

Who thought that we would spend a year with restricted activities to avoid contacting the COVID-19 virus? Who thought that we could continue a vibrant quilting guild online? Did we think we could maintain our friendships and share our quilting journeys online? Did we think we could learn new technology and experience quilting around the world? Well, the Kanata Quilt Guild has done it this year.

We followed the COVID-19 protocols in our personal and guild lives. And we grew as a guild and offered most of our programs and activities online. The stories we will tell when we can get back together and show our quilts and projects to each other will raise the roof! We look forward to the day when we can get together, although as we gathered online, we saw that there were benefits to that meeting approach as well. One new aspect of the year was that we all took up making masks, improving mask patterns, donating our stash and being very practical. It was networks like ours that helped us get through this pandemic,

Here is a summary of the year:

**Executive:**

The Exec was Leslie Whitby, Pres; Liz Poitras, VP; Lynn Price, Treasurer; Dianne Markle, Secretary; Debby Holden, Past President; and Pauline Farey and Judith Pach as the Program Directors. The Exec used email and ZOOM to share info and set out plans. It became evident that we were going to rely on new technology and each other to make it all work. The Exec voted to include Brigid Whitnall, who has been our Communications and Technology Lead, in all our Executive meetings so that we had a good working relationship among us. The existing Leads for all the program areas agreed to continue in order to have a wonderful experience with the year. The year shows that teamwork can accomplish everything.

Some of this required change to our Constitution and at the September AGM, members voted to eliminate the term limits for Exec positions. There are no term limits for the volunteer lead positions. The Exec invited new members to join with the existing leads if they had an interest in contributing to the growth of the guild. And this is a standing offer to all members.

In addition to her VP duties, Liz had the challenge of using the new technology live as the meetings were in progress. Lynn had the challenge to manage new electronic payments and refunds, to set up a variety of ways to pay our presenters, and to keep the books organized and balanced. Dianne tracked our Exec decisions and documented the highlights of our guild. Pauline and Judith gave us an interesting program (see below) and overviews of the local shops. Brigid helped us use the technology for our meetings, invitations, and activities, and continued the communications with our members and the broader community. Debby provided sound advice to us all. I would like to thank this group immensely for their enthusiasm, guidance, and innovation for implementing the changes presented by new technology. They were especially important as COVID-19 presented many issues/changes for groups such as ours and required innovative approaches to serve our members. We worked together well and had a lot of fun. We hope that some members will join the Executive and Program areas for next year.

**Program:** We made the decision early to take full advantage of online resources and visit quilters around the world. Our program was a combination of local/Canadian and international speakers giving presentations on their quilts, and quilt journeys. Many of our face to face and social activities were put on hold for the year, while several of our less structured activities were moved online. Our Speakers were:

September	Bill Stearman, Picton, Ontario and AGM/General Meeting
October	Jean Jurgenson, Walnut Creek, California
November	Melissa Marginet, Bruxelles, Manitoba
December	Karen Eckmeier, Kent, Connecticut
January	Gloria Loughman, Victoria, Australia
February	Elaine Theriault, Mississauga, Ontario
March	Brigitte Heitland, Werther, Germany
April	Madonna Oliver, Carp, Ontario
May	Dawn Piasta, Dauphin, Manitoba
June	Daisy Aschehoug, Nesodden, Norway

I want to thank Pauline and Judith for their efforts to bring us interesting and informative speakers, and they often reflected our efforts in their international mirror. Quilting is indeed international, with local flavours added. Thanks also for arranging the Shops of the Month who offered some of the interesting items they carry in their stores.

**Workshops and Play Days:** We did not offer workshops this year. Our workshop leads had stepped down at the end of last year and we did not have a volunteer to work with the Exec to offer workshops. Workshops have always been popular and fully attended and we are looking for one or two volunteers for next year.

However, once we were comfortable on Zoom, we did offer some informal "Play Days", starting in March. These were intended to share our collective knowledge and have fun among the participants. The response was overwhelming, and we will be looking for ideas to run others next year. In March, we made Happy Villages from Karen Eckmeier's book, and the variety of wall hangings was amazing. In April, we learned 12 free motion motifs that are useful for backgrounds. We have activities planned for May, June, and July already. Please let the exec know if you are looking for a specific technique or want to offer one.

Thank you to Doris Braslins and Dianne Wilson who have organized activities for the past 6 years for this guild, and to all our instructors and participants. Leslie Whitby organized the Play Days. Together, they make us better.

**Retreats:** Both our in-town and our overnight retreats are extremely popular with our members, but we had to cancel them due to COVID 19 precautions. We are looking forward to offering retreats when it is safe to do so. I want to thank Lynn Price, Debby Holden, Iwona Mooney and their teams for all the efforts they put into making the retreats seem effortless and fun.

**Membership:** Our membership topped 225 this year. We had 28 visitors, many of whom became members. Our meeting participation ranges from 140 to 180 members. We are a membership based Not-for-Profit group and depend on our members for all our funding and

activities. Due to the ease of online registration and meetings, we have members from British Columbia, Southern Ontario, northern Quebec, New Brunswick all parts of Ontario, northern Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick and the United States. Thank you so much to Nancy Wright and Ruth Bennett for keeping the membership files organized, producing the Directory, and trying to improve the renewal process. And when time allows, welcoming you back in person to the guild.

