

Cherry Parker's March 2020 Newsletter

My mantra is stitch what you want to – otherwise you will never enjoy it. It is a subject I harp on about quite a bit!

The next doodle didn't go well. Of course it is no use thinking that every new pattern will be great, because it just isn't. Much changing and fussing went on. I began to stitch it, but it didn't feel or look right. And it got put down. Reluctance to stitch hovered, whenever I thought I *should* do a few more stitches.



Once the word *should* comes into the sentence there is an immediate negativeness to whatever activity follows the word.

Eventually I realised I was doing what I am always telling others not to do. So for a while the doodling has been moved to the 'do later' pile. It will get done, but later.



The doodling was not sitting right after I had that big tidy up I talked about last month. Lovely colours came to the fore. Lots of colour in the beads, sequins, ribbon roses, velvet pieces, lace, trinkets, crochet, trims, fabric etc. You know what I mean. And some partly completed cross stitch that didn't make it to the discard pile. Fancy that!

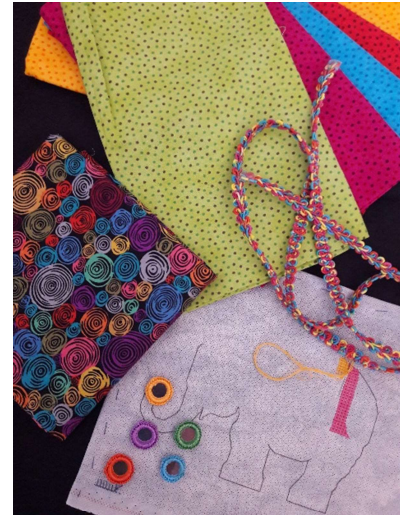
It is a great day when you begin to look for a certain piece of fabric, that you know is somewhere, and you find all sorts of other treasures that you had momentarily forgotten about. Just waiting in the wings for a new project.

Time to put on the thinking cap and use these things. No use keeping them for another 10 years. This is how things begin.

The drawing board now has 5 rough designs for *Using Up the Stash*.

Of course not being able to leave cross stitch out of it, these designs all have *cross stitch* somewhere in them. Many people think my house has framed stitching everywhere, or cushions etc displaying the stitching over the years. This is far from the truth. All my cross stitch is either in shops for display or in boxes at home.

There are also pieces that are partly stitched and didn't make the grade. Small stitching and partly completed items are all heading towards these new projects. Such as the items below. Let's see what we can do with all these items in the stash.



The designs will be easy to do. Decorated with bits of the stash that have been waiting in the wings for years, rather than decorative stitches. Some over the top. Some quiet and peaceful. Nothing bigger than 12" x 18". Each very different.

I will put together a pattern of each design, although these designs are mainly ideas, options and choices as everyone's stash will be different. They will give you a starting point from which to grow your own ideas.

Nothing is right or wrong. If it looks right to you it *is* right. Purple can go with brown and pink beside yellow.

It will be a matter of Reinvent/ Reprocess/ Recreate/ Rethink/ Reuse and Recycle.

The biggest challenge of this adventure into *Using Up the Stash* is actually doing that, and not going out to buy just one little thing! How often we need a slightly different shade of green fabric or half a metre of black braid. Using up what we have is the key.

Hopefully..... Well it is the idea anyway!

The first design is an over-the-top Little Elephant. He has a story.....

The elephant design was a submission to a magazine that didn't make the cut. Another elephant had got there first and they didn't want two.

I have found over the years that when a design is rejected it will be a great hit. There is nothing like someone saying “ No”. That is how my whole designing career started. Some one told me it would never work. No one would buy the designs.

Always get excited when someone says ‘No’ to a design. It means there is another exciting path waiting around the corner for it.

Little Elephant looked a tad forlorn standing by himself even though he was all dressed up. And he had a three-dimensional ear and tail!

Out came the stash and a piece of black felt to put him on. I cut the elephant out and the black felt got decorated with bright over-the-top elephant-type bits and pieces. Way over the top. He is making a statement.

This new pattern is free to all subscribers of this newsletter.

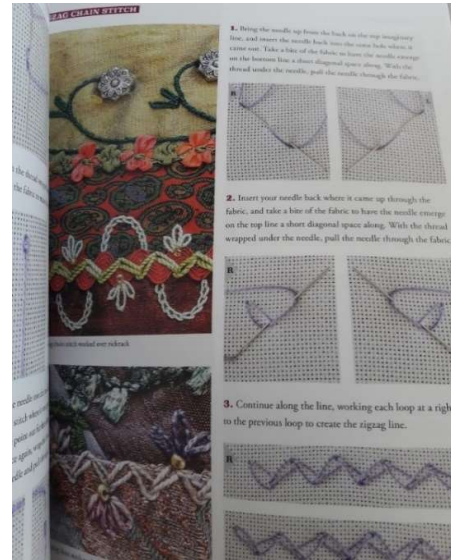
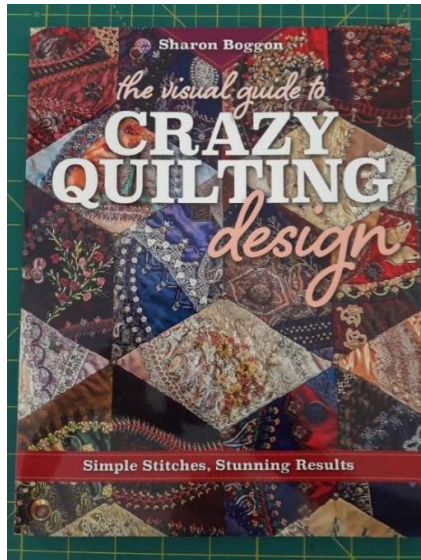
Just email me at cherry.parker@xtra.co.nz and I will email a digital pattern to you, that you can print out immediately and start playing.

