

Lace Threads

News of the Pittsburgh Lace Group

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

Summer 2011

President's Message

Hello friends,

Well, it's finally summer again! Our weather has been so goofy that unless you look at the calendar it's hard to figure out what season we're in. Anyway, summer means PLG's "Summer Camp" is coming up. For several years PLG has taken a week, usually in July, to concentrate on a project that most of us don't know how to do. Most of the time it's lace related, but not always. Last summer we made beautiful bead bracelets.

This summer we're concentrating on spiders. Most of us have made ordinary 2, 3 or 4-legged spiders, but we'll be learning about some more unusual ones this year. I have made some different kinds of spiders, but it was a long time ago and of course I don't

remember how I made them. I made the mistake that we all make at one time or another of thinking that I would remember what to do so I didn't need to write any notes. I wonder why I never seem to learn that I don't remember all the things I think I will.

If you haven't ever come to "Summer Camp" don't panic. Even though I said that we chose a week in July, it's not an all day thing. We meet for a couple of hours during the evening Monday through Thursday at the same location where we have our meetings. And don't worry if you don't know how to make a spider. None of us have made all of the kinds we'll be learning about this year. Join us. It will be fun.

Louise Chuha

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You can help!!

The Minnesota Lace Society is hosting the 2012 I.O.L.I. Convention. On their web-site (<http://www.minnlacesociety.org/technique>) they are requesting donations of white or silver stars made in any lace.

The stars must be 2-3 inches in diameter, made in size 20 or finer and have 5 points.

They are also accepting colored stars 3 to 4 inches in diameter. In the first Springett book, *Lace for Children of all Ages* there's a very simple star in a bangle. I'm not sure about the size/diameter, but it could easily be done without the bangle and adjusted for size.

from Robin Panza

Calendar of Future Events

Monday thru Thursday, July 11-14 7:00 P.M. PLG Summer Camp details on page 3

Wednesday, July 13th Dorothy travels to Richmond.

July 31 thru August. 6, I.O.L.I. Convention in Bethesda, MD

Wednesday, August 3rd possible trip to Convention

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

Saturday, August 13th possible trip to Your Beading Heart in Irwin (date is tentative)

Thursday, September 1, 7:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church

Thursday, September 22nd Deadline to turn in Articles to be included in the Fall Newsletter

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

There will be two opportunities to demonstrate in October, which will be discussed at the meetings.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Recent Events

Folk Festival

Amy Gibbons - Pittsburgh Lace Group has demonstrated at The Folk Festival for as long as I can remember. Some years everyone came and some years it was just a few of us. This year it seemed like we had difficulty committing to a specific time, but in the end there were lots of us there. Friday began with the usual hoard of children and ended for me with a bus scraping the front bumper of my car (no real damage, but a real time consumer). Louise, Chuha, Barb Lis and I had a great time helping the Children from different schools. Don't be letting people tell you they can't make lace because of poor eye sight. Louise obviously had everyone enthralled, (see photo) so she can make lace and talk at the same time. (Is that like walking and chewing gum??)



Amy Gibbons - Saturday morning I woke up early and couldn't go back to sleep. I decided that we needed to have a taller display to attract more attention from people shopping in the next room. I brought lace that I made years ago, figuring that the only way we could get people to come to see our lace was to pretend we were P.T. Barnum, showing them the "way to The Giant Egress" – make it tall and make it shiny. (See photo at left). I even brought my personal Easter Tree so we were really visible. I was joined

by Sonya Hanczar, Joanne Frey and Susan Hottle, who came from Erie and discovered she could teach lace with the "try it" pillow. (See photo at right) Dewi joined us in the afternoon. Susan and Joanne were helped over the humps in their lace and should be able to complete their pieces. There was lots of shopping and eating.

