

The Grand Quilt Guild Block of the Month May 2022

Sunbonnet Sue

Presented by Lorrie Taylor



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Go.SunbonnetSue/Accuquilt.com



We couldn't present traditional quilt blocks from 25 years ago without including Sunbonnet Sue. She is so epic, and the following article from classicssewingmagazine.com, July 2016, by Janet Gilbert* gives us a brief history of her rise to stardom.

A Brief History of Sunbonnet Sue*

By [Janet Gilbert](#), July 6, 2016

Known by many names including Dutch Doll, Bonnie Bonnet, "Sun Bonnet Baby," and undoubtedly others, Sunbonnet Sue is a textile image that has been popular for centuries. Widely portrayed in quilts, she is most often-depicted working, playing, and sometimes getting into trouble.

While sunbonnet-clad little girls existed in quilt patterns of the 1800s, Sunbonnet Sue's rise to folk image fame began in the early 1900s. Bertha Corbett Melcher published a book, "The Sunbonnet Babies," in the year 1900, in which she depicted young girls with their faces hidden by bonnets. In the published applique patterns that followed, Sue is typically shown in profile, wearing a large bonnet and an over-sized pinafore dress, similar to the illustrations in Bertha's books.

Janet Gilbert article (continued)

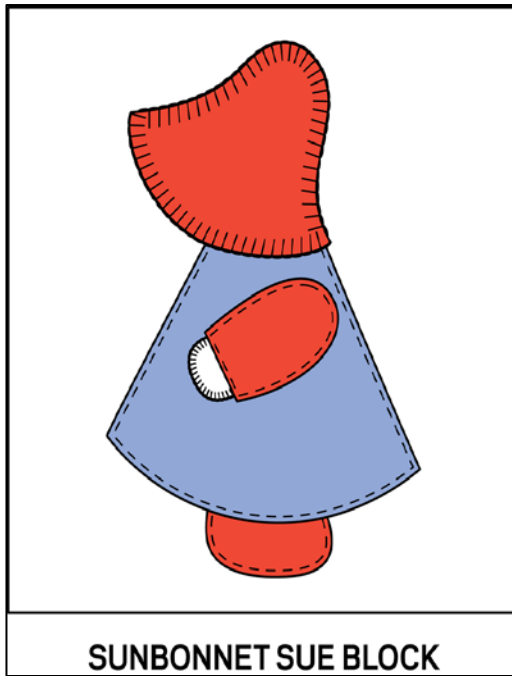
Ladies Art Patts was reportedly one of the first to issue Sunbonnet Sue appliques in 1900, and they later became available in catalogues. McCall's pattern company also issued a version of Sue, available until the 1930s.

Sewists were enamored with the simple, happy scenes of Sue's life, shadowed by her ever-present bonnet. During the years of the Great Depression, Sue's popularity reportedly skyrocketed as people yearned for reminders of simpler times.

Ruby Short McKim, of McKim Studios designed Sunbonnet Sue patterns for a syndicated column that appeared in over 900 newspapers across the United States.

Sue has remained popular over the years, appearing in quilts and even in clothing!

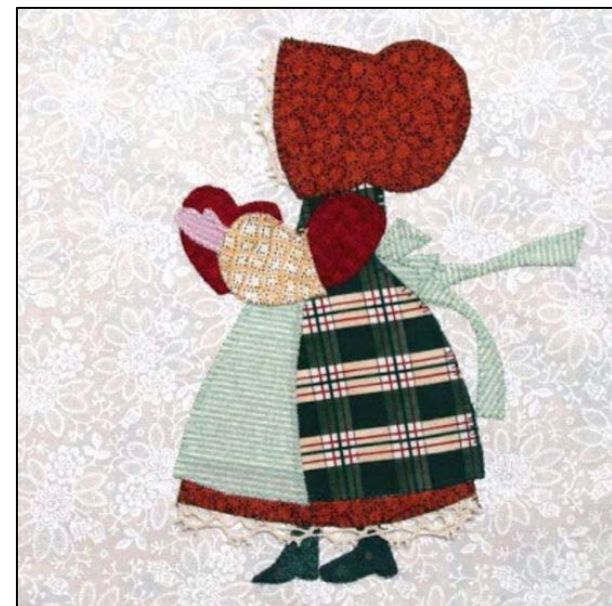
Let's look at some of her transitions over the years, to more active little girls with different hats, and even little boys with hats and fishing rods. Many modernizations of this classic have occurred over the years by talented fabric artists who crave to make him/her/them more relevant to today with bright colours and active youngsters.



