



Website: <http://www.mahonebayquiltersguild.com/>
Email: info@mahonebayquiltersguild.com
Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/people/mbqg/>

President's Message

Hello, all! I hope you made it safely through the recent snow storms. We have an exciting and busy few months planned, during which we'll celebrate our 35th anniversary of the Guild with some very special events.

We have exciting workshops coming up, more Open Sew days on Saturdays throughout the year, some great programs and more exciting news about September's quilt show.

Speaking of the quilt show, the committee has had some philosophical discussions about what our quilt show should focus on, and they have decided to come back to the members for the final input. You'll find info about this elsewhere in the newsletter, but if you want to go directly to the questionnaire online, please visit <https://mahonebayquiltersguild.com/members/quilt-show-judging/> by the end of the day February 10.

Please read the newsletter through for reports on all our plans!

Stay safe and warm and we hope to see you in February, weather permitting.

Nina

MBQG January 2026 Newsletter

Executive Members

President – Nina Scott-Stoddart –
president@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Vice President – Vacant

Treasurer – Jill Rafuse –
treasurer@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Secretary – Dawn Pritchard
secretary@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Communications – Cheryl Borden –
communications@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Membership – Betty Learning –
membership@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Library – Heather McEwan, Pam Hancock
and Diane Binmore –
library@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Past President –Annette Fralic –
pastpresident@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Workshops – Josie (Pina) Wall and Didi Morton-
Spaan –
workshop@mahonebayquiltersguild.com
or 902-693-2018

Monthly Program – Sandy Morrow-
program@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Newsletter – Sheena Gibbs–
newsletter@mahonebayquiltersguild.com

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is **February 2, 2026**
@1:00pm. Doors open at 12:30pm. It will be
in-person only at the Trinity United Church.
*see page 17 for meeting reminders!

For Information on Slow Quilting, Sew Zoom
and other Guild Activities check out our
Website Calendar:
<https://mahonebayquiltersguild.com/events/>

RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT OUR POSITIVE BANK BALANCE

Hello! I've been on the board for half a dozen non profits in NS (none of which ever had a large surplus) and was curious about the rules and what they might mean for us as a society. I found that there are no legal limits on a surplus for a charity or non profit in Canada or Nova Scotia.

There's some good advice from the BDO Canada (BDO is a debt consolidator and trustee in bankruptcy): <https://www.bdo.ca/insights/not-for-profit-organization-managing-surplus>

Non profits should have 6 to 12 months of expenses on hand.

For us that would be \$10k to 20K. At the upper end, that's what we have in the bank, minus the prize fund. Which means nothing we're currently doing is out of line for a non profit interested in being fiscally responsible.

Keeping surplus beyond this might make the organization face the opinions (opinions only, because it's not illegal) of up to three groups: CRA (not applicable to us because we're not a charity), society members, and the public.

We have heard that the members care, so as an Executive we've been discussion some solutions as part of our budgeting plans for the next fiscal year.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. **Investment:** Put \$5-10k in a GIC for a year, and reinvest. Use the proceeds (current 1 year GIC at Bank of Montreal would give us guaranteed 2.25% return) towards a memorial prize fund for quilt shows, given in the name of any members who may have died since the last quilt show.

Benefits: We would be using our surplus in a way to support our mission and our members. (one of my opera companies does this with a bequest to fund a singing prize annually), while keeping a prudent amount in the bank for contingencies.

2. **Make some capital purchases** (connective dongles for projector, new Guild rulers or books, etc.) to support members and program presentations.

3. **Offer more free events for members.** For the next year the Executive proposes supporting a few free events for our members, including covering the costs to bring in an instructor for two workshops to mark our 35th Anniversary, and ongoing Open Sew days at Trinity.

You'll see these reflected in the proposed '26-'27 budget which will go out in March to start April 1, 2025.

Nina

What kind of quilt show do you want MBQG to put on?

MAHONE BAY QUILTERS' GUILD

A WORLD *of* COLOUR

2026 QUILT SHOW & SALE



The quilt show committee and the executive have agreed that we need to bring something to the members to have the final say on.

