

Stitchers Hideaway!

2003 Sturbridge Fun Report

with

Betsy Stinner of Earth Threads

What a great time we had at the Stitcher's Hideaway in Sturbridge, MA!!

We officially began the retreat on Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m. Stitchers had traveled from NY, PA, MA, NJ, CT, NH, NY, ME, and Wales, and boy! Were we ever excited!!

Awaiting each stitcher was a Stitcher's Hideaway Fun Pack filled with stash and goodies, and a wonderful gift bag from Lydia of Wyndham Needleworks. The Stitcher's Hideaway Fun Packs had donated items from [Glory Bee](#), Calico Crossroads, Nordic Needle, Olde Willow Threads, [Weeks Dye Works](#), Charles Craft, Just Nan, monsterbubbles, [Kreinik](#), The Prairie Schooler, [Rosewood Manor](#), Finger Work, and Mill Hill. Elizabeth Foster of [Elizabeth's Designs](#) also created a design just for the Sturbridge Stitcher's Hideaway stitchers.

There was a yummy New Englander Reception of blueberry scones, hot mulled cider, cheeses and crackers – but it was hard to even think about eating because Wyndham Needleworks, Earth Threads, and [Glory Bee](#) had set up mini-shops for us, and we had a stash enhancement frenzy! Eventually we settled down for our first class with Betsy Stinner of Earth Threads. What a beautiful ornament project she had for us! It had rich colors and called for some specialty stitches, beading, and blackwork. Betsy's sense of humor was a delight and her needlework knowledge a real treasure.



Betsy Stinner



"House of Dreams"
Our retreat project



We worked on this preface piece to learn the stitches required to complete “House of Dreams.”



Betsy’s “Christmas Rose” was our bonus class, which was also used to teach us some of the stitches for “House of Dreams.”

You can just imagine that most of us went to our hotel rooms that night to play in all our stash!! Nordic Needle had given us catalogs of all their merchandise and it made great bedtime reading!

The next morning, we gathered for a delicious breakfast buffet in the loft. We sat at round tables and this gave us a great chance to chat and get to know each other. Then off we went to our morning class with Betsy. There we worked on a pretty preface piece as we learned the stitches we would need to know for the sampler. Betsy gave us a wonderful historical lecture as we worked on each new stitch. And while we stitched and learned, Lisa from Needle Pulling Thread set up a mini-shop for us, which we pounced upon in another stash enhancement frenzy after our lunch buffet. The folks at the Sturbridge Aisle did a great job with the food and the presentation was wonderful. We had one of the most deadly and delicious chocolate desserts of all time!! After lunch we returned to class with Betsy to continue learning both stitches and needlework history, and at each seat we discovered yet more gift items for us all! This time they were from Needle Pulling Thread.



There was great excitement as each recipient opened their door prize!
Linda from Maine opens hers.



Betty unveils her gift

In the evening we gathered for a served dinner followed by drawings for door prizes. Oh, that was a lot of fun!! We all enjoyed seeing what each person received, and everyone received a prize from one of many thoughtful and generous donors. There were items from Stitchy Kitty, Earth Threads, The Victoria Sampler, Glory Bee, Trail Creek Farm, Nordic Needle, Olde Willow Design Group, Charles Craft, Needle Pulling Thread, and Stitcher's Hideaway. We had a good laugh when it was announced that the next door prize was from Trail Creek Farm. As the name for the prize was being drawn, Nancy from MA was saying out loud "Please let it be me....please let it be me....please let it be me!" And wouldn't you know it? Her name was the one that was drawn!! She was one happy stitcher!



Nancy receives her Trail Creek Farm gift!

Liz from NY, who had attended the Mystic 2002 Stitcher's Hideaway, had commented upon hearing that we had a stitcher from Wales, "Well, I guess I know who will get the prize for the stitcher who traveled the farthest!" Well, she guessed right about that, but what she wasn't expecting was to receive a prize for being our Most Pregnant Stitcher!



Nancy and Donna chat across tables, while Liz received a gift for being the Most Pregnant Stitcher!



Betsy Stinner (in striped top) and Mr. Betsy (Ken) enjoyed dinner with the stitchers.



Christine and Debbie have a good laugh while Jeannette tries to guess what's in there!



Jodi's smile lights up the room!



Rosemary from Wales easily receives the gift for the Stitcher Who Traveled The Farthest!



We all enjoyed seeing what each stitcher received.

Next, we returned to our stitching area for Show and Tell. WOW!! What a talented group of stitchers! There were many different styles shown and good stories to hear. Some had worked hard to complete other samplers by Betsy Stinner in time to show them to her and to us. It was very interesting for all of us to see a work in progress by Rosemary from Wales – the Lord’s Prayer in Welsh stitched on black linen. The piece was quite different from designs we see in the States.

