

Louisa (Lisa) Sharpe - CQC#023, 105

Lisa Sharpe and Dominique Drummond (# 302) are credited with the start of Cranbrook Quilters Guild in the fall of 1985. At the time, neither quilter had belonged to a guild. What they knew about guilds was what they read in some of the quilting magazines. Both Lisa and Dominique had been quilting since the mid 70s. They met at a quilting conference in Banff in the summer of 1985. At the conference they met a quilter that had helped form the Creston guild. *Creston Valley Quilters Guild* held there formation meeting on November 9, 1983 - Gail Greenwood was elected as Chair and the Vice-chair was Yvonne Brownfield. The Creston Guild shared its *Constitution and Bylaws* with Cranbrook.

Lisa was the first President of the newly formed Cranbrook Quilters Guild - Fall 1985 to June 1987. Dominique was the Vice-president until she moved to Grand Forks in 1988. Pat Hall was Secretary and Ann Senyszyn was Treasurer. Lisa describes the early meetings as mainly chatting with each other about quilting, getting ideas for new projects or helping one-another with quilting issues. The initial members to gather at the library meeting room were: Lisa and Dominique, Judy Wright (#043), Peggy Salvadore (#021), Noreen Aikman, Anne Senszyn, Linda Nesbit and Pat Hall.

Lisa's quilting story began when she was living in Vancouver. Lisa was a PE Teacher. A former student was teaching quilting so Lisa and a friend enrolled in her course. Few of the fabric stores carried quilting cotton; polyester fabrics were the rage for clothing. The course quilt was a 15 block sampler. Lisa hand-quilted this yellow twin-size quilt, which she has kept. Her new hobby meant trips to the US where quilting had a higher profile and where there was a greater variety of fabrics and courses. Lisa recalls that the American Bi-centennial in 1975 seemed to be the impetus for a surge in quilting as a pastime.

Lisa's quilting story continued through her move to Mayook, a rural community outside Cranbrook, in 1981. Lisa found there were few quilters or resources here, so initially much of the time she quilted by herself. Being that she was a teacher, Lisa started teaching beginning quilters. She invited students to her home - either individuals or small groups. Tootie Gripich remembers going to Lisa's home for her beginners sampler quilt course as does Tammy Ekman (#110). Lisa soon taught her traditional sampler in town during stores hours at "Sew Unique" (#078) [on 9th Avenue and later in the small Cranbrook Mall], a fabric store owned by Lisa's friend Ida Van Der Molen. For Lisa, Ida's shop had been a local source of quilter's cottons. The shop closed in 1986 when *Fabricland* opened offering prices that the small store could not compete with. After the store closed and the guild formed, Lisa offered the course through it. By 1991 the guild had endorsed Lisa's plan to offer the course in the evenings through the *Cranbrook Parks and Recreation Department* at the swimming pool complex. Lisa offered two versions: a six week basic and a 10 week in-depth course. These courses reached a broader audience, expanding the interest in quilting locally among the younger women.¹ Lisa's response to anyone wanting her to make a quilt for them was "I'll teach you to do it yourself".

Lisa stayed on as guild President for the first two years and then moved into the position of Workshops Coordinator as her 'passion' was going to workshops and bringing the ideas back to the guild. She organized workshops 1987-89, 1992-93 with Linda Shaw, and 1996-97. In those beginning years, workshops were the guild's primary focus. In 1986, to bring in two workshops/ instructions a year and start a library, the guild applied for funding from the *Community Arts Council* - the quilt was a member group until 1989 when it was "happy to

¹ There were quilters in Cranbrook before the surge in the 1980s. See Hilda Pingitore (#045) and the Fort Steele Hand Quilters (#151). The guild was able to use the Seniors Hall as a meeting space, a small group of Hall members held regular quilting bees at the Hall.

report that it was on its feet". Raffle quilts became the main source of guild income to support the activities. Lisa also took a turn as Treasurer in 1993-94 and Resources Convenor in 2001-2 with Ellen Stapleton (#092) as Librarian. And Lisa chaired the guild's third Quilt Show held at the Cranbrook United Church Hall. Linda Ainsworth won the Viewer's Choice for her appliqué quilt "Northern Bird".

