Keizer Merchant’s Quilt on Display at Chamber

In 1978, the Keizer Creative Art Association (now commonly known as the Keizer Art Association), in conjunction with the Keizer Merchant’s association (now known as the Keizer Chamber of Commerce) held a fundraising drive. The fundraising was silent bid auction for a quilt depicting 72 of Keizer’s businesses. The quilt was made by members of the KCAA.

On October 22, 1978 at McNary Restaurant, the winning bidder was announced. It was Lois Nelson, owner of Keizer Retirement. Since that time, Lois Nelson moved over to the Oregon Coast at Waldport. The quilt was left with her family in the area. In the intervening years the family moved and the quilt ended up being part of a donation to the Goodwill here in Keizer.

Then, in June 2004, Darlene Williams of Keizer stopped by Goodwill and just happened to notice the quilt and saw all the businesses in squares. She bought it for $24.99. She decided that it had to be donated to the Keizer Chamber, or the Keizer Heritage Museum. On her way to the Keizer Heritage Community Center, she stopped for lunch and afterwards opened her fortune cookie. It read, “Be charitable. It will be appreciated.” She knew that was a sign. Darlene met with Chamber and Keizer Heritage representatives and donated the quilt to the Museum.

At that time, very little could be found out about the quilt. The Chamber had some information that it had been put together to raise funds for the start of the Art Association. Even those businesses who were on the quilt could not remember the whole story.

Then in September of 2007, the Keizer Heritage Museum received a letter from Lois Nelson. The information had finally made its way to her. In her letter, she regrets the inadvertent donation to Goodwill but is glad that it has a home in the Keizer Heritage Museum. In her letter, Lois enclosed copies of newspaper articles, the Keizer Merchants Assoc. newsletters, Keizer Creative Art Assoc. solicitation letters, and even the invitation to the drawing, plus the receipt for the $1001 winning bid and membership card.

Due to the size of the quilt, the Museum had been unable to find a suitable location to hang the quilt in full until the Chamber located their office to the expanded space at Keizer Station. The quilt now hangs over the concierges desk and visitors are encouraged to visit the still open businesses displayed on the quilt.
Keizer quilt auctioned

Marge Rush holds a corner of a quilt made by Keizer Creative Art Association members to commemorate Keizer's 100th anniversary.

Each square represents the sign or logo of one of the community's 72 businesses.

Lois Nelson, owner of Keizer Retirement Center and a member of the Keizer Merchants' Association, bid a successful $1,001 for the quilt at an auction Sunday.

It is on display in the foyer of McNary Golf Club and will be on exhibit during the coming months at other Keizer businesses.

Statesman photo by Ron Cooper