

Lace Threads News of the Pittsburgh Lace Group

Web site ~ <http://pittsburghlacegroup.org/>

Fall/Winter 2010

President's Message

Hello friends,

I belong to an organization called the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind. It has several chapters throughout the state and we're having our yearly convention this year in Pittsburgh. One of the workshops is about unusual hobbies of blind people – things that you would think only of sighted people doing.

Probably most of you who read this newsletter know that I am blind and have been since birth.

Since I have to talk about my lacemaking as part of the above mentioned workshop, I thought I

might practice a little on you all. (Editor's note: See Article on Louise's introduction to lacemaking on page 4. It was too good not to make a stand alone article.)

If I had a dollar for each person who has said to me at a demonstration, "You must really have to see well to do this," I'd be able to buy a car and hire a chauffeur.

I wish you all a lovely autumn and hope you continue to make lace. Louise Chuha

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Calendar of Future Events

Thursday, September 30, NO CLASS

Friday, October 1. **National Lace Making Day**

Friday, October 1, 6:00 – 9:30 P.M. **Art Nouveau Design** with Debbie Beever at the Churchill Borough Bldg

Saturday & Sunday, October 2 & 3 10:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. **Art Nouveau Tiles Workshop** Churchill Borough

Saturday, October 16, 1:00 - 5:00 P.M. Monroeville Heritage Fall Festival -demonstrate at the McGinly House

Thursday, November 4, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Thursday, November 25 NO CLASS scheduled *Happy Thanksgiving*

Thursday, December 2, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Sunday, December 5, 1:00 – 4:00 P.M. Demonstrate at The Nationality Rooms

Thursday, December 24 NO CLASS on Thursday night *Merry Christmas*

Thursday, December 30 **6:00** P.M. Lace Christmas Party at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Dues for 2010 are due January 1st

Thursday, January 6, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Thursday, February 3, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Friday, February 25. Newsletter Deadline

Thursday, March 3, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Summer Camp-In Two Parts

Beads, Glorious Beads by Louise Chua

What are lacemakers doing talking about Beads? Well one of our projects at "Summer Camp" was to make a very lovely (and lacy, I might add,) Victorian bead bracelet. The bracelet has a foundation of bugle beads, a top layer of crystal bicones, surrounded by tiny seed beads. First we chose the 2 or 3 colors we wanted to use. It took some of us almost the whole evening to choose their colors and some people changed their minds a few times before they were satisfied. We received a sheet of directions, so theoretically we could have proceeded on our own, but you know how that is. Having made one, I think we all could follow them to make another. Some people bought extra kits to make more.

One of the hardest parts of the project was threading that miserable small thin needle. Even wire loop needle threaders were too big to fit through the eye. And then there was that nylon thread that insisted on getting tangled up and falling out of the needle. Joan Trimble, who had made these bracelets before was our instructor. She supplied everything we needed, included a plush cloth to work on. I would never have thought of that, but I was thankful we had it. Otherwise I, at least, would have had those

tiny beads all over the floor. Amazingly hardly anyone dropped anything on the floor.

The bracelets are really lovely! We paid \$15.00 for the kits, and I would say they were more than worth it. Dewi made one with tiny extra loops of seed beads along the edges to make it look more lacy. There were some earrings that could go with the bracelets, but we didn't even think of making those. Maybe next summer .



Some of the bracelets we made at camp

Jana Novak's Pins by Suzanne Potter

The second part of our week of fun was taught by Amy Gibbons. She had shown us several Jana Novak pins she had made and we were anxious to try too. Fortunately, she had plenty of the colorful linen and metallic thread needed for the project; as well as, the pin forms from Mayra Threads. After a hands on tutorial showing us how to "hang on," we all got started using short rows and turning stitches galore. This pin is also a good refresher for rarely used techniques! Handouts with detailed instructions were also provided, so we should be

able to finish our summer project at home. The finished pins will especially good on a jacket lapel. Many thanks to Amy for sharing her hard earned knowledge.

Since no pins were completed at camp, I have included a picture of Gretchen's Patriotic Bracelet.



