



## A Long Hot Summer by Anna McDowell

How lucky we have been with such a wonderful summer! The only trouble with such gloriously hot days is that I had to force myself to sit down to make Dorset Buttons. Over the summer, I received a number of commissions, including a sequel to the Disney film Maleficent which is loosely based on the fairy-tale story Sleeping Beauty and stars Angelina Jolie, Michelle Pfeiffer and Chiwetel Ejiofor. I worked 220 Dorset Buttons on 12mm rings in the Blandford Crosswheel design. Where my buttons will be placed I do not know but I suspect they will be hard to see.

Some of you may have seen the building work on my new studio on social media. For those who haven't it was during June that my builder, Donald, started work. All being well I hope to move in next month, October. At last I will have

space to spread out all the lovely fabrics and yarns I have collected over the years. The building is constructed in wood, well insulated and has glorious views across the valley. I can't wait to move in. I plan to run small workshops from my studio when not at the Hardy's Cottage Visitor Centre.

This year celebrating 100

years of women over 30 obtaining the vote is almost over and I



would like to thank all of you who sent me such lovely comments on my beaded Suffragette buttons. I only have two of these buttons left so will have to work a few more if I



## Dorset Arts & Crafts Annual Exhibition

Each year I report on the Dorset Crafts section of this very popular exhibition. There seemed to be more entries this year in the section especially for Dorset buttoners with Dorset feather stitching seemed to be in decline. The quality of the entries was high with many receiving a gold for work of outstanding merit or silver for work of special merit.

However, who did win the Dorset Trophy? Well I'm embarrassed to announce that I

did with my collage of Dorset Buttons which I called "The Knitting Bee 2".



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## My Very Own WW1 Sweetheart Pincushion by Julie Poole



During a visit to the Spring Knitting and Stitching Show in March of this year, I was drawn towards an exhibition promoting the [Untangled Threads](#) project which has been set up to coincide with the centenary of the First World War. I recently found some hand-painted plates of glass in family archives which have photographs of two young men. It seems that the young men would have been my mum's uncles, and the glass plates were made by my great-grandmother and my great-aunt. On further

investigation I discovered the following:

**Alfred Barnett** died of wounds in Mesopotamia on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1915 aged 25 and his brother -

**Ernest** (known as 'John') died of wounds in Flanders on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1916 aged 23

It is therefore these young men that are remembered on my Pincushion.

With this project now far more personal than I ever imagined, I set it aside until inspiration struck and then I hit on the idea of incorporating Dorset Buttons. The obvious choice would be to include a traditional poppy for remembrance but I also wanted to include forget-me-nots as they were painted on the original plates of glass.

I can only hope that my pincushion echoes the pride that I feel in

remembering these brave boys as well as reflecting on the original heart-breaking sentiment felt by my great-grandmother and aunt.

May they 'Rest in Peace'



## “Stitch” Magazine Inspires by Julie Mayer



A few years ago I found an article in “Stitch” magazine about Dorset Buttons, and thought I would give them a go. Little did I know I was starting something so captivating.

Living in Australia it is a challenge to try and find the requirements and instructions for a lot of crafts, and although I do own a small Craft Shop in Goolwa, South Australia, (near the Murray River Mouth), my suppliers will tell you I drive them crazy chasing new threads etc for my button making. Unfortunately living

at the other end of the world also means that freight costs from Europe and America are very high.

I have also taught Bobbin Lacemaking, Tatting, Quilting and Embroidery, and have written two booklets on Chicken Scratch Embroidery, which I sell through my shop, Cotton, Pins and Crafty Things.

The idea for my button tree came from a photo on Pinterest, and the tree was painted by my dear friend, Sandy.

Just lately I have been preparing some samples of buttons (including 9mm ones!!) to show at the South Australian Quilter's Guild meeting in August 18, as they have asked me to speak about the Dorset button industry.



## Getting Ready for the Cooler Months



June was the month when I was contacted by a number of people with their Dorset Button projects. I was delighted to receive an email from Caroline, who attended one of the first workshops I organised,

showing her latest creations getting ready for the cooler months. They are designed to keep your ears warm and hair in place. A very good idea especially as the months begin to get cooler.



## A Very Successful Student by Anna McDowell



Above: Carol Abell with Associate Professor of Fine Arts Dominic Sheppard.  
Right: Carol with all three of her works of art.

During the end of May I received this lovely invitation  
*Hello Anna, I hope you are well. I thought you might like an invitation to the Fine Art degree private view on 7/6/18 at Arts University Bournemouth, at 6.30pm. I have completed my degree and I did promise you an invite. I finish the course with three large Dorset Buttons. Which I thank you for getting me so interested in. I will attract the three buttons just in case you can't make the evening. The exhibition goes on for a few days of you cannot make the private view. Best wishes Carol Abell.*

Carol was a student who attended a number of my classes at the Visitor Centre at Hardy's Cottage near Dorchester. I knew she had started a Fine Arts Degree and had adopted Dorset Buttons for her theme for her final year artwork. So I was not going to miss such an occasion to discover how she had

developed.

