

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

My two-year term as President of the Kanata Quilt Guild is coming to an end. The decision to take on the presidency came because of the fact that as of the AGM in 2022 no one had stepped forward and the guild was in danger of folding. The outgoing president made it clear that she was not prepared to continue in the role.

My first year as your president was not enjoyable. However, this past year after a change of some executive members, we were able to work together which resulted in a busy and productive year. I know that the executive's decision to offer free membership to existing members was controversial to some, however, it was welcomed by a majority of the members.

The results of the 2023 survey showed that retreats are popular for many of our members. Regretfully, the Kanata Quilt Guild could not offer retreats in 2023-2024 because the existing Retreat Committee resigned, to form their own retreat group separate from the guild, taking the dates with them. It was difficult for the executive to recover at that time, both finding a venue large enough to accommodate as many members as possible, as well as finding the necessary volunteers to form a retreat committee.

While the executive team has seven official positions, this year we welcomed any of the volunteers who wanted to attend executive meetings. At the initial August meeting of all executive members and volunteers we went through our calendars and set up monthly meetings, to be held at Glen Cairn United Church on the 4th Wednesday of the month. These meetings delivered positive outcomes and meeting in-person monthly kept us focussed and decisions were made from the contributions of all those who attended the meetings.

Year At A Glance:

Treasurer

Susan Joss has worked diligently, taking care of the guild's finances. It was Susan's recommendation (after a lot of investigation on her part), that we change financial institutions which has resulted in a considerable savings in fees (which will be even more noticeable as we take in membership fees again in 2024-2025), since the guild had been paying for every e-transfer coming into our account at the previous bank. Susan also sent out monthly expense sheets for the various positions as well as a monthly accounting of guild finances. She also took the opportunity to present financial reports at several meetings throughout the year to keep the membership updated as well.

Secretary

Louise Lenton joined the executive team as secretary this year and she has become a real asset, recording and participating in our discussions at both executive and monthly meetings.

Program

The program this year was put together by Nancy England. Sadly, Nancy moved away from the area, but prior to leaving, she put together a full program of speakers and even provided a year-at-a-glance page giving details about the topics that would be covered.

Membership

This year the guild had a total of 192 members which included thirteen out of town members. Nancy Wright looked after the Membership information which she distributed to the Executive following each meeting. Our highest meeting attendance was 106 and the lowest was 65. This year our executive offered free membership to our 2022-2023 members. This year, two membership directories were published. Both were listed alphabetically, one by last name and new this year, one by first name.

Ruth Bennett took orders for nametags and delivered or mailed them to members. Ruth also looked after handing out tickets for the Door Prize draws (which were funded by the guild this year) and distributed the prizes to the lucky winners at meetings. During the winter Zoom meetings she delivered them at Sew Days or to members at their homes.

Ruth and Nancy have worked together on Membership since 2018 and are retiring at the end of June this year.

Workshops

Workshops were run by Pauline Farey (who was also our VP), who took a different approach to workshops this year. It was noticed that we had a number of members new to quilting and therefore Pauline and the executive team decided that we would embark on a skill building program, which would not infringe on the community quilt shop programs but would equip our members with basic skills enabling them to take on more difficult projects. For this program we relied heavily on our very talented pool of members, offering them a modest honorarium for the cost of their preparation for these workshops. It was decided to make these workshops available to as many members as possible and to only charge each participant \$5.00 toward the cost of the room. Pauline would like to thank the following members who taught these skills:

Linda Meyer for her bag workshop, Judy Emond for introducing us to Redwork, Patsy Herman, for a fun but challenging day learning paper piecing and Beth vanWyngaarden for showing us how much fun improv quilting can be.

Not only did these workshops introduce members to skills they may not have previously considered, but it fostered camaraderie, which led to many of these members participating in sew days.

Sew Days

Doris Braslins and Janice Meeking have presided over our sew days for the last two years, held at Glen Cairn United Church in the main hall. Their duties included arriving early, setting up, leaving late and just making sure that the guild left the church as we found it. Sadly, this is their last year.

Janice also inspired us with a “STASH BUSTER” program. What a great event this was. When Janice agreed to do this, she took it on wholeheartedly, making herself available throughout the year at sew days to continue to guide and encourage the participants.

