

LORNA DOONE WAS BORN LINDA LOU SMALLEY in Aberdeen, South Dakota, in 1954. In November 1969, when she was just 15, she took a Greyhound bus to Minneapolis and stayed. (“I wasn’t a runaway; my mother knew where I was.”) She did some odd jobs, such as working in a moccasin factory, and occasionally went to school. Lorna Doone—a hippie friend gave her the nickname, and it stuck—happily became part of the local counterculture and music scene.

Lorna brought this pair of jeans with her when she moved to Minneapolis. Of course, they were not yet *this* pair of jeans, which changed over the years as she added more and more patches. In 2011 the Minnesota Historical Society acquired Lorna’s patchwork jeans for *The 1968 Exhibit* and, ultimately, for the Society’s collections. Here are some excerpts from a 2011 interview conducted with Lorna by the exhibit’s curator, Brian Horrigan.

“My stepfather gave me the jeans in 1968 when I was 14, and they fit me, so I started wearing them. . . . They started getting holes pretty soon, and so I’d patch the jeans with whatever I had laying around the apartments I rented over the years—I can’t even remember what some of them were. The colors were mostly red and orange and blue. My colors are generally pink, red (the blue kind), black, blue, and purple.

“I never patched anything that didn’t need it. All of those were necessary patches on the jeans. And in the end there weren’t any jeans left, practically, except around the waistband; it was all patches. I had to wear tights underneath them so you couldn’t see through them, because there were holes here and there where the sewing was stretched. They were very heavy to wear.

“This blue velvet with rhinestones—it’s the same as a ceiling I made for a VW van. Four people and three cats, we went out to California, first going through Texas, and it



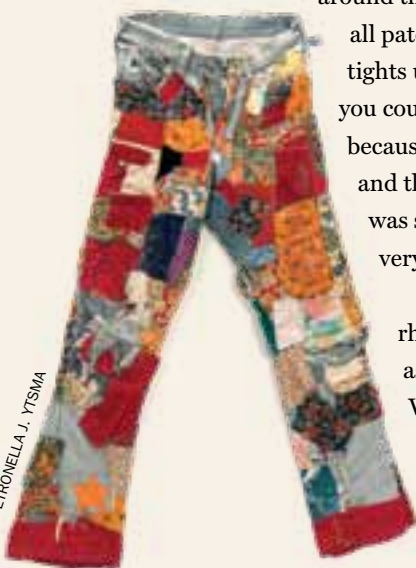
Lorna Doone (right) with friends in Minneapolis, about 1970 (COURTESY LORNA DOONE)

was so cold. But I made a ceiling out of a five-pointed star, and it had rhinestones in it, on blue velvet. And then I had satin and velvet rays going out from that; just fabrics I put together. But these are all by hand; this is all hand-sewn. As soon as I got holes I had to patch them up. They didn’t start out to be anything, they just grew organically, in a real sort of way.

“1968 is when I became more of a hippie. Especially after I left home; it was instant. I was still shy, of course. But in those days you could trust people and things were a lot more open. It was about personal transformation, and it just was so different. I remember hitchhiking around and people would pick me up and we’d smoke some pot and I could trust them. One guy asked me why I was going to college when I was hitchhiking around the country. And I said I went to college so I’d have things to think about when I got high.

“Back in those days, like in 1968, you could be considered weird and a hippie if you wore, like moccasins, or if you wore a jean jacket. I mean, you didn’t have to look that much different to attract attention from people back then.”

The 1968 Exhibit at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul runs from October 14, 2011, to February 20, 2012. For more information, visit <http://the1968exhibit.org>.



PETRONELLA J. YTSMA



Copyright of **Minnesota History** is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, or email articles, however, for individual use.

To request permission for educational or commercial use, [contact us](#).