

Maye River Quilters History

January - May 2015

“Let’s start our own guild” one friend said. “I’m in” said the other. That was the beginning of Maye River Quilters. In the Fall of 2014, Founders Debi Bacon and Ann Godwin were at a quilting retreat talking about their “dream quilt guild”. One of the “dreams” was that it would be in Bluffton as they felt there was more than enough interest for one there. And so they invited every Bluffton quilter they knew plus a few others outside the area for a series of organizational meetings. In the end, 29 charter members met numerous times and the charter meeting was held at The Haven at New Riverside community center on Saturday, January 10, 2015. Debi and Ann presented a gavel to the guild. Sheila Wright took pictures of each charter member and later presented a quilt with the pictures to the guild.

Officers elected and installed for a six-month term included: Debi and Ann acting co-presidents/founders, Weezy Devlin, Secretary, Linda Pirtle Treasurer and Ann Piercy, Member-at-Large. Each of the 29 was given a lifetime “charter member” card. The beginning treasurer’s report showed a balance of \$800.

MRQ met once more at The Haven then the remainder of 2015 at John Paul II Catholic School, Okatie, SC. Programs included a trunk show by Bobbie Lehman, a round robin demonstration of various techniques, a “What’s Your Story” introduction to several members and an “Ask the Expert” session on various quilting topics.

Connie Davidson presented a workshop on bindings and the guild held its first retreat at Epworth by the Sea, St. Simon’s Island, GA.

Fundraising efforts included monthly Birthday Bundles and a Spoon Luncheon.

MRQ elected to focus on one or two charitable interests each year. For the six-month period, MRQ made and donated 3 Quilts of Valor for a Vietnam Veteran recognition in Bluffton. The guild also voted to make Osprey Village the charitable interest. This included cash donations and the donation of a quilt for the organization to raffle.

The six-month term ended with 54 members.

Debi Bacon, Founder

June 2015 – May 2016

The places we've been and the things we have done! In just one short year, we have gone from 29 members meeting in Deb Bacon's living room, to 57 members meeting at Pope John Paul School, to 88 members meeting at Palmetto Electric Cooperative. We have grown larger and larger, hopefully due to our main purpose of friendliness, volunteerism, sharing our knowledge and charity to those in need. The year began with the election of new officers: Debi Bacon, President; Nancy Rasmussen, Vice-President; Weezy Devlin, Secretary; Linda Pirtle, Treasurer; Ann Piercy, Member-at-Large; and Ann Godwin as Immediate Past President. We adopted Osprey Village as our charity and made them a beautiful quilt to use in their fundraiser. We also donated another beautiful quilt to Pope John Paul to

use for a school fundraiser, to thank them for housing us for our first year. We will pick a new charity for the coming year.

We held two retreats at Epworth by the Sea and this will be a semi-annual event. These retreats are great and help to forge friendships and share knowledge within our guild.

We have had some wonderful programs including a talk from a colorist from SCAD and another program on color from Mary Huey. Mary was our first outside, paid program and workshop presenter. Also, our own experts put on a wonderful demonstration of several new quilt patterns, with detailed instruction that were invaluable to beginners and experienced quilters as well.

This second year of our guild will also include our very first quilt show to be held in October. It will feature mini quilts made by our members.

We are slowly building our treasury. The birthday bundle and spoon luncheons have helped immensely with this. We hope to continue these well into the future. Our own guild members that volunteer to give classes at no cost to the guild has been a big bonus as well.

Maureen Henault, 2015-2016 Historian

June 2016 - May 2017

We have now passed our two year mark! We have grown from 88 members to over 100. We are still meeting at Palmetto Electric Cooperative. The year began with the election of new officers: Debi Bacon, President; Pat Black - Vice President; Gail Eskra - Secretary; Christine Monical - Treasurer; and, Peggy Binder, Member-at-Large.

Our charity project for the year was led by Sheila Wright. Approximately 200 lapghans were made for *Quilted Embrace* which were given to local nursing home residents. Many, many members gave of their time to sew, quilt and bind these quilts and put labels on them. The left-over fabric was made into 24 dog and cat beds which were given to the Palmetto Animal League Shelter. Also, there were dresses made for *Sew for Hope* for girls/women in Tanzania, Africa.

We had planned on having two retreats at Epworth by the Sea. However, Mother Nature had other plans for us in Oct. She sent Hurricane Matthew to us and really messed up our plans, our homes, our neighborhoods and more. We will get back to *semi-annual* in the Spring, if Mother Nature cooperates.

We have had some wonderful programs including a presentation on copyright law, how to use social media, 10 ideas in 10 minute demos, and the history of quilts in Georgia.

