

PATCHWORK PRESS

H E B E R V A L L E Y Q U I L T E R S

History Lessons ~ Time Marches On

By 2011 HVQ Guild President, Company Commander Rachel Crane

Mary Young Pickersgill sewed the very large Star-Spangled Banner in the summer of 1813. It flew over Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 (1812-1814) and was the inspiration for Francis Scott Key to write what would become our National Anthem. That summer, Mary, a 37 year old widow was contracted to sew two flags for Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland. The one that became the Star-Spangled Banner was a 30 x 42-foot garrison flag; the other was a 17 x 25-foot storm flag for use in inclement

weather. Major George Armistead, commander of the forces at Fort McHenry, commissioned Mary to hand sew a flag "so large that the British will have no difficulty seeing it from a distance." Mary was an experienced maker of ships' colors and signal flags. She filled orders for many of the military and merchant ships that sailed into Baltimore's busy port.

Helping Mary make the flags were her thirteen-year-old daughter Caroline; nieces Eliza Young (thirteen) and Margaret Young (fifteen); and a thirteen-year-old African American indentured servant, Grace Wisner. Mary's elderly

mother, Rebecca Young, who made ensigns, garrison flags, and continental standards during and after The American Revolutionary



War, may have helped as well. Mary and her assistants spent almost seven weeks making the two flags. They assembled the blue canton and the red and white stripes of the flag by piecing together strips of loosely woven English wool bunting that were only 12 or 18 inches wide. The flag contained over 400 yards of fabric and each of the fifteen stars measured twenty-six inches across from tip to tip. The result was an enormous American flag that could be seen for several miles from the Fort. When the British attacked Baltimore, Francis Scott Key saw Mary's flag while he was held captive on a British ship and was inspired to

compose the poem that became the national anthem of the United States.

The \$574 she was paid for making the Star-Spangled Banner and the smaller storm flag was more than most Baltimoreans of the time earned in a year. One of the most important artifacts at the Smithsonian, this flag is undergoing an \$18 million restoration and will be the centerpiece of the redesigned National Museum of American History.

Did Mary and her family ever think that their handiwork would be so revered and inspire millions of Americans almost 200 years after they made it with their own hands? Did Mary have any idea how treasured her work would become and how it would be a symbol of freedom and hope for generations of Americans?

Do **you** realize how inspiring your work is to others and will be to your posterity? Do **you** have any idea how talented your hands are and how treasured your handiwork will be someday? You are wonderful ladies with amazing and inspiring gifts to offer each other now, and your work will continue to inspire many others to come.

MARCH ~ Tactical Training

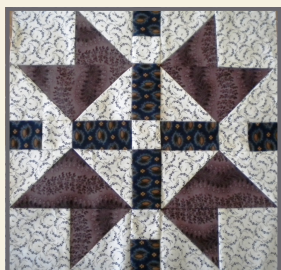
"I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'VE BEEN TOLD
PAPER-PIECING'S THE WAY TO GO!"

Drill Sergeant Deonn will lead us in the
"FOOTSTEPS" of paper piecing that will help us to

achieve accurate, detailed shapes in quilt blocks
with this creative "piece-by-number" method.

Report for duty next Thursday, March 3rd, 2011,
7:00 p.m., AMBank Conference Room.

See you there!



H V Q Guild Quilt 2011

February's block is the Continental. All patterns and
information is available for guild members on the guild
website www.hebervalleyquilters.com/members-only.php.



Make a comment, win a prize!!

Check out our guild Blog online which is updated OFTEN, even weekly! Subscribe to this blog to receive emails automatically when updates occur. Share a comment which will enter your name in monthly drawings at guild meetings.

<http://hebervalleyquilters.blogspot.com>

Finishing Bee

REMINDER: Participants in the Finishing Bee should report to Sergeant Bethany with your finished project for February, and to receive your next mission. Those who failed to complete the previous mission will donate a RED fat quarter to the pool.

Round Robin Group

REMINDER: Round Robin participants should bring back their Round 1 quilts to trade for the next border. Please report to Staff Sergeant Cat to receive your next assignment.

C h e c k l i s t

PLEASE BRING:

- Round Robin quilt with Round 1 border attached and ready to trade*
- Finishing Bee Finished UFO or a RED Fat Quarter*
- Sew & Tell including the Continental HVQ Guild Quilt Block*
- Quilted Nametag
- \$25 for Quilt Retreat (\$20 if only attending part of the time)*

* (if participating)