

The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for Online Quilters

Issue 19 • October 1997

GUILD PROFILE:

The Greater San Antonio Quilt Guild, Inc.



Larry Beauchamp, president of the GSAQG.

When I finally caught up with Larry Beauchamp, President of the Greater San Antonio Quilt Guild, he asked me: “Do you want to go see our Operations Center?”

Operations Center? I could see immediately that this was a guild to be reckoned with.

With a membership of nearly 400 quilters and a \$95,000 annual budget, the west Texas guild serves nearly all of the San Antonio metropolitan area with a wide variety of activities and services. It is definitely Quilting, Inc.!

The occasion for my being in San Antonio was the guild’s large biennial quilt show September 19-21. I had a quilt in the show as a result of the guild’s call, through the internet, for quilts “by and for men.”

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GUILD PROFILE:

The Greater San Antonio Quilt Guild, Inc.

continued from cover

Since the chances of my ever again displaying a quilt anywhere besides my own house were fairly slim, I decided to go to the show along with the quilt.

“Quilts By and For Men,” was a special exhibit within the overall show, which included more than 250 quilts and wearables in categories ranging from art quilts to scrap quilts to quilts on the official show theme, “A Victorian Texas.”

I asked Larry, who was in charge of the men’s quilts, how the idea had originated. “We always have some special exhibits in our show, and this one sort of fell out of the sky,” he said. “Amy Cottrell, the overall show chairperson, suggested it, and we decided it should be quilts ‘by and for’ men so we would be assured of getting enough. The only place this exhibit was publicized was on the internet.” This call through the net resulted in the submission of 18 quilts, 12 of them by men and 6 by women for men. In the guild’s previous show, in 1995, they had featured quilts designed on computer.

Like so many things Texan, this show was a big production. Besides the many quilts, the show was characterized by an unusually large number of vendors — a total of 48, who took up fully half the exhibit space in the Live Oak Civic Center, a former Handy Dan home

improvement store. They came from all over Texas, and from as far away as Wisconsin, and they were doing a land office business. “We had 3,500 attendees at our 1995 show, and expect 5,000 to come to this one,” Larry told me. “Vendors start to get interested in any show with 2,000 visitors.” This year’s show also featured a series of free technique demonstrations from a variety of vendors and guild members. These half-hour presentations were extremely popular and continued throughout the show. The overall show was organized through the efforts of more than 200 guild volunteers.

Profits from the show, along with an annual guild auction, go for guild activities, including a charitable effort known as “Bright Hopes.” Guild quilters make 200-300 quilts a year to give to children in local homeless shelters, as well as doing special projects such as a quilt for the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat had intended to auction the quilt as a fundraiser, but liked it so much they kept it. They photographed it and sold posters instead. The guild also sponsors a community education project which takes quilt history, design, and techniques into the local schools.

Larry and his wife Lois are both quilters, and I asked him how they became involved with quilting, and with the guild. “My mother was a quilter,” he said, “and there was a quilt frame set up in our dining room as far back as I can remember. Lois also comes from a sewing family, though they were not quilters. But the real reason we had to be serious sewers is that we have eight children, five of whom are girls. We had to sew to outfit our daughters.”

The guild was founded in 1980, and he and Lois were involved in it almost from the beginning. “I joined so I could go to a lecture by Mary Ellen Hopkins,” he said. Now he’s president, a two-year post he said he took because “no one else wanted to do it.” He has previously served as second vice president and put out the guild newsletter, a chore he says fit with his professional skills in desktop publishing.

The guild meets monthly in a local church and sponsors two retreats each year, including a week-long quilt-in at a resort in the nearby Texas hill country.



Home improvement store turned quilt show: the Live Oak Civic Center.

So what's this about the Operations Center? Larry led me out to his Mazda MPV and we headed around the city's outer loop highway to a turnoff on the northwest side, about 25 miles away from the show. There on 15 acres of live-oak studded Texas scrub land was a low 3-bedroom ranch house that the guild leases so that it will have a "place of its own." It was empty and much of its contents removed because of the show, but Larry gave me the tour. The house is kept open by volunteers four days a week, and is used by quilting bees as a meeting place, as well as for classes. It is equipped with a design wall and large tables which can be used for basting.

One of the bedrooms is devoted to storage of the guild's considerable library of books, videos, and patterns, which was one of the main reasons for leasing the house. "The librarian got tired of hauling the library around in her car from meeting to meeting," Larry says. "I bet there aren't too many guilds around who have their own headquarters."

