

UK/US Bead Pals

2011-2012 Project

## Message in a Bottle





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## The 'Message in a Bottle' Project

Each participant received 11 plastic tubes similar to those that beads are sold in which were cut to a 1" length. Both ends were pierced with a pin to create a bead.

Next, participants put a little message in the bottle, just a nice beady sentiment, to be either kept secret or a copy given to the recipient separately.

Now the fun bit was to cover each tube with beads in any way the beader chose. The size was restricted to no more than 1 1/2" (about 4 cm) in any direction.

Each Bead Pal received a list of 10 beaders (5 US/5UK) and the chosen colours for each person. Bead Pals had until September, 2012 to complete them.

The initial idea of the Bead Pals was that US/UK beaders could correspond and be in touch with one another, so beaders were free to contact the people on their list to see how they are getting on and how it's going with them.



Carla Abler-Erickson, US

I started learning beadwork back in the 1980 from a Native American at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Over the years I took many, many classes from Native American's, through the Split Rock Arts Program at the University of Minnesota, Bead and Button and of course from Diane Fitzgerald and others at the Upper Midwest Bead Society.

Over the years I've drifted between various types of bead jewelry and sculptural beadwork. The past two or three (or more) years have been devoted to my opus magnum, Nefferbarbi, her sarchophagi and grave goods. Hence decorating my bead tubes with hieroglyph initials.

I find my inspiration in things that strike my fancy and then twisting them to suit my personality which is also somewhat twisted. More than one of my instructors has encouraged me to make things bigger since I like really tiny beads, but no matter what I do working with anything larger than a size 10 bead feels like I'm working with a boulder.

I love to do the special bead projects because they cause me to stretch my imagination and partially because I like to stretch the rules.





Maureen Berry, UK

Since I was a 6-year-old swapping beads in the school playground, I have been captivated by those tiny, intense dots of coloured light. I enjoy researching the history of beads and beadwork as well as crafting my own beadwork projects and patterns. I have met and made great friends whilst sharing my love of all things beady.

I really enjoyed the challenge. I was amazed by the artistry and ingenuity shown by the other participants in the challenge. Receiving the beaded beads was like 50 Christmases rolled into one! They are like little packages of happiness! It was a special treat to receive all those beads made in one of my favourite colour combinations. The task of making these beady wonders into a necklace was a daunting one. I needed to make spacer beaded beads that were either so subtle that they stayed in the background, or as bold as the beads themselves. I chose to do the latter and made doughnuts using tubular right angle weave using pink "crystals" with flattened bead caps either side. I would like to say "Thank you" to all my fellow participants and for all those hidden messages! (Ideally, I should have made the necklace longer in order to make the beaded beads sit well against each other, but time constraints made this impossible.)





Rachel Bertenshaw, UK

*What to do with the beaded treasures? Litz Wilson put one on a hatpin....Steph Hornblow gave me the hat....Denise Campion gave me the chain....and ebay provided the head. Then the beaded tubes just arranged themselves.*

*And I already have a hat and a head for the next project to be put on!!!*





Francie Broadie, US

These tubes were a challenge in more ways than one. Procrastination and tube theft by a certain cute kitten, who shall remain nameless, both added to my struggles. But in the end I managed to send off all the necessary tubes. The remaining lost tube was found under the file cabinet. By the time I received my box of beaded tubes, I had nearly forgotten about them. What a delight to unwrap each little treasure. They were all fabulous. Then came the challenge of making something out of them... Stringing seemed too simple, plus I didn't want any of my treasures hidden in the back of the necklace. I attempted to make some sort of pendant assembly which seemed like a good idea but just wasn't quite right. Finally, time caught up with me and I had to go with plan B. Each tube was placed on a very long head pin and wired up. I strung the tubes with some opalescent glass and silver spacers in a color block arrangement. I love the way the little pop of dark blue beads create a transition into the Chinese crystals. Now all of the tubes are front and center. It's so much fun to share this experience with other beaders. I can't wait to see where the tubes I beaded end up!





**Denise Champion, UK**

The recently finished 'Bead Pals group' work was such a different challenge. To begin with a small plastic tube and end up with such exquisite beads has been a real joy. Everyone's approach was both diverse and attractive, and after much thought a necklace seemed the best way that I could do justice to the beadwork that I received. I used a long bead between the tubes and am quite delighted and proud of everyone's effort with the result.





Marcia DeCoster, US

Here you go. I can't seem to do anything these days without a touch cubic right angle weave, so that is what I used for the between bead connections. I love the flower one that I used in the center drop.