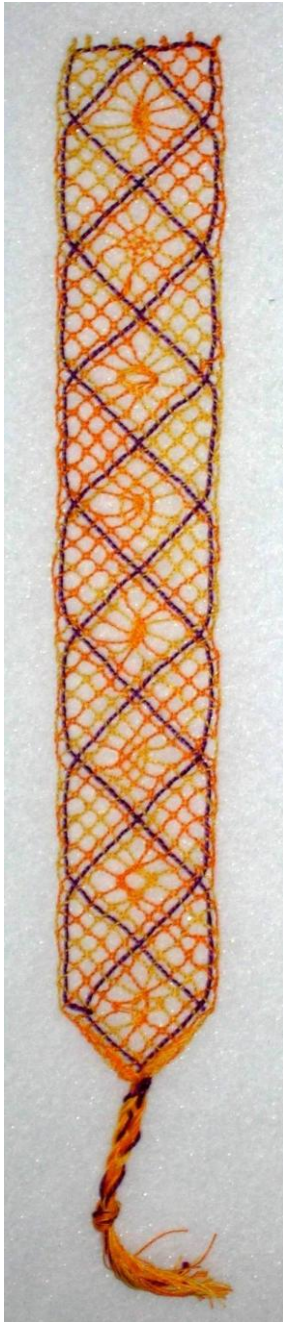


Suzanne Potter - On Sunday we had a good turn out of "demonstrators" - Joanne, Barb, Gretchen, Sonya and I were there at various times. Thanks to all who helped. Unfortunately, the number of visitors was not so good. Amy has suggested a way to draw attention to our table(no, no, no--not the dancing boys!) and we'll hope for better results next year. There were lots of booths selling crafts and, of course, the delicious food. I bought two scarves/shawls decorated with oya, Turkish needle-knotted lace. As usual, there was lots to see and do at the fair.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Future Events

**Welcome to Bug Infested Summer Camp ~ July 11 through the 14th
Spiders EEEK!**

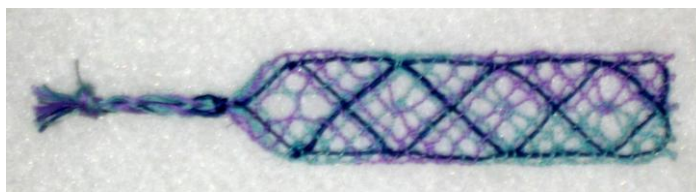


Summer Camp is almost here. We will start each evening at 7:00 p.m. Our Library includes Julie Hendricks book "A Study of Torchon Spiders" which we will use in a self guided study of spiders, with everyone working at their own speed. I have drafted patterns for 4, 6, 8 and 10 legs as seen in the pictures. I have made these in Moravia Linen size 50 so that Louise can "see" what they look like and in differing colors so that the rest of us can see where the threads go. If you want to use these patterns I will have originals available to be copied in sizes to work with Perle 8, 60 linen (or tatting cotton). I recommend using a strong thread. The group has blue paper if you are working in white. The six-legged and the two eight-legged patterns are quite long and you will be happier working on a pillow with movable blocks unless your arms are very, very long.

You will need: pricking card, contact paper to cover the pattern, and paper scissors; 10 pairs of bobbins for the four legged spiders, 14 pairs for the six- and eight-legged spiders, and 16 pairs for the ten-legged spiders; two gimp pairs for every pattern (they could be omitted, but certainly set off the spiders and makes it easy for you to see where they start and stop); paper and pencil to write the instructions down to work from and to take home for later use; and whatever equipment you usually need to make lace.

Hopefully you will end up with something which will work well as a "sampler" and enable you to substitute a different spider in any pattern. If you prefer to work the edgings from the book, that option is available. Please understand that this is a self-guided tour. I am NOT the teacher. I will be helping Louise from my copy of the book.

