

# A Postcard from Ontario

by Jean Hillis

Large cities, beautiful trees (maples, birches, evergreens), picturesque rivers and lakes, lush farmlands, with great diversity in all, were characteristics which came to my mind in thinking about representing Ontario in the Millennium Sampler Project. Our provincial flower, the trillium, inspired a hexagon format and a multi-fabric landscape was created. Applying this hexagon section to a background of water and sunny blue sky, completed the block. I hope you will enjoy selecting fabrics from your stash, which best represent the various elements featured in this "Postcard from Ontario"!

## SUPPLIES:

- small quantities (scraps) of a wide variety of fabrics which will represent buildings, trees (glowing red, golden and maybe some green maples, soft birches, and deep green striped or streaked fabric for evergreens)
- water fabric – 4" x 7" OR small scraps of 2 or 3 water fabrics for pieced water section
- sun fabric – 5" x 2 1/2"
- sky fabric 5" x 12 1/2"
- template material

## GENERAL NOTES:

**Make Templates** – In order to maintain accuracy in piecing these tricky little hexagons, hand piecing is recommended and **accurate templates** of the shapes are essential. \*Note – hexagon template should measure exactly 2", from side to side, and the half hexagon shape should be exactly 1" wide, in order to make our finished block 12" wide. Hand piecing templates are the **finished size** and seam allowances must be added all round. Carefully trace around templates using a very sharp marking

pencil. Cut shape 1/4" away from pencil line.

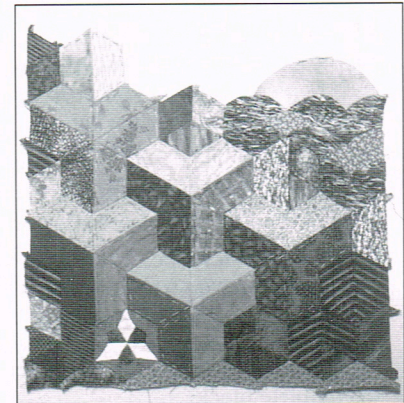
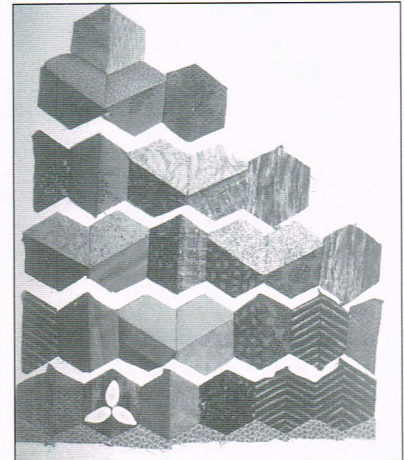
**Hand Piecing** – Pieces are joined together, **matching pencil lines**. Pin at each end of pencil line and between, as required. Sew with small running stitches, **only on pencil lines**. Do not sew across seam allowances at beginning and end!

## CONSTRUCTION:

**1** From the diagram, identify the city buildings, made up of three hexagons, which are divided in half. Select a light, medium and dark fabric for each building and cut two half hexagons from each fabric. Make three different pairs and join these to make hexagons. Now arrange so that darks, mediums and lights are touching each other but do not sew together at this point. (We will prepare all the hexagon units and join them in horizontal rows, then join the rows together.) There are five full *buildings* plus one *skyscraper*, consisting of a single hexagon, in the upper left corner.

**2** The second hexagon from the left in the bottom row is the *trillium block*. From white fabric which is heavy enough to prevent shadowing, cut three petals and appliqué to a background hexagon of your choice. (I also tried dividing the hexagon into six equal sections by joining the centre point of each side to the opposite side and paper pieced a trillium.)

**3** The remaining hexagons represent the various trees which dominate the Ontario landscape. You may choose to use a single fabric which aptly suggests the particular trees or you may choose to divide the hexagons into the smaller components – diamonds, 60 degree triangles or the half hexagons we have used for the *building* units and use a combination



of fabrics within the hexagon shape. For the evergreens, I found a green and tan striped fabric, which, cut with the angled side of the template placed along a stripe and paired with the same shape, cut in reverse suggested the shape of evergreen trees nicely.

**4** The row of *skinny* triangles that form the base line of the block should represent agriculture (the foundation on which this province began) and could suggest grains, vegetables, fruits, etc. depending on which area of the province you wish to highlight.

**5** When all hexagon components are complete, join into horizontal rows and then join rows together. This unit will be appliquéed to the

## A Postcard from Ontario CONTINUED

water/sky unit. Turn under the seam allowance of the upper edges of the section and baste.

