

Cher delaMere

1. I was born in the fall of 1945 - too early to be a baby boomer in Los Angeles into the home of my maternal grandparents because my father, an Air Force pilot, was often assigned foreign duty. I had a sister born almost a year exactly after me. I grew up surrounded by 8 great aunt's and great uncles on my Gramma's side. And they all came to Gram and Papa's to play canasta so I, like the great author Eudora Welty, learned the family secrets by hanging out around the card table. Of course, I was not allowed to speak. I was much loved by my grandparents and I in turn adored them and spent as much time as possible with them till the day they died in the early 1990's. I took my very young children to spend summer vacations with them, camping up the Calif. Coast, staying in Oregon with them and camping back down (no husband present as he, a city boy, hated all that smacks-of the great outdoors)



2. I was fortunate to choose a profession I love and that is eternally interesting, librarianship and I have practiced it for 35 years at San Francisco Public Library where I specialize in doing reference work in art, music, performing arts, crafts, costume, sports and recreation. I personally am responsible for the subjects of film, dance, puppetry, costume history, fashion, television, bullfighting, etc. The librarian who orders quilting books always accepts my suggestions. I also have selected and programmed audio visual materials for 20 years. I order music recordings. Every year I assist a member of the SF Opera Guild in showing video/DVD excerpts of the upcoming SF Opera season. Overall I think my profession has given me a wonderful knowledge of the cultural history of San Francisco, enriched my life with countless interests and made me aware of the vast resources available in public libraries.

3. I have lived all over the Western US in Air Force bases and since we always drove from one to the other by backroads in the 1950's I saw and retained the love of the great Western outdoors. I lived one year in Europe to perfect my French and Spanish and it is because of experiencing the great cities of Europe, namely Paris, Barcelona, London and Dublin I decided to live in a real city so I got on a Greyhound bus in LA, came here and never left. That was 1967. I swore I would NEVER again live in suburbia. A city is the best place to be when you are old.

5. My earliest memory of a hand made item were the matching red polka dot pajamas my Gramma made for me, my sister and our dolls for Christmas . I sewed all my school wardrobe since I was 11. My Mom would stop off at the fabric store once a week and buy me 3 yards of fabric. And I always loved her choices. I sewed my boy and girls Halloween costume every year till they were about 10. I started quilting when I was pregnant with my first child about 27 years ago .. I chose to hand piece and hand quilt a double wedding ring quilt because it was always my favorite block. The fabrics were far too fragile and it is now the beach quilt.

6. I am easily bored so each quilt I make is a different color scheme and different block but I must always create movement in a quilt. When I turned grey, I made a snails trail quilt with its wonderful double movement pattern in the new colors of my wardrobe, rose, purple, grey, blue and berry. I called it my "Grey haired lady quilt" I love applique as well as piecing so I have spent 18 months so far making a Hawaiian quilt that is very oriental in its fabrics and colors. My daughter at age 10 chose a combination of black with purple, turquoise and blue for her special quilt. It took me 8 years to complete just in time for her to take off to college. I used patterns in those colors to create an Amish Fan quilt that undulates both in color spectrum and diagonally. It is quite bold. My sister always wanted a red and green quilt so just a few years ago I chose quite a variety of those colors esp. colonial reds and deep forest greens in antique patterns and found the perfect rose print with ivory background to use in the center of the pickle dish block. She loved it and wouldn't put it on her bed; she kept it draped over the couch in the living room so as she said "I can see it every day" She died recently so I'm happy that I gave her a present she treasured daily. I made an applique dinosaur quilt for my son's 9th birthday.

I love 19th century repique fabrics and made a quilt to showcase them that is in rich autumnal colors with blues, turquoises & colonial reds with a diamond pattern variation on the 4 square block that causes the viewers eye to move both outward and around the quilt.

I love hand quilting and I made an ocean wave quilt in cathedral window colors with a gold border on which I did contrast quilting in dark blue in a Japanese wave motif with fish jumping into them that was my original design and the only time I received an award. (for the hand quilting).

A few years back I made a deal with myself to make a quilt for charity in between every quilt that I make for myself or as a gift. Our Guild's outreach efforts afford the perfect opportunity to do that. My first charity quilt was in my daughter's kindergarten/1st grade class. I read and told quilt stories to them at the start of class and then they sat down with crayons in hand and drew any picture they wanted. I ironed transferred them onto fabric and assembled it all. It was a very culturally mixed class so the variety of pictures was amazing. There were 3 Russian children fresh off the plane who did not speak a word of English but Hey!! Anybody can draw. Months later when I cornered the father of one of these Russian kids and started to tell him which block his son did he said "Don't tell me- I know trains and buses- and sure enough that was true. The quilt went to the Ronald McDonald House.

9. I've made relatively few quilts because I hand quilt and I work full time and was a single Mom of 2 children.

10. I designed 1 SFQG raffle quilt and I worked on others. I've never sold any quilts.

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11. I have one quilt on my bed that my Mom made me in my favorite color combination of pastel pink, blue, yellow and green in a 9 patch. Others are kept in a cedar chest because my house has too much bright light to expose quilts. I inherited 2 antique quilts my Mom bought in the Midwest; one is entitled "Colonial Ladies" and the other is a magnificent Depression era Jacobs Ladder in what one dealer described as the best condition she'd ever seen for an 80 yr old quilt. As far as sharing fabric, my friends in my sewing group do. My Mom due to dementia gave up quilting and gave away all her fabric so as I received boxes from her I shared the contents.

12. Both

13. Yes, for the SFQG

14. I learned basic piecing technique from Sonya Barrington in a SF City College class in 1980. It emphasized the importance of geometry in piecing.

15. No

16. Yes, just local quilt shows, mostly SFQG. I hope to show my Hawaiian quilt at Paducah.

17. I earned an award for hand quilting at the Marin Show in 1993 for "Stained Glass Waves"

18. The quilt I designed "Depression Butterflies": for our 2003 show made \$6,000.00 for the Guild

19. No

20. Have patience. Be willing to make lots of mistakes and join a sewing group. Quilting friends will be special friends.