

## **My Quilting Obsession by Maryke of Batik and Beads**

Maryke's quilt obsession began when, as a teenager in the 60's, she was introduced to a fabric shop by a colleague. She eventually made her wedding dress and bridesmaids' dresses with fabric from John Lewis, moving on to curtains with fabric from Laura Ashley. Her first patchwork throw was made of 4" squares using her grandmother's Singer machine and not fully understanding how to quilt she merely stitched the four corners to hold it all together. Maryke progressed to a City and Guilds P & Q course but, due to ill health was unable to complete the course and had to wait a further two years to be able to begin again.

Maryke displayed the quilts she had made along her career path, beginning with a beautiful quilt with a pineapple design in the centre, a crazy patch and Drunkards Path around the edge. Some of the quilting was in gold thread in remembrance of her dog, Honey, who had died while she was making the quilt. Her next big project was to get special permission to photograph tiles at Stokesey Castle so that she could transfer them onto her quilt. Flying Geese were painted as were several other small areas.

After four years, Maryke and her husband sold their house, bought a motor home and travelled the country for 6 months. Taking her machine with her, this was when she created her first Batik Quilt, multi-coloured hexagonal s (all left over fabric was used on the back), the quilt was featured in Popular Patchwork. Another of her projects was Raindrops Keep Falling – because it had rained from April to October that year.

Another quilt, Courthouse Steps, made from the fabrics she started her company with, was displayed at the Minerva Art Centre, an organisation which Maryke has been involved with for several years.

Maryke began creating wall hangings and having completed the first, she decided the design looked too bland and needed highlighting, so she attached (only at the top) a black Log Cabin surround which gave the design the highlight it needed. Maryke went on to make several more wall hangings but with different 'colourways' and with added flowers, leaves and beads, leading her more into embroidery and embellishments.

Maryke doesn't usually sell her quilts – she feels she has put too much of herself into them to part with them and when you see them you can understand why.

Five years ago Batik and Beads was born, starting with 8 bolts of fabric and some beads and she has now built up a very successful business. Maryke began publishing and her second book, 'In The Wild', is now out with her third book in the process of being published, while she is working on her fourth book, 'Threads and Things' showing what you can do with accessories.

Reviewed by Anne Hawkins