

## QUILTER'S RESEARCH NETWORK

by Barbara Brackman

*Joyce Gross, Editor/Publisher of the QUILTERS' JOURNAL and sponsor of the meetings stated that for some time she had wished to have informal gatherings of quilt historians to exchange information, listen to each other's interests and questions and develop an index to interests. The response to the two meetings was quite favorable and similar get-togethers will be arranged at symposia if possible. The QHR will meet at 1:00 pm Wed Nov 3, 1983 in the Hospitality Suite at the Continental Congress. No invitation is necessary.*

*Report on an informal meeting of people interested in quilt history at the Land of Lincoln Symposium, Chicago June 26, 1982*

Helen Kelley, discussed her three interests: fabric history, fabric conservation and cut-out-chintz quilts. She would like to develop a time line of fabrics. She is interested in analyzing damage to fabric in the past and documenting possible damage to contemporary fabrics by chemicals such as surface design, flash photos, washing and handling. She has been looking at Broderie Perse or Cut-out-chintz quilts (her preferred term) and when the former term was first used (her earliest reference is 1888)

Cuesta Benberry has been studying AfroAmerican Quilts; she is interested in quilts made by white women with an Afro-American connection and quilts made by black women (slave and free). She has discovered thirty slave-made quilts. She has been comparing black made and white made quilts and studying the development of quilting by black women in South Africa.

She and Carol Crabbe have been compiling a list of quilt fiction. She has been studying the history of quilting decade by decade and is up to 1920.

Barbara Brackman listed several areas of interest including collecting published patterns from regional newspapers, e.g. THE OKLAHOMA FARMER STOCKMAN; examining collections of quilt research and archival material like Carrie Hall's at the Univ of Kansas. Ms Brackman is interested in biographies of people who wrote the quilt pattern columns, quilts displayed at either the 1893 or 1933 World's Fairs and quilts that are amusing--either intentionally satirical or unintentionally bizarre.

Bettina Havig said her special interest is Amish quilts. She has found that there is still a good deal of integrity to Amish quilts in the Mid-West. She would like pictures of new/old Amish quilts and locations.

Carol Crabbe was not present but had sent word she is looking for catalogs from old fairs

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*Report on the meeting of QRN at Quilt Colorado '82 Denver July 25, 1982*

Louise Townsend began by stating her interest in obtaining a complete list of KCS patterns. She has read the microfilms from 1928-June '45 and is looking for any patterns from that source after 1949.

Jean Christensen collects quilts, lace and everything on their history. She is also interested in fad quilts, i.e., Wedding Ring, Grandmother's Flower Garden.

Candy DiMaggio said she is interested in any research on Seminole patchwork and is working on a project on Michigan quilts and quilters.

Jo Inzer-Smith stated that she is **collecting quilts and** wants to learn more about Idaho quilts and dating by fabric.

The mention of Edna Ford's recent death (see pg 1) led to a discussion of leaving/ donating archival material to institutions. Participants voiced concern about museums since curators change and with them attitudes and policies toward collections.

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### QUILTER'S RESEARCH NETWORK

Joyce Gross and Barbara Brackman have been developing a network of information on people doing research into quilt history and their topics. At meetings held in conjunction with the quilt symposia in Chicago and Denver last summer, they developed a cross reference of people and projects, hoping to foster communication between researchers. So often historians can be of help to each other if they are aware of who is working on what project. If you would like to be included in the Network send \$5.00 to Barbara Brackman, 500 Louisiana, Lawrence Ks 66044 to cover duplication costs and postage.

Include your name, address and phone number plus a short summary of your specific interests in the field of quilt history. You will receive an index plus periodic updates.

