

The Brooklyn Bee

BROOKLYN QUILTERS GUILD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2022

Volume 30
Issue 4

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Dear Fellow Quilters,

Happy December! Thanksgiving came with some unusual side effects this year: COVID disrupted my family's plans, invited guests found another venue and my husband and I nestled down with boxes of tissues and hot soup.

My COVID Thanksgiving was an unpleasant reminder why it is still good practice to don our masks when we meet as we do our best to protect ourselves and our friends. We have so much to be thankful for. I am grateful for the friends that I have made over the years through the Guild, all of our new members who bring different perspectives to our community, and everything I have learned from our programming and workshops as we move into our thirtieth year. I am especially grateful that we are still able to have the option to meet in person,

As we look forward to the holidays, many of us are using our sewing skills to make gifts. Thanks so much to Marcy Brenner, Madi Appell and Annette Wallace for teaching us how to make bags, books, and stars at our November meeting.

For our December meeting we are asking our members to exchange wrapped notions or tools. Do you have a tool or notion that you love? Why not purchase one for another Guild member? We also ask that you bring a dozen cookies to help make our meeting festive. There will be cookies to munch on at the meeting and probably plenty to take home as well.

And don't forget your show quilt and the President's challenge. The February deadline will be here before you know it.

See you soon.

Micki Segel
Co-President

2022-2023 Brooklyn Quilters Guild

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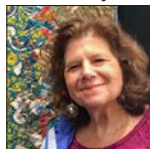


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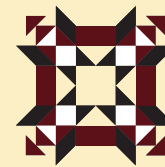
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Our Social Media Links

Facebook BOM Group

<https://tinyurl.com/ycxzf8fs>

Facebook Member-Only Group

<https://tinyurl.com/ycbwzom9>

Monthly Show and Tell

<https://tinyurl.com/y6xv5wyd>

Instagram

@Brooklyn_Quilters_Guild

YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Qfeous_-lc

Something to share? The deadline for submissions for the January 2022 issue of *The Brooklyn Bee* is 9 a.m., **Monday, December 19, 2022**. Please email to: susan.aronoff@gmail.com.

Guild Meetings

NEXT MEETING: December 17, 2022, 11 a.m.

Hybrid meeting: In-person at the Holy Name of Jesus Church and on Zoom.

The church is located at 245 Prospect Park West (enter at Shepherd's Hall in the back, off the parking lot).

A mask and proof of vaccination required for all in-person attendees.

ZOOM MEETING LINK: <https://tinyurl.com/y3ekc9ug>

SUNDAY BEES: Join us on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, 1 – 4 p.m. Zoom link Information will be emailed on Sunday morning and can always be accessed on the EVENTS page in the Member section of our website.

Guild News & Notes

Membership Report

As of 11/28/22, there are 180 members in our Guild. We welcome Carolyn Houghton, Willie Banner, Beth Christensen, Donna Greco, Gable Grehan. Rae Jerome and Georgina Lale.

Community Quilts

At the October meeting community quilt chairs received: 4 **Comfort Quilts**, 12 **ABC Quilts** and 2 **Veteran's Quilts**.

Jenn Arzberger (**ABC Quilts**) reports that she received a letter of thanks from the Wycliff Hospital in Ridgewood.

In all, 8 **Veteran's Quilts** quilts were delivered to the St. Albans Veterans Hospital for Veterans' Day

Eight **Hole in the Wall Quilts** were donated at the October Heritage retreat.

Quilts-4-Cops met on Monday, November 11. at One Police Plaza for our Annual quilting bee. Diane Prior-Holland reports that 34 quilts were presented to families, approximately 8 tops were completed and numerous blocks were completed by the ladies. It was a beautiful day.



Guild Calendar

See the **Bee Blasts** for more information on these events.

December 2022

December 11, 1 – 4 p.m. — Sunday sewing bee on Zoom

December 17, 11 a.m. — Guild meeting, hybrid/Zoom. Proof of vaccination and masks are required to attend the in-person meeting.

Along with regular Show & Tell quilts, please bring: Winter, snow, Hanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and other winter holiday-themed quilts

Members Gift Exchange: notions (see page 4)

December 25, 1 – 4 p.m. — Sunday sewing bee on Zoom **CANCELLED**

January 2023

January 8, 1 – 4 p.m. — Sunday sewing bee on Zoom

January 21, 11 a.m. — Guild meeting, hybrid/Zoom. Proof of vaccination and masks are required to attend the in-person meeting.

