

Celebrating
the
Silver Anniversary
of
Quilters Unlimited



1973-1998

**Historical Overview and Update of
QU's Past Five Years**

Dear Fellow QU Members,

Celebrating the anniversary of the birth of QU over 25 years ago has given us a good opportunity to be festive this year. My thanks to the movers and shakers behind all of this. One of the big responsibilities of the anniversary committee has been to assemble this document - a summary of the past five years of QU activities.* Chapter representatives throughout the year have been:

Annandale	Billie Tuzo & Jane McDowell
Arlington	Margaret Frick
Burke	Glennnda Shriver & Pat Adams
Centreville	Joan Toomey
Fairfax	Karen Pettibone & Mary Grace Ronan
Falls Church	Terri Willett
McLean	Joan Clemons
Mount Vernon	Mary Stauss & Anne Parke
Reston	Kendall Martin & Carol O'Neill
Springfield	Marianne Lloyd & Susan White
Vienna	Kay Lettau & Barbara Tricarico

Others who made special contributions are:

- Carol O'Neill (R) for her invaluable help to me writing and editing this document
- JoAnne Tikkala (S) for extracting information about Big QU from old newsletters
- Chapter historians for helping assemble the information from their groups
- Gene Ives (MV) for the design of our logo that has been used throughout the year
- Lesly-Claire Greenberg (V) for designing the anniversary mystery quilt
- Carla Schardt (R) for assembling the signature quilt
- Joan Toomey (C) for making the center block for the signature quilt
- Nancy Karst (B) for setting up a display of our community service works at the annual show
- Kay Lettau(V) for organizing an exhibit of past-presidents' quilts at the annual meeting
- Individual chapters and program chairmen for incorporating the theme into their activities this year as well as into the big QU events for which they were responsible
- Leslie Pfeifer (V) for giving us meeting space at the Quilt Patch

My sincere thanks to all of you and any others who helped as well as to the members for their enthusiastic participation in events throughout the year.

Carolyn Lynch
Chairman, QU 25th Anniversary Committee
May 14, 1998

*A copy of "Highlights of 20 Years" that was published May 20, 1993, has been given to the historian or president of all the individual chapters.

Quilters Unlimited Executive Board Officers

1993-94

President	Barbara Tricarico (V)
Vice President	Jackie Thompson (F)
Secretary	Carol O'Neill (R)
Treasurer	Terri Willett (FC)
Newsletter Editor	Jackie Isbell (B)
Nominating Com.	Judy Babb (A)
Quilt Show Chair*	Marie Milow (Ar) & Judy Babb (A)

1994-95

President	Carol O'Neill (R)
Vice President	Theresa DeFore (FC)
Secretary	Kathy Gray (B,F)
Treasurer	Beth Fagerberg (C)
Newsletter Editor	Jackie Isbell (B)
Nominating Com	Sally Price (Ar)
Quilt Show Chair*	Judy Babb (A)

1995-96

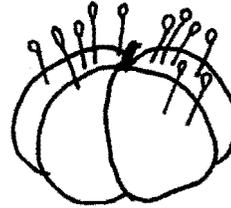
President	Rosemary O'Brien (Ar)
Vice President	Terri Willett (FC)
Secretary	Kathy Gray (B,F)
Treasurer	Judy Muller (S,McL)
Newsletter Editor	Joyce Tobias (A)
Nominating Com.	Sally Price (Ar)
Quilt Show Chair*	Susan Neilson (Ar)

1996-97

President	Terri Willett (FC)
Vice President	Loretta Spittle (S)
Secretary	Marianne Jamney (R)
Treasurer	Carla Schardt (R)
Newsletter Editor	Joyce Tobias (A)
Nominating Com	Linda Birkner (C,V)
Quilt Show Chair	Susan Neilson (Ar)
President Ex-Officio	Rosemary O'Brien (Ar)

1997-98

President	Loretta Spittle (S)
Vice President	Joan Toomey (C)
Secretary	Kathy Nagle (C,F)
Treasurer	Carla Schardt (R)
Newsletter Editor	Sharon McDonagh (Ar)
Nominating Com	Karen Naylor (FC,V)
Quilt Show Chair	Pat Adams (B)
President Ex-Officio	Terri Willett (FC)



From the 1997-98 Quilters Unlimited President -

"Many quilt historians credit the American Bicentennial Celebration with generating the current quilting enthusiasm. Those whose business it is to forecast economic and social trends believed initially that the quilting revival would be nothing more than a fad. No one considered that quilting would become the billion dollar industry it has become today.

