COVID-19 COMMENORATIVE QUILT

PIECING LIFE TOGETHER DURING THE PANDEMIC OF 2020
Donated to Washington Historical Society by these Washington residents:

Blockmakers:

- **Ginger Larson Bentley**, *Wenatchee* — Getting Supplies-Groceries, Essential Workers-Janitorial, & Stay Well-Stay Home, Appliqué
- **Laura Dorr**, *Camano Island* — Essential Workers-Garbage Pickup, Getting Supplies-Food delivery, & Truck deliveries, Appliqué
- **Alice Jackson**, *Stanwood* — Problems-Toilet paper, & Problems- Virus Contagion, & donation of her signature fabric ImageryfromBeyond.com, Embroidery
- **Simme Bobrosky**, *LaConner* — Getting Supplies-Foodbank, & Problems-2020, Appliqué
- **Birgit Miller**, *Tumwater* — Essential Workers-Restaurants & Pharmacies, Appliqué
- **Terry Robbins**, *Redmond* — Essential Workers-Medical, & Stay Well-Hand soap/sanitizer, Appliqué
- **Christine McDonald**, *Pullman* — Essential Workers-Physicians, Appliqué
- **Will Stich Smith**, *Acme* — Stay Well-Facemask, Embroidery, Green Roof Farms DIY
- **Wendy Mudd**, *Kenmore* — Stay Well- Gloves/goggles, Essential Workers- Transportation, Appliqué
- **Candie Olsen**, *Coupeville* — Problems-Closed due to Covid 19, Embroidery
- **Kate Freeburg**, *South Prairie* — Stay Well-Testing, Appliqué
- **Susan Greene**, *Vancouver* — Problems-Earth (worldwide), Appliqué
- **Chris Stuart Blom**, *Tacoma* — Essential Workers-EMTs, Appliqué
- **Debby Parry-Evans**, *Covington* — Problems-Stop Covid 19, Appliquéd & Beading
- **Esther Wood**, *LaConner* — Stay Well-6’ Social Distance, Appliqué
Other Contributors:

Project envisioned & organized by Denise Long, Stanwood

Miriam Lancaster, Stanwood, representative for Days for Girls, donated scraps from maskmaking for the sashing, borders, binding & backing.

White block fabric and batting donated by and piecing of completed blocks, sashing, borders, binding & backing by Denise Long, Stanwood

Long arm quilting sewn by Jahr Huber, Mount Vernon

Binding and hanging tabs sewn by Gale Marple, Anacortes
Inception of the Quilt by Denise Long, Stanwood, WA

Around April 1, 2020, I saw a WA Historical Society Facebook post looking for Covid19 commemorative items for their collection. I had been thinking about making a memorial quilt and had been collecting Covid19 icons that could be executed as appliqué or embroidered blocks.

I wrote the Historical Society about my idea, and the possibility that quilters from all over the state might create memorial quilts for people in their areas. COVID19 had touched me personally when a lady from my church died in early March, 2020...the first person in Skagit County. The person who responds to emails for the WA Historical Society put me in touch with the Historical Society’s Head of Collections, Margaret Wetherbee. She asked if I could send weekly updates on the COVID19 quilt’s progress, which would be added to their archive. I decided to ask each contributor to write a bio that I could send in the emails and that I would add to a packet of information we include with the quilt when we present it.

I also wanted to use scraps from the masks people are making to create the appliqués. Originally, I thought it would be nice to reuse sterilized fabric masks as they are retired as a way of honoring their original purpose. The Days for Girls Stanwood Camano Chapter coordinator of mask distribution to the Navy, medical staff, tribes, etc. said she didn’t think the masks would be retired anytime soon so the idea morphed into piecing their scraps together to make the donation quilt.

