

# Don't Lace Threads

News of the Pittsburgh Lace

Group

Web site ~ <http://pittsburghlace.8m.com>

Fall 2006

## President's Message

I hope everyone had a wonderful relaxing summer. Bob and I spent the last week getting Robert and Patrick ready to go back to IUP. They both have apartments this year. I really would prefer they stay on campus, but they are growing up - time to let go even more this year. Victoria started eighth grade on Monday. The house is quiet; I hope that means time to make more lace.

My family had a reunion/60th birthday party for my oldest sister in Washington D.C. After the reunion I was able to visit G-Street Fabrics in Virginia. What a terrific quilt store. I bought fabric to make a Dogwood quilt. Someday soon I hope to start this beautiful hand appliqué quilt. I was also lucky enough to visit Keepsake Quilting and Patternworks in New Hampshire. I would love visit again when I have more money- what great store. Right now I have so many projects started; I must concentrate on finishing at least one before beginning another.

I would like to finish my Cantu piece from Debbie Beaver's workshop before Robin comes to teach Rosalibre in the fall. Robin is a great person and a wonderful teacher. Please leave the weekend of October 20-22 open for her workshop. I know this will be a fun filled weekend full of laughter and learning. Our Lace Group continues to thrive. We have two new members coming every Thursday night. They are doing very well. I cannot wait to see their snake and rainbow. Welcome to the Pittsburgh Lace Group. I love having you in our group. Keep up the wonderful work!

Theresa Troyan

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Reminder: Our Treasurer is now Gretchen Baudoux and all PLG checks should be sent to her at 4704 Bert Drive Monroeville, PA 15146 e-mail [gretchenbaudoux@adelphia.net](mailto:gretchenbaudoux@adelphia.net)

## Calendar of Future Events

Saturday, Sept 30 & Sunday, Oct. 1 11:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.-Demonstration at Phipps Conservatory

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

Friday, Oct. 20th, 6:00 – 9:30 P.M. I.O.L.I. slide show **Development of Lace** at Churchill Borough Building

Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 21-22, 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. **Rosalibre Workshop** at Churchill Borough Building

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

Thursday, Nov. 23 no class scheduled *Happy Thanksgiving*

**Sunday, Nov. 26 Newsletter Deadline.** To enable pick up of newsletter December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Sunday, December 3, 1:00 P.M. Demonstrate at The Nationality Rooms (tentative- information Dewi Wong)

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

# Pittsburgh Lace Group

## *Recent Events*

### *Summer Camp* by Gretchen Baudoux

Our third annual Summer Camp was all about knitting those wonderful beaded pendant bags. Theresa has made many of them and she was a great teacher. She brought some of her finished bags, each one a beauty, to show us and inspire us. We marveled at the ones that she had to count and place three colors of beads in order, so that they would fall into place in solid colored stripes.

We met Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup> through Thursday July 27<sup>th</sup>. It was a learning experience to place the hanks of tiny beads onto the #8 perle cotton, then knitting with the thread on 0000 steel knitting needles, counting stitches and increasing the number of beads to make the pattern. Esther was so proud when she finished fivies. Theresa helped as we went along, giving instructions, correcting mistakes, untangling knots, and pulling the beads down the thread.

As always, with our group, just being together was half the fun. The bag ladies were Theresa, Amy, Barb, Dewi, Gretchen, Esther and Susanne from PLG, and Shirley Spindle and Dolores Koster from Grace Reformed Church. We have been pleased to be joined on Thursday nights since camp by both Shirley and Delores. It also should be noted that Amy did finish her bag during camp, but she had already had experience knitting with fine thread and had done innumerable short rows in her Steeler scarf. There should be lots of little bags for gifts this Christmas.



### *Quilt Show at C.C.A.C.* by Suzanne Potter & Amy Gibbons

On July 28, 29, 30, members of the PLG demonstrated the Quilt Company East show in Monroeville. Jeri Wiederkehr from Five Rivers Lace Guild asked us to fill in for her. We were happy to do it and had an interesting time. There were at least 50 quilts ranging in style from the traditional to the modern. Most were machine quilted, but three were done by hand. Also present were many vendors. All of us enjoyed browsing through the Bead Bazaar booth, especially. Other interesting booths included the Ford City Quilt Shop with its international fabrics and The Quilted Heart from Grindstone with its embroidery embellished quilted pieces. The latter was a special favorite of Theresa and mine.

