



Friends in Stitches

The Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery
Australian Quaker History in Crewel Embroidery

Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Newsletter Jan 2023

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Happy New Year to all Friends in Stitches.

On New Years Eve when people were seeing 2022 off with 'good riddance to old rubbish' attitude I was puzzled as to what made them imagine that 2023 was going to be any better. Perhaps I am a grumpy old woman but none of the problems of 2022 have been finalised: COVID is with us still, war rages, getting more deadly year by year, and as for Climate change, floods and bushfires, who knows what this year will bring. Science tells us it will get worse before it gets better.

All I know is: Let worship and daily life enrich each other. This advice, the one featured on the January page of the FIS 2023 speaks to me. We find in Meeting for Worship, a spark of light to guide us. For some Friends this will be big actions, for others of us small. Day by day, moment by moment, we live our lives the best we can. May your 2023 be happy.

A beautiful death

Tessa Spratt

Sally has asked me to write an article for this issue of Friends in Stitches Newsletter, to tell those of you who do not know, that my husband, Richard died on Christmas Day, so I have re-joined the Friends in Stitches Organizing Group again. I am really looking forward to working with Margaret Bywater – we worked together on the Gordon Barclay Vietnam Fund in the 70s.

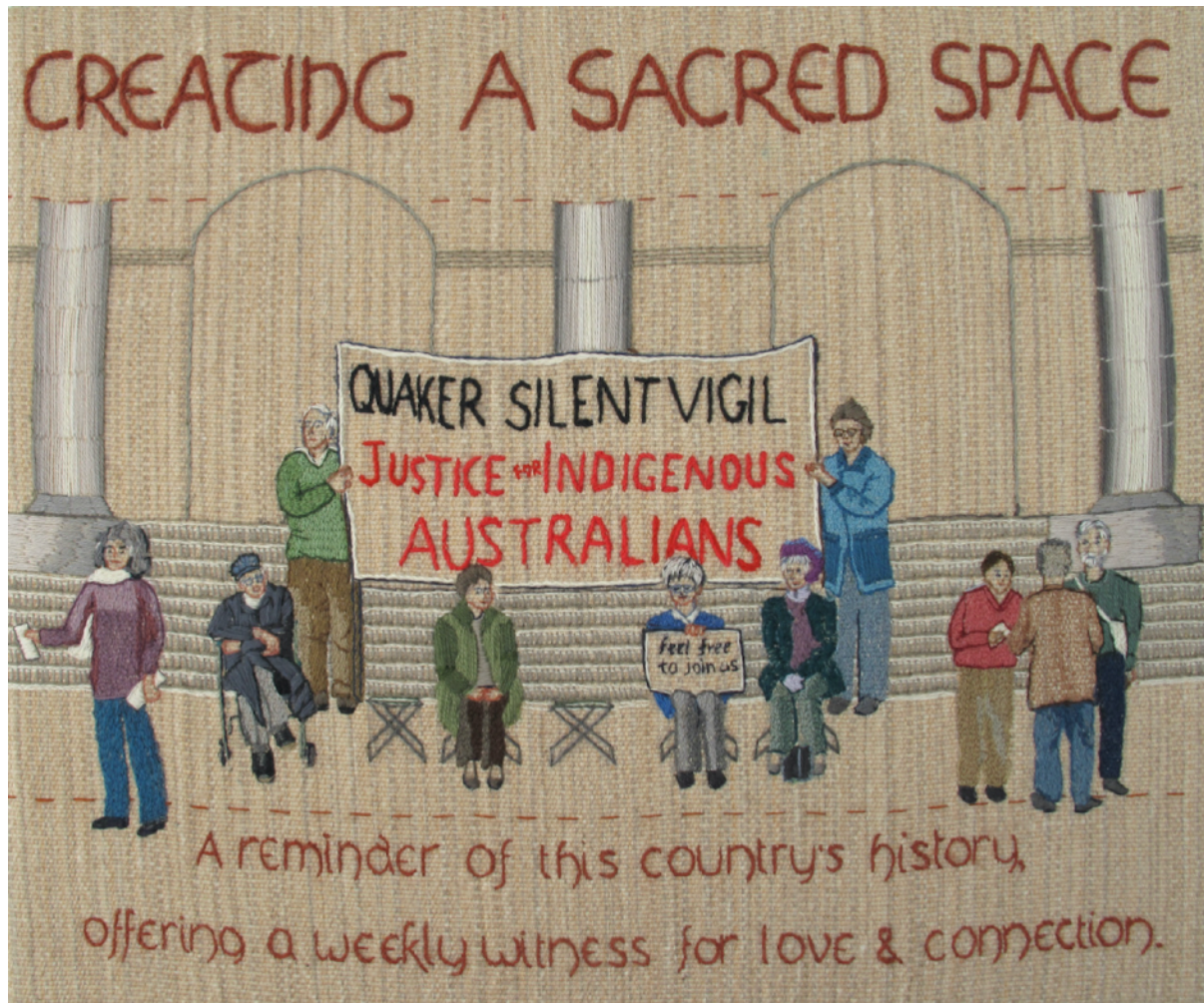
Richard's death was the most beautiful it could've been. He died at home surrounded by our family. He hadn't felt strong enough to attend the planned family celebration at my son's house in Mount Dandenong, so everyone dropped in to say Happy Christmas to him on their way home. One family member missing from our celebration was our paramedic grandson, Daniel who was on duty – and when we needed to send for an ambulance, it was Dan who responded (they couldn't know because his surname is different from ours, being our daughter's son.) It was a bit rough on Dan, but a miracle for me and when Dan had recovered, he was really glad too. They look after our ambos very well – a supervisor came out to see Dan and gave him not only the rest of the night off, but the rest of the week. So, I am back on deck folks and free to travel again. Once Covid loses its grip, we shall be

