

NEWSLETTER

December 2023

no. 164



From the Chair

This year has flown by and Christmas is here once again. As always I am unprepared.

Hopefully we have had our share of snow and having nearly been caught out on 2nd December on the A590 at Haverthwaite when it took me three and a half hours to do a 20 minute journey back to Heversham I have learned not to drive in snow again and if I do, to make sure I don't have my mother in the car!!

Being asked "can you see where you're going Donna??" Every three minutes is almost as tedious as "is that tatting" when demonstrating!! However, we made it and I thank my lucky stars I wasn't stuck in the car with her all night even though she thought it would be a good idea to stop until it got daylight!! I made the following day a duvet day. She rang me at 18:00 asking me to go to the shop for fizzy pop! Guess what she's having for Christmas!



As usual we will be having our Christmas Party on Saturday, 20th January, 2024. For those who are new or may have forgotten, we have a Jacobs Join for lunch. You may bring sweet or savoury food. We have a secret Santa and if you wish to take part, bring a wrapped up gift with a value of around £5.00 (do not put any names on the present). Each parcel is given a number and everyone takes a raffle ticket. Hopefully you will not draw your own ticket but if you do, shout up and we will work a little magic so everyone gets a surprise. If you don't wish to participate that's fine but please don't take a ticket or someone will not get a gift! Also, as it's party day we do not pay £1.00 when signing in.

Hope you all have a good Christmas and New Year and hopefully fit in some time for lace and craft work.

Donna

ps - A quick reminder: the date for the February meeting has had to be changed and will be held a week later on Saturday, 24th February.

National Events

Dates in 2024	Event & Venue
23 rd - 25 th February	"Unravel" - knitting, crochet, spinning, weaving Farnham Maltings, Surry
8 th - 10 th March	Craft Festival , Cheltenham - jewellery, ceramics, textiles, glass Cheltenham Town Hall, Gloucs.
14 th - 17 th March	"Sewing for Pleasure", "Fashion & Embroidery", "Creative Crafts Show" all at the NEC Birmingham
18 th -22 nd March	The Lace Guild Spring School Yarnfield Park, Stone, Staffordshire (see LG website)
21 st April	Beads Up North, Haydock Park Racecourse Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, WA12 0HQ
22 nd September	Beads Up North, Haydock Park Racecourse Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, WA12 0HQ

From the Editor

Dear Lace-making friends,

I was just looking through my notes for this newsletter, and realised I hadn't covered the Cartmel Show, or the Country Fest, in earlier editions... so apologies to our amazing demonstration team, and I hope the pictures in this edition make up for the delay.

With various government organisations now trying to draw a line under the 2020 - 2022 nightmare, I think we're all making good headway into some sort of "normal". I have seen members I was worried for, back at meetings, and a new sense of energy and purpose to our latest projects (or in my case, UnFinishedObjects). With my "Membership Secretary" hat on, I'm looking forward to seeing a few "wannabe lacemakers" peeping through our meeting door, or even the return of past members/lacemakers, this next year. Who knows.

Just to do a wee bit more nagging: I would LOVE to get a book review, a lacemaking tale, or hear of tips and tricks that "old hands" use and do. PLEASE drop me a line, with something I can include in the newsletter. Without input, I'll have no output... and SLL no newsletter!!

Happy lace-making until next time, Ali O

Programme 2023

Date

Meeting

Continue/finish Christmas Lace with Janice

16th December



20th January

New Year Party (Jacob's Join) plus optional Secret Santa

24th February

Tatting with Helen

16th March

Make lace & sales table

20th April

Make lace & sales table

27th - 28th April

Spring Lace Weekend with Frances Bell

18th May

Make lace & sales table

15th June

Make lace & sales table

20th July

Silk yarn dyeing with Ali (silk yarn supplied)

17th August

Make lace & sales table

21st - 22nd September

Autumn Lace Weekend with Frances Bell

28th September

Make lace & sales table

19th October

Idrija Lace with Shirley

16th November

AGM plus activity TBA

21st Decemebr

Make lace & sales table

Messages & Notices

Marjorie and Pat Hanson send warm Christmas Greetings to all our Friends.
Instead of cards and postage we will be donating to Charity.

Christmas Carols... a (tongue-in-cheek) update:

The Rocking Carol
Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;
We will lend a coat of fur,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you.

Fur is no longer appropriate wear for small infants, both due to risk of allergy to animal fur, and for ethical reasons. Therefore faux fur, a nice cellular blanket or perhaps microfleece material should be considered a suitable alternative. Please note, only persons who have been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check and have enhanced clearance will be permitted to rock baby Jesus. Persons must carry their CRB disclosure with them at all times and be prepared to provide three forms of identification before rocking commences.

Jingle Bells
Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way

A risk-assessment must be submitted before an open sleigh is considered safe for members of the public to travel on. The risk assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly if passengers are of large proportions. Please note, permission must be gained from landowners before entering fields. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we would request that laughter is moderate and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches health and safety regulations to insist that shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements being provided, therefore benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available. Shepherds have also requested that due to the inclement weather conditions at this time of year, they should watch their flocks via CCTV cameras from centrally heated shepherd observation huts.

Please note, The Angel of the Lord is reminded that before shining his/her glory all around, she/he must ascertain that all shepherds have been issued with glasses capable of filtering out the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and the overwhelming effects of Glory.

Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer
Had a very shiny nose.
And if you ever saw him
You would even say it glows

You are advised that under the Equal Opportunities for All Policy, it is inappropriate for persons to make comment with regard to the ruddiness of any part of Mr. Reindeer. Further to this, exclusion of Mr Reindeer from the Reindeer Games will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of this offence. A full investigation will be implemented and sanctions - including suspension on full pay - will be considered whilst this investigation takes place.

