

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

VIOLET, DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM
How about some house parties?

CORA, COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM
She's been asked to one next month by Lady Ann McNair.

VIOLET, DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM
That's a terrible idea. She doesn't know anyone under a hundred.

CORA, COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM
I might send her over to visit my aunt. She could get to know New York.

VIOLET, DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM
Oh, I don't think things are quite that desperate.



December 12, 2014

So last night while I was sleeping (sounds like a movie, doesn't it?) I decided to write a song. And no, it wasn't a dream, exactly. I was semi awake. But unfortunately, trying to get the lyrics right finally woke me up. I tried to pretend that I was just counting sheep hoping to trick my brain into going back to sleep. But it didn't work.

It all started when I began counting the number of singing gigs I have for Christmas. Ten, plus dress rehearsals. And that doesn't count the additional rehearsals we're doing just to be prepared. Which fit perfectly with the tune for the 12 Days of Christmas, or almost. So now you can understand why I wound up wide awake. Once you start singing that song, you can't stop. You can thank me later for creating an irritating ear worm for you.

Anyway, I started writing the lyrics in my head, trying to match the words with the verse. Naturally I had to keep singing the song to figure out how many words I needed. That's what was so irritating and what finally woke me up.

It went something like this:

On the first day of Christmas my director had me sing
Carols at the historic gov's mansion
(I know it doesn't work well, but it was 3 in the morning, give me a break)

On the 2nd day of Christmas my director had me sing
Songs at Little Theater and
Carols at the historic gov's mansion.

On the 3rd day of Christmas, my director had me sing
4 hours of rehearsals,
Songs at Little Theater and
Carols at the historic gov's mansion.

On the 4th day of Christmas, my director had me sing
Concert at St. Mary's,
4 hours of rehearsals,
Songs at Little Theater and
Carols at the historic gov's mansion.

On the 5th day of Christmas, my director had me sing....

And it was about at this point that I realized that the 12 days of Christmas song wasn't working very well. I had a 3rd day and 4 hours (not 3), and we sang more than 2 songs for opening night at Little Theater and we didn't do 5 of anything on the 5th day. We actually did 2 concerts. So I gave up. And besides, I only had 10 concerts, 11 if I counted dress rehearsal. Remember, this was 3 a.m.

But I did have an ending, which is why I kept hoping the rest of the song would just fall into place. The ending went something like this:

On the 12th day of Christmas, my director had me sing - Absolutely nothing.
(Which is the only line that really fits with the rhythm of "12 drummers drumming.")

And then I ended the song with:

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah. And so on. (From Handel's Messiah)

Which put a different ear worm into my head.

And aren't you glad I don't write song lyrics for a living?

P.S. We're having a 12 Days of Christmas Sale starting today. See below for more details.

CHRISTMAS MYSTERY CLASS!

Time & Date: Sat. Dec. 13, noon-6 (give or take)

Project: TBA (but I can tell you it is a table runner & you will learn a new technique!)

Cost: \$50. Includes pattern, fabric & tool.

Limit: 10 students

Particulars: Select your fabric pack now (I have several different fabric choices). Tool and pattern will be provided in class. (Some secrets must be kept)

Additions: Everyone bring one munchie to share. It can be as simple as a plate of cookies, a bag of carrots, a carton of milk. Okay, that's what you set out for Santa. Or bring jello wigglers, Chex mix, popcorn. Something simple. Easy finger food. Something to munch on.

At the end of the day, your table topper will be sewn!

DOWNTON ABBEY RETREAT!

The dates are set for March 20-22, Nagel Warren Mansion. Special Attraction: Downton Abbey Trunk Show!

We are set for Friday March 20 through Sunday March 22. You will be able to check in mid afternoon on Friday and we will plan to leave Sunday mid afternoon. We have 8 king bed rooms reserved. Cost is based upon double occupancy. If you prefer a single room, you will need to let me know very quickly so I can look into booking a different room (cost of retreat will need to be adjusted). Reservations will be made through me and you can secure your spot with a down payment of half the cost by Feb. 15. The rest will be due by March 15.

If you need to cancel, I will need to know 30 days in advance. But if something comes up, please talk to me because we might be able to work something out.

We will be sewing in the conference rooms in the basement. There are 3 rooms that can accommodate about 16 sewers. I will set up separate tables for cutting and will plan on having 2 irons/boards. If you just want to come to sew, and go home at night to your own bed, I might be able to accommodate that. However, I don't want to get more than 16 sewers. If you are interested in this option, let me know and I'll see what I can work out.

At the retreat, you may sew on any project that you like -- it does not have to be a Downton Abbey Quilt. For those of you sewing your Downton Abbey quilts, though, I will provide instruction for this year's quilt (quilt blocks will be online prior to the retreat).

During the retreat, we will play some games, win some door prizes, watch some episodes of Downton Abbey, take High Tea on Saturday, and sew our socks off!

