N E W S L E T T E R

The Perfect Table Mat (24" dia)

Pearl McGown's DELLA ROBBIA WREATH

By Peggy Hannum, Lancaster, PA

The Perfect Table Mat (con't)

For some time I had been looking for a pattern for a table mat that would accommodate sitting a large bowl in the center without covering most of the motif, since most small pieces have the major portion of the design in the center.

The Della Robbia Wreath is perfect with the fruit circling a plain center. If you wish to order this from Cushing, know that it is not listed in their catalogue. I had a friend who had an old pattern, so I called Cushing and they did have it. I ordered it on their fine linen as I hooked it with a #3 cut.

I began this piece several years ago at a workshop with Nancy Blood who did the lovely color plan. Since I enjoy dyeing as much as hooking, I was delighted with the rich colors against the dark brown background which compliments my dark wood table.

I have long been enamoured with Della Robbia pieces and love the pale blues, yellows and whites of the original ceramics. Someday I 'might' do those shades, but the deep shades of my Della Robbia suit my purpose well. It also would be fun sometime to sculpture the fruits. A long time ago I saw a beautiful interpretation of the pattern done with this method. However, even though I again 'might' do this, I'm afraid both of these endeavors will have to be in another lifetime.

Nancy introduced me to a technique that worked beautifully in hooking the fruits. Instead of hooking something oval or circular to show the highlight in the motif, she used what she referred to as a flame or a large angular highlight. For a plum or a peach, the flame on the larger, bright cheek would be filled in with value 1 and then worked out toward the edges to value 5 or 6. On the smaller, darker cheek, fill in the flame with value 3 and continue out to value 7 or 8 or whatever gives you enough contrast with the brighter cheek. On an orange or apple one needs just one large flame filled in with value 1 and then work out to whichever value you can manage, preferably a combination of 7 and 8. This method really makes fruit easy and realistic.

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