



# RI Sewing Network

## February 2024 Newsletter

### RISN Meetings

**Warwick Center for the Arts**  
**3259 Post Rd**  
**Warwick, RI 02886**

**First Tuesday of the Month**

**SOCIAL HOUR**  
**6:00 PM**

**SEW & SHARE**  
**6:40 PM**

**SPEAKER**  
**7:00 PM**



October 17, 2023  
November 7, 2023  
December 5, 2023  
March 5, 2024  
April 2, 2024  
May 7, 2024

### “It’s Fine-ally Finished”

It was a pleasure having Jackie du Plessis speak about her needlepoint business “It’s Fine-ally Finished.” Before Jackie’s presentation, I was unaware of the differences between embroidery, cross stitch and needlepoint. Embroidery’s typical end use is to adorn clothing, home décor and accessories. Cross stitch is often used to create decorative items such as samplers, framed pieces and greeting cards. Needlepoint is a form of canvas work that uses cotton or linen and a special needlepoint needle to create stitched designs. There are a variety of stitches used to create intricate patterns and designs to produce decorative items such as pillows, cushions and wall hangings.

I was pleasantly surprised to discover Jackie not only creates beautiful needlepoint samplers, she then finishes them to be functional three- dimensional products and teaches others how to do the same.



### “Welcome back from the Holidays and looking forward to Spring soon.”

Make sure to attend the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Elizabeth Clouse will be speaking about designing and creating historical garments for various industries including Renaissance faire actors, theaters and anyone who wanted a special custom gown. You won’t want to miss it.

Below is the list of the exceptional speakers this year. A brief introduction to each months’ speaker is in the Newsletter.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| October 17, 2023 | Pamela Leggett – Lingerie/Shapewear                         |
| November 7, 2023 | Jennifer Lopez – By The Yard Comics                         |
| December 5, 2023 | Jackie du Plessis – Needlepoint                             |
| March 5, 2024    | Elizabeth Clouse – Queen of King Richard’s Faire            |
| April 2, 2024    | Kathleen Bowler – Project Runway (tried out) Home E Teacher |
| May 7, 2024      | Amanda Downing Carney – Trinity Rep Costume Designer        |

**RISN Executive Board**  
**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Mary Jo Hines  
(401-785-9001)

[maryjo.hines@gmail.com](mailto:maryjo.hines@gmail.com)

**TREASURER &  
REGISTRATIONS**

Sue Ann Walter

[Sueann301@yahoo.com](mailto:Sueann301@yahoo.com)

Mary Morse

[memorse@yahoo.com](mailto:memorse@yahoo.com)

**NEWSLETTER**

Kaleigh Guay

[kaleighguay@gmail.com](mailto:kaleighguay@gmail.com)

**PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON**

Diane Martin

(401-439-5376)

[dianemartin426@gmail.com](mailto:dianemartin426@gmail.com)

**WEB ADMINISTRATOR**

Maureen Rozes

[maureenrozes@gmail.com](mailto:maureenrozes@gmail.com)

**FACEBOOK ADMINISTRATOR**

Mary Morse

[memorse@yahoo.com](mailto:memorse@yahoo.com)

**BOARD ASSISTANT**

Nancy Spirito

[bridalfinerydesign@gmail.com](mailto:bridalfinerydesign@gmail.com)

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## 1. Membership Information for 2023/2024

Attached to this Newsletter is the 2023-2024 RISN membership application form. Membership includes six issues of our Newsletter, access to the private RISN Facebook page, plus discounts to meetings and other events as well as email news.

1. Annual Membership is \$10 and each of the six scheduled meetings is \$10 for each meeting attended.
2. The nonmember fee for meetings is \$10 per meeting (no emails or FaceBook).
3. Premiere Membership is \$40. With this Premiere Membership, the \$10 membership fee is waived and there are no additional fees for attending meetings.

The Registration form is attached to the Newsletter and on our website:  
[www.rhodeislandsewingnetwork.com](http://www.rhodeislandsewingnetwork.com)

## 2. Meeting Venue – Warwick Center for the Arts

### **Warwick Center for the Arts**

3259 Post Road, Warwick, RI

#### **Address for Parking:**

3273 Post Road, Warwick, RI

<https://warwickcfa.org/about-wcfa/>

RISN Meetings will continue to meet at the Warwick Center for the Arts (WCFA) located in the heart of Apponaug Village. After 6 meetings last year, most have learned how to successfully navigate the numerous rotaries in the area (I'm still working on that success!). The ever-changing beautiful artwork on display in the Center, makes up for the extra one or two trips around the block to get to my final parking place.

For directions, we suggest you use your GPS, however, here are a few details you might find helpful.

From RT 117 go straight past the first rotary, turn right at the second rotary (Dunkin Donuts), and a short distance to the next rotary go 3/4 around onto Post Road. Immediately watch for the first driveway on the left (before the Town Hall) for parking in the back. There is also parking on the street if you passed the WCFA (Armory building).

