

Transcription (by Ashleigh Mullins) of *Interview with Carla "Janie" Nickell-Collinsworth* conducted by Ashleigh Mullins on March , 2010. Transcribed on April 4, 2010.

BEGIN PART 1:

MULLINS: This is a recording of a conversation with Carla "Janie" Nickell-Collinsworth recorded by Ashleigh Mullins, March 6, 2010 at Janie's house in Wolfe County, Kentucky. The subject is quilting.

END PART 1, BEGIN PART 2:

MULLINS: Okay, we'll start with background sort of stuff, where were you born and where did you grow up?

COLLINSWORTH: I was born in West Liberty, Kentucky August 20, 1961. I grew up on my Grandpa Nickell's farm on Caskey Fork- which is in... South, southwestern part of Morgan County.

MULLINS: Okay, and- where were you first exposed to quilting and what was that like?

COLLINSWORTH: My Grandmother Nickell was a quilter and in her home she didn't have anything but featherbeds, and the featherbeds were covered with all different kinds of handmade quilts. Some of the patterns was a Double-T, Nine Patch, Dove at the Window, Flower Garden, Churn Dash, Monkey Wrench, and many others.

MULLINS: And what were they filled with?

COLLINSWORTH: Some of her older quilts would have been filled with cotton batting. Nowadays you can, I think the batting is polyester blend, but the old ones that my grandmother had were, I think probably 100% cotton batting.

MULLINS: And what like- Do you know what kind of fabric she used? Like the old feedsacks or was it fabric she's woven, or you know, what was it?

COLLINSWORTH: As far as I know she never did weave any of her own fabric. A lot of her quilts were made with feedsacks, and then she saved the older dresses and clothing from the family that, maybe they'd outgrown or worn out. She'd cut the material of the better pieces of material- she'd cut them into little pieces and put them in her quilts.

MULLINS: Did anybody else in your family quilt, besides her?

COLLINSWORTH: My mother quilted some, but she didn't do the more intricate patterns like my grandma did. Mom just usually did a Nine Patch and then wound up quilting it or tacking the quilt.

MULLINS: And, did somebody teach you how to quilt or did you self-teach?

COLLINSWORTH: I'm pretty much self-taught.

MULLINS: Just looking at books and patterns or-?

COLLINSWORTH: Yeah.

MULLINS: And- Why do you quilt?

COLLINSWORTH: I enjoy quilting. It's, It's relaxing. I just, it's something that I always just enjoyed seeing the pretty quilts that others had done. And it just kinda inspired me to try and see what I could do with it.

MULLINS: And, do you have a favorite block pattern?

COLLINSWORTH: One of my all-time favorites I guess would be The Flower Garden.

MULLINS: And what's it look like?

COLLINSWORTH: It's made out of hexagon- little hexagon pieces. And you can set those pieces together in several different ways and make different- you can make a, i think they call it a Field of Diamonds Flower Garden, or just the little- the Round Flower Garden, and now they've come up with a basket design. There's a star design made from the hexagon pattern.

MULLINS: Okay. And what's your favorite kind of material to work with? Like do you go and, go to like Jot-em-Downs and stuff and get old used clothes and cut em up or do you go to Wal-Mart and just buy pre-made fabrics, or...

COLLINSWORTH: First quilt I ever made, was made from old fabric that was years and years old. And that quilt didn't hold up very well. So, from then on I tried to, to buy fabric, that- good quality cotton, 100% cotton. Because if you go and put all that work into making the quilt- piecing it and then quilting it by hand- you want something that's gonna hold up for several years. And through- the first one, because the material was not, it was old and wasn't so good. When it- It didn't hold up through washings.

MULLINS: What's your, do you have a favorite stitch that you do?

COLLINSWORTH: No, I, I've done some Briar stitch but- as far as a favorite, i don't guess I actually have a favorite.

MULLINS: And- do you tend to stitch real loose or do you- Are you careful and do real little tiny stitches?

