

HAPPINESS IS QUILTING

JANET DEGROFF

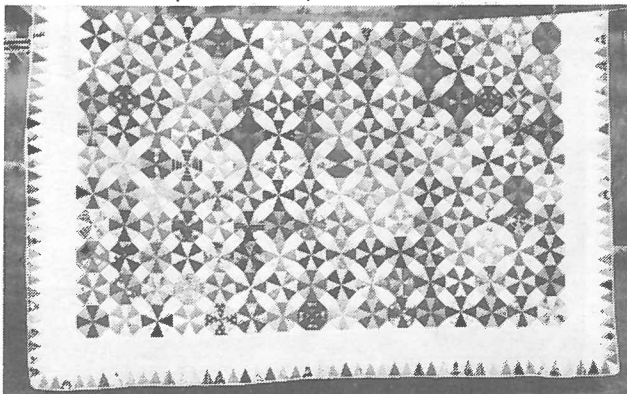
LORRAINE ARKIND

BY: CAROL EASTHAM, DONNIE HEDDING, KAREN SADVAR



**THE STEAMBOAT SPRINGS STAR QUILTERS:
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, ARLENE SELBE,
LORRAINE ARKIND, WILMA MARSHALL, DORIS
GRAY, JANET DEGROFF, AND ELISABETH
SALZGEBER.**

The women who started the quilting club now called "The Steamboat Springs Star Quilters" are Lorraine Arkind and Janet DeGross. The name was thought up by Ross Dolan, who used to work for the Steamboat Pilot. When we heard about the "Star Quilters" we decided to do a story and let others know about them too. We would like everyone to get acquainted with and appreciate all the hard work and time these ladies have put into quilting. Their quilts are



**KALEIDOSCOPE: ONE OF THE FAVORITES COMPLETED
BY THE STAR QUILTERS.**

beautiful and very artistic.

There have been many women who have quilted with them throughout the years. Some of these women are: Dessie Bowden, Doris Gray, Ella Turischk, Wilma Marshall, Vivian McKay, Nellie Otteson, Elisabeth Salzgeber, Arlene Selbe, Iva Allen, Emma Waugh, and Jacqui Tuttle.

We found these ladies and the quilting procedure very interesting, and we learned a lot about quilting. We did our interview while these women worked. They told us their personal histories and about their various quilting backgrounds.

Janet told us how she got into the quilting business. "I originally started in New York 15 years ago. I got into the quilting business

LORRAINE ARKIND & JANET DEGROFF



because of a quilt that had been given to me probably about 20 years ago. I went to work with a group of women who quilted for their church. I had been quilting for a few years before that. There are a lot of groups around the country that quilt for their churches. We formed the group here in Steamboat in March, 1978.

"The Steamboat Springs Star Quilters do not receive any money themselves, but we do charge around \$100 per quilt, which goes to the Steamboat Arts and Humanities Council. For us to finish a quilt top, I like to have the owner of the quilt top furnish everything. We can get together a little bit and discuss what is needed. Basically, they need the completed quilt top, the batting,

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and a lining, as well as thread."

Lorraine told us about coming to Steamboat. "I moved into town about eight years ago. Jan and I met on the front lawn of the Fish Creek Condominiums by coincidence." Jan had a condo here, and Lorraine was visiting her son in the condo below. Janet was sitting out on the lawn having some crackers and cheese and reading a book when she spoke to Lorraine. They talked about the town of Steamboat. "I was looking for a place to buy; I found a place. That was back in 1978. I was coming back to a wonderful town, where I had already made friends."

Lorraine said, "You can't put a time limit on quilting, or a matter of patience, as it's just something you sit down to relax and do. It's

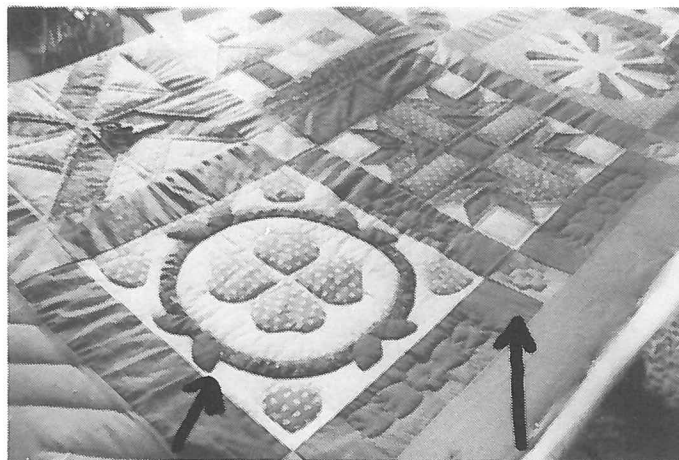


**FOUR OF THE LEADING LADIES HOLDING UP A
BROKEN STAR QUILT. LEFT TO RIGHT JANET
DEGROFF, ELISABETH SALZGEBER, LORRAINE
ARKIND, WILMA MARSHALL.**

rewarding in itself if you like to stitch and sew. We exchange recipes, problems, stories of grandchildren and flower gardens. Once in a while we get into politics." Janet added that they discuss whatever they're interested in besides quilting.