Amy Gibbons



Pittsburgh Lace Group

Recent Events

Annual Meeting

by Amy Gibbons

The Pittsburgh Lace Group held its Annual Meeting on April 2, 2011. Plans for participation in The Folk Festival were made as well as plans for "summer camp." An amendment imposing term limits on our officers was discussed, but not implemented. (Drat) Votes in the election included one for "not me" and one for "any other warm body," but once again Amy Gibbons will be our vice president and Suzanne Potter our Secretary.

After the meeting Joanne Frey provided a wonderful program showing us her beautiful quilts and discussing quilting. It was an excellent chance to learn something and to appreciate the talents of one of our members.



Call for Contributions! Call for Contributions!

As always, any and all contributions to this newsletter are most welcome. Any news about members, other lacemakers, bobbins, threads, patterns, books, ideas, pictures: send 'em and keep 'em coming!

Send articles to Gibbons214@verizon.net

Why Are They Called Baltimore Quilts?

[From an e-mail written by Joanne Frey]

Amy asked me why Baltimore quilts are called "Baltimore Quilts." I didn't think everyone is as nerdy as I but if you are interested, there was a very wealthy lady at a Methodist church in Baltimore who was worried about the young women and widows in her church before, during, and after the Civil War. So she organized a group of women to make artistic quilts. One woman, Mary Evans was the designer and artist. She was the backbone of the group. It is said that they sold patterns and may have even made kits of the squares. The

wealthy women bought fabrics most women could not afford or probably would not choose if they could. Mary's quilts included a white rose made from silk, maybe for her husband, and many symbolic flowers and themes. It takes real academic study to figure out the true thoughts of the quiltmaker. Many of the patterns were political, very anti-war. The ladies are always right. The whole subject is a study that you might enjoy.



We were all impressed with Joanne's work and thought that all of her quilts were gorgeous. Thank you again for a wonderful program.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

A Note from The PLG Library

Were you looking for me? There was so much really good stuff for the newsletter that I have decided to save my appearance for the fall newsletter. If you are desperate to find out if we have a book, you might check our web site. In the mean time, enjoy the articles.

PLG IS 30 YEARS OLD! By Louise Chuha

I hadn't really given much thought to how old our lace group was until at one of our meetings someone mentioned that this year was our 30th anniversary. Now when I think about it, the beginning of the group seems like it happened way back in the dark ages.

When I learned to make lace, in 1976 or 1977, there were only a couple of us. Gradually the word spread and we started meeting now and then in each other's homes to share patterns and ideas and, of course food. There were very few books available at the time, and copy machines were few and far between, so we used tracing paper to copy patterns. If there were places in this country to buy supplies we weren't aware of them, so we sent to England for what we wanted. Or we gave a list to Inger Grenvik, one of the original lacemakers in the area, to bring back when she went to Sweden. Eventually we thought we should make ourselves somewhat official and give ourselves a name and put out a newsletter. Its publication was probably somewhat sporadic at the beginning, but I guess it improved as we went along.

The first real workshop we had was with Sue Thompson from England. She taught Honiton, and it was not "big and bold." She also brought a Tray Cloth pattern that was like a sampler of Torchon lace.

The next big workshop I remember was with Pam Nottingham who taught Bucks. I remember she went round the table in a very orderly fashion, like a train stopping at each station. If you made a mistake or wanted to ask a question, you had to

wait until she arrived at your station, stopping at everyone in between.

In the earlier years, we had workshops with the Springetts and Vera Cockuyt. With the Springetts we learned how to spangle bobbins and made projects from *Lace for Children of All Ages*. Vera taught us Flanders, and also the Flanders way of finishing and attaching lace.

Virginia Suplee was the guiding force of the group for many years. Inger Grenvik, who learned to make lace as a child in Sweden, taught Virginia, Dorothy and me at the beginning. She was very traditional. We learned on Swedish roller pillows with Swedish rather large bobbins and linen thread and there were definitely traditional beginner patterns. One of the early patterns I made was called Princess Lace. Virginia branched out from the traditional much more quickly than I did. I'm still mostly a traditionalist.

