

# The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for Online Quilters

Issue 30 • February 1999



## Also inside this issue of TVQ:


The Traveling Quilter: [San Jose Quilt Museum](#)

Book Reviews: [Cathedral Windows & Paper Piecing](#)

Product Review: [Olfa's new 45mm rotary cutter](#)

The Stay-at-Home Quilter: [Quilt Shops in the Atlanta area](#)

[More!](#)

The rotary cutter brings you back here! 

# BOOK REVIEWS: CATHEDRAL WINDOWS AND PAPER PIECING

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## *Breaking Traditions: Cathedral Windows Quick Method Quilt*

by Susan T. Fisher and Kimberly Nappier  
Bountiful Press, 1998  
12 pages, \$8.95

[Available from Planet Patchwork](#)

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### Reviewed by Lynn Holland

More than four years ago, I started a cathedral windows quilt. Inspired by Pauline Speiks, an eighty-something-year-old instructor who was a hand-sewing purist, I began with twenty yards of muslin and a pack of John James needles. During the class, Pauline shook her head and confided that "some folks actually sew the first two ends of the square together by machine." Somewhere after the first few rows of squares, I stooped to chain-sewing the ends of many seven-inch squares to speed up the process. Then about the halfway point, I read online about a method to allow the machine sewing of the center seam, and added that secret to my repertoire. Now, too far into the project to abandon it, I discover the aptly named Breaking Traditions technique that lets you do it all by machine.

Had I found this book four years ago, I would have been sleeping under my quilt for a couple of Christmases by now. However, those of you who yearn for the cathedral

windows glory without the agony of making millions of tiny hand stitches can benefit from this nifty method.

If you're into strict definitions right now you're probably thinking, "Cathedral windows isn't a real quilt," and you're right. This technique consists of folding and sewing muslin squares to make a four-layered frame for insets of colored fabric. There is no batting, no traditional sewing through all layers to hold them together. But be forewarned-- a cathedral windows quilt is no lightweight coverlet. Someone once compared hers to chain mail. (Perhaps this is why the authors of "Breaking Traditions" don't give instructions for a size bigger than full).

Written by Susan T. Fisher and Kimberly Nappier, this leaflet-style publication is designed to minimize confusion. First, there is an overview of the project, giving

definitions of the terms used in the instructional text. There are charts to guide the process, and the diagrams are very clear and well labeled. I appreciated the clarity and number of the diagrams and what may seem to some to be redundant labeling, but I have great difficulty with spatial concepts (yes, left and right too, if you must know) and even I could follow these diagrams.

This book assumes nothing, which I consider a plus when presenting a novel technique. Not everybody **DOES** actually know the very thing at which you may roll your eyes. Most possible pitfalls are discussed and critical points are emphasized. The authors have packed a lot into

this twelve-page booklet, including two different methods for finishing your quilt, a chart so you can experiment with different color combinations, and instructions



for a cathedral windows pillow. The only thing missing is information on the specifics for making quilts in queen- and king-size, and maybe some more specific tips on how to deal with the size and weight of the quilt once you get beyond the halfway point of the larger sizes. Although early in the instructions Susan and Kimberly mention that the quilt will be heavy, it occurs to me that wrestling a bed size quilt under a sewing machine may be a challenge.

So if you've been waiting to get started on that cathedral windows quilt, this book may be what you've been waiting for. You know, once I finish my cathedral windows quilt, I'd like to try a grandmother's flower garden. Susan and Kimberly, could you figure out how to do that by machine by the year 2005?

the Field", which is labeled intermediate. I have a feeling that the ease or difficulty of some of these patterns is rather subjective - we each have our own specialties and our own particular areas of stress when it comes to piecing.

The fact that there are ten projects hides the fact that some of them include several different patterns, which you can mix into your own quilt designs. The projects themselves are worthwhile, though, and appeal to a wide variety of interests. They feature cows (the author is from Texas), airplanes, flowers, coffee cups, angels, Santas, sailboats and bumblebees.



Reading through the book, you may have trouble deciding which quilt to try out first. Personally, I'm torn between "Safe at Last" and "Flowers and Bees." In the first, a cardinal perches at the entrance to his birdhouse, to the obvious intent interest of a cat sitting below. You have to piece the bird first, then insert that into the larger birdhouse pattern. The cat is a pretty simplified design - really only an outline. Quilting the cat's tail as shown, though, and the context of the quilt, makes it fairly clear. Also, the tulip border compliments the design, bringing out the cardinal's red very nicely. "Flowers and Bees" is pretty much what it sounds like, but made a little more whimsical by the quilting of the bees' circuitous flight paths. It includes one pattern for the bees, two patterns for the blossoms, and two stem and leaf patterns.

