

**Blog #44 - It's been a while ....**

Tuesday, 11 October 2016

*It has been a while since I last added any news to my blog.*



*I am sorry, but life has been 'more than a little busy' this past year or so.*

*At the end of August last year, as many of you will already know, I ventured overseas with my Auckland friend, Elizabeth Darrah, for almost six weeks on a needlework tour of Italy, visiting as many museums and galleries as possible throughout that country to view all their magnificent needlework created over several hundreds of years, visited needlework shops in many areas (e.g. Assisi) to purchase pieces of needlework and attended a needlework show in Formigine to admire and purchase beautiful designs, threads and needlework accessories being designed and created by today's talented needlework artists.*



*Here I am pictured (bottom left) with an Italian designer friend, Niky of Niky's Creations*



*and with other friends exhibiting at the show .....*



*I also stayed for several days with a very talented and gifted Italian needlework designer and awesome friend - Giulia Manfredini of Giulia Punti Antichi "GPA". Giulia is well known for designing beautiful needlework skirts for the lovely ceramic half dolls. She and Mario live in Massa. When you look to the surrounding hills, they look like they are capped with snow - but they're not! The white that can be seen is the world famous Carrara marble. Giulia drove me up into the hills for a close look and she also took me to meet her friend, Roberta who is a silversmith and makes all the intricate silver accessories (chatelaines, etc) that dangle from the stitched skirts of the dolls. Here are pics of us at Roberta's studio / shop -*



*From Massa I travelled by train to Brussels in Belgium to participate in a needlework show - exhibiting and selling my own designs there.*

*My exhibition / display -*



*Yes - it is Diane Martin from Auckland!*

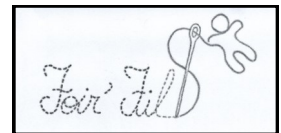
*and me selling.*

*Do any of you recognise who is looking at my wares?*



*She and David were in England at the time of my arrival in Brussels and so they decided to join me for several of the days that I was in Belgium. They were GREAT company. When I wasn't preparing for or at the show, we explored the city of Brussels together, and the day I set up at the show they were there to help. Awesome. Apart from my stock for selling (which I had sent by post before leaving NZ), I had carted my stitched models, display cloths & all the other necessary paraphernalia for exhibiting, all over Italy in my suitcase & carry-on bag!*

*This show was organised by another lovely friend, Monique. You may recall me telling you all about the show in Blog #41. She has organised this show for many, many years. All proceeds from the show go to UNICEF.*



*It was wonderful spending some days with her and meeting up with another lovely Belgium friend - Gigi of GR Designs.*

*Here are two lovely pics - Monique (taken when she took me to Bruges) -*



*and this one of Gigi - participating at the same show in Brussels as myself -*



*And so ..... on to the next page to read the blog that I had drafted, but not typed up or posted before leaving on my amazing and unforgettable trip!*

## Blog #44 - The Orford Sampler

Wednesday, 29 July 2015

Quite some time ago, a lovely lady, Gwyneth, whom I met because of our mutual love for needlework, was needing to "down-size" her home contents in preparation for her and her husband to move into a smaller home and offered her trio of family samplers to me as her family of sons and their wives did not wish to have or keep them.

Oh - you can imagine my delight! What a wonderful gift.

I will always treasure them - and I know that my daughter, Melissa, will also treasure them when it is time for me to no longer be on this earth.

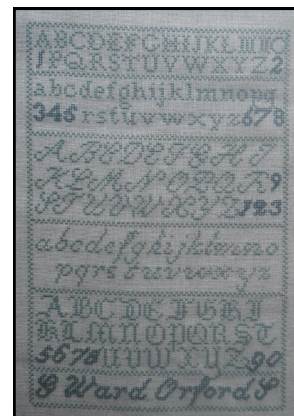


This is one of the samplers and the first one to be charted so that sampler lovers can stitch this simple but elegant piece. You may recall me showing a picture of the beginnings of my stitched piece in Blog #13 - the 2nd of October last year.

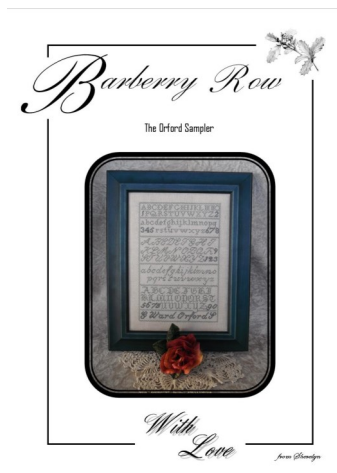
If not, this is how it looked  
at that time ...



and how it looked  
on the 16th of December ...



During this month of July I finally finished writing all the instructions for this design, typing them up and creating the computer generated chart and had the complete design printed - just in time for Sampler Gathering. Thus, this design is now available for purchase.



Title: *The Orford Sampler*

Code: *BARB 2000*

Cost: *\$21.50*

Materials: As per stitched model -

Fabric: Permin Linen - 35 count - Lambswool

Threads: Soie d'Alger - 3423 : 3425

Stitch Count: 106w x 156h

Design Size: 6" x 9.25"

Techniques: Cross Stitch, Four-Sided Stitch

Vivien Caughley of Auckland has kindly researched the history of the sampler makers of my three sampler pieces. Three generations - Grandmother, Daughter, Granddaughter. This information is included with the design.

I sincerely hope you treasure pieces of needlework that have been created by members of your family and that you have kept a record of their history. So too, kept a record of your needlework journey and achievements, as these may well be the subject of someone's research one day.

That's all for the moment.

Until next time, bye .....

