



Home

A Quilting Journey

SHEFFIELD GALLERIES
& MUSEUMS TRUST



Firshill Quilting Course
February - May 2006

Welcome...

"Following a well received and productive Islamic textile design course, Nikky Wilson and I thought it would be great to build on the wonderful creativity and rich cultural mix that exists in Burngreave. We asked participants what would interest them in learning in the future and the unanimous response was...quilting! Thus the seed was sown.

Burngreave Voices provided generous funding for materials and other resources, while I did my best to nurture and sustain the group at Firs Hill school. But the fruit borne was entirely the work of the group, mostly Burngreave residents, with the able help of their tutor, Anne Smithies. The project was shaped largely by Anne who worked flexibly and tirelessly to provide inspiration, guidance and artistic and moral support. The group worked incredibly hard to finish their quilt in time for the Burngreave Celebrates Learning Festival 2006 when their work was displayed at Verdon Street Recreation Centre. Since then the quilt has been displayed at St Catherine's School, the Board Room at Burngreave New Deal, Firs Hill School and, we hope, will find its way eventually to the Vestry Hall to be part of the Burngreave Voices exhibition space there.

I feel privileged to have been a small part of this dynamic and vibrant process, with an end product which represents even more than its striking individual parts. I hope when you have read the accounts written by the participants in this project, you will see the quilt again with a new understanding and insight into their 'journey', both literal and creative, and feel as proud as I do to call Burngreave my home."

Rashida Hassanali (Community Education Coordinator)

Home

A Quilting Journey

The remit was to incorporate documenting stories of what 'home' meant for people whilst teaching patchwork, appliqué and quilting techniques. The aim was to create a community quilt for local display and celebration.

The course was centered around St Catherine's and Firshill Community schools but was open to any woman in the Burngreave area. It was commissioned and funded as part of the Burngreave Voices Project in the spring of 2006. Sixteen women completed the course and their contributions are documented within.

The course outline devoted time to think, consider, talk, discuss and decide on what the word 'home' evoked. The individual personal booklets the women created gave rise to the backbone and basis for each quilted square. Each square has more than one technique learnt and developed by its maker. The panels encompass the whole thinking process and incorporation of individual memories and ideas, even where only one detail is the basis for the final design. The course ended with a tasty shared meal and celebration party of the completed course and quilt.



The Quilting Course Ladies

Home

A Quilting Journey

During the 12 week course a whole range of techniques, skills and processes were covered. Some of these are covered in the following list:

- Ideas & concept
- Design – choosing, refining and deciding upon
- Choosing the right fabrics
- Colour matching
- Measuring & cutting
- Layering fabric, wadding and backing
- Patchwork: traditional (log cabin) and modern techniques (paper piecing)
- Transferring chosen designs onto cloth
- Gathering images and materials
- Reverse appliqué (cut work)
- Fabric painting
- 3-D work (machine embroidery flowers)
- Embellishment including beading and couching (goldwork)
- Hand quilting
- Machine quilting
- Hand embroidery
- Machine embroidery
- Use of bondaweb
- Cording and trapunto
- Image transfer/photo printing onto fabric
- Planning time – goal setting and completion
- Appliqué techniques





Saphina Embroidering Flowers

Saphina Ahmed

I am 28 years old and was born in Sheffield. I enjoy arts and craft. I joined this group because it was an opportunity to learn a new skill. The group was made

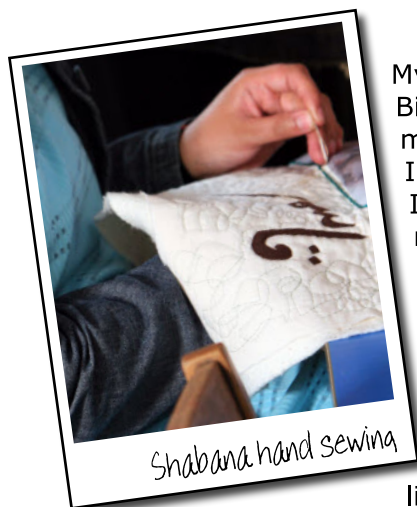
up of 16 women of many different cultures. We made new friends and shared our experiences.

We were all given an opportunity to choose a topic. I decided to make a square quilt using different techniques: appliqué, trapunto, patchwork piecing, hand and machine embroidery, beading, cording. These were all new techniques which I learned. I now feel confident to be able to use these at home creating new designs.