On the other hand, the "Sailboats" pattern is pretty easy and will fit in very well with some fish patterns I already have, for a marine-themed quilt I'm about to make.

While only brief instructions are given for each quilt project, the book does begin with a page of general directions on making and piecing foundations, including discussion of different foundation materials, and a few pages of step-by-step instructions, with color photos, using one of the simpler patterns, featuring airplanes, as an example. It's well done, although this is fundamentally not a how to foundation piece kind of book. It's a collection of favorite patterns, and it fills that role very well indeed.



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### *Favorite Foundation-Pieced Minis: Book II*

Miriam Neuringer  
Chitra Publications 1998  
\$12.95

[Available from Planet Patchwork](#)

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### **Reviewed by Christina Holland**

I've lately become enamored of foundation piecing. Given the proper pattern, it's a remarkably easy technique to learn and the results can be incredible. But I've learned from experience that it's not at all easy to design one's own foundation block. It's kind of tricky to keep in mind both the overall look of the pattern and the order in which the pieces are to be stitched. So I, probably like many of you, have started to collect particularly interesting and fun foundation patterns. Miriam Neuringer's book "Favorite Foundation Pieced Minis: Book II" offers some very worthwhile additions to almost anyone's collection.

There are ten miniature quilt projects in this book. Only one is marked advanced; there are five intermediate projects and four easy. Which is actually a little bit misleading. "Angels at my Window," marked as easy, actually requires the same total number of pieces and has similarly tiny triangles in it as does "Outstanding in

# THE TRAVELING QUILTER: THE SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF QUILTS AND TEXTILES

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By Christina Holland

## San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles

110 Paseo de San Antonio  
San Jose, California 95112  
(408) 971-0323

10am-5pm Tuesday - Sunday, open 'til 8pm Thursdays,  
closed Mondays

Free on the 1st Thursday of every month

Shortly after I arrived at San Jose's Museum of Quilts and Textiles, I found that I had violated one of the cardinal rule of museum visits: call ahead to find out what's scheduled for that day.

I'd been there only a few minutes when they arrived. About thirty or forty teenage boys and girls and their somewhat frantic chaperones, clearly on an involuntary expand your cultural horizons kind of field trip. It made my visit more interesting, but probably less fun, than it would otherwise have been. Which is too bad, because the museum is a pretty neat place.



The [web site for the museum](#) declares it to be "America's 1st Quilt Museum, Since 1977." I don't know exactly how they arrived at that, since I can think of a few other museums that could vie with them for the title. For example, the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of American History opened in 1964 and has a textile [exhibit featuring 50,000 items](#) including many quilts. So don't let "America's 1st Quilt Museum" get your expectations up too high. It's a small museum that features rotating exhibits. If you keep your expectations

within bounds, though, it's quite worth visiting, and a pleasant antidote for all the techiness of the surrounding Silicon Valley.

If you go to San Jose and want to visit the museum, your first challenge, I'm afraid, is to find the place. It's on Paseo de San Antonio, downtown, which is a pedestrian mall a few blocks long. I'm going to digress to give you basic directions, because I grew up in San Jose and I still got lost. San Antonio runs parallel to and between Santa Clara and San Carlos streets, starting at the Cesar de Chavez Park and ending at San Jose State University. The museum is just a little bit east of the San Jose Repertory Theater.

Once you arrive (having learned from my mistake

and called ahead), you'll find the admission very reasonable: \$4, or \$3 for seniors or students. It's not a large place - you probably needn't allow more than an hour or two, depending on the exhibit. When I was there last month, it was "Go Figure! Cloth Dolls and Figurative Quilts."

"Go Figure!" was certainly very interesting. It was a fairly small exhibit,

perhaps thirty-five items in all, in essentially one room. Which made for an interesting mix. There were some very serious pieces, such as Judith Moores' "Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman," a strikingly detailed figure overlaid on a log cabin quilt, made in tribute to the 75th anniversary of U.S. women's right to vote. Or "Woman and Cat," by Deidre Scherer, made in memory of her cat Rosie, companion for 20 years.

Several of the works displayed were memories captured in cloth. "Mother grew up in Canada", by Nancy

S. Brown, is a smallish wall-hung quilt featuring three children riding on the back of a very realistic moose. Ruth B. McDowell's "Blueprint for an Ancient Imple-ment" looks very like a photograph, of two small chil-dren (the guide says they are Margaret and Leah) dig-ging at the beach with a clam shell. Another quilt of extreme realism is "Daniel and Grandpa" by Ann Gail Peterson, which was based on a photo.

