



Quilters In Common

These are the strangest of times. Most of us locked down for several weeks with no end in sight. No thought of summer outings or trips to quilt shows, exhibitions, no meeting friends etc. But we have our fantastic hobby and the weather couldn't be better. We have a lot to be thankful for. Several of you have sent in details of how you are filling your time, mainly attacking the pile of UFOs that have been lurking in hidden corners for many a month. So here is a snapshot of what some of us have been doing.....

From Alison Lee:

I have been doing all sorts of things over the last few weeks, not all quilt related. My greenhouse is looking good, loads of seeds growing, some were quite old, so I wasn't sure they'd come up at all! Hopefully I'll have plenty of tomatoes and cucumbers this year.

As to the quilting, I am up to date with the Block of the Month Red Manor House quilt from the Quilter's Guild. I enjoyed the last part as it was patchwork, rather a lot has been applique and the next few instalments are as well. I am now wondering whether to quilt what I have done so far, as it is already 50cm square, and add the rest at the end.



I made a little rainbow quilt, based on a Dresden plate design, to hang in my window for people to see as they walk by on the common, I've put bunting in the other windows.

My main achievement has been to finally finish my log cabin quilt. This has been an on-going project for about 8 months, and I bought all the fabrics over a year ago! It took me a while to decide how to quilt it, and in the end I went for very simple tramlines between the blue sections, and diamonds on the blue. This way it didn't detract from the patchwork design. I am very pleased with the end result, all I have to do now is make a label.



From Viv Philpot:

I've been working on a series of small quilts, 3ft x 4ft, very simple traditional patterns, quite large scale blocks for the size of the quilt and using fabrics from my stash including lots of recycled fabrics.

I like to hand quilt my quilts but this takes me so long. The Photo on the right is a quilt I'm working on but will probably be another 2 or 3 months before it's done.



I've been experimenting with big stitch quilting, it suits the folky feel of quilts I'm making and is just so quick by comparison to

my usual quilting style. I started by using cotton perle #8 which gives quite a bold look, photo 2. But now I'm using some cotton perle 2/16, which I really like, thick enough for the big stitches but with a more subdued look as in the photo below.



I'm also experimenting with alternative waddings. I've run out, so am now recycling old woolen blankets. I think its going to give a nice heavy feel & suit the style of the quilts.

I've found the lockdown a very productive time. I've even quilted a top from my ufo pile with big stitches, the flying geese, made in 2017. The photos opposite and below are the quilts. I need to plan a binding day to get them all finished off.



From Annie Folkard:

Some Tips to Help with your Free Motion Quilting

As a comparative novice at free motion quilting, I have found the following tips extremely helpful and I must say that the Dr Bob videos that are recommended are great to watch and really helped me more than I would have believed. I just searched Youtube for Dr Bob Superior threads and a series of very short talks headed the list, 'Tension Discs Work:' and 'Thread twist' in particular.

The following is the post in a group that I belong to which led me to this extremely helpful resource.

1. Ensure the thread delivery is correct for your thread. That it's coming off the spool the way it went on. Check out a video by Dr Bob Thread Therapy with Dr Bob – Needles part 1 and part 2 with Superior Threads;
2. Ensure you are using the right needle for your thread. I use a Topstitch 90/14 needle almost exclusively. Dr Bob has a video on this and explains it very well.
3. I use the Sensomatic foot with my machine and I bring the pivot height down (found in your menu) so that the foot just glides a little above the quilt. If your foot is too high, you'll get skipped stitches.
4. I use all kinds and weights of threads in my machine and adjust the size of the needle to accommodate, but the one that will give you less trouble is a trilobal polyester thread. It's a shiny thread, such as Glide thread, and it goes through the needle's eye with less friction.
5. Relax. Breathe. Enjoy the process.

To practice my quilting I have started doing the Helen Godden flower challenge. Here are two of the flowers that I have stitched. They are quick and easy to do and Helen makes suggestions about how you might fill in the different parts of each flower. The flower drawings are downloaded and traced on to Batik squares with a fine sharpie.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=HelenGodden+Flowerpower



Sue and I have both made blocks for a virtual log cabin quilt in which each block had to have a central yellow square. Normally in a traditional block the centre square would be red, signifying the hearth of a homestead. In this case it signifies courage, hope and light at the end of the tunnel. It is the project of Dionne Swift and Janice Gunner. They have received 300 blocks so far and are encouraging as many people as possible to join, so please share with your friends far and wide.

www.dionneswift.com



From Louisa Lawson:

I started the year with a list of UFOs and this has been a wonderful opportunity to get some of them finished. I have completed my wool appliqué quilt and only have the label to put on.



I have also started a daily challenge of a 1" wool appliqué circle with Sue Spargo which involves lots of different embroidery stitches. This will produce a piece 15" x 17" which I am going to get framed at the end. It goes on for 90 days and so far we have done 36.