Boro Workshop with Susan Sato

January 22, 1 – 4 p.m. — Sunday sewing bee on Zoom

CALL FOR A NEW BLOCK OF THE MONTH VOLUNTEER

The Block of the Month project needs someone new to run the program for the next year, starting in September 2023. The Block of the Month runs from September to June, and it's a fun way to meet guild members and try out pattern writing. Each month you'll write a simple pattern designed for beginners. Usually we have two volunteers, one person who makes the pattern and another who helps test and edit the pattern. If you're interested in volunteering or learning more about either volunteer position, please email Eleanor Mohren at tabletopwhale@gmail.com.

Left: Eleanor Lutz-Mohren's BOM Quilt constructed from blocks designed in the 2022–2023 year.

December Programming: Holiday Exchange

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Rulers, and Pincushions, and Gadgets... Oh My!

Our December Guild meeting is a fabulous opportunity to spread some Holiday cheer.

If you are attending in person, please bring a favorite quilt tool, notion, or supply that you want to share with a fellow guild member. Make sure it is new, wrapped, and ready to give, because by giving you also get! Yes, you will get to select a surprise for yourself in a fun exchange during the meeting.

- Think about that must-have tool you want to share!



Cookies!! Guild Cookie Swap

- Please bring a dozen home-made cookies. Our Hospitality Committee will supply plates, coffee and small bags to take home uneaten cookies!

Guild Show News

Good news! We finally have the contract for our venue — BKLOFT26 at 153 26th St., Brooklyn — so we can move ahead with other plans such as raffles, postcards, publicity, vendors, etc. For more information on BKLOFT26, go to bkloft26.com. The 2023 show marks our 30-year-anniversary as a Guild. It is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, April 29–30, with set-up on Friday, April 28,

We have also made a commitment for security. We will have two security guards during each of the three days and one during each of the two nights.

Meanwhile we hope to have the raffle tickets for the two quilts at the December meeting. If not, they will definitely be at the January meeting. Each member will be given a batch of tickets to sell. The Sunflower quilt by Marcie Brenner and the wonky quilt organized by Barbara Danzi will both be raffled at the show. Proceeds from the Sunflower quilt will go to UNICEF for Ukraine while proceeds from the wonky quilt will help support the Guild.

Another person has stepped forward and volunteered to head a committee. Georgia Lale, a new member, will handle admissions for the show. And Mary Hawley has volunteered to make the label for the wonky quilt. Kate Haller, who is heading up the silent auction, has decided that the proceeds will go to Ruth's Refuge, a local women's shelter.

In other news, we will start having more show meetings in the near future. The first one will be Thursday, December 8 at 7 p.m. on Zoom. We will have others in person, either before or after the regular meetings. Watch the Bee Blast for more information.

We will also start organizing volunteers soon, so if you have a preference where you want to work during the show, please contact Micki Segel.

Meanwhile, and most importantly, keep working on those beautiful quilts and on the President's Challenge quilts.

~ Martha McDonald

PRESIDENTS' CHALLENGE 2023

GOING GREEN

Green, the color associated with 30th anniversaries and our theme for the challenge. Interpret as you will: Think nature, environment, sustainability, money, jealousy, envy... Have fun and be creative!

- Size: 36" x 36" square.
- Must feature the color green in a significant way.
- Must include a hanging sleeve and quilt label on the back.
- New quilts — not previously shown at any BQG shows.
- Deadline: Saturday, March 18, 2023 Guild meeting.

Quilts will be displayed at our April 2023 Quilt Show.

QUILTY BOOKS

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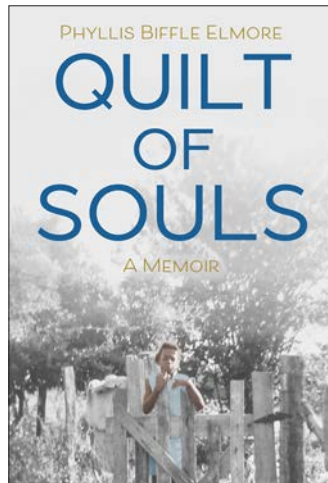
Quilt of Souls: A Memoir

By Phyllis Biffle-Elmore

Hardcover; 304 pages

Published by Penguin/Random House, 2022

On October 22, 2022, quilters from New York and Maryland attended the book signing by the author, Phyllis Biffle-Elmore at a Black & White Tie Event. On the massive acres of land at The Boiling Air Force Base in Washington, DC at least 200 guests in their better-than-Sunday-best walked on the red carpet.



