

Guild calendar & projects

TWELFTH NIGHT!
SATURDAY, JANUARY 7
in SAN JOSE

Artisans' display

Catherine Lorraine, coordinator

The Artisans' Display is a chance for all artisans who are not Laurels to show the Kingdom who you are, what you've made, and what you're currently working on. Populace admiration is guaranteed!

Exact timing of the Artisans' Display on Saturday afternoon is not confirmed at press time, as it will be subject to the timing of Their Majesties' Courts. Please be alert for announcements before and on the day itself so you won't miss your chance!

Bring your best stuff! And if you haven't done so already, contact display coordinator Catherine Lorraine ahead of time at connyftz@inreach.com with your space requirements. 

2006 UPCOMING COMPETITIONS

...of interest to needleworkers!

MARCH CROWN

March 24-26

Fine art: Lace & open work

CYNAGUA SPRING CORONET

May 26-29

Art: Renaissance Beadwork (jewelry, rosaries, clothing embellishment)

JUNE CROWN

June 23-25

Fine Art - Masks

CYNAGUA INVESTITURE

July 15-16

Art: Middle Eastern Costuming (DOCUMENTED)

A&S TOURNEY

July 21-23

Fine Art: Italian Hats or Bonnets
Technical Science: 16th Century Hunting Accoutrements

MISTS FALL CORONET

September 22-24

Arts: Viking decoration
Sciences: Viking clothing

OCTOBER CROWN

September 29-Oct 1

Technical Science: Chopins and other types of shoes

CYNAGUA FALL CORONET

October 27-29

Art: Renaissance Hats and Fans (English, Italian, etc)

Research Paper: Period Clothing for Babes and Children


MISTS FALL INVESTITURE

November 11

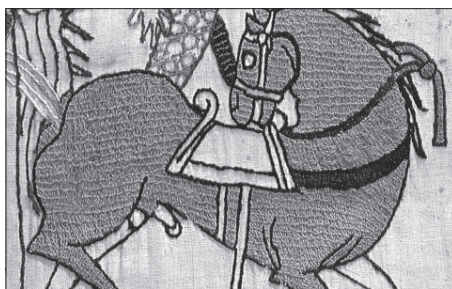
Arts: anything inspired by Harvest folklore

12TH NIGHT 2007

Practical Science: book binding

Note: the competitions published in the January Page are not quite correct, but they will be correct in the February Page. You can always find the correct information at the A&S website: 

<http://westkingdom.org/arts-sciences>



ROYAL ROSE 2006 NEEDLE CASES

If you are one of the busy volunteers hard at work on a Royal Rose needle case for the West's 2006 royal gift baskets, a few reminders.

First, if you forget which colors apply to the kingdom rose you selected, you can view each kingdom's royal rose under the Kingdom arms/badges section at:

<http://www.goldenstag.net/MiscSCA>

For information about the needlecases and how to construct them, you can go to:


<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WKneedle/>

Look under the "Files" section for [Pennsic2006Needlecases.pdf](#)

If you need a rose motif to download, there's one in the same section, in the file [WKNRosePouch.pdf](#)

Something that was **not** included in the needlecase instructions — you will need to add "pages" or "leaves" to the needlecase so that there's a place to insert the needles. 3 rectangles sewn down the middle of the "open" needlecase gives you 6 pages. Wool fabric works very well for the pages. If you would like to see an example of a needlecase, Isela will have one available at 12th Night for you to look at.

Most important, the deadline for this project is **June 1st, 2006**. After 12th Night, Isela will be checking back with you every couple of months to make sure we're all on track for the presentation at June Crown!

If you have any questions, please contact Isela at dcobb@mail.meyernet.com or call her at **831-385-3040**. 


COMING IN THE SPRING ISSUE
OF FILUM AUREUM:

Embroidered book bindings

SUMMER ISSUE:
Pattern darning

The Needleworkers Guild of the Kingdom of the West

All are welcome to join us in making and enjoying historical needlework, furthering our knowledge, and developing our skills. We meet Saturday afternoon at every Crown Tourney, and we look forward to seeing you and your needlework!