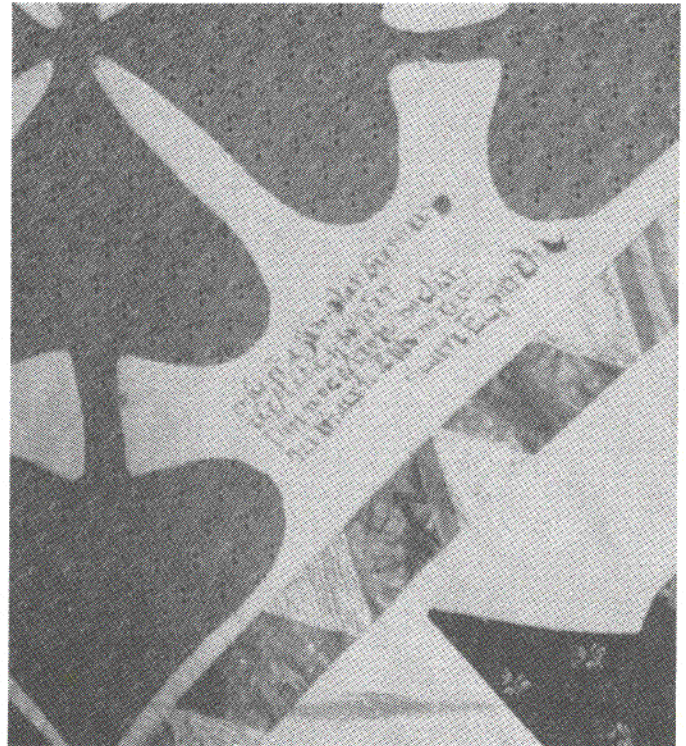
inscription which took time to identify and even longer to secure a translation. It is in Gaelic and grateful acknowledgement is made to friends, including Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore for their interest and help. All the way from Dublin, Professor Osborn Bergin sends word that the 'sampler' verse is a corruption of a well-known colophon found on old manuscripts. The translation from Margaret's quilts reads:

'Sad that is, O fair little sampler, The day will come and true it will be Over thy flat surface one will say:

The hand that wrote it does not survive'  
Mary Epworthy (mairi Elpurthi)

The Cleland Friendship Quilt is owned by Mrs. Robert Rue.\*

*Reprinted from "Quilts are Documents" by Florence Peto, NATIONAL HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Daughters of the American Revolu- Aug. 1, 1941. Florence Peto was a well-known author, lecturer and quiltmaker in the 1940's and '50's. Her articles have appeared in ANTIQUES, WO'IAN'S DAY, McCALL'S NEEDLEWORK. The JOURNAL has published excerpts from her letters to Emma Andres in Winter '79, Spring, Summer, and Fall, 1980.*



\* This quilt is now in the collection of Bettie Mintz.

#### DENVER MEETING *cont from pg*



*From left to right: Joyce Gross, Louise Townsend, Candy DiMaggio and Jo Inzer-Smith admire Mrs Inzer-Smith's French Basket a Marie Webster pattern.*

Joyce Gross, Pat Cox and Barbara Brackman repeated their interests from the Chicago gathering.

Researchers Rita Erickson and Helen Ericson were unable to attend. Ms Ericson is working on Carrie Hall's quilt blocks with the Kaw Valley Quilter's Guild. They hope to publish a book on Hall's blocks in color. She is also interested in quilts/quilters from Emporia during the '30s. Ms Erickson is interested in design

sources for quilt patterns, particularly those from other media such as cut paper and stone.

A discussion was held about documenting quilts in local historical societies as a project for guilds or guild historians. Pat Cox suggested that guilds should fund their historians to do research. The Iowa Guilds contributed raffle quilts to the Des Moines Living History Farms Museum the proceeds to go to improved textile conservation.

Discussion was held on museums with substantial quilt collections as well as the value of conservation versus exhibition and the frequent conflict between those goals. Museums which currently value their quilt collections included the Denver Art Museum, the Spencer Museum of Art at the Univ of Kansas, the St Louis Museum of Art, the Living History Farms and the American Folk Art Museum. It was suggested that libraries and historical societies rather than museums would appreciate donations of archival materials.

Participants urged the creation of the Quilter's Research Network.

