

Antonia Cox - CQG# 064,081

Antonia or Annie to the guild members, joined the Cranbrook Guild in 2015. She was the guild's Vice-president from 2017 to 2019 when Joy French was President (see 042). Annie taught a few mini-sessions including sewing machine maintenance and the quilting pattern "Attic Window"¹, plus she shared her quilts in a trunk show "Quilts We Made" with Julie Laird and Jennifer Ham. While a member of the Cranbrook guild, Annie lived at Grasmere (BC) where she had a long-arm quilting business: *Quality Quilts*. To attend meetings, Annie had to travel 90 km one way - so about 2 hours travel time. Fortunately she could commute with her friend Julie Laird (see #026).

In 1983, Annie had moved next door to Julie in Fernie, BC. Julie introduced her to serious quilting and Annie joined the Fernie Quilt Guild in 1984. She had known something about quilting before meeting Julie. Her husband's grandmother had quilted with the church ladies and Annie had made a few baby quilts as gifts - the style with satin-stitch appliqués and a shaped border like her 'first' quilt made in 1980. Annie first quilt, made for her toddler son, features 12 appliquéd Teddy Bears in a sash and block layout with sashing cornerstones. She used a zig-zag stitch for the appliqués. The pattern was from a McCall's Magazine. Annie says "I didn't know what I was doing ... I used pre-quilted fabric and tied the quilt". This experience was complicated because the printed pattern had an error - the cornerstones were omitted.

Annie still enjoys learning from others and loves working with fabric. Besides being part of a guild for the past 41 years she joins friends twice a year at the "Bull River Retreat" organized by Lynn Zak (see #069), and occasionally goes to a retreat in Coleman, AB. Once a month she quilts with Julie and the Jaffary Queenagers. Her favourite patterns are wholecloth quilts and Cathedral Windows. She hand-quilts a pre-printed wholecloth while watching TV because she just likes to do something with her hands - averaging about one-a-year. Hand-quilting "it's relaxing - if I sit and quilt for a few hours, I sleep like a baby." She uses a commercial quilting frame: a 17" square Q-snap frame.

She has made over 100 quilts and many small items like wall-hangings and table runners. Some for home use, some for celebrations and charity. Annie has won a few prizes for her quilts. A quilt she made for her son's graduation - a Judy Niemeyer pattern "Mariners Star"² - received the honourable mention ribbon in the 2006 Fernie Guild's Quilt Show. And her quilt "Tidal Pools"³ a queen size quilt made for her brother and sister-in-law, won second place in Fernie's 2012 show. Her preferred pattern designers are Judy Niemeyer (*Quiltworx*) because of the precision of paper piecing and *Benartex* pre-printed wholecloth kits. Bright clean colours catch her attention. She labels her work with computer generated tags attached to a border.

In her condo in Fernie, Annie's quilting space is the spare bedroom. She sews on a *Bernina Activa 210*, and has a *Elna lotus*. The Bernina replaced a *Pfaff*. When she operated Quality Quilts, she had a studio with a *Gammill* long-arm quilter - a *Classic* from 1995-2001 (cost ~ \$15,000) and a *Classic Plus* from 2001 - 2017 (cost \$25,000). When Annie started long-arm quilting in 1995, she took some private lessons from Jodi Beamish (Trail, BC), though she's basically taught herself. The story goes that she tried a long-arm machine in Kalispell, MN,

¹ Attic Window is a quilt pattern in the public domain. The use of rectangles and triangles with fabric tones creates a shadow borax effect to highlight feature blocks.

² *Mariners Star* is a discontinued pattern of Quiltworx and "Tidal Pools" is its *Sea Urchins* pattern. The *Nautilus* is a pattern by quilt-artist Barbara Shapel (2006).

where she was surprised that she could write her name with the machine because “before I couldn’t draw a stick-man or write neatly. My dad was an artist - a baker and a painter. My art-genes came out when I got a Gammill for myself.”

Annie operated *Quality Quilts* in Grasmere, offering long-arm quilting services full-time from 1995-2018. Initially as a ‘home-based business’ and later as a small quilt shop. She was always busy - that snag between being too busy for one person, but not busy enough for two. She also collected vintage sewing machines. This lead her to teach long-arm quilting and sewing machines maintenance. She still repairs sewing machines, but now it is more of a hobby. Now that she has sold her Gammill, has rented the machine at *Sew Creative Quilt Shop* in Kimberley. Also, her friend Julie has an *APQS Lucey* she can use. She does prefer custom quilting with lots of feathers to edge-to-edge with a pantograph. She has recently sent one piece, *The Nautilus Wallhanging*, (see fn #2) to be custom quilted by Sam Alberts of *Quilting Curve Studio* in Grand Forks.

