

Photo Gallery and Synopsis of
“Stitching for Solidarity” Event
Transfer Embroidery Workshop, 25 July 2024
Linen Hall Library, Belfast, N.I.

For Conflict Textiles, and The Linen Hall Library

Deborah Stockdale, Textile Artist

In conjunction with Conflict Textile’s collection of recently donated historic arpilleras from the 1970-80’s (Stitching for Solidarity) which I had mounted on linen panels for display in the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, and to highlight the featured vintage linen textiles which were included in the display, I was asked to give a workshop on 25th of July, 2024 on vintage embroidery, especially transfer embroidery.





I focussed the workshop on the technique of transfer patterns, which were often used from the mid-19th to the mid- 20th century for domestic embroidery in many parts of the world, and of which the exhibition had several examples. After a short tour of the exhibition, the group had a chance to look at other vintage linen textiles, such as table cloths, napkins, pillow covers and the all-linen quilt which I had brought to show the styles and techniques, and we talked a bit about the history of transfer work, domestic linens and the group's memories of either doing this type of embroidery or knowing someone who did in the past.





We then went through the pattern selections which I provided and each person selected a pattern to trace. Participants were given a square of linen, an embroidery hoop, needle and several colours of embroidery thread. They chose a pre-printed pattern and used a piece of carbon paper to trace their pattern onto the linen. Example sheets of embroidery stitches were also provided. The sewing went on for the next 2 hours, with a good amount of story sharing and sparking ideas for other projects.





Some of the participants had not done this type of work since early days at school, and were happy to have this short refresher experience of a remembered past-time. Other participants were experienced needle-workers and enjoyed getting new ideas for their own ongoing creative projects, using their own embroidery designs and the transfer process as used in the workshop. It was a creative and convivial day!



Linen quilt made by Deborah Stockdale on display at "Stitching for Solidarity", Conflict Textiles and Linen Hall Library 2024.