



Rhonda & Nancy Mahoney in the Martingale Booth May 2016 International Quilt Market, Salt Lake City, UT

Love that Split Star block on the cover! The great news is that you can make this block too. Nancy Mahoney has to be the hardest working women in the quilting industry and her 14th book <u>Learn</u> <u>to Paper Piece</u> is now available at your favorite quilt shop.

Nancy's paper piecing techniques remove the mystery to sewing upside down & backwards, well, that is my explanation. Recently, I was delighted to meet with Nancy to learn a few paper piecing tricks. From our private conversation, I knew I was getting a master lesson in paper piecing. She shared her favorite paper piecing paper brand, favorite tweezer and timing for the paper removal. I so wish I had read this book before my initial journey into paper piecing. Paper piecing is fun & addictive and Nancy's techniques shorten the learning curve. Her instructions are succinct, understandable and heighten paper piecing. Save yourself hours of paper picking time in front of the TV, and learn from the best.

Nancy has an aggressive teaching schedule. My hope is that you learn from her book and soon take one of Nancy's classes from your local quilt shop or enroll in her upcoming #learntopaperpiecequiltalong. Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit Too!

Rhonda Pierce Spokesperson, SCHMETZneedles.com In this Issue:

Sewing Star: Nancy Mahoney

Hardest Working Woman in Quilt Industry

Page 3

Needle Points: Microtex/Sharp

Page 12

Cover: Nancy Mahoney

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There's an App for That!















## Nancy Mahoney

Nancy Mahoney (nancymahoney.com) has a reputation for being the hardest working woman in the quilting industry. Nancy has been making quilts for over 25 years and her best guess is that she has designed and created over 600 quilts. SO FAR. Her quilts have been featured in over 175 national and international quilt magazines — with more in the works.

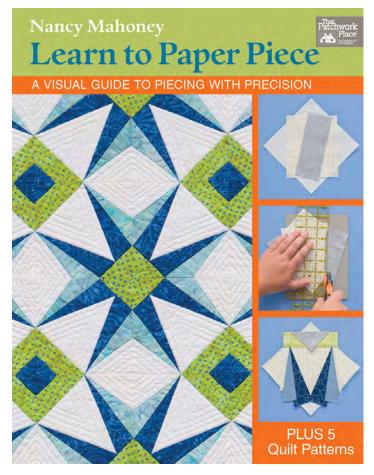
A snapshot of Nancy Mahoney's quilt world achievements:

- Created over 100 quilt patterns for various fabric manufacturers.
- Designed 15 fabric collections for Clothworks and P&B Textiles, including eight 30's reproduction collections.

- She is one of the most popular teachers in the quilting world. In 2016, Nancy will teach at more than 30 quilt events.
- Authored 14 books, her most recent, <u>Learn to Paper Piece A</u>
  <u>Visual Guide to Piecing with Precision</u>.

When asked how her incredible quilting career started, Nancy thoughtfully said, "I have always loved sewing. As a kid of 7 or 8, the sewing machine was in my bedroom and I loved playing with fabric and sewing pieces together. I made garments for many years and spent 10 years doing tailoring and alterations for a department store in Boise, Idaho.





Nancy's new book published by Martingale.

In 1976, I saw a magazine showing vintage quilts, with patterns. I took a class and learned how to hand piece and hand quilt. At that time, cotton fabrics were scarce and we didn't have rotary cutting equipment. But I was hooked."

In 1991, Nancy got a job at Clothworks, a Seattle fabric manufacturer — and that was the moment quilting changed from a hobby to a career.

Nancy started attending Quilt Market as a Clothworks employee. Part of her job was to make quilts to display in the booth (using the new fabric collections). Her first cover girl quilt was published in 1996 on the cover of *Quilting Today*. Since then, her quilts have been featured in over 200 national and international quilt magazines, and she's had 15 quilts on the cover of various magazines.

Nancy loves all styles of quilts — from appliqué to paper pieced — from easy to challenging. She likes to try different techniques, and her quilts often combine different design elements. For example, she might add a little appliqué to the border of a pieced quilt. Because so many of her quilts are designed to feature specific fabrics, she creates the design FIRST — then determines the best method or technique to achieve the finished quilt.

