



## Designer women's clothing feature Dorset Buttons

Viva women's clothing now features Dorset Buttons.

Recently, I have collaborated with local fashion designer Vivienne Dines, who has her own label 'Viva'. Viv specialises in women's clothing and has designed a range of items of fashionable clothing which feature Dorset Buttons. Each item is unique with usually only one in the range. This is one of her creations a jacket that features three Dorset Buttons designed to reflect

the lace on the sides.

Viv was a successful designer and pattern cutter in London who decided to relocate to Wiltshire with her husband. Although she is frequently asked to help develop designs by her previous



employer, Viv now concentrates on developing her own range of unique tops inspired by our local heritage of Dorset Buttons.

## The War Child Embroidery Project

The War Child Embroidery Project is the brainchild of Lavinia Earl and is supported by Coates Crafts. The project began in 2000 and, when completed, the embroidery will be made up of 100 main panels, each measuring 90 x 60

inches. One of the panels features Dorset Buttons.

You can see a detail of this panel and find more about this worthwhile project on my website: [Henry's Buttons – News and Views](#)

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## Happy New Year by Anna McDowell

The build up to Christmas was an opportunity to experiment with a selection of fabrics, threads and designs. One of my most popular designs was a flower brooch made from local alpaca yarn from my sister's heard at Shute Farm Alpaca at Donhead St Mary near Shaftesbury. Another was one I designed from rolled sari silk from India with the button worked from two different colours of Chinese silk thread.

It is an inspiration to be able

to experiment with new and vintage fabrics and threads



A selection of this years Christmas range of gift items

and I have made it my new year's resolution to spend more time creating new designs.

One of my new ranges for

2014 is a wedding range inspired by Abraham Case and his wife. The Dorset Button industry started as a love story. When Abraham Case, a professional soldier, was passing through the area he fell in love with a local girl from Wardour. They set up home near Shaftesbury and started the Dorset Button Industry. A wonderful love story with monumental consequences as can be seen on the following web page [History of the Dorset Button Industry](#).

I look forward to receiving your news and images of your own projects to share with other buttoners.



### Dorset Buttons Morris

Last June, Ben Fogle, TV presenter and international explorer, explored Dorset in new ITV series of programmes called Harbour Lives. One of the topics he mentioned, included a Morris dance team based in Wareham called the Dorset

Button Morris team who, as fitting for a group of dancers based in Dorset, decorate their costumes with Dorset Buttons.

This Morris dancing group was formed in 1978 and based in Wareham in Dorset. Their outfits also include

wearing wooden clogs that were everyday footwear at the time the dances were first performed. The team's colourful dresses and vibrant dancing have become well known throughout the country. For further information click on [Wareham Whalers](#)

### The Great Dorset Steam Fair

Traditionally, this English fair is held at the village of Tarrant Hinton, near Blandford Forum, in the heart of the beautiful Dorset countryside and attracts around 200,000 visitors. In 2013, the Fair had two firsts, the organisers officially

crushed the world record for the greatest amount of steam rollers in a formation over a set course with 102 rollers taking part; and secondly I was sent this photographs of the first stall holder dedicated to selling



gifts featuring Dorset Buttons.

## Lord Nelsons undershirt

One of the artifacts held by the Maritime Museum is Lord Horatio Nelson undershirt. The shirt is made of lightweight cream-coloured wool flannel. The skirt is of a heavier gauge wool flannel. The body is made of four panels, the seams are finished with a combination of cross and herring bone stitch in white silk thread. The right sleeve is cut short and the edge is finished with blanket stitch. The collar is edged with linen tape. The shirt fastens in the front with seven Dorset buttons which are supported by a strip of linen tape. The buttonholes are stitched into a wide stripe of cotton/linen tape. The right cuff is edged with narrow linen

tape and fastens with a Dorset button. Inside the neck at the



Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson, by Lemuel Francis. *National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.*

top is Nelson's laundry mark which features a coronet above the letter N done in cross stitch in black thread.