Guild members at the book signing:
Standing: Guild members Sylvia Hernandez, Diane Prior-Holland, Thadine Wormly-Herndon
Seated: former Guild member Stacey Becco

In her first book, *Quilt of Souls*, Phyllis Biffle-Elmore intertwines stories of the lives of her family and neighbors told to by her Grandma Lula *Quilt of Souls: A Memoir*, expands her first book, providing more detailed stories of some of the characters she mentioned only briefly.

At four years old, Phyllis Biffle-Elmore was taken from Detroit to live with her grandparents in rural Alabama—an experience familiar to many black Americans whose families migrated from southern rural states to northern states in the 1940s and 50s. Grandma Lula helped ease her fears, loneliness and feelings of abandonment through act and story. Lula made quilts only from the clothing of those had died and as she sewed she shared the stories of the people who had worn the items.

[Quilt of Souls continued on page 7](#)

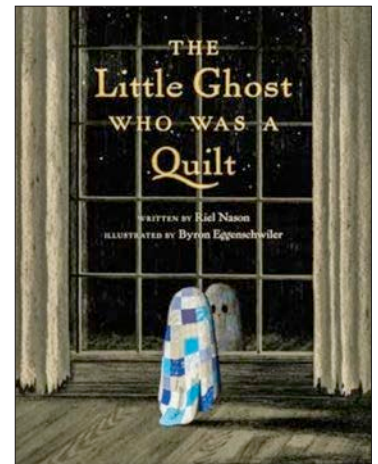
The Little Ghost Who Was A Quilt

Written by Riel Nason; illustrated

by Byron Eggenschwiler

Hardcover; 48 pages

Published by Tundra, 2020



In most children's stories, ghosts look like sheets. In Riel Nason's *The Little Ghost Who Was A Quilt*, the little ghost is a quilt. Being a quilt proves challenging as he tries to keep up with his other ghost friends. Quilts are certainly heavier than sheets and warmer, so he flies more slowly than the other little ghosts and gets hot trying to keep up with them.

Ultimately this is a tale of difference and that universal feeling of not fitting in with one's family and peers. The little ghost comes to value his otherness after he is unexpectedly swept up into a little girl's trick or treating experience one Halloween and has a very close encounter with the living.

There is subtle humor in the Nason's text, and Eggenschwiler's illustrations drawn in pencil with touches of digital color lend a wonderfully old-fashioned feel to this gentle book.



As a quilter, a book lover, and a new grandmother to be (January 15th), *The Little Ghost Who Was A Quilt* intrigued me. This book is the delightful tale of a ghost who also happens to be a quilt. I highly recommend this book.

~ Carolyn Oppenheim Schwartz

In thinking about the introduction to Phyllis Biffle-Elmore's **Quilt of Souls: A Memoir**, my question to quilt artists became: "Who do your quilts give voice to?" Biffle-Elmore's Grandma Lula Young Horn was born 2 years before the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. Her life was pre-destined as was her granddaughter's. Lula would cut-up and sew pieces of clothing/cloth of the deceased black and white folks from her community. She spoke the life story of each piece of cloth that was stitched into the quilts she created.

Reading the stories placed my spirit into that person's life. It also flashed back to many stories I heard from my elders and neighbors who have passed on. The book is a human story, even though the voice narrating happens to be an African American woman born in Detroit, but transported to Alabama as a child.

As fibers of thread that connect to weave into cloth, and the thread that connects each piece of cloth, Biffle-Elmore's book connects each one of us.

~ Thadine Wormley-Hendon



Phyllis Biffle-Elmore wrapped in Grandma Lula's Quilt of Souls.



At Members Teaching Members at the November meeting, Madi Appell demonstrated how to make a fabric-covered book.

Here are the instructions she handed out.

1. Cut the oak tag, paper and fabric to the appropriate sizes. For $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ -inch book, the oak tag would be $5 \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ inches, the three sheets of paper would be $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ inches and fabric would be $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. You also need two rectangles of fabric $3\frac{1}{4} \times 5$ inches.
2. Score the oak tag down the center.
3. Fold paper pages in half.
4. Position pages centered on top of the scored oak tag.
5. Stitch down the center of the pages on the scored oak tag.
6. Place the fabric wrong side up on a surface.
7. Position the oak tag centered top of the fabric.
8. Glue the oak tag onto the fabric.
9. Fold over the edges of the fabric and glue to the inside of the oak tag cover.
10. Glue the two rectangles of fabric onto the inner covers of the book.