I'm not sure exactly when it happened, but at some point several members who lived closer to Beaver County formed their own group called the Five Rivers Lace Group. Those of us who were left did a lot of lace demonstrations in the area and out as far as Washington County. Our membership has changed over the years, and I think I am the only one left from the original group.

[Editor's note: with the departure of Dorothy Kokal for Virginia, Louise is the last of the founding members. *We are planning a birthday party for the group (in conjunction with Debby Beever's Saturday/Sunday workshop) the first Friday evening in November.*]

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Poem Published with permission of the author Noelene Lafferty.

Robin sent this to me. It was on *Arachne*. Through Robin we received permission from the author to include it in our newsletter. In return I sent her e-mail copies of two of our newsletters. Guess which ones.

The Torchon Tug is an awesome force

To keep all those passives in line.

If they start in to waver all over the place

Just give them a tug and they're fine.

And Bedfordshire lace is a class on its own

With techniques to avoid any grief

Give a good Torchon Tug to tighten a trail

But watch out when making a leaf.

A Point Ground Pull is a different affair.

The thread is so fragile and thin.

A Torchon Tug here would wreak havoc galore

And probably pop out a pin.

'Cause a leaf in this lace needs the greatest of care

In keeping the tension just right.

The first thousand leaves are the worst I am told

And I only make two in a night!

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Communion Veil by Gretchen Baudoux

I made this communion veil for my granddaughter, Anne, in 1994. The pattern is Anne Marie Clegg's "Millefiori." The thread is DMC Machine Broder #50. It requires 20 pairs of bobbins.

My sister Peg's granddaughter, Brooke, wore it in 2002. Recently it was shipped to Dallas, Texas for my brother's granddaughter, Marrissa to wear. Next in line is her sister, Alexa. It will remain in Texas for her cousin, Emilee. It will come to Harrisburg for Peg's granddaughter, Sofia, and then back to Dallas for Emilee's sister, Sarah.

My niece has lovingly packed the veil in a special box, and plans to enclose pictures with names and dates of all the ones who wore it. Knowing that you have created something that is shared and treasured is what makes lacemaking so rewarding and enjoyable.



Artifact of the Month

Susan Hottle thought we would like to sign up to be part of a program she heard about on *Arachne*. As part of their "museum" mission, The Lace Guild UK is sending out a lace-related email "Artifact of the Month." It's free: they aren't selling the addresses and you don't need to be a member. Sign up by sending an email to: Office@laceguild.org.

Pittsburgh Lace Group

Member's News

Dewi's Pittsburgh Lace in Show

Two of Dewi Wong's lace pieces with Pittsburgh themes were accepted for a juried show at the 3G Gallery. The show ran through June so it is too late to attend. Congratulations on sharing lace and encouraging people to understand that Bobbin Lace can be art. Although the two pieces were not new creations, they are beautiful pieces of lace that many of us have seen and enjoyed in the past.

Skansk Lace

by Susan Hottle

This freestyle lace originated in the southern part of Sweden and is characterized by simple peasant motifs worked in linen thread. At the time this lace was developed, pins were expensive so pins are only placed on the edges. There are no prickings; checked or striped fabric is used instead as a guide to pin placement. I attended a Skansk workshop in Cortland on June 11th to give it a try. Like Milanese, tensioning is very important & can be a bit tricky. This was resolved by switching from CTCT to TCTC so that stitches ended in a cross & began with a twist. There are "order of

work" issues as well. Groups of bobbins regularly "rest" while waiting for another group to return. I worked with 1/8" gingham fabric on a small roller pillow that easily accommodated the small scale insertions that we worked in class. The lace ranged from 5/16" to 3/4" and included small zig-zags, wide zig-zags, diamonds with an outline and a motif called "beans." More practice is needed before advancing to edgings & a motif curiously known as "pig's snout." As always, it was fun to try something new and hang out with other lacemakers.

