

I chose Surface Stitchery for Proficiency and stepped outside of my comfort zone of fine stumpwork embroidery into a new world of creative stitchery. Using heavier textured threads and different ways of constructing my embroidery became my focus. My theme was The Chase now known as Kuring-gai National Park in Mt. Colah and Eucalyptus trees, bark and fire. This is where I spent most of my childhood and teenage years.

I lost myself in my stitching and this has helped me heal from loosing my Mum and my brother during this course. I have always had something to embroider in my hand, so I was up for the challenge and what a challenge it was. The guidance and encouragement of the mentors made me question myself many a time and it gave me more than one option to consider for the next 2 months. One concern was that my work was getting damaged in my flight to Sydney and return as the silk threads were being rubbed no matter what I did to prevent it. Sometimes I had to redo some of the stitching, so then I bought photos of the pieces I was working on until nearer the end.

I chose as a special interest to do some dyeing of the eucalyptus trees that are on my property and was very pleased with the outcome. My Traditional piece was a Mountmellick piece of a canopy including the tassel part of the course. The other pieces are fire ravaging a tree and surrounds, tree trunks, roots and a section of the eucalyptus tree when a limb falls and gets damaged with seeping juices and gnarls form and it looks very abnormal.

I would like to thank my family for their support and encouragement. My special friend Jenny with whom I travelled every few months and with whom I shared so much. Effie and her team of mentors, Lizette and her Library team, Ellen and Heather for showing us the collection, Chris and Janet in the office, Annette for always being there, Doris for her encouragement every time we came out of the back room. All the other girls WOW what a journey. Wendy & Ron for looking after me with friendship, support and making me feel like family every time I visited. Lastly the Embroiderers' Guild for giving me this opportunity to extend myself and I look forward to further projects in the future.

Complete body of work  
for Proficiency 2010

Embroiderer: Jan Pilgrim  
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