The ABC Committee Needs You!

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The ABC Committee is currently a group of 1. One person does not constitute a group, you intelligently respond. Well you would be correct. Two people would be a couple of persons, but might be considered a very tiny group. Why is she nattering on like this? you ask. Well, Jenn Arzberger (our current committee chair and group of 1) needs assistance. She has 2 young sons, a full-time job, an over-filled basement, a husband who is getting cranky and a back that has sent her a clear message that enough is enough!

What would you need to do to help? you tentatively respond. Well, it depends, is my less than clear answer. If you live near our Guild's meeting place and actually have some space in your home you could help store stuff and bring it to the monthly meetings—and, if you have a car and have some space in your home, it wouldn't matter where you live.

On another note you could help Jenn figure out how to streamline ABC committee processes so that it's easier to manage. Currently she totes supplies (fabric, batting, some quilt sandwiches as well as smaller items) to and from each meeting. And Jenn gets a bit lonely during meetings, so another person or 2 helping her out would be a blessing.

If you would like to be involved with the ABC committee we are convening a meeting of ABC volunteers after the December meeting.

~Susan Aronoff



This little girl came into the November meeting with her mother looking for the Church's refugee center. I checked with Jenn Arzberger, **ABC Quilts** Chair, to see if we could give her a quilt. Absolutely, was the answer. The little girl went straight to this quilt! She had no jacket and just wrapped it around herself.

When I went outside there were four other little kids and their parents in line for the food kitchen. I turned around and went back inside to see if we could give them quilts! The answer, of course, was yes. So I went and got the parents and kids.

~ Dori Dietz

SEW SMART

Tips N' Tools

Hello dear quilting brothers and sisters,

I just love when one of you approaches me with a great new tool. This one is from Martha McDonald:

I love my magnetic pin cushion with a cover made by Dritz. The cover is useful when you are traveling to retreats or any place where you need sewing supplies. It keeps the pins from falling out and scattering.

Then when you are sewing, the cover can become a base for the pin cushion or a little bowl for odds and ends.

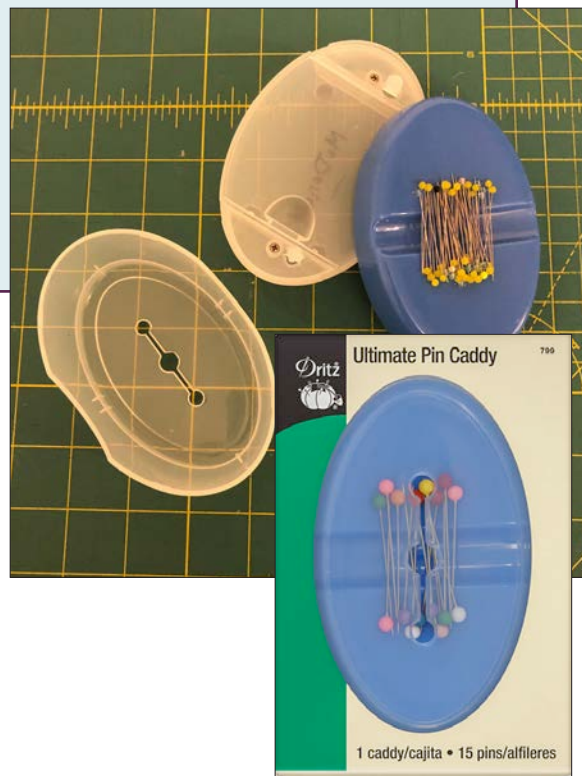
The magnetic portion also slides off to reveal a storage unit in the bottom of the unit. For more information, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZn00_ruSqs.

The Ultimate Pin Caddy is available in three colors from places like Marcie Brenner's Sew Beary Special for about \$15.

Clover makes a similar item.

Please keep those tips and tools coming! Wishing you all a most joyous holiday.

My best,
Alice Braziller



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My First Quilt

BY GAIL OTIS

10

On a chilly January afternoon almost thirteen years ago, I was on my way to dinner at a restaurant in Chelsea when a store with a radiant window and a bustle of activity caught my eye. The City Quilter, the sign said. I was early for dinner, so I stopped in to see what I might discover.

