

# Bear in Mind

An electronic newsletter from Bear Threads Ltd.

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## From The Editor –

The leaves are at their peak here in Atlanta as I pen this letter. And with all their brilliant colors of green, gold, red and bronze, the sky is a beautiful blue backdrop with not a single cloud to obscure the painting. Homes are decorated with pumpkins and goblins, and moms are thinking ahead to Thanksgiving Dinner and the Holidays.

For all that goes on during the next two months, we have decided to combine the November and December issues of *Bear In Mind*. So in the future there will be 10 issues per year, but with the plans already being made, they will each be packed with wonderful, educational and entertaining articles.

One of my favorite sections of the newsletter is the FYI article. This month we refer you to a 2-part series I did in September and October of 2010 on Pearl Buttons and how Pearls are formed. I stumbled upon the little tidbit for this month's FYI which has absolutely nothing to do with sewing, but you trivia buffs might find it interesting, anyway! Enjoy.

Remember that all newsletters are available on our website: [www.bearthreadsltd.com](http://www.bearthreadsltd.com) Just click on the tab: newsletters, and then on the issue you wish to read. If you were not receiving the newsletter when the Pearl articles were written, you might like to look them up on the website.



Actually, you might say we have two guests for you this month. Sandra Riley, the owner of an adorable shop in Birmingham, *THIMBLES*, recently acquired the Maggie's Classic pattern company. Sandra is thrilled to be re-introducing these truly classic patterns, AND she will have more good news for you very soon, so stay tuned. If you would like directions to her shop, or to order the patterns her phone number is: 205-682-6008. I know you will enjoy reading what her interview of Maggie revealed!

So, with this letter, I wish you Happy Halloween, Happy Thanksgiving, and a Wonderful Christmas and New Year!

Till January,

Keep stitching, *Sheila*

# Meet the Designer

Margaret (Maggie) Dowling Hillard of Mobile, Alabama is a lovely, petite woman with a beautiful southern accent, who I could sit and talk to for hours about sewing children's clothing. Maggie learned to sew from her mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She recalled as a young child in Mobile that dinner was served midday and afterwards, women would gather in groups to sew. If she were good, she would be able to join them and learn tatting, hand embroidery and sewing.

In 1976, Maggie woke up one morning and decided it would be fun to start a pattern company. Maggie's Classics Patterns was born and forty-six years later the patterns continue to be used to make heirloom garments for children with beautiful fabrics, laces and threads. The collection of patterns was inspired by vintage clothing for children and fashion of the day. Today in the south, mothers continue to dress their children for church, wedding and other special occasions in heirloom clothing. It's just a southern tradition!

At 89, Maggie continues to teach heirloom sewing by hand in her home to ladies who want to continue the tradition. Maggie doesn't own a serger or a computer, and she said she doesn't know how to use either one. She does own a sewing machine. She told me, "I will cheat and sew the first seam of a French seam by machine when it's real long. It is on the inside of the seam, and no one knows the difference."

I've always loved Maggie's Classics patterns and in 2011, I was fortunate enough to purchase the pattern line from Maggie. The patterns have a new home in my heirloom sewing shop, Thimbles in Hoover, Alabama. My hope is to continue to see the patterns used for many more years in heirloom sewing.



The bishop dress is made from Maggie's Classics #301 (size 2) using the Swiss cotton flannel smocked with DMC floss using the Cross Eyed Cricket smocking plate Ornamentation Bishop. The sleeves are embellished with Bear Threads lace edging.





The boy's smocked button-on suit (size 2) is made from Maggie's Classics #321, using the Swiss cotton flannel for the shirt and the red Swiss cotton flannel for the shorts. It's smocked with DMC floss using the Little Memories smocking plate HO HO HO.



## Acorn Cookies

Nutter Butter Bites  
Hershey Kisses  
Chocolate Chips  
Chocolate Frosting

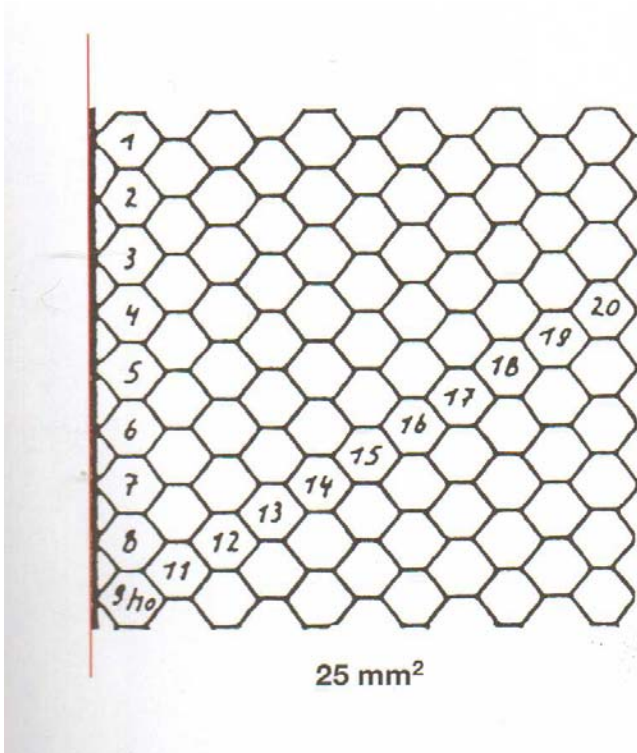
Using the Chocolate Frosting as the "glue", assemble as shown. These are delicious and are popular with kids and adults.

- 91% of Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving
- About 280 million turkeys are sold annually for Thanksgiving
- The Butterball Turkey Talkline is 1-800-BUTTERBALL (1-800-288-8372)

## SWISS TULLE PART II

Bobbinet tulle is an open, mesh-like fabric construction today commonly known as tulle. Genuine bobbinet tulle can be woven using natural fibers such as silk or cotton, as well as viscose, polyester and other fibers. The fabric is woven of warp and weft yarns in which the weft yarns are looped diagonally around the vertical warp yarns to form a hexagonal mesh, which is regular and clearly defined. By using the finest gauge yarns and filaments, a transparent and tear resistant gauze-like fabric is obtained.

The fineness of the bobbinet tulle is determined by the number of holes. Calculate this by counting the number of holes in a 25mm square of material, in the warp direction as well as in the weft direction diagonally. The edge (corner) is counted twice as shown in illustration #1.



Tulle is a most diverse fabric. In theater, we know it is the fabric of choice on the ballet stage for tutus. But it is also widely used in cinematography because of its' natural ability not to melt under hot lights if made from natural fibers. Flame retardant bobbinet is used to fit in lightweight portable frames to create light diffusion. It is often painted and used as curtains in opera houses and theaters.

Another use of tulle is in wig making. Weaving real hair into the tulle creates a wig that is virtually invisible against the skin. Plus it is lightweight and naturally breathes.

And finally another wide use of bobbinet is in the construction of parachutes. These fabrics are the specified form for military ejector seats and low-level personal parachutes worldwide because of their superb performance characteristics and proven durability. The light weight and low bulk of bobbinet is particularly important as it allows for compact packaging of the canopies.

With all these other uses of fine Swiss Cotton Tulle, we embroiderers have our own uses of tulle. It is most often used in the sewing industry for bridal veils and petticoats. But many older embroidery techniques used tulle as the ground fabric.

Perhaps you have a grandmother's tulle doily which was woven with patterns of heavy yarn. This technique is called 'net darning', and is still done today. I have seen very fine tulle used as the ground for beautiful hand embroidery.

Go ahead; be Creative.....Tulle is more durable than you might think. But, I would not wash it with the **JEANS!!!**

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