

The summer months are always busy and this year is no exception. The High Top workshop was very well attended and received many complimentary comments. Participants were shown images of High Tops on clothing and were able to hold the original buttons. This was followed by a video on how to make these intricate buttons and finally the participants made their own buttons. All within a very intensive two and a half hours.

Get creative and make your own personalised present for that special occasion is the subject of the next workshop in September. Use your Dorset Buttons and favourite photographs and pieces of fabric to create a gift for that special occasion which may even become a family heirloom.

Please contact me with your Dorset Button news and views as I am interested in what you are doing.

*Anna McDowell*

### **Gold Hill Museum Dorset Button Exhibition May 2013 by Anna McDowell**

Over a year ago at a brainstorming session we discussed how to promote the Dorset Button industry. It was suggested that we have an exhibition of Dorset Buttons. So I set to and started to look for a venue and possible date for this exhibition.

My immediate thought was Gold Hill Museum in Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury was the base from which Abraham Case started the industry and the museum has an excellent display of Dorset Buttons. The venue has a temporary exhibition room and an excellent lecture room for workshops and talks. The timing is still under discussion but it is hoped to mount this display over the Bank Holiday weekend at the end on May 2013.

The subject for this exhibition is to give individuals and groups the opportunity to display their skills and works of art and offer the opportunity for sales. In addition I hope we can arrange workshops, demonstrations and talks.

If anyone is interested please contact me on 01747 829010 or [henrysbuttons@aol.com](mailto:henrysbuttons@aol.com)

2013 Dorset Button Exhibition by Anna McDowell

Smock and Dorset buttons by Ros Atkins

Publication by Sally Webster

Charles I waistcoat by Anna McDowell

News from Bridport by Mercia Machin

Workshops and events

### **Smocks and Dorset Buttons by Ros Atkins**

I have been making traditional smocks for many years and it was the finishing of these garments that first introduced me to Dorset Buttons.

Earlier this year I designed a smock based on the description in the Thomas Hardy novel 'Under the Greenwood Tree' of '...snow white smock frocks embroidered on the shoulders and breasts in ornamental forms of hearts, diamonds and zigzags....'.

Accordingly I decorated the areas on either side of the smocked panels with heart and diamond motifs richly embroidered in feather and chain stitch. The photograph (right) shows some of the embroidery and the buttons. The smock was the popular coat style, fastening right down the front with Dorset cross wheel buttons.

The smock was entered into the Dorset Arts and Crafts Association annual exhibition held earlier this month and I am pleased to report was awarded a gold certificate. [www.rosalindatkins.co.uk](http://www.rosalindatkins.co.uk)



### **Publication: Open – Antiques, Curios and Dorset Buttons by Sally Webster**

Sally Webster was inspired by 'buttony' and, as part of an exhibition of works of art based on Dorset Buttons, has produced this full colour book which is packed with images of original buttons and her creations. Sally began using traditional techniques to create Dorset Buttons on a larger scale in her art work. She has developed the art of making these intricate thread buttons by using contemporary materials. This book is an inspiration to us all on 'buttony' in the 21st century.

Sally completed a pre MA course at Bath Spa University through the Artist Teacher Scheme and has exhibited her work on Dorset Buttons at Corsham Court, Wiltshire. Details on how to order this publication can be found on [www.henrysbuttons.co.uk/shop](http://www.henrysbuttons.co.uk/shop).



## Research - Charles I waistcoat by Anna McDowell

It is said that Charles I went to his execution wearing a waistcoat with Dorset Buttons.

Intrigued, I thought I would try and find this garment. After researching into this, I have found two possible garments, one held by the Museum of London, the other at Longleat House in Wiltshire. I contacted the curators of both collections and they very kindly sent me photographs of the garments.

The Museum of London holds a knitted silk 'waistcoat' reputedly worn by Charles I on the scaffold. Forensic examination has been used to determine the cause of the stains and to see whether they could be linked to the execution. The results were inconclusive. Sadly the buttons are not from Dorset.

So my hopes now lay with the garment held at Longleat House. Dr Harris, Curator of the Longleat Collections, was very helpful. Apparently she receives many enquiries on this subject as they hold a blue sleeved waistcoat which only has eight buttons left of original forty nine buttons. The missing buttons were given away as relics of the King. The buttons are domed, made of bone and covered with three strand woven pale blue silk. I was hopeful that this could be Dorset Knobs. When I examined the photograph of the garment I was again disappointed as they were not Dorset Buttons.

So where did this misconception originate? Where is the garment with Dorset Buttons that supposedly worn by Charles I at his execution? Does such a garment even exist?

## News from Bridport by Marcia Machin

The stalls at craft markets in Bridport during the summer, provided a great opportunity to talk about the history of buttony with the many interested visitors.

Bridport Dorset Button Group enjoyed a visit from an enquiring friend from Budleigh Salterton recently, who showed interest via [www.henrysbuttons.co.uk](http://www.henrysbuttons.co.uk). We are always open to more keen button makers on a Monday morning 11.00am in the Beach & Barnicott where you will find a warm welcome.....and extremely good hot chocolate while you make your (first?) button! Contact Marcia Machin 01308 423457 [marciamachin@gmail.com](mailto:marciamachin@gmail.com) to be sure we are meeting.

## Workshop & Events

### Tuesday 11th September - Workshop - Get Creative

Made a Dorset Button - or two? Want to display it?

Use family photographs and your Dorset Buttons to create something special for that special occasion or for someone special? Kate Pickard, an experienced trainer and enthusiastic quilter, will show you how to make a decorated photo album with your buttons on the cover.

Venue and time: Gold Hill Museum, Shaftesbury. 2.00 – 4.30pm

Cost: £15.00 (bring your own sewing equipment)

For details and to book a place: Booking Form or contact Anna McDowell.

### Friday 12th October - Ardington School - Dorset Buttons Workshop

In this practical workshop you will learn how to make the intricate Dorset Cartwheel button and then other designs. This course is ideal for beginners and all those who want to refresh their skills.

Venue: Ardington School of Crafts, School Road, Ardington, Oxfordshire OX12 8PN

Time: 9.30am - 4.30pm

Cost: £65.00 (see the Ardington Centre for details)

Contact: To book and for further details Tel: 01235 833433 or email [info@ardingtonschoolofcrafts.com](mailto:info@ardingtonschoolofcrafts.com).

### Tuesday 23rd October - Dorset Button Workshop – Cartwheel buttons

The aim of the workshop is to achieve two fully worked buttons with different patterns starting with the traditional Cartwheel button.

Venue: Garden Room, Gold Hill Museum, Shaftesbury. 2.00 - 4.30pm

Cost: £15.00 (bring your own sewing equipment)

For details and to book a place: Contact Anna McDowell.

In addition to the workshops above I'm proposing to book tables at three Christmas Fairs. If you are interested in finding out more please contact me for details.

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Supported by



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