

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

"Isn't it exciting Grannie," Edith said. "At my age one must ration one's excitement," replied the Dowager.



March 28, 2014

Watching Downton Abbey is a little like watching the melodrama. Sigh for the heroine. Cheer for the hero. Boo the villain. And hiss at the villainess.

It amazes me that the villain butler/footman (Thomas) is still employed. You'd think the upstairs crew would figure out how irresponsible, untrustworthy and sneaky he is. Yet they continue to believe what he says. Even after he stole the silver. In fact the only character that has figured out how evil he is (other than Bates and maybe Mr. Carson) is the mousiest-most unable to stand up for himself--character: Mosley. I know that's a little unkind, but Mosley is an odd duck. But every drama needs a villain and Thomas is a pretty good one.

The hero and heroine are probably Mary and Matthew. Although (spoiler alert for those stuck in Season 2) for no apparent good reason, we lose the hero. Next best choice is probably Tom, the chauffeur from Ireland. He's redeemed himself for the most part. Bates & Anna don't count, mainly because of the hinted at aggression that emanates from Bates.

The villainess (spoiler alert, again) was O'Brien. Is that Mrs. O'Brien? I swear I can't quite keep it straight whether the servant has to go by his first name or last. And whether you're supposed to use the Mr. or Mrs. in front. Someone, somewhere, has a book on all this etiquette. And only the Dowager has read it, I'm guessing.

I don't advise watching Downton Abbey in a marathon attempt. You'll wake up wanting breakfast in bed. And you'll have this urge to change clothes 5 times a day.

And if you attend a Downton Abbey retreat you have to employ Vegas Rules: What happens at a Downton Abbey retreat stays at the Downton Abbey retreat. So I won't discuss the room of rowdies who resorted to talking back to the laptop which was playing episodes of Downton Abbey. Over and over again. Sometimes they watched the same episode several times. What was interesting though was when I came to check on their progress (I was sewing in a different room) they were all excited for me to change the DVD, but they weren't quite sure which episode they had watched. Over and over again. Just that they had watched it several times. Alcohol may have been involved.

Like I said, what stays in Vegas.

But I can report that we had a good time. We played Downton Abbey trivia, with prizes awarded for the most knowledgeable-or at least who got the most questions right -- and one prize for the person who consistently missed the most questions. But without her, I wouldn't have the pictures (posted below) from the retreat. She was a good sport about it.

We had high tea and were serenaded by the Capital Quartet - the group of 4, sometimes more sometimes less, women singers in which I sing alto/bass. We stayed in old fashioned rooms, each one different from the others, all in period furniture.

We were given a talk on the language of flowers and their use in quilting fabrics during the Downton Abbey time frame, 1900-1920, by quilt historian Cindy Brick. She showed us a lot of antique quilts and explained color, dyes, and patterns from this period. And we learned what the word "flourish" meant --look it up and you will understand why 2 of Lady Mary's fabrics are called "Flourish."

And, of course, we sewed. And sewed. And sewed.

And it was all caught on film. One of our sewers is making a documentary of the making of a Downton Abbey quilt. So her film crew interviewed all of us on film, captured our sewing, and preserved the high tea. I'll keep you posted on the progress of the film.

And if you're interested in reading about this time period, try "Home," by Bill Bryson. He is a travel writer, and he decided to stay at home for once and just write about all the rooms in his recently purchased English country manor. I was especially interested in his section on stairways. And the number of accidents attributed to falling down and up stairs. And it was this section I was reading while at the Nagel Warren Mansion. I am so glad I had my knees replaced -- lots of stairs. And I held on tight to every handrail in sight. I didn't want to become a statistic.

DOWNTON ABBEY FABRICS

The rest of the reorders are in -- Lady Mary bolts and Dowager bolts! Those of you who requested certain cuts, I have called to reconfirm your orders and I have cut what you have requested. Those fabrics are at the store in the desk drawer, labeled with your names.

If you did not get a call from me, but were expecting a call, please contact me.

Photos, compliments of Betty, from the retreat.