COLLINSWORTH: I try to do reasonably small stitch- I don't think it's the- exactly the size of the stitch that makes your quilting better, I think it's trying to keep the stitches the same, each stitch similar- the same length. And I, I try to, when I quilt, I try to keep 'em reasonably small.

MULLINS: Okay, and- Have you ever heard of plain versus fancy argument- with quilting and whether like a plain quilt would be like something that's just tacked and then a fancy quilt would be- more complicated...

COLLINSWORTH: Well I consider a tacked quilt kind of a every day quilt. And some of 'em

are very pretty. They- You can set 'em up and tack 'em to their very pretty. But the hand-quilted- there's several patterns, feather pattern and all different kinds of more fancy and to me they're more for- just more of a bed spread or a throw... More than just the everyday quilt to use

MULLINS: So, and what level of quilter would you consider yourself to be? You think you're advanced or-?

COLLINSWORTH: Well I'd probably be intermediate. I've quilted a long time- several years, but I would probably consider myself intermediate.

MULLINS: How old were you when you first did a quilt?

COLLINSWORTH: I think I did my first quilt when I was in high school. Before that I can remember when I was a little girl I told my mother I wanted to quilt, and she got some old material out and cut me some squares and started me sewing up just a Nine Patch. Well that didn't last too long I don't think it ever got finished.

MULLINS: Are you a member of a quilting bee or a guild or a club of any kind?

COLLINSWORTH: I belong to String-Along quilt Guild in, based out of West Liberty. The Guild is thirteen years old. and I've been a member of it probably about twelve years. And we've got about twenty-eight members at the present time. Some of the things our guild does as projects- we make just a patchwork quilt and donate it to fire victims in Morgan County, because we're based in Morgan County. When the family loses their home to fire, we try to have a quilt to present to that family and we make little children's quilts and donate to the A.R.H. hospital there. These quilts are given to children patients there that's aged up to five years old. And we do several other little community service projects, we've made decorative christmas stockings for the nursing home in West Liberty. We've made a wall-hanging and donated there.

MULLINS: So do you all do sort of like group lessons? Or do you just bring in your squares and look at 'em and talk about 'em or...

COLLINSWORTH: We meet once a month and occasionally we'll have a mini-lesson during that meeting. And we always have show and tell. Different ones will bring- maybe finished quilts or quilt tops or cushions, table runners, all kinds of different handmade items- and just display to the group. And sometimes if they've run into a problem maybe someone there can help 'em. Just kinda tell them what how they might get around the problem they've got with their project.

MULLINS: *[mumbles incoherently and laughs. A long pause follows]* Oh! How do you- So are people constantly- People that are in the guild that are constantly quilting like every month- How much work would you say you get done in a month on anything- or is it just depending on what's going on?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, to be a member of this guild, you don't have to quilt often. In fact, you probably wouldn't have to- you could be a member and not quilt at all. But some of the ladies that's retired and don't work out of the home, get several items done each month. and

then others like myself don't get anything done real often.

MULLINS: So where do you get- you said that you just, you get- you make sure you get pure cotton material now, where do you go to get that and have you ever- even just for fun- like hand-spun thread or something?

COLLINSWORTH: I usually get my fabric at Wal-Mart which is going out of the fabric business. I've found different pieces of material at Goodwill stores and second-handed stores but good cotton material I pick it up because you can always match it up with something you've got stored at home and the- there's a craft shop, fabric shop in Jackson, Ohio by the name of Mrs. ?Doul's? and our guild as an outing has gone, we go carpool and go there and buy fabric and things, so I pick it up different places that I can find it.

MULLINS: And then have you ever hand-spun thread or done you know sort of the old timey ways of doing it?

COLLINSWORTH: No I've never had the opportunity to learn or to do any of that.

MULLINS: Have you been somewhere and seen that done? Like at Fort Boonesboro or...

COLLINSWORTH: I have seen spinning at different area festivals.

