

Stitchers Hideaway!

Sturbridge 2010

Fun Report



The lucky folks who attended this retreat will long remember it not only for the fantastic project and instructor, but for our personal inside tour of the archives at [Old Sturbridge Village!](#) Amazing! Dawn Fisher of [Morning Glory Needleworks](#) was our instructor. Dawn designed her “Lady

Washington” sampler around the life of Martha Washington or, as Martha was known to those who loved and respected her, Lady Washington. As Dawn taught us the various stitches used in the sampler, she provided interesting facts about Martha’s life and made her come “alive” for us. We learned that Martha was a fascinating person and an avid stitcher! We heard about her upbringing, first marriage, the births and deaths of her children, life with George especially during the Revolutionary War, her life as the original “First Lady”, and after the death of her beloved husband, George.

Each band on the sampler represents a highlight from the life of Martha Dandridge Custis Washington. The sampler begins with the Martha Washington Geranium and concludes with Martha and George in their wedding finery. You can see a band with the colors taken from Martha’s wedding dress, the shell stitch band taken from the chair seat she stitched (which is at Mt. Vernon), her “blew” china pattern, even the black canvas lace representing the death of George. Speaking of her china pattern, there was a piece of it on display in the historic Publick House where our classes were held!



Dawn's written and oral instructions were absolutely outstanding. She covered two versions of Foliage Stitch, Cross with Bar, Diagonal Cross, Half Rhodes with Cross, Modified Tudor Rose, Rapid Stitch, Florentine, Captive Rice, Trellis Cross, Continental, Triple Cross, Blackwork, Queen, Double Star, Smyrna over 2, Rice over 2, Canvas Lace and a new stitch Dawn calls Martha's Dance Fan. There were new stitches even for those of us who were more seasoned.

The sampler was worked on 30 count Angel Hair over-dyed linen using over-dyed threads, both from Weeks Dye Works.



Dawn's teaching experience includes EGA, needlework shops, and sampler guilds. She also has attended many seminars on samplers and their history, plus classes in textile conservation. We learned a lot from her!

This group of stitchers were from NY, NJ, ME, CT and OR. Anne from Oregon was the stitcher who traveled the farthest and she was spoiled with some extra goodies!

Chris's Collection set up shop for us -- and boy, did we ever shop!

We had wonderful goodies in our Fun Packs! They were donated by Brightneedle, Calico Crossroads, Cherished Stitches, Chris's Collection, Elizabeth's Designs, Glory Bee, The Gift of Stitching, Jeannette Douglas Designs, Kreinik, Finishing by Dawn Boisvert, Nordic Needle, Trail Creek Farm, The Prairie Schooler, Victoria Sampler, and Weeks Dye Works. And we had loads of doorprizes from Brightneedle, Elizabeth's Designs, Karen Capello (a friend of Stitcher's Hideaway), The Gift of Stitching, Jeannette Douglas Designs, Kreinik, Finishing by Dawn Boisvert and With My Needle.



We had a great time going through our Fun Packs!

Our first day whizzed by with shopping, class time, and yummy meals from the Publick House.



Gail and Linda



Marianne with a door prize from Karen Capello, a friend and alum of Stitcher's Hideaway



Deb with a doorprize from Kreynik



Donna with a Jeannette Douglas Designs Door Prize



Cynthia received a kit from The Gift of Stitching



Linda received a doorprize from Needlework Finishing by Dawn Boisvert for a free ornament finish!



We had just finished savoring our dinner and were relaxing over coffee when we had a surprise visit from

Grandma!! Grandma stopped by to share her remembrances of the Revolution! Grandma (Lois Kelley) is one of the characters at Old Sturbridge Village. She captivated us with tales of her family's adventures during the Revolution. She was adorable!!

