

INSPIRED TO Sew

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





Rhonda with Pam Holland
Shipshewana Quilt Festival

Summertime and quilt festivals go hand in hand. The Shipshewana Quilt Festival nestled among the serene rolling hills of northern Indiana is one of my favorites. This year I was not only a teacher at their Schoolhouse event, but I was also a student of Pam Holland, the glorious always traveling Australian quilt artist who delivers color and understanding to our world. What a joy! Through Pam I discovered a flicker of creative brilliance just waiting for development. Thanks Pam for your inspiration! PS: Every time I wear the color orange, I'll think of Pam.

Last summer I met Kay Whitt at the Moda Wholesale Open House and am so pleased to meet up with her again. I love Kay's designs and her creative use of cotton fabrics beyond the quilt. Kay has a special way of blending a vintage vibe into her feminine dresses, perfect for summer.

So, grab an ice cold lemonade and enjoy a glimpse into the worlds of Kay Whitt and the Shipshewana Quilt Festival.
Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit Too!

Rhonda

Rhonda Pierce
Marketing Director & Editor
SCHMETZneedles.com

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Cover: **Cabbage Roses**
Serendipity Studio

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What Inspires YOU to Sew?



There's an App for That!





Kay Whitt

Kay Whitt — Serendipity Studio



Kay Whitt,
also known as Serendipity

Hey! Kay Whitt here from Serendipity Studio! I am thrilled to introduce myself and share a bit about my background as a designer. I am a native Texan and grew up in the small rural town of Vernon in northwestern Texas, close to the Red River. I am a farmer's daughter, so I understand the value of hard work . . . both the struggle and reward.

I am the baby of the family (youngest of three). My mother was a stay at home mom so she was always there to teach and encourage us. She says I learned my colors as a toddler playing with a box of zippers! I remember those zippers very well. Mom introduced me to sewing and was my first influence. There isn't a time in my life that I don't remember her sewing. As soon as I was old enough to handle a needle, she taught

me how to thread it and make stitches. I started with hand embroidery, graduated to making pillows, simple bags, and doll clothes (I was a Barbie fanatic!). Growing up, I had many other interests. I also enjoyed painting, crocheting, cooking, and gardening. I am forever grateful for having a family that expected me to learn things and contribute. I think it makes us who we are for the rest of our lives.

Garment sewing and making my own clothes was my favorite thing to do. By the time I was in high school, I was making just about everything I wore. When I got married, I made my wedding dress as well as the bridesmaid dresses and flower girl dress.



Kay, 1992



Kay & Keith
International Quilt Market 2012

I still live in the great state of Texas! I am not a country girl anymore (except maybe at heart), as I have spent the last 23 years in the Dallas/Fort Worth metro area with my husband Keith. We live in Grand Prairie with our sweet bird Bella, a cockatiel. We have spoiled her rotten!

As a newlywed with a degree in education, I set about finding a teaching job. I was lucky enough to get a job teaching second grade in Grapevine and taught that grade for 7 years and fourth grade for 2 years. Although I loved teaching, I felt the need to do something with all the creative ideas I had.

This led to some soul searching about what I could do that would be outside the realm of teaching, which is all I had known professionally. Everyone kept telling me that I should sew for a living, but I knew that was easier said than done. After a bit of investigation, I happened upon the idea of designing patterns. I talked with some local fabric shops and showed them my work. They enthusiastically encouraged me, so I wrote the first patterns in the spring of 2001 while still teaching. The patterns took off and I resigned from my job. Once I didn't have the responsibility of teaching, I was able to focus on the design work and had 23 designs by the end of 2001! I guess my brain was more than ready!!



Use Cabbage Roses for hand embroidery or appliqué. Be creative!

You won't believe how I chose the name of the company. I literally flipped through the dictionary! I happened upon "serendipity" and it just seemed to fit. I have had a lot of serendipitous moments as the business has gone along, so I think the name fits. At Quilt Market, people sometimes call me "Serendipity" instead of Kay!

My business is definitely a family effort. Without my husband's savvy technical skills, keeping the books or maintaining the website, I would be lost. He comes with me to all the markets and helps set up and break down the booth. Keith is also a great salesman, and can really sell Serendipity patterns!!

I am blessed to work from home, but that means I never really leave work. I had to find balance, so I still have many other hobbies. I dabble in a lot of things, such as crochet, knitting, painting, hand embroidery, cross stitch, jewelry making, and gardening. I even play ukulele and sing! But I know how to kick into high gear when the need arises. Believe me — I have stuffed a LOT of patterns in 14 years!