Dorothy's Afghan by Amy Gibbons

What does a Lace Group do when a member moves away? Or gets sick? Or both?? We create. We have known that Dorothy was moving as soon as her house was sold, for over a year. By moving to Richmond she will be near her son and daughter. Dorothy's house was in the process of being sold, when she suffered two strokes. At first she couldn't see or swallow. With her usual diligence she is gradually gaining back those abilities but has a ways to go. Originally we thought she would be moved by July 1st and a going-away party was out of the question. The lace group sprang into action. E-mails were sent and our members produced twenty 10 inch squares. Susan Hottle came from Erie to assist me in joining the squares into an afghan.

Dorothy's departure for Virginia is scheduled for July 13th. She is in room 4426 at The Willows in the Oakmont Presbyterian Home until then. Visitors are welcome any time. Dorothy is regaining many of her old abilities,

although her vision is still not good and she needs help to walk. She wants to try to make lace again and that is next on the agenda. The afghan is on her bed and it gets plenty of compliments. I hope you have time to see it. Thank you to the square makers: Robin Panza, Gretchen Baudoux, Theresa Troyan, Louise Chuha, Suzanne Potter, Joan Trimble, Barb Lis, Sonya Hanczar, Dewi Wong, Joanne Frey, Susan Hottle, and me.



Pittsburgh Lace Group

Dorothy

By Louise Chuha

All of us who belong to PLG are saddened to be losing one of our faithful members. Dorothy Kokal is moving to an assisted living situation in Virginia near her son and daughter.

Her family was from Slovenia and her mother knew how to make bobbin lace. Dorothy had her mother's bobbins, but never learned much about lace making. When she discovered PLG, it was only natural that she became a member. She framed several of the pieces she made and used them to decorate her home. I'm sure she must also have given some to her grand children.

Dorothy is a remarkable lady. She's in her nineties and has more energy than the rest of us who are 30 or more years younger. A few years ago she learned to play the trumpet and entertained us at our Christmas party. Up until very recently she was taking piano lessons. I had piano lessons when I was in high school and never did learn to play very well.

Dorothy really loves to bake. She makes the best raisin bread you can imagine. Whenever she brought bread or rolls to one of our parties we all made sure we got them before they disappeared. I don't know what she did that made her bread so good, but she must have had a magic touch with yeast dough; and we were fortunate enough to reap the benefit.

We wanted to give her something as a going away

present, so we all made squares-some knitted, some crocheted, and some fabric-and Amy and Susan Hottle sewed it together and brought it to her a few days before this writing. We were hoping to have a little party for Dorothy before she left us, but there wasn't a time when we could all get together. Anyway she'll have a lovely, soft afghan to remember us by. We all want to wish Dorothy every good thing for many more years.



A repeat of this pattern is on her pillow now.

by Amy Gibbons



Trumpet made by Dorothy for Jack

Dorothy is certainly something. She has said that her move to Virginia will be "a new adventure." She is working hard at her physical therapy and has really progressed. Dorothy has friends all over, including the many lace teachers who have stayed at her house, enjoying her thoughtful hospitality.

Everyone knew that Dorothy went dancing on Monday nights until the wee hours of the morning, kept her house neat as a pin, kept the weeds out of her yard, took trumpet lessons and piano lessons with Jack, played both the organ and the button box, went to nursing homes with a combo, and really was hardly ever home. No wonder she is so healthy at 93!

Pittsburgh Lace Group



Dorothy Off on another Adventure
(Picture taken October 2009 by Susan Hottle)

Membership Lists available

Members may receive a copy of the membership list by sending a S.A.S.E. to Gretchen Baudoux,
4704 Bert Drive Monroeville, PA 15146 or e-mail gretchenbaudoux@comcast.net

Debby Beever is Coming - SAVE THE DATE - the first weekend in November!!