



THE RIBBON

1985

**“What I Cannot Bear to Think of As Lost
Forever in a Nuclear War.”**

The idea of tying a peace ribbon around the Pentagon first occurred to Justine Merritt of Denver, Colorado in 1982. She envisioned a ribbon encircling the Pentagon as a visual symbol reminding the nation “we love the earth and it’s peoples.” In August 1985, on the 40th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Justine’s vision materialized (pardon the pun.). A Peace Ribbon was constructed of fifteen miles of fabric, pieced together in 36” by 18” segments. Women and men, youngsters and senior citizens would create their own unique and valued symbols in batik, appliqué, embroidery, needlepoint, quilting, silk screen, knitting, painting, crayoning ... each piece conveying thoughts and emotions concerning world peace, ecology, poverty, justice, human rights, and women’s issues, just to list a few. Each individual panel was subsequently sewn together. The completed Peace Ribbon, supported and carried by women from all over the USA, stretched around Pentagon, trailed across the Potomac and twined about the Capitol.

Members of HBC created 28 peace panels under the guidance of Jeanne Townsend.

A memory from Arlene Gallipeau, “*The Peace Ribbon adventure was something! It was a time when concern was high about nuclear weapons. We were asked to make a panel that showed what we would miss in case of a nuclear attack. For instance, mine showed a tree, flowers, and green grass. Pat Brotz, Jan Gulick and I took the bus to D.C. to participate in wrapping all the panels together that would encircle the Pentagon as a protest against nuclear weapons. It was a scary time for the world! A lot of the American Baptist Women’s Groups got involved in the effort.*” As a side line, Arlene recalls, “*It was so hot in D.C. I can still remember the mushed PB & J sandwich in my backpack.*”

Watch for further information, pictures and history on display in January.

Jeanne Townsend

PRAY FOR PEACE

**CELEBRATION OF
LIFE**

**PROTECT THE
EARTH**

PIECES OF PEACE

**OPENING A NEW
PATH TO PEACE**

