



# Poole Bobbin Lace Circle

NEWSLETTER 231

7 November 2020

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the November Newsletter, I would like to thank all those who have contributed. In this issue we have a new mystery object, a Cattern cake recipe to celebrate St Catherine's day on November 25th and there are some Christmas Lace patterns, just in case you are looking for a small project to occupy yourself now that the clocks have changed.

Finally the Committee would like to wish all PBLC members a Merry Christmas; we look forward to seeing you all in 2021.

*The Editor*

## PUZZLE CORNER FOR NOVEMBER

Thanks to Edith Cansdale who wrote to let me know that the mystery object from the last newsletter was, in fact, a KNOTTING SHUTTLE. When I first saw it I thought that it was for tatting but rather too chunky. Actually I hadn't had any success at tatting until I bought the knotting shuttle. I wound it with string and was able to get the thread to click. After that I was able to transfer the skill to finer thread although I have to say that tatting doesn't thrill me like bobbin lace does.

Knotting was very popular in the 1700s when ladies of quality (!) used to make vast quantities of knotted thread, which was then couched on to clothing or furnishings for embellishment. The equipment needed was compact and kept in a little drawstring bag suspended from the wrist. Many ladies had jewelled knotting shuttles made and would often knot during afternoon gatherings. The occupation was perfect for showing off dainty hands (no callouses or rough skin from housework). The quality of the knotting shuttle also indicated the wealth of the lady and her husband. There are many paintings showing knotting, and many beautiful examples of shuttles in museums and on the internet.



**Portrait of Madame Dange, 1753  
Oil on Canvas, location: Pushkin  
Museum, Moscow**



**Mystery Object for November**

This month's mystery object:

The conical ends are hollow, well turned from box wood and each measuring two and a half inches long. They are joined by some fancy, stretchy fabric. What could they be used for?

*Liz Pass*

## TUESDAY GROUP

This was our first Tuesday morning since the lockdown restrictions were lifted. It was attended by 12 lace makers eager to not only make lace but also to have a chat and catch up with friends after not seeing each other for a few months. I am not sure how much lace was produced as the chatter was certainly heard above the click of bobbins. I write this just after the second Tuesday meeting which I was unable to attend and just as the government had announced a further limitation on indoor meetings and, I believe outdoor meetings, starting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> of September. We had a good time as the weather helped and a few took the advantage of having a break outside with tea/coffee brought in by themselves.



*Phil Henley*

## **CARPACCIO**

A lover of good food would probably associate the word carpaccio with Beef Carpaccio, a dish of raw slices of beef with Dijon mustard sauce, devised in 1970 by Giuseppe Cipriano the owner of Harry's Bar in Venice. The dish was so called because the colour of the beef resembles the colour of paint that features so predominately in the paintings of Carpaccio. It is thought that Vittore Carpaccio was born in 1465 in Venetian territory. His paintings are full of detail of mediaeval life but for a lacemaker there is one painting of particular interest 'The Vision of Saint Augustine' (otherwise known as St Augustine in His Study). Protruding from a vase, on a shelf above a chair, is the unmistakable head of a lace bobbin. Carpaccio took five years (1502 to 1507) to complete this painting. Could this be one of the earliest pieces of evidence of bobbin lacemaking?

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Augustine\\_in\\_His\\_Study\\_\(Carpaccio\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine_in_His_Study_(Carpaccio))

*Jean Organ*

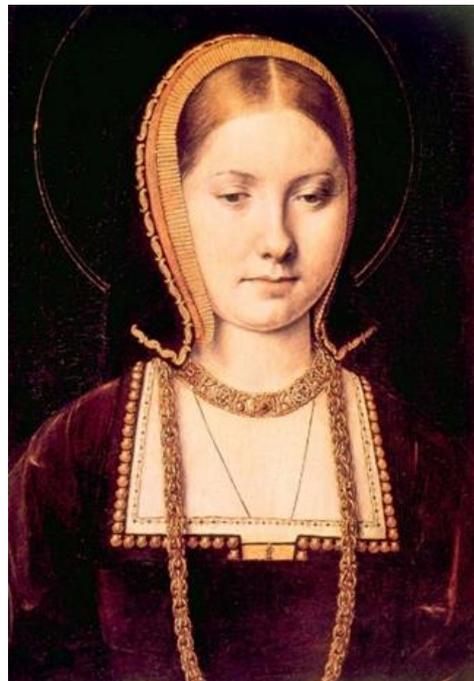
## **ST CATHERINE AND CATTERN CAKES**

Happy St Catherine's Day come November 25th.