When we got back to the quilt show about 3:00 the parking lot at the civic center was all but full. Quilters



were coming and going, buying tickets for the appliqued raffle quilt (designed on a computer), attending vendor demonstrations, examining the tiny stitches and colorful designs of the guild's members and other show participants, and perusing acres of fabric, books, and notions to add to stashes. Clearly quilting is alive and well in San Antonio, and the GSAQG, Inc., is at the heart of it!

* * *

QUILT SHOP REPRISE

Our trip to San Antonio included (of course) visits to the local quilt shops. Earlier this spring we reported on trips to Las Colchas and Plain Jane's, with a vow to see Seventh Heaven the next time. There are a number of wonderful quilt stores that are located in improbable places. You know, you follow the directions you got over the phone and about three minutes before you find the store you say to your companion, "It can't be out here!" Seventh Heaven is one of those stores. It's located in what felt like the outskirts of town, and I have to admit that I was somewhat surprised by the burglar bars on the doors, and the reasonably unpicturesque surroundings, but once you get in the door, who cares?

Greeted by someone who advised us that "Half the store is already at the quilt show," we were still impressed by half that was left. The general atmosphere of the place was one of a family reunion, and that may have actually been what was occurring that day. Two babies and other young children were in the store and several adults sat



chatting in the classroom, rather oblivious to the fact that they were in a place of business. Even though we were the only customers in the store, we were allowed to poke and browse leisurely. There are lots of shop samples. Advertised as serving the quilting needs of the south side of town, Seventh Heaven offers an unusual block-of-the-month pattern (Everyday Angels) that accommodates machine and hand appliquers. I picked up a flier that details their machine quilting service and since the sample work I saw was so nice, I may become a mail order customer to help me finish up my UFOs. Seventh Heaven also does quilt-related trips.



Since our visit in the spring, Plain Jane's has moved more toward the front of Artisan's Alley (directly outside Apple Annie's tearoom-yum.) The store has retained its down home flavor, complete with the bare bones instructional area that features metal and formica tables, left over from kitchens of the Fifties. Same great primitive stuff, same great feel. Even your non-quilting companions will find it appealing.

Las Colchas continues to have many, many kits and has the most specifically old San Antonio atmosphere. It features wallhangings of missions and other designs paying homage to the city's Hispanic heritage. One of their unique items is a "tortilla quilt" kit for children, which goes with a charming book. Las Colchas has also developed something of a taste for the primitive in their fabric and pattern selections. The owner and staff are very friendly and helpful, without being officious. A very pleasant shop.

— Lynn Holland



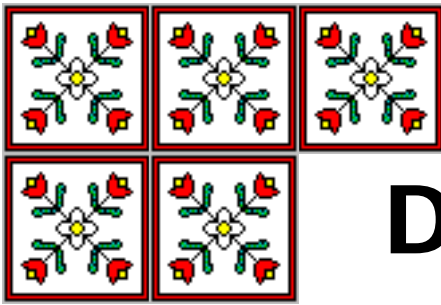
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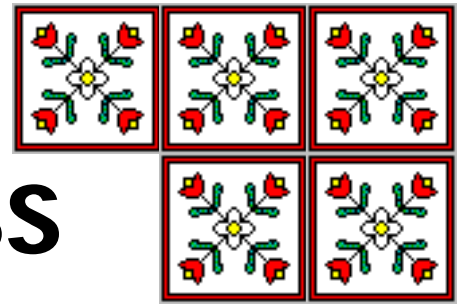
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Quilter Profile



DEBRA WEISS

Debra Weiss began sewing in home economics class, but she couldn't quite get it right: "I started sewing in junior high home ec class. I liked it and kept at it. My mom bought me a used sewing machine, and I made garments for many years. Unfortunately, I never could get them to fit quite right. I didn't figure out that you could alter the pattern for a long, long time! My sewing sort of went by the wayside until one afternoon in 1985 when I attended an outdoor craft festival and stumbled upon Quilt in a Day. I looked at the quilts and the books, and thought 'I could do that!' and marched on down to their shop. The ladies there helped me pick fabrics and supplies, and I went home and made a queen sized Log Cabin that I gave to my brother. He still has it, and I've been quilting ever since."

In the intervening years Debra has become an accomplished quilter and has developed a personal style with the aid of her computer: "I began doing all the traditional patterns until one day, I was doing a layout in Corel Draw! (tm) and was struck by the idea that I could use it for quilt design. I spent hours drawing blocks so I could have a library, and began mixing and matching different patterns, stretching, rotating, etc. I've been doing my own designs for about ten years. I prefer geometrics, and I enjoy playing with color and illusion. I'm dyeing my own fabric now as well. While I enjoy all aspects of quilting, I like design best."

