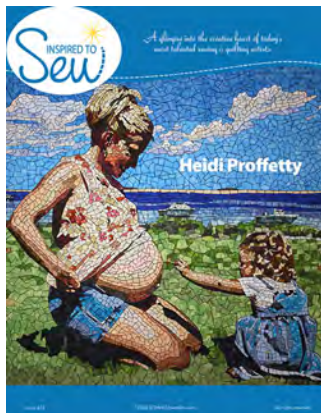


INSPIRED TO Sew

*A glimpse into the creative heart of today's
most talented sewing & quilting artists.*

99 Issues



Reminiscing . . .



Rita & I planned many SITS issues over scrumptious meals.

Ninety-nine issues done. Except for the index, Issue #99, this is the last issue of **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW** (SITS). In 2013, an idea for a quarterly publication took shape at a Creative Arts Business Summit (CABS) lead by Morna McEver Golletz in Washington DC, then bloomed into this monthly e-zine. At that time, print magazines were beginning to fade, so a digital publication seemed appropriate. My intent was to create an informative e-zine as a way of thanks and support for the many sewing machine dealers, quilt, and fabric shop owners that sell SCHMETZ. Monthly features were written to provide shop owners content they could trust and just pop into their own newsletters. Many of the talented designers I met at various CABS events were featured.

Over the years, the e-zine became so much more. As I traveled to sewing events throughout North America, the e-zine documented my trips and the amazing people I met. Publishing SITS became a vessel that opened doors to meet many industry leaders. I can truly say that people that sew and quilt inspire me to create and share sewing stories.

Special thanks to Rita Farro for her spirited contributions to each issue. Rita is a skillful interviewer, savvy businesswoman, and master word crafter. Rita and I quickly became friends. Thanks to my colleague, Paul Ragas, for his layout and technical skills. Big warm hugs to the talent in each issue for a glimpse into their creative world. I love each issue we published. Thanks to you and all the SCHMETZ fans for being part of my wonderful sewing and quilting world. ❤️

Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit® Too!

Rhonda

Rhonda Pierce
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- Pictures:** **Provided by Various Sources**
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- Layout/Design:** **Paul Ragas**

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Reminiscing



Rita Farro, Our Wonderful Wordsmith, [SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #68](#)

Rita Reminiscing

Wow . . . 99 issues!! Putting together the **SCHMETZ Inspired to Sew** (SITS) magazine every month has been the biggest learning experience of my life. I didn't even realize that until I was asked to take a look back. I am incredibly proud of this body of work.

The first thing I would like to say is that this magazine was the brainchild of Rhonda Pierce, who is the face and the voice of SCHMETZ home sewing machine needles North America. Rhonda knows everybody in the sewing industry, and she selected sewing personalities and topics that offered a broad view of our creative sewing world. She included quilting topics, fashion sewing, home dec, new trends, historical background, etc. She had an uncanny eye for the NEXT big thing, as well as a deep respect for our sewing roots. So I could be writing

about the hottest quilting craze (i.e., **Row by Row**, [Inspired to SEW, #16](#) or the unique history and battle between Isaac Singer and his lawyer/partner, Edward Clark, *Singer & Clark: The Unlikely Partnership*, [Inspired to SEW #83](#).

There's really no way for me to explain what I learned from writing 99 issues of SITS. But it worked kinda like this

While working on [Inspired to SEW #11](#), I took my friend Linda Phillips, on a road trip to see EllynAnne Geisel, the author of **The Apron Book**. EllynAnne was presenting workshops at the Grout Museum in Waterloo, Iowa. She also invented Tie One On Day, recognized by Chase's Calendar of Events and celebrated annually on Thanksgiving Eve. Linda and I stumbled into a room with a small group of women sewing





Singer Featherweight, [SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #15](#)
Rita's Favorite Cover

on their Singer Featherweight sewing machines. Looking back, it's hard to remember that I didn't know people actually sewing on Featherweights was *a thing*.

Learning about Singer Featherweights became a personal passion. Which led to [Inspired to SEW #15](#), my favorite cover of all time. It is young Ruthie Henry, sewing on a Featherweight. I interviewed her parents, April and Carmon Henry ([Singer-Featherweight.com](#)) for that issue. It was not long before I found my own Featherweight sewing machine at an estate sale in Davenport, Iowa. My enthusiasm for that little dynamo sewing machine was contagious, and soon, my three sisters owned their own Featherweights, as well as every member of my book club. I am personally responsible for the acquisition of over 20 Singer Featherweights here in my little corner of Iowa. We love getting together to sew on our Featherweights.

When I learned the Henry's would be presenting a three-day Featherweight workshop in Hamilton, Missouri, I was quick to sign up. My sister, Ronda, and I turned that into a wonderful road trip, where I met Jenny Doan, [Inspired to SEW #49](#).

Road Trips?? ([Inspired to SEW #55](#) and [Inspired to SEW #56](#)) Rhonda knew sewing road trips were a very big thing. I was always happy and eager to hit the road. I loved tracking down Mark Lipinski in New Jersey to learn about his *Slow Stitching Movement*, [Inspired to SEW #7](#). Rhonda and I, along with my friend Phyllis Krogman, traveled to Winterset, Iowa to see an award-winning documentary film about *Barn Quilt Blocks*, [Inspired to SEW #59](#). We toured the Iowa Quilt Museum and met Marianne Fons, [Inspired to SEW #74](#).



Mary Mulari appeared in more issues than any other designer!

Writing SITS has been the north star in my life for many years. It has been the reason for many wonderful excursions. When Rhonda heard about a shop in Illinois that was blowing up the internet, we made several trips to LaSalle, Illinois to see what was happening at *Quilting In The Valley*, [Inspired to SEW #80](#).

