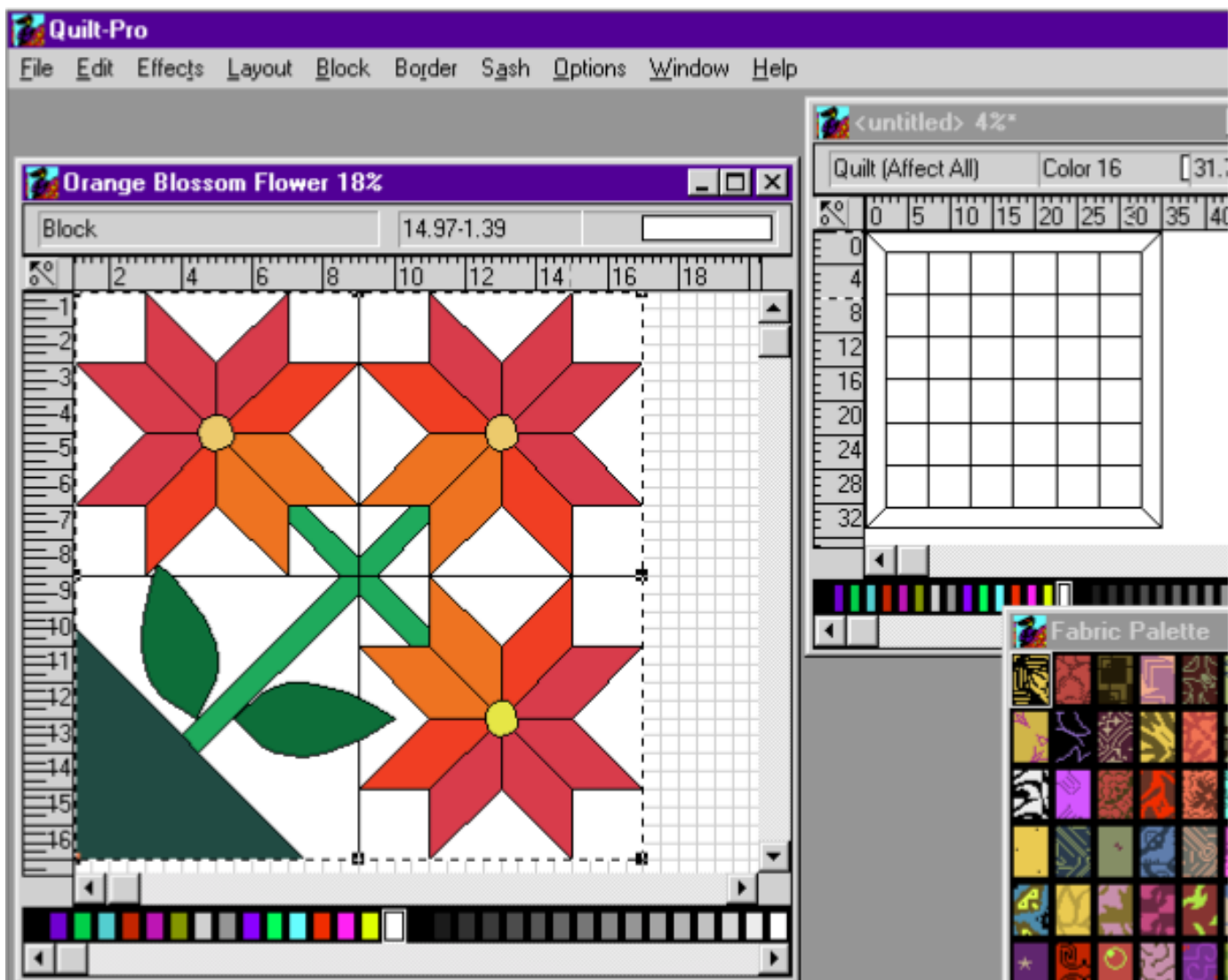


# The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for Online Quilters

Issue 34 • August 1999


## A look at Quilt-Pro 3



Also inside:

[New Orleans Quilt Shops](#) • [Curved Piecing : a basic techniques book](#)

[Manhole Cover Quilts](#) • [Quilter Profile: Shirley MacGregor](#)

The rotary cutter brings you back here! 

# SOFTWARE REVIEW: Quilt Pro 3 for Windows 95/98/NT

By Christina Holland

Quilt design on a computer can be easy and fun. If you're not using the right program for your needs, however, it can become frustrating. Quilt Pro 3 is one of the new design programs among which you can choose, and on the whole it's a fairly decent package. It may or may not be right for you, though.

Quilt Pro 3 is reasonably easy to understand. You'll most likely be able to do all of the basic stuff after either thirty minutes of experimenting or about ten minutes of reading the manual. It's also a versatile program. It should serve you well whether you want to draw up a quilt that's already clearly laid out in your mind or to develop a new quilt within Quilt Pro as you go along.

I do have some reservations about this program, which I'll go ahead and get out of the way.

The feel of this program is different from others currently on the market. You need to have several windows open at once in order to work on a quilt: a quilt layout window, one or more blocks, a fabric palette and a toolbox. The fabric palette and the toolbox insist on being in front of all of your working windows, which can be annoying. You can banish them entirely (don't do it without being sure of how to get them back), but they cannot be sent to the back or minimized. This is a matter of preference; you may like having everything visible at once. Certainly if you have good eyesight or a large enough monitor, the necessity of having multiple windows open is not such a problem. Personally, though, I find it all a bit claustrophobic.

Also, Quilt Pro 3 crashed, twice in fact, while I was trying it for the first time. Perhaps the fault is with my computer, but it's a Pentium and only about 2 years old. I wasn't running anything else in the background except Windows 95. I'm not saying the same thing will

necessarily happen to you, but I would advise you to save your work often.

This is still an awfully fun way to design quilts, though.

Quilt Pro 3 opens in block mode. You'll need to select "Layout" and then "quilt" to start a new quilt. The maximum number of blocks is twenty horizontal by twenty vertical. Each block can be between one and three hundred inches (twenty-five feet), which ought to be ample room in which to maneuver!

