

The art of quilting: alive and well



LADY QUILTERS of Trinity United Church meet every Monday and Tuesday afternoon to work on beautiful coverlets which are turned out at the rate of two per week. The industrious ladies enjoy their afternoon get-togethers which sometimes stretch into the evening hours. Seen working at last Monday's bee, are Mrs. E. Reed, Mrs. Truus Veldhuis, and Mrs. N. Weick. The U.C.W. ladies are able to turn out 50 quilts each year and some of their patterned covers can be seen displayed in background.

An art which has, for the most part, been revived over the past few years has never stopped being an important part of Acton crafts for community ladies. Institute groups, church groups and women in other organizations have been gathering together in homes and church basements for years, constantly keeping their needle fingers supple as they create beautiful spreads and quilts designed to keep out winter chills and dress a bedroom at the same time.

Quilting is one of the embroidery arts which has been practiced throughout the centuries in Asia, North Africa and Europe. Soldiers of the middle ages wore padded and quilted coats and hoods under armor. Dutch and English colonists brought along quilts to protect them from the severe cold of the American winters, and it was one of the favorite home arts in the colonies. Women and girls wore quilted petticoats with warm interlining and babies' cradles were hooded with quilted pieces. Quilted pieces were also used on backs of chairs and fireside benches as protection against drafts of cold air. Colorful scraps of material and favorite quilting designs were combined to provide beauty and warmth in colonial bedrooms.

Bees
In the early days, quilting bees or parties were popular in villages and towns. Groups of women and girls would gather at a friend's home and complete a quilt in one afternoon. Their families would join them for supper after which they usually sang and danced.

Many interesting and beautiful quilt designs have been developed and handed down from generation to generation as heirlooms. With the recent revival and interest in homespun articles and things of the past, North American women are once again reaching back and are to be seen often, gathering in

groups, in an effort to revive the ancient skill and restore some of the pride of homespun needlework. In Acton, as in many rural communities, the art of quilting has never been dropped. For years ladies have gathered regularly in church basements or in homes to diligently apply their abilities.

Two per week
Quilting for members of the United Church has been a matter of two and sometimes three afternoon sessions per week when ten or 12 ladies of the church are able to complete two quilts in a week's time.

The ladies of Trinity U.C.W. believe they are the remaining group in Acton which meets regularly to make quilts on a constant basis. They take orders for the bedcovers and sell them for their own church treasury. As well as completing whole quilts according to specified orders, they also quilt for groups who have completed the designed tops but are not interested in quilting to the finished product.

The church ladies not only make the beautiful covering for customer sale, but also donations for worthwhile charity draws. They recently

created a special one for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Years ago, when a fire occurred in the town or district, the ambitious ladies would donate a quilt to destitute families who had been burned out. Members feel that, if required, their organization would still apply the same generosity today. Working hours stretch from 1 to 5 p.m. of an afternoon with time off for a short refreshment break. "Sometimes in emergency situations we meet and quilt again in the evenings," say some of the avid members. Dorothy Simmons heads up the quilt committee in the Trinity United Church.

Homespun
Group member Marguerite Taylor feels that the interest of owning such coverings is being revived. "People like the homespun idea," she says, but adds that she feels the skill of making them is fading out. "Young girls today just don't have time to work on them," she explained that, in their U.C.W. group they manage to complete 50 quilts a year.

At the moment in Acton, store windows are featuring several colorfully-designed covers which attract people to the windows for viewing. Besides the appliqued type

worked in patches, one interesting afghan for bed or cheserfield covering is being displayed at Acton Home Furnishings. It was created by the Catholic Women's League of St. Joseph's Church.

"Different"
Members of the group knitted one square each with 12 the total number included on the interesting work. The squares are representative of the 12 ladies who participated in its making. Teresa Matheson, treasurer, instigated the afghan and, when all squares were completed, pulled it together and knitted on the final border. The enthusiastic lady said it was made as "something different" for this year's Christmas bazaar.

Another quilt shown was one completed by the Ladies' Board of the Agricultural Society. It was to be seen also at the Acton Home Furnishings and was drawn at the church party held at Luxton Hall on Oct. 18.

Acton Scout and Guide mothers also worked together to produce another pretty covering drawn on at their Oct. 4 bazaar.

In the making is yet another exciting quilt being completed by members of the Lakeside Chapter of the I.O.D.E. as supervised by Marguerite Taylor. Although the group have quilted together on previous occasions, according to the knowledgeable organizer, "not for a long time."