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The Bayeux “Tapestry”

—by Isela di Bari

For over 250 years scholars have studied, debated, photographed, classified, conceptualized, and theorized over the Bayeux Tapestry and its historical significance. It stands at the crossroads of three great civilizations: Viking, Anglo-Saxon and Norman. However, few have written about the embroidery through the eyes of an embroiderer. So we owe a debt of gratitude to researchers like Dr. Gale Owen-Crocker, Jan Messent, David Wilson and the group who presented papers at the Cerisy Colloquium in Bayeux, France in 1999. I’ll summarize some of their new insights here.

The Broderers

The tapestry (really an embroidery, since it’s stitched and not woven) was created between 1066 and 1077, commissioned by Duke William’s half-brother Bishop Odo, and destined for Bayeux Cathedral’s consecration in July, 1077.

English embroiderers were already producing work to high standards at this period: William the Conqueror’s chronicler and chaplain William of Poitiers wrote about the rich goldwork by English hands that adorned the state robes and “made all that France and Normandy had beheld of the same seem mean by comparison.”

Although some believe Canterbury was the headquarters for the design and development of the Bayeux Tapestry, Jan Messent proposes that this honor may belong to the City of Winchester. Winchester was the English capital, royal residence and location of the royal mint in the 10th and 11th centuries. It was also a great center of art production, well stocked with spinners, weavers and dyers. Messent suggests the tapestry was worked at Winchester’s Nunaminster, a well-known nunnery that occupied a large plot inside the walled city, with the Norman-named Abbess Beatrice the organizer and collaborator with Bishop Odo on the project.

The Fabric

The foundation for the needlework is a fine bleached tabby-weave linen measuring about 230 feet long and 18 to 20 inches wide. Gale Owen-Crocker notes the Tapestry demonstrates the high quality of linen weaving in the late Anglo Saxon period.

The linen background is left fairly bare, not covered with needlework. To the naked eye, the seams in the Tapestry are almost invisible, definitely a salute to the seamstresses. Bedát & Girault-Kurtzman attribute this to a three-step process: overcast stitching of the upper edge, overcast-



ing of the panel sides, and then the joining, done in a “fine, regular whipping stitch with 2-ply yarn.” Messent notes that except for the first two panels, the others were attached to each other before the design was embroidered over the join.

The Inspiration

Maylis Baylé suggests the tapestry was created during a time when many image sources came together: illuminated manuscripts, carved ivory panels, carved grave-stones, and architectural carvings, all of which have been suggested as design sources in the past.

In particular, it has long been suggested that the tapestry was inspired by commemorative or “saga” wallhangings. One was found in the Oseberg ship burial; another is the epic memorial hanging given by the great warrior Byrhtnoth’s widow to



The Ron fragment from Norway

Ely Cathedral, depicting her husband’s deeds before he was killed in the battle of Maldon in 991. David Wilson mentions an especially interesting Norwegian fragment from Ron, worked in laid and couched wool on linen with outline stitching. In common with the Bayeux piece, this fragment also features “dead prone bodies, a horse, and a foliage scrolled border.”

Although some people refer to the tapestry design as “cartoonish,” Wilson objects, and sees the design as “lively” and

presenting a “remarkable uniformity of style,” suggesting the entire Bayeux Tapestry was designed by one artist.

The Stitches

The laidwork technique now known as “Bayeux laid-work” figures prominently in the Bayeux Tapestry. But one can also find split and chain stitches, especially in lines and lettering. Stem and outline stitches are also present, mostly used for outlining. These two stitches are very similar in appearance, usage and technique, but stem stitch is done with the thread held below, and the outline stitch with thread held above the needle. They produce slightly different effects because one works *with* the twist, and the other *against* the twist of the embroidery thread.

Restorers Girault-Kurtzman and Bedát inspected the back side of the Tapestry for their Cerisy paper, and showed that shapes in the Tapestry were outlined in a contrasting color before they were filled in. Some areas, in fact, were only outlined, especially faces and hands. Stem or outline stitch is also worked in closely packed rows as filling for acanthus leaves, hair, animal tails and bird wings, as in the scene where Harold is being crowned.

For the Bayeux laidwork, long, closely worked parallel threads are laid across on top of the fabric. A second layer of threads is laid at right angles, evenly spaced across the first layer, and couched down using a stab stitch. Generally the added threads are the same color as the base threads, but in the scene where Harold is crowned, Bishop Odo’s cloak is laid with a different color for a patterned effect. The same applies to the bricks in the tower in the same scene.

