

# SNIPPETS

Kenya Quilt Guild Newsletter



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## A Word From Our Chairwoman

During the month of July, we have many comings and goings. I just returned from a quick 3 weeks in the States for our son's graduation from university. It is good to be back home in Kenya and to get caught up into the activities of the guild. This month, I am interviewing one of our new members to the executive, Dorothy Stockell. Dorothy is the friendly face that greets you at the door of every guild meeting.

Patty: Where do you consider home? How long have you lived in Kenya and how is it that you arrived here?

Dorothy: They say you can take the girl out of Texas, but you can't take Texas out of the girl, so I guess I have to say home is the Hill Country of Texas. I married my husband in 1983 and moved abroad, and haven't lived in the States since. My husband has worked for the same company all

these years, and it is a Swiss company with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. We have lived in lots of places around the world, and arrived in Nairobi in October of 2012 after only a year in Casablanca, Morocco. .

Patty: Tell us how you started quilting and how you ended up at the guild.

Dorothy: I made my first quilt for my dorm room the summer before my sophomore year at Rice University in Houston, Texas. I made my second quilt for a nephew while in London (with Liberty fabrics!) when I was well into my 30's. Quilting was a solitary endeavor until I joined a quilt guild in Santiago, Chile, which opened a whole new quilting experience for me. We met twice a month in each other's homes, and it was not only social but educational to see what others were doing and sharing

**M**  
**eetings**

**Thursday 17th July—**  
**Please bring your Challenge Quilts to turn in for judging. We will also have White Glove Training and a video and demonstration on how to attach a quilt sleeve.**

August—We do not have a meeting in August.

**Thursday 18th September—**  
 In preparation for the Exhibition in October, please bring your quilts to turn in for the show.

techniques with them. When I returned to Geneva, I also was part of the quilting group at the American International Women's Club of Geneva and we had some fantastic projects, including making 100 quilts that were given to all the premature babies in incubators born in the Cantonal Hospital during the club's 50th anniversary. When we came to Nairobi, I was astounded at the organization of the Kenya Quilt Guild, and impressed with the quality of the quilts produced by its members. I found the guild via its attractive website.

Patty: What is your favorite part of making a quilt? Why?

Dorothy: My favorite part is hand stitching the binding down. It is very tactile and calming. It is the finishing touch on a project and a last chance to appreciate the feel and colors before the work is done.

Patty: Tell us about some of your quilting projects.

Dorothy: I don't usually plan a project ahead of time like I used to do. And I haven't bought fabrics to make a quilt in years (with the exception of the Lala Salama quilt I made this year). I have been recycling fabrics like my father-in-law's silk ties to make a crazy quilt, blue jeans to make purses and

chair covers, and my husband's old shirts to make cushion covers. The quilt I am working on now is made from blue and white shirts. I have been known to change direction radically if a quilt isn't working out like I imagined when I started. I enjoy seeing a project evolve as it proceeds!

Patty: I feel as if I have gotten to know you better, Dorothy. If my family ever gets transferred to another locale, you will be one of the first people I will call because you probably have lived there. Greet Dorothy at the next meeting and tell her how much you have enjoyed what she said.

Before I close off this month, I want to say a big Thank YOU Suzanne Waithaka for all her help with the guild. She has edited Snippets, helped with our tech problems, chaired meetings and is always good for a story or two. She is temporarily returning to the States to seek employment that can help her family get ahead. She has agreed to continue to edit Snippets until our next AGM, for which we are thankful. We will keep you, Suzanne, in our thoughts and prayers for a speedy return.

Hope to see you all at Thursday's guild meeting!

*In Stitches,*  
*Patty Arensen*

# Modern Quilting: What's is All About?

By Dena Crain

Modern Quilting is taking the USA by storm, and finding its way into the cultural fabric of other countries as well, all with lightening speed. Our own Gill Rebelo gave a talk and presentation on the Modern Quilting movement a few months ago. I have been watching the development of the movement ever since, with great curiosity, trying to find out what is the big attraction. Here is what I have observed.

