



West Lancashire Lacemakers Newsletter

Issue No. 148

May 2020



***Lace from Bobbin Lace Makers - Facebook.
Made by Kevin Rodriguez. Design by Mika Toyoda***

E&OE

Reg. Charity 1002673

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2020

Coronavirus – Important information about meetings and courses

Due to the current health situation our venue at Moor Lane Church is currently closed. With regret this means that West Lancashire Lacemakers will not be holding any meetings or courses until further notice. The AGM that was due to take place on the third Monday in April has been deferred. As soon as the hall is open again we will notify all members about meetings and courses resuming and a new date for the AGM.

Please look out for monthly emails from Joan White which will update you on courses, meetings and any other news. Those of our members who do not use email will get a phone update from a committee member.

We wish all our members well during this time and hope you stay safe and have the opportunity to make lace

Saturdays 10.00am – 4.00pm; Mondays, 7.00pm –9.30pm

Month	Monday meeting (Crosby)	Workshop	Events
January	20 th	25 th	
February	17 th	-	14 th – 16 th Garstang
March	16 th	7 th	
April	20 th	4 th	AGM – 20 th April
May	18 th	2 nd	
June	15 th	6 th	
July	20 th	-	
August	-	-	15 th - Formby
September	21 st	5 th	
October	19 th	3 rd	23 rd – 25 th - Garstang
November	16 th	-	Catterns – 28 th Formby

If you know of someone who would like to come to a meeting to 'have a go' please let one of the committee know so that they can make sure there is a practice pillow, pattern and bobbins wound ready.

Venues

Moor Lane Methodist Church
Crosby
Liverpool
L23 2UH

Formby Methodist Church
Elbow Lane
Formby
L37 4AF

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WEST LANCASHIRE LACEMAKERS

- To educate the public in the craft of lacemaking, it's history and usage.
- The promotion and improvement of a high standard in the design and making of lace.
- The presentation of fine craftsmanship in lacemaking.

Garstang Residential Workshops

We have again booked the Crofters Hotel. If you are interested and haven't signed up for October 2020 please contact Anna. Sign-up sheets will be available at meetings. You need to pay a £50 non-refundable deposit at the time you add your name to the list. At the present time, we only have an approximate cost for the weekends as the final figure depends on how many people attend, but an estimate for a single room is £250 which includes tuition and full board at the hotel.

Update – At the time of producing this newsletter we are unable to predict if the October 2020 course will go ahead. The committee are monitoring the situation and will follow national guidelines. They will work with our tutor, Susan, our organiser, Anna, and the venue to make a decision over the coming weeks.
Dates for 2021 are now planned. Please see page 6.

COMMITTEE

President	Jenny Bernhardt	01704 530447	jennybernhardt@hotmail.co.uk
Chairman	Sylvia Wright	01257 463411	sylvia.jwright@btinternet.com
Vice Chairman	TBA		
Treasurer	Marilyn Walker	01257 462730	marilyn@georgewalker.org
Minutes Secretary	Jane Banks	01704 542815	janebanks@btopenworld.com
Membership Secretary	Joan White		Joanwhite1632@gmail.com (*Note new e-mail address**)
Meetings & Courses Secretary	Linda Hill	0151 924 0865	lindahill@blueyonder.co.uk
Librarian	Ann Gunstone	01704 872879	agunstone@hotmail.com
Keyholder/ Webmaster	Jane Banks	See above	See above

Jobs undertaken by members not on committee:

Sales Table	Val Hunt	Contact via a committee member
Raffles	Val Hunt	
Newsletter Editor *	Jane Banks	

*Our usual editor, Susan Roberts, was unable to edit this May Newsletter. Jane Banks has stepped in as a temporary measure.

Copy dates are 1st of January, May, September

Publication dates: Monday meetings in January, May and September



Please note that from January 2020 the committee are taking over responsibility for printing and distributing paper copies of this newsletter, Joan White will e-mail out the electronic version of the newsletter.