The growth of Quilters Unlimited is a grass roots testament to the national trends. Membership grows steadily, participation in our annual quilt show increases both by exhibitors and viewers and no member ever has enough fabric or quilting notions.

While social historians spend hours analyzing why quilting endures, we as a guild can explain simply for our 25 years that it is fun, full of personal reward and a peaceful past-time!"

Loretta Spittle, QU President, 1997-98

* Appointed position until 1996-97, when it became an elected board position.

Celebrating 25 Years: 1973-1998

Happy 25th anniversary, Quilters Unlimited! As an organization we've been bringing together quilters from throughout Northern Virginia since May 17, 1972, when Bonnie Spather met at the Merrifield Village Apartments with sixteen other women interested in quilting as a group. From this informal get-together came plans to organize area quilters initially as a chapter of the National Quilting Association; a short time later it was decided to form an independent group. Hazel Carter drafted a constitution and bylaws, and Quilters Unlimited came into being to:

- Preserve the tradition, culture and history of quilting
- Promote the knowledge and understanding of all aspects of quilting
- Enjoy rather than judge each other's work

The first meeting of QU was held in January 1973, with Bonnie Spather as president. The Epworth (Annandale) chapter, the charter group, had 37 paid members at the end of that year. Over the past quarter of a century QU has grown from the first-year total of 172 members in three chapters to almost 1,200 men and women in 1998 in the following eleven chapters:

Chapter	Year Organized	Initial Membership	Spring 1993 Membership	Spring 1998 Membership*
Annandale (A)**	1973	37	78	78 (84)
Arlington (Ar)	1974	18	64	83 (85)
Burke (B)	1983	43	115	162 (179)
Centreville (C)	1992	21	21	76 (79)
Fairfax (F)	1975	8	99	127 (139)
Falls Church (FC)	1974	12	79	90 (100)
McLean (McL)	1975	15	92	109 (119)
Mount Vernon (MV)	1973	34	37	70 (71)
Reston (R)	1980	10	92	107 (112)
Springfield (S)	1974	12	53	95 (106)
Vienna (V)	1973	52	213	200 (206)

*Number in () includes associate members who belong to more than one chapter.

**Letter in () is the abbreviation for individual chapters.

Not surprisingly, the organizational structure of QU has grown along with the membership. The major change was obtaining nonprofit 501 (c)(3) status based on being an educational group; work on this began under the guidance of Debbie Repass (B) in 1986 and culminated in 1994. Increasingly complex tax requirements, raffle regulations, and greater QU income and expenses led to hiring a year-round accountant in 1996 to work in conjunction with QU's Treasurer. Dues through 1998-99 remain at \$15, the amount established in 1989. QU bylaws were revised in 1996-97. Changes included moving the start of the membership year from September to July and adding the

President Ex-Officio and the Quilt Show Chairman to QU's Executive Board. The show chairmanship had been a rotating chapter assignment until 1990; it was an appointed committee position from 1991 to 1995 before becoming an elected board position.

QU's annual show was moved in 1993 from the Vienna Community Center to more spacious accommodations at the Annandale campus of Northern Virginia Community College. Other show changes since 1992 have included replacing all the wooden quilt poles with sturdier metal ones, adding an annual exhibit of member-made cloth dolls as well as a quilter's corner to demonstrate aspects of quilting, raising funds through a silent auction of a wallhanging from each chapter plus raffling a major prize, and permitting advertisements in the quilt program (1998). Each year individual chapters select a "Meet the Quilter" to be honored at the show and to demonstrate her special expertise. The show remains quite unique in being neither judged nor juried.

QU's Virginia Quilt, which was made as a group project in 1989-91, has been much appreciated when brought to schools, churches, nursing homes, museums, quilt shows (especially the QU tent at Sully Plantation), and the like. It was particularly enjoyed by area fifth-graders studying Virginia history. However, in late 1997 QU's Executive Board, concerned about continuing to store, display and preserve the quilt, voted to present it to the Virginia Quilt Museum. Remaining copies of the accompanying pattern book, "Virginia is for Quilt Lovers," have also been donated to the museum. The quilt is taking a detour in getting to the museum in Harrisonburg, first going to Japan to be shown by invitation in November 1998 at International Quilt Week Yokohama.

QU events continue to include a Fall and a Winter Quilt-In, a Fall Luncheon-Seminar, the spring show, and an annual meeting and speaker to close out the QU year. QU's library at the Fred Packard Center currently boasts 185 titles available for members to check out. In addition to "Threads," QU's quarterly newsletter, Barbara Tricarico (V) set up and oversees an e-mail directory of members and e-mail updates for QU. Toshiko Uchiyama (V) expertly created a QU web page in 1997.