Besides organizing workshops and demonstrations or giving a trunk show, Lisa taught a number of patterns/techniques herself. These included: freezer paper appliqué (1988), Bakers Dozen (1989 with Judy Wright [#043]), Diamond Logcabin Tree Skirt (1991), Exploding blocks/Enlarge and Divided (1995), marking a quilt (1997), colour theory (1999). And of course she was on a raffle quilt committee - in 1999 she and Helen Ward selected the *Triple Irish Chain* pattern and organized the members to make the quilt.

In 1987, Lisa and Peggy Salvador (#021) were given a budget of \$100 to purchase books for the Library and the guild took out a subscription for *Quilters Newsletter*. Two books were: *Quilters Handbook* (Micheal James) and *Putting it all Together* (Pat Cairns & Jean Affleck). Linda Nesbit kept the library at her home and later a cabinet to hold the books and resources was made by Janet Leggett's husband, Terry Leggett, and is still "the library cabinet" in use in 2025.

Lisa exhibited her quilts in all the guild shows. In the guild's first show (1987), Lisa's won the second place ribbon for "Columbia Wood Lily", in 1993 (the fourth biennial show) her "Feathered Star" quilt was the "People's Choice" winner, and in 1999, her wall-hanging "Other Curved Things" was the winner in the small quilt category.

Lisa has made over 100 quilts and many pieces for home decor, including a few tree skirts. Many were for home use or gifts for her children and grandchildren, but mostly she made quilts for her personal satisfaction. She doesn't have a favourite pattern/style - she simply likes all the variety of patterns and fabrics with a little leaning towards batiks. She did pre-wash all the fabrics she would use. Lisa favoured foundation paper piecing and appliqué. She usually labelled her creations by hand or computer, on muslin or a pre-printed fabric label. And, even though her health issues at the ripe age of 89 have limited what she can do, she still follows her favourite blogs and newsletters.

In each of her homes, Lisa had a dedicated quilting space. And she was "certainly not immune to buying tools". She used *Electric Quilter* software extensively to audition blocks, pairing two or more, turning them to find the perfect setting. Her sewing machine is a *Bernina*. She preferred to hand-quilt, using a hoop and sitting in the living room. She sometimes machine quilted small items on her domestic machine having learning free motion at a few classes.

Lisa would still encourage people to take up quilting as a hobby. To her it has been a way to be creative. Her words - express your creativity, pay attention to the foundation of the project but "don't take it too seriously and have fun". As to her legacy, one daughter has made a few quilts.

Quiltmaker	Louisa (Lisa) Sharpe (nee Pentland)
Date and place of Birth	August 1, 1935 Kimberley, BC

Father	Arthur Pentland
Occupation	Geologist
Birthplace	Carmen, Manitoba
Mother	Mary Draper
Occupation	Geologist
Birthplace	Rochester, New York, USA
Date and place of Marriage	1956 Vancouver, BC
Spouse	James Sharpe
Occupation	Land Surveyor
Quiltmaker Occupation	Teacher
Children	2 daughters, 1 son
Quiltmaker Education	Bachelor of Physical Education
Where quiltmaker lived	Kimberley, BC; Trail, BC; Nelson, BC; Salmo, BC; Mayook, BC; Marysville, BC.
Ethnic/ancestry background	English, Irish, Scottish

CQG #023 - *Aloha Hawaii (Baltimore was never like this)*

Quiltmaker/Owner: Lisa Sharpe

This is the last quilt that Lisa created. She based the style on a traditional Baltimore Album quilt (#109), which features a block and sash layout where each block is appliquéd with a different realistic/pictorial design. The designs all represent the Hawaiian Islands, which was a favourite vacation place for Lisa's family. The quilt will go to her daughter Mary.

