

M.E.G. at Sarum  
Sarum College, Salisbury  
MACHINE EMBROIDERY GROUP

Making machine-embroidered textiles to the highest standards. Exploring ideas and techniques old and new. Growing in skills and confidence.

MEG was set up in 2008 by Jenny Rose as a group of experienced machine embroiderers. Initially the group met at Urchfont Manor, and moved to Sarum College, Salisbury, on the closure of Urchfont Manor. The group meets four weekends a year. Members bring their own stitching to work on during the weekend and for discussion with the members.

Aims of the group

- To encourage and extend development of personal practice in a challenging and supportive environment
- To provide a forum to explore common issues and ideas relating to art and craft
- To stimulate inventiveness and experimentation
- To introduce new ideas and techniques
- To foster emerging strengths and develop new skills
- To enrich skills through sharing expertise
- To extend skills through regular, planned and delivered workshops
- To communicate ideas and share work through interaction with other groups and exhibition of work

Currently there are 12 members of the group. Nine members have created hangings for Sarum College. The members of the group exhibit their work outside MEG, individually and with other groups, many are textile tutors, all produce work that is innovative and of a high standard.

MEG at Sarum  
Celebration in Stitch

This exhibition of hangings by MEG at Sarum is inspired by the ambience and the physical presence of the buildings. The ethos, the warmth of hospitality, the community and caring, as well as the structures of the building have all enfolded MEG into the extended Sarum College community.

The members of MEG were asked to create the hangings for Sarum College, for exhibition as part of the celebrations of the eight hundredth anniversary of Salisbury Cathedral.

The hangings have been donated to Sarum College by the members of MEG.

Vicky Bilton

MEG at Sarum

Vicky Bilton started working in textiles as she loved touching fabric and found the repetitive, nature of free machine embroidery extremely relaxing and absorbing.

Celebration in Stitch

**'There is no key to happiness, the door is always open'**

Founded in 1995, Sarum College is based in historic grade 1 – listed buildings with a heritage of theological education stretching **back more than 150 years in Salisbury's Cathedral Close**. The college is a centre that represents a number of Christian churches for study and research with a passion for learning that nourishes the human spirit. From the first time Vicky visited, she felt the warm welcome and sat with people of all faiths and none, in the refectory. She has sought to reflect this welcome in her hanging by focussing on the door.

Over the last year her work has moved on to being based on a desire to depict the places that have shaped the county she lives in. Vicky is inspired by the ancient landscape and her experience of it, so was very happy to take part in this exhibition which is part of a year-long programme of events and activities to mark the **800th anniversary of the laying of Salisbury Cathedral's first foundation stone** and the development of Salisbury in 2020.



Marion Constance

MEG at Sarum

Marion trained in Fine Art Embroidery at **Goldsmith's** College, London during the early 1970s and was fortunate to be under the tutorage of Constance Howard, Christine Risley, Barbara Dawson and Betty Swanwick. She went on to teach in both primary and secondary schools for some 28 years.

Her interest in machine embroidery was re-kindled in more recent years, completing a City & Guilds course in Historical Heirloom Embroidery gaining a distinction. She prefers working from her own photographs and drawings.

Celebration in Stitch

**'Spirit Rising'**

For her hanging Marion was inspired by the hexagonal flint tower. Using her love of layering her work she interpreted the different textures of stone, brick and flint combining this with the concept of a building rising up and steeped in spirituality.

Marion wanted to give the impression of looking through and beyond shapes, such as the arch, to find what may lie within and beyond.

