



## A Brief History

Quilting has been around for thousands of years and sometimes it seems as though **A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** has been around just as long. This active guild began in the spring of 1993 and wants to welcome you as its newest member!

In the 1970's there were very few quilt shops and it seemed as though quilting was a dying art. With the bicentennial, this country saw a resurgence of quilting. During the 1990's quilt shops and quilting guilds were popping up in many towns across America. Groups like **A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** helped to make that happen.

In the early 1990's there were several quilting groups meeting in Manitowoc homes. These groups were limited in size because they met in private homes. Some ladies joined the Sheboygan quilt guild but the drive limited their participation. Three of these women saw no reason why the quilters in Manitowoc could not organize a guild. In May of 1993, they reserved a meeting room at Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, and put a notice in the newspaper inviting interested quilters to the meeting. Five people joined them and the group continued to meet over the summer. Attendance was small, only between 4 and 7 people. In October more people were coming to the meeting and the idea of moving the meetings to Manitowoc was discussed. The group began meeting at St. Mary's Nursing Home in January. After that, attendance at meetings steadily increased. By the end of that first year, in May of 1994, the group decided to organize more formally. **A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** was chosen as a name, officers were elected and the organization was off and running!

The first 3 years saw membership grow to close to 100 members, a number that has been maintained to the present day. 25 of the current members joined that first year. Two of the 3 who initially started the guild remain as members. In the early years, the group struggled to find an identity and a direction. The guild discovered that with a larger group, not all members had to participate in every activity in order to make them successful. A member could pick and choose what they wanted to get involved in. During those first years, the guild began many activities that continue yet today.

Someone suggested **A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** should have a quilt show. Members said, "Why not!" and planning was off and running. Our first show, titled **Seasons On the Lakeshore**, was held

in March of 1998. It was a wonderful success. The second day of the show was marred by a blizzard that dumped several inches of snow and put a damper on attendance. To avoid the snow, the group decided to move the show to the end of March. We have not always avoided snow but have never had as much snow as that first year! We host shows in alternating years to avoid competition with the biannual quilt show in Green Bay. Each successive show has been successful, growing in size, scope and creativity. The Manitowoc show is recognized statewide as a quality show and brings many people into the community from as far away as Illinois and Minnesota. Planning begins a year before each show, with each member contributing in some capacity.

**A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** holds a weekend quilting retreat at 4H Camp Tapawingo in Mishicot. The first retreat, February 1995, was opened to non-members. Several Green Bay area people came and they remain friends today, bound by a common love of quilting. The retreat was such a success that, within a year, it had been expanded to twice yearly, with an additional one held in October.

The annual picnic is a fun time that serves as the start of each year for **A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters**. At that first picnic members wanted to exchange recipes of the dishes that were brought to the picnic and the first cookbook was developed. Most books were sold before they came from the printer! The group has since published a second cookbook in 2006.

**A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** is committed to providing enrichment activities for guild members through programs, shows and trips. In April 1995, the group organized a bus trip to the Sun Prairie Quilt Show. The show was one of the larger shows at that time. A road trip to the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum was also organized to view the exhibition of historic quilts from the 1933 Chicago World's Fair- *A Century of Progress*. The group has monthly programs, with speakers on every topic related to quilting. Often, speakers are viewed as experts in a particular area and readily share their expertise, with other members. The group has offered workshops to members and other quilters from the very early days, using local quilters and also bringing in nationally and internationally recognized quilters to learn from.

**A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** has a strong charitable spirit. We have made many quilt and monetary donations to local and regional agencies. A few beneficiaries include: baby quilts for the Domestic Violence Center, children's quilts for St. Joseph's Children's Home, quilted wall hangings for the Alzheimer's Unit at St. Mary's Home, wall hangings for Manitowoc Health Care Center and Hamilton Home. They donated a quilt for St. Mary's to raffle and made holiday placemats for Meals on Wheels. Money was donated to a variety of projects at Salvation Army, the Humane Society and Hope House. Many, many quilts have been donated to Quilts of Valor Foundation, which gives quilts to wounded soldiers. Members made several hundred scarves and hats for cancer patient at local cancer centers and nesters for premature babies at regional neonatal intensive care units. In 2000, the group held a rummage sale of quilting and craft items and donated the money from that to Domestic Violence for an apartment they were setting up as temporary housing.

**A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** is committed to community education. They helped teachers with quilting classes at local middle schools. One year, members served as artists-in residence for the local high school, doing presentations on quilting as an art form. The group has taken quilt show to nursing homes in Manitowoc, sponsored a bus trip for art students in Manitowoc Public Schools to the Milwaukee Museum of Art to view the Gee's Bend Quilts.

**A Patch of Lakeshore Quilters** has a solid foundation in Manitowoc County and will be here for as long as quilters are interested in quilting. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:45 pm at the Manitowoc Senior Center. Meetings are open to the public and membership is open to anyone interested in quilting.



## Some of our Culture

Welcome to a guild full of many opportunities for interacting with people and learning new skills. The following are a few idiosyncrasies, or things you may choose to become involved in.

- ❖ Committees - - At the start of our year, July, sign- up sheets are passed around. Members choose committees that appeal to them, and sign up for participation. The committees are described on another handout in this welcome packet. Committee members are listed in the guild phone book. Please participate in as many or as few things as you would like. Ask questions!
- ❖ Guests – Friends are always welcome to come to a meeting and see what we are all about. Junior members, aged 10 or older when accompanied by an adult, are welcomed. This is a great way to encourage new memberships and the continuation of the art of quilting.
- ❖ Membership book- This is a great resource! Once a year, following the membership drive, this book is updated with names, phone and e-mail contact information and committee members. It comes in handy!
- ❖ Name tags – Please wear your nametag to meetings and other guild activities. It helps us get to know each other. If you have your nametag on, you will be eligible for door prizes!
- ❖ Quilt Show –It happens every other year, but takes a year to plan! Every member is expected to participate in set up and take down for the show along with one work shift. Plan ahead! It is an awful lot of fun!

- ❖ Sharing table – This is the table in the back of the room. If you have items you would like to get rid of; fabric, patterns, magazines, books, craft items, please place them here. If you see something you like, then take it! At the end of the night, please take what you brought if it was not scooped up.
- ❖ Show and Tell – Occurs each guild meeting. It is optional and meant to be inspirational and educational. If you have a project, quilted or another handmade medium, small or large, you are invited to join in show and tell. We identify ourselves and give a brief explanation about our projects. Common presentations include what the pattern was, who authored it, some history on the project or where it is going, why you chose it or how long it took to complete! It is held up by the Show and Tell Helpers, and then carefully placed on the tables for guild members to look at during snack time. Please be comforted by the fact that people do not touch quilts with soiled hands, nor walk close to them with refreshments. We are all protective of our treasures and respect others.
- ❖ Sign in – There will be a notebook floating around each meeting. Choose a line and write your name on it. At the end of meetings, numbers are chosen for door prizes. If you have a nametag on....you win!
- ❖ Snacks – Each meeting light snacks and beverages are provided during break. At the start of our year, July, committee sign-up sheets are passed around. It is a great thing to do with friends or as an opportunity to meet new people.