



# Quilt of Belonging

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## Fibres du monde

FALL 2014

### **New worlds! New audiences! New friends for the Quilt!**

There is a continued sense of wonderment at how the life of Quilt of Belonging unfolds and that reaction describes our journey this year. Yes, there were challenges and our plans did not always materialize, but most of all we've had wonderful opportunities—surprises big and small, from unexpected sources that have taken our breath away.

The Quilt's first 2014 show was in May, nearby at Cornwall's NAV Centre, for the Ontario Heritage Conference. The pace picked up in June with preparations for the Grand Rapids and Manitoulin Island shows. Meanwhile, we tried hard to get our book reprinted as supplies were low, but we didn't have the needed funds. August flew by with a busy AQS Quilt Week in Michigan. Two weeks later we were on our way to Manitoulin Island.

Just two days after returning from Northern Ontario, we went into overdrive. At the request of the president of Malaysia, we agreed to send the Quilt to the CAPAM Commonwealth Conference. We scrambled to make the arrangements and nine days later the Quilt was en route to Malaysia. A week later, our team flew to Kuala Lumpur. Unbelievably, during those same two weeks, CAPAM had our book edited, proofed and reprinted in Kuala Lumpur. The books arrived at the conference the morning of the first day, literally still 'hot off the presses.'

Each venue brings a new audience. The huge American event had art lovers. Manitoulin was an intimate event in a small town in Ojibwe territory. Malaysia had ministers, media and delegates from 50 countries. Still, the Quilt's messages remain the same, still needed in our times, whether by a world leader, a quilter or a child. My father, who began the Quilt journey with me, passed away last week. He taught me that though the road ahead is unknown, it is always worthwhile. I am thankful for his lessons and for you, our faithful supporters—for your gifts of time, talents and funds to continue this amazing Quilt journey.

Esther Bryan  
Executive Director

# The M Year: Michigan, Manitoulin and Malaysia !

The 2014 Quilt tour began with the **Ontario Heritage Conference**. The special event was held on the warm weekend of May 23rd at the NAV Canada Conference Centre in Cornwall, Ontario. The Quilt was the perfect backdrop for the occasion as the attendees had gathered to share their passion and their knowledge in regards to the preservation of history and culture— a good fit indeed for the *Quilt*.

## MICHIGAN: Grand Rapids

**American Quilter's Society: Quilt Week 2014, Aug 20 -23**



Esther Bryan and 4 members of the 'blankie group' of Brantford, Ontario

The 'blankie group' consists of 27 ladies who last year sewed 900 blankets for Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

Rita: *"The book tells a wonderful story, but it just doesn't give you the chills you get when you see it in person, so when I found out that the Quilt would be only a 5-hour drive away, a road trip was suggested."*



De Vos Place Convention Centre

Nearly 20,000 visitors from all parts of the USA and Canada thronged into the enormous hall.

Meredith Royds, a lively Quilt volunteer and an avid quilter, loved sharing Quilt stories and, in the rare quiet times, peeked at some of the show's treasures.



Jane & Forrest Rietze had a trailer custom-built to transport the Quilt with their truck to the Debaj. Our arrival was greeted with much relief.

## The Island Quilters Guild & Debajehmujig Storytellers

- Over 400 school students
- 1500 visitors
- Ojibwe Chief, elders, families
- visitors from near and from as far away as Sweden



## MANITOULIN ISLAND

**Sept. 12-17**

**They dreamed and made it happen!**

Josh Pelletier, Debaj's art coordinator and Kathrine Grant of the Island Quilters Guild determined to get the Quilt to Manitoulin.



The innovative Debajehmujig Creation Centre, formerly the old general store in Manitowaning



The opening with special guests, including the Odawa and Ojibwe block makers, neither of whom had ever seen the completed Quilt.

"Everyone is talking about the Quilt in Manitoulin—in the grocery store, the hardware shop, in every church, on the sidewalks. That we got to have this amazing piece of art here is a miracle."



## Putrajaya International Convention Centre



## First overseas exhibit!

## MALAYSIA

October 18-21

The Canadian Commonwealth organization, CAPAM, founded 20 years ago, assists governments with good governance practices and innovation. The 2014 Biennial Conference and Anniversary, hosted by CAPAM and the Office of the President of Malaysia, included a Ministers Forum, an International Media Forum and the International Innovations Awards and great festivities.



