

PROFILE

Barbara Robson

Nova Scotia



As a child Barbara Paterson grew up in awe of her grandmother, Hester Mitchell of Grimsby, Ontario.

Give her a needle and thread, some wool and a loom, knitting needles or a crochet hook and she could make something wonderful. Whether she created clothing, table linens, quilts, blankets or toys, they were all works of art and even cherished by Barbara as a child. Barbara has no memory of seeing her grandmother quilting but is very lucky to have three of her quilts, plus table linens and some of the great stuffed animals and dolls she made. Every time the family visited, Barb was allowed to choose something from the box under the bed to take home, a tradition she

plans to continue someday with her own grandchildren.

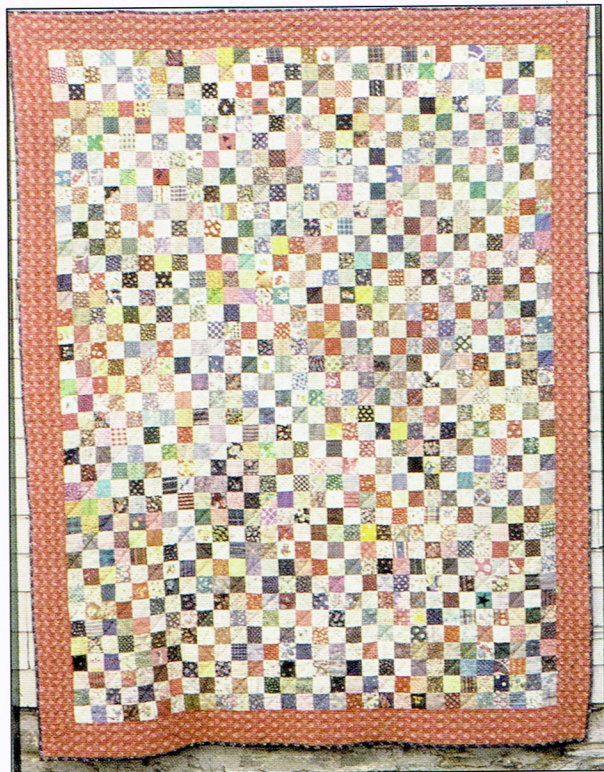
Twenty-six years ago, when her children were just two years old and an infant, Barb took a one day quilting workshop from Polly Greene at the Nova Scotia Museum. She has never looked back and loves every step of the quilting process. Polly remains one of her best friends, and she says proudly that she is still learning from her.

At the same time as Barbara (now Robson) started quilting, the Mayflower Quilters' Guild also began, and both have just celebrated their 25 year connection. Over the years she has been very involved in the Guild, and rarely misses a meeting. She was President for a two-year term, as well as doing

