



Embroiderers' Guild

sharing opportunities for discovery and creativity

Dear Everyone

As we have not met since March, I am writing to update you about some changes to the way that pay for membership that we been recently notified about by HQ, and our plans for Branch fees for next year.

As you will know, for many years we have charged a Guild membership fee, a Regional levy, a Branch membership fee, and a payment for attendance at a meeting (the door fee). Last year, in our branch, we agreed to test out a proposal that people could pay either an annual door fee as part of a one off membership fee, or continue to pay their door fee on the day of attendance. I will consider all these separate elements in this order

Guild membership

Last year the Guild membership fee was £38.00. Most members paid this through the branch, although a small number pay directly to the Guild.

This fee is used to support the Guild in its aims. Just to remind you, the aims are to:

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- promote and encourage the art of embroidery and related crafts;
 - educate the public in the history and art of embroidery;
 - undertake or support research in embroidery;
 - collect, document, preserve, exhibit and interpret examples of fine embroidery, which are of historical or educational merit, and to make such articles available to the public.

As well as nurturing an enjoyment of embroidery and enabling anyone to participate, the Embroiderers' Guild exists to build awareness of stitch and textile art. The Guild aims to educate, encourage, inspire, and promote the achievement of excellence. By paying your annual membership, you are helping to achieve those aims.

As a Guild member, you will also have several benefits, including Contact magazine via email and an annual printed summary, news of events relevant to textile art, access to the Guild library, access to folios through your branch, competitions and workshops, special offers and reduced prices for embroidery equipment, (admittedly most shops in this scheme are in the south of England, but some are online.). A new online branch is being set up by the Guild, the ThreadIT branch. I believe membership of the guild implies the use of this virtual branch. There are details on the Guild website.

This year the Guild have advised us that they will invite members to pay their membership fee direct to the Guild from September 2020. The current arrangement (fee was paid to the branch, and the payment forwarded to the Guild) has proved to be increasingly complex for the Guild to administer. Many will know that the lists of members held by the Guild are rarely accurate. I have been advised by Guild HQ that they will be sending out letters to members about the new system in August, with payments due in September. I do not know if

they send them to our committee for distribution or directly to you, but I will be doing my best to ensure everyone will get the information when it is available. My understanding is that you will be able to pay:

- online at the Guild website, or;
- by cheque, or;
- by BACS.

I suggest that you do not try to jump the gun and pay ahead of the letter, as I am not sure if that would create more admin rather than less for the Guild. This is a new system, and we will have to navigate it patiently. If anyone has questions, please contact me, if I don't know, I will try to find out.

Regional Levy.

Last year we contributed £1 each to support the regional committee in all that they do, which includes organising events and workshops. You may be aware that there have been many resignations from this committee over the summer, but new members will be elected and future events arranged. As far as we know at present this fee will not change, and will continue to be collected as part of branch fees.

Branch Subscription and Door Fees

Last year we collected a membership fee of £14 and this will remain unchanged for 2020/21. These funds enable us to pay the running costs for our branch, including hall hire, and speaker fees. We only intend to collect these payments once meetings resume again.

The monthly door fee is £5. As you will recall, last year we offered the option to continue to pay door fees monthly or pay a £50 annual door fee (which offered essentially one free meeting entry). Most members chose to pay £50.

However, at the time of writing due to COVID-19 we have had to cancel five meetings (April-Sept inclusive), therefore those members who paid the annual door fee have overpaid. Our current intention is to work toward resuming meetings in October (see other updates). Hopefully we will be able to meet regularly over the coming Guild year, but we have to acknowledge that restrictions could be re-instated and either some members will be unable to attend, or a meeting will have to be cancelled. Therefore it seems inappropriate to ask for an annual door fee, and for this year we will revert to charging £5 on the door for every meeting attended. People who paid the annual fee last year will be offered a voucher for five door fees which they can use over the coming year (October 2020 to July 2021)

Consideration of re-instatement of an annual door fee, or incorporation of the door fee into the membership fee is a matter which remains on the committee's agenda and will be discussed over the next year in committee and branch meetings.

With best wishes

Clare Bradley
Darlington Branch Treasurer
