



## Suffragette Inspired Dorset Buttons by Anna McDowell

It is one hundred years since those brave and determined members of the Suffragette Movement fought for the rights for which we enjoy today. I wanted to celebrate and thank the women and men for their outstanding contribution.

My challenge was how to do this with a Dorset Button? I wanted my buttons to have a vintage feel and my collection of vintage threads included the three Suffragette colours: a perfect white for purity, green for hope and purple for loyalty and dignity.

So having got the threads, what to do next. I wanted to make my buttons special, something memorable that would celebrate this anniversary.

I'm an Antiques Roadshow fan

and in one episode I remember seeing a wonderful brooch that a lady brought in to be identified and valued. It was a lovely filigree gold brooch set with precious stones of amethyst, emeralds and pearls,



all Suffragette colours. For further inspiration, I searched the website and found similar fine delicate pieces to the brooch I remembered on the Roadshow.

So the challenge I set myself was to work a button in the

suffragette colours using thread and beads and which will also have a filigree feel to it.

Unfortunately, my budget didn't run to such exquisite sparkles as amethyst, emeralds and pearls so I had to improvise

and used crystal beads instead. This image is the result of my little experiment. Now all I have to do is to turn them into brooches ready to sell later this year.

Finally, I would like to thank all those women and men who fought for our rights so we can now have a say in today's political environment.

One hundred year ago 'The Representation of the People Act 1918' saw British women over 30 gain the vote; women over 21 did not get the vote until 1928. You can find out more about Women and the vote from [Parliament UK](#)

## Dorset Buttons Support Dementia by Anna McDowell

The Forget-me-Not button I wrote about in my December edition of this newsletter has been an overwhelming success. Nearly 200 buttoners downloading the instructions from my website, I don't know who you are but I would like to thank you all for your support.



Not only have you supported this worthwhile cause with my worksheets but I have also been asked to run a workshop at the Hardy Visitor Centre near

Dorchester (details on the back page) as part of their Dementia week. Also my local town, Shaftesbury in Dorset, has adopted my button as their symbol to show which businesses are 'dementia friendly'.

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# A “Homegrown” Wedding by Lindsay Burt



On Saturday 22nd July 2018, our wedding celebrations were always going to be a “homegrown” affair featuring buttons. This theme started with the invitations which were all homemade and decorated with buttons.

We framed a table name ladder decorated with

Dorset Buttons, lace and burlap flowers. Table jars were filled with garden gloves with



Dorset Button table number labels.

I made a tiny Dorset ‘Cartwheel’ Button (12mm) and sewed it at the back of my dress

My mother was unable to come to our wedding due to Alzheimer’s but my necklace was made from pearl



buttons discovered in

her button box.

My daughter is getting married this year and she, of course, must have a blue Dorset Button discreetly sewn on the inside of her dress!



## Fingerless gloves

Last year I was alerted to a free knitting pattern for fingerless gloves that featured a Dorset Button. This pattern was available to download for free from Ravelry, the community site



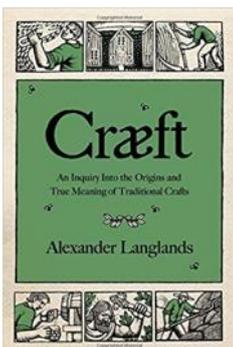
for knitters and crocheters. Earlier this year, I received this message from a Dorset Buttoner, Jackie Freeman.

“Hi Anna. Sometime in the autumn you kindly shared a free knitting pattern for fingerless gloves finished with a Dorset button. I downloaded the pattern vaguely thinking I could knit them as a Christmas present....and I even bought

*some nice Aran wool while on a weekend break in Dublin. But Christmas came and went and I didn't get round to making the gloves. This weekend, with a cold snap forecast for this week I decided to make a pair for myself. I remember you asked for photos - so here is my contribution!”*

Thank you Jackie. Love the mits.

## Publication—Craeft: An Inquiry Into the Origins and True Meaning of Traditional Crafts by Alexander Langlands



I've just come across this book published in 2018 on Amazon. Has anyone read it and if please send me your comments? I feel it may be very relevant to the heritage craft of Dorset Buttons.

“When it first appeared in Old English, the word craeft signified an indefinable sense of knowledge, wisdom, and resourcefulness. Rediscovering craft will connect us with our human past, our sense of

place, and our remarkable capacity to survive in the harshest of landscapes. Craeft helps us more fully appreciate human ingenuity and the passing on of traditions from generation to generation.”

## A few thoughts on Dorset Buttons by Anna McDowell



I love working in the round and Dorset Buttons allow me to do this to my great satisfaction. With the use of different textures, a humble button can be turned into something quite magical and usually very tactile. So much so that I have had to frame some of my bigger pieces as they were beginning to get a bit worn!



Top: Anita Pullan's vase

Bottom: Sally Webster's take on the Dorset Knob

I am always looking for new ways to use these lovely designs and some of you have been an inspiration. In 2013, I organised an exhibition on Dorset Buttons and was thrilled when two artists agreed to exhibit their work, a ceramist, Anita Pullan, and a textile artist,

Sally Webster.

Anita's porcelain pieces were very fine. By using the methods of making a Dorset Button, she covered a vase before firing. She also mixes and

matched the button weaving patterns she had learnt including the cartwheel and basket weave. Sally Webster used the High Top and Dorset Knobs and incorporating household items into her work

This was five years ago so what is happening today? I noticed on Twitter that Tania Ashton Jones was up to something interesting with textiles so I contacted her for details. This is what she sent to me.