While I love the appliqué and stitching it does not reduce the stash much so I decided that I would continue to make quilts for Project Linus and so far I have made six, with a seventh on the design wall. These are not rocket science quilts but there are going to be a huge amount of children who are going to need these quilts at the end of all this chaos.



I am not sure whether anyone else feels like this but living on my own I am not finding this lockdown very difficult and am enjoying having the time to do so much sewing. I have tidied my sewing room and found several more UFOs and have now completed them all – cushions and pouches. Not what I had originally intended for these projects but I had fallen out of love with them and just needed to finish them.

Sue Hart:

March-April are usually busy times for me. Gardening generally takes priority (I have two allotments and a small garden) so with having to stay at home and with the unseasonal weather I've quite enjoyed the extra time. My veg plot has certainly benefitted with nearly all my nineteen raised beds almost weed free (but it won't take long.....)

It was just a week before lockdown began that I was lucky enough to go on the Jo Avery workshop with Dulwich Quilters. The subject was Jo's Shutter Speed quilt. So my first priority was to finish the quilt shown below. I particularly liked the colours and would have like to make it bigger but I just ran out of suitable fabric.

I'm averse to doing a lot of FMQ due to my arthritic shoulder but persevered on this occasion. I could have done better on the inner 'circles' had I planned it more but c'est la vie.





Encouraged by Louisa's Checkerboard quilt I thought I'd have go. Easy piecing and a stash buster, what's not to like? I put aside my lack of ability in accuracy and forged ahead. It was only when I came to put the blocks together that I realised some of my squares were really rectangles. As a result any thought of quilting along the diagonals was simply not going to happen so I used in the ditch instead. Nevertheless it's a bright, cheerful quilt that will go to the Linus project.

My handstitching project during lockdown has been to quilt my Rainbow Scrap quilt pictured below. I started making the blocks from my colour coded scrap bags a few years ago. I chose Big Stitch quilting but on reflection think Giant Stitch might be more appropriate. I do like the texture it gives. I used a mixture of Perle Cotton no 8 and DMC stranded embroidery cottons.



Cathy Stoddart:

My lockdown started with some finishes. I had been lucky enough to attend the Sewcial Retreat (#sewcialretreat2020) run by the lovely Basingstoke shop, Purple Stitches, the weekend before lockdown began. So the first things I completed were my class samples from there, some QAYG and my first foray into hand quilting.



Then I decided it was time to finish my Dream Big Panel (see #dreambigpanel for many more beautiful ones than this). It was definitely a challenging process. If I did it again I wouldn't use a variegated thread I think.

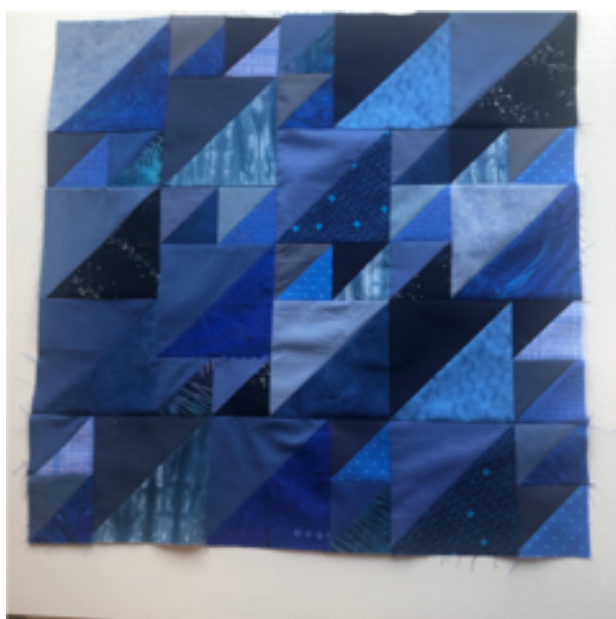


Then I dug out this pile of scrappy improv squares that I had done over the preceding year or so, and I decided to put them on point with some Kona slate sashing,

This has yet to be quilted, but I'm happy that the piecing is finished.



Next up, I had a play with some HSTs and some HRTs.



Last, but not least I made a paper pieced rainbow to go in my window. It's based on a pattern by Sheri Cifaldi-Morrill (@wholecirclestudio).



Altogether, it's been quite a productive lockdown.

[Karolina Kerswell:](#)

I was sick for the first 2 weeks of lock down but as soon as I was well enough to sit in front of my machine, I've been sewing whenever I have a spare moment. I decided to finish all WIP projects first.

I've attached a picture of a Christmas quilt top, I'm planning to quilt as you go, for the first time. I finished 2 baby quilts and started 2 large quilts.



The next newsletter will feature the Modern Sampler plus other items leftover from this one. Please feel free to send me anything else you'd like to share with other members. It's just a virtual Show and Tell after all. I'd rather email or Word but not WhatsApp - I don't know how to save photos or texts from WhatsApp so if anyone knows how and would like to tell me, I'd be grateful!

Sue Hart

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