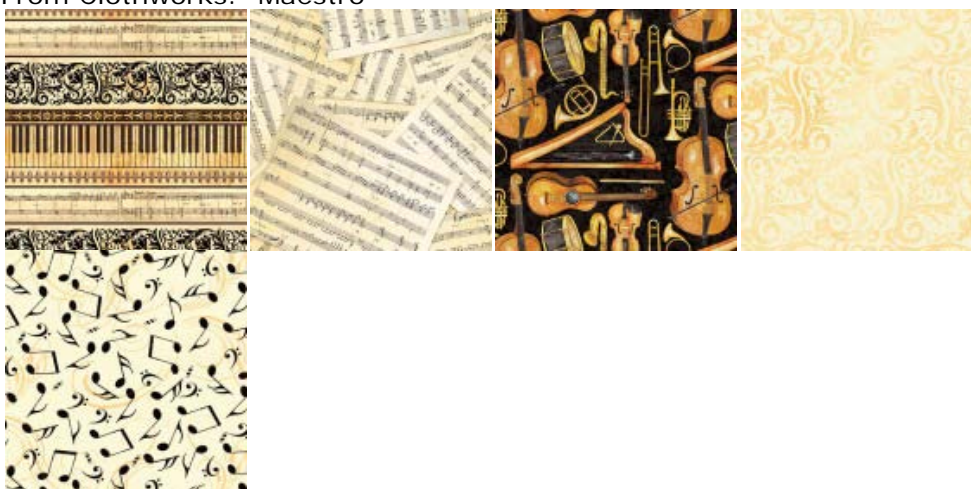


WHAT'S NEW!!

