



Friends in Stitches

The Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery
Australian Quaker History in Crewel Embroidery

September 2019. Newsletter

<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Stitches>

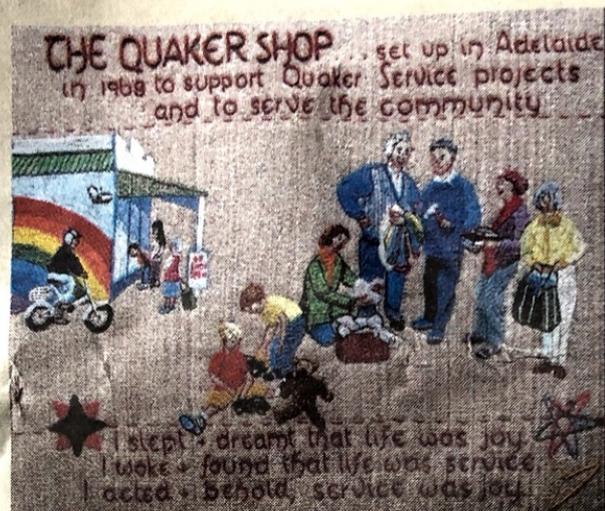
CStitches@quakersaustralia.info

The Exhibition at Moonah Arts Centre, Tasmania.

Sally O'Wheel

On Monday I packed up the panels and brought them home after their exhibition in Hobart. Following the 'deinstallation' I had this message from Moonah: 'For your records, the audience attendance at MAC during exhibition was 2271.' When I went there on the last Saturday to take some friends there were quite a few people there and they all were blown away by our work. Here's me at the exhibition, telling the story of the Elizabeth Fry Retreat to my friends.





FRIENDS IN STITCHES

**Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Project
Moonah Arts Centre
23-27 Albert Rd, Moonah
Until August 24**

This is a sweet and uncomplicated example of traditional art made by a community. Some 20 embroidered panels have been made that basically tell stories about Australian Quaker communities, people and events. And there's something very engaging and beautiful about the work – what you see is what you get, with the interest lying in the raw honesty of the process and the way that each panel is made by groups of people working together. That's what makes this worthwhile. We don't see this kind of community driven output all that much in contemporary culture, so it's a pleasant surprise to have it shared like this. The tactile, analogue nature of the work itself is very welcome in our digitally saturated world, and it feels ever so slightly precious as a result.

On that last Saturday morning there was a review in the Mercury.

I took exception to the word 'sweet' and think it is a word that would only be used for the art of women or children. However others did not think it was patronising. I was also a bit annoyed that the review appeared on the last day of the exhibition and not earlier. But as we know over 2,000 people saw the exhibition so we should be very happy and proud. I wish I could have recorded all the comments that people said to me about how much they loved it. That was a more meaningful review for me. One of the other artists who was exhibiting his work came up to me as I was packing up and spoke enthusiastically about how much he admired it. Other Moonah volunteers and workers also spoke to me glowingly.

The opening went well. There were four exhibitions opening at the same time and each exhibition had someone speak to open their bit. Tessa spoke for us. We had been told that we could only speak for three minutes, which is quite a long time. However the last speaker, all dressed in grey, opening a grey exhibition, spoke on and on for at least 15 minutes. My grandchild was getting restless! Then to finish off her long oration she had to say that her chief hate was 'narrative art'. It still makes me laugh!

Here are some of the comments I have received via email.

'I caught the exhibition at the MAC this Saturday. It's a beautiful collection! Thank you so much for telling me it was on. And, Sally, the Elizabeth Fry Retreat panel is amazingly stitched. I love how you realised the design.

Kind regards and many thanks to you both for all your hard work, passion, creativity and commitment.'

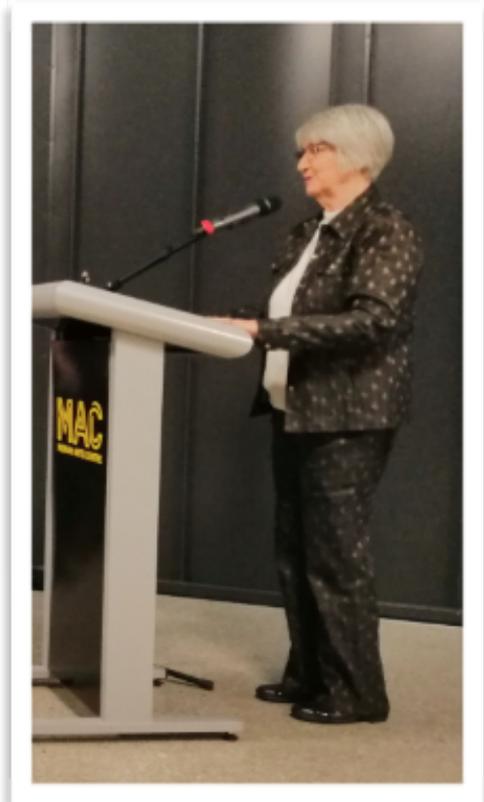
From Nadine Frick, who designed the Elizabeth Fry Retreat panel but had never seen it finished.

'Congrats to you and all the FIS on the ex at MAC, it's very impressive! I went to it with Megan the other day.

In peace, Felicity Rose'

'I saw the Quakers in Stitches exhibition, such interesting work. Our Guild members liked it very much, Sheena Sims was wondering why there was not an embroidery of Friends' School but apparently it is in the making. Ursula is part of our Guild and runs the group for youngsters. The book of the embroideries is very beautiful but too expensive to buy oneself.'
Jenni Bond

Below, photos from the opening. Tessa opens the exhibition, Kay, Allport, Maggi Storr and Tessa Spratt at the opening, and below, the crowd. Thanks to Julie Walpole for the photos.



Julie Walpole has organised for an exhibition in September in the State Library in Launceston. We are thrilled that someone other than Tessa and me have taken this initiative and we encourage all of you to approach possible venues. We have a lovely speel, written by Jacque Schultze to send to prospective exhibition spaces. A big thank you to Julie!

The exhibition in Launceston will begin on the 9th of September and finish on the 4th of October. My Devonport Embroiderers Guild are planning to go. Julie has also been in touch with the Launceston Embroiderers Guild and they are going to ask me to speak to one of their meetings.

Letter from Cologne!

Dear Friends,
I came across Cathy Davidson's article in AF June 18 " Beginning the Sydney Parkinson Panel "and enjoyed both the article and the picture very much.

Now I'm interested enough to give a short talk, on the life and work of Sydney Parkinson, to continental European Friends, meeting for one of our Border Meetings the weekend of September 5-7. The theme is Quakers and the Arts, so it's nice to be able to talk about Sydney as a Quaker making good use of his talents, as well as mentioning that you are creating this tapestry. I will be starting my "illustrated " talk with a slide of the tapestry panel. I'll acknowledge the source, but assume that since we are non-profit- making Quakers there is no need for more formal copyright procedures.



I like the look of the cards you offer for sale, but wonder what the postage would be for about 10 cards sent to Germany.

I'm thinking of the cards more as something for Christmas than for the coming meeting, so there is no great urgency to my question.

with Friendly greetings,

Janet Kreysa

Cologne Meeting

GermanYM