**Simplicity of Design:** Modern Quilts use simple block patterns, some designed in advance and others cut-as-you-go. The piecing appears easy, but in some cases it is probably more complicated than it looks. Modern Quilters are really *thinking* about what they are making, how the shapes relate to one another, what kind of secondary forms emerge.

**Clever Use of Foreground/Background Relationships:** Control over what comes forward and what recedes brings about surprising imagery, but it takes a bit of thought and planning. Value contrast is high in Modern Quilts, and there is a strong sense of foreground and background. Simple shapes are emphasized against white, black or other colored backgrounds, with those background fabrics creating spaces and movement within the blocks.

**CMYK Colors:** The color palettes of Modern Quilters are based on CMYK colors. These are the colors we often see on computers, the colors of print publications, where C = cyan, M = magenta, Y = yellow and K = black. These palettes are strong, clear, fresh and lovely eye-catching colors, very different from the ones we find in fabrics from as little as only a few years ago. They lack the gray and brown components that so often appear in RGB color systems, and

they come off looking clean, bright, cheerful and fun!

**Solid Colors Prevail:** Modern Quilters like solid color fabrics. This is a most unusual trend after many years of piecing with prints. The popularity of prints is not likely to die a sudden death, as manufacturers have spent a fortune developing and producing them, but the Modern Quilt movement should be responsible for generating a much wider range of solid color fabrics in the marketplace in future.

**Graphic Design:** All these factors I have mentioned result in a style of design that is highly graphic. Each quilt carries a lot of visual punch. They are strong, well-thought-out designs and Modern Quilters are to be commended for their freedom of approach and for pushing their creativity to the limits. More and more competent patchwork quilters are turning to Modern Quilts precisely because they permit greater freedom in design, without demanding the total commitment to emotive content required for art quilting.

**Quilting is Still Important:** There is a lot of free-motion quilting in Modern Quilts, and a lot of quilting that relies on mechanical quilting aids. Speed of quilting is a desirable factor, but quality still counts! Quilting guides, templates and paper patterns play a strong role in the quilting, but Leah Day's impact on free-motion quilting is definitely obvious.

**Functionality:** Quilts made by Modern Quilters are intended to be functional. They are meant to be used as soft-furnishings in homes where their style of design and color palettes fit in. Minimalist in nature, these quilts belong in clean, uncluttered interior environments where their visual impact can easily be appreciated. Modern Quilts are beautiful! There's no doubt

# Classifieds

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## Meetings

**Venue:**  
Simba Union Off  
Forest Road

**Time**  
9.30am– 1.00pm

## Monthly meetings

May 15, 2014  
June 19, 2014  
July, 2014

## This month's contributors

- ◆ Patty Arenson
- ◆ Dena Crain

about it, but they belong to a space and time that exists now and will continue for a while before it morphs again!

So, what does all this mean for us in Kenya? We gain a fresh perspective on quilts being made in other parts of the world in a more timely manner, thanks to computers and the Internet. Because of modern technology, we learn faster today than we did twenty, ten or even five years ago. We feel the effects of Modern Quilting sooner, and can respond more quickly, than ever before.

Can we make Modern Quilts with African fabrics? I'm not sure, but surely it is worth a try. And, if we cannot, will Western style Modern Quilts suit our lifestyles as contemporary Africans? Will they fit into our homes and be admired by family and friends? Almost certainly - those people usually love what we make, don't they?

With all these things in mind, step back and take a look at the quilts you presently make. Are you already a Modern Quilter, perhaps without yet realizing it?

For more on Modern Quilting, see The Modern Quilt Guild [link: <http://www.themodernquiltguild.com/>] and know that having a professional

organization behind it is also helping Modern Quilting catch on fast!!

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To participate in the Fat Quarter of the Month drawing, please bring a fat quarter (18" by 22") of 100% cotton fabric in the monthly theme. If your fabric is not 100% cotton, it will not be included in the drawing. Please put your name on it, and turn it in to Dorothy when you sign-in.

July—Dots

August—No Meeting

September—Animal Prints

### With Sympathy

The Kenya Quilt Guild would like to offer our condolences to Heather Campbell on the passing of her Husband, Bob.