



“Welcome 2022” by Anna McDowell

This year is going to be full of anticipation as events develop. During 2021 I was unable to offer workshops in my studio so started a series of online workshops using Zoom. These proved a great success and I enjoyed meeting you all. Participants were truly international representing countries from all over the world. I am planning further workshops for 2022.

This year we are celebrating the second bicentenary of the Dorset Button industry. One of the many questions I have been asked is “why 1622?”. This is the date that Mervyn Bright mentions in his booklet “Buttony the Dorset Heritage” printed in 1971. Unfortunately, he does not mention where he found this date. However, what we do know is that the professional soldier, Abraham Case, on his return from

fighting in the European wars, ended up in Wardour in Wiltshire and fell in love with a



Dorset Button worked on a 60cm wooden ring using textiles, yarn and vintage buttons. Title: Think About the Summer.

local girl. They moved to Shaftesbury and started the Dorset Button industry. I always say this cottage industry started as a love story.

Today, we are sharing our love of these discrete buttons, unique to Dorset, with celebrations from several

continents as you can see from the website [Dorset Buttons 2022](#).

During the year, my small contribution to the celebrations is to organise a variety of different events, including an art exhibition in the Gallery at Shaftesbury Arts Centre. I am planning a workshop where participants can take a new look at making Dorset Buttons using ethically sourced yarns with added texture. I am also designing my own celebration button and will be offering a workshop in my studio (restrictions dependant) and further workshops on line through Zoom.

This is just a few of the events and workshops to look forward to during the year. Please, in touch and let us know what you have planned for your own celebrations.

Wishing you all a very happy New Year.

Found on Instagram by Anna McDowell

I couldn't resist sharing this image posted by the fashion historian Kate Strasdin @katestrasdin. Kate is a Senior Lecturer at Falmouth University, curator, writer & part time amateur stitcher. She posted this photo on Instagram in May 2020.

[The dress](#) is made from "... some light embroidered cotton, blue stitching standing out in relief against the white. A row of small Dorset buttons, mini cartwheels of thread, fasten the

floaty bodice, early 1900s, [@goldstein_museum](#) ..."



Inside this issue:

Celebration year arrives	2
Auction of Dorset Buttons	2
Dorset Button hat	2
Crafter v textile artist	3
My Dorset Dutton journey	3
Workshops and Events 2022	4

Henry's Buttons

dorsetbuttons@henrysbuttons.co.uk

www.henrysbuttons.co.uk

Follow me on:





Our celebration year 2022 has arrived by Anna McDowell

Dorset Buttons 2022

At the stroke of midnight when we welcome in the New Year, we will also welcome the start of our celebrations for the second bicentenary of the Dorset Button industry.

There are not many celebrations organised for a small item used by the textile industry. I was so encouraged that many of you have adopted this year to do something to celebrate the birth of a small cottage industry that grew to become a major employer in East

Dorset.

Many of you have already sent me details of your events and I have heard that others are awaiting for final details before forwarding them to me to add them to our colander page on our website.

The year will start in England on Saturday 8th January with a Dorset Button Mass Button-a-Long, a social event organised by Jen Best of Beaker Buttons. We then move to the USA for two workshops, on the 15th January, one in Washington,

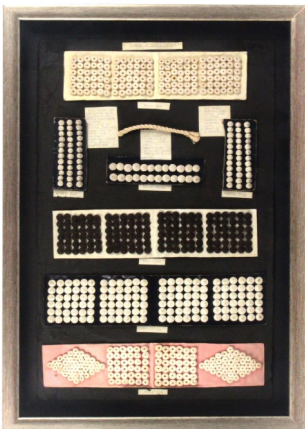
the other in Mississippi.

There is another workshop in Mississippi on 28th February and on 2nd April, Spring Tea and Dorset Button Workshop Celebration in Waterford, PA, USA. On Saturday 9th April we are back in England with a celebration workshop in my studio.

Where we go next is entirely up to you. So please keep sending us details of your events. All you have to do is email me at dorsetbuttons@gmail.com.

www.dorsetbuttons2022.co.uk

Auction sale of original Dorset Buttons by Anna McDowell



Collection of original Dorset Buttons that went up for auction at Bleasdales Ltd.

