



Dorset Buttons are not just for clothing by Anna McDowell

It is always lovely to see the many imaginative ways Dorset Buttons are used. As its Christmas I thought I would show you what is happening in my local town of Shaftesbury, where the Dorset Button industry began.

An experienced buttoner, Marigold Rumble, came up with this lovely idea of a Christmas Memory Tree for her local church, St Peter's. The tree is decorated with heart decorations. Each decoration has been commissioned to be crafted in memory of a loved one.

The tree elements

in the design of the decoration represent:

The Heart – "Love came down at Christmas"

The Star – The star of



Bethlehem and finally, The Dorset Button – Celebrating the caring community in which we live and where these buttons were first made many years ago.

Seasons greetings and wishing you all a Happy New Year.

Dorset Singleton Buttons - now on Ebay!

The final stage of the Dorset Button Singleton Challenge is now underway.

This beautiful set of Dorset Singleton buttons was created by a group of talented button makers from around the world. The full set of 34 buttons is offered for sale on Ebay. The closing date and time

is 29th December 2014 at 12:40:19 GMT. This is an

opportunity to buy a piece of history.

The proceeds from the sale is going towards the work of Dorset Archives Trust.

For further details about the project visit Henry's Buttons website.



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Henry's Buttons

01747 829010
henrysbuttons@aol.com
www.henrysbuttons.co.uk

A Wheel within a Wheel by Judy Adams



In June of this year I completed 122 of the small Crosswheel brooches and 9 of the yellow flowers all in blue and yellow.

Why? For Inner Wheel, of course – and blue and yellow are our colours.

Let me explain. Inner Wheel is an organisation for women which has branches all over the world and thousands of members. It was formed out of Rotary in the early 20th Century for the wives of Rotary members (in those days women were unable to be Rotarians, unlike today).

What do we do? Well, apart from the amazing fellowship and support we offer to each other and the fun we have on our social occasions (which are many) we raise hundreds of thousands of pounds each year for people in need at home and abroad. We have sent Shelter boxes and Water

Aid to disaster areas, supported children with disabilities, women's refuges, hospitals for premature babies, knitted soft balls by the hundred for children in need in Moldova and helped fill shoe boxes each Christmas for children in areas where they have virtually nothing. The list goes on and is too long to list.

So – I have had the honour this year to be chosen and installed as the District Chairman for District 11 Inner Wheel, which includes Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire in its area including the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands. We have 31 clubs and 800 members in the District and part of my task is to visit with them all and lead them in their plans for 2014/15.

The brooches were made over the course of a year so that everyone who attended the lunch to celebrate my installation could

take a flavour of something unique to Dorset, and the to Blandford area (where I live) home with them as a memento. Each one was presented on a card which had a short history of the Dorset Button on the back. The flowers were made for the members of my Club in Blandford who helped make my day work smoothly for me and my guests.

Around 120 ladies came to the lunch and were delighted with their brooches. I have now had a request to make the remaining 680 for those who didn't come but would love to have a Dorset Button brooch.

All I can say is – WATCH THIS SPACE!!!!

Judy Adams is a Dorset Button Maker and member of Inner Wheel which is open to all women and requires no connection to Rotary. You can contact Judy by emailing dorsetbuttons@henrysbuttons.co.uk



The Cotton Reel Group by Tina Sharp



The Winchester Embroiderers' Guild, a branch of the Embroiderers' Guild, encourages young embroiderers. They meet in school holidays for all day

workshops.

On Wednesday 29th October, Tina organised a Dorset Button Workshop and here are some of the results of the day. In all 24 girls aged from 6 to 14 years old attended and almost everyone made two buttons each. They really

seemed to enjoy making them.



A childhood memory by Sara Lutton

I remember overhearing a conversation about Dorset buttons when I was a child. I didn't know what made them different from other buttons but somehow I knew they were rare and highly coveted. Fast forward forty years sprinkle on some Internet magic and add

a splash of generosity from Anna McDowell for sharing a copy of her eNewsletter, and behold—my first (and second) buttons. I plan to make many more!



Dorset Buttons and the Case Family by Patrick McDowell

Conventional wisdom has it that in the early 1600's, one Abraham Case, a yeoman from the Cotswolds, joined the army and travelled to France and the Low Countries, present-day Belgium and Holland, where he encountered local women making cloth buttons of a type he had never seen before.

Returning to England, he married a girl from Wardour, near Tisbury in Wiltshire, set up home in Motcombe near Shaftesbury, and started making similar buttons to the one's he had seen on the continent which he called "High Tops". He opened a depot in Shaftesbury and is said to have fathered a number of children including two sons, Abraham Junior and Elias. The sons subsequently joined him in the business which expanded rapidly throughout the towns and villages of Dorset, notably Blandford and Bere Regis.