Her acquaintance with the computer led, as it has for so many, to the online world. "I first got online on

GENie in 1992 through my corporate job", Debra says. "When I figured out how to search the service, I found a quilting area there, and was amazed to see so many other people interested in quilting. In 1994, I heard through the sysop grapevine that Microsoft was starting an online service, and I submitted a proposal for a quilting area called Stitch. I was awarded that contract, and managed the area until May of 1997. I so enjoyed building the community there and participating in various swaps and activities.

Later Debra started up the very elegant online magazine Quilt Gallery (<http://www.quiltgallery.com>). "The Quilt Gallery Magazine came about through an inquiry in Stitch," she says. "Two gentlemen from Ohio lived near a Toyota plant, and watched as workers from Japan

came to the USA and went crazy for American quilts. They figured that there were lots of people around the world who would like to have a quilt of their own but didn't have access to quiltmakers, and conversely, that many quiltmakers didn't have access to buyers. They wanted a listing service on the web, and figured that some editorial content would be a good draw. They hired me to do the editorial piece of the site, and I ended up doing the site design as well.



Unfortunately, they were unable to pay me the promised fees, and in the end, signed over all rights and the domain name to me. The magazine had generated such a positive response I figured I might as well keep on publishing it. I've done four issues, and hope to publish it on a more regular basis.

“I’ve tried to put out a magazine that as a quilter, I would want to read. I like meaty how-to information, with lots of diagrams. I also like to highlight the work of professionals for inspiration. I want the magazine to appeal to quilters of all levels, and particularly want to inspire quiltmakers to express their own ideas.

“Regarding my computing background, I’ve been at it since 1982. I’m completely self-taught. I’ve made one hundred percent of my living off my laptop since 1995 — I’m a full-fledged cybergeek! I publish the magazine, do web design, run the Games Forum on MSN and run a venture called The Content Company that generates trivia, word games, facts, polling and research for various clients.”

As a quilter and “cybergeek,” Debra has been at the center of the computer revolution that has swept quilting in the last few years: “I think the computer is a phenomenal tool for quilt design. It takes the tedium out of the design process — no more graph paper, tracing paper, colored pencils! I’m a big fan of the Electric Quilt program . . . while it’s not perfect, I think it has the best feature set, and it’s great for swaps.

“With the advent of online services and the internet, quilters from all over the world can swap tips and experiences, and I’ve been so enriched by being a part of the community. I’ve been amazed at how helpful and friendly folks are, and have ‘met’ so many wonderful people. I’m also constantly surprised when I see the visitor list for The Quilt Gallery Magazine. Just about every country in the world is represented. I could never have access to this kind of readership with a traditional print publication. I’m also delighted by the significant number of web sites devoted to quilting. So many people think quilting is just for little old ladies sitting around a frame. . . the industry has exploded in the past 12 years since I’ve been involved.

“I moved into a new house recently, and walked out on my porch one day and spied a big box sitting there. My online friends had made me a quilt and sent it

as a surprise. Dozens of people worked on it, and they did it all via e-mail. I was so moved by the effort and the spirit behind the stitches — I’ve never met any of these ladies in person. It’s exquisite, and it’s something I’ll treasure forever.”

As for the future, Debra sees good things for both quilting and online communities: “I think the industry as a whole will grow steadily. Quilts are special — they are useful and beautiful. No two are exactly alike. They

ooze with emotion. People aren’t going to stop making them, buying them or using them any time soon. My hope is that quiltmakers will be able to get a fair price for their work . . . that the quilt-buying public will see them for the art form that they are, and appreciate and care for them properly.

“Most of us are making quilts for people we love. It’s an emotional process, and it’s hard to describe it to people who don’t do it themselves . . . the

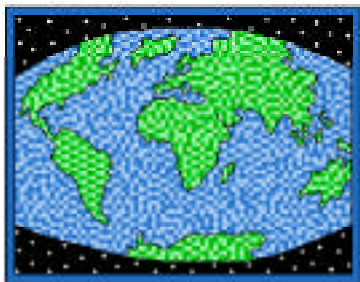
recipients often don’t quite understand how much energy goes into the finished piece. So many of us make quilts alone — we don’t belong to a guild or have quilting friends in our neighborhood. That’s why the online medium works so beautifully for us . . . you can always find someone to share with, even if they are on the other side of the world. I try to do my small share to facilitate this process.”

Through her work at MSN, and now with Quilt Gallery, Debra has set the standard for elegant design and high quality content for quilt sites. What also comes through clearly in all she does is her love for this beautiful and useful craft, and for the worldwide community that continues it.



