

The Lost Tapestry - by Maggie Goodrum Crosby U3A

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Tapestry depicts sights and history of coast and town

Years of hard work to create panel art

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A GROUP of members from Crosby U3A have created a beautiful needlepoint tapestry of key things related to Crosby. So far 10 people have worked on it over the past years.

Hilary Turner, the organiser, said it took some time to get going. The scheme was initiated by U3A chairman David Atherton who asked for a panel to be produced around the Crosby Plaque.

Hilary decided that in order to make it a group project they needed to add more panels. Each panel is separate so the tapestry is flexible and can be moved to form different shapes.

Each panel measures 36ins x 27ins.

The following locations have already been completed:

- Crosby Plaque – view of Crosby from the beach in 1716
- Merchant Taylors' crest
- Original 1630 building at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School
- Current Merchant Taylors' boys' school and iconic clock tower
- Sefton Church and Punch Bowl
- One panel depicting eight crosses of Crosby
- One panel depicting spires of Crosby Hall
- Little Crosby
- Thornton Windmill, stocks and sundial
- Crosby parks
- Royal Hotel
- Potters Barn
- Carnegie Library
- Liverpool Aviation Flying

The tapestry on display at Merchant Taylor School, Crosby

School at Crosby Beach (taken from old sepia photo)

The intention is to create more plaques over the coming year depicting Five Lamps and the Iron Men along with coastal erosion in 1930s and a shipwreck on the beach.

Our U3A Needlework group in Crosby was the 1st group I joined when I retired from work in 2012. The group were embarking on a local history project inspired by the 'Crosby Plaque' 1716 [a west prospect of Great Crosby sailing ships on the River Mersey. It also depicts horsemen and pedestrians on the shore, sand dunes with rabbits and a small house on the right for the keeper of the warren, a local economy. Beyond are cattle grazing on pasture of Great Crosby Marsh.]

Our group co-ordinator, Hilary who sadly died recently, suggested we speak to local historians, take photos of old local sites and she would embark on sketches to form individual tapestries. This research took about 6 months and when Hilary had completed the sketches she transferred them onto canvas for us to take away and work on with wools, using a variety of sewing and embroidery techniques and meeting up

regularly to discuss, embellish and try new techniques. Hillary made the copy of the Crosby Plaque at the top, centre of our work.

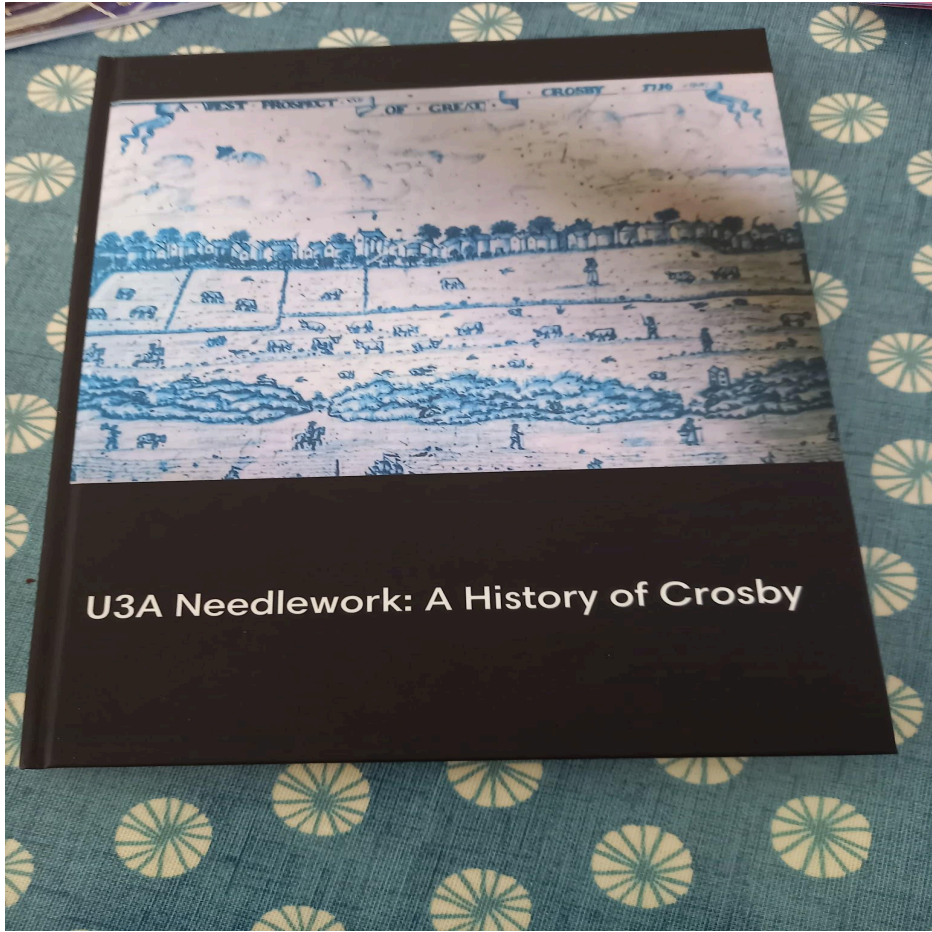
We individually created 15 pieces of work to be mounted and flexibly joined together ready for display in 2013 - ranging from the Crosby Plaque, churches and spires, the oldest house in Little Crosby, Crosby Hall, Merchant Taylors School, the oldest pub, and the original flying club on the beach. Completed it measured about 1 ½ metres by 1 metre.



How the tapestry was lost - the tapestry had been displayed on a wall at CHET, Crosby Hall Education Trust for a number of years where it could be appreciated by the public. We loaned it to Sefton Council to be displayed for Borough of Culture celebrations in 2020 but due to pandemic restrictions it could not be displayed. We agreed it could be retained by Sefton Council with a plan to find a permanent display location for the tapestry in the borough. The Lake House [a watersport and restaurant centre] at the Marina Lakeside, Waterloo, was agreed as a good public location. Some development and refurbishment work at the site was delayed for at least a year. In 2022 I discovered that the tapestry could not be located. We were advised by Sefton Executive to apply for compensation, which our U3A committee agreed on. In 2023 we received our request of £3,000 to be used for further development work in our Needlework group.

We did not have the heart to start on the same project after 10years but have used some of the new funds to take some textile exhibition trips for inspiration, and so far have taken our group with invited members from our Crosby U3A to the Quaker Museum in Kendal and the Silk Museum in Macclesfield. A photo album has been created to record the completed tapestry, the sketches and newspaper articles recording our work. Copies of the album were made for each person who had worked on the tapestry. We are now in the process of putting together a display of small samples of our individual sewing and embroidery work to be displayed at our local library.





U3A Needlework: A History of Crosby