

Chapter 1 : Rita Weiss | Open Library

The templates are in a " , " and " size, making it easy to know what size each piece of fabric needs to be cut in order to make one of those 3 different size blocks. This book was a gift from one of my swapping partners and has helped me to advance in my skills of sewing quilt blocks.

It was initially made as a cushion, then remade as a quilt and re-quilted on the advice of a quilt teacher. Interview Carol Lenagan [CL]: Margaret, can you tell me about your lovely quilt please? I would love to know that. May I just ask you were you quilting it block by block? Block by block, yes. You were quilting it as you go? You start off with your Martha Washington Star in the centre and then you have other blocks on this quilt. How did you choose the colours? I like pink and green. Quite right and the backing? The backing is just a nice piece of green and floral fabric again with pink flowers on it and it must have just been from the patchwork shop, not that there were many of them around! I was going to ask you where you managed to find your fabrics. That was really where I learned to quilt [laughs]. So which courses did you find most useful? Or maybe you can talk about some of the courses you took. Just whatever she sort of, a technique she was showing us how to do, you know. Golly, what else did I make? Can I go back to this quilt? How, how did you, where did you find the quilt patterns? Did you use templates? Who was the author? Rita Weiss, ah ha. American School of Needlework. So you describe yourself as an eclectic quilt maker in style [MB: What do you think influenced your style most? The courses or the City and Guilds? And when you go and do a course, would you, what would happen to the projects you were doing on the course? You would do on the course. Well sometimes it was finished in a few weeks. Sometimes it was finished five years later. I prefer not to. Other times add something to it to make it your own or change something to make it your own, you know? Where do you get your inspiration from? I did make one for my father-in-law when he was 90 and traditionally he neverâ€ my mother-in-law and father-in-law, lovely people but they, if you gave them a gift it always went away in a drawer or cupboard, you never saw it again. So I made a little lap quilt, very basic, with that sort of flanelette-type fabric that, does it have a special name? And I made this very basic quilt. On the other hand my mother always sewed and knitted and everything so for her 90th I made a quilt, a Log Cabin quilt, hand quilted and I appliqued hearts and things on the corners with little messages. I knew that my mum would use it and everything. My mum put it in a bag behind her dressing table because it was far too good to go on a bed [both laugh]. You mentioned that you entered quilts into the Loch Lomond, did you ever win? And I won one year the hand quilting bowl, the Louise Mundie, Marie-Louise Mundie award for hand quilting, on a white, creamy-white background with blue stars made up of, they were all irregular and made up of scraps from the scrap basket. Do you prefer to buy fabric specifically for quilts or do you prefer to use scraps? Well I think for services rendered, definitely not for quilting [laughs]. You know you had to write to the Director of Education and then it would go out in the mailbag to all the schools and we had schools from all over the country and none from Edinburgh [CL: And apart from that you know I have just been there to support the Young Quilters. One of my grand-daughters particularly loves doing it, they both enjoy working, and on the machine, you know I let them use my good machine. How old would a Young Quilter have to be? And I think they have to be over seven [CL: Well, the Young Quilters nationally had been given a grant from Coates, the thread folk, and it was to be matched by our fundraising. And years ago I had used this principle of the wee bag and worked to raise money for, I worked with stroke patients and it was to raise money for that. Well this was just to request to save twenty pence a week. And if we save twenty pence a week we would have ten pounds each inside. So I gave out a hundred bags. Just your own grandchildren [MB: I do] What kind of talks do you give? What do you talk about? Well, I mix the quilts and the stories that go with them but I like to add a bit of humour and a bit of fun. And so I just enjoy taking my quilts, telling the stories, adding little funny stories that have nothing to do with quilting. And just, I just do it for fun! All my beds have quilts on them. And, as you can see, lots of things on the wall. And then I just use them for my talks. And this first quilt, is it

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your favourite bed quilt? But it, and it did actually win the first prize at Loch Lomond for the group quilt, it is a lovely quilt. And of your smaller, eclectic quilts, do you have a favourite of those? And that was made at a week-long workshop with Katie Pasquini Masopust from the States. A very hard-working workshop. I was completely out of my comfort zone. We were painting, we were painting blind, we were painting to music, we were cutting up photos, we were enlarging, we were doing all sorts of modern techniques and I loved it. And I loved the piece that I ended up with. And I have a, I like my two Japanese ladies, with the mountain in the background. That is, I like the quilt but not the binding. How interesting [both laugh]! I never actuallyâ€¦ CL: So how did you do that? So you also put a border, a simple border round your, oh you put two borders round your quilt. That would be to make it to the right size for the bed. And it was interesting when I took this out I had forgotten that I had completely hand quilted it. And nowadays would you hand quilt a big quilt? Why is quilting important to you Margaret? Well, I like patchwork quilts. I went to school in America in But I do like patchwork, I just like the look of it. And I like having a hobby. And I enjoy it. But I think the greatest thing has been the friendship that has developed through quilting. I wondered if there was anything else that you would like to say particularly about quilting and quilts. Or say about it? One of the things that is sad in a way that there is so little nowadays opportunity for people to do college courses and such, and I think is a financial thing, the colleges can make more money by doing different courses. But at the same time for a while there was this, not urgency, but to be anybody you had to have done City and Guilds. And I would say that yes, I learned to be more creative, to look at the world. Perhaps not a very good advert for City and Guilds [both laugh]. Thank you very much.

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