Thanks for letting me participate, it was fun.

I've had so much fun being part of the bead swap. I have been having a love affair with cubic right angle weave so it was each to decide to use it for the necklace between my beaded beads. The center Vee is created by sharing one side wall between the cubes on either side and then softflex could be fed up between them leaving a loop for attaching the bottom dangle. I love the flowered bead so I decided to use it as a center focal accent, and of course I can never resist adding a few crystals!







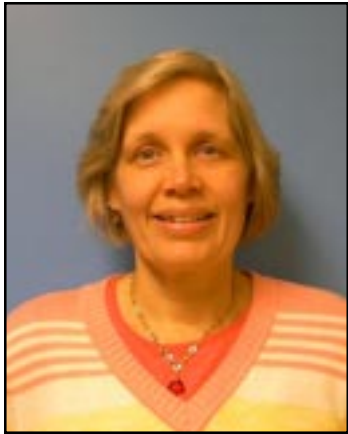
Diane Fitzgerald, US

*I just thought hot pink and lime green would be wild colors. At first, when I saw some of the tubes in gold and black I sort of wished I had chosen those colors, but when I finished my necklace I was quite pleased. It is one of the wildest pieces I have.*

*I added Swarovski bicone crystals in fuchsia between my tubes and accented those with rings of fringes with tiny fuchsia bicones on the tips. Pretty soon, it reminded me of the fun toys used at parties, party poppers. So that's what I named it: Party Poppers!*



Party Poppers!



Kathy Franke, US

*This was a really fun project and I really enjoyed it. My husband was as excited as me about how each tube turned out. I'm not sure which of us was more excited when the box arrived in the mail with all the tubes that were made for me. Before I could even think of anything, he suggested making a frame that would be deep enough to work the tubes into a 3-dimensional piece of art! It was perfect. There was a lot of back and forth as to how to "string" the tubes and we finally settled on brass rods from the hardware store that are tempered to stay straight. Once we found the perfect arrangement so that no tube was covered by another or by the wire, he drilled the holes in the frame and painted it a dark blue. I then marked the wire and beaded it to keep all the tubes in the perfect alignment. He did all the securing and took the final pictures. So this project was truly a group effort!*





Ann Gilbert

*I called my piece Bead Henge. I saw all of those wonderful beaded tubes marching together in a circle. They are so wonderfully textured and I found myself holding each one over and over enjoying the shapes. A bracelet made more sense to me as fondling it is easier than a necklace. The bracelet is strung on elastic cord.*





Jean Hall

For this the third Bead Pale project, I decided to work a peyote stitch panel to cover the body of the tubes. I covered the ends of the tubes using four rows of a bead-quilling technique which was used in a project designed by Kathy King published in *Bead and Button* in June 2008. This resulted in the same bead count around the circumference of each end section as the peyote strip, and was exactly the same diameter as the tube plus the peyote stitched panel. I set myself the challenge of devising a completely different design for each tube, and as in the second Bead Pale project, I found some colour combinations easier to work with than others.

When it came to making a necklace with the tubes that had been made for me, I eventually decided to keep it very simple and make a necklace that would showcase all the little works of art that I had been given. I hope that everyone who made a tube for me feels that I have done justice to their work!





Stephney Hornblow, UK

*I decided to arrange my tubes into a necklace as I had been collecting up lampwork beads for the past 4 or 5 years and the tubes just sang out to them and they all joined the party together!*

*It was a satisfying and interesting project to do and I have worn the necklace 4/5 times since making it and have had lots of interesting comments.*

*Another successful Bead Pale, onto the next.*





Sandra Houk

*For my tubes I wanted to do swirls. I like the idea that things go round and round. It just keeps generating. Since I like primary colors, this seemed like the perfect place to use them. I had my daughter do the wire wrapping on the tubes that I made. She is still trying to teach me how to do perfect wraps.*





Carol Hutchings

Hi! My name is Carol Hutchings, I am 62, divorced with one son. I have been interested in handcrafts from the age of 3 when my mother taught me to knit. Over the intervening years I have studied lacemaking and patchwork to City & Guilds levels and I joined Stephney Hornblow's beading class in 2010.

When the "Bead Tube" challenge was issued at the start of September 11 I thought I would put my name forward; it wasn't quite the "walk in the park" I had envisaged but I was pleased with the results I produced as the newcomer to the group. The construction of the tubes from my Pals has been more challenging but the resulting necklace and lapel pin will hold many memories when worn.

Having originally said I would not be picking up the gauntlet again for 2012/13 I bet you can all guess what I am currently making?!!





