

DOCUMENTING & LABELING SPECIAL QUILTS

You've finally finished that labor of love; the final stitch has been put into the binding, you've trimmed all the threads, your quilt is officially done. Not quite! Before you go any further with that quilt it is so important to label and document your work.

Why, you ask? With a little bit of luck your quilt will long out-live you. When you are gone but your quilt remains in the family, proper labeling will ensure that your history lives on, so that future generations can appreciate your hard work.

Additionally, quilts are being stolen at an alarming rate these days. Perhaps everyone else is learning what we already know about quilts—their ability to be warm and nurturing yet artful, all at the same time. But if your quilt, that you have poured your heart and soul into, is ever stolen or lost, you'll have a much better chance of getting it back if it is labeled and properly documented.

Start with the label, which can really be a fun way to complete your quilt. There are many types of commercially-available labels, either selections that are printed on fabric, or ones that you print from your home computer. Some are already colored while others are black and white, allowing you to color the label to coordinate with the colors of your quilt. If you'd rather not use an additional piece of fabric for your label consider drawing on the back of your quilt with a "stencil", or embroider your information.

There are a few things to make sure to include on your label. At minimum make sure to include your name and date of completion. Better yet include that information plus your address, phone number, and possibly your email. Finally, for a label to last the years, include the name of your quilt, who it was made for, and why, and wash/care instructions.

Once your quilt label is ready you'll want to attach it securely to your quilt. As more quilts are being stolen, we recommend attaching your label to the lower right back corner before you quilt your quilt. This makes it more difficult to remove the label without damaging the quilt.

Lastly, quilt documentation is an additional step you can take in preserving your well-made quilt, as well as protect it from theft. Fill out a documentation form (such as the one found at www.rmqm.org) and include a photograph and any other backup material, such as the story of why it was made, awards won, etc. Keep this information in a safe place or file it with a quilt documentation group. Check with your state guild for documentation preservation.

You've worked long and hard on that beautiful quilt and it would be a shame to see it lost, stolen, or damaged. By taking a bit of time to label and document each quilt you create, you'll preserve not only your quilting legacy, but the security of all your beautiful quilted artwork.

HELPFUL WEBSITES:

Lost Quilt Come Home: www.lostquilt.com

Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum: www.RMQM.org

Colorado Quilt Council: www.coloradoquiltingcouncil.com

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8970 E. Hampden Ave. • Denver, CO 80231
303.740-6206 • 1.800.474.2665 • www.possibilitiesquilt.com