The rhythm of the pattern business is that I launch a new collection twice a year — at Spring and Fall Quilt Markets, so I am always working on new designs. I draw a big part of my inspiration from current trends and I keep my eye on



Kay's creative work studio.

what's going on in the world of fashion. I like to take what is current and mix it up with a vintage vibe which has become the hallmark of my style. I emphasize femininity in my pattern designs. Everyone deserves to have clothes that fit well and flatter them so they feel beautiful!

I feel it is important to support our creative community, so I exclusively sell my patterns to independent fabric shops. In my opinion, the independent shop is where customers find the best education, products, and service. It is so important to support them and everything they have to offer. In between markets, I do events for shops.

Social media has become a part of my job, and it is so valuable to stay connected to the sewing community and customers. I enjoy the feedback and inspiration I get from the women who are sewing my patterns.

Although I have embraced the internet and the digital age we live in, I believe there is a balance with regard to business and how to provide the very best product. For this reason, I do NOT offer my patterns as a digital download. Serendipity Patterns are printed on tissue sheets.



Maxi Length, rayon fabric with turned hem, & front waistline dart omitted

Maxi Length, border print with contrasting bias hemband

Knee Length, border print with small ruffle hemband

Maxi Length, stretch chambray fabric, & bias hemband, featured with fused machine applique from our Birds in Flight stitchery pattern

The Ava Sundress is the perfect summer dress.

When my finished pattern reaches my customers' hands, they can trust how it will sew together and fit. A customer can make a virtual "muslin" from the tissue itself, taking it in or letting it out as desired. Tissue is a perfect medium for this as it will mold well to a dress form or body to get the perfect fit. It is also wonderful for fussy cutting the fabric to maximize the potential of a print since tissue is semi-transparent.

A PDF digital pattern may initially seem like a cheap option. But before a customer can actually start sewing, they have to download the pattern, using their own paper, printer, and

ink. Then, it takes time (and lots of tape) to fit all the different pieces together. There is a lot of hidden cost, and it is simply not possible to control the quality of the finished pattern pieces.

Again, I am passionate about supporting local sewing/fabric stores. They support Serendipity patterns, and they also support the end user — my customer. Why would I cut them out of the loop? If we want our industry to remain vibrant, we have to support one another. It's that simple!



Capture the essence of the urban cowgirl with the Aspen Tunic.

Getting off my soapbox now . . .!

As a designer, it is gratifying to get the designs from my brain onto paper and I love that people feel free to make them their own. That has always been my goal.

My 2015 spring collection was released at the Minneapolis Market — a great sundress, versatile tunic, and two stitchery patterns. The stitchery is so FUN because it lends itself to handwork or machine appliqué and can be added to just about anything.

Kay's Advice:

I love SCHMETZ needles! I refuse to use anything else. What shocks most people is that I pretty much use a size Universal 90/14 needle for everything.

I find that they are strong enough to handle just about anything, yet gentle enough for regular sewing. I switch to a lighter needle (size 75/11) for sewing cotton lawn and voile.

For knits I highly recommend Stretch needles 75/11 or 90/14 depending on fabric weight.

I still love making garments. The very best part of my job is being creative and sharing that with others. I feel grateful every day that I love my career!

www.serendipitystudio.com

— written by Rita Farro

Shipshewana Quilt Festival 2015



Shipshewana Quilt Festival

Get a glimpse into the beautiful Amish countryside where giddy shop hoppers descend onto little Shipshewana, IN, population 677. For the 7th year Shipshewana celebrates quilts among the traditions of friendly hospitality, soul soothing comfort foods, and the workmanship of needle and thread. The shopping is mighty fine too! This festival is a feast for the eyes and soul as the quilt reigns king from fabric to gardens.

Make your plans now for 2016!

Rhonda



An area tradition not to miss.



Hands All Around Quilt Garden



Locally made dolls.



Hostetler's Hudson Auto Museum



The parking lot is full.



The Pink Lady

Pieced by Russ Schmidt

Quilted by Jane Hutchinson

Over 17,000 ½" finished squares took 2½ years to machine piece.

Design inspired by cross-stitch pattern by Nancy Spruance.





Needle Points with Rhonda



Universal Needles

Only one color band to indicate needle size.

Just as the name suggests, the Universal is a solid workhorse needle that works well with most fabrics. Sew a dress, hem a pair of jeans, make a quilt, stitch up lingerie, the Universal needle is an all-purpose needle.

Sizes available: 60/8, 65/9, 70/10, 75/11, 80/12, 90/14, 100/16, 110/18, 120/19, Assorted, Twin, Triple



Compliments of Your Local Retailer

Click to Replace with Store Logo
Size: 250 x 250



www.SCHMETZneedles.com

