



A Stitch in Time

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The Story

With inspiration from the Fishguard Tapestry in Wales, and with encouragement from the City of Vancouver, the Historic Reserve and the Clark County Historical Museum, Eleanor Van de Water and associate Sherry Mowatt applied for and received a Vancouver Cultural Commission Grant to plan and design the Fort Vancouver Tapestry. Based on the proportions of the renowned Bayeaux Tapestry in France, the projected textile narrative will be finished 28" high and approximately 100' long. Detailing the history and significance of Vancouver, the story will be developed scene by scene from images of native American life through the present.

Scenes will be embroidered in richly-colored woolen threads on a natural linen background. A central band of activity 20" high will be complimented by 4" wide borders top and bottom. A storyline stitched in the lower border will interpret each scene. The upper border will provide details of chosen vignettes. Vancouver's cultural diversity will be honored by words of greeting in the language of each significant group as it arrived in the area.

Suggested scenes have been listed and sequenced. Working materials have been selected. We have been in consultation with a glass company and cabinet-maker about the final framing and mounting of the finished project.



Drawings Come to Life

In preparation for her daily work on the tapestry design, Eleanor has spent hours at the museum researching details to assure historical accuracy. She chooses scenes alive with human involvement, illustrating changes in culture, fashion and technology. At this date approximately 50 running feet of full-scale first drawings are complete. Final drawings will indicate specific stitch techniques for each line and space as well as chosen thread colors. At least two complete black and white copies and two color copies of the 100' length must be made.

Assigning thread color and quantity for each stitched line is in itself a daunting task, along

with detailing historic accuracy, incorporating spirit and spunk, and sequencing and spacing to fit the 100' length.

At this date we have a list of more than 70 willing and we trust eager volunteers to assist with the tasks of transferring designs, sorting, measuring and cutting fabrics and threads, record-keeping, identifying and filing samples, storage, frame-building, soliciting financing, etc. Actual stitching cannot be begun until all preliminary details are complete.

Wish List

We're still searching for a suitable work space. We've had good discussions with Tracy Fortmann, Superintendent of Fort Vancouver, about moveable demonstrations when stitching begins, but have no place to park our chairs, tables, shelves, fabrics and threads, work on design details, and meet with individuals and small groups as work progresses.



Spreading the Word

Recently Eleanor attended the quarterly meeting of the Columbia Stitchery Guild to update them on our progress. The Guild has pledged an in-kind donation of \$1,000. worth of hours to the project and members are anxious to get busy. Tapestry drawings and details were well received by a fascinated audience who had no idea of what an intricate and involved project this is.

We would be happy to make a presentation to any group interested in learning more about the Fort Vancouver Tapestry



Word of Thanks

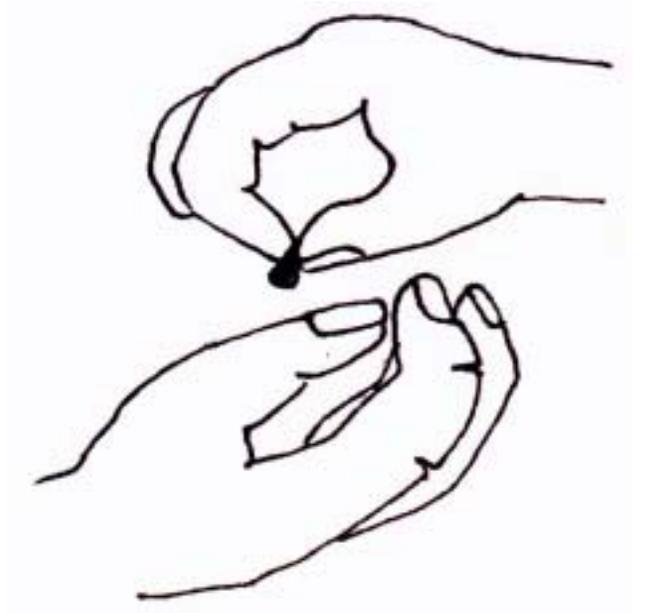
We extend greetings to our many friends and supporters, and thank you for words of encouragement coming in person and by mail. Special thanks go out to Laura Emerson and Elaine Thompkins for donations of \$1,000. each. Thanks also go out to Donald Russo, Maya Jones, Grace Wetherell, Don Cannard, John Rausch, Lisa Haven, Pat Jollata, Tracy Fortmann and Tessa Langford for generously sharing their time and ideas.



Stitchers Take Note

This actual size drawing, one of a series of designs for prospective stitchers, is taken from the border of the tapestry. The story behind the drawing is that a visitor from England, after an elegant dinner at McLoughlin House, reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out an apple seed from his homeland. Doctor McLoughlin valued the seed enough to plant it and nurture its growth. The resulting tree still lives and can be visited at Old Apple Tree Park, just east of the I-5 Bridge on Columbia Way.

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## Financial Support

In considering a financial contribution to the Fort Vancouver Tapestry, you might challenge a friend or your employer to match your donation.

Budget information on request.

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Volunteer Support

At the moment, our real needs are for a part-time bookkeeper and a volunteer with some time and computer skills to assist with accessing and storing information. Reach Sherry at sdmowatt1@uswest.net or Eleanor at 360-699-5315

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Fort Vancouver Tapestry  
202 NE 68th Street  
Vancouver, WA 98665  
[sdmowatt1@uswest.net](mailto:sdmowatt1@uswest.net)