To augment QU's treasury, tote bags with the QU logo were offered for sale in 1995; quilt T-shirts were sold the following year, and commemorative 25th anniversary pins and tote bags in 1997.

Highlights of the Past Five Years

1993-94: For our demonstration of quilting at the Labor Day Wolftrap International Children's Festival, QU members prepared over 2,000 quilt "sandwiches"; even more could have been used. QU also demonstrated at the September 12 Sully Plantation Quilt Show. The Fall Seminar featured Virginia Avery's trunk show of wearables followed by Dr. Raymond Dubard's lecture on historical aspects of African quilts. Doreen Speckmann's lecture, "Will Go Anywhere for a Quarter Yard," was enthusiastically received at the June 2 annual meeting, as were her workshops. Patty Herzog (F) won the Double Wedding Ring raffle quilt at the Fall Quilt-In. Four community-service quilts were finished from blocks started at the previous year's Quilt-Ins. The annual show was moved to the spacious gymnasium at Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale and also boasted much improved metal poles replacing some of the older wooden ones.

1994-95: A major goal of the year was shoring up QU's treasury. This was accomplished by selling tote bags with the QU logo and raffling a Singer Featherweight sewing machine at the Winter Quilt-In (instead of the traditional quilt raffle). For the first time, at the annual show small quilts donated by each chapter were offered in a silent auction, and there was also a raffle (of a P. Buckley Moss signed and framed quilt print). The Fall Quilt-In raffle of a Double Wedding Ring quilt was won by Mary Younce (V,A). The Fall Seminar featured editor Patty Bachelder's inside peek of quilt magazine publishing, plus Coleen Walters and Diane Herbort's fashion show of their embellished garments. Coleen and Diane followed up with workshops. Ruth McDowell spoke at the annual meeting and offered a workshop. QU members made plaids-and-stripes scrappy blocks for a fund-raiser quilt; it was completed the next year and donated to My Image After Breast Cancer (later renamed Y-Me).

1995-96: Lectures and workshops galore highlighted this year. "It's Color that Makes a Quilt Go Wow!" was Joen Wolfrom's talk at the Fall Seminar, followed by three days of workshops. Nancy Crow was featured at the annual meeting, then gave an intensive four-day workshop on "Improvisations: Let's Experiment." In addition, extra one-day workshops were offered in May by Jinny Beyer on soft-edge piecing and tessellated patterns for patchwork. QU members demonstrated quilting and specific techniques at the fall Sully Plantation Show. QU was delighted that the Smithsonian's American History Museum displayed a Christmas tree decorated with miniature quilts made by QU'ers and others in 1985 plus new miniatures contributed this year. QU was brought into the computer age with an e-mail directory of 39 members.

1996-97: Community-service projects were a focus of all QU chapters, with fund-raiser quilts and others made for more than 20 nonprofit groups. QU continued to demonstrate at the Sully Plantation Show in September, showing both general quilting and specific techniques. At the Fall Quilt-In the antique Double Wedding Ring raffle quilt was won by Joan Clemons (MV, S). The Winter Quilt-In again featured the raffle of a Singer Featherweight. The quilt show committee focused on streamlining set-up activities to speed and ease the process. Margaret Miller lectured at the Fall Seminar, then gave workshops on "Quilts from the Wedge" and "Blockbuster Quilts." Gwen Marston was featured at the May annual meeting; her workshops were "19th Century Folk Art Appliqué" and "Liberated Block Construction."

1997-98: A celebration of QU's silver anniversary was incorporated in all activities during the year. Six original charter members of QU were honored at the Fall Seminar. Everyone in attendance received a fabric square stamped with QU's new anniversary logo. Yvonne Porcella spoke at the seminar and then offered a "Six Color Workshop" and "Fabric Painting and Embellishment." The anniversary theme continued at the Fall Quilt-In with an exchange of bell motif blocks. QU's anniversary pin, designed by Gene Ives (MV), went on sale at the Quilt-In. The unique raffle prize was a \$300 gift certificate to a local fabric store of the winner's choice. The Winter Quilt-In featured two raffles: a Singer Featherweight won by Nancy Landis (B) and a basket

brimming with fabric won by May Joyce (FC). Other celebration projects included Lesly-Claire Greenberg's (V) intriguing four-part Mystery Quilt, collecting signature blocks for a QU-members quilt, and sale of tote bags as well as pins featuring the anniversary logo. A showing of past-presidents' quilts was held at the annual meeting. Judith Montano was the featured speaker. Carolyn Lynch (McL, A) chaired the anniversary committee, which included representatives from each QU chapter.