[click here for](#)

[Planet Patchwork](#)



THE PATCHWORK PLANET

Quilting in South Africa

Of the former English colonies, South Africa is a relative late-comer to quilting. According to Jenny Whitehead of Newton Park, immediate past President of the South African Quilters' Guild, the craft only came to this once-troubled nation in the late 1970s. But they've been making up for lost time.

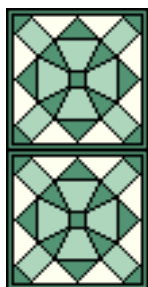
"Most of our early information came from American books and magazines," she says. "The few that we managed to lay our hands on at that time became very worn. Thus when we started we were very influenced

way a form of art. Recently we have had more success in having exhibitions hung in galleries. For instance the recent 'Peace Quilt Project' has been widely acclaimed, has been displayed in art galleries and the quilts really looked so good. This project was presented at our last National Quilt Show in Durban 1996. Participants were asked to contribute to the 'Wall of Peace' by sewing a quilt 'brick,' in blues and whites. The response was 800 bricks from 29 different countries, and these were sewn into 26 panels. These will be travelling extensively in our country and overseas, and will be on display at Houston this year."

The quilters in South Africa are more systematically organized than in most countries. "The quilting community is roughly divided up into 9 geographical regions," Jenny says. "Each of these regions has an umbrella guild, which links all the smaller groups in the area, and keeps them informed of shows, workshops etc. A representative from each region sits on the national body, The South African Quilters' Guild, which has been in existence for 7 years. The President is elected from its committee members.

"We have an additional 3 co-opted members who each have special talents to offer the Guild, such as judging or quilt study. The SAQG meets annually and it has been very exciting to see how it has helped to guide the quilters in this country with respect to standards, and directives for the National Quilt Shows.

"We used to host a National quilt exhibition annually, but it put quite a strain on our quilters to make exhibition quilts each year. Now it is held every two years, in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. Each show is totally autonomous, but has to adhere to certain guidelines from the SAQG. Each hosting guild has the right to select venues, teachers, theme and the dates. It is normally held in the first week of July. The delegates number about 600 (very small compared to your shows over there. I attended Paducah in '96 and nearly freaked out with all those quilters!!!) We usually run from the Monday morning right through to



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by the American trends. By the early '80s there were quite a number of us who had grown tired of making cushions, and we moved on to sewing quilts. We have never looked back."

Based on her experience with SAQG, Jenny estimates there are approximately 5,000 quilters in South Africa today — certainly a small community compared to the estimated 14 million quilters in the U.S. "Being a small community has the great advantage that we all know each other well," she says, "sharing information and skills very willingly. As our history of quilting grows we are creating our own styles, colours and designs.

"Interest in the 'Art Quilt,' for want of a better definition, is growing, and we have some very talented quilters who are slowly getting their work recognized as an art form. We have found it quite hard to educate the public and galleries, that we are making more than 'bed-covers,' that the quilts being sewn are all in their own

the Saturday following. We offer courses throughout the week. For the next show here in Port Elizabeth in 1998 we have 30 SA teachers and 5 from overseas who have already agreed to come and teach during the week.

“We will be holding our first juried show in 1998. This has been decided by the SAQG as we feel that the quilts on the National exhibition should be of a high standard. There will be other smaller quilt shows at regional levels, so that every quilter will have the opportunity to show/share their work. We will be jurying two days before the judging commences (I for my sins will be one of these first jurors, together with one of our learned judges and our present President of the SAQG Paul Schutte. I was selected as I am the immediate Past President.) We hope to have about 250 quilts on display for the exhibition.

“The national show is the highlight of many quilters and they travel many miles, by air and car, to attend. For some it is the only time that they make contact with fellow sewers. We have vendors from all over the country coming. In 1998 we are expecting about 13 to attend, all quilt-related, and this is a good representation of the vendors in the country.

“The umbrella guilds in the larger areas meet quarterly, with meetings similar to those in the states, with Show and Tell, hands-on sharing, slide shows, etc. Within the umbrella guilds we have the smaller home groups who usually meet weekly, and are supportive groups.” There are no quilting magazines published in South Africa, though the guilds publish their own newsletters and the country’s family magazines also carry quilt stories.

Asked if there is a distinctive South African style of quilting, Jenny replies: “I feel, having traveled both in the USA and UK, that quilting in SA is very similar to that in other countries. The traditional type of work is the most popular, but this is inevitable when we get most of our ideas from overseas publications, both books and magazines.

“However there is a definite style being developed which is very South African. This is the use of bright, hot colours, obviously as a result of our hot climate, and of course the local flora and fauna offer many ideas, leading to folk/simple styles and to the more exotic/artistic wall-hangings. We are also taking ideas from many of our African tribes, who use simple shapes and beadwork to decorate their homes and themselves.

