

Quilters' Connection Handbook

History

In the fall of 1977, three friends, Linda Genovese, Nancy Nevola and Jane Phillips, met to form an informal craft group which would become Quilters' Connection (QC). The first meeting of the Quilters' Guild was held on October 26, 1977. Within six months the group had grown to seventy members. In April, 1978, the Guild held their first Quilt Show at the Unitarian Church in Arlington, MA. In these early days the stated purpose was "to gather together all interested quilters to explore the world of patchwork and quilting, and to provide a meeting place for beginners as well as the experienced to exchange ideas, designs, techniques and workmanship." The Articles of Organization Statement of Purpose is "To preserve and enhance the art and skill of quilting." Both of these statements hold true today. QC continues to grow and is well known for its educational programs and charitable objectives.

Organization

Quilters' Connection, Inc. is a nonprofit organization governed by an Executive Board and overseen by a Board of Directors. The eight voting members of the Executive Board are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and the appointed chairs of the Membership, Newsletter, Program and Quilt Show committees. Executive Board meetings are held monthly and any QC member can attend by notifying the President of his/her intention to do so. The time, date and place of all meetings are listed in the Calendar section of *Quiltations*, our monthly newsletter. At each April meeting, a proposed slate of nominees for the following year's Executive Board is announced and also printed in the April issue of *Quiltations*. The slate is voted upon by the membership at the May meeting. Other QC committees are Caring, Hospitality, Historian, Donations, e-communications, New Member Coordinators, and Scholarship. The Board of Directors consists of five voting members: they are the President, the immediate Past President and three members, each of whom has been a QC member for at least five years.

For twenty seven years QC met at the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, in Arlington, MA. Because of the growing membership and fire-law limitations, Quilters' Connection moved to the Mosesian Theater at the *Arsenal Center for the Arts*, 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA. in September, 2005.

Membership

Yearly membership, September 1 through August 31, is open to all who are interested in the art and craft of quilting. At the present time the membership is limited to 400 members. Those wishing to join QC should address the Membership Chair, Quilters' Connection, P.O. Box 1337, Arlington, MA 02474. Our Membership Chair maintains a chronologically ordered waiting list. Membership renewals are due by May 31; new members' dues must be in by August 31. No free memberships will be given for past service or for any other reason. There are four categories of membership:

- 1) Regular members are expected to attend most meetings. They are eligible for all workshops,

may exhibit in the Annual Quilt Show, have the right to vote, and may invite two guests per year to our monthly meetings, at a fee of \$5/guest. Dues are \$40 per year.

- 2) Associate members are former members who may attend two meeting per year, exhibit in the Annual Quilt Show and attend all workshops An Associate may return to a regular membership at the time of membership renewal, by requesting reinstatement and is placed ahead of the waiting list. Associate membership is not available to new members. Dues are \$ 30. per year.
- 3) International members are those members who primarily reside out of the country or are living in this country temporarily. The Executive Board admits the International member. International members are entitled to regular membership benefits. Dues are \$ 40. per year.
- 4) Student membership is open to all students ages 8 to 18 and are sponsored by a regular member. A regular member may sponsor only two student members per year. Student members may attend two meetings per year and exhibit one piece in the Annual Quilt Show. Dues are \$20. per year.

A subscription to *Quiltations* alone is \$ 10. per year.

Membership cards should be worn at meetings for the benefit of all members. A membership list is available for members use only and is not to be used for any commercial purposes.

Meetings

The QC year begins in September with the ever popular Show and Tell. All members are urged to bring their latest work to share. Subsequent monthly meetings feature speakers on all aspects of quilting— traditional to contemporary. Normally, our evening's program begins with a brief business meeting, followed by the scheduled program.

Prior to the formal beginning of the meeting at 7:30 P.M., the Library, Sales Table, Adopt-a-Fabric and Bulletin Board offer opportunities for members to increase their knowledge, supplies, and stash. The extensive library carries books, magazines, and videotapes available for members to check out, a Sales Table sells quilting notions, and Adopt-a-Fabric is for members wishing to sell their fabric. All are welcome to leave handouts of general interest to QC members for shows, classes at other quilt or fiber venues at the Handouts Table and on the Bulletin Board.

