

# *Bitsy the Teeny Tiny Vessel By River Rose*



*We start with something small,*

*something doable, while*

*Our secret ambitions*

*Are something else!*

*Below is the Mother Vessel.*



# Bitsy

“She’s just a little bitty thing, we’ll call her Bitsy.” Named in memory of my best friend in the 6th grade. Welcome to this intro to vessel making offered as a gift to work if you’d like to prepare yourself for your adventure in a class with me and vessel making. This vessel was originally designed for a four hour class. It is worked by starting at the bottom, working to the top and out the star like flare, then working the bottom.

As you begin with this project, you will notice words that are in bold italics. These words and terms were developed by me for use in my work with and teaching herringbone stitch pieces and are to be found in the Glossary.

## Materials needed for Bitsy:

**5** grams of cylinder beads, which we will refer to as **A** beads

**1.5** grams size 11 for the accent beads, which we will refer to as **B** beads

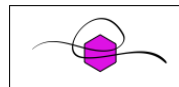
**2 or 3mm** bugles for the ladder

Fire Line 6 lb. for working the vessel

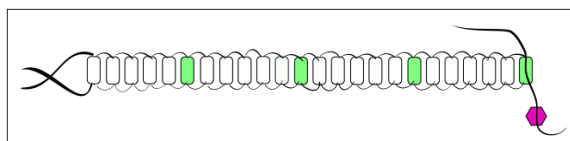
A ladder of at least **24** beads to accommodate **12** bead pairs

~ follow the illustrated instruction to make your ***ladder***. For this project, you need a ladder of at least **24** beads to accommodate **12** bead pairs. A longer ladder may be used. ~

~ to begin, cut a ***workable length of thread***; thread a needle; attach a ***stop bead*** in this way. ***Travel*** through a stray bead and pull it to about an inch from the end opposite the needle; travel through this bead again and pull thread all the way through. (travel is my term for pass your needle and thread). ~

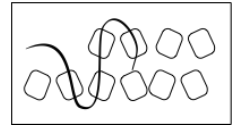


~ travel through the end bead of the ladder opposite the finish tails, pull thread all the way through to the stop bead. ~



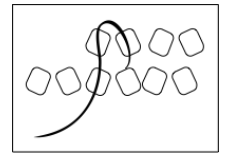
Before we begin the beading, let's look at these two directives. These are use throughout the entire pattern and it is very important that you understand each and the difference between them.

**Work 1 A pair** - means to pick up 2 beads; travel down the left bead of the pair your thread is exiting; then travel up through the right bead of the next pair to the left. It is the directive given for the working of basic herringbone stitch.



**Work 1 A bead** - it is the same as working a pair, only using a single bead, not to be confused with inserting.

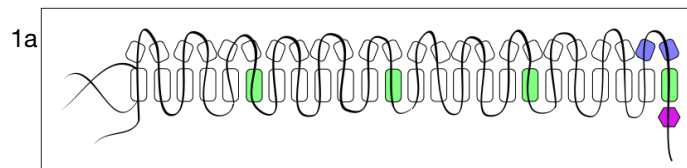
**Partially work 1 A pair** - means to pick up 2 beads and travel down through the left bead of the pair your thread is exiting. This directive is used when you are going to insert a bead or beads between columns.



**Partially work 1 A bead** - means the same as partially working a pair, only using a single bead, not to be confused with inserting.

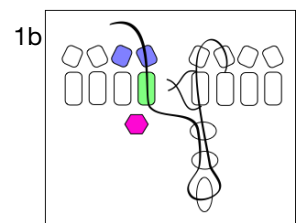
Please, be clear about the difference between these two directives!

**Row 1 ~ work 11 A pairs / partially work 1 A pair. (1a)**

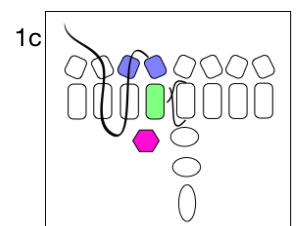


**I have colored the start pair in the first few illustrations for visual aid ONLY.**

~ after you have partially worked the last pair, string on 3 size 11 beads; Travel back up the 1st two of these; now flip ladder and 1st row over so that stop bead end is in your left hand; holding stop bead aside, travel up through the 1st bead of the ladder and the 1st bead of the 1st pair; pull thread all the way through. This will pull the ladder and 1st row into a circle. You will be able to see the stop bead dangling from the first bead and the 3 bead tail dangling from last bead that you have used. (1b)

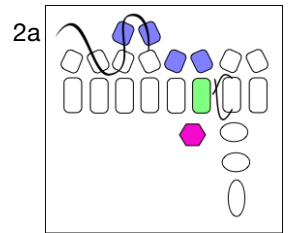


~ travel down the left bead of the 1st pair and the 2nd ladder bead and then up the 3rd ladder bead and the right bead of the 2nd bead pair. **This is the last time you travel into the ladder.** You have a total of **12** pairs. Please double check this. (1c)



**Row 2A** ~ Start point for row 2 is the **2nd pair** over from the start of row 1. Notice the beads at the beginning and end of row 1 are not yet attached.

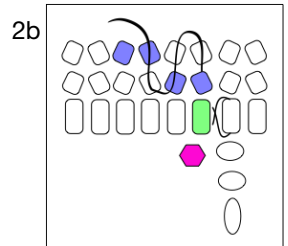
~ {work **12 A** pairs stepping up with the 12th pair.} (2a)



~ as you work the **11th** pair, the beginning and end of row one 1 are joined.

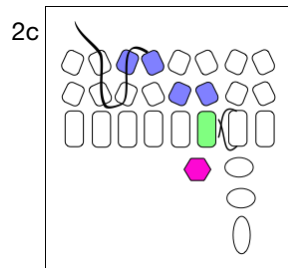
~ as you work the **12th** pair, and the end of row 2 meets the beginning of row 2, you will notice that you need to travel up **2** beads in order to keep your rows even. This is your **step up**, preparing you to begin row 3. Also notice that you step up to the same pair that you started row 2 with.

In this illustration, you see the last pair worked **and** the step up. (2b)



~ after you step up, before you begin row 3, you will **travel over one column**.

**Travel over 1 column** - means to pass your needle and thread down **2** beads and then up **2** beads. This directive is given at the end of most rows. It's purpose is to secure the tension of the work and to move the start position of each new row over so you are not starting and finishing in the same spot for a whole vessel. (2c)

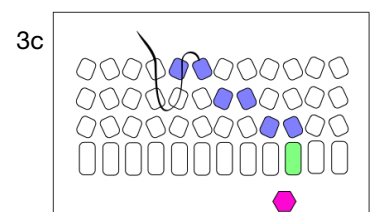
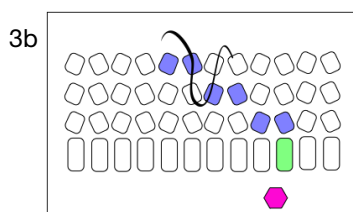
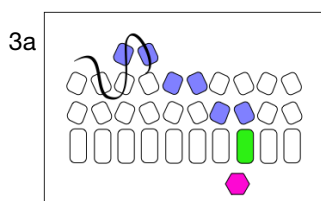


The first pairs in these two rows are colored **only** for visual aid to emphasize that the start of the new row moves over.