Many of you will know that St Catherine is the patron saint of lacemakers but where does she come from? St Catherine of Alexandria was originally protector of young, unmarried girls but because of her connection to the wheel, intended to kill her, she also became the emblem of spinners and ropemakers. Catherine of Alexandria was a fourth century scholar in Egypt. Reportedly a very beautiful, intelligent and well respected woman, so when she converted to Christianity many people followed her. This did not sit well with the hierarchy, so she was arrested and visited by fifty philosophers trying to persuade her to end 'all this nonsense' but everyone who visited her came away having been converted to Christianity themselves. Eventually it was ordered that she be placed on a wheel, an instrument of torture rather than one from a cart, and to be driven away until she died (I'm so glad things have moved on from then). However, when the wheel was brought towards her and she touched it, it smashed apart; sadly, she was then taken to outside the city walls where she was beaten and beheaded. Catherine eventually became the patron saint of spinners and rope makers and by extension textiles, which in turn also led to the inclusion of lace makers.



**Catherine of Alexandria**



**Catherine of Aragon**

The Cattern cakes, which originated in Tudor times, are not actually for St Catherine but for Catherine of Aragon. During her imprisonment at Ampthill in Bedfordshire she heard of the plight of local lace makers, so she ordered all of her lace to be burned in order to give them more work to do and most likely her ladies-in-waiting followed suit. The lacemakers went on to honour Catherine, aptly choosing St Catherine's Day, by making an enriched dough called Cattern cake, to be eaten on the feast day.

In France, St Catherine's Day continues the tradition for unmarried women and on the 25th November young girls (known as Catherinettes) and spinsters of all ages pray to St Catherine to find them a husband.

The young ones pray:

"Lord, give me a well-situated husband. Let him be gentle, rich, generous, and pleasant!"

For those a little older the prayer became:

"Lord, one who's bearable, or who can at least pass as bearable in the world!"

Finally, the prayer is a little less choosy:

"Send whatever you want, Lord; I'll take it!"

It seems that many poems and nursery rhymes can also be attributed to St Catherine and lacemakers, for instance do you recognise this:

Kit be nimble, Kit be quick

Kit jump over the candlestick!

This used to be sung on St Catherine's Eve as young girls jumped over a lighted candlestick trying not to extinguish it, lest they be dogged by ill-luck for the year.

### **CATTERN CAKES RECIPE**

This is a more traditional version using yeast.

#### **Ingredients - makes 10**

10oz (300g) flour	4oz (100g) melted butter
2tsp caraway seeds	1oz (25g) currants
½ tsp ground cinnamon	1 large egg
8oz (225g) caster sugar	2 oz (50g) ground almonds
½ packet of dried yeast or 1oz (50g) fresh yeast	
A little extra sugar, cinnamon & caraway seeds for sprinkling	

#### **Method**

1. Pre-heat oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
2. Sift the flour and cinnamon into a bowl and stir in the currants, almonds, caraway seeds and sugar and the dried yeast if used.
3. Add the melted butter and beaten egg.
4. If using fresh yeast, mix with 1oz of the sugar until liquefied and add at this point. Mix well to give a soft dough.
5. Roll out onto a floured board to give a rectangle about 12"x10".
6. Brush dough with water and sprinkle with the extra sugar and cinnamon.
7. Roll up like a Swiss roll and cut into ¾" slices.
8. Place these slices spaced well apart, on a greased tray and bake for 20 minutes. Take care not to overcook as they can become too hard.
9. Cool on a wire rack. Sprinkle with extra caraway seeds if liked.

Modern versions of this recipe use self-raising flour and omit the yeast. My thanks to Lis Heriz-Smith from the Kingsdown, Lynstead & Norton Parish Newsletter for allowing me to publish this recipe.