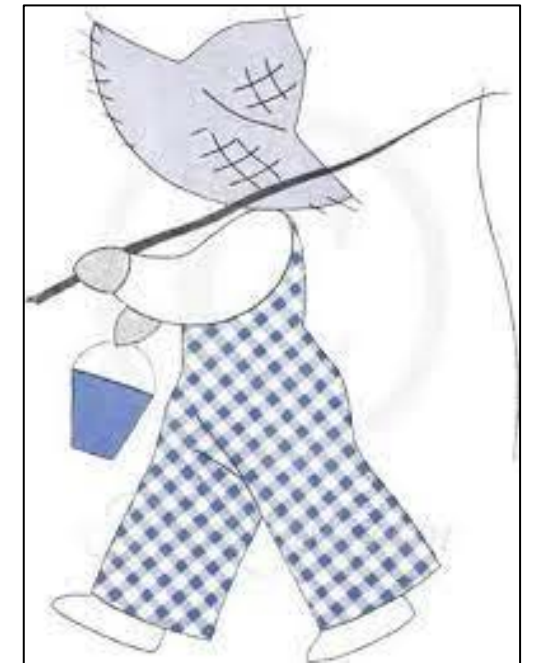
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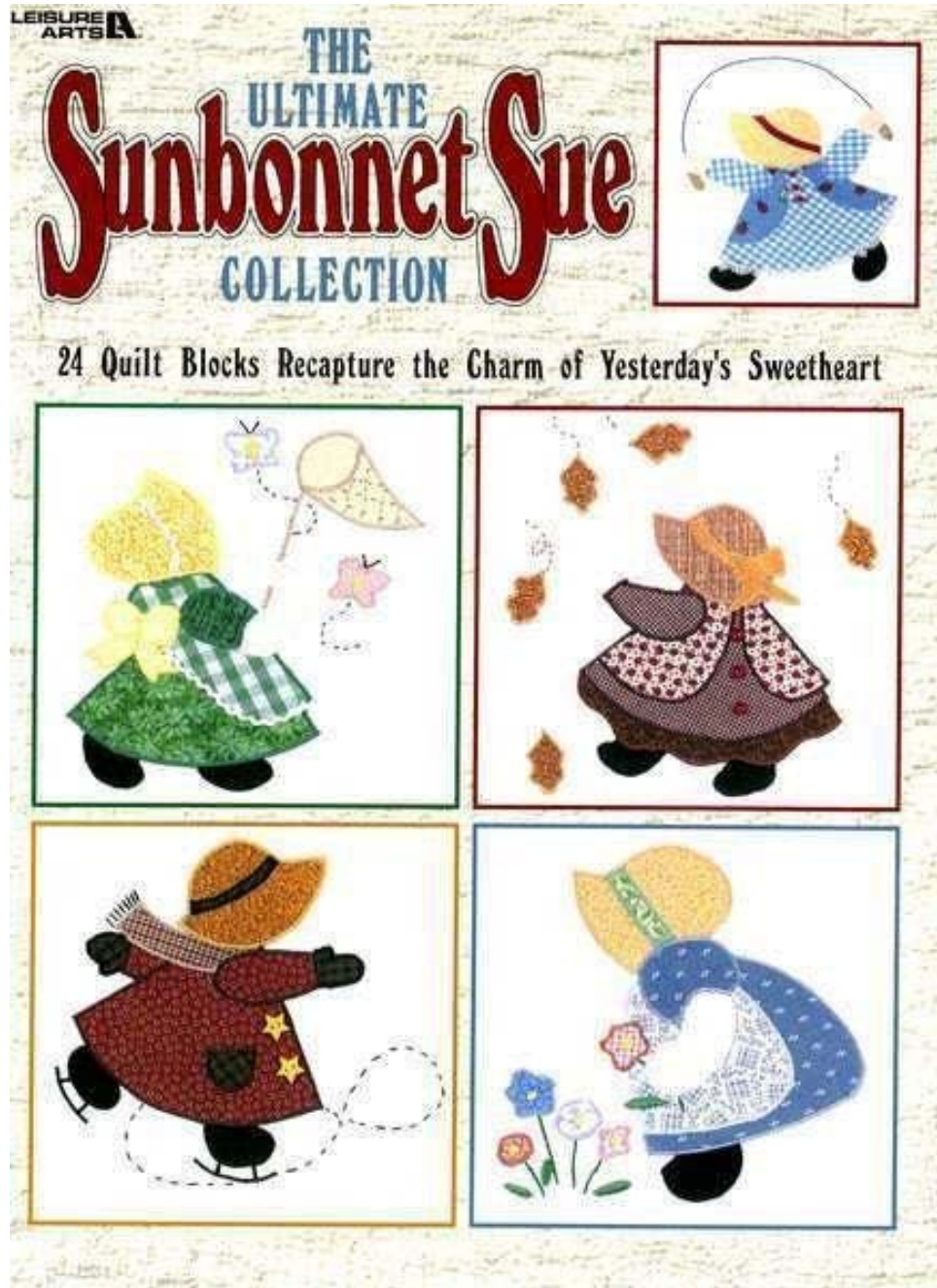