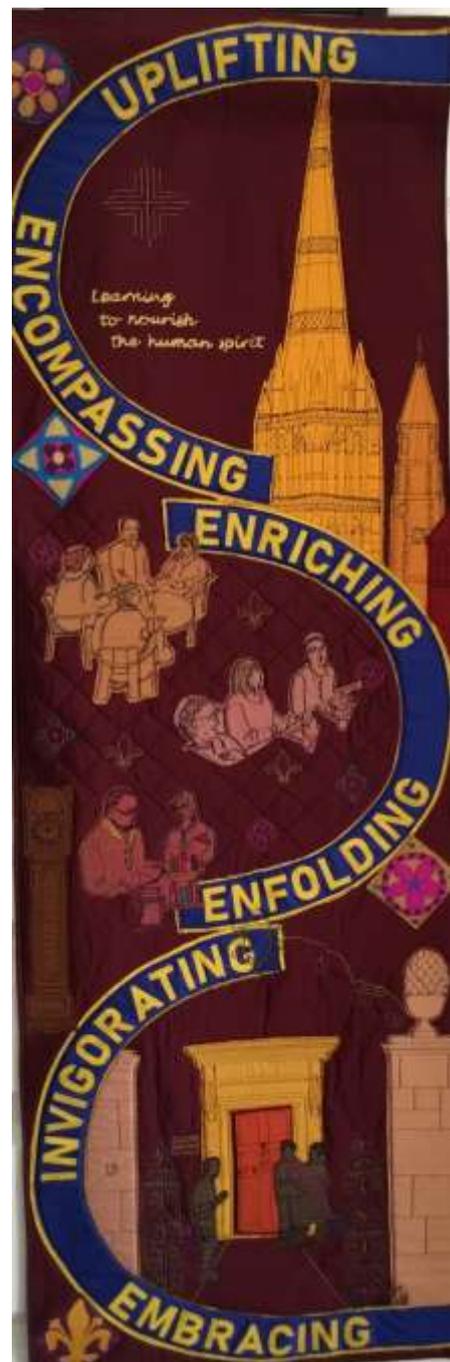


Janet Crowther

MEG at Sarum

Janet Crowther has been involved in the world of textiles for many years, as a maker and tutor.

Janet was brought up to knit and sew her own clothes: **'if you wanted something new, you made it'**. She was awarded a distinction for art embroidery when training for teaching in the late 1960s. In the 1980s an aunt gave her a spinning wheel, and she learned to spin and weave. One textile experience led to another. Janet has attended many textile-related courses, each one feeding into her own work. She has five City and Guilds Certificates and some others. She works in a range of textile media, machine embroidery, paper, dyeing, spinning, weaving, braids, felt, machine and hand knitting, quilting; combining techniques and materials. She exhibits regularly; a highlight was being invited to have a sole exhibition in the Orangery at the National Trust house, Knole, in Kent. In 2005, after 36 years, she gave up full time teaching in primary schools to concentrate **on her 'other life', textiles**. The feel of fibres through her fingers, a lifelong love of learning, the sharing of knowledge and expertise are **her textile 'being'**.



Celebration in Stitch

**'Ethos'**

On entering Sarum College, through the stone gateway and impressive door, you are immediately enveloped in the welcoming aura, the feeling of community and caring. The design, worked in silk fabrics, was initially based on the spiral staircase leading upwards from the rear car park. The idea of a spiral enveloping and embracing was developed to encapsulate many of the aspects of the ethos of Sarum College, with the spire of Salisbury Cathedral ever-present.

Christine Highnett

MEG at Sarum

Christine is a Creative Textile Designer who loves to include detailed elements in her work based on natural sources.

She gained an HNC Certificate in Textiles in 1998 through the Open College of the Arts and has completed various other art and textile courses. In 2012 she completed the City & Guilds Historical Heirloom in Machine Embroidery Course with a distinction.

Christine regularly takes part in local exhibitions, especially the West Berkshire & Hampshire Open Studios.

She enjoys making silk paper, then working with free machine embroidery to create unusual and interesting work, experimenting with new methods whenever possible.

Celebration in Stitch

### 'Layers of Learning'

Christine decided to take the main entrance which then leads to the various corridors of Sarum College as her theme. The intention is to show layers of fabric to symbolise the different functions that take place within the College. The main door is large, grand and impressive so this will be her source of inspiration.