I posted my original black and white paper pattern idea on my Facebook page asking for feedback about what else my friends would like to see represented in the quilt. From there I formulated the pattern into the four areas we now have, with 6 blocks in each area equaling 24 blocks. After distilling the idea further I posted the revised pattern with a call for quilters to “adopt” a block on my personal Facebook page and on to the Facebook pages of the Pacific Northwest Quilters and Camano Island Quilters. 15 people responded making one or more blocks. I provided them the 8” white fabric square and a digital and hard copy of the pattern that they would interpret using their own fabric.

I asked for blocks to be returned to me by June 1, 2020 so I could piece the top together with the fabric scraps I was sewing into sashing and into strips of binding. While waiting for the blocks to come in I trimmed the scraps I’d recieved into usable rectangles and sewed them into horizontal strips, then sewed the strips together to make the back panel. I also created a bag in which we will present the quilt.

The long arm quilter from Mount Vernon, Jahr Huber, donated part of her time. And one of my church friends, Lyn Kelley, who lost a brother to COVID19, donated money towards the remaining quilting costs. Finally, after the quilting was done, another church friend and fellow quilter, Gale Marple, donated her time to machine and handbind the quilt and add tabs to hang the quilt.
Contributors’ Bios: We 20 contributors to the quilt look forward to the day we can gather to meet each other and present the quilt to the WA Historical Society in person.

- I am a mother of 3 boys and daughter in laws, and 6 grandchildren.
- I have tried most needle and sewing crafts all my adult life and loved them. My first pieced quilt was a heart bargello when I was 61 yrs old. I loved the entire creative process.
- When I saw the invitation to participate in this special 2020 quilt and in my favorite medium, I easily volunteered. This was a fun and creative way to be a part of something that will historically live on.
- I used fabrics I felt told the story along with the patterns. I did three blocks; 'Grocery Workers', 'Janitorial Staff' and 'Stay Home'.

Ginger Bentley, Wenatchee, WA
Ginger Bentley's Blocks  Continued
• About me... hmmm. I’m a transplanted CNYer from the Finger Lakes Area of UPSTATE New York. Joined the Army in 79. Traveled to the 4 corners of the US. Eventually landing here at Fort Lewis 12/85. 2 kids born in Texas, then 1 more here in WA. Was a professional Volunteer thru ´91. Husband Retired after 23 yrs of Army life and I finally rejoined the financial workforce. He got to be Mr. Mom to a 10, 8 & 3 yr. I have always had my hands busy. If I don’t know how to do it, I find a way to learn. First was beadwork, bead weaving. First large scale participation project was contributing a 3*3 bead patch to the “9-11 Beadquilt” project panel. There are three 9’ displays: NYC, Washington DC and Pennsylvania. After that I deployed, and found out about QOVf.org (Quilts of Valor Foundation) so learned how to sew to create Quilts.

• Now for the reason for my EMT block. My eldest daughter enlisted with her HS best friend. They both went into the Medical fields. She became a Mental Health Specialist, and her friend went in Radiology. My daughter was called to back fill at Madigan during OIF/OEF when active duty personnel were deployed. The younger sister of her friend (daughters from another mother) chose EMT. This “daughter” is currently an active EMT in Western WA. This block was created from scraps of masks that were made for Family and Friends, the white symbol for Hope and the inner most symbol for our Country. **Christina A Blom, Tacoma, WA**
I have been fascinated with textiles ever since my mother taught me, when I was 8, to embroider and knit. My father learned to sew in the army and passed those skills on to me. After graduating from California Institute of the Arts as a fine arts major, I went on to work in textile design and animation. I was drawn to the Pacific NW when I was very young and moved to Seattle while billboards were still saying “Will the last one to leave please turn out the lights”. I have had varied and colorful careers and travels throughout my life. I am now retired after working as an Occupational Therapist for 30 years. I enjoy working in all aspects of textiles from dying, spinning, weaving, knitting and felting wool, to appliquing and embellishing multi-dimensional pieces.

After requesting to participate in the making of this quilt, I was honored to have been chosen to help commemorate this time of hardship (2020 block) and community cooperation (Food Handouts block).

