

“The Shetland Collection”

This very special collection of wool, wool threads, and the penny rug pattern **that’s near and dear to my heart has been in the back of my mind for quite a long time. Let me take you back ‘a ways’!**

Ever since I can remember, I have been in love with wool fiber, the sheep that the fibers come from, and specifically the Shetland breed of sheep. You might think this odd since **I’m born and bred in Louisiana, and this climate is not exactly ‘wool friendly’!!! But I digress.**

Since I was a little girl, **our family has spoken of our ancestors on my fathers’ side that came from Fair Isle, Scotland. Fair Isle, for those who don’t know, is part of the Shetland Islands in northernmost Scotland. We knew that somewhere, way back when, our family name was MacGregor, later changed to Stout. We knew that my great grandfather, James, emigrated from Fair Isle to New Brunswick, Canada, but that’s where the ‘knowledge’ stopped.**

The family always wanted to know more, **but no one seemed to take up ‘the cause’ to dig deeper and root out our family history.** Well, I took up the cause.

Fast forward to today, where with the help of a Fair Isle resident turned friend (who just happens to own her croft, raises the Shetland sheep and spins their wool into yarns) I was able to connect with a professor at the University of Edinburgh. Through his research and published papers, and through my research with the various Shetland Islands and Scottish historical records folks, I have been able to trace my family history all the way back to my great great +++ grandparents in the year 1700. What a treasure I have uncovered, and most certainly the explanation for my obsession with wool and the Shetland breed of sheep. I guess **you can say it’s in my blood** – always has been, always will be. **The connection is there, and can’t be broken.**

Armed with all of my new found knowledge, I set myself on a course to develop a wool collection that would honor my heritage as well as my love for the Shetland sheep. For over a year, I have searched for, and found, 7 colors/textures/patterns of wool that to me, represent 7 of the 11 major color variations in the Shetland breed. So I bought them. Lots of them, where I could, limited amounts **where I couldn’t. Then, as luck would have it, the Rustic Moire Wool threads with their gorgeous natural blend of fibers in the wool strands happened to have 7 spools of wool thread to match the wool yardage that I’ve amassed.** YAY!!! And so I set out to create a simple project, one that would showcase each one of the 7 wool pieces that I had chosen. What evolved was a simple penny rug, done in the early style, where single pennies (not stacked pennies like the modern penny rugs of today) would highlight each and every single wool in each and every single penny. Words cannot express the joy I felt in every **stitch I laid into this simple yet elegant primitive rug. It’s as though I was honoring my family’s heritage with each and every stitch.** So for me - - this is a very personal collection. One that I am very proud to have put together, as much for my own sentiments as for the beauty of the collection itself. **It’s definitely a labor of love!**

So that’s it – now you know why this collection is so very special to me.
I’m honored to bring to you this limited edition collection:

“Shetland”



Fair Isle, Shetland, Scotland



Shetland Sheep