Mixed in with all of that, though, were some fairly lighthearted pieces. I especially liked "Orbitting Zenith" and "Zenith"'s two companion pieces by Emily Owens. Zenith is a dog. A large, yellow dog with his tongue hanging out and his leash leading back to his human, who's mostly confined to a wall hanging. There're quotes attributed to each in the exhibit guide they gave me when I came in. The woman says "When walking, I prefer my blue shoes." Zenith says "Ruff ruff. Let's go."

Or then there was the rather large and enigmatic

purple guy sitting in the middle of the room, an untitled work. Or "Regal Bird," number 15 in a series of 25 such bird people, each with a different costume, by Nancy Laverick. I was strangely drawn to "Regal Bird." It's a small figure, 24 inches high, but I think the combination of the somewhat stylized bird head and the ornately de-tailed burgundy robe reminded me of some of Jim Henson's creations.

All in all, I enjoyed my visit to San Jose's Museum of Quilts and Textiles very much. Probably much more than most of the kids who were there with me. Hope-fully some of them were impressed by it, although too cool to say so in front of their friends, and will visit again. I wouldn't mind going again, myself. I have a feeling that on less crowded days it'd be a great place to hang out and relax for a while, and to find an inspiration or two.



[For more pictures from the San Jose Quilt Museum, please see the Web version of this article.](#)



# PRODUCT REVIEW: OLFA'S NEW 45MM ROTARY CUTTER

By Addy Harkavy ([aah@maine.rr.com](mailto:aah@maine.rr.com))

Olfa has made a very good attempt at creating a safer, more ergonomic rotary cutter that holds straight, pinking, and wave blades.

To extend the blade, one pushes a red button to unlock the blade and squeezes the handle. The blade moves forward and can be locked in the "out" position. Alternatively, one can leave the blade unlocked and squeeze the handle for each cut, which would return the blade into the body of the cutter after each cut. Olfa calls this system the ADual-Action Safety Lock and mentions locking the blade open "for comfort." For comfort, maybe. For safety, I don't think so. Those who lock the cutter open rather than compressing the handle with each cut will still need to remember to close the blade each time they use it.

The curved handle may be more comfortable for some quilters, but I found that if I put my index finger on the "washboard" -- that ridgy surface on the narrow edge of the cutter body which presumably puts the wrist in its best position, it was cumbersome to use the lock/unlock button. The cutter was extremely comfortable, however, when I forgot about the button, kept the blade



unlocked, and compressed the handle for each cut. This was possible, even with my finger on the "washboard."

It doesn't seem fair to compare the new cutter to Olfa's 45mm straight cutter because it would be like comparing apples to oranges. On the other hand, folks who already use another brand of curved cutter might like the Olfa grip, which is quite comfortable, and they might prefer its blade locking system to that of other manufacturers.

From a safety standpoint, I'd prefer to use this cutter by compressing the handle each time I cut and

releasing after the cut to put the blade back into the body of the cutter. The cutter could be locked in the closed position before leaving the sewing area.

Olfa's suggested retail price is \$21.95 

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## PERFECT SQUARE

Perfect Square's mother is pregnant and about to have a new product. Perfect Triangle is due any day now. Perfect Triangle is also a REUSABLE iron-on design but it will make quarter square triangles instead of half-square triangles.

Perfect Square is growing up now and has gotten a job at a creative quilt pattern company and is doing quite well. In fact, patterns are being written exclusively for Perfect Square. See the Perfect Square web site at <http://www.webworldinc.com/perfectsquare> for details.

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# SCHOOLHOUSE ENTERPRISES

## IN ASSOCIATION WITH PLANET PATCHWORK

Gridded Geese(c) is a unique paper foundation method for mass-producing Flying Geese units up to 24 at once (no kidding!). Schoolhouse Enterprises, inventors and manufacturers of this revolutionary product, offers both a printed version of their catalog, and an on-line

(<http://www.planetpatchwork.com/store/index.cfm?DID=21>) shopping cart service in conjunction with Planet Patchwork. You can safely order online through Planet Patchwork's secure server with your credit card!

The folks at Schoolhouse Enterprises and Planet Patchwork search for items for quilters (and friends of quilters) which are unique and often overlooked by other catalogs you might connect with. Check out their on-line catalog, which offers such interesting items as Photos-to-Fabric(tm) photo transfer paper, Ott Lights, beautiful embossed note cards, kaleidoscope pendants, and much more! And while you're visiting, be sure to check out the current Monthly \$special!!

Schoolhouse has recently begun carrying the complete line of Electric Quilt products, including EQ3 design software, and Sew Precise! and Sew Precise with Shirley Liby.

