

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

MATTHEW

A situation has arisen, and...I'm not quite sure which way to turn.

VIOLET

Well, obviously, if you've turned to me.

MATTHEW

Robert won't discuss the matter. And Mary is affronted by the very mention of it. But given that I've sunk my own fortune, alongside everyone else's, into...

VIOLET

Into-into Downton.

MATTHEW

I feel a duty, apart from anything else, to do what I can.

VIOLET

About?

MATTHEW

Downton is being mismanaged, Cousin Violet, and something must be done. The thing is, how do I do it without putting people's noses out of joint?

VIOLET

Oh, my dear. Oh, I doubt there is a way to achieve that. I mean, you must do what needs to be done, of course, but...oh, I think I can safely say a great many noses will be out of joint.



February 13, 2015

So I'm watching this ad on tv about a probiotic pill. You know, one of those over the counter pills that keeps your insides moving appropriately. I'm familiar with this product because I can't stand yogurt. Which is a problem if I'm taking lots of antibiotics. Those drugs strip your intestines of stuff like yeast and good bacteria. So you need to eat stuff with bacteria to replenish your system. Hence yogurt. Shudder.

Anyway, back to the ad. Two coed teams are hiking up this hill hauling a big long pine tree, minus the branches (it's a pole). They are dressed for competition--spandex pants, drip dry shirt, competitor number on their backs. Visualize it.

So the woman in the front takes one hand off the pole she's hauling on her shoulder and she produces a vial of pills--the probiotic. She then starts extolling the benefits of this little pill to the other team -- who actually look interested, while they're carrying their own pole up a hill. They're actors, I get it. But....

First of all, she doesn't have any pockets in that tight fitting spandex costume. So she couldn't have pulled the pills from a pocket. Second, she actually had the pills in her hand, one of the hands that had been gripping the pole she was carrying. Third, who in their right mind would carry a vial of pills in their hands while competing in some kind of endurance course? It's probably illegal. Even if it is only something that aids in digestion.

And why would you strike up a conversation with your competition about digestion while walking up hill hauling a pine pole on your shoulders? It would be like Lance Armstrong discussing the benefits of blood doping while biking up hill. Ridiculous.....

And then to casually pass the bottle of pills to your competitors who also have their hands full carrying a big long pole on their shoulders up a hill? It defies credulity. Who thinks this stuff up? I don't think the ad is intended to be funny. I think whoever wrote it completely believes that it's perfectly normal for athletic competitors to carry pills around in their hands. What other explanation is there?

Now, I gotta admit, it is a little easy to watch than that toe fungus commercial that aired during the Super Bowl. I would like to think there are rules of propriety about what should be aired on major broadcasts like that. That ad just gave me the creepy crawlies-like an ad about how to get of lice or bed bugs. Dancing toes wearing helmets. Reminds me a little of Katie Perry's half time show.

But I suppose, if there were such standards, we'd never have the Viagra car. If you didn't see the Super Bowl, or you missed the ad, it involved a small car that takes a pill and gets magically bigger. A refreshing take on that silly little pill. Enough said.

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. Single Room supplement is \$75. We need a minimum of 10 quilters for the retreat.

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.



They face adversity and endure hardships; yet all too often their troubles go unnoticed. We also honor those Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines who must miss holidays, birthdays, and family moments in far-away distant lands. It is for the family members who keep the house running while their husband, wife, son or daughter is away. It is for the children who dearly miss their deployed parent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt. We say thank you to the men and women who have volunteered to serve our country and preserve our freedom.

See precious posts for more info on submitting a quilt for the challenge.

The Frozen panel is here! Panels are \$8.
We have some beautiful sparkly fabrics
that should work well with this panel.



WHAT'S NEW!!

From Alexander Henry:



From Moda:



From Andover:



February Classes & Special Events

Hand Embroidery Club Sat. February 14, 10-11:30 FREE

(Club normally meets the 2nd Sat. of each month from 10-noon)

This year we're doing birds-state birds. We will have between 40-50 birds (some states use the same bird) for you to stitch. Various setting for turning the birds into a quilt will be provided. Color suggestions for the birds will also be offered. As a bonus, you will get the state outlines, state flowers, and other patterns to compliment the birds. You can join anytime.

Table Runner of the Month: Round Applique Table Runner Sat.

February 14 1-6 \$20 Sue Frerich

This table runner is from a Fons & Porter magazine. But we've increased the size little bit to make it easier to do. This is a perfect centerpiece for any table.

Take 5 Quilt Mon. Sat. February 16, 10:30-5 \$20 Barb Boyer

Take 5 is a fun and fast quilt to make on a Monday holiday. This is always a popular class and you can usually get your top completed in class (the smaller versions, not the king size). And we have lots of new spring fabrics that will help relieve the doldrums of winter. This is a perfect graduation gift-think ahead to May. You can get it done! So if you need a quick quilt project, this is the perfect quilt class.

Hand Quilting Thurs. February 19 1-3 \$25

Sandra Freeburg

Hand quilting is an art that should not be lost. By the end of Sandra's class you will be hand quilting with confidence. Everyone has at least one special quilt that calls out for hand quilting. And there is nothing better than the feel of a hand quilted quilt. Do yourself a favor and learn this art that connects us to our past -- our mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers.

Chloe February 21 10:30-5 \$20 Sue Frerich

This contemporary applique quilt with its unique setting has the look of needle turn applique, but is done entirely by machine in a fraction of the time! Furthermore, because of the materials used, it has the look of trapunto after it has been quilted. During class you will learn this machine applique technique using applique fiber. With this method there is no need to slit the back of the fabric and stress your stitching to remove paper.

