



# DesignStream

ARCHIVE

## For the Love of Lace: One Woman's Crusade in Canada

While lace is often relegated to the world of fussy sheer curtains in quaint B&B's, it represents a noble, ancient industry that has slowly been in decline. Nova Scotia-based Anna Halley of [Highland Lace & Textiles](#) has been working over the last 24 years to keep the tradition alive. Halley's English grandmother was a seamstress at Buckingham Palace responsible for finding and sewing all the fine embellishments onto ball gowns. When Halley's family moved from England to Canada the connection to textiles stayed with her: "my dressers and drawers were always overflowing with lace trims, table pieces, and curtains," she says.

In the mid-eighties, after traveling to Scotland in search of old mills that still produced traditional lace curtains and trims, she launched Highland Lace. "I went through the archives and found patterns dating back to the mid 19th-century that inspired some of my own designs." Although Halley notes that there's a fair bit of vintage lace in the States, her favorite sources are the *brocantes*, the second-hand markets in France and Italy. Read on to see some of Halley's designs and finds, and learn about the history of lace.



Above: Highland Lace's new Sicily Curtains of black cotton were inspired by Dolce and Gabbana's fashions. Of lace's long history, Halley explains, "Our homes evolved over the centuries from having oiled parchment skins over the windows, to glass windowpanes needing privacy. In the 19th century, as heating issues were addressed, it was less about the cold and damp, and more about the light-filled spaces that still needed some sheer covering to maintain privacy. The very wealthy could afford to have full-time embroiderers and lacemakers (these earlier curtains were more of embroidered fine voile), but lace curtains ( or 'net,' as they're known in the UK ) really became popular once machinery was built to produce them for the middle class of the 1800s."



Above: A 1950s Linen Bridgecloth made in England; \$55. In addition to offering new designs, Halley collects and sells vintage household linens. She typically goes for monogrammed pieces, and explains, “they were usually of a better quality and tended to be handed down and well maintained. At one time, women of a certain stand in society would come to a marriage with a complete set of household linens and lace. I look for Irish damask with a soft sheen and hand. These were strong linen fibers. Often you will find sets of 12 to 20 napkins with hand rolled edges, 22 inches to 28 inches square.”



Above: Shannon Lace Curtains in viscose polyester are available in a selection of sizes; they're shown here in light cream, white, and dark cream.



Above: Halley's lace drawings from her own collection.



Above: On an island off Venice, Halley visited with this 94-year-old Italian lacemaker. She's shown working on a bobbin pillow to make Halley's favorite type of lace, created by twisting and plaiting threads that are pre-wound onto a bobbin and laid out on a pattern pinned to a pillow.



Above: Heritage Medallion lace available by the yard only. Halley explains, “This is 14 point (fine quality) and when it’s gone, there can be no more as the loom is broken.” She adds, “This lace business is like missionary work!” Halley has around 100 yards left. Contact [Highland Lace](#) directly for ordering details.

Looking for more casual curtains? Check out our post [Patchwork Curtains made from Linens](#). And if you’re a lace lover, have a look at these [Lace-Patterned Rugs from Finland](#) and lace jewelry maker [Emma Cassi’s DIY Headboard](#).

[http://www remodelista.com/files/styles/733\\_0s/public/fields/Black-lace-highland-lace.jpg](http://www remodelista.com/files/styles/733_0s/public/fields/Black-lace-highland-lace.jpg)

DailyEmail, DESIGN February 12, 2014 at 10:00AM from Remodelista

<http://www remodelista.com/posts/windows-lace-curtains-new-and-vintage-from-highland-lace>

via [IFTTT](#)

Feb 12th, 2014

**MORE YOU MIGHT LIKE**