The tops of the bead pairs you are working will tip toward each other and touch. The bottoms of the right and left beads of the previous row should touch. This is good tension.

**Row 3** ~ start point is on 3rd **column** from ladder marker bead (above the stop bead) (3a); notice that we are referring to **columns** now which are the vertical stacks of bead pairs.

~ work **12 A** pairs stepping up with the 12th pair. (3b) **Travel over 1 column.** ~ (3c)





**Row 4** ~ start point is 4th column to the left of the ladder marker bead (above the stop bead).  
 ~ work **12 A** pairs stepping up with the 12th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~  
 (Done as illustrated in rows 1, 2, and 3.)

Before we begin Row 5 and the increasing, I want to have a discussion about punctuation.

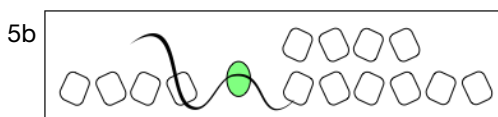
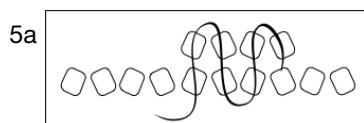
**Let's take a moment to look at the punctuation used with the directives.**

The ~ (wave) is used at the beginning and end of the whole row's directives.  
 The { } (brackets) are used to highlight the **set** that will be repeated in each row.  
 The / (slash) is used between directives within the set as new beads are picked up.  
 The - (hyphen) is used when there are further travel directives without picking up beads. (See row 7 for first use.)

**Row 5** ~ start of the **first set of increases**. Each accent bead you insert between columns, is like planting a seed that will become a new column.

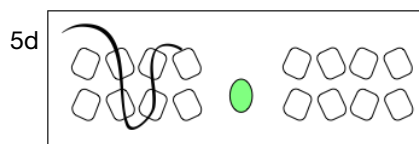
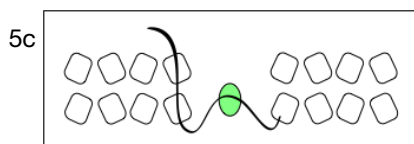
Start point is 5th column to the left of the ladder marker bead with the stop bead attached.

~ {work 1 A pair / partially work 1 A pair (5a) / **insert** 1 B bead.} (5b)



Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with the last B bead insert. (5c)

**Travel over 1 column.** ~ (5d)



**It is helpful to count out the beads for 5 more sets so that as you finish**, you will know you are at the end of the row. As you insert the last B bead, travel up 2 beads for the **step up**. Each time you step up, you are stepping up to the pair you started the row with.

**Because herringbone stitch is worked into the previous row, notice that the B bead insert falls down into row 4.**

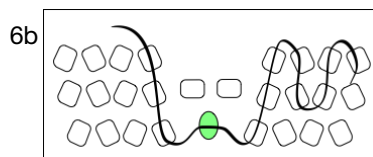
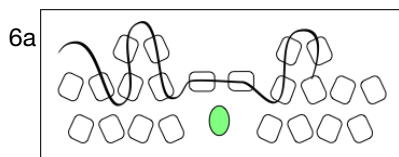
Row 5 is a pivotal point in your vessel so stop and check to see that there are **2 columns** between each of **6** accent beads.

This entire vessel will only ever have **6** accent beads and/or sets in a single row. We increase the number of columns in the sets and then decrease the number of columns in the sets... but there are always **6** sets.

**Row 6** ~ start point is on column just to the **right** of B bead insert.

~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 2 A beads (above B bead) / work 1 A pair.} (6a)

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair. **Travel down 3 beads - through the B insert - up 3 beads.** ~ (6b) (See notes on by passing an increase for travel in **Glossary**.)

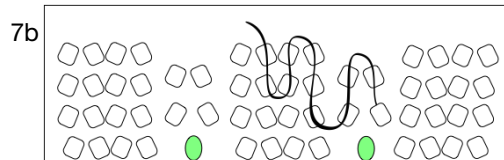
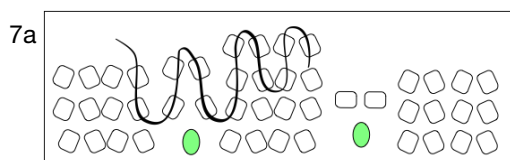


**Row 7** ~ start point is on the column just **left** of 2 bead insert.

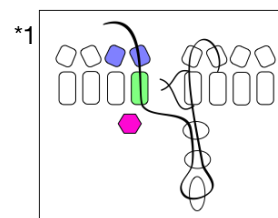
~ {work 1 A pair / pick up 2 A beads - travel down 2 beads and through the 1st bead of the 2 bead insert / pick up 2 A beads - travel through the 2nd bead of 2 bead insert and up 2 beads (check tension, situate beads, they will be sticking out).} (7a)

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up is with last pick up 2 beads - so the step up is up **3** beads.

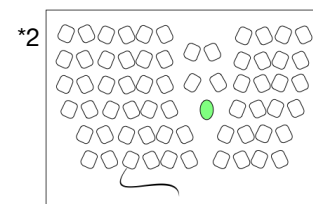
**Travel over 1 column.** ~ (7b)



At this time, stop and check... **do you have 2 columns between each of 6 new columns?** If yes, then you can now remove the ladder. You will clip off the 3rd bead of the 3 bead dangle; then gently pull the ladder and unthread with a needle or an awl until it comes free from your herringbone stitch rows. (\*1)



Once the ladder has been removed, you are left with about an inch or less of a tail thread of your working thread... this is called the **start tail**. Please, leave it be for now. It is a marker for your return to work the bottom of the vessel. (\*2)



**Row 8** ~ start point is on the column just **right** of new column.

~ work **18** A pairs stepping up with the 18th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 9** ~ start of **second set of increases**. Start point is **on** new column.

~ {work 1 A pair / partially work 1 A pair / insert 1 B bead / work 1 A pair.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with the last A pair. (You are stepping up to a new column, which is a bit shorter, so be careful.) **Travel over 1 column.** ~

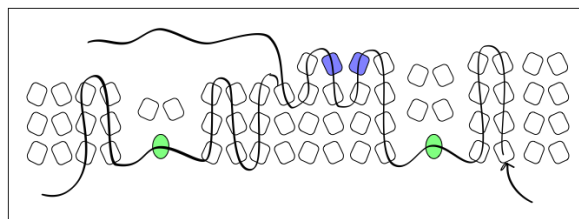
**Notes on changing thread:** I make a point of changing thread in the middle of a row rather than at the end of a row because it is too easy to get too much thread in the beads where you have traveled.