How important is competition at our quilt show to you?

If you want to skip the background, you can go right to the online ballot, which will be open until 5 pm, February 10, 2026: <https://mahonebayquiltersguild.com/for-members/quilt-show-judging/>

BACKGROUND

Big quilt shows are definitely competitions. Because we're a regional biennial show restricted to guild members, MBQG has kept our show informal – the goal of the quilt show has been to encourage members to share their work in a supportive way.

The exception to this has been our Best in Show quilt (voted on only by Guild members) and the Viewers' Choice award (voted on by all attendees).

A few shows ago members of the quilt show committee volunteered as judges for a category and to make a ribbon. All of this judging was done in the brief time after the show was hung and before it opened to the public. It was still very informal and was intended to be an informal "Hey, I really appreciate that" from one member to another.

At the last quilt show we had problems finding people willing to be judges. Volunteer judges requested general guidance for judging which our guild had yet to formally define. It was challenging for the judges to even know which quilts to judge given members had not been requested select a category. Some members didn't realize their work was to be judged at all. Some members that won awards were thrilled to be recognized, though we also heard some were uncomfortable with the formal recognition. Some people also worried about judging fellow members or having others judge their work that may have varying levels of expertise and biases. These experiences led to the quilt show committee's initial recommendations documented in the file that was circulated to members in January.

To date, the stated purpose of our guild's Quilt Show is "to host a colourful celebration of creativity,

community, and all things quilting." It a fantastic way for our members to express their creativity, tell the story of their quilts, grow as a maker/artist, inspire others and contribute to the legacy of the craft and engage with the broader community.

Traditionally, the judging process was solely intended to recognize our members' exceptional skills without imposing overly strict or complicated rules. In this way, every quilt and every quilter is honoured, making the Show both uplifting and true to the spirit of quilting.

QUESTION

To what extent should our 2026 Quilt Show include competition with judging and presentation of awards?

Option 1 – More formal judging. Accept the Quilt Show Committee's circulated recommendations (Awards section attached) where competition should be more formalized with awards and judging implemented as described, with one key change where members would opt-in rather than opt-out of having their work judged. Some judges may be sought from outside the guild and we'd try to find two judges per category. Winners and runners up would be awarded in all categories.

Option 2 – Return to a Show with no formal judging. Only two awards would be presented, the Best in Show with two runners-up as voted on by members of the guild only and Viewer's Choice with two runners-up as voted on by the public. A monetary prize and ribbon would be awarded to each of the six winners. No other awards or prizes would be presented.

Option 3 – Keep judging less formal Judges selected from within the Guild only (members cannot judge their own work). There would be one judge per category. Members would have to opt in to judging and select a category. Some basic judging criteria would be implemented. There would still be a winner and a runner up for each category.

To vote, please visit <https://mahonebayquiltersguild.com/for-members/quilt-show-judging/> before 5 pm on February 10, 2026 and fill in the form. If you have any problems we can either help you at the Feb. 2 meeting or you can email Nina at ninascottstoddart@gmail.com

Quilt Show Planning Update

Save the dates! Our 2026 Quilt Show will run from Friday, September 25th to Sunday, September 27th, with show hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Set-up will take place on Wednesday, September 23rd and Thursday, September 24th.

Committees, Volunteers & Show Support

We are thrilled to share with the guild that every position on the Quilt Show Committee is now filled and we have 18 members participating! We are gearing up to recruit volunteers for set-up, take-down, and show shifts starting in April. Thank you to everyone who has already stepped forward — your enthusiasm is what makes this show shine.

Challenge Kits

Challenge Kits are still available from Annette Fralic for \$15.

