

San Francisco Quilters Guild History

This interview was held November 15, 2003 at the home of Winona Pepin in Daly City, California. Bonnie Morley, Jurline Lawson, Patricia Pepin, and Winona were present.

1. Your full name and where you were born.

Winona Prue Hatfield Pepin. I was born in Miami County, Kansas in the country July 11, 1913.

My mother was getting ready for harvest hands and was making up bread around 6:00 am. Then I came.

2. Was there a previous quilting or sewing tradition in your family? (What kind of sewing was done?)

Everything except men's clothing was made in our family. At that time there were no ready made clothes. Not racks of clothes like there are today. We made our dresses, underwear, curtains, quilts, everything.

I have done embroidery, tatting, knitting of sweaters, dressmaking, cut work, quilting (hand quilting that is). In fact, that is how you got the scraps for our quilts. (*Her daughter Priscilla remembers flour sacks in her Mom and Dad's closet filled with wonderful quilt scraps. Priscilla used them for dressing her clothes pin dolls!*) I never learned to crochet.

In fact, I made this cut work tablecloth on the table. In 1932 I worked in the Coker's dime store from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm for 50 cents a day. I was paid in cash. On Saturdays I worked from 8:00 to 9:00 pm and was given my 50 cents a day and 10 cents for a cab to take me home. I bought this tablecloth then. It was printed. I did the button whole stitch and cut it out. I also bought crystal at the dime store. It was 29 cents a piece.

My daughter Priscilla was seven and had scarlet fever and black measles. We were quarantined for three weeks. She was really sick. It was then that I taught myself to tat. Priscilla was really sick so I talked to her all the time even though I know she wasn't listening. One time I said "I lost my picot:" and Priscilla for the first time in a long time said, "Moma, I'll help you find it."

My mother taught me to quilt. I was probably about 7 or 8 years old. My first quilt was a nine patch and I remember it had 5 pink blocks. I don't remember how big it was.

Both of my grandmothers quilted. My Mom would tell me, "Now get your blocks out because your grandmother is coming". I didn't want to share. I wanted to do my own

quilt.

In school we had sewing class. It is there that I learned to pull threads. I have always pulled threads as my marker for cutting.

My mother subscribed to the WORKBASKET magazine. It had quilting patterns, crochet patterns, ideas, etc. . My daughters used to color the patterns and they didn't stay inside the lines. (Samples were shown because Winona still has many years of the magazine. Those we looked at were published in 1961.) We also used to get a publication called NEEDLECRAFT. It was tabloid sized. I now subscribe to the QUILTER'S NEWSLETTER.

My daughter Priscilla remembers me making thread dolls for her. I would take left over quilting thread from my needle, fold them in two, and tie a thread around the top to make a head. Priscilla really enjoyed playing with them.

3. How long have you been quilting?

About 83 years.

4. Why do you like quilting? Are you involved in other crafts?

It is so relaxing. It stimulates me. The only other crafts I do are tatting and embroidering.

5. What quilt teachers have you had, and how have they influenced our work?

Bonnie Morley has been a teacher. She is so tactful and helpful.

6. Do you make traditional, innovative, story quilts or wearable arts?

I make traditional, pieced, hand-quilted quilts. I have just finished making two queen-sized postage stamp quilts. (She showed them to us. The pieces were "fussy-cut" so that each one-inch piece would have a flower or animal or other object.) I'm now working on 4 Sunbonnet Sue quilts for my 4 great-granddaughters. Priscilla will embroidered the girls, so it will be a joint grandmother and great-grandmother project.

I also have made appliqué quilts.

I have also made innovative cat quilts for baby quilts.

I love all aspects of making quilts. For me, I enjoy the selecting the fabric, the piecing, the challenge of how to set them up, and the quilting.

I've made a lot of baby quilts and some other quilts for friends.

7. Do you make utilitarian or wall quilts?

Most of the quilts are utilitarian. They are to keep us warm. I have made my daughters wall hangings.

8. How do you design your quilts? (Do you work from patterns, draw your own designs, receive inspiration from fabrics?)

I see a quilt and decide I'd like to make one. My mother would sometimes use kits of precut fabrics.

9. Do you have any personal stories of who or what influenced you to start quilting?

Necessity caused us to make quilts. We needed warm bedding. My husband was proud of my quilting.

10. Has quilting helped you through any personal problems?

I can't say.

After my father's death, my mother had a hard time. She moved in with us at that time and lived with us until her death. At that time, she did a lot of hand-quilting. She charged \$1.00 per spool of thread and then an additional amount for the quilting. (Winona pulled out a small notebook, and read the prices that her Mother had entered in the book in the early 1950's. See Attachment 1.)

11. Are you a professional quilt artist, teacher or do you have a related business?

No.

12. Do you collect or sell quilts?

After I retired in 1978 from Pacific Bell, I made more quilts. At that time there was a store in Ghiradelli Square called Poppy's. I took 5 or 6 of my quilts there and sold them on consignment. I received 50% of the price paid.

I don't collect quilts.

13. Do you donate quilts for fundraising? (which organizations receive your donations?)

My husband's mother was very active and a Past Noble Grand of the Osawatomie, Kansas, Rebekah Lodge No. 336. After her death, I pieced 2 quilt tops that were

raffled off to make possible the purchase of new regalia for the Lodge in her honor. The blocks were 18" stamped squares embroidered in with yellow. It was on a lavender background. This was about 1950. The raffle brought in \$300.00, enough to pay for the regalia. (See Attachment 2.)