A turning point in Nancy's quilt journey was when she became an Electric Quilt artist. The Electric Quilt is a quilt design program. She has been testing and using their product since it was DOS based. She describes it "like a simplified version of Photoshop combined with Illustrator. You can work in layers, experiment with fabric selection and colors. EQ has tools for coloring your blocks, or you can scan in a fabric,





Nancy enjoys meeting quilters around the world.

import it into EQ, drop it into the quilt, and see how the quilt will look before you make that first cut."

When Nancy and her husband moved from Seattle to Florida in 2001, she didn't want another 9-5 job. She decided the time was right to start her own business. She had earned a reputation in the industry for being a creative quilt designer who understood deadlines. She had also developed important contacts and relationships with fabric companies and quilting magazines, so she started to submit fabric designs, quilt patterns and magazine articles.

Her first book, **<u>Rich Traditions</u>**, was released in 2002, and that's when she added teaching and lecturing to her workload. Her classes, like her books, are well-organized, with clear instructions and illustrations

— always with fun anecdotes. Nancy's goal is always to make sure her readers/students have a good time, learn something new and create a quilt they will enjoy for many years. Fourteen books and hundreds of classes down the road, Nancy is well known for developing simple techniques that create dramatic results. Her 2016 teaching calendar is completely booked. Nancy will do more than 30 events and be away from home for over 100 days.

Where does she get the inspiration for a new quilt? That depends on what the quilt is for. If she's been asked to design a quilt using a specific fabric collection, then the fabric is the inspiration for the design. On the other hand, when she doesn't have to use a specific fabric collection, the inspiration comes from playing with different blocks and colors. She uses EQ7 to design all her quilts so it's easy to











A glimpse into Nancy's sewing home.

change a block/design until it evolves into something she likes. She loves to play with colors and fabrics to add the finishing touches.

Nancy says, "I love collecting vintage quilts, and I have about 150 vintage quilts and quilt tops, plus lots and lots of blocks and partial quilt tops. My vintage quilts are often an inspiration for my own quilts. I enjoy recreating a block from a 1930s quilt using today's fabrics and techniques.

We all have a bucket list of quilts we want to make. My philosophy is, if I own a quilt I can cross it off my bucket list and don't have to actually make it. We'll never know the story behind most quilts. However, I have a Basket quilt in my collection that is dated. All the baskets are different fabrics and each block is signed in permanent ink. All the blocks appear to be the same handwriting, so I think one person wrote the names on

the blocks, which was very common at that time. The name on one block is Maggie B. Walker and I think she made the quilt, because it's inscribed in the upper-right corner 'Lizzie Walker from Sister Maggie, June 9, 1884."

When Nancy became interested in quilts from the 30s, she also started collecting patterns that quilters clipped from newspapers during that time. They could send a dime to a clearing house for a full-size pattern. Those patterns and newspaper clippings became the inspiration for three of Nancy's books. The fabrics in vintage quilts have been the starting point for all of her fabric collections.

So, how did Nancy Mahoney earn the reputation as the hardest working woman in the quilt industry? Here's her schedule: When home she is at her desk by 8:30 AM, doing social media and answering





Fabrics galore in Nancy's sewing home.

emails. The rest of the day is spent working on new patterns, writing articles for magazines, or editing books for Martingale (she is a technical editor). At 4:00 PM, she takes a break to fix/eat dinner. After dinner, she sews on her Bernina until 8:30 PM. It's a long day, and she doesn't have any employees. Since she and her husband moved to Georgia, she has one entire floor in the house devoted to her business. That includes one room for fabric, one room for quilts and class prep, and three adjoining rooms for her office/studio.

Laughing, she says, "I got just what I wanted -- NOT A 9-5 job!! I pretty much work all day, every day, seven days a week. I can do the technical editing if I'm on a plane or sitting in an airport or motel."

Nancy's constant companion in her sewing studio is Prince. He's a 35-year old Umbrella Cockatoo (also called a Great White Cockatoo). She and her husband bought Prince at Pike Place Market when he was three years old. He could live to be 100! Prince loves to help Nancy sew. He likes to remove pins ... usually before she sews the seam! Nancy says Prince is the perfect pet. He is like a cat because he likes a lot of affection...but, like a dog because he wants to follow her around the house.

