



Quilting is a historical and traditional craft that has been handed down through families for generations. Many folks are getting back to their roots, exploring their family history and admiring their grandmother's quilts or in some cases - great-grandmother's quilt patterns. The Dale Hollow Lake region is rich in history, ranging from

kirmishes and all out battles during the Civil War to logging, textiles, farming, and more. Many of the old barns in these communities still stand proudly – a testament to the incredible workmanship that crafted them creating a fabulous base on which to display these colorful blocks. Many of the communities have started **quilt trails** to provide folks that are visiting or coming home an opportunity to not only enjoy the beautiful countryside of the region, but to also search out some awesome artwork. These scenic trails are often available in print form from the local Chambers of Commerce or Visitors Bureau and include directions and other useful information. These trails will entice you to see some of the prettiest countryside in Tennessee and Kentucky and will showcase some of the magnificent and historic barns owned by local farm families. Other blocks adorn local business buildings and homes adding a little of the local flavor to their exteriors.

Quilting has always been popular, but often considered for older people. However, the economic challenges that we have faced in recent times have fueled a desire in many to get back to a simpler lifestyle and the traditions and values that have served generations. Women (and men) both young and old are learning the techniques of quilting, either by hand or machine, to produce incredible works of art. Quilting is a form of artistic expression giving an outlet for creativity oftentimes encapsulating a family heirloom pattern or offering the opportunity to really express oneself through the creation of a unique pattern. Many recycle old clothing or buy scraps of fabric, thereby implementing the thrifty qualities of previous generations of quilters that rarely had the opportunity to purchase fabric for the sole purpose of creating a quilt.

Most of the quilt squares that are put on barns range in size from 2' x 2' to 8' x 8' wooden squares. Each square's pattern is chosen by the proud property owner. By displaying favorite patterns on barns, businesses and homes, we are honoring local quilters who are well known for their skills of using every piece of scrap fabric to create a beautiful work of art that is also a useful item in the home. The old family homestead barns used methods of construction and materials that either are not available today or would be cost prohibitive. Some have been restored and maintained at great cost to their owners who value the work that their ancestors put into the construction. They are reminders of our roots and history – a visible anchor to our past.

The **Upper Cumberland Quilt Festival**, held annually in Algood, TN, showcases many patterns, fabric, notions and supplies, plus many of the buildings in town display dozens of quilts created by the talented quilters of the Upper Cumberland. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Algood Senior Center. People come from all over to view the fantastic array of quilts. Clinton County, KY and Monterey, TN have recently launched new quilt trails and most counties around the lake have their own trail, are in the planning stages, or are part of a more regional

trail that encompasses several counties, such as the **Upper Cumberland Quilt Trail**. Every quilt block owner and every community are extremely proud of their projects.

Trails give purpose to our journeys and are a great way to see the local scenery and a purpose for driving down quaint country roads. It will give you a taste of the local communities and an opportunity to discover places you might never have gone otherwise. Some trails have signs to guide you from site to site, others you should seek out the brochures for that specific tour. Allow lots of time. Along the way you will also have the opportunity to visit local fabric shops, country stores, antique shops, galleries, businesses, and historical sites. Stop and have dinner at any of the many family owned restaurants and enjoy some local fare.

We invite you to make it a day trip or a weekend. Come experience the country lifestyle we love and view some of these incredible masterpieces. If you don't have time to do the entire trail, make time for a few sites or maybe make a family game out of it to see who can spot the most blocks – kind of like the old license plate game my family used to play when I was a child. Enjoy the countryside, stop and have a bite to eat, explore the little country stores (which are rare sites as well) and soak in some of the prettiest scenery around Dale Hollow Lake! Be sure to make plans now to visit the Upper Cumberland Quilt Festival in 2011 – www.Quilt-Festival.com.

Table of Trails:

Clinton Co., KY: <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/Clinton>

(Under Community & Economic Development) • 606.387.5404

Cumberland Co., KY: www.cumberland.kyschools.us/Academics/CCHS/STLP/QuiltProject/index.htm

Monroe Co., KY: www.monroeky.com • 270.487.1314

Monterey, TN: www.MountainQuiltTrail.com

Overton County Chamber of Commerce

800.876.7393 • 931.823.6421

Upper Cumberland Quilt Trail in Tennessee

www.uppercumberlandquilttrail.com

