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# Heritage Quilters' Guild History

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In 1996, a quilting group, called the Napanee Piecemakers, began discussing the possibility of starting up a Quilting Guild in the area. They knew that there were Guilds in the Belleville and Kingston areas, but felt that, particularly in the winter, driving conditions and the distances involved would prevent many from participating.

The Piecemakers had met together for fifteen years. However, they met in a private home and, although they wished to spread the joy of quilting, there simply wasn't room to expand. Therefore, they had to find another way to include people and share the fun, accomplishment and camaraderie of quilting.

The Piecemakers decided in the spring of 1996, that, in the fall they would shoulder the costs involved in holding two meetings, the first of which would hopefully give an indication of what interest there might be in the area for the formation of a Guild. If there was sufficient interest, they would fund a second meeting, where they hoped a Guild would be formed. It was felt that from that point on, the Guild would be able to pay for itself.

One of the local papers, The Guide, was very helpful and printed an article before the first meeting, telling people about the proposed Guild. A room was rented at the Napanee and Region Conservation Authority. Napanee Piecemakers members got tea and coffee supplies ready and baked cookies. Finally, on the evening of October 15, 1996, everything was ready. Preparations had been made to accommodate about twenty-five people. The Piecemakers numbered about ten, and it was felt that if another ten or fifteen people showed up the meeting would be considered a real success. Forty-four more people showed up! Everyone scrambled. More chairs were set up ... closely. Bonnie Welsman, the President of the Piecemakers, explained the purpose of the meeting and divided everyone into four groups. Each group then travelled to four different areas for about fifteen minutes, then on to the next area until they had covered all four areas of interest.

In one area, June Donaldson held a discussion on templates and patterns. She passed a template to someone in the group, told them to copy it and then to pass their own template on to the next person who would repeat the process. Everyone was astounded when, at the end of the meeting, June showed them the last template made. It was at least 1" larger all around than the original, and graphically reinforced the need for accuracy when making patterns.

In another area, Mary Esther Hicks and Eleanor Taylor demonstrated and encouraged people to try piecing blocks together. In a third area, Margaret Henshaw demonstrated appliqué techniques and also encouraged people to participate. In the last area, Bonnie Welsman showed people some of the paraphernalia acquired by quilters, such as rulers, markers, thimbles, threads, books, colour wheels etc., and explained their uses.

Partway through the evening, Anne Craig, from the Napanee Beaver, took pictures and gathered information for an article for the "Beaver".

It was decided that the next meeting would be held on the 3rd Tuesday of November at a place to be determined. An advertisement would be placed in the Napanee Beaver in the Community Pulse column indicating where the meeting would be held.

Refreshments were served.