

## Sewing together stories in Barry's Bay



Ethan enjoys the sights and textures of the Quilters Curve, the primary sponsor of the Telling Tales through Quilts installation at the South of 60 Railway Station, in Barry's Bay. Photo submitted by Quilters Curve

### By Sarah Vance

Cultural narratives continue to be a theme of the arts community, as the "Tales Told Through Quilts" exhibition gets underway at the South of 60 Arts Centre and at the Madawaska Library in Barry's Bay.

"The partnership programs between the library and the arts centre reflect how beneficial it can be for children to engage in reading, arts and culture at an early age," said Karen Filipkowski, the library CEO. "This year the arts centre exhibits are about telling stories through art, which is a perfect partnership for the library."

From the South of 60 Railway Station Gallery, the installation, which runs until April 30, includes a vibrant collection of hand crafted quilts and textiles created by Madawaska Valley and Renfrew area artists. "I love working with fibre and textiles because they are tactile," said Catherine Timm, an artist whose piece called 'Bark' is part of the show. "I am free to explore the connections between process and materials, and the way that they relate to my subject matter."

Telling Tales through Quilts has been curated by Anya Gansterer and Danielle Paul in such a way as to combine many stories, which are as diverse and varied as the artists whose works form the installation.

Eden Thurston's 'Cavenish Shore' blends many varied textures and a range of pastel colors in order to represent the motion of a shoreline, while Jude Crossland's 'Sow's Ear to a Silk Purse' breaks away from traditional patterns with colorful fabrics sewn into lines of flight.

Adult education is a component of this partnership, with artists such as Ann Dunlap leading workshops where participants create mixed media fibre sculptures.

Quilts tell the histories of the artists who fabricated them. Over the years, they have been used as social and political pieces, a fact which makes them significant archives in the evolution of cultural narratives. In North America for example, quilting was used as a trail marker by those who sought asylum in Canada through the Underground Railway in the mid 1800's.

"The South of 60 Quilt Show is always beautifully done," said Lisa Strack and Cathy Drevniok, who run Quilters Cove, a fabric shop which is sponsoring the event. "Anya and Danielle have done a wonderful job presenting quilts from the community."

Quilting and needlework have seen a resurgence in the Madawaska Valley. Quilter's Cove, a little shop in Combermere, has begun offering sewing classes for adults and children. "We run weekly sewing classes and our tote course has been very popular," said Lisa. "Our monthly classes are full at this moment, but we will always entertain the idea of starting another class."

And it's not just amazing quilt work you can find at the show, there are also [quilt patterns](#), tips, and memberships to their monthly classes available for those interested. If you've ever shown interest in starting your own quilting hobby then this is the perfect show

to go to if you want to see what's possible and learn how you can get started.

Upcoming projects under the Telling Tales partnership include a "School's Out" children's program, scheduled on April 22, which will see youth participating in a walking excursion between the station and the library, a tour of the gallery, then a chance to create their own story using fabric crafts.

Information about these and other upcoming Madawaska Valley projects can be found at <http://www.southof60.com>.