Have you visited our website recently?

www.westlancashirelacemakers.org.uk You no longer need a username or password.

Sales Table If anyone wishes to purchase Bookmark Sleeves, Sticky Backed Plastic and Pricking Card please contact a committee member and Val Hunt will arrange to bring them to a meeting. These are not stored in our cupboard at Moor Lane. Other items from the Sales Table can be brought out at meetings on request. Susan also has some beginners supplies which will be available at workshops.



Anyone requiring lace supplies prior to meetings resuming is advised to use one of the many on-line suppliers

Current Fees

Annual Membership	£12 for Lace Guild Members, £15 for non-Lace Guild members
Monday evening meetings	£3
Saturday meetings	£4
Workshops	£20 for members and £30 for non-members

Chairman's Notes

My previous notes at this time of year were usually about decisions taken at the AGM and news of upcoming events during the summer. Sadly, this year is very different due to the Corvid 19 emergency. We are not able to meet together and have no idea when the AGM will be able to take place.

The Liverpool Makefest due to take place at the end of June has been cancelled and I feel sure the Southport Model and Hobbies Fair will follow suit. The National Trust Properties are closed so no demonstrating at Rufford Old Hall for the foreseeable future.

At times like this it is good to look at the bright side and count our blessings. More time to make lace and look at those projects that have been on the back burner! Time to get in touch with long lost friends and find out how they are managing. Time to discover new ways of communicating with family. My youngest grandson rings me every day at 1pm to read to me. He thought I might be missing book club too so we have a talk about books we have read.

Even though we have to keep our distance I have probably chatted more to neighbours and acquaintances these last few weeks. Strangers say 'hello' now when out for a walk, even when walking into the road to keep their distance from you. Things certainly change but I have noticed more acts of kindness lately.

Your lace committee is in constant contact over WhatsApp and are making plans for the future. We are also busy making lace for the sales table for when we start demonstrating again.

I do hope you are all safe and well and keeping positive.

Take care.

Sylvia



Courses 2020

As mentioned previously, no courses will be taking place until further notice. If you have booked onto and paid for a course that has been cancelled, any fees paid will be transferred to the next available course that you can attend once we are back in business.

Please note that all Saturday courses will be held at Moor Lane Methodist Church in Crosby. Sign-up lists are available at meetings. **Cost for the day is now £20** for members and £30 for non-members. From January 2020 **the full amount will be payable at the time you add your name to the list.** There will be no refunds unless in very exceptional circumstances. Course fees need to be paid in advance and not on the day of the course.

Course lists will now close for bookings 7 days prior to the course to enable time for Susan to plan and prepare to ensure students get the best support on the day.

Numbers are limited so book in advance either at a meeting or ring Linda on 0151 924 0865 or email her at lindahill@blueyonder.co.uk

If there is a problem on the day Susan's mobile number is 07702 720780.

Residential Weekends

The 2020 dates are on page 2 of this newsletter. Dates for 2021 are 16th – 18th April and 22nd to 24th October. If you are interested in attending please contact Anna on 07761 334733, there will also be a list for names available at meetings. Non-refundable deposits are required at the time you add your name.

Balances will be due:

September meeting for the October date

March meeting for the April 2021 date

If you cancel after 1st March for the April date or after 1st September for October you will be liable to pay any outstanding balance. We suggest you take out adequate travel insurance in case you need to cancel.

If you can't get to a meeting, cheques payable to West Lancashire Lacemakers can be posted to the Treasurer, Marilyn Walker, her address is on your calendar. Prior to 1st March and 1st September, the final cost will be calculated and these figures will remain even if additional people come.

Sometimes it is possible to attend for the day on Saturday from 10am – 6pm. At present the cost for this will be £20 (lunch not included), there is no teaching between lunch and coffee on a Saturday (normally 1pm to 4pm)

Please note that participants are required to provide Susan, in advance of the weekend, a photocopy of the pattern to be worked together with any appropriate instructions.