Everyone’s Little Elephant design will look different because everyone’s stash is different.



Those who know me, will know that sewing machines and me, do not go together. I think I have an allergy to them. I love to stitch by hand - easily. No fancy stitches. Lots of straight stitches and an occasional French Knot are my limit. If it is difficult I don't do it.

I recently bought Sharon Boggon's book - '*the visual guide to CRAZY QUILTING design*' as I have always loved crazy quilting. To look at. So many fancy stitches and complicated stitchy, beaded projects, but beautiful to pour over the pages of exquisite photography to admire from afar. But with my stash of stitching and inherited crocheted pieces who knows what may happen in the future?

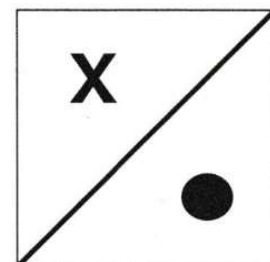
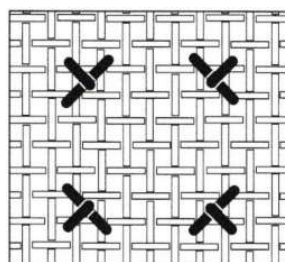
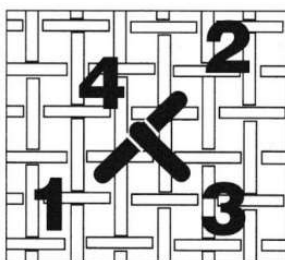


It is a lovely book with excellent photography as well as each stitch described and photographed for **left and right** handed people. Clever!

Sharon says she has been 'fabric-ating' since she was a little girl. She trained in fine arts in Perth, Western Australia and developed great skill in contemporary embroidery and crazy quilting. She has taught crazy quilting internationally and online and was a lecturer in the Textiles Dept at the Canberra School of Art. She now lives in Canberra with her woodworking husband. They have one daughter who is a circus performer and costume designer.

The Seemingly Dreaded $\frac{3}{4}$ Stitch

As I have had a couple of emails lately asking about how I do the $\frac{3}{4}$ stitch. Here is the answer. In fact, I do two $\frac{3}{4}$ stitches in the square. Sounds a bit odd but the pictures will explain.



Always work the longer diagonal stitch of the three-quarter stitch first and then the shorter, top part of the stitch. The three-quarter stitch can be worked on four different angles – see diagrams. The great advantage of the three-quarter stitch is that it gives your work a more natural line.

If the square on the graph is divided in half as in the diagram below, work two three-quarter stitches in the same square, each with the corresponding color. This will not be too bulky, and the stitches will sit neatly when completed. The diagonal line between the two three-quarter stitches may need to be backstitched.

Next month I will show you how I make the outer line curve even more – with a bit of cunning backstitch as well as the $\frac{3}{4}$ stitch.



It is always exciting to receive unexpected emails. So often we try to push an idea in one direction, when suddenly an opportunity pops up from a completely different area.

The first email came from Sally Wilson of Caterpillar Cross Stitch who is getting together a collection of small stitchings from all over the world and sewing them together. Would I like to add a cross stitched piece to the project?

Why not? A few days later a 30sts x 30sts piece was on its way to Warwickshire in the UK. It will be fun to see how Sally puts it all together. Watch this space.

The second email came from Lakeside Needlecraft who have won the British Craft Awards Stitch Retailer of the Year for the last two years.

A request for a design to possibly be added to their Summer Cross Stitch Book. A particular size is given along with a palette of colours to be used and a theme.

It is always good to have an outline like this, rather than being too vague. An idea/sketch has first to be submitted or otherwise they have no clue what might be coming.

Luckily I keep sketches that may come in handy for something one day. Going to this department, the perfect little design was waiting.

It has been accepted, so stitching begins immediately as it needs to be in the UK in time for their summer.



I wonder how far cloning is away?? I will apply as soon as it happens.

In keeping with the idea of lessening the stash, a lucky dip will be available when you see this sign. It doesn't matter whether you are in Nicaragua, Oklahoma, Paris or Wellington. **So long as you are a subscriber to this newsletter and supply your physical address.**

First in, first served each month and only one dip per person, in each calendar year please.

Email me at cherry.parker@xtra.co.nz



A new pattern in my Etsy shop this week is yet another pincushion. I love stitching these Biscornu pincushions. They look so complicated but are very simple.

This pattern is very easy with the only cross stitch being the eyes. Otherwise the remainder of the design is backstitched.

<https://www.etsy.com/nz/shop/CherryParkerDesigns>



I was asked by a group of ladies last week what I found to put in my newsletter month after month? The answer – 'A bit about stitching and a few ramblings.' It is probably a good description.

Well that is all the ramblings for this month. I hope you have enjoyed them.

Cherry

As always request a pattern, ask a question or unsubscribe at cherry.parker@xtra.co.nz
www.cherryparker.co.nz