Good photos show how the stitch direction changes within motifs. Clothing is often worked with a vertical first layer and horizontal stitches in the second layer. There may be a change in direction at the shoulder or elbow, or it may continue in the same direction over the whole figure.

(continued next page —>)

(Bayeux Tapestry, *continued*)

Threads change direction to mimic the wind's billowing effect on ships' sails and to mark the separation of animal legs from bodies. To handle long thin shapes such as trees and legs, laidwork can be done in adjoining "blocks" of long stitches, with an extra second-layer thread hiding the joins where one block meets another.

The Threads

The question often surfaces about the choice to use wool thread on linen for the Bayeux Tapestry, in light of the notoriety of Anglo-Saxon needlework using silk and metal thread and silk fabrics. Most of the



woolen thread is two-ply, and some linen thread is also used. David Wilson concludes that the tapestry's sheer size precluded silk from being considered.

Laidwork is not only economical in terms of using wool thread and less of it, but it is easier to master than goldwork and covers fabric quickly. Messent notes that this type of stitch allows embroiderers who are "reasonably proficient" to work on the tapestry. She estimates that a project of this scope could be completed within two years "if a steady stream of helpers worked at it consistently." That was approximately the time it took for a modern reproduction to be made in the 1980s.

The Colors

Researchers who have had a chance to look at the back side of the tapestry note, surprisingly, that not much fading has occurred over the ages. Girault-Kurtzeman and Bedát report in their Cerisy paper that the terracotta reds were produced from madder, the beige and yellow from weld, the three shades of blue from indigotin, and the three shades of green from weld plus indigotin. Indigotin is the dye chemical in woad, a common European dye plant.

When you think about the size of this project and the number of embroiderers, overall the color scheme works. In spite of some unnatural combinations — dark blue horses, or a horse with three different colored legs, the colors meld into a cohesive whole. As for which colors were selected for which shapes, Messent suggests that a

limited color palette, overlapping figures, cooperation with one's fellow embroiderers, and some established guidelines probably determined the overall color scheme.

In further papers from the Cerisy symposium, Baylé notes that the Tapestry's color scheme "has no real exact equivalent in Norman illumination" before the end of the 11th century, but that the colors used do correspond to those found in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. In particular, outlines in contrasting color to the filling of shapes can be seen in the Anglo-Saxon illuminated manuscript called the *Hexeteuch*.

Gale Owen-Crocker points out that colors in adjoining areas of the Tapestry are contrasted to distinguish, for instance, the inside of sleeves from the outside, or a horse's legs from its body. One of the best scenes for use of contrasting colors that designate inner and outer legs of the horses overlapping is the panel where William's ships sail to England.

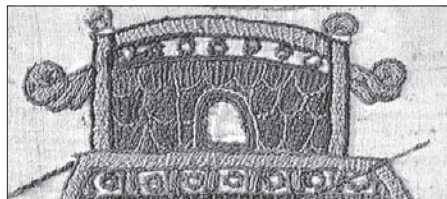
She also notes that many colors used in early manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxons were more decorative than realistic. She suggests the depiction of clothing may also be unrealistic, noting that for instance it is unlikely that the warriors would have been wearing full-bodied chain mail on their legs, especially if riding a horse.

The Technique

Laidwork requires a frame to keep the fabric taut. Jan Messent proposes that panels were stretched in horizontal frames, with one embroiderer sitting at the top edge of the panel, and a second one at the bottom, both embroidering toward the center. Messent believes that a panel was completed in total, central theme and borders together, rather than doing all the panel centers first and then moving to the borders later.

Bedát and Girault-Kurtzeman note that the Tapestry's embroiderers weren't as neat about the back side of their stitchery as we would like to imagine. In some instances the thread skips from the central scene to the border or to an inscription, or from a motif to a letter in the middle of a word. They describe some of the needlework as "positively disordered," indicative of various skill levels from various hands.

Bedát and Girault-Kurtzeman were also able to deduce that the tapestry could not have originally been lined. Two layers of ribbon were sewn onto a backing strip that probably formed loops through which a cord could pass through for hanging.



