

“STARS in the GARDEN”

Making the Clamshell Quilt Guild 2010 Raffle Quilt



In January 2009, around twenty members of the Clamshell Quilt Guild met at the Waterford Public Library, conference room to collaborate on ideas and patterns, and select a pattern for our 2010 Quilt Show Raffle Quilt. Everyone brought books, patterns, and pictures to look at. Two of us brought the same book, “Simple Blessings” by Kim Diehl. Many of us loved the pattern “Romance and Roses”, but were not thrilled with the appliqué boarder in it, and we knew it needed to be larger than a lap quilt. We set about searching for a new border, and settled on one from Elly Sienkiewicz’s book “Baltimore Elegance.” We chose the border pattern “Bette F. Augustine’s Stars and Flowers Border”, and Corner Stone Pattern, “Spun Rose.” We had a plan.

Kim Diehl’s “Romance and Roses” blocks were 6” square, and we drafted these to 9 inch finished blocks. Her first pieced border was made up of 2” finished “Square in a Square” blocks, and we drafted ours to be a 4” “Square in a Square block”. Elly Sienkiewicz’s Stars and Flowers border was 6” x 21”, and we enlarged it to 8” x 24”. This way everything we were putting together would be in 4” or 8” increments, and the quilt would be very proportional. The interior blocks were 9” each but we made them 8 blocks wide by 8 blocks long, and the interior quilt was 72” by 72”, also a multiple of 4” or 8”.

Our ever expanding group met every other Friday for 6 sessions, to pick fabrics, cut and piece interior blocks and border blocks; to make up 12 packets for the appliqué border pieces, as well as 4 packets for the corner stone pieces. Many of our members just do piecing, many do just appliqué, and a few did both. Everyone who participated really did their best to piece accurately and in a timely fashion, so as to get the top done quickly. We all agreed this traditional quilt should be hand quilted, and we knew this would take time.

We had a marking and basting quilting party at the East Lyme senior center. Within an hour we had quilting patterns selected for the entire quilt, and set about getting the job done. We had a basting frame brought in, and got the whole quilt basted and marked in 5 hours. Many hands do make light work.

I hand quilted the whole interior pieced star blocks over the late spring and summer. Many of us got together every other week for several months to finish hand quilting the borders, in a real old fashioned quilting bee. I really enjoyed the women's fellowship of these meetings.

Finally in late November 2009, the quilt was all done. One member made a two sided binding for our quilt; dark green for the front side and medium green for the back. It came out perfect and adds another beautiful dimension to the quilt.

We chose predominately a Moda Collection of fabrics called "Portobello Market", by 3 sisters for Moda. We chose a large off white floral for the backing fabric, and selected a 45 piece "Portobello Layer Cake" to have a nice variety for the center pieced blocks. The appliqué fabrics and borders were reproduction fabrics by Judy Rothermel that really coordinated nicely. The cream, mini-floral background fabric was from a "Quest for a Cure" collection by Ro Gregg, called "Rose Garden Tea for Two", by Northcott Fabrics.

We all felt the diversity of colors would appeal to many people. Whether you have blues, greens, reds, or pinks in your bedroom, we felt this quilt has something for everyone.

The quilt top finished, measured 96" by 96", but after all the hand quilting, it measures approximately 93" by 93". This would fit a Queen size bed with a 16" drop on each side, or a King size bed with a 9" drop on both sides.

Tara Lynn Thornton

And all the raffle quilt committee members