I arrived at campus, and after several wrong turns and eventually with the help of a very helpful student guide, I found the Fine Arts faculty. Winding my way around the students work, I eventually discovered Carol's work. Her three pieces virtually hit you as you walked pass.

Each button had a meaning, the purple one is to represent 100 years of the vote for women, the lino cut is from a photo of Carol's Great Grandad ploughing the farm that is now part of Hurn airport hence the aeroplane in the sky. The last is a 100 year old map, on which she placed images of sites in Dorset with small buttons to show Shaftesbury, Blandford, Milton Abbas and Bere Regis.

Carol also handed out 69 buttons to represent the amount of buttons produced by the original workers. A lovely and evening after five years of study, it all came together with her buttons. Carol passed with higher than expected results.

I contacted Carol to ask how she was and received this from her *"They are at The Gallery Arts University Bournemouth at the moment until November. I am also finishing a second set for the exhibition in Aspex Gallery Portsmouth which starts on the 27/9 until December. I have sold the originals to the Gallery Bournemouth. So I am so glad I met you"*.

I love it when my students do so well.



## Henry's Buttons website helps buttoner in Germany by Anna McDowell



In June I received a very kind email from Elvira from Germany who found my website very helpful with creating Dorset Buttons for two dirndls she was making in black velvet.



Elvira sent me lovely photos showing her Dorset Buttons and I particularly liked the one with her daughter Mira holding her granddaughter in her arms. Mira is wearing a dirndl with one of the buttons worked by Elvira. I have shown the whole image as I did not have the heart to crop such a lovely photo.

It is always lovely to hear from people who have visited my website and been inspired to make these lovely buttons



## Summer Time is Ice-cream Time by Anna McDowell

The summer we have just experienced in the UK has been wonderful, long hot sunny days and warm evenings, just right for ice-cream of all flavours. With this in mind, I was delighted to find this lovely take on a Dorset Button Pinterest.

It's worked by Yoko who says she has never eaten chocolate mint ice and heard that it is in fashion. So before trying the real thing, she worked this

chocolate mint ice on a 25mm ring. Yoko can be contacted on her blog page <https://tik2chidori.blog.fc2.com/>. Yoko has a very creative take on thread buttons and used both the Dorset Button and the German/Austrian Zwirnköpfchen for inspiration. Here's a link to how to make a Zwirnköpfchen button <https://www.babsi.cc/2016/10/29/anleitung-zwirnknopf-sterknopf/>



# Events for 2018

## **Monday 10th September Dorset Button Workshop for beginners with Anna McDowell**

Learn a traditional Dorset craft in the lovely woodland setting which inspired the writer Thomas Hardy.



This workshop will be run by Anna McDowell who will share her creative flare with attendees to create their own traditional Dorset Button. *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)*

## **Wednesday 18th September Merley Evening Townswomen's Guild**

Talk on Dorset Buttons

## **Tuesday 16th October 2018 Dorset Button Workshop for beginners**

See Monday 10th September.  
*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)*

## **Wednesday 7th November North Dorset Quilters**

Talk on Dorset Buttons

## **Monday 12th November Poole West Country Embroiderers**

Dorset Button Christmas Workshop

## **Saturday 17 November Dorset Arts & Crafts Association**

**Christmas Craft Fair**  
*Venue: Allendale House, Wimborne, BH21 1AS*  
*Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm*  
*Entry: TBA*

## **Monday 19th November Dorset Button Workshop for advanced buttoners**

Extend your skills of Dorset Buttons with new designs such as the spiral and daisy.

Anna McDowell will share her creative flare with attendees to create their own traditional Dorset Button.

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)*

## **Monday 3rd December Workshop - Sparkle and Shine Christmas Decorations with Anna McDowell**

Enjoy traditional Dorset craft of Dorset button making in the lovely woodland setting which inspired the writer Thomas Hardy. Using original methods Anna combines contemporary materials and designs to help keep the tradition of Dorset Buttons alive. With Christmas around the corner this great workshop will enable you to learn a new skill or refresh old ones while creating a truly bespoke item to bring out every Christmas.

*Venue: Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre, DT2 8QH*

*Time: 10.00am to 12.30pm*  
*Entry and Details: Tel: 01305 251228, Hardy's Birthplace on Facebook or [hardysbirthplace@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:hardysbirthplace@dorsetcc.gov.uk)*

## **Tuesday 4th December 2018 Workshop - Sparkle and Shine Christmas Decorations with Anna McDowell**

This workshop is a repeat of Monday 3rd December see above for details on how to book

## **Monday 10th December 2018 West Country Embroiderers Sherborne Branch**

Talk on Dorset Buttons

## 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](mailto:dorsetbuttons@henrysbuttons.co.uk)*

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

**[Henry's Buttons](http://henrysbuttons.co.uk)**