~ Without removing your needle from the working thread, thread a second needle with a workable length of thread. Travel this new thread into your piece 3 columns before your old working thread. As you can see in the illustration, 3 columns before your old thread is a new increase **not** ready to be traveled in. So, enter your new thread 1 column before the new column.

~ Travel up 4 beads / down 4 beads / through the insert / up 4 beads / down 2 beads / up 2 beads / down 2 beads / up 1 bead. Now the new thread and the old thread are in the same place. Always bring in new thread before tucking and cutting old thread, because your old thread is your guide. Especially in areas of increases and decreases where the columns are not very level.

~ Now travel the old thread similarly to bury it. Clip old thread. Continue beading with the new thread without losing your place! With your finger, follow the thread path of the new thread... then the old thread. The key to securing your thread is to change directions at least 4 times. The thread on the right is new thread. Thread on left is old thread.

~ Now we have no knots... inside or outside. The bead work is clean and secure.



This thread change is typically for a larger piece than Bitsy, but this gives you a visual to get around the increases even on a small piece.

**Row 10** ~ start point is on the column just **right** of B insert.

~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 2 A beads / work 2 A pairs.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair. **No Travel.** ~

**Row 11** ~ start point is on the column just **right** of 2 bead insert.

~ {pick up 2 A beads - travel down 2 beads and through the 1st bead of the 2 bead insert / pick up 2 A beads - travel through the 2nd bead of the 2 bead insert and up 2 beads / work 2 A pairs.} Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair. **No Travel.** ~

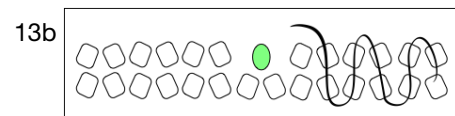
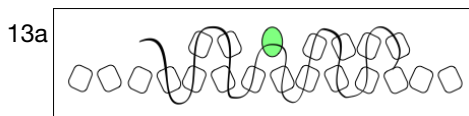
**Row 12** ~ start point is on the column just right of the new column.

~ work **24** A pairs stepping up with the 24th pair. Step up. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 13** ~ start of **first set of decreases**. Start point is **on** the new column.

~ {work 2 A pairs / work 1 **B bead** (on first new column) / work 1 A pair.} (13a)

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up is up to the new column with last A pair. (It is a bit shorter, so be careful.) **Travel over 1 column.** ~ (13b)

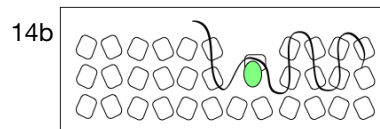
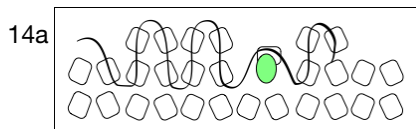


**Row 14** ~ start point is on the column just **right** of the decrease/ended column.

~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 1 A bead behind ended column / work 2 A pairs.} (14a)

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair.

**Travel over 1 column including the insert.** ~ (14b)



**Row 15** ~ start point is on the column just **left** of decrease/ended column.

~ work **18** A pairs stepping up with the 18th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 16** ~ start point is on the 2nd column to the left (or right) of decrease/ended column.

~ work **18** A pairs stepping up with the 18th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 17** ~ start of **second set of decreases**. Start point is on the column just **right** of the decrease.

~ {work 2 A pairs / work 1 **B bead** on 2nd new column.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last B bead. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 18** ~ start point is on the column just **left** of decrease/ended column.

~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 1 A bead behind ended column / work 1 A pair.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair. **Travel over 1 column including insert.** ~



**Row 19** ~ start point is on the column just **left** of decrease.

~ work **12 A pairs** stepping up with the 12th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 20** ~ start point is on the column just **right** of decrease.

~ work **12 A pairs** stepping up with the 12th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 21** ~ start point is on column just **left** of decrease.

~ work **12 A pairs** stepping up with the 12th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 22** ~ start point is on column just **right** of decrease.

~ {work 1 **A bead** / work 1 **A pair**.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last A pair. (up 1 bead and through single bead). **Travel down 1 bead and up 2 beads.** ~

**Row 23** ~ start point is **on** a column.

~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 1 B bead in **front** of ended column.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last B insert. **Travel over 1 column including the insert.** ~

**Row 24** ~ work **6 A pairs** stepping up with 6th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 25** ~ work **6 A pairs** stepping up with 6th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 26** ~ work **6 A pairs** stepping up with the 6th pair. **Travel over 1 column.** ~

**Row 27** ~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 1 B bead.} Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with 6th B insert. **No Travel.** ~

**Row 28** ~ {partially work 1 A pair / insert 2 A beads.}

Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with 6th 2 bead insert. **No Travel.** ~

**Row 29** ~ {pick up 2 A beads - travel down 2 beads and through the 1st bead of the 2 bead insert / pick up 2 A beads - travel through the 2nd bead of the 2 bead insert and up 2 beads.} Repeat set 5 more times. Step up with last 2 bead pick up so it is up 3 beads. ~

**Row 30** ~ {partially work 1 **B bead** on column / insert 1 **A bead** between columns.}

Repeat set 11 more times. Travel thread into beadwork until you have at least an inch of hidden thread.

## *Working the Bottom of Bitsy*

The first thing you want to do is be sure you are happy with the shape of your vessel. If there is any shaping that you want to do, now is the last time you will be able to reach inside the vessel. If your finger does not fit, perhaps the curved handle of pliers.

When you are happy with the shape of the vessel, bring a new working thread into the bottom edge about 3 columns before that start tail that is hanging off the edge. Travel up 4 beads, down 3 beads, up 3 beads, down 2, then up 2 and down 2 until you are a few columns past the start tail. Clip the start tail.

**Row 1** ~ work 1 A bead on each column. 12 total. ~

**Row 2** ~ work 1 A bead between each of the 12 beads of row 1. Step up through the first bead of this row. You are now working circular peyote stitch. ~

**Row 3** ~ work 1 A bead between each of the 12 beads of row 2. Step up through 1st bead of this row. ~

**Row 4** ~ {work 1 A bead / work 1 skip} (a skip is worked by traveling through the “down” bead of the space **and** the next over “up” bead.)

Repeat set 5 more times. The last skip is also the step up, so you will travel up **3** beads. There are now 6 up beads. ~

**Row 5** ~ work 1 B bead in each skip space. 6 beads worked. Step up through 1st B worked. ~

**Row 6** ~ work 1 A bead / work 1 skip. Step up through 1st A of this row.

**Row 7** ~ work 1 B bead in each skip space. Total of 3. Travel through the last 6 beads worked, then through the last 3 beads worked, pulling the bottom closed. Now travel your thread out into the bottom to tuck a tail and secure the thread. Clip excess.

