

HERITAGE COLLECTION INTRODUCTION

The national embroiderers' association began with a small group of dedicated embroiderers who met in Winnipeg in the studio of Leonida Leatherdale, a local needlewoman, teacher and shop owner. They were enthusiastic about the work done by some of the British and American embroiderers' organizations and their annual seminars. They felt that not only those in Winnipeg, but stitchers from all over Canada needed an opportunity to share their learning experiences with one another. Thus, on Thursday, September 27, 1973, the first organizational meeting of the national association was held.

Bylaws were drafted and approved by the federal government and in November of 1974, the *Embroiderers' Association of Canada, Inc.*, officially came into existence, with the head office in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Association has expanded to include chapter guilds and national members from across Canada and around the world.

While the Embroiderers' Association of Canada started collecting pieces of stitchery and stitchery related items in the 1980s, the Heritage Collection was formed in 1991, with the donation of textiles from Leonida Leatherdale's estate. In point of fact, the collection really began in 1758, when some unknown child or woman stitched one of the oldest pieces in the collection—a sampler. Unfortunately, we have no written history for it. It is only one of over 200 pieces collected by Leonida that have been donated to be studied and appreciated. The collection includes purses, evening bags, embroidered panels, doilies, bits of lace, kalagas (wall hangings of southeast Asia) and other samples of ethnic embroideries, and the list continues to grow.

Donations of stitchery have been made to the collection in recent years in memory of EAC members. Others have donated pieces that they have collected and felt to be deserving of a place in our history.

This booklet, *Samplers in the EAC Heritage Collection*, is the second in a series cataloguing pieces in the collection. Special thanks to Dot From of Winnipeg, and to members of the collections committee: Pat Bayko, Anna Marie Winter and Janice Routley, and to Karen Rowan and Linda Lassman.

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EAC Heritage Appointee
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