MULLINS: Would you consider quilts- Well let's talk about the quilts you make first- Would you consider your quilts are just useful utilitarian things or just a craft?

COLLINSWORTH: Well both, they're useful and I enjoy the, just the different patterns I choose. So I would think they would kinda fit in both categories.

MULLINS: *[A helicopter flies over]* I thought the cops were coming to get us. So do you have any sort of preconceived notions about the title "Folk Art", would you consider your quilts folk art? Would you consider quilting at all folk art? Or do you think that's just kind of a silly term, or-?

COLLINSWORTH: When I think of folk art, I think a lot of the wood carvings- more-so than quilts- but there would be some quilt patterns that would probably fall into that category.

MULLINS: So then you think folk art is sort of steeped in tradition and that's what makes it different than other kinds of art?

COLLINSWORTH: Yeah.

MULLINS: Have you ever heard of the term "Outsider Art" before?

COLLINSWORTH: No.

MULLINS: Well, basically now they're trying to sort of split between, not only is there folk art, there's outsider art. And folk art- they used to say, you know, "Oh well you can't have any formal training." and "It has to be, It has to have been passed down through your family." and all this, now they're saying that that's outsider art- when you have not training and you just

kinda come to it on your own. And, that folk art is just steeped in tradition but you could have had some sort of classes or club activity or something like that. Big argument that's going on right now. *[Laughs]* Let's see... Do you only give your quilts as gifts or do you sell them or keep them all?

COLLINSWORTH: I've never sold a quilt. About every one I've made has been for gifts. One I have right now I made for my aunt several years ago and when she passed away the quilt was given back to me. But I think most everyone that I've made has been a gift for someone.

MULLINS: Would you ever sell a quilt?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, I probably would. But I really don't- I don't make them for that purpose and I don't get enough made to have extra to sell.

MULLINS: And, let me see, Oh! How many quilts do you think you've made in your lifetime? Do you know for sure or do you have a rough estimate?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, I've got nieces and nephews and most of them got a quilt when they were born, and then my sister-I've given her one and my aunt, I mentioned her. So I've not really actually made all that many in my lifetime.

MULLINS: How- So do you usually... Would you say that you would usually do like- a quilt for a purpose? Like they were born so you made them a quilt. Or- Like why did you give your sister a quilt? Was it her birthday or did you just make it for her?

COLLINSWORTH: I just had the quilt made and she liked it really well and I just let her have it. So...

MULLINS: Okay. And do you do other types of art or crafts or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: I do some oil painting.

MULLINS: And is that- Is it landscapes or portraits or-

COLLINSWORTH: I do a lot of landscapes and old buildings. I've never mastered the skills of portraits, I'd love to some time but that's, that's pretty difficult.

MULLINS: So is it- your subject matter- usually sort of just regional stuff? Are you actually going out and taking a picture of something and painting it or are you going out and paint it there- like outside, or..?

COLLINSWORTH: I actually paint from pictures a lot. I'll make a picture of something and bring it home and work on it. I've never actually gone out on sight and set up to paint. That can probably be difficult because your shadows will change- A lot quicker than you realize. If you're just out walking around looking you're not gonna pay attention to it, but if you're trying to capture that image on canvas, you'll see the changes, you'll notice the changes a lot quicker- So I've found that it's easier for me just to snap a picture and then get the picture printed and paint from the picture.

MULLINS: And the paintings- Do you keep those or give those away or sell 'em, or what do you do with 'em?

COLLINSWORTH: I've sold a few. Recently- more recent I've just kept what I've painted. Give 'em for gifts.

MULLINS: Have you ever done a commissioned piece where somebody brought you a picture or they saw a picture you had and asked you to paint it for them?

COLLINSWORTH: Yes I have.