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applique patterns

All the above images found on Pinterest



There have been so very many patterns and books printed over the years. They also appear in liquid embroidery and thread embroidery patterns.

This book pictured left was published on Jan of 2000 by Leisure Arts and is still available on Amazon.ca, both new and used.

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Sunbonnet Sue: Pick a

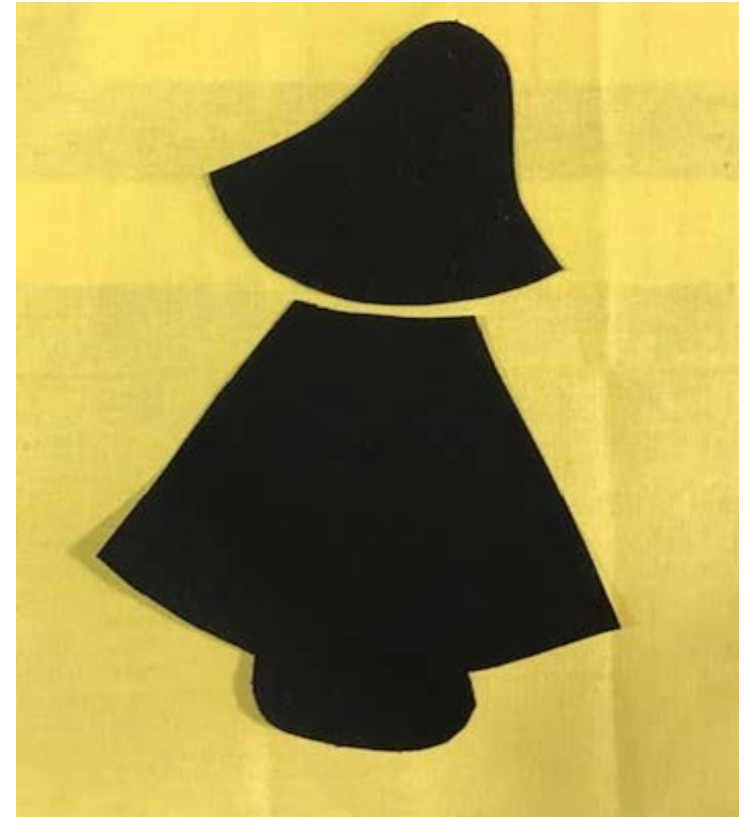


From traditional to more modern, these quilts represent lots of different poses and activities that can be created with this basic block.

I chose this block for our final Block of the Month because I knew it would be a big challenge for me. First, because I shy away from applique, and second because I don't really care for this block (It is a bit too old-fashioned for my taste).



