

Quadra Island Quilt and Garden Tour 2007:

Posies, Passions and Pathways

by Barb Round

When I retired and moved to Vancouver Island from the Northwest Territories, I hoped to have more opportunities to attend quilting events. My first opportunity this summer was the Quadra Island Quilt and Garden Tour, a brief 10 minute ferry ride from our new home in Campbell River.

Quadra is the largest and most populous of the Discovery Islands, with 2,700 year-round residents. They have a very active quilt guild, which teams up with island gardeners to sponsor this wonderful tour. Proceeds go in part to fund a "Quilters' Marathon" in which quilters produce comfort quilts for children undergoing cancer treatments. Several of the comfort quilts were displayed on the Tour.



First stop was the Tourist Information Centre where we bought tickets and got a tour map. The Tour featured 11 gardens, most of which also had quilts on display. In the brochure the links between the passions of gardeners and quilters are explored, as both experience "gotta have it" moments for fabric or plants, which may be used later to enhance a project, even though the plan may not there at time of purchase. It continues: "Flowers, be they real or in fabric, brighten our days and lift our spirits. Quilts complement the garden and the greenery shows off the quilts beautifully. Somehow the colours in the quilts and nature never clash. After the tour is over and the quilts are taken down, most gardeners remark how bare the garden is, although it never appeared so before there were quilts in it."

At the first venue, we parked on the road

and walked down a lane shouldered by deep woods, when suddenly the view opened to show a hillside property overlooking the ocean, with expanses of green grass, interspersed with islands of garden...and quilts everywhere! It was breathtaking.

Members of the QUADRA QUILTERS, welcomed us and provided insights and information about the quilts.

I asked the Guild hosts what would happen to the quilts if it rained (which it was threatening to do). They indicated that they had tried, where possible, to place the quilts under the protection of eaves and porches, and that others had plastic coverings available "just in case". Except for "that one" (pointing behind me), "which the quilter said was washable anyways, so not to worry about it." Turning around, I saw the indicated washable quilt hanging under a massive tree. It was queen sized,



with an inventive pattern of bright birds. What a perfect setting to show it off! I couldn't help but think that if I'd put that much work into a quilt, I wouldn't have wanted to leave it in the rain.

The gardens were also lovely. You will note the wire fencing, which is needed to keep the deer from eating every last bloom!

Before visiting the next garden on the Tour, we stopped at Rebecca Spit, a provincial park on a long, long spit of land that has the most amazing views-across the strait to the mainland on one side, and to the protected waters of Drew Harbour on the other. A group of sea kayakers were preparing their gear on the beach to paddle the calm waters of beautiful Drew Harbour. That inspired us to go home and sign up for kayaking lessons...but I digress...

Then on to the next garden, high on a bluff, overlooking Drew Harbour.





The gardens were lush, and my favourite part was the steps leading from one level to another, covered in flowering thyme. The owner/gardener invited us to walk on it and enjoy the fragrance...a spa-like experience!

And, as if the views and the garden were not enough excitement for one stop, an eagle stopped by, perching on the top of a nearby tree.

And on to the next and next gardens and quilts....

Various sea creatures were depicted in the quilting on this one.

The rain finally caught up to us near the end of the Tour, but, undaunted, we carried on with umbrella and jacket to see the gorgeous-though-wet blooms and quilts-in-baggies.





The Guild Host at this location was hand-piecing in her quiet-and dry- moments. My hat is off to her.



Rain could not dampen my enthusiasm for the dramatic effect of quilts peeking out through the garden.

The next garden, overlooking a quiet cove, had gardens containing over 200 rose bushes.

A quilt on a trellis is framed by roses and “California Lilac” which has little balls of purple flowers.

This quilt was perfect in this peaceful, protected little spot to sit and enjoy the gardens.

And the quilts and blooms just kept on appearing around every corner...



Finally we tore ourselves away from the roses, and headed to our last stop at an artist’s studio.

What perfect placement for this little quilt—its fabrics seem to exactly match the flowers in front of it. Coincidence? I think not.

Just as the rain was gearing up for a real deluge, our Tour was finished and we were back on the ferry to Campbell River.

By the end of the day my feet were soaked and cold, but I was energized by all the beautiful displays.

