



Friends of Lace

Friends of Lace is a volunteer group that was formed in 2017. Its mission is to bring Limerick lace to public attention by cataloguing and researching existing artefacts in Limerick Museum and private collections, create teaching resources and support novel interpretations and uses of Limerick lace.

On the long term, the group would like to see the establishment of a Lace Study Centre within the Limerick Museum.

Find us online at: Limericklace.ie, and on

  Facebook and Twitter as @LimerickLace

Classes

Currently, Limerick lace classes are offered in three locations around Limerick:

- Eileen McCaffrey - Pennywell
(eileenmcc27@gmail.com)
- Toni O'Malley - The Granary
(toniomalley123@gmail.com)
- Ann Gabbett - Raheen
(ghaboid7@eircom.net)



A Limerick Lace Veil

For visitors

Limerick Museum, in collaboration with Friends of Lace, are offering:

- Presentations on the history of Limerick lace.
- Tours of Limerick Museum (open Monday to Fridays 10.00 to 1.00 and 2.00 to 5.00).
- Demonstrations of lace-making by experienced teachers.
- Limerick lace making workshops for beginners.
- Lace-making kits for beginners.

Limerick Museum holds the largest collection of Limerick lace in the country. A significant collection is also held by the Sisters of Mercy in Charleville, Co. Cork.



Limerick Museum

The Old Franciscan Friary,
Henry Street, Limerick

Opening Hours: Weekdays 10am-5pm
(closed for lunch 1pm-2pm)

P: +353 61 557740

E: museum@limerick.ie
www.limerick.ie/limerick-museum

LIMERICK LACE



Limerick lace is the most famous of all Irish laces. Established in 1829, it has been worn by thousands of women, including Queen Victoria, American First Lady Edith Roosevelt and Countess Markievicz.

Limerick lace is a hybrid lace made on a machine made net base. It is a 'mixed lace' - rather than a 'true lace', which would be entirely hand made. Limerick lace comes in two forms:

Tambour lace is made by stretching a net over a frame like a tambourine and drawing threads through it with a hook.

Needlerun lace is made by using a needle to embroider on a net background.

History of Limerick Lace

Limerick lace is a specific class of lace originating in Limerick, Ireland, which was later produced throughout the country.

In 1829, **Charles Walker**, of Oxfordshire, founded Limerick lace. That year, he brought 24 girls to Limerick to teach lace-making. He availed of cheap, skilled female labour, and his business thrived.

Limerick lace was produced mainly in factories for the first forty years of its existence. Between the 1830s and 1860s, several lace factories operated in Limerick.

The city's second lace factory was established in 1835 by **William Lloyd**, initially at Clare Street and later in Abbey Court, off Nicholas Street. In 1841, there were 400 women and girls working for him. In 1836, **Leycester Greaves**, of Cork, opened a factory in Limerick. These lace factories employed almost 2,000 women and girls.

In the 1840s, Limerick lace making was introduced to a number of convents and convent-run institutions, both in Limerick and elsewhere. In 1850, lace making was introduced to the **Good Shepherd Convent** on Clare Street Limerick, but it was also made in other religious houses based in the city, including the **Presentation Convent** in Sexton Street and the **Mercy Convent** at Mount Saint Vincent, on O'Connell Avenue.



Mrs Vere O'Brien's Limerick Lace School (1907), courtesy of Veronica Rowe Collection.

Limerick lace was disseminated widely throughout Ireland by Catholic religious sisters anxious to provide employment at the time of the Famine. They introduced it to several other convents including religious houses in Youghal, Kinsale, Dunmore East, Cahirciveen, and Kenmare. In 1990, production of lace at the last of these convents, the Good Shepherd Convent ceased.

The Limerick lace industry declined rapidly from the 1860s due to the market being flooded by machine made lace chiefly from Nottingham.

It was revived in the 1880s due to the work of **Florence Vere O'Brien**, who established a Lace School in Limerick in May 1889. This ran until 1922. Another promoter of Limerick lace during this period was **Ishbel Hamilton-Gordon, Countess of Aberdeen**, who established the Irish Industries Association in 1886 to encourage the 'Buy Irish' movement. She was integral in reviving Limerick lace as a traditional craft. One reason for this period of revival was the realisation that design was necessary for beautiful lace.

In 1904, **Maude Kearney**, a daughter of James Hodgkinson, founder of the famous firm of specialists in church decoration in Henry Street, Limerick, established a lace making business called Thomond Lace Industry, based in Thomondgate. Thomond Lace employed between fifty and eighty workers at the height of its success. After the Second World War, Limerick lace declined rapidly.

Other Irish laces are:

- Kenmare lace
- Carrickmacross lace
- Youghal lace
- Irish crochet
- Headford lace

Recent Limerick Lace Events

Dec. 2014 - Amazing Lace exhibition launch and the publication of the Amazing Lace book.

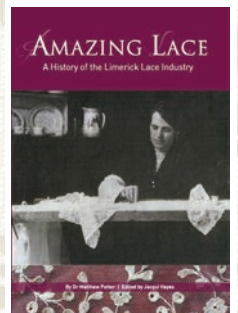
Jan. 2016 -The Florence Vere O'Brien Lace Drawing Award.

Aug. 2015 - Bring Out Your Lace event.

Oct. 2016 - HYBRID: Identity of Liminal Lace conference and exhibition.

Amazing Lace: A History of the Limerick Lace Industry by Dr Matthew Potter.

A beautifully written and illustrated book, available from the museum and in the O'Mahony bookshop, Limerick.



Upcoming Events

17 Nov 2018 - Amazing Lace Symposium

A second edition of HYBRID is planned for autumn 2019.

HYBRID
LIMERICK LACE | LIMINAL IDENTITY

Come to Limerick for the Amazing Lace Experience!!