Raffle Prizes

Do you have anything suitable for a raffle prize that you could donate? No tat please, perhaps you got something for Christmas/birthday that you won't use yourself but would make a nice prize; any donations to Val please.

Demonstrations - lace to sell needed

Our demonstrators would welcome any **snake bookmarks** or other small pieces of lace you are willing to part with to sell when they are out and about. All money raised goes to group funds. Marilyn and Sylvia report that the crochet necklaces are still selling very well!

Being in lockdown is a great time to make some small pieces of lace for sale. Why not try some of the designs in the 40th Anniversary pattern book? If you would like to have a go at the key fobs Jane Banks has a supply of the fob holders, both large and small. Contact details are on page 4.



Lace in the Time of Lockdown

I hope all our members and their family and friends are keeping safe and finding comfort in making lace during this challenging time. As you already know our venues are closed and meetings and courses cancelled while the country is in lockdown. At time of writing sadly we cannot begin to predict when we will be able to make lace together again.

I'm sure, like me, many of you will have been tackling all sorts of jobs at home and in the garden. We actually found out what is in our garden shed last week! The garden is looking beautiful and the paintbrushes have been out too – not to paint pictures I hasten to add! The lovely weather has been a bonus.



Your West Lancashire Lacemakers Committee have been communicating with each other and thinking about how we can best keep in touch with you all and how we can celebrate together once we are able. We have sadly made the decision to cancel Catterns for 2020. I know it is sometime off but our planning is usually well under way at this time of year as we need to book speakers and plan activities. As an alternative we are suggesting a party/celebration event at some point in the future to which we could bring family and friends. We would love to hear from all our members for ideas of how you would like your celebration event to look. Please contact any committee member with suggestions. Our contact details are in the

newsletters.

In the meantime we have laid down our lockdown challenge to you all. We had already decided some months back that our Catterns theme for 2020 would be 'Rainbow'. This seems very fitting as Rainbows have become a real symbol of hope over recent weeks. Please put your creative heads on and join the challenge to make a rainbow themed piece of lace. Not necessarily in the shape of a rainbow but use your imagination with beautiful bright rainbow colours. The entries will be judged at our celebration event and is open to all members. There will also be a competition for newcomers and will be any piece of lace you have made in the last year – newcomers are anyone who joined West Lancashire Lacemakers in the last 3 years.

Finally, if you have been making lace, or anything else for that matter be it knitting, embroidery, crochet, bead work etc, please send any photos to secretary@westlancashirelacemakers.org.uk so we can include them in the newsletter and on the website. In the next week or so I am hoping to develop a section of the website for 'Lace (and other crafts) in the Time of Lockdown'.



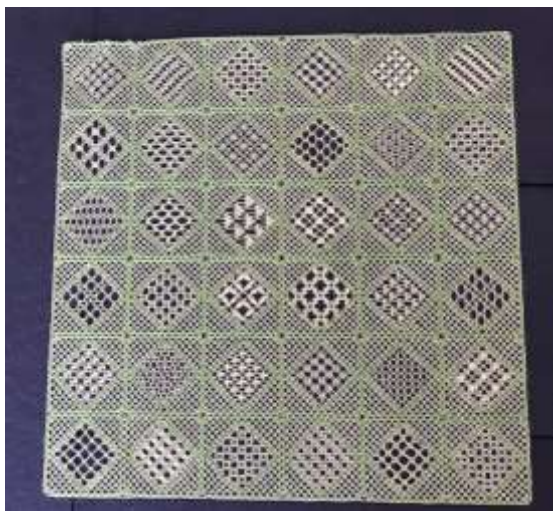
In the meantime please see below some lovely work that has been completed since March. And don't forget, once we are back in business we look forward to demonstrating our craft at various venues and events. We welcome any pieces of lace that can be sold for club funds such as bookmarks, Christmas decorations and key fobs. If you want ideas please look at the 40th Anniversary pattern book for inspiration.