“It is still early days but I am sure that we will see

more and more of our quilters using our own SA colours and designs. Nevertheless there will always be those who prefer the traditional/historical patterns, though perhaps we tend to use brighter contrasting colours. When visiting both the AQS and the Show in Lancaster, we were delighted to see that our work is of a comparable high standard. Not perhaps as high as your Best of Show, but



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not far off!!”

As for quilting materials, South Africa must import most of them, but has some distinctive local products as well. Jenny says: “We have several quilt shops around the country, based very much on the quilt shops we saw in the U.S. But all the supplies are imported from the U.S. and are thus very expensive. Obviously it is impossible for the vendors to import the vast selection of fabric available in the States. Sadly this will inhibit quite a few quilters with their purchases as it now costs a fortune to make a quilt. But while we were in the U.S. in April, 1996, we were pleasantly surprised to find we have nearly the same selection of books /notions/rulers. We have only a very small selection of packaged designs, and of course we just loved the wonderful selection of embellishments. These are few and far between here.

“We do have a few locally produced fabrics, and we tend to use these for our quilt backings. They are not as detailed in their printing and tend to be rather ‘stretchy.’ However I must mention our cotton blue and white fabrics which are only made here. It is commonly called the ‘German print.’ An Indigo dyed cotton fabric was brought to South Africa by German settler women in the mid-19th century and traders began importing this fabric from Europe. Xhosa women gradually also started using this fabric for clothing. A German factory developed a cheaper synthetic indigo dye in the 1890s and

the fabric was manufactured in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. When this manufacturer emigrated to England in the 1930's the fabric was then made in England under the 'Three Cats' trade name. In 1982 Da Gama Textiles first started production of German Print in SA, in the Eastern Cape, under the 'Three Leopards' logo, which is the African version of the 'Three Cats.' The recipe for the dye is a closely guarded secret and it is a synthetic, unlike the original indigo dyes. There are many different designs printed on these fabrics, which are usually blue but may also be printed in maroon and brown. The Xhosa ladies still wear these dresses."

Computer use by the general South African public is still in its early stages, so there are few quilters online. Jenny is the exception: "It seems strange to me, when our distances are so vast, that we don't use this form of

communication more. There are about 15 of us in contact with each other in Southern Africa, but this is a very new venture only a few weeks old, so hopefully it will grow and become exciting. Not many quilters use the computer for their work, I personally have because I find with my teaching that it is a wonderful tool to have at my finger tips. Also the cost of programs are expensive. As far as the Internet is concerned, I was only given this tool in March this year, and each time I log on to a digest or whatever, I ask for contact with SA's, and there only appears to be a handful of us using this most exciting medium. I am a bore with my peers when I meet and keep telling what I have discovered!!! But I am sure that this will also change and soon more and more quilters will be reaching out to friends across the world."



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plique when her family decided to live in a caravan that was not equipped with water or electricity. Talk about improbable serendipity!

There ARE artists profiled in this magazine with more "average" occupations and lifestyles, but I have to admit that the truck driver, the innkeeper and the electricity-less appliquer are really more memorable personalities. Although the photography is not the stylized, glitzy variety we have come to associate with many popular American publications, it has a family album charm. Consistent with the unpretentious, thoroughly likable style of the magazine as a whole, the photos are without that staged feel, as if the photographer just dropped in unannounced and asked "Mind if I take a few shots while I'm here?"

Quilt store photos usually include pictures of real

life patrons clutching fabric bolts, and sometimes a quilter's children serve as hangers for mother's handwork. Complete with a monthly section devoted to quilts made by children, Down Under Quilts covers a wide range of quilting interests in Australia, provides book reviews and quilt group news. Overall, it gives the impression that even though Australia covers a huge geographical area, its quilters are part of a friendly, closeknit community. I plan to visit them regularly, just to catch up on the latest news.

For more information about a subscription to Down Under Quilts, point your browser to

<http://www.quiltropolis.com>

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BOOK REVIEW:

The Quilter's Computer Companion

TVQ was among the first publications to review Judy Heim's wonderful earlier book, *The Needlecrafter's Computer Companion*, which has been a basic resource for computing quilters and other needleworkers around the world. In this new book,

The Quilter's Computer Companion

By Judy Heim and Gloria Hansen

No Starch Press, 1997

352 Pages, \$29.95

Judy has teamed up with prize-winning quilter and writer Gloria Hansen (see profile of Gloria in [TVQ #16](#)) to focus in more detail on the computing quilter.