It is the policy of QC to comply with the obligations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and to accommodate members with special needs to the maximum extent possible. Our monthly meetings are held in a building that is accessible to all. Seating is flexible and can be arranged to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers or other devices without difficulty. However, if a member requires a special access or communication accommodation, please contact Chair of the Program Committee at least one week in advance of a meeting so that the appropriate accommodation may be provided.

Meeting cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergencies follow the example of Watertown Public Schools. Later day cancellations are announced on WBZ radio (1030 AM). Meeting cancellations will also be announced on the QC website (www.quiltersconnection.org)

and the QC /Yahoo email list by mid-afternoon of the meeting day. Further attempts will be made to contact members by phone or email.

Annual Quilt Show

Our Annual Quilt Show, held in the spring, is the culmination of the QC year. The non-juried exhibition of members' current work is open to all of our members. All exhibitors must volunteer a shift during the Show. As part of our fund raising efforts, guild members are asked to contribute to a yearly raffle quilt by participating in the construction of the quilt and in the sale of raffle tickets. Each year's new design is anxiously awaited and the quilt is raffled at our Annual Quilt Show. Money brought in by the sale of tickets helps defray the cost of operating expenses of our guild. The Annual Quilt Show also includes a Boutique which sells the work of members. QC collects fifteen percent of the selling price. The success of the Annual Quilt Show depends on the involvement of all members. Preparation begins in September and volunteers are needed throughout the year for many jobs, large and small. QC's Annual Quilt Show displays the incredible quilt talent of QC as well as our ability to organize and produce an exciting and successful annual event.

Workshops

Throughout the year, the guild sponsors a wide range of workshops for QC members. Teachers include our own talented members, as well as visiting speakers. A workshop schedule is printed each month in *Quiltations*. Workshops are held at our regular meeting place. QC members have the first option to sign up for the workshop. After a specified period, registration is opened to the public. Four weeks notice is necessary to cancel with a refund. After that, refunds are given only if a replacement can be found.

Communications

Quiltations, our newsletter, published monthly September through May, is mailed or emailed to all QC members except student members. *Quiltations* includes articles by QC members and invited writers, "News and Notes", a list of QC's monthly programs and workshops, "Library News", and a "Calendar" listing upcoming events, shows and venues of interest to quilters. It is our primary means of communication with QC members on the affairs of our guild.

Our Website at <http://www.quiltersconnection.org> provides information about QC to the public at large, and also archives QC documents such as this handbook, the QC Articles of Organization and Bylaws, and *Quiltations*.

Our Yahoo group at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/QC_QuiltersConnection/ is used for email communications to and among members.

Comfort Quilts

Each year QC administers a community service program in which members make and donate utilitarian quilts to organizations assisting the homeless, the ill, the elderly, and children.

Scholarship

The Scholarship Committee conducts an annual review of members' scholarship applications in order to select the recipients and determine the amount of the individual awards. There is one thousand dollars set aside each year for awards in amounts of \$500 or less. The committee conducts much of its business by email or mail and meets only when necessary to review policies and procedures.

Visions and Voices

Responding to the success of QC and the growing national recognition of the quilt as an art form, particularly, although not exclusively, a women's art form, QC completed a project that placed these issues in historical perspective. Compiled and edited by Verena Rybicki, former QC historian and archivist, the resulting book titled *Visions and Voices* (published in 2001) traces the history and development of QC and tells the stories of many of our members.

Privileges and Duties

QC owes its success and the resulting advantages and privileges of membership to the work of countless members over the years. We are a volunteer organization. Everyone is needed to help preserve and maintain this guild from which we derive so much. Volunteering is the way to make your specific contribution to QC. It is also the best way to meet other members and to form networks. There are over fifty main positions filled each year, all of which require assistants and understudies. Even a small contribution of time is helpful. QC needs you!

Revised: April 2010