Di Hannay – Sampler



Linda Hill – Cardigan



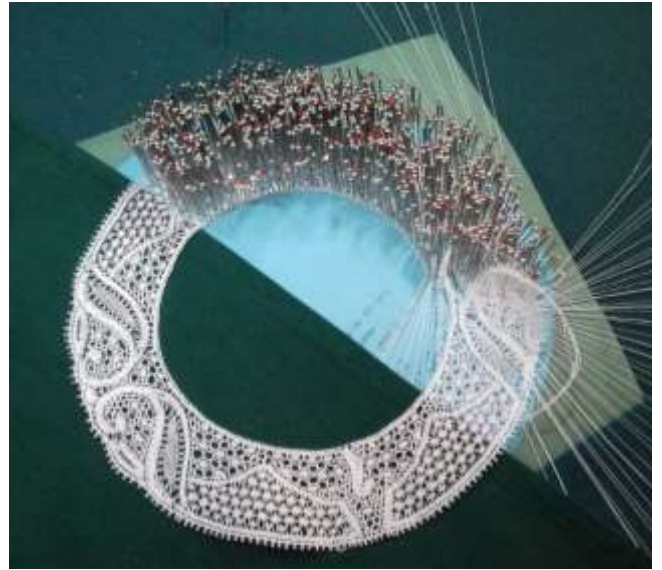
Jane Banks – Lace Sampler



Sylvia Wright – Bucks Point Jewelry box cover insert



Linda Hill – Button bands for care workers to protect ears from masks



Ann Gunstone – Bruges mat



Linda Hill – Wall Hanging



Linda Hill – Key Fob



Ann Gunstone – Hot water bottle covers for
Charity shop



Linda Hill – Key fob

Keep safe and happy crafting

Jane Banks

News from the archives

I hope you enjoy this new regular feature of West Lancashire Lacemakers newsletter. Each month there will be a review of a previous newsletter. As we are currently up to issue number 148 we have plenty of back issues to look at. And of course we are starting with Newsletter No. 1. Sections in italics are transcribed direct from the original. Issue number 1 of West Lancashire Lacemakers was published in Spring 1980 and was headlined '*A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever*'. From the articles and review you will see what a busy club this was with so many activities taking place related to Lacemaking.

Inception. November 21st 1979 was the day of birth of the West Lancashire Lacemakers. Fifteen ladies met at the home of Mrs. Pamela Pinch and decided to have a go. Since then our membership has increased to 46, making all kinds of bobbin lace – Torchon, Bucks, Beds, Honiton – you name it. Our aim is to further the interest in and keep alive the craft of lace-making, bobbin making and the preservation of lacemaking equipment through collections, lace days, exhibitions, etc. And to encourage our families and friends to do likewise. This last is so important. There is nothing quite so satisfying as making lace yourself, knowing that you are keeping alive an ancient craft and giving yourself and your family a work of love and beauty to be an heirloom. Passing on your interest, enthusiasm and skill is always worthwhile in any field, but especially so with the satisfaction of knowing you are sustaining a part of our treasure heritage.

Meetings were held on Monday evenings at Crosby Library and Thursday afternoons at Formby Library. Individual contribution was 30 pence per meeting to cover room costs and included a drink and biscuit. Membership of the Lace Guild was encouraged at £4 per year and they produced two magazines per year. Only members of the Lace Guild

could vote at the West Lancashire Lacemakers AGM. Advance notice of the first AGM for West Lancashire Lacemakers was given as Monday 22nd September 1980. The groups first Teach-In was planned for Saturday 10th May at Crosby Civic Centre. The tutor for the day was Mr. Andrew Johnson, assisted by Dora Friar.

Profile on Andrew Johnson. Although only 23 years old, Andrew has a wealth of training and experience behind him. He started lacemaking at the tender age of 10 and quickly progressed from Torchon to Honiton and beyond. His tuition at the West Surrey College of Art and Design will gain him his B.A. in Textiles with an additional course in lace, both bobbin and needle-point, which he plans to teach. Prizes have already come his way with his lace-making and no doubt we will be hearing a great deal about Andrew in the future. We are very fortunate in having him for our Tutor at the forthcoming Teach-In and look forward to a rewarding day.

