Keeping Track

Happy New Year!

President’s Message

Through the efforts of our officers and members, we are organized and ready to charge into 2012.

• Check your email. I’m excited to let you know that the publishers of *Australian Smocking & Embroidery* have given me permission to send a PDF file of all the instructions to each member to make the Dainty Silk Heart. Come to the January meeting prepared to go through the project with Ingrid.
• We will continue with Floss Flowers.
• We all look forward to Lyn Weeks coming in April.
• Catherine has taken the lead in the Sarah Douglas Collection at Lacis in Berkeley. Anyone is welcome to join her in this project of preservation and display.
• Wee Care is on the calendar.

I feel like our guild is off and running in 2012.

The month of February has a lot to offer stitchers. Beyond Cable Care Cablers, I see that Nancy Zieman will be at Eddie’s Quilting Bee, Roxanne of Roxanne’s Ribbonery has a Winter Retreat in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and The Bay Area Quilt, Craft & Sewing Festival is scheduled in San Mateo at the end of the month. For classes in San Francisco and other excursions you can check Sandra Betzina’s website, [www.powersewing.com](http://www.powersewing.com).

As I list all that is available to us in 2012, I wait in anticipation. The next twelve months will present: other ideas, willingness of members to share in some way, information of many different classes, exhibits, field trips, sit and stitches, retreats, and shopping expos. The networking of our guild is terrific. The first notice from a member this year is Christy’s email about the current doll exhibit at the Lace Museum in Sunnyvale.

As we all resolve to a New Year of sharing our skills and ourselves, may we all prosper and enrich our lives. Happy New Year

Gloria
Christmas Tea

A big “Thank You” to Lois for once again being our Christmas hostess. Everyone had a good time and there was as usual plenty of food as well as a cookie exchange. If you missed the event you missed Lois’ moment ...she finally won a raffle basket! Thank you to everyone who brought items for the basket.

Lois sent a note for everyone!

“Thanks to all of you for the wonderful surprises in the Christmas raffle box. I was thrilled to be the winner even though I still suspect the drawing was rigged! Such great choices any stitcher would love--embroidery hoops, Dovos and Gingher scissors, pincushions, a book on stitchery, ornaments, Irene's tea cozy (we all need that pattern!), laces and trims and so much more--it was a treasure trove of goodies. It still makes me smile. Thanks.”

Lois
Birthdays!

Happy Birthday to Catherine who celebrates on January 9th! Happy Birthday to Lois who celebrates on February 5th! Happy Birthday ladies!

Check It Out!
Lois sent along information about a charity that she researched. We are including the information because it specifically donates monies to sewing machines. [http://www.outreach-international.org](http://www.outreach-international.org)

“Before Christmas I was inundated with pleas for money for worthwhile charities. You might be interested in Outreach International. I looked them up on Charity Navigator and found they ranked four stars. They fund and organize animal and farming projects, schools, health clinics, women's leadership training, etc. in 13 countries. What caught my eye was that for $120 you could give a sewing machine that would provide an income for a family. What a difference we could make in someone's life! Just something to think about...Thanks”,

Lois

AS&E Heart of Mine

At the CCC February 28, 2012 meeting, Ingrid Chan will demonstrate how to work the Lattice Smocking. We will be working on a small piece of fabric to learn the Lattice Smocked design before working on the AS&E Heart of Mine. Participants should bring a light color 6" by 7" satin or silk fabric, the Lattice Smocked Practice Pattern, pencil, ruler, matching DMC embroidery thread, needle, and if needed light or light box. You may trace the dots lightly onto the fabric with a pencil prior to meeting or trace during the meeting.
Lyn Weeks Workshop
This April the Cable Car Cablers will be hosting Lyn Weeks for a series of workshops in San Mateo, California.

A Hanger to Personalize Every Outfit
(3 hrs, Fine Machine Sewing, Kit Fee $22).
Friday, April 13, 2012
6:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Frannie Cap-Sleeve Dress with Smocking
(12 hrs, Fine Machine Sewing/Smocking, Kit Fee varies $10 to $53)
Saturday, April 14, 2012
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Sunday, April 15, 2012
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Frannie Kit selection must be made by Feb 28, 2012, so Lyn can start preparing the kits.

Class fees will be decided at the CCC January 2012 Meeting.

A Hanger To Personalize Every Outfit
What says ‘couture’ more than displaying your garments, from baby to adult, on their own matching padded hanger?
In this class each participant will proceed with a kit containing a wooden baby hanger, the prepared cover in fine cotton fabric with tucks and lace embellishment, complementary satin piping and ribbons, plus hand sewing threads and needles. Create beautiful hangers to match every outfit and learn how to alter your pattern to fit any size garment hanger – one padded hanger will be completed in class with inspiration being provided to create many more using this delightful pattern.