Simme Bobrosky, La Conner, WA
Sewing, for me, started in my Seattle area Junior High Home Economics class in the 1960’s but focused mainly on clothing. Still, it taught me basic skills that I dusted off and honed from time to time throughout the years of child rearing. Then retirement offered me extra time when we moved to Camano Island in 2009, I gravitated toward quilting. My interest and skills took off as I created quilts for family members, including my 4 grandchildren. My real passion is Kaffe Fassett Collective fabrics which is why I made my 3 COVID blocks, the car for Food Delivery, the truck for Delivering Supplies, and the essential service of Garbage Collection) using Kaffe Fassett Collective fabric. I have attended his workshops when possible.

My quilting buddies and I get together often for inspiration, great conversation, quilt sessions, and to attend quilt shows.

I love to work on charitable quilt projects, donate small quilts for police cars and contribute to group quilts, like the COVID19 quilt which memorializes this unique time. It is very rewarding to create quilts just for eye candy, but helping others through this awesome medium is icing on the cake! And a way to leave your mark on the world.

Laura Dorr, Camano Island, WA
• I was raised by a professional seamstress and she started teaching me to sew when I was just a toddler. Although I have sewn for over sixty years, I am fairly new to quilting. My focus has been garment sewing and I teach beginning fashion sewing and tissue fitting. I also do a lot of machine embroidery.

• I decided to take part as this was a unique opportunity. I machine appliqué the COVID Testing block. I’m grateful to my friend Bonnie who digitized the test tubes pattern that Denise sent me.

• **Kate Freeburg, South Prairie, WA**
• I started quilting in 2003, when my niece was in her senior year of high school. My maternal grandmother had given me some scraps when she was no longer able to sew and I wanted to use them in a graduation quilt for my niece. I soon discovered quilt shops, quilt shows (the Pacific International Quilt Festival was an eye-opener!), and machine embroidery. My husband and I moved to Clark County from the San Francisco Bay Area in 2018.

• We were just starting to get into the groove of "Living the 'Couve" when the pandemic arrived. I saw Denise's post in the Northwest Quilters Facebook group and knew that this was the way for me to contribute to the legacy of the pandemic. I liked the idea of the earth as a symbol of the global nature of this disease as well as a personal representation of my far-flung family. Handwork not really being my thing, I searched online for a machine embroidery design and found the "Pandemic Earth" machine applique/embroidery design. As luck would have it, the design was created by Paula Nelson of “Snugglepuppy Designs”, located in Snohomish, WA. My hope is that this quilt will serve as a reminder of how communities rally around in times of trouble.”

Susan Greene, Vancouver, WA
I’ve been quilting since I was 8, taught by both my grandmas. Since 2013 my focus has been on long arm quilting. I started quilting for others in 2015 under my business name ‘Above and Beyond.’ It’s been pretty much 6 days a week since. I love every moment and am excited to be part of so many incredible quilts. The variety of style, pattern and ingenuity I’m exposed to is amazing. I’m really blessed to be doing what I love!

These are times of huge change for the whole world. Documenting that change for the state museum feels like being part of our history.

Jahr Huber, Mount Vernon, WA
My life has had many incarnations during my 70 years: I’m a native of Miami, Florida, former prosecutor, divorce attorney, and County Court magistrate. Now happily retired for 21 years, I’ve recreated my life as an artist and author, and love living in the Pacific NW. At age 51, I began drawing abstract art (that’s a whole different story!) and settled into the art community in Stanwood, WA in 2016. Soon thereafter, I became interested in machine embroidery and sewing, and enjoyed my new hobby. What began as creating bags and functional items for myself quickly became a small business of putting my art on fabric. My computer savvy husband, Dennis Jackson, helps by digitizing many of my designs for embroidery, and together we created the Contagion block for the COVID 19 quilt. The purple thread was purposely used to show that the virus affects all people, no matter their race, religion, or political beliefs. There simply is no red or blue…just purple.