After Nelson's death at the Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805, his belongings were returned to his family. His clothing from his cabin was given, in a small bundle, to his sister Catherine Matcham. This undershirt was included in the effects that Mrs. Matcham received, it was passed down through the Matcham family. It should be noted that while it was amongst the clothing Nelson took with him to sea, he was not wearing at the Battle.

Unfortunately, the Maritime Museum' owns the copyright and hence, I'm not allow me to show you an image of this shirt but you can see it by clicking on the following link [Lord Nelsons under shirt](#)



## Norfolk & Suffolk Guild Weavers Spinners & Dyers by Judy Read

I have been playing with buttons on and off for a couple of years, having done a workshop with Anne Dixon – who is a member of our Guild. We have an exhibition and sale in August every year in Southwold (on the Suffolk Coast) during which we have a competition, and in 2010 Dorset Buttons was the theme.

My next project is to design a bag for the National Exhibition in Norwich of the Spinners, Weavers, and Dyers Guilds and I plan to have some buttons on it. The online guild is doing a workshop on Dorset Buttons for October – this involves members from everywhere !!



## A Christmas tree angel

I have had a number of enquiries' about how to include beads with Dorset Buttons. In the past I have always referred such enquiries to Marion Hewitt's fact File Book which has an entire section on working with beads. However, I thought it was about time that I taught myself the art of beading with these lovely buttons and came up with

s simple design as you can see on the right.

I took this a stage further and developed a Christmas angle using ready available beads from my local bead shops in Sturminster Newton and Shaftesbury. If you would like to receive basic instructions please contact me at [henrysbUTTONS@aol.com](mailto:henrysbUTTONS@aol.com).



## In praise of the humble Singleton - a Dorset Button Challenge for 2014

Within a couple of weeks of sending out the August 2013 edition of the Dorset Button eNewsletter, I received three enquiries for this challenge. Several other buttoners have shown interest so I have decided to take this challenge further and I hope you will join me to help raise funds for the Dorset Local History Centre, Dorchester, for conservation material.

I have spent many hours researching into the Dorset Button industry at the Dorset Local History Centre and I know the Dorset Archives Trust, who support the Dorset History Centre, are seeking funding through their sponsor-a-box programme; just £10 pays for the purchase of a new, acid free archive box together and acid free and pH neutral materials which are used to wrap up archives, and increase their longevity.

Your help and contributions of Singleton buttons will enable me to mount them



Sample of buttons from the Macclesfield Button Project 2013

onto a panel for display. Funds will be raised through donations received from all those who want to view the panel and I'm currently talking to several organisations who have shown interest in supporting this project. I will also raise funds through Dorset Button demonstrations coffee mornings and tea parties. Your help with events and other fund raising ideas would be appreciated. The local press have also shown interest in this project.

### Requirements

- . Each buttoner may submit one button for the display.
- . The basic button must follow the original method of making a Singleton button but go to town on your design on the top of the button.
- . The button should be 25 mm wide and 15 to 3 mm high
- . The button must have a loop on the back enable me to fix it to a backing cloth.
- . Please submit your button by the 31st March 2014

Original buttoners were free to put their own individual decoration into the centre of these buttons and it was whilst up in Macclesfield for the Button Project I got to thinking on how we could take this individualist idea into the 21st century. I was able to take photographs of some of the entries and it was this that inspired me and I hope you to try something new.

Full details of this project can be found on my website [Singleton Button Challenge](#)

### *Workshops:*

*I have had two enquiries from individuals who would like to join other buttoners at one of my workshops for Dorset Cartwheel Buttons. If anyone is interested and would like to join me please contact by email : [henrysbuttons@aol.com](mailto:henrysbuttons@aol.com) or Tel: 01747 829010. I have not yet confirmed a date or time but hope to hold the workshop at the Gold Hill Museum, Shaftesbury.*