



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
August 27, 2014

The Face of Fillmore has generally focused over the years on the exterior of older homes in Fillmore. This week we will revisit one of the first homes discussed in this column – that of Ken and Connie Martin located at 190 South Main. Also known as the Country Gardens Bed and Breakfast, this pioneer era home is decorated with Connie's amazing quilt collection.

The home was built in 1897 by Theodore Willard Rogers, who was born in Provo on February 21, 1853, as his parent's family was on their way to answer the call to move to Fillmore. He was named Theodore after his father and Willard after Willard Richards, who had been especially kind to his mother. The family remained in Provo for about a year before continuing their relocation to this area.

Ken and Connie visited Fillmore in 2001. While here Connie asked her cousin Don Burt to suggest a good place to stay and that place was a bed and breakfast. They immediately fell in love with the house and the community and were especially pleased to find out the house was for sale. During the night Ken lay awake going over the details in his head to retire early and move to Fillmore to run the bed and breakfast. All of those details worked out for them and on December 11, 2001 they moved from Mission Viejo, California to Fillmore.

The warm interior of the home greets you as you enter its doors. Decorated with antic treasures collected over the years, it is a history lesson right before your eyes. Nearly every room through the home has colorful quilts to catch the eye.

The sun filled dining area features the colorful glass hen collections as some interesting quilts, one of them being of Quaker design.

In one area is an old quilt made by Ken's grandmother in 1948. Time and loving use had caused the quilt to need repair. This was done by Julie Limburg Stout, who used fabric from the 1940's to restore the quilt to its original beauty, looking as though it just came off the quilting frames for the first time.

The upstairs bedrooms each are named after one of the Martin's four daughters – Julie, Elizabeth, and twins Heather and Holly. Each is in its own color scheme with beautiful quilts to match.



The parlor contains my favorite – the Joseph Smith quilt. Each block tells of part of his life. The log cabin design tells of his humble beginnings in what was then the western frontier of our nation with reds being symbolic of the heart of the home. The true lover's knot square tells of his love for Emma. The broken windows design represents the many hardships they face. The broken dishes motif tells of the broken China donated by the ladies to put into the bricks of the Nauvoo Temple so the temple would shine. The ocean waves design tells of the missionaries sent across the ocean to England and the thousands of people who came to America from there. As Connie was planning this quilt, she researched the fabric of that era so that the quilt blocks would be historically correct.



The history of quilts began long before European settlers arrived in the New World. People in nearly every part of the world had used padded fabrics for clothing, bedding, and even armor. With the arrival of the English and Dutch settlers in North America, quilting took on a new life and flourished.

The term "quilt" comes from the Latin "culcita", meaning a stuffed sack.

The earliest settlers had no labor or materials to spare so they typically found the simplest solutions to problems. Those early settlers could not afford to discard things when they wore out. It was necessary for them to carefully use their resources. When blankets became worn, they were patched, combined with other blankets, or used as filler between other blankets. These were not carefully constructed heirlooms; rather they were functional items for the sole purpose of keeping people warm. Only in later years, when fabrics were being manufactured in America and were more affordable and easier to obtain, did the more artistic type of quilting become more widespread.

This love of quilting and preserving this art form was evident in the pioneer women who came to Fillmore in its early days and still is alive and well in Fillmore today.