

## Textile News Aug 2013

On the 20<sup>th</sup> August our Textile group had a very interesting outing to the Qld Art Gallery. They have at present a very interesting Exhibition *Quilts 1700-1945*. This was a display of over 50 quilted and/or patchworked bed covers, bed hangings and sewing accessories created over two-and-a-half centuries and came from one of the world's most important collections of textiles and decorative arts – the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

One of the most extraordinary quilts was the *Rajah* quilt, lent by the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. This was sewn by the convict women on board the convict ship *HMS Rajah*, during their transportation to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) in 1841. The ladies in London had decided this would be a worthwhile occupation for the women and would help to prove how industrious they could be. On their arrival the completed quilt was given to the Governor's wife and had an inscription embroidered on it which detailed the work and the women's industry. Somehow the quilt ended up in Scotland before coming back to Australia. It is remarkable that it has survived all this time. The exhibition will be on until the 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

We also saw another display at the Art Gallery that was presented to complement *Quilts 1700-1945*. This was Ruth Stoneley's beautiful work in *A Stitch in Time*. This is a collection of contemporary quilts. Ruth came to quilting later in life, only committing herself to her practice full-time from 1982 and was very prolific – exhibiting widely in Australia and overseas.

This Exhibition shows Ruth's transition from early experimentation with the contained patterns of traditional quilts to the free-flowing, abstract and expressive works she made in later years, reflecting her feelings, emotions and ideas, about herself and the people around her. This exhibition finishes on the 7<sup>th</sup> October.

It was a very enjoyable and informative outing.

Jan Banks