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*September/October 2026*  
*ad booking deadline is August 7, 2026*

Kirby's Korner

I heard two stories this week that made me think about how much the world of technology has changed. The first was a teenager of today talking about this cool new music she and her friends had found online. It was parody songs written and performed by what must be a new app called Weird Ai. Yes, you read that right, Weird Ai not Weird AI. The thing that really got me about that story was how the teenager thought it was more likely that artificial intelligence would make such music than actual recording artists.

The second story was about Thomas Y. Levin, a professor and media theorist at Princeton University who collects 20th-century "voice letters". These voice letters were really the first ever voicemail. Starting in the 1930s, recording booths were opened where anyone could pop in and record a personal message for a loved one or friend. They would pay a small fee and then receive a lightweight vinyl record with their recording on it. This record could then be put in an envelope and mailed anywhere in the world.

I don’t know about you, but when I see that I have a voicemail on my phone, it's almost annoying, because you know there is a 10-to-1 chance it is just a scam call that went to voicemail, and there is nothing there once you get through all the menu options. I think that would have been quite the opposite ninety years ago.

I can almost imagine the excitement of receiving one of these lightweight vinyl records in the mail. I can only imagine someone waiting all day after the mail arrived for everyone in the family to get home so they could listen to it. What if the family didn’t have a record player? Not only would they have had to wait to get the whole family together, but they would also have had to find a neighbour or another family with a record player they could use. And you could bet if that happened, both families would have gathered around to listen. There would have been no private messaging.

From what I hear time and time again from our readers of *The Country Register*, we provide a bit of the latter. “When is the new issue coming out?” or “I check every time I go into my favourite shop in hopes that the new one is out.” These are just some of the things I hear from our readers. It gives us great pleasure to know that, in a new world where everyone wants what they want and wants it right now, we can provide something worth waiting for.

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# Quilting With Barbara

by Barbara Conquest of BlueSky Quilting

## WHY AM I DOING THIS?

A few weeks ago, after struggling with a quilt that simply would not co-operate, a thought flashed through my mind: Why am I doing this? In fact, why would anyone quilt? Seriously. I began to consider the question. Seriously. Originally, making quilts from good scraps of worn-out clothing was an economic necessity for many households that could not afford to waste anything. This is rarely the case today, so why are there still so many quilters, young and old?

Upon reflection, I realized there are almost as many reasons for quilting as there are quilters. Every person, deep down and often well hidden, harbours a streak of creativity which may manifest itself in quilting, an activity which allows one to choose or originate patterns and to arrange colours. Many people, myself included, are fascinated by colour with its limitless permutations and combinations and its effect on emotion. Colour permeates our lives: restaurants choose their décor colours and lighting to influence their customers; wearing certain colours, different for everyone, gives us a sense of wellbeing. Those of a “certain age” will remember the popular book *Colour Me Beautiful* and its spinoffs.

Certain grandmothers, aunts and friends, although they have never quilted before, cannot resist making a quilt for a special baby. They may never make another one, but chances are that they’ll be hooked and will make more, possibly for subsequent family members or others. It’s possible that they will join countless others to broaden their group of recipients to include “charity” or “comfort quilts” for sick or needy children (think the 1,000,000 pillow case challenge), wounded veterans (Quilts of Valour), the homeless and disaster victims... and so many more.

Some of us want to leave quilts as legacies for future generations whose graduations, weddings and other rites of passage we will not be here to attend.

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People who simply must follow trends often enter the quilting world in their quest to keep up with their friends. Inevitably, some of them will leave, but more will stay until quilting is not a novel new craft, but a way of life.

To others, the benefits of quilting are less tangible but no less important – companionship, common goals and social contact. Anyone who has ever belonged to a quilt guild can attest to the joy of sharing skills, information and time with other like-minded people. No matter how old one is, there is always something new to be learned, and that is an attraction for many. It has been said that to stop learning is to stop living.

And a talented and devoted few -- competition quilters -- create original projects that the rest of us can only admire from afar as they win some of the thousands of dollars in competition prize money available from many sources, from small local fairs to sponsored prizes of thousands of dollars from large companies and organizations. Prize money is a tangible reward, but it’s not hard to imagine that the resulting satisfaction and recognition are just as important to the winners as the money.