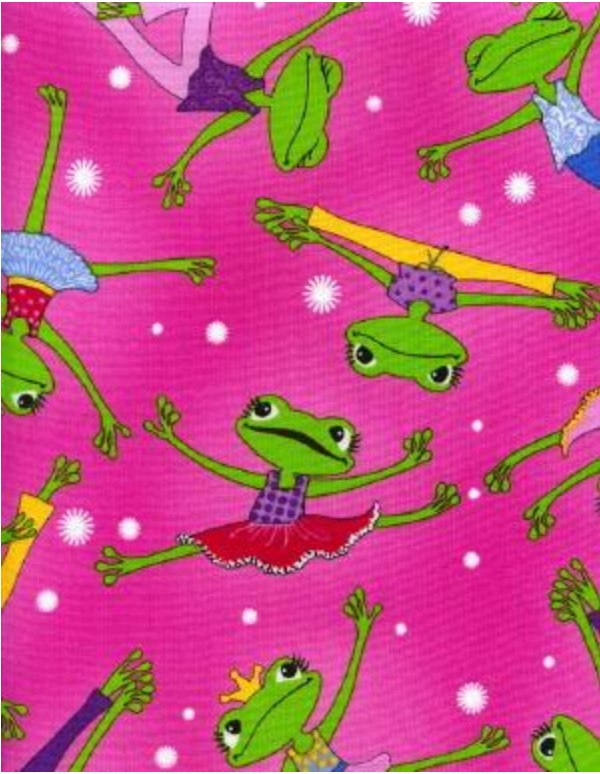




Granny and Sue

After our visit with Grandma, we went back to our stitching area for a surprise from me! I created this little design for everyone.





Sometimes I spot something that looks interesting and buy it thinking maybe someday I'll use it in a design. Sometimes whatever I've spotted inspires a whole design!

About 3 years ago I purchased a whole mess of children's bracelets and necklaces because of these cool flower beads that were on them, and probably 5 years ago I picked up a big yellow linen tablecloth at an antique shop -- and used them both for this design all these years later!

Then I found some fun fabric on-line to use for the pillow backing, shown left. I have drawers of cool stuff I've found over the years -- just waiting for the right design to hatch!

The next morning we returned to class, quite eager to get going on our project. We still had a lot of ground to cover -- and Dawn was a slave driver! LOL!! Somehow she managed to get us all through it! Some of us stitched right on our sampler fabric, and others brought along some scrap linen to learn the stitches before actually working on the samplers. It was all good -- and we learned a lot.



Anne learning a specialty stitch



Dawn in patriotic instructor mode

That afternoon we excitedly left for our trip to Old Sturbridge Village where we met with Jean Contino, Coordinator of Households, and Rebecca Beall, Collections Manager, for an amazing guided tour! Our first

stop was an exhibit open to the public entitled “The Labour of My Youthful Hands: Young Ladies’ Needlework and Ornamental Arts.”





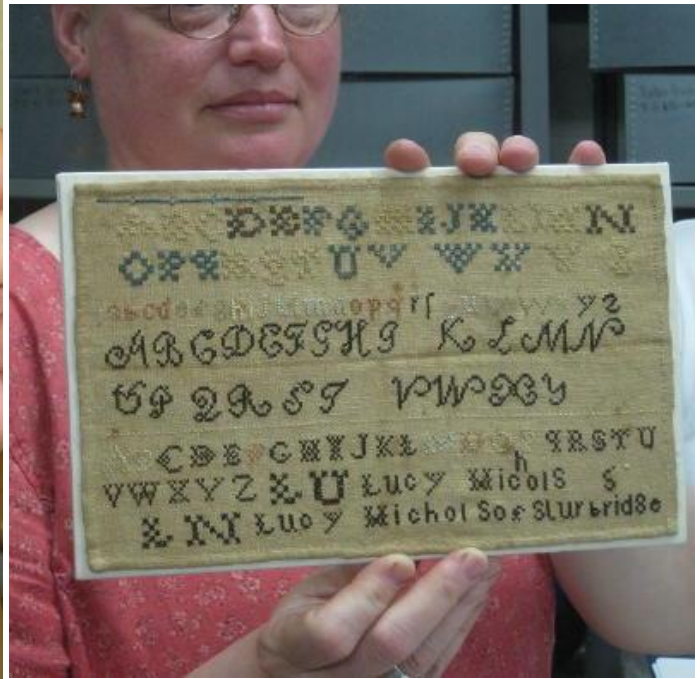


We were in absolute awe!



