

Stitchers Hideaway!

Sturbridge 2011

Fun Report

Wow!!! What an amazing retreat we had!! Thea Dueck of Victoria Sampler was our wonderful instructor and the project she created for us -- the *Sturbridge Sewing Box* -- was beyond fantastic!!!



We are all in love with this project!! It was even better than we had imagined it from the pictures, and it was so much fun to finally have our much-anticipated kits in hand. Everything was so perfectly color coordinated, and the linen was gorgeous!



Thea's design was inspired by previous trips to Old Sturbridge Village when she taught for Stitcher's Hideaway, and also by some historically-correct [Old Sturbridge Village](#) inspired fabric that she found in Canada of all places!

Old Sturbridge Village depicts a village circa 1790-1840. Women at that time would have used an authentic print like the one above to make dresses or sewing boxes of their own. Sewing and embroidery skills were a sign of an accomplished and educated woman in those days. Alphabets and specialty stitches were proudly used in their samplers and clothing and they would have been thrilled (just like us!) to make a box like this for their special needlework tools! As children they would have learned to stitch alphabets to create samplers on their own handwoven linens, and would have known how to weave, cut and stitch linens and clothing for their family and even for profit. Sewing boxes were treasured during the 18th and 19th centuries, the more personal the better.

The Sturbridge Sewing Box is about 5" high and is held together with a tarnished gold box top, and embroidered with a fanciful historic sampler design. The box top included some stitches common to the 18th century. A scissors case and fob were also included. One long side of the box has a full elasticized pocket, a short side has wool felt for needles, and the other short side has an area for storing tools.



Our project kit included a DVD demonstrating each specialty stitch and the finishing instructions!! That was certainly a wonderful bonus -- but we had Thea with us in person to guide us through our project! Her expertise, sense of humor, delight in fun, patience and kindness were so very much appreciated!



We had a great group of attendees at this retreat from CT, FL, MA, MD, ME, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT and Canada. Sisters Vicki and Joan travelled the farthest and received special gifts. Vicki and Joan are blessed to share the same addiction to needlework, and they enjoy events and retreats related to their addiction!

Upon arrival, each attendee received a Fun Pack with wonderful designs, threads, goodies and fun! Items were donated by Calico Crossroads, Chris's Collection, [Elizabeth's Designs](#), [Giulia Puntì Antichi](#), [JBW Designs](#), [Jeannette Douglas Designs](#), [Kreinek](#), Lavender Wings, [Morning Glory Needleworks](#), [Nordic Needle](#), [Olde Colonial Designs](#), Sew-Inspired Needlework Finishing, [Stitcher's Hideaway](#), [Stitchy Kitty](#), [Tempting Tangles](#), Trail Creek Farm, The Prairie Schooler, [ThreadworX](#), AND one of the attendees, Susan Fizer, made acorn and sheep waxers for each of the attendees! It was a lot of fun to go through all our goodies!



We spent time stash enhancing with Chris's Collection, [Olde Colonial Designs](#), and [Stitcher's Hideaway](#), who set up shop for us right there in our classroom.



Pam ([Olde Colonial Designs](#)) and Chris and Pam (from Chris's Collection)

Throughout the retreat door prizes were given out. Our generous donors were [Blue Ribbon Designs](#), [Brightneedle](#), [Elizabeth's Designs](#), [The Gift of Stitching](#), [Jeannette Douglas Designs](#), [Karen Capello](#) (a friend of [Stitcher's Hideaway](#)), [Morning Glory Needleworks](#), [Nordic Needle](#), [Olde Colonial Designs](#), [Rosewood Manor](#), and [Stitchy Kitty](#).