What Judy and Gloria have undertaken in this new book is a daunting task. Not only do they provide basic general information for quilters who think they want to begin using a computer, but they provide dozens of tutorials and tips for users of both dedicated quilt design programs and general drawing and paint programs. Given the number of such programs for both the PC and the Macintosh, the comprehensiveness of this book is remarkable. Even more remarkable is that they have been able to present such material, in considerable detail, without boring us all to death. In fact the book is highly entertaining throughout, with a sprightly writing style and the zany sense of humor of the authors.

The book begins with a chapter entitled "The Stuff You Need to Buy," which provides a good overview of "how to be a quilting computer nerd" and gives good no-nonsense advice on everything from whether to buy a PC or a Mac to how to find cheap (or free) software. The chapter includes a vintage Judy Heim description of a foray into three computer stores where she asked the innocent question, "What kind of computer would you recommend for designing quilts?" The responses she got include the following, from Al, a manager at Circuit City:

"We hear that question all the time," said a grinning Al. "Microsoft has a software package for designing quilts."

"They do?" (Actually, they don't.)

"We don't have it in stock right now," Al said as he ran his hand over a rack, searching for the program," but we usually do."

"Bill Gates is into everything," I said.

"He is, and this Microsoft quilting software is terrific. You can scan quilts, you can print quilts. You'll probably want a color printer to do that."

"What kind of computer will I need?" I asked.

"Any computer here will run it but all you'll need is something low-powered. You know, a little entry-level Pentium."

The answers Judy got went downhill from there at two other computer stores, and her deadpan description of these encounters had me rolling on the floor laughing. Only thing is, it's not funny, and is one reason this book is so valuable for beginners.

But there is plenty in it for the computing quilter veteran as well. Part II gets into the design process and begins a series of chapters which include "quick start tips and sneaky ways" to draw quilt blocks using line tools and curve tools in a variety of programs. To make the book manageable, the authors did have to make some choices, and so limited the programs for which they wrote tutorials. Of the dedicated quilt design programs, they selected Electric Quilt 3 and Quilt Pro for the PC and for the Mac. Of the general design programs their main focus was on Corel Draw! for the PC and Canvas for the Macintosh, although some others are also touched upon. To my mind these are the right decisions, given the feature sets and ease of use of these programs. One can make an argument for QuiltSoft or PCQuilt, but a book can't be all things to all people.

Beyond the basics of drawing patches and blocks, Judy and Gloria move on to explore more sophisticated design strategies using the tools available in these programs. One particularly interesting chapter is "The Log Cabin Block: A Case Study." Through distortion and a variety of other techniques, this old chestnut block yields some stunning and unexpected quilts.

One of the things a quilt design program can do for you is help you learn basic principles of design, such as

how to manage color and value. Judy and Gloria capitalize on these capabilities to provide a succinct tutorial on the effects of value on the appearance of a design, and make one of their most interesting recommendations, that you try designing your quilts in shades of gray instead of living color.

Another chapter covers creation of star designs, and there are several on applique in a variety of programs. They then turn their attention to the subject of cyber-fabric. Many of the most popular quilt design programs are now offering CDs with large collections of digitized fabrics from designer collections. These have a great deal of appeal, but once again Judy and Gloria have an unconventional recommendation — don't bother with them. They are fun, but not that helpful, because "there's no substitute for laying the fabric all over the floor."

Other useful chapters are those on printing on fabric (full of tips and tricks) and on using the printer to create stencils and negatives for fabric painting, sun printing, and blueprinting. The riches in this book are incalculable for anyone who wants to experiment using high-tech equipment to design and make quilts.

In its final chapters the Quilter's Computer Companion provides "A Quilter's Guide to Cyberspace" and a "Quilter's Internet Yellow Pages," a selective but highly entertaining collection of links and other quilting resources on the internet, with editorial commentary. This section is invaluable both to newbies and internet veterans.

In addition to this wealth of information, humor,

and insight, the book also includes a 16-page four-color insert showcasing various quilts discussed throughout the book. Unlike the *Needlecrafters' Computer Companion*, this book does not include a disk with demo software on it, as there is not a great deal of demo software out there for quilters.

For all of its technical information and diagrams, its tips and tricks, one of the best things about this book is the controlling intelligence of the authors who help us sort out and make sense of this new and often strange cyber-world. I'll conclude by letting Judy and Gloria sum it up:

"Our grandmothers might have said that the best thing about quilting was being able to share in others' lives while helping them assemble something of beauty. The fact that we cyberge quilters are separated by oceans and mountains is irrelevant. Words and the immediacy of electronic communication bring us together.