During the Covid Pandemic she made a lot of masks and some ‘scrubs’ from her whole cloth muslin fabric. Annie “found it hard to concentrate on patterns for quilting”. That said, she hand-quilted a lot and speaks of quilting as being a “great hobby”, that you meet great people quilting and that it does help you get through rough times like Covid and separation/divorce”. Long-arm quilting certainly “brought out the artist in me”. Annie has donated many quilts to charity and some grace the pews of the United and Anglican Churches of Fernie. Of her many quilts that she still has and will no-doubt continue to produce : “whoever comes to the funeral can have a quilt”.

Quiltmaker	Antonia Cox (nee Vander Geest)
Date and place of birth	April 16, 1953 Borssele Zeeland, The Netherlands
Father Occupation Birthplace	Anne Jan Vander Geest Baker & (Artist painter) Lemmer Friesland, The Netherlands
Mother Occupation Birthplace	Johanna Antonia Vossers - Vander Geest Homemaker Wageningen, Gelderland, The Netherlands
Date and place of marriage	September 3, 1977 Prince George, BC
Spouse Occupation	Dan Cox Sales Manager
Quiltmaker occupation	Flight Attendant/retired
Children	2 sons
Education of Quiltmaker	College
Where quiltmaker lived	Borssele, NL (1953-54); Prince George, BC (1954-73), Toronto, ON (1973-78), Fernie, BC (1978-2012) & 2019 - present; Grasmere, BC (2012-19)

Ethnic/ancestry Background	Dutch/Canadian
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CQG # 064 - Benartex Wholecloth Quilt
 Quiltmaker/Owner: Antonia Cox

Of this whole-cloth quilt, Annie says simply "I love to quilt and usually make one a year just for fun". She did sell one, but found you can't sell quilts for what they are worth in terms of the time invested. She finds the designs from *Benartex* particularly inviting to quilt. There are many different motifs - flowers, feathers, vines, swags, grids. She will pass this particular piece to her children or any member of the family that would like it.

Pattern	<i>Welsh Beauty White</i> preprinted wholecloth design by Holice Turnbow for Benartex.
Subject	Swags, hearts, daisy flowers and feathers
Date	Specific date: 2022-2024
Size	L 84½" x W 101½"
Overall style	Finished hand-stitched whole cloth quilt Queen size
Edge finishing	Binding: W ¾", straight, machine front/hand back, white
Batting	Wool/poly blend
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave (100% muslin) Motif: plain/solid Feature colour: white
Quilt fabric designer	Benartex
Backing	Vertical pieced Cotton, plain weave Feature colour: white Motif: Plain/solid
Quilting	Traditional hand-quilting, 7-8 stitches/inch Thread: cotton, ecru Patterns: prestamped including crosshatch, feathers, grid
Condition	Unused

CQG #081: Vander Geest Family Quilt
 Quiltmaker/Owner: Antonia Cox

Annie designed this wholecloth quilt for her parents' 40th wedding anniversary in 1994. The motifs include the hand prints of her parents, their children and spouses, and their grandchildren. The original took Annie a year to complete. When Annie inherited it, she took it apart because the wool batt had bearded. She use the original backing as a second top

because the needle holes were all there and she could “easily” follow the pattern to stitch a replica top. The two family quilts will be inherited by Annie’s two brothers.

Pattern	Original design by Antonia Cox.
Subject	Family - represented by 15 hand prints
Date	Specific date: 1993-1994
Size	L 94” x W 81”
Overall style	Finished quilt (double bed size) Medallion whole cloth design
Edge finishing	Binding: W $\frac{3}{8}$ ”, scalloped, machine front/hand back Colour: cream
Batting	Wool/poly blend Low loft
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave Feature colour: cream
Backing	Cotton, Plain weave, one fabric Feature colour: Cream
Quilting	Traditional hand quilting, 5-6 stitches/inch Thread: Cotton, cream colour
Condition	Used, 5 stains
Comment	Hand prints of the quiltmaker’s parents, the quiltmaker, two brothers and their spouses, and her niece and nephew.