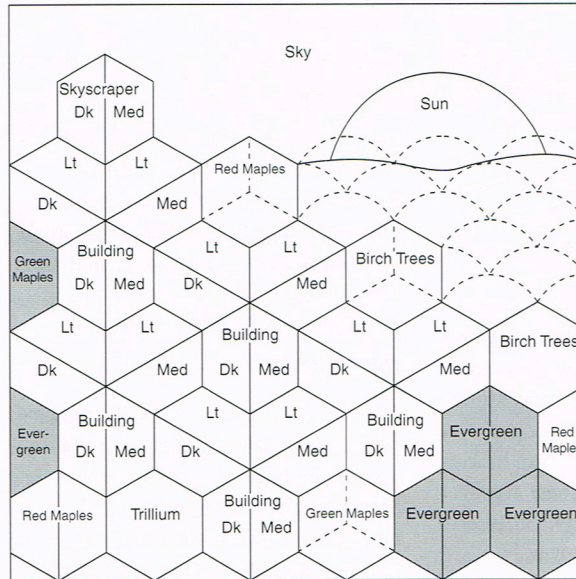
**6** Next prepare the water/sky unit.

**7** Water section may be pieced using the clamshell shape and following the diagram or may simply be a piece of *water* fabric 4" x 7" cut with a slightly wavy edge and appliquéd to the sun/sky, aligning the water with the corner of the upper *tree* hexagon. Pin in place.

**8** Sky – a strip of sky fabric 5" x 12½". Turn to wrong side of sky fabric and mark a ¼" seam allowance on one long side and ends of piece. Now lay this strip over the wrong side of the *building* unit and adjust to make a 12" square, lining up the seam allowances. Pin in place.

**9** Sun – cut sun shape, turn under upper edge and slip between the water and sky layers. Pin in place.

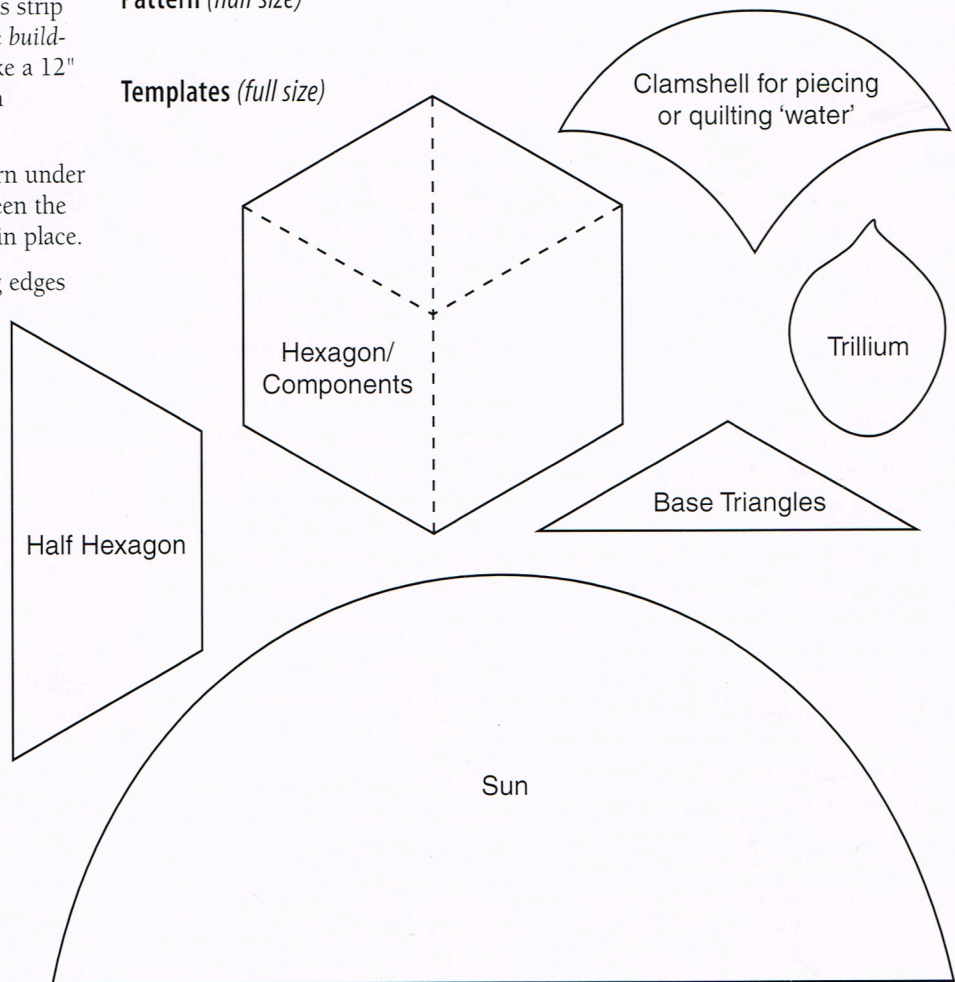
**10** Appliqué all remaining edges to complete block.