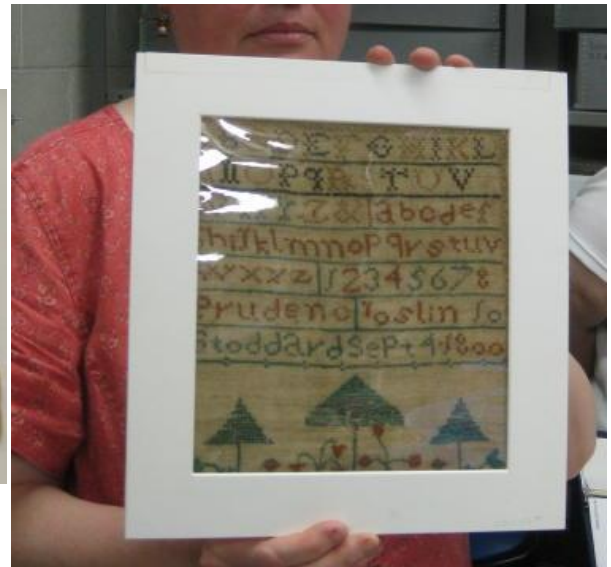


OSV has some 60,000 antiques in their storeroom -- many items that the public has never seen. We entered a secure area where we left our purses and they took our fingerprints and photos (okay, I'm only joking about the fingerprints and photos). And then we entered the Inner Sanctum!! Oh, my! In the first room was a display of pieces created by young ladies in the late 1700s and early 1800s in New England, both at home and with instruction at academies. So much to see!!



Made with a bazillion Queen Stitches, this piece made Anne, who had just learned to do them in class, gasp in horror! LOL!

Jean Cantino from OSV showing us an early sampler



Note the dates!!





AND THEN...WE WERE TAKEN INTO THE INNER SANCTUM!!!!!!



AND OH, MY!!! THE NEEDLEWORK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



We were allowed to take photos, too!

Inside the Old Sturbridge Village Store Room!







In Memory of
M^r Thomas Hill
died August 25th 1840



Yes -- that map is STITCHED!









There were many items besides needlework in this store room -- too many to even convey. Here are just a few pictures...







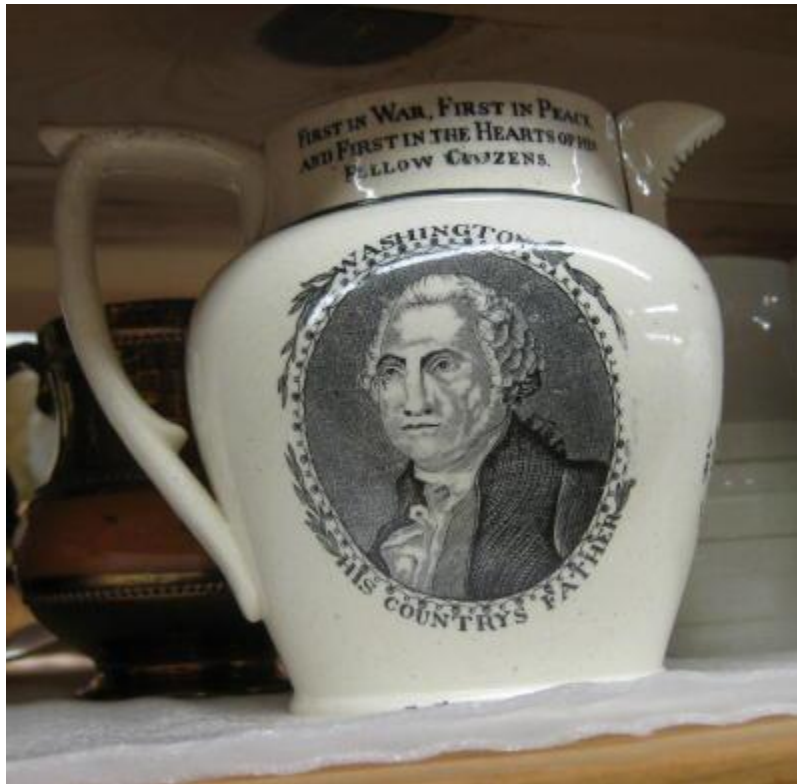
These were children's toys!







Look! Portraits of George & Martha!



What an amazing time we had!! WOW, WOW, WOW!!! We felt so incredibly blessed to be able to see these treasures!!

After our incredible insiders tour of the Old Sturbridge Village Store Room, we headed back to the Publick House for yet another delicious meal, followed by Show 'n Tell!



**Cynthia showed us these two beauties.
She entered both in the Bridgewater Fair and won first place ribbons for each!**



Among other crafts, Marianne also makes beautiful quilts!



Marianne made me a frog pocket book! LOL!



And she knits, too!



Donna and Terre showed us their Victoria Sampler finishes.