What are your reasons for quilting?  
Article © Barbara Conquest, BlueSky Quilting, Tofield, AB

## Funeral Potatoes

*My coworker, Seth, couldn't believe I'd never had these before. His mom makes them a couple of times a year for special occasions, and he called them "Christmas potatoes". I understand that in the mid-western States this dish frequently makes an appearance at after-funeral gatherings which gave rise to the name.*

- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 can condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 1 pkg (30 oz.) frozen shredded hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 small onion, finely chopped or grated
- 2 cups crushed cornflakes
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, mix sour cream, condensed soup, salt and pepper; stir in potatoes, cheese and onion. Transfer to a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.

In a small bowl, mix crushed cornflakes and melted butter; sprinkle over potato mixture. Bake, uncovered, 50-60 minutes or until golden brown.

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## Trivia

### Rubber Heel

The popular heel that has been a blessing to foot comfort and shock resistance in walking was invented by accident. A printer named Humphrey O'Sullivan had sore feet that ached and fatigued him as he worked at his machine. One day, he got the bright idea of placing a resilient rubber mat on the floor in front of the machine. This gave his feet much comfort. But his fellow workers would, as a practical joke, hide the rubber mat from him. Necessity being the mother of invention, O'Sullivan countered with an idea. Why not nail a piece of rubber mat to his shoes? And so was born the rubber heel.

### Salt-Spilling

The superstition that the spilling of salt is a sign of bad luck seems to derive from Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper, in which Judas is depicted spilling salt on the table.



Think Sustainable

by Bizz McKilligan, The Green Thimble, Victoria

SUMMER BREAKS FOR SEWISTS:  
TAKING CARE OF YOUR TOOLS WHILE YOU'RE AWAY

Summer often brings a change of pace for many crafters. The cozy afternoons spent sewing, quilting, knitting, and creating are often replaced with family visits, road trips, camping adventures, and vacations to far-off destinations. While some dedicated makers tuck an embroidery hoop, a small knitting project, or the final hand-stitching on a quilt binding into their luggage, most of us leave our sewing machines, irons, and larger projects behind for a few weeks.

That seasonal pause presents the perfect opportunity to give our tools the attention they deserve.

One of the most important pieces of maintenance is regular sewing machine servicing. Even if your machine seems to be running well, most manufacturers recommend professional maintenance every two to three years. Be sure to check your owner's manual, or ask your local dealer, for the specific recommendation for your machine.

Many sewists assume that machines only need servicing if they are heavily used, or are experiencing a problem. In reality, both frequent use and infrequent use can create problems. Machines that see a lot of sewing gradually lose lubrication and accumulate lint, dust, and thread debris. Machines that sit unused for long periods can experience a different issue: lubricants begin to thicken or gum up, causing mechanisms to become sticky or, in severe cases, seize altogether.

If you're planning to step away from your craft room this summer, a little preparation can help ensure everything is ready when you return.

A summer getaway can be an ideal time to schedule routine maintenance. While you're enjoying a break, your machine can be receiving the attention it needs, so it's clean, lubricated, and ready for many more hours of sewing when you return home.

It's also an excellent time to have scissors sharpened. Sharp scissors are safer, more accurate, and far more enjoyable to use than dull ones.

Before packing things away, take a few moments to organize your fabrics, threads, and notions.

Store fabrics away from direct sunlight to prevent fading, and keep materials protected from dust, moisture, and curious pets who may decide your fabric stash makes the perfect napping spot.

Don't forget about your iron. Flush it with fresh water, use a descaling treatment if recommended by the manufacturer, clean the soleplate, and empty the water reservoir before storage. Many irons include a self-cleaning feature that can help remove mineral buildup and keep steam flowing properly.

Finally, cover your sewing machine, retract rotary cutter blades, remove batteries from any battery-powered accessories, and make a note of any projects currently in progress. A quick photo and a few written notes can make it much easier to pick up where you left off.

When autumn arrives and it's time to settle back into your favourite creative pursuits, you'll be glad you spent a little time caring for the tools that help bring your projects to life.

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Sudoku answer on Page 6

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Suduko answer  
from Page 5

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Rhubarb Mojito

Rhubarb is definitely a love-it or hate-it fruit, so if you dislike rhubarb this probably isn't for you!

½ cup rhubarb syrup

Juice of 1 lime

8-10 fresh mint leaves

Sparkling water/club soda

Ice cubes

Lime slices & mint for garnish

QUICK RHUBARB SYRUP

2 cups chopped rhubarb

1 cup water

¾ cup sugar

To make the syrup. Simmer the rhubarb, water, and sugar for 15 minutes. Strain and cool.

In a glass, muddle the mint leaves with lime juice. Add ice and rhubarb syrup. Top with sparkling water. Stir gently and garnish with the mint & lime.