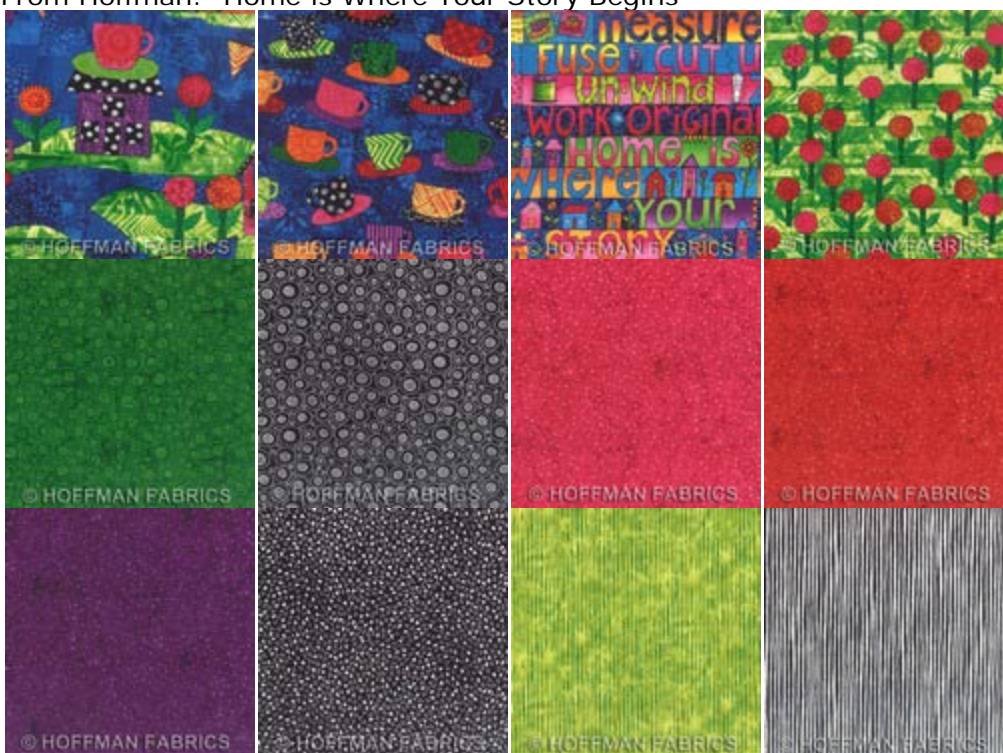
From Timeless: the horses are flannel



From Clothworks: Maestro



From Hoffman: Home is Where Your Story Begins

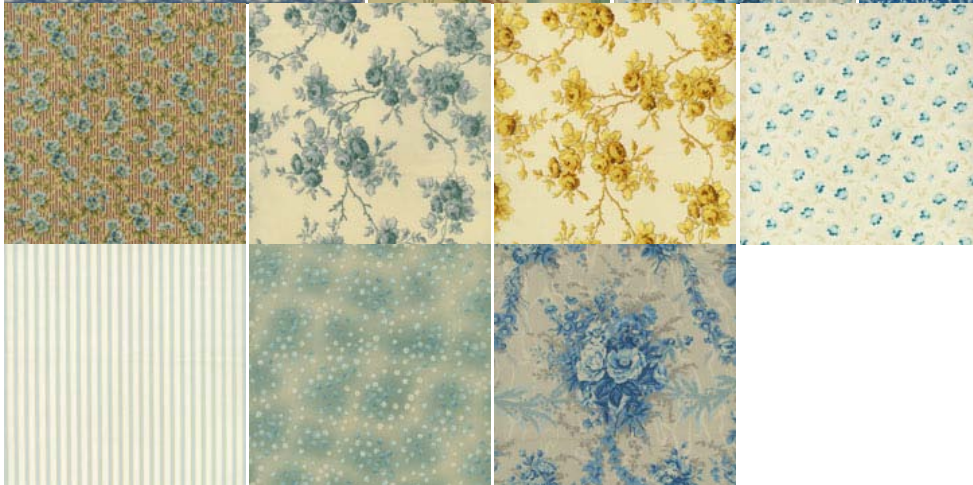


From RJR: Man of the House & Woodland Trails by Dan Morris





From RJR--Robyn Pandolph

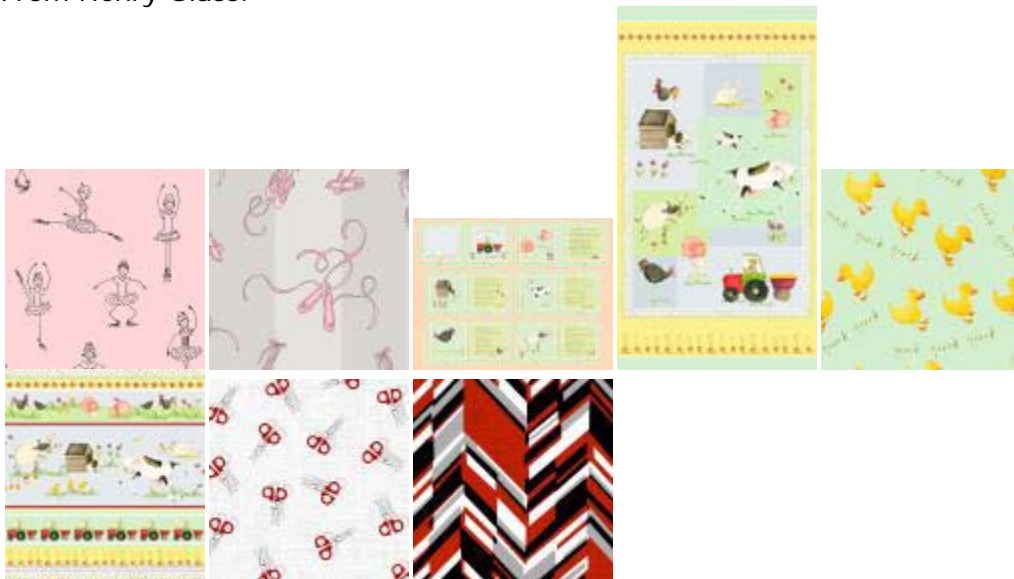


From Robert Kaufmann: Classic Minis





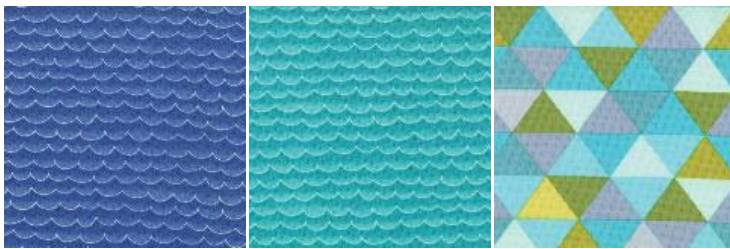
From Henry Glass:



From Alexander Henry:



From Moda:



March Classes & Special Events

Hare Brained Jungle Walk Applique Quilt Sat. Mar. 29, 10-5 \$30 Sue Frerich

Giraffes in high heels? Zebras in snow shoes? Snake on a skateboard? Each jungle animal is decked out in sneakers, roller skates, spats and crocs - for the crocodile, of course. This cute quilt is fused and then you can have fun decorating the shoes with laces and fur.