Workshops have included projects led by members such as a Santa door banner and a memory bear. A great teacher-led class was taught by Bonnie Hunter.

April Boyd has held some amazing functions to increase our bank account. There was the construction and selling of tickets for a raffle quilt, monthly birthday bundles, selling of T-shirts, sweatshirts and tote bags, and a yard sale.

Our very first quilt show was held in October during Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival. It featured 92 small and miniature quilts made by our members. Over 400 people came thru the gallery to view our quilts. What a great showing for our first show.

Gaye Paquet, 2016-2017 Historian

June 2017 - May 2018

We are officially three years old and still meeting at Palmetto Electric Cooperative under the leadership of Ann Piercy – Acting President (who replaced Bobbie Giddings mid-year); Mary Docka – Secretary; Christine Monical - Treasurer; April Boyd - Member-at-Large.; and Ann Godwin, Founder.

This year the chosen charity project was the Bluffton Boys & Girls Club. Eileen Keohone led members in teaching young children to sew and make quilts and pillowcases. Liz Penke and others made a beautiful quilt for the Boys & Girls Club to auction. Also, quilts were made for girls at the Tamassee DAR School.

Programs consisted of a paint chip challenge, game day, an anniversary luncheon and pillowcase party, garage sale, an auction, and a super program by Kristine Richardson on T-shirt quilts. Other great workshops were taught by Rita Fishel and Augusta Cole.

Linda Forry did a superb job in raising funds for our guild. A raffle quilt was made, and tickets sold, monthly birthday bundles, and the garage sale.

Our second quilt show was again held in October during the Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival. Again, we only showed small and miniature quilts for one day.

Gaye Paquet 2017-2018 Historian

June 2018 - May 2019

Maye River Quilters is now four years old. We continue to meet at Palmetto Electric Cooperative, this year under the leadership of April Boyd - President, Barbara Wanthal – Vice President, Maureen Henault – Secretary, Cindy Rosenberry – Treasurer, and, Sandi James – Member-at-Large.

Two charity projects were chosen for the year. The first was led by Martha Greenly for Habitat for Humanity. In all, six quilts were for made for the families receiving the homes. The second was walker bags for people who use walkers at a local hospital. This project was led by Emily Riepe. About 200 bags were given to the hospital. A dozen beds were made for the Humane Society on Hilton Head by a small group of ladies and another group made six quilts and donated them to the Bluffton Police Department.

Programs for the year included a presentation by physical therapist Michael Kramer on preventing/treating injuries and soreness while sewing and quilting; how our quilts should be prepped for quilting by members Janet Swan and Lynn O'Neal; a presentation by Sally Korte on wool work; and, a lively and fun Christmas party in December with games and prizes. In the new year our programs included an anniversary luncheon and pillowcase party; Valentine related quilt block demonstrations by members; Island Quilters owner Beth Ridder and her quilts; and, a trunk show by Patti Kline and Cindy Page. In May we installed our new officers and showed our appreciation to our members.

Our workshop schedule included Paper Piecing by Martha Greenly, Quilting Extravaganza by Pat Wys, One Block Wonder by Rita Fishel, No Strings Attached and 15° by the Pizza Girls, Embroidered Biscornu by Sally Korte, and, Hunter Star by our own Debi Bacon.

Again, Linda Forry surpassed our expectations in raising funds. Linda made the raffle quilt which was quilted by Lynn O'Neil. Her committee of Linda Robinson and Sue Smith organized ticket sales and managed the birthday bundles. In all, a superb effort from the Fundraising Committee which raised a lot of money for our guild.

For the third year, we held a one-day small and miniature quilt show in October during the Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival. This show is always well attended.

The membership now stands at 113.

Gaye Paquet 2018-2019 Historian

June 2019 - May 2020

Maye River Quilters is now 5 years old and growing bigger and stronger each year. These past 5 years have been so productive. When we began, our charter members numbered 29 and this year we now have 120 active members. This has been a year of great accomplishments and exciting events and unusual circumstances. Our Board officers for this year are Linda Forry President, Kristine Richardson Vice President, Eileen Keohane Secretary, Cindy Rosenberry Treasurer and Denise Nierstedt as Member-at-Large.

As in the past our Charity Projects have been well supported by our membership. We began this year with a December Stocking Challenge that provided holiday Christmas stockings filled with toiletries for local veterans living at the Veterans Victory House. This project was coordinated with Debi Bacon and the DAR group. It also provided us a contest to develop the Most creative stocking. It was fun!! Our other year long project commitment was to provide quilts and personal bags filled with toiletries for children living in the Foster Care program in this county. Over 100 bags and quilts were donated.