*Penny Stevenson*

**CHRISTMAS LACE PATTERNS**



**Christmas Angel**

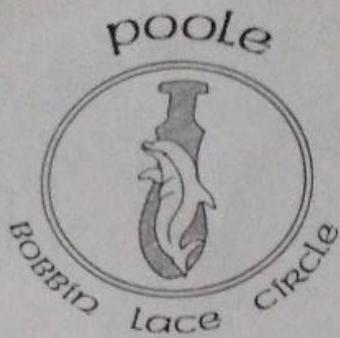


**Christmas Bauble**

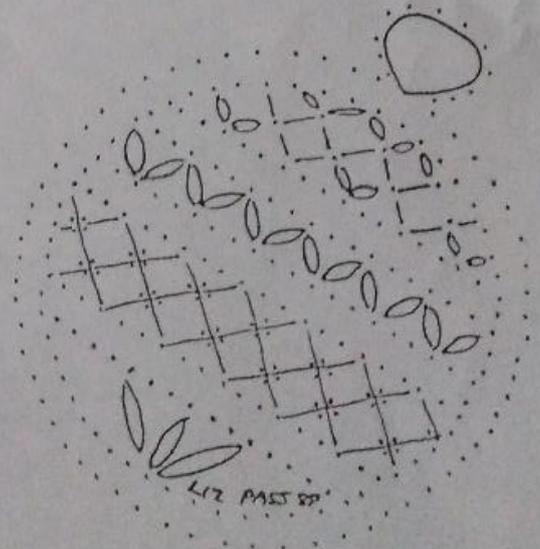
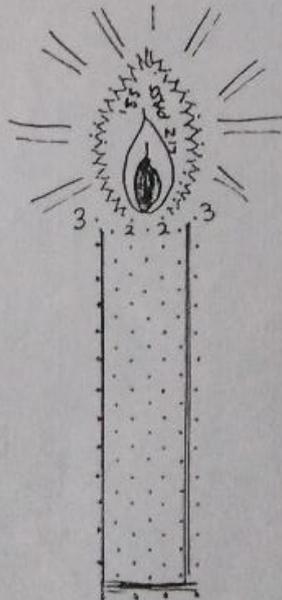
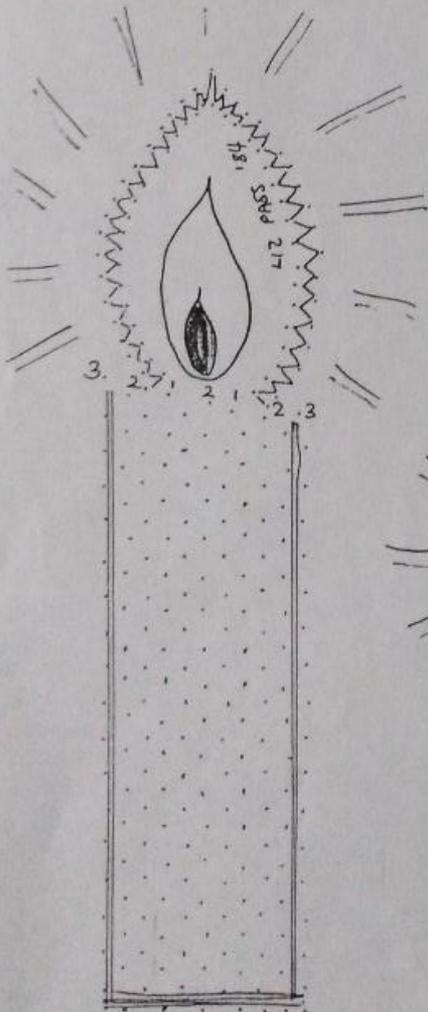


**Candle**





use these motifs to decorate your Christmas cards or place mats. Seal within a pvc record cover machine stitch around the outer edge with invisible thread and trim closely, then the motifs can be used as tree decorations.



The Angel and Bauble can be made with Sylko or DMC Brilliant d'Alsace. DMC metallise can also be used. Four pairs and a worker are needed for the trails, including the angel's wings. Extra pairs are necessary for the halo. Central fillings can be made separately or simultaneously.

Work 'corners' with pivot pins. Tiny French fans are worked along the bottom edge of the skirt. Using two pairs of bobbins make four leaves at the bottom of the bauble, the third on top of the second, where it will not show. Join with sewings. This avoids the need to join another pair of bobbins.

The finished Christmas bauble should measure 6 cm across

The larger candle measures approximately 12 cm. and was made with variegated Fils a Dentelles. Pairs were added as indicated. Any ground stitch could be used. The halo used 4 pairs of Sylko and a gold metallic worker. The flame was cut from wrapping paper. You would need to use finer thread for the small candle.

Note: to avoid wasting thread always make a small sample before winding all your bobbins and enlarge/reduce pattern or change the thread accordingly.

Merry Christmas,

*Liz Pass*

### **SARAH JONES BOBBINS**

We have been contacted by Sarah Jones Bobbins and thought leading up to Christmas it would be lovely to share her 'virtual lace day' website showcasing a new range of spangled bobbins that she has put together during lockdown.

Sarah's contact details are, website: <https://www.paintedlacebobbins.co.uk/virtual-lace-day>  
email: [sjonesbobbins@aol.com](mailto:sjonesbobbins@aol.com) telephone: [01983 883 428](tel:01983883428).

### **FORTHCOMING DEMONSTRATIONS**

At this present time there are no up & coming events planned for 2021.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting to be held at St George's Church Hall is the Pillow Party on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2021, followed by the PBLC meeting on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 2:00 p.m.. These meetings will only take place in accordance with the Government's restrictions.

*The Committee*

### **COPY DATE**

Items for the January edition of the Newsletter should be with Ruth Oldridge by Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December.

*The Editor*