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards with your precious load

The RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry; also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four-hour plodding period. Please note that due to the increased risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear face masks to prevent inhalation of any airborne particles. The donkey has expressed his discomfort at being labelled 'little' and would prefer just to be simply referred to as Mr Donkey. To comment upon his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star.

Whilst the gift of gold is still considered acceptable - as it may be redeemed at a later date through such organisations as 'Cash for Gold' etc, - gifts of frankincense and myrrh are not appropriate due to the potential risk of oils and fragrances causing allergic reactions. A suggested gift alternative would be to make a donation to a worthy cause in the recipients name or perhaps give a gift voucher.

We would not advise that the traversing kings rely on navigation by stars in order to reach their destinations and suggest the use of RAC Routefinder or satellite navigation, which will provide the quickest route and advice regarding fuel consumption. Please note as per the guidelines from the RSPCA for Mr Donkey, the camels carrying the three kings of Orient will require regular food and rest breaks. Facemasks for the three kings are also advisable due to the likelihood of dust from the camels' feet.

Away in a manger
No crib for a bed

This is definitely one for Social Services!

(With thanks to Marjorie)

C K-C has made a series of daffodils



The daffodils are out of Joyce Willmot's flower book. Patterns are shrunk to make them small for buttonholes. The centres of the daffodils are different.



The Torchon Tug

The Torchon Tug is an awesome force, to keep all those passives in line. If they start in to waiver all over the place, just give them a tug and they're fine.

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!

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.

'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!

Country Fest - 3rd & 4th June
Our usual beautiful display of eye-catching lace... and lace-makers:



...and, of course, winners!
Congratulations again, Clarissa



Cartmel Show - 2nd August

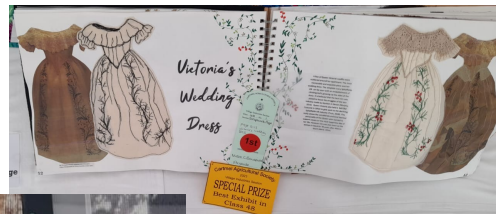
About as wet as it could get! Did it dampen the spirits of our intrepid team? Of course not!

Karen Bousfield



We are very proud of all our SLL entries - and prizes:

Clarissa Bousfield



Christine K-C



Rachel B

Frances Atkinson



A Gingerbread recipe that never fails!

Having brought a box of mini-gingerbread biscuits to the last meeting, I was asked for the recipe. I have been making these for a few years now, from "Gingerbread Wonderland" by Mima Sinclair (2015) - varying ingredients for vegan friends, and less dark for youngsters!

Ingredients

140g of 50:50 treacle and honey (more treacle, less honey, if you like darker gingerbread), or treacle and syrup for vegans.

200g soft brown sugar

200g butter ("plant butter" for vegans)

zest of 1 orange/lemon

4tsp ground gingerbread

2tsp ground cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground nutmeg

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cloves

1tsp bicarbonate of soda (NOT baking powder)

500g plain flour

1 medium free range egg (or 1tsp egg substitute, made up, for vegans)

Method

1. Put treacle, honey (or syrup), brown sugar, butter (or vegan "butter"), zest and spices in a pan twice as large as you'd normally need. Put over a medium heat, stirring until the sugar has melted.

2. Raise the temperature until it is **just** boiling. Turn off the heat and stir in the bicarbonate of soda. The mixture will froth up immediately - keep stirring vigorously until the froth starts to subside. Put to cool.

3. Place the flour in a mixing bowl, with the egg; add the cooled syrup mixture, beating well until the result is a putty-soft lump of dough.

4. Line a number of baking trays with silicone-paper, and pre-heat the oven to 180°C, fan-assisted 160°C, gas mark 4.

5. Break the lump into approximate quarters; roll a quarter out to 3mm thickness, and cut out shapes of your choice. Lay out the gingerbread on the trays with spaces between, to avoid spreading and sticking together. Bake until slightly browned, leave on tray to cool, before transferring to cooling trays.



Unbeatable mince-pies

There is also a trick to pastry-making, when making award-winning mince-pies:

For a 750g mix (reduce amounts as long as flour to fat is 2:1), you need...

250g self-raising flour

250g plain flour

125g butter

125g vegetable fat (eg Flora)

zest and juice of 1 orange

Line two bun-tins with cake cases. Mix everything (bar the juice) as usual, to "bread-crumbs" finally binding the pastry dough with the orange juice.

Break off a lump of dough, roll out, and cut approximately 2doz large rounds, plus 2doz slightly smaller, combining remnants from one cutting with the fresh dough for the next. Line each bun case with a pastry circle, load with mince-meat and top with the smaller circle, before baking.

Perfect mince-pies!!

Lace-makers Blessing

May your pins never bend
Nor your thread ever break
May your shoulders never tense
Nor your eyes ever ache

May your seat be so soft
And your pillow at good height
May your fingers remain nimble
And your light always bright

The last day for items for the 'March 2024' Newsletter is:
(Saturday) 2nd March 2024
Please email to Ali Ongley at:
aongley@yahoo.co.uk



"Lacemaker III" by N Maes

Committee Members 2022

Karen Clark Refreshments
Yvonne Dobson Demonstrations Co-ordinator
Donna Earl Chairman
Jayne Lindley Hon. Treasurer
Ali Ongley Newsletter/Membership secretary
Heather Onions Hon. Secretary
Claire Pearson
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