President’s Challenge

This year’s President’s Challenge was to make a small wall hanging based on a popular song. There were several entries and members were amazed at what they came up with. Congratulations to our first-place winner, Marilyn Fairfull with her take on “The Cat Came Back”. Our runner up was Bev O’Connor with her improv wall hanging, of “Anything Goes”

Charity/Outreach

We’ve had another exceptional year with our charity work. Kudos to Pam Denesyk and Colette Gentes for organizing fabric, cutting kits and arranging for longarm quilters. In the fall, about a dozen members contributed small projects for the Maycourt Club Christmas Market. The guild received a gracious letter of appreciation for our support and has pledged to help with the 2024 event. The guild had 66 finished quilts donated, or ready to donate, to various agencies in the area. In December, 18 quilts were donated to Interval House in Lanark County, and the Kanata Blanket Brigade. A total of 18 unfinished quilt tops were sent to Victoria’s Quilts, Quilts for Survivors and Quilts of Valour, to be finished by their own volunteers. In April, 13 quilts were donated to the Roger Neilson Children’s Hospice and another 17 are ready for the Kanata Blanket Brigade. Kanata Guild member Dawn Harkness (who also coordinates the Zoom show and tell) quilted and bound over 14 quilts this year!

Our last charity sew day was combined with a potluck luncheon at the church, which Pam and Colette organized. No paper plates for our girl Colette...instead, she arrived with her beautiful Hawaiian table clothes and matching picnic dinnerware. The 28 participants had a blast, and more than a couple of people think each sew day should include a potluck lunch, with a picnic in nice weather.

Website and Communications

The website, managed by Pam Denesyk is an important tool for guild members and non-members alike. Ideally, it will let you find everything you need to know about what's going at the guild, including:

1. The current newsletter as well as an archive going back to 2016-2017.
2. An event calendar to keep track of past and upcoming guild activities, as well as other community events that may be of interest to our members (quilt shows, shop hops, etc.)
3. The constitution, descriptions of executive and volunteer positions, and the annual report from the previous year.
4. Membership and guest sign up forms, program and workshop information, and guild history can all be found on the website.

Some technical / financial details to note:

The website was migrated to a managed Word Press site in October, with a two-year term. Problems with site backups and resource usage which Pam felt were beyond her abilities to manage are now handled by our hosting company, Host Papa. The two-year cost for the managed service is \$478.80, and the annual cost to provide guild mailboxes is \$216, plus HST.

CyberImpact is the service we use to manage mass mailings to guild members and is currently free up to a maximum of 250 contacts. The contact list is updated every year in the fall after most membership renewals have taken place, and whenever a new member joins. Regular emails are sent to all members for the newsletter, and reminders for upcoming meetings and events.

The Guild also has a (free) Google account which is currently used to create surveys and forms when input is required from the membership.

Pam suggests that next year's executive might look at moving to Google Workspace (paid) for email and virtual meeting capabilities, to replace the HostPapa basic email and Zoom subscription.

Zoom

This year's Zoom team of Blake Proudfoot and Odette Gaudet did a terrific job with managing our Zoom meetings, which is no small feat with a hundred members all signing on at the same time. They really gave it the personal touch helping anyone who required assistance and keeping us connected during the winter months. Breakout rooms were created for members who signed in early to visit with the speaker and each other. Josette Gaudet was a great hostess on our Zoom sew days, keeping the conversation flowing.

Newsletter

Despite having a full agenda this year, Marilyn Fairfull took on the role of newsletter coordinator and has done a wonderful job. A special thank you from yours truly as Marilyn took over writing our speaker blurb, thus freeing me up for the other aspects of the program and president's duties. Not only does Marilyn keep us informed through the newsletter, but she also makes it look jazzy.

Quilties

Thanks to Elaine Bradley's organizing skills, we have had an abundance of quilties donated by our members for the Queensway-Carleton Hospital. We received a heartfelt thank you from them in appreciation of our members' generosity. Elaine's son also delivers quilties to northern Canada where they are equally well-received.

Free Table

Meeting day would not be the same without seeing Joanne Batchelor in the front hall of the church with all the free fabric, books, and patterns that people donate. Thanks to Joanne, many people have gone home this year with a treasure or two.

Setup

A special thank you to Dorothy Wilson and Joyce Bruno who arrive early to setup and stay late to ensure everything is put away at our in-person meetings at the church.

CQA

Dorothy is also our CQA representative and has been so, for a number of years. She always finds interesting articles to keep us all apprised of what's happening at CQA and

events surrounding Quilt Canada which took place in Edmonton this year. The articles included write-ups on various quilters who would be teaching, how entries are accepted into the National Juried Show, the new categories available this year and various tours that could be taken during the show.

Dorothy has also filled in as our secretary on a few occasions and did a stellar job!

Finally, a huge thank you to this extraordinary executive team for all the work they have done this year on the members' behalf, making the Kanata Guild the success it is.

A special thank you to Glen Cairn United Church and their Rental Coordinator, Andrea who went the extra mile to provide the guild with both a portable sound system and a projector when needed for our in-person meetings.

Judith Pach

President, Kanata Quilt Guild