This was an ideal venue for us, since it was close to our meeting site and attracted craft type people. It was nice to demonstrate with people who spoke a similar language to ours. They have fabric stashes, while we

have thread stashes. A number of people worked on the try-it pillow and lots of flyers for the group and for our upcoming slide show were handed out.

Two ladies have joined the lace group and are becoming a welcome part of the Thursday night Group. Marlene Ayers is a carpenter, who works in Monroeville and lives in Washington, PA. She stays after work a couple of times a month. Joanne Frey lives much closer and therefore comes more often. We are glad they have joined us.

## Pittsburgh Lace Group

### *Future Events*

#### *Phipps ~ Sept. 30 & Oct. 1 ~ International Lace Making Day*

This year we are combining the annual celebration of International Lace Making Day (October 1st). with our visit to Phipps Conservatory. It is one of the most pleasant places to make lace. The public is always interested and interesting. If you have time to join us either day, please be sure to bring your pillow and some pretties to share, for a pleasant way to celebrate lacemaker's special day. We will be there from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. If you haven't been to Phipps since it has been remodeled, you will be surprised at how nice it is. If you can't join us at Phipps, please take a couple of minutes to sit down and make some lace Sunday, knowing that around the world other lacemakers are doing the same thing.

#### *The Development of Lace*

Friday October 20<sup>th</sup> the Pittsburgh Lace Group is fortunate to be able to present a slide show from I.O.L.I. Robin Panza will be with us to narrate the show entitled *The Development of Lace*. Tracy Jackson has agreed to bring wonderful things for us to buy from her store, *The Lacemaker* and we should all have a good time. Since it is in October Halloween Treats should be the order of the evening, and contributions are welcome. This subject is of interest to a broad range of people, so be sure to invite your friends, any pseudo-experts that you know, and even your favorite local antique dealers. Anyone interested in vending at this event contact our president Theresa Troyan.

#### *Rosalibre Workshop Oct. 21-22 with Robin Panza*

Robin will be teaching the Rosalibre techniques found in Cathleen Belleville's book, [Introducing Rosalibre Bobbin Lace](#). This lace uses few pairs and can be worked in many colors. Robin recommends getting a copy of the book because the diagrams in it are excellent and it would be a useful addition to your personal library. If you wish to preview a copy there is one in the Lace Group's Library. The book is available from Holly Van Sciver for \$29.95. and can be ordered by e-mail at [vsblace@twcny.rr.com](mailto:vsblace@twcny.rr.com) or by telephone at (607)277-0498. During the workshop examples of flower, leaf, stem, and bug may be completed in class. A specific project will not be made, but the techniques to make a project will be taught. Robin is an excellent teacher and we are glad to have our friend back with tales of her life on the West Coast. Registration for the workshop is on the last page of this newsletter.

#### *Nationality Rooms*

Don't forget that we have been invited to demonstrate at the Nationality Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 12 to 4:00. 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 be in the Croghan Schenley Room. Come and help us put up our Christmas tree and see our nativity, It is a fun Sunday afternoon. (Please remember no food is allowed in the room.)

## *Pittsburgh Lace Group*

### *Twenty Five Years Ago*

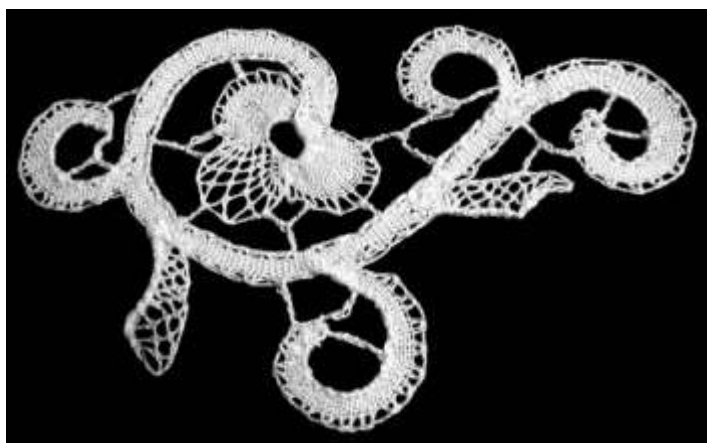
To our amazement we are still here twenty-five years later. It seems like only yesterday, I was introduced to Louise Richards, Dorothy Kokal, Virginia Supplee, Louise Chuha and Joanie Trimble. I will be including excerpts from the old newsletters on the anniversary of their publication. They contained patterns and articles about lacemaking techniques.

