

# The Avid Quilter



Central Branch's **Margaret McKay-McNeil** can be found at the Johnson Avenue Senior's Centre on Fredericton's north side doing what she truly enjoys – quilting. Currently, the quilting group to which she belongs numbers eight.

Margaret misses socializing with her friends at the Senior's Centre because of the coronavirus pandemic's restricting the number of individuals who can meet at a time. At the time of writing, quilters who are allowed to quilt at the same time have been restricted to two. Nonetheless, she along with others of the quilting group still meet two at a time to quilt.



*China Tea Cups*

Margaret says that the quilting group charges a fee for the mainly hand-quilting based on the number of hours it takes to complete a quilt. The monies realized from the group's quilting go to scholarships for graduates from the Leo Hayes High School.

Margaret has completed four different quilt tops during the pandemic. All, she says, have been machine quilted. One quilt that she particularly liked is "*Stars in My Mother's Garden*". One of her all-time favourites is the "*Log Cabin*" quilt.



*Stars In My Mother's Garden*



*Log Cabin*

In addition to quilting, Margaret maintains a busy schedule. She outlined her schedule for an ordinary week that is full and keeps her on the go. On *Monday*, she says, there is quilting. On *Tuesday*, she goes bowling. On *Wednesday* mornings, she is a hospital volunteer at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital where she has been volunteering for twelve years. Then, on *Thursday*, it is quilting again.

In 2001, she joined the IODE, the Sir Howard Douglas Chapter. Presently, she is the Provincial President of IODE New Brunswick. Additionally, she serves as Secretary of the Dr. Everett Chalmer's Hospital Auxiliary Board. Margaret also served as Secretary of the Central Branch of the NBSRT for thirteen years. In her spare time, she knits! Socks, especially!

One of nine children, Margaret is originally from Kouchibouguac where she attended school from grades one to eight and took correspondence courses to complete grade nine. After grade nine,



*Margaret with a few of her many quilts.*

she completed high school at the Convent School in St. Louis de Kent. In 1955, she graduated from Fredericton's Teachers' College on Queen Street with a temporary license and went on to receive her permanent license, a Bachelor of Teaching, a Bachelor of Education, and a Master of Education from the University of New Brunswick. She taught for thirty-eight years, retiring from South Devon Elementary School in 1993. She also taught at Barker's Point and Lower St. Marys.

Margaret says that she has not done much travelling, but she does recall with fondness a trip to Shelburne, Ontario to attend a "Fiddle Festival". In 1985, she and her daughter travelled to Amsterdam, a trip that she had won from a draw while shopping at Lawtons Drug. They had not only the opportunity to visit the Netherlands, but also Belgium. She remarked that the tulips were absolutely beautiful. She also recalls a bus tour to New York City with a daughter and a granddaughter which she found enjoyable.

After the death of her husband in 1997, she remarried. She and her second husband will have been married for eleven years in May. Her children, a son and two daughters, live near her, all on Claudie Road. She mentions with pride that a granddaughter is following in her footsteps as a teacher.

A busy lady who loves to quilt – that is Margaret McKay-McNeill!