



WIN
A PRIZE
FOR YOUR
STORY!

"My fabulous forum friends"

When Susan Hyde joined internet craft forum, Crafts by Carolyn, she had no idea of the exciting projects ahead of her, or of the special friends she'd meet...

We've noticed from all the letters and emails we receive that more and more of you enjoy stitching for charity. Whether it's for your local hospice (issue 113) or for the Love Quilts project (issue 107), many of you appreciate how your stitching skills can make a real difference to those less fortunate. But when Susan Hyde started stitching charity quilts with a sociable internet forum, she also ended up making friends across the world, and what started as a small-scale charity project evolved into so much more...

To celebrate our fourth birthday we played pass the parcel by post!

Let's get quilting

"The forum celebrated its fourth birthday with a month of competitions, quizzes, and party games," Susan tells us. "We even played pass the parcel by post!" It was during this time that forum member Sharon Langley came up with the idea of stitching for charity. "Many of us are avid stitchers, so Sharon decided Operation

Nicki brought the quilts back all the way from Switzerland



Elderly Charity Stitches (OECS), that makes quilts for the elderly, was the project for us."

Susan and the gang set out to stitch eight floral squares, but the idea grew as more and more people got involved and a second quilt was started. Adele and Steph, (right) were two of the members who were thrilled to take part. "I'd forgotten how relaxing stitching is," says Adele. "I chose a sunflower because they're bright, sunny and full of cheer." Steph also chose a design with special meaning. "My grandfather's nickname was

'Poppy', so when I found out the theme was flowers I just had to stitch one."

Forum member, Nicki, who lives in Switzerland and is a whiz with a sewing machine, even offered to sew up the quilts and even brought them to the UK to show everyone at the group's big reunion.

The 'Big Meet'

You can just imagine how exciting it must be to finally meet friends you've been getting to know online. Even more so, since many members have more in common than a love of stitching. "The non craft chit-chat section of the website is the most popular," says Susan. "It's a real community and this naturally grows into great friendships." Susan regularly meets up with her forum friends to visit craft events, but it's the 'Big Meet' she looks forward to most of



Adele, Carolyn, Steph and Susan (front row from left) with more members from the forum. Each quilt took over 70 hours to make



Steph chose to stitch a poppy in honour of her grandad

all, as members come from as far afield as Switzerland, Canada and New Zealand.



Bright and cheerful, sunflowers are the flowers for Adele

Susan met over 50 forum members at this year's event and unveiling the special quilts was the highlight of the day.

Everyone found stitching for a charity so worthwhile. "Being involved in a communal effort for the benefit of others has given us all an extra dimension to our stitching," says Susan. She's excited about the forum's future and urges us all to jump on board. Visit www.craftsbycarolyn.co.uk to join this friendly worldwide forum. ☒

Write in to us!

Win a year's free subscription (or an extended subscription) to our super mag if your story is printed here! Write to: Your Story, *The World of Cross Stitching*, Origin Publishing, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN or send an email to amanda@cross-stitching.com

