

Stitchers Hideaway!

2004 Mystic Fun Report

with

Jeannette Douglas of Jeannette Douglas Designs



WOW!! What a wonderful time we had at the Mystic retreat!! Every retreat has been wonderful, but each one seems even better than the last!

Instructor Jeannette Douglas and I met in person at the MN 2004 retreat and connected in such a way that we were just counting the days until we could spend time together again. She and her husband Dale arrived a few days before the retreat to spend time with my husband Michael and me. It was their first time in Connecticut and they had a great time sightseeing. Jeannette had researched the area to design the Mystic Sampler, but this was her first time to see things in person. She was thrilled with the foliage and loved the stone walls! We brought them to a very old

cemetery with stones dating back to the early 1600's. Jeannette became fascinated with the headstones and took many photos. We drove them to our cottage in Haddam, CT where they were able to enjoy the view of the Connecticut River. Dale buried Jeannette in leaves and took pictures of her – what a sight! Ha! We drove to the shore and had lunch in a restaurant built above the ocean. The dining area was surrounded by glass so we had a perfect view to enjoy during our meal. We sure did a lot in our short time together. Somewhere in there Jeannette mentioned that she loved Good 'n Plenty candy and wanted to be sure to pick some up because she couldn't get it in Canada. That night I secretly emailed the Mystic stitchers and suggested that if they could find some Good 'n Plenty it would be fun to shower Jeannette with them, and they didn't let me down!

The night before the retreat I met up with Dawn from FL, who has attended 2 retreats in Kissimmee, and Kathy from MN, who was attending her first Stitcher's Hideaway. They were matched up as roommates for the retreat. The three of us went out for dinner. It was raining cats and dogs and little old ladies out and I stepped into a big puddle in the dark, flooding my clogs. We were laughing about it as I slogged my way into the restaurant where I enjoyed crab cakes and steak. Mmmmmm!!



Dawn & Kathy

After dinner I managed to step into another deep puddle on the way out and was back to sloshing in my clogs. I was thinking, hmmm, every time I get together with Dawn I manage to make a moron out of myself! I was hoping I would avoid that for once, but no! It gets better! (Or worse...!)

We arrived at the hotel parking lot and in the rainy dark I spotted Jeannette and Dale hustling into the hotel. I hollered out to them and Jeannette turned and looked at me briefly but didn't seem to even recognize me. So I yelled out, "It's Sue!" And they both looked at me quickly but kept hustling into the hotel. It was then that Kathy said, "Maybe it's not them!" As they reached the lights at the hotel entrance, I realized Kathy was right!! Omigosh, we laughed ourselves sick in the car. I was doubled over with laughter. Dawn began picking on me and asking if I'd had any "virgin" Pina Colodas (see Kissimmee 2003 Fun Report). Kathy said, "Um...maybe we need to wait awhile before going in?" Ha-ha!! But I decided it wasn't the first time I'd made a jerk of myself, and surely wouldn't be the last, so we went into the hotel, me sloshing in my clogs. So, who was right inside the door checking into their hotel room? "Jeannette" and "Dale". I tried to pretend I wasn't the fool they had seen yelling from the car, and Kathy and Dawn fled to the safety of their hotel room!!



Lisa prepares for the invasion

That night I began working on setting things up for the retreat. Lisa from Needle Pulling Thread had arrived, and soon we were joined by Lynda from Scandinavian Stitches. Naturally I had to look at all their stash and try not to drool on things that the stitchers would be looking at the next morning. It was really cool -- like having my own personal sneak preview! Lisa had some of Jeannette's trunk show and a big selection of charts, stitching toys, and much more. Lynda set up a big display of stitched Scandinavian Designs that were just wonderful. Seeing stitched models is always amazing -- everything looks better in person than pictured on a chart. With everything in place for the next day, I headed for a good night's sleep.



Let us in!!

The next morning Lynda, Lisa, Jeannette and I opened the door to a *very* eager group of stitchers lined up just itching to get in! You could feel the anticipation in the air! I grabbed my camera and did my best to capture them in between greeting everyone. They checked in, headed for their Fun Packs, and began stash enhancing. Hot coffee, tea, cold apple cider, cheese and crackers and cookies awaited them. There was excited chatter as everyone played in their stash, greeted friends from previous retreats, and met those new to Stitcher's Hideaway.