Pittsburgh Lace Group

Demonstration Opportunities & Future Events

Monroeville Heritage Days ~ October 16

The McGinley House in Monroeville has invited us to join them for their celebration of Monroeville Heritage Days from 1:00 to 5:00p.m. It is a nice chance to learn about a local homestead, to meet nice people and to share your craft. Last year Suzanne & Louise had a wonderful time demonstrating. If you are able to join us please contact Gretchen Baudoux for more information.

Nationality Rooms ~ December 5

Although we have received no details, don't forget that we usually demonstrate the first Sunday in December (the 5th) at the Nationality Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning. We are usually there from noon until 4:00 P.M. This has been the traditional kick off for the Christmas Season for members of the Pittsburgh Lace Group for many years. There is good food, wonderful craft items from around

the world available to give as Christmas gifts. We will again put up our Christmas tree and nativity, in the Croghan Schenley Room. Come and help us and help celebrate the season. It is a fun Sunday afternoon. (Please remember no food is allowed in the room.) You may volunteer at the November meeting when Dewi should have more information available.

Christmas Party ~ December 30th

Our Annual Christmas Party will be Thursday evening December 30th at the Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church on Hochburg Road at 6:00 p.m. Last year we almost needed the snow date, taking Louise home was more exciting than she knew. This year's snow date will be the meeting date of January 6th. We will have a wonderful time singing, eating and playing the re-gifting/white elephant game. If you have questions ask anyone who was there last year. I have never laughed so hard.

Things to bring: your family, some food to share, and a white elephant or two for the game wrapped or unwrapped. Once again if we are lucky Louise Chuha will read us a story and Gretchen will help us stumble through The Twelve Days of Christmas." This is our one time to get together and laugh with no pressure. With thanks to Robin who sent this to me, here is

A Christmas Poem to get you in the mood

Twas the night before Christmas, I'm glued to the tree.

I'm wondering what Santa brought just for me.

Could it be fat quarters or a pattern or lace?

Or a quilt kit, I said, with a smile on my face.

And that's when I heard him,

"Hi Santa," I said

"You know..good little girls should be in their beds".

"I know I should Santa, and now I've got caught.

But I was just so excited to see what you brought."

"Well, let's take a look in this room where you work."

He shook his head quickly, And left with a jerk.

I heard him exclaim as he put it in gear.

"You've got enough stuff, I'll see you next year!"

(author unknown)

Dues for 2011 Are Due January 1st

. The cost of membership is \$15.00. Please complete and mail the form on the last page of the newsletter, with your check, made payable to Pittsburgh Lace Group to. Gretchen Baudoux, 4704 Bert Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146. There is a form for you to complete on the next to the last page of the newsletter.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

How Louise Met Lace

I discovered lacemaking at a large arts and crafts exhibition in 1976. My husband came to the booth I was minding and told me I had to come and see this! Of course I was totally fascinated, like most of us who first see someone actually making lace. We talked for a while and when I asked if I could try it one of the ladies said "Sure."

Neither of the ladies had ever worked with a blind person, but we figured we didn't have anything to lose so off we went.

The first problem, and perhaps the easiest to solve, was how to find the holes for the pins. I turned the paper pricking over, and behold! There were dots where the holes had been pricked.

Then it was time to learn the stitches. The first pattern I made was a wink-a-pin, using heavy crochet thread. The pricking had 2 rows of pins and only whole stitches – ctct. There was a sewing edge on the left requiring an extra twist, which I probably forgot half the time.

Then I learned how Torchon lace is made on a 45 degree angle. I made a piece of insertion with Brussels ground and alternating cloth and half stitch diamonds, down the middle. Of course this was all done orally. Gwen, who was my first Instructor, told me exactly what to do and how to do it, and then stayed with me until I knew what to do. There were very few lace instruction books back in those days and they wouldn't have done me any good anyway.

When I became more skilled, my husband sometimes pricked patterns for me and read the instructions. One evening we went to dinner at a

By: Louise Chuha

local restaurant. For some reason I had a lace book with me. I wanted to learn to make rose ground, so after dinner, my husband, who was a mechanical engineer, used all the items on the table to make me a tactile diagram of what it should look like. When I got home, I tried to follow the directions, and darned if it didn't work!

