

**Jennifer Sawyer's Smashing Sashings Program to the Red River Quilt Guild of Wichita Falls
January 4, 2021**

I received several requests for pictures, etc from my program in January, 2021. I've decided to write up a brief description. The pictures included are my own.

I took my first quilt class at least 20 years ago because I wanted to spend the day with my sister. That started it all! After that, I signed up for several Block of the Month clubs and truly enjoyed making the blocks, but was rarely interested in actually completing the quilt top. Generally speaking, those quilts were finished with solid sashing and possibly a corner stone of a different fabric. I never even bothered to purchase finishing kits! Years later, I had a closet full of orphan blocks.

Marti Michell's Secret Garden

And then I signed up for a Marti Michell Block of the Month "Secret Garden" copyright 2010. This quilt was very different. Marti's blocks are all made with specialty ruler sets to help ensure precise piecing. But the sashing! The sashing made all the difference on this quilt and it changed the way I look at quilts and how I want my quilts to look.



Well, the mitered border certainly doesn't hurt either! But that's another program...



The corner stones on this sashing are fussy cut from one of the other fabrics. The other pieces were cut using Marti's "Long Skinny Sashing Star Set" found here: http://www.frommarti.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=FMM&Product_Code=8232&Category_Code=P

The blue, light blue and green border is also cut using the above set, but the corner stones are simply half square triangles and quarter square triangles. (Now that I write that, knowing when to use HST or QST is yet another topic, isn't it?)

Bugs and Flowers

So after finishing this quilt, I dug out those old orphan blocks and let my creativity go! The first set I pulled out was one of my very earliest sets. These Bugs and Flowers were a BOM from Material Girl Quilt Shop in Shreveport and the designs were all the owner's own. Each block featured a slightly different method (pieced, applique, 3-D, a bit of embroidery...) As each block featured bugs or flowers, I decided the sashing and border needed to resemble something from outdoors.... A yard with a fence!





The cornerstones for this one are simply a 2 inch (2 1/2 cut) green square. The sashing pieces are strips of 1 inch (1 1/2 inch cut) green strips with half inch (1 inch cut) white strips on either side. Because the blocks were made at least a decade before the sashing, no, the whites are not the same. But honestly, no one has noticed.



For my border, I did get out some graph paper and start sketching. The fence posts are simply 2" (2 1/2" cut) solid pieces with green HST on the corners. For the fencing between the posts, I sewed long pieces together and sub cut to 4 "(4 1/2" cut) pieces. For a pineapple on the corner, I googled "paper pieced pineapple 8" finished" and made 4 of them. There is a solid green border around the outside of that. I used that because I wanted the stability of a solid outside border.

Cumberland Valley Quilt Guild BOM, 2015

The next top I showed was made by my sister, Nancy Robichaux with the Cumberland Valley Quilt Guild Block of the Month, 2015.

I am not sure what she used to make the stars in the sashing, but I would have used Marti's Original Sashing Stars Set found here:

<http://www.frommarti.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?>

[Screen=PROD&Store_Code=FMM&Product_Code=8114&Category_Code=SSS](http://www.frommarti.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=FMM&Product_Code=8114&Category_Code=SSS)



That is a 3 inch (3 1/2 cut) sashing which is an option on the ruler set with cornerstones to finish the pink star. The effect is beautiful!

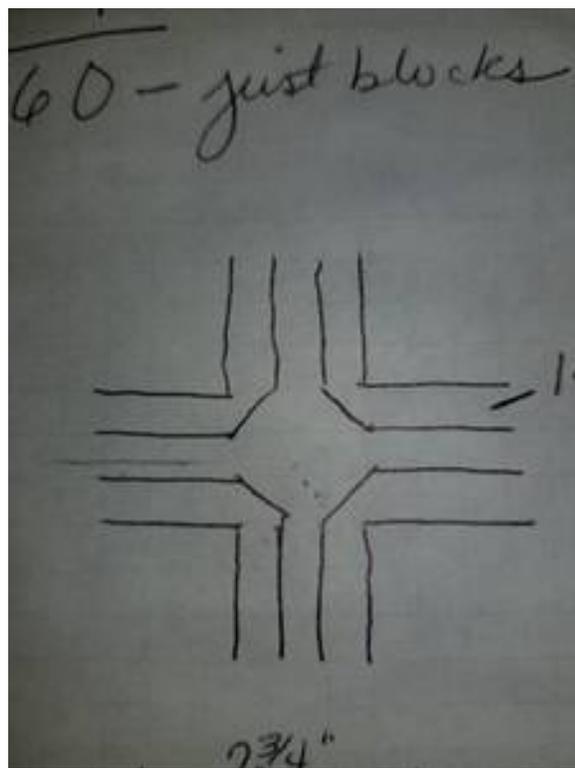


The Giant Red and Green Top

The next set of Orphan blocks came from my Mom. These blocks were huge at 15" (15 1/2" unfinished) and there were 16 of them! Luckily, there was lots and lots of extra, matching fabric included.

