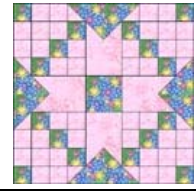




# Pieceful Times



Volume 32, Issue 9

Vienna Quilters Unlimited

May 2005

## *FIRST AND LAST*

Since occasionally I've heard complaints that this column isn't always about quilting, I thought I'd try to make this one about sewing and quilting and how those things came about in my life.

I was blessed to have three grandmothers. My mother's mother (and all my mother's people are Austrian) was a professional seamstress who actually designed and created costumes for movie productions in pre-war Austria. She knitted, embroidered, tatted lace, spun linen, and did all her sewing on a treadle sewing machine (which is what I learned to sew on). My mother, in a bizarre act of rebellion, only learned how to knit and could barely thread a needle, but I guess in an act of contrition, would dump me out at her mother's in the summertime when I was a pre-teen, and boy did I learn how to sew and cook over a wood burning stove! (a character building experience when it comes to making jam in August!)

My father's parents got divorced when he was a young adult, and his father remarried a twice-widowed school teacher who loved to sew and craft. I particularly remember her making the nicest hucked embroidered dresses for me. My father's

mother was supposedly a quilter, although I never saw any of her quilted items. They were rumored to be quite beautiful, although I'm told she would wrap new calves that needed special attention in them in calving season. (Let this be a lesson to all of you who are afraid of using a quilt because it is too "good" – some fool is going to come along and wrap a calf in it come calving season – so use it now and get some joy and pleasure out of it!)

Anyway, when I was very young, about 3 or so, my father who was in the Army was stationed in Korea, and my mother who was living in a town in Oregon near his father and his new wife, was overwhelmed with caring for my brother and sister, who were twins, about thirteen months younger than I, and quite the handful. I believe they were known far and wide as the "wild Indians." My step-grandmother enjoyed my company (since I had not earned any pejorative nicknames like my brother and sister, I must have been fairly well-behaved) and used to have me come stay with her for several days on end. To keep me entertained, she decided to teach me how to crochet. I became so adept at this that one day, while she was on the telephone (and I remember she was on the

telephone A LOT!) I wound up crocheting together all the fringe of her American Heritage hobnail bedspread. I was very proud of my accomplishment, but Oma was not – turns out it isn't that easy to take the crocheting out of fringe. Who knew?

My second great accomplishment under my step-grandmother's tutelage was to help her make place cards for her bridge group. This involved taking a piece of card stock, drawing the suggestion of a tiny face on it, with sequins for earrings, a scrap of felt for hat, and a little feather to adorn the stylish hat, and then the guest's name would be written in on the card when it was folded over. In those days, I don't recall the Woolworth's or the G.C. Murphy's having much in the way of craft supplies, so my grandmother and her friends would get the feathers from a couple of budgies that she and one or two of her friends kept. The birds were either yellow or blue, and occasionally would drop a feather in their cages. One day, again while Oma was on the phone, I decided to "help" out by making some of these place cards. When I got to the part of needing some feathers, I bravely (or so I thought) put my hand in the parakeet cage to get a feather or two. Since the budgies had not obliged by molting a couple out, I decided to help the process along a little. By the time Oma got off the phone, I had denuded the tails of her darling budgies, who, as memory serves, were not particularly happy about the process. To this day I am terrified of touching birds, and I cannot entirely lay the blame at the door of Alfred Hitchcock's movie *The Birds*.

My step-grandmother also had me help stuff sock monkeys that she and her cronies were making for the hospital auxiliary. My job was to cut up stocking stuffing with the world's dullest scissors. To this day, I can't look at a pair of kids'

scissors without thinking I have blisters on my hands! I really, really coveted a sock monkey of my own, but Oma assured me that they were only for the sick, poor children in the hospital, and I would not be allowed to have one. For reasons I still haven't figured out, I think of sock monkeys to this day as a guilty pleasure, like eating raw cookie dough, owning red underwear, and wearing shoes with no socks! I'll bet a psychiatrist would have a field day with that one!!!