The Motifs

The motifs are mainly human figures, exaggerated and natural foliage, and birds and beasts of natural and mythological origin. Many of the animals and birds are a part of Anglo-Saxon heritage and can be seen in manuscripts, metal work, sculptures and carvings. Most of the motifs are in profile, except some of the royal or very important figures (such as Odo) who are seated and looking forward.

The borders of the Bayeux Tapestry feature some creatures from Aesop's Fables (fox & cheese, wolf & crane, hare & hound), mythical figures (dragons and wyverns), half-naked bodies humped over, and plenty of dead warriors. Some of the motifs in the border face each other as mirrored images, as also noted in the 10th c. Mammen embroideries with the lions facing each other.

As for foliage, the acanthus leaf design, also found in the early 10th c. St. Cuth-



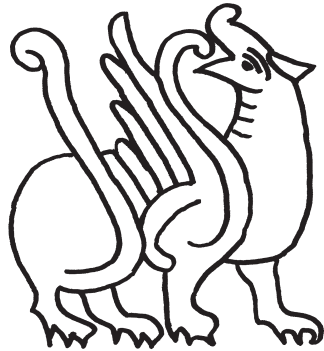
bert's embroideries and the late 10th c. Mammen embroideries, was also a common motif found in manuscripts produced by the Winchester scriptoria. The tree motif depicted throughout the tapestry is similar to the one found in the Norwegian wall hanging from Ron.

Parallels have also been found to the Tapestry's use of framework and stylized creatures as a border. The late 9th to early 10th c. Llangors fragment, a recent discovery, displays stylized birds within a framework of geometrically drawn vines.


The Hanging

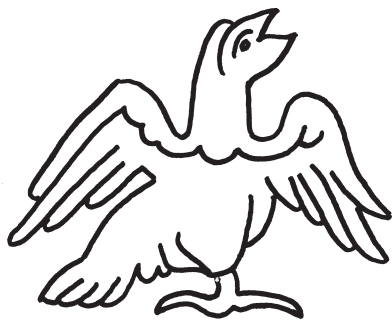
Finally, why has the Bayeux Tapestry been called a "tapestry"? Nicole de Reyniès suggests a partial answer. In the 19th century, the word "tapestry" was used "to spare the work of any association with the degrading image of embroidery, which by the eighteenth century had been reduced to simple decoration for clothing." Calling this hanging a "tapestry" became a tribute to its quality and value as a work of art.

Border birds & beasts



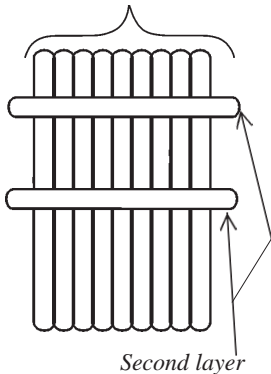
The birds and beasts of the Bayeux borders (how alliterative!) are often amusing, and make a good small exercise in laidwork. The motifs on this page are a bit smaller than actual size. Isela recommends Appleton wool or DMC's Medici wool as good threads for this kind of work.

Studying a good photo of a border "beast" or bird will show the directions in which the stitches are worked. As you can see in larger overviews, pairs of mirror-image beasts separated by diagonal bars and a small plant motif are common in the Bayeux borders. The diagonal bars are also worked in laidwork, the plants often in simple outline or stem stitch. Most of the animals and birds have darker stem-stitch outlines as well. 

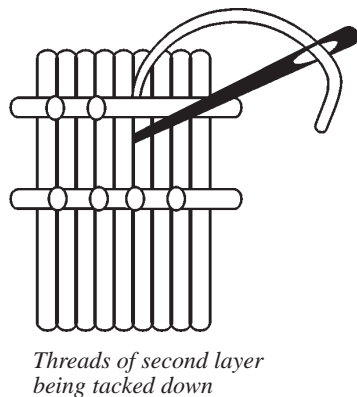


Bayeux Laidwork

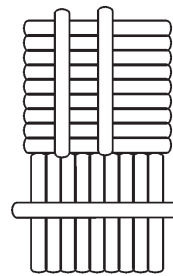
First layer of threads



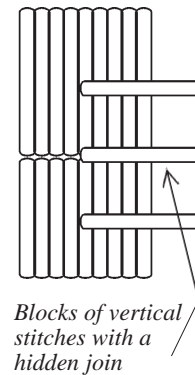
Second layer



Threads of second layer being tacked down



Changing direction in different blocks of stitching



Blocks of vertical stitches with a hidden join

Bibliography

Bayeux Tapestry: Embroidering the Facts of History. Presses Universitaires de Caen, 2004. Proceedings of the Cerisy Colloquium (1999).