Saphina's Final Piece

Shabana Behzad & Abida Khalil



My name is Shabana. I was born in Birmingham, which was home to me. I moved to Sheffield nine years ago where I live with my husband and two children. I believe home is where the heart is and my heart is with my children and husband.

I completed this quilt panel, but the initial idea came from my sister-in-law, Abida. This was her take on what home meant to her. Abida was born in Pakistan, so her quilt represented her life there. The vibrant colours and scent of the flowers represented what home is to Abida.

Though I did not attend any of the lessons, I finished the quilt block at home, I can only imagine what the atmosphere was like in the class. I wish I was a fly on the wall. Everyone seemed to have had fun. I was very impressed with the standard of work and amazed with the different techniques used.



Shabana & Abida's Piece

Joanne Chadwick

I have lived in Sheffield all my life. My husband and I have four children. We all have many interests, love learning and gaining new experiences. We are always on the go - going dancing, beavers, family learning, guides, community groups and courses. I was married at Christchurch, Pitsmoor and have had links with Burngreave for many years.

When we were asked to think of things that reminded us of home as children and adults, smells, colours, scenery, treats, houses we'd lived in, I wanted to make a patchwork quilted piece that reminded me of the old corner shop. I remembered the sweet jars that lined the shelves. My quilt block is of two jars. I learnt to make up my own fabrics that look like sweets. Using a technique called paper piecing I used that material with others to patchwork the jars sitting on a lace edged shelf.

The company of the group of ladies was always lively and full of laughter. We had lots of good conversations both about our squares as well as general life! I saw lots of different types of patchwork and quilting being learned as well as the techniques I tried.



Angie Cordell

My name is Angie. I have lived in Sheffield for a number of years and was previously in London. I love colours, textures and working with fabrics. Yummy, just like tactile sweets! I grew up with textiles and embroidery as part of my childhood.



Angie Finishing Off

I joined the course to give me the opportunity to make a new piece of work and give some 'me' time in the busyness of life. When we talked of home as the subject I concluded my 'home' was a complete convergence of many, many things: thoughts, feelings, places, people, emotion, meetings, experiences, family and friends.

I decided to paint myself some cloth in seaside rock colours. Then I cut up, realigned and rejoined my piece of work embellishing the new image with stitchery, trapunto and appliqué.

The group was an extremely lively and noisy one. Lots of ideas and questions, conversations and activity charging around. It was great for me to learn a new skill, develop my ideas and finish a piece of work.



Angie's Final Piece



Doreen Green

My name is Doreen, I was born in Barnsley, but we moved around a lot and I came to Sheffield 20 years ago. We came to Sheffield because my partner, Maggie, got promotion into a new job at what was then the Manpower Services Commission (MSC). Maggie died in 2005, so I

now live with Meg (Maggie's mum, who moved here from Aberdeen 9 years ago), a dodderly old dog and two geriatric cats.

As soon as I came to Sheffield, I felt like I'd come home. A cliché, admittedly, but it was the people – they were so friendly and helpful, a lovely surprise after living in Birmingham (and previously London). So, home was Yorkshire – not necessarily Barnsley or Sheffield, or any other particular town – just Yorkshire. Of course, the first thing that sprang to mind to represent Yorkshire was the white Yorkshire rose, and the second thing was the Yorkshireman's advice to his son (or, in my case, daughter!) that my dad was so very fond of quoting.

Working as part of a group is usually more productive than working on your own – and it's more fun, particularly when it's such a lively group. We enjoyed ourselves and had a laugh, but managed to do lots of work as well (Anne made sure of that). It was interesting to see what the others had chosen to represent "home". I learned a lot of new techniques, not just the ones I was using myself, like traditional quilting, trapunto and beading, but techniques others in the group were using on their pieces. I hope to be putting some of them to good use in the future, but I will definitely be avoiding vermicelli!



Louise Haine

My name is Louise. I was born in a small village in the south west of England. I moved to Sheffield 14 years ago and I have lived in Burngreave for three years. I have four children: Sophie 6, Chloe 4, Abigail 2 and Charlotte 10 months. Burngreave now feels like my home.

When I started the course I had few sewing skills. I could sew a straight line with a machine but that was about it. When I heard that the topic was about home my initial thought that my children are at the centre of my home. Home to me is about my children and husband. Place is not the most important thing. I also wanted to learn about how to make a traditional patchwork quilt. I used my children's handprints combined with log cabin patchwork,



Louise Patchworking



Louise's Hands

Working as a group was amazing. It was fabulous to meet loads of new people who each had special skills. Even though there were many people I hadn't met before there was a great atmosphere in the group. Everyone was willing to help everyone else. We all learnt new things even though we all started from different levels.