Jane Langenback

Hello! My name is Jane Langenback and I love tassels! I took a tassel making class back in 1999 at the Bead Expo in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Since then, I have been making and collecting tassels and have about every tassel book in print. For the beaded tube project I started with a porcelain insulator for the main body, added the large beads around it, then added the beaded tubes. It took a few tries, but eventually I put a wire through the beads and tube and used thread to attach them between the large beads on the insulator. Next I used a tassel from JoAnn Fabrics and put the loop through the insulator and up through the black and white beads. Then I attached the bottom tube to more beads, up through the tassel and tied the thread around the tassel head.

Then I finished the top of the tassel by attaching another tube to the end of the tassel loop and finished it by using black and white beads for the handle.

It was a fun project and I enjoyed making all of the tubes for the other people by using Diane Fitzgeralds out of print book on peyote patterns.

My main focus on beadwork is using antique buttons for making beaded pins/pendants. I am the president of the Minnesota Button Society, which I enjoy very much. I have been doing beadwork since 1996 and enjoy being one of Diane's Beadheads.







Liana Magee, US

I ended up being the lucky recipient of not one, but two different color combinations. I originally wanted my colors to be bronze and black, but just before the final Bead Pal listing was sent, I changed my mind to red, white and black. Unfortunately, my color change didn't get communicated in the original document. A correction went out immediately, but not all beadlers realized the change. So when the finished tubes were delivered, I found that I had tubes in both color combinations. It didn't take me long to realize that this was a **GOOD** thing! Now I have **TWO** funky necklaces! I wanted to keep my final project(s) simple, not only due to time constraints, but also because I wanted to be able to wear them, and I like them both.

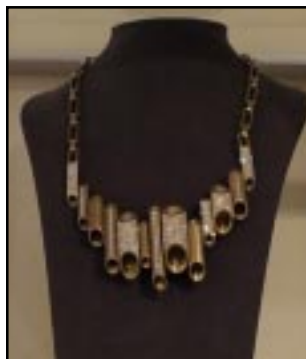




Susan Manchester, US

When we started the tubes project, all I could think of to do with the final product was a bracelet. But then this year I had the great good fortune to travel to England for the first time. One of the best parts was actually getting to meet many of my fellow beaders in England....what a wonderful group of people. Anyway, as one of our adventures in London, we decided to we needed to have a proper high tea and went to Fortnum and Masons to do so. After tea, we wandered around the store, of course ending up in the jewelry department, where I spotted an interesting necklace made of metal tubes. Had it not been completely out of my price range I would have purchased it as a model, but I did manage to sneak a picture that worked just as well. The result is a necklace that I love. Thanks to everyone who made tubes for me...they are exquisite.

Inspiration Necklace





Barbara Marsh, UK

I have been beading for about ten years and still enjoy it as much now as when I first started. Although I finished work last year there still doesn't seem enough time for beading but I manage to spend at least one afternoon a week with my beads and books, in the company of my good friend Maureen. We spend a lot of time chatting and laughing as well as beading (well, sometimes there's not so much work done as other). The challenge was just that, a creative challenge. I did worry that everyone else would produce gems of creativity and mine would be awful in comparison since I felt stuck for ideas. In the end I was pleased with my efforts and loved the beads I received - such a range of styles. There are so many creative people and it's great to feel part of that community.





Sonya Monzel, US

*Lots of fun!*





Vicky Pritchard

Once again, I really enjoyed the challenge of making the tubes for everybody else. There was a degree of trial and error, and a good deal of scissor action involved until I came up with a few designs that I was happy with, and that worked with the tubes- that slight difference between the two ends caused a few headaches! Once again I found it a good exercise to work with other peoples colours- a lot of which were colours that I don't normally use which have sparked a few ideas for me to explore in the future.

The tubes I received were beautiful. I wanted to make sure you could see them all so opted to be quite boring and simply string them with some crystal that would unify the colours but also allow each tube to shine individually. I had one tube that refused to play nicely with the others, so I strung that one on it's own using a few of crystal that I had used on the first necklace to bring it together.





Carmian Seifert

My passion for bead weaving began in 1996 and has only continued to grow thanks to projects like this exchange. The endless colors, shapes, textures and techniques provide a very rich experience in creativity. Knowing that I can never exhaust the possibilities is very energizing and keeps me hungry to do more.

