

Mel Peters - Featured Quilter 2025
Sierra Mountain Quilters Assoc

The Sierra Mountain Quilters are pleased to name Mary-Louise “Mel” Peters the SMQA Featured Quilter for her long involvement in our guild and her superior quilting over a long period of time.

Mel Peters’ home in a small North Fork neighborhood sits in a little valley of oak trees. Her home is filled with quilts and family heirlooms alongside contemporary furniture. Her quilting studio is uncluttered, light, and roomy with built-in cabinets that hide what can be assumed to be a sizable stash and sewing tools. Mel is an extraordinarily talented quilter. She describes herself as a piecer but also does lovely appliqué. Her sense of color and her exquisite attention to detail insures that points are pointy, corners match and the curves are rounded, and all of it works together to make her quilts noteworthy and a joy for a quilter’s eyes.

Mel has been eyeing quilting since her voluntary transfer from UC Berkeley to the new Cooperative Extension Regional Office located at the Kearney Agricultural Center in Parlier, CA in 1988. She has always been crafty, keeping her hands busy with crochet, knitting and needle point but the window display at the Mennonite Quilt Center in 1993 enticed her to try something new and she never looked back. Mel joined the Kings River Quilt Guild where she remains a member. Mel joined Sierra Mountain Quilters in 2001 when she and Dick moved to North Fork.

While Mel likes piecing most she enjoys most aspects of quilting and is presently hand quilting an antique quilt handed down by her mother-in-law. She will machine quilt smaller projects herself, but most often sends her quilts to her favorite long-armor. She has displayed her quilts at Best of the Valley in Lindsay where she won a sponsored award for best appliqué and at our 2023 SMQA quilt show where she also won for best appliqué, Southwest Memories.

Raised in Fresno, Mel met her husband Dick on a blind date in Berkeley where he was a tennis professional. Married sixty years, they lived in Oakland 25 years before Mel accepted the transfer to Parlier. Upon retirement in 1993 Mel and Dick kept busy with their 9 acre orchard growing plums and apricots. Leisure retirement came when they moved to North Fork.

The Peters have a summer home in Wilsonia, at 7000 feet elevation in Kings Canyon National Park. Quilting became a community event there with an annual summer retreat organized by Mel and held in the Wilsonia Clubhouse. Mel's SMQA Quilting Circle Bits and Pieces has also enjoyed many retreats in Wilsonia.

Meet Mary-Louise "Mel" Peters and see her beautiful quilts at the Sierra Mountain Quilters Association Quilt Show "Mountain Magic" May 17-18, 2025 at the Oakhurst Community Center. Oakhurst is the southern gateway to Yosemite National Park.