

# Uncoverings 2003

Volume 24 of  
the Research Papers of  
the American Quilt Study Group

Edited by Virginia Gunn



# *Uncoverings 2003*

Volume 24 of the Research Papers  
of the American Quilt Study Group

*Edited by Virginia Gunn*

*Presented at Dallas, Texas*

*October 10–12, 2003*

Copyright © 2004 by the  
American Quilt Study Group  
All Rights Reserved

Copyright note: This is a collective work. AQSG holds the copyright to this volume and any reproduction of it in whole. Right to individual articles are held by the authors. Requests for permission to quote or reproduce material from any article should be addressed to the author.

Published by the American Quilt Study Group  
35th and Holdredge Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68504-0737

Manufactured in the United States.

*Uncoverings* is indexed in:  
*America: History and Life*  
*ARTbibliographies*  
*BHA (Bibliography of the History of Art)*  
*Clothing and Textile Arts Index*  
*Feminist Periodicals*  
*Historical Abstracts*  
*MLA International Bibliography*  
*Sociological Abstracts*

ISBN 1-877859-19-2    ISSN 0277-0628  
Library of Congress catalog number: 81-649486

Cover: Detail of El-Sheikh Hassan Aly, Islamic pattern, El Bassatien area, Egypt, 1979. Cotton, hand appliquéd on a gold ground layered over a canvas ground, 17.5 x 17.5 inches (44.5 x 44.5 cm). Collection of Dr. Betty Wass.



## Contents

Preface	vii
<i>Eighteenth-Century Annapolis Quilters: “She performs all sorts of QUILTING in the best Manner”</i>	
Heather Ersts Venters	1
<i>The Anti-Polygamy Quilt by The Ogden Methodist Quilting Bee</i>	
Mary Bywater Cross	17
<i>The Cultural Significance of the Block Island Woman’s Christian Temperance Union Quilt of 1931</i>	
Sarah Rose Dangelas	49
<i>Quilt Symposium ’77: “Fine Art–Folk Art” at Lincoln, Nebraska</i>	
Carolyn Ducey & Mary Ellen Ducey	75
COLOR PLATES BETWEEN PAGES 86 AND 87	
<i>Quilts as Manifestations of Cross-Cultural Contact: East-West and Amish-“English” Examples</i>	
Marin F. Hanson and Janneken Smucker	99
<i>Egyptian Appliqués</i>	
Blaire O. Gagnon	131
Authors and Editor	163
Index	165



## Preface

The twenty-fourth annual seminar of the American Quilt Study Group will be held in Dallas, Texas, from October 10–12, 2003. The host committee has worked with Dallas museums to offer “Quilt Mania,” multi-faceted collaborative quilt exhibitions at eight sites. Barbara Brackman will deliver the keynote address, “Rocky Road to Analysis: Interpreting Quilt Patterns.” Barbara will share her thoughts and experiences on the complexities encountered when people attempt to “read” quilts. Research and study centers will round out a weekend of friendship and learning and attendees will hear the six research paper presentations which appear in this volume of *Uncoverings*.

There is currently renewed interest in the eighteenth-century roots of American quilting. Heather Venters’s important research on four eighteenth-century Maryland quiltmakers will help put a face on some of the women who quilted. This group of four offered their quilting services to the residents of Annapolis in order to meet personal and family economic goals. Their needlework skills served them well in a time which offered women few opportunities for self-support.

Mary Cross and Sarah Dangelas have completed in-depth studies of distinctive quilts which clearly expressed the social and political opinions of their creators to the community at large. Cross carefully analyzes and interprets The Anti-Polygamy Quilt, which gave voice to a group of Methodist women vigorously opposed to polygamy in nineteenth-century Utah. This fashionable Victorian show quilt voiced their support for political efforts to end the practice at a time when they could not voice their opinions via the ballot box.

Dangelas’s study of a 1931 temperance quilt commemorating the work and friendships of members of the Block Island, Rhode Island, chapter of



the Woman's Christian Temperance Union calls attention to aspects of the temperance crusade that have received little notice. This quilted document reminds us that the legal victory of Prohibition in 1919 did not ensure the end of intemperance. Women continued to be vigilant on a topic of concern to them for decades.

Carolyn Ducey and Mary Ellen Ducey have opened up a new area of research. They teamed up to document one of the earliest quilt symposiums, held at Lincoln, Nebraska in 1977. These symposiums played a key role in the quilt revival of the 1970s and are deserving of study. Their work demonstrates that quilters in Nebraska laid a firm foundation for the quilt appreciation, research, and scholarship that would eventually bring the International Quilt Study Center to their midwestern city.

Marin Hanson and Janneken Smucker, both graduates of the master's program in textile history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, also combined their efforts to discuss the cross-cultural aspects of quilting. They firmly support their thesis that cross-cultural influences on American quilting traditions have been ongoing in every era of quilting, and that these same cross-cultural interactions continue today on an international level.

In the first book on quilts, Marie Webster traced the historic roots of American quilting and included illustrations of modern Egyptian patchwork, calling attention to this distinctive art form. Blaire Gagnon's research gives us a clear picture of these Egyptian appliqued textiles. She shows how the modern tourist items grew out of a long-standing tent-making tradition. Her textile analysis helps us understand the designs and techniques used on these tourist offerings which numerous Americans purchased and brought home as souvenirs of their world travel.

Once again, this volume of *Uncoverings* showcases the rich variety and excellent quality of research that results when people from diverse backgrounds, disciplines, and training work together to further the study of our quilted heritage. Members of the American Quilt Study Group can take pleasure and satisfaction in the contributions of these scholars and in their own efforts to develop and support quality research on quilting in the broadest sense.