A fusion of styles has been used to create a hanging embracing traditional and new techniques after researching textiles, art & **photography**. **Christine's inspirations are translated with free machine embroidery, appliqué cut back work, and beading.** Consideration has been given to design, size and colour to radiate richness. Christine hopes this hanging will give pleasure to the people who visit Sarum College for the exhibition and in the future.



Jill Jordan

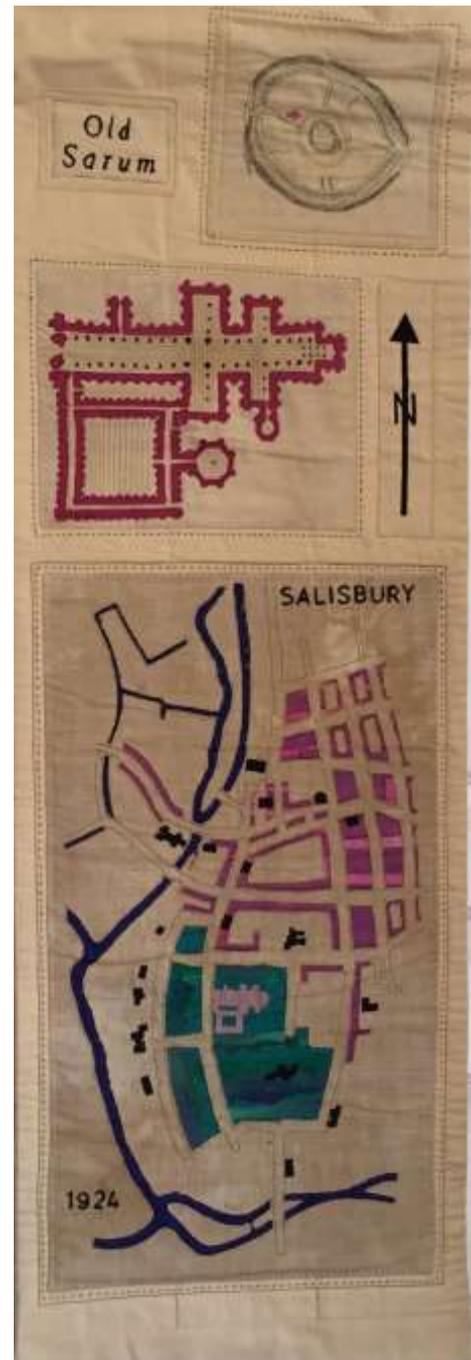
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Jill Jordan is a textile artist living in South East London. She particularly enjoys working with maps and plans of all kinds and using naturally dyed fabrics. She often finds inspiration in worn and aged fabrics and materials.

Celebration in Stitch

'Sarum'

The hanging "Sarum" was based on a very beautiful 1924 map of Salisbury and upon plans of Old Sarum and the Cathedral. The map provides a clear image of the relationship between the town, the rivers and the cathedral. The main part of the hanging uses reverse appliqué on linen dyed with onion skins. Frayed edges and hand stitching works well on linen and provides texture.



Jane Mayhew  
MEG at Sarum

Jane began to work with textiles after taking an early retirement. Grounding was achieved with City & Guilds qualifications. She enjoys working on various types of embroidery, both with a sewing machine and by hand. Traditional techniques can receive a modern twist. The magic moment is when a pictorial idea coincides with a particular technique and a particular combination of threads and fabric. Even better if the same idea coincided with more than one such set of possibilities. In addition to MEG, she is also a member of Zero Nine Textile Artists.

### Celebration in Stitch 'College Library'

The design of the door to the library at Sarum College intrigued Jane, seen from a **corridor's distance**. **Beyond the door, the library blooms** – piles of books ancient and modern and burgeoning pot-plants. **Jane's piece "College Library" depicts books and bookshelves** and makes use of the image of the door – the entry and exit of students. One half is the door yet to be entered; the other half is an open door radiating the output of study there. Jane has used a variety of fabrics and, primarily, techniques of piecing and appliqué. The open door is in reverse appliqué – layered fabrics cut back.