The second block I chose was the Toilet Paper Roll…a humorous symbol of the panic that set in during the initial stage of the COVID 19 pandemic. My Art by Ali Abstract fabric is used on the toilet paper roll and the paper holder itself. In addition, you may find my fabric on the quilt’s backing and sashing.

It was my privilege and an honor to be a contributor to this quilt.

Alice Best Jackson, Stanwood, WA
• I was born and lived most of my life on the East Coast. I married, raised two sons and had a nursing career in New Jersey. My husband and I retired to Camano Island, WA to be near our eldest son and family in 2008.

• I am a bit of a sewer, lots of direction, and I love art. I saw a lot of quilting in the PNW and learned they tell a story, offer love, comfort, and heal a heart.

• I lost a loved one to coronavirus. My brother, Nick Webster died April 3, 2020 in his New York City home. I am privileged to have followed Denise Long, and the community she created, to produce this magnificent quilt. It honors him among the myriad others who died.

• I am grateful and proud to contribute the payment for the long arm quilting.

• **Lyn Kelley, Camano Island, WA**
I’ve sewn in one way or another since I was 6, learning to make quilts for the needy with my grandmother at the Ladies Aid Society. I can’t believe I was much help, but she said the little triangles I hand-sewed together were good. I ultimately became an RN and worked in ICUs for over 20 years, for Indian Health Service, and the United States Public Health Service. I retired after 40 years of Federal Service. Then, in 2013, Days for Girls found me. I started Days for Girls in Guyana in South America where I lived as child, and co-founded the Stanwood-Camano Island chapter of Days for Girls (DFG) (https://www.facebook.com/Days-for-Girls-Stanwood-Camano-Island-WA-Chapter-1483797295238191/). My current role is “DFG Global Sewing Specialist” which means I am a sewing mentor to over 100 DFG Enterprises around the world. My focus is mentoring new Enterprises to help them gain certification. While I no longer co-lead the DFG local chapter I am still an active local volunteer.

When COVID-19 hit I mobilized our Nextdoor Neighborhood (which is how I met Denise) to sew masks. We contributed our masks to the local DFG chapter under the auspices of the DFG “Masks4Millions” program. Together, DFG volunteers, neighbors, and local quilters distributed masks to local medical personnel, first responders, essential workers, farm workers, Tulalip, Navajo and the Sioux tribes, for the sailors on the Naval ship USS Ralph Johnson, (the reason for the US Navy patch on the quilt sashing) and to many more. To date, locally, we have sewn and distributed over 11,000 masks. When Denise Long asked for the scraps left from our maskmaking to use for the backing, sashing and binding, I was happy to contribute to the COVID quilt for the WA Historical Society. Our Days for Girls posie is embroidered to both the front and the back of the quilt to our the DFG contribution to the quilt. Miriam Lancaster, Lake Ketchum, WA
Growing up on a Nebraska farm, I made doll clothes with scraps left over from the clothes my mother had made my 8 siblings and I. I started 4-H, sewing an apron on the electric machine and went on to sew some of my own clothing as a young, poor teacher as well as home decor items.

My undergraduate minor in art was utilized in my career as a special education teacher because I created most of my own teaching materials. Creating the pattern for this quilt was reminiscent of creating teaching materials. In my free time I also create “narrative art”. This quilt is a form of “narrative art”, visually representing our experience of living through this pandemic.

My mother started quilting when she retired at age 62. I followed suit starting to quilt at age 62, mostly making baby and lap quilts for my very large family of nieces and nephews, and their babies. I chose to piece the fabric scraps together which led me to the COVID19 quilt’s subtitle about ‘Piecing Life Together’ during this Pandemic.

Why did I want to do this project? First, because creativity keeps me sane! And to demonstrate that we can create community in the midst of isolation. It’s been a pleasure helping the group get to know the other contributors. And it gives me great pleasure to know that our handwork will be seen by Washingtonians in the future.

