

December, 2017

## Visit to the National Gallery

Wilma Davidson

When I read Sally's request to 'go into to National Gallery and check out the colours of Linor Robey's embroidery and match them with wools for the panel' I did have a little chuckle. If only it was that simple!

I checked the website and there are 32 of her works in the Gallery, only a few which are embroidery, and of those, few illustrations on this list. And nothing was on display - not unusual in institutions holding large National collections.

The only information available to me was who donated the work to the Gallery in 2016 – no name for the work, no date of completion.

The Gallery has a remarkable space, the collections study room (CSC) where works not on display can be viewed. I use this room often with our slow art group, when we want to look closely at works of particular artists. The person who manages the room is Rose Montebello. I emailed Rose with the scanty information I had and in ten minutes she was back to me with the information below. We made arrangements for me to view the work the following week.

When I arrived at the CSR, there was an oblong conservation box on the table and the object inside covered in tissue. I was introduced to textiles conservator Carmella, who came with the work, because of how delicate it was. Apparently it was donated in a frame and needed to be 'deframed' and checked and restored as best it could. It was really in good condition considering its age (c1912) though there were a couple of worn

patches in the fabric.. Carmella talked about it being faded somewhat, though really, the colours were still quite stunning and the contrasts still work beautifully.

The CSR is a controlled environment therefore I wasn't allowed to bring out my wools, however, both Rose and I took lots of photos to assist with the panel. I did have to sign a waver stating the photos would not be published. I have included two photos of details of the work that as long as they go no further than this newsletter, can be shared with Quaker stitchers.

I feel very privileged to have viewed this work that is considered so precious and thank Sally and Margaret for the opportunity.



Editor's note: I wasn't able to harvest the photos to my computer and the photo of the whole embroidery would have been too small for this publication. Frustrating! Next time Yearly Meeting is in Canberra we could organise a group visit to the Gallery to check out all 23 pieces of Linor Mobey's work!

## Letter from Nelson, New Zealand

Hello there

I am Barbara Curtis from Quakers in Nelson, South Island, NZ. Probably three years ago now we hosted Tessa Spratt and Cathy Davies who talked to us about the Australian Quaker Tapestry. (Tessa also gave me some gluten free recipes, which is why I can still remember her name!)

Here in Nelson we have a keen embroider who has persuaded us to take on the project of a (small - 3 panels probably) Tapestry of the History of Quakers in Nelson. Nelson was the first place to have a Meeting House when Quakers arrived from the UK in 1833 (I think).



We had our first meeting yesterday, and I remembered with warmth the visit by Cathy and Tessa, and found 3 (very poor) photos I took of the panels which moved me most. They left with us the book from Kendal of stitches, etc.

I would very much like to know how you are progressing over there, and have images of some of your panels, to help us consolidate what we want ours to be like. There are not many of us with skills and enthusiasm at this stage, but we are aware that it is a journey which will lead we know not where! So while we are busy digging up all available history, to work out what we want to include, I would like to hear from others further down the path, as it were. We hope that other Quakers across NZ will take an interest and perhaps, who knows,

follow suit! We have photographic copies of the Kendal panels in Whanganui at the Quaker Settlement (and borrowed around the country) and copies of their book.

Any help you can give, in the form of newsletters and so forth would be very welcome.

And greetings and hugs to Tessa and Cathy if this email finds it way in their direction

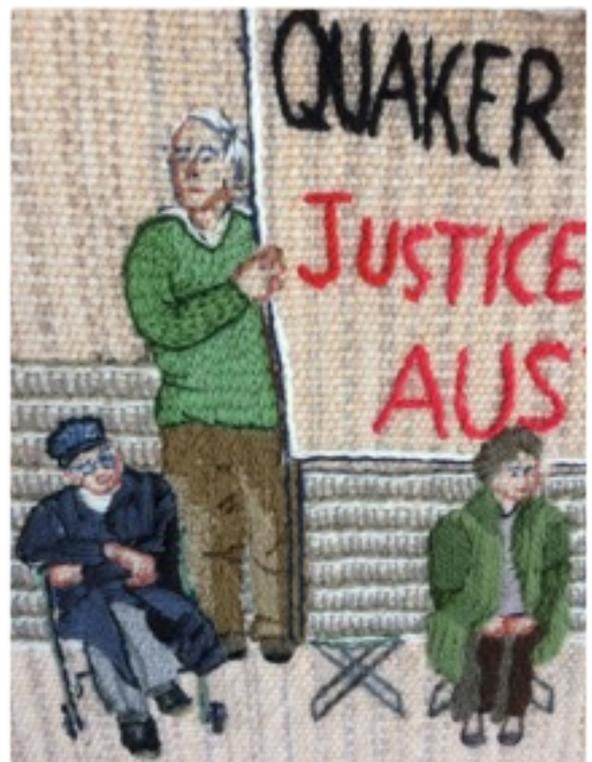
In Peace, with needle in hand to practice the Quaker stitch!