Pillow Case Party Sun. Mar. 30 1-4 FREE

If you've never made a pillow case, or just want some time to sew a pillow case, this class is for you. This is a great mother/daughter styled class and pillow cases make great presents!



Friday Nighters Fri. Mar. 28, 5:30-9 \$10(one time fee for year)

This class will help you get organized for Christmas 2014 -- or just help you get things done. You give me a list of your "to dos" or unfinished projects you want to finish and then each month I check off what you've completed. Trust me. If you need incentive to stay on track, this is it. You can bring your sewing machine or do hand work.

April Classes and Special Events

Doodling for Machine Quilters Wed. April 2 1-4 or 6-8:30 \$25 Barb Boyer

You can do basic meandering, stars & loops with a darning foot on your sewing machine. But how do you...? Learn to do a variety of designs to expand your quilting repertoire. You will learn leaves, pinecones, feathers, flowers (a variety), paisleys, dragonflies and other interesting motifs.

Knit Pickin' Club Thur. April 3, 6-8:30

Every second Thursday, we're getting together to practice our knitting. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and knit. You can start simply by making a dishcloth. Carol will teach you the essentials to get you started. For those of you who already know how to knit, you can still join the club--it's time for you to simply sit & knit & share ideas.

Block of the Month Sat. April 5, 10:30-11:15 FREE

Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. This year we're making a Christmas Quilt -shaped like a tree. Each month will feature a different block, mostly 12" finished blocks.

Make it Do (Use it Up, Wear it Out, Make it Do or Do Without) Sat. April 5 and May 3 ongoing

ABCs of Binding Sat. April 5, 3-4 \$20 Jo Sunderman

Learn the ins and outs of selecting binding, cutting binding and applying binding. It's easier than you think. If you have a project you are working on, be sure to bring it to class for some hands on advice.

**Monthly Minis First Saturday of the Month, Jan-Dec. 4-6 Barb Boyer
\$20 (free if you buy the kits)**

Each month we will feature a snowman, from McKenna Ryan's Snow Buds patterns. The kits will be laser cut, all ready for assembly. You can also choose to make the Snow Bud with your own fabrics. The laser kits will billed month by month.

**Monday Morning Quilts April 7 10-2
Free, if you buy that month's kit**

Each month we will feature quilts from the Fons & Porter Love of Quilting magazine or other fun quilts. From Fons & Porter, we will choose one of the quilts from the magazine and make limited kits. In class, we will show you how to put the quilt together and you will have time to get started. Quilts will be big or small or in between. The first quilt, just because it is January, will be Lost Socks, an easy fusible quilt. We won't completely kit this quilt, but we will have a bundle of flannel fats to get you started. **April will feature a Fons & Porter quilt.**

**Shop Hop At the Ranch
April 11 & 12**

**Hand Embroidery Club Sat. April 12, 10-11:30 FREE
Kathy Sconce**

(Club normally meets the 2nd Sat. of each month from 10-noon)

This year we're stitching "penny squares" using simple drawings that we create! During class we will draw various designs and stitch them on 5" squares. Each month we will learn new stitches and trade designs and ideas. Then these 5" squares can be made into a sampler quilts, or stitched into a "book" of stitches. You will also make your own notebooks so you can keep your squares, ideas, floss, needles & scissors in one place. You can join anytime.

**Beyond the Basics: Paper Piecing Wed. April 16, 1-3, OR 6-8:30 \$20
Barb Boyer**

Learn the basics of paper piecing. We will have some simple designs to choose from that can be turned into a mug rug, ornament, or small wall hanging. This is a technique class intended to teach you the basics of paper piecing.