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Wacky  
Definitions:

Gardener:

1. One who learns by trowel and error

2. Someone who thinks that what goes down must come up

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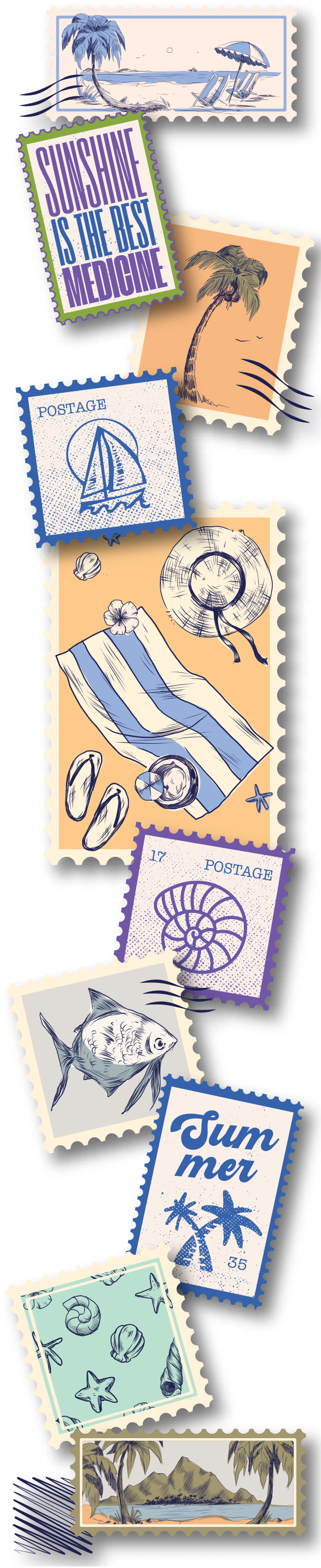
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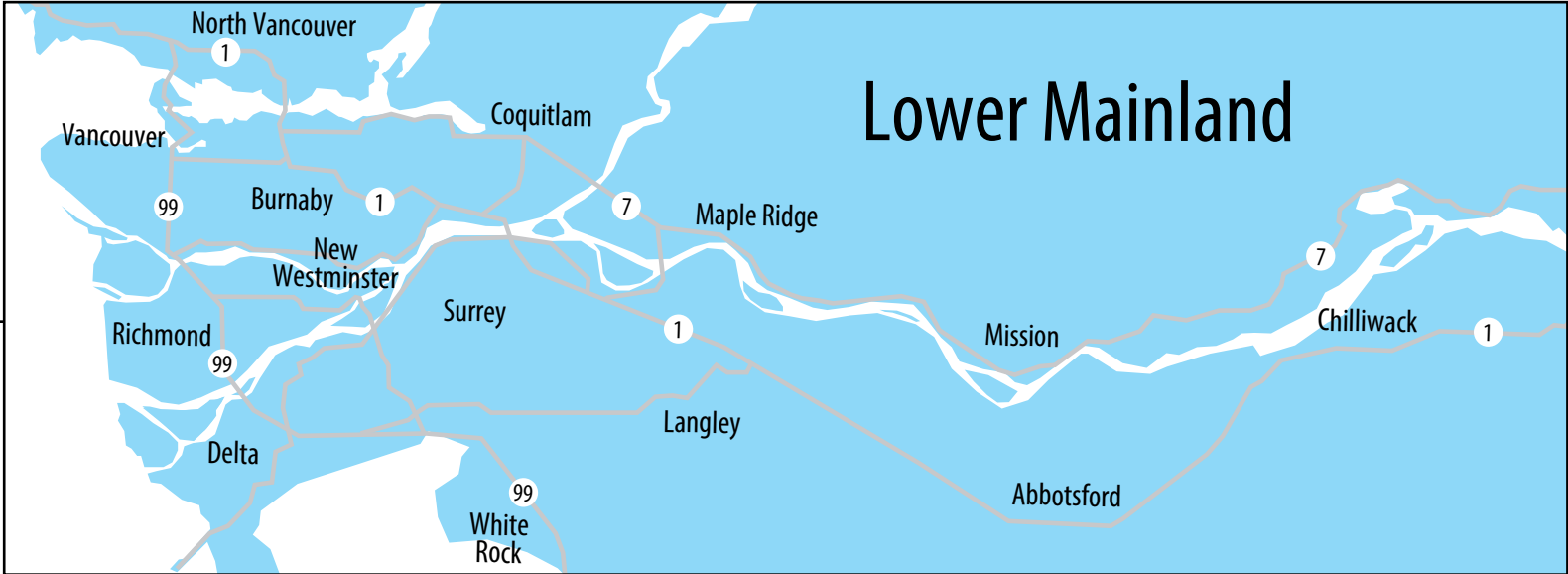






|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Priddis (Alberta)</b><br><b>Quilters Palette</b> .....Pg 15<br><b>www.quilterspalette.ca</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Regina (Saskatchewan)</b><br><b>Humble Life Acres</b> .....Pg 12<br><b>www.humblelifeacres.ca</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |







# Ranger Cookies

I made these after Sunday breakfast recently. Despite everyone just having eaten, there was a sizable dent made in the cookies!

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 2 cups oats
- 2 cups Rice Krispie cereal
- 1 cup sweetened coconut flakes
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Preheat your oven to 350°F and line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In a stand mixer with a paddle attachment or with a hand mixer, cream the sugars and butter together. Add in the vanilla, salt and the eggs and mix until well combined. Turn the mixer to low and stir in the flour, baking soda and baking powder until all the lumps are gone. Stir in the remaining ingredients.

Using a spoon, form the batter into balls and place 2 inches apart on each baking tray. You should be able to get 12 per tray.

Bake for 10-12 minutes or until the edges are golden brown. Let them cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before removing them to a wire rack to cool completely.

## Answer to Crossword on Page 12

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| E | N | L | A | C | E |   | T | R | U | S | T | Y |

## Humour Break

The trouble with so many club meetings is that they open at 7:30 sharp and close at 10 o'clock dull.

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### Sew Smart for Better Results

Using the correct needle for your project makes a big difference in stitch quality and helps prevent skipped stitches or needle breakage. Always match your needle type and size to your fabric and thread.

It's also important to avoid sewing over pins, sequins, or beads, as this can damage your needle and internal parts of the machine. Likewise, avoid pulling or forcing the fabric through the machine let the feed dogs do the work.



Pulling on fabric or sewing over hard objects can cause damage to your needle plate, hook, and bobbin case, leading to costly repairs.

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For further contact information, see business listings on page 8



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# Enjoy the Journey

Textile Travel Wisdom & Inspiration from Kim  
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## LEARNING, EXPLORING & EXPANDING YOUR CREATIVE WORLD

There’s something timeless about a summer road trip. The open highway, coffee in hand, favourite music playing, and the anticipation of discovering something wonderful just around the next bend. For quilters and textile lovers, road trips offer something even more special — the opportunity to explore creativity one quilt shop, museum, and fabric-filled destination at a time.

Across Canada, quilting road trips have become a beloved tradition. Whether it’s a carefully planned “shop hop” through Alberta, a scenic textile trail across British Columbia, or discovering hidden gems while travelling through the Maritimes, these journeys combine adventure with inspiration.

Many quilters also plan their travels around spring and summer quilt shows, guild exhibits, or a quilting retreat, turning a weekend event into a memorable creative getaway. Quilt shows and retreats are wonderful places to gather ideas, admire beautiful workmanship, attend demonstrations, and reconnect with fellow makers who share the same passion for creativity.

Quilt shops each have their own personality and charm. Some specialize in modern fabrics and vibrant colour palettes. Others feel like stepping back in time, filled with reproduction prints, cozy samples, and stories shared over the cutting table.

What I love most about these road trips is that they slow us down enough to notice the details. We begin to see colour combinations in prairie sunsets, quilting patterns in old grain elevators, and texture in weathered barn wood or coastal rock formations. Creativity has a remarkable way of appearing when we allow ourselves to wander and observe.

Road trips also connect us with people. Quilters are storytellers by

nature, and quilt shops often become gathering places where travellers exchange ideas, favourite patterns, and local recommendations. Some of the best travel memories begin with someone saying, “If you’re heading that direction, you must stop at this little shop...”

Of course, the spirit of the quilting road trip doesn’t stop at provincial borders. Some of the most inspiring journeys happen farther afield, where textiles are merged with another culture and way of life.

That’s one of the reasons I love leading Quilt & Textile Tours internationally. Travel opens our eyes not only to beautiful landscapes and historic places, but also to the traditions, artistry, and creativity that connect makers around the world.

