



History of National Sewing Month

On September 21, 1982, at the request of the American Home Sewing & Craft Association, an industry and trade association supporting the sewing and craft industries, President Ronald Reagan, under Proclamation #4976, declared September as National Sewing Month "In recognition of the importance of home sewing to our Nation."

Subsequent Proclamations naming September as National Sewing Month were issued by President Reagan in 1983 (#5106), 1984 (#5233), 1985 (#5368) and again in 1988 (#5867). The Proclamations state that "Tens of millions of Americans sew at home. Their efforts demonstrate the industry, the skill and the self-reliance which are so characteristic of this Nation." Full documentation of the Proclamations can be found on the American Presidency Project website at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>

Unfortunately, we have no records of how National Sewing Month was celebrated in those early years and few references exist on any specific outreach, activities or advertising.

In the summer of 2004, the Home Sewing Association (HSA) (formerly the American Home Sewing & Craft Association) renewed its dedication to National Sewing Month and commissioned a new logo, shown here.

In May of 2005, HSA submitted a proposal to the Office of Proclamations asking for a revival of National Sewing Month under Proclamation #5368. The letter stated that "The revival and recognition of September as National Sewing Month gives the industry an annual celebrated boost to all those associated in the business of home sewing. The re-declaration of this proclamation will aid in promoting and energizing commerce, re-inspiring consumers and introducing sewing to new demographics."



2004 - 2007

On July 20, 2005, Marguerite A. Murer, Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Correspondence sent a note of regret that the request could not be accommodated.

HSA's management understood that a new Proclamation was not a requirement to promote September as National Sewing Month and a full advertising campaign was launched, including press releases, ads, flyers, web banners and a digitized logo available for free download from the www.sewing.org website. The theme for 2005 was "Sewing... the alternative yoga" after earlier studies had shown that sewing reduced stress in adults and gave kids a creative edge. The campaign was a huge success and included participation of local and national retailers, American Sewing Guild (ASG) chapters, sewing educators, online retailers, school systems and more.

The success of the 2005 campaign continued in to 2006 with a theme of "Sewing... Express Your Creative Spirit" with a call to action — "As a form of self-expression, sewing is fun, fashionable and rewarding. Create your own signature style!" The theme for 2007 was "Sewing...it's what you make of it" and continued to garner the support of retailers, ASG chapters, educators and more.

In December of 2007, the Home Sewing Association closed its doors.

In early 2008, the American Sewing Guild (formerly a part of HSA) joined forces with the Sewing & Craft Alliance, a new program started by HSA's former Executive Director and its former webmaster, to continue the promotion of National Sewing Month and provide a central location for the distribution of National Sewing Month information and materials to organizations, educators, sewing enthusiasts and anyone else interested in promoting and/or participating in activities for National Sewing Month. The www.NationalSewingMonth.org website launched on April 20, 2008 with a newly designed logo and a theme of *Go Green! Sew Green!*, which reflects the changing way we see our environment and the knowledge that we can make a difference, even with our sewing projects, without sacrificing comfort or style.



2008

For the first time, National Sewing Month featured a project, the Anti-Ouch Pouch, which is a wedge-shaped pillow designed for women to ease the painful area under the arm after a mastectomy. Developed by Deon Maas, an ASG member and *Sew News* contributor, the Anti-Ouch Pouch is ASG's 2008 *National Service Project*.

September is a time to celebrate our passion with National Sewing Month, but we know the creative, therapeutic and calming effects of sewing are joys that we can celebrate throughout the entire year.