

# COMING TO AMERICA

*The women of the Mayflower*



**From Brenda Gervais, With thy Needle & Thread:**

**Greetings!**

I am stopping by for a visit to share some exciting, stitching goodness that will be coming your way from With Thy Needle & Thread in 2020. Twenty Twenty marks the 400th celebration of the arrival of the Mayflower. It is also the 400th anniversary of the arrival of needlework to America. Did you know, needlework

came to America with the woman of the Mayflower? That is something to celebrate, as needle workers of the 21st century! The first American sampler was stitched by a young girl, Lora Myles Standish. We learned of her father, Captain Myles Standish in history class, as young students. I taught at a retreat this past October and my speech topic was "History of Needlework in America." The attendees thoroughly enjoyed the topic and I think that will translate to stitchers wanting to stitch a sampler of this theme.

"History has dwelt long and minutely upon the Pilgrim Fathers and their great adventure, but has passed over the women with a generalization and occasionally a tribute. Even their contemporaries have had but little to say about them. There is much need today to perpetuate their spirit, to practice their faith, to maintain their ideals. They loved liberty and endured hardship, sacrifice and suffering for its sake. They built the homes of the Nation on the foundation of English ideals of home and family life, which we cherish today as ours. They served their homes and the community life of the colony with loyal and unswerving devotion. They brought up their families in those rugged virtues and living faith in God, without which nations perish. They have a message for us today, calling us back, not to their austerities but to their righteousness and spirituality." - Anne Rogers Minor, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Life for the woman of the Mayflower was not easy. The woman and children lived on the Mayflower while the men built their dwelling places. The living conditions were dirty, wet and cold. Many of the woman and children died the first winter. In the spirit of these brave and enduring woman, and the 400 year celebration, I am happy to share that I have designed a sampler to honor the Woman of the Mayflower. The piece is titled *Coming to America - The Woman of the Mayflower*.

I hope you will partake in 66 days (number of days the Mayflower was at sea) of stitching to honor these woman. The release date for this design will be September 6th, the date the Mayflower left Plymouth England. The ending date for the series will be Nov 9th, the day the Mayflower landed in Cape Cod. With some good stitching time, this sampler can be, realistically, completed in the 66 days.

The kit coming from WTN&T will include the sampler pattern and a pattern for a smaller design (to be handed out to participants free of charge on November 9th, 2020.) We will be supplying you with a lovely, custom printed, colored box for the kit. Also included with this will be a piece of finishing fabric for the small design that is a replica of a hand-written page from William Bradford's journal. Your shop (that's us - The Silver Needle!) will supply and kit the linen and flosses for the sampler and tuck them inside the lovely box. At the time you receive the kits, the boxed kit will include the large sampler pattern, finishing fabric for the backing of the smaller surprise project, and the linen and floss. The 2nd pattern, for the small design, will handed out to participants on the 9th of November, the ending date of the series. This date coincides with the landing of the Mayflower.

A few hints about the sampler... It is a larger sampler. It is long and narrow. Very similar in size and stitch count to the historical Lora Standish sampler. As expected, there are nautical Mayflower themed motifs, but I have also worked in the motifs relating to the connection of needlework coming to America, and the

woman of the Mayflower. The animals on the Mayflower included 2 dogs, pigs, goats and chickens. Look for these motifs on the sampler, as well! The cover model will be stitched on a 40 count linen. This sampler, due to its size, is best suited for 36 count or smaller linen. The sampler is worked entirely in cross stitch, over 2 threads, with a small amount of straight stitching. There is no over-one stitching on this piece.

The plans in place for this are as follows: (These are Brenda's Guidelines)

- Shops can officially start taking sign ups for this kit on June 1st. (I will be sending out fabric and floss colors April 1st so your shop has enough time for you to obtain the necessary linen and flosses).
- Shops will release kits to participants on September 5th. The actual date the Mayflower set sail was the 6th of September... the 6th happens to be a Sunday, so starting a day early. ;) (No early birds, here.... let's make this fun for everyone and follow the specific release dates that coincide with the historical dates of the Mayflower voyage.)
- There will be a Facebook group formed for this commemorative sampler. The focus of the group will be to share stitching progress and fellowship for participants. We will also be using a hashtag for Instagram posts. More information to follow on this.
- Lastly, to commemorate the Mayflower arrival date on November 9th the participating shops will hand out the small chart to participants, free of charge. A small way to say, "THANK YOU" for joining in on this wonderful celebration of 400 years of needlework in America!

We can hardly wait to join in on the fun, and sail into some late summer stitching goodness! I am expecting this to be lots of fun!

Brenda Gervais, With thy Needle & Thread

Lindy Legener, The Silver Needle