Nancy has seen many changes in quilting since she began. "Tools are so much better now than when I started. Can you even imagine making a quilt without a rotary cutter? The fabrics have changed, too, both in style and color. In the beginning, the colors were more muted, homespun was popular, there was a lot of brown. Now the colors are brighter and





Nancy's constant companion, Prince, making sure every stitch is correct.

cleaner. Batiks are still very popular, and you see a lot of white in today's quilts. The techniques for making quilts have changed too. When I started, the standard was hand quilting. Then quilters started machine quilting and long-arm machines came into play. Electric Quilt was a game changer. It's always exciting to attend Quilt Market and see what's next on the horizon."

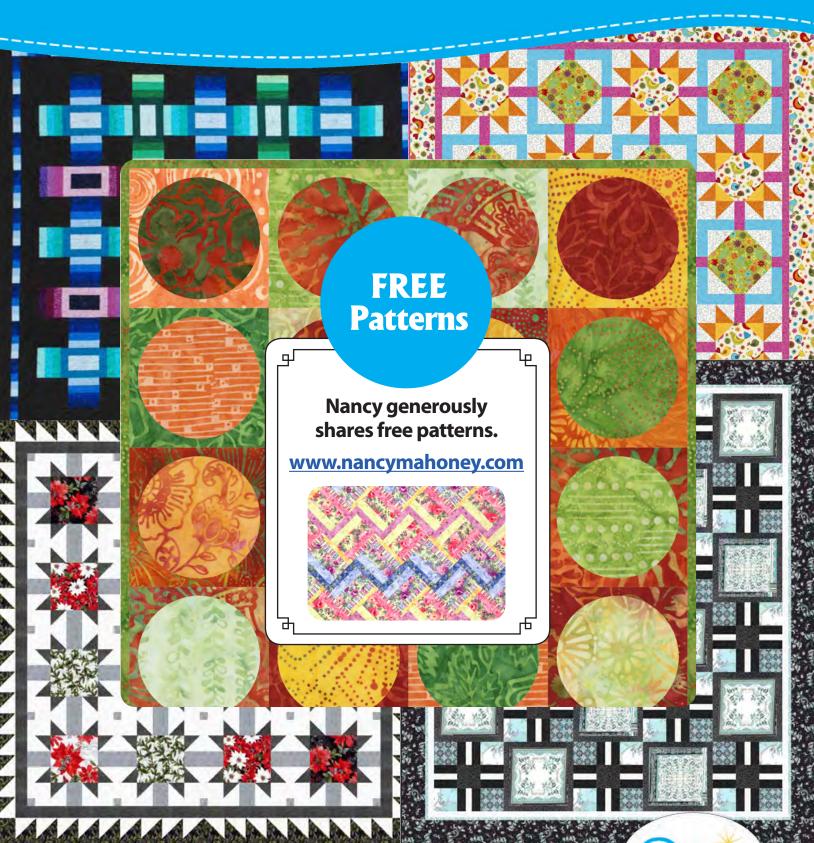
Adele hears songs in her head, and she must sing them. J.K. Rowling hears stories in her head, and she must tell them. Nancy Mahoney's brain is full of quilt squares and techniques, and there seems to be no limit to how many quilt patterns and books she will create.

If you are in need of a little quilting inspiration — visit Nancy's website (nancymahoney.com) where she has made hundreds of her quilt patterns available as free downloads. Her energy and enthusiasm for this hobby-turned-job is legendary. She is living that Confucius bit of wisdom "do what you love, and you'll never work another day in your life."



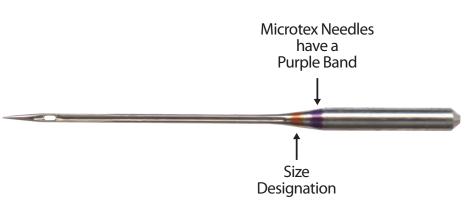












## **SCHMETZ Microtex Needle**

The SCHMETZ Microtex is generically known as a Sharp. This needle has a very slim acute point. In other words, a very fine point. Because the point is so fine, it also needs to be replaced more often. That's right! Needles don't last forever. Replace the needle when you hear a little click at stitch formation or your stitches become uneven.

Use SCHMETZ Microtex with Micro fibers, polyester, silk, foils, fake leather, batiks, quilting cotton. The very thin acute point creates beautiful topstitching and perfectly straight stitches for piecing quilts. Use when precision is paramount.

Sizes: 60/8, 90/10, 80/12, 90/14, 100/16, 110/18

Sew SCHMETZ!





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