



Sew a Token of Love and Remembrance

24 June 2023, 10am - 4pm
St. George's Hall, Liverpool

As part of the Armed Forces Day exhibition of the War Widows Quilt, lead artist Lois Blackburn invites you to try your hand at sewing your own token of love and remembrance, whether you're a novice or experienced embroiderer.

Who would you like to be remembered this Armed Forces Day?

We invite you to embroider their initials, or their name, onto a hankie to create your own very own commemorative keepsake.

Whether you are an experienced and confident embroiderer or a complete novice, you are welcome to join us at the exhibition and to sew along with Lois's guidance. Or you can take these instructions, some materials, and much inspiration with you to sew in the peace of your own home. Even if you cannot join us at the exhibition, why not try your hand following the instructions below and using your own materials?

'Sewing my square gave me a strange sort of peace ... it worked for me.'
(Lauran Hamilton, The War Widows Quilt)

What do handkerchiefs mean to you?

In the Middle Ages, a knight might tie a lady's handkerchief onto his helmet for good luck. Elsewhere, they have been used as gestures of a secret language of love, embroidered with patterns that carried symbolic meaning, or exchanged as tokens of affection. Handkerchiefs are associated with tears of grief, joy, or compassion, with bidding farewell, and they are something we carry with us, sometimes in our top pockets, close to our hearts.

Instructions

1. Choose a handkerchief that has meaning to you. If you have your own hanky, you can work on that, alternatively, choose one from Lois's collection.
2. On paper, write your chosen initials or name in a few different ways. Think about size, colour, and style. You may wish to look at some fonts Lois has brought for inspiration.
3. With a fabric pen (or chalk), copy your design onto the fabric.
4. Choose a colour of thread that takes your fancy. You can use any embroidery stitch you like (running, back, or chain stitch). Lois will be on hand to help.
5. When you have completed your embroidery, you may like to tie a knot in the corner to remember something, or you may want to add scent to your handkerchief, such as rosewater or lavender, with their connotations of love, empathy, devotion, serenity, grace, and calmness.
6. Please share your work with us by taking a photograph and sending it to us, alongside a few words, via social media or email. Tell us about your embroidery and what it means to you. If you prefer, you can send us a letter.

Would you like to share your work with others?

See our contact details below. We won't share anything you send us if you don't want us to, but we would still love to know about your experience and see what you made.

Lois Blackburn (Lead Artist, The War Widows Quilt)

Facebook : ladyloisartist
Instagram : @artistloisb
Email : loisartist@icloud.com

Dr Nadine Muller (Project Leader, War Widows Stories)

Address : John Foster Building, 80-98 Mount Pleasant, LJMU,
Liverpool, L3 5UZ
Email : n.muller@ljmu.ac.uk
Twitter : @war_widows
Facebook : warwidowsstories

