

The Birth of the Cal-Co Quilters' Guild

In 1980, a small group of quilting ladies gathered to form a group. They named themselves "The Four Seasons". In October 1982, they put up a quilt show at Willard Library. When signing in the guest register, people were asked to indicate if they were interested in forming a guild. Fran Rago was trying to restore an old quilt of her step mother-in-law's and talked to Millie Payne at the show. Later the sign-up sheet of names was given to Fran. With the help of Jane Sperry and Siri Thar, they made phone calls. Nine were present at the first meeting. It was held at Jane's apartment on November 18, 1982. Those attending were Jane Sperry, Siri Thar, Fran Rago, Cheryl Roland, Barbara Cline, Suzette Bradley, Marcia Moan, Beth Payne and Lynne Evans. Plans were made to take a survey of quilters, have a public meeting and find a place to meet. We each put \$5 in the kitty to cover expenses.

Cheryl Roland and Lynne Evans wrote the first newsletter. In looking for a name, Lynne recalled that her Dad called her Mother's shorthand notes "chicken tracks" so they looked thru quilt books but couldn't find a block named "chicken". They did find turkey tracks, so the name stuck and is still called "Turkey Tracks".

A second get-together was held on January 4, 1983 with 8 in attendance. Last minute problems were solved and final plans were made for the public meeting. Another \$5 was assessed for refreshments, room rent and other expenses.

The first guild meeting was held on January 10, 1983 at the Urbandale First Federal Savings and Loan building in their basement meeting room. No one told us we needed to set up the tables and chairs ourselves. It was a cold rainy night and we had no idea how many to expect. We had one sheet of paper and one pen for signing in. The ladies kept coming and coming. As a long line formed up the stairs, we quickly found another pen and tore off a sheet of tablet paper to make two sign-in lines. Eighty-nine people showed up that first night.

We gave away several door prizes. When we asked for the maker of the most quilts, Helen Barton came up with a number so large that with time we can't remember it exactly. Some say it was over 200, others say only over 100. We were all astonished.

Siri Thar and Jane did the program on Seminole Piecing using construction paper and Scotch tape. Not knowing how much paper we would need, we had lots. We used those paper strips for a later program and still had some left.

Yearly dues were set at \$5 and later raised to \$10.

The second meeting changed to the third Monday of the month and moved to the Vo-Ed Center which was our "home" for the next 7 years. There were 100 at this meeting. Beth Payne lectured on the then new Georgia Bonesteel Lap Quilting method.

In March, we met on the second Monday, which has remained our meeting date.

In April we elected our first slate of officers:

President - Jane Sperry

Vice-President - Siri Thar

Secretary - Suzette Bradley

Treasurer - Marcia Moan

Special Activities - Fran Rago

Newsletter & Publicity - Cheryl Roland

Arrangements - Beth Moody

Membership - Barbara Cline

For Several years we had a big map of the city and all the members were located on it. The map was kept by Beth Payne. When we printed a directory, the map was discontinued.

The name CAL-CO comes from Calhoun County and was first found in the May issue of Turkey Tracks.

I hereby submit this history of the Cal-Co Quilters' Guild and hope that with time the facts are somewhat accurate.

Submitted by, Beth Payne Howard