It was a lot of fun to see what everyone has been working on. Of course, some of our Show 'n Tell just naturally happened throughout the retreat! And if I hadn't been so caught up in admiring everything, I might have thought to take more pictures! LOL!! Happens to me all the time!

This was really quite a unique retreat with our fabulous insiders tour at Old Sturbridge Village! If you could have seen our faces when we entered that store room! Dawn did such a great job of teaching us all the stitches

used in the Lady Washington Sampler and providing us with such interesting history as we worked on our project. It was a very pleasant Stitcher's Hideaway indeed!

See you at retreat soon!
Sue



Jen and Cynthia with doorprizes from Karen Capello, a friend of Stitcher's Hideaway.



The Sturbridge retreat was so much fun! Dawn's design was awesome and so much fun to stitch using all of the special stitches! Her instructions and diagrams are very clear and easy to follow. She takes a lot of care in preparing her kits and I really liked the fact that she packaged the thread in little plastic bags! That's a small thing but it makes it so much easier to store that lone lose thread. I also liked that she included both a black and white chart and a color chart in her instructions.

Food was wonderful as usual and we all ate way too much. It was fun to see familiar faces as well as meeting new stitchers. Chris and Pam did a great job in enticing us with all of the newest stitching items. They always do such a great job in knowing exactly what we can't live without. Our trip to Sturbridge

Village to view their new needlework exhibit as well as seeing their Collections Storage building was absolutely awesome! We all drooled at all of the lovely needlework pieces done mostly by young girls as well as tons

of old items they have in storage. The experience was over way too soon and we could have spent days in the building and still not have been able to see everything.

Thanks Sue for all of the special touches you do to make your retreats so special. I'm always amazed at all of the fun stash and snacks you give us and for your cute designs you make to remember our time together.

~ Linda M. (shown with doorprize from With My Needle)



Dawn LOVES Weeks Dye Works!



Terre with a door prize from Stitcher's Hideaway
-- a Sudberry House box



Sue, you outdid yourself again! we had a wonderful time!! Going to Old Sturbridge Village was awesome, I hope we can do that again!!! See you at Mystic!!

~ Donna S.

Wonderful instructor, patient, very knowledgeable -- her teaching us about Martha Washington while we worked on our sampler was just grand! I enjoyed learning more about Martha Washington. She really does an exceptional job of research to tie into the different stitches. I wish I could have taped her commentaries.

As I was rather a novice linen stitcher (due to an absence of several years), Dawn took extra time to make sure I knew how to do the stitches. She was always helpful, never rushed me, a natural teacher.

The trip to Sturbridge Village was OVER THE TOP. What an experience to see all that needlework from so long ago--it was so thoughtful of you to arrange it, the guides were very informative and knowledgeable about the subject. It was so beneficial for me to see those pieces that young girls had done. I figured if they could do that, I could too--except maybe for the Queen Stitch - lolol

Also, coming from an area that has a dearth of cross-stitchers and shops, it was fantastic to meet other stitchers and visit with them.

The retreat was great--I enjoyed myself immensely, learned a lot (Dawn is a phenomenal instructor, isn't she?) --you were so well organized, so calm, so caring.

Thanks for organizing these types of retreats--what a getaway!

~ Anne from OR (with doorprize from Jeannette Douglas Designs)



Gail and Jen stitching away



What a wonderful retreat. Nice and cozy. As always, I thoroughly enjoyed myself and was so happy to see familiar faces and a few new ones too. Food-- yummy, yummy! I can't believe I actually passed up dessert at one meal, but I was too stuffed to fit it in. Dawn is an awesome teacher and I absolutely loved hearing all the history on Martha. She was an amazing woman. The tour at Sturbridge Village was to die for. I can't believe we actually got to see the beautiful pieces in their vault. Looking forward to next time. Thanks again.
~ Cynthia

Sue-

I want to congratulate you on another fine retreat. Dawn did an awesome job of combining the right amount of lecture about Martha with an excellent job of instructions. It's amazing that after all of these years, I can still learn many new stitches. Thanks.

Your friend in stitching, Deb



But wait!!! There's more!!!!

The next day Dawn and I went to [Old Sturbridge Village](#) and we have a few photos to share!



Dying the yarn with variety of plants.





Inside the Old Sturbridge Village General Store.





A lovely, peaceful walk.



And this just might be my favorite shot -- Stitching by sunlight.