

**Monday 14 July 2025 meeting**  
**Deborah McGuire: Reframing British Quilt**  
**Histories for Creative Makers**

It was a great pleasure to welcome historian, writer, teacher and traditional quilt maker [Deborah McGuire](#) to give our July talk to CETG members and friends. Deborah outlined the focus of her talk as how the study of the ways that quilters made and used quilts in the past gives us insight and an understanding of their lives, with relevance to our lives today.



A passionate advocate of the tradition of framed hand-quilting, [Deb's own quilts](#) are made on a Welsh quilt frame from 1900. Her contemporary designs are inspired by the research she undertakes on British historical quilts. Deb talked eloquently about the quilt as an emotional object within families, with significance and communication between generations, informed by her research into the subject, including her [Masters' dissertation](#) completed at Oxford Brookes University in 2021.

Deb went on to tell us about her research partnership, [Within the Frame](#) with art historian Dr. Jess Bailey, of the University of Edinburgh, leading the advocacy for the traditional skill of "*Hand Quilting in a Frame with Rocking Stitch*".

Success came earlier this year, with the announcement by UNESCO that it is adding this old quilting practice to the list of crafts that have intangible cultural heritage status and the craft also being listed as [\*critically endangered\*](#) on the [Heritage Crafts](#) Red List of Endangered Crafts. The listing will help to preserve the craft form for generations to come. Heritage Crafts are the national charity for the protection, preservation and continuation of traditional craft practices, working with government and key agencies to ensure a healthy and sustainable framework for the future.

[Look here](#) for a short film called *Quilt Time*, showing Deb talking about and demonstrating rocking stitch in a frame.

[Look here](#) at a [Haptic and Hue](#) page including a podcast entitled *Reviving Rocking Stitch and Saving Whole Cloth Quilting*, plus other interesting links.



Deb's talk was well illustrated with images of a very comprehensive range of historical quilts, in addition to her own contemporary quilts. We were all delighted to have the opportunity to look at and handle Deb's own quilts which she had brought along with her. Deb had explained their links to specific historical quilts in terms of the materials used, style and design, as well as their own unique stories relating to Deb's family, social context and time.

It was a lovely evening, full of information, gorgeous quilts, sociability and things to think about! Thanks so much Deb; it was a pleasure to have you as a speaker at our meeting.

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