

“Bear in Mind” March 2010

From the Editor:

Welcome to the March issue of ‘*Bear In Mind*’. Hopefully those in the path of the southern blizzards and snowfalls have thawed and are beginning to see crocuses and daffodils peaking up from the melting snow.

I hope you are enjoying the electronic publication. We would love to hear your ideas and suggestions. If you have an idea or project you would like to share please send it to us attention: Tami Litton. We welcome guest’s contributors and ideas to make the newsletter the best it can be for YOU and your customers.

Remember, we do remove any promotional sales material from the newsletter and post the articles on our website: www.bearthreadsltd.com so encourage your customers to take a look.

Our thought for the month: “It destroys the craft not to learn it” -Irish Saying

Having said that, consider having a class promotion month, to encourage those customers who have never taken a class to try learning a new technique. Perhaps adding evening or Saturday classes might find a broader base for attendees.

This month I am starting a series of articles on St. Gallen, Switzerland – the embroidery capital of the world. I hope you enjoy them.

Sheila Nicol Bear Threads, Ltd.

ST. GALLEN

A Swiss Town with Roots in Ireland

St. Gallen is the embroidery capital of Europe. To those of us who create delicate treasures by smocking and French sewing techniques, it is indeed, the embroidery capital of the *world*. Nowhere else can these lovely embroidered insertions, edgings, and fine batistes be produced.



Switzerland's embroidery center has 75,000 inhabitants living at 2200 ft. elevation in the foothills just north of the Alps. St. Gallen is proud of its' Irish roots. The city's recorded history dates from AD 612, when the Irish missionary Gallus established his hermitage 'in the green wilderness between Lake Constance and Santis'. St. Gallus, who was a disciple of the sixth-century Irish missionary to the European continent, St. Columban, lived in his cell until his death in 646. By the 8th century his cell had become a Benedictine monastery, and the nucleus of an abbey which was soon to exercise a profound cultural influence in the western world. The monastery flourished, acquired land far and wide through donations and developed into one of the few centers of scholarship during Europe's Dark Ages. The monks of St. Gall studied and taught Latin, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, music, medicine and astronomy. They also copied ancient texts that otherwise might have vanished. Much of the scribes' work can still be seen in the monastery's library, one of the world's great collections of rare manuscripts. Its oldest extant catalogue, from the 9th century, lists 430 works according to the subject. Today the library at the Abbey is one of the richest medieval libraries in the world. Since 1983, it has been an UNESCO World Heritage Site. Around the abbey grew the 'Villa Sancti Galli', a settlement of craftsmen and peasants which eventually expanded into St. Gallen as we know it.

One of the legends about St. Gallus has him taming a bear that trotted down from the mountains, and teaching it how to kindle a fire. The saint is said to have fed the beast, blessed it and sent it back into the wilderness, perhaps to teach other animals. To this day the coat of arms of St. Gall pictures the docile bear walking upright and wearing a collar that the saint was said to have given it.

By the 13th century needlework, a skill that had for centuries been practiced in convents, became St. Gall's commercial specialty.

When Empress Egenie, the beautiful consort of Napoleon III, wanted a new lace gown some 130 years ago, 36 seamstresses stitched for 18 months. The low-cut dress can be admired today in a glass case in the Museum of Arts and Trades of St. Gall (in German and English, St. Gallen). Today computers govern the machine needlework in large factories, though some 2000 women are employed in their homes for hand cutting and appliqué work.

Sheila T. Nicol Copyright Sheila T. Nicol Designs

In the April Issue

St. Gallen – Embroidery Development

From Play Time to Tea Time

A Variation of Children's Corner *Carol*

The Children's Corner 15
Size 2-3-4 Carol



View C View A View B

With a few changes this wonderfully simple play dress can be transformed into a lovely heirloom style ready to attend a Tea Party. The classic apron, View C, is made of pink Bearlin and has been gathered instead of smocked at the neck. The pattern has been raised slightly at the armhole to make it sleeveless with entredeux (E-10) and lace (L-138) added. Instead of a hem, the addition of entredeux, insertion (L-136) and edging (L-138) changes the tailored style to an heirloom look. Entredeux and edging (L-138) adorn the collar.



Children's Corner has pattern sizes Infant through 14 in a variety of styles from casual to elegant. Satisfy all of your sewing needs with easy instructions and a pattern piece for each size-no stacking. Children's Corner has been in business for 33 years with children's timeless styles - "the patterns that fit".

Ginger Caldwell

www.childrencornerinc.com

Simply Elegant Baby Blanket



1 yard Satin Stripe Dimity in Ivory

2 yards Swiss Cotton Flannel in Wintergreen

4-3/4 yards each of E-13 in Ivory and E-88 in Ivory

Cut Dimity (face fabric) 31" x 31"

Cut 2 Flannel (backing fabric) 31" x 31"
warmth and weight. For a lighter blanket use one layer)

(I used two layers of flannel for

Using standard heirloom techniques, attach edging (E-88) flat to entredeux beading (E-13) down the full length of the trims to make the blanket edging unit.

Cut a 10" square of Cotton Flannel and fold on the diagonal. Cut along the diagonal fold to form a triangle. Cut a length of the trim unit 18 inches. (This measurement is the length of the diagonal plus 2in. on each end for finishing.) Attach blanket edging unit to the long side of triangle using standard heirloom techniques and remembering to extend the ends of the edging about 2" past both ends of the triangle. Baste triangle to blanket face in one corner.

In each corner of blanket face, measure 1/2" in from the corner and mark with a water-soluble marker. With the right side of trim unit to the right side of the face fabric, attach the edging unit to the dimity face fabric by stitching in the 'ditch' of the entredeux. At EACH corner extend blanket edging the width of the blanket edge plus 1". For example, if your blanket edging is 1-1/4" wide then you should extend the blanket edging $1-1/4" + 1" = 2 1/4"$ past each side. You may cut your blanket edging into 4 pieces or cut as you go, remembering to leave the extension on each end. Do not finish the seam formed from the face fabric and the blanket edging.

Begin and end stitching at the ½” mark on each side so that the ends of the blanket edging overlap at each corner.

To miter the corners of the blanket edging, lay blanket face up with blanket edgings overlapping on ironing surface. Fold under one end of blanket edging to form a 90 degree angle. Press folded blanket edging. Using the pressed fold line as a stitching line, sew corner, trim and finish seam. Repeat for each corner.

To attach backing fabric to face fabric, place right sides together remembering to fold in blanket edging. If using 2 layers of backing fabric, treat the 2 layers as one. Sew around blanket following edging stitch line. Leave a 10” – 12” opening for turning. Turn blanket and press. Slip stitch opening to finish blanket.

Add an embroidered motif or hand embroidery to blanket face triangle. Wrap baby and enjoy!

Tami Litton Copyright Tami Litton - March 2010



Don't forget the Details! Spring Green Faille is the perfect background for our Shamrock Maline Lace Series, L-472 (5/8" edging), L-473 (1" edging) and L-477 (5/8" insertion), available in White. Add Clover Shank buttons for luck.