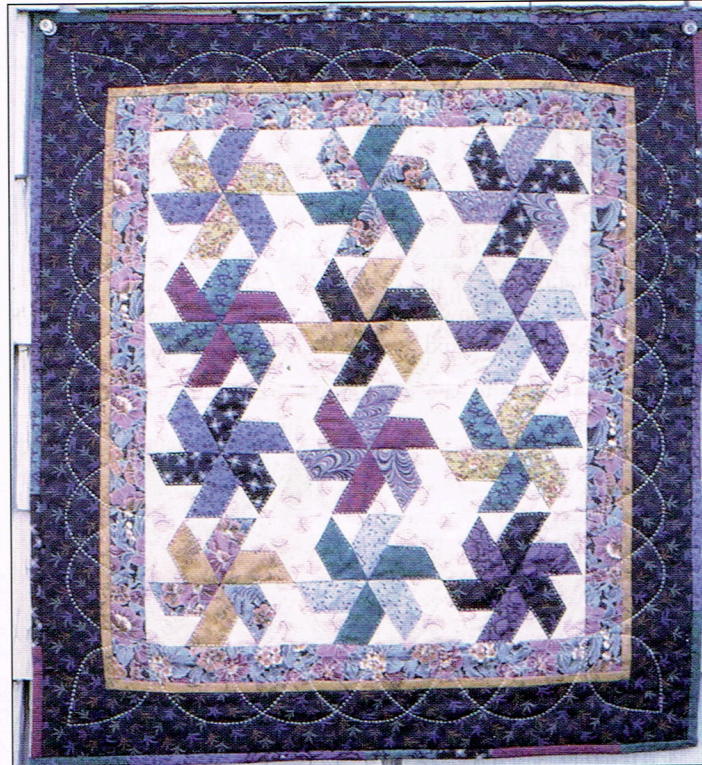


JUST PLAIN FANCY

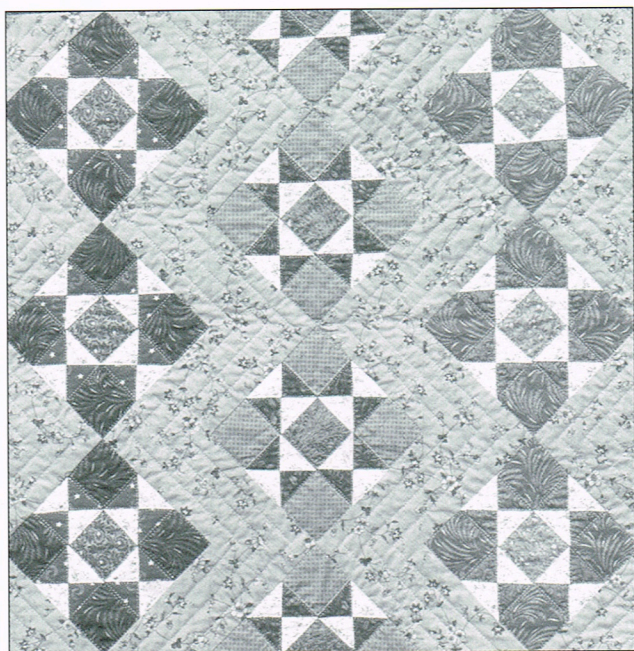
Programs and chairing the Pictou Retreat committee for twelve years. More recently, she has been co-chair of the Nova Scotia Heritage Quilt Project since its beginning in 1995. Her quilts have been in many exhibitions in Canada and the US. She has taught across Canada, in the US and in England. She was thrilled to receive the Silver Thimble Award from the Mayflower Quilters' Guild and the Dorothy McMurdie Award from the Canadian Quilters' Association. The Mayflower Quilters' Guild hosted two Quilt Canada conferences, 1984 and 1994—both for which Barbara was the



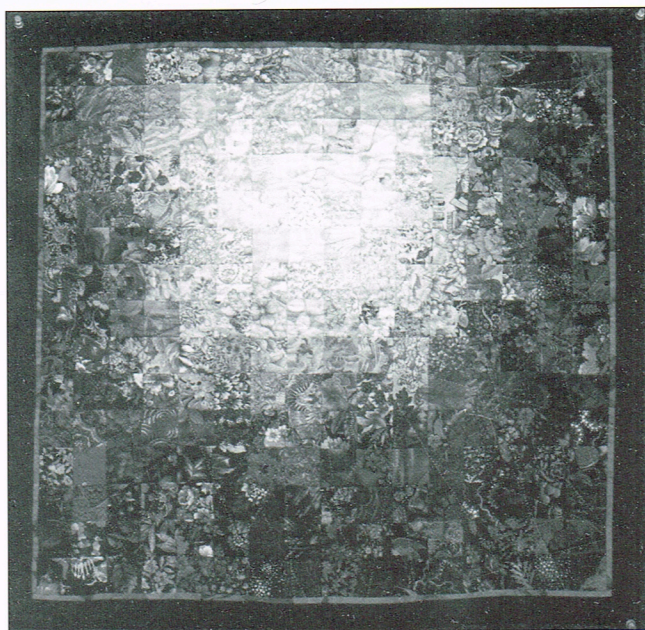
RIVERCOURT BLVD. – 1957



WHIRLIGIG



MRS. MOSHER'S STAR



A BUNCH OF STARS...TWELVE FRIENDS

Workshop Convenor.

Her involvement with quilting has also led to many years of volunteer work with the Nova Scotia Crafts Council, chairing the Standards Committee, working on both the Exhibitions Committee and the Permanent Collection, and representing Nova Scotia on the Canadian Crafts Council.

Her quilts and wall hangings are in private collections in Canada, the US, England and also with Blue Cross Canada, Nova Scotia Crafts Council, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Art Bank of Nova Scotia and the Cathedral Church of All

Saints. Barb has been involved in several commissions with her bee, the Piecemakers, and these quilts can be found at St. Philip's Church, Halifax; Maritime Life, Halifax; Summit Park, Dartmouth; IWK-Grace Hospital, Halifax; Northern Telecom, Halifax and the Mayor's Office, Halifax City Hall. A great thrill for the Piecemakers was to be chosen to host a quilt show for the G-7 Summit held in Halifax in 1997. They also organized a quilt, "Celestial Rows", made (by 98 quilters) for Nancy Wight, whose only child, Rowenna, was killed in the SwissAir crash off Nova Scotia in 1998 (see "Celestial Rows", *The Canadian Quilter*, winter 1999).