**Sew days:** We held a number of sew days, especially in the winter months. The participation was in the 25 to 30-person range and we were able to stay on one screen together. It was a great time to catch up with friends and hear about their quilting and life journeys as well as get a little sewing done! Thanks to Johanna Vajda and Beth van Wyngaarten for organizing the days.

**Mystery quilt:** Krista Zaleski designed and presented a new Mystery Quilt for us this year. The pattern was such that it kept one guessing until the final installment! We will have a virtual showing of the member quilts in the coming year. Thank you, Krista, for this fun project!

**Charity:** From March 2020 until now, our members have donated their time and effort, plus fabric, to make a total of 58 quilts. We also have some that are not yet 100% complete. Overall, members did amazing work. Carol Dworschak was active organizing donations and blocks challenges to help members make coordinated quilts. Rudy Shenkman Hospice Care Kanata received 15 quilts in November and 6 in February, while Cornerstone Housing for Women received 20 quilts in November and 6 quilts in March. And we have 11 completed quilts ready to donate after lockdown ends.

Although we did not meet in person for the Christmas season in 2020, we organized to donate to our Christmas charities whereby members could donate via Canada Helps. The guild donated \$300 each to the Shepherds of Good Hope and the Kanata Food Cupboard. Members donated an additional \$1400 to these charities. Plus, we organized a hats/mitts/socks for the Shepherds of Good Hope. Thank you to members for your generosity.

**Quilties:** Thanks to Liz Raizenne and Elaine Bradley for all their efforts to coordinate the production of small quilties for the Queensway Carleton Hospital and to deliver them. The families and nurses are so welcoming of these small gifts from our members for high-risk infants. Liz and Elaine made and provided kits of children's fabrics for members who did not have a stash of "quiltie" fabrics, using suitable fabrics and batting donated by other members. During the year, over 300+ quilties were provided. Thanks to all the members. There are piles of quilties just waiting for the lockdown to end!

**Monthly Draws:** We were left at the end of last year, with several baskets of quilt related goodies. About half the members participated in bimonthly draws for these baskets. Although they had stepped down, Joan Armstrong, Iwona Mooney and Nancy Maloney remained to organise the draws and deliver the baskets. Plus, they have organized a different type of draw for next year, one that could be done totally online. These funds were critical for keeping us in the black as we had not anticipated needing to purchase a ZOOM large group license for the size of our guild. Thank you, Joan, Iwona and Nancy, your participation is sincerely appreciated.

**Newsletter:** A special thank you to Nancy England, who writes a very entertaining monthly newsletter. Not only did she communicate the latest info on all our programs and activities, but Nancy also added the latest info on events in our region, tidbits of info to make our quilting easier, and pictures of quilts from our Show and Tells to prize winning quilts from the international shows. She is always searching for interesting items for our upcoming newsletters

so if you have something, be sure to contact Nancy. This is a vital part of our guild to help everyone stay up to date and involved. Thank you, Nancy, for all your efforts. Lynn Price usually seeks out advertisers for our social media but since all small businesses were stretched by the pandemic, we offered them free ads in the newsletter for this year. Thanks, Lynn, for your efforts.

**Show and Tell:** Our members have embraced Show and Tell, sending in photos that we put in a slide presentation with a description of the quilt. It allows everyone to see the quilts up close. We get on average about 20 quilts per month, which is likely more than we used to have in person.

**Presidents' Challenges:** Since we ended last year with a lot of uncertainty, we did not complete the Presidents Challenge of producing a quilt with flying geese, any size, any type. As well, we added a second challenge for this year of making an architecturally inspired quilt. So, we had 2 Viewers Choice awards for both challenges. The winners names will be in the June newsletter.

**Free table:** One of the busiest areas of our meetings was always the free table and the eclectic variety of quilt related items. Hold onto your donations as we will have a Garage Sale in the fall to share and sell our bounties. Thanks to Debby Holden, Joanne Batchelor and Lynn Price for organizing the Garage Sale for September.

**10<sup>th</sup> anniversary Celebration and Quilt Along:** A team consisting of Leslie Whitby, Dianne Markle, Lynn Price, Dawn Harkness, Nancy England, and Marianne Gibson developed a plan for celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020-2021. The plan included having a quilt along for the members where we would teach members increasingly more complex techniques. Beth van Wyngaarten agreed to lead the Quilt Along and offered patterns and kits of Canadian fabrics for those who wanted a coordinated kit. Unfortunately, since this was to be a social event for members, the Exec decided to delay the celebrations until we can meet in person. Beth did entice us with three free patterns and demos that would keep us entertained until we can begin our Quilt Along – these patterns are available on our website for all members. So, we will be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in our 12<sup>th</sup> year, but that is life in a pandemic!

**CQA:** The guild is a member of CQA, buys its liability insurance from it, and members participate in some of its activities. Quilt Canada, CQA's annual show, was cancelled last year and moved online for this June. There are lots of activities to take part in virtually from June 16th to 19th, 2021 at <https://canadianquilter.com/quilt-canada-2021/>.

It was a pleasure to work with all these quilters on a topic so close to our hearts. It was interesting and fun to get to know all of them and as many members as I could.

Respectfully submitted to the 2020-2021 AGM,

Leslie Whitby President, Kanata Quilt Guild