Jane Seviour

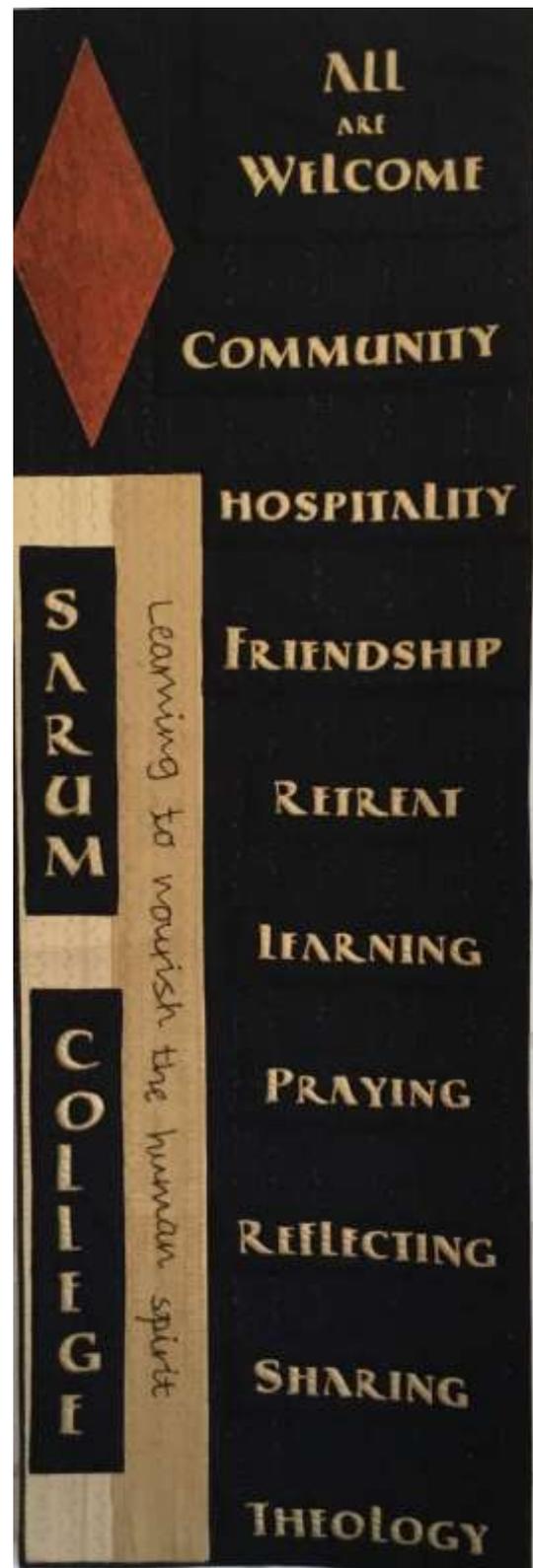
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Jane attended Urchfont College between 2001 and 2004 where she was introduced to machine embroidery by Valerie Campbell-Harding. Jane became a member of the Machine Embroidery Group (MEG) in 2008 and is a member of Salisbury Embroiderers Guild.

Celebration in Stitch

**'All are welcome'**

The hanging is based on many happy and inspiring visits to Sarum College where the Machine Embroidery Group (MEG) meet four times a year. The words reflect the energy and some of the activities undertaken at the College where ALL ARE WELCOME.