Our current officers have formed a committee to sort out the details of a celebration of this achievement. If you have any suggestions, or want to serve on the committee, please contact one of them. A commemorative bobbin is planned as well as a very special party. Watch for details in the next newsletter.

### *Pillows Available Again*

The lace group again has a supply of One and Only lace pillows from Snowgoose. Pictures of these pillows may be seen at [www.snowgoose.cc](http://www.snowgoose.cc) It is a 20" shaped 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 \$33.05 should be made to the Pittsburgh Lace Group.

### *Completed Projects*



Joan Trimble's Cantu from Debby Beaver's class

## *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!

## *Pittsburgh Lace Group*

### *Thread Stuff* by Robin Panza

I recently attended a lecture on threads by Bob Purcell of Superior Threads. The lecture was at a quilt show and was therefore geared to machine sewing and machine embroidery, but a lot of what he talked about was very useful information. One of the first things he pointed out is that most people in his audience had hundreds or thousands of dollars invested in one or more sewing machines, so how can they justify trying to save a dollar or two on cheap thread? We don't have fancy machines, but we're doing heirloom work, and many of us have hundreds of dollars invested in equipment, so the same thing goes for lacemakers. Thread is cheap, even if you're buying the expensive stuff. Here is some of what I learned of use to lacemakers.

#### **Thread Structure**

**Spun thread:** relatively short staple fibers, such as cotton from the boll, are spun into a single ply, which may be twisted with other plies to make a thicker thread. There may be tiny bits associated with the finished thread, which is lint. Also, the beginnings and ends of each staple fiber are not fully caught up in the spinning, so the thread is a bit fuzzy unless further treated.

**Filament thread:** when the thread is made from one or more plies, but each ply is a single, extremely long fiber. Silk from a cocoon, or synthetic fibers such as polyester, rayon, and nylon, can be made into filament threads. [Silk is usually called reeled instead of filament.- RKP] Monofilament is where the thread composed of a single filament. Filament threads are smoother than spun threads and don't have lint.

**Core thread:** a spun (cotton or polyester) thread is wrapped around a cluster of polyester fibers (the core).

Synthetic thread is made when a liquid is squeezed through tiny holes and the stream hardens into fiber. The fibers can be short and spun into thread, or made into filament thread. Cotton and linen fibers are never long enough to make filament thread, although linen fibers can be a lot longer than cotton. Silk can be spun or reeled (filament).

#### **Thread Stuff- Fiber Characteristics**

This is continuing the information I learned from Bob Purcell of Superior Threads. Unfortunately, Bob didn't talk about linen or silk as they're not much used for machine work.

Cotton is fairly soft and flexible. It is strong and durable. The finish affects what cotton looks and feels like. Mercerizing is a liquid bath that swells the fibers. This strengthens the thread and allows dye to penetrate better, making it richer and more lustrous. Gassing is where the thread is passed through a flame to burn off the fuzzies. Glazing is coating the thread with wax or other material, then polishing the coating. The thread is shinier and very smooth, but also stiffer. The glaze can rub off- it can gum up machine needles but I don't know if lacemaking will affect the glaze.