The poster features a background of seashells, a starfish, and a fishing net on a wooden surface. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Mahone Bay Quilters' Guild 2026 Challenge Quilt

SEE YOU AT THE ocean

Create a quilted piece using the seashore
and ocean as inspiration

Technical Guidelines

- Each bundle contains four fat quarters, 100% cotton, not pre-washed
- The front of your entry must incorporate the four fabrics provided
- You may add up to four other fabrics of your choice
- Your entry may be in any style (traditional, modern, art quilt, etc)
- Use any quilting technique (piecing, applique, fusing, painting, printing, etc)
- Embellishments (thread, beads, wool, paint, etc) are permitted
- The finished piece can be any shape
- The perimeter cannot exceed 120 inches
- A two inch sleeve and a label must be attached to the back of your entry
- Your entry must be submitted at the September 2026 Guild Meeting

Raffle Ticket Sales Progress

Raffle tickets are ready for pick-up from Tara Lynas. With 95 members, our collective goal is to sell 475 tickets prior to the show— just five per member.

So far:

- 340 tickets deployed (72%)
- 80 tickets sold (17%)

Please return sold stubs and funds to Tara at any upcoming guild meeting. Remember, there will be a \$100 gift card from a Nova Scotia quilt shop of the winner's choice as a prize for the member that has the highest ticket sales. Winner to be announced at the September 2026 meeting, with gift card presented shortly after.

Show Layout & Features

To maximize display space for member quilts, we will not host a special exhibit or demonstrations this year. Instead, we're excited to welcome a vendor pop-up shop within the show footprint — a fun new addition for visitors and members alike.

Postcard Promotion

Show postcards will be ready in March 2026. We'll be asking members to help distribute them far and wide — quilt shops, craft stores, tourist bureaus, B&Bs, community centres, church notice boards, other guilds, and even Quilt Canada in Winnipeg. Didi Morton-Spaan will coordinate distribution and tracking to ensure we reach audiences across the Atlantic provinces.

Quilt Entry Rules — Now Finalized

Thank you for your thoughtful feedback. Based on your input, we have:

- Added a clear **definition of a quilt**

- Explicitly enabled **group/bee entries**
- Introduced **ranking of up to three entries** per member to provide the Hanging Committee team with the flexibility to curate the exhibit based on available space, quilt sizes, number of entries and overall layout.

Our goal remains to display all entries, with every member guaranteed at least their first-ranked quilt. If space or layout constraints arise, the Hanging Committee will contact members directly to discuss options — including creative solutions like folding large quilts.

Competition and Judging

A new request for feedback on competition, judging, and awards is underway — please take a moment to share your thoughts.

Opening Ceremony

We're reimagining the opening ceremony for 2026. This year, it will take place on Friday morning, just before the show opens, rather than on Thursday evening. More details to come as plans take shape.

Preparing for Boutique Sales:

The boutique at our Guild's Quilt Show provides a fantastic opportunity for our members to showcase and offer their quilting/sewing related creations for sale.

The best-selling items from previous shows have been smaller items such as bags, pillows, pillowcases (sets), pouches, wall hangings, table runners and Christmas ornaments. Products in the boutique will be intermingled with the products from other members (i.e. no dedicated table/spaces for vendors). The boutique team will rotate and replenish stock of duplicate items during the show. There is limited space in the boutique to display larger quilts, so those may be

folded and displayed on a shelf or draped on quilt racks. Ideally, members should enter larger quilts they wish to sell into the show so they can be properly displayed and marked for sale. We are looking for a volunteer(s) to help with the boutique set-up to ensure we integrate and display the products our members submit for sale in a visually appealing manner that is also easy for the volunteers to manage sales and stock rotation.

We will open registration for your boutique items via an online form through our website on August 1st. The September 9th registration deadline will enable the boutique team to confirm how they will display the products and get ready for the rapid intake process. Details about the registration process will follow. All boutique products must be dropped off to the Mahone Bay Centre on Thursday September 24th and unsold products must be picked up on Sunday September 27th (times to be confirmed). For convenience we have set these to be the same times as quilt drop off and pick-up for the show. If you cannot make it at those times, please arrange for someone else to do your drop off/pick-up. Given the show set-up and take down periods are very hectic, we appreciate your patience and request that you only come during the designated times.

