

NOTE This is a low-resolution sample only and does not reflect the quality and clarity of the published book



Daisies



Daisies quilt

Controversy often arises when a barn quilt's pattern is not a traditional geometric design. Donna Sue and I agreed that it was not our place to determine what is and isn't a quilt, but we still find some puzzling. Is that horse a quilt? What about that college logo? Some of the more intricate designs could be sewn into an appliqué quilt, but it is doubtful whether they would be. I stood in the chilly mud studying the floral design on Lois Degler's barn, umbrella in one hand and camera in the other, wondering whether this was another such case. But sure enough, Lois had the quilt on hand and disproved my notion that her daisies were not quilt-able.

Lois made the Daisies quilt about 1945 as a 4-H project. The quilt looked remarkable for its age, especially since it was used as a bedspread when Lois got married. "That was the end of quilting for me," she said. "I was busy raising a family and being a farmer's wife." Lois met her husband, Dean, through 4-H when both of them showed cattle at the state fair. Dakota County, where Dean lived, is situated next to Carver County, and by the time the fair had ended, romance had begun. The couple married and bought the eighty-acre farm in 1946. Dean had moved to be with Lois in Carver County, but the herd changed from her Brown Swiss cows to his Jerseys.

Son Gayle was a county commissioner, but he still had a hand in farming. The crops that once fed the cattle on the last dairy farm in town were now sold to others, but Gayle still rented land on which to grow corn, alfalfa, and soybeans. Speaking of the encroaching development, Gayle said, "I'll grow crops on it until they build a house on it!" He acknowledged that he would most certainly be the last generation to operate the family farm. The lack of open land nearby and his sons' choices of careers in teaching and engineering told the tale. For the time being, the two young men are on hand when it is time to bring in the hay, but "the clock is ticking," Gayle said. Lois pointed out an aerial photo of the property from some years past. I had seen many such photographs proudly hung in farmhouses across the country. In the photo, the Degler farm was surrounded by nothing but lush green. I shuddered to think what a more recent image would reveal—those hundreds of houses in neat rows like so many teeth in mammoth jaws.

Janet Fahey was pleased when her application for a barn quilt was approved, but almost immediately a problem arose. After much thought, Janet had decided on Double Wedding Ring for her barn quilt, with one of her grandmother's quilts to be used as the model. Unfortunately, Double Wedding Ring had already been claimed by the Kelzer family, as part of a fiftieth anniversary celebration. Naomi urged Janet, "You need to pick something else—quickly!" as the first round of barn quilts was set to be painted. Janet turned to the samples that had been provided, and when she saw the Triple Tulip pattern, she said, "Well, hello!"

Janet can trace her ancestors back about 150 years when they immigrated from Echt, Holland. The land that they worked so hard to clear on which to make a living is precious to Janet. The barn was built in 1961 from hardwoods on the