This project was definitely challenging, starting with creating the pattern that would accommodate all the color preferences, look interesting, and easily incorporate a way to cover the ends of the tubes. For me, choosing and combining just the right colors have been the most ongoing challenging aspects of creating beaded objects. This project provided the opportunity to really grow as I selected the specified colors and tried to optimize how they would look in the pattern I had created. It was very fascinating to watch how each took on a very individual look, even though the pattern remained the same. It also led me to work with colors and combinations I may never have chosen on my own.

It took quite a bit of deliberation to determine how the beaded tubes could be put into a single piece in a way that presented a unified and complimentary configuration. I also felt so much work had gone into each piece that they should be displayed frequently. For the final construction I chose a necklace that will fit very well into my wardrobe. It has the added length that I commonly wear in necklaces allowing for the size and balanced placement of all the beaded tubes. A special thank you goes to Marcia DeCoster, Ann



Gilbert, Sandra Houk, Carol Hutchings, Jane Langenback, Barbara Marsh, Sonya Monzel, Vicky Pritchard, and Catherine White who have all contributed to my necklace. It is a wonderful conversation piece. I am ecstatic with the result! THANK YOU ALL for the opportunity to be part of this exchange!



Carol Stevenson

*I enjoyed making the necklace and found all of the beads that I was sent to be exquisite, the colours worked really well together.*

*I look forward to next year's challenge and the fun of putting all the different shapes together.*

*This is my first Bead Pal's experience and I have really enjoyed it.*





Catharine White, UK

I found this project very challenging. I couldn't decide on what to put inside my tubes - I am the same when asked to write in a colleague's leaving card - everyone else seems to come up with something better/wittier/more appropriate than I can. Searching my stash for beads to fulfil each participant's colour requirement was a joy - a pure indulgence - multitudes of colour and texture. I decided to follow my love of texture and use multiple sizes of beads to cover the tubes. Sewing the tubes was lovely too, creating swirls of colour, for my beading friends. Then when all the tubes arrived - how gorgeous - how to put them together! Why do I put myself through these challenges? Thank you all my beading pals for my lovely tubes, they gave me a few headaches - getting a needle through from end to end was the first, what beads would compliment the tubes was the second. Eventually I found some gold, blue and turquoise beads, and developed an asymmetric stringing pattern so now I have a lovely necklace courtesy of my pals.







Elizabeth Wilson

*My design was inspired by an art deco chair. Using the same bead sequence for each it was fascinating to see how the different colour.*



## 2012 Message in a Bottle UK/US Exchange Invitation

### Who:

Participants in the first or second UK/US exchange, plus members of Beadheads and a few others. Any number of participants may join but you will make only 10 tubes regardless of how many participate.

### What:

#### Message in a Bottle:

The project involves embellishing with beads 10 one-inch (2.5 cm) long plastic tubes for others and one for yourself.

- These tubes are 2 inches in length and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch in diameter and have removable caps. You are asked to cut the tube to a 1 inch length with a scissors and to put a hole in each end with a large darning needle or drill. The idea is that the tubes can be either strung or have an eye-pin or headpin inserted so that the tubes can be joined like a chain or dangled. Each participant will receive 10 tubes in return. Each participant will also receive an extra tube to make one for herself.
- **COLOR:** Each participant can specify either three shades of one color or up to three colors for her tubes so that the resulting piece will look unified. If you want to be specific about your color choices, it might be helpful if you indicate the color by the Miyuki Delica color number as a reference only. The tubes do not need to be embellished with Delicas.
- **Message:** You are also asked to place a message for the recipient or for some future person inside the tube. If you wish you may send a copy of the message along with the tube to the recipient.
- Images of all the tubes will be included in a pdf file so that you will have a reference of ideas for later tubes.

### How:

To determine who will receive your tubes, this is what we'll do: A list of participants in alphabetical order will be drawn up. The list of UK participants will be merged with the US participants so that #1 will be UK, #2, will be US, #3 will be UK and #4 will be US and so on. You will be asked to embellish tubes for the 10 people appearing on the list after your name. So, if your name falls in position #4, you will be asked to embellish tubes for persons #5 to #14 on the list. In this way, the number of tubes each person makes is limited to 10 but there is still a personal aspect to it.

**NOTE:** Please be sure that when you send your tubes for the exchange that you attach a note saying who it is for and your name so the person knows who it is from.

**Cost:** Please pay Diane \$2.00 for your tubes. If your tubes need to be mailed, please add postage as you think necessary.

The names of your recipients will be sent to you after Oct. 19.

### When:

The project completion date will be Sept. 1, 2012. Tubes must be sent to either Stephney or Diane by that date.

If you would like to participate, you must let either Stephney or Diane know as soon as possible.

Hope you're all on board!