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Sheila Acton 1934 – 2011

Sheila wrote this profile of herself for the Contemporary Expressions website:-

"The number of times people have looked at my work and commented, "I wish I was creative and artistic" I usually launch into my speech about everyone being creative in some way and that being an artist is something we can all learn.

I come from a graphic design background in Advertising and Public Relations, prior to that as a draughtsman in an engineering office. The sewing capability comes from my Grandmother and other members of my family.

I have been teaching Textiles for over 12 years and have written a column in my Quilters Guild Regions newsletter, highlighting the history of Patchwork and Quilting.

I am a member of the Quilters Guild of the British Isles and Danetree Quilters in Daventry,

I have been fortunate enough to have my work included in the 'Gallery' of several famous Textile artistes' publications."

This quotation is only half the story of this very modest and talented lady.

When she retired, she studied for her City and Guilds in Patchwork and Quilting, and then took this forward to teach others at Woburn in 2000. She was always well prepared and expected the best from her students. The topics were very varied and interesting, each one teaching a new skill. Eventually this group moved to Paulerspury and became the Paulerspury Patchers

In 2001 she became a member of the Quilters Guild Council as PR-Officer, a role that included raising the Guild's profile in the general world of textiles, and setting up the first Festival of Quilts in 2003. She organised stands at various shows, and when the Guild's webmaster emigrated to New Zealand, she took over this role as well.

In 2006, she joined with a group of textile artists to become a founder member of Contemporary Expressions. This gave her an opportunity to push her boundaries in quilting, a task she was the first to admit that she found difficult. The results were astonishing - her latest triumph being "Fred Astaire" which was on display at the Northampton Shoe Museum until the day she died.

Many people in the quilting world have been touched by her in one way or another. We will miss her.