The collection of blocks is both sizable and varied in style. There's an especially nice selection of applique blocks. The paper pieced block folder has seventy-three items in it, although many of these are variations on fairly

common blocks such as flying geese, log cabins and so on. The "basic" blocks are ideal either for use as is or for modifying to make your own variation. There are also forty-eight quilting stencils available. Of course, you can also modify the blocks or create your own from scratch.

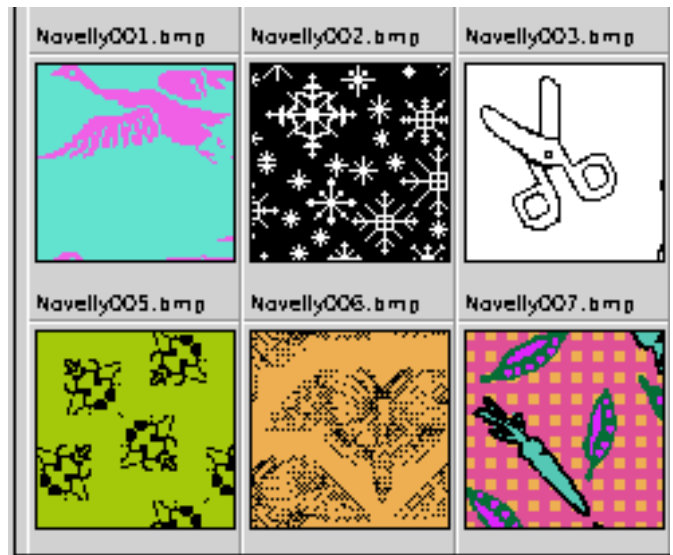
One interesting point is that there are a variety of hexagonal blocks as well as square to choose among, but the quilt layouts are designed for rectangular grids - straight, diagonal or on point. Perhaps a later version of Quilt Pro could make it possible to design quilts on a hexagonal or a triangular grid. That would certainly open up new options.

There are over one thousand fabrics available. Of these, you can keep sixty-four open in the fabric palette window at any time. Most of them, honestly, are not all that attractive. This is partially to keep them simple (most are only two colors) and easy to modify. Some of the fabrics are more detailed than average and are quite nice. The types and colors of fabrics are quite varied. So if you're designing a quilt with specific fabrics in mind, you should be able to adequately approximate them.



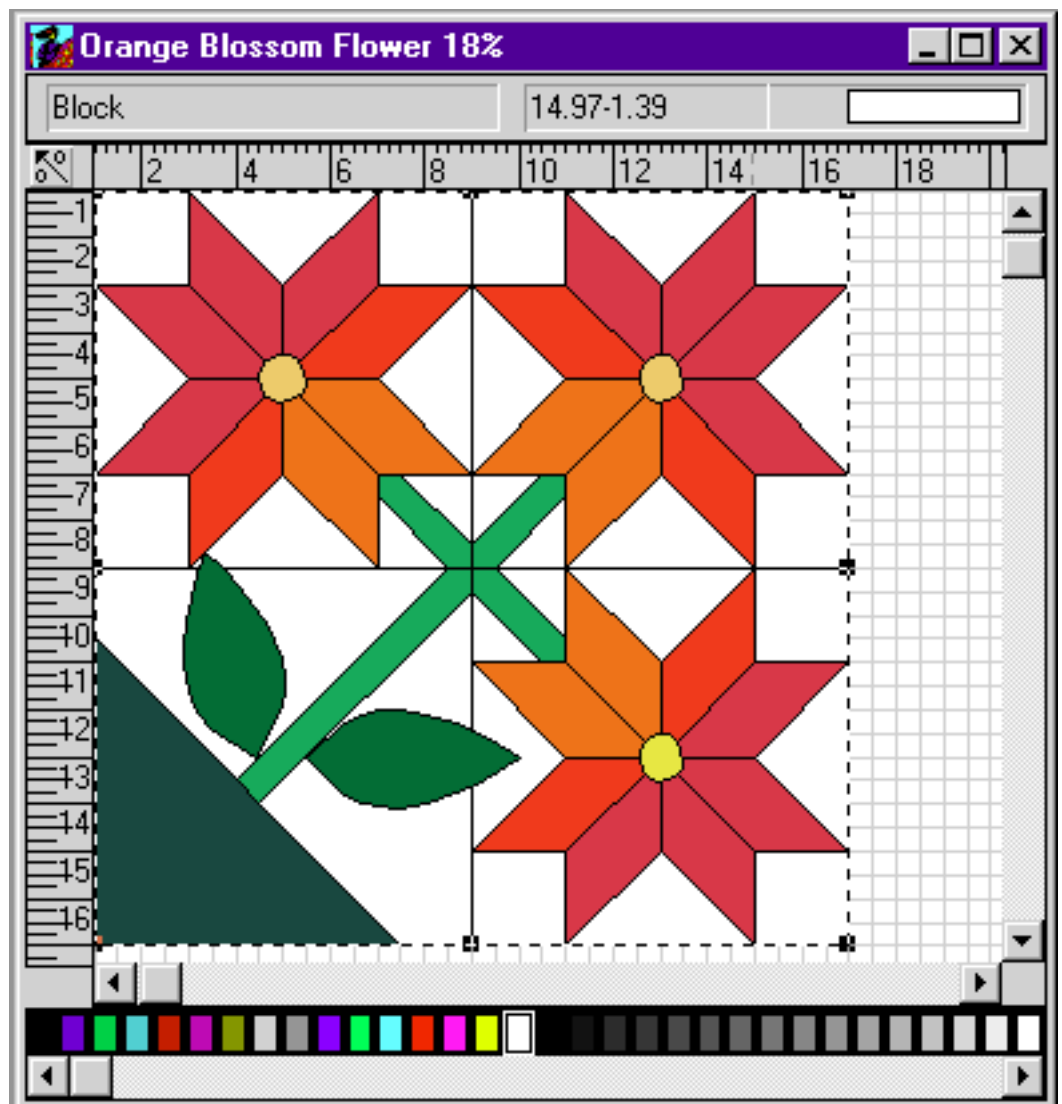
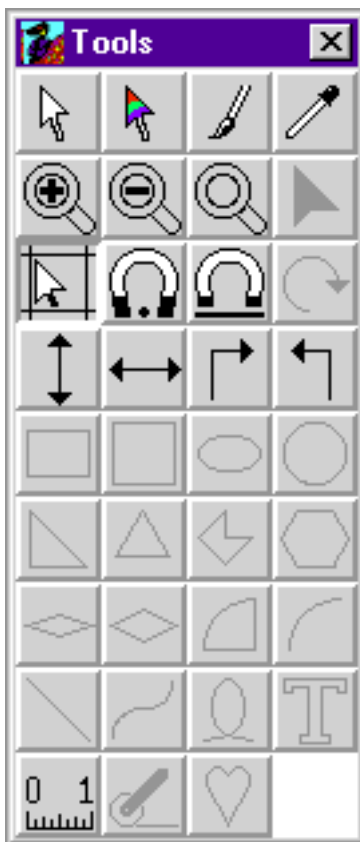
Of course, if you do have specific fabrics chosen, and if you have both the technology and the motivation, you can just scan them in. I haven't tried this, but it seems straightforward. Simply scan in the fabric and save the image as a Windows bitmap (\*.bmp) file.