MULLINS: Cool. Do you do anything else- any kind of, I don't know, jewelry-making or flower arrangements or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: I have done a little bit of beaded jewelry- not a lot. I had some seeds that I grew, an elderly lady from Isonville, Kentucky gave me the seed for these beads. And I grew them. They grow- You can plant the seed in the garden and the foliage looks a little bit like corn growing- only it's not nearly that tall and it's not as - the blades are not as course and heavy as corn blades. And then it would have a little shoot come up, and these beads, little round beads will grow on them and in the fall when they're ripe they turn a black colour. And they've got a little, oh a little center, a little thing in the center you can pull out, and that leaves your hole to thread these onto whatever you're stringing 'em on. So I actually grewed them a few years and I strung some of them and I bought beads- smaller beads (different colours) to blend in with- with the ones that I had grown. And I did a little bit of that.

MULLINS: (What was I gonna say I forgot already... Oh!) Do you have any idea what that plant's called that the beads grew off of?

COLLINSWORTH: No, I don't know the name of it. The only thing the old lady told me that gave me the seed was that it was beads. And i'd never seen anything like it so I didn't know you know, if they would sprout or what they would look like. So I just put some of 'em in the ground, planted them in the garden and they came up and they grow oh, probably about three feet tall and- But i have no idea what they name would be.

MULLINS: How did you meet the lady that gave you the seeds?

COLLINSWORTH: Well I work in the local newspaper office- work for the Licking Valley Courier in West Liberty. And we also print the Elliott County news and the Wolfe County news. And this lady, for years wrote a news column for the Elliott County news. and she would stop by the office from time to time to leave her news and we got acquainted that way.

MULLINS: So back to painting- Did you have- ever take any classes or did you just sort of sit down and figure it out for yourself or...?

COLLINSWORTH: In high school, my senior year, I went to Hazel Green Academy- My senior year they had an art teacher and I took art there, that one year. In class that year we learned to do charcoal sketches and we did a little bit of watercolor. We never did get to do oil paintings, with just one year we you know, we didn't have time to fit all that in. So, several years after I got out of high school, a lady, a well-known artist in the area by the name of

Debbie Horton, taught oil painting classes at the high school in West Liberty and I took some lesson from her-she taught me an awful lot about it.

MULLINS: Have you ever taught anybody else quilting techniques or painting techniques or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: We have, our quilt guild has a quilt show once a year in West Liberty and during that show I have demonstrated hand-piecing.

MULLINS: And with that show, are there any sort of awards given out or prizes or anything and have you ever won anything for your quilts?

COLLINSWORTH: I've not actually won anything for a quilt- I have won the last two years, we have a- the members have a quilt block competition- once a year we each make a quilt block of our own choice, we make these in twelve inch blocks and then the blocks are donated to the guild and set into a quilt and we raffle it off. So a couple of years my quilt block has won first place.

MULLINS: Cool. So have you ever made up like- I know people make crazy quilts but have ever made up your own sort of quilting square and put it together or do you kind of tend to go with the patterns that are already-

COLLINSWORTH: The quilt block that won first place last year was a variation of the Flower Garden. And- it was kind of a made-up thing. Part of it was kind of from the original Field of Diamonds block and then I added some to the block to make it twelve- the full twelve inches.

MULLINS: Do you ever- Do you just do like fabrics straight from Wal-Mart or do you sometimes take like a white piece of fabric and paint something or draw something on it and then quilt with that?

COLLINSWORTH: Several years ago I made a quilt that was painted- the blocks was a white block and I paint- used ballpoint paint from Wal-Mart or craft shops and painted it was a little... similar to the... Oh, the Dutch girl and Dutch Boy. This pattern was a Fishin' Freddy and it was a little- has a little doll with bibbed overalls and a big hat on and then it had a fishing pole and a fish hanging at the end of the line. But that was- it was painted with ballpoint paint.

MULLINS: And do you ever sew other things besides quilts like dolls or toys- like soft toys or just mending clothes or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: I have in the past- I used to make quite a bit of my clothing and I kinda- I guess I burned myself out with that I don't do much of that anymore. I have, I made one rag doll.

