
I.Q. QUARTERLY

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September 2006 - November 2006

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Our September meeting was our annual Members' Sale, the chance to sell off all those P&Q items that we'd bought with enthusiasm at the shows and wondered why, with 10% of the proceeds going to group funds. There was an especially good selection of books at bargain prices - some of us went home with as many as we'd brought in! - and quite a few gadgets and accessories. It was also a chance to catch up with some sewing and chatting. We did notice that there wasn't much fabric for sale and, inspired by the wonderful hamper of offcuts that we rummaged through recently on our visit to Sunflower Fabrics, thought that we might organise something like this for ourselves. Suggestions (and fabric) welcome!

There were more completed Mystery quilts this evening too - this year's Challenge has been very popular.

Don't forget that this more relaxed kind of evening can also be used to help with quilt tacking - a chore that we don't all have the space or enthusiasm for - or group help and advice.

October MEETING

There was a fantastic turnout this evening to hear Dawn Cameron-Dick plus we had 11 visitors.

She was a hilarious speaker with numerous tales to tell us. One was how she first started making quilts when living in Saudi Arabia, and she made friends with a seamstress, but neither of them knew how to quilt. They attached the quilt to the frame but put it on too tight, then couldn't work out how to get the needle through from top to bottom and back to the top again as it wouldn't give sufficiently. So her friend, who was rather large, sat on the floor under the frame whilst she passed the needle through to her and then she passed it back up to Dawn! They did this for a while thinking this was the way to do it. She prefers to machine piece and quilt as she doesn't have the patience to do anything by hand - no wonder if this is how she thinks it should be done.

When she moved to Belgium a number of years later she asked if she could teach at the only shop there was. They told her they didn't want a machine quilt teacher as

they weren't 'real' quilts. So she put an ad in the local paper and had 12 people at her first class.

She has been making quilts for 35 years now and prefers a traditional style, making them for her family so they can be used and loved. She is fascinated by Log Cabin.

She made a Quilt for her parents 50th Wedding Anniversary. Family were travelling from all over the world for the celebration so she made a Family Tree Quilt including everyone in it. They were in proportion to each other and had something unique about them on it that would make them recognise themselves. She had us in stitches explaining about some of the strange members of her family.

She always labels her quilts and said if we don't they are 'orphans' and nameless - we should put information on the back, so that everyone can get to know the person who made it and why.

She has sold 27,000 copies of her first book "Invisible Machine Applique" and had her second book for sale that night.

She spoke for exactly an hour without taking a break and making us laugh a lot along the way. She was very entertaining and would be good for a workshop in the future. She stayed the night with Gillian after the meeting and they apparently chatted into the small hours!

NOVEMBER MEETING

This month we were given the opportunity to have two slide shows for the price of one!

The first set was from the American Collection of Folk Art and consisted of an interesting selection of Amish quilts, many over 100 years old, donated by private collectors to the museum.

The second was a set of 76 slides labelled ' A New Look at Old Traditions' and came from the Quilters Guild 5th National Exhibition at Edinburgh in 1993.

The two shows were very different but extremely interesting!

We had a large and varied selection of 'show & tells' this month, including some fantastic photo quilts and lots more finished mystery quilts!

Stack & Wack Workshop

Steph Pettengell

24th February 2007

Baldock Community Centre

10am to 4pm

Cost £20/£21 members/non-members

Bramble Patch Visit

10 March 2007

Depart Baldock 8.30am - return approx 5.00pm

Cost £15/£16 members/non-members

The morning session will be a practical tutorial on Appliqué using a flower design of your choice and in the afternoon there will be a lesson on colour.

If anyone comes across any good shops on their holidays and travels please let us know so that details can be included in our newsletters.

SUNFLOWER FABRICS VISIT

In early October, a group of 15 met up in Baldock and then headed off to Maggie Wise's shop in Bedford. Sadly she had to give up her shop premises about 18 months ago and her business is now based at the back of an industrial unit in Dean Street. However the location should not put anyone off paying her a visit, because she still has her wonderful selection of materials and patterns. The pattern instructions are so clear and her material bundles take the hard work out of choosing materials - she even sells scrap bundles which are colour coordinated. Knitting wool has also been added to her stock.

Despite the cramped conditions, everyone enjoyed a relaxed day. Maggie started off by showing us a number of her scrap quilts - some were such simple ideas but so effective. We were then sent off to sew some log cabin blocks which were subsequently cut at an angle. Maggie handed round doughnuts to keep up our energy levels!! She encouraged everyone to delve into her large scrap basket and try just sewing pieces together without worrying about shades of colour etc.

