

Rebecca Anderson

Ever since I took apart old clothes to make capes for the lizards I played with while I was a missionary's kid in South America, I have been fascinated with sewing. I always had a need to create. Since art supplies were not in the budget, sewing provided that outlet.

Beginning with embroidery and hand-sewing doll clothes, I learned to sew my own clothing by the time I was in Junior High. By college age I was replicating antique quilts seen in library books. Amish quilts were a favorite because of their powerful graphic qualities.

With a little help from my friends – Discovering quilt guilds as a young mom was a tremendous revelation. The inspiration, learning and friendship found in guilds greatly enriched my life. At various times, I have been Education Chair, Program Chair, and President in my local guild.

A guild hand-quilting class with Ami Sims reinforced my passion for handwork. While challenging at first, my stitches improved as I discovered its calming, therapeutic nature. This love led to winning second place in the hand-quilting division of the Quilter's Newsletter Magazine contest, "Quilts: 35 Years of Inspiration, Information, and Imagination". To this day I am almost never without a piece of handwork.

Thanks to a class in paper piecing with Carol Doak, I went from being frustrated with the technique to developing numerous designs of my own. Realistic animals are a favorite. I currently have barn scenes on my design wall.

It was guild Show-and-Tells that helped me realize I loved to put together a good story to illustrate my latest quilt. Soon I found myself being asked to lecture and teach classes. Guild shows encouraged me to enter my quilts at national shows. My quilts have appeared in the American Quilter's Society (AQS) show in Nashville, the National Quilting Association (NQA) show in Chicago and the International Quilt Festival in Houston. I have done technical writing and contributed quilt patterns to Better Homes and Gardens Quilting Ideas, Country Sampler Decorating Ideas, and the book Better Homes and Gardens Kids' Room Projects.

Rebecca Ruth Designs – The family business of producing home how-to books for publishers like Better Homes & Gardens, Reader's Digest, and The Home Depot, was hit hard by the recession of 2008. I had been designing sewing patterns as a hobby and had ten finished. In desperation, I and my husband Dave Toht decided to go into the sewing pattern business.

Several of my earliest patterns were aprons, inspired by my ever-growing collection of vintage aprons. I like the challenge of making something functional and flattering. This caught the attention of shops and distributors. To date I have published more than 50 apron, quilt, wearable, and jointed figure patterns. In 2018 my book, Button-Jointed Stuffed Animals, was published, featuring illustrated steps and complete patterns for 20 felted-wool projects.

Sweet Home Minnesota – In 2015 I and my husband Dave moved from Washington State to Minnesota to be near our three grown children and two wonderful grandchildren. I like to think my ever-growing stash of fabric helps insulate the house from the sub-zero winter temps.