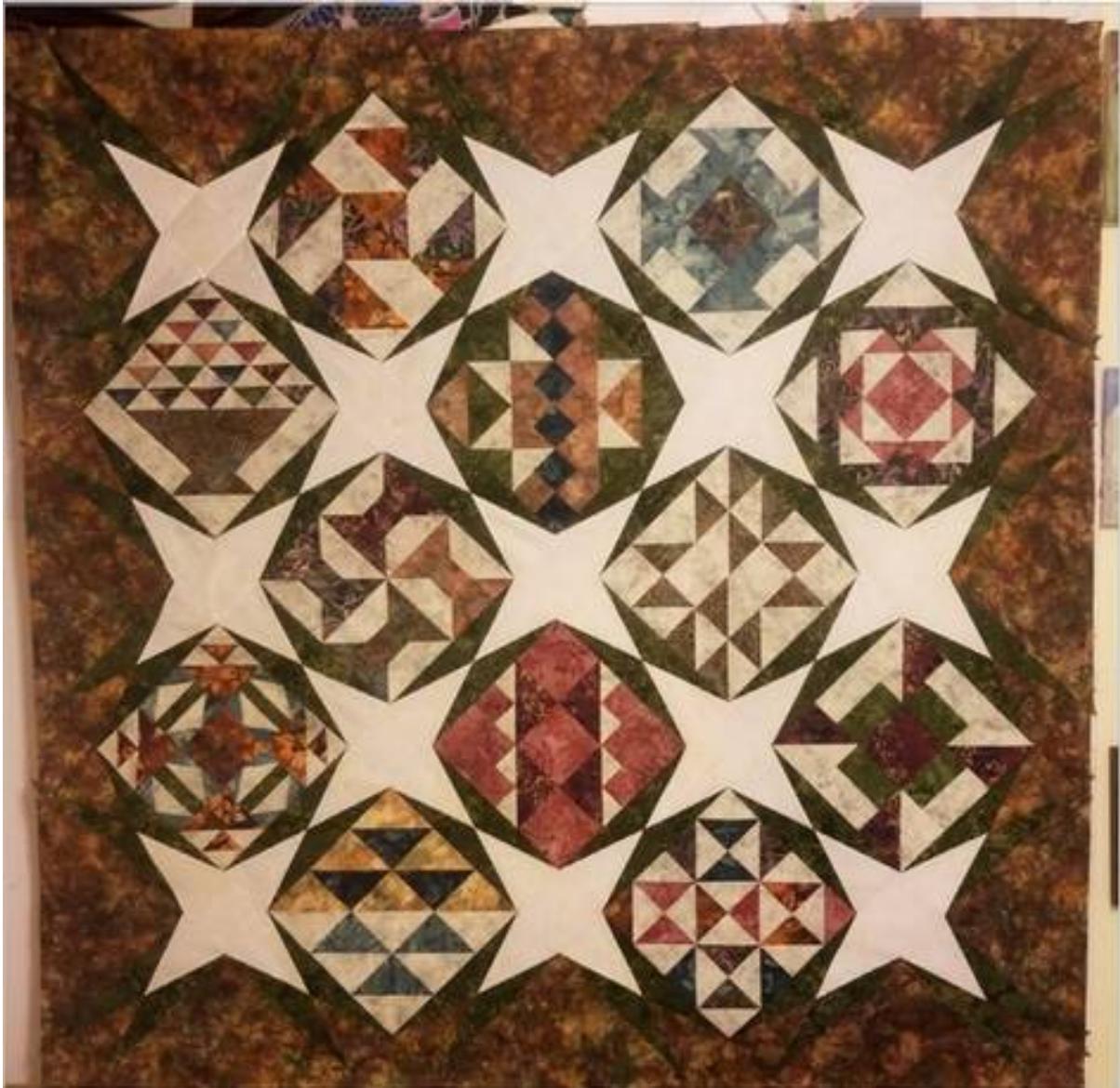


Because the blocks were so big, I decided against doing anything “fancy” in the sashing. This sashing is simply 1 1/2” strips (2” cut) and cut to length. I wanted the corner stones to “turn the corner” so I got out my graph paper, drew exactly what I wanted it to do, copied that to paper piecing paper and “Voila!”



Wimmen's Work

The next set of blocks were from a seminar given by Lisa Erlandson from a pattern called "Wimmen's Work." The pattern called for a pieced border of a zillion 1" squares. That wasn't anything I felt like doing.



But, I do really love these blocks and wanted to do something special with them. I used Marti's Long Skinny Sashing Star Set again matching the fabric in the stars to corner stones. I turned the whole thing on point using Kaye England's Side Set Triangle ruler found here: <https://www.kayeengland.com/good-measure-side-set-triangle-ruler/> . I truly love the effect.

Coping Strips

The next quilt explains the use of “Coping Strips” which is something that can come in handy when dealing with blocks made by multiple people.

If you win a set of blocks and they aren't all the same size, you have two choices. 1) Cut them all down to the smallest size or 2) sew a border around each block, then cut that down to a size. If you choose #2, very rarely, will that difference show up in the quilt.



In this example, the center set of blocks were made and assembled years before those on the sides. When I got around to finishing the quilt, my seam allowance had obviously changed! Cutting anything down would have cut off every point on those blocks. My only real option was to add the coping strip, which could be cut so that all three pieces would be the same size. When I look at this quilt, I see a huge border on that middle set. But, when others see it, they rarely notice. The judge (who gave me a red ribbon for this quilt) thought it was an interesting design detail! Little did she know! This method works great in many instances!

Odd Number of Blocks

The final quilt I showed is another top made by my sister, Nancy Robichaux. These are not orphan blocks but rather a pattern on Pinterest. I thought it was interesting because it shows what can be done with an odd number of blocks with a different setting style. Who would have thought of using 3 inch (3 1/2 cut) squares to set such traditional blocks?



If you win an odd number of blocks, you can either make more blocks to attain the number for a specific setting, or get creative with a design!

Thank you so much for your enthusiasm for my program! I can't wait to see what you come up with!!