

## Jan Gordon - Hooker - CQG #038

Jan created her first quilt in 1977, while living in Smithers, BC, when she made her toddler son a simple block and sash quilt, "*Streets and Avenues*". He son could play with his toy cars on it and sleep under it as well. All the sewing was straight stitch (quilting is a plain stitch textile craft) and she cut the patches with scissors as this was the "time before rotary cutters". No doubt she measured with a simple tape measure or a school-type ruler. Jan was in the *Women's Institute* in Smithers and used a pattern circulating among the group. After a hiatus of 26 years, Jan took up quilting as a hobby and never stopped - this was 2003. A lot of Jan's major pieces are self-designed - she sees a block pattern or conjures an idea and begins. An admirer of what Jan titled "her best work", a landscape quilt she made for her sister-in-law, suggested it should have been entered in the *Houston World Quilt Festival*, which is held annually in Texas. Such is the calibre of her design style.

Jan joined the guild in 2007. Soon her accounting talents were in demand for the audits required every two years or when the Treasurer changed. These skills were also sought after by the *Symphony of the Kootenays* - for a number of years, Jan was on the Board of that vital community arts organization. Jan credits her friend and guild member Jan Niedermayer with introducing her to paper piecing and its complementary technique of picture piecing<sup>1</sup>. Jan (G-H) herself taught a mini-workshop "Paper Piecing Scenery Pictures" in 2013. That was the year that her piece "Into the Wild" took the 3rd place "Viewers Choice" ribbon at the guild's quilt show. Since 2023, Jan has been a vital member of the guild's *History Project Committee*. She helped to prepare the grant applications - to the Regional District's *ReDi Grant* program, through the *Columbia Basin Trust*, and to *Heritage BC's Legacy Grant: Legacy Awareness*. As well, Jan was part of the documentation team for the registry part of the project (2024-25). Through her years in the guild, Jan has donated her share of community quilts. One special donation was to the "Hungry for Life Haiti" fundraiser - a Cranbrook based project that supports local medical/nursing personnel travelling to run clinics in Haiti.

Jan has completed over 50+ quilts as well as placemats, wall-hangings, and even picture/growth charts. Most have been gifts for family or friends. She has four children plus eight grandchildren, and has made each one or more quilts as the babies become school kids, teenagers and now young adults. She recently completed quilts for her grandniece, grand nephew, and youngest sister's 70th birthday. A few of the grand-children have started quilting when visiting their grandmother and her 'studio' space. When designing the space Jan made sure that the lightening would illuminate her sewing area and she added a large 'design wall'. Jan is tall, so her husband had built her a special cutting table. The storage shelves are adequate for her accumulated fabric collection, the "formidable" stash that she's now trying to use up.

Most of Jan's pieces are labelled. She adheres to the traditional binding method - a double fold binding that is machine sewn to the quilt top, and hand sewn to the back with neat mitred corners. She sews on a *Janome 6600 - Memory Craft*. The last workshop she tackled was "*Shimmering Triangles*" (#083). The top is still a "work-in-progress" - she proved her stash was 'up to the challenge' and that even more subtle tonal fabrics can shimmer with using this pattern and a 'practiced eye'. Jan's advice "...make each project a learning experience. Each time, take on something new that you've not done before. Then enjoy the journey".

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<sup>1</sup> Picture piecing - see the work of Ruth B McDowell or Cynthia England. These quilt artists take a picture and use a method of creating freezer paper templates of the various elements (leaf, flower, bird, person...) in the picture to recreate it in fabric. The fabric qualities (colour, motif etc) and 'cuts' are used to make an "artfully pieced quilt".

Quiltmaker	Jan Gordon - Hooker (nee Gordon)
Date and place of Birth	March 26, 1947 Vancouver, BC
Father Occupation Birthplace	Douglas Gordon Lighting Engineer Vancouver, BC
Mother Occupation Birthplace	Marjorie Gordon (nee Foster) Housewife Rochester, Kent, England
Date of Marriage	May 4, 1983
Spouse Occupation	Wm Paul Hooker Family Physician
Quiltmaker Occupation	Accountant (20 years)
Children	1 daughter, 3 sons
Education of quiltmaker	Business Admin Dip/College/ CGA Program years 4/5
Where quiltmaker lived	Vancouver, BC; Prince George, BC; Smithers, BC; Cranbrook, BC.
Ethnic/ancestry background	English, Irish, Scots, Eastern European, Scandinavian

CQG#038 - *Strawflowers*

Quiltmaker: Jan Gordon-Hooker

Quilt Owner: Gillian Cutler

Jan designed this quilt especially with the future owner in mind. It was made with love and friendship. She describes Jill as a close family friend and as a person with a “tailored” taste, so the design needed to be something in a “quieter” palette - hence whites, creams and beiges. For Jan making the quilt, the curved blocks were initially difficult. She purposely made the block colours the tones of the background and brought the olive green of the appliqué stems and leaves into the blocks to balance the colour scheme. The border plan specifically had the final two outside borders echoing the first two borders. *Strawflowers* was quilted by Donna Sheppard (Donna’s Quilting & Design) when she was still living in Elkford, BC.

The quilt can be found on Jill and Bob’s bed with the matching pillow shams.

Pattern	Designed by Jan Gordon-Hooker using a block pattern from a magazine.
Date	Specific date: 2013 - 2014
Size	L 93 x W 96

Overall style	Finished quilt Repeated block
Block	Feature block: L 8" x W 4½", rectangle Secondary block L 4" x W 4½" Spacing: side-by-side Brackman #2220 (V) (Drunkard patchwork) & #3314 (Chinese fan ~ 1932) Number of blocks: 100
Border	Border 1: W 2", pieced, straight, Colour: light brown w tonal diagonal strips Border 2: W 1", straight, one fabric. Colour: dark cream Border 3: W 7", straight, appliqué, Colour: cream Border 4: W 1", straight, one fabric, Colour: dark cream Border 5: W 2", pieced, stright, Colour: light brown w tonal diagonal strips
Edge finishing	Binding: W ⅝", straight, machine front/hand back Colour: dark cream
Batting	80/20, low loft
Top fabric	Cotton, plain weave Feature colour: beige, brown, cream, orange, pale yellow, pale olive green. [monochromatic] Motif: mottled, tonal Background colour: multi neutral tones
Top piecing method	Machine piecing
Appliqué	Motif: flowers/leaves, vines Method: turned edge, machine and hand Thread: cream
Novelty technique	Curved flange
Backing	Cotton, plain weave Feature colour: cream
Quilting	Mid/Longarm Machine Pattern: echo, grid, crosshatching 1⅝", fan Thread colour: cream
Condition	Used (has been laundered)
Label	<i>Strawflowers for Jill and Bob Cutler Designed and pieced by Jan Gordon-Hooker Quilted by Donna Sheppard 2013-2014</i>
Comment	Exhibited at the Cranbrook Quilter's Guild <i>Quilt Show 2017</i> . Received Honourable Mention in the Viewer's Choice Category.

