

Wrap Your Barn in Love and Warmth

By Beth Thomas, South Bristol Historian,
Leah Friends, Deb Lindbloom,
and the members of the Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail

What I wouldn't do for a barn.... Well, actually I have one that qualifies only as a glorified shack and really needs just one stick of dynamite, but it has stalls and a chicken coop and smells like hay. I'm blessed to have it. However, in my jealous moments, I drive County Rd. 12 and covet the 1898 beauty and then the Gothic cupola of the most photographed barn in the county. You know the one; it is even in a Wegmans commercial.

Have you noticed the Founders' Cemetery barn just south and across from Bristol Mountain on Rte. 64? The Town of South Bristol barn's perfectly-weathered boards are now enhanced by a barn quilt on the north gable, lovingly designed, painted, and donated by **Leah Friends**, the founder of the new Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail. It's an 8'x8' painting that replicates one square of a fabric quilt.

Leah chose this pattern to represent that "X" marks the spot: our beautiful home. The colors encourage viewers to remember the blue lakes and sky, green fields and hillsides covered with trees, yellow sunny days and grey skies too, and even flying geese. Her work of art will last many years before it will need a touch-up. It makes me smile every time I pass it and I can honestly say that I have made a new friend because I stopped at her house one day to ask her about it.

We are not the first geographic area to promote tourism, camaraderie, fun, and reverence for our beloved barns (Barn quilt trails are in 25 states and Canada and the closest one to us is located near LeRoy), but we do have an extremely enthusiastic group of artists and barn owners who have created a club and are working on a touring map to share the splendor of our area with visitors. Last year Leah held two workshops to help approximately 35 people make their own miniature 2x2 barn quilts.

Presently, there are several painted barn quilt blocks hung on barns and homes in the Naples, Bristol, and surrounding areas. The idea is pulsating by word of mouth and Facebook with the goal of expanding to hundreds of barn quilt blocks displayed throughout the Finger Lakes for the enjoyment of all viewers. Of course, this map would include local tourist attractions, businesses, and historic sites and help ALL of us to promote agri-tourism in the Finger Lakes.

Quilt blocks may be mounted on barns, homes, businesses, churches, posts, fences, or any type of structure. A quilt trail includes a map of the locations for travelers to use during a self-guided tour. This map may be available in an electronic form as well as a paper copy.

Barn quilts not only enhance a structure, they tell endless stories of the community, its culture, history, agricultural heritage, or even honor a grandmother's precious handmade quilt. Visitors are welcomed to a newly-opened business or are attracted to a long-standing merchant. Heritage barns are noticed, appreciated, and preserved, and gardens and gates are beautified.

The Selection of a Barn Quilt Block Design

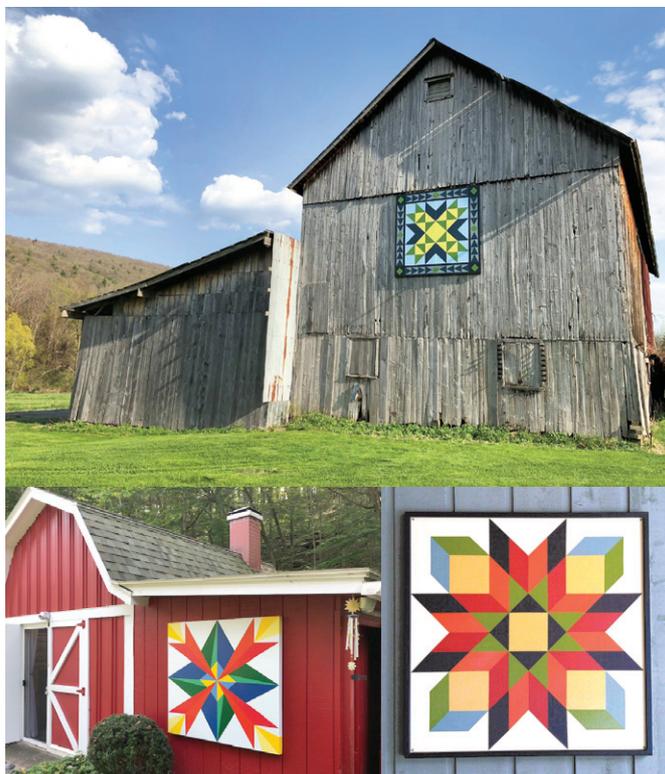
Traditional geometric blocks are found in quilting books, Pinterest, Etsy, or through a Google search. A treasured family quilt may serve as the model. A pattern may represent the type of crops grown on a farm or the colors of a favorite tractor. A red, white, and blue motif can display patriotism or a mascot and school colors may be chosen. Designs and colors are countless and personal,

but should complement the environment and building. The Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail has an application form to remind artists to respect copyright. Logos, words, or advertisements are excluded since they would be considered signs rather than quilt blocks. Minimum size for inclusion with the primary Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail is 4'x4'. An 8'x8' is recommended for a large barn or structure. Smaller barn quilt blocks will be promoted in the secondary trail.

How To Join The Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail

Paint a barn quilt or have one painted for you! Complete the Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail Application-Agreement Form. Every quilt block is part of the American Quilt Trail Movement, but only registered barn quilt blocks will be placed on the Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail map for the purpose of directing travelers to their location. This ensures continuity and the understanding that you may have cars stopping by your fence on a summer day to photograph your masterpiece!

Learn more at Facebook - Finger Lakes Barn Quilt Trail
<https://www.facebook.com/FLBQT/>
or email FLBQTrail@gmail.com



Barn Quilts created by Leah Friends. Founders Cemetery barn on Route 64 shown at top. (Photos provided)