When my Dad was stationed in Germany, and I wound up spending time with my Austrian grandmother, my sewing world expanded. When I finally mastered enough German to make myself understood to her (she didn't speak English) and persuaded her that I liked sewing, she sat me down at her sewing machine and began to teach me how to use a machine. I did learn on a treadle machine, but other than working out my right leg more, there wasn't a whole lot of difference in what goes on in the process. When I finally got old enough that my mother couldn't override all my insistence for a Barbie doll, my Austrian grandmother (who was bemused at Barbie's heroic figure and lack of underwear) helped me create some great ensembles for Barbie, including a real live mink stole and matching hat, made out of real fur. She also taught me some amazing embroidery stitches, and how to appliqué.

Because my father was in the Army, we moved around a lot. As luck would have it, we managed to move frequently enough that I changed schools in just enough time to AVOID having to take Home Ec each and every time; it was a mandatory course in at least 5 of the last junior high and high schools I attended. My sister was not so lucky and had to take it three different times. She also has the distinction of getting 3 Ds

and 3Fs in Home Ec (Oh, had she only worked with Oma's budgies!). Naturally, she got married first! More ironically, I took the Betty Crocker Scholarship test in High School (I needed scholarship money for college badly) and despite never having Home Ec, I was the Betty Crocker Scholarship First Place runner up! This is an early demonstration of "Life is just not fair!"

I have ALWAYS loved quilts and have always had quilts in my life. The mother of Alabama friends of my parents used to make quilts for pin money (I think she was in a nursing home at the time), and Wilma would always be calling my mother to tell her that her mother had another quilt for sale for \$15. I'd beg my mom to buy it. They were beautiful quilts, made from scraps, but my mother only bought them to help out Wilma's mother and humor me. However, when the Bicentennial came along and the popularity of quilts became a hot subject in the media, Mom realized she was sitting on a gold mine, and she snagged all those quilts back from me. Shortly after that, Wilma's mother began making all of her quilts out of double knit and the new ones weren't as attractive to me. We've had some family friends who've had a few relatives who would make quilts for us since then, but as the years went by, it became more and more obvious I was going to have to learn how to do this myself.

We had bought a quilt from an old friend that was in the tumbling block pattern in purples, and my oldest, who was 5 at the time, decided it was his. My youngest, who was 3, had a melt-down over the confiscation and demanded his own quilt in his then-favorite color, yellow. The family friend was reaching the end of her sewing years and allowed it was time I learned how.

