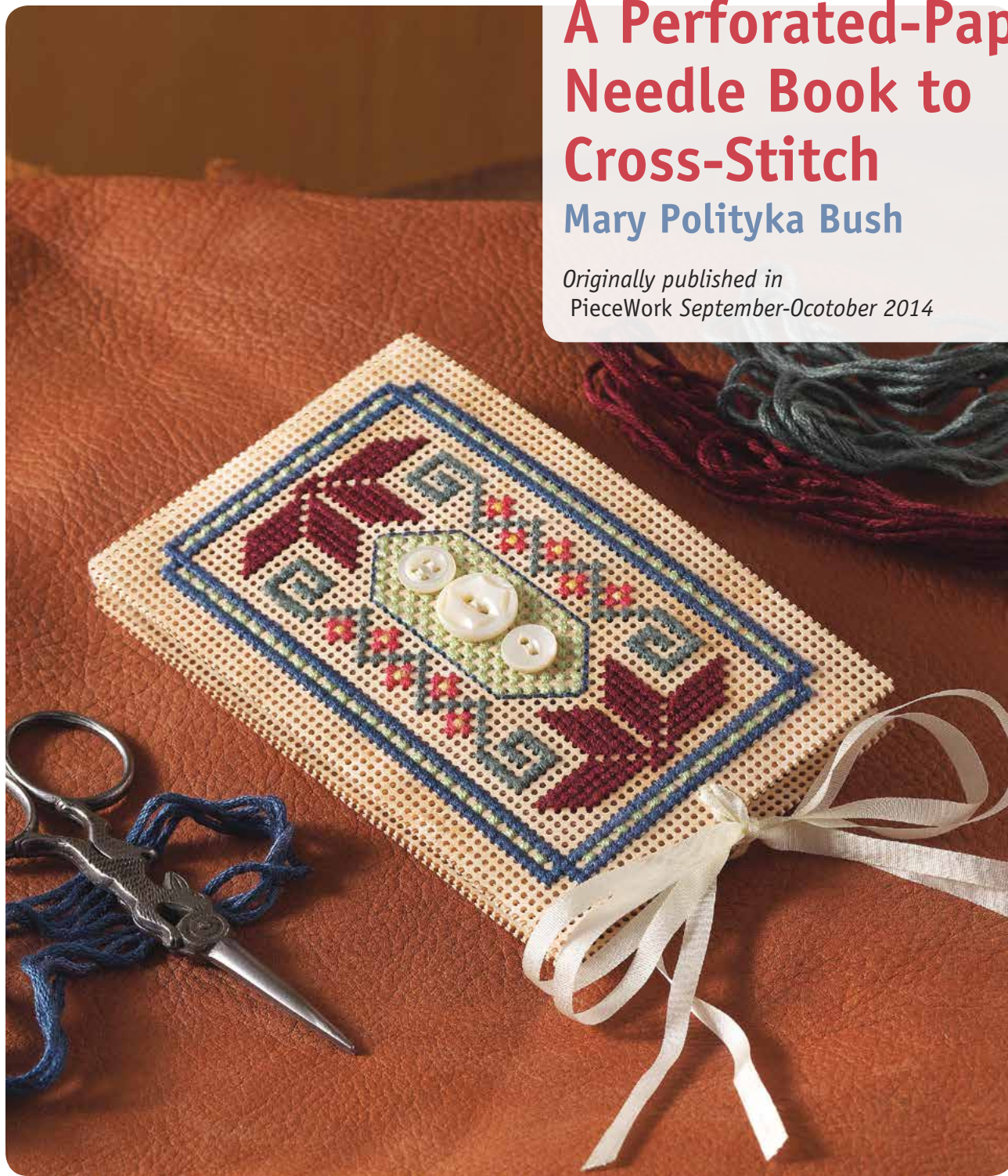


A Perforated-Paper Needle Book to Cross-Stitch

Mary Polityka Bush

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Joe Coca

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MARY POLITYKA BUSH

◀ Inspired by the preceding article ▶



Perforated paper was a popular substrate for embroidery around the turn of the twentieth century, the period in which *Sonoran Borders: Threads of Friendship* (Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City Star Books, 2013) is set. To create a vintage look for this project, I artificially aged the perforated paper with a tea solution and chose overdyed threads to suggest colors tempered by time. Antique buttons from the button box of Dorothy Diver Partee, born in New Mexico in 1909, provide period accents. Milagros (charms) or other tokens could replace the buttons. The checkerboard area could be omitted to make room for stitching initials, a name, date, or word such as “Friend.” The embroidery may alternatively be framed, mounted on a box or card, or backed with felt for a bookmark.