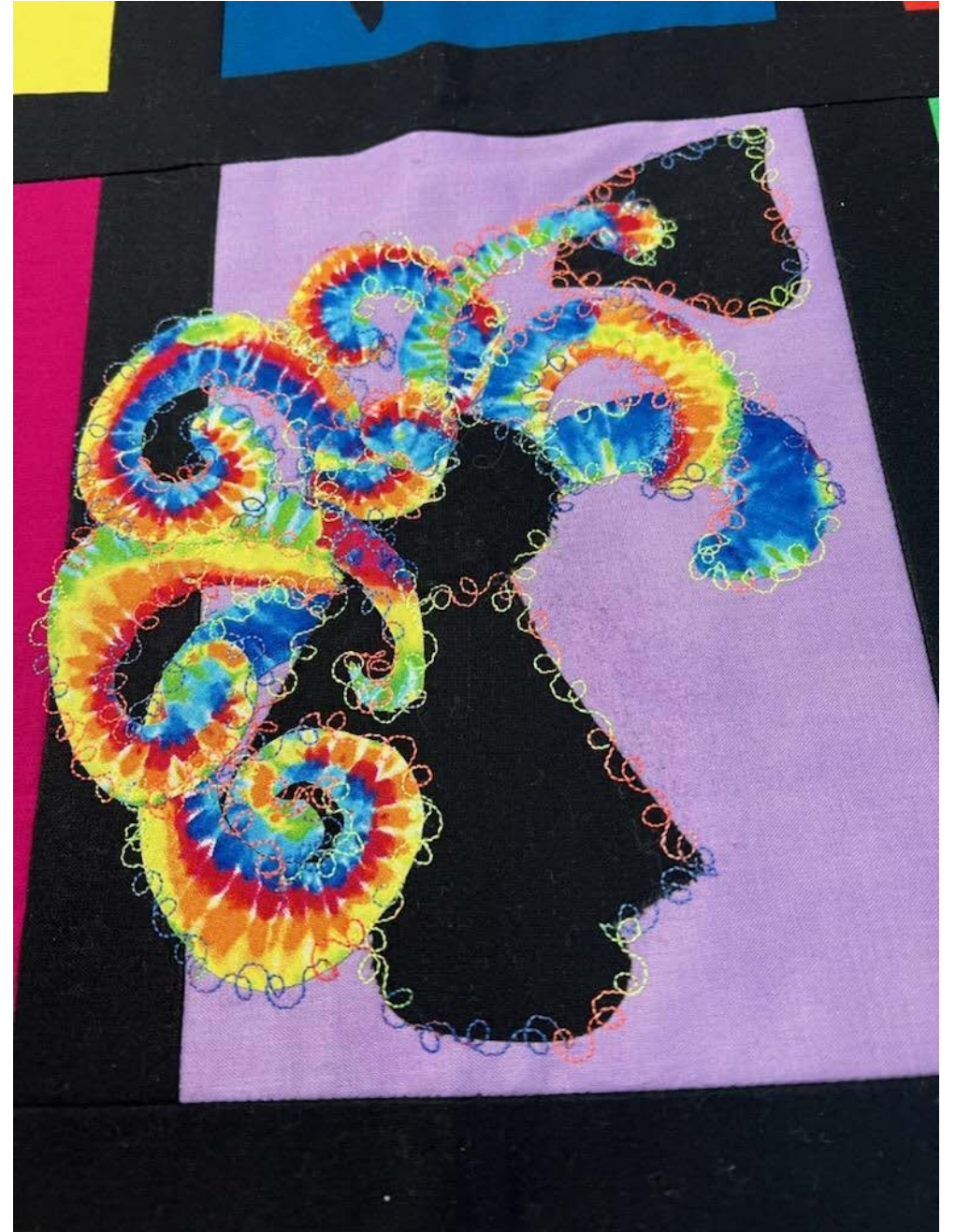
I knew I would have to reinvent this block with colour and movement to create a version that matched the energy and creativity of my six grandchildren. I decided to start with black silhouettes.



But still, I was not happy with just the two colours on the block on the previous page, so I started to think.....what if the wind blew off her hat and her hair sprung out?



This picture of one of my granddaughters, Scarlett Taylor, is my inspiration for this idea.