Rayon is chemically related to cotton in that it is made from cellulose, but is a synthetic. Like all synthetics, it is made from a solution squeezed through small holes to solidify into filaments. It has a high sheen, like silk, and takes dye richly. However, not all rayon is colorfast. Rayon is soft like cotton and not as strong or durable as polyester. Polyester is a synthetic that comes in three forms. Spun poly is much

like cotton, but has less lint. Filament poly is lint-free. Trilobal poly is a kind of filament thread; the filament looks like a 3-leaf clover in cross section and is high-sheen like rayon or silk. Polyester is very strong and durable and can be made to look like the other kinds of threads. It is colorfast, retains its shape, and recovers from stretching.

Nylon, also called polyamide, is usually a filament thread. It has a low melting point so keep it away from irons. It also gets brittle and discolored with age.

Metallic threads are core threads and vary tremendously in quality. Good metallic thread has a nylon core, which is the strongest. Poorer quality threads have polyester or rayon cores. Bob was comparing his own company's thread, spiral-wound on topless spools, to the stuff that we're used to on those tall thin plastic spools. Quality thread uses rice paper in the construction which adds strength and softens the thread so it tangles less and is less springy. There's also a protective surface on good metallic thread, which protects the wrapping from abrasion. [This can be important if you ever have to retro-lace a metallic!-RKP] The way to recognize a quality metallic is to unwind a foot or two from the spool. Good thread will drape between the spool and your hand; cheap metallic will stay tightly-coiled, will kink if pulled, will go springy if released.

A little more about cotton: There are several varieties of cotton plants, which originally had different names and different characteristics. Egyptian, Pima, and Sea Island were once different critters that came from different places, but the names have been abused and confused. The Egyptian government has declared that all cotton grown in Egypt is Egyptian cotton and all cotton grown outside that country is not, regardless of what plant variety the fiber came from. Similarly, Pima cotton originally came from the US and the name can only be used by US cotton. Pima and Egyptian cottons used to be long-staple, but now come in all staple lengths. Short staple is up to 1-1/8 long. Long staple is 1-1/4 long. Extra-long staple is 1-3/8 to 2 long. Cheap cotton thread is made from short-staple cotton fibers. All sewing threads made from long-staple or extra-long (ELS) will say so on the spool. I do not know how to tell staple length on lacemaking cotton.

**To be continued in the next newsletter.**

### *Editor's notes*

I want to thank Robin for her kind contribution of the above article for our newsletter. She is so generous in her care for the lace group. My stash of goodies saved for future newsletters is now exhausted other than the remainder of this article. I continue to put the request for articles used by our former editor, Margot Barbour, as a link to our past, but my request is sincere.

Computer catastrophes happen periodically to lots of folks. Fortunately for the Lace Group it happened at the Gibbons house not while I was in the middle of getting the newsletter to press. There are only two things that make this catastrophe newsworthy to the Lace Group. My e-mail server is no longer AOL, so the Lace Group e-mail held on my account is no longer viable. The new e-mail address is Pgh\_Lace\_Group@comcast.net. I promise to check it at least weekly. My personal e-mail address has also changed to Gibbons214@comcast.net. Please take note. Also anytime you want to send an article for the newsletter, please use my personal e-mail address. If you send e-mail to either of the old AOL addresses, there will be no notification that the mail was not received.

**This space could be filled by pictures of your completed lace project or article.**

Our e-mail address is Pgh\_Lace\_Group@comcast.net

The **Pittsburgh Lace Group** Halloween Lace Weekend

Friday, October 19, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

~ **The Development of Lace** ~

a slide presentation from I.O.L.I.

shopping with *The Lacemaker* begins at 6:00 p.m.

Admission at the door is \$5.00 members and \$7.00 non-members

Refreshments will be provided (donations are welcome)

Saturday, October 21 & Sunday, October 22

**Rosalibre** taught by **Robin Panza**

(basic Torchon skills are needed for this class)

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

with a 45 minute break for a pot luck lunch and a 15 minute break in the afternoon

Cost for the workshop will be 65.00 for members and \$75.00 for non-members

**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 center front door.

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**Workshop Registration Form**

The workshop is limited to 12 participants, to be given priority, active members must register by Oct.1.  
Supply list will be sent with confirmation

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 (payment must be included to guarantee a spot) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Commemorative bobbins @ \$8.00 must be ordered by October 1<sup>st</sup> No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of dinner reservations for Saturday (not included in cost) \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_