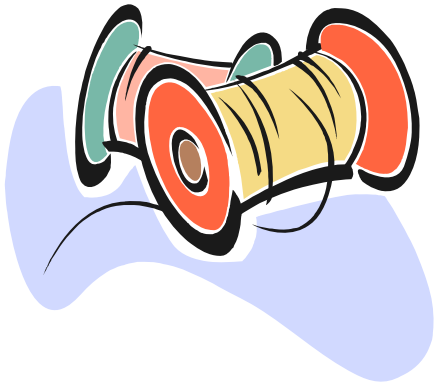
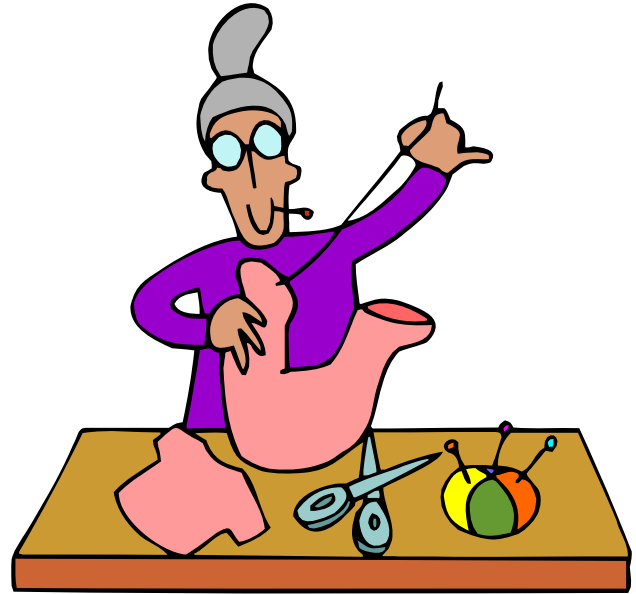
About a week later, we had a big snow storm in the DC area, and I was up late at night watching a cable program about quilting. The program was so old, it was in black and white and touted itself as "how to make a quilt in a day." It advertised a new product called a "rotary cutter" and indicated that you could go to the hardware store, have a 2 and ½ inch strip of Plexiglas cut, lay your fabric on layers of cardboard, and using the Plexiglas as a guide, cut strips of fabric really quickly with the rotary cutter. The pattern they were recommending was called "spider's web" but probably is known as kaleidoscope. I went all over town looking for enough different yellow fabrics and finally found them. For reasons I still can't explain, I felt honor bound to make the quilt in a weekend (their "relaxed" version of sewing time) so I by golly did it. I wore out 3 blades cutting strips on cardboard, until someone at the fabric store took pity on me (I guess they got curious why I was buying so many blades throughout the weekend and finally asked me what I was doing. After they ascertained I wasn't hacking up the neighborhood with all those blades I kept coming in and buying every few hours, the staff became really friendly and helpful) and explained what a self-healing mat was, and showed me a ruler too.

Actually, in light of my original quilting experience, it is a miracle I tried the process again. The pattern called for cutting pie-shaped wedges from the strips that were sewn together and then rearranging them into these octagonal blocks that would ultimately look like giant spider webs. Another unfortunate feature of this particular pattern is that if you do not measure and sew exactly right, the wedges come together to make what can only be charitably referred to as "breast protrusions" on your quilt top. I remembered thinking

that when the top was completed, if my breasts had been that large I would never have spent a Saturday night at home alone!! It was going to be one of the great ironies in my life that my quilt top was going to get better dates than I had ever had!!! Mercifully, the family friend took me under her wing, and showed me that the old saying that most mistakes will “quilt out” is true. You can hardly see the protuberances in the quilt anymore! However, I still wince anytime someone says, “Every quilt needs a little yellow in it.”

Now, you have the whole story of how I got into sewing and sewing quilts, from first to last, and before I ended my year as president, you got a whole quilting/sewing article out of me. What more can you ask for???

*Andrea Gribble  
President*



## **BOARD MEETING – APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>**

The Vienna QU Board met on Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. The Board minutes were not ready at the time of printing this

newsletter. They will be available at the May 17<sup>th</sup> VQU meeting.

## **SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2005-2006**

At the April meeting, the nominating Committee announced the following slate of officers for next year's Vienna QU Board:

President: Theresa Nichols  
Vice President: Carole Marti  
Recording Secretary: Barbara Cannon  
Corresponding Secretary: Kathleen Kurke  
Treasurer: Bill Rice  
Newsletter: Trudi Sommerfield  
Nominating Committee: Dottie Reed

Elections will be held at our May meeting. At that time, nominations from the floor may be made for any of these offices provided that the prior consent of the nominee has been obtained. The installation will be at the June Dinner.

## **BOOK BEAT**

*by Diane Dresdner*

### New Purchases:

***The Magic of Quiltmaking: A Beginner's Guide*** by Rolfe and Bowker. Great for beginners; covers topics from choosing fabric and seam allowances to understanding basic patchwork. Also covers piecing and appliqué techniques.

***Fusing Fun: Fast, Fearless, Art Quilts*** by Wasilowski. Fast projects with little or no sewing (can even fuse the borders). Great for a quick art quilt.

