

Shared Visions

Northern Ireland quilt, workshops facilitated by Sonia Copeland, 2008

Photograph: Christopher Keenan

Four Belfast based women's groups participated in making this quilt: Ardmonagh Family Centre, Beechfield Parent Partnership, Women's Group Woodstock Alternatives and Women United Clifton Park Avenue. Here, the handcrafting of Loyalist, Nationalist, Republican and Unionist women, rich in symbolism and colour, demonstrates a tentative coming together to express a vision for a new inclusive society in Northern Ireland.

Quaker House Belfast, who funded and co-ordinated the making of the quilt and to whom it was donated on completion, urge us to absorb the messages of this quilt through viewing it with our senses: *"It has been said; 'Listen till ye hear.' As you stand before this quilt today let me suggest to you that 'You look till ye see'."*

As women from four Belfast based women's groups, drawn from diverse communities gathered to stitch, and at times unstitch this piece together, they created a space for peace-weaving/stitching. Sharing conversation, meals and spaces together allowed them to explore their own vision for a shared future.

The strong, purposeful messages inscribed on the quilt indicate their yearning for and commitment to a peaceful future: *"We CAN make peace together – We CAN make peace forever"* and *"We're all in one boat."*

Courtesy of Frederick Street Quaker Meeting place, Belfast.

Source:

Accounts of the Conflict (*archive*)

Bacic, Roberta. (*individual compiler*)

Conflict Textiles (*collection*)

<http://accounts.ulster.ac.uk/repo/collections/show/153>