

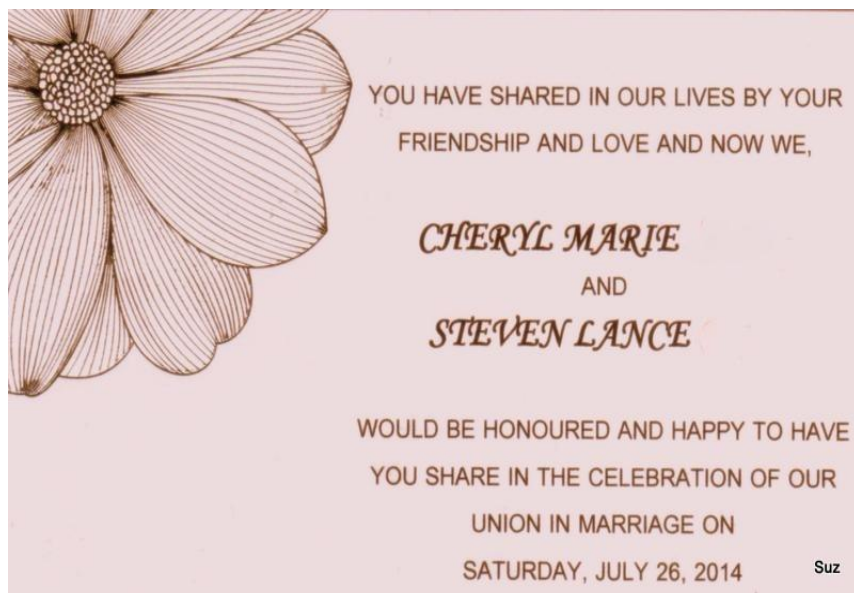
Creating A Personalized, Embroidered, Wedding Gift

by Susan Cuss

In 2014, my brother-in-law was getting married, and my husband and I wanted to create something unique for a wedding gift. Since I love to embroider, and my husband enjoys woodworking, we decided to collaborate on a very special, and personal piece.

The couple has a collection of antique furniture, and we hoped to fashion a piece that had a feeling of history, yet a timeless appeal.

Once I received the wedding announcement in the mail, I began to plan the wedding piece. I scanned photos of the couple, and their wedding announcement, and printed them onto muslin, adding an enlargement of the flower on the invitation.



Once I decided on the beginning design for the piece, I began adding lace as a frame around the printed fabric. It was layered onto a larger piece of muslin.. A lace initial was added and stitched between the two photos of the couple. Cascades of tatted Josephine Knots were also

The leaves shown in the above photo are woven picot stitch: many are raised and secured at one end.



Suz

This above and below photos show the piece in progress. Stitches used include buttonhole lace variation, casalgudi stitch, long bullions, french



knots, kantha stitch, and tatted tendrils.

Other stitches used in creating the wedding piece include straight stitch, chain stitch, cast-on stitch, spider web stitch, back stitch, outline stitch variation, stem stitch, and silk ribbon embroidery.

It took approximately 4 months to complete the stitching on the wedding piece, and, happily, the recipients were thrilled with their wedding gift!



Suz

The completed piece has been damp stretched, then secured to a padded, wooden backing before placing it into the frame.

The beautiful frame below was designed and built by my husband. It was his first intarsia piece, and he did an incredible job!



Suz



Suz

Since this was the first time I had attempted such a large piece of work, and since I was creating this piece without a structured pattern, there were a few lessons I learned along the way:

1- It is more difficult to lace an oval piece than a rectangular one.

2- Leaving a border around the stitched area creates a better result. Allowing an open space beyond the stitching gives a bit of breathing room from the busyness of the embroidery which means that the frame will not create a shadow on the work. Then, the focus is on the embroidered piece, and it won't look crowded against the frame.

3- Removing and adjusting/adding some stitchwork will happen as the design progresses.

4- The embroidery will take you much longer than you think it will!

5- A simple frame might create a cleaner look, and allow the embroidery to take the spotlight instead of competing with it.

Although the wedding piece took longer to complete than I had anticipated, I'm very pleased with the result. In fact, I began stitching a second wedding gift as soon as this one was gifted to the newlyweds.

I hope this might inspire you to create something unique with your embroidery. Such a personal piece may well become a family heirloom. Happy stitching!

Susan Cuss