We asked Janet what kind of designs she likes best, and she responded, "Personally, I like the old traditional patterns. I like to just copy them; there are many people who are artistic and can create their own designs for their quilts, but I don't get into that myself. For a person to get started quilting, an interest in wanting to carry on this old art is an appreciation of good old things.

"We average around six to eight women, yet as many as 11 women may quilt with us. Anyone can come in and quilt with us, but we would like them to have a little experience. We will do a certain amount of teaching if they are interested. To get their name on our list, I think they should contact either myself or the arts council. We advertise in the paper that we're here every



**SAMPLER QUILT, TOP TO BOTTOM: BEAR PAW
RING OF HEARTS.**

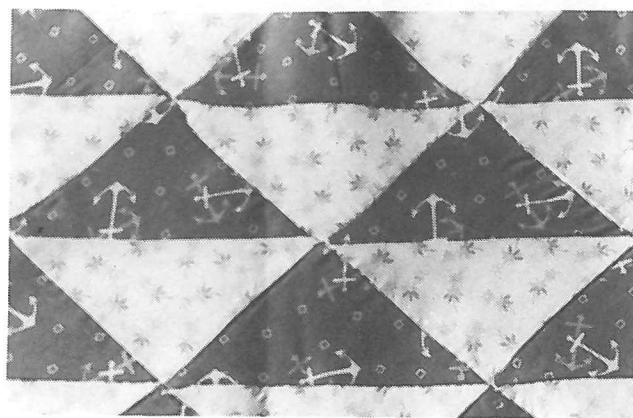
Thursday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and people just find out about it. We have quilted about three quilts, in the past year."

We wondered if these ladies ever entered any of their quilts in the Routt County Fair. "Some of our own personal quilts, yes, we have put in the fair, and one quilt that we did, or we completed for Cathy Borland, was put in the fair, but she had to put on the card that we quilted it. And I think it took a second place," Janet said.

The quilters told us that if a quilt were to be made from scraps, it would take about two or three years. There are some patterns that are very intricate and some that are easier to do. Janet told us what it takes to start a quilt.

"For a person to start a quilt I think the initial thing is to pick out a pattern that you want to make the whole quilt out of, and then start out and make a template, or a pattern piece, cut pieces from fabric, and then sew them all together to achieve a particular pattern. To put the squares together, you can applique the squares: that is, fabric has been applied to that square. There are patchwork squares, besides appliqued squares, that can go into one quilt, or there can be a single pattern square. Individual squares can make up the whole quilt; that is called a sampler quilt.

"It does take certain utensils and materials to



OCEAN WAVE



GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

do a quilt, such as a cotton fabric, or you can use blends. You also need batting (polyester fabric batting, completely machine washable and dryable, is preferred).

"The easiest fabric to handle for quilts is cotton. Lots of people use left-over fabrics that they have used for their children's sewing. They didn't throw anything away, and then they put the pieces together in a particular pattern, or different-shaped pieces were put together in a crazy-quilt fashion. Women nowadays will go to a fabric store and color coordinate material. They will buy the material, but the original quilting was done from scraps. People used to trade different color scraps that they needed. The patterns are available through books or stores.

"There are books you refer to that will tell you what you need if you want to make a queen-size

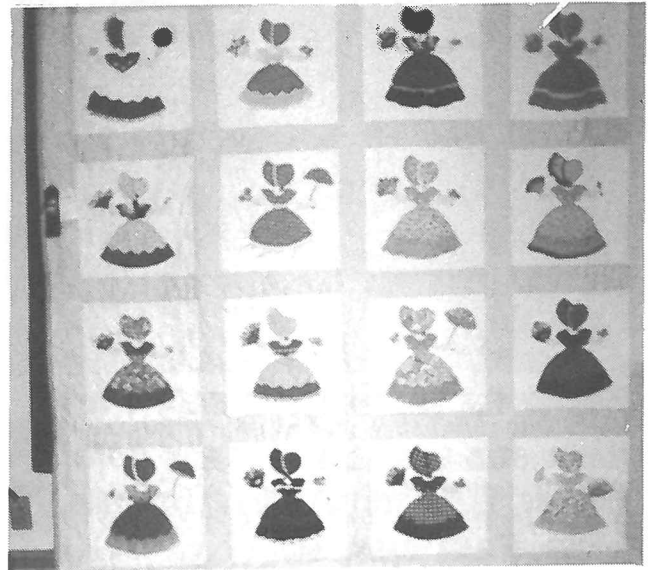


DRESDEN PLATE, NINE PATCH VARIATION.