This is a pretty easy program for even a computer and/or quilting novice to run. It does have its problems, but it will allow you plenty of freedom in designing exactly the quilt you want. Plus, it'll free you from countless pencil and paper design sketches. It'll even estimate the yardage for you, which avoids a lot of needless math. Quilt Pro 3 may just change the way you go about designing quilts.



Above: A sampling of the novelty fabrics available in QuiltPro.

Bottom Left: The QuiltPro tools palette.  
Bottom Right: A sample block window.



# Book Review: Quilting with Manhole Covers: A Treasure Trove of Unique Designs from the Streets of Japan

By Shirley MacGregor  
The Carriage Trade Press, 1999  
Paperbound, 136 pages  
\$26.95

[Available from Planet Patchwork](#)

This is a book that would never have been produced without the single-minded dedication (not to say obsession) of an individual with an idea she would not let die. The result is one of the most unusual, beautiful, and quirky quilt books you will find anywhere.

Jogging early in the morning in the streets of Zushi, Japan, Shirley MacGregor made the remarkable discovery that Japanese manhole covers are graced with decorative designs that bespeak great care and local pride. Ranging from the whimsical to the delicate, the designs find their inspiration in the characteristics of the communities in which they were created. There are mountains and valleys, flowers and fish, leaves, birds, and squid, all rendered in the confined space of cast iron circles and used to mark the entrances to Japan's utility underground.

A long-time quilter, Shirley quickly made the imaginative leap to these manhole covers as inspiration for quilts, and she herself made one (entitled "Treasures Underfoot") using two of the designs. The quilt won a first place in the 1997 Pacific International Quilt Festival. She undertook to document the beauties of these manhole covers, and beyond that to demonstrate how naturally and beautifully they are translated into the quilter's art.

"Quilting With Manhole Covers" is the result of that undertaking, containing color photos of dozens of manhole covers and the quilts they inspired in artists on both sides of the Pacific. Organized geographically, the book is also a travel guide to the many towns and counties in Japan, providing windows into such little-known places as Tajiri town, which portrays smiling onions on

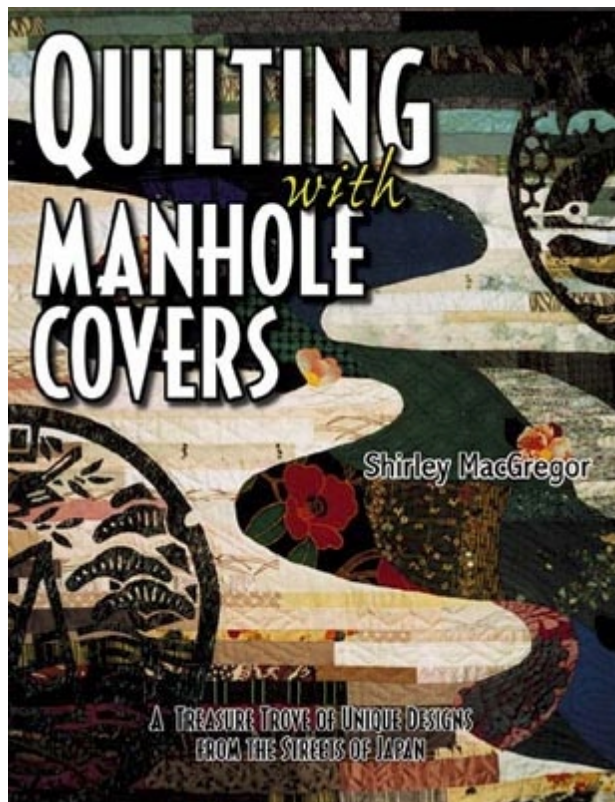
its manholes, and Fujino town, which chose a delicate rendering of the wisteria. The manhole cover of each of the communities is explained and rendered in both color and black and white, and the companion quilt is presented along with comments from the artist. Some of the quilts are relatively close copies of the manhole covers, while others take imaginative liberties with the designs. All are unusual and some are breathtaking.

While this is not a "how to" book on making manhole quilts, MacGregor has accommodated quilters who might want to give it a try by providing clear line drawings of each of the manhole cover designs. These could easily be blown up and used as the ba-

sis for a quilt of your own.

This book is self-published by Shirley and her husband, and the design and production show the same great care as is lavished on the manhole covers. The photography and layout are superb, and the quality of the materials and the printing are very high.

If you're looking for something not only different, but very different, get yourself a copy of this book. It will add a new dimension to your quilting life (and make you look more closely at your seemingly mundane surroundings!)



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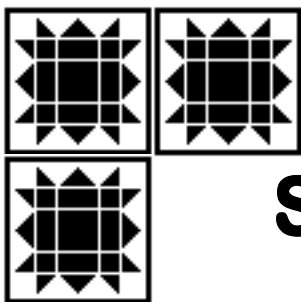
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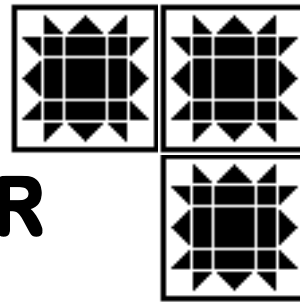
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# QUILTER PROFILE

## SHIRLEY MacGREGOR



One of the pleasures of being associated with Planet Patchwork is that quilters just arrive at my door. Not literally (at least not most of the time), but in the form of books and letters and e-mails that appear bringing unexpected gifts of ideas and images that come from the world of quilting.

