

## Featured Quilter: **Leslie Bird**

Leslie Bird knew how to sew when she was a teenager, but she wanted to learn to quilt. Eventually, when she decided to make a quilt, she chose a Lone Star pattern. With no instruction and no quilting experience, she made that quilt. She wasn't all that pleased with the result, but the quilting bug caught her. That was in 1976, and she hasn't stopped making quilts since.

She went on to take some quilting lessons at the Green Briar Center in Sandwich, where she learned to make quilt templates from graph paper and sandpaper. The first quilt she made from those lessons was a black and white sampler, which she gave to one of her sons. She then made another black and white quilt, in a baby block pattern, for another son. Her third quilt was another baby block but in bright colors.

Leslie's quilting has evolved since the graph paper and sandpaper templates of her early quilts. Through workshops and classes—at Bayberry and elsewhere, Leslie has developed a wide range of techniques. As a result, her quilting has become quite eclectic. She no longer follows patterns; her quilts just grow. She does quilts in all sizes, small to bed-size. Her piecing might be by hand or machine, and her quilting might also be by hand or machine. She still does more or less traditional piecing but also does whimsical, or as she calls them “cuckoo,” quilts. These quilts are made with crazy techniques and items and often on playful subjects; they might employ embroidery, like the seaweed in her goldfish quilt, or attached items like old jewelry in the lady with the necklace and earrings quilt. Her quilt “Sarah's Flowers” is a beautiful and dramatic combination of piecework and applique in a large quilt. She has striking pictorial quilts that focus on specific items like elephants or the Indian pipes that grow in her yard. Her applique work is stunning, particularly her large appliqued flower quilt. Leslie particularly enjoys doing handwork; she finds it relaxing and even meditative.

Leslie has fun with all her quilts. She will continue to find that new angle or unexpected approach to each quilting project.