They also offer a large selection of INSPECTOR CLUESEW's Mystery Quilts. If you missed any of the Cases which were previously online, you'll find them here!

If you're not able to access the web page, just e-mail Schoolhouse Enterprises (<mailto:clusew@jerseycape.com>) with your "snail mail" (post office) address for your FREE CATALOG and Sample of Gridded Geese(c)! (Sorry, but Samples are only available in the printed catalogs.)



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## BREAKING TRADITIONS Cathedral Windows Quick Method Quilt

This book will instruct even the novice sewer how to create an heirloom quality quilt, entirely by sewing machine, in a fraction of the time it would take to sew by hand. Full color cover, clear concise illustrations, yardage charts and many tips.

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E-mail inquiries to: [Bountipres@aol.com](mailto:Bountipres@aol.com)

## RED RIVER QUILTERS

The Red River Quilters Guild will present their Biennial Quilt Show and Seminar April 9-11, 1999 at the Bossier Civic Center, Bossier City, LA. The show hours are Friday & Saturday 10 - 5, Sunday 12 - 5. Guest Instructors are John Flynn, Jackie Robinson, Gabrielle Swain, Charlotte Jackson, Thelma Thompson, & Gayle Wallace. For class information send a large SASE to: Leslie Holder, Registration Chairman, 4703 Gilbert, Shreveport, LA 71106. Or call Virginia Young, 318-746-3637, or Email [byoung@shreve.net](mailto:byoung@shreve.net).

## HOLOCAUST WALLHANGINGS

### **The Holocaust Wall Hangings of Judith Liberman at The Museums at Stony Brook, January 16-May 2, 1999**

The Holocaust Wall Hangings of Judith Liberman is the most powerful exhibition to document the dehumanization, suffering and torture of Jews during World War II through fabric art. The Museums at Stony Brook will present the exhibition in the History Museum from January 16 through May 2, 1999. The exhibition includes more than thirty quilted wall hangings that convey Judith Liberman's interpretation of the atrocities suffered by Jews during the war.

Major funding for the exhibition has been provided by Citibank, NA, with additional support from Drs. Henry and Marsha Zlatin Laufer, Richard and Sandy Feinberg, Paul and Barbara Lusman, Temple Isaiah and Jeannie Cohen.

The exhibition is noteworthy not only for its historical and emotional content, but also for its artistic merits. The wall hangings are a unique art form in which a wide variety of techniques are applied to a fabric background to form an expressive work of art. Painting, block printing, calligraphy, stenciling, sewing, appliqué, embroidery and beading are all utilized to express the devastation of the Holocaust. The format of each quilted piece is reminiscent of the banners the Nazis used to establish their presence in Europe during the Holocaust. The limited palette of red, grey and black conveys images of blood and fire, suffering and despair, and death.

The exhibition is divided into two thematic sections: Scenes of the Holocaust and Maps of the Holocaust. The scenes contain realistic portrayals of individuals stripped of humanity. In these people take center stage and are viewed as either utterly isolated or as a part of a totally depersonalized mass. The maps include places, numbers and symbols that take the place of the individual telling the story. Often in these works people appear within a much broader context of time and place.

Judith Liberman was born in Haifa, Israel, and came to the United States upon completion of high school. She is the award-winning author-illustrator of *The Bird's Last Song* (Addison-Wesley, 1976) and is a member of the National Association of Women Artists, the New York Artists Equity Association and the American Society of Contemporary Artists. Liberman's first solo exhibition was in 1973. Since then, her artwork has been exhibited in Boston, New York, and Israel and can be found in numerous collections including the DeCordova Museum (Massachusetts), the Haifa Museum of Modern Art (Israel), and the Yad Vashem Museum (Jerusalem). Judith Liberman earned four degrees in Social Studies and Law including a J.D. degree from the University of Chicago Law School and a LL.M. from the University of Michigan Law School. In search for a creative outlet, she decided to pursue her main interests in art, later receiving a M.F.A. at Boston University School for the Arts.

A catalogue, in both English and Hebrew, accompanies the exhibition.

Long Island's largest privately supported museum, The Museums at Stony Brook is located at 1208 Route 25A in Stony Brook (New York). The Museums are open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 AM-5 PM and on Sunday from 12-5 PM. The website for the Museum is [www.museumsatstonybrook.org](http://www.museumsatstonybrook.org). For more information please call 516-751-0066.



