

# Berlin quilting group have fun together Tuesday mornings

By SANDRA LEPLEY  
Daily American  
Correspondent

BERLIN – Laughter and joy spills forth from the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Berlin every Tuesday morning when about 20 women get together to quilt and knot – a tradition started in the 1940s in Berlin.

“Every Tuesday morning one group of women quilts and another group knots,” related quilter Anna Mae Weighley, Berlin. “We work individually but enjoy working together.”

The quilters are called the Jolly Quilters and the knotters go by the name Knotty Knotters. This also serves as mission work for the church.

Fellow quilter Edith Hoffman related that “everyone does a lot of talking and we laugh enough for the whole week. It’s good therapy.”

This lighthearted group stitches and knots like clockwork with each one working individually but the whole group cooperating for the finished product.

Their teamwork and years

of experience show through in their handiwork with each stitch done in care and detail. And, their intricate artwork and togetherness is sadly a dying art form with mostly all senior citizens and no younger people involved.

Both Dolly Leydig, 85, Berlin, and her sister-in-law Marie Countryman can remember when the group started back in the 1940s and the church was flooded with fellow helpers. But, times have changed and most people work or have become too busy.

“I learned to quilt from my aunt and if those stitches weren’t right she made me rip them out and start over again,” remembered Dolly.

Each member in the group had been taught to quilt by a family member or close friend and those memories are talked about in warmth and kindness.

Shelvie Ryan, Somerset, is one of the youngest quilters in the group and she joined after her mother, Rose Saylor, also a member of the group, told her it was time to help out.

“My mother asked me to learn because another quilter was dropping out and so she

got me started and I’m glad she did,” said Ryan. “Younger people are so busy with jobs and family that they honestly don’t have the time but it is unfortunate because younger people are not learning the skill.”

The group works on about six to seven quilts a year. They do not charge but ask for a simple donation. They also work through the Area Agency on Aging’s Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

The knotters can work at a faster pace because the intricate detail is not as necessary and they produce over 100 lap quilts a year for area nursing homes and have sent over 70 larger quilts overseas or for underprivileged families through Lutheran World Relief. They have also donated to the One Step Center in Somerset and most recently for the victims who lost their belongings after the Hunter’s Inn building was destroyed in a fire on Dec. 26.

“A few years ago, we didn’t have anyone interested in knotting,” explained Dot Landis, a member of the church. “So we called around and found some people. Most of our people are



(Photo by Sandra Lepley)

The Knotty Knotters get together every Tuesday morning at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Main Street in Berlin and knot over 100 lap quilts a year for area nursing homes. They have also been able

to provide larger quilts to needy families. They are from left: Sara Gross, Rose Saylor, LaRue Engleka, Dot Landis, Carol Dickey, Dot Dilling, Alice Trent and Nancy Schrock.

semi-retired. Too many young people can’t come because they work and that’s understandable. We started the lap quilts last year because there was a need and we knot for individuals or efforts and where there is a need.”

Donna Schmucker, Shanksville, just recently joined the group and is the newest member.

“I bought flannel to make my own quilt and I didn’t know how,” laughed Schmucker, who is friends with quilter

Anna Mae Weighley. “Anna Mae said come over to the church on Tuesday and here I am. I always have a project for winter. Now, I can make all my children a quilt and quilts always look nice in a home. It gives a home a warm feeling.”



(Photo by Sandra Lepley)

The Jolly Quilters who get together every Tuesday morning at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Main Street in Berlin are shown from left, front: Marie

Countryman, Violet Zorn, Edith Hoffman and Anna Mae Weighley. Back row: Jane Luther, Dolly Leydig, Shelvie Ryan and Mary McQuade.



(Photo by Jackie Coughenour)