Essays cited in this volume include:

- *The Bayeux Tapestry and Decoration in North Western Europe*, by Maylis Baylé.
- *The Technical Study of the Bayeux Tapestry*. Isabelle Bedát and Béatrice Girault-Kurtzman.

The Bayeux Tapestry. David M. Wilson. Alfred N. Knopf, New York, 1985.

The Bayeux Tapestry Embroiderers Story. Jan Messent. Madeira Threads Limited, 1999.

Bayeux Tapestry or Bayeux Embroidery? Questions of Terminology, by Nicole de Reyniès.

Dress in Anglo-Saxon England. Gale R. Owen-Crocker. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1986.

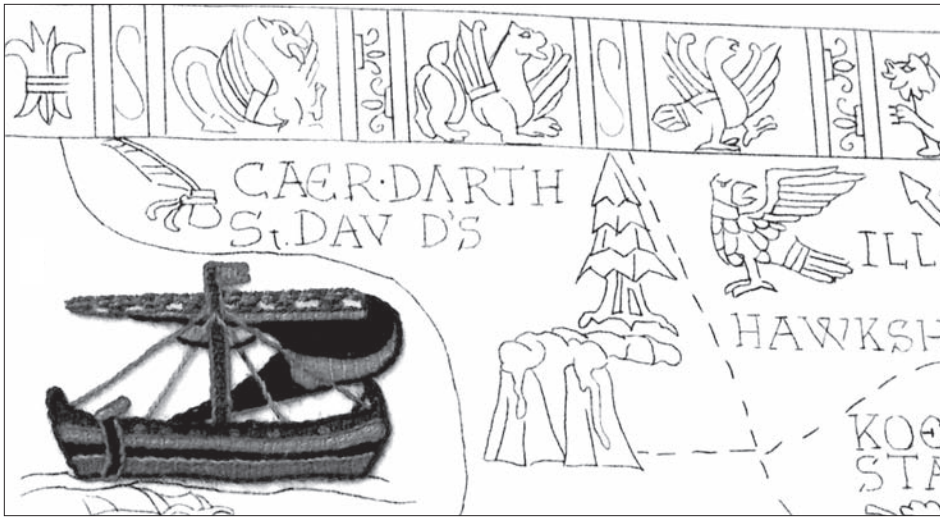
English Medieval Embroidery. A.G.I. Christie. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1938

A Very Brief Discussion of the Llangors Embroidery, by Heather Rose Jones, May 31, 2004.

<http://heatherrosejones.com/llangorsembroidery>.

The Llangors textile: an early medieval masterpiece. By Louise Mumford, National Museum & Galleries of Wales, Jan. 5, 2004. www.walespast.com 

Tapestries of the Known World



A portion of the map panel of the Darkwood Tapestry, showing the border, part of the main panel, and the beginnings of the embroidery

Inspiration

Hmmmmmm. A medieval embroidery that tells a story ... whose drawing style is easy to copy ... worked in a fairly easy stitch ... in inexpensive materials?

A number of thoughtful needleworkers have gazed at the Bayeux Tapestry over the years and uttered those fateful words that begin great adventures and large needlework projects: “Hey — I think I could do that!”

Hangings after the model of the Bayeux Tapestry remain a popular way for a group of interested historical needleworkers to commemorate their own or their group’s history. People of a wide variety of skill levels can participate — all that’s needed is organizers, materials and an artist sufficiently skillful to draw the panels. Two groups in the West Kingdom are currently working on such projects.