Denise Long, Stanwood, WA
• I’ve always been enchanted by the many different fabrics, but didn’t get started in sewing or quilting at an early age. After I moved to Orcas Island in 1997, I found a quilting teacher and started weekly lessons. I loved it immediately. I’ve been quilting since then. In 2005, we moved, and I joined Fidalgo Island Quilters in Anacortes. I was Programs Chair for two years, the newsletter editor for six years, and a museum docent for the Kids Quilting Project for three years. I have also been very involved in setting up our Quilt Show for every year we have done it since 2006. What great fun, with wonderful people!

• I learned about this project from Denise Long, who attends the same church as I. I'm excited to be part of this quilt which will be donated to the Washington Historical Society Museum. I offered to bind the quilt and to affix the black fabric tabs to help with hanging the quilt onto its back.

• **Gale Marple, Anacortes, WA**
“A Poetic Quilters Bio”

My grandmother’s quilt told a story of cold winter nights in Montana, young boys with tipsy cups and the depression of the 1940’s.

The blue, red and green cotton fabric was worn through and soft. The quilt told of hard work, simplicity and hard times.

I took up quilting in my 40’s to tell my own stories.

I sewed strength into a green and brown BearPaw quilt for my son.

I sewed gentleness and courage in the yellow and purple tulip quilt for my daughter.

Hours were spent selecting the fabric, then cutting and assembling the blocks.

When I was asked by Denise to submit a quilters block for the Washington Historical Society COVID-19 quilt I said yes and took on the challenge even though I am an amateur at applique.

The physician took on its own life as I cut and assembled the fabric.

The bright red cross on the physician’s surgical cap stood out on the tan linen.

The Physician (block) has the feel of an early 1900’s doctor as if he walked out of that historic era from the Pandemic of 1918.

Fifteen Washington quilters tell another story in their artful creations. Each block tells us of the choices we can make to protect ourselves and those we love.

I think we can all agree COVid-19 is about change. Human relationships, economics, social structures and the relationship with our bodies and environment will never be the same.

I said yes to this project because I believe more love and creativity is needed as the world faces the challenges and uncertainity of this time.

That is why I support this project.”

Christine McDonald, Pullman, WA
• I started quilting in 2007, when my friend took me on my first Quilt Shop Hop. I started to volunteer for this project for several reasons:

• As a state employee, I am considered an “essential worker,” although I do get to work from the safety and comfort of my home.

• Quilting (any kind of needlecraft, actually) is a welcome diversion from the havoc created by COVID 19.

• Hopefully, this quilt will serve as a reminder for future generations to consider the greater good over their own desires and needs.

• I chose hand appliqué for both my Restaurant Workers block and my Pharmacy Staff block, because the rhythm of the stitches has a calming effect on me. The fabrics I used were scraps left over from making facemasks for friends and family. They also represent three quilts I’ve made.

  Birgit Miller, Olympia, WA
I’m a wife, Mom of 5 boys, Grandma of 5 boys and 3 girls, retired high school counselor and creator of many things. I’m passionate about creating with fabric and have been since the age of 7 when I found my grandma’s stash.

I love a challenge and was delighted to be invited by blockmaker, Terry Robbins, to test my creativity appliquéing two blocks (Transportation Workers and Gloves/Goggles/PPE for the COVID 19 Quilt.

As rewarding as it is making face masks with the “Crafters Against COVID-19 Seattle” and for family and friends, this was a welcomed break. It is an honor to be among the talented contributors of this work of art that will become a piece of Washington’s history!”

Wendy A. Mudd, Kenmore, WA
• For my eighth Christmas, Santa brought me a little battery operated sewing machine. That was my beginning. For many years sewing was clothing only designing and combing patterns to achieve what my vision was. Then along came marriage and pregnancy. I'd never made a quilt, and to my ‘soon to be new mom’ mind, I thought “How hard could it be?” It was a true scrap quilt made from all the left over fabric pieces, from the layette sets I had made all my friends. I had no concept of how to quilt a quilt, so it was tied with yarn. My son is now 43 and his son is using that very lumpy creation.