Lisa used *Electric Quilter* computer software to design the blocks. The whole process was fun, challenging and very enjoyable. Due to health issues, Lisa wasn't able to hand-quilt her masterpiece. It was quilted by a group of quilters that knew Lisa through the Cranbrook Guild on Thursday afternoons in Linda Wesley's living room (October 2023 - March 14, 2024): Linda Wesley, Wendy Litz, Linda Nesbit, Betty Wardle, Marg Hall, Erika Schulz, Susan Little, Jeanette Oddy and Jan Gordon-Hooker. Lisa contributed \$500 to the History Project as a thank-you. These quilters will bind the quilt - summer 2025.

Pattern	Designed by the quiltmaker Lisa Sharpe using EQ software. Based on Baltimore Album patterns.
Subject	Hawaiian botanicals
Date	Start: Unknown, Hand-quilting: March 2024
Size	L 89 3/4" x W 70 1/2"
Overall style	Unfinished quilt Varied block/Sampler, Sash and block Appliquéd

Block	L 16½" x W 16½", square 12 Appliquéd blocks Appliquéd sashing
Sashing	W 2½", one fabric, straight Appliquéd (heart motif) at cornerstone place; Colour: teal & orange flower print
Border	W 6", one fabric, straight Appliquéd (swag motif); Colour: teal & orange flower print
Binding/edge finishing	[Not finished]
Batting	Polyester, Medium Loft
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave Feature colour: white (background to appliqués) Motif: flowers
Top piecing method	Machine piecing Appliquéd
Appliqués	12 different realistic appliquéd motifs Motifs: botanicals (Hawaiian), map, golfer Appliquéd fabrics: cotton, plain weave Appliquéd feature colours: green, purple, blue, orange, yellow, red, multi Appliquéd fabric motif: flowers, plain/solid, mottled Appliquéd method: turned edge, reverse
Embellishments	Beads Embroidery - stem and satin stitch
Backing	Cotton, Plain weave Feature colour: white Motif: flowers
Quilting	Traditional hand-quilting: 9 - 12 stitches/inch Patterns: outline, echo, chain cable, hearts, leaves
Condition	Unused

CQG#105- "Happy Windmill" aka *Trade Winds*
Quiltmaker/Owner: Lisa Sharpe

Lisa made *Trade Winds* "just for fun" and to use some of the fabrics from her stash. At the time, she was a member of the *North Star Quilters Society* in Kimberley as she and Jim had relocated to Marysville. The pattern is a 'strip tube ruler © design' meaning the initial patch is a 2½" strip sewn into two to more fabric sets, and then those sets are sewn to make a tube that is cut into block patches with the specialty ruler. The technique and ruler made it easy to sew an otherwise tricky block. This pattern shows how combining four blocks made a secondary 'happy windmill' design. Specialty rulers started appearing in the quilt stores around 2005 as

pattern designers created ways to simplify complex block patterns and add to the popularity of their pattern.

Lisa sent this quilt to a longarm quilter to be finished.

Pattern	“Tradewinds”, Cozy Quilt Designs: El Cajon, CA, 2008-2010. Designed by Georgetta Dell’Orco
Date	Specific date: 2011
Size	L 76” x W 61½”
Overall Style	Finished quilt Repeated block Scrappy
Block	Block layout Feature block: L 7½” x W 7½”, square. Number of blocks: 48 Block pattern: Brackman #3131 (July’s Summer Sun) Spacing: connecting blocks that create a secondary block Secondary Block: 15 ½” x W 15 ½”, Square Number of blocks: 12 Block pattern: Brackman #1268 (V) (John’s Pinwheel)
Border/frame	Border 1: W 2”, straight, one fabric, Colour: grey mottled Border 2: W 4¾”, straight, one fabric, Colour: multi blue, pink, lime
Edge finishing	Binding: W ½”, straight Colour: multi blue, pink, lime Machine front/hand back
Batting	80/20
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave Motif: batik Feature colour: scrappy, coral, lime green, blue, mottled grey
Top piecing method	Machine piecing Strip Tube Ruler design
Backing	Cotton, plain weave, one fabric Feature colour: green Motif: flowers

Quilting	Mid/Longarm Machine Thread colour: white Edge-to-edge panto
Condition	Unused
Label	<i>Trade Winds Lisa Sharpe Kimberley, BC 2011 quilted by Donna Sheppard</i>