There is a lot more memorization involved if you can't see, when you first begin to make lace because you don't know enough yet to be sure you are doing things correctly, and you can't look back to see if what you've done looks like what it's supposed to. After a while your fingers get used to knowing what elements of a pattern feel like.

I have tried other kinds of lace besides Torchon, but that is still my favorite because I can picture it in my head and it is quite logical, most of the time. Other laces, such as Bucks, that are worked on a different angle, are much harder to imagine and I have trouble keeping track of the pin holes. I can make my own prickings from someone else's but if the pattern is not pricked, I have to ask someone to do it for me. When I pick up a pattern, I can tell basically what must be done. I might not know whether a diamond is made with cloth or half stitch, or whether the ground is Torchon or Brussels or Dieppe, so I can do whatever strikes my fancy, or ask someone what the diagram looks like if I really want to know.

A couple of years ago, as part of our summer camp, we did a workshop on lace without looking. I think it's still somewhat of a mystery to some.

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Pillows Available

Pittsburgh lace group has a supply of "One and Only" lace pillows from Snowgoose. It is a 20" round polyethylene pillow with a cardboard base. There is a roller as well as two 5" square blocks and two half blocks. It comes with instructions for covering. The pillows are currently residing at Amy Gibbon's house. If you are interested in purchasing one, please let her know by the day before class. She will bring it to any Thursday night class. Payment of \$34.00 should be made to the Pittsburgh Lace Group.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Crafting Donation Opportunity

In July Joan Trimble brought us an e-mail and some patterns to knit scarves for women in Pittsburgh Crisis Shelters. Check things out at www.handmadeespecially.org Locally, It is being organized Joan's friend Barb Kochuba. Yarn and patterns, both knitting and crochet, are available. Ask Joanie for Barb's e-mail if you would like to make a scarf for a person in need.

Class at Yarns By Design by Amy Gibbons

Many of you have received or seen the lace shawls that I have knitted from the book in our library. Because they work so well, I will be helping people make them at the yarn shop in Oakmont. You might have time to join us. If not the book has very complete directions. Excerpted from the September Yarns by Design Newsletter -"New this Autumn, Stahman's Shawl Collaboration, held on Wednesday's, September 22nd through October

13th, from 1:30-3:30pm. Purchase your yarn and book from YBD and the collaboration is FREE. Our very dear Amy, who introduced us to Myrna Stahman's book, will guide you through your shawl of choice from this book. Not only will you learn to knit a shawl but you will also knit lace and read from a chart. We will have a few samples at the boutique for you to try on. These shawls do not fall off of your shoulders!"

Page a Day Calendar by Amy Gibbons

Every day my e-mail includes a note about knitting. (There is no Page-A-Day Bobbin Lace option) Sometimes they could apply to bobbin lace too, so here are my adaptations.

You know you make too much bobbin Lace When -

you think that if lace making toned your abs, you would be seriously hot.

you think that almost every sort of poor behavior in humans could be improved if only everyone learned to make lace.

you hear a neighbor ask your kid if you're around, and your kid replies, "I don't know where my mother is, but I know she's making lace."

you really can't imagine what people are talking about when they say you could return "extra thread" left over from your project to the store.

you realize that you're thinking of the cost of your new armchair as "about four lace books."

you understand that if you had to give up making lace, you would have to take up strong drink . . . or maybe heroin.

even though you really love your lace making friends, you still buy what you want before you even tell them there is a sale.

you have invested money in a lace storage solution that involves more than one room of your house

you are capable of holding a 35-minute conversation about a lace making technique, even if (sadly) the person you are talking to doesn't make lace..