Given an adequate supply of the two principal materials of thread and sliced sheep's horn, the local women were able to work from home and produce buttons on demand following the patterns laid down by the Cases. The buttons were collected and stored at

central depots in several Dorset towns from which they were distributed and sold. The women were recompensed for their labours and the Case family took a turn on the profit from sales.

The earliest verifiable member of the Case family was William Case who married Joan, they had seven children, all registered at Shaftesbury St James in the Parish Records. William died in 1731 and his will has been read. His son Peter Case, born 1694, inherited the business and took it to new dimensions when he invented wire rings in 1720 to replace the old sheep's horn. Depots opened all over Dorset and also opened significant distribution points and offices in London and Liverpool, to trade with the Continent, Australia and North America.

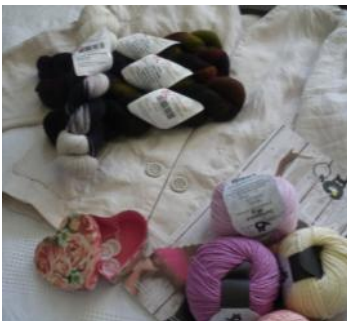
Peter Case also had seven children and the business passed down first to his son Peter Case, born 1726, and then to his grandsons, Peter, born 1767, and Samuel, born 1772. By 1793, 4,000 women and children in Shaftesbury alone were making Dorset Buttons. The family combined Dorset Button production with linen and drapery.

Samuel Case had four sons, all of whom worked in the family business, Samuel born 1788, George born 1793, Abraham born 1795, and Henry born 1797.

The business continued despite family disputes and squabbles until 1846 when the two remaining business partners, George and Henry Case, decided to part company and published notices accordingly. By then a new button-making machine had been invented and shown at The Great Exhibition in 1851. As a result, many families in Dorset lost their livelihood, suffering greatly in the process, and for some even choosing to emigrate.

Henry Case's children Elizabeth Case born 1833, and William Hillier Case born 1840, continued the drapery business in Milbourne Stileham, combining it with running the Post Office. William died in 1912 and with him died the last Case connection with Dorset Buttons, albeit The Dowager Lady Lees bought up the collection and endeavoured to resurrect the industry in 1900. However, the onset of World War in 1914 finally ended nearly 300 years of Dorset Buttons and the involvement of the Case Family.

A Dorset Buttony holiday by Trudi Hodges



Take 33 Norwegians and me and put them on a coach to the Rhine Germany. They knit and I crochet but I make Dorset buttons often to include in my crochet creations. So I gave one to each

person (and the poor coach driver) as a Thank you for having a non speaking 'Viking' Saxon on board. Some had never left Norway before and were puzzled but intrigued. We were visiting yarn factories to buy the more unusual yarns these factories produced. It

was a 'hand to hand' searching for the right yarn—some I intend to use for future buttons. I made some during the trip and gave an impromptu lesson on the coach during a 2 hour traffic jam on the autobahn north of Hanover.

A daughter's creation by Anna McDowell

In November I received this email from Jackie Freeman, one of the original buttoners who attended one of the workshops I organised five years ago. Jackie continued to make buttons and has only just put them to one side as she has more pressing demands for her time.

Jackie said "I will continue to button as and when time allows, and thought you might like to see a picture my daughter, Hannah Freeman, created for a friend's wedding – it includes Dorset buttons for the bride, groom and their baby daughter".

It's lovely to see that both

mother and daughter are now keeping this craft going.



Events for 2015

Thursday 8th January

Hindon WI

Dorset Button talk by Anna McDowell at 7.30



Shaftesbury Snowdrop Festival 2014. 'Where an angel blows on snowflakes, snowdrops will grow' by Anna McDowell



Saturday 14th February to Saturday 21st February
Shaftesbury Snowdrop Festival

Sunday 1st March
Walford Mill, Wimborne

Dorset Button Workshop by Anna McDowell



Dorset Button workshop at Larmer Tree Festival. 2014



Thursday 19th March

Civil Service Motoring Association Dorchester

Dorset Button Talk by Anna McDowell

Saturday 25 to Sunday 26 April
Brockenhurst FESTA

Wednesday 24th June
Bradpole House Wives

Dorset Button Talk by Anna McDowell

15th – 19th July 2015
Larmer Tree Festival

Saturday 12th September to Sunday 13th September

Sturminster Cheese Festival

Saturday 19th to Sunday 20th

September

Holnest Country Fayre



Workshop – learning how to make Cartwheel buttons. Stralbridge, Dorset. 2014

Saturday 14th November – SERO Christmas Fair
Sturminster Newton

Saturday 21 November
Blackmore Vale Embroiderers Guild

Dorset Button Workshop by Anna McDowell



Dorset Buttons at Halloween 2014

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

News, views and projects

I'm always interested to hear your news, views and projects with Dorset Buttons and from the emails I have received, I know that some of you are involved in exciting projects. 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 preferable with an image to Anna McDowell at henrysbuttons@aol.com.