Fazeelat Hussain



Fazeelat Stitching

My name is Fazeelat. I was born in Pakistan. I came to Sheffield. I am married with three children. My elder son is 22 years old, my daughter is 15 years and my younger son is 13 years old. I work as a dinner supervisor and I also work as a carer for elderly people.

I could do some sewing and embroidery, but when I heard about this course I thought it would be a good opportunity for me to learn different techniques. We did a booklet on ideas of home. First when I looked through this all I could think was about my family. So I decided I would do a house where we as a family live. I did my quilt on this.

I enjoyed working with this group. I used to look forward to the Wednesday session to meet everyone. The group was very helpful. If we had any problems there was always somebody there to help. My quilt block had lots of small pieces so it took me a long time to stick them on and then I had to hand sew them in place. The tutor had lots of patience with me. She was brilliant and very helpful. Thank you.



Fazeelat's Home

Saleema Imam

Home is where the ♥ is!

Though my roots are in Pitsmoor where I was baptised in Christchurch over 60 years ago, having taught English to speakers of other languages from many different countries for most of my working life and being blessed with a large multi-ethnic family, the whole earth is my home.

Problem! How do I include the whole world in one small square? I decided to cut it down to the three places which really do hold my heart:

- Pitsmoor/Firshill, where I live and from where my maternal family hales. Pictured by a road map.
- Pakistan, where, on my travels, I was welcomed with unbounding hospitality into their homes by relatives of Pitsmoor students, represented by the national flag.
- Sudan, the original home of my husband. Sporting, in the shape of the ostrich, the 'Bismillah' in Islamic calligraphy designed by a Sudanese artist.

I dyed, wove, pieced, appliquéd, embroidered and quilted my square by hand during several enjoyable weeks when our eclectic group shared ideas, techniques and banter and further developed firm friendships which I am sure will endure.

Thanks to Nikky, Anne and Rashida for organising and supporting everyone.



Robina Khan

My name is Robina Khan. I have been living in Sheffield for 16 years. Before, I lived in Pakistan. Sheffield is a great place. I really like living here. I have four children and a cat.

My quilt was inspired by my daughter's cat, Laila. I was unsure what to do, then the idea came to me. I appliquéd my children's names on to the painted cat fabric which I made and then quilted.

I really like working in this group. Everyone is really nice and I love it.



Robina working



Robina's cat

Asma Khursid

My name is Asma. I have lived in Sheffield all of my 33 years. I married Ashfaq in 1991. Fifteen years later, with four sons, I am still happy with life.

The topic of the panels was about home. We made a booklet with various thoughts. Every thought had my children in them, so I decided to use my children in the quilt. Using a photograph I transferred it onto material. Each child has different qualities and I wanted everyone to see their individualities.

Every Wednesday morning was the creative highlight of my week, All my friends were always present. The tutor, Anne, was excellent, with patience and humour. Once the course was over, I felt we needed another one to follow on. It was great. I would recommend this to anyone wanting to learn new techniques and meet friends.



Najma Khursid

My name is Najma. I am 37 years old, born and bred in Sheffield. I will have been married for 20 years in November 2006. I have six beautiful children.

What inspired my design was the most important thing in my life, my children. I decided to do a crossword with all of my children's names. I learnt a lot of new techniques: machine embroidery, cut work, using bondaweb. I also learnt how to use a sizzix machine.

I really enjoyed coming on Wednesday mornings. Anne is a brilliant tutor who made everyone feel welcome. Everyone got on and helped one another.



Rashda Nazi

My name is Rashda and I live in Burngreave. I decided on fabric painting the cat in front of a warm fire at home. I learnt about designing, choosing the right fabrics, layering, machine embroidery, quilting and appliqué. I used some fine material with a regular pattern stitched onto the painting to look like wallpaper. I added sequins and beads to create depth and interest in the



Rashda Planning

carpet.

I enjoyed the clarity of teaching, getting ideas from designs in books and from the class teacher. I enjoyed the activity a lot.



Rashda's Piece

Rukhsana Shabere

My name is Rukhsana. I am married with two daughters. I have been living in England now for 8 years. I have a keen interest in sewing and embroidery. I joined the group to advance my skills. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all the women making new friends and acquaintances, giving me confidence to speak more English.