One such unexpected gift was the arrival in the mail a few weeks ago of the book "Quilting with Manhole Covers," by Shirley MacGregor. I don't know Shirley, but the envelope contained a modest cover letter asking us to take a look and perhaps review it. As you have seen, we did, [in another part of this newsletter](#). At the

same time, we thought it would be nice to get to know a quilter of such obvious accomplishments, unusual experiences, and creative imagination, so we e-mailed her for a profile.

Shirley says there are no quilters in her family, so she had to start the tradition herself. "I began quilting in the mid-1970s because it was a skill that I had always admired. There were no quilters in my family. When we migrated from California to Oregon in '75, it just seemed to fit."

Fit it did, and once Shirley began quilting she found herself quickly pushing limits -- her own and those of



"Treasures Underfoot," by Shirley MacGregor.

the craft. "My style has changed over the years from traditional, and is now very definitely contemporary," she says. "Although I appreciate traditional quilting, my eye is always on the horizon, and the limitless possibilities that exist."

About 15 years ago Shirley and her husband, who still make their home base in Oregon, began traveling extensively around the world. Shirley also took up teaching quilting, and further tested her limits (and those of her students) by setting up classes wherever they went. "I love teaching quilting because it is an excellent way to learn and to share something very special with others," she says. "It has allowed me to look at the same old things from so many points of view that they never become dull. I have taught American, Dutch, English, Japanese and Korean students, and am particularly fond of working outside of my own cultural frame of reference.



"When I began teaching in Japan it was quite challenging. I didn't speak the language, and had no real understanding of the culture. The two Japanese neighbors I recruited to get me off the ground thought I was nuts, but they graciously helped. Japanese (and Korean) quilt teachers use a very direct approach, wherein the students are shown an example of the teacher's work, and are expected to copy it -- originality is not an op-

tion. My students came to me with this expectation. Surprise, surprise! With a great deal of effort, I forced them think for themselves. Once they got the hang of it, wonderful things began to happen, and now they are very capable and enthusiastic quilters. Another peculiarity about teaching in Asia is that students tend to sign on for the long term. When I finished my first basic course, I declared the class over, but the students weren't prepared to leave. They were crushed. I soon learned that once Japanese students sign up, they are essentially yours for life!"

It was of course in Japan that Shirley came up with the idea for "Quilting With Manholes," and that was another cross-cultural adventure. Not only did she and her collaborators find themselves working through Japanese bureaucracies for permissions (as described in the book), but they had to unravel the mysteries of publishing as well.

"My husband and I tossed the book idea around for quite a while. The idea of introducing manhole designs to the quilting world seemed very ambitious. But the designs were just too good to leave in the street, so we decided to give it a try. Virtually all of the publishers to whom we sent draft copies of the book offered encouraging comments, but no one would take it on. Two suggested we self-publish. So, we sent off for a copy of Dan Poynter's book on the subject, and set to work. By this time we had moved to Korea, and thus began looking around Seoul for a graphics outfit and a printer. The graphics team we settled on was as green as we were, which added a bit of spice to the mix. Our printer -- who brought experience and clear thinking to the effort --

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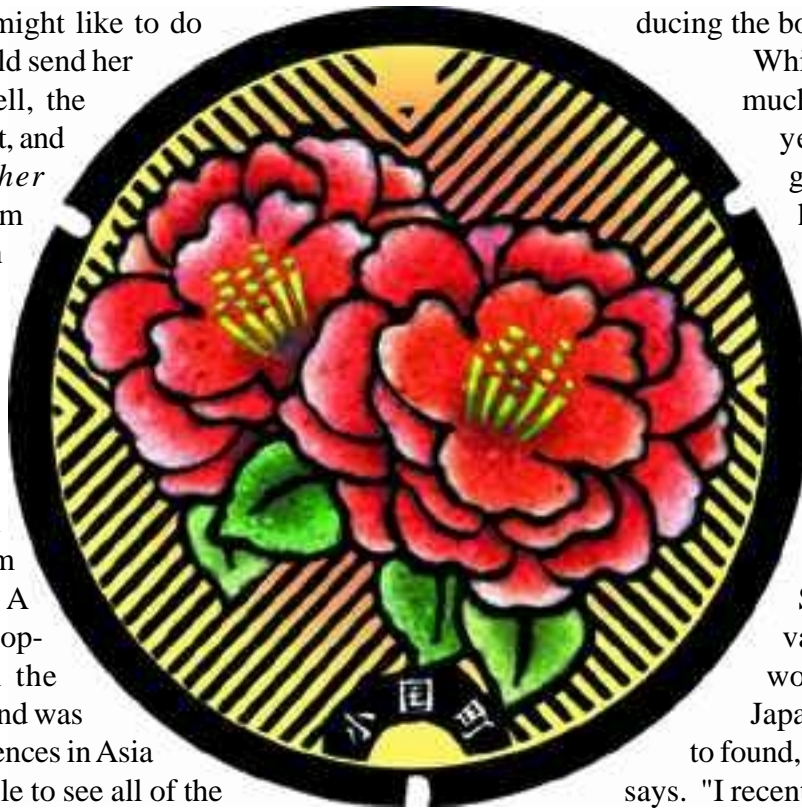
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was, at various times, teacher, referee and analyst to all parties concerned."

If working out these details was something of a trial, getting quilters to undertake quilt versions of the manhole covers was relatively easy. "While we were still considering whether or not to do the book, I asked a few friends if they would like to give one of the designs a try. One of them mentioned that she had a friend in Virginia who might like to do one, and asked if she could send her one of the designs. Well, the friend thought it was great, and so did a number of *her* friends, most of them members of the Cabin Branch Quilters in VA. There are now some 40 manhole quilts. They were recently on display at the Virginia Quilt Museum until the end of July, and will travel to a textile museum in Seoul this September. A few weeks ago, I had an opportunity to visit with the Cabin Branch Quilters, and was asked to share my experiences in Asia with them. I was also able to see all of the manhole cover quilts together for the first time; very inspiring."