If you run into any questions or problems while working this pattern, please, feel free to contact me: [riverivyrose@gmail.com](mailto:riverivyrose@gmail.com)

You can follow my work on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/Beading-with-River-Rose-323741361407438/>

## *Beading With River Rose*

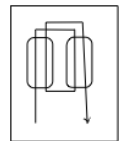
# *Herringbone Start from a Ladder*

**Basic Herringbone Stitch** is worked by stitching two beads at a time into the previous **row**. But before there is a previous row, what do you do? In other words, how do you begin a technique that is worked into the previous row? I was taught to use a **ladder** as a foundation to begin each piece. The ladder is temporary and removable and becomes a tool as it is reusable.

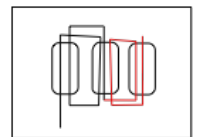
I use size 1, 2, or 3 bugles and two different colors to make a ladder, using the second color every **6th or 8th or 10th** bead (depending on how you want to count) as a marker. The markers are a visual aid for counting pairs and knowing at a glance how many beads the ladder has. Bugles are much easier to hold than single cylinder beads. Sets using marker beads makes counting pairs a lot easier. And starting with the correct number of pairs is crucial for each piece. The length of a ladder needs to be at least twice the number of pairs for any given piece.

~ pull a length of thread, at least 2 feet for a 30 bead ladder with size 1 bugles. You will want a longer thread for a longer ladder. It is always better to err on the side of too long a piece of thread than too short because you do not want to have to add thread when making a ladder as there is already enough thread in the beads.

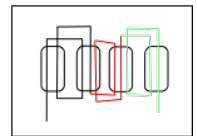
~ pick up two beads of the main color and pull them down to about an inch from the end of the thread. **Travel** through these two beads a second time, pulling the thread all the way through, causing these two beads to line up side by side.



~ pick up a third bead; travel down the previous bead and back up the new bead.



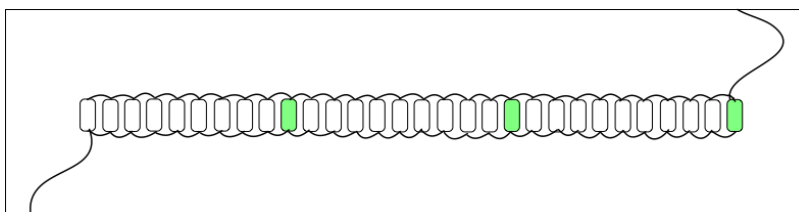
~ pick up a fourth bead; travel up the previous bead and down the newest bead.



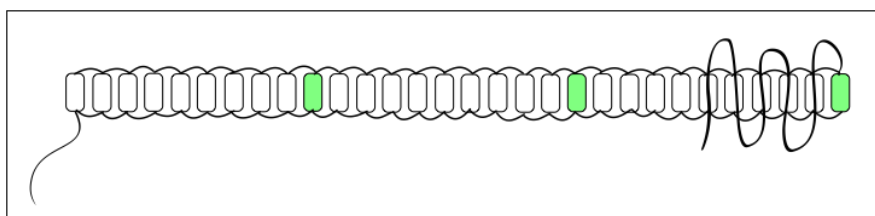
~ continue your ladder by repeating the above directions for the addition of the 3rd and 4th beads until you have the number of beads needed. The first 9 beads are the main color, then 1 bead of a second color... continue for another 2 sets. For this project you need a 30 bead ladder to accommodate 15 pairs.

**Discussion:** As must always be stressed, the use of the terms left or right and up or down is relative to how you *\*hold your work\** I am right handed so these directions are written only from my perspective. I work the ladder from left to right... but then I work herringbone stitch from right to left. Hopefully, the illustrations will allow you to make any necessary adjustments to see it from your own perspective.

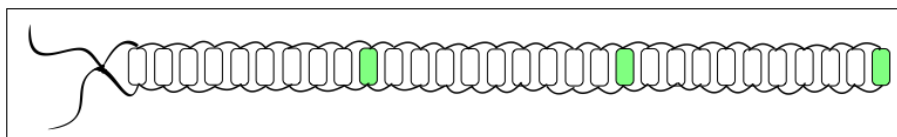
When you have the necessary # of beads for your project stitched together, your **working thread** is coming up out of the last bead, and your tail thread is coming down out of the first bead.



~ Sew back through the ladder by traveling down through the 2nd bead from the end and then up through the 3rd bead, down the 4th, up the 5th, down the 6th.... back to the beginning of the ladder.



~ Tie the two thread ends together into a knot; clip the excess leaving about an inch of tails. This is now an independent tool. It is a removable foundation. It can be used again and again, until a thread breaks or a bead breaks, and that happens.



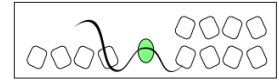
After you have completed seven rows, you will remove the ladder because it constricts the herringbone mesh. Initially, I would cut up the ladder to remove it. But during one class, a student pulled her ladder off after clipping only one thread. It was a delightful discovery as making a ladder for each project can be tedious, especially when you move into the bigger pieces. The ladder becomes one of your tools to be used again and again.

# *Glossary of Terms and Directives*

## *For Herringbone Stitch*

### *As used in instructions by River Rose*

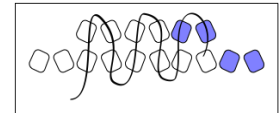
**Accent bead** - in my use of herringbone stitch, this is referring to the bead used to begin an increase and to finish a decrease. An accent bead can be a drop or an 11 seed bead or a second color cylinder bead. Most typically referred to as the **B** bead in my directions.



**Art** - the act or practice or process of communing with one's inner self and ultimately the source of all creation. It is to be in the moment with full self expressing from within. Art is not necessarily an end result or a product.

**Basic Herringbone Stitch** - a technique of bead work that is worked in horizontal rows, stitching two beads at a time into the previous row.

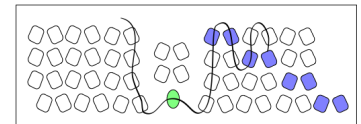
**Tubular herringbone stitch** - herringbone stitch that is brought into a circle, then worked around and around in the same direction with a step up at the end of each row.



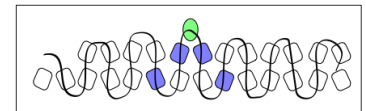
**Flat herringbone stitch** - herringbone stitch that is worked in horizontal rows back and forth from side to side.

**Bead pairs** - the two beads used together in each basic herringbone stitch. Now referred to in patterns by its color letter (A, B, C, etc.) pair or pairs... because of course we are talking beads! See the directive **work a pair**.

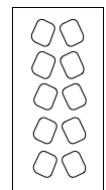
**By passing** - the action that must be taken when an increase or decrease area is not available for typical travel. Traveling around rather than through.



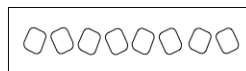
**Color coding** - capital letters are used to denote each color used in any project. In all my directions **A** is the main color; **B** is the second color used; **C** is third color used and so on. This is to honor each student's choice of color as well as encourage students to make their own choices with color.