**Important Reminder: Please return all library books at the May and June meetings for the annual June book inventory.**

Donations to Haymarket QU: On April 21st, we donated 39 former VQU Library books and 19 books from our stashes for a total of 58 books!

### Recycling:

Please bring and help yourself to quilting-related magazines and patterns with our recycle box located at the library table.

### Reservations:

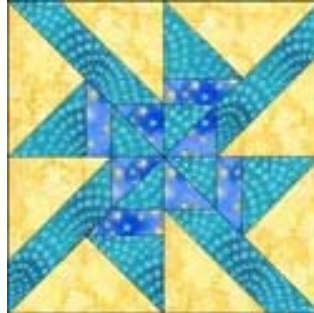
To reserve a book or video please contact Diane Dresdner at 703.378.0994 or [ddresdner@cox.net](mailto:ddresdner@cox.net). For a listing of our library, go to the Quilters Unlimited website, click on the Vienna link and follow the instructions for the library listing.

## ***QUILTED POSTCARDS***

Please keep those quilted postcards coming!

**May:** How Does Your Garden Grow?

**June:** Anything and Everything Goes.



## ***DON'T FORGET THE QUILT SHOW!***

The show will be June 3, 4 and 5 at the Dulles Expo Center. Five hundred thirty-eight quilts (including miniatures) plus 19 wearables, all made by our members, will be on display. Quilts also made by our members and connected to breast cancer will be in a theme area. The Artful Deck will be displayed as a special exhibit. These are a special group of playing card quilts which have been shown nationwide, and some of them were made by QU members.

One new part of this year's show will be Event Rooms. One room will be for the construction of quilts to be sold or auctioned to raise money for breast cancer research. The blocks contributed by the chapters throughout the year will be assembled and quilted. A second room will be used to make Quilts of Valor to be donated to wounded service members coming through Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval Hospitals. The third room will be for Project Linus quilts. Multiple quilt kits will be provided, but members are encouraged to bring thread, batting, and backing fabrics.

Two of our corporate vendors are putting three sewing machines in each of the

3 event rooms to use for these quilts. One room will have Pfaff machines, one Viking, and one Baby Lock. These machines will be sold as used at a special show discount at the end of the show. We hope all members will take an hour or two to work on these excellent projects and try a new machine when they come to visit the show.

A new Quilters Unlimited pin will be sold this year, along with the QU aprons, totes, tool bags, disposable cameras, AA batteries, and quilt CDs. The pin has the words *Quilters Unlimited 2005* on it with a pink ribbon in the center. The ribbon chairman sent a sample of this year's pink participation ribbon to the pin manufacturer; so the colors would match. There will be only 350 pins available.

Opening the show will be a ribbon cutting ceremony of the pink blocks contributed by the chapters. All QU breast cancer survivors are invited to be present at 9:45 a.m. on Friday, June 3 for this ceremony.

*Bonnie Wilbur & Linda Roberts*

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE JUNE DINNER

Food...fabric...friendship...Come one, come all to our annual June Dinner on Tuesday, June 21, at 6:00 p.m. in the Kilmer Cafeteria. Please bring a potluck dish to share (main dish, pasta, salad, or dessert).

Beverages and paper products will be supplied. Gifts for all! Join us!!