MULLINS: Do you have any ideas as to what you think that quilting will be in the future- Do you think it will still be around, do you think it's a dying art form? What do you-

COLLINSWORTH: I think there's a lot of interest in quilting. Several, you see several young people at the quilt shows. Maybe not as many as we need, but I think that the art of quilting

will be around a long time.

MULLINS: Okay, So how long has your family been in this region- if you know?

COLLINSWORTH: Well the farm I was raised on had been in the family for about three generations. There was an old family cemetery there where my great-great-great grandmother was buried. She was buried there I think in 1895, and she was a n elderly- very elderly lady when she died. Her son who was my great-great grandfather was born in 1825 he passed away in 19-5 and he was also buried in the same cemetery. So the family had been- was there probably over a hundred years.

MULLINS: And so you would identify yourself as a person from Appalachia or an Appalachian person then?

COLLINSWORTH: Yes, Appalachia's been my home, and I've seldom ever been out of Appalachia.

MULLINS: So, as an Appalachian person- like what do you think, what does that mean to you? Does that mean to you- Do you think- Does that mean that you have a certain lifestyle or is it just that you happen to live in this place and you-

COLLINSWORTH: Well I think that, being raised here... My lifestyle definitely would be different to someone raised in the large city. When we were kids we played, we rode horses, rode mules- and Played in the woods, played in the creeks- We'd have wiener roasts, build up a big bonfire and have wiener roasts in the evening and- we were pretty much family oriented. Most everything we did involved our family. We worked on the farm with my parents and my grandparents. We helped in the gardens, we worked in the backer crops. We growed chickens, hogs, and cattle. Growed tobacco. And my grandpa was- he'd farmed all his life and he made, he growed cane and made molasses. He was an old-time molasses maker. I think the most he ever got out of a gallon of molasses was two dollars. And sometimes back before I was born, I guess when he was raising his family, maybe in the 40's and 50's, if he had more molasses than what the family wanted to use he'd take 'em to different merchants and trade the molasses to sugar or apples, anything that the merchants would trade you know that he could use, they could use at home in the kitchen- he did that. My great-grandfather was a blacksmith. He had a blacksmith shop. And worked on wagons and shoed horses and mules. Did a lot of things like that for his neighbors.

MULLINS: So would you say that- Is that sort of give and take and everybody looking out for each other and that sort of thing, would you say that's still present in the region now or not as much?

COLLINSWORTH: Well I think this- this community, this area... If you've got a neighbor and they get down 'n out, a lot of times the people around in the community will pitch in and try to help 'em out. Nowadays we have a lot of benefit singings and auctions and fundraisers for people that maybe needs help with medical bills or if they lose their home or something like that the neighbors and people in the community will kind of pitch in and help out.

MULLINS: So it's the same kind of attitude but it's just updated because like not everybody needs to have a barn raised-

COLLINSWORTH: Right, right.

MULLINS: now, so it's just different stuff that they need help with, but it's still the same kind of-

COLLINSWORTH: Right, yeah, years ago we might get together and raise a barn, where now they raise a little money for a funeral- funeral expenses, medical expenses, different hardships that people fall into, maybe the people get together and- I'm sure it's similar to like a hundred years ago where they'd have a barn-raising.

MULLINS: Okay, and- so what sort of- what did- Did your parents just run a farm or did they have different occupations/responsibilities?

COLLINSWORTH: Dad farmed all of his life, at one point he drove a school bus for thirteen years. He drove the bus- it fit in good with his farming because he still had time to work on the farm- he could work- make his morning run and then work some and then go back in the afternoon and make the evening run and then lots of times he come in and worked till after dark. But, that bus driving job kinda generated a little bit of cash-money that we didn't have any other way because you sell your tobacco crop in the fall and you know you didn't- it was just a once a year crop to sell. And then you know, you had cattle, you could sell cattle, certain times of the year maybe the market would be higher, and you'd try to get your cattle raised and ready to hit the higher market with them. Mom was a housewife and she worked side by side with dad on the farm. Most of the time if she was not in the house cooking meals for workhands who'd come in to help us, she'd be out in the fields working in the crops too.

