

Quilt Heritage



MUSEUM



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Rejuvenation

Thanks to the brisk Eastern Idaho winters, this can be a great time for rejuvenation. Our flowerbeds, and our soil too, all utilize this time to rest and prepare for the growing season ahead. We can learn a lesson from this.

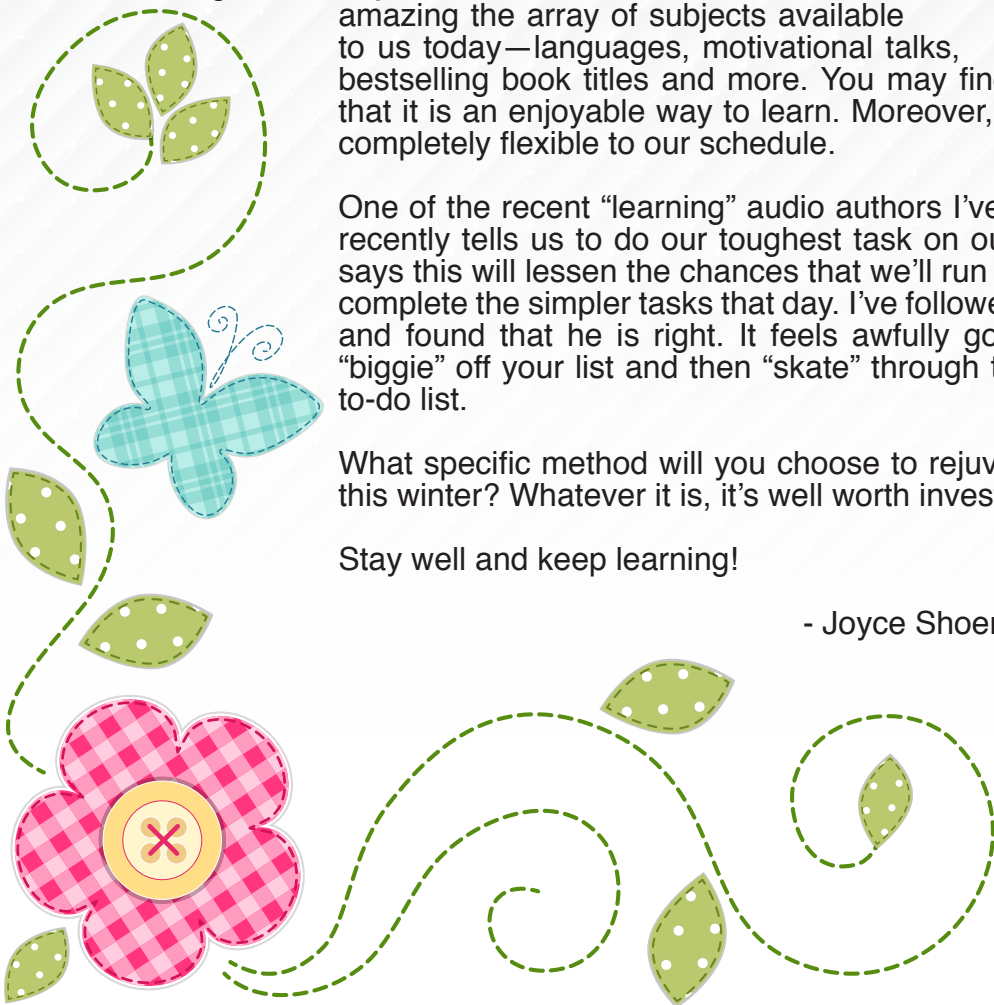
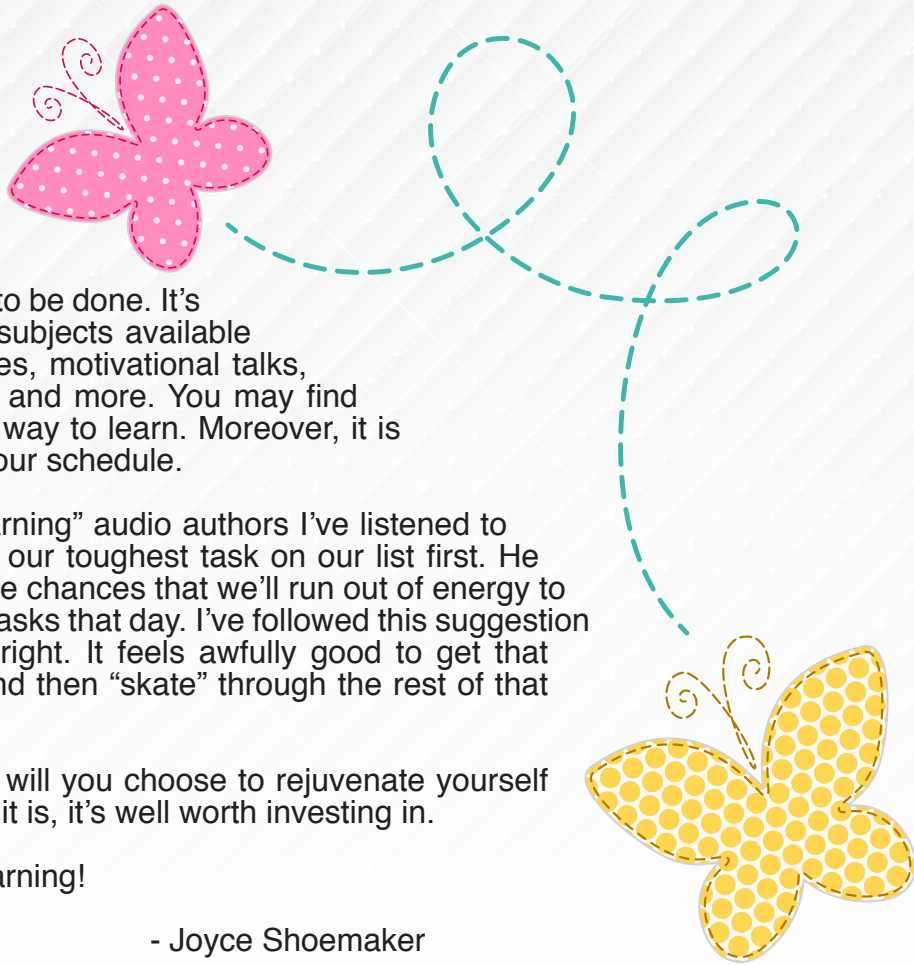
This time of year is particularly suited to put on a “learning” audio as you do what needs to be done. It’s amazing the array of subjects available to us today—languages, motivational talks, bestselling book titles and more. You may find that it is an enjoyable way to learn. Moreover, it is completely flexible to our schedule.