"Has the Internet changed quilting? Only in the sense that it has increased the quilter's access to information, products, and ideas. One of the things that every quilter who has ventured into cyberspace marvels at is how the camaraderie of others has inspired them to try things they never dreamed they were capable of doing. . . .

"Like a thimble or sewing pins, the Internet is a tool. Like any other tool, its purpose is to help us accomplish our goals. Its advantage is that it helps us talk and learn more quickly than we otherwise would in our isolated lives."

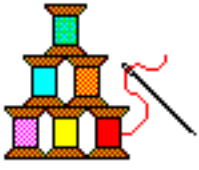


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The Schoolhouse Enterprises catalog offers lots of Other Fun Stuff, too! We've added a few things we think you'll like, so if you haven't visited our web page lately, we think you'll be pleasantly surprised.



CHARMS & SCHNIBBLES:

News Notes from All Over

FCREATE SPONSORING E-MAIL FRIENDSHIP QUILT

TVQ got an e-mail message from Rika Iwashige of FCREATE, an online quilting community in Japan, requesting contributions to an "e-mail friendship quilt" the group plans to make and display at quilt shows in Japan.

Rika writes: "At the largest Japanese quilt show, International Quilt Week '97 Yokohama (Nov. 6-8), members of FCREATE (a group of on-line quilters in Japan) are going to make a friendship quilt with e-mail messages, which we call "E-MAIL QUILT." We will bring together "e-mails" from quilters all over the world. We are going to print them on fabric, and make them into a quilt. We want messages from a lot of quilters. Those wishing to join this project, please visit our web page at:

http://www2b.meshnet.or.jp/~cr-quilt/e_QW97.html

which will be open at the beginning of October. If you or your family can send e-mail, you will be able to join us. If you have no access to the WWW, please send a message of a few lines (whatever you wish to put on the quilt) with your name (or nickname), country, and state to GBH00457@niftyserve.or.jp.

After we complete the quilt, we will show it on our web page and at some quilt shows (sorry, only in Japan). We would like to have a lot of participants in this friendship quilt making.

Please come and join us!

QUILTING HERITAGE CONFERENCE SET FOR MAY 1998

We received the following notice from Kris Driessen, sponsor of the Quilting Heritage Maillist, about an upcoming conference:

The 1998 Quilting Heritage Conference in Lowell, Massachusetts, "A Celebration of Creation," will be held May 21 - 23, 1998. Lowell, Massachusetts is considered the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution in textiles. There are several museums in the Lowell area which celebrate both the mills and the women who

made them profitable, and we have scheduled this years conference to take full advantage of two of them: the New England Quilt Museum and the American Textile History Museum. Lowell was the city where the farm girls went to better their lives. The reality was somewhat different, and our 1998 convention will focus on the social history of the time.

All the details are yet to be finalized, but our schedule so far includes:

*Lecture: "Quilts as by-products of textile production," Camille Cognac (author of *Quilt Restoration: A Practical Guide*)

*Lecture: *Assessing Your Antique Quilt*

*Lecture: "New England Quilts and Their Care," Jenny Gilbert (curator of the New England Quilt Museum) and Susan Wellnitz (assistant conservator American Textile History Museum)

*Lecture: "American Printed Textiles," by Diane Fagan Affleck, senior curator of ATHM and author of *Just New from the Mills*.

*Lecture: "The Adirondack Quilt," by Kathryn Greenwold, quilt historian and appraiser. A slide and trunk show.

*Private, guided tours of the New England Quilt Museum by its curator Jenny Gilbert

