

Book Reviews

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CRAZY QUILTS by Penny McMorris, publ by E P Dutton, NY, NY 1984. 127 pp \$18.95 paper.

To be honest, crazy quilts have not been my favorite form of quilt, up to now. I have found the studied lack of design structure disquieting. I have seen too much busy work, too many prideful fancy stitches, and insensitivity to color and texture. Something has caused me to re-evaluate my position.

CRAZY QUILTS by Penny McMorris is the reason for my changing attitude. Ms McMorris presents a book which delineates the range of crazy quilts and records their phenomenal popularity, especially between 1876 and 1900.

Quilt scholars will be pleased with the thoroughness of the historical research which gives a reason for being to the crazy quilt vogue. McMorris cites certain Japanese exhibitions in the western world which ultimately had such marked influence on art and design. The resulting fashion for asymmetry and planned disarray was readily adopted by quiltmakers.

In a well-ordered introduction, Ms McMorris chronicles the rise and fall of the crazy quilt rage. Having thoughtfully assimilated resource material from leading scholars and historians and having done original research, she is able to establish a platform of appreciation for the crazy quilt.

Pattern, construction and motifs are examined more closely in following sections. Excellent color and black-and-white photographs, with numerous close-ups, deepen one's regard for these complex and varied quilts. The work and brief biographies of six exceptional quiltmakers gives warmth and depth to the study. M M Hernandred Ricard was the maker of the crazy quilt which symbolizes all that is grand and glorious in that art form, signing and dating her quilt (1877-1912). She even includes a picture of herself printed on fabric and stitched into the quilt.

Other quilts are grander and more glorious, but none more charming than Mittie Barrier's wonderful crazy quilt of embroidered farm animals and birds. Mittie finished her quilt in 1920 in Salisbury, N.C.

It is one of my favorites. The final section is given to the work by six contemporary artists, in glass, paint, and cloth. Notes, an excellent bibliography and index follow.

Penny McMorris has convinced me that crazy quilts do have a rightful place in the annals of textile art. You will share my convictions when you read her book.

Bets Ramsey

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THE PROUD POSSESSORS: The lives, times and taste of some adventurous American art collectors. Aline Saarinen, Random House, New York @ 1958.

The author, who received a Guggenheim scholarship in 1957 to finish THE PROUD POSSESSORS, chose her subjects because they especially appealed to her. No doubt this helped her in writing these fascinating biographies. She interviewed as many family members and friends as she could find and found them very helpful. Her choice of anecdotes and incidents helped immeasurably to bring her subjects such as Joseph H Hirshhorn, Isabella Stewart Gardner, J Pierpont Morgan, and the Rockefellers to life. She also included Electra Webb and the Henry O Havemeyers.

If you would like a glimpse into the background of these famous people who have given us so much, you will want this book.

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Oregon Historical Society Quilt Show

Thru June 12, 1985 - "Heritage Quilts" the first major antique quilts exhibition at the Oregon Historical Society since 1966 will present patchwork quilts as cultural documents reflecting important aspects of women's lives. The exhibition emphasizes human values through the juxtaposition of quilts, photographs, artifacts and manuscripts. Some 100 regional quilts, most from the Oregon Historical Society collections and several very special loans from other parts of the country will be shown in settings showing the intimate connection between a quilt and its environment.

Classified

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"POLITICAL and CAMPAIGN QUILTS" catalogue from 1984 exhibit in Frankfort KY. Photos and descriptions of 30 quilts from museums and private collections. \$7.50 plus \$1.50 postage and handling. Kentucky Heritage Quilt Society, P O Box 23392, Lexington, KY 40503.

AMISH-MADE DOLLS for sale: 14" traditionally dressed boy or girl with moveable arms and legs. \$35.00 postage & handling. The Quilt Cottage, 1004 W Worley, Columbia, MO 65201.

QUILTERS' JOURNAL now available wholesale to shops and guilds. The magazine for quilt and textile historians and lovers. Write JOURNAL, Box 5427, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

AVAILABLE - Volumes I, II, III & IV of UNCOVERINGS. Vol I - \$9.50, Vol II - \$10.75 Vol III - \$12.00, Vol IV - \$13. Calif addresses add 6% sales tax, Send check and order to AQSG, 105 Molino, Mill Valley 94941

FEATHERED STAR DESIGN information sought. Also slides and descriptions (quilter's names, dates, locations etc) Please contact me if you have information or slides to share. Marsha McClosky, 2151 7th Ave W. Seattle, WA 98119.

QUILTING BOOKS UNLIMITED: Receive your free catalog on request. Postage paid in U.S. We carry the unusual - museum catalogs, regional samplers, histories. Roberts' Quiltworks, 156 S Gladstone, Aurora, IL 60506

Emms - cont from back cover

her. Then she shook hands with me, and pinned the medal on my dress, talking to me about quilting. I answered by telling how my work had gone all over the world. I must say here she really looks lovely and so very pleasant, just what you would expect her to be.

Once I left the Ball-room I was directed round the hall-ways to the other end of the Ball-room where I was shown to a seat among the guests and those who had already received their honours. My daughter happened to be seated right behind me. It was 12-30 when the ceremony was over. We took our time coming out of the Palace and had more photographs taken. Also a reporter spotted me out so he came up to take a photo of me with the medal. The next morning there was another write up in the papers. Yes all my friends and relations are very proud of me, and all say I well deserve the honour.

How very good of you to order me the name tapes and also a rubberstamp with my M.B.E. It will be very useful indeed as I have fan mail now and I shall be delighted to use it.

I read in your letter you are still very busy with your lovely work. You really are marvelous. But then you are quite young. I reached my 80th Birthday beginning of this

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Error in WORLD OF QUILTS CATALOG

The catalog for World of Quilts exhibit held at Meadow Brook Hall at the Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan Sept 1983 mistakenly contains the information that "Calendula", one of the quilts in the exhibit, was "made by Rose Kretsinger of Emporia, Kansas, an artist ... who has been honored with membership in the Quilter's Hall of Fame." Mrs Kretsinger has not been so honored at this time and the JOURNAL hopes that our readers will do what they can to correct the error. It is hoped that the Quilter's Hall of Fame would do whatever necessary to rectify the mistake and not honor Mrs Kretsinger at this date to change history. To do this would discredit the Hall of Fame and only confuse Historians.

month. Feeling now as though I should kind of retire from teaching quilting, but will never give up the craft until I must. Once it is your blood you cannot give up. Mind it has been in my blood a long time.