**Column** - the **vertical** stacks of bead pairs that tip toward each other. Once you have worked a second row, you have columns. Not to be confused with row.

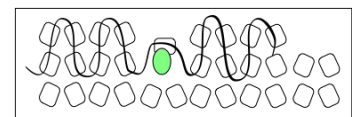
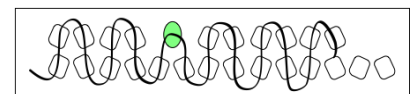


**Row** - the **horizontal** lines of bead pairs.



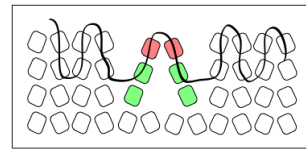
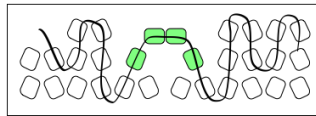
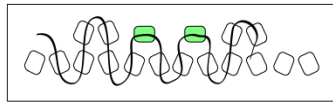
**Creativity** - an entry into the mysterious. Technique, expertise, and knowledge are tools but the key to being creative is to abandon oneself to the energy that fuels the birth of all things. When we are creative, we open ourselves to what wants to be expressed through us.

**Decrease #1** - the process employed to end a column. 1st, a row is ended by working a single bead on a column. It is often an accent bead, but not always. 2nd, you work an insert behind the ended column as a space holder to gradually pull the two columns on either side of the ended column together, giving a protruding detail, but not pinched. When working the row following the insert, the columns that were on either side of the ended column, come together behind the ended column and the ended column is taken completely out of play. In the instructions, I refer to the ended column as "the B bead column".





**Decrease #2** - the process employed to turn 2 columns into one. 1st, 2 columns are ended by working a single bead on each. 2nd, 2 beads are inserted between the 2 single beads on the ended columns. 3rd, a pair is worked on the 2 inserted beads. This 2nd way to decrease came to be as I had a desire to keep decreases and increases centered in the emerging vessel rather than spiraling.

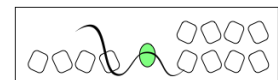


**Experimentation** - doing something without knowing how it will turn out. It is the key to originality, to personal signature in our creative work.

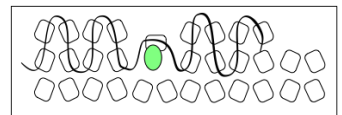
**Ideas** - something like radio waves that travel through the ether. Ideas will come to roost with those who make the space for them by engaging in creative work. We cannot own ideas, as they do not originate with us, we are simply the vessels. (Hence, my obsession with vessel making!) Ideas are gifts that we may use to begin, to enrich, to complete our creative work.



**Insert** - used both as a noun and a verb. Inserting a bead or beads follows the directive to partially work a pair or single bead. It means that while your working thread is between columns, you will pick up a bead or beads and travel up the right bead of the next over pair.

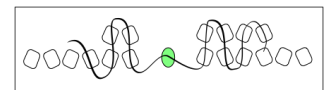


In the case of inserting behind or in front of an ended column as in a decrease, you travel up the right bead of the pair next to the ended column.

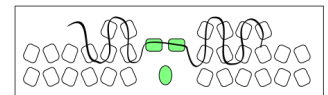


**Increase #1** - the process employed to insert a new column between existing columns. The process of increase #1 takes 4 rows to accomplish.

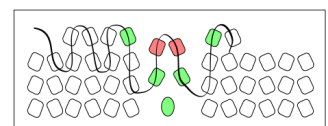
1) In the first row we insert 1 bead between columns. The inserted bead is often an accent bead, but not always. This single bead falls into the previous row because herringbone stitch is worked into the previous row.



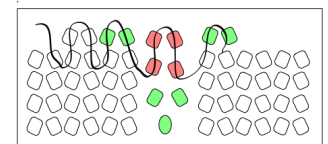
2) in the 2nd row of this process, we insert 2 cylinder beads.



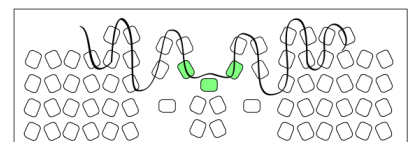
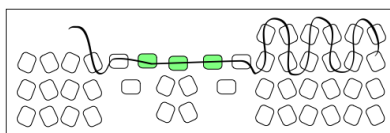
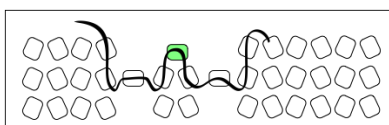
3) in the 3rd row of this process, we work a pair in between the 2 bead insert. These pairs stick out at first, so don't be worried that they are not lining up with the mesh of the rest of the herringbone stitch.



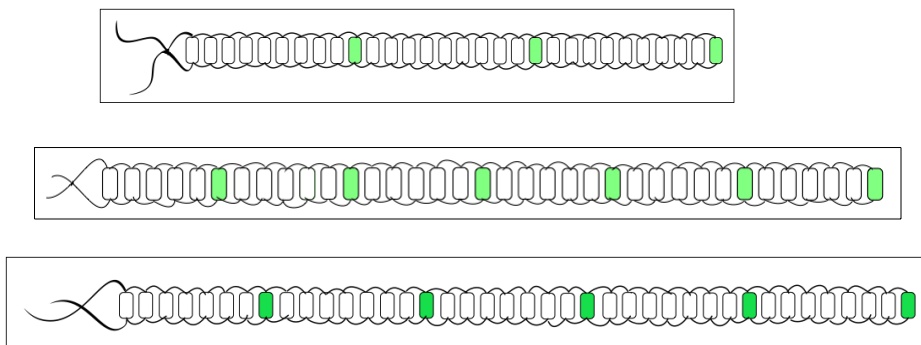
4) in the 4th row of this process, we work a pair on to the sticking out beads and pull them up into the herringbone mesh.



**Increase #2** - the process employed to turn one column into two columns. This is a 3 row process with the 4th row working the new columns. In the 1st illustration/row we insert for a new column, end a column, insert for another new column. In the 2nd illustration/row, we insert 2 beads traveling through the single bead and inserting 2 more beads. In the 3rd illustration/row, we work pairs onto the 2 bead inserts, by passing the single bead. In the next row we would work these new columns into our vessel.



**Ladder** - a row of beads, (in my work bugles), sewn together side by side. It is used as a temporary foundation to work herringbone stitch from. I focus a lot on the ladder because it becomes one of your more significant tools if you get enmeshed with herringbone stitch work. Below are samples of different lengths of ladder using sets of 10, 6, and 8. The marker beads are for easier counting both in choosing the correct ladder at a glance and in counting the pairs as you bead the first row onto the ladder.