One of the recent “learning” audio authors I’ve listened to recently tells us to do our toughest task on our list first. He says this will lessen the chances that we’ll run out of energy to complete the simpler tasks that day. I’ve followed this suggestion and found that he is right. It feels awfully good to get that “biggie” off your list and then “skate” through the rest of that to-do list.

What specific method will you choose to rejuvenate yourself this winter? Whatever it is, it’s well worth investing in.

Stay well and keep learning!

- Joyce Shoemaker



Batting Wrappers: A Lesson in Marketing Your Product

Historically the Stearns & Foster Company, located in Cincinnati, Ohio marketed their quilt batting under the brand name Mountain Mist. Much has been written about this long-standing and venerated quilt batting company.

The batting wrapper shown below is one of Mountain Mist's. It has a copyright date of 1954.



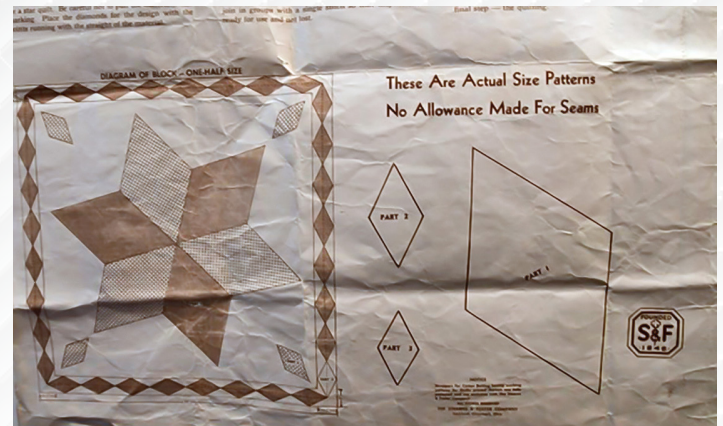
Stearns & Foster used both sides of the batting wrapper to promote their batting. On one side we see many common quilt block designs listed with names and numbers. Quilters could order block patterns by number and title from the company for 20 cents each.