The kit will contain the diagrammed instructions and pattern in three sizes, a wooden baby size hanger, prepared hanger cover in fine cotton fabric, complementary satin piping, ribbons and batting, plus hand sewing threads and needles.
There is no pre-class preparation required, as all techniques will be stitched using the pre-cut kit pieces.
Frannie Cap-Sleeve Dress with Smocking Class

Brochure Description: This delightfully different dress can be gathered using bright, colorful fabric for a play dress, smocked for more impact or incorporate heirloom sewing for that special occasion. The ‘Frannie’ dress has a gently curved, piped yoke, a choice of collars and a sleeve-cap, which takes the place of a set-in sleeve – what could be easier?

Importance will be placed on collars to ensure they are constructed to fit correctly, meet at both centers and do not flip up. Curved pleating within the skirt width, blocking and smocking preparation form part of our program, however, the class will focus on perfecting the more-advanced garment construction skills.

Kit Contents: Pre-washed German iron-on interfacing and additional pattern notes will be supplied. $10.00

Optional Kit and Cost:

(a) ‘Frannie’ pattern by Lyn Weeks available from www.lynweeks.com or Martha Pullen Company – pattern will need to be traced and garment cut prior to class.

(b) A pre-cut kit of Swiss Piqué in your choice of over twelve colors, matching sewing thread, contrasting collar fabric and piping/trim is available – Sizes 1-2 $58.00 and Sizes 3-4 $63.00, which includes all elements of the basic $10.00 Kit. See Lyn Weeks website, www.lynweeks.com, for colors.

Student Requirements: Participants will need to bring basic sewing supplies plus their sewing machine in good working order and with no tension problems, all machine feet (including a ¼" foot, an edge-joining foot with centre bar, a foot for creating fine piping (I use the #3 basic buttonhole, #23 clear appliqué or #32 five-groove pintuck foot on my Bernina), and two empty bobbins. Also required will be the ‘Frannie’ pattern by Lyn Weeks (traced in the required size), fabric cut out for the ‘smocked’ version with fine cotton sewing thread to match (Mettler 60/2 or DMC 50) and one packet of mini piping. A smocking pleater with 12 needles, ½" dowel and two spools of quilting thread (orange and blue are good) are also required.

Specific and detailed instructions relating to the pattern, fabric and trim choices, pleating and blocking preparation will be supplied prior to class by emailing Lyn at lyncfriars@me.com at your earliest convenience after registration.
A visit to Winterthur

By Kathy Pennock

I followed the blog about the reconstruction of a colonial-period jacket on the Plimouth Plantation website with interest. I then discovered that the jacket was to be one of the highlights of a Winterthur Museum exhibition entitled "With Cunning Needle" which would focus on the place of embroidery and other needlework in the early history of the States. I decided I would plan a day there next time my husband and I headed to the Philadelphia area to see family. Our available day turned out to be Black Friday, and I can assure you that spending four hours there was far more interesting than fighting crowds at the mall!

Winterthur, formerly the estate of Henry Francis DuPont, is located on the Delaware River near Wilmington, Delaware. Originally a 2000 acre estate, it now covers about 1000 acres and includes several buildings and two houses, one of which has been turned in to a museum showcasing American Folk Art. DuPont, on seeing a large maple kitchen dresser, decided that it was as important for day-to-day items of life to be preserved as it is for fine art works, and set about not only collecting these things, but creating a home where they could be displayed as they would have been used. He had a smaller (15-room) cottage created on the property and set about converting the 9-story, 175-room mansion into a museum.

The "With Cunning Needle" exhibition was gorgeous. There were examples of various needleworks from the earliest colonies onward. My favorites were probably a pair of window curtains done in bright crewel work and a lovely linen baby bonnet made from what looked to be 200 thread count linen. The threads were so fine that the piece looked like vellum paper. There was no embroidery or lace, just a self-ruffle at the brim and a tape-woven linen ribbon fastening. It was very simple yet quite elegant. Looking at this bonnet I finally understood that sleeping on linen sheets was probably an incredibly luxurious experience rather than the rough and scratchy one I always envisioned when reading about it in historical references. Even the 50-ct we can get these days is fairly course, but this fabric was as translucent as a fine swiss batiste, but with no visible warp and weft threads.