Being a “Networking” group, we’d like to encourage more interaction between the members. What better time to do it, than during that drive to and from the meetings. If you know someone that lives in your area, consider driving together. Not only might it save a little on gas, but you get to talk “ALL THINGS SEWING!” If you aren’t sure who to ask and want to carpool or need a ride, send Diane Martin an email and she will forward the request to the Network.

WCFA, situated in the historic Kentish Guard Armory building, is located on Post Rd in the heart of Apponaug WCFA offers plenty of lighted parking, handicap elevator, front and side door entry, good natural lighting along with overhead track lighting on the high ceilings, comfortable chairs, raised speaker platform with a podium and microphone, a basement classroom and outdoor patio area.



### 3. December Recap – Jackie du Plessis, Needlepoint

[www.itsfineallyfinished.com](http://www.itsfineallyfinished.com)

It was a pleasure hearing Jackie speak about her needlepoint business “It’s Fine-Ally Finished.” Jackie’s background had a heavy influence on what she does today. In South Africa there was limited access to fine goods and a small range of threads and material colors available. When she moved to the United States at 25, she was excited to see the large variety of colors and now had the ability to make the fine goods she could only window shop. She joined a community at a needlework store in Walpole, MA. After noticing Jackie’s abilities, the community of women soon started asking Jackie to finish their work. The shop owner also noticed and this developed Jackie into offering her finishing business.

Her business grew from finishing Christmas stocking at 6 different needlework shops to working with designers directly. There was a need for designers to have their work finished and developed into patterns for their customers. Soon the idea to do this for herself was possible by working with Sampler Gathering, a needlework festival in Plymouth, MA. Every April they would put on a needlework market that had a focus on education. This exposure helped built her business. She was able to purchase fabric and materials at wholesale with Sampler Gathering’s backing. It also opened doors into future teaching and has allowed her to traveled throughout the United States, England, France and Canada.

What I appreciated most about Jackie is her mission to make beautiful three-dimensional functional products. Below you can find some images of her needle boxes, pin keeps, spool boxes, thread holders, thread winders, pin discs and buttons made in mother of pearl and more.

She also builds her student’s skillsets and as a result their confidence to stitch and finish a piece. Check out her website to see which kit she is currently offering to teach and check out her Facebook for photos of her previous kits.



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## 4. December Recap - Sew and Share

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**Mary Morse** made these fleece hats for a serice project from her smocking group. You can find the pattern on the RISN Exclusic Facebook page under the documents page.



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**Diane Martin** made two of the Brainy Baby Balls from Sew Fun. You can find the pattern #102 on [www.sewfun.com](http://www.sewfun.com)

Diane also made a dress for her granddaughter. Nadia looks so beautiful on her first birthday.

Diane also mentioned a book she created. Every week for 52 weeks she answered questions about her farmhouse. This will now be something she can pass on to the future owners. She provided a coupon code to receive \$10 off if you so choose to make a memory book of your own.








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**Rebecca** sewed this beautiful coat. We love the lining color she chose.



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**Rowena Burke** used another pattern from Sew Different Pattern to create this garment. She got the fabric at the consignment shop, Fabric Treasures. She looks so lovely in this piece.



## 5. RISN Meeting Schedule and Speaker Line-Up for 2023-2024

### RISN 2023/2024 Speakers

October 17, 2023	Pamela Leggett – Lingerie/Shapewear
November 7, 2023	Jennifer Lopez – By The Yard Comics
December 5, 2023	Jackie du Plessis – Needlepoint
March 5, 2024	Elizabeth Clouse – Queen of King Richard’s Faire
April 2, 2024	Kathleen Bowler – Project Runway (tried out) Home Ec Teacher
May 7, 2024	Amanda Downing Carney – Trinity Rep Costume Designer

Below are a few details about these very talented artists.

### **Elizabeth Clouse**

March 5, 2024

### **The Queen of King Richard’s Faire**

“Queen Elizabeth’s Closet” started out as repurposing thrift clothing to create a 1940s wardrobe as the rebirth of swing when it was at peak in 1998. Then it transitioned to Civil War garments while participating in and teaching during full scale reenactments. Eventually she started designing and creating historical garments for various industries including Renaissance faire actors, theaters and anyone who wanted a special custom gown. I can be found in the Fall, performing in my 6th season at King Richard’s Faire as Queen Anne III. I also have a booth there, where I sell, one-of-a-kind, handmade, renaissance accessories.

We can’t wait to learn how to design extravagant archival inspired attire, utilizing contemporary sewing techniques for the stage.

### **Kathleen Bowler**

April 2, 2024

### **Project Runway Home Ec Teacher**

Kathleen Bowler began sewing at 13 making clothes from bed covers and shower curtains that her grandmother gave her. In 2015, she auditioned for Project Runway. Kathleen wasn't selected for the show, but was inspired to start her own business Double Button Designs. Since then, Kathleen has been experimenting with new ideas and combining mediums looking to reopen Double Button Designs by the end of 2024.

Kathleen will discuss her journey from the classroom to the runway to the business world. Discover how old threads become new and star opportunities turn into an inspiring business. Learn what future your threads hold.