The Darkwood Tapestry

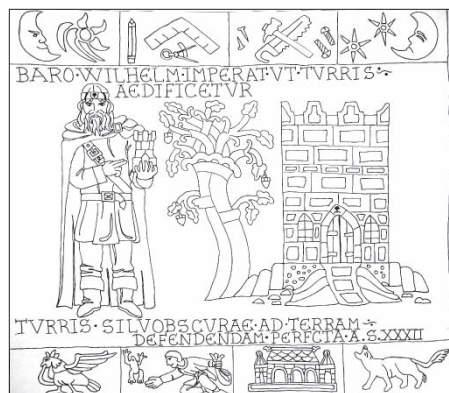
(reported by Isela di Bari)

In October 2004 Eric Bjornsson and I discussed the idea of creating a gift to the Barony in celebration of Darkwood’s upcoming 20th birthday in 2007. We decided on an embroidered wallhanging in the style of the Bayeux Tapestry, and within a week, Eric enlisted the services of artisan Raymond von dem Lowengrab and needlework master Catherine Lorraine of Stonegate Manor. Within two months, 20 panels were claimed by embroiderers.

Although the original tapestry mea-

sures 230 feet long, we decided the Darkwood Tapestry would be a more manageable 29 feet. By March 2005, Raymond had drafted the first four panels. Using David Wilson’s book on the Bayeux Tapestry, Catherine and I decided to limit the color palette to 7 colors to enhance uniformity. We are using Italian twill fabric, #22 chenille needles, stretcher bars and Appleton Crewel wool thread. Several workshops have been held to familiarize embroiderers with the stitches and materials.

Each panel depicts an important event in Darkwood’s 20-year history. For example, one panel features Baron Sebastian petitioning Their Majesties to make Darkwood a barony; another features Baron Wilhelm commanding the construction of the Darkwood Castle. A third will feature our current Baron Erich & Baroness Liesel presiding over court. The Latin text has been composed by Lord Raymond and translated by Lady Adriana Tacita.



Baron Wilhelm and the castle (sketch)

The Darkwood Tapestry will be presented to the Baron and Baroness at the White Shield feast in 2007. When completed, it is our dream that this embroidery will live on to remind future generations of their Barony’s illustrious history.

The Oertha Tapestry

(reported by Morgana yr Oerfa)

A handful of years ago, Varakreivitär Kareina Talventytär thought it would be nice to have an Oerthan tapestry based upon the Bayeux Tapestry. Before too long there was a tapestry with edgings drawn on. The borders, similar to those on the Bayeux, are comprised of a series of slanted bars in various colors. Between them are motifs from the devices of the Princes and Princesses of Oertha. In the center panels it is planned to have drawings of the first tourney: a fight, a court scene, etc.

Kareina took it everywhere she went in Oertha. She researched the stitches, pre-



Detail of a fox, from the Oertha Tapestry

pared a handout, and taught several classes so people could work on the tapestry as they had time at events and activities. When she left for parts south, including An Tir, West, and now Lochac, the tapestry found a new home in the Barony of Winter’s Gate. Now Magdalena Ochastka has physical custody of the tapestry, and like Kareina, Magda carries it to all events and activities, armed with handouts and threads and books, for people to stitch.

Kareina started the stitching in cotton embroidery thread, because that is what she had. However, Magda studied the original further, and discovered it was executed in wool. So it has been decided that we will continue the Oertha Tapestry in Medici tapestry wool. It was also decided to leave in the original work in cotton floss, as it forms part of the learning history of the project.

When finished it is hoped it will become a part of the principality regalia, displayed at Coronet Tournaments.

Greetings, fellow needleworkers, and Happy Holidays to every one of you! I hope you all are getting some extra time in your schedules to relax and to embroider. Like many, I am eagerly awaiting 12th Night and its myriad of activities. While the guild will not have an official display this year, there will be the Artisans' Display headed up by Mistress Catherine Lorraine for you. If you are not a Laurel, I urge you to consider participating in this

display; it is a wonderful way for you to show off all your hard work and see the work of other artisans in the kingdom.

As we head into the next year, I look forward to more wonderful classes presented in the guild pavilion at crowns and collegiums. As we are in the planning stages for next year, I am eager to hear your opinions: what classes would you like to see? Were there any in the past that you would like to see again? Would you like to teach,

but would prefer to try team-teaching first? Please contact me and let me know! This guild exists by and for you, and I want to plan classes that you want to take.

I hope this holiday season finds you happy and healthy, and I look forward to seeing you all at 12th Night or beyond!

Yours in service,

Nelia Apollonia

INTERVIEWS • THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE • & MUSINGS

Question: What was your first piece of (historical) needlework?