I had never quilted, or even imagined doing so, but I was immediately enthralled. Hanging on the walls were quilts of many colors and filling the shelves was a rainbow of fabric. In the back of the shop there were sewing machines for sale and through a door was a classroom equipped with tables, chairs, sewing machines, and design walls. I had entered a kind of wonderland and had no idea how captivating this journey would turn out to be. My first thought was that, at the very least, this could be my opportunity to learn to use a sewing machine. I had been hemming pants by hand while procrastinating for the longest time about buying a machine. I had never learned how to use one because my junior high school class was the first in which girls were offered shop instead of sewing or cooking, a welcome break for me at the time because I so enjoyed woodwork.

Later, at the restaurant—remember this was about dinner at a restaurant—I couldn't stop regaling my friends about what I had discovered. I had retired only recently and was spending my time painting, something I hadn't done since before I began working. In my first career I was an art director/graphic designer, which helped prepare me for quilting because the skills are transferable. When I was ready to move on, I joined a non-profit organization servicing the elderly which has nothing to do with quilting but was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever known. So, I was still finding my way in retirement and at this stage in the passage, had become disgruntled with my painting and open to new creative possibilities.

The next day was consumed with exhilarating thoughts of the quilts I had seen, sort of like experiencing my first crush all over again. After I got over the feeling that I would be diving head first into the shallow end of the pool, I bought a sewing machine and registered for classes at the store, first on how to use the machine I had purchased and then a beginner's class on piecing and quilting taught by guild member Christine Janove. In this class, I learned to cut and piece basic shapes and also got a glimpse into quilting and binding. I made a sampler of six blocks and even now, when

I am at the ironing board, I am reminded of those first lessons on seam pressing direction.



Thus began my consuming passion for quilting. I took more classes at the store—quilt as you go, stack and whack, drunkard's path, free motion quilting—and had great times with others who, like me, began a boundless accumulation of fabric. The store was a welcoming place and I went there routinely to find just the right color to work into my current project. If the right color wasn't available, well, I was sure to find something that would work in the future. Though the store is no longer there, I feel as if I never left it.

Encouraged in my work by my dear supportive husband and friends who take an interest in my passion, I have made many bed quilts and pillows and gifted something to each of them.

I'm now on another exploration, having fun learning hand embroidery, both crewelwork and needlepoint. Maybe one day, these will become blocks for a wall hanging quilt. ❖



Events of Note

Shari Werner, Contemporary Quilts, The Adler Gallery, November 2 – December 29. Port Washington Public Library. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 – 5 p.m. For more information: <https://pwpl.org/exhibitions>.

The Social Fabric Textile Art Exhibit, October 17, 2022 – January 22, 2023. Arts Westchester Gallery, 31 Mamaroneck, Ave., White Plains, NY. Artists, including guild member Sylvia Hernandez, address themes such as climate, equity and justice. For more information: <https://artswestchester.org/the-social-fabric/>.

Uncovering Black History: Quilts from the Collection of Carolyn Mazloomi, International Quilt Museum, October 21, 2022 – March 25, 2023. 1523 N. 33rd St. Lincoln, NE. Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; For more information: info@internationalquiltmuseum.org; or <https://www.internationalquiltmuseum.org/exhibitions/now-showing>

Art Quilt Elements. Online Exhibition of the March–April, 2022 show can be viewed here: <http://www.artquilelements.org/>. Guild members Susan Byrnes, Barb Danzi and Shari Werner have work in online show.

Quilts=Art=Quilts 2022, Schweinfurth Art Center. **October 29, 2022 – January 8, 2023.** 205 Genesee Street, Auburn, NY. Juried show featuring 64 artists based on overall quality of design, visual impact, and originality of the pieces.

Four Sundays during the exhibit, quilt artists give a lecture about their work and bring their pieces. The talks are at 2 p.m. and free with admission. Videos of the talks will be posted on our website. Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 – 5 p.m. Schweinfurth Admission \$10. For more information: <https://schweinfurthartcenter.org/quiltsartquilts-2022/>.

For a video of Barb's talk: <https://youtu.be/AfmAXNXH9js>

BLOCK OF THE MONTH



The November Block of the Month featured Tall Trees. The winner this month was Elaine Kosik who took home a forest. Congratulations Elaine!

