

Mystery Quilt 2019

✧ Aunt Addie's Blue Ribbon Quilt ✧

Kathleen Tracy



Finished quilt without borders - 33" x 39 ¼"



Finished quilt with borders – 43 ½" x 49 ¾"

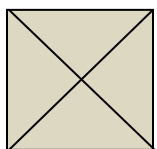
Well, here we are. After working on this for 6 months, I'll bet you never thought we'd get to the end of our Mystery. As you can see, it's not exactly a small quilt. (But, hey, we used small blocks!) I originally planned for this to be simple row quilt - Set the blocks on point in rows and use sashing in between the rows. Add a binding. You often see this simple kind of finish in antique quilts. It makes a great wall hanging. Then, after I made mine, I decided it needed a border so I could use it as a lap quilt. You know how quilts often have a mind of their own and tell you what they want to become. So, you also have that option but adding a border does make it a bit larger. It's your choice. Be sure to read Aunt Addie's "story," below.

Materials and Cutting

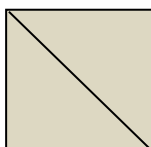
For the setting and corner triangles **for each row**, you'll need 3 squares, 7" x 7" and 2 squares $3\frac{3}{4}" \times 3\frac{3}{4}"$ of a "quiet" print that looks good with the blocks. I bought quarter yard cuts of several different fabrics to go with the blocks and that was plenty for all the rows. I say "quiet" because if you use a print that's too busy it may blend into the blocks and make them disappear. You worked hard on these small blocks and we want them to stand out and be the focus of the quilt. So, my suggestion is to use something that won't compete with the scrappiness of the blocks.

Cutting

For the **setting triangles for each row**, cut 3 squares, 7" x 7". Cut each square twice on the diagonal for 12 triangles (2 triangles left over).



For the **corner triangles**, cut 2 squares, $3\frac{3}{4}" \times 3\frac{3}{4}"$. Cut each square once on the diagonal for 4 corner triangles.



For **sashing**, you will need 5 **sashing strips** measuring $1\frac{3}{4}" \times 33"$. I made my quilt scrappy and so bought a few $\frac{1}{4}$ yard cuts of dark prints and then cut my sashing from those. You may make yours with the same print or use several different prints for a scrappier look.

If you wish to include borders –

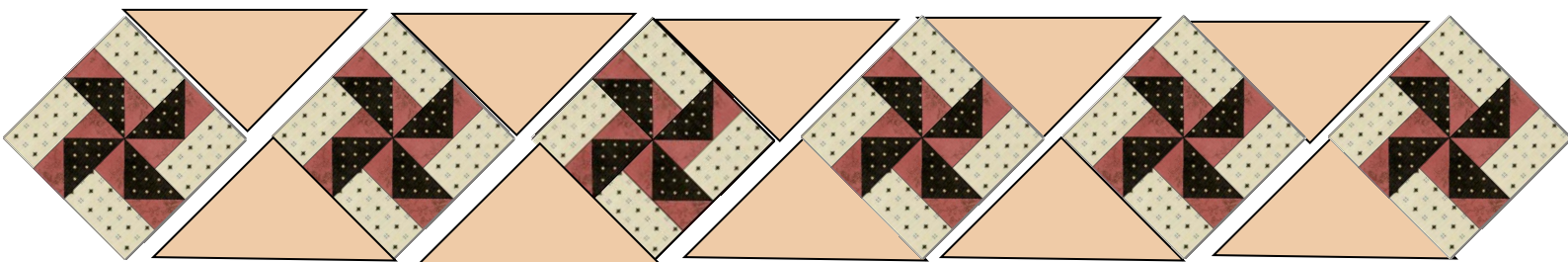
For the **inner border**, cut 2 strips $1\frac{1}{4}" \times 36"$ and 2 strips $1\frac{1}{4}" \times 39\frac{3}{4}"$. (One quarter yard of fabric)

For the **outer border**, cut 2 strips $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 44\frac{1}{2}"$ and 2 strips $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 50\frac{1}{4}"$ *on the lengthwise grain* (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ yards of fabric)

If you wish to use the same fabric for the sashing and inner border, you will need $\frac{1}{2}$ yard.

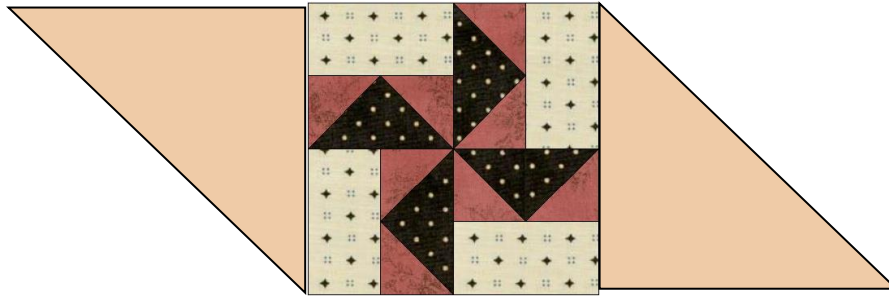
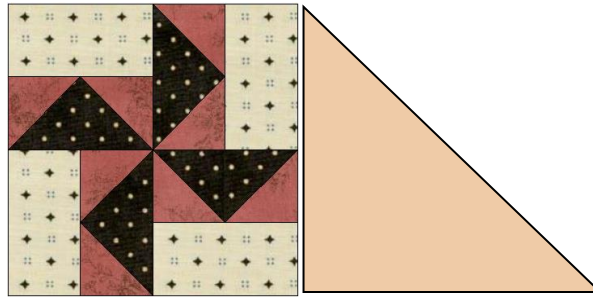
Make the Rows