My first piece of needlework was my name, in counted cross stitch, when I was about 8. My mother, Baroness Mairi ni Colin, taught me cross stitch as a way to get me to sit still at events. I think she still has it, I remember seeing it a few years back and thinking how primitive it seemed compared to the wrok I do now, 20+ years later.

Juliana of the Westermark (West)

My first piece of needlework was a satin-stitched bird, a great multicolored exotic thing called a quetzal, I believe :) I was 10 years old and had never embroidered a thing in my life. My auntie coached me on the embroidery stitches, and it didn't turn out badly, even if I do say so myself. I have two regrets — one, that I should have used a more substantial background fabric, and two, that I gave it away a few years later, as I was getting started in the SCA, 'cause it didn't look terribly period :(Sigh!! Five years later, I got obsessed with metal thread embroidery, and have been lost ever since!

Comtesse Albra Bautiste, OL, OP (Darachshire, Caid)

My very first embroidery was a cross-stitch of the Knight from the Ellesmere manuscript *Canterbury Tales*. Clueless person that I was, it was a beastly project, and I had such a miserable time, I told myself I would never do embroidery again... I got over it. :-)

Giuseppe da Borgia, OL (Embroidery, dance) Caid

My first period style piece was based on a drawing derived from a picture in the Maciejowski Bible of two knights fighting. I did the central figures in satin stitch and used various other stitches in the background to fill in area. It was very satisfying at the time, though now I look at it and think it isn't really very period in execution and

the stitching was kind of uneven. Oh well, we live and learn, sometimes, and I still sometimes break out the floss and needles and try to make messes on fabric.

Ewen MacGillipadraig (Calontir)

I had seen a purse charted by Richard Wymarck, and a photo of one of the Göss vestments with a similar pattern. I used them to make myself a purse, a bit more late 13thC-ish than 14th-15thC-ish...

It was pure torture from beginning to end. It pains me to look at it, but I keep it as a show and tell example, mostly of what *not* to do! Cotton and me will never be friends again. Cotton floss? Yuck! It snags, twists, absorbs dirt like nothing else. And what in my wisdom made me choose THAT linen? It was maybe a bit optimistic starting out with a 32 count linen fabric for my first ever embroidery — hindsight seems to suggest it, at least. Sharp needles are a no-no when doing counted embroidery. There is no such thing as unpicking that mess afterwards. Scissors will be your best friend until you snip the wrong threads. A hard learned lesson, believe me.

I also learned a lesson about judging shades. Floss always looks darker once you start embroidering. 13thC embroideries are a bit on the colorful side. They don't hold back in the next century, either, when using color, but this piece would have been considered garish by even those standards!

Gunvor Vinje (Gotvik, Nordmark)

http://www.drakt.org/Projects/Embroidery_projects.html

My first piece of embroidery was a dish towel with the design stamped on. I was 9, and my Mom taught me stem stitch and French knots. My first SCA embroidery was some scrolling vine decoration around the neck opening and wrists of a dress. I still wear it, though it's getting a little shabby now. I was wearing it at a Western event, and a girl said to me "If they come upon your naked body by the privies one morning, it's because I want that dress!"

Made me feel like I'd done something right!

Edwinna of Hawk's Bluff, Caid (formerly West)

My first piece of historically inspired needlework I did in college. It was part of an assignment for an Introduction to Fiber Arts class. The assignment was to create 10 square inches of "embellishment." Having already been in the SCA for some years, I decided this project could have a dual purpose. It was based on Elizabethan "tree of life" patterns and was meant to become a stomacher for a bodice. It never did, but I still really like it. It is worked on silk noil, a material I would not choose now, and uses couching, running buttonhole and other period stitches. I used a combination of silk, cotton and metallic threads. There are some elements of the overall design that are not period, but I may yet use it if I ever have time to make another dress of that period.

Ysenda Macbeth of Islay (East)

My first piece of SCA-period-historically-inspired needlework was an embroidery kit that a friend brought me almost 15 years ago from her trip to France. It's a Bayeux-tapestry-inspired piece of laidwork, I guess. The design is a large winged lion set into a square with smaller lions in the corners. The instructions on the kit refer to it as "Bayeux stitch." It's about a foot square. I still have it and haven't (after all these years!) yet decided what to do with it.

