

Towpath Quilt Guild History

The Towpath Quilt Guild was born in the spring of 1981, developing from an informal quilt show at the Fayetteville Public Library. The Founding Mothers- Marty Bowne, Lee Burnham, Donna Fuller, Jean Hughes, and Phyllis Scutt, worked diligently following that show to create the Guild. The first meeting, March 1981, held at Fayetteville's Merchant Bank, had an attendance of thirty quilters. Attendance of the April meeting doubled to sixty! The bank no longer was able to accommodate the numbers attending and the meetings were moved to the United Methodist Church. What a growth spurt, within six months the membership blossomed from a mere thirty to over 100 members!

Right from its birth, the Guild has been industrious in its endeavors. May of 1981, two months after the first formal meeting, the Guild invited Michael James to speak at a public program. Response from the community was over-whelming, attendance was excellent, and as a result the Guild's treasury was firmly established.

The informal quilt shows in public libraries continued for 2 more years. In 1985 the first formal two day Quilt Show occurred. Now these shows are scheduled every other year, in the spring.

Annual dues in these early days was \$10.

Beverages and refreshments are not served at the Guild meetings. Coffee and tea stains are difficult to remove from the precious quilts and quilting during the meetings is never discouraged. Members are however, invited to bring lunches for after the meetings and stay for the afternoon to work in informal groups.

Small groups are also formed for Friendship quilts. Each member of the group assembles the fabrics for her quilt in a large box, along with plans and instructions. Boxes are passes, at the Guild meetings, from one group member to another. Each group member makes one block a month from the box she receives, simultaneously someone else is doing a block for her. With 18 persons in a group, 18 blocks are made over the course of 18 months for each group member. At the end of 18 months the blocks are layed out and planning for settings and quilting designs are discussed for each quilt.

Programs for 1981-1982 year of operation:

August: Michael James, Quiltmaker Inspirations and Innovations in Contemporary Quiltmaking

September: Tis the Season to be Quilting: Christmas ideas for small gifts.

October: Quilted Fashion Show: Show and tell- Wear or bring any quilted clothing you have made...

November: History of Quilting

December: Gifts and Ornaments and Christmas party

January: Denim Patch Workshop