Shirley says that computers have had a role in her computing life, but not particularly in quilt design. "I began working with computers in the sixties, when they had to be kept in cold rooms. Also, a good part of my college training is in computer science. I must admit, however, that I have not used the computer for any design work, or for teaching. Email has played a very sig-

nificant role in my quilting activities in the past few years, as I have been engaged in a quilting 'challenge' involving friends in Japan, England and the US. Over a period of 6 years, we have set 14 quilts in motion, and have communicated via email with a great deal of pleasure and success. The challenge quilts will also go on exhibition in Seoul this September. Our computer (a Macintosh, to be sure) has been very important in producing the book."



While the book has taken up much of her energy in recent years, Shirley hasn't neglected her own work, and has won several prizes for her quilts. Her quilt "Treasures Underfoot," based on manhole cover designs, won a major prize at the Pacific International Quilt Festival, and recently took a third place at NQA's National Quilt Show. Shirley is active in a wide variety of quilting groups world wide. "I belong to a Japanese group that I helped to found, and a group in Seoul," she

says. "I recently participated in the first quilt contest in Seoul, and received a bronze award. I belong to NQA, AQS, TAFTA, PNWQA and IQA."

A risk-taker in her quilting and in her life, Shirley MacGregor shows us all the rich rewards that can come to those who push limits. Through her quilts, her teaching, and her new book, she shares these rewards with the rest of us.



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# The Traveling Quilter: Quilt Shops in Southern Louisiana

Most people don't go to New Orleans to visit quilt stores. But we're not most people. So when our plane touched down in N.O., we hopped the rental car and headed for the first store on our list, Yesteryear Antiques and Quilts in Ponchatoula, which is on the northern side of Lake Ponchartrain (165 East Pine, 504-386-2741). We had consulted our favorite reference, *Quilters' Travel Companion*, and carefully mapped out our visit. After some initial directional snafus, (suffice it to say we may be the first couple

to accidentally circumnavigate Lake Ponchartrain in a frog-strangling downpour and emerge with their marriage still intact), we arrived at Yesteryear approximately five minutes before closing. This was not a huge disappointment, because although they carry neat stuff, the emphasis is on selling antique quilts rather than creating new ones. They had some gorgeous antique quilts, vintage fabric and buttons, old spools and spindles. Among the beautiful oldies was an unusual solid pink tucked and folded number from the twenties. However, we enjoyed our peek at Ponchatoula, a town that bills itself as America's Antique Town. There's a Feed and Seed across the way from Yesteryear and several other interesting shops on the same street.

After a long drive back to New Orleans, we bought an expanded map and plotted the rest of our visit. Since we didn't feel like an extended trip the next day after a plane flight and our Ponchartrain excursion, we decided to check out the close-in opportunities. Since many people visit New Orleans on business, we were especially interested in any location which might be accessible without a car. Both the Quilt Cottage and The Quilt

Shop in New Orleans fit that requirement.

The Quilt Cottage (801 Nashville Ave., New Orleans, 504-895-3791) can be reached by taking the St. Charles streetcar from Canal St., getting off at Nashville and walking through the picturesque Garden District for a few blocks, or by taking the bus down Magazine Street. The Quilt Cottage is located in an old house, right on the corner of Nashville and Magazine.

The first thing that catches your eye when you open the door of The Quilt Cottage is a large baker's rack loaded with finished quilts available for sale. Many are very current patterns, some hand quilted, some machine quilted but all of them gorgeous. They range in size from table runners to king size and the styles vary from traditional to contemporary. There are also quilts for sale



**A view of Jackson Square.**

hanging from the ceiling, from the walls and just about everywhere. There is a terrific selection of fabric, many complete lines of favorite designers, and some highly unusual Indonesian fabrics and handpainted batiks that are extremely different. And that's just the front room of the store. The back room is stuffed with books, stencils, decorative thread and patterns for wearables of all descriptions. Not only has co-proprietor Carol Schiaffino co-authored the American Society of Needlework book *Fan Quilts*, she has designed patterns with a definite New Orleans flavor, including a distinctive mask design that is just begging to be made up with the traditional purple, green and gold Mardi Gras colors. Should you need a souvenir for yourself or one for a quilting friend back home, The Quilt Cottage carries specially designed Mardi Gras fabric, with white or black background. And

if it's a really special friend or something for you, she offers three extremely clever fat quarter assortments, each one representing something indigenous to Louisiana. There's a choice of gumbo, herbes or crawfish etouffee, which have fabrics representing the ingredients tied up with a silk-screened recipe panel or the Mardi Gras selection which includes actual Mardi Gras beads if you're on a diet.

The Quilt Cottage is home to Stitchy Fingers and the Under Cover Quilters, who meet at the shop. The store was featured in Country Home Magazine as part of a story on the local quilt guild. Class choices are plentiful, and many offer either AM or PM sessions to fit differing schedules.

Right across the street from The Quilt Cottage is Café Luna, which offers reasonably priced coffee and pastries you can enjoy on a cute outdoor porch if it's not too hot. Otherwise, you can stay inside to sip your latte and try to decide which of the beautiful stylized "good karma" voodoo dolls you have to buy. Foolishly, I couldn't make up my mind and wound up not getting one because I didn't see anything else like them during my stay. She who hesitates, etc. etc. If voodoo with your refreshments isn't your thing and you prefer the familiar when it comes to coffee, there's also a Starbucks at the same intersection.

