

Dear BERNINA Dealer,

We will be sending "A Moment from Alex Anderson" to our newsletter list. Below is your preview of the December 2006 edition that will be sent out this week (Wednesday and Thursday nights).

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Dear BERNINA Web Site Visitor, Let's hear it for Bernina, and I'm not just talking Bernina USA! This past month, eighty national teachers (both quilt and garment makers) were invited to the home of Bernina in Steckborn, Switzerland. We have known for a year that Bernina was treating us to a trip of a lifetime, but until it happened, the reality hadn't really sunk in.

First off, you know how much I love Bernina, both the machines and the company, but now I have an incredibly deeper appreciation for the entire operation. Did you know that Mr. Ueltschi is the fourth generation owner of Bernina? Actually, BERNINA is the only family-owned sewing machine company and when we talk about tradition, we can't separate the family's history with its commitment to quality and innovation.

I arrived late in the afternoon and scarcely had minutes to change into something appropriate for the opening party at Mr. Ueltschi's home. Both he and his beautiful wife held a fabulous cocktail party followed by a delicious dinner at a downtown restaurant. The family home sits up on a hill overlooking the Bernina factory as well as Lake Constance. The food was so good and the wine served was made from his home grown grapes. We were a raucous group and enjoyed every moment of it despite the jet lag. It was a pretty neat way to start the first day! The next morning we were divided into small groups and got a first hand look of the factory. It was INCREDIBLE! First off, you could eat off the floor. I am not suggesting that we did, but that is how clean the factory was. I would have expected all sorts of "robotic" action, but this was simply not the case. The assembly came from trained hands, putting each little metal piece into place, thus building our dream machines. I was particularly struck by two young men (dare I say boys?) who were apprenticing to work on the machines, a two year process! Each step is documented. If there is a machine with a problem, Bernina can figure out exactly where, what and how it happened. All that data is linked to your serial number (so be sure to register your baby at www.berninawarranty.com!) I wish my Dad had could been there, he too would have loved it. In the afternoon we were delighted by Mr. Kuhn who presented an inside look explaining how different countries celebrate creativity, using their Bernina of course. It was really fascinating to realize that creativity is a God given instinct that we all enjoy. It is simply how we implement our creative desires.

Talk about creativity, a group of women called the Network Quilters came and shared their work with us. These women are German, Austrian and Swiss. They had studied under Nancy Crow and their work was amazing! They will be hosting a show at the Textile Museum in St. Gallen a few years from now and I promise it will be something to behold. I believe some of the national

teachers are talking about a return trip to see this exhibit.

Speaking of the Textile Museum, we took a bus trip there on Sunday and got private tours of an incredible exhibit by Akris. Akris is a Swiss clothing designer whose work is beautiful and classic. Any of his pieces I would love to own. Everyone in our group was spell bound by his creations. They encouraged us to touch and even try on the pieces!

Another super treat was a quilt lesson with Mariana Fruhalf. She is a German machine quilt artist whose work is out of this world. She prepared three lessons for us and was super fun to learn from. She didn't speak English, and although she had an interpreter, really it wasn't needed. She was as cute as a button and had us eating out of the palm of her hand.

I could go on and on, this is only a singlet of our trip. The experience was truly the best! I have had a lot of wonderful opportunities in my life and truly, this will remain as a top contenders. I assume, if you are receiving this e letter that you are a Bernina lover, as I. Rest assured that you have picked a SUPER product, made by a SUPER company. I can tell you first hand! To hear more about our most excellent adventure, please visit my web site, www.alexandersonquilts.com and listen to Podcast number 46, recorded in Germany. It's a little goofy, but helps capture the spirit of our journey. Congratulations Bernina, about to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the first Bernina branded machine - introduced to the world in 1932! It is a privilege and honor to be associated with you!

Until we meet,

Alex Anderson