On Wednesday 3rd November 2021, a collection of Dorset Buttons went up for auction by the auction house Bleasdales Ltd in Warwick, England. Robert Bleasdale is a passionate exponent of antique sewing collectables and a highly experienced and knowledgeable specialist. As Group Managing Director of Bonhams, he was instrumental in founding and then expanding their specialist sewing sales held at the

company's Knowle salerooms in the West Midlands. So it was no wonder that this collection made its way into his hands.

I came across this collection of Dorset Buttons through an online auction search. The guide price was £40 to £80. This seemed standard to me. The lot included a framed piece with the collection of Dorset Buttons mounted on black. The collection included Birdseyes, Singletons and a few Dorset Knobs. What made this piece so interesting was that the

buttons were mounted on, what looked like, original card. The pink card representing top quality buttons, black next down and yellow the lowest quality. I have been after buttons mounted on pink card for several years.

On the day, I sat at me computer determined to bid until I won this collection. The price crept up and then up again. Finally, the lot was sold for £1,220 to a private collector. Unfortunately, not myself.

There is always next time!

My Dorset Button hat journey by Jo Maree



My journey to Dorset buttons is pretty unremarkable to be honest. I was just mucking around on the internet one day and literally stumbled upon them... and was instantly 'in love' and knew I wanted to make a hat with them as a trim... but with the trim as the main 'hero' of the design. The Millinery

Association of Australia runs an annual Design Award for members and this year's theme was "The 20's... Past, Present, Future" where we could choose a 20's decade of any century as inspiration.

As you know Dorset buttons dated to the 1620's so that was just perfect as my launching point. I love the 1920's so chose a 'Breton' style design. It was a labour of love as everything was handmade, hand shaped and hand

sewn... I'd hate to think how many hours but 150+ is a good start.

I know not all the buttons I made were Dorset but I loved the way they all worked together and I can't wait to make more... my next design is a 'work in progress' for an exhibition in November 2021, when Melbourne Fashion Week, Millinery Australia presents their 'BOLDLY DIFFERENT' exhibition at the No Vacancy Gallery in the CBD's QV Building.

You can follow Jo on Instagram @jomareemillinery

When does a crafter become a textile artist? by Ann Davey

I also wanted to comment about your August newsletter. You mention becoming a textile artist. I have just finished a M.A. in History and wrote very briefly about this in my dissertation. I was writing about Victorian amateur lacemaking and stated in my conclusion:

The Victorian hobby makers may have seen themselves as participating in a sisterhood of craftswomen, but modern women also use these creative skills as artists, a development that followed an expanding cultural path from the (somewhat gender-restricted) needlewomen of the Arts and Crafts movement and the female weavers of the Bauhaus, but also this great mass of Victorian and twentieth century women, whose creativity and ingenuity, in the face of societal prohibition and resistance, produced the impetus and confidence to promote the textile crafts in the hierarchy of arts. When a modern artist paints a giant crochet or tape lace design on the side of a building, she is a direct inheritor of this

progression of creative women inspired by lace. <https://www.behance.net/NeSpoon>.

In effect I am referring to 'textile artists' here. I share your interest in how people suddenly think of themselves as textile artists rather than craftspeople. I gave tours on textiles (before covid) and noticed that many of the women called themselves 'textile artists'. I did not have space to expand on this in my dissertation, (it was somewhat off topic) but my thoughts on this are that

Women got pushed into textile making (in the Arts and Crafts movement for instance) as these skills were gendered as female. They put up with it and made the most of it- May Morris for instance made a good career out of it. In the 20thC the Bauhaus women also got pushed into the weaving room rather than being allowed to work in other departments. Women

produced excellent textiles but some also rebelled.

Essentially, women got to participate on the edge of artistic movements, but only in textiles. Gradually they just decided that okay, textiles are now not just 'handicrafts' because they are part of these movements. We didn't want to be put in this corner, but now we are here, we can say that textiles are real 'art' and therefore we are going to call ourselves 'textile artists'. Now women actively choose to work in textiles (not as something they were forced into!) and they are choosing to say that, with this heritage textiles are as much an artform as anything else and therefore I am an artist.

Essentially, you become a textile artist simply when you decide you are one! So, there you are, you are a textile artist!

Thank you Ann for allowing me to share this with my subscribers.