After we finished our coffee break, we headed back to the Quarter via the funky shops that stretch down Magazine Street. Arriving at the French Market rather late in the day, we located The Quilt Store in New Orleans (816 Decatur St., 504-522-0835), we found the proprietor stitching away and talking to customers as she worked on a crazy quilt. Having been in the French Market for 22 years this store sells more finished products than it does fabric, although fabric and patterns are available. They have lovely selections of fat quarters tied up charmingly for easy selection as gift items and kits for many of the more popular finished items, but this store appears to focus on patrons who are not interested

in doing it themselves. There are many stylish wearables, cathedral window offerings from potholder to king bed size, crazy quilts and crazy quilt stuffed pigs, nice chenille stuffed animals and many beautiful though somewhat pricey gift items. The day we were there, someone was writing a check for a king-sized crazy quilt to be shipped to her home. The Quilt Store obviously knows its quilt business: they have shipping rates posted on the walls, not just to the US but to many international destinations as well. So, if

you have a loved one that needs to bring you back a wonderful present from his/her business trip to New Orleans (Has your significant other priced overnight



**Inside the Quilt Cottage.**



**Outside at the Material Girls Quilt Shop. Must see inside.**

childcare recently?), steer him/her toward The Quilt Store, conveniently located in the French Market, open seven days a week and until 9 p.m. on weekdays.

The next day was Saturday, and we set out early to find Albany, Louisiana. We knew it wasn't too far past Ponchatoula, but it was still quite a drive, located near the intersection of I-12 and I-55. Upon arriving, we found that we weren't the only ones who either suspected or knew that this two-year old shop was worth the trip.

Located across the street from a mobile home community and next to a tanning salon, Material Girls' exterior reminded us of houses whose For Sale sign says "must see inside" (29937 South Montpelier Road, Albany, 225-567-5269). Although the exterior is bland, once you open the door, you're in Wonderland. This store is beautifully decorated; there are lots of samples and consignment items for sale. As we went in there were at least a dozen Santas sitting in a faux snowbank. Made by a local artist, many have coats constructed from antique quilts, but all have lots of personality.

Unique to this store in my experience was a wonderful line of clothing for "quilty ladies." The garments were all well constructed of excellent fabric with an eye to both comfort and style. Most of them were made in Katy, Texas (right near Houston) so I suspect whoever makes them may have firsthand knowledge of what quilters like to wear. Christmas in July was in progress during our visit, and one whole room was dedicated to displaying wonderful Christmas items. There's a Thimbleberry Room for those of us who just can't overdose on Lynette Jensen's fabric and designs. At the very front was a huge bank of flannels followed by bolts and bolts. There are lots of books and just about every imaginable gadget or helpful item. They carry "Parking for Quilters Only" signs and had several of the very latest tapestry sewing machine caddies in the store for us to admire.

But perhaps the most impressive things about Material Girls aren't the material things. This shop is truly a feel good place and obviously an oasis for lots of quilters from surrounding small (and not so small) towns. Everyone who came into the shop was warmly greeted. The spouse of an out-of-town visitor was steered toward the comfortable "Husbands, Chair," offered a cup of coffee and his choice of reading material from a definitely non-quilting collection. Some acquaintances of one of the employees had driven in from Lake Charles that morning (about 200 miles away), so the shop had a



**A customer of Scrap Happy shares a quilt.**

family reunion flavor about it that day.

Material Girls seems to be a hub for sewing activities in the community, offering many classes, including beginning sewing for young people taught by the local extension service. They also have Thimbleberries and Aunt Grace Clubs to provide the support groups(!) we fabric fanatics need. In all, about sixty classes are offered, which is quite amazing when you consider that Albany is enough of a small town that the local fire trucks were in an end of Vacation Bible School parade the morning we were there, and it's an hour plus drive from New Orleans.

Co-owner Judy Jensen wouldn't let us leave without a peek at her fabulous quilt-picture-strewn powder room, a copy of the Gulf States Quilting Association guild newsletter (Judy's GSQA president) and advice to stop for lunch at Middendorf's (it's right off I-55 at 30160 Highway 51, Ponchatoula). Favored dishes are the crispy fried catfish or the soft shell crab. Judy also told us to

be sure to mention the 8th Biennial Show of the Gulf States Quilting Association, September 17 - 19, 1999, at the Ponchartrain Center in Kenner, Louisiana. For more information call (504) 737-2142.

As we headed back toward New Orleans, we noticed in the newsletter that there was yet another quilt store in Kenner that was not listed in *Quilter's Travel Companion*. Since it was right on our route, we decide to stop. Scrap Happy (2546 Williams Boulevard, Kenner, 504-463-0094) is another two-year-old venture, this one by Ann Deemer. Located in a strip mall that houses an Army surplus store, a Jumbo Sports, a nail parlor and a barber shop, Scrap Happy offered us look at the modern day equivalent of the traditional sewing circle. One quilter was pressing her pieces at the iron up front, another was sitting at the table doing hand-work and the proprietor was working on something of her own. All were busy with their efforts, but they paused long enough to talk with us about this obviously popular store. The women assembled there were very supportive of each other's efforts, and gave us an impromptu show and tell. The social aspect of quilting is strongly supported here. Every Thursday two machine quilters stop at the store to pick up tops to be machine quilted and customers gather for this weekly meeting. This Thursday thing has gotten to be so popular that Ann often runs out of chairs and advises newcomers to bring their own just in case.

Although there is a strong emphasis on hand quilting here (Ann just took her first machine class this year), there are classes in both hand and machine quilting. There are, of course, bolts and bolts of gorgeous fabric, lots of patterns and notions and gadgets to meet every need. However, I had so much fun talking to the women assembled there for an informal Saturday afternoon of quilting that I'm sure I may have missed some of the inventory. Leaving Scrap Happy I felt that I had just

visited what quilting is really about. If you're hungry after all this wonderful input, the HobNob café is right next door so you can have lunch or a snack.

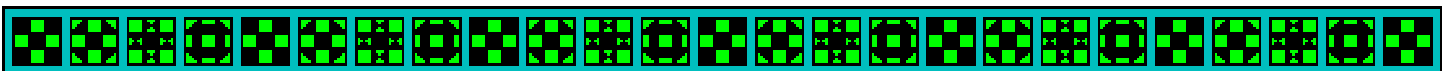
Although by this time we were pretty worn out, we had one more stop to make. The Quilting Bee was sort of hidden in a small store behind a large mall, in Metairie, a middle-class suburb of New Orleans (3537 18th St., Metairie, 504-456-2304). It shares its space with a shoe repair shop and a nail parlor, both run by relatives of the shop's owner. Although The Quilting Bee has been



**Fat quarter display at The Quilt Shop of New Orleans.**

around since 1900, the owner admits that she devotes much of her energy these days to caring for her two granddaughters (there's a crib set up in the shop). She participates in the GSQA activities and does carry all cotton fabric and current books. She's not offering any set classes these days due to her family responsibilities, but is always willing to share her knowledge and experience with fellow quilters. If you're short on time, I don't think I'd make a special trip (or pay cab fare) just to visit this shop.