Mary Polityka Bush's delightful needle book was inspired by pieces worked on perforated paper that are included in Vickie LoPiccolo Jennett's *Sonoran Borders: Threads of Friendship* (Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City Star Books, 2013). The front of the book is shown here. Scissors courtesy of the Loveland Museum/Gallery, Loveland, Colorado.

MATERIALS

- ♦ Caron Collection Soie Cristale, 12-ply silk thread, 6 yards (5.5 m)/skein, 1 skein each of #2010 Lacquer Red and #5024 Olive Green; Caron Collection Waterlilies, 12-ply silk thread, 6 yards (5.5 m)/skein, 1 skein each of #073 Charcoal, #169 Moss, #205 Saffron, #221 Bittersweet; www.caron-net.com
- ♦ Holland Wool Felt, 1 piece 8 x 12 inches (20.3 x 30.5 cm), Soft White; www.achildsdream.com
- ♦ Mill Hill Perforated Paper, 14-count, 2 sheets/package, each 9 x 12 inches, (22.9 x 30.5 cm), Ecru; www.wichelt.com
- ♦ John James Needles, tapestry, sizes 24 and 26; www.colonialneedle.com
- ♦ Sewing thread, Ivory
- ♦ Bucilla Embroidery Ribbon, silk, 4 mm wide, 1 yard (0.9 m) of #655 Creamy Yellow
- ♦ Buttons, milagros, or other add-ons (optional)
- ♦ Laying tool
- ♦ Craft knife, metal edge ruler, and cutting mat or sharp scissors for cutting the perforated paper
- ♦ Black tea bags, 3

Finished size: 4½ x 2⅞ x ¼ inches (11.3 x 7.3 x 0.6 cm)



The back of Mary Polityka Bush's needle book.
Scissors courtesy of the Loveland Museum/Gallery, Loveland, Colorado.

INSTRUCTIONS

Tea Dyeing

It is advisable to experiment on a scrap of perforated paper or a piece of plain paper first. Be aware that colors will dry slightly lighter than they appear when wet. You may wish to tea dye both sheets of the perforated paper in the package to give yourself a choice for stitching.

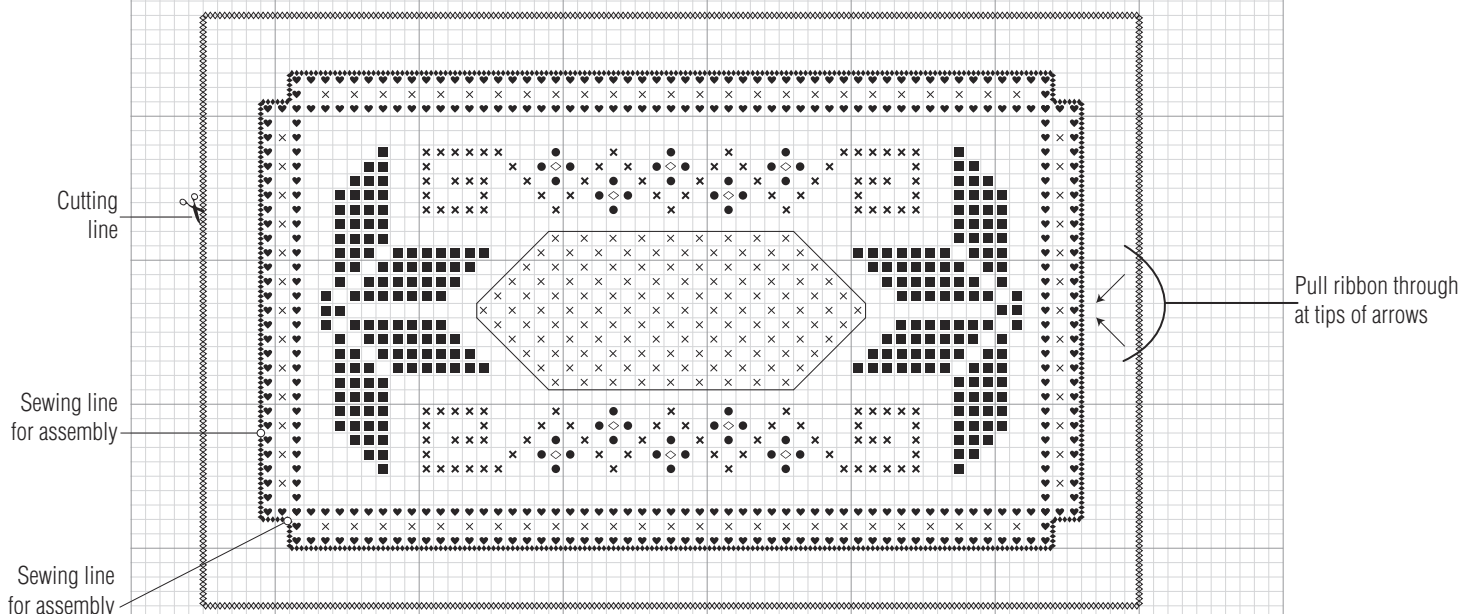
To dye the perforated paper, lay 1 sheet on several layers of paper towel. Barely cover one tea bag with boiling water, let it steep until the tea leaves are thoroughly soaked. Gently squeeze out most, but not all, of the tea and use the wet bag as a dauber to spot color random areas. If the tea bag becomes too dry, steep a second tea bag rather than re-wetting the first one, which may weaken its coloring potential. Let the paper dry. To intensify the color in selected areas, steep another tea bag in the same manner, cut it open, and sprinkle wet leaves here and there. Let them remain in place for at least half an hour. Remove the leaves and let the perforated paper dry thoroughly before beginning to stitch. If the dry paper is warped, sandwich it between layers of paper towel and press with a warm iron.