*My aim to think of different ways to use Dorset Buttons led to making Dorset Button Fabric. The pink & orange bag range was launched in 2017, followed this year by the blue & green designs. Working in conjunction with other independent Scottish companies, I make the Dorset Buttons, photograph them & then they are digitally printed*

*for me onto Scottish & English Linen and made into bags by a social enterprise. I plan to gradually add to the colours and designs & use the fabric for other items too. This year I took the green design & also had it printed up into wallpaper to use on my*



*display stand at Edinburgh Yarn Festival — it was certainly very eye-catching!*

Thank you Tania for sharing this.

## Surprise Dorset Button Birthday Cake by Tania Ashton Jones



Having seen Susan's chocolate birthday cake decorated with a Dorset Button in the December 2017 Newsletter I thought I'd show you the surprise Dorset Button Birthday cake my husband had made for me in 2015.

We were travelling to the West Country for a birthday weekend when he said we had to do a detour to pick up something for a work event he had. Slightly exasperated at this detour, on arrival I stayed in the car. A few minutes later he came out and said they've invited us in for coffee. And there inside was this cake!

Having never heard of a Dorset Button the lady had looked at my website to come up with the design and I love how she also incorporated knitting as the base & a frog, a nod to my collection of frogs & my business name TJFrog. It was with great reluctance that the cake eventually got cut!

## Wet summer day in Australia by Susan Lendon



Beautiful Wilson's Promentory and especially Magic Beach, epitomised in Alison Lester's book for children; a perfect venue to share the craft of Buttons and make Dorset Button Brooches.

A week of sunshine and then Dorset Button day, rain, rain and more rain. Not daunted we spread out the samples under shelter, got out the threads and rings and

immersed ourselves, my sister Dawn and I. Buttons can disappear an afternoon, not to mention create an addiction and I had a captive audience to share the story of the people and the beginnings of the Button trade.



# Events for 2018

## **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 Dorset 'Forget-me-not' Button workshop**

**Dementia Awareness Button**  
This workshop is aimed at advanced buttoners who wish to help promote dementia awareness. Participants will spend the morning creating the Dementia Friends symbol, the Forget-me-not flower, within the button. Being a Dementia Friend is about understanding dementia and the small things that we can all do that can make a difference to people living with dementia.



**Supported by Stepping into Nature** a local Dorset project using Dorset's natural and cultural landscape to deliver health and well-being benefits for those living with dementia, pre and post diagnosed and their carers.  
Skill level: Advanced.  
Knowledge on how to make a Dorset 'cartwheel' Button essential.  
Venue: *Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre, Higher Bockhampton, near Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8QJ*  
Time: 10.00am – 12.30pm  
Entry and Details: Tel: 01305

251228, *Hardy's Birthplace on Facebook* or [hardysbirthplace@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:hardysbirthplace@dorsetcc.gov.uk)

## **28th May to 12th June 2016 Dorset Art Weeks**

Dorset Arts Weeks is one of the largest Open Studio Events in the country; it brings artists and visitors together in ways that are often remarkable and profoundly different from entering a public gallery. Visit Henry's Buttons unit at the Cygnet Gallery, Shaftesbury, a co-operative style gallery featuring a collection of arts and crafts by local artists including my Dorset Buttons.  
Venue: The Cygnet, Swans Yard, High Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8JQ  
Time: 10.00am – 5.00pm daily  
Details: [www.thecygnet.org.uk](http://www.thecygnet.org.uk)

## **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 Larmer Tree Festival Adult Workshop**

Work Dorset Buttons in the Suffragette colours and turn it into a Festival brooch.  
Venue: Larmer Tree, Wiltshire  
Time and Details: Visit the [Larmer Tree Festival](http://www.larmer-tree.co.uk) website

## **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August – Tuesday 7th August 2018 Dorset Arts and Crafts Association Annual Exhibition**

The Dorset Arts and Crafts Association was founded in 1907 and is one of the oldest in the country. The Association is dedicated to the promotion of traditional and modern arts

and crafts and organise an exhibition with twenty-four different craft sections including one for Dorset Buttons under the section for Traditional Dorset Crafts. This is an opportunity to help keep the heritage craft of Dorset Buttony alive by exhibiting your work. Look out for the Henry's Buttons stall where I'll be demonstrating Dorset Buttons and have many gifts, kits for sale together with my new publication on how to make Dorset Buttons.  
Venue: The Purbeck School, Worgret Road, Wareham, BH20 4PF  
Time: Friday to Monday 10.00am - 5.00pm. Tuesday 10am - 4pm  
Cost: Adults £5.00, Senior citizens £4.00, Children aged 6-16 £3.00, Children under 6 free, Families (2 + 3) £12.00, Pre-booked coach parties £3.50. Free for Members of the Association.  
Details: [Dorset Arts and Crafts Association](http://www.dorsetartsandcrafts.org.uk)

## **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> and Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2018**

**Dorset Artisans Craft Marquee**  
**Dorset County Show**  
Dorset County show is launching a new Dorset Artisans Craft marquee at this year's show, featuring handmade quality arts and crafts from Dorset, including Henry's Buttons Dorset Buttons.  
Venue: *Dorchester Showground, DT2 7SD*  
Details: for full details go you the [Dorset County Show](http://www.dorsetcountyshow.co.uk) website

## Share your news, views and projects

For full details of all events please visit the Events Page on my website  
[Henry's Buttons](http://www.henrysbuttons.co.uk)

*I'm always interested to hear your news, views and especially any projects you may be involved in featuring Dorset Buttons. From the emails I have received in the past, I know there are many talented buttoners amongst you. If you would be willing to share your Dorset Button news with other like-minded people, I would welcome contributions to this eNewsletter. Please email your information preferably with an image to Anna McDowell at [dorsetbuttons@henrysbuttons.co.uk](mailto:dorsetbuttons@henrysbuttons.co.uk)*