Lunch was a pleasant surprise - she had arranged a pub lunch just 2 minutes walk away. Suitably refreshed we then sewed some sawtooth blocks which is another excellent block for using scraps. Maggie kindly gave us instructions for various sizes. She has used this block in several of her small wallhangings.

All too soon it was time to settle our bills and head home. Despite the theme of scrap quilts ie trying to use up some of our stash, I think we all came home with yet more material! Maggie mentioned that she is considering compiling a book of her patterns - I am sure this would sell very well and she needs to be encouraged to bring this to fruition.

JUNE WORKSHOP

If you needed to escape the heat (or the football!) on June 10th, there was no better place than Monica's Studio 39, where we had a really cool and laidback day making Christmas Wallhangings with Janet Goddard. Janet teaches workshops at the House of Patchwork, Hoddesdon as well as bigger venues such as the Festival of Quilts, and proved to be a very relaxed, though thorough, and generous tutor. We could make

either a Christmas Tree or Snowman - Janet had both sets of shapes available in wood, which we painted in fast-drying acrylics (though they could be applied in fabric if we wished); these were simply glued into place. The backgrounds were very simple but effective, especially with checked or folksy fabric borders, and embellished with applique or embroidered lettering, big stitch quilting, buttons, beads, sequins and twigs... If you'd forgotten anything, or everything, there were supplies a few yards away, (not to mention tempting fabrics for your next project!), plus all the tea and coffee you could drink. A really enjoyable workshop, and we can all be smug as we have something finished, or almost finished, for Christmas already

SEPTEMBER WORKSHOP

Back in September a group of us took part in Jenny Dukes' workshop 'Know Your Sewing Machine'.

None of us quite knew what to expect - but we all had various stitches/buttons on our machines that we had either never used before or not used to their full potential! We started off with just quilting 'wobbly lines' using variegated threads and then experimented with the array of built-in stitches on the machines using different threads and altering both the width and length of the stitches - we produced some very interesting results. After lunch we played around with cords and ribbons, couching these with various threads and stitches.

The whole day was really relaxed and we all agreed that it was lovely to have a whole day just to 'play' with our machines - something none of us are allowed to get away with at home!

LOOKING FORWARD

8 January 2007 - the first meeting of 2007, the AGM & 2007 challenge.

12 May 2007 - Gail Lawther Workshop - Stained Glass Iris

15 September 2007 - Hever Castle trip.

20 October 2007 - Kim Shaw Workshop - Convergence Quilt

3 November 2007 - Tudor Rose shop visit and Beaded Bag Workshop.

FORTHCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

Studio 39 sale dates - 18 December 2006 to 22 December 2006 - 10am to 5pm (including Thursday) & 23 December 2006 - 10 am to 12 noon.
8 January 2007 to 13 January 2007 - normal shop hours (10am to 4pm - closed on Thursdays and Sundays).

Chilford Spring Quilt Festival - 16/17 March 2007.

BITS AND PIECES

1. If you have access to the internet (I think this may only apply to broadband users) then there's a 24/7 live action quilting channel broadcast by QNN. It's been going for about 18 months now and is the first round the clock special interest channel. It features a wide range of mostly half-hour programmes, all quilting- or sewing-related, interspersed with shorter gadget demos, show and tells, interviews etc. There are regular shows by wellknown American quilters such as Fons & Porter, Eleanor Burns and Marti Michell, with some lovely quilts as backdrops and props, and lots of tips to pick up, if you can stay with the relentlessly smiley presenters! Well worth a look if you've got a stack of ironing to plough through though; the address is www.thequiltingchannel.com - click on Program for the current day's features.
2. If anyone needs any help in tacking up a quilt please bring it along one sewing evening - many hands do make light work! Please just mention it beforehand to a committee member.
3. Does your sewing machine need servicing? A group of us have used the following contact recently and were really pleased with the results. The charge for a single machine is £49 but there is a sizeable discount for any additional machines so it does make sense for two or more members to get together .

Homecall Sewing Machines - 01234 870027 - mobile 07885 345756.

4. We've all seen those lovely memory quilts using family photos or craft items made with copyright free images from just about anywhere, so for those of you who've progressed to printing your own fabric with a computer and inkjet printer, Jacqui

Wilson has a catalogue from a very reasonably priced supplier of fabric sheets. There's a really good range of washable fabrics - cotton (sew- and iron-on), linen, voile and silk - and if we all got together a bulk buy of 50 A4 ready-backed cotton sheets would work out at just £1.20 per sheet, and no messy soaking and drying processes involved! If you're interested, please see Jacqui.

5. Mobile Sharpening Services have also been recommended to us. Scissors sharpened for 50p to £1.50. 07818 866844. - just phone.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members, friends and families the happiest of Christmases and all the very best for the New Year!