I chose to make two quilt blocks with my daughters' names on them which I will save for them to put in their bedrooms when we move into our new home. I am sure they will cherish them in years to come.



Rukhsana Sorting



Rukhsana's Piele

Anne Smithies

Teaching this course was a learning journey for each participant including me. I grew up in a rural Wiltshire market town surrounded by forests, rolling downs, white horses carved into hillsides and ancient stone circles. I moved up to Sheffield and lived in surrounding areas in 1985 settling in Burngreave about 16 years ago.

Considering the topic of home I realised many things make me feel like I am at home: landscapes with hills and trees, sunshine and blue skies, family and familiarity, meeting and greeting people as I go about my daily journeys. Home is where I feel safe, secure, relaxed and am refreshed by.



Anne Laying Out

Trees remind me of many places where I have felt 'at home' and breathe in 'nature's fresh air' and tranquility. The final square draws together both my love of trees with the commemoration of Burngreave Voices Project input into this community quilt.



Anne's Piece

Anna-Mercedes Wear

I was born in London and grew up in the south east of England. I moved around a lot and have long since lost all my family as well as all my mementos from my childhood. I do, however, remember lots of long hot summers and big rambling gardens but I no longer have a 'home' I could return to.

My children inspired my design: My daughter loves the story of little Red Riding Hood and adores the colour red and my son has blonde curly hair and is always being mistaken for a girl, he also has a passion for porridge every morning! We make a point of having

birthday parties at home and the hub of our home is definitely our kitchen.

I would have loved to have incorporated more into my design but as usual I ran out of time. I did however learn several new sewing skills, which I hope to use in my own work.



Anna Preparing Thread



Anna's Piece

Joan Williams

My name is Joan Williams. I have lived in Burngreave for almost five years. The theme of the quilt was "What is home to you?" I grew up in Yorkshire next to a park, so I was surrounded by green. I now live near Abbeyfield park and it reminds me of home. Burngreave is **such** a green place.

I chose the changing seasons for my quilt. I grew the sunflowers and photographed the other seasons in the local park. I printed my photos onto material and used other pieces which reflected the seasons.



Joan Pinning



Joan's Piece

I learned so many new skills. It was a wonderful experience. Well done to the tutor, all the women and Burngreave Voices for making it happen.

Conclusion

I was in a privileged position being asked to work with such a diverse group of ladies. Such a breadth of cultural backgrounds, knowledge, skills, expertise, personalities, and the common ground of wanting to quilt and have a little 'away from responsibilities' time.

I had a complete blast with these ladies. They were enthusiastic, lively, positive, prepared to try new things and brave enough to see them through. Each lady stretched their knowledge and understanding of patchwork, appliqué and quilting techniques with amazing ease and spirit.

They taught me and each other by their willingness to share ideas and knowledge and eagerness to learn. The ladies were lively and caring, daring and refreshing to work with - feisty too! I so enjoyed

my time with them and learnt so much about friendship, teaching, inspiring and being inspired, encouragement and support, celebration and laughter. Lots of laughter. Lots of chatter. Lots of colour. Lots of fabric... Home... relaxing and refreshing, friends, family and familiarity.



The Quilting Course Ladies

Anne Smithies
Course Tutor

Feedback

"fun! And I learnt a lot – as much from seeing what other people were doing as from my own and will take away some interesting techniques to use again. A great group of people and lovely tutor" Doreen

"Had a really lovely time learning about these techniques and now I want to put my new skills to use on an even better quilt please." Anna

"enjoyed myself"

"Anne was a brilliant tutor. I thoroughly enjoyed myself" Najma

"It ended too soon, not long enough! I loved it, thank you"

"It was the best ever. Enjoyed it to the max!" Asma

"It was brill – best course I've ever been on!" Louise

"Brilliant course, fun as well as informative and a lovely friendly tutor and other participants"

"want more please.... Anne is an excellent teacher, loads of knowledge, encouraging, no negativity and inspiring." Angie

"I really enjoyed myself and learned lots of it"

"Although I was only here a short time however I did enjoy the course immensely" Muserith

"Learning stuff that I can use at home – finishing a completed square!"

"A really good course. Lots of learning and building friendships."
Joan



Tea Break!

Credits

Thanks to:

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Carl Rose Photography

Anne Smithies

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www.timsmithies.com



The Finished Quilt!