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appreciate pictures of old and new ones with a notation about their location.

Joyce Gross is collecting catalogs of quilt shows which have hung at least three weeks, compiling a list of quilt postcards, and collecting journals, scrapbooks, or archives dealing with quilts or quiltmakers in the 20th century.

Edie Pigg is working on a book of patterns named for Kentucky or Kentucky quilts.

Pat Cox is interested in new or unusual arrangements of the blocks in Log Cabin quilts. She has been collecting Baltimore Album quilt pattern and other old applique patterns to redraw them and make them available.

Helen Thompson's interest are primarily in the migration of patterns and the changes in pattern names. A discussion of sorting fact from fiction followed. Cuesta Benberry suggested she look at an article "Tapestry of the New World" published by Scribner's in April 1894 which was the first published history of patterns as far as she and Carol Crabbe can trace.

Katy Christopherson talked about her involvement with the Kentucky Heritage Quilt Society, a group of 200. They are looking for quilts of Kentucky origin and are engaged in a program of quilt documentation and quilter interviews. The society is operating on a small budget and a discussion ensued on obtaining funds for such projects.

It was suggested that quilt guilds with large cash reserves be impressed with the value of such projects and encouraged to use their money to further the study of quilt history and conservation projects, e.g. scholarships to textile history and conservation institutions; cleaning, conservation, photographing and cataloging quilts in institutions; offering prizes for the oldest and best preserved quilts to generate interest and records of historical quilts in projects similar to the Kentucky Society's; offering seed money for seminars and symposia, e.g. North Carolina Quilt Symposium. Mrs Christopherson was interested in any evidence or relevant information concerning why Kentucky had the reputation of being "Queen of the State Fairs"

A discussion followed on the difficulty of designating a quilt as a "Kentucky quilt" or a "California quilt".

Christa Ellis is looking for Illinois quilts. She mentioned that her husband is a microscopist who would be glad to assist historians in fiber analysis projects. Julie Powell is looking for Illinois quilts. She organized the Illinois quilt show at the symposium and has been looking for political fabrics.

A discussion following on systems people use to file their information. Katy Christopherson keeps her periodicals by title and chronologically. She has a few files indexed by subject, e.g. "design"

Cuesta Benberry files her books by type, e.g. "museum catalogs", "Swedish books", "Very old books", etc. She has a scrapbook for each periodical source in which she keeps clippings chronologically. She keeps the complete periodical for these magazines: MODERN PRISCILLA, NEEDLECRAFT, McCALL'S, and WOMAN'S DAY. She has a card file on subjects and an alphabetical reference to her patterns.

Barbara Brackman keeps periodicals filed by title, with clippings kept in plastic page protectors in note books. She indexes every pattern she has seen, published or unpublished by design on cards with an alphabetical cross reference in a notebook. She also files some material by subjects with a cross reference to the pattern or material in a periodical, e.g. Roosevelt quilts.

Mrs Kelley said her husband is a computer programmer and she intends to use her computer in research.

A discussion was held concerning plans people have for disposing of their archives after their deaths, with the consensus that most people hope to find a younger person interested in history to leave the material to, rather than an institution.

It was decided to develop a list of researchers and their areas of interest.

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## **N.M. QUILTERS' ASSOC AWARDS GRANT**

*Reprinted from the Quilt Denver Symposium newsletter SCRAPs & PIECES Vol I #3 July 26, 1982.*

The New Mexico Quilters' Assoc has awarded a grant to Iowa State Univ to conduct a research project entitled "An Assessment of Textile Products Used in Quilting". Many types of threads and 3 types of batting will be tested for compatibility using laboratory testing equipment and controlled procedures. The abrasion factor of synthetic fibers used with cotton thread will be measured. Numerous brands of thread will be tested for strength, resistance to abrasion, ultra-violet light fading and deterioration, shrinkage and washability.

NMQA hopes to have results and mat'l samples used in testing on display at the Enchanted Quilt Fiesta II in June '83