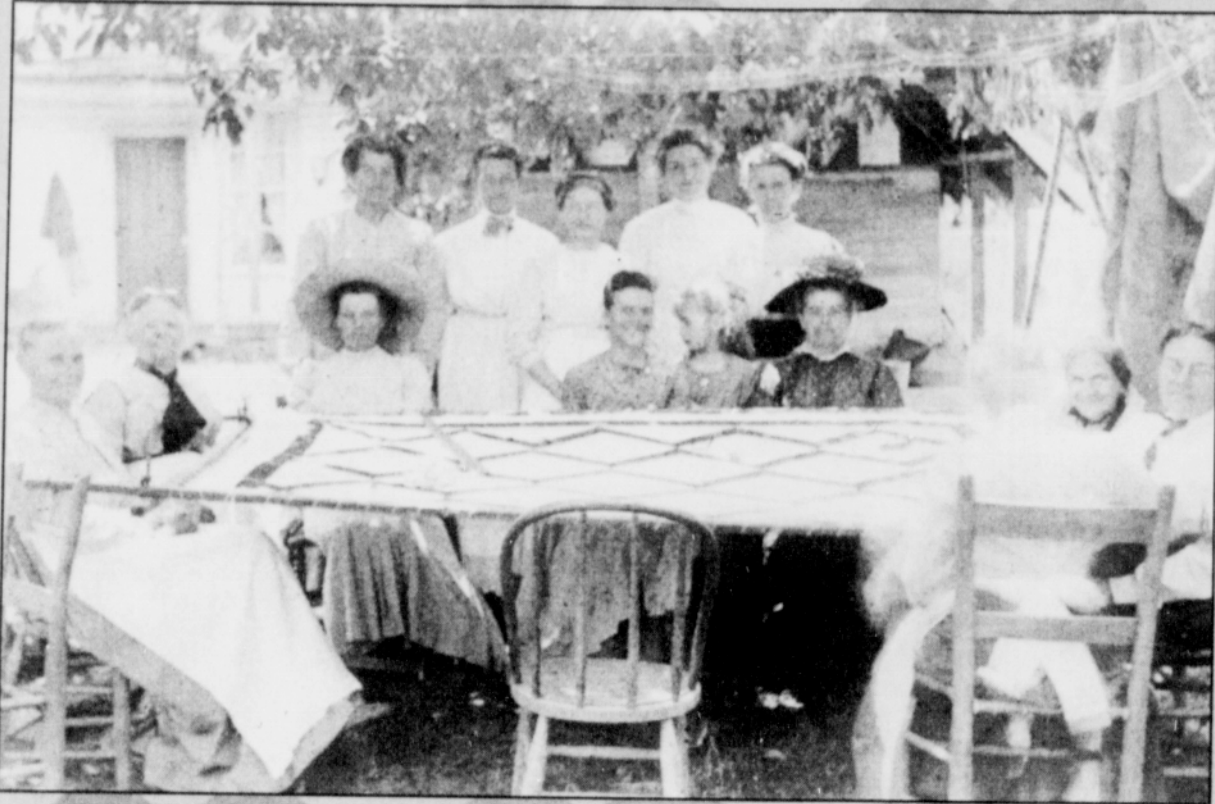


Mother's Day

Mother Love Through Quilts



An Oregon Quilting Bee. Circa 1900. (Courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society.)

By JOY RAMOS

A Mother's love is one of giving. When a quilt is hand-made, it is fashioned from her heart. It is a thing of beauty, a power to behold. Mothers have given quilts with good intentions of being passed on.

From a mother to her beloved, quilts are a reminder of her gracious and loving bond.

Women gathering to make a quilt become a communion of spirits. They openly share, knowing that an equality exists among each other. Collectively, they hold a power to manifest as they are creating from the heart. The pieces of fabric come together as a mosaic that gives simplistic expression of how a woman nurtures, supports and establishes deep connections.

During the 1800's, women of the Oregon Trail held quilting bees. "It was in a circle of friends that women shared news, remedies and companionship. It was here where seeds of community were planted, seeds that grew into churches, schools and support systems," cites Susan Buttrille, a historian. "Women's need for each other's help and companionship was a matter of psychic, if not physical survival. So they reached out to each other and shared resources. Needles were so precious that they were passed around from woman to woman and carefully guarded."

Travelling the 2,000 mile Oregon Trail took several months that was fraught with danger. Quilting sustained and protected emigrant and pioneer women and their families. As one writer put it, "A woman made utility quilts as fast as she could so her family wouldn't freeze, and she made them as beautiful as she could so her heart wouldn't break."

Quilts can leave lasting impressions. Roland Freeman, a historian relates, "When I was a child, quilts were special, even magical to me. They could heal and they could curse; they could capture history and affect the future; they could transform pain to celebration."

With every African American quilt Roland has collected, he sleeps under each one as a ritual.

It is to connect with the "spirit" imbued within the quilt during dream time.

Women have understood that the power of quilting comes from the making. It is grounding yourself to something humble and being in the moment. There is nothing like quilting to help you appreciate that because it's very slow. Your life just sort of winds down to a very slow stroll. Women make quilts to glimpse eternity. In quilting, you have moments of that where you know that this is eternity. This very moment is eternity," explains Maya Angelou, an author.

Quilting has been a medium for many women to sense their own connection and transmit their highest intentions. As mothers do the same with their children, quilts preserve the goodness of all that.

They are handed down as keepsakes to be treasured long after their existence.

Camille Cosby, a well known society figure reflected on her ties to a grandparent. "I just feel that my grandmother is with me.

Her spirit is in the quilt she made. Sometimes, if I'm really agonizing over something, I'll just go and get the quilt and just put it on me to feel her warmth and protective spirit.

It is a connection to her, a

connection to my roots, to my grandmother. I know that she spent a lot of time, although the quilt looks very simple, but there was a lot of labor and her will of love that went into the making of the quilt."

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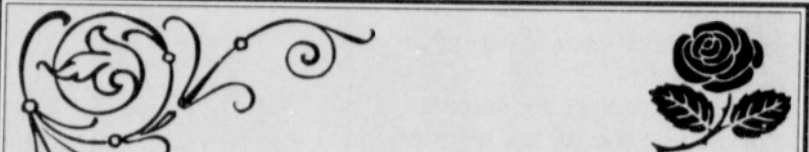
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Darneil Lake, Little Momma, Patricia Williams

You Truly Are The Women Of My Life, May This Day Bring You Many Blessings

-- Jesha



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