Plans for the next few months include involvement in the Mahone Bay Quilters' Guild "Art in Stitches" show, a group exhibition "Talking Threads" curated by Laureen van Lierop at the Mary Black Gallery in Halifax, and her son's wedding in Toronto in August. Always the quilter, at the wedding she plans to collect best wishes for the couple to later be sewn into a wall hanging.

Dear quilting friends,

Because lobsters remind me of the following three things, the lobster block was my logical choice for a Nova Scotia millennium block:

1 The sense of taste. What can be more Nova Scotian than to sit down with your family and friends, newspaper as table covering and enjoy a heaping platter of freshly boiled lobster? Along with the lobster you just have to have lots of melted butter, salad, homemade French bread and a good supply of N.S. Celtic music on the stereo! And, how about rounding out the experience with a bottle or two of Lunenburg County wine?

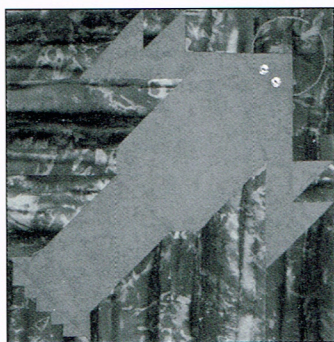
2 The sense of sight. I live right on St. Margaret's Bay, just outside Halifax, and from November till May I watch the lobster boats do their daily "dance", emptying their pots of lively lobsters and re-baiting them for the next daily catch. It is a wonderful sight. Picture the boats of different colours, from turquoise to orange, and each lobsterman's buoys painted with "his" colours set against a backdrop of blue sky/water on a sunny day.

3 The sense of fun and generosity of Nova Scotians. For many years now the IWK-Grace Hospital has had an annual fundraiser connected with the Children's Miracle Network Telethon. They hold the "Lucy's Lobster Lunch and Race" in an open courtyard in downtown Halifax. Local businesses pay to sponsor a live lobster for the race and the public participates by buying lobsters for lunch and by cheering on their favorite lobsters in the race. Some teams dress for the occasion, and it becomes a fun event while at the same time raising thousands of dollars for the children's hospital.

We present the eleventh block in our series of Millennium Blocks.

11 Lucy

by Barbara Robson



Instructions for "Lucy"

The block is 12" (plus seam allowance). There are 26 pieces in the block, (plus the tail pieces), 13 templates – sorry, this is not a fast block you can do with a rotary cutter! You will need graph paper, a ruler and a pencil to draft the patterns for good old-fashioned templates.

Fabric:

Background, I used a blue batik that resembled water. A fat quarter is ample.

For the lobster, mine is "cooked" so I used a red tone on tone. If you want a "live" lobster use a very dark greenish black. A fat quarter is ample.

You will need 2 small buttons or beads for the eyes or you could embroider them with French knots. The feelers were embroidered with floss to match the lobster.

Cutting:

Cut: 1 - A, 2 - B, 2 - C (1 - C and 1 - *Cr), 1 - D, 2 - E, 2 - F (1 - F and 1 - *Fr), 2 - G (1 - G and 1 - *Gr), 2 - H (1 - H and 1 - *Hr), 6 - J (2 of the background/water fabric and 4 of the lobster fabric), 2 - K, 1 - L, 2 - M, 1 - N

*Denotes that the template be drawn reversed.

For the tail cut 5 (2 1/2" squares) from the lobster fabric.

Sewing:

1. Sew B to C.
2. Sew B to Cr.
3. Sew B-C units to D on each long side.
4. Tail pieces: fold each of the 2 1/2" squares in half to form a rectangle, then in half again to form a 1 1/4" square. Place the folded squares, overlapping along the long edge of A, in a good 1/4" from the end, so that the raw edges hang over the edge of the triangle, baste in place then trim away the excess to the edge of the triangle.

5. Sew the BCD unit to A, stitching through all the layers of the tailpieces.
6. Sew L to the above unit #5, leaving the seam allowance open at both ends.
7. Sew J – "lobster" to J – "background/water" to make a square; repeat.
8. Sew K to the above J unit #7; repeat
9. Sew J – "lobster" to J – "background/water edge of the above; repeat
10. Sew H to the above unit #9; repeat.
11. Sew G to the above unit #10; repeat.
12. Sew F to the above unit #11; repeat.
13. Sew E to the above unit #12, leaving the seam allowance open so that ABCDL can fit in around the corner; repeat.
14. Sew M to the above unit #13 leaving the seam open so that L can fit in around the corner; repeat.
15. Sew N to one of the above #14 units.
16. Sew the ABCDL unit #6 to unit #14, the one without N.
17. Sew unit #16 to unit #15.
18. Sew or embroider eyes.
19. Embroider feelers.

I know this is a tedious block to construct. Have patience and take your time fitting those corners in and enjoy your Nova Scotia lobster!

Scale: 1/4 size