Programs for our meetings and special guest speakers were successful and encouraged many members to enjoy new topics. We learned about Machine Maintenance and Judging criteria at Quilt Shows. This year we repeated our popular Mini Round Robin classes on how to use Precuts. Two big highlights were our Raffle Quilt which many members volunteered to work on to help create the blocks. This was also our first year to introduce our first BLOCK OF THE MONTH quilt project that many joined. Pat Wys did an outstanding job motivating and encouraging our group to create a quilt while learning special new tricks and techniques to improve our skills.

We had many outstanding program speakers this past year with Anita Bowen's program called Pot Holes, Road Blocks and Detours and Rita Fishel's Underground Railroad. Classes were offered after each presentation. A Yard Sale was help to help us all clean out our stash, although truth be told, we all enjoyed finding new fabrics and patterns to add to our stash.

Our year had a disappointment in March that could not be avoided. We were not able to have Gyleen Fitzgerald come for her presentation and class. In fact, we were not able to even have our own monthly meetings in March and then in April due to something that invaded our country called the Corona Virus.

It became important that all group meetings be canceled and still now in May life is not quite back to normal. Our new officers for the coming year were officially installed at our guild's first ZOOM meeting since we still could not physically meet together. The women from this past board have agreed to continue their leadership of the guild for the coming 2020-2021 year and for that we are all very thankful and appreciative of their work to make the Maye River Quilt Guild such a friendly, creative group of quilters.

Peggy Binder, 2019-2020 Historian

June 2020 - May 2021

When I sat down to write about this past year for our Maye River Quilters group, my thoughts were scattered as this has been a year we will never forget. As our 6th year began, we found ourselves in the midst of a worldwide pandemic COVID and life literally came to a screeching halt for most of us. A special thank you to our board members: Linda Forry, President; Kristine Richardson, Vice-President; Eileen Keohane, Secretary; Jean Le Blanc, Treasurer; and Peg Anderson, Member-at-Large.

Despite the difficulty of never being able to see each other and meet in person, they worked together to make this a productive year for our members. A special note of thanks goes to Gaye Paquet and Holly Martin for their work in sending out our newsletters and keeping our website up and current.

Zoom was a lifesaver as we still managed to have exciting quilting programs presented by Gyleen Fitzgerald, Donna Royson, Andrea West, Linda Forry, Lynn O'Neal, Brandy Yingling, Diane Mann and Rose Parr. We also had 4 classes taught online, one being a T-shirt quilt taught by Kristine Richardson. Andrea West did 2 called Chic Picnic and Cool Cars. The last was by Gyleen Fitzgerald called Uptown.

Despite never getting together, we all continued to work together making baby blankets for low-income expectant mothers in Bluffton. Many quilts were collected and distributed. The local Beaufort County Sheriff's office and the Bluffton Police Dept also received lap quilts to use to help people in need. It's impossible to estimate how many masks were made and shared by our members to help out the community in masking up. We even managed to continue our Raffle Quilt project and with the help of Judy Cain, Joan Moss and Lynn O'Neal who tirelessly worked on it to successfully raise money to be used to help out the community. The early retreat that had been planned in the fall had to be canceled but thankfully some members were able to escape and go on a weekend retreat this past April. A new venue is being considered and there are plans to set up some future retreat weekends.

As a reflection on this past year, many were sick and sadly, many lost their lives, but we come away from it with a stronger appreciation of the people we see each day and are so thankful that for many of us, having our quilting was a lifesaver in keeping us occupied and happy while we were confined in our homes.

Membership is now 110.

Peggy Binder, 2020-2021 Historian

June 2021-May 2022

As we began our guild year in June 2021 we were still meeting via Zoom since the pandemic was still raging. Our new slate of officers was: Fran Oblander, President, Gaye Paquet, Vice President, Julie Hiscox, Secretary and Lill Helming, Member-at-Large.

In June we began work on our first Mystery Quilt. Our charitable interest for the year was The Pines in Bluffton. They requested adult bibs and pillowcases. We also decided to make fidget quilts for The Vineyard.

The much anticipated in-person meeting in August was cancelled due to a surge in the pandemic, so we went back to Zoom. The holiday party in December was in person. We made and donated Christmas stockings filled with personal care items for veterans at the Walterboro Veterans Victory House.

Diane Knott did a fun class at the Hampton Hall clubhouse in February.

We were finally able to meet in person on April 2, 2022. It was so good to socialize and interact with other members. Nancy Mahoney did a slide and live demo of some antique quilts and her own creations.