Ireland, in particular, has a magical way of capturing the hearts of travellers. As we prepare for our Ireland 2027 Quilt & Textile Tour, I find myself already dreaming about the slower pace, winding country roads, natural patchwork landscape, charming villages, historic castles, woolen mills, textile experiences, and the warmth of Irish hospitality. There’s something deeply inspiring about standing in a centuries-old landscape while surrounded by rich textile traditions that continue to influence makers today. It’s this inspiration that keeps me going back time after time.

And just like a Canadian quilting road trip, the memories often come from the unexpected moments — laughter shared on the coach, finding the perfect piece of fabric tucked into a small village shop, or seeing colours and textures that suddenly spark a brand-new creative idea.

Whether your summer plans involve exploring your own province, venturing across Canada, or dreaming about a future textile adventure abroad, road trips remind us that creativity thrives in movement, curiosity, and discovery.

Because sometimes the destination is only part of the story. For quilters and makers, inspiration often happens along the way.

*“The best inspiration often comes from the road — and the fabric of new experiences.”*

*“We travel because distance and difference are the secret tonic of creativity. When we get home, home is still the same. But something inside our minds has changed, and that changes everything.”*

Please check out Kim’s ad for Kim Caskey Quilt & Textile Tours on page 14

### Peanut Butter Cornflake Bars

Growing up, we were not a Rice Krispie bar household. To be honest, none of us cared for it, and I still avoid it to this day. However, my mom would occasionally make cornflake bars. They most definitely are not any healthier!

- 1 ½ cups creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 6 cups cornflakes

In a large saucepan, combine peanut butter, sugar and corn syrup. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat; stir in cereal. Spread into a greased 13x9-in. pan; press lightly. Let stand until set, about 1 hour.

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| 24 |  |    |   |    |    |    |  |   | 25 |    |    |   |  |    |

#### ACROSS

- 1 Beliefs contrary to a religion
- 4 Desolate (6)
- 8 Farmyard milk producer (3)
- 9 Recipient (9)
- 11 Muslim ruler (4)
- 12 Exchanged (8)
- 15 Modify (9)
- 18 Five-sided polygon (8)
- 19 Cry noisily (4)
- 21 Being (9)
- 23 Treasure (3)
- 24 Tangle up (6)
- 25 Reliable (6)

#### DOWN

- 1 Electronic investigator (6)
- 2 Edited (9)
- 3 Mockery (4)
- 5 Fail to notice (8)
- 6 Letter-width units (3)
- 7 Financial returns (6)
- 10 Rebuke (5,4)
- 13 Crusades (9)
- 14 Of enormous size (8)
- 16 Ball (6)
- 17 Awkward (6)
- 20 Get wind of (4)
- 22 Diseased (3)

Answers on Page 12



# 2 Minute Lift

TWO MINUTE READS TO FLIP OUR SCRIPT *BY: KATHY J. SOTAK*  
LESSONS FROM THE PAST

## A Historian Takes Her Daughter To The Cemetery

Imagine being an eleven-year-old girl and are told enthusiastically, “*Get in the car, we are going to the cemetery!*”

That was my mother beginning a new detective’s journey, with an invitation for me as her apprentice in training.

I knew by then my mother followed her curiosities. I watched her pick up (and lay down) several hobbies and projects throughout her life. Her primary role was homemaker and chief operating officer of the household. Of course, she did the expected things of the era like knitting, gardening and embroidering. She also followed her yellow brick road of peculiar interests, like learning tatting – a near-obsolete form of lace-making, restoring ruined photographs from the late 1800s and professionally valuing old silver coins.

I was the baby of the family. After three decades of child-rearing and that job near complete, her attention went elsewhere: she became a self-appointed historian, overnight. I believe she felt it was her duty to make sure legacies lived on. This included her ancestors, her husband’s ancestors and our community.

Somehow, in the roles and responsibilities section of her historian job role, appeared *cemetery investigator*. My mother had a suspicion that there were more graves buried than headstones appeared. With this as our hypothesis, we started this journey at our county’s courthouse on a beautiful summer day. I recall that I wished to be *anywhere but there*.

The clerk invited us back into a dark and musty corridor and I recall the *creak* of metal filing drawers – like the rusty tin man that hadn’t moved in ages. Out popped the proper binder with names of those buried in our community’s rural cemetery.

I moaned and groaned as my mother drove to our next stop: the cemetery. I became even more desperate to end my training by convincing my mother she could do it by herself. But she made it sound like a magical journey of meaning as we walked the rows of stones.

“*There should be a headstone here. Baby [last name] was buried here, 1921-1921.*” We knelt down with garden tools in hand, which served as official archaeology instruments.

