

Milton Means Business

Quilter's Basket celebrates grand opening Sept. 18-23

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Forget snowboarding or scooters — quilting could still pull ahead as the hot hobby of the decade.

It combines the creative mixing of colour and pattern with the focused precision of higher geometry.

It decreases stress, heightens concentration and, thanks to easy, hands-on lessons, can be done by anyone.

That's the premise behind the Quilter's Basket, which opened

April 25 at 264 Bronte St. S., unit one. A grand opening is scheduled for the week of September 18 to 23.

The woman behind it is Dagmar Scherer, who fed a recently-acquired addiction to quilting by opening her own store.

"I was fascinated by quilting, the colours and the patterns," said Ms Scherer. "I took courses and decided this town could really use a quilt shop."

Others appear to agree. Since opening, Ms Scherer has offered a variety of well-attended quilting classes for pre-beginners, beginners and kids. More complex fare is also offered.

The classes demolish the intimidation of complicated-looking

quilts. Those who've never held a fabric swatch before emerge from a two-hour pre-beginners session with a self-made wall hanging.

Once the technique is grasped, quilting is as simple, challenging or varied as the people who do it.

"The possibilities are endless," said Lynne Tompkins, a full-time employee at the shop.

The Quilter's Basket sprawls across about 2,800 square feet of space, divided up into a series of rooms.

One is jam-packed with lashings of fabric bolts in a kaleidoscope of colours, as well as books, patterns, kits and quilting accessories. Janome brand machines are also available. What isn't there can be ordered in.

A cozy room complete with a couch and table curls by one side of the shop, while another housing a 14-foot hand-guided and laser-lit quilting machine nestles on the other.

A classroom area perches above it all on the second floor.

And a riot of completed quilts cast both inspiration and a down-home glow throughout it all.

In running the shop, Ms Scherer and Ms Tompkins are good-natured with a down-to-earth humour, both quick with a quip and containing a storehouse of knowledge on the various aspects of quilt-making.

Quilting is an old tradition, dating back almost as far as human creativity and resourcefulness.

But judging by the number of young people passing through the doors of the Quilter's Basket, it won't go out of style soon.

At its basic, quilting starts with selecting a pattern and plenty of coloured cloth.

The fabric is then cut into pieces and sewn precisely back together again in distinctive design that can be as simple or complicated as the maker chooses.

That outer covering is then sewn onto an inner filler, or batting, for warmth and texture.

Historically, women used recycled clothing for their quilts when times were lean and money tight.

"It was the beginning of layering," said Ms Tompkins. "To stay warm you layer, and that's basically what this is."

Today, quilting is largely considered a hobby or art form, and the people who make them are frequently hooked on trying ever more elaborate colours, fabrics and patterns.

"You always have to be challenged to do something else," said Ms Scherer.

But it's also a sure way to lower blood-pressure and stress levels.

"People are so stressed out these days, they need something that can calm them," she said. "It takes their mind off the stress of working."



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Trianglis

"Victor's genius has inspired an entire generation of musicians to pursue the triangle as their instrument of choice..."

By CHRIS DAV

TORONTO — Panic swept the city like a raging Tsunami yesterday as word spread that beloved area resident and renowned trianglist Victor Petrenko had gone missing.

Petrenko acquired prestige and critical acclaim as the lead triangle player in the North Etobicoke Symphony and Taps, but has moved on to a highly successful solo career credited with single-handedly dragging the triangle from the back row of the orchestra into the musical mainstream.

"Victor's genius has inspired an entire generation of musicians to pursue the triangle as their instrument of choice..."

Mr. Petrenko was seen yesterday at a local assessment point. Witnesses say that he had been seen in the area of the assessment point. The assessment point was too huge to be seen in its entirety.

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Owner Dagmar Scherer holds up a bolt of cheerfully coloured fabric, one of many available at the Quilter's Basket on Bronte Street.

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