

National Lacemaking Day

You may be an old hand at organizing lace events, or this may be the first time you plan to go out to meet the public with your lace. We hope you will find these notes and the publicity material helpful.

Lace Guild members are insured for events that they organise as a benefit of membership but, if you plan to organise an exhibition, please contact the office with details well in advance to ensure that cover is sufficient.

Venue

Choose a place where there will be plenty of people about – maybe a shopping centre, a library, museum or even a stately home. Wherever you plan to be, make your arrangements as far ahead as possible. Contact the manager of the venue and ensure you find out about the practical details and any conditions or restrictions as to what you can do.

Are tables and chairs provided?

What space is available for a display?

Is the light good?

What time can you arrive and when do you need to be out?

What are the car parking arrangements?

Are there toilets?

Can you get food and drink or do you need to take your own?

Publicity

If you are planning to get the local press involved try to send information about your event to a named individual (ring the enquiry desk at the paper). Offer a photo, or a photo opportunity, if possible.

Add to the posters details of when and where you will be demonstrating keep the information simple and don't be tempted to use lots of fancy type.

Displays

You may have room to put up a display. If so it is best to keep it simple, but try to show a variety of items and levels of skill. If you will be somewhere where there will be a lot of visitors you need to be very careful, particularly with small items any pieces which could be within reach should be pinned or stitched down, fine fishing line is useful to secure pictures.

A dark blue cloth which reaches to the floor looks good and is very useful as it provides a place to store packaging, bags etc.

Demonstrating

The prime reason is to talk to people and explain how lace is made, rather than to simply make lace; sit so that visitors can see what is being done, don't hide behind a table. Have one person standing to speak to visitors and talk to them about what you are doing or make sure you look up and engage their interest.

Have something on your pillow that does not require too much concentration - an edging you know well for example - as this will allow you to work and talk to your visitors at the same time. If several of you will be working together try to show different types of lace, or different items. Bobbin lace is an almost ideal demonstration craft, but if you or your companions can tat then it is a good idea to have a tatting shuttle handy for the inevitable person who insists that bobbin lace is tatting. Similarly a partworked piece of needle lace may be of great interest to an embroiderer.

If there is room a 'Have a go' pillow is always popular, but you may need to encourage your visitors to try. The Lace Guild has 'I made Lace' stickers which are popular with children (and some adults!). Remember to have extra bobbins ready in case you run out.

Information

Prepare flyers/posters with information about your local lace group and any classes you know of in the area.

The Lace Guild can provide contact details for visitors from further afield. The membership flyers and bookmarks both have the Guild's details.

Comfort

In September the temperature can vary widely so wear layers and comfortable shoes. if you are bringing a pillow stand and are not someone who sits elegantly with both legs to one side, you might consider wearing trousers or a skirt with sufficient material to hide your modesty. Put your feet on a box if necessary and don't forget to get up, stretch and move around every hour or so.

Most of all have fun and spread the lacemaking habit!