

Erika Schulz - CQG # 028,029

Erika started as a novice quilter in the summer of 1980 with the *Fort Steele Heritage Town Hand-Quilters*. She went on to be a foundering member of the *Cranbrook Quilters Guild* in 1984/85. She's now a 'master hand-quilter' with 45 years experience. She was already an adept sewer, having made her children clothes for years. She started sewing at the age of 14 on a *Pfaff* treadle machine. Quilting was a new focus at a time when her children were teenagers and no longer wanting 'home-made' cloths. She wanted to use up the fabric scraps.

In 1980, Erika decided to apply for a volunteer position at "Fort Steele", which is a "living museum" and open late spring to late fall. At 'the Fort', Erika met a group of 'senior' women<sup>1</sup> who were hand-quilting. A quilting bee is one of the living-museum activities as "bees" had been a part of life in Fort Steele town since the early days: 1898 onwards. Erika joined the hand-quilters, learning that skill before she learned to piece a quilt block. Though, one of the women suggested that at the tender age of 40, Erika was too young to quilt! The following summer (1981) Erika made her first quilt top, an eight pointed star, using fabrics that were left over from making clothes. Some of this fabric dated back to 1963-1965 before the family immigrated from Germany (see #028, Dresden Plate). This first quilt was hand-quilted by the Fort Steele hand-quilters. Erika learned to quilt from these women, and being young she learned a lot about life, charity work and friendships as the women shared their stories while they quilted.

In 1984, Dominique Drummond<sup>2</sup> visited the quilters at Fort Steele to talk about starting a quilting guild in Cranbrook. Erika joined the guild to learn more and has been a steady guild member assuming roles of Vice-President (1989-90), Secretary (1991-92), Phoning committee (2000- 2003), Raffle Quilt committee (2002-3)<sup>3</sup>, Publicity (2009-2012), Library (2010-11), Sunshine (2023 - present). Besides the meetings and some workshops, until recently she regularly joined the Tuesday Morning hand-quilters. The "raffle quilt" of 2003-2004 was named *Irish Thistle*. It was made in mauve and green, and the pattern was Erika's favourite (see #029). The guild members made a queen size quilt with 20 "thistle" blocks. Joining Erika on the committee were Ellen Stapleton, Susan Alexander, Heather McKay. One thing she learned early on from guild members was the 'proper' way to bind a quilt. The Fort Steele ladies had used a knife edge or fold over method rather than a separate binding sewn to the front, mitred at the corners and hand-stitched to the back.

Over the years Erika says "I got better and more daring when it came to colours and patterns" though she still leans to the soft colours, and not the modern shades. In 1988, after joining the

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<sup>1</sup> Fort Steele Lambi House hand-quilters in 1980: Gladys Hummer, Willa McClure, Louise DuFrene, Mary Charles, Laura Holden, Iola Lyons and Erika Schulz.

<sup>2</sup> Dominique Drummond and Lisa Sharpe were the initiators of the Cranbrook Quilters Guild. The first meetings were held at the Library and the United Church in the fall of 1984. The group moved to the Senior Citizens Hall in early 1985. They have met there since.

<sup>3</sup> Guild Raffle Committee: From 1985 to 2003, a committee of three or four members choose a pattern for a quilt that the guild would raffle to make money. On average \$2,500 came to the guild selling tickets at \$1-\$5/ticket. In 2002 the Provincial Government changed the rules for raffles. One requirement was to be a registered charity. The guild members decided to stay as a hobby group. In 2003, like many other groups, they offered folks a chance to win a quilt for a donation. The 'Irish Thistle' brought in \$2,750 and was won by June Vanlerbergh. The guild did offer community groups a quilt 'at cost' that the group could raffle and the guild could at least re-coup the cost of the quilt. This didn't prove to be a viable option. After 2004, the members were busy making the Centennial Quilt (#080) and stopped making a raffle quilt each year. If asked, the guild will donate a piece for a charity/non-profit group to raffle.

guild, she made her *Thistle Quilt* (#029). For this quilt she didn't work with left over fabrics. She simply went to the fabric store and purchased the material she needed. She used scissors to cut the fabric as rotary cutters were still not the norm of the everyday quilter. Neither were acrylic templates - Erika cut her's from cereal box cardboard. Not one to purchase patterns, her style is to find a block or two that she likes, choose fabrics and create a settling. She has tried most techniques. She made one appliquéd quilt and says "never again". A favourite that took three years to complete is her *Pioneer Braid*. Erika has show her quilts in the guild's Quilt Shows and the Fort Steele Fall Fair.

Now she routinely uses the computer to print labels. She has a full list of her quilts with pictures. Most were made for home use. Her creations total 35 large bed-quilts (18 queens) and many smaller projects - all hand-quilted on a wooden frame that rests on saw-horses made by her husband. She has only machine quilted one table-runner and recently one wall-hanging (Ricky Timms' *Convergence*). The wall-hanging and an abstract face were recent foray's out of her comfort zone.

Her quilting space includes a "piecing room" that is an upstairs bedroom and a "quilting space" that is on the lower level. Initially this space was in a den-type room with large windows and a fireplace. Now, she sets up in the 'quest bedroom' where the light is better. She only gathers fabrics for the project - she has not accumulated a stash - and washes the fabric as soon as she buys it. She recently treated herself to a new machine: a *Janome C30W*.

