Keeping Track

A Method to the Stitching Madness

President’s Message

I often stitch when I visit my neighbor and friend, Fran Forsythe, who is also a past president of Cable Car Cablers. Never sure what I will be in the mood for or how much concentration will be required on my part, it is not unlike me to bring 3 or 4 kited projects with me when I visit her. I leave all but one in my car. I start stitching on the easiest and quickest stitchery. This is similar to rallying before a tennis match. I finish a section or the piece entirely. This work is returned to my car.

I bring the second stitching kit into my friend’s house. We chat as I work on a moderately difficult piece, completing a significant section or I at least stitch past what had heretofore been a stumbling block. Often the stumbling block is nothing more than needing to learn a new technique or extended practice of a new stitch. I recall my personal experiences: the Van Dyke stitch benefits from lots of practice and is well worth it. Finding a good place to stop, I leave the needle half way through the next stitch, this ensures stitching will be easy to resume next time I pick it up. This kit is returned to the car.

I bring the third kit into the house. This item of stitchery is an old friend, possessing no surprises, no unfamiliar stitches, one I will be sad to finish but oh so happy to gaze upon once completed. There are as many methods used for keeping needle and thread in cloth as there are stitchers. In times past necessity was the motivation. The love of stitching, the love of creating, a friendly competition or just knowing it is time to move on to the next project – any reason or no reason is a good reason to sew. Of the great arts, a close second to architecture, stitching is perhaps the most essential to the survival of humans. We need protective covering for our delicate skin and we love to embellish the clothing we make. The smocking exhibition opening this month at Lacis Museum of Lace and Textiles in Berkeley, California will be showing many outstanding examples of smocked and embellished clothing. I hope to see many old friends there and to make many new friends.

Warm regards,

Christie

Calendar

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>March 25, 2014</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
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<td>April 27, 2014</td>
<td>SAGA Trunk Show Tea</td>
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Wee Care

Thanks to everyone for all the hard work you put into our Wee Care program over the last few months. I was able to deliver 33 full sets (gowns, bonnets, blankets) and almost 40 knitted hats to the Lucille Packard hospital in February.

Cara and the other staff at the hospital were thrilled. She noted they “all love the gowns and other items from the Cable Car Cablers which are always so beautifully made and that we add such nice variety with colorful items.” She appreciated that we also included some full term gowns as, unfortunately, they have been in need of this size in the past year. I walked through the NICU with her and it was wonderful to see the little babies being taken care of with so much loving care.

The staff noted to me that when we make a delivery, everyone wants to view the items and there is much appreciation from both the staff and the parents who receive our donations.

We will plan another Wee Care workshop soon. Maybe in April? Details will be confirmed at the next CCC meeting. Thanks again and happy stitching.

Denise

Birthdays!

A Happy Birthday to Fran who celebrates a very special day on March 8th!
Happy Birthday to Gloria who celebrates on April 4th and Denise who celebrates on April 9th!
Happy Birthday ladies!
Lacis

The Smocking and Fabric Manipulation exhibit at the Lacis Museum in Berkeley is ready to open. On March 8th Sarah Douglas, Mimi Ahern and Nellie Durand will visit the exhibit from 2:00-4:30 pm. Many of you know who these ladies are, but for those of you who don’t they were influential in the early development of SAGA, wrote for SAGAnews, and taught classes at convention. All have been featured in books on the topic of Smocking, one of which is Creative Smocking by Chris Rankin and, of course, Sarah Douglas wrote The Pleater Manual, originally published in 1986.

Julie Stillwell will be there to interview them in a group discussion setting for SAGAnews. I hope as many of you who can will come and be a part of this historic event.

Jules Kliot, director of the Lacis Museum, has put up a slide show of the exhibit on the museum site. If you would like to view the slide show go to lacismuseum.org, then click on Current & Upcoming Exhibits, then click Smocking, then Slide Show.

I look forward to seeing those of you who have signed up to take classes at Lacis on March 13th & 14th.

Catherine
Lattice Smocked Velvet Pillow

by Ingrid Chan

In preparation for the Lacis exhibit on smocking which begins on March 8th, Catherine requested that a smocking class be offered at LACIS in 2013. I began thinking about ideas and remembered that I had smocked a gray lattice pillow which had great texture when I used a high pile fabric.

I chose royal blue velvet then recreated the Velvet Lattice Smocked Pillow. I used a 2 inch chalk grid to expedite the marking and smocking time. Making the pillow was easy; writing the instructions took me a lot more time and many iterations.

On August 8, 2013, I taught a 6 hour Cable Car Cabler’s pilot class with Lucie, Vicki, Margaret, Jill, Gloria, Solly and Catherine. They provided me feedback on class execution and instructions. All of them had experience with English smocking and most of them had North American/lattice smocking experience.

