AUSTRALIAN LACE GUILD
NSW BRANCH INC

Lace_E News
Volume #44

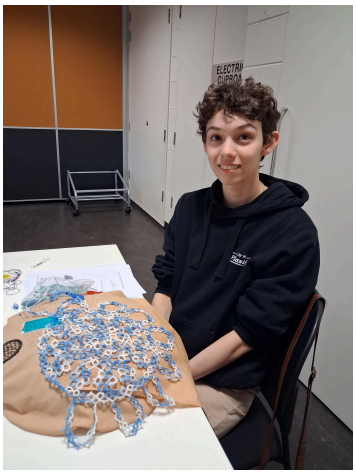
WELCOME

Our 44th edition of Lace_E News - the ALG NSW Branch's monthly newsletter.

Website:
https://www.lacemaking.com.au/

WORKSHOP IN CASTLE HILL

FINISH READING ON PG. 3



NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

FINISH READING ON PG. 2

CROCHET RETREAT

FINISH READING ON PG. 4

NEWS

From the Committee

Dear Members

Welcome to the July edition of Lace E News. Our Sydney meeting is at Linnwood House on the 2nd August.

Members, please keep sending us updates so our lace community can enjoy seeing the lace updates!

Please get in touch with the committee if you have anything you'd like to share for our future newsletters by emailing: laceguildnsw@gmail.com

Thank you, NSW Branch Committee

Powerhouse Museum-Castle Hill workshop on 19 JUL 2026

Thank you to Isa for sending photos of the workshop in July. As you can see, it was a wonderful day for everyone.

Hunter Valley Crochet Retreat 2026

This was held at the Mercure Hotel Hunter Valley Gardens on Friday May 16 to Sunday May 17th. We had the choice of two patterns of the Floriella: a whimsical crochet bouquet to stitch and cherish – simpler or 2nd Australian Native Bouquet by Lynda Tomkins.
All work required advanced knowledge of crochet methods and stitches. We were supplied with a bag of cotton thread and the pattern instructions with the opportunity to exchange threads from a box if desired.

We had been asked to bring our own kit of crochet hooks with scissors and other personal tools. There were 22 people who attended, of various skills and experience, ages and origins of places in Australia. Lynda also provided a pop-up shop from her business, Crochet Australia in Queensland. We were tempted by all the goodies, while also having the added bonus of saving on postage.

All started at 9am Saturday morning, although some of us had met and had an evening meal on Friday night together. We had our own room in the facility where we could leave all our goods. Morning and afternoon tea were provided, with a special dinner on Saturday night where we had a show and tell of work and were encouraged to wear our own work. This was an amazing experience, seeing the skill of some of the ladies and what they had produced. The rest of the evening was entertainment including a quiz on the craft with lots of questions and also good prizes such as tickets to the upcoming Crochet Guild Conference in Wollongong.

On Sunday we had the same program starting at 9am with breaks for meals and cuppa and a rest period to stretch our bodies lead by Lynda to help to counter act any problems from all the sitting and concentration. We also had group photos.

We worked in groups with three large tables with Lynda moving around each of us as needed. With the tables we were able to help one another and share knowledge and experience and, in some ways, work together. Plenty of laughs but also complaints and struggles with difficulties. It was, however, self-paced and self-directed work.

I chose the Australian native flowers, but it took me most of Saturday to complete the waratah flower as it was a challenge with new techniques and the use of stitches in unusual ways. Working with stitches, going around a small object with many different stitches, and levels of work. I found the holding of the work a challenge and a change of perspective while also watching tension. Working with wire was new to me, as was working in the back and front of stitches. Turning the work was quite a challenge with the holding of the work a bit of a different way of working.

The wattle was a bit more relaxed with the use of popcorn stitch and the wire stem with leaves. The gumnut was a little new with the base of the flower worked to shape and then insert the wire with the yellow centre glued in later. The use and terminology of the magic ring was new to some, such as invisible join around the pod and the increasing and shaping and counting of rows. I had not had a lot of experience using row markers, so that was a learning curve for me.
I found the instructions were not always clear and so added lots of notes to put the terminology in a more conservative language. All this required lots of questions, clarification and instructions of new terms used and discussion with the tutor and fellow students.

I was inspired by the work with Australian native flowers and enjoyed the work but was challenged by the new methods and terminology. Came home inspired having learnt a lot of new skills and use of crochet traditional stitches adapted to contemporary use and methods with a completely new approach to the traditional methods. It was very different to what I was used to and actually work with. Really a challenge to knowledge.
This was a more contemporary use of crochet methods with the use of basic crochet methods using modern adaptation and the use of wire, glue and stuffing with modern threads.

The fun of doing it all with a group of people as there was a lot of show and tell and working together while learning together. And of course, lovely breaks with good food, sunshine, and fresh air.
The lady next to me knew the modern methods of “amigurumi,” which is a Japanese method of making children toys and other objects. In some ways it is different to the traditional methods and use of crochet. I went with the thought of observing how and what a crochet retreat was and what type of people attend these events while also observing how it all works. But especially it was a time of getting away from the usual and enjoying time with like-minded people in a relaxed and lovely environment.

I felt my knowledge was challenged as I needed to know all the basics. I had to adapt my knowledge while gaining new knowledge and skills in new areas, especially as it was an adaption of traditional methods to new uses and methods.

Next year a retreat may be at Reillys Resort in the Queensland hinterland. There have been others in the past.

Costs to me was travel from my place with a taxi to Liverpool then train to Newcastle and bus to Cessnock at $2.50, with another taxi to the motel. The complete cost of the Retreat was $1,090 and I added the Sunday night as an extra. The cost of the retreat included complete accommodation of meals and extra light meals and supply of patterns, threads and tuition. A couple of weeks prior there was the drama of a threat of cancelling the event, but the overwhelming response was that the majority wanted it to go ahead despite the petrol problems.
We were told to have a time of fun, enjoy, relax, learn through the experience in the lovely environment of the Hunter Gardens, truly a yarn about yarn.

Pauline Garland