

My Quilting Bio  
Roz Feldman

Family is most important to me..The greatest tragedy of my life was when my younger sister, Barbara, who lived next door, died at the age of 53 from metastasized breast cancer.

Growing up in the Bronx, I begged my mother to let me sew on her electric Singer sewing machine. She refused. Mom feared that I would be attracted to sewing as a way to make a living. My paternal grandfather had been a tailor in Manhattan and my paternal grandmother did custom sewing at home

After completing high school at the age of 16, I spent a year in Israel, studying in Jerusalem and on a kibbutz in a program for youth leaders from abroad run by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

While on the kibbutz I became ill with Jordan Fever. The care I received from a kibbutz nurse stirred my interest in nursing. My mother had consistently praised visiting nurses we saw in uniform while walking on the streets of the Bronx.

Leaving the friends I'd made from across the globe at the "machon" as it was called, was sad. Returning to North America, I spent a year as a youth leader for Hashomer Hatzair, the young guard, a Zionist youth group in Montreal, Canada. During this time I applied to and was accepted at one of the first associate degree programs in nursing in the United States, at Queens College in New York City.

Upon completing my basic nursing education and passing Nursing boards I attended New York University while working as a medical surgical nurse at University Hospital. After completing my bachelor's degree I worked as a public health nurse in the Bronx, making home visits and running the Tuberculosis Clinic at Montefiore Hospital. I took an adult education sewing class at a local high school two evenings a week. Folk dancing, and sewing became my after work pleasures.

Al and I met at folk dances alongside Manhattan's East River. We married in 1959 and moved to Hyde Park, Chicago, where Al attended a PhD program in physics at the University of Chicago. I worked as a school nurse. Living in married student housing facilitated getting to know people from around the globe and the U.S., some of whom we are actively friendly with 50 years later!

Our first child, Gail, was born in Chicago. Our second child, June was born soon after Al completed his PhD, and we moved to Maryland. Our third child, Jonathan, was born four years later.

Once Al finished his PhD he took a position at the National Bureau of Standards which is now the National Institute of Standards and Technology, located in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

I returned to school when Jonathan was four years old. After completing a Masters in Nursing at the University of Maryland I taught nursing at The Catholic University of America. They introduced a doctoral program in nursing in which I enrolled and earned a PhD. Years of teaching at Georgetown University and Bowie State University followed.

After my sister died, so did my father. My mom, living alone in Leisure World required more of my attention, motivating me to find a job close to home. I worked as a licensed psychotherapist at the Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents in Rockville until I retired at the age of 66. It was a 15 minute drive from my house.

After retiring I enrolled in the Osher Program for senior learners at Johns Hopkins University in Rockville where I've been a perpetual student. My main hindrance has been Essential Tremor, which has worsened with age and now affects my vocal chords, impairing my speech, and making it difficult for non-Bronxites to understand my speech.

Sewing and quilting are the way I relax. I do the piecing and Al does the quilting on his Bernina long arm. For years, I took sewing classes at Capital Quilts, G Street, and Oasis. I look forward to continuing to learn new skills and perfect existing ones at courses through our guild and at area quilt shops once the COVID pandemic abates.