MULLINS: So, did either of them do any sort of craftwork or- like building furniture or whittling or any kind of art sort of thing?

COLLINSWORTH: Dad, in later years, kind of, he whittled all the time. A lot of the older people whittled just for a little bit of pastime. But he in later years begin to kinda carve out- I know of a few toys that he carved out for the grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

MULLINS: They never did any sort of like just throwing a chair together or a cabinet or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: No, no not much.

MULLINS: Okay. So you grew up on a farm, do you think that was a good thing? Like would you trade that in for growing up somewhere else in different circumstances?

COLLINSWORTH: I wouldn't trade that for anything in the world. That's the way I grew up and I appreciate it so much. And, with my dad passed away and my grandparents gone, the family kinda scattered- the farming, and then with the- what happened to the tobacco program- The farming has kind of fell by the wayside. And I miss that lifestyle very much.

MULLINS: And how long have you lived... In the place where we're at right now- in the holler that you live in right now?

COLLINSWORTH: I've been here with the exception of two and a half years about nineteen years. and this was originally part of the land that my grandfather Nickell owned.

MULLINS: What kind of- What's the land used for now? Where it used to be all farmland like, do you keep any kinda animals or is it sort of just stopped in place where it's at?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, a couple years ago, we ran several head of goats. I mowed this land where I'm at now is hill land, and the hills were growing up in briars and vines and we bought some goats and raised goats and let them run on the- graze on the hills and kind of keep the ground eat down. We did- That's the last farm animals we've had.

MULLINS: And did you sell those to other people or why did- I mean besides keeping the grass cut down how else did you use those?

COLLINSWORTH: Well that was the main reason that we had the- bought the goats. And we kept 'em through the winters two or three years and feed got so expensive- and the herd grew from about five to twenty-some and that was more than we wanted to take through the winter- try to feed. So we sold 'em in the fall to avoid high prices of feed.

MULLINS: And back to your family- Did you have any siblings?

COLLINSWORTH: I have one sister- younger sister.

MULLINS: And, does she do any kind of crafts or art or sewing or anything like that?

COLLINSWORTH: She does a lot of quilting.

MULLINS: And what kind of- Like what kind of quilts does she make and why does she make 'em does she sell 'em or...?

COLLINSWORTH: No, as far as I know she's never sold a quilt... She makes lots of times when she gets invitation to a baby shower she'll make a baby quilt for a shower gift.

MULLINS: And how do you go about making a quilt- like what is your sort of time frame or how do you start out? Do you have an idea and then your like, Oh well that would make a pretty quilt, or do you find fabric first?

COLLINSWORTH: Well maybe I'll see a quilt in a magazine or something somewhere that I really like and I'll try to get the pattern and go from there with it. Once you get your pattern, get it cut out, and get everything worked out and you, you know, you choose your fabric if you've got a certain color in mind and you pick your colors, try to match them up, and just go from there. You start cutting your pieces and putting them together and with- I usually, lots of times if I'm working on a quilt I'll cut enough pieces for one block and I'll carry that with me- maybe take it to work and when I'm off for lunch hour or something, I'll sit there and sew my little pieces together, and try to get my blocks. Get your blocks all, some- A lot of quilts if you strip 'em- By strippin' I mean instead of- When you set 'em up maybe you'll set 'em up with a three inch strip between the blocks or something. If you do that, if you've got like a twelve inch block, usually if you get about thirty blocks pieced, you'll have enough to set a quilt together. And then when you get your- get it all- get everything sewed together, then you get your

batting and whatever your going to use for the lining and baste all that together. Then you put it in your- I've got oval-shaped quilt hoops that I use to quilt from.

MULLINS: Do you hand-quilt or do you use a machine?

COLLINSWORTH: I do hand-quilting. I've never tried to quilt one on the machine. If I did I would probably hire someone who has one of the regular quilting machines to quilt it for me.