Lynda from Scandinavian Stitchery braces herself for the flood of stitchers as Diane reaches for her Fun Pack

Oh, what treasures awaited them in their Fun Packs! There were items from Brightneedle, Brittercup Designs, [Elizabeth's Designs](#), Full Circle Designs, [Glory Bee](#), Grateful Hearts, [Jeannette Douglas Designs](#), [Kreinik](#), Ladybug Lane Designs, M Designs, monsterbubbles, Needle Craft World (a shop in Kissimmee, FL), Needle Pulling Thread, Nordic Needle, Old Willow Stitchery, [Rosewood Manor](#), Scandinavian Stitches, The Prairie Schooler, [The Victoria Sampler](#), [Udder Cream](#), [Weeks Dye Works](#), [With My Needle](#), and, of course, Stitcher's Hideaway. Throughout the retreat stitchers commented on the generosity of the designers and the wonderful charts and threads they received. Several of the design lines were new to us and it was a great introduction!



As we began our first class, I introduced Jeannette and talked a bit about our adventures. I also told them about dinner out the night before and how I had greeted "Jeannette" and "Dale" in the dark. We had a good laugh over it. Lisa from California received a special gift for traveling the farthest, and two stitchers also had something unusual in their Fun Packs identifying them as special door prize winners. That was fun!! Then as Jeannette began her class, stitchers paraded up front and presented her with box after box of Good 'n Plenty! Jeannette was so surprised and kept laughing as more and more boxes appeared! It was great!! After quite a bit of giggling we settled down to begin our beautiful Mystic Sampler under Jeannette's direction.



Class Time -- Lisa from CA in the yellow t-shirt was the stitcher who traveled the farthest!



Linda, Debbie & Diane

We enjoyed Jeannette so much! Her directions were excellent and she was fun and patient and had a great time right along with us. We took a break, ate and shopped some more, then returned back to continue working on our samplers only to find more freebies waiting! The hours just really flew by and the next thing we knew it was dinner time!! We had a delicious meal catered by Mystic Catering and incredible apple and blackberry pies. We were stuffed – but did that prevent us from standing up and doing some more shopping?!? No way!



Admiring Scandinavian Stitches Models



Stash Enhancement Frenzy!!

There was so much to see!! So many wonderful designs!!! What a wonderful display!!

We had more door prizes, stash enhancement, snacks (!), and time chatting and stitching together. Some of us very reluctantly headed for bed that night. Jeannette left with a box of Good 'n Plenty in her hand for a nighttime snack! Some thoughtful stitchers stayed behind to help Lisa pack up her "shop" so she could get on the road at a decent hour.



Juana with Door Prize from Full Circle Designs

The next morning I gathered my things and then headed for the elevator. I guess I don't need to tell you who got on with me again!!! This time I pretended I was part of the elevator wall!! I kept thinking, are these people ever going to check out of this hotel?!? Of course, I told everyone what happened once again, and noticed that everyone seemed to enjoy my embarrassment!!

We began our morning session with more freebies and more door prizes, and then Jeannette guided us through our next sampler section. I had been in and out of the classroom the previous day taking care of various things and had been very distracted. Here on the second day I removed my fabric from my Q-snaps to move it farther down to work on the next row and it suddenly seemed too short to me to complete the project. Jeannette must have seen my puzzled look because she came over for a peek and then gently told me that I had started my sampler too far down on the linen!! Well, I guess I wasn't surprised with all the distraction I had at the beginning of our class sessions. I got the giggles, and Linda next to me did, too. Then with sudden revelation I blamed it on Dawn! Sure, she was sitting several rows in front of me, but every time she's around I get into trouble!! And she blames it on pina colodas!! Heh-heh-heh! And so, I began the tedious work of frogging out every stitch I had made on my sampler!!



Lunch arrived from Mystic Catering and we enjoyed cookies that some of the stitchers brought to share with us. Mmmm. We returned to more freebies and door prizes in class, and a wonderful afternoon of stitching on our beautiful samplers. Midway through the afternoon I informed everyone that I had completed my sampler!! I held up my now completely defrogged linen proudly and Jeannette took a photo of my "finished" work while everyone else had a good laugh. Amazingly enough, I somehow managed to complete the tree at the top of my

sampler that afternoon and was so glad I had something to show for my time in class!!



