

Cherry Parker's August 2021 Newsletter

It has been a busy time with 4 cross stitch designs heading to the States for next year, 2 felt nutcracker patterns and a tui who arrived from left field. It is good to have variety as well as deadlines to meet.

Sometimes it seems as though I am not doing a lot of cross stitch, but often the stitching is going on behind the scenes ready to pop out in several months' time.



The stitching group completed their gnomes and some are pictured here.

Even though it is a simple pattern different techniques are learnt such as how to attach a nose from the back and indent it, as well as how to sew on arms that move about. The ladies in the group also learnt a cunning trick that they wished they had known many years ago.

When you are indenting anything such as gnomes' noses or the centre of a biscornu pincushion, you often need another person's finger to hold the indent where it should be.



Then you tie the cotton off trying not to include the finger of said person.

You don't need the other person When you begin to tie the indent down, slightly wet the cotton where you want the knot to be. It will now hold in place while you keep knotting and then tie off.

There was much discussion about gnomes, Scandinavian or otherwise so here is a little bit about history about these gnomes.

Tomte in Sweden, Nisse in Norway and Denmark and Tonttu in Norway these little gnomes have become extremely popular.

The word 'Tomte' means homestead man and in Scandinavia these mischievous domestic spirits protect farmsteads and their families and animals.

Folklore has it that they originated from the soul of the first farmer and are ancestral figures who command respect.

A tomte is described as a little bearded man, just three feet high, with a long beard, work boots and a red cap. A clean house or farm is a clear sign that a tomte spirit resides there. If you happen to offend the tomte he will play pranks on you so next time something strange happens you may have offended the tomte.

Well..... there you have it in a nutshell. All you probably need to know about tomtes.



Nice to have a full page article on my cross stitch designs in this month's Cross Stitcher magazine.



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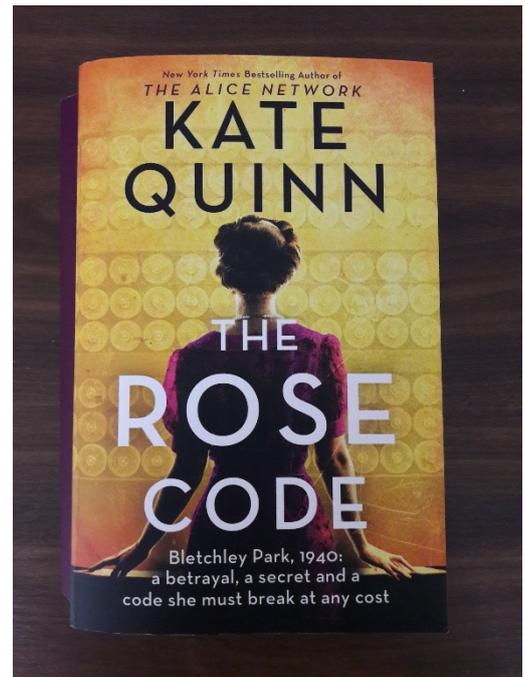
One of the books for this month which I thoroughly enjoyed – **The Rose Code by Kate Quinn.**

1940, Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire

This stately home saw thousands of men and women work to crack the unbreakable Axis military codes - a feat that according to many historians shortened the war by at least two years and saved thousands of lives.

In **The Rose Code** three very different women are recruited to the mysterious Bletchley Park where the best minds in Britain were trained to break German military codes. It is a work of fiction with the history of the Park and England at the time woven into the story.

The site had deteriorated into near dereliction after the war but in 2013 it was restored and opened by the Duchess of Cambridge. The former Kate Middleton had a personal reason for visiting BP as her grandmother Valerie Middleton, nee Glassborow was employed in Hut 16. Retracing her grandmothers' footsteps the duchess met with veteran code-breakers such as Mrs Mab Sharpe, who works part time as a bombe machine demonstrator. Mrs Sharpe a grey haired, unbent five foot eleven at age 96, instructed her colleague's



granddaughter in the art of intercepting and decoding a Morse code message.

Mrs Sharpe is happy to reminisce with Bletchley Park visitors about the work done during the war now that the term of secrecy has officially expired. Other veterans have refused to release their stories until



after their deaths – such as Bletchley Bletherings by Lady Cornwall, nee Osla Kendall, the award winning satirist and Tatler columnist whose droll, touching account of her time as a Hut4 translator was not published until after her death in 1974. Miss Beth Finch retired GCHQ considers the oath of secrecy to be binding in perpetuity. The white haired 94 year old politely refuses to discuss her war work.



The code of secrecy upheld by Bletchley Park's workers is fully as remarkable as their code-breaking achievements. Churchill famously referred to them as 'the geese who laid the golden eggs, but never cackled.'



I have recently been emailing back and forth to a magazine editor who is deciding what designs I am going to stitch for next year. Three options are submitted for each choice so a few emails go back and forth.

Everyone talks about the weather and as I don't know the staff and am never likely to meet them, it is a good general subject that gets mentioned every now and again.

Perhaps it is just the time of the year but in Indiana at the moment it is hot, but the editor tells me they must make the most of it as winter will soon be with them.

Here I am saying it is wet and windy and if you are in the far south snow is falling. As someone said yesterday that tiny speck on the horizon here in New Zealand might just be spring.

I have already seen a few lambs; the bulbs are sprouting out of the cold soil and the hours of daylight are stretching out.

That seems to be enough rambling for this month. The gnome hat pattern follows.

A continuation of the New Zealand map for you next time!

Happy stitching and as always request a pattern, ask a question, or unsubscribe at cherry.parker@xtra.co.nz

Cherry

www.cherryparker.co.nz

Cut one from felt and fold in half. Whip stitch down the back seam.

Twist 2 pipe cleaners together and bend the top ¼ over. Fit this end into the point of the hat. Stuff loosely around the pipe cleaner.

Fit the hat on the gnome's head down to where you have sewn the large wooden bead for the nose.

The hat will now bend to where you want it.