MULLINS: Do you think that using a machine is sort of going against what the whole point of the quilting is or do you think that's just a way to get it done faster?

COLLINSWORTH: Well I like, just my personal preference, I like the hand-quilted quilts. That's the way- the old way of doing a quilt and machine quilting is, a lot of it's real pretty- and they've got some real pretty patterns. But to me that, to machine quilt kind of takes away from the art and the craftsmanship in it. If I- like a machine quilted quilt would probably be one, for me, that I would just use everyday. And the hand-quilted is just a little more, way, in my eyes, they're just a little more special, they're more the old time way of doing the quilting.

MULLINS: So if somebody in say, Lexington, sat down and made a quilt... Do you think that that would be, would you consider that quilt folk art, or would it not be considered folk art and why do you think it wouldn't?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, if they pieced it and hand-quilted it, to me that would just be the old time way of making a quilt, and there's quilters in the larger towns and cities I'm sure, that do the hand-quilting just like here in Appalachia. So I wouldn't make any difference in their quilting and ours.

MULLINS: So you think it's the technique and the tradition, not where your at whenever you quilt it?

COLLINSWORTH: Right, right.

MULLINS: So, Have you ever been outside the area and because of your accent or- Just because you've told somebody where you were from had a negative sort of reaction to that or- are you aware of the negative stereotyping that goes about the region?

COLLINSWORTH: Not that much, I'm sure there's plenty of it that goes on. The one thing that I remember, I was in Kansas several years ago to visit an uncle that lived out there, and I walked into one of the fast-food restaurants don't even remember which one it was and the waitress that took my order kind of giggled when I told her what I wanted and I said "Well what is it? What's wrong?" and she said "The way you talk!" and of course I wasn't aware that the way I talk was any different than the way she was talking. But I've not had a lot of that. I've not exposed to a lot of it.

MULLINS: What is a crazy quilt? *[laughs]*

COLLINSWORTH: A crazy quilt. Well, that is a quilt that is sewn together by pieces of fabric that's not- It doesn't have any certain way, any certain design. It's just different sizes and shapes of material sewed together into blocks. Sometimes maybe it would be an overall

pattern, but I've seen a lot of 'em sewed and cut say into twelve fourteen inch blocks and then put together to make the quilt top.

MULLINS: So you just, it's basically the same principles of you putting, piecing something together and then putting the batting in between it and the liner and sewing it together?

COLLINSWORTH: Yeah, my grandmother made crazy quilts a lot out of old wool blends of material, probably from old worn suits, or some men's suits. And lots of these they were really- what she made was heavy, real heavy quilts but she'd sew the tops together. Lots of the material would be dark, dark colors maybe blacks, grays, and maybe a little bit of tan, maybe some blue, navy blue all of the different shades of blue. But before she'd quilt these, once she'd get these put together, then she would stitch the seams with an embroidery stitch called it was called a briar stitch, and that just added a- it just made the quilt a little bit prettier to look at which most of these quilts weren't really- they were made to use they were batted with real heavy batting and a lot of her linings would be like a flannel-type lining and it made a real heavy quilt. Her- the home she lived in was an older home and it was drafty and these quilts, you know, they were really necessary in the winter time to keep her family warm. But she'd take maybe a orange or red, different color, bright color, most of the threads are bright colored that she would use to briar stitch with, and then once she got the briar stitching done she'd put the batting and the lining on it. And then sometimes she would tack the quilt- the tacking that's- you take a thread, and just make a loop, make a stitch, and tie the stitch off on top and you kind of have the ends of the threads maybe would resemble like a tassel or something on the top. But then she- sometimes she would go ahead and hand-quilt these quilts that are kind of hard to hand-quilt because they were so heavy. But I know some of hers were hand-stitched after she got the briar-stitch done on the top.

MULLINS: So do you have- Do you remember any of the sort of patterns that she did her stitching in on quilts, like was it like basic sort of patterns?