Brenda with door prize from With My Needle



Sarah with door prize from Rosewood Manor



Marietta with door prize from Rosewood Manor



Regina with door prize from Jeannette Douglas Designs



Lynn with gift from Olde Colonial Designs



Cynthia with door prize from Blue Ribbon Designs



Barbara with door prize from With My Needle



Julie with door prize from Morning Glory Needleworks



Linda with door prize from Rosewood Manor



Sue with gift from With My Needle

I should tell you about Karen Capello! Karen and her mother, Dolores Schissel, did a lot of needlework together and took a lot of the same classes. Unfortunately, her mother did not outlive her stash. As a way to honor her mother and to bless other stitchers, a couple years ago Karen very generously donated her mother's stash to Stitcher's Hideaway to give out as door prizes. Just recently Karen discovered yet more of her mother's stash and sent it on to me. Many of the items came from some of those fantastic classes she took with her Mom, who sometimes only stitched just a bit on some of these projects -- which were complete kits with linen, threads, embellishments and more. So, what I did one night was to display about 14 of these wonderful projects and let the attendees put their names in to be drawn for whichever items they were interested in! Everything went to a very good home. It gives Karen a lot of joy to know that her mother's stash is being enjoyed by stitchers around the country! Here are some of the lucky recipients of the Schissel Stash!



Virginia



Cynthia



Karen



Teddy



Brenda



Maureen

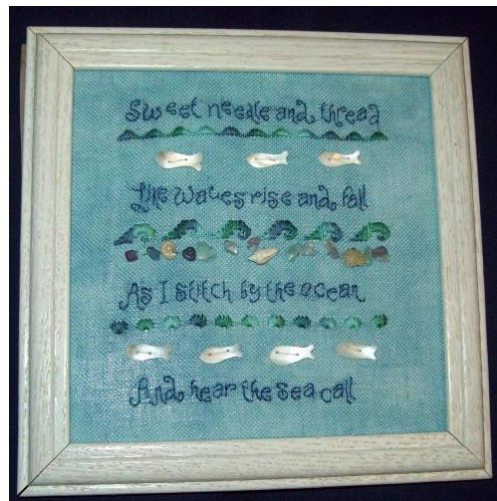


But was all this enough stash?!? NO!! LOL! On our first night together, we had a **NORDIC NEEDLE NIGHT!** Roz from Nordic Needle had shipped us fun needlework tools, and toys -- enough for all, and each beautifully gift wrapped. What fun! There were beautiful scissors, Uptown Girl items, storage cases, laying tools, and so much more. If you haven't gone to the Nordic Needle website, you really must! In addition to fantastic charts, books, linens and threads, they have a wonderful collection of fun accessories. We enjoyed seeing many of these items during our Nordic Needle Night!



Sue & Loretta with Nordic Needle treasures

Just in case we needed MORE stash....hehehehe...I made a design for everyone I titled "Hear the Sea Call." They each received a kit with all the little shells, fish carved from shells, and sea glass embellishments.



Oh, yes! There was lots of stash enhancement fun! And did I mention that during our two days together we were working away on our Sturbridge Sewing Boxes? LOL!



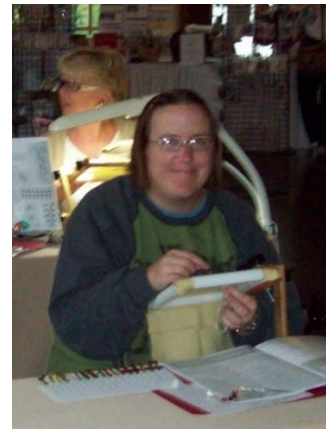
Loretta and Thea



Judy the Turbo Stitcher!



Lynn working away...



Julie -- Stitching and a Grinnin'



Liz - learned SO much!



Edie



Sisters Vicki and Joan

We had great meals at the Publick House in a room connected to our classroom -- how perfect is that? We just walked through a doorway and our meals were magically spread before us! Some of our meals were buffet style, and some were individually ordered entrees with many courses! So, we shopped, stitched, and ate...and talked and talked and talked!





Deb and Jen



Edie, Linda and Teddy



Doris



Maureen and Sue



Cynthia and Julie



On the afternoon of our second day we had an entertaining and fascinating lecture by Robert W. Haven, Associate Professor of Costume Technology at the University of Kentucky. Bob presented his lighthearted exploration of what it is we embroiderers do, “**From Curiosity to Addiction, a Journey through Needlework with no Road Map.**” He certainly had a captive audience! What an interesting man!

Bob started out as a junior high teacher who helped with their dramatic productions. His involvement with creating costumes led from one thing to the other until he became a complete needlework addict, delving into all sorts of needlework and adventures!

