

STUDY CENTERS

HEARTLAND QUILT SYMPOSIUM

The Heartland Quilt Symposium held a very successful Study Center May 2-5, 1985. 103 persons signed the register during the three days the room was open and 19 filled out questionnaires evaluating the room. To the question if they would be willing to pay a fee equivalent to taking a workshop at a future symposium 8 said they would, 2 said they would not, 2 said "possibly"; 1 didn't know and 6 left blanks.

15 of the 19 found the area useful; 2 were just browsing; 1 did not and one left a blank. 5 had no subject in mind for research and of the 12, 7 had to do with pattern, 1 with fabric dating and 1 wanted the early QNMs.

Criticism included: needs included more operating hours, more time for participants, bigger room, more light, overall index with references for each source, and separate area for visiting and/or discussions.

Several commented that this kind of a center should be available at every symposium and letters from several people with similar comments have been received since the conference.

Cuesta Benberry, Barbara Brackman and Joyce Cross were available for consultation or guidance. The material available included Issues 1-56 QNM; complete set of QUILTERS' JOURNAL; UNCOVERINGS 1980-83; QUILTER'S HALL OF FAME BOOKLETS 1979-84; Index and selected articles LADIES HOME JOURNAL 1898-1980; out-of-print museum catalogs; magazine and newspaper articles from a variety of sources; scrapbooks from Lenice Bacon, Lucille Hilty, Maxine Teele, Mary Schafer, Bertha Stenge, Carrie Hall, Joyce Aufderheide, Michael James, Jean Laury, etc; excerpts from books (other than quilting) about quilts/ quilting; Letters from Florence Peto to Emma Andres Vol I-IV; Diary of Myrtle Fortner; Greeting Card Collection with quilts; Quilt Wrapping Paper Collection; Quilt Postcards Collection; special research projects such as Hawaiian Quilting, Afro-American Quilts/ Quilters, Sears "Century of Progress" quilts, WOMAN'S DAY, Stearns & Foster. There were approximately 50 binders and notebooks available for browsing or studying. The majority was from the Gross collection with additional scrapbooks and binders on loan from Cuesta Benberry and Barbara Brackman worked up for their special areas of interest.

CUESTA BENBERRY

I believe that quilt study centers or quilt resource centers are useful additions to the agenda of quilt symposia, quilt conferences or seminars. Of course the study center staff's first hope is that the visitors will be motivated to engage in quilt history research.

Just by surveying the contents of the center, one can learn the vast amount of quilt information that cannot be found during a visit to one's local public library. This can encourage truly quilt-interested people to become collectors or archivists themselves of quilt information. However, there are less ambitious benefits that may accrue. Under the guidance of the center staff, one can learn how to find the name of the pattern of an old family quilt, that heretofore has been nameless. Or, possibly find the true source of a long-held unidentified quilt article, now reduced to a torn scrap of yellowed paper. But most of all, I believe many persons who equate serious, scholarly quilt research with pedantic stuffiness are quickly disabused of that notion. Instead, they will be caught up in the excitement of discovery - the truth; a confirmation or denial of their beliefs - but always the truth; and that the endless quilt information search must always be for the truth.

Finally, the quilt study center is a marvelous forum of exchange. People will bring to the study center information so rare, so exciting as to set the whole place in a state of happy turmoil! The study center is unique as the one place that can properly utilize such information. The center staff can provide guidance to these persons so that the end result will benefit all of the quilt community with new knowledge.

CORRECTION...

In JOURNAL #19 the article on pages 8, 9 and 15 about the "Bird of Paradise Bride's Quilt Top" incorrectly listed the date for the QUILT ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR as 1974. It should read 1975. Please correct your copy. See pg 6 for an Update.