

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Members have made some lovely quilts for the premature baby units and I plan to share them between the Lister and the L&D Hospital. The bags and cushions for the breast units at QEII and St Albans are an ongoing project. Linda Cosgrove and Barbie Edwards keep them supplied thanks to members' generosity with time and fabric.

A 5 kg bag of stuffing for breast cushions will be available at the November evening meeting.

We are still looking for someone to look after the magazines and bring them back and forth for sale. Also, there is a place remaining for Denham in February; it's a bargain break and guaranteed to banish the winter blues.

Finally we are looking forward to the Christmas Party and the Committee is working on a fun evening with old favourites and some new ones. After much discussion, we have decided that we would like the party food to be 'Bring and Share'.

The reason for this change is that last year Committee members were unable to join in games and some didn't have time to eat due to their various responsibilities. They had also spent time beforehand preparing sufficient food for about 50 people.

It should be an enjoyable evening for all so we are asking members to bring a plate of 6 items or more, either sweet or savoury, to go on the table to be shared. A board will go round at the November evening meeting and December morning meeting where members can say whether they will be providing 'sweet' or 'savoury' items.

Committee members will then 'fill in the gaps' in the hope that we will have a good 'spread' that all will enjoy. We hope you will understand our reasons for the change and that this year's party will be a great success.

Valerie Pollington

Interesting articles, and photos of [Alias Grace](#) blocks to me please:

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TEA ROTA

November - Caroline Ellis, Sally Simpson, Irene Heathcote;
December - Christmas Party - see above;
January - Awaiting volunteers;
February - Sue Jonas, Maureen Chalk, Jane Storer

Barbie has asked me to say that the existing specialist teabags are all in broken boxes and getting rather stale, so if in future you wish to have a more healthy cup of tea then please bring your own tea bag and the ladies will supply the hot water.

THE KNITTING AND STITCHING EXHIBITION at ALEXANDRA PALACE

I had a very easy ride to Alexandra Palace from WGC and then the courtesy bus up the Hill and when I entered the Palace the Palm Court was full of crocheted amigurumi animals. Normally there are one or two stands here but this was the prelude to a very different layout of the halls.

There was an interesting exhibition of student work in the main corridor but the small hall was entirely given over to embroidery and other crafts which took quite a time to negotiate. I loved the display of embroidered caskets from the Royal School of Needlework, very inspirational.

I enjoy many other crafts so I enjoyed looking at all the new kits and other crafts on display; the main hall which is overseen by a fantastic rose window was given over to needlecrafts, sewing machines and fabric both for quilting and dressmaking. I often wonder if all the fabric which leaves the hall gets made into quilts and clothes and just how many sewing machines are sold over the course of four days.

The small hall to the right of the main corridor was full of workshops, dispensing dressmaking tips, techniques and embroidery and because they were all in the same room I realised just how many workshops were run on each day. If you have the time, you could learn so many new things and really enrich your leisure time. I

In addition, many of the smaller exhibitors were in this hall and I couldn't resist a little Scottie dog pattern. Sadly they have still not solved the

problem of the catering, too little seating although better than last time, but by the time I had negotiated a windy canvas corridor with my stick and food on a tray I was pleased to sit anywhere. I did enjoy my day and arrived home feeling that it had been a good day out.

Hilda

AUTUMN QUILT FESTIVAL, DUXFORD

We were lucky to have a dry day for our little jaunt up to Duxford, it is such an easy journey taking just under an hour. A quick cup of coffee in the canteen on the airfield to exchange pleasantries and then off to the shops!

I have never really liked Duxford, preferring the Chilford Wine vineyard but that was further to go and so I am coming round to enjoying my day out at the Air Museum among the quirky aircraft hanging up.

My real reason for going was as a member also of Mimram Quilters . . . I had taken part in their Scryptastic Challenge, although I freely admit to not knowing what a modern quilt is or was when I made my entry. Helen Howes' talk did help but bearing in mind these were only 16inch blocks, they didn't really tally with her definition. I needn't have worried as the display was so diverse mine didn't stand out as being more modern than anyone else, in fact there was a definite traditional twist there.

It was good to talk to Jenny and Doug of Patchwork Corner who are now continuing their business from their website and also to chat with Lucy of Secret Garden about her forthcoming Christmas workshops. Check both websites for details.

I had a good look at the various stalls who were selling rulers to enable more overall quilting but I think I need to find someone who uses and understands them to give me a lesson. I spent one whole afternoon re-learning stipple quilting with the BSR foot on my machine. I think I had just about cracked it, but wonder if I will still remember when I go back to it?

My next call was at a stall which had intrigued me in the spring and I couldn't not buy Vendulka Ballais's book on new ways with Cathedral Windows. This is a machine technique which allows the windows to be inserted into a background and is a bit more versatile than the traditional hand technique. Vendulka also gives lectures and runs workshops from her home in Monks Eleigh in Suffolk, a name to be looked for in the future.

I resisted the temptation to buy more fabric, and didn't see anything which was so different except the wool tweeds available from a couple of stalls, but I can't help thinking that a quilt made of these

would be very heavy and I am already struggling with a large American style quilt.

This is the last of the big quilt shows so apart from an Area Day with the Quilters Guild in November, it is all Christmas and getting all those Christmas and Advent projects finished.

ALIAS GRACE QUILT

The October blocks which were available at the last morning meeting are called Pandora's Box and Letter X. At the evening meeting these two further blocks were available, Hearts and Gizzards and Falling Timbers . . .



Photo courtesy of Jo Day

To date we have not received any photos which I can publish, it would be interesting to know how members are enjoying this project which replaced our previous Block of the Month project.

CHRISTMAS PARTY CELEBRATIONS

You may remember that after last year's Christmas Party, the Committee decided that all those members who had attained their 90th birthday during the year would be celebrated with a special cake.

Due to the current IT regulations we no longer keep members' birthday dates on computer, so if you or a fellow member who you know has a birthday or has had a birthday during this year, please inform Linda Cosgrove as soon as possible.

A PERSONAL NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR

I regret to say that I will have to give up writing the newsletter at the next AGM, mainly because I have now been diagnosed with gout in my hands and fingers which makes sewing and using the computer extremely painful.

I hope that a volunteer will come forward before then, someone who enjoys exploring the exhibitions and enjoys writing about them. Sometimes it is quite a challenge but it's always very enjoyable.

Hilda