Notice and a booking form was also given of the forthcoming 'Blackpool Weekend' a 'bargain weekend of lacemaking and tuition'. In addition, a Lace Day was planned at the Arts Centre, Lord Street for Saturday 18th October – 'This is a day when we have the public in and exhibit all our own work, together with antique pieces on loan from some of our members.' Members were encouraged to make lace to sell for club funds. 'A dealer will set up a stall selling bobbins and various supplies with a good range to show'.

West Lancashire Lacemakers shop was operational at this time with 'quite an extensive stock of lacemaking and lace mounting requisites'. The shop also offered an ordering system for anything not stocked - I guess this was very useful in the days before internet shopping! Prickings and patterns were available via Pamela Pinch who was establishing a catalogue to enable a small library to be built up. Commemorative bobbins were also offered to order via the family of two members.

Ever wondered where the design for the West Lancashire Lacemakers logo and letter head came from? Read on below: -

Design Heading. We've got a beauty from Mrs. Barbara Higham, the winner of our competition. Her prize is a ticket for our lace Teach-in. We're hoping somebody will copy the design in bobbin lace – any volunteers? Now we have an official heading for our official correspondence of which we can be proud.'

I was really interested to read the article below about the Botanic Gardens lace collection. This museum, sadly no longer open, has always been very local to me. I wonder if any of our longer-standing members know what happened to this lace collection?

Botanic Museum. A whispered hint of a hidden store of lace at the Southport Botanic Gardens Museum in Churchtown led to the keeper, Mr. Ian Morrison, asking us to sort, catalogue and display a fine collection of old and modern lace hitherto unseen by the general public. Delighted to help, members of the committee made themselves available in the Local History room on a succession of Mondays until the marathon task was completed. The result is a most attractive display of Honiton lace in the entrance hall and a case of other laces in the Victoria room. This latter case has very kindly been given to the West Lancashire Lacemakers for their own use for as long as they wish. Our grateful thanks go to Mr. Morrison for this opportunity to show samples of our own work at some later date. Original article written by Pam Pinch.

There was a lovely article about an '*Excursion to Manchester*' when 24 members went on a coach to the Polytechnic Textiles Department to see the Elena Holeczyova exhibition organized by the Lace Guild. The newsletter finished with a call for volunteers to support the work of the group and for articles for the next newsletter – no change there!

I hope you have found this foray into the archives enjoyable. I look forward to reviewing another newsletter for you next time. Jane Banks

Postscript

I was so interested to read the article about Andrew Johnson and wondered if he was still making lace. After an internet search he was found and this is what he sent as an update: -

After college I was Briggs Fellow based at Gawthorpe Hall lecturing on the Embroidery collection also spent time drooling over the lace in the days when I could just wander into the store and pull stuff out as I wished. After that year I moved back to my home of Kent and taught in Adult education for several years teaching Lace, weaving and spinning and knotting and even the City and Guilds Textile course.

During these years I was on the committee of the Lace Guild but when I was head hunted, thanks to Doreen Wright, to go out to St Helena as Handicraft Adviser to the Island. I stopped being an active member. I came home with a sample folio of their work which unfortunately once off the Island was impossible to sell as they were competing against the far east and far east wages.

I then moved to Northern Ireland and basically stopped making lace as weaving and interior design (making curtains) took over until I was accepted to go to Theological College in Dublin. I came to Wales on exchange from college and met my future wife and moved to Penarth on the outskirts of Cardiff then after marriage and completing my curacy in 1999 we moved to West Wales where we still are.

I am a full-time priest but still cannot live without making things so I occasionally get to do some lace but mostly I spin and weave. At the moment, while in lockdown, I am working on an Altar frontal for one of our local churches.

