

## CELTIC SAMPLER EAC- 2003-7



**Description:** Delicate and charming, this little Celtic sampler, worked on evenweave, antique white linen, 35 threads to the inch, immediately conveys its Irish/Scottish roots; a complex Celtic Knot and colourful mauve thistle leaves little doubt. Embroidered in shades of mauve and green floss plus No. 12 white perle cotton and a metallic braid, the tiny stitches include several techniques made all the more difficult because of the fine count and threads that are used throughout much of the sampler. The latter, edged in deep purple binding, hangs like a miniature bell pull on a white wooden rod adorned with a gold chain. The final and somewhat elegant touch is a generous tassel, composed of all the threads used in the sampler that is secured at the bottom.

Beginning at the top, a diminutive V-shaped zigzag row of Smyrna cross stitches is worked in white perle cotton over two threads. The row consists of six V shapes plus a partial V at each end, with the sides of the V having three Smyrna cross stitches and sharing the bottom one. A minute heather-coloured bead is centred in the valley of each V, making a total of eight beads, all individually stitched, across the top of the sampler. Immediately below and centred are the numbers 2003, eight fabric threads high, all backstitched in a single strand of dark green floss. On either side, five upright triple cross stitches are embroidered in white perle over eight fabric threads. The tiny cross stitches in the centre—over two threads—are worked in one strand of light mauve. Six fabric threads down, the

third band is comprised of the words "Stitchers' Ceilidh". It is all back stitched over two threads and is the same height and colour as the date.

Directly below is a readily recognizable Celtic Knot, some 24 fabric threads high and backstitched in single strands of medium and dark mauves that fill the width of this little sampler.

Following are stunning little sparkling rows of cross stitch over two threads which are enhanced with ribbon stitch and a tie down stitch, respectively worked in white perle, light mauve, single strand floss and mauve metallic braid. These rows border the top and bottom of a colourful beaded floral band. The latter is made up of three mauve flowers, each outlined in back stitch and accented with five tiny deep purple beads, complemented with light green back stitch leaves, tiny dark purple cross stitch buds and two other light mauve back stitched small Celtic Knots.

The next band is a beautifully shaped Scottish thistle, including muted green foliage, a full blossom and buds in medium and dark mauves, which are all cross stitched in two strands of floss. All told, this motif at its highest point covers 32 fabric threads.

A decorative Herringbone stitch is worked over eight fabric threads in the next band. It is first stitched in a single strand of light mauve, followed by a darker shade of mauve, all of which is secured with upright cross tie down stitches in mauve metallic braid that further complement the above textures and accents.

The second last band is really a variation of the first. The V-shaped zigzag row of Smyrna cross stitch is worked in mauve perle rather than the white perle used previously. The upright triple cross stitches are in single strand light green floss with the tie down in mauve metallic braid. They are placed with the spaces, above and below the Smyrna cross stitches.

Resting just three fabric threads below the initials and in the centre is a single deep mauve bead. Finally, attached to the bottom is a lovely little tassel about 6.5 centimetres long composed of all the shades of green and mauve threads, including the very fine braid, used in the sampler. It is edged in a deep purple binding and the back of the sampler is very neatly lined with corded white taffeta.

**History:** Donated to EAC's Heritage Collection by the Marigold Guild of Needle Arts, this sampler was charted for kits and used as a fundraiser for Seminar 2003 held in Truro, N.S. The original design similar to the Seminar piece was designed by Cheryl Kienzle in collaboration with Leslie Burrows for an annual retreat of the Marigold Guild of Needle Arts. When it was learned that the Marigold Guild

would be hosting seminar, Cheryl was asked to adapt a variation of Celtic design for seminar. That sampler was embroidered and framed by Leslie, while another Celtic kit was stitched by Midge Horner and finished as a bell pull, thereby giving seminar members two different finishing techniques. The Marigold Guild later donated the bell pull sampler to the Heritage Collection.

While this sampler may be currently remembered by many EAC members and considered a contemporary piece, it, like all things, grows older. It is in fact a very choice historic, artifact that will tell EAC members many years hence about Seminar 2003. It reminds all members that today's projects are tomorrow's treasures.

**Materials:** Antique white linen, 35 threads to the inch, green and mauve DMC floss, No. 12 perle cotton, metallic braid, minute heather-coloured beads, white corded taffeta for the back lining, deep purple binding used for edging and white wooden 14.35 centimetre rod complete with gold chain.

**Condition:** This bell pull sampler is in excellent condition.