GALLERY OPEN HOUSE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022
Noon - 3:00 p.m. *

McLean Textile Gallery
6819 Elm Street, McLean, Virginia 22101

40 x 40 @ 40
Contemporary Art Quilts by members of
Manhattan Quilters Guild



EXHIBITION OF EXTRAORDINARY CONTEMPORARY QUILT ART FROM THE MANHATTAN QUILTERS GUILD

* Exhibition on view from December 6, 2022 - January 12, 2022
Regular gallery hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thurs, Friday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Closed Wednesdays

PLEASE NOTE: The gallery can be hard to find. Look for the sign on the left side of the street.



Sew Know: EXPOSED ZIPPER BAG

BY MARCIE BRENNER, MCSE

12



Supplies

2 outer Fabrics

2 Lining fabrics

1 zipper 1 1/2-2" longer than Fabric

Align closed zipper to the long edge of the outer fabric, having zipper pull past side edge.

Stitch near teeth.

Repeat for other side.



Sandwich Zipper tape between lining and outer fabric.

Stitch along previous stitching.

Repeat for other side.



Open zipper.

Pin bag fabric to fabric, lining to lining.

Face zipper teeth toward lining.



Stitch 1/2" seam, leaving hand width opening at lining bottom,

Turn right side out.



Completed zipper bag

HOLIDAY HEART

December 2022 Block of the Month • BROOKLYN QUILTERS GUILD

By Eleanor Lutz



Fabrics & Cutting

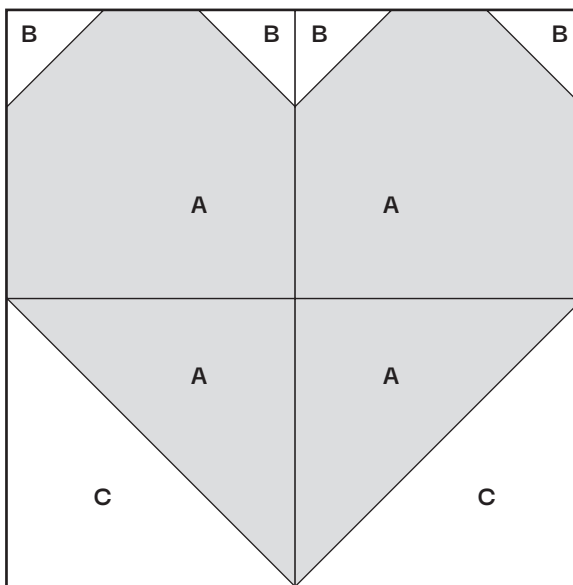
Heart (four colorful, fun fabrics suggested)

A: 4x Heart squares, **5.75x5.75 in.**

Background (light fabric suggested)

B: 4x Small squares, **2.25x2.25 in.**

C: 2x Large squares, **5.75x5.75 in.**



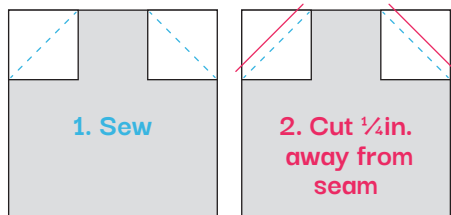
Instructions

All seam allowances are $\frac{1}{4}$ in. Finished block is 11x11 in.

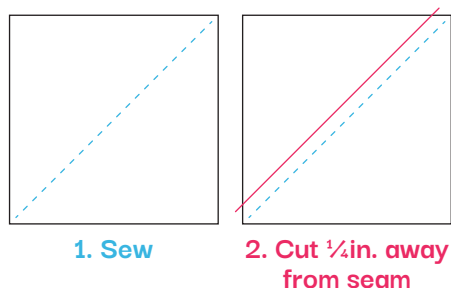
1: Draw one diagonal line on the back of each background square (**B** & **C**) in washable marker or chalk.



2: Pick two heart squares (**A**) to be the top half of your heart. Sew two small background squares (**B**) onto each heart square, following the diagonal line you drew earlier.



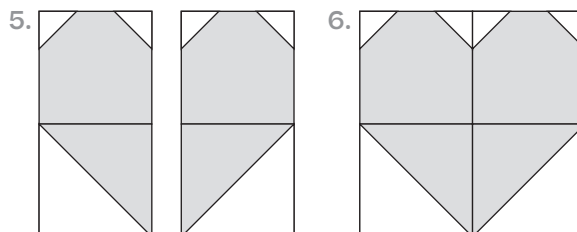
3: Sew one large background square (**C**) onto each remaining heart square (**A**), following the diagonal line.