# THE STAY-AT-HOME QUILTER: QUILT STORES IN GREATER ATLANTA

By Lynn Holland

Living in Atlanta has spoiled me. On any day, there is an open quilt store within 15 minutes of my house. If it's not Sunday, there are two. And if I want to extend my travel time to a half hour, there are at least four available to meet my fabric needs. Of course, the closest two are the ones I frequent the most, and not strictly due to proximity. My relationship with Village Quilt in Stone Mountain Village (975 Main St., Stone Mountain, GA 30083, (770) 469-9883) began before I became seriously

interested in quilting. I can remember wandering into this store when my children were little (Village opened its doors in 1981), and wishing I had both the time and other resources to take a class at this imaginative place. Today, of course, I am addicted to the monthly Santa Club workshop and visit there

practically weekly. Joyce Selin, shop owner, has assembled a sizeable collection of wonderful fabric and an even more wonderful shop staff. The staff seems to truly love being there, and no one leaves the store a stranger.

Although not the largest shop in the area, Village stands in my mind as the "cornerstone" store of the Atlanta area. The selection is varied, but solid. The range of classes is impressive, both in number and type. In any given quarter, there are multiple hand applique/hand stitching classes, several wearable offerings, lots of machine technique classes and of course, monthly Santa

and doll club meetings. There is a block of the month, Millennial Stars, which is designed and "kitted" in-house. For those not into Marge La Benne's scrappy style, there are two other BOTM offerings. In general, if you need it or want it, Village Quilt has it. Although the stock at Village is always current, and the fabric selection is wide, the emphasis here is NOT on the funky or offbeat. They are like family -- traditional, reliable, always welcoming.

Should you need sustenance after shopping at VQS, give the Magnolia Tea Room (just down Mountain Street

from the shop) or The Village Corner Restaurant (just down Main Street) a try. Magnolia does a lovely Southern lunch while Village has the most fabulous bread and other continental goodies. Both are high on my list of places to go even when you're not visiting quilt stores.

Not too far from Village, in

the next little town of Tucker, Dream Quilters (2343-A Main St., Tucker, GA 30084, (770) 939-8034), opened in 1991, the joint venture of two sisters. Although both sisters have left the business, the new owner, Jan Holdorf, has managed to preserve much of Pam and Libby's uniqueness and added her own stamp as well. DQ has always had a flair for color and unusual design techniques, although there is an emphasis on traditional fabrics and methods as well. There is always a good supply of novelty and seasonal fabric, often right up front to make it difficult to resist temptation. Beautiful batiks and Balis, as well as a good selection of oriental-style



Lynn and Pamela admire the dolls and patterns in the "Santa Corner" at Tiny Stitches in Atlanta.

fabrics, round out the hallmarks of this store. The staff is friendly and helpful and ladies of the shop frequently participate in shop challenges, which the customers judge by their votes. This year there are four Block Of The Month opportunities at DQ. My favorite is Cynthia Willard's "Angels More and More," based on a pattern from Curtis Boehringer Quilting. Each month a 20x30 block is completed, yielding a bed-sized quilt when you're done. There's also the intriguing "Piecing the Trail" which offers history lesson each month along with each new section of the quilt, to give you the flavor of the quilting experience in the 1850s.

Classes cover the time-honored basics and then expand your horizons to include the very latest, including origami, fabric dyeing, foundation piecing and silk ribbon techniques. Yes, there is a monthly Santa Club, and VERY importantly, Dream Quilters has now begun to offer its newsletter via e-mail for those of us who hate to wait for the class schedule. Another great feature is that DQ is open on Sunday, which is a real plus for those of us who can't get there during the week.

Every so often, I visit the far reaches of Marietta, about a 30-minute trip from my house if it's not rush hour. Within a few minutes of each other are two won-



**It's not hard to find Little Quilts!**

derful stores, Tiny Stitches and Little Quilts.

Far from being diminutive, Tiny Stitches (2520 E. Piedmont Rd., Suite H, Marietta, GA 30062 (770) 565-1113) is a sizeable shop with tons of fabrics (4,000 bolts), books, patterns and about every other quilt-related gift and notion imaginable. At the front of the store is a nice playtable with decent toys, ready for the restless tot who comes shopping with Mother. Since the attractions are so vast here, Mom's visits are probably not just quick trips. Just beyond the kids area is a giant selection of cute pins and mini-ornament patterns. After that, there are bolts and bolts from which to choose. I was particu-

larly taken by a cute Noah's ark themed quick quilt, which was available in kit form, but very attractively packaged. Tiny Stitches has the best Santa, snowman and doll pattern selection I can remember. The day of my visit, someone was carefully sorting through the big scrapbasket and selecting a huge number of pieces (for a charm quilt?). There was a respectable crowd at the cutting table, everyone having a great time admiring the choices of everybody else.