Included in the cost:

2 nights (2 per room) at the Nagel Warren Mansion (such a treat!)
Sat & Sun breakfast
High tea on Saturday

Set of patterns for quilt
Door prizes
Lots of Fun !!!

Downton Abbey Trunk Show (quilts provided by Andover from the new line)

Lunch and dinners are on our own. There are plenty of fun restaurants downtown. You can also check out what is playing at the Lincoln Center and go to a movie (for a buck or two).

Cost per person = \$250. A \$120 deposit will secure your room. We need a minimum of 10 quilters for the retreat. I am also working on getting a national speaker to come.

Blocks will be posted on line at www.aroundtheblockquilts.com You can find the blocks under the "What's New" tab (once I get them posted). Fabric requirements for the quilt are also given. These blocks will stay posted for a limited time and we'll have them in the store. Price to buy in store is \$1 for one page or \$2 for 2 pages -- to help me cover the costs of the ink.

12 Days of Christmas sale!

I will be sending out daily emails, reminding everyone about the sales. Each day something will be 25% off.

Dec. 12 = Fat quarters

Dec. 13 = Thread

Dec. 14 = Patterns

Dec. 15 = Rulers

Dec. 16 = Batting

Dec. 17 = Kits

Dec. 18 = Pillow Case Kits

Dec. 19 = Books

Dec. 20 = Best Press

Dec. 21 = Fabric Bundles

Dec. 22 = Fabric Down the Hall is \$3

On the first Day of Christmas... December 12

Okay, I admit, I don't know when the 12 days of Christmas really starts. But we're starting on Friday, Dec. 12. Each day for the next 11 days, we will have a specific product on sale at 25% off regular price (except for the last day). Check your emails, as I will send out a reminder every day -- **the day before the sale.**

DAY 1: All fat quarters are 25% off, no minimum purchase.



**First Day of
Christmas**

On the second Day of Christmas... December 13

DAY 2: All thread is **25% off**, includes Aurifil, Presencia, Bottom Line, WonderFil and Gutermann.



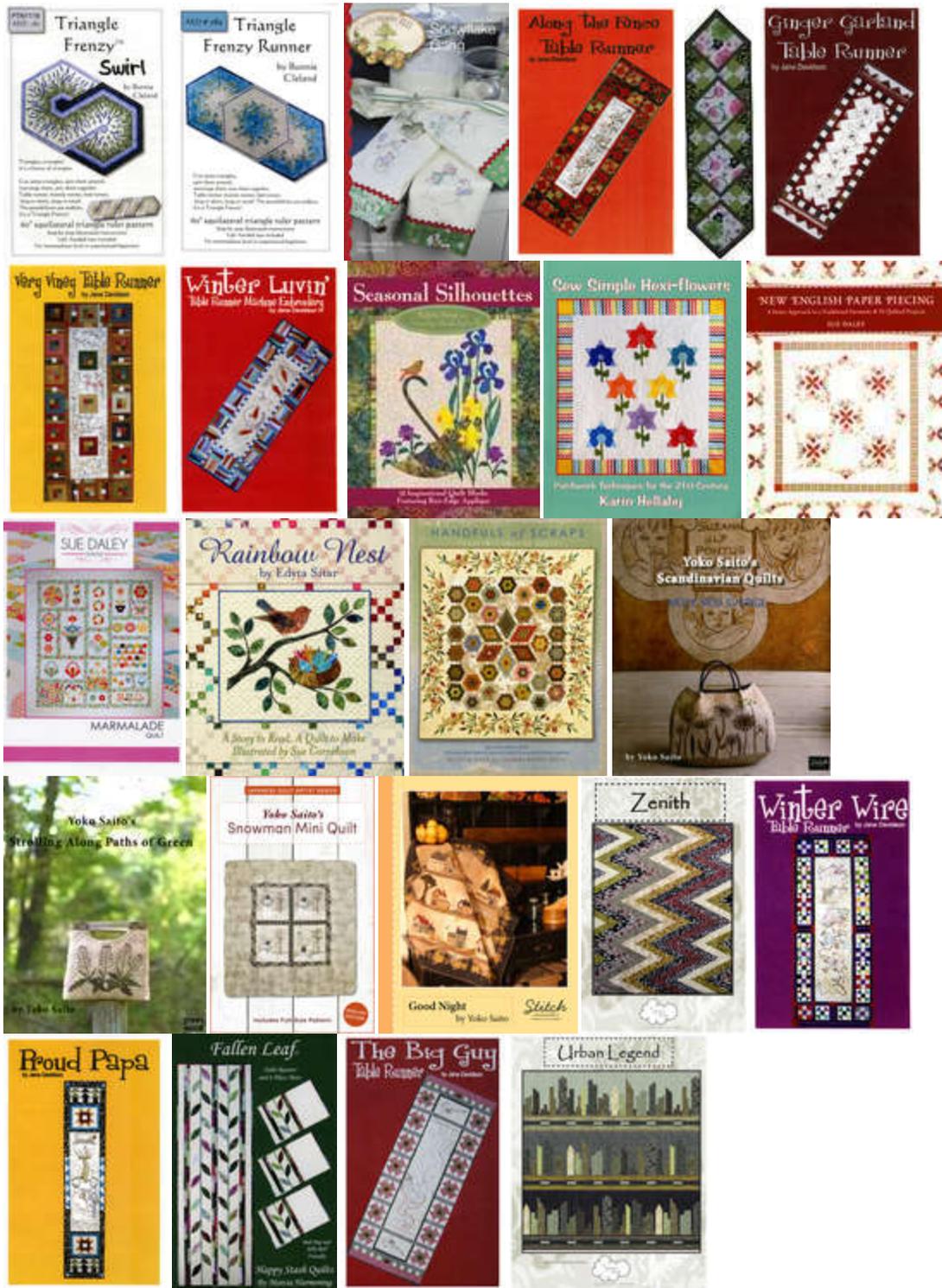
WHAT'S NEW!!



