

Favorite quotes from Downton Abbey:

LADY EDITH

Why is Sybil having a new dress and not me?

CORA, COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM

Because it's Sybil's turn.

LADY SYBIL

Can it be my choice this time?

CORA, COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM

Of course, darling. As long as you choose what I choose.



**February 27, 2015**

It's all about the dress and I am here to keep you up to date on what is trendy in the news. I figure that's my job, since none of this is really important and I know you don't pay much attention to any of this. And actually, neither do I, but as I was waiting for a ride back from the auto service store (oil change place), CNBC news show was playing on the tv. The sound was turned off, but the headlines, and photo, were all about "the dress" controversy: Is it black & blue or gold & white? And the 4, count them 4, news anchors were talking about the controversy.

Did I mention this was a news show? One where stock quotes and stock market ups & downs are scrolled at the bottom of the screen? Presumably important stuff. Like news. But all 4 of the anchors were talking about the color of a dress.

And they're not the only ones, but I'll get to that in a minute. For those of you not up to date on this crisis, it all started when the bride's mom was figuring out what to wear to her daughter's wedding (which was on an island in Scotland, no less). She took a picture of the dress & sent it the daughter for an opinion. They had a discussion regarding the color of the dress, based upon that picture. The picture got posted on Facebook and then days later, & after the wedding, on Tumblr (no clue, but obviously you can share pictures on this). Then the photo got shared with a singer in the band that played at the wedding and the picture got posted on the fan site for the band. Meanwhile, the bride & groom are on their honeymoon in the Caribbean, probably clueless regarding the dress controversy. I hope they're clueless, if you get my drift. Got all of that?

Now it gets weird. The thing goes viral. Bloggers, news outlets, Twitter (another one of those instant time wasters), CNBC and even Congress gets into the debate. Remember, the wedding is over, bride & groom are on their honeymoon, and the mom has probably put the dress back into the closet. But now Ellen Degeneres and Taylor Swift are Tweeting about it. Kim Kardashian has asked her 29.4million Twitter followers to help settle a disagreement between herself and husband Kanye West about the color of the dress.

I'll get to Congress in a minute. I just want to dwell on the fact that 29.4 million people follow what Kim Kardashian has to say. Scary, isn't it.

So anyway, Congress now gets into all of this. On a Thursday night, when clearly there were more

pressing matters to attend to, like whether to continue to fund Homeland Security, the legislators starting testing their tweeting skills by debating the color of the dress. Clearly we don't have enough to do.

Now, I get that we all need to take a break from important stuff and this whole debate falls under the category of "fun." But there is a bigger picture here. And it's called the Oscars. (And you thought I might start talking about climate change. Silly you.)

The Twitter hashtag campaign, #AskHerMore, is all about more than the dress. Or actually, not about the dress at all. Red Carpet interviews consistently ask the women about their clothes and the men about their upcoming movies & careers. Reese Witherspoon (and others) want to put a stop to this: "This is a movement to say we're more than just our dresses... It's hard being a woman in Hollywood." So in response, the Red Carpet offered the manicam, to showcase what women were wearing on their fingernails. Heads up to Best actress Oscar winner Patricia Arquette regarding the "silly mani cam business" when she told a Red Carpet interviewer that she didn't have time for a manicure because she'd been busy with her eco-sanitation charity.

And because we're still talking about the silliness of dresses, let's not leave out Kim Kardashian and Rita Ora from this conversation. Yeah, I know, I don't know who Rita is either, but apparently she dated Kim's brother for awhile before dumping him because she was cheating on him. Yes, you read that right. And that makes her important, I guess. Anyway, the two of them show up at the same party wearing the same (or almost) similar dress: a pink latex body suit. Who knew there were 2? There shouldn't even be 1. You gotta google the pics. It's one of those moments when you can hear a mother somewhere in the background saying, "You're not going to the prom (or school or the mall) looking like that, young lady. Go upstairs and change."