Needle Book

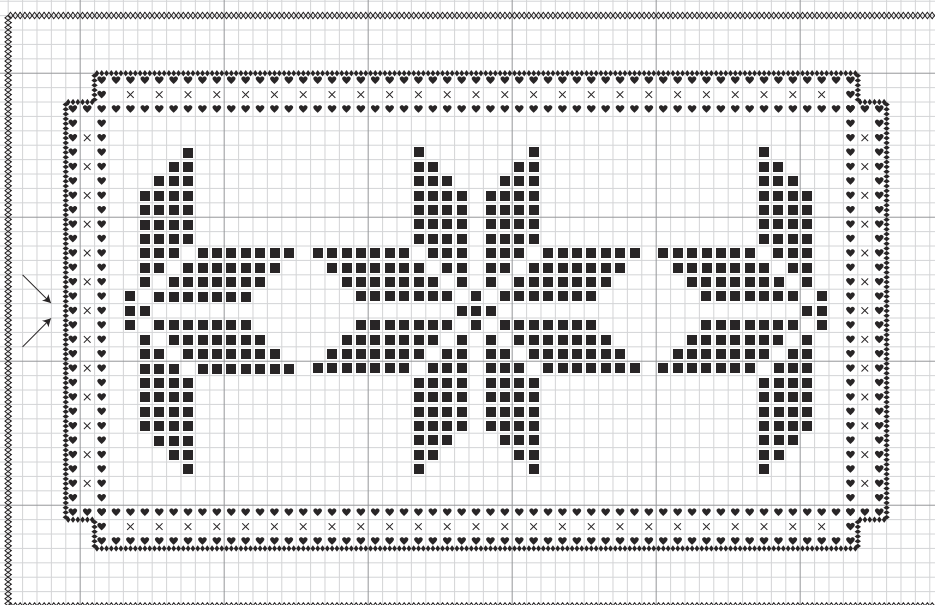
Notes: Each square on the chart represents 1 stitch; each intersection of gridlines represents 1 hole on the perforated paper. Use the size 24 needle for stitching and the size 26 for burying thread tails and for assembling the needle book. Use 3 strands of silk thread for cross-stitches, 2 strands for backstitches. The laying tool will help ensure the best silk coverage. To soften the color transitions of the Waterlilies, turn one of the 2 or 3 strands required in the opposite direction before threading the needle. Work with the perforated paper in hand or mounted on wooden stretcher bars with tacks; do not use a hoop. Handle the paper carefully, taking care not to bend and soften its edges. Begin stitching with waste knots, end by sliding through the backs of completed stitches, taking care not to be forceful, which, in addition to pulling too hard on individual stitches, may result in tearing the paper. If a tear occurs, mend it on the wrong side with cellophane tape then continue stitching through the tape. Do not travel behind unworked areas. Trim thread tails closely, so they do not show through to the front.