Other classes and programs during the year were given by Diana Mann, Becky Robinson, Carrie Zizza, Katherine Redford and Cynthia Freeman. In May our own Linda Pirtle showcased 13 of her own quilts.

Our raffle quilt for this year was donated by June Jones; it is a beautiful multicolored pineapple quilt.

Membership is 118.

Diane Kretkowski, 2021-2022 Historian

June 2022-May 2023

In June 2022 we had 118 members and in May 2023 we had 121 members, with about half that number attending our in-person meetings at the Church of the Palms from June to September 2022, and at Palmetto Electric from November 2022 on. (October meeting was cancelled due to a hurricane threat.) Board members were President Cynthia Cassidy, Vice President Gaye Paquet, Secretary Suzanne McClure, Treasurer Carol Treanor, Member-at-Large Dianne Kretkowski, and Past President Fran Oblander.

Charitable Projects Chair Sylvia Cameron and her committee prepared hundreds of placemat kits for members to make for Meals on Wheels for November 2022 and the project was repeated for April 2023. Debi Bacon coordinated the making of Christmas Stockings for veterans at the Veterans Home in Waldoboro, South Carolina, in conjunction with a chapter of the DAR, whose members filled the stockings with useful items. Also, the Guild donated a raffle quilt to the Osprey Center for Disabled Adults.

The Guild encouraged "Bee" and "Mentor" programs as well as two retreats. A stunning raffle quilt was made by Lill Helming and quilted by Karen Park-Bigelow. Fran Oblander encouraged ticket sales with raffles and gifts for those selling 20 or more tickets and by offering more tickets after the first round had

been sold. From September on, a segment of each meeting was devoted to ideas, block patterns, borders, etc. for the Challenge Quilt. Fundraising Chair Debi Bacon created a special raffle of baskets for December which was very profitable and also raised money by selling \$5 bags of scraps and \$2 fill-your-own bags, along with silent-auction birthday baskets.

Each month the Guild featured outstanding speakers and workshops including Charleston Modern Quilt Guild, Cynthia Cassidy's Fabric Collage, Brenda Dyer of Savannah Sews, Kickoff to the Fancy Border Challenge (in-house), Lisette Nremond of South Africa on Creating a Fabric Line, Quilting in the Time of Martha Washington with Muriel Pfaff, a bed turning by members Susan Smith and Lynne Mortenson, New York Beauty by Linda Hahn, Accordion-Sewn Half-Square Triangles by Beth Paige, and Dimensional Thread Painting with Joyce Hughes. The Challenge Quilt judging and awards in May ended the fiscal year.

Lynne Mortenson, 2022-2023 Historian

June 2023 – May 2024

June 2023 began our 9th year as a guild! Exciting things were in the works. Board members started with a change. Kelly Coombs, President moved to Portugal, so our Vice President Judy Hertel moved in as President. Our VP was June Jones, Secretary Liz Penske, Treasurer Suzanne McClure and Member At Large Kris Ducharme. Our meetings continued to be held at Palmetto Electric.

The guild kept busy with charitable events with a poplar repeat of Stockings for Veterans to be distributed at the Veterans Home. This mission was led by Fran Oblander. Joyce Fowler assisted in getting the stockings to the Veterans home for filling. Debi Bacon's DAR chapter filled and distributed the stockings to the veterans. SUCCESSFUL as always!

Kathy Coates chaired our charity for Veteran neck pouches, to carry phones, glasses etc. and we were able to deliver 250 pouches!

Sylvia Cameron chaired placemats for Veterans and the guild sewed and sewed! Plenty was delivered and appreciated.

Several bees were started this 9th year and mentoring programs were established with meetings held in individual homes.

Workshops and Programs led by Fran Oblander and Gaye Paquet continued to bring exciting and educational opportunities to the guild. We had the Pizza Girls, Augusta Cole, Lisette Niemond, Sassy Sunflowers, Beth Ridder and our own Pat Wys to provide us with new pattern challenges and information. We also held our popular Round Robins of various demonstrations.

We continued with our popular events such as the annual Garage Sale, where members clean their closets out and sell to each other.

Our Christmas party had amazing baskets that were won by members. Bingo led by April Boyd that netted some gift certificates to local quilt shops for the winners and lots and lots of food organized by Karla Ward and team.

Birthday Bundles continue to be a staple of fundraising and is always exciting to win the bid! Free table continued with this year having an overabundance of freebies! We ended the year by saying goodbye to some long-time members and welcoming some new members.

Membership: 133 (as of April/24)

April Boyd, Historian, 2023-2024