This store is a host store for the Debbie Mumm Friendship Club. Among their monthly offerings are a



**The shop shows the sense of style the Little Quilts books have made famous.**

Baltimore Album class, a Strip of the Month quilt, Marti Mitchell Sampler, a holiday items group and a Santa QUILT group. In addition to the expected basic techniques classes, Tiny Stitches features classes in the latest ideas such as T-shirt quilts and photo transfer methods. Add to this a beautiful selection of polymer clay buttons and other gorgeous embellishments and you're got one fabulous shop. My one regret is that I didn't sign up for their cat jacket class - but maybe next time. After all, you've got to go back to a store which features as "sad news" in the newsletter that this is the last year to buy 20th century fabric!

Just a few minutes away is Little Quilts (1450-C Roswell Road, Marietta, GA 30062, (770) 578-6727), operated by the ladies of Little Quilts fame -- Alice Berg, Mary Ellen von Holt and Sylvia Johnson. Opened late last fall, this store is a house that used to be home to an antique store. If you're ever seen one of their charming publications, you'll feel like you've stepped into the book. This store is too charming to do justice in a review, not to mention that Mary Ellen von Holt was behind the counter that day! Most of the fabric is of

the small prints/reproduction variety that typifies the Little Quilts look. There is a healthy selection of primitive embroidery patterns, an extensive redwork collection, Little Quilts "cheater cloth" and yards and yards of the familiar "magic" variety for which they are known.

There are also rug hooking supplies, and many other goodies that will get your nostalgia bone to aching.

In addition to fabric, there are beautiful pottery items, country wood and tin creations, and fabric dolls to complement the quilts you'll want to make. And the quilts you'll want to make! Many of the familiar patterns are available in kit form, and there are classes to go with them, too. The four block of the month choices

for this year are gorgeous beyond description; it's impossible to decide which one should be your next UFO!

There's a Little Quilts museum room in which the trio has enshrined the mementos of their business, which was started 15 years ago with \$47 and fabric from the collective stashes of the owners. To commemorate the opening of their retail shop, the ladies have designed a charm quilt with 470 pieces for which they are asking -- yup -- \$47! The Marietta stores are easily accessed from I-75 (Okay, we did get lost, but it was not the fault of the directions), so if you're travelling through town, it's not a huge sidetrip. The only drawback I can mention is that the quaintest eating spot was the McDonald's across the street from

Little Quilts, but I'm sure someone will e-mail me with a recommendation for a great lunch place not too far away. And please e-mail me quickly. These stores are so inviting that I feel a return trip coming on.



**Top: Exterior of Tiny Stitches.**  
**Bottom: The shop is well-lighted by the large picture windows, making it easy to see true colors.**



## THE QUILTBROKER

TVQ Winter SPECIAL! - (this offer is NOT on our web site!)

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## DESERT THREADS

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# QUILT SHOW REVIEW: GEORGIA QUILTS

Georgia Quilts: Piecing Together History

Atlanta History Center  
130 West Paces Ferry Road  
Atlanta, GA 30305  
(404) 814-4000

<http://www.atlhist.org>

November 14, 1998 through September 5, 1999 Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Sun. Noon - 5:30 p.m. Admission: \$7.00

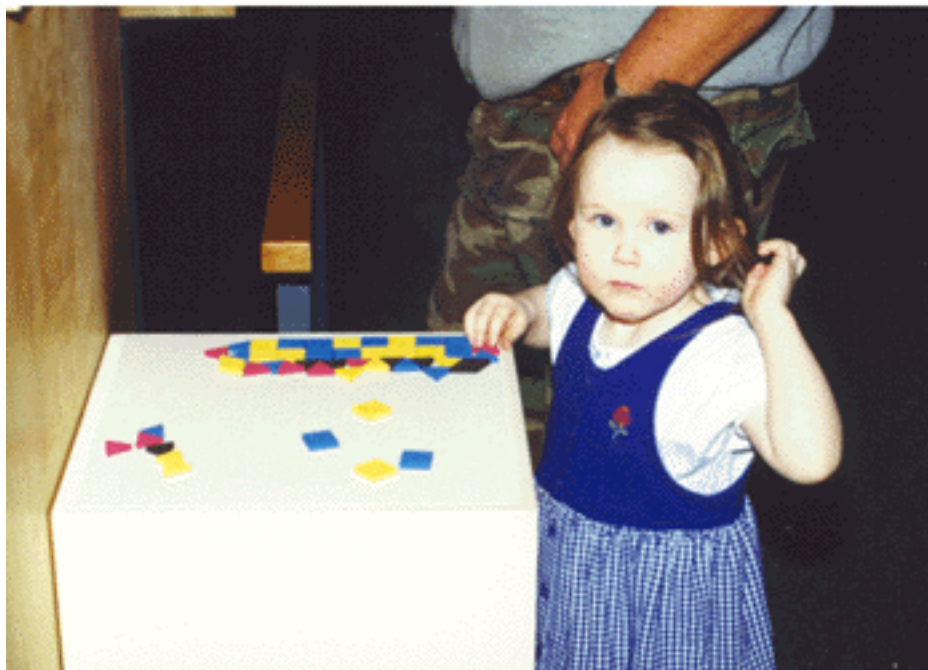
"Before Monet, Picasso, & Matisse there were Mabel, Harriett, & Gladys." So goes the headline on the promotional flyer for "Georgia Quilts: Piecing Together History," the current show at the Nicholson Gallery of the Atlanta History Center. The last quilt show of note at the Nicholson Gallery was the marvelous traveling African-American quilts exhibit curated by Roland Freeman. Before that, the [Olympic Games Quilts](#) were featured in this relatively small gallery prior to the 1996 Atlanta games.