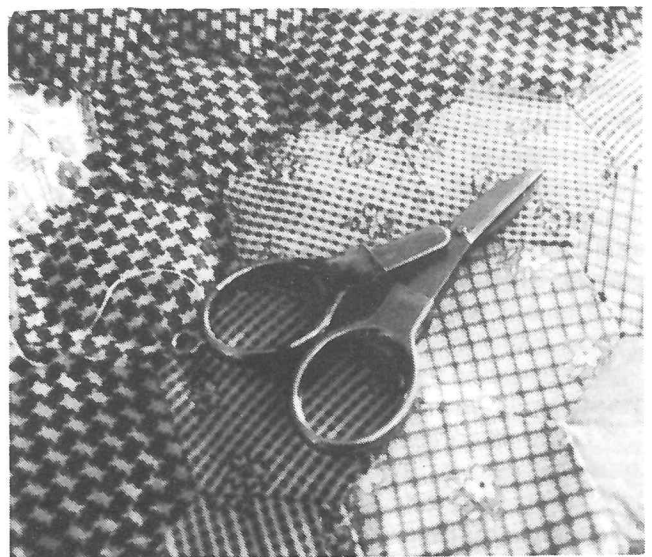
quilt, and you need a 24-inch by 12-inch square, and so many three-inch strips. Then you sew them together, and you'll end up with a queen-size quilt, so there are instructions. In the instructions, it will say how much fabric of one pattern or one print, a light print, you'll need — for example, 3 1/4 yards — and, of a darker print, so many yards; so you can get all this information.

"When you get to the point where most of the quilting is done and there is not enough to keep six people busy another week, the quilt has to come off the frame and you start the binding on the edge.

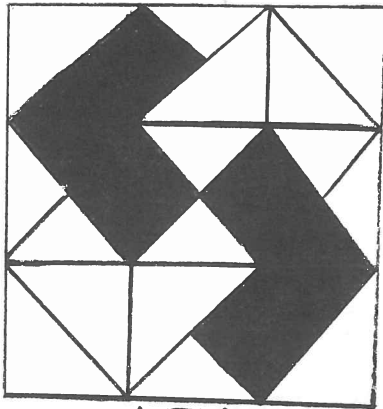
"It is so impressive to see those tops! The time required to finish a king-size quilt depends on how much time is devoted to the work. I have other things at home that I enjoy doing, like gardening. I like spinning wool and knitting the



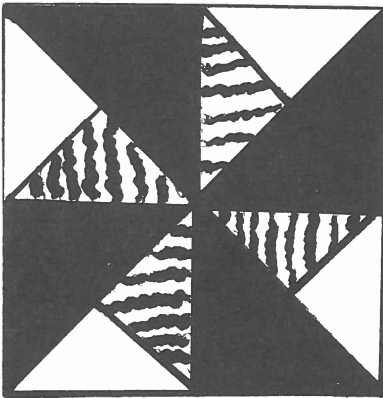
A FIRST PLACE DOLL PATCHWORK QUILT COMPLETED BY KAREN SADVAR'S GRANDMOTHER, DORIS BOCHMAN.



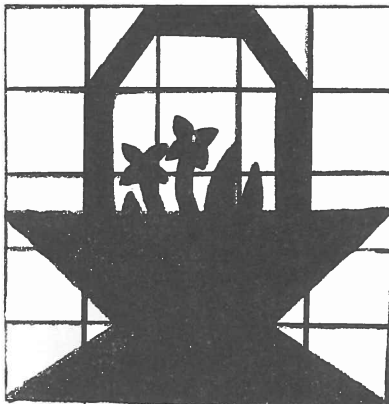
EASIEST PAIR OF SCISSORS TO USE WHILE QUILTING.



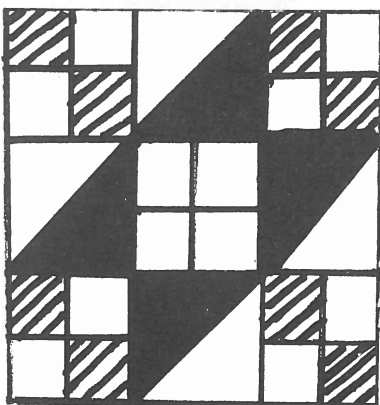
Card Trick



Pinwheel



Flower Basket



Jacob's Ladder

wool, so I do have two time-consuming things to do."