◀ *Note: The water may be cut as one piece using "water" fabric, or "clam shell" may be used as piecing and/or quilting design.*

Pattern (half size)

Templates (full size)





PROFILE by Leslie Marquis

# Jean Hillis

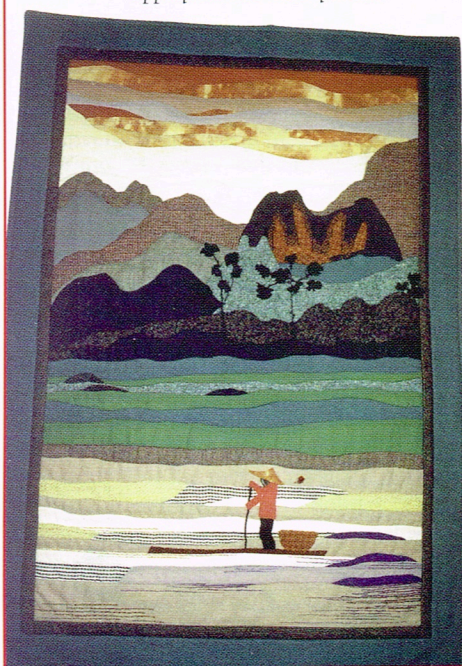
Charter Member and Past President

Jean, born and educated in Guelph, Ontario, obtained her degree in Home Economics at the University of Guelph and then moved to Ingersoll to teach. There she met and married her husband Don, also a teacher. She continued to live in Ingersoll, teaching sewing and tailoring while raising a family.

In 1972, Jean helped to found the Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre. Conceived by a group of artists and crafts people, it has continued and grown as an independent (not municipally funded) organization of more than three hundred members. More than half the members are quilters. Classes are offered in painting, pottery, fibre arts and quilting. There are regular open co-operative workshop times when members are free to make use of the excellent facility for their own work. It is a unique centre, providing a creative atmosphere and encouraging excellence in all its members. Jean has played many roles at the centre including being chairman from 1977

**GUILIN - TRANQUIL BEAUTY**

30" x 43" a woollen landscape which is hand appliquéd and hand quilted.



until 1981 and being program chairman for the last several years.

Although an excellent sewer, Jean was not originally a quilter. In 1976, she looked at her newly redecorated bedroom and decided to create a quilt to echo the design in the new wallpaper. After that project, she was hooked! She took a quilting class from Anne Larock and then convinced her to teach quilting at the Creative Arts Centre, which Anne did for the next ten years. In 1979, members of these quilting classes established the Oxford Quilters Guild as part of the Creative Arts Centre. They brought in well known teachers during the 1980's—Jinny Beyer, Roberta Horton, Michael James, Nancy Crow, Nancy Halpern; but they now prefer inviting excellent Canadian teachers.

Jean is a charter member and past President of the *Canadian Quilters Association/ Association canadienne de la courtepointe*. She feels she is lucky to have attended *EVERY Quilt Canada*. In 1990 she co-convened Hospitality for *Quilt Canada* in Waterloo.

As one of her early projects, Jean took a course from Jinny Beyer on medallion quilts where she created a design on a piece of graph paper. She went on to make the quilt for her daughter's graduation in 1981. It was juried into the *Ontario Crafts Show '82* and was awarded 'Excellence in Fibre in the Southwest Region'. She has since made other medallion quilts and each has won awards, the most recent being "Flights of Fancy" which won awards in both the *Ontario Juried Show* and the *National Juried Show* in 1996/97. Her contemporary work entitled "Spring Song" was a part of the *Canadian Contemporary Quilt Show* in 1992. Another quilt, "Autumn Dancers" won an award of merit in the *Ontario Crafts Council Juried Exhibition* in 1988.



A POSTCARD FROM ONTARIO

Above left: *HIDDEN TREASURE 43" x 43"* is hand appliquéd and hand quilted.

As the program coordinator at the Creative Arts Centre, Jean plans programs to inspire and encourage members of the guild to try new things. She tries to include a wide variety of experiences and if an appropriate teacher cannot be found, she will develop the class and present it herself. Recently, she has a small group working on 'Medallions for the Millenium' and so she hopes to have another medallion quilt finished before the Y2K. She continues to be a student herself, taking classes in design whenever possible. She likes to teach beginners drafting and design in the hopes of equipping new quilmakers with all the tools and techniques they need to 'take flight' with their quilting. She enjoys making scrap quilts ever since she did a Presidents Challenge called "Working Together—What to do with Pink and Blue" when she disguised the pink and blue fabrics and pulled them into the earth tones she is more comfortable using.

Quilting has taken Jean from coast to coast and even to the Arctic. She has met many wonderful quilters and considers herself blessed with the friends she has discovered along the way. As she says "It has been a fabulous experience. I wouldn't have missed it for the world!"