Quotations

"Never give up. And never, under any circumstances, face the facts."—**RUTH GORDON**

"Never be afraid to do something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark; professionals built the *Titanic*."
—**ANONYMOUS**

"If you only do what you know you can do—you never do very much."—**TOM KRAUSE**

"Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal. My strength lies solely in my tenacity."
—**LOUIS PASTEUR**

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Fall Weekend with Debbie Beever October 1, 2 & 3

Friday night we will have an exciting shopping opportunity!! After a long absence, Tracy Jackson a.k.a. The Lacemaker has promised to bring goodies from her store with lots of wonders and marvels to lure our coins from our pockets. There is always something new and exciting for us to covet.

This year she has said that she would join us for our class so we can have extended shopping too

Art Nouveau Design will be the topic of Debby's program and discussion at about 7:30. She is always interesting and fun. Shopping will begin at 6:00. Admission will be \$7.00 for members and \$10.00 for non-members. . Feel free to come early to help with set up.

Please remember to bring some cookies or finger foods to share

Don't forget that Friday is National Lace Making Day

Art Nouveau Tiles Class Saturday and Sunday

Debby Beever will be teaching a lovely Art Nouveau Floral Tile. The class began as a result of studying the designs of the antique Art Nouveau tiles that were used extensively in homes of the late 19th century. These tiles were manufactured in Belgium, France, Germany and England.

The class is suitable for all skill levels and uses **20 pairs**. It lace will be made using techniques borrowed from Mirecourt, Russian tape, Milanese, Honiton, Torchon, point ground laces and Cluny, etc. It is a multiple technique workshop and those techniques may be nice to know for later projects. We will be using either Guterman silk or Mettlers 50/3 silk-finish cotton. The silk is slightly finer and the sewings slightly more difficult. If these threads are unavailable to you, don't worry as

Debby will bring these threads with her in appropriate colors of the time period.

Class begins at 10:00a.m. both days at the Churchill Borough Building. Come early so you can get settled before we start. Debbie will be available to answer a few questions about your project on Friday night

We will be taking Debby to dinner Saturday night if you want to join us please indicate that on the registration form. Suzanne will be making commemorative bobbins which also may be ordered on the registration form which is on the last page of the newsletter. Please send your registration to Gretchen Baudoux. The cost of the workshop is \$110.00 for members and \$ 125.00 for non members. The supply list which includes tools and thread color selection suggestions, will be sent to you when your registration is received.

Please remember to bring a dish to share for lunch.

Directions to the Churchill Borough Building

From Monroeville: Parkway East (I-376) to the Churchill Exit (Exit 10-A). Exit from left lane. Turn left at first intersection and immediate right into Borough Bldg. parking lot.

From Pittsburgh: Parkway East (I-376) to Churchill Exit (Exit 10-A); right at bottom of ramp to "Y" intersection with Beulah Rd. (Rt. 130-W); take the right branch and immediately get into left lane. Turn left at the light (left turn signal) onto Old Wm. Penn Highway.

Borough Bldg. is on the left, entrance to parking lot is just beyond the building.

You may use either parking lot, but if you use the lower lot, please park away from the building so the police can park close to the building. Enter through the side doors.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Pittsburgh Lace Group Dues are due by January 1, 2011.

\$15.00 checks made out to **Pittsburgh Lace Group**

Name_____

Address_____

e-mail address_____

Phone_____ Cell Phone_____

I am available and willing to teach_____ at an afternoon workshop.

I would like to take part in a workshop on _____

I would like to receive my newsletter by e-mail_____ by U.S. Postal Service_____

Please complete and send to Gretchen Baudoux
 4704 Bert Drive
 Monroeville, PA 15146

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Workshop Registration Form

Return this form with check payable to **Pittsburgh Lace Group** to:
Gretchen Baudoux, 4704 Bert Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146 (phone 412-372-8956)

Name & Address_____

Phone_____

E Mail_____

Workshop 110.00 members, \$125.00 non-members
(We will refund part of this if our costs permit) \$_____

Workshop Commemorative bobbins @ \$8.00 number_____ \$_____

Number of dinner reservations for Saturday (not included in cost) _____

Total Enclosed \$_____

**If the weather might be bad and you are coming to class on Thursday night
please call Suzanne or Amy by 5:00 p.m.**

Please forgive any errors in this newsletter ~
they were the result of poison ivy induced
insanity.