After interviewing Pat Sloan, [Inspired to SEW #28](#), I organized my own sewing retreat to work on my very first (and possibly only) quilt. I'm proud to say, my completed Splendid Sampler quilt is hanging on my wall now. I learned many quilting techniques along the way. It was simply wonderful to spend an entire weekend with some of my closest friends.

Maybe the best thing about writing 99 issues is that I was able to shine a light on some of the hardest working, creative people in the world. Mary Mulari was the most frequent

contributor to SITS because if a deadline was approaching, I always knew I could count on her. That's what friends are for. I can guarantee that nobody ever had a better friend than Mary Mulari, [Inspired to SEW, #10](#).

Looking back on these 99 issues, I realized this is the way things work in the sewing world. In the 90's, I owned a small sewing machine dealership in Clinton, Iowa, and I hired Mary Mulari to come to my store and give a presentation about Designer Sweatshirts. Mary introduced me to Nancy Zieman, [Inspired to SEW, #2](#). Through Nancy, I met Deanna Springer, [Inspired to SEW #69](#).

When I self-published a little book called **How To Dress With Style When You Feel Like Cher But Look Like Roseanne**,



The Art of Homemaking, [SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #73](#)

Mary introduced me to Joanne Ross, the founder and director of the Sewing & Stitchery Expo in Puyallup, Washington, [Inspired to SEW #37](#). That incredible show opened many doors for me. Sew Expo is where I met Pati Palmer, [Inspired to SEW #24](#); Eleanor Burns, [Inspired to SEW #72](#); Katrina Walker, [Inspired to SEW #52](#); Gail Yellen, [Inspired to SEW #23](#); Marti Michell, [Inspired to SEW #81](#); Amy Barickman, [Inspired to SEW #13](#); John Deer, [Inspired to SEW #91](#); Anne Unrein, [Inspired to SEW #43](#); Loralie Harris, [Inspired to SEW #31](#); and so many other hard-working, inspirational sewing teachers, quilters, and designers. It has been an absolute honor to learn more about them and focus on the work they do.

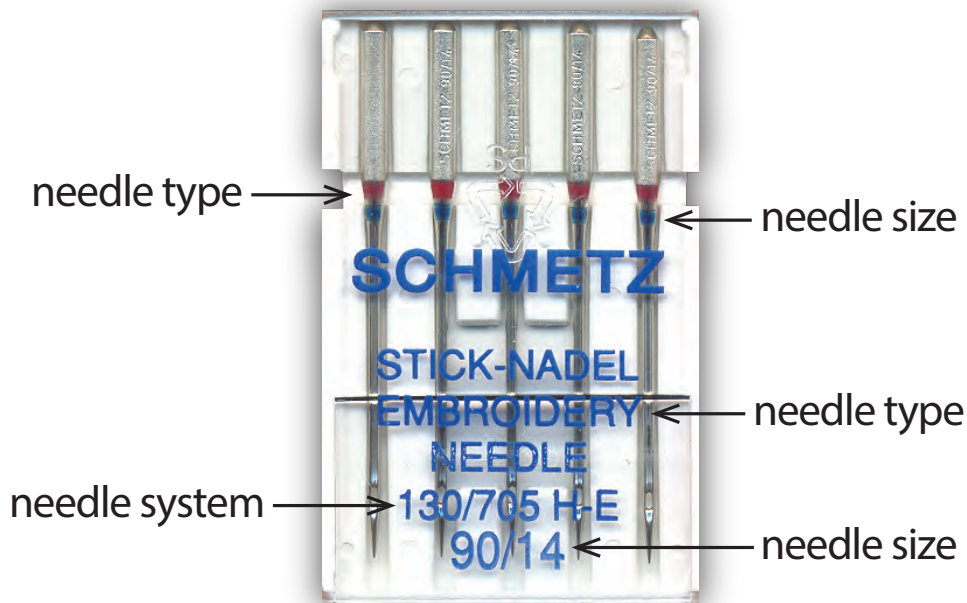
Of course, I can't write about my favorite issues without writing about the two issues that focused on ME. Rhonda surprised me with [Inspired to SEW #68](#), which was all about me! I

couldn't have been more delighted. Then, in [Inspired to SEW #73](#), I got to write about and share my extraordinary vintage linen collection. Rhonda, along with my friend Linda Phillips, and my favorite sister-in-law, Jeanne Little, helped me lovingly unpack, iron, and hang a huge display of my lifetime collection of extraordinary (and ordinary) linens at the Bettendorf Library. We named it *The Art of Homemaking Exhibit*. Hundreds of people got to see the exhibit, and it was featured in the front page of the *Quad City Times*, and got its own segment on the Paula Sands television show. Putting that exhibit together was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Part of my collection included over 50 embroidered samplers. One of my favorites was featured in Issue #73. It's how I feel about writing 100 issues of **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW** magazine.



Needle Points with Rhonda

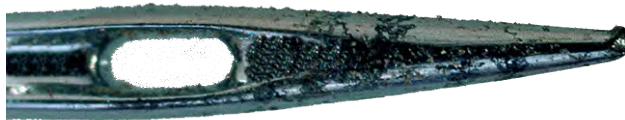


What Do Those Numbers Mean? How to Read the Needle Package.

Home sewing machines require a needle with a flat shank and a scarf – that little indentation above the eye on the back side of the needle. Needles with a flat shank and a scarf are identified as needle system 130/705 H. There are over 7,000 needle systems throughout the world. Thankfully, 99% of home sewing machines use 130/705H.

Sew SCHMETZ!





Needles don't last forever.

Change the needle!

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