My Dorset Button journey by Joyce Boudreau Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

I am so pleased to learn of your Dorset Button newsletter and read the August edition which was so interesting. I don't have the expertise I saw in that newsletter but I would like to share how I learned about dorset buttons.

Here is my story. Before my granddaughter began school I knitted her a pullover sweater. Having been a teacher I should have realized that was not a good idea because the schools are too warm to wear such clothing. I decided to turn the pullover into a cardigan thinking that it would have more use. I steeked

the front and made button bands for each side of the steeks. Because these button bands were much thicker than traditional bands because of the cut yarn pieces that had to be hidden I made buttonholes that would work in the depth. The problem came when I tried to find bigger buttons because of the depth of the holes. I could not find large buttons that would be appropriate for a little girl. I figured that there had to be ways to create buttons and by searching the internet learned about Dorset Buttons. I had never heard of them. I was able to learn

how to make them by following written directions I had found and the pink yarn made these larger buttons look quite appropriate on this little sweater. The photo below shows my granddaughter with the sweater with the first Dorset Buttons I made.

Since then I have made numerous Dorset Buttons many to have been put on my Textile Art Quilts. I am also including a photo of my rughooking project which combines Rug Hooking with Yarn, Wool Applique and Dorset Buttons.



Workshops and Events 2022

Wednesday 12th January 2022

Dorset Buttons a Cottage Industry - Talk
Dinton WI
Details: TBC

Friday 14th January – Saturday 29th January 2022
Welcome 22 – Exhibition

Dorset Buttons 2022 Showcase exhibition from artists who will be showing work in the next 12 months.

This exhibition will include a varied selection of paintings, photography, textiles, ceramics and will include three pieces representing the “High Tops, Knobs, Birdseyes and Mites celebrating 400 years of Dorset Buttony” exhibition in July
Venue: The Gallery, Shaftesbury Arts Centre, 13 Bell Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8AR
Entry and details: <https://shaftesburyartscentre.org.uk/gallery/>

Saturday 12th February 2022
Dorset Button Demonstration

I will be demonstrating the heritage craft of Dorset Buttony at Shaftesbury Library as part of their Hobbies Season.
Venue: Shaftesbury Library, Bell Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8AE
Time: 11.00am – 12.00pm
Entry and details: Free entry and contact 01747 852256 for details

Saturday 5th March 2022
Dorset Buttons a Cottage Industry – Talk

The History of the Dorset Button Industry by Anna McDowell
Venue: Shire Hall Historic Courthouse, High West Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UY
Time: 2.00pm
Entry and details: Tickets £6.00 each. For details and how to book click [here](#)

Wednesday 9th March 2022
West Country Embroiderers Dorset Day

The Sherborne West Country Embroiderers group is organising the annual meeting of all the Dorset groups. As this is a special year for the Dorset Button industry will have a stand with many new items to help you celebrate four hundred years since the start of this cottage industry.
Venue: The Hamworthy Club, Magna Rd, Canford Magna, Bournemouth, Wimborne BH21 3AP
Time: TBC
Entry and details: TBC

Saturday 9th April 2022
Celebration Dorset Button Workshop with Anna McDowell

Dorset Buttons 2022 I will be designing a special Dorset Button to celebrate the second bicentenary of the Dorset Button industry. Numbers will be limited to four.

Keep an eye on my website for details.

Venue: My Studio, Undercliffe Cottage, Donhead St Mary, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 9DG
Time: 10.00am – 12.30pm
Entry and details: £30 each and include all materials, refreshments and goodie bag. Go to my [Workshop/Events](#) page on my website for full details.

Tuesday 19th April 2022
Dorset Button Workshop

Westcountry Embroiderers Wimborne Group
All day workshop designed for members of the group

Thursday 28th April 2022
Dorset Button - Talk

Museum of East Dorset
Venue: Museum of East Dorset, 23-29 High Street, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, BH21 1HR
Time: 7.00 – 8.00pm
Entry and details: Contact the [Museum of East Dorset](#) for details

Friday 6th May 2022
Dorset Buttons - talk

Talk to members of the Poole Bobbin Lace Circle

For details of my workshops and events please keep an eye on the [Events & Workshops](#) page on my website.

Those who subscribe to receive information from me will be notified of new dates before uploading to my website. Just go to my Home page for details.

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