Barbara Curtis  
barbarandy252@gmail.com

## Here in Melbourne

Tessa Spratt

Friends are gearing up for a very impressive Open Day. From 11am to 4pm next Saturday Dec. 2nd we are opening our new Victorian Friends Centre. We are viewing this opening as an introduction to the general community that we are now settled and ready for business. There will be lots of interesting activities including an Open Doors Exhibition, Calligraphy as meditation, Children's Activities, Posters about our



Service, Peace and Social Justice Work. Books by Quaker Authors will be for sale and our extensive Library on Display. And of course the 16 completed panels of the Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery.

I am very fortunate in that I re met an American Friend, Clemmie Overall who spent a lot of time in our peaceful corner at Melbourne Yearly Meeting. Clemmie only attends our beautiful monthly Meeting for Worship at St. Andrews, a little



town outside Melbourne. I love to go there when I can. St Andrew's Meeting is held in the home of Tess Edwards and Lloyd Godman: In winter they have a roaring fire and all year round, they switch off the phone and the electricity so that it is truly quiet. Clemmie spent an afternoon with me learning more about the Tapestries and we got on like a house on fire. She is delightful and promises to be a real support on Saturday. She also accessed a dozen music stands for us to use which makes a display much easier to arrange.

As you know, South Australia had the panels on display last month and this was extremely successful. Robin Sinclair found Wendy Hartley to drive across with our panels, packed in the brand new cases that SA bought for us. I am very glad I will have someone to help as the instructions for opening the cases looks as if it needs an engineering degree to negotiate successfully, eg: "There are long metal tags on the two main zippers. These have been aligned with the lock and clicked into place once the number has been set. Once the numbers have been scrambled it can't be unlocked." I am sure it will not be as daunting as it sounds!!!

Jill Parris, who has been the Leading Light in organising the Exhibition also created a video showing the panels which can be accessed at

<https://www.facebook.com/jill.parris.jill/videos/10213976994322023/>

## Inspirations: the world's most beautiful needlework magazine

Sally O'Wheel

My local newsagents in Ulverstone, north western Tasmania, stocks this magazine so do check in your local newsagent! I was so pleased to get the issue #96 which contains an article about the Kendal Tapestry.

As it is an Australian based publication I shouldn't have been surprised that the panels relating to Australia and the Australian project itself would receive attention. The opening photo depicts the Elizabeth Fry Panel and the introduction explains that this panel toured Australia in 1983 and 1984.

Who of us remembers that? It was in my



pre-Quaker days. In the opening page it tells of Verley Keliher's leading in 2005, to create the Australian Quaker Tapestry.

The article goes on to tell the whole story of the Kendal Tapestry, its inspiration from the Bayeux, the idea instigated in 1981 in the Sunday School by a twelve year old boy, the development of the Quaker Stitch by Anne Wynne-Wilson. The Kendal tapestry is the work of over four thousand friends and has spread to fifteen countries, 'making it one of the largest community textile projects ever undertaken.'



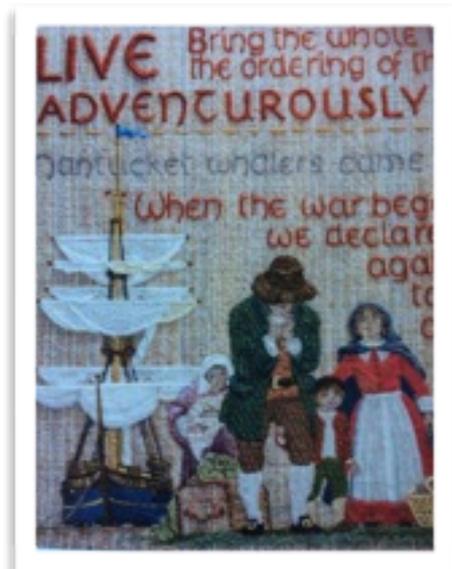
Detailed pictures of the panels are awe inspiring.

A 20% discount on Quaker Tapestry Museum embroidery kits is offered on the website, [www.quaker-tapestry.co.uk](http://www.quaker-tapestry.co.uk) for readers of the magazine.

The rest of the magazine is interesting too, but somewhat over my head! Those of you who are more experienced and skilled embroiderers will find lots to interest you with detailed patterns for such things as three dimensional strawberries for the Christmas table, decorations like snowflakes, berry wreaths, poinsettias, Christmas trees, stockings, partridges in pear trees and you name it!

And don't miss the issue #97 which will contain an article about our own Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Project.

(Photos pinched from Inspirations #96: The World's most Beautiful Needlework Magazine)



As this is the last Friends in Stitches Newsletter for 2017, I will close with wishing all friends a very merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See you over in 2018.