As a Costume Technologist he has extensively researched the construction techniques of Kabuki costumes and is a student of Japanese Embroidery and Katazome, rice paste resist dyeing. He also holds a certificate in hand embroidery from the Royal School of Needlework in London. He recently completed the Professional Course in Haute Couture Embroidery at the prestigious Lesage and Co in Paris!

Bob brought with him a sampling of the amazing embroidery he has done and he told us about the various techniques and how he learned them.





Thea models a cape



Sue models a jacket







Me working the “runway” in the embroidered jacket!

Bob is one of the very few people in the US to actively teach the art of tambour beading. To that end he has spent two summers teaching the art at the San Francisco Academy of Art University fashion program. Here he has worked with young fashion designers in training. Exposing them to the art of tambour beading has opened new avenues of creativity for the ensuing generation of fashion designers. This became evident during the Fall 2010 Mercedes Benz Fashion week where an entire collection of couture designs was shown by an AAU graduate Student with each piece being encrusted with imaginative and non- traditional beading.

You can read some fascinating information about Bob and see some great pictures of his adventures in stitching and unique needlework photos here: http://web.me.com/rwhaven/Professional_/Welcome.html





You might be wondering how I happened to meet Bob! It started with a small piece of needlework I found in an antique store. I was puzzled about it because it looked like it was entirely done in chain stitch, but too perfect and small for any mere human to accomplish. After some research online, I suspected that it was tambour work accomplished with a tambour hook. I searched online again for someone who might be able to tell me, and discovered Bob, wrote to him sending a picture of my needlework find, and he was able to confirm it was worked with a tambour hook, and also gave me some leads to research the origins of the design. One thing led to another until the next thing you know...he was flying all the way from California to present his wonderful lecture to us!

Here I told the class about my little antique find and how I met Bob online, and here is a picture of the little tambour piece.



Wow, wow, wow!!! What an awesome lecture and presentation!! Thank you, BOB!

During our last night together, we had Show 'n Tell! That is something that is always interesting. Many of us brought in some of our needlework projects to show each other, and then we put everything out on a table so we could admire each piece close up. This is just a sampling of the wonderful work we saw.



Linda



Barbara



Brenda



Doris



Wanda



Karen



Sue



Wanda







In just two days I think we crammed in a months' worth of fantastic memories during our time together! What a rich experience!

Thea did a truly outstanding job teaching and entertaining us. I had a special frog gift for my meditating friend. I think only Thea could appreciate a frog in a lotus position! Ha!



Thank you so much for everything, Thea! Well done!! We love you!!

And now...here's some more pictures and some words from some of the attendees. Enjoy!

See you at a retreat soon!

Sue



What can I say! For a "newbie", I had a wonderful time! It was so much more than I expected!!! Thank you, thank you, for a wonderful retreat!!! I had the best time, and met some wonderful ladies!" ~ Loretta

Loretta with a door prize from Brightneedle

"Sue -Thank you for a wonderful time at Sturbridge. Everything (as usual) was top-notch. Thursday night's dessert was absolutely yummy! Thea's project is beautiful and hopefully I'll get to work on it soon. It was nice catching up with old friends and making new friends. Thanks again for everything." ~ Cynthia

Cynthia (right) with Julie





Marietta, Thea, Sue and Bob



"A FINE TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!" ~ Marjorie



Maureen & Marjorie

"I had so much fun at the hideaway. Everything was so wonderful. Our guest speaker was fantastic, the costumes out of this world. The time spent with Thea was perfect -- it is something I will always remember. I would also like to thank you for all the great gifts! It was like Christmas opening all the gift bags. See you next year." ~ Karen

Karen with doorprize from Karen Capello



Wanda & Doris

"As usual, the retreat was fantastic! It was great to meet up with familiar faces and to meet new stitchers. Thea's projects are always great and this one was awesome. She is so patient and always there to offer suggestions and to encourage everyone. Instructions for her projects are always so good that there is never a problem working on the project once you get home. Lisa's finishing techniques are the best and the step-by-step details along with the pictures are so easy to follow. Also, what a bonus to get a CD showing steps in making the stitches and finishing to box! Robert Haven's presentation was so interesting and fun. His work is so incredible and awe inspiring. Makes me want to take a class from him on tambour beading in the future! Can't forget the food of course....yummy! Sue, once again, thanks so much for all the work you do to make your retreats so much fun!" ~ Linda M.