Then there was The Plimoth Jacket itself. This garment required over 3700 hours of stitching by more than 300 stitchers to complete. It is modeled after two jackets in the Victoria and Albert Museum, item #1359-1900 for the embroidery, and item T.228-1994 for the cut and construction. During the research phase of the project, it was discovered that the gilt twist thread used for embroidery is no longer available, that the embroidery patterns were most likely from a commercial tailor who had templates of scrolling vines and leaves and various floral motifs which could be placed in the open areas as desired by the customer. I won't go in to more of the history here: if you are interested, the blog can be found online at:
http://blogs.plimoth.org/embroidery-blog/2007/05/ and
There is an overlap of information on these two blogs. Photos and more history can be found on the V&A site. Start here and have fun:

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O11095/jacket/

So, back to that jacket. The stitching is exquisite. Both the gold coil threads and the gilt silk twist thread were manufactured for the jacket by Bill Barnes of Golden Threads in the UK as they are no longer produced. I have since noticed that while many of the extant embroidered items of this type use the gilt thread, any newer projects such as those found in the book Exploring Elizabethan Embroidery are worked in plain silk thread or cotton thread. Now I know why.

A wire worker at Plimoth Plantation did some studying and figured out how to reproduce the spangles worked into the bobbin lace edging, and a bobbin lace maker spent some time coming up with a good reproduction of the edging itself, which is worked in a combination of silver and gold metallic threads. I've tried bobbin lace in plain cotton thread, and it's not all that easy. I can only imagine how difficult it was to work with those brittle metal threads and keep them from twisting.

The result of all this is a sumptuous jacket which gleams subtly in the light. There are whimsical details such as butterflies with detached wings and pea pods which curl open a bit to reveal tiny goldwork pea pods. There is a rich braid made of 6-ply plaiting. The motifs are stitched with close detached buttonhole, trellis or ceylon stitches, among others.

Me being me, I have signed up for an online class which uses the materials and motifs used in the jacket. With a lot of work I hope to have it finished for next year's design show at Convention. I really wished I had a loupe like they have at Lacis for viewing some of the stitches. They were so tiny it was difficult to tell what some were. I will likely find out when I start my gentleman's cap.

Kathy
WeeCare

Congratulations to Kathy who won our quarterly Wee Care raffle in December. A check for $25 was quickly mailed to Pennsylvania for our long distance member. Thank you to all of you who turned in gowns, blankets, bonnets and knitted caps. You make our service project a success.

We will have Wee Care workshops on Friday, January 13 and Saturday, January 14 at Irene's Cayuga Street "sewing house", in San Francisco. We'll start at 10:00 each morning and continue until we're tired! (2:00?) Our purpose is to complete any unfinished gowns we have at home, so bring those and any other supplies you might need. Irene has sewing machines, serger, iron and ironing board at the house, as well as a table for cutting. If you have no unfinished gowns, please come and help cut, stitch and pleat gowns for new kits. We have a job for everyone! Please come either day or both days if you have the time--we need you!

Directions to Irene’s Sewing House:
Take 280 north. When you get to Daly City continue on 280. Do not take the 19th Ave exit. The next exit is Geneva. That is the one you want. Coming off freeway stay in right lane and turn right. Go down hill through next light (San Jose Ave) and continue to bottom of hill. Turn right at stop sign, you are now on Cayuga. Continue on Cayuga to 1745. It is about 8 -10 blocks. Brick and shingle house with giant elephant plant in front driveway.

Lois
Condolences
Sincere condolences go out to Kathy Pennock on the death of her mother back in Illinois. Her mom had suffered an extended illness and decline.

Birthdays
If you are a member of the Cable Car Cablers and do not see birthday greetings in your birthday month, or do not see them in the correct month, you can notify either Irene or Lynn and provide them with your month and day. We don’t need the year!

Road to California
Quilter’s Conference & Showcase
Ontario Convention Center, Ontario CA.
January 19-22, 2012
http://road2ca.com/index2.html

Quilt, Craft, and Sewing Festival
San Mateo Expo Center, San Mateo.
February 23-25, 2012. 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

Pullayup Sewing and Stitchery Expo
Pullayup Fair & Events Center, Pullayup, WA.
March 1-4, 2012.
http://www.sewexpo.com/

Lacis
On January 4, Catherine, Margaret, and Irene met with Jules Kliot at Lacis to discuss the details of displaying Sarah Douglas’ smocking and sewing collection. The group will be gathering at Lacis again on February 27th, the Monday before our February meeting. Please contact Catherine if you wish to volunteer on this project.

Refreshments
January       Sue Kocienski
February      Cindy Cohan
March         Fran Forsythe
April         Irene Thomas
May           Ingrid Chan
June          Mary Taylor
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Meeting Location
San Mateo Medical Center Hospital
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Saga Contact Info
Region representative Tawn Hunka
regionfive@smocking.org

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.