Janet mentioned some different designs that can be copied to make a quilt, for instance: Log Cabin, Jacob's Ladder, Rail Fence, Flower Basket, Card Trick, and a Star pattern. We talked about one Star pattern that Janet was interested in.

"This piece looks like a flower (a tulip or dahlia). Also, there is a design called a Dresden Plate; it can also be called a friendship ring because your friends give you different pieces of fabric that can be put into the ring.

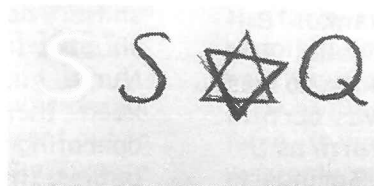
"I will only quilt one day a week for someone else here at the Depot. At home, I'm working on quilts all of the time. As soon as I get one quilt top done, I'll start another. The Star Quilters work on Thursdays. Four or five of us have quilts at home that we work on. We also go around and help each other one day a week.

"My family does not have a history of quilting, but I think I remember my mother tying a little quilt when I was young. This interest has not come from my family. I can remember my mother taking me to a neighbor woman who took care of me while my mother did something else. I can also remember a basket of patches on her windowsill, so I do have early memories of seeing it being done."

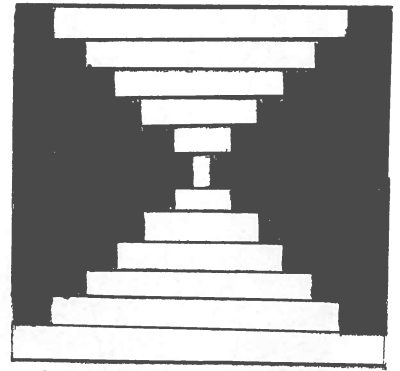
"When patchwork quilting just got started, the patterns were made out of newspaper, and they would be handed to your neighbor, and she had scraps of fabric. You traded scraps of fabric back and forth. It is kind of a different world of quilting now. But we're sort of carrying on a tradition, in just a little different manner, because we are a more efficient society. It's just a good occupation, that's all. I guess that's just what we enjoy doing. Of course, that's not the way they used to work. I don't know if I would have quilted without Janet constantly with me to say, 'Okay, here is what we should do,'" Lorraine said.

Karen, Donnie, and I have all learned a great deal about the quilting business and have met a lot of friendly women while doing this story. Quilting can be a hobby that anyone can enjoy. Like Janet mentioned, "The patience for quilting is just the desire to sit with a group of people."

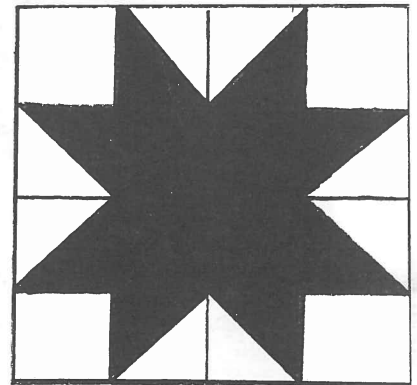
Quilting has been around for thousands of years. People are beginning to appreciate the art even more today, just as this group of women has shown us.



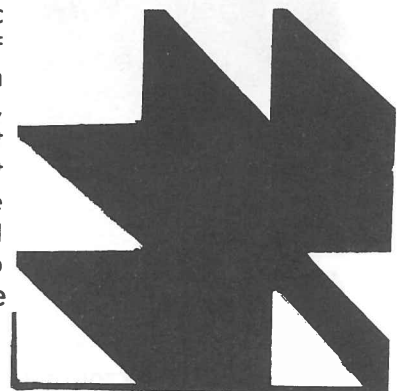
THE OFFICIAL STEAMBOAT SPRINGS STAR QUILTERS LOGO.



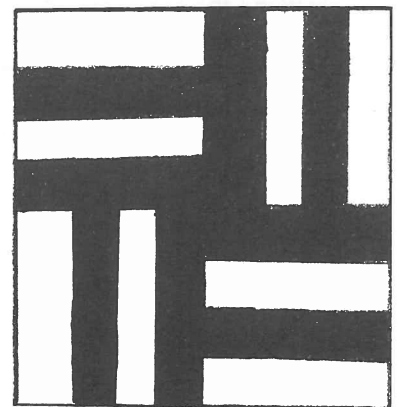
Log Cabin



Star Pattern



Maple Leaf



Rail Fence