4: Iron all your squares flat.

5. Sew the top and bottom of the hearts together.

6: Iron again, then sew the two halves together.



The finished block should be 11 inches square, including seam allowance.

We're all busy during the holidays, so this month's block is an easy holiday heart. Pick whichever fabrics you love the most, the hearts don't need to be red or pink.

Bring your block to our next guild meeting to enter the lottery and win that month's collection of blocks! If you can't come to the meeting, you can enter by sharing your block on our B.O.M. Facebook by 10a.m. the morning of the Guild Meeting. Each completed block gives you a chance to win, whether you are present at the meeting or not. Blocks will be collected from those attending the meeting in person. Everyone else will privately mail their blocks to the winner.



facebook.com/groups/838028493370905

2022 RETREATS

Cross Roads in New Jersey

Cross Roads is a camp and retreat facility located in Port Murray, NJ, one and a half hours from Brooklyn. Information about Cross Roads can be found on the website, www.crossroadsretreat.com.

2023 Cross Roads retreats

Sunday–Friday March 5–10, 2023.

Sunday–Friday June 4–9, 2023

All mid-week retreats are for 5 nights and 14 meals.

Some members have expressed interest in going on a quilt retreat, but they need it to be on a weekend because they have regular Monday–Friday jobs. We are happy to offer a weekend retreat at the Cross Roads Retreat Center in New Jersey.

Here's the dope:

Dates: Friday June 9 through Sunday 11, 2023 .

Price: \$190 per person in a double room; \$230 in a private room. That includes 2 nights lodging (Fri., Sat.) and 5 meals: B,L,D Saturday and B,L on Sunday.

The catch: We need a firm 15 people, to commit two months in advance – and that would be April 9 – for us to secure this weekend with Cross Roads. If not, we need to release those dates back to them so they can offer it to others.

Want to come? Interested? Or questions?

Martha Musgrove (marf86@hotmail.com) or

Susan Aronoff (susan.aronoff@gmail.com).

More detailed information on the retreats can be found on the Guild's website at <https://www.quiltbrooklyn.org/retreats>.

Heritage in Connecticut

The Heritage Hotel is a Spa and Conference Center in Southbury, CT, about one hour and 45 minutes from Brooklyn. For more information, go to:

<https://www.heritagesouthbury.com>

2023 Heritage retreats

Monday-Friday April 17–21, 2023.

July 24–28, 2023

October 23–27, 2023

Please see the Guild website for pricing options.

If interested, please contact Carol Lieberman, 917-439-9549, or email: clieber@verizon.net.



At the November meeting, Annette Wallace showed members how to make a folded (no sewing) Swedish star ornament. For more information and a demonstration, go to <https://the-weekendquilter.com/blogs/blog/scandinavian-woven-star-ornament-gift-bows>.

GEES BEND RETREAT

BY THADINE WORMLEY-HENDON

On November 2 through 6, 2022, Diane Pryor-Holland and I attended the Gees Bend quilters retreat in Raymond, Mississippi sponsored by Ms. A. Robertson. China and Mary Ann Pettway traveled from Boykin, Alabama to Mississippi to teach and guide the quilters.

We were a gathering of 42 women from all over the USA as diverse in age, race, career and quilting ability as the threads in cloth. Despite our differences, each woman helped the other with fabrics, sewing and suggestions to such questions as "How does this look?" We sat at different tables during meal times, and learned about each other. China and Mary Ann sang spiritual songs thanking God for life and blessings, and we often joined in singing. What a blessed experience brought together because of mere cloth.

Gees Bend Quilters Collective

Mary Ann Pettway & China Pettway

China and Mary Ann Pettway can often be found at their shop in Boykin, Alabama. As two ambassadors of the tradition, they are teaching artists, who present at festivals, contribute to workshops at the Alabama Folk School, and lead programs at many other arts and cultural institutions. As singers, who perform and present the sounds of sacred music traditions, China and Mary Ann continue to contribute their voices to special events, documentaries, and recordings.

A specialist in home health care, who moved back to Gee's Bend after college, China Pettway learned to quilt from her mother, Leola. The manager of the Gee's Bend Quilt Collective, Mary Ann Pettway, a professional in book keeping and accounting, returned to quilting after working for a sewing factory for twenty years.