Many of us continued to sit and stitch that evening, with Betsy on hand to assist, and to talk until we could fight sleep no longer. We began saying farewell to fellow stitchers who were leaving for home that night.

For some of us, the fun continued on Saturday when we visited Old Sturbridge Village and a local craft show. That evening about 8 of us remained and gathered in a room for supper and to sit and stitch and chat. Jodi Merusi of Vintage Designs, who attended the retreat and is also a designer, brought in some of her stitched works of art for us to admire. On Sunday some of us still remained and went to the craft show and lunch before reluctantly heading home. “Amazing” Grace from NJ – master of hotel bathroom lights {wink} -- and I were passing each other on the highway, waving as we went.

Want to know what the stitchers had to say about the Sturbridge retreat? Read on!

Sue

“Where to start raving about the Sturbridge weekend? The location was great - easy to get to and reasonable in costs. The food was outstanding and the staff was really friendly and helpful. The overall organization of the event was flawless and Betsy was a fantastic teacher. I really liked that there was enough time to learn the stitches at your own speed and that the teacher was there to help whenever needed. The project is just fantastic and I loved having a preface piece of the stitches to be used so that I could gain confidence in my technique before starting the sampler. I especially enjoyed learning more about the various sampler schools Betsy discussed in between teaching stitches. It was also great to have both Wyndham Needleworks on Friday and Needle Pulling Thread there on Saturday so that we could browse and add to our stash. I'm sure we all found something we just "had to have" while we were there. The location was great too because if you came with a spouse or family, there were things they could be doing while we were stitching so the location choice was a really smart one.” ~ Patti

“I just wanted to let you know what a terrific job you did on our Stitcher’s Hideaway Retreat. The accommodations were fine and the meals were great... more than I had hoped for. I still haven't gone through all the goodies you had for us but some are just what I need for a scissors job that I have to make for our FCE group in our December Exchange. We enjoyed the fellowship and of course Betsy was the greatest teacher. One super lady!” ~ Jean



Grace receives a door prize from Glory Bee!

“Thank you so much for a well-planned, well executed hideaway weekend. I’ve just gotten back and can't wait to go again. So, Mystic, here I come!” ~ Grace

“Thanks so much for all your hard work and for a fantastic time at Stitchers Hideaway in Sturbridge! Having Betsy back was great and her piece was incredible. I, too, finished the preface piece and the ornament.....major accomplishment for me, and enjoyed every minute!” ~ Debby



Rosemary admires her new stash -- kits from Earth Threads.

“I was stitching last night when I got home from the retreat and realized that I missed everyone stitching with me. I really, really enjoyed the whole weekend and was glad that I decided to stay on Saturday night. Sue, you did a wonderful job and thank-you for the great time. I try to think what was the best of it all and keep coming up with different things. I think one of the top things was hanging out with stitchers who love to stitch as much as you do. The group was a perfect size and to be able to shop and stitch was the best. I also love show and tell, everyone knows the work done to complete a project.” ~ Jeannette

“The goodies were great, the food was excellent and the Quality Inn was comfortable. Keep up the good work. Oh yes, Betsy was really a great teacher and I am glad she is doing so well!!! Thanks again for a great stitching time.” ~ Betty

“Thanks again for a really wonderful time. Look forward to next year.” ~ Marjorie

“The retreat was great fun, and well worth my time and money.” ~ Peggy

*"The Sturbridge retreat was so wonderful. Sue did a great job of organizing everything. Thanks Sue! Betsy Stinner of Earth Threads is such a great teacher! Even though I have been designing for a few years I have so much to learn and Betsy started me on my way! She is very knowledgeable and her lectures on the New England schools were fascinating. I look forward to stitching the sampler. Thanks Betsy! I hope to see some or all of my new stitching friends in Mystic in November. Join us, you won't be disappointed.
~ Nancy Boyarsky, Glory Bee*

"The entire weekend was wonderful! A few of my favorite things of the retreat were meeting wonderful stitchers, sharing some laughs and techniques, having Betsy teach us a beautiful sampler and learning more about the history of samplers. The food was awesome and sinful, the gift bag of goodies was great, the door prizes were wonderful, the vendors had nice stuff, etc., etc., etc.!!!! What can I say...I really had a great time! All of your hard work in setting this up and getting all of the goodies for us was truly appreciated by everyone!!!! Thanks so much for a wonderful time." ~ Linda

"Glad to hear you are taking a well-deserved vacation after working so hard to make the Stitcher's Hideaway in Sturbridge such a rousing success!! I thoroughly enjoyed myself. The whole experience was delightful from start to finish. The food was excellent, accommodations clean and comfortable, wonderful (and seemingly endless) "giveaways", not to mention the companionship. And as usual, Betsy outdid herself. I loved the project and will definitely finish it." ~ Deb

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