

Arlene Hansen, Quiltmaker



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Quiltmaker Story

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I was born in southern CA. and grew up in Salinas. I have 1 brother, and I'm a California junior college graduate. Then, I graduated from O'Connor Hospital School of Nursing in San Jose. I've been married nearly 50 years. We have 3 boys, 2 girls, 8 GRANDkids. I worked while my husband was at San Jose State. Then, I kept having kids and was a stay-at-home mom and school volunteer until 1982. I retired from geriatric nursing and do volunteer work. After retiring, I nursed my parents and helped with new grandbabies, etc. Being a native Californian has given me mostly good weather and relaxed attitudes. My husband is a teacher, so he is in an academic atmosphere. We've lived in bay area here for 45 years and have been in the same home for 41years... lotsa stuff here! 23 years ago, a son died in single car crash... one never gets over such things. Having a big family definitely influences - sharing, doing without, enjoying the small things, nature and family.

Both my grandmothers & an aunt quilted... mom was an excellent seamstress and I learned early how to knit, crochet, embroider and sew garments. I knew that SOME DAY I too would quilt. I made my 1st quilt in 1966 made after borrowing three books in library. I hand pieced, hand quilted, and it has double triangles. I loved it loved it to shreds!

I love star patterns, Asian influence, plaids, and I made a koi wall hanging for a son who used to raise koi. I made 3 crazy quilts for the 3 boys. I have MANY u.f.o. awaiting my attention. Our son who died was one of my biggest "fans", encouraging me greatly to learn, do more! I miss him. Having a piece of applique or hand quilting to work on has always helped settle nerves, and to calm the spirit. I have no idea how many quilts I have made. They have been given to family, wedding presents, and for charity. Since Mike used to smoke, the quilts have stayed somewhat hidden. But now that he's stopped recently, they are over the back of a couch and a chair. I don't really have "wall space" in this ol' house. I have an antique quilt from an elderly friend who thinned her collection. I've shared blocks & have WON A QUILT (long time ago) . I

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exchange fabric. but mostly I help the economy & buy mostly at the quilt shops. I buy FOR projects, but often 'cuz I LOVE IT, or it's BLUE !

I belonged to the Marin guild & helped with their raffle quilt making for over 26 years. I had the fabulous experience and the privilege to work on an applique section for the California Sesquicentennial Quilt that now is awaiting proper "hanging" in Sacramento... It was huge project, and an honor to work on.

I've been taking quilting classes from the following teachers: Roberta Horton, Elly Sienkiewicz (applique), Margaret Miller, Barbara Shapel (contemporary applique), Lura Schwartz Smith, Sally Collins (miniature), Linda Ballard (mystery quilt), Ruth McDowell, Lawry Thorn, Sally Frey, Cara Gulati, Vivienne Moore, Mary Mashuta, & others whom I can't recall, but they all taught me MANY new techniques, patience, and the love of quilting. Jeanne Brogan & I met about 1981 or so when we both BEGAN quilting classes at College of Marin !!!

I don't teach quilting, but just keep learning more. I've entered quilts in the Marin quilt shows, Marin County Fair, E.B.H.Q. shows and S.F.Q.G shows. I won a 1st place ribbon for a miniature applique several years ago and a 1st place at the county fair, some 2nd place and honorable mention ribbons. The ribbons have all happily surprised me. Otherwise, I receive recognition when I receive lots of hugs, thanks from family.

I haven't written or authored anything on quilting. My advice to quilters is to KEEP ON QUILTING, LEARNING.... DO NOT PROCRASTINATE.... DO IT, y'hear?