During our class time Jeannette told us about some of her adventures on the road – some very hilarious stories!! We learned how she began designing and a bit about how she creates her designs and chooses linen and threads. I wish everyone reading this could have seen her trunk show! Jeannette’s color choices and designs are fantastic!

That evening we had a big pizza party. Michael and Dale arrived with 10 large assorted pizzas from the famous Mystic Pizza (of Julia Robert fame), chips and sodas. It was delicious! Then we had extremely yummy assorted cakes. Most of us were unable to choose just one type of cake, so of course we had samples of several! I went for a coconut one and a deadly chocolate delight.

That evening we gathered in the classroom for Show ‘n Tell – and more freebies! Weeks Dye Works provided us with beautiful skeins to complete a design, and I provided linen for it from one of my grandmother’s antique linen tablecloths in just the perfect color.

Show ‘n Tell was wonderful!! There were many different design styles to see, and a variety of stitching and finishing techniques. Some brought in beautiful quilting and knitting to share with us. We had a great time sharing about our masterpieces. We learned that several in our group stitch samplers to go into the new homes built by Habitat for Humanity, and they shared how appreciative the recipients are of their handiwork. What a great thing to do!



This masterpiece was stitched by Grace from NJ

After Show ‘n Tell we stitched and chatted for quite a while, reluctant to say goodbye. So many of the stitchers told me what a great time they had, how it was just what they needed, that it was heaven for stitchers, that they couldn’t get over all the freebies, and they couldn’t wait for the next retreat. I find myself already counting the days until the Minnetonka retreat in April 2005! I wish I didn’t have to wait so long to do it all again!!



The next morning (figures it would happen *after* the retreat), I finally saw “Jeannette” and “Dale” checking out of the hotel!! Ha! Much relieved at their departure, I had breakfast with some of the retreat attendees and we chatted about our plans for the day. Some were leaving early to catch flights home. Dawn (FL) and Diane (MN) and I spent the day shopping and eating in Mystic Village. We ran into some of the other stitchers in the village, too. The *real* Jeannette and Dale went to Downtown Mystic and then we ran into them in Mystic Village. Dawn, Jeannette, and Dale spent a couple days at our home where Chef Michael continued to spoil us with delicious breakfasts before we took off for more sight-seeing fun. It was so sad to see everyone leave on Tuesday morning!!

And now, here’s what some of the stitchers had to say!



“Thanks Sue. I still can’t believe the amount of stuff I came home with. It was insane. Barely got it in my suitcase and carry on. I laid it all out in my living room and just sat in the middle of it and giggled. As soon as I’m done with my sampler, I’m stitching your Whale.” ~ Lisa, CA

“Sue, I just wanted to thank you for such a fantastic time at Mystic. This was my first time at Stitcher’s Hideaway and it was awesome. Jeannette was great and seeing what everyone else had stitched during the year was inspiring. I could go on and on about how impressed I was with the event. Everyone was so friendly. I look forward to attending your other Hideaways. What a great job you have done!!!!” ~ Juana

“Fabulous!!! Sue, thank you for this wonderful idea of yours. The weekends are SO much fun and the women are the best. The door prizes are amazing and all the freebies are so much fun. I have already bought fabric and silk to stitch the Hope tree ornament and the fabric from my Monsterbubbles pillow door prize. I can’t wait till July for Sturbridge and I just want to keep sending you hugs for all you do. I have attended 2 hideaway weekends and I can’t wait for the next one I can attend. The stitching is only part of the fun, it’s the camaraderie of other stitchers, the door prizes and goodie bags, and all the just plain fun (and of course, the food!).” ~ Peggy



"I've been told that if you learn one new bit of information at a retreat, then your time was well spent. If that is true, then what a bargain I got at your 2004 Mystic retreat! Everything was well planned. Jeannette is a fabulous designer and teacher. The host hotel was easy to get to for someone flying in and the staff was friendly. The vendors were excellent and had a great variety of items and nicely presented. I'm so glad I came and will definitely attend future retreats." ~Kathy, Lino Lakes, MN



"Jeannette was wonderful! She has a great attitude and I (the beginner that I am) was able to keep up pretty good. The sampler is beautiful. I was able to get at least a few stitches done for every line we worked on. (It's not perfect, but that's the whole idea -- to learn and practice the stitches, right?) I'm hoping to complete this one and use it as a seasonal autumn piece in my home. I really enjoyed spending time with all the stitchers and seeing the different methods, preferences, and styles used across the country. Of course, I enjoyed shopping for more stitching stuff. And even the food was delicious. Thank you for making it all happen." ~ Marie, Stitchin' Witch

"Well, Good and Plenty, Good and Plenty. Just a few lines to say that I had a great time at Stitcher's Hideaway. I think it's the best since I started going. Maybe because I can really understand the stitches or just being with other stitchers who are as crazy about stitching as I am.