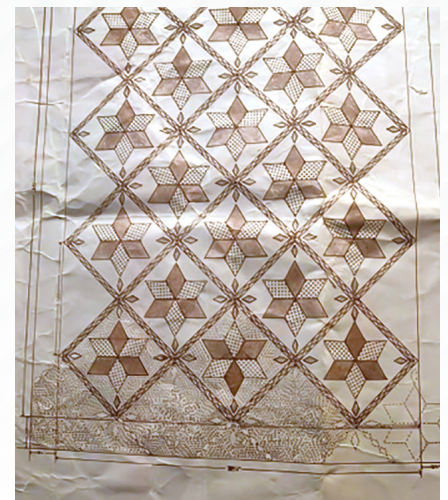
On the reverse side of the batting wrapper, a specific block pattern was featured.



A diagram of the block, at one-half size, was printed along with full-size templates for that block.



Step-by-step instructions on how to construct blocks and an entire quilt was printed as well. This made it pretty simple for the quilter to trace the templates and begin her quilt project. A full quilt layout using the block was shown including the yardage chart. It is interesting to note that the yardage chart is based on 36" wide fabric. Just think, today fabrics are printed up to 108" wide!



There is little doubt that Stearns' marketing method enticed many a quilter to buy their brand of batting because of the "free" block patterns inside. They understood we all like to get a little something extra when we make a purchase.

FABRIC SPOTLIGHT: THE GREENS OF THE 1860-1880'S

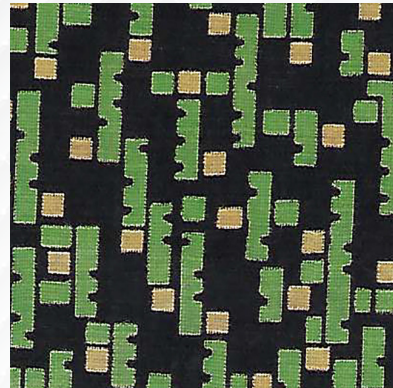
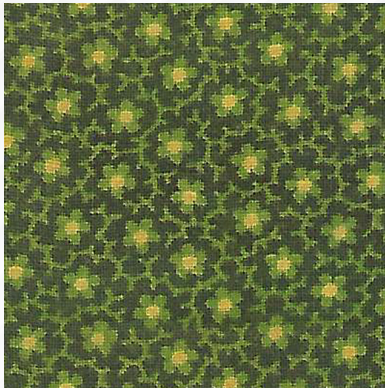
From the 1860's to 1880's many fabric dyes were made from plant and vegetable sources. The color green did not have a single vegetable dye. At this time in history, a dyer had to first dye the fabric yellow and then overdy it blue to "make" it green. In addition, many of the early greens were fugitive—meaning they ran or bled when washed.

Mineral dyes were developed during the first half

of the 1800's. Some of these mineral greens were quite stable and fading or bleeding was less of a problem.

Solid greens applied in a single step process came from synthetic dyes after 1875 according to historians.

The selection of greens below is thought to have been made between 1860 and 1880.



GOLD EMBROIDERED

Quilt of 1895

New Jersey resident Jane Tomaine donated two quilts to QHM in early December 2020. One of these quilts is shown below.

While the maker's first name is unknown, her surname was Thomas. At this time, that is all we know about her.

It is not known why the quilt was created. Perhaps the color choices would have been appropriate for a marriage or an important anniversary. What is known is that the maker was a precision embroiderer and a competent quilt-maker. The detail in the blocks and the fine hand stitching, both in embroidery and in quilting is excellent.



This particular quilt has a low color contrast by the maker's choice, so it's difficult to capture the work that has gone into its construction in a photo.



Each block/border is hand-embroidered in fine detail in gold thread on a white background. The maker put the date in the center of one block.

The donor tells us this quilt was made by her father's mother, who lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

This quilt is in very good condition, and it is obvious that someone cared for it very well. We so appreciate Jane for donating this to our organization and look forward to sharing it in a future exhibit so many others can enjoy seeing it. Thank you, Jane!

Ink It

Today, when we say “Put it in ink.”, it typically means we are making a commitment or making something permanent.

Quilters have used ink in their quilt projects for many decades. As early as the 1830’s, when indelible ink was introduced, quilters used ink in their quilt projects. When stencils and stamps became quilting design tools, inks took on a larger role.

In recent times, many magazine articles have been dedicated to the ink art of doodling. Creative quilters have “borrowed” this creative art form and emulated the doodle lines in their quilting lines on their quilt tops. This has brought a whole new look to finished quilt projects.

No matter how you use ink (or don’t) in the quilt itself, let us urge you to document your quilt with a label—ink it for historical purposes. It’s important.

Below are some examples of early quilts wherein ink was employed.