Louise Wainwright

MEG at Sarum

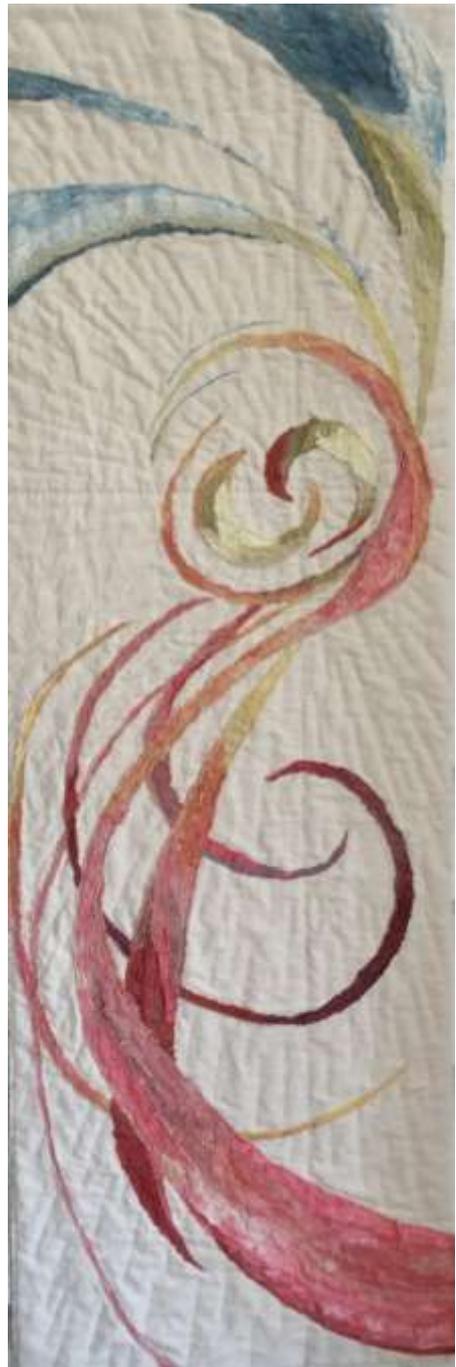
**Louise's passion is the rhythm of the seasons and the continually changing balance of light, colour and texture found in nature. Her work embraces these delicate qualities using natural materials in a variety of techniques.**

Celebration in Stitch

### 'Journey of Life'

This piece is inspired by the feelings and challenges we face as we explore both the **world and our inner selves on life's journey.** The path we tread is shaped by many things, including nature, our beliefs and encounters with others. At times we can feel stronger forces at work and our lives often turn out somewhat differently from what we expected.

The background fabric is part of a vintage linen sheet that in its past has wrapped **many lives, with ivory 'watermark' hand stitching radiating from the centre,** in which Louise has left her own mark. Each applied shape consists of various textures and colours attached with machine stitch. Moving from the warm colours of youthful energy towards the cool twilight phase at the top, she has used natural dyes to produce the three primary colours: red (made with madder), yellow (from weld) and blue (from indigo). These dyes are then combined to create every colour used on cotton, linen, and even the threads. The rough edges signify the difficult choices and experiences we face on our own journey, where nothing is perfect or easy.



Adrienne Woodfine

MEG at Sarum

**Adrienne's love of decorating fabric** has been part of her life from her earliest years. On moving near Salisbury in the 1980s she joined the Embroiderer's Guild and attended classes to learn about Goldwork. On the strength of this she was invited to join the Sarum group led by Jane Lemon. Adrienne worked with them, specialising in goldwork for about 11 years. She worked on commissions for Salisbury Cathedral, other Cathedrals and churches in Britain and abroad. Adrienne then left to concentrate on getting Parts I and II City and Guilds qualifications. Following this she continued to work towards exhibitions and on commissions while also nursing at Odstock Hospital. As well as MEG, Adrienne is a member of **the Embroiderer's Guild, The Guild of Goldworkers and the Contemporary Quilters.**

Celebration in Stitch

**'The Glory of Music'**

**Adrienne's immediate** thoughts when told of this project were that she would like to include, in some way, the music that we hear in the chapel. After studying the chapel and drawing details Adrienne found interesting, she decided that she would work in layers. Adrienne used the tiled floor as a background to link the other items together. She portrayed the organ by the fretwork panels on its front superimposed by scrolls of music from different periods of musical notation. Adrienne felt that the Sanctuary lamp and Pastoral candle were important symbols that should be included. She hopes she has portrayed her aim of depicting **'The Glory of Music'**.

