

THE BIBLE QUILT

In 1971, when Prudence Fuchsman, the daughter of the late Bertha Stenge offered some of her mother's quilts for sale to the public, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE ran a story on April 5 about Mrs. Stenge. The cover of the Feminine Section was a color photo of the Bible quilt with the caption, "Its creator, the late Bertha Stenge, was considered an authority in quilt-making, in addition to winning countless prizes for her work. Here, she depicted 12 scenes from the Bible in charming detail, using as background antique white moire and ice blue skinner satin."

Many quilters took the word "creator" to mean that Mrs. Stenge designed the quilt. However in the August 1938 issue of the LADIES HOME JOURNAL, the magazine had an article entitled "You Might Consider Making a Bible Quilt" with cartoons and descriptions of some of the blocks. The pattern and diagrams for cutting the pieces were offered for 10¢.

There were 12 blocks in the pattern which were to be made 12" x 11 1/2" allowing for 1/4" hem. The finished quilt would be 48" x 69" and the directions suggested that it might be made larger (48" x 69" if one alternated the story squares with plain squares.

Mrs. Stenge wrote to the LADIES HOME JOURNAL and received a reply dated April 2, 1953 from Charlotte Johnson of the staff, "...I have not been able to find the name of the girl who designed our Bible Quilt. I finally located her last name but cannot remember or find her first name. And so I think the 'credit' will have to be 'Miss Jervis.

NIMBLE NEEDLE TREASURES reproduced the pattern in the summer 1971 issue.

During the PATCH IN TIME #4 when seven of Mrs. Stenge's quilts were on display, several quilters remarked that they had made the Bible quilt. One of the loveliest is pictured in detail below. The blocks were appliqued and embroidered by Alice Bennett Stone

of Berkeley, Ca. and were among the things her daughter inherited.

Lucille Hilty of Berkeley was asked to finish the quilt and she is in the final stages of quilting it. The blocks that depict outdoor scenes had blue as the background and the indoor scenes used beige so Mrs. Hilty framed each picture with brown and beige stripe and then began researching for the quilt design. The block depicting Belshazzar's feast required researching the type of architecture as well as the scriptures. Mrs. Hilty then quilted the walls to depict clay bricks and a tile floor.

Joyce Gross



* * * * *

S. I. T. E. S. QUILT SHOW

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit of the Quintessential Quilts was shown in conjunction with the Patch in Time #4 in San Francisco.

The material to accompany the exhibit from Sites did not arrive in time for the show so there was much confusion that these quilts were the winners of the 1978 Good Housekeeping Quilt Contest. Many people thought they were going to see antique quilts from the Museum.

There were some very interesting quilts but as a whole I feel they do not represent the best work of contemporary quilters.



RELAXING AT PATCH IN TIME #4

- 1) Rhoda Fisher, Carson City, NV and her prize winning quilt from the S.I.T.E.S. exhibit
- 2) Lucille Hilty Mary Douglass Osburn, guest of honor at the luncheon
- 4) Jean Ray Laury and Bobbie Sandwina, President of the Santa Rosa Quilt Guild, hold the block presented to Jean by the Guild
- 5) Committee members Connie Morse, Evie Landis and Wyn Reddall
- 6) Vernice Thorne
- 7) Authors Mary Elizabeth Johnson, Deborah Kakalia, Michael James, Jean Ray Laury, and Jinny Beyer
- 8) Deborah Kakalia.

Photos by Linda Beltz and Steve Hurts