Linda with door prize from [Rosewood Manor](#)



"I just wanted to let you know I had a great time at the July Stitcher's Hideaway. I hope I will be able to go again! I thought everything was really well planned. Thanks again for a great time!"~ Judy

"The retreat was fantastic and the work Robert does has to be seen - it was gorgeous." ~ Virginia



Sue



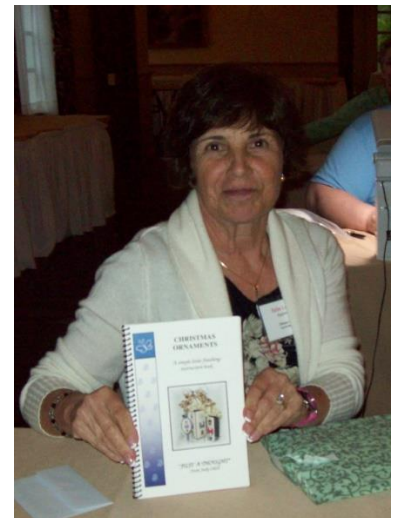
Thea



Jen with door prize from [Elizabeth's Designs](#)



Doris with door prize from [Rosewood Manor](#)



Lynn and Edie with gifts from Karen Capello

“I have to say that this class project has captured my imagination like no other project from any of the very many classes I have taken over the years. I can't seem to put it down. I have finished stitching the lid and the first side completely and have completed the perle cotton stitching on two more of the sides. Okay, I do have to go back and frog out a small error on the lid ... one of my queen stitch hearts is oriented in the wrong direction ... but other than that I seem to be flying along.

I thought Thea's presentation was spectacular; I enjoyed the guest speaker [and wouldn't mind taking a class with him at some future hideaway, if that's feasible; I thought the room we used for stitching was comfortable and roomy; Chris' Collection was, as always, a joy to shop; the pieces displayed by other stitchers at Show and Tell were inspiring and enabling; the swag bags and door prizes were generous in the extreme. I don't know how you manage to do it, but each year you top your previous efforts.

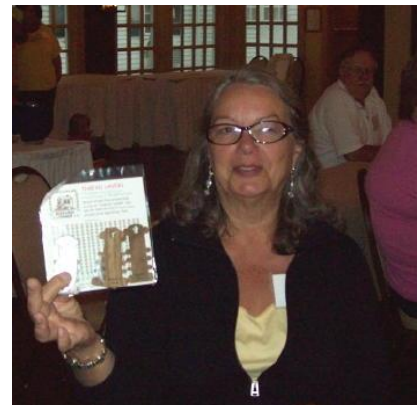
I want to thank you for a great experience and I want you to know I found your summer beach sampler one of the best things in the swag bag, especially once I really had the time to examine it: all those lovely embellishments AND the gorgeous floss ring ... you really outdid yourself.” ~ Regina



“As usual, I had such a good time at Sturbridge. Thank you for bringing Thea to stitch with us and inspire us. The Sturbridge Box is wonderful. I almost have the top stitched. I actually can't wait to put the box together— Lisa's directions and the DVD make it almost as good as having her sit next to me! Thank you for all the work and organizing you do to make each Stitcher's Hideaway so much fun. I look forward to coming each time. See you in Mystic.” ~ Linda E.

“I enjoyed the retreat immensely and cannot wait to start the project. it is so beautiful. I look forward to attending more hideaways. Thanks for a wonderful retreat.” ~ Liz

Liz with door prize from Rosewood Manor



But wait! There's more!

After the retreat Thea and Bob joined me for a day at Old Sturbridge Village!



I love this picture of them studying some clothing from long ago.



I was so pleased that "The Labour of My Youthful Hands" was still on display!!
How perfect that Thea and Bob were able to enjoy it!



Little Bobby and Little Thea



Little Sue and Little Bobby

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