20 blocks
Twenty blocks to 20 people is the way Mrs. Taylor describes how the I.O.D.E. quilt is being planned. "Each of the 20 members working on her patch was required to sell 24 name places at 10¢ each," she explains. Each square has a yellow sun applique in the centre with names of friends and relatives embroidered in brown thread as rays of the sun and name of I.O.D.E. square worker is centred in the sun. Each square is 23 inches long. Enthusiastic needleworkers are anxious to see the quilt completed. They describe it as interesting as well as colorful.

Quilters involved in projects say they would like to see more young people taking up the ancient art.

Ladies of the United Church say they would be pleased to demonstrate and encourage anyone interested in learning the how's of quilting with no obligation to join as a member of their group. They feel it is a way of restoring and keeping the craft alive. The U.C.W. meets at the church every Monday and Tuesday afternoons.



GRACING THE WINDOW of Acton Home Furnishings, the beautiful Rose of Sharon quilt made by the Ladies' Board of the Agricultural Society, drew much interest. Twelve-year-old Marie Arbic admires the pattern before it is taken to Luxton Memorial hall for presentation to winner of the Oct. 18 quilt draw.



AN AFGHAN was made by the Catholic Women's League for their fall bazaar draw. Teresa Matheson was the organizer of the group who made the coverlet, to which she added final touches of border and matching pillow. In the Acton Home Furnishings store Marie Arbic holds the quilt for display.



ERNESTINE FOSTER is the proud winner of the Scout and Guide mother quilt made by them for their Oct. 5 bazaar ticket draw. Three ladies of the group designed and worked on the attractive covering. Mrs. Foster says her young daughter Elaine, 15, has already taken over the quilt and likes to keep it on her bed as decoration.

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"Bear with us", employees are told

Halton Region's Public Works senior staff and elected committee members met with about 130 employees Thursday afternoon in an effort to provide a more comfortable and more secure atmosphere for the workers. The meeting was held at Richview Golf Club.

Three Acton men were among the group. They expect to transfer to the region before long.

Director of Public Works Bob Bailie told workers the meeting was called so that workers could get to know one another. He suggested each had his or her own job to do and seldom came in contact with workers in other areas of the department. He said the meeting was designed to help workers see how they fit into the overall picture.

"We have no past history, we have learned a lot in our first year and knocked a lot of the rough edges off. We're trying hard and want everyone to try hard," he said.

Issue resolved
Bailie indicated that the issue concerning which authority would handle sewer and water had been resolved and that it would remain at the regional level.

Bailie showed slides of each of the landfill sites, pollution control plants and works departments with which workers are affiliated.

A question and answer period followed the slide presentation. One employee said he had read about a four per cent increase for regional employees but had never received the increase.

Bailie explained the increase was for non-union workers and the union employees would receive increases as a result of bargaining sessions which he expected would get underway in the not too distant future. Outside workers are represented by the IBEW.

probably some concern in the work force concerning the publicity emanating from committee and council meetings. He said that if the politicians seemed to be taking a long time in bringing about an effective organization, it was because they were searching for the best way to do it.

Councillor Bill Mason suggested "you must be concerned about your job security. I am one dedicated to the regional concept, it is here to stay, and you are here as long as you want to be."

"Shotgun"
One employee asked how long it would be before the takeover was complete and the organizational goals were met. "Every regional employee is before the shotgun. I spend more time arguing about regional government than I do with my wife," he said.

Bailie indicated he had not anticipated it taking as long as it had to develop the organization. He suggested the council had authorized the hiring of some additional staffers, after much argument.

"It takes time before we can work effectively," he said, noting the other regions had been in force for two, three and four years and were still suffering from growing pains to a certain extent.

"Bear with us," he asked. Bailie warned workers that there were probably disruptions ahead that are not even foreseen yet. He pointed to the proposed expansion of the regional road system and

SINCERE THANKS

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Sincerely
George Sargent

Some suggested there was little change other than that the pay cheque comes from the region instead of one of the four towns. One expressed a desire for the takeover to be completed and a desire to have the region have its own men controlling all facets of the regional operation, rather than having area municipalities do jobs and charge back the cost to the region.

Chief Administrative Officer Reid commended Bailie and the works committee for holding the meeting and suggested the step was a progressive one.

Night classes

Night school classes are in full swing as the most successful season in years has begun.