

## Signature Quilts of the Wilmot Historical Society

The Wilmot Historical Society is lucky to have acquired two early signature quilts that are stored in archival boxes in the History Room at the town offices. Signature quilts were sometimes created as a fundraiser, other times sewn by friends for the fun of it. As a church fundraiser, for instance, squares were sold to church members and others for the privilege of being included in the finished product.

Loose blocks of what was to become the Wilmot Bicentennial Quilt were donated by members of the Clark family. They think the originator was probably Lucinda Sanborn, who may have died before finishing it in 1906. The two families were neighbors - Theodore and Frances Clark lived across the street from Albert and Lucinda (Fernald) Sanborn on Pancake Street in 1883, the date marked on one of the quilt squares.



It is guessed that Lucinda, aged 52 at the time, probably contacted her friends in the village and asked them to make quilt squares in the "friendship" pattern. Each would have stitched her block and attached a name to be sewn on later. It is amazing that these squares survived with pencil on paper signatures still pinned to most.

Judy Rayno used her own embroidery skills to complete the 64" X 64" square quilt in 2007. She and Barbara Sanborn chose appropriate old fashioned patterned material to bind the various sized squares, starting with the smallest, to develop a template for the project. The finished quilt became known as the Wilmot Bicentennial Quilt because it was completed as part of the 2007 town celebration and presented to the Wilmot Historical Society on the Wilmot Bandstand June 18, 2007.

The second signature quilt belonging to the WHS is a finished 80" X 90" patchwork quilt with open bed corners that belonged to Mary Isabelle Tewksbury Pedrick. It was donated by her granddaughter, Kay Butler, and carefully repaired by WHS volunteer Chris Jenssen in 2018.

The Wilmot Historical Society is grateful to Luan Clark, Judy and Jim Rayno, Liz Kirby, Chris Jenssen and Julie Morse for providing background information and assistance in caring for these priceless historical artifacts.