I covered how to mark the fabric with chalk for lattice smocking, cut the velvet fabric, and how to lattice smock. I demonstrated how insert a zipper into the back of the pillow using the selvage edge to reduce...
bulk, and discussed how to finish the pillow. I gave them many options for their lattice smocking besides making pillows.

On November 16, 2013, I taught the *Velvet Lattice Smocked Pillow* class at LACIS to four students. Susie and Kay are members of Embroidery Guild of America who have experience in other types of embroidery. Joanne and Diane are from the East Bay and are interested in joining a SAGA group in Berkeley.

All were new to North American Smocking. After discussing the pillow design options, most students preferred to make a 12 inch or larger square pillow. Most of the morning was spent marking the lattice grid on the back of the velvet. In the afternoon, I focused on stitching the lattice and demonstrated how to insert a zipper into the back of the pillow. Thank you to Catherine for helping out with the class.

The next day, I was happy to learn that Susie had completed her lattice smocked pillow including installing the zipper in back.

Happy Smocking!

Ingrid
Getting to Know:
Smocking Designer Mimi Ahern

Last November, Catherine, Jules, Margaret, Irene and Ingrid along with Jules Kliot, met Mimi Ahearn at Lacis in Berkeley, California. Some time ago, Mimi was active as smocking designer and teacher. She is a very close friend of Sarah Douglas. She is the creator of many beautiful Christmas ornament designs and kits. Some of Mimi’s beaded ornament designs are featured in the book *Creative Smocking* by Chris Rankin. Mimi has generously provided many smocked items for the upcoming Lacis exhibit SMOCKING: Fabric Manipulation and Beyond.

Photo: Ingrid, Catherine, Mimi, Jules, Margaret and Irene

Mimi spent a few hours with us sharing her design process, her notes and examples of her experimental smocking designs. Mimi shared her stories on the “Smocking Play Days” with Sarah which inspired their creative processes. Sarah asked Mimi, “Can you design something with feathers stitches or a Christmas ornament?” Mimi shared with us her smocking doodle cloth that resulted from that conversation.

Mimi showed us a magazine with a game board. Each month Sarah and Mimi would come up with inspirational words or sayings for a design contest. Readers would send pictures of their work and Sarah and Mimi would select the top design entry to feature in the magazine.

Mimi showed us her designs for smocked Christmas ornaments, fans and needle cases. Thinking outside the box, Mimi would sometimes use Trapunto in her smocking. Her Christmas ornaments are amazing to see as was her use of color in her fan designs and needle cases.

We hope to arrange a Smocking Play Day with Mimi this year!

Ingrid
Docent slots are still available for Saturdays at Lacis from now until the close of the smocking exhibit there. Cable Car Cablers who volunteer for docent time slots will receive a 10% discount on purchases made at Lacis on the day that they volunteer. Please sign up with Catherine Ljunquist as soon as you know your availability.

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The Lace Museum
Is There Treasure in Your Old Lace
Lecture April 25, 2014

Antique Lace: What is it and What is it Worth?
April 26-27, 2014

April Showers
Bring May Flowers
An introduction to Needle Lace
taught by Katrina Middleton
May 10 & 11, 2014

Lace Museum Sale
March 21-22, 2014
http://www.thelacemuseum.org

Sarah Douglas Collection at Lacis
March 8-October 4, 2014
http://smocking.org

Voices in Cloth Quilt Show
Richmond, California
March 22-23, 2014
http://www.ebhq.org/quilt-shows/vic2014

Contra Costa Quilt Show
Concord, California
April 5-6, 2014
http://www.contracostaquiltguild.org/
quilt_show.htm

Lace, A Sumptuous History
1600s to 1900s
SFO International Terminal
Departures - Level 3 - Pre-Security
February 2014 - June 2014
lace-sumptuous-
history#sthash.fpGYSRYW.dpuf

SAGA Trunk Show Tea
April 27th, 2014

San Mateo County Fair 2014
June 7-15, 2014
2014 is the Year of the Horse. Two special horse themed prizes will be awarded at the fair. $50 in Quilting and $25 in Non-Quilting. Why not incorporate a horse into smocked item and double your chances of winning a special award?

Upcoming CCC Events
The Cable Car Cabler challenge for 2014 is to embellish a padded hanger and enter it into the San Mateo County Fair. Hangers are available to chapter members.

At our 2014 June meeting, members will have one vote for their favorite embellished hanger. The winner of the popular vote will receive $25!

SAGA Convention
Orlando Florida
September 17-21, 2014
Registration begins May 1st at
http://smocking.org

Refreshments
March    Ingrid
April     Jill
May     Margaret
June     Denise
July     Solly
August    Lois
September    Fran
October    Irene
November    Catherine
December    Christmas Tea
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Meeting Location
San Mateo Medical Center Hospital
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San Mateo, CA 94403

SAGA Contact Info
Region representative  Chris Sykes  regionfive@smocking.org

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The purpose of the Smocking Arts Guild Of America is to preserve and foster the art of smocking and related needlework for future generations through education, communication and quality workmanship.