COLLINSWORTH: Most of hers was basic. A lot of the patterns was the- I think probably one of the most common was the fan pattern. You'd start maybe in one corner of the quilt and just make fans, make rows of fans. And then you'd go over, maybe towards the center and start you another fan and then go on to the other side and make still yet another fan. And you just went from like one end of the quilt to the other with the fan pattern.

MULLINS: And, what kind of like- I don't know how long ago that was but what kind of thread would she have been using?

COLLINSWORTH: For that particular thing I think she used embroidery thread- maybe three- two or three strands of it together. You can use a- there's a real lightweight crochet thread that you can tack with and some people just use yarn.

MULLINS: Where would- where did she get her thread from, do you know?

COLLINSWORTH: Ah, not really. She may have gone to Mount Sterling. It seems to me like maybe years ago Penny's in Mount Sterling carried a pretty good selection of fabric and sewing notions. And it's possible that she got a lot of her quilting threads and things from there. Years ago there was a fabric shop in West Liberty- I think the name of it was Henry's Fabric Shop, and they carried quite a bit of threads and sewing notions.

MULLINS: What kind of needles do you use whenever you do your quilting?

COLLINSWORTH: Well, when I quilt, I think the size is maybe a number eight or number ten it's a real short needle, I found that that works better for me. It seems the shorter the needle, maybe the smaller stitches you can make with it.

MULLINS: Any idea how many stitches you get per inch?

COLLINSWORTH: No, not exactly.

MULLINS: Well, do you wanna read your poem that you wrote about quilting?

COLLINSWORTH: Why sure.

MULLINS: Just I guess read the title first and then read the poem.

COLLINSWORTH: Okay, the first one is *Grandma's Featherbed*.

Grandma's featherbed laid atop coil springs on white iron bedstead, so fluffy and warm on a cold winter's night. Stiffly starched cotton sheets covered the big featherbed resembling a huge marshmallow, The next several layers comprised of beautiful hand-pieced quilts, all lovingly stitched by grandma's hands. A wide-array of colors were worked into the nine patch quilt. Grandmother's Flower Garden came next, set up in green fabric that resembled mossy garden paths. The Double-T looks stately in its shades of red, yellow, and white. No featherbed would be complete without a crazy quilt made from Papaw and Uncle John's old wool suits, adorned with hours and hours of brightly colored briar-stitching. What a delight to lay snuggled in the soft featherbed under layers of Grandma's handiwork, while flames from the burning log in the fireplace put off a soft glow about the dark room. Papaw and Grandma now sleep in a heavenly home. Their old white house that seemed so grand no longer sits beside of the narrow dirt road. The memories of a small child that loved them dearly is all that remain today.

MULLINS: That's pretty.

COLLINSWORTH: My next poem I wrote about quilting kind of dealt with members of the String-Along Quilt Guild. The name of it is *My Quilting Friends*.

Some dear and special friends to me, were made when I became a member of a little group in town called String-Along Quilt Guild. A group of ladies, some with silver in their hair, a twinkle in their eyes, and quilting on their minds. Helping friends and neighbors, definitely a priority with them, while having fun and fellowshiping at the same time. This group of little ladies has been known to load in their cars and drive to far-away places where they gathered supplies: threads, yarn goods in an array of colors, templates, thimbles, nearly every sewing notion imaginable would find their way into shopping carts and baskets. With their purchases in hand they return to their homes, eager to begin a new ?Lovey? quilt for the hospital, or a lap robe for the elderly. Christmas stockings have been made to brighten the lives of local nursing home residents. Families in the county remembered with a handmade quilt when disaster strikes. Throws and pillows were donations of the group to a local disaster shelter. Many other

tasks and projects are completed by these energetic ladies. Picnics and holiday meals always bring around the best of recipes from these gals. A lively group they are, and so hard for me to keep up with. But how I appreciate being a part, Thanks for your friendship.

MULLINS: And goodbye.

END PART 2