

From Christmas to Valentine's: Making Lace without the Pattern

by Paula Harten

While decorating the display tree at The Lace Museum few years ago, I found an ornament that had been donated by Mary McPeck in 1992. Since I was in a hurry to make some lace to fit on a flat, round, glass ornament, I decided to try to make it from a scan of the lace. Since it had been attached inside a bangle, the shape was pretty true.

I scanned it into my computer (Figure 1) and, with Photoshop, studied the enlarged view. By following the paths of the threads, I could determine where the pinholes went and how it was made. To make the pattern, I inverted the image to black on a white background. On a second layer, I painted in red dots for the pinholes. Then, with the lace temporarily invisible, I could place the pinholes in straighter lines. The image needed to be re-sized to fit the ornament. It seemed to me that Brok 36 would work and I used a red metallic Treasure Braid for the gimp. I used 14 pairs of thread plus the gimp. The worker from the center ring can also do the false plaits in the center.

To join the two medallions together over the ornament, I used a thinner red metallic thread and strung gold beads between the points as I tied them together. This, plus a couple of glass heart-shaped ornaments I have covered with needle lace, led me to buy a couple of Valentine's ornaments and my little Christmas tree has taken on a new life! (Figure 2)

The pattern (Figure 3) is a neater one I have created using shapes and circles in Photoshop and then placing the pinholes following grid lines and by eye. This is still not a perfect pattern, and I have not worked it, but it gives you an idea of what you can do if you have a piece of lace and don't have a pattern. I would still like to try finding a circular grid that would fit this and see if it can be made any better following the grid.

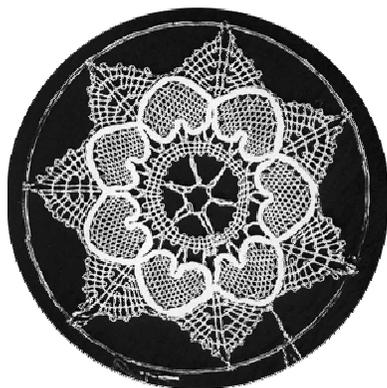


Figure 1



Figure 2

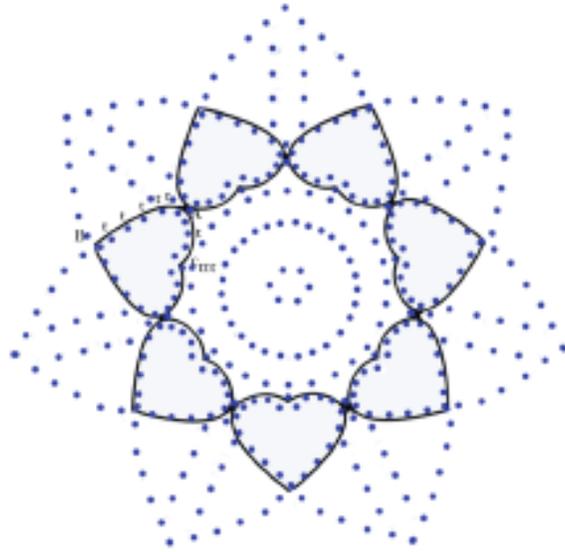


Figure 3