Quiltmaker	Erika Schulz (nee Jaehn)
Date and Place of Birth	October 27, 1940 Jagerndorf, Czechoslovakia
Father Occupation Birthplace	Friedrich Jaehn Blacksmith Samsdorf, Germany
Mother	Martha Homemaker Kritzkow, Germany
Date and Place of Marriage	September 25, 1959 Stuttgart, Germany
Spouse Occupation	Jorg (George) Airforce Photographer
Quiltmaker Occupation	Retail sales
Children	2 daughters, 1 son
Education of Quiltmaker	11 years (German system)
Where quiltmaker lived	Germany: Gustrow, Babelsberg, Legau/Allgau, Memminzen, Stuttgart, Erding Canada: Moose Jaw, SK; Regina, SK, Cranbrook, BC

Ethnic/Ancestry	Unknown (due to and adoption)
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## CQG #028 - Dresden Plate

Quiltmaker: Erika Schulz

Owner: Frank Schulz

Erika was attracted to the block pattern “Dresden Plate” because Dresden was a town in Germany near her husbands hometown, so the pattern name reminded her of home. While it was made for a special occasion, her son’s wedding, she classifies it as an everyday quilt. Essentially it is a ‘scrappy’ quilt as the fabrics used were scraps leftover from dresses that she made from about 1960 onwards. In fact Erika’s oldest daughter can point-out the fabric of a dress to blouse from when she was about five years old.

Pattern	Source: Unknown. In public domain as typical 16 petal “Dresden Plate” in ‘sash and block’ layout.
Date	Specific date: 1994
Size	L 82” x W 82”
Overall style	Finished quilt (full size), hand-quilted Repeated blocks, Sash & Block, Dresden Plate Pink sashing with cornerstones
Block	L 14¾” x W 14¾” Square Spacing: Sashing Cornerstones (white) Pattern: Brackman#3488a(v) [16 petals] - (Friendship Ring(20); Dresden Plate; Aster) Number of blocks: 16
Sashing	Sashing: W 2¼”, straight pink with white cornerstones
Border/frame	Border: W 5”, one fabric, white
Edge finishing	Binding: W ½”, straight, machine front/hand back, mitered
Batting	Polyester, low loft
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave Motif: flowers, geometric, polka dots, plain/solid, plaid, flecked Feature colour: blue, coral, green, red, white
Top piecing method	Machine pieced Turned edge appliqué Dresden Plate
Embellishments	Appliqué Embroidery: DMC thread

Backing	Cotton, plain weave Vertical pieced Motif: Paisley, roses Feature colour: green, pink,
Quilting	Hand, 4-5 stitches per inch White thread Patterns: cables, in-the-ditch,
Condition	Used (has been laundered)
Label	Frank's Quilt Hand Embroidered Love Mom

CQG #029 - Thistle Quilt  
Quiltmaker/Owner: Erika Schulz

Erika found the pattern for this quilt in a magazine in 1988. It's her "Thistle Quilt" and her favourite pattern. The fabrics were bought at *Shannon's Fabrics Ltd*, in Cranbrook for about \$150. The pastel colours, soft pinks and greens, were what she liked at the time. It took about a year to complete - piecing and hand-quilting. Erika bound this quilt using the wrap the back to the front technique, that she had learned at Fort Steele. When she joined the guild she learned the more 'proper' way of binding with mitred corners, which was required to enter your quilt in a show.

She initially made it for herself as an everyday quilt, but has since changed her mind and is 'bequeathing' it to her youngest daughter.

Pattern	Worktable block (EQ5) with appliqué leaves. ( <a href="http://support.electricquilt.com">support.electricquilt.com</a> )
Subject	Thistles?
Date	Specific date: 1988
Size	L 93½" x W 87"
Overall Style	Finished quilt (full size), Hand-quilted Repeated blocks on point with setting blocks and triangles. Accent and border

Blocks	<p>Feature block: L 10" x W 10", pieced with appliqué, 25 blocks</p> <p>Secondary block: L 10" x W 10", plain, 16 blocks</p> <p>Setting Triangles: equilateral with 4½" sides</p> <p>Square block on point (diamond)</p> <p>Spacing; side-by-side</p> <p>Feature block pattern: Brackman #1330 (v)</p> <p>(English Ivy, KC Star 1931; The Clover Blossom, Mrs Danner, 1934)</p>
Border/frame	<p>1. W ⅝", pink, one fabric</p> <p>2. W - Top/Bottom ¾", Sides 7 ¾", off-white, one fabric</p>
Edge finishing	W 1 ½", straight, hand-attached, "old Fort Steele style" knife-edge?
Batting	Polyester, low loft
Top Fabric	<p>Cotton, plain weave</p> <p>Motif: plain/solid, flowers, polka dots</p> <p>Feature colour: green, pink</p> <p>Background colour: white</p>
Top piecing method	<p>Machine piecing</p> <p>Turned edge applique (leaves)</p>
Backing	<p>One fabric vertical pieced</p> <p>Cotton, plain weave</p> <p>Feature colour: beige, pink</p> <p>Motif: flowers</p>
Quilting	<p>Hand-quilting, 5 stitches/inch</p> <p>Thread - cotton, white</p> <p>Patterns: Cables, feathers, cross-hatch, outline, in-the-ditch, Flower (Aster/daisy)</p>
Condition	Used (has been laundered)
Label	<p>Thistle quilt</p> <p>goes to</p> <p>Nancy's Collection</p> <p>Love Mom</p>