Jungle walk February 28 10:30-5 \$20 Sue Frerich

This adorable quilt is a fusible applique project, as easy as it is fun to make! Gather up your scraps to make your quilt one of a kind. You will learn the fusible applique process and explore both hand- and machine-finishing techniques. Expect to finish at least one block during this 1-day class.

Hand Applique Club

Thursday February 26 1:30-4 free

The last Thursday of each month, 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 while sometimes you can just fuse it down, learning how to hand applique is a wonderful skill that can be carried anywhere you go.

Bertie's Year last Friday of the month, 1-4

Bertie's Year is a small wall hanging, (or you can make each block into a mini quilt for display each month). Bertie is done in flannels and wool (kit only includes flannel). Bertie (the bird) and friends (squirrel, pumpkins) are appliqued with crazy quilt embroidery embellishments.

Friday Nighters Fri. February 27, 5:30-9 \$10 (one time fee for year)

This class will help you get organized for Christmas 2015 -- 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.

March Classes & Special Events

Monday Morning Quilts Mar. 2 10-2 Free, if you buy that month's kit

Each month we will feature quilts from the Quilter's World magazine or other fun quilts. We will choose one of the quilts from the magazine and make limited kits. In class, we will show you how to put the quilt together and you will have time to get started. Quilts will be big or small or in between. Quilt is a Hexi Swirl from this issue of Quilter's World. Learn to cut the triangles for the hexies in several different ways.

Beginning Quilting ongoing Sun. 1-4, Mar 8, 15, 29

OR Wednesdays: 1-4 OR 6-9 Mar 4, 11

Block of the Month Sat. Mar 7, 10:30-11:15 FREE

Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. This year we're making a neutrally colored quilt (tans, taupes, greys, etc.)-come to class in January to see an example.

Monthly Minis First Saturday of the Month, Jan-Dec. 4-6 Barb Boyer \$20 ongoing

Knitting: Back to Basics. Mon. Mar 9 6-8:30 \$20 Carol Moler

Each month we will offer a selection of projects for the beginner and more advanced knitter. In March we will how to bind off the projects we've been working on for the past couple of months. We will also have a beginning ribbing project, like a head band or scarf. For more experienced knitters, the project will be a slouch hat, joined in the round with ribbing.

Downton Abbey Sampler Quilt Thurs. March 12, 1-4 ongoing

Knit Pickers' Club Thur. March 12, 6-8:30

Every second Thursday, we're getting together to practice our knitting. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and knit. If you are in the Monday knitting classes, you can work on your project and get help, if you need it.

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Table Runner of the Month: Leaves

Sat. Mar 14 1-6 \$20 or free if you buy the kit Jo Sunderman

We will be making different table runners each month. This table runner includes appliqued (fused) leaves and simple piecing. It's easy to extend the length to fit the size of your table.

Sew Simple Hexie Flowers Mon. Mar. 16, 1-3

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. Instead of traditional hexagon shapes, we will make "hexi flowers" using the shape called bishop's mitre, or jewel. We will make a bouquet of different flowers that will be appliqued onto a background, to make a small wall hanging. This class is for both beginners and experienced paper piecers.

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**DOWNTON ABBEY RETREAT!
AND DOWNTON ABBEY TRUNK SHOW!
WARREN NAGEL MANSION
MARCH 20-22**

See Dec. 12 Newsletter for more details (on web at aroundtheblockquilts.com)

Beginning Machine Quilting Wed. Mar 22, 1:30-4 OR 6-8:30 \$25 Sue Frerich

Be prepared to quilt! You will practice your quilting skills on various samples, using both your walking foot and darning foot. Batting, threads, needles and patterns will be discussed. Who knows? By the time you leave you may even be able to write/quilt your name!

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Machine Servicing Mon Mar 30, 10-6

Chris Blakeman from Blackman Vacuum and Sewing will come to the shop to service machines! We are hoping to be able to handle up to 20 machines, but I'll keep you posted. For now, I will start a list, first come first served, of everyone who wants a sewing machine serviced. Pricing will depend upon machine, but more details will follow. Machines can be dropped off at the shop on Sunday between 4-5 (please don't bring them earlier because there is a class) and on Monday after 10. Machines will need to be picked up no later than noon on Tuesday, unless other arrangements are made (we don't have the room to store machines). Let me know if you are interested!

February 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| 1 CLOSED | 2 Monday Morning Quilts 10-2 | 3 Full Moon | 4 Beginning Quilt 1-4 Or 6-8:30 | 5 Back Basting 1:00-3:00 | 6 Open Sew1-4 | 7 BOM 10:30-11:30 Monthly Minis 4-6 |
| 8 Beginning Quilt 1-4 | 9 Knitting: Back to Basics: Stockinette 6-8:30 | 10 | 11 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or 6-8:30 | 12 Downton Abbey Sampler 1-4 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30 | 13 | 14 Embroidery Club 10-noon Round applique table runner 1-6 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Beginning Quilt 1-4 | Take 5 10:30-5 | | Beginning Quilt 1-4 or 6-8:30 | Hand Quilting 1-3 | Open Sew1-4 | Chloe 10:30-5 |
| 22 Beginning Quilt 1-4 | 23 | 24 | 25 Beginning Quilt 1-4 Or 6-8:30 | 26 Hand Applique Club 1:30-4 Arcadia 6-9 | 27 Bertie's Year 1-4 Friday Nighters 5:30 -? | 28 Jungle Walk 10:30-5 |
| Color of the Month: Red | | | | | | |

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: January 5 (observed), February 3, March 5, April 4.

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

January purple, February red, March green, April yellow