

## Hardman Quilt Film

*In the last issue of the JOURNAL, Mrs. Peterson asked for details of the HARDMAN QUILT FILM. We are happy to fill her request.*

The Hardman Quilt is part of the collection of the Pioneer Museum and Haggin Galleries of Stockton, CA. The museum has an unusual number of crazy patch, signature, and friendship quilts and is one of the few museums to schedule quilt exhibitions about every two years.

Their own collection is well worth seeing and occasionally they bring in other collections. Susan and Robert Slott's Amish quilt collection was shown in 1977.

1972 was the year I first saw THE quilt. I remember well going around the room at the quilt show taking the first look at the collection, noting something special in this quilt or that one. Suddenly I was in front of an incredible medallion quilt of silks, satins and velvets. The medallion was a Victorian house complete with shades and lace curtains at windows, a fine teal blue lawn of velour, and two trees with birds in them. Around it were blocks of fabric pictures!

There were giraffes, an American steamboat with bellowing smoke, a very fancy lady in top hat on a horse looking at a robin in a tree, a girl with a very elaborate hairdo of blonde ringlets down her back jumping through a hoop onto the back of a beautiful black circus horse and much, much more. On the wall beside the quilt was a sign saying simply, "Made by donor's father's aunt, New York City, 1860."

I was organizing a quilt exhibition for the Bank of America World Headquarters in San Francisco and I had to have that quilt for the show! I found the curator and told him what I wanted and asked if there were more information about the quiltmaker.

We went to the accession card and found that the donors were Nora LeQuellec and Marie Freeman and their address. The current phone book had no listing nor did the current city directory. The city directory listed another person at that address. In going through earlier city directories, we finally found them about six years earlier. I decided to try a letter hoping it would be forwarded.

My letter of inquiry was sent and very shortly a reply came from Kansas where they had moved.

Very little came from the letter. The sisters are elderly and really didn't know very much about the subject. Phone calls and further correspondence revealed that they felt the quilt was made in Ireland because their father's aunt, Mrs. Edward Hardman, lived and died in Ireland. They were at a loss to explain the NYC on the accession card. Their father had come from Ireland as a small baby and made his home in St. Louis, MO. When the uncle died, he had left the quilt to their father. Their mother had kept it until she died and they had donated it to the museum hoping it would get good care.

And that is almost the end of the story except that we showed the quilt to film producer Hans Halberstadt and he felt it would be the perfect subject for a film. Permission was granted by the Pioneer Museum to film it and today one can see through the camera's eye more details than the closest scrutiny of the quilt could reveal. One can see every ringlet, the facial expressions and listen with fascination to one woman's interpretation of the scenes on the quilt.

**The film has won** numerous awards including a "Chris" statue for the best educational film in 1976.

Joyce Gross



HARDMAN QUILT: Portrait of an Age

16mm/color/sound/10 minutes. Rental \$25.00 for 3 days. Perfect for stitching and quilt groups, antique societies, classroom study, social groups. For reservations - Joyce Gross, Box 270, Mill Valley, CA 94941. 415/388-7578.