14. Have you won any quilting awards or had your work published. (you may submit a quilt list)

Osawatomie had an annual fair. I submitted several of my quilts there. There was no fee for entering your quilts. I won several awards for my quilts and other handwork. (Here Winona showed us her 16 ribbons. Most were first prizes. See Attachment 3.) At the beginning no monetary award was given, but if you look at the back of the ribbon, you will see the amount given for the prize. (See Attachment 4.)

(At that time Patricia brought out a quilt that her mother had given her. It was a blue and white snail trail and it had won a First Prize ribbon at the Osawatomie Free Fair. Winona had attached a note to it. The note said

"Patricia, this is Mom's quilt.

The reason that I know is Mom used it on her bed sometimes, so it couldn't be the one I gave to Priscilla.

Dad worked 4-12 so I sewed in the evening.

Priscilla would be in her playpen and I sat on the floor beside her and sewed.

We lived in a flat on the southside of the building. The landlord's wife was an older woman and she was rather strict.

The lights had to be out at ten and the heat was off at the same time.

I would use a dresser lamp on the floor and the shades down and quilt until Dad came home.

This quilt was given to Mom for Christmas December 1940.

We used them just for cover so they weren't big like now when they are used as spreads.

Lived in Davenport, Iowa.")

(See Attachment 5.)

At that time muslin cost 3 cents a yard.

15. Describe a favorite quilt: what's the design, what techniques did you use, how long did it take to make, is there a story, was it made for someone?

I don't have a favorite quilt. My favorite is the one I'm working on at the time.

16. What year did you join SFQG? What do you enjoy about our guild?

I am not a member of the SFQG, but I am a member of the Dorcas Quilters which is

an affiliate of the SFQG. I joined Dorcas in 1984. Dorcas is a group of women which meet at St. John's Presbyterian Church in San Francisco each Wednesday. They do hand quilting. Through word of mouth people have heard of Dorcas. They bring there quilt there and obtain a contract. The money Dorcas receives for the quilting is given to the Church .

I had a hard time finding Dorcas. I went by the Church and didn't see any sign or mention of the group. After several weeks of trying to find them, I finally went into the church and went into each room until I found them quilting. Once I found them, I was hooked on the group.

17. What Dorcas positions or projects have you held or worked on?

Everything.

18. What would you like to tell someone about quilting?

If you start, you have a habit because it won't let you go.

19. What advice do you have for a future quilter?

Get to going!



Society and Clubs

Rebekah's Dedicate New Regalia

Oswatimie Rebekah Lodge No.

336 celebrated the fifty-third anniversary of its birthday on Monday, December 11, 1950, with the dedication of new regalia for officers and members.

The altar, draped in white with

the Holy Bible in the center, adorned with the beautiful new pink and green cord regalia with appropriate medallions for each officer, was reverently carried into the lodge room by Lola McGuire and Mildred Bradley. Officers of the lodge in white formals circled the altar, members, visitors and candidates of the evening formed the second circle around the altar. The regalia was then dedicated to the memory of those brothers and sisters who through all the years have kept the torch of Rebekah Sisterhood aflame, and especially to the memory of Emily Pepin, Past Noble Grand, in whose honor the quilt tops making the purchase of the regalia possible were presented to the lodge. The dedication prayer was given by Mildred Bradley, during the prayer all present linked fingers and then sang "Bless Be the Tie that Binds." The regalia appropriate to each station was then placed on each officer by the Noble Grand, Lucille Ludwig.

The Degree Staff exemplified the beautiful work of the initiatory degree to eleven candidates, including two guest candidates from La Cygne, Mrs. White and Mrs. Stainbrook, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Young, Ann Bruntz, Violet Schiller, Lucille Simpson, Janet Barker, Patricia Ellis, Laura Williamson, Melba Montanye, Grace Whitt and Nettie Carpenter were added to the roll of membership.

The occasion also marked the official visit of Mrs. Grace Stockwell, president of District No. 6, who brought greetings from Ruth Hibler, president of Rebekah Assembly. She was welcomed and gave a very interesting and inspiring address on the hopes of the coming year in Rebekah. Mrs. Stockwell was also present to honor the initiation of her daughter, Evelyn Young, into the order.

During the session Winona Pepin, Ethel Fike, Lola McGuire and Alma Smith were given special recognition for their part in the quilt project, and added thanks was given to all who helped in any way, great or small. Ruth Cook and Mae Davis received special recognition for perfect attendance during the current term. Ruth Cook, incoming Noble Grand, was invited to preside in closing ceremonies during the absence of the Noble Grand, Lucille.

Social chairman for the evening, Mildred Bradley, assisted by new members of 1950, Gwendolyn Harmony, Virginia Johnson, Virginia Hardesty and Katherine Williams, served refreshments to the class of new members, guests from La Cygne and Paola, and members of the home lodge. The hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion.

From the Oswatimie Graphic, 1950

The Annual Christmas program of the I. O. O. F. Rebekah families in Santa and candy for the children will be held in the I. O. O. F. Hall at 8 p. m. on Friday, December 15. There will be no further meeting of Rebekahs during December as the next meeting falls on Christmas.
Turkey Dinner and Dance.

Attachment 2



Class Classified

Prize _____

Awarded to _____

Date _____

Made by _____ Judge _____
 FAIRCRAFT COMPANY
 Rock Island, Ill.

Class Yellow Tail

Prize 1.75

Awarded to _____

Date 56

_____ Judge _____
 FAIRCRAFT COMPANY
 Rock Island, Ill.

Class Blunt White

Prize 1.00

Awarded to _____

Date 56

_____ Judge _____
 FAIRCRAFT COMPANY
 Rock Island, Ill.

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