*Linda Montross*

## MAY/JUNE BIRTHDAYS

5/2	Emily Gross	6/2	Shelly McAllister
5/6	Geri Daines	6/11	Lillian Ryan
	Marie Heaney	6/17	Mary Ellen Simmons
5/13	Robin Speck	6/18	Ludy Rauber
5/25	Vicky McMichael	6/20	Marjorie Midili
5/26	Helen Hollingsworth	6/22	Joanne McCallum
5/31	Ann Hall	6/27	Mary Joyce
	Jane Leppin	6/29	Diane Dresdner

## VIENNA QUILTERS UNLIMITED BOARD 2004-2005

### Executive Board:

President	Andrea Gribble andragribble@hotmail.com 703/764-9331 (H) 202/736-0291 (W)	Recording Secretary	Kathy MacNabb <a href="mailto:kmmacnabb@aol.com">kmmacnabb@aol.com</a> 703/938-4355
Vice President	Theresa Nichols <a href="mailto:nicholsfamily1@earthlink.net">nicholsfamily1@earthlink.net</a> 703/938-3553	Corresponding Secretary	Janice Feather <a href="mailto:featherjl@cox.net">featherjl@cox.net</a> 703/425-0381
Treasurer	Bill Rice 703/503-7378	Newsletter	Trudi Sommerfield <a href="mailto:tsommerfield@pwcgov.org">tsommerfield@pwcgov.org</a> 703/921-9135
		Nominating Committee	Karla Vernon <a href="mailto:kvernon@cox.net">kvernon@cox.net</a> 703/281-0738

## TIME FOR ANNUAL DUES

It's time to pay dues for next year. The Big QU Board voted to increase dues to \$20 for regular membership, to \$10 for senior & associate members, and to \$30 for a family

membership. See the Big QU March newsletter. Please bring your renewal form and a check to the May or June Vienna QU meeting.

## Vienna Quilters Unlimited 2005 – 2006 Membership Form

Annual membership runs from July 1 – June 30. Membership payment must be received by September 30<sup>th</sup> for inclusion in the Annual QU Directory.

Name	Telephone (Home)
Address	
City	State
Zip Code + 4	
Email Address - optional optional	Birthday (Month/Day Only)

**Circle “Yes” or “No” for each question below (if blank, YES is the default):**

QU may put my e-mail address in the directory YES    NO

If applicable, QU may e-mail my chapter newsletter to me YES    NO

\*\*\*If you wish to receive your chapter newsletter by regular mail, there is a \$10 charge. Please provide Treasurer Bill Rice with \$10 in cash or check.

If applicable, QU may e-mail the Big QU Newsletter to me YES    NO

Below is my work phone number. I understand it will not be included in the directory:  
(work phone - optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Categories (check one) and Dues:** Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Regular (\$20. )

\_\_\_ Senior - Age 65+ by June 30, 2005 (\$10)

\_\_\_ Life - Age 75+ by June 30, 2005 (no charge at primary chapter, complete form for annual records)

\_\_\_ Family - two or more people at the same address (\$30) - Please list names at the top

\_\_\_ Associate – primary membership in other QU chapter (\$10 )

(Name of home QU chapter: \_\_\_\_\_)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Dues

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ QU Membership Pin @ \$4.00 each, if desired

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL ENCLOSED

To give the board help in planning events and activities for the coming year please indicate your interest in helping Vienna with the following committees/projects:

Auction	Block of the Month	Challenge	Community Service	History
Hospitality	June Dinner	Library Make-A-Quilt Night		Membership
Newsletter	Programs	Quilt Show	Retreat	

Please bring this completed form and payment to the Vienna chapter meeting. **Make your check payable to Vienna QU.** Details on meeting times and days are available from our website: <http://www.quiltersunlimited.org>



## ***QUILTING DATES TO REMEMBER***

- May 17 VQU Meeting at Kilmer Middle School (7:00 p.m.) – Kit Robinson Trunk Show
- June 3-5 QU Quilt Show
- June 17-19 “Blue Ridge Quilt Festival – Images in Fabric) – Blacksburg, VA (see [www.brqfestival.com](http://www.brqfestival.com))
- June 21 VQU June Dinner at Kilmer Middle School **Cafeteria** (6:00 p.m.)

Quilt clipart courtesy of Dawn Stewart at <http://dlstewart.com/clipart.htm>

Trudi Sommerfield  
6579 Grange Lane #204  
Alexandria, VA 22315