travelling, running workshops wherever required and helping people start new panels to add to the 24 completed ones.



Another exhibition

Lisa Riley, on Facebook.



Central Coast Quakers who meet twice a month at Kariong Eco Garden will be exhibiting 10 of the 24 completed panels of the Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery in the Kariong Arts Barn (2 Dandaloo St Kariong) on Saturday 21 January 10am - 4pm and Sunday 22 January 11.30am - 2pm. There is no charge to visit.

These panels beautifully depict the story of Quakers in Australia, ranging from the Sydney Parkinson panel, telling the story of the first Quaker to set foot on the land we now call Australia, to the panel about the Silver Wattle Quaker Centre on the edge of Lake George. The project was inspired by the Quaker Tapestry in the UK.

I am a local Quaker and stumbled across the Quaker Tapestry in Kendal (UK) in 1994 and returned to volunteer there for a week in 2014 (the same year that I became a member of Quakers, also known as the Religious Society of Friends).

I was so inspired by the 40 or so tapestry panels in Kendal. I had only met one Quaker before that - when I did a course in Peace Studies at Macquarie University. My Tutor, Sabine Erika, was a Quaker and told us about her activism with women at Greenham Common. I was drawn to this faith community of people who 'let their life speak' and worship in silence. I had grown up in the Uniting Church and had many of the same passions as the Quakers I met. It has become my spiritual home. The panels are each unique works of art that tell a story. Many hands and hearts have worked on each of the panels. I stitched some of the 'Creating a Sacred Space' panel and can show you which parts! I have also joined the silent vigil for justice for Indigenous Australians that the panel describes. Ten of the Australian Quaker Narrative Embroideries can be seen:

Saturday 21 January: 10am - 4pm

Sunday 22 January 11.30am, - 2pm
in the Arts Barn, 2 Dandaloo Street Kariong.

I will also have my EARTHCARE board game available on tables for children to play if they don't want to spend as long as the grown ups looking at the embroideries and reading about them. I will be making clay footprint pebbles for the game in between visitors.

For more information call Lisa Wriley 0429 431 889.

Central Coast Quakers meet every 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month 10am til about 12.30pm at Kariong Eco Garden (2 Dandaloo St).