Cut 2 rectangles, each 5 x 7 inches (12.7 x 17.8 cm), from the perforated paper. Run your fingertips over both sides of one piece to determine which side is smoother; use that side as the front of the

Front Cover



Back Cover



Charts may be photocopied for personal use.

The charts for this project are available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations.

Key

-  #2010 Lacquer Red
-  #5024 Olive Green
-  #169 Moss
-  #221 Bittersweet
-  #205 Saffron
-  #073 Charcoal
-  #073 Charcoal



The interior of Mary Polityka Bush's needle book, showing the felt that holds needles and pins securely.

embroidery. Tape the 2 outermost rows so threads won't snag along the rough edges. Mount the paper on stretcher bars, if desired.

Following the chart and key, center and stitch the design for the front cover of the needle book. Repeat with the 2nd piece of perforated paper, stitching the design for the back cover.

Note: The rows of backstitches indicated on the chart around the outer edges of the front and back designs are for assembly purposes only; do not stitch either side at this time.

Trim away the excess perforated paper on both pieces, following the cutting lines indicated on the chart.

Cut the silk ribbon in half; thread one half into the needle. Referring to the Front Cover Chart, pull the ribbon from front to back and back to front twice at the points indicated by arrows, repeat with the 2nd piece of ribbon on the back cover. It may be helpful to carefully pin the ribbons to the center of each piece of embroidery until assembly is complete.

Finishing

Cut two lining pieces of perforated paper identical to the trimmed size of the covers. Cut two felt pages, each 4 x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (10.2 x 12.1 cm), and one felt

hinge 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches (7.0 cm x 2.9 cm). Fold one felt page in half widthwise, center it on one of the lining pieces and, using a doubled strand of sewing thread, sew along the inside of the fold to attach it to the lining piece. Repeat with the second piece of felt and the second lining piece.

To assemble the needle book, position one long edge of the felt hinge on the wrong side of the front cover so it covers the side border, baste it in place along the row of holes closest to the edge. Position and baste the opposite edge of the hinge to the back cover in the same manner. When the needle book is opened flat, right side up, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) of the hinge should be visible between the two covers.

Lay one lining piece on the front cover, wrong sides facing with the fold of the felt page at the top. Referring to the chart, use a single strand of sewing thread to join the two pieces with running or double running stitches worked around the outer edge of the design. Repeat with the second lining piece and the back cover. Remove the basting stitches.

Unpin the silk ribbons, press and tie them in a bow to secure the closed needle book after filling it with needles and pins.

ABBREVIATIONS

beg	beginning; begin; begins	M1R (L)	make one right (left)	sl st	slip stitch (sl 1 st pwise unless otherwise indicated)
bet	between	p	purl	ssk	slip 1 kwise, slip 1 kwise, k2 sl sts tog tbl (decrease)
BO	bind off	p1f&b	purl into front and back of same st	ssp	slip 1 kwise, slip 1 kwise, p2 sl sts tog tbl (decrease)
CC	contrasting color	p2tog	purl two stitches together	st(s)	stitch(es)
cm	centimeter(s)	patt(s)	pattern(s)	St st	stockinette stitch
cn	cable needle	pm	place marker	tbl	through back loop
CO	cast on	psso	pass slipped stitch over	tog	together
cont	continue(s); continuing	p2sso	pass two slipped stitches over	WS	wrong side
dec(s)	decrease(s); decreasing	pwise	purlwise	wyb	with yarn in back
dpn	double-pointed needle(s)	RC	right cross	wyf	with yarn in front
foll	following; follows	rem	remain(s); remaining	yo	yarn over
g	gram(s)	rep	repeat; repeating	*	repeat starting point (i.e., repeat from *)
inc	increase(s); increasing	rev St st	reverse stockinette stitch	**	repeat all instructions between asterisks
k	knit	rib	ribbing	()	alternate measurements and/or instructions
k1f&b	knit into front and back of same st	rnd(s)	round(s)	[]	instructions that are to be worked as a group a specified number of times
k2tog	knit two stitches together	RS	right side		
kwise	knitwise	rev sc	reverse single crochet		
LC	left cross	sc	single crochet		
m(s)	marker(s)	sk	skip		
MC	main color	sl	slip		
mm	millimeter(s)				
M1	make one (increase)				



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