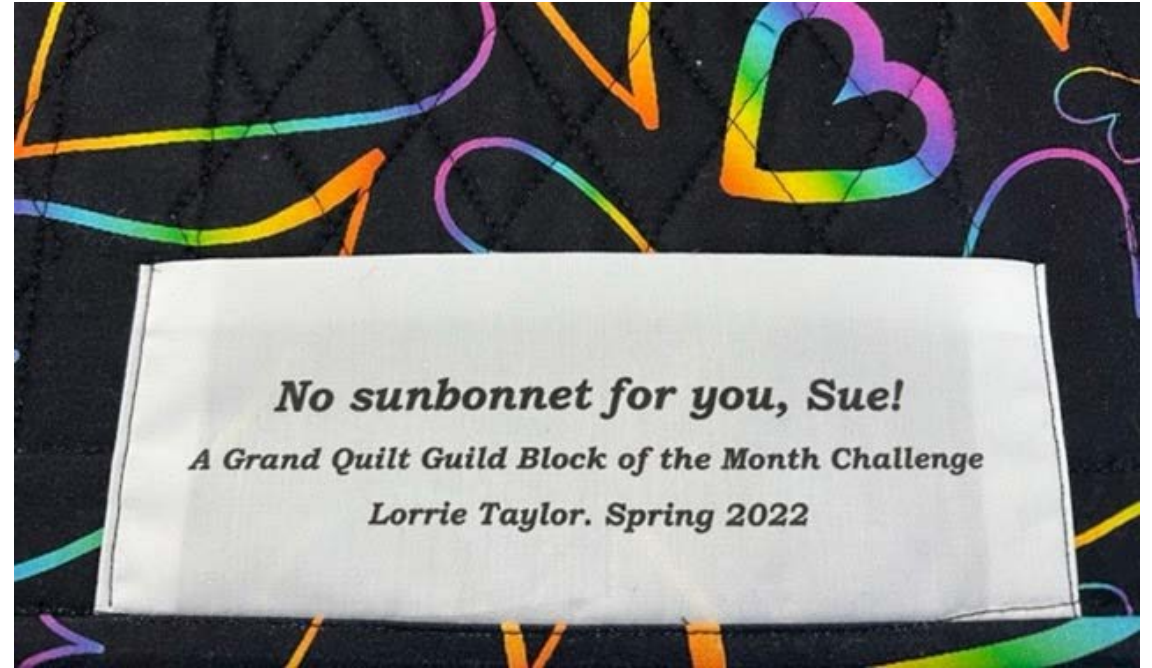
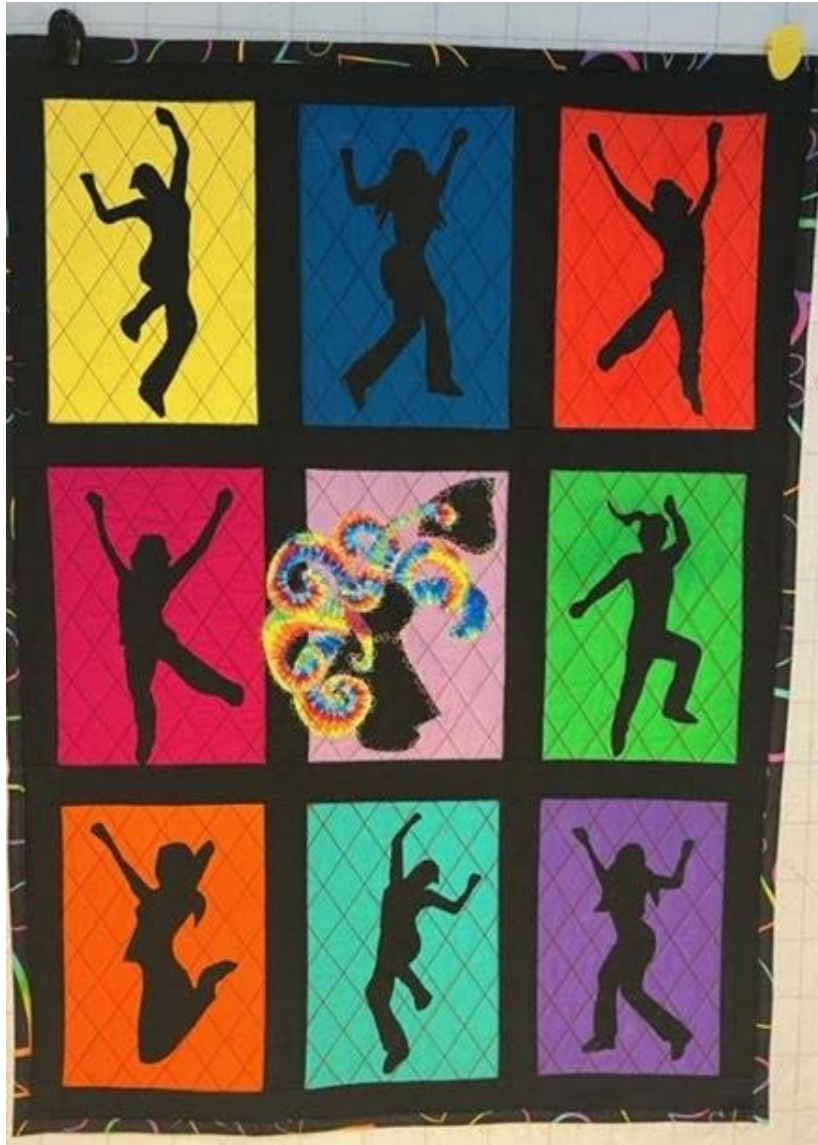


Now I was on a roll. I looked for some more silhouettes of active children jumping, dancing, tumbling, paying sports and having a blast!



I machine quilted the wall hanging and used a grid to represent the children playing behind the schoolyard fence.

And here is my finished wall hanging.



Finished Size is about 24 inches wide by 40 inches high

And just in case you are worried that the traditional Sunbonnet Sue is losing popularity, Millie spotted her on Pinterest, heading to Paducah...