**Hand Piecing Thur. April 16, 1-3 \$25
Sandra Freeburg**

Learn to hand piece straight lines, curves & inset seams. Very portable, doesn't need electricity, can sew anywhere, and it's easy to tote. Your mothers and grandmothers pieced by hand-this is an art form we don't want to lose. Stay connected with tradition and learn to hand piece.

Hand Applique Club Thurs. April 17, 6:30-8:30

Every 3rd Thursday, we're getting together to practice our hand applique skills. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and sew. More and more patterns are showing applique work, and while sometimes you can just fuse it down, learning how to hand applique is a wonderful skill that can be carried anywhere you go.

**T-Shirt Class Sat. April 19 10:30-5
Barb Boyer**

Learn how to transform t-shirts into quilts. You can make them simple with sashings and posts, or get really creative design a one of a kind quilt using different sized t-

shirts. We'll help you with all your choices.

Beyond the Basics: Bias Half Square Triangles Wed. April 23, 1-3 OR 6-8:30 \$20

Barb Boyer

Learn the basics of making half square triangles from bias strips. This is my favorite way to make half square triangles, when I have lots to make.

Friday Nighters Fri. April 25, 5:30-9 \$10 (one time fee for year)

This class will help you get organized for Christmas 2014 -- or just help you get things done. You give me a list of your "to dos" or unfinished projects you want to finish and then each month I check off what you've completed. Trust me. If you need incentive to stay on track, this is it. You can bring your sewing machine or do hand work.

Stripped in Bali Sat. April 26, 10:30-5 \$25

Sue Frerich

This cool quilt is made with 2 1/2" strips -- perfectly suited for Bali Pops or any other coordinated set of strips. The color illusions created by the light and dark fabrics create a wonderful geometric pattern.



Beyond the Basics: Inset Seams-Attic Windows

Wed. April 30, 1-3 OR 6:8:30, \$20 Barb Boyer

From attic windows, to mitered borders to lone star quilts, inset seams are a must to master. Learn the basics of inseting seams, the "Y" seam construction, while making a small attic window block quilt.

March 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 BOM 10:30-11:30 Make it Do 1-2 Monthly Minis 4-6
2 Closed	3 Monday Morning Quilts 10-2	4	5 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or Beginning Quilt 6-8:30	6	7 Open Sew1-4	8 Embroidery Club 10-noon Sophia 1-5
9 Beginning Quilt 1-4	10 Learn to Knit Socks 1:30-3:30 OR 6-8:30	11	12 Beginning Machine Quilting 6:30-9	13 Back Basting 1-3 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30	14	15 National Quilt Day FullMoon (celebrated)
16 Beginning Quilt 1-4	17	18	19 Hand Quilting 1-3	20 Hand Applique Club 6-8:30	21 Downton Abbey Retreat	22 Downton Abbey Retreat
23 Downton Abbey Retreat	24	25	26 Beginning Machine Applique 1:30-4 or 6-8:30	27 Hand Quilting	28 Friday Nighters 5:30 -?	29 Hare Brained Jungle Quilt 10:30-5
30 Pillow Case Party 1-4	31					

April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Doodling on Your Quilt 1-3:30 OR 6-8:30	3 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30	4 Open Sew1-4	5 BOM 10:30-11:30 Make it Do 1-2 Binding 3-4 Monthly Minis 4-6
6 Closed	7 Monday Morning Quilts 10-2	8	9	10	11 Shop Hop	12 Shop Hop Embroidery Club 10-noon
13	14	15 FullMoon	16 Beyond Basics: Paper Piecing 1-3:30 OR 6-8:30	17 Hand Piecing 1-3 Hand Applique Club 6-8:30	18 Open Sew1-4 Good Friday	19 T-Shirt Class 10:30-5
20 Closed Easter Sunday	21	22	23 Beyond Basics: Bias Half Square Triangles 1-3:30 OR6-8:30	24	25 Friday Nighters 5:30 -?	26 Stripped in Bali 10:30-5
27	28	29	30 Beyond Basics: Inset Seams 1-3:30 OR 6-8:30			