

Hidden Quilts 2024

by Pat Wills

During the lockdown, we all resorted to many new activities to keep us occupied and to stimulate our creative juices. Thanks to our local quilt group Fishergate Crafters, we were treated to the opportunity of producing an A4 journal quilt every month. The enthusiasm of experienced member, Claire Scott, had given us a fantastic start as she had previously shared some of her own stunning journal quilts.

My own journey in quilting began in 2010 when I volunteered to steward in our lovely Quilt Museum here in York. The sheer range and imagination of quilters young and old, both traditional and contemporary, launched me into enjoying a new sense of creativity in my retirement.

I also enjoy photographing interesting textures, surfaces, colours and spaces while exploring many wonderful parts of the world. These have provided the never ending inspiration for exploring ways in which I can reproduce these, using a variety of techniques. Some are more successful than others but I have learned so much by doing.

The 2024 theme for CQ's journal quilts is providing the opportunity for me to look again at ways in which I can extend my skills and try out some new ideas. The February subject is based upon a finding in our canal side property. The house is part of an old worsted mill from the late 1700s. It ceased as a mill in the early 1900s and was converted into dwellings. Renovating it has uncovered many gems. This particular beam in the basement was still covered in coal dust! As the basement was the route for transporting the coal from the canal into the engine room, it is not surprising.



Left:
**Carpenter's
Marks**



Left: **Dry Stone Wall**

Uncovering the carpenter's marks was a real joy! I confess that I traced the marks to help with the accuracy of the hand stitching. Fabric paints, scraping and machine stitching provided the surface of the old wooden beam. The marks certainly showed the craftsman's skill and I hope I have been able to do them justice (bottom, previous page).

One of my favourite places to visit is nearby, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The photograph was taken of one of the installations, an artist's recreation of a dry stone wall. It was a sunny day, enabling the contrast between sunshine and shadows. I think I could have continued hand stitching this piece for many more days! I loved choosing a mix of colours for every stitch to contrast with the thicker black thread that emphasises the structure (above).

The April quilt is based upon rock formations seen on the Isle of Skye. Weathering by spray has led to the creation of hundreds of holes thus exposing the surface underneath. I really enjoyed using a piece of home dyed fabric to 'hide' under the white felt layer. It had been a less than successful piece so was perfect to cover up! Cutting out the holes was an intricate task but quite enjoyable and, again, I rediscovered my love of hand stitching. The band of orange through the rock provided the opportunity to add the contrast which really makes it zing. It is based upon a piece I made for the previous Fishergate Crafters challenge because I liked it so much (right).

I am excited to be looking at other ways of exploring the subject of hidden in the coming months. Our old mill provides lots of opportunities, as does our wonderful world.

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Below:
**Honeycomb
Weathering**