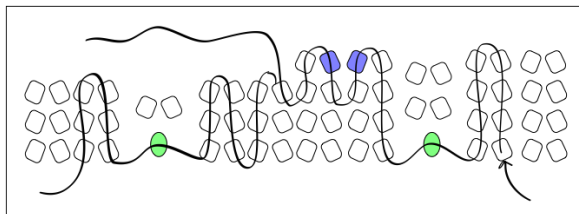
**Notes on changing thread:** I make a point of changing thread in the middle of a row rather than at the end of a row because it is too easy to get too much thread in the area of starts and finishes where you have already traveled.

~ Without removing your needle from the working thread, thread a second needle with a workable length of thread. Travel this new thread into your piece 3 columns before your old working thread. As you can see in the illustration, 3 columns before your old thread is a new increase **not** ready to be traveled in. So, enter your new thread 1 column before the new column.

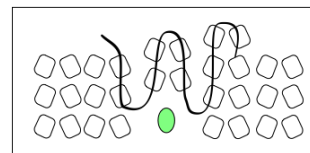
~ Travel up 4 beads / down 4 beads / through the insert / up 4 beads / down 2 beads / up 2 beads / down 2 beads / up 1 bead. Now the new thread and the old thread are in the same place. Always bring in new thread before tucking and cutting old thread, because your old thread is your guide. Especially in areas of increases and decreases where the columns are not very level.

~ Now travel the old thread similarly to bury it. Clip old thread. Continue beading with the new thread without losing your place! With your finger, follow the thread path of the new thread... then the old thread. The key to securing your thread is to change directions at least 4 times. The thread on the right is new thread. Thread on left is old thread.

~ Now we have no knots... inside or outside. The bead work is clean and secure.

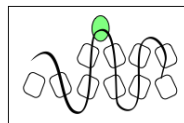
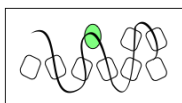
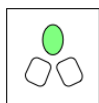


**Pick up 2 beads - travel...** - similar to partially working a pair, but the travel directives are more specific. In this illustration you see pick up 2 beads - travel down 2 beads and through the 1st bead of the 2 bead insert; pick up 2 beads - travel through the 2nd bead of 2 bead insert and up 2 beads. This directive is found in the 3rd row of an increase.

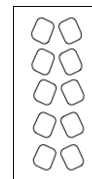
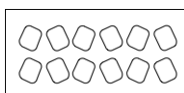


Here is a little jingle to help you remember the long wordiness of the pick up row: You're gonna pick up 2 hitchhikers and travel down the mountain 2 miles - and through the valley 1 mile; then pick up 2 more hitchhikers and travel through the valley 1 more mile and up the mountain on the other side 2 miles.

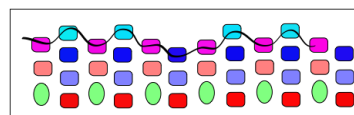
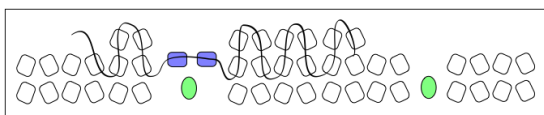
**Picot** - the use of 3 beads at a time in one stitch. Most commonly used in a finishing row. However, picots can be used in herringbone stitch for more significant texture within the body of a piece as when used in decreasing. The 2nd illustration shows the start of ending a column with an accent bead. The accent bead is in the same row as the rest of the bead pairs. The 3rd illustration shows using a picot as the start of a decrease. The accent bead is higher than the row of bead pairs which adds a more prominent texture to the vessel.



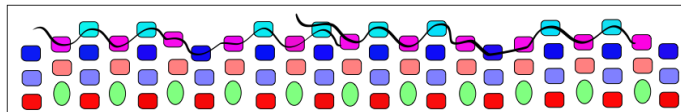
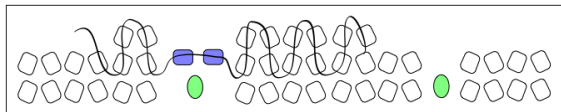
**Row** - the horizontal lines of bead pairs. Not to be confused with columns, which are the vertical stacks of bead pairs.



**Set** - the set is defined in the instructions by the directives in brackets. { } Sometimes a set coincides with a section, but more often, it does not. The start of each set changes with each row; the sections remain the same. I took set and section out of alpha order because the {set} is the most important focus

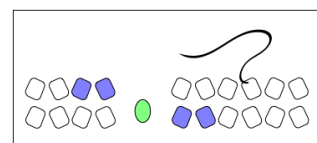


**Section** - both herringbone stitch and the circular peyote stitch used on the bottoms of vessels can be seen in sections divided by increases or decreases or accent beads. The sections are defined by the increasing and decreasing.



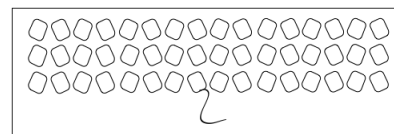
**Start Point** - the start point is the column your thread needs to be exiting to begin each row. In order to understand the start point, you will need to become familiar with all the other terms I use in writing herringbone stitch.

“Start point is on the 2nd column to the right of B bead insert.” The B bead insert is the “marker” used to explain the start of row 6. The use of markers for the start point of each row will always be referring to the most recently worked of whatever marker is mentioned.



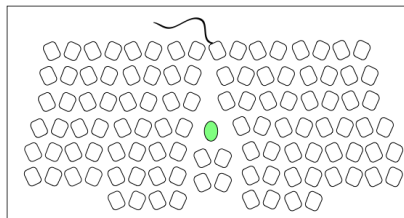
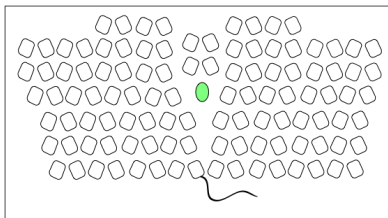
The start point can be right or left of the 2 bead insert. It can be right or left of the new column, or on the new column. It can be 2 columns or 3 columns right or left of an ended column/decrease. As you see the possibilities are endless. This is why a familiarity with all the terms I use **has** to happen and can happen in the first several rows.

**Start tail** - after you have worked at least 5 rows (never before 5 completed rows) and better after 6 or 7 rows, you will remove your ladder. The 1 inch tail that is left when you remove the ladder from your piece is called the start tail. It marks the beginning of your herringbone stitch pairs, and acts as a marker for returning to your starting edge to complete your vessel.



**Start tail; returning to the start edge to work on the vessel in the opposite direction** - some of the vessels are worked by starting **NOT** at the top or bottom, but somewhere in the middle. This means, you will return to bring a new working thread into the starting area and work in the opposite direction.

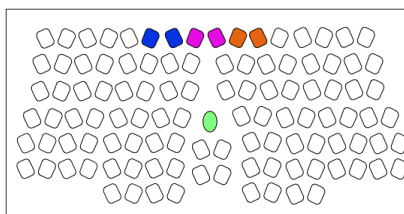
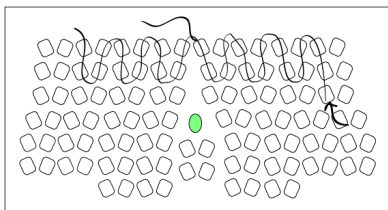
Notice that when you turn your vessel to work in the other direction.... those that were columns in the first direction are not columns in the opposite direction. Just an interesting point of herringbone stitch!