Members must have paid their membership dues for 2026-27 by August 1st, 2026, for your products to be marketed in the boutique.

Members that wish to sell products in the boutique should be willing to volunteer to work at least one shift in the boutique during the quilt show.

Products must be made by members of the guild, unless approved by the Boutique co-chairs (dependant on space and products).

We have a detailed tracking system to accurately track inventory and report on sales. While it is rare and the boutique team will exercise upmost care, the guild cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items. Members will receive payment for their products sold at the October guild meeting.

The guild retains 15% of the proceeds of all sales to offset the fees when folks purchase with credit and debit cards and costs to put on the show. The commission is being reduced from 20% for this Show and has been accounted for by the Guild Treasurer in the budget.

Excited to see what wonderful creations our members will make for our boutique. We will share some tips for pricing products. Reach out to Elizabeth Tumblin or Johanna Benning with your questions.

Workshop News

Workshop:

We're putting the finishing touches on a few details, but we couldn't wait to share what's coming. Mark your calendars and save the dates—these upcoming workshops are ones you won't want to miss.

Fantastic Fabrics with Judy Cooper, March 28th from 9:30 -4

You'll explore sheer fabrics and a variety of playful materials—threads, yarns, glittery textiles like lamé, tulle, and organza—to create your own unique fabric. This creative technique produces a one-of-a-kind textile that can be used for appliqué, background, piecing, or framed art. Free-motion stitching brings everything together in a beautifully textured, expressive surface. Judy will have samples and suggestions for future projects. A fun, stress free day.

Tamarak Jacket/Coat Class with Kate O'Brien, Kate's Open Quilt Studio, April/May

Kate will walk us through each step in creating the quilted coat that includes finding the perfect fit by creating your own mock up jacket, cutting out the pattern, fabric selection, buttons, pockets, embellishments and French seams. Workshop will consist of one-in-person class and 3 on-line classes.

April 25 th from 9:30 – 4 In person Workshop	You will be building a mockup of the jacket, breakdown of all the different parts of the coat and considerations you would take in making a customized jacket: custom quilting, design placement & layout, reversible vs non reversible, quilted pockets, etc.
May 16 th from 1-4 Via Zoom	Cutting out the quilted coat pieces from the mock up and sewing it together.
May 30 th from 1-4 Via Zoom	Buttons & Pockets
June 13 th from 1-4 Via Zoom	Finishing coat seams (French Seams)

As an added bonus, Kate will have a pop-up shop, open to everyone, on April 25th. Get your shopping list ready by visiting her website at <https://www.openquiltstudio.com/> and pick up your order on the 25th.

Karen Neary, Quilt Designer, 2 day Workshop May 1st and 2nd

In celebration of the Guild's 35th anniversary, we are delighted to have Karen Neary for 2 days, offering two different workshops free of charge. Class size is capped at 20.

Friday, May 1st from 10 -4 – Midnight Magic



In this workshop, you will draft and sew a free form curved flying geese unit which will then be added to a project.

The technique used will be paperless paper-piecing (also known as freezer paper piecing) which results in perfect points but no messy paper to remove afterwards.

Saturday, May 2nd from 9 – 3 – Maritime Beauty



A variation of a New York Beauty block, the Maritime Beauty makes an eye-catching centerpiece for your table or wall.

You will learn freezer paper foundation piecing, sewing curved seam and apply bias binding to a curved edge with inside corners.

Josie(Pina) & Didi

Cuddle Quilts

This year, Cuddle Quilt Day will be Saturday, March 21, 2026, in coordination with International Quilters Day. During the year, our guild members make quilts to generously donate to various agencies in need. We can donate any size quilt, except Preemie. So, baby quilts on up in sizes. Please don't exclude flannelette for your quilt fronts or backings, as they makes very cuddly quilts. Pre-wash the flannelette or wash in cold water after making the quilt, as it has more shrinkage than cotton fabric. We usually have a demand for Wheelchair Quilts, which can be any design that is approximately 36" x 42" in size with rounded or cut-off corners to prevent wheel entanglement. And some agencies love the Walker Caddies. There are so many patterns and options online, so please make the one you like. The quilts, caddies or quilt tops need to be donated before Cuddle Quilt Day, if possible, at any regular meeting. On Cuddle Quilt Day, we will sandwich and quilt the donated quilt tops, sew on the binding and iron a MBQG label on each quilt. We need volunteers for Cuddle Quilt Day, so I will pass around a sign-up sheet at the February and March meetings.

