

“August”

Gail MacLean



My first lace teacher did not like leaves and tallies. Not only did she not teach them to me, but I thought I didn't like them either and purposely steered away from any lace that used them, or else designed them out.

However, I kept seeing striking lace that happened to have tallies or leaves and finally decided that I would tackle these bugaboos! It also helped to have a lace making friend who was one of those crazy people who love leaves.

My first venture into the world of tallies was in a Binche class with Anny Noben-Segers, where I worked one of those designs with several ovals entirely outlined with rectangular tallies. The lace was complicated enough even without the tallies, so I just forged ahead and by the end of the piece, my tallies were almost respectable.

Then I had the opportunity to take a 2 ½ day class with Josee Poupart on Deciphering Leaves and Tallies. What a revelation! Once you learn a few simple tricks they really weren't all that fearsome. So when I signed up for a Bedfordshire class with Jean Leader, I knew just what I wanted to tackle—the design "August" from [A Bedfordshire Lace Collection](#) by Barbara Underwood. I loved the design but thought I might be able to improve upon the execution as it appeared in the book. I re-aligned parts of the trails in the pricking and with Jean's help, modified some of the methods, ending up with a piece that earned me the "Best Technical Proficiency" award at the 2011 Creative Arts display at the Eastern States Exposition (the Big E)!