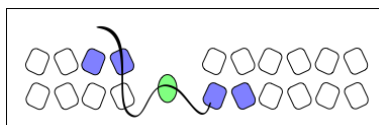
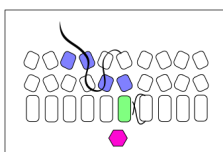
You will be instructed to bring a new working thread into the start edge of your vessel 3 columns before the start tail and proceed to travel over columns until your thread is 3 columns beyond the start tail **OR** to be at the start point for Row 1 working in this new direction.

The start point for Row 1 might read “on the column just to the **right** of the increase worked in the opposite direction” which would be the orange pair in the illustration. Or it might say “start point is **on** the column directly above the increase worked in the opposite direction” which is the pink pair. Or it might say “on the column just to the **left** of the increase worked in the opposite direction” which would be the blue pair.

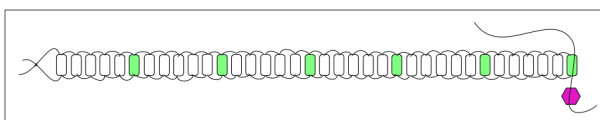
The marker being the increase worked in the opposite direction... which would be one of the set of the first increases worked at the start of the vessel when you were holding the vessel in the opposite direction.



**Step up** - the travel up 2 beads at the end of a row in order to connect the end of a row to the beginning of the row. It is the necessary ending of rows to keep your work even rather than spiraling. The 1st illustration shows working the last pair of a Row 2 and the step up. The 2nd illustration shows the step up as you work the final B insert of a row.



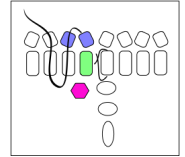
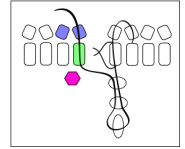
**Stop bead** - a bead used as a temporary knot as you begin a piece of beadwork.



### Tips on ladder removal -

~ after you have partially worked the last pair, string on 3 size 11 beads; Travel back up the 1st two of these; now flip ladder and 1st row over so that stop bead end is in your left hand; holding stop bead aside, travel up through the 1st bead of the ladder and the 1st bead of the 1st pair; pull thread all the way through. This will pull the ladder and 1st row into a circle. You will be able to see the stop bead dangling from the first bead and the 3 bead tail dangling from last bead that you have used.

~ travel down the left bead of the 1st pair and the 2nd ladder bead and then up the 3rd ladder bead and the right bead of the 2nd bead pair. **This is the last time you travel into the ladder.**



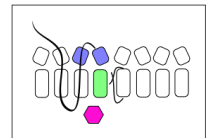
After about the 7th or 8th row, stop and check... if your sets are evenly spaced and correct according to whichever directions you are working, you can now remove the ladder. You will clip off the 3rd bead of the 3 bead dangle; then gently pull the ladder and unthread with a needle or an awl until it comes free from your herringbone stitch rows.

**Thread** - endless possible choices... it is always a good topic of discussion in class! In vessel making, I suggest Fire Line (6 or 8 lb.) for students because it can be pulled tight enough to hold the tension for a piece. Most standard beading threads will not work. I would be willing to bet that most of you know more about what the current market offers in the way of threads and stringing material than I do.

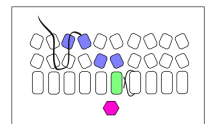
I use clear fishing line so it does not change the color of the beads and it offers a real solid structure for vessels. However, it is very difficult to work with and requires a lot of patience. So I never suggest it to students. If you become a serious fan of vessel making, you can explore and experiment on your own.

Now that my work and classes is going back into purse making, the discussion of threads expands... the monofilament that works so well for vessel making does not work for purse making. I have discovered and like #46 bonded nylon and Power Pro 10#. They are both thick, yet soft. So the bead work mesh is strong, yet very supple which is what we want.

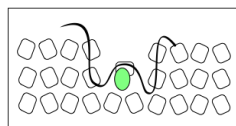
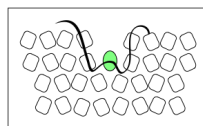
**Travel** - a term I have come to use in place of “pass your needle and thread”. It is a directive used to change the position of your working thread without adding any beads. The 1st illustration shows the first travel done at the end of row 1. It is the **only** time you travel into the ladder.



**Travel over 1 column** - means to pass your needle and thread down 2 beads and then up 2 beads. This directive is given at the end of most rows. It's purpose is to secure the tension of the work and to move the start position of each new row over so you are not starting and finishing in the same spot for a whole vessel.



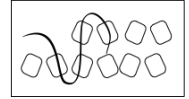
**Travel over 1 column including insert** - Means to travel down 2 beads, **through the insert**, and up 2 beads. This directive is used when you end on a column just right of an insert, or when there is an insert behind or in front of an ended column aka a decrease.





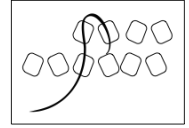
**Work 1A pair** - means to pick up 2 beads; travel down the left bead of the pair your thread is exiting; then travel up through the right bead of the next pair to the left. It is the directive given for the working of basic herringbone stitch.

**Work 1 A bead** - it is the same as working a pair, only using a single bead, not to be confused with inserting.



**Partially work 1 A pair** - means to pick up 2 beads and travel down through the left bead of the pair your thread is exiting. This directive is used when you are going to insert a bead or beads between columns.

**Partially work 1 A bead** - means the same as partially working a pair, only using a single bead, not to be confused with inserting.



**Working with my directions** - it is critical in working with my directions that you understand these two directives and differentiate between them as they are used throughout the body of my work with herringbone stitch. And it's basically just as critical that you become familiar with all the terms and directives in order for the directions to make sense.

**Workable length of thread** - a length of thread that is comfortable to work with. In my opinion, not longer than two arm lengths. It is way quicker to add new thread throughout a vessel than to undo knots.

**Working Thread** - the thread that you are currently using to bead.

# *Herringbone Stitch Vessels*

## *Back Story by River Rose*

Well, let me begin by taking you back to the year 2001... I had been beading for about nine years, had become familiar with several different bead working stitches... brick stitch, looming, right angle weave, peyote stitch, branching, embroidering beads onto flat beadwork, sculptural peyote stitch a little... I had designed and made wearable pouches and pendants using brick and peyote... I had beaded on boxes and vases using peyote and right angle weave... I had already completed my head dress... when I took a class to learn herringbone stitch.