• Time passed, and an occasional quilt was made, but I still stuck to tying. Then my husband and I moved to Whidbey Island Washington, December of 2000 to be closer to our son. I met the most incredible co-worker, Nancy Mondor, who past four years ago from influenza. She was so wonderful, I wish we’d been friends our entire lives. She introduced me to quilting as I had not experienced before. I signed up for a class but I left after the first night in tears. It was too hard, too exacting, but a dear neighbor, Vi, told me, “You are someone who has always thought outside the box, accept that, and learn what you can. Don't give up and don't get discouraged. You can do it.” My first completed quilt is scary to look at, but I did stick to it. And it is still holding together, cheap fabric and all.

• Now nearly twenty years later, I can’t say that I'm still much pass the beginner quilter stage, and "hand" quilting is still a four letter word, but it is on my bucket list. I discovered that while I am not dyslexic when it comes to reading words, I am sort of dyslexic when it comes to reading patterns, so many of my quilts are still outside of the box so to speak.

• A fellow fabric artist, Alice Jackson, asked if I would be interested in participating in making a block for the COVID19 quilt, it was with great trepidation, I said yes. My block, Closed Due to Covid 19, is very stark. Simple words in black and white. I’d had another vision in mind, but my simple block makes the statement clearly.

• It has been a humble honor to participate. May a miracle be brought forth, that a cure is soon found, and lives are saved. And that our new normal will be something we can all not just live with, but grow and gain a better understanding of one another.” Candie C. Olsen, Coupeville, WA
• I was born and grew up in England, I moved permanently to Washington in 2010. I have done textile crafts since I was a child but my world was turned upside down when I saw Eleanor Burns on PBS (on a vacation to USA back in the 90's.) I was hooked on quilting from that day. I am a very active member of Covington Quilters Guild and I am one of the organizers of our annual quilt show. Unfortunately, we had to cancel this year due to Covid 19.

• I chose the Stop Covid block because I love to sew and quilt by hand. I think it is a wonderful tradition that events in history are memorialized by quilters and I was honored to be included in this project.

Debby Parry-Evans, Covington, WA
I learned to sew at an early age as my Mother was a professional seamstress. I sewed clothing and eventually covered couches. I made my first quilt in 1975 because we needed a winter blanket ...and didn't quilt again until about 2003 and I haven't stopped since. So many things to learn and try. I love bright colors in my quilts and am always up for a challenge. I saw a post of someone's squares on Facebook and contacted Denise to see if I could participate. My two blocks, the Medical Chart representing all the types of essential medical workers and the Hand Soap/Sanitizer, are done in applique.

I think it's awesome to bring together Washington quilters to commemorate this unusual time in our lives. I am proud to be a part of this piece of history that will live on in the Washington Historical Society.

Terry Robbins, Redmond, WA
I was a high school junior when the block was made while I was home on COVID school closure. I machine embroidered this block with my mother, Candice Leonard, at our home and business “Green Roof Farms DIY”, in Acme, WA. I was inspired to go on and create my own pandemic quilt to travel the United States during the summer of 2020. (PandemicQuilt.com) I continued on to make 2 smaller Pandemic Quilts. One of those has been received and is on display at the CDC headquarters in Atlanta, GA.

I learned a lot about textiles and how to make embroidery designs and to quilt during this COVID 19 pandemic event. The block I chose for this project was a simple mask to represent the simple need for everyone to wear a mask.

William Stich Smith, Acme WA
• I was asked to appliqué and embroider the Six Foot Distance Block by my good friend, Miriam Lancaster, a co-volunteer from our mutual charity Days for Girls. I was honored to be asked.

• I started quilting in 1990 after watching a 'Sewing with Nancy' episode about quilting. Her guest was sewing what we call today an Improv quilt but at that time it was called a Mosaic quilt. She took tiny pieces of fabric and created a masterpiece. I was fascinated.

• I also apply this technique to my volunteer work. Every hour and every item I produce, just a tiny bit, adds up. It is amazing how many hands can create an impressive result.

• Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the COVID19 quilt.

**Esther Woods, LaConner, WA**