The guild can provide batting. Please pass along your required batting size to Betty, and I will have the batting cut and passed along to you. Also, at the February meeting, Annette will be helping me with cutting batting so you can request it during the meeting break. **We have a whole roll of black batting, so if your quilt can possibly accommodate black, let us know.**

-Betty Learning

Membership Questionnaire 2025

Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the Membership Questionnaire in 2025. The suggestions and comments have been excellent and will be a great help to the executive on moving forward. Several have already been enacted upon, and there will be more exciting events and activities in the future, inspired by your input. As you can imagine, it has been quite a challenge to summarize all the comments and suggestions, but I will do the best I can in a file that I will forward directly to members as it will be too lengthy for the newsletter. This report should be coming your way soon

– Betty Learning

Library News

The year got off to a good start with the addition of three new titles to our Library collection. The new books purchased are:

Freestyle Color Collage Quilting – Carly Mul

By the Bundle, 12 Fat Quarter Friendly Quilts – Emma Jean Jansen

Love Flying Geese, 27 Modern Quilt Projects – C & T Publishing

Members are reminded to give requests for new books to the library committee. Help us spend the money in our budget!

Submitted by

Diane Binmore, Library committee

2026 MBQG Retreat

The 2026 Guild Retreat is booked for May 22-May 24. We will be gathering at the Best Western Plus in Liverpool Nova Scotia in the same space as last year.

Again, this year I want to thank my sister, Sue Conrad, for assistance with securing the venue for us. We will be capping the attendees at 30 but will be taking a wait list. Last year everyone on the wait list was offered to attend because of members who had to cancel.

The registration will be starting at 9am on Friday February 6th.

Please contact me by e-mail, once registration is open, if you wish to attend. Once I have you on the list I will send you a confirmation e-mail.

My email is aandbf@eastlink.ca

The cost of the retreat will hopefully be no more than \$50 for the whole weekend. The only way it would be more is if there is low attendance so, PLEASE do not send payment to me until the price is set. I will send another email to registered members with payment details once I see how registration is progressing. Registration money pays for the conference room and to provide door prizes for attendees.

You are responsible for booking and managing your own room at the hotel. If you think you are going to stay, PLEASE book your room early.

The block of rooms will be held until one month before the event and then will be opened to the public. We also have a special group rate of 134.00 plus tax per night. To get this rate you must call the hotel directly at 902-354-2377 and ask for the Mahone Bay Quilters Guild Retreat rate. The event rate is good for Friday and Saturday night, May 22 and 23rd. Buffet breakfast is included for guests who are staying overnight.

Everyone is responsible for their own meals.

This retreat is for independent sew time with no classes offered. If anyone wants to offer demos or skills let me know and I will include it in the retreat updates.

We do have a vendor booked to come for the entire retreat.

The Wooden Spool from Granville Ferry has agreed to come down and will bring requests if you contact Donna. Use her personal cell # 1-902-532-8592 or you can reach the shop by messenger to request something be brought down. If you request something you do not have to purchase it UNLESS it is something that had to be cut from a bolt especially to fill an order. That's it for now. There will be more updates once registration is open.

Annette

Meeting Reminders

Meeting is at Trinity United Church Hall, Mahone Bay:

- Doors open at 12:30 pm, meeting begins at 1:00 pm
- Wear a name tag, please
- Meetings are scent free
- Pink, white, red or a combination themed fat quarter(s) for draw

Sheena Gibbs, Newsletter Chair