It was a one day class at the Bead and Button Show in Portland, OR. I think I was more interested in taking a class with NanC Meinhardt than learning a new technique. There was no project for this class, we just learned the basic techniques. But as I was learning how to increase, I experienced an explosion of imagination, seeing all manner of possibilities. You see, in all my work with both brick stitch and peyote stitch, I always started at the widest point of a piece and then decreased to shape it because I didn't like the look of increases. With herringbone stitch, I loved increasing as much as decreasing which I knew, even then, would allow so much freedom in shaping 3D pieces.

I embarked on a journey that was the equivalent of an all consuming love affair, as if beading hadn't already been all consuming. My lariat and the original drawstring purse (not the one pictured here) are two of my earliest projects. Now you can see that my visions in that class were indeed immense! Ahhh... but in those months following the class, I was alone with the beads and my guides for long hours, and knowledge seemed to flow in just for the asking and the beads were sooo cooperative. After more than 17 years of working with herringbone stitch, I still love its versatility and it is still the technique that I work with most.

The real challenge of herringbone stitch came when I was asked to teach the draw string purse and lariat. Admittedly, this was not the place to start... but I was naive and I was excited to share what I had learned, both in the class and on my own through hours of beading. So, a group of students and I embarked on a four part class over a period of a year. Writing the instructions for those two pieces was the most difficult undertaking of my beading career. I had no idea that others might not readily "see" what I had seen when I first learned.

Very little had yet been written in the way of herringbone stitch instruction so there were no universally accepted terms or phrases to fall back on. I was on my own, with the help of willing students, to come up with terms and directives to teach others what had come to me intuitively, without words.

During that year of on going workshop, I actually took apart the original purse in order to dissect all that information that had come to me intuitively. This is also how I was able to see how to work secondary ways of increasing and decreasing.

Yet where were the words that were going to help students see what I saw in my head??? I wrote and rewrote instruction. And still, early instructions were full of inconsistencies. Over the years, I did develop the use of certain terms and phrases as the means of conveying my visions and knowledge to students. These are not new words or phrases, but my use of them is specific to my working with and teaching herringbone stitch. These terms will be defined as we move through this intro project but they are more clearly defined in the glossary for continual reference.

In the spring of 2014, I began designing small and tiny vessels expressly for introducing my work in a one day class at the BABE bead show in California with the hope that students would get far enough along with the piece to get introduced to all the techniques used while I was there to answer questions. The Small and Tiny Vessels were a hit...

In 2016, I met four lovely women at the Bead Society of Northern California Bead Together who came to study herringbone stitch and vessel making with me. They have gone through a lot of my herringbone stitch projects. It is so gratifying to work with students on going... I get to see them finish pieces and I am moved and inspired by their enthusiasm to take on the next project. This on going work has also pushed me to new levels with my instructions, because these students questioned and offered feedback and suggestions. As I made changes to the instructions, they let me know how it helped their work with each project. They have been a great help and inspiration to me to make my instructions more able to stand on their own. Now, from the beginning to the end of each project, the language is consistent.

From my perspective, there are two main reasons to bead... one is to partake in the dance of creative flow with beads for myself, and two is the students. In addition to the women I've met through the bead society, several students have returned who beaded with me years ago before I moved up to Washington. All the students that have worked more than one herringbone stitch project with me, and especially the ones that have worked several of my more elaborate projects, agree with me that there is a starting place and in the last few years, I have come to see it is with this Small Vessel. From this piece, students can move with confidence into and through the world of herringbone stitch and especially vessel making.

Of course most people are attracted to and want to work the big elaborate projects... but there is a progression to learning... especially with vessel making because it is more than just following the directions, even when they are good directions. Vessel making is a combination of beading and sculpting. You do have to mold and shape a vessel as you bead and the tension must be firm in order to get and hold the desired shape. Then you also need to learn how to relax your tension in order that your beadwork will drape when you are working projects that are not vessels.

## *Bio for River Rose*

I began my journey with beading in the Fall of 1992, almost 29 years ago while I was still known as Susan Hillyer. The Place to Bead in San Ramon was the first bead store I ever experienced. Beading quickly became a passion for me and within three years, I was teaching my own designs.

In 1997, Bead and Button Magazine published my reversible amulet purse in issue #20, calling it "Two Faces of Peyote". In Spring of 1999, "My Little Coin Purse" was published in Beadwork Magazine. Bead and Button also published "Memories of my Mother's Sachet" in April 2000 (Issue #36), and "Wildflower Purse" in issue #45. From January 1998 through December 1999, I wrote and published my own newsletter called "The River Flows".

My beaded headdress, perhaps still my most significant piece is in Bead International 2000 (photo only) and my herringbone stitch drawstring purse is in 500 Beaded Objects in 2004 (photo only).

I taught in bead stores all over the Bay Area, Sacramento, Stockton, and Southern CA. I organized and taught at several Beading Retreats held in B & Bs and hotels and enjoyed quite a loyal following.

In 2002, I got divorced and moved to Washington State very near Portland, Oregon, partly because the Bead and Button Show had moved there. Alas, they only stayed there for 2 years.

In 2003, I changed my name... It had been a difficult decision to make, as all my publications were in my birth and married name, Susan Hillyer. But I got to teach in 2004 at the Embellishment Fair and was able to share about the name change in my bio at that time.

I was able to continue traveling to teach through 2005, and also sold 4 of my designs to Toho, although I have no idea if they ever did anything with them.

On a very personal note, being on my own at age 49 for the first time in my life and in a new state, was more difficult than I could have ever imagined. I turned to meditation and other spiritual studies, which is why I changed my name. I also kept very busy building gardens, walking in the woods with my dog, working other genres of art, and I let go of pursuing the very competitive pursuit of teaching and being known in the bead world. I never gave up beading, just the public aspect of it.

Late in 2012, 8 years ago, I returned to California to live. I slowly began to reconnect with old friends and students and tried my hand at teaching again. Three years ago I applied to teach at BABE (Bay Area Bead Extravaganza) and was accepted. I taught herringbone stitch vessels in 2016 and 2017. 2017 was BABE's last show.

For over a year and a half, I worked ongoing with a small group of students. This was one of the most fulfilling teaching experiences of my life because these students have finished the projects and shared the finished products with me. With the help of their honest feedback and critique of my instructions, I learned to see the work on many different skill levels. And I have modified my instructions to include things that I thought were obvious... but new students haven't been doing herringbone stitch for 22 years!!!

Also, this old dog is learning about social media! Since I have been posting pics of my vessels on FB on various pages, I have had dozens of requests for tutorials from people all over the world. As a result, I embarked on the journey of fleshing out my classroom instructions so that one day I can sell and send my instructions out into the world on their own.

Then I decided to apply to teach at Bead and Button again.... so I'm going to wait to launch selling instructions until I see what happens with this application.

So I did get to teach at the Bead and Button Show last year, 2019. And thank heaven, because as it turns out it was the last Bead and Button Show. I met so many wonderful people that I try to keep up with on Facebook. And now, of course, I've turned to learning how to teach beading via Zoom classes!!!



You can find me on Facebook as:

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