## Amanda Downing Carney

May 7, 2024

## Trinity Rep Costume Designer

Amanda Downing Carney is the Costume Director at Trinity Repertory Company in Providence. She has a BFA in Theatre Technology with a concentration in Costume Design from URI and has toured nationally and internationally backstage with Broadway musicals as a Wardrobe Supervisor. She has lived in RI her entire life and has had a career in the arts for over 20 years.

Amanda will discuss inside the costumer's mind. A costume designer is required to use MANY varied skills and I'd love to tell you about all the different disciplines and steps involved in a successful design process from Brain to Stage. Including: Script and Character analysis, Color Theory, Clothing History, Texture and Silhouette, Collaborative Input and Magic Tricks. Listen to me explain how the form and function of costumes onstage also need to help tell a story to the audience.

Be sure to check out Trinity Rep and Amanda  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuVeaVpuJi0>

## 5. Facebook Sharing

All Annual and Premier members are welcome to join the RISN private Facebook page. Access is not automatically granted with membership applications. Please be sure to request access from the Facebook Administrators if interested. To become a member of the RISN Facebook group go to the search bar and type in RISN Exclusive. When it brings you to our page there are two questions you need to answer. Answer those and hit submit. Once the administrators are notified by Facebook the record will be checked to make sure you are a current member, and you will be added.

Facebook activity continues to be high and is filled with sewing advice and fun links.

## 6. Other News and Interests

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### **Congratulations**

Congratulations to our members Susan Berlam and Rebecca Armitage for being testers and sewers for Threads Magazine Pattern Review! Check out Spring 2024 #225 pages 26-30!

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## **RISN Raffles**

1. Without a doubt, we love the meeting raffle that Mary Jo coordinates. If you don't go to the meetings, you are missing out on the fun and possibility of winning a thoughtful prize. All meeting attendees are handed a raffle ticket when they check-in for the meeting. Following the speaker presentation Mary Jo raffles off 5-6 goody bags to lucky winners. You never know what fun prizes await. It could be sewing supplies that everyone needs and always forgets to purchase, a piece or two of cloth and a challenge to make it up, adorable coffee mugs with sewing themes, powerful LED lights for your sewing space, etc.
2. Anyone that participates in the optional Sew and Share portion of the meeting will receive an extra raffle ticket. We want to encourage everyone to share what you are working on, whether it be successes or NOT. There's no better way to learn and be inspired, but from someone else's experience.

For Sew & Share, Kaleigh Guay, Newsletter editor, will take your name, photo and details about your 'Share' for the Newsletter. Please be sure to "check-in" with Kaleigh before you share so she can get the details. Kaleigh will have index cards for you to jot down the details yourself to be sure she gets it right in the Newsletter.

3. Occasionally there may be an extra surprise raffle such as a book to go along with the presentation that month.

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## **RISN Website**

Be sure to check the RISN website [HERE](#) for archived Newsletters, updates, and events.

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## **Sell, Buy, or Services**

Urge to Purge? Members who have sewing/craft items for sale are invited to set up a table at our meetings. You need to bring home what you do not sell. We do not have the space to store extra fabric, etc. Do you have a sewing/craft related business? Why not consider showcasing/selling your items at a meeting? Please limit your selling space to one table. You can also post your sale items or what you might be looking to obtain on our Facebook page.

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## 2023-2024 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your completed application with a check made out to RI Sewing Network or RISN should be mailed directly to:

Sue Ann Walter  
54 Hamilton Avenue Rear  
Norwich, CT 06360

Membership includes six issues of our Newsletter, membership to RISN FaceBook page, plus discounts to meetings and other events as well as email news.

**Annual Membership:** New members will be asked to pay an Annual \$10 registration fee for the 2023-2024 season which includes the email notifications, Newsletter, and access to the private FaceBook group. For each in-person meeting, a \$10 fee will be collected at the door from Annual Members.

**Nonmembers:** The nonmember fee for meetings is \$10 per meeting. Non-members will not receive any of the additional benefits (Newsletter, emails, FaceBook, etc.).

**Premier Membership:** The Premier membership fee is \$40. With this Premiere Membership, the \$10 annual registration fee is waived and there are no additional fees for attending meetings. Premier Membership includes the email notifications, Newsletter, and access to the private FaceBook group.

For members that want to participate with the FaceBook page, they must request to be included.

To become a member of the RISN FaceBook group go to the search bar and type in RISN Exclusive. When it brings you to our page there are two questions you need to answer. Answer those and hit submit. Once the administrators are notified by FaceBook the record will be checked to make sure you are a current member, and you will be added.

The Registration form is below and on our website: [www.rhodeislandsewingnetwork.com](http://www.rhodeislandsewingnetwork.com)

<b><u>RISN Membership Application 2023-2024</u></b>			
Last Name: _____			
First Name: _____			
Email: _____			
Mailing Address: _____			
Street			
_____		_____	_____
City/Town	State	Zip	
Preferred Telephone Contact: _____			
<b>Please select your membership category.</b>			
Annual (\$10) _____			
Premier (\$40) _____			