“*Be careful,*” my mom said as we gently tapped the trowel into the soil an inch down, “*we don’t want to wreck the headstone.*”

I didn’t believe we would find anything, but then I heard a distinct “*clink*” of the trowel followed by an excited “*gasp!*” from my mother. Unbelievable to me, under two inches of topsoil and grass we found our first headstone.

Slowly we pulled up soil and grass, exposing decades-old cement. We went back home to get paint brushes – I mean, more *archaeological tools* – to gently sweep away the dirt to see if we could read any of the imprints.

Sure enough, we soon read the inscription: “*Baby [last name]. 1921-1921.*”

We repeated that exercise for every plot that indicated a grave but no

headstone appeared. In several cases, we found small cement markers buried under topsoil like the example above. In most there was none. With love and responsibility in her heart, my mother found the funding (perhaps from the county or from our church) to purchase small proper headstones that would remain for decades to come.

I didn’t realize how much that experience would shape my life. My mother helped to restore the remembrance of every life in our community. Every single life made a difference. I’ll never know the story of the family whose baby died after only a few months. I just know that that life made an impact – even now a century later through me and those who read these words.

Over time we visited more cemeteries, looking for family ancestors. My mom would point out the extra-beautiful headstones, making sure I learned to respect intricate details that most overlook. Sometimes we would find a special inscription that made my mom think about the legacy she wanted to leave. It made for a beautiful conversation as we walked through the rows of those that had passed before us.

Today when I visit a cemetery, it brings a pang of excitement. It sparks this memory that only my mother and I shared. I think about her legacy that lives in my heart. I think about the legacy I want to live.

I don’t know what my kids will remember about me. It likely won’t include cemeteries – but perhaps I’ll find a detective journey of my own.

They will be my perfect apprentice.

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Spool Knitting and the Knitting Nancys

- by Daw-Marie Nokleby

For many, it is their first introduction to the art of knitting, often during childhood. It is a craft known by a myriad of different names: spool knitting, loom knitting, French knitting, tomboy knitting or corking.

This simple pastime has roots that go much deeper and far back in history than most people would ever suspect.

Spool knitting is done on a device which, in its simplest form, can easily be constructed from a wooden spool (with a hole in the centre), with four to six nails pounded into one side, spaced evenly around the hole.

The device itself is variously known as a Spool Knitter, a Knitting Nancy, Knitting Jenny, Knitting Nelly, Bizzy Lizzy, Apple Pie Knitter or Knitting Loom.

They are thought to have evolved from an ancient Roman device with two prongs known as a "lucet" (as some of them take a similar form with a hole in the middle), but that is only a supposition. The earliest written reference to these types of knitting frames is from the early sixteenth century in a legal decision involving sock knitters who were using a similar but larger frame.

When you increase the size of the frame and add a larger number of nails, you are able to produce larger tubes to knit items such as socks and even hats. Modern plastic sets of knitting frames are certainly not new innovations. As a matter of fact, it is said that the reason for the term "French knitting" is because knitting looms were used to create the iconic French hats worn by peasants during the French Revolution from 1789-1799!

Using the traditional small spool gives one a resulting long, thin tube of yarn. You may have wondered if there was any real purpose



to this cordage, well - in fact, there is! If you head back into the mists of time you will find that this cord - not actually made of yarn but of a material closer to a strong but not too thick string or twine - was used to make sturdy, strong and flexible reins for horses!

As kids, we often had no real goal in mind. Sometimes all we wanted was to create the longest cord or tube. There is actually a world record for the longest result from a spool knitter - it is a surprising 12.26 miles (19.7 km).

If a product other than the tube itself is desired, the long tubes of knitted yarn produced by a spool knitter can be sewn together to produce mats, rugs, baskets and bags.

The knitting device or looms themselves are often popular collectibles. In Europe in particular, the form of the wooden device is often fashioned to look like a simple doll - a head on top of a torso.

These Knitting Nancy's are given faces and colourful painted outfits and even traditional ethnic costumes. Others are designed and painted to resemble animals, mushrooms and flowers.

From these various looms, more complicated devices with hand cranked mechanisms would eventually develop. These marked the earliest automatic knitting machines, originally designed for hosiery and later for other items as well.

It's such a simple craft, a carryover from childhood. You can find it in a modern children's craft section in a toy store, yet it would have been perfectly at home in a Victorian nursery. From the practical production of horse reins to the evolution of circular knitting machines, a child's first introduction to knitting to popular collectible; who would have thought that there was so much history behind a spool with nails in it...



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