1. Here's how you'll finish each row. First, lay out the blocks with the triangles arranged as shown.

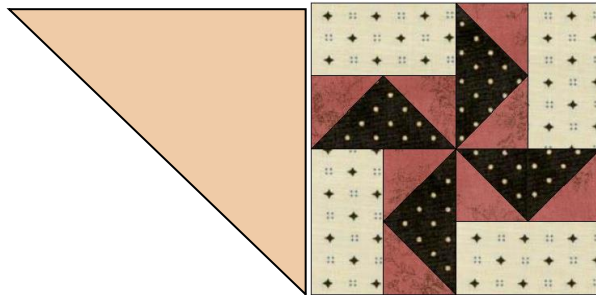


2. Then, sew the triangles together with the blocks as shown below.

Make 1.

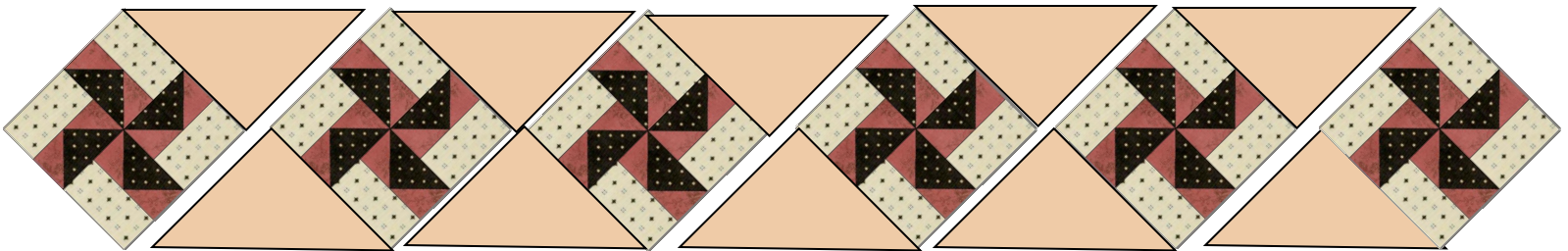


Make 4.

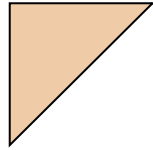


Make 1.

3. Sew the blocks and triangles (from step2) together in six diagonal rows.



4. Sew the four corner triangles to the first and last block.



Corner triangles



Do this for each set of blocks to make a row. When the rows are completed, add sashing in between.



Finish the Quilt

Your row quilt can be left without a border. Just bind it for a simple finish. Or, add an inner border and an outer border. I used a 4 ½" border for mine but you can make it narrower or wider as you wish. Measure your quilt and cut strips to match the length of the sides. After sewing, measure again and cut strips to fit the top and bottom.

My quilt is scrappy and I used a different print for the setting triangles in each row. I played around with the setting fabrics until I found ones that went well with the blocks. When I arranged the rows, I decided to set them according to the color of these setting fabrics instead of following the order of the blocks as they were given each month. Play around with yours too until you get the look you desire.



Aunt Addie's Quilt

Aunt Addie enjoyed pulling scraps from her scrap basket, putting them to good use in the quilts she made. Some of the scraps she used were dressmaking remnants or scraps of old clothing her family had discarded. Some were pieces of fabric sent to her from friends and family who lived far away. She loved quilting and making things from these scraps but never felt that she was especially creative. Who had time for that when there was always so much work to do on the farm? The quilts Aunt Addie made were practical and simple – mostly utilitarian quilts for the family, to keep themselves warm on cold winter nights.

One day, after she finished reading and re-reading a letter from her dear sister in Iowa, she had an idea. The envelope with the letter also contained scraps of material from a new dress she was making. Addie missed her sister and wished she could see her more often. They sewed together when they were younger and thinking about those days made her feel sentimental. Addie became inspired to make a quilt using some of her favorite blocks and she wanted to include these pieces of fabric. The block patterns she especially loved were those that had been shared with her by friends and family long ago. This sharing of blocks was very common among quilters in the nineteenth century, before the publication of quilt patterns and designs in magazines and newspapers. Since the block patterns she collected were all different sizes, she modified them a bit to make similar blocks that were the same size so that they could all be easily pieced into one quilt. Then she downsized them to four inches.

Addie's niece Margaret had just arrived for an extended visit and she begged Aunt Addie to teach her to quilt. So Addie showed her patterns for some larger blocks she had acquired over the years and encouraged her while she cut fabric and practiced her piecing skills on the simpler ones. The two women chatted and shared family stories while they worked. Addie continued to hand stitch her four-inch blocks. Making these smaller blocks was a lot of fun but she'd never pieced anything this small before and discovered they required more patience and a little ripping and resewing at times. Working on her small blocks alongside her niece, Addie became determined to be more precise in her piecing and discovered that slowing down helped her efforts. She was teaching Margaret basic skills but she was also learning some new habits herself.

Weeks later, after she finished making the blocks, she arranged them in rows and sewed them together. Each row contained a different block pattern that was shared by a friend or family member, along with some of the fabrics they had given her. When the quilt was finished, she was very pleased with her efforts and decided to enter it in the quilt competition at the County Fair coming up in a few months. Guess what? She won a blue ribbon for Best Scrap Quilt! She was proud and delighted that her efforts had paid off. And every time she looked at this special quilt she was reminded of her beloved friends and family. Wrapping herself up in it was like getting a warm hug from every one of them.