But back to the color of the dress, which started all of this. The photo is deceptive because of the angle of the sunlight. It is blue and black. What's even more amazing about this story is that scientists have actually been drawn into this morass, with explanations on how the eye sees color.

Sheesh.

So now you know all about the dress controversy. And you are now officially part of the morass. You can thank me later.

## **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](http://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.

### **I now have the forms for the contest.**



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.

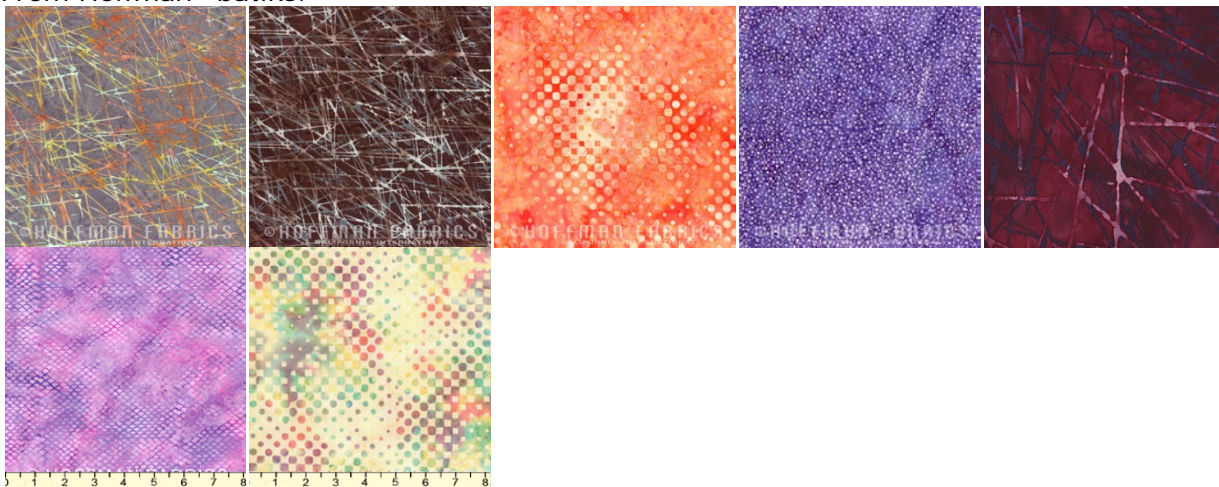
See previous posts for more info on submitting a quilt for the challenge.

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 Hoffman--batiks:



From Moda:



## February Classes & Special Events

**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 show 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.

**Hand Embroidery Club** Sat. March 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: 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.

**Hand Quilting** Thurs. Mar. 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.

**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](http://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	2	3	4	5	6	7



CLOSED	<b>Monday Morning Quilts 10-2</b>	Full Moon	<b>Beginning Quilt 1-4 Or 6-8:30</b>	<b>Back Basting 1:00-3:00</b>	<b>Open Sew1-4</b>	<b>BOM 10:30-11:30 Monthly Minis 4-6</b>
8	<b>Knitting: Back to Basics: Stockinette 6-8:30</b>	10	<b>Beginning Quilt 1-4 or 6-8:30</b>	<b>Downton Abbey Sampler 1-4 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30</b>	13	<b>Embroidery Club 10-noon Round applique table runner 1-6</b>
15	<b>Take 5 10:30-5</b>	17	<b>Beginning Quilt 1-4 or 6-8:30</b>	<b>Hand Quilting 1-3</b>	<b>Open Sew1-4</b>	<b>Chloe 10:30-5</b>
22		24	<b>Beginning Quilt 1-4 Or 6-8:30</b>	<b>Hand Applique Club 1:30-4 Arcadia 6-9</b>	<b>Bertie's Year 1-4 Friday Nighters 5:30 -?</b>	<b>Jungle Walk 10:30-5</b>
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.

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### 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.

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### 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