I feel very grateful to lace as it has taken me round a fair bit of the world having been asked to teach in America four times and the stay in St Helena involved traveling through South Africa meeting lace makers and a trip to Paris.

I was very fortunate to be able to find Andrew and delighted with this update from him. I can't promise the same next time but you never know.

Jane Banks

Dorset Buttons

I haven't been a lace maker long but have always dabbled in crafts involving threads and usually some sort of needle(s). I nearly always have knitting on the go alongside my lace and especially now my next grandchild is on the way later this year! In the past I have also dabbled in machine sewing (though not made anything to wear for a good few years), cross stitch, tapestry and crochet (the latter not very successfully). With grown up children moving out over recent years I was, at long last, delighted to develop a Craft Room with all my crafting 'stuff' in one place. Surprisingly retirement hasn't really brought me as much time as I thought to craft – I wonder if a grandchild has anything to do with that! Or maybe I just haven't spent enough time at home!

Last autumn my husband and I planned a wonderful trip to the USA/New England and Canada. It was a touring holiday so, as well as Transatlantic flights, we knew there would be a considerable time spent on a coach on some days. Although I like reading there is a limit to how much you can do and I also don't read well on buses. Everyone assured me that the film choice on the planes would be excellent – all well and good but I never sit and watch a film without my hands being busy! So, the challenge was to find a craft I could do on a plane or a bus, was small enough to go in hand luggage, was light enough to carry round all the time, and required no sharp tools!

Enter Dorset Buttons! A couple of years ago I was given the gift of a subscription to 'Landscape' Magazine. It is a lovely magazine and includes a variety of seasonal topics wildlife, flowers, places to visit, recipes and always an article on a craft. If you like a high quality and relaxing magazine over your morning coffee I highly recommend it www.landscapemagazine.co.uk. I remembered reading a fascinating article in Spring 2018 about Dorset Button maker Anna McDowell and it lodged in my mind as something I'd really like to try. With the forthcoming holiday I decided to do some research and see if I could give it a go.

First stop was some internet research. I soon found 'Henry's Buttons', the company run by Anna McDowell from the 'Landscape' article at www.henrysbuttons.co.uk. There is a huge amount of information on her website about the history of Dorset buttons and a gallery showing some of the delightful buttons she has made. I found a free 'How to make....' sheet to download at www.henrysbuttons.co.uk/worksheets-and-tutorials and treated myself to a starter kit. I packed this along with my handy travel thread cutter, a children's plastic bodkin and some additional threads/wools and rings (bangles) into a small 4" x 3" purse and off I went.

Making the buttons is a 4 stage process. Stage one is 'Casting' which is where you bind the ring using a blanket stitch. This is fairly straightforward to do and, depending on the size of the ring and thread thickness, is quite quick. Next is 'Slicking' where you push the ridge from the blanket stitch to the back of the ring so it isn't visible from the front. Next and what I find most challenging is 'Laying'. This is where the spokes of your button are made and secured. It is important to get this right for the look of the button and I find it challenging to get this centred correctly. The final and most enjoyable part is 'Rounding'. At this stage the thread is would round the spokes and a variety of different designs can be created.

Success has been hit and miss. Making the little buttons is a bit fiddly and I have done a couple on bangles. My favourite is the first one shown below with the daisy centre.

There are all sorts of designs you can do and its fascinating seeing what other people are doing.



Daisy design on a bangle



Variety of smaller buttons. Not perfect due to my centering issues! By altering how you lay spokes you can create other designs e.g. the snowflake at top left.



Using the snowflake design to create a Christmas decoration



Work in progress - this is at the early stages of 'Rounding'

I hope you have found this article of interest. While we are primarily a Lace making group I am aware that many members also participate in other crafts and activities which members may enjoy hearing about. If you would be willing to write a short article and add some pictures it would be wonderful to include them in future editions of the newsletter. Please contact any member of the committee with your ideas.

Jane Banks