Mackie:

*The Quilt certainly was the hit of the conference. Every one of the 1,0000 delegates wanted their picture taken in front of the block representing their country.*

*One of the most meaningful visits was with the students of some of the local schools. The message of the Quilt has always been to celebrate the gifts of all peoples, no matter where they came from and no matter how great or small that gift .*

*Susan and I were truly blessed to have this opportunity to meet new friends and tell the Quilt's story, and by extension a little of Canada as well."*



Putrajaya

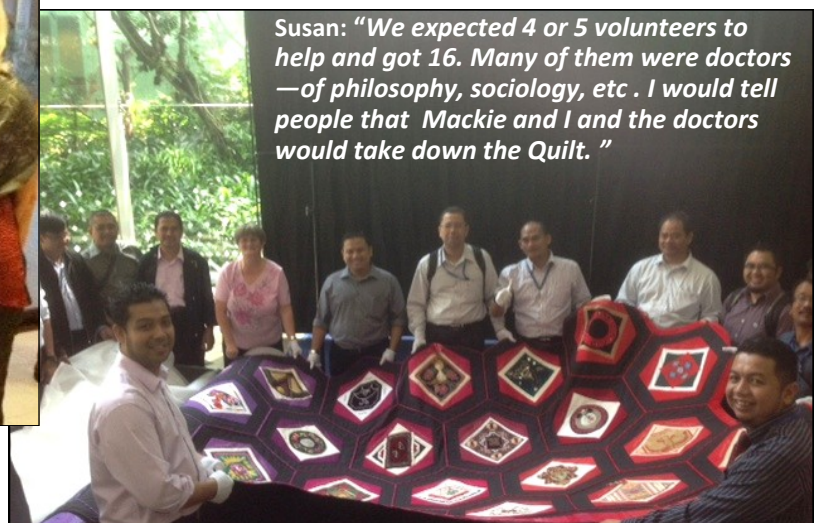
This is a planned city 25 km south of Kuala Lumpur, built in the 1990's due to overcrowding in the capital. It is the federal administrative centre of Malaysia, the seat of the King and Parliament, and the financial centre.



**The Robertsons:** The Quilt was not the only sensation at the conference! The 'man in the skirt' was the talk of the ball and thus the subject of many photos!



Gay Hamilton, Executive Director of CAPAM and event organizer with HE Ben Eghan and his wife, along with CAPAM staff member, Leona Wall.



Susan: "We expected 4 or 5 volunteers to help and got 16. Many of them were doctors —of philosophy, sociology, etc . I would tell people that Mackie and I and the doctors would take down the Quilt. "



## Lost & Found in Wikwemikong

For the past decade, Quilt of Belonging has made sure that newsletters and invitations to special events were sent out to all our block makers. Undeliverable letters were returned by Canada Post. For over a decade, we sent mail to Marlene Shawana, who beaded the Ojibwe block and Shirley Pitawanakwat who created the Odawa square. Both live in Wikwemikong and neither received any of our communications nor had they seen the finished Quilt. A mystery indeed! It was therefore a very special opening for the Deba-jehmujig Creation Centre and for these women. Surrounded by their proud families and friends, they were honoured, interviewed by the media, photographed by all as they got their first taste of being part of the Quilt family. Asked how she felt, one of them responded with delight "It's like being a movie star".



**Shirley Pitawanakwat** has 4 children and 13 grandchildren. She loves to sew, bead, knit and is learning to crochet. She remembers her grandmother working with birch bark and quills and her mother made huge "Big Star" quilts. Shirley learned to bead as an adult at the local centre. Her greatest sense of satisfaction is seeing a project completed



**Marlene Shawana** is the mother of two and the delighted grandmother of Dominique. Still doing a lot of beadwork, she makes moccasins, jewelry, medallions.. She works on deer hide and felt and says it passes the time. Marlene is also teaching her daughter and high school students. She loves cooking traditional foods, especially for wakes, and outdoor cooking and camping.

### Visitor Comments:

*"I feel like everyone reached out and touched me."* Goldene Taylor

*"The work of God and His angels."* Dawn-Marie Ceaser

*"A quilt of around the world is absolutely 'out of this world' "* Joyce Chilton

*"Si on pouvait suivre cet exemple entre les nations comme le font les femmes."* Ghislaine Desjardins

*"What a treat to see the whole world peacefully together"* V. Hoelzer-Laidre

*"Comforting to find all of my tribes and clans"* Summer Marie Miller

*"Unbelievable! I have never been prouder to be a Canadian"* Shirley Burley

### Become a *Quilt* member

#### Members receive:

- Newsletters 2 times a year
- Invitations to the annual AGM Voting privileges at AGM or special members meetings
- 10 % discount for all *Quilt* bookstore purchases

**Annual fee: Single \$15 Family \$25 Corporate \$100**

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