

My Quilting Bio Josephine Sanders

My quilting journey started a long time ago by osmosis. My mother was very talented. She could do anything, ranging from auto repair to woodworking and anything else in between. In this line-up there was always needlework, be it hand embroidery, knitting or garment making, that did not matter.

Post WW II there was a dearth of everything in the Netherlands, including clothing and fabrics. However, with my mother's ingenuity and talents, combined with my father's complementary talents and type of business we never lacked for anything in that sphere. My father was a rain-wear manufacturer. As a result, after he got his business back up and running, my mother always had access to fabrics! She also taught me to sew my own clothes, because I was eager to have more than she could whip up.

Fast forward to age 11 when I became a High School student. It was time to remake my bedroom into a more grown-up sanctuary. This is where my father joined the fray. I had a choice of colors for all things fabric, as long as they came from the factory's inventory.... Yess! Egyptian cotton, the fabric of choice for raincoats! The favorite colors of the era were "powdered", i.e., grayed red, grayed blue, grayed green, and more. First came the upholstery of the chairs (rattan of course, it is the early 1950s), then drapes. Next my mother started on a Grandmother's Flower Garden quilt for my bed: You guessed it: same cotton poplin, same colors. My parents worked as a relay team and took turns sewing all of the above. The result was this fabulous "Symphony in Raincoat" room, a term that did not come into existence until decades later. I was proud as a peacock, and counted myself as the most fortunate daughter in the world! Unfortunately, this quilt is long gone; to who knows where?

It was not until I took an evening class at the Adult Night School in Pennsylvania in the late eighties, early nineties, that I tried my hand at anything related to quilting, but that bug bit me hard! I joined quilt guilds and this opened a totally new world of camaraderie, friendships and support. From there on I took any class I could fit into my days or nights. At that time, we had an import business of cross stitch kits! I predominantly still use commercial patterns, but sometimes I leave my comfort zone and get a little more creative. Those excursions leave me

with a sense of daring! Very important to me is the right technique and proper construction, the first lessons my mother taught me as a child! Also: "Anything worth doing..." etc. The actual quilting is not my forte, probably because of my zest for perfection. Fortunately, there are excellent long-arm quilters who can help me turn my finished tops into quilts. Yes, I do get the last word/stitch: I love sewing on binding!

After we moved to Bethesda, one of the very first things I did, was checking out quilt guilds. That is how I became a member of NCCC, and enjoying everything about it.