After four busy days in New Orleans and all the quilt stores we could ever wish for, we took one last stroll through the French Quarter, had one final cup of coffee with chicory and plate of beignets, and regretfully returned home.





PINETREE QUILTWORKS, Ltd.

<http://www.quiltworks.com>

Announcing an all-new site ... PineTree Quiltworks, the online discount quilting store, has a brand new look! PineTree's online store has been completely renovated to make it easier, more convenient, and more fun to shop for notions and fabric! You can now "shop as you go" using the powerful and convenient Shopping Cart feature. When you find a product or fabric you like, a click of the mouse lets you add it to your shopping basket. And if you change your mind, another click lets you remove it or change quantity!

PineTree will be adding new fabrics by the day, not to mention books, notions, and more. Addy, Shirley, and the gang at PineTree extend special thanks to Mike Ober of Quiltropolis for all his efforts in the design and set-up of the new store! Please stop by PineTree's new store at <http://www.quiltworks.com>, and don't forget to make a bookmark!

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## Greenhaven

Greenhaven, a bed and breakfast retreat especially for Quilters, on the Olympic Peninsula.

Visit Washington State and stay with a quilter, and her cat Oliver.

The Herbolds live just outside of Sunny Sequim. Their home, set in the tall trees, is warm, pleasant, and affordable.

Norma can direct you to quilt shops in the area, plus the natural wonders located on the Olympic Peninsula. For those in the Northwest, Norma can also plan a personal retreat for you and your quilting friends.

You are invited to visit the website for Greenhaven, where you can check out Norma's quilts, learn more about Sequim, and of course, see Oliver. The address is: <http://www.olympen.com/normah>

You may email Norma at <mailto:normah@olympen.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 most exciting place on the Internet if you want to make or sell handcrafts. We sell quality cotton fabric, Mettler and Sulky thread, and quilting notions, all at a discount. 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, pictorials, and guy stuff, and you should see the new Lost Fabrics of Atlantis collection.

Every month some items are for sale at 20 percent off our already discounted prices. 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.

Check out our Free Stuff. Each month we offer a new pattern and a new lesson. We also have a Calendar of upcoming Quilt Shows. Come by our website at <http://www.craftconn.com>.

# SILVER DOLLAR SHEEP STATION

The MINI DUST-IT. Genuine sheepskin duster on a 6" stick that is perfect for picking up dust and lint from your sewing machine and serger. Soft, beautiful sheepskin won't scratch polished surfaces. Picks up the lint and tiny threads; doesn't spread them around. Prevents lint build-up. Inexpensive way to protect expensive sewing machines and sergers. Fun and handy to use. Also works great on the computer.

**ANNOUNCING:** New colors -- white, black, navy, gold, cocoa, taupe, teal blue, gray, charcoal!

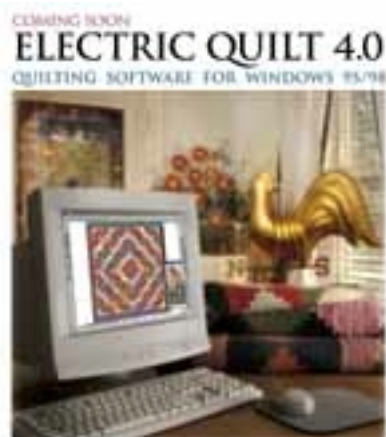
Price: \$3.50 each including mailing. To order send check to

**Silver Dollar Sheep Station 5020 Winding Way Sacramento, CA 95841.** 800-887-8742.

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PERFECT SQUARE and PERFECT TRIANGLE are tools that help quilters make quiltpieces more easily and accurately. Patterns have been written especially for PERFECT SQUARE and the necessary sheets to make the quilt are included in the pattern.

The PERFECT SQUARE website has been updated to include information on all products and patterns complete with pictures. Credit cards are accepted.

Also included are pictures of Monica's art quilts and links to really cool quilt sites.

<http://www.webworldinc.com/perfectsquare>  
for details.

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## THE QUILT BLOCK

We are a cottage industry located just outside of Yosemite National Park. We specialize in clothing and patterns for quilters and for people who love quilts.

We offer t-shirts and sweatshirts in sizes from medium to xxx-large. All of our quilts are machine pieced. Most of our patterns are easy enough for beginning quilters. Come see what we have to offer at our website. We have a great sale page.

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# BOOK REVIEW: Help With That First Double Wedding-Ring Quilt

*Your First Quilt Book: Basic Quilting Techniques for Curved Piecing*

Paulette Peters

That Patchwork Place, 1999

79 pages

MSRP: \$14.95

**Reviewed by Christina Holland**

Do you remember "Your First Quilt Book," in which Carol Doak gave us a wonderful introductory text to basic quilting techniques? Now "That Patchwork Place" brings us a new series of primers for slightly more advanced study. Each book introduces a different aspect of quilting, from "Borders and Bindings" to "Hand Applique" to "Strip Piecing" and more. If they're all as helpful and as much fun as Paulette Peters' "Basic Quilting Techniques for Curved Piecing," then we're really in for a treat.

If you've read "Your First Quilt Book (or it should be!)" by Carol Doak, then you'll see some familiar faces here. That kind of strange winking glove line drawing is back, in little gray boxes on the page whenever there's a tip that will make your life easier. Your guardian angel is back, too, catching your attention just before you make that mistake. Plus, there are whole pages of "down the road" information for future projects, and those too are set off with their familiar friendly graphic. It's a little thing, I know, but those line drawings do bring a smile to your face sometimes, and they certainly can make the whole experience less intimidating for a beginner.