New notions (rulers, glue pens, hexi papers, pin cushions, needle threaders, new floss, wool, hand needles of various types & sizes, safety pins, Roxanne chalk markers, thread, and cutters).

New books & patterns:





December Classes & Special Events

**Hand Embroidery Club Sat. Dec 13, 10-11:30 FREE
Kathy Sconce**

(Club normally meets the 2nd Sat. of each month from 10-noon)
This year we're stitching "penny squares" using simple drawings that we create! During class we will draw various designs and stitch them on 5"

squares. Each month we will learn new stitches and trade designs and ideas. Then these 5" squares can be made into a sampler quilts, or stitched into a "book" of stitches. You will also make your own notebooks so you can keep your squares, ideas, floss, needles & scissors in one place. You can join anytime.

Christmas Mystery -- See above

English Paper Piecing

Mon. Dec 15, 1-3 Barb Boyer \$20

English paper piecing dates back to the early 1800s. It is a hand sewing method that uses paper templates to help sew complex angles together, like hexagons. Any number of different designs can be made, including Grandmother's Flower Garden. The new Downton Abbey line is showing a hexie quilt, using the English paper piecing method. We'll get started on a purse using iron on templates, and then move on to larger quilts and learn different methods of paper piecing.

Hand Applique Club

Thursday Dec 18 6-8:30 free

Every 3rd Thursday, we're getting together to practice our hand applique skills. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and sew. More and more patterns are showing applique work, and learning how to hand applique is a wonderful skill that can be carried anywhere you go.

Friday Nighters Fri. Dec 19, 5:30-9 \$10(one time fee for year)

This class will help you get organized for Christmas 2014 -- or just help you get things done. You give me a list of your "to dos" or unfinished projects you want to finish and then each month I check off what you've completed. Trust me. If you need incentive to stay on track, this is it. You can bring your sewing machine or do hand work.

HAND APPLIQUE CLUB

This is a get-together & stitch class. Many of us are trying hand applique these days-- patterns are calling for a lot more applique. The club is designed for quilters who already do some hand applique, but beginners are welcome as well. We will share techniques, suggest patterns, talk about threads and, in general, just stitch. A little quiet time away from the distractions of home is what we need to get our projects done.

HAND EMBROIDERY CLUB

If you want to learn to hand embroider or just brush up your technique, join us on the second Saturday of the month from 10 to noon. We provide free vintage patterns, and this year we will have free patterns of girls with hats, that you can embroider, embellish and color. Each month Kathy Sconce shows us a new stitch to try, plus, she guides us through thread choices, how to knot, fabrics to use, and tracing techniques.

Knit Pickin' Club

This is another get-together class to sit & knit, work on our projects, share information and get some help. We will share techniques, suggest patterns, but mainly we'll sit &

knit (or pick).

Toad Toters

On full moon days (as noted in the calendar) you will get 20% off all purchases (not otherwise discounted) that you can fit in your bag. You must bring your bag to participate.

Full Moon Days: October 8, November 6, December 6.

Discount Policy

We will honor only one discount -- whichever is largest. You can't combine a 10% with a 25% discount to get a 35% discount. On this we can't be bribed.

Color of the Month

September brown, October orange, November green, December flannels

December 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Monday Morning Quilts 10-2 Quilt TBA	2	3 Doodling on Your Quilt 1-3:30 OR 6-8:30	4	5 Open Sew1-4	6 BOM 10:30- 11:30 Monthly Minis 4-6 Finish Your Quilt Sale FullMoon
7 CLOSED	8 Learn to knit TBA 1:30-3:30 or 6-8:30	9	10	11 Underground Railroad Quilt 1-4 Knit Pickers' Club 6- 8:30	12	13 Embroidery Club 10-noon Christmas Mystery noon-6
14	15 English Paper Piecing 1-3	16	17 Park Bench 1-4 or 5	18 Underground Railroad Quilt 1-4 Hand Applique Club 6-8:30	19 Open Sew1-4 Friday Nighters 5:30 -?	20
21	22	23	24 CLOSED	25 Christmas Day CLOSED	26 sale	27 Sale
28 CLOSED	29	30	31			