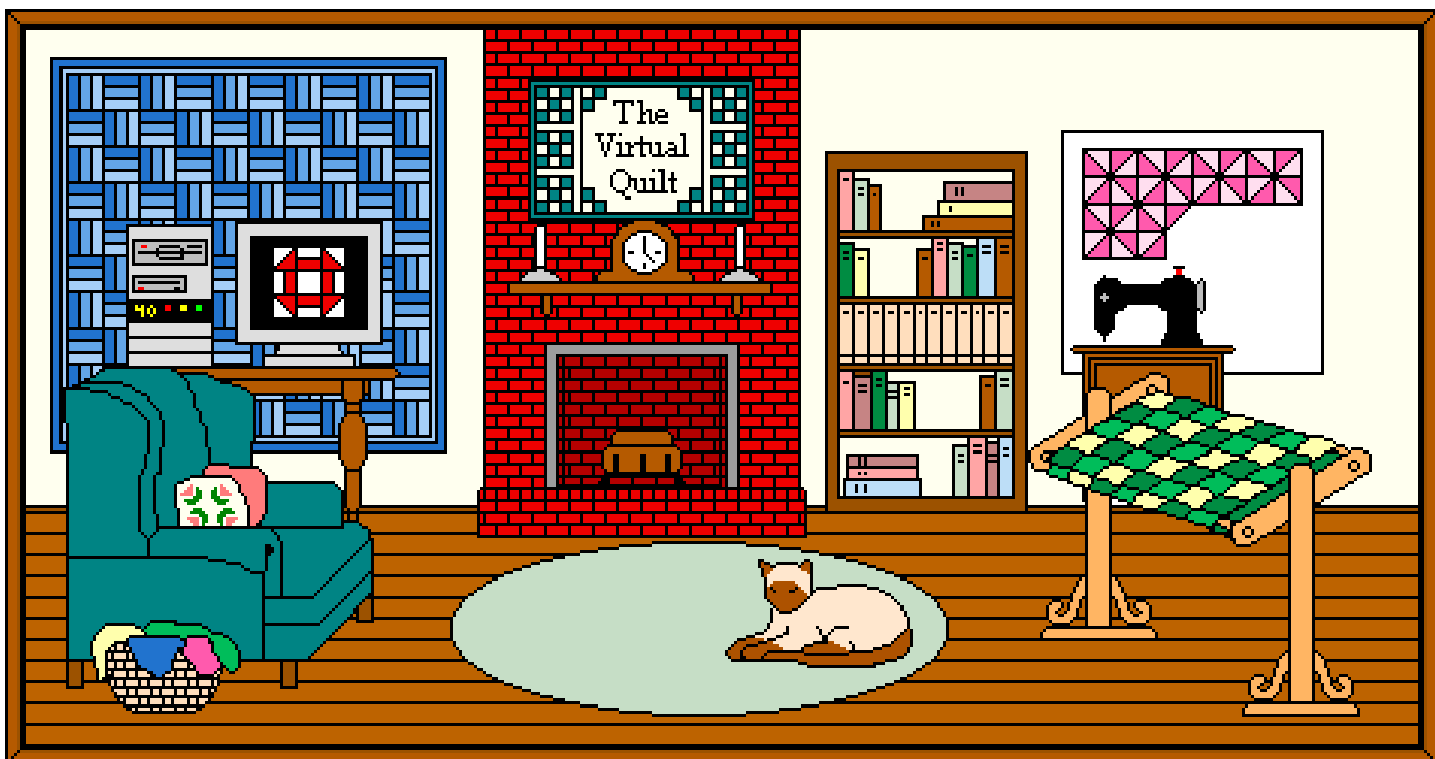
*Behind the scene tours of the textile conservation center of the American Textile History Museum and the collections department.

*Much more!

The Sheraton Inn Waterfront has agreed to discount their room rate to \$79 a night for up to four people. Sharing a room would be an excellent way to save costs!

We encourage you to sign up as quickly as possible. For obvious reasons, we have to limit the size of the convention - you can hardly have personal tours with 300 people! So we are limiting the number of registrants to 75. If you pay in full before December 1, 1997, you will receive a \$30 discount off the package price of \$225. A \$25 deposit will hold your spot, but it will NOT be refunded should you cancel. To register, E-mail oldquilt@albany.net, or snail mail: Quilting Heritage Convention, PO Box 273, Esperance NY 12066. Yes, we do accept credit cards.





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COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, NEWS, IDEAS, BRICKBATS?

Like any news publication, TVQ is always hungry for information about new developments in the area we are trying to cover. If you have an idea for a story, or want to tell the world about something you are doing which relates to computers and quilting, we'd like to hear about it.

We'd like news of new classes starting up to teach quilt design on computers, or new approaches to that teaching. New products, maillists, World Wide Web pages, etc., are all fair game, and we'd appreciate any tips you can provide. Send your tips by e-mail to rholland@atlanta.com.

If you have a comment about an article, a complaint or a correction, we're glad to hear that, too, and may publish some comments as letters to the editor. Again, these may be sent to rholland@atlanta.com.



The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for
Computing Quilters

Editor and Publisher: Robert Holland, Decatur, GA

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If you would like to continue receiving this newsletter (the ASCII version) in your e-mail about every 6 weeks for the next year, all it requires is a small contribution of \$5.00!

That buys you 8 issues in which you will find more in-depth reviews of quilt design software, more profiles of quilters, as well as profiles of online quilting communities. These features will be interspersed with news of developments in the quickly changing and expanding world of online quilting.

TVQ is also available to subscribers on the World Wide Web. The graphically enhanced web version can be seen at <http://planetpatchwork.com/tvqmain/>. Future issues will also be converted into Adobe Acrobat format.

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