Jeanette is a wonderful teacher and designer. Her designs are wonderful. She was always smiling. I'd definitely take another class with Jeanette. I can't wait to finish this Sampler, hopefully before the next retreat! Thanks Sue, for everything you do. Kuddos to you. Thanks for the great surprise gift. I can't wait to find a pattern to stitch for it. Thank you again. I can't wait until Sturbridge. Happy Stitching."
~ Liz Loper of the Stitchin' Witches.



"Hi Sue! We had a wonderful time at Mystic and can't wait till the next retreat in Sturbridge. It was great seeing some of the same stitchers from previous retreats and we met a lot of new ones and hope to see them at upcoming retreats. The food was great as always. Thank your husband for lunch again! Jeannette was a wonderful teacher and I hope she comes back for another retreat!! Well Happy Holidays!!! I can't wait till January when I have more time to stitch!!!" ~ Donna

"Once again, I had a wonderful time at the Mystic Retreat!!! Jeannette's project was wonderful and her instructions were very clear and easy to follow. She made the class fun with her easy-going manner and wonderful sense of humor.

This is the fourth retreat I've attended with Stitcher's Hideaway and it's still as much fun as the first. It just amazes me what Sue gets for donations for our goodie bags and the door prizes are great! And the food!! What more does one want but a weekend of eating and stitching! And of course, I already signed up for the Sturbridge Retreat in July 2005!

Thanks, Sue, for all of your hard work and time in putting these retreats together! You do an awesome job and we all appreciate it!!" ~ Linda, ME

"I really enjoyed your Stitcher's Hideaway. I normally shy away from such type of get togethers as I usually have nothing in common with the women who attend. This was such a great mix of people from 22-year-old Nicole (my newly adopted daughter) to 70 some year-old Grace - the minister in her new condo. I can't wait for the next one or two next year! Thanks for everything." ~ Joanne



“I really enjoy your updates about Stitcher's Hideaway, and as a first-timer in Mystic, I have to say I'm spoiled for LIFE!! I had the BEST time in Mystic, and I've been telling all my friends how you spoiled us all weekend! Jeannette Douglas was wonderful, and our sampler is so beautiful, isn't it? Stitcher's Hideaway was probably the single best stitching event I've ever been too, and for so many reasons. The projects, the stash enhancement, getting together with and making new friends, the food....WOW. Thanks again for all your hard work and the thoughtfulness you put into our Mystic Retreat; I'm so looking forward to Sturbridge!” ~ Karin

“I had a great time and it was so good to get away from everything. I really relaxed and stitched every night while I was there. Then I came home and back to the madness. I really appreciated you inviting me to tag along on Monday and going to Sudberry. And I went over to Needle Pulling Thread and saw the rest of Jeannette's Trunk Show. They were really neat to see in person. Lisa is very nice and I hope her shop grows. Connecticut is beautiful and I was glad there was still some fall color left. It was nice to be able to drive through some of the towns and also the countryside. I drove up to Sturbridge Village and wish I could come to the Sturbridge retreat and see the historical samplers. Maybe in 2006.

I had a great time at the hideaway and really enjoyed meeting all the stitchers from New England and those of us from the other states. What a surprise that three of us came from Minnesota. And Jeannette was so much fun, as I expected after meeting her in Minnesota. She is such a delight and so nice to have as an instructor. I still have a long way to go on my sampler, but I am making time to work on it so I can have it done by the Minnetonka Hideaway. And maybe for show and tell in Florida.

The food was great and now I have had the famous Mystic Pizza. The hotel was very comfortable and easy to get to and I enjoyed my morning complimentary waffle.”
~ Diane, MN



Dale, Jeannette, Sue & Michael

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