The Atlanta History Center is made up of several restoration dwellings, including The Swan House and the Tullie Smith House, with attendant gardens, and a museum featuring a variety of rotating exhibits. The center specializes in folk art, and has its own collection of about 200 historical quilts, including the Civil War quilt, written up in *TVQ* #26. It is one of the best tourist venues in Atlanta because of the unique, lively way it presents history, and not least because it is not well-known and therefore not crowded most days. It also has a fine restaurant.

The 80 quilts in this exhibit do not come from the museum's archives, however. They are borrowed from the owners of quilts documented in the Georgia Quilt Project. From 1990 - 1993, this grass roots movement measured, photographed, and documented 8,100 Georgia quilts, including 1,300 from the nineteenth century. Nine of these quilts were certified as having been made

by slaves.

The pieces represent a wide variety of styles and each one has a story. Respecting the importance of this provenance, the exhibit tells many of these stories, and brings to life the people behind the quilts. One postage stamp quilt was entered in a contest by its owner, and won her a pump organ, a photo of which is displayed. Another log cabin utility quilt, sent with soldier Asbury Hargrove to battle in the Civil War, was used to wrap his body when it was returned to his family. Yet another, a tumbling blocks, was made by Anne Winter after the death of her husband in 1861, when she was 35. Left to raise five children alone, she cut up her fancy Paris wardrobe of satin and velvet to make the quilt. She never



**The Georgia Quilts show had several educational aspects, including a table with plastic triangles, etc. to illustrate the concept of piecing. One of the exhibit's younger visitors found it quite amusing!**

remarried.

A "possum quilt" made up of a series of blocks depicting possums (in honor of the maker's husband's love of possum hunting) is represented only by a photograph because the quilt itself could not be located by its owner.

The curators of this exhibit have also, as mentioned above, made an effort to recognize the contributions of

African-American quilters, featuring quilts made by both free and slave black women.

Consistent with its educational mission, the museum takes the opportunity with the exhibit to present several "lessons" in quilting for the benefit of those not

familiar with the craft. Miniature displays called "What is quilting?", "What is Piecing?", and "What is Applique?" give viewers an insight into the techniques involved in the construction of quilts. One clever display used plastic triangles and squares to demonstrate piecing. This is particularly popular with small children, who are able

to manipulate the plastic pieces like a puzzle. These little displays are actually quite interesting, even to those of us familiar with the materials and techniques of quilting.

Surprisingly, the museum allows flash photography of the quilts, but the lighting inside the gallery is often too dim to really see the quilts well. They are interestingly hung, with large dramatic quilts on the walls and many others hung over quilt racks on the floor. Photos of their makers and other archival images of quilters in earlier days add to the historical aura. An alarm sys-

tem, rigged to go off if anyone tried to touch the quilts, kept sounding, and became a nuisance after a while.

Besides the main exhibit room, there is a hallway outside which features some more contemporary quilts, so be sure not to miss it. There is also a fine gift shop,

which sells quilt books and other craft items and, in the spirit of the occasion, raffle tickets for a quilt on display in the hallway (a dollar a pop). I was disappointed that there was not an exhibit catalogue available, but soon discovered that one is in the works. Unfortunately it will not be available until late this year, but it's being done by Rutledge



**The exhibit made no assumptions about the level of knowledge visitors had about quilting.**

Hill Press, one of the finest small publishers in the south.

Over the period of the exhibit, the museum is sponsoring several special quilting events, including a quilt preservation workshop on February 27 and a celebration of Georgia Quilt Day on March 28.

If you plan to be in Atlanta between now and Labor Day, put this exhibit on your itinerary. Wander through the fragrant gardens, tour the houses, and find out how folks lived in the 19th Century. And plan to have lunch at the Swan Coach House! It beats the heck out of Six Flags.