I have to admit, I picked up this book with an ulterior motive. You see, I have some friends getting mar-

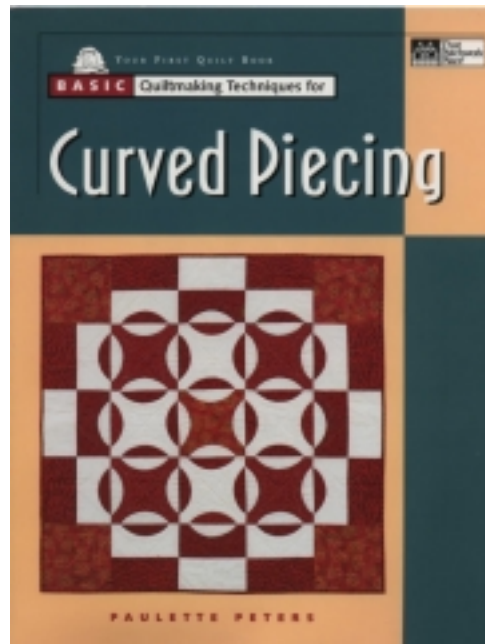
ried in the fall, and I really want to make a double wedding ring quilt for them. Stop laughing. Okay, so I'd never sewn a single curved seam. That wouldn't be a problem, would it? I said stop laughing.

Actually, I think I can do it, now. As my introduction to the world of curved piecing, I made a pillow with the "Drunkard's Path: Love Ring" (page 48) on one side and "True Lover's Knot" (page 60) on the other. I wouldn't say I'm an expert now, or anything. Actually, several of my finished "squares" were, well, not very square. Luckily for me, Ms. Peters provides a solution for that problem in "Basic Quilting Techniques for Curved Piecing," on page 20.

The first third of the book explains the basic techniques involved. There's a glossary and a discussion of what tools to use and which ones to avoid. There's also a thorough explanation about convex and concave pieces, which one should be on top in machine piecing, and when and how to press towards the concave or towards the convex. This book is for both machine and hand piecers, devoting equal pages to each method. Finally, there's a section on how to draw your own template of any size for the essential curved blocks: lover's knot, drunkard's path, orange peel, and double axe.

Next is the gallery. There are only eight projects represented here, but each one is granted a full-page color photograph and brief description. Plus, directions for each are provided in the latter half of the book.

The directions are friendly, helpful, and carefully written. They start with an introductory paragraph, "Project Information at a Glance" (basically size information on the finished piece and its components), cutting measurements, and one or more grayscale diagrams



of the project. Following that are sections with advice on choosing the fabrics, what templates to use, cutting, block assembly, quilt assembly, and making the border and finishing the project. All necessary templates are provided for all projects. The block assembly and quilt assembly paragraphs are especially nice, as they are accompanied by a clear diagram for every step.

"Curved Piecing" is very nearly an essential addi-

tion to the library of any beginning quiltmaker. I've come across plenty of other books with great patterns and ideas for curved piece projects, but none of them seem to just spell out the technique and the pitfalls the way this book does. It complements "Your First Quilt Book" very nicely indeed. Now, I look forward to reading and learning from the other books in the series.



## Gallery



**True Lover's Knot** by Paulette Peters, 1998, Elkhorn, Nebraska, 30" x 40". A beautiful floral print creates a painterly quality in this two-color quilt. A flash of color accents the border. Directions begin on page 60.

# 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 <mailto:rholland@planetpatchwork.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).



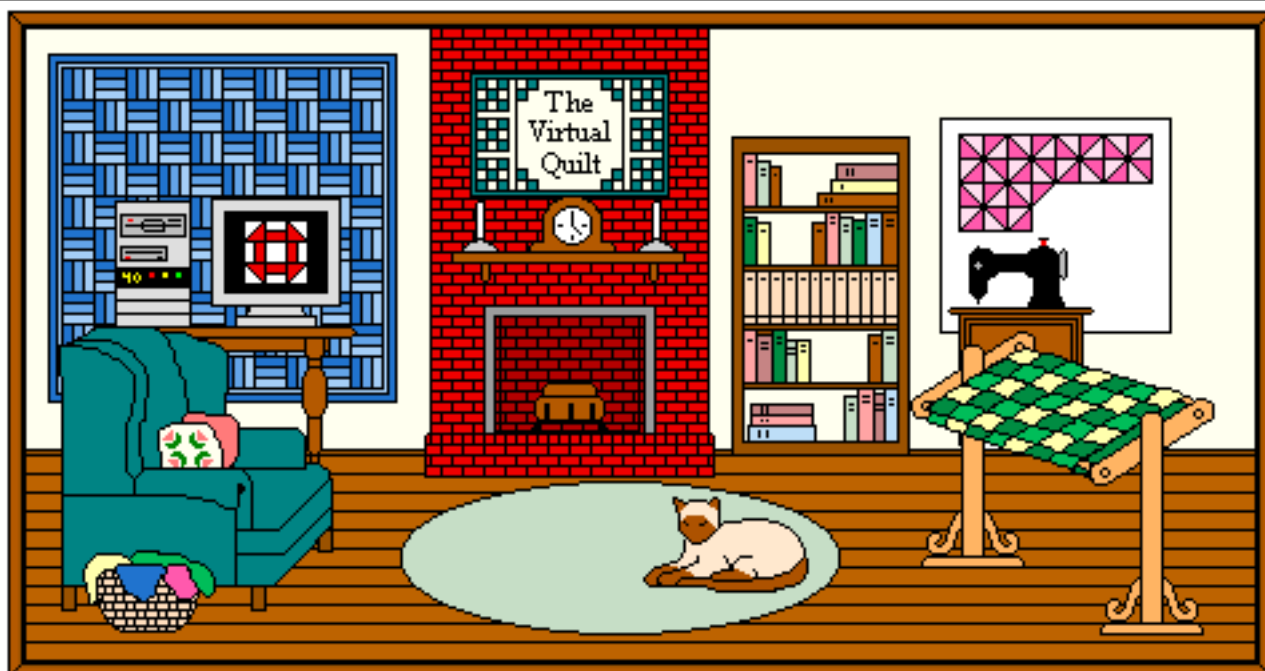
## The Virtual Quilt

A Newsletter for  
Computing Quilters

Editor and Publisher: Robert Holland, Decatur, GA

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