



Opening my Studio this May by Anna McDowell

What a very strange beginning of the year we have had! Our third lockdown started in January and we were eventually allowed to mix with others in early April, albeit only six adults can meet outside with the usual masks and distance requirements.

Making a decision of how to exhibit may work was also in the forefront. In 2021 I have decided to open my studio as part of the Dorset Art Weeks which was supposed to take place in May 2020. But as you can imagine, this was cancelled. So, what to do? Will the organisers wait until 2022 or

bring it forward to 2021? I was also scheduled to take part in the Wylve Valley Arts Trail which in normal circumstances takes place during the middle of May 2021. I was still waiting for a decision from both organisations in February

May. Would I have enough work to exhibit? So I had to spend many happy hours in my studio creating.

The first of the two events was the Wylve Valley Arts Trail which runs from 1st to 9th May followed by the Dorset Art Weeks from 22nd May to 6th June. A total of three weeks of meeting and greeting visitors to my studio and I needed to create enough work to make it worth their visit.

I'm now open and the general

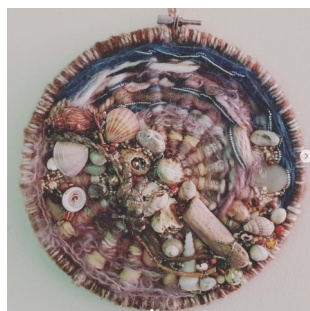
feedback I am receiving is very encouraging. So, my efforts have been worthwhile. Wish me luck!



and March. At last a decision was made, but help, both events would take place in

Dorset Buttons on Social Media by Anna McDowell

I'm always interested to see who is uploading their Dorset Button creations on to social media. I was particularly interested in this image on Instagram from [@ramtopsrac](https://www.instagram.com/ramtopsrac)



and inspired by the seashore. I particularly like the way the ridges of the Dorset Button can still be seen against the careful placing of the sea shells. Thus proving it is a Dorset Button!

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Henry's Buttons

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Follow me on:



Update - 2022 marks the 400th anniversary of the Dorset Button by Anna McDowell

Plans for our celebration are going ahead behind the scenes, with several ideas for possible ways to celebrate the Dorset Button industry being discussed.

Dorset Buttons 2022

Also, a number of Dorset Buttoners have contacted me with ideas for their own projects and workshops and I look forward to receiving details so I can include them on our calendar page of our

website. I have uploaded four of the ideas that we have received for suggestions on the Dorset Button 2022 website. All you have to do is click [here](#).

Other ideas that we are exploring are the best way to collect a list of all those who have connections with the Dorset Button industry, and a possible project looking at ways to use items in the home to upcycle otherwise destined for the bin and the landfill. This would be based on the basic methods used to make Dorset Buttons.

I'm so lucky as I have an excellent group of volunteers who have agreed to help with coordinating and organising this celebration. The team comes from all corners of Britain with Tania Ashton Jones of T J Frog from the Isle of Skye, Scotland; Julia Clay from North Wales, whose father's family originally came from

Dorset; Jen Best who has a shop called Beaker Buttons at the Fairground, Weyhill, Hampshire; Julia Carter, Dorset, a passionate upcycler, textile artist and a Trustee of the Dorset History Trust, and finally myself. All of us are passionate about the Dorset Button industry.

The dedicated 400 years celebration website provides a platform to enable you to promote your calendar of events giving extensive visibility while adding to a bank of activities for people across the world to take part in. The Dorset Button 2022 project team would love to hear your ideas.

www.dorsetbuttons2022.co.uk

@dorsetbuttons2022

Historical Costumes by Andrea Tavner



Working within the historical costume business, discovering Dorset buttons and being able to replicate authentic era fastenings has been an absolute joy. Not only have I learnt about the history of

the Dorset button, I've been able to make them too. Although my first attempt, certainly wouldn't have passed the grade back in the day! The images are of a 1800's daydress,

for a client, who when restrictions allow, will continue her passion for historical dancing. With my costume commissions currently up to date, I now find myself looking through my project draw. Hunting out where I can make and use some more Dorset buttons and I'm relishing have some time to attempt the daisy design and go on from there.



With Buttons Series #1: Dorset in white linen from Hope Wright, Springfield, USA

I decided to get my buttons out of notebooks to wall hangings so I can enjoy them on the wall. I could use some of my already made samples from various hand and machine embroidery projects, that were just sitting around in notebooks and boxes, and enjoy them as well. The embroidery is

from an experiment to achieve texture using free-motion machine stitching. This is from the page in my button notebook of Dorset buttons using mostly linen threads, with a couple using sewing thread in order to have a smaller thread

