

Ellie Held

From age 6, sewing has always been a part of my life. Starting with creating and sewing doll clothes by hand, begging my father to use the sewing machine at eleven to make my own clothes, my love of sewing clothes proceeded to remaking gowns in junior high school, to making a suit jacket in high school to fit my tall future husband. Next came my wedding gown, my Mom's mother of the bride dress, my daughter's and daughter-in-law's wedding gowns, and bridesmaid's dresses.

My quilting history began with a very simple block quilt for my son's crib in 1966. My second quilt was a Dresden Plate appliquéd on Dacron/cotton fabric in 1972. I started a double wedding ring quilt in 1982 and after putting it aside for 6 years, finished it in 1989 for our 25th anniversary.

Around 1988, my friend Janet and I each made an Eleanor Burns log cabin quilt by ripping strips. The batting and backing was a used bedspread.

Both of our children married their sweethearts in 1993, so two wedding shower quilts were created.

I joined the Bayberry Guild in 2005 and Diane McGuire introduced me to rotary cutting and reproduction fabrics. Living in a 1700's antique house, reproduction quilts became my focus for quilts. Hand quilting was a must, but I machine pieced. I was now hooked on quilting and it has become my passion.

Between Bayberry workshops and learning from its talented members, this has helped me to improve and perfect my skills. With every new quilt, I challenge myself to learn something different, although I don't wander too far outside of the traditional style box. My focus and personal challenge for this year is to make my first hand pieced and hand quilted quilt using Dear Jane blocks, and piece a reproduction quilt on my great-aunt's 1907 treadle machine.

I feel God has blessed me with a wonderful talent and I like to share it by making preemie and various charity quilts, and sharing any of my skills to help other quilters.