



Friends in Stitches

The Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery
Australian Quaker History in Crewel Embroidery

January, 2019. Newsletter.
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<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Stitches>

Dear friends,

This is a very short newsletter for January, as I catch my breath after Xmas. Here in Tasmania I am not, like many of you, dealing with extreme heat. Please keep cool, you mainlanders. I have had two letters which I will share with you. Meanwhile I wish you all a very Happy New Year. - Sally

News from Jean Hart.

Get this: I have a fifth cousin, John, who has a wife, (Gail), who has an ex-mother-in-law who is a 90+year old Quaker in Sydney. Gail sent her a calendar for Xmas and this was the response from Jean Hart. Sydney Friends may know her.

'Your gift of 2019 Friends in Stitches Calendar: Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery is a delight. I have known of Quaker embroidery initiatives in the past but every work in the 2019 calendar is new to me and very appealing. Many thanks for your gift. As you may know, I remain a member of the Society of Friends, have no conflict about Quaker faith and practice but I don't attend Meeting, as I did regularly for 43 + years.

However, when a memorial service was held recently at the meetinghouse n Devonshire Street Surry Hills for Dr Dougald McLean, who died recently in Hobart, I was ever so pleased to be accompanied to the gathering by my nearest Quaker neighbour. Sharing memories of this dear man with others who knew him well when he was medical superintendent of various hospitals in Sydney until his retirement in the 1980s, was a heartwarming experience. He and his wife Carol opted, as you did, to become Tasmanians. I wonder did John's cousin Sally know them? Sally is to be congratulated on the production of the calendar. The choice and sequence of the panels is very pleasing. I shall cherish your gift.'

Rhoda Dorell bought five calendars. She said 'It is lovely the way it shows the details of the stitching work and the colours. You may get some more orders when I show the only one I have left to F/friends at Meeting tomorrow.'

There were 110 calendars printed and all were sold, unless Jacque Shultz still has some. It is satisfying to imagine them finding homes in Australia and across the globe. I know one went to Scotland and one to France.

From the January page. The Quaker Shop,
Adelaide



News from Tricia Wood

This letter contains some sad news. You will be sorry to learn that Tricia and her husband are struggling with health issues. It is also sad to know that the once vibrant and productive WA FIS is not functioning as it once did.

This brings up issues that are endemic around Australia with FiS, (and perhaps many other Quaker Committees!) We are ageing. We cannot do what we did ten years ago. Cathy Davies and Ann Walker in Gippsland and others as well as Tricia have had to lay down their work. As these Friends withdraw the groups around them also falter.

I want to celebrate the great contributions all these women, and particularly Tricia, have made to the project and acknowledge their leadership and skilled embroidery. The panels from WA are some of the finest: Elinor Clifton and The Loneliest Meeting House.

Let us hope, as Tricia says in her letter, that the groups will revive as Spirit leads them, that younger Friends will find their way to the joys of embroidery and take up quiet leadership roles in WA and in the rest of Australia.



Dear Sally,

I have been meaning to write to you for a long time, particularly about the Panels that we were doing but somehow so much has been happening here with my husband's health problems and my new problems of being unable to do things with my shaky hands. I was so sorry to have to give up working on the 350 panel – I was finding it so hard to do and I really hope that someone has felt able to work on it. I realised how difficult I had made it! I hear from Tessa that the two panels we were working on went to South Australia and have been taken on.

I have also been interested in the possibility of getting a calendar but I may have missed out on that. What a great idea to have one with the group's work on show especially at this time – with Christmas on the way etc. I was given a copy of the first book and that is a great thing for me to have especially as I was involved with the process for a long time. I have kept most of the letters that were sent out by Tessa and Cathy. I'm only sorry that the WARM group – except for Beth – has died away. I hope it will revive!

You do a wonderful job. I want to wish you the very best for Christmas and the New Year and hope to keep in touch, even at this remote distance, and to follow the progress of Friends in Stitches! In Friendship,
'Tricia.

The 350 Years Exhibition panel has been taken to Victoria, where Tessa Spratt and Deborah Schrader are hoping to finish it.

Please send news and photos for the next newsletter in February.

xxxxx