Joan the Harper (West)

My first piece of historically inspired needlework (which was also my first piece of counted cross-stitch) was a stylized griffin motif from Dover's *Charted Peasant Designs from Saxon Transylvania*, worked in red on a nice, sturdy piece of evenweave linen. I enjoyed making it and was really pleased with the way it came out. I made it into a pouch, but the red lining and tassels I used turned out not to be colorfast, and they bled onto the linen. I've thought about taking the pouch apart, salvaging the em-

(continued next page)

(NEEDLE'S EYE, continued from p.7)

broidery (which wasn't stained) and making something else out of it, but I've never gotten around to it. (Yeah, yeah, I know some of you are thinking "Transylvania — that figures!" :)

Fionnabhair Inghean ui Neill (Caid)

My first real historically inspired piece is an embroidered Tafl board. I found a reference to a tafl board embroidered on reindeer hide and thought this sounded like a good idea. However with no guidance or any idea of how to go about it I plowed on in. The work is lovely, but the design themes are mixed and the stitches are mostly invented, and my research was complete CR#\$@! This was 2 years ago and when I look back on just how far I have come since then I am amazed. I have also tinkered around with Florentine, which I love. (My husband thinks that is when I sew with 2 needles!! Fighters!!)

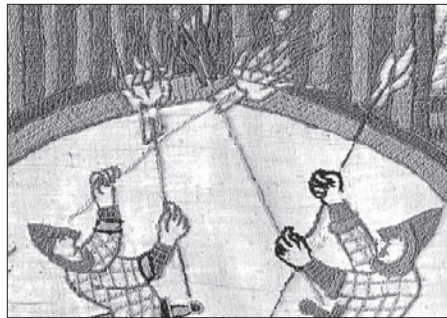
Constance de Coligny, Lochac

(http://www.sca.org.au/broderers/member_work.htm)

First piece of historically inspired needlework — embroidered set of neck decoration and sleeve decorations for one of my husband's tunics. Used DMC thread on a wool tunic. Design was Celtic animals. He still has the tunic (I won't let him throw it away) and I use it with later, correct, pieces to illustrate how the different types of materials create a different look and how you can get a great look using more period materials such as wool and silk. I used split stitch, a little bit of satin and couching. The experience was wonderful but I wish I knew more about period materials when I did it. Now, of course, he is spoiled and wants all of his tunics embroidered.

Countess Adelicia of Cumbria, OP (Atlantia)

First needlework was done when I was four — a pink cross-stitch puppy, under the guidance of my Aunt Peena. My first historically inspired needlework was done for my second SCA event in 1991: embroidered



heraldic lilies as a border on the sleeves and hem of my gown. No piece of plain cloth has ever been safe from me since!

Leonora, Five Rivers Chapmanry

Recent historically inspired embroideries:

http://www.5rivers.org/en-gb/dept_33.html

http://www.5rivers.org/en-gb/p_916.html

The first competition I ever entered was a counted cross stitch piece inspired by a medieval manuscript page. Imagine my horror when I arrived at the competition and found that someone else had done the exact same piece! Luckily, I had documented not only the inappropriateness of the technique in period, but also the materials and dyestuffs that could have been used to obtain the colors in the piece. I won

— on the basis of the completeness of my documentation! Whew!

Caiterina nic Sheamus (West)

My first historical piece was a lovely piece of blackwork I received in a blackwork class at an SCA event. We were given all the materials on the spot and drew a motif from, I believe "Portrait of an Unknown Lady(?)." It did take me about 2 years to finish, but I think I will use it on a pouch flap or as a facing on a small pillow. I did enjoy it and wish to start another blackwork project, perhaps next time not making such a big mess of the backside!


Randalin in kyrra (Meridies)

THANK YOU

to everyone who has responded!

NEXT TIME:

What's your favorite style (or type) of needlework and why?

E-mail your answer to **WKneedleowner@yahoo.com** by February 1st. Please sign your full SCA name and Kingdom. Responses may be edited. 

C R E D I T S & C O N T A C T S

GUILD MENTORS

These people are here to help you with your needlework questions!

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WEB PAGES

- WK Needleworkers Guild Website <http://www.bayrose.org/wkneedle/>
- WKneedle Mailing List <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WKneedle/>

JUST FOR FUN...

