



The Inter-Mountain photos by Shannon Bennett Campbell

Those who quilt have unique talents and are always ready to discuss their pattern choices and colored materials.

# PATCHWORK

*Mountain quilters brighten our homes*

As we move past spring blossoms and find stronger sunrays filling our backyards, many will recall early summer episodes when grandmothers would take a notion to air out the many quilts and coverlets used to provide warmth for the many winter nights.

Neatly hung on every clothesline, most of these coverings were hand-stitched and many were hand-me-downs of past generations with a specific history or special people who patiently planned and stitched each piece. It is a wise mother who makes sure her family members know the stories and creators behind the cupboard quilts.

While most families have some of these heirlooms to pass on, those who do not may want to take some summer trips on the trail of these native Appalachian antiques while they are plentiful and can be found. I am pleased to make some suggestions that could start a collection for you and allow you to share this beauty in your home.

The West Virginia Quilt Festival is offered today and tomorrow at Prickett's Fort State Park ([www.prickettsfort.org](http://www.prickettsfort.org)) near Fairmont and will have several quilt varieties to examine. Because heritage is accented here, information about historical details as well as styles will be discussed. This quiet colonial setting makes a great place to showcase quilts for children's examination.

Another excellent venue where quilts can be found for purchase in mid-August is the West Virginia State Fairgrounds near Lewisburg, where there are always a multitude of quilt samples. Names and addresses are attached to each quilt and owners can be contacted and purchase prices discussed.

Closer to home, the quilt show at the Stonewall Jackson Jubilee usually offers some gems and you will find no better quality



**The I.M.**  
Happy Trails  
and Many  
Tales

**Shannon Bennett  
Campbell**

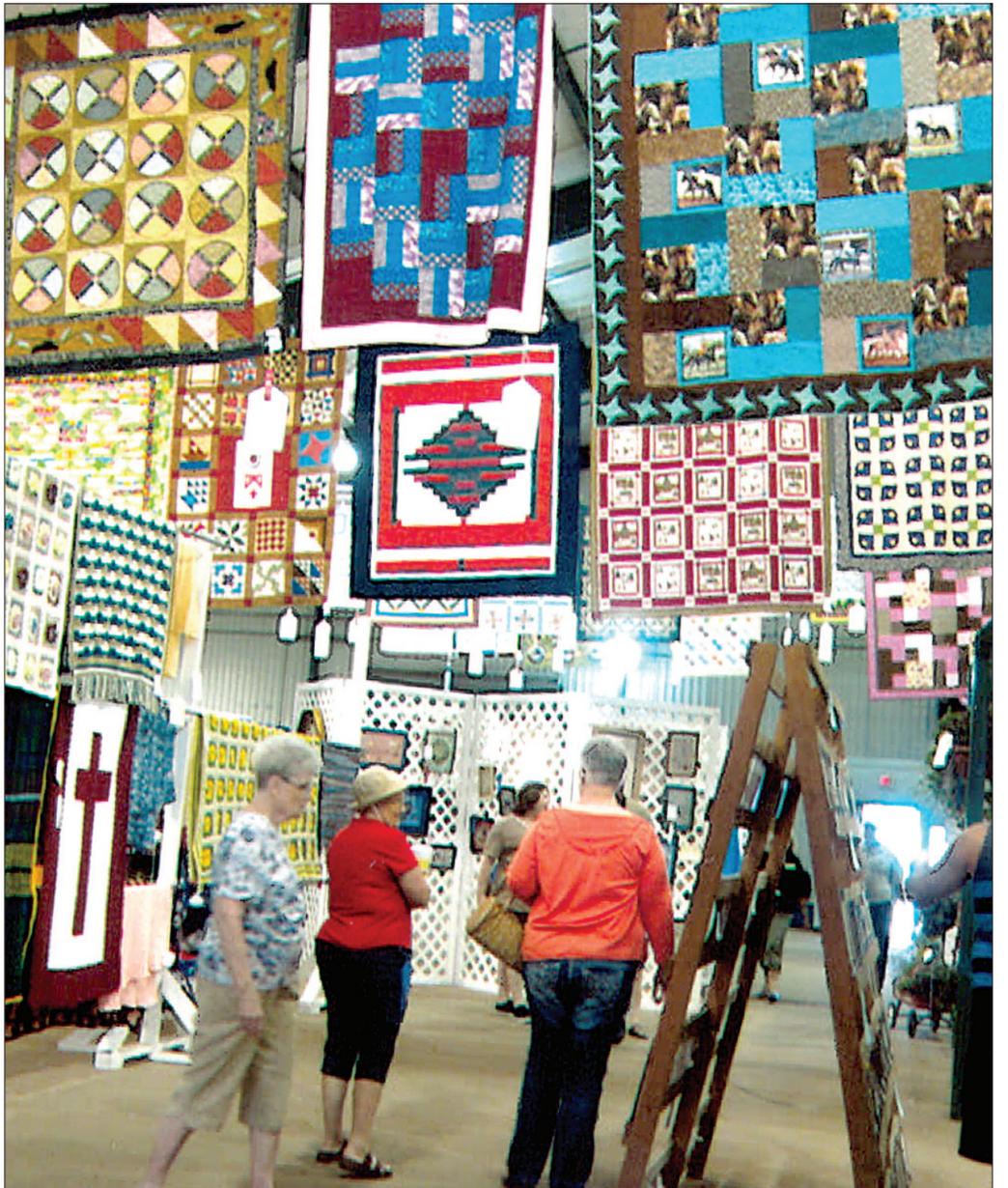
than what you see stitched by this show's contributors. This three-day event at Jackson's Mill during Labor Day Weekend provides a good opportunity to see many quilt varieties.

Another good resource for quilt purchases is the Mountain State Forest Festival Quilt Show. Usually housed in a local church, many in our own community work through the year to have a new entry for this show open to the public during most of the festival week.

An additional way for being able to own a quilt is to visit area auctions where homes are selling their household goods. Auctions I have visited in recent years provide hand-sewn full-sized quilts in very good condition for prices ranging from \$100 to \$200, so it is easy to own a piece of the past without taking too much out of savings.

In Fawn Valentine's excellent review of Mountain State quilting titled "West Virginia Quilts and Quiltmakers," Humanities Foundation head Ken Sullivan reflects, "Quiltmaking differs from most other housework in that it leaves something tangible behind. Quilts are made to last. Good ones hold up for years, decades even, of hard use. Often the very best quilts are never put into service at all, but instead carefully preserved, sometimes for generations. As with other fine things, their beauty protects them. Quilts in their durability preserve a record that is our to interpret."

Take some time to find one of these old mementos and provide a place to dis-



High above the showcases of the West Virginia State Fair a quilt cavalcade covers the ceiling area ensuring that at least one will strike the fancy of each visitor.

play it. The warm feelings it evokes can serve to keep a special joy alive in your home that cannot be readily found in the daily obstacles we experience. If any trail can be a peaceful one, it will be the Appalachian Quilt Trail and it seems no matter what direction we turn toward, we will find ourselves firmly planted on this path.

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