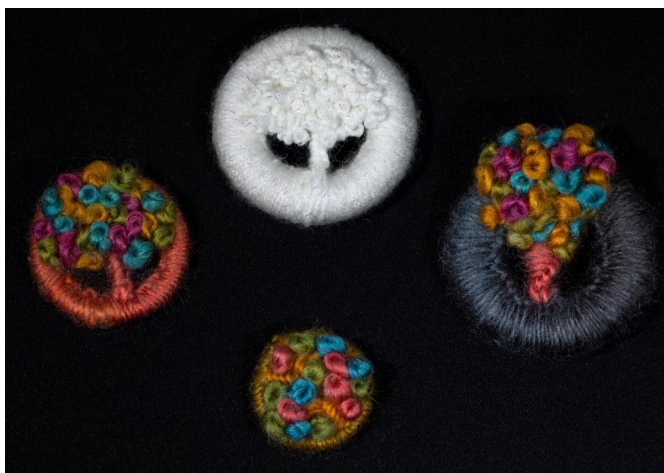


My Dorset Button journey by Caroline Allen

"I am currently studying for my City & Guilds diploma, in creative textiles and embroidery. As part of this course I was researching the history of embroidery; the search suggested Dorset buttons, among other things, such as gold work. I started reading up on it and looking at images, by the end of the search I was hooked I hunted through my macrame supplies, where I knew I had some brass and wooden rings, and while watching TV set about mastering the wrap and the weave. I found it very therapeutic and before I knew it I had four buttons finished, to varying standards. Nonetheless, standards aside, I loved it and

would definitely like to explore more about this regional and historic craft, and try some of the more elaborate patterns" They all

interesting website which proved the best to navigate through, packed full of photographs and instructions, it was very inspiring,



look so pretty and appeared to have so many versatile uses. Henry's Buttons had the most

joined the email subscribers group and here we are"

Scottish Handcraft Guild from Pat Freeth



It's good to know that so many people are interested in the History and making of the Dorset Buttons.

I have sent this photo of a piece I made for an exhibition of work by the Scottish Handcraft Guild of which I am a

member. Sadly it was cancelled because of Coronavirus but perhaps another time.

I made the moulds for the High tops with Fimo clay because I had no sheep's horn. They are not exactly perfect but served the purpose I think.

In answer to a questionnaire I sent to my workshop subscribers

list Pat went on to sayThe on-line workshops look interesting and my suggestion for a class would be High Tops or domed buttons (Dorset Knobs) with help to keep the spacing accurate. Another might be how to add beads.



An Ingenious idea from Colleen Pavlech, Ontario, Canada

I am a spinner/weaver/knitter and sometimes dye my own fleece. As well, I am 'a woAuld be' button maker!!

Attached is a photograph of a button. I made two of these for a hat I knitted this winter. The wool I used was made up of very small

left-over scraps of dyed yarns and the fibres for the buttons are commercial threads that I have on hand for my weaving projects.

I sewed a matching Dorset Button on each side of the hat, strengthening the area with a

commercial button sewn on the inside.

When I wear the hat I can easily loop or unloop A the buttons. This saves me trying to get the elastic around my ears, my glasses and hearing aids.

Workshops and Events 2021

**Saturday 1st May –
Sunday 9th May
Wylde Valley Arts Trail
Venue 35**

Working in the round using Dorset Buttons for inspiration. To further details please click [here](#). To go directly to my entry in the catalogue click [here](#)



**Saturday 22nd May –
Sunday 6th June
Dorset Arts Weeks
Venue 224**

Working in the round using Dorset Buttons for inspiration. To further details please click [here](#). To go directly to my entry in the catalogue click [here](#)

**30th June – Sunday 4th
July 2021**

Dorset Arts Festival

An amazing award-winning five-day festival showcasing the best artists and makers in Dorset. With over 60 artists, crafters,

performers and musicians gathered together at Sculpture by the Lakes to demonstrate their skills. Visit my Dorset Button stand where I will be working, with your help, a 90cm button in T-Shirt yarn. Please bring an old clean t-shirt work into this memorable button after I've cut it into on long continuous strip!

Please can you help me by saving your old unwanted, washed T-shirts for my 90cm T-shirt Dorset Button.

If you are planning to visit the Dorset Arts Festival why not bring your T-shirt with you and I can cut it into strips ready for you to work into the button.

[Just contact me for details](#)

Venue: Sculpture by the Lakes, Pallington, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 8QU

Time: 10.00am – 5.00pm

Details: Entry £12.50.

Further information

[Sculpture by the Lakes](#)

**Sunday 25th July 25th –
Saturday 31st July
Organization of Lace, Inc.
(IOLI)**

Virtual convention (UnCon)

Workshops

After the success of my on-line workshops I have decided to continue to offer a range of workshops through Zoom even after the lockdown is lifted.

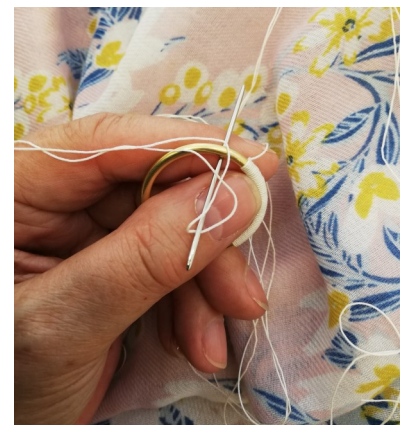
Two new workshops are currently being planned - working with beads and tree and bouquet.

I'm currently planning

three workshops in June, after my open studio events. However, I'm scheduled to have a cataract operation in late June and another two month after! I

will contact all of you who have subscribed to receive information about workshops as soon as I confirm dates.

Thank you to all of you who took part in my first season and for your very kind comments and emails.



For full details of all events please visit the Events Page on my website

[Henry's Buttons](#)
Follow me on:



Share your news, views and projects

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