What would you expect if you come to a Quaker meeting?

We meet together in quiet for an hour, waiting for the peace which descends when we turn away from our everyday thoughts and open to an experience of that which is sacred. If Friends are moved by the spirit they can bring brief Spoken Ministry. After the quiet worship we share food, a cuppa and conversation and sometimes we sing.

Find out more on these webpages:

<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/.../completed-panels>

Quakers at Sea

Sally O'Wheel



I am inspired to work on this panel which depicts the voyage Quakers - and everyone else - took when they migrated to Australia before air travel. The journals tell of mountainous seas and terrible sea sickness. So here is the sea. My friend Tara, in Deloraine, is keen to stitch and while I am getting the background done. she is working on the figure of Elizabeth Wells who has a moment of quiet in a deck chair on a Sunday morning. Tara is working on a practice piece and we are going to start Meeting for Stitching on a monthly basis. When next we meet I will hand over our panel to her and she will introduce this next bit. While she is working on the panel I will do my practice piece, the biblical quote. I am so pleased to have someone else to stitch with because most of my stitching has been done by myself. It really is motivating.

Hot off the press! - mail from Mary Jane Hogan, from Devonshire Street.

I am an attender at Devonshire Street Local Meeting in Sydney. At our most recent Meeting for Business, we agreed to consider creating a Devonshire Street panel as part of the Quaker Embroidery Panel series. We would like to do this as part of our recognition of Devonshire Street Meeting House being in its current location for 120 years in September 2023.

I am making initial contact with you and Margaret to begin to find out how we go about this and what is involved. We are aware this is a long process and it may not be finished by September 2023.

I would be grateful if you could get back to me by email or mobile and we can start the process.

Many thanks. My mobile is 0402 063 914.

In peace,

Mary Jane



Mary Jane and Sydney Friends have started to research the story of Devonshire Street Meeting. They have started the process of designing a panel. She reports Friends at the business meeting were enthusiastic with many wanting to be involved. She herself was inspired by visiting the Wahroonga meeting and seeing the panels displayed there in December. The Convenors, Sally, Tessa and Margaret will be ready to visit Sydney when the design is ready to run a workshop, show them how to attach the design to the woollen fabric, how to do the basic stitches, and get them started. What a wonderful way to celebrate 120 years of Meeting in Devonshire Street.

News from Queensland

Many thanks to a QRM Friend who posted these pictures on the Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Facebook group page. It is so encouraging to see the great work that is being done by Brisbane Friends. This is not far off finished!



'When you find old partially done kits hiding in the FIS cupboard from eons ago and need to finish them... now small comfort cushions for our Meeting house.'

Calendars.

Sally O'Wheel

A big thank you to Friends in Queensland, NSW, Tasmania and South Australia who sold bulk calendars in your meetings. I do hope they all sold. If you have any left, find a suitable recipient for a complimentary copy.

At the end of the year I still had 12 left so I made the executive decision to send complimentary copies to a range of friends across the land. First I sent one to Bruce Henry, the Clerk of Australia Yearly Meeting. Then I sent one to Jacque Schultze, the Australia Yearly Meeting Secretary who has been so encouraging and supportive in every way. Then I sent one to Brydget at Silver Wattle.

Then I looked through the meetings listed on the AYM Website and sent a calendar to the contact person at these meetings: Geraldton, (WARM) Melbourne Northern Suburbs, Goulburn Worshipping Group, (NSW) Gembrook, (VRM) Alice Springs, SANTRM) Albany, (WARM) Geelong. (VRM). Trish Johnson of Atherton Tablelands, suggested Kat Hadleigh, a member of their meeting, would appreciate one. And I sent one to Maxine Barry who has recently moved to Melbourne from Tasmania and I knew she wanted one. I had held off sending her a single calendar in the hope that we could send a bulk order to Melbourne and save on postage costs. But that didn't happen.

It was expensive to post them out but it is good outreach. I hope they all found good homes.

The idea of using the Advices and Queries to caption each picture has been met with enthusiasm from Friends.