[For more pictures from the Georgia Quilts Exhibit, please see the Web version of this article.](#)

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Planet Patchwork is widely recognized as one of the premiere quilting sites on the web. Along with our frequently updated articles, you'll find product reviews, a well-stocked Amazon bookstore, links to quilting freebies, and updates on quilting events around the world. Point your web browser to [Planet Patchwork](#) today!

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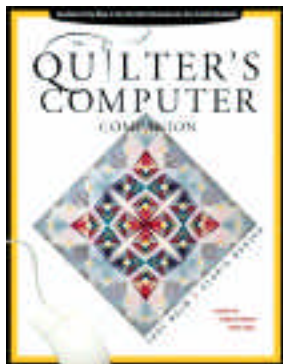
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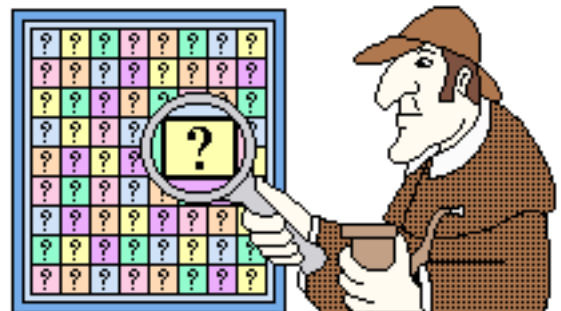
Norma can direct you to quilt shops in the area, plus the natural wonders located on the Olympic Peninsula. She can also plan a personal retreat for you and three quilting friends, or cross stitch buddies, or rubber stampers! You name it.

You are invited to visit the website for Greenhaven Enterprises, Quilt Retreats on the Olympic Peninsula, where you can check out Norma's quilts, learn more about Sequim, and of course, see Oliver. <http://www.olyopen.com/normah>

You may email Norma at [normah@olyopen.com](mailto:normah@olyopen.com) or call 360-681-0364 for more information.

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## THE CRAFT CONNECTION

The Craft Connection (<http://www.craftconn.com/>) is the place for you if you want to buy, make, or sell handcrafted items on the Internet. We sell quality cotton fabric at a discount, vintage ties for crazy quilts, and we'll soon be selling threads at a discount. All fabrics are linked to coordinating fabrics, so you know your choices will look great together. We try to find fabrics you won't see anywhere else. And we'll package them into packets of fat eighths, fat quarters, or 5" squares, so you can get a good variety without a big cash outlay. Among our fabric categories are florals, almost solids, and guy stuff.

Every month two fabrics are for sale at 20 percent off our already discounted prices. At our Crafters Mall, you can purchase quilts, vests, paintings, and music box kits, and we're adding new crafters to our mall all the time. You can use your credit card online on our secure server to safely purchase our fabrics and also our crafters' products. If you're a crafter, you can sell here and take credit cards without having your own credit card vendor account.

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## HICKORY HILL QUILTS

The Feedsack Club is delighted to announce that it will once again hold a conference concurrently with the Quilters Heritage Celebration in Lancaster PA on April 8 - 10 1999.

The conference continues to grow in size each year and has moved to the Holiday Inn at 521 Greenfield Rd, Lancaster PA, just down the street from the Quilters Heritage Celebration and across from the Tourist Bureau. The additional room at the new location means even MORE exhibits, lectures and demonstrations.

Lectures and classes are planned, including new products demonstrations - come and learn about Gridded Geese & Thangles. Events include the Show & Share, Raffles, a quilt contest, an auction, and, of course, vendors! Throughout the convention, look for buying, selling and trading of feedsacks and other fun stuff as well as door prizes. For more information, E-mail [baglady111@aol.com](mailto:baglady111@aol.com).

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Just arrived! Jeana Kimball's Foxglove Cottage buttons in size 11. These durable needles are as short as the size 12 and as tough as the size 10! Perfect for use in cotton batts.

PineTree now carries the complete line of EQ software, Until March 1 you can order the new version of EQ4 for the introductory price of \$80! After that, EQ4 will cost \$110 retail, \$93.50 PineTree price. PineTree now stocks SEW PRECISE - the Original, stand-alone software for foundation piecing, and SEW PRECISE 3 -- Shirley Liby Designs for foundation piecing. Look for the EQ-related books, TOO MUCH FUN, EQ3 SIMPLIFIED The Basics, and the EQ3 BLOCK BOOK.

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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](mailto: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](mailto:rholland@atlanta.com).



## The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for  
Computing Quilters

Editor and Publisher: Robert Holland, Decatur, GA

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