

## **"And Waved to Me"**

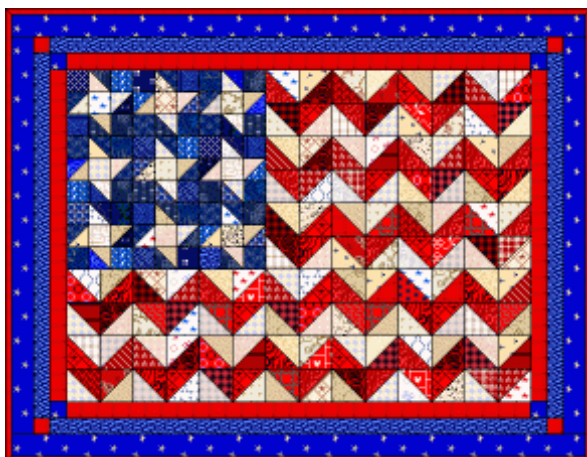
Tish Douglas©

There's a Fourth of July parade in the town where I live. The mayor sits up tall on the back seat of a convertible. Girl Scouts ride in the back of a truck, waving timidly. There are a few policemen on high-stepping horses. A high school band marches past. At the very end we endure the police motorcycles and fire trucks with their sirens at full volume. The babies usually start screaming, while parents set strollers into rhythmic, soothing motions. I can walk from my porch to the street that holds the parade in about ten minutes, and I always go. I try to find something red or blue to wear, and I remember my wide-brimmed hat. Off I go, year after year, willing to sit on the hard curb on a hot July morning and wave back to whatever local company decorated a wagon with streamers and a boom box and joined the march. I like the Fourth of July. I like the old-fashioned parade and the tinny sounds of music coming from truck cabs going past. I like the baton twirlers looking up, and the marchers looking down. I like the dogs on leashes here and there along the sidewalks, and the little flags and pinwheels tied to radio antennas. I even like the crying babies and the sirens.

Memories of other July holidays romp around in my head. I was an "Army brat," moving from one post to the next, one country to the next, for the first 18 years of my life. I was reminded who I represented every time I went out the door. I was taught about sacrifice, pride, and honor, about military transports, airmail, and the PX. I learned about flags folded into triangles, and the melancholy echo of "Taps" at sundown. Patriotic holidays mattered in our family. I loved those years, those moves, those friends, those beautiful places. This July it may look to all the world like I'm enjoying a parade, but really I am living again in my lovely, fragile yesterdays, as I sit on the curb while my town walks past and waves to me.

# "And Waved to Me"

Tish Douglas©



Quilt size 40"x 52"

I am going to make this little quilt from scraps - using as many fabrics as I can find - representing all of America, all of its people, stitched together with threads of freedom, determination, and strength. I may put a soft gray or even a muted black on the back to remind me always of this one September day.

Please make your quilt your way. You may want more borders. You may decide to use browns and country blues rather than clear colors. Construction is easy, using only squares, some rectangles for the borders, and half-square triangles for the star points and the stripes. It will take you but a weekend to make this little bit of America, this quilt to celebrate our unity.

<b>Yardage required</b>	Red:	1 yard total (1/4 yard for border #1, and 3/4 yard for red stripes).
	White:	1 yard total (1/4 yard for stars, and 3/4 yard for white stripes).
	Blue:	2/3 yard total (for star background and border #2).
	Blue #2:	3/8 yard (for border #3).
	Cornerstones:	There's plenty of red and blue for these little pieces.
	Backing:	44 x 56 inches (or 1-2/3 yards).
	Batting:	44 x 56 inches.
Binding:	1/3 yard for doubled binding (cut 2-1/4 inches wide on straight of grain; directions are given below).	

## Borders

Let's cut the strips for the borders first from our long yardage, before we slice off little squares. Of course you can piece fabrics together to make these borders (it is patchwork, after all!). Please DO cut each border piece a couple of inches too long, and then measure YOUR quilt before you add the borders. With so many seams in the quilt top, a tiny fraction of a difference in seam allowances will affect the lengths needed for the border pieces.

**Border #1:** Cut two, each  $30\frac{1}{2} \times 2$  inches.  
Cut two, each  $42\frac{1}{2} \times 2$  inches.  
Cut four cornerstones, each  $2 \times 2$  inches.

**Border #2:** Cut two, each  $33\frac{1}{2} \times 2$  inches.  
Cut two, each  $45\frac{1}{2} \times 2$  inches.  
Cut four cornerstones, each  $2 \times 2$  inches.

**Border #3:** Cut two, each  $36\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.  
Cut two, each  $52\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

## Instructions for the red and white stripes

Red fabric: Cut 52 squares, each  $3\frac{7}{8} \times 3\frac{7}{8}$ .  
White fabric: Cut 52 squares, each  $3\frac{7}{8} \times 3\frac{7}{8}$ .

**Making the stripes:**

Pair up the squares, right sides together, one red one and one white one, and make two half-square triangles from each pair.

Remember how to make HSTs the easy way? Quick review: Draw one diagonal line on the wrong side of the lighter square, pair it with a dark square, right sides together. Sew a 1/4 inch seam on both sides of that drawn line, and then cut on the drawn line. Open up each HST and press the seam allowances carefully to the dark side. Please remember you can cut bigger squares (maybe 4-1/4 inches square), make the HSTs, and then cut down, trimming some from all four sides, to get a perfect 3-1/2 inch HST (unfinished size).

Hint about cutting: If you cut a slice 4-1/4 inches wide across a whole width of new fabric, you will have a piece of usable fabric (cut off all selvages!) 40 inches long. We need squares that are 4-1/4 x 4-1/4 inches. Divide 40 by 4-1/4 and you see that from each slice you will get 9 squares. We need 52 squares, and  $6 \times 9 = 54$ . Thus, you need 6 slices of red and 6 slices of white for the stripes. If you are using six reds and six whites, take one slice from each to make the stripes - an easy way to mix fabrics evenly.

You should have 104 HSTs when you are finished. Set them aside, and let's do the stars.

**Instructions for the nine Friendship Stars :**

White fabric: Cut 9 squares, each 2-1/2 x 2-1/2 inches, for the centers.

Cut 18 squares, each one 2-7/8 x 2-7/8 inches, for the star points.

Blue fabric: Cut 36 squares, each 2-1/2 x 2-1/2 inches, for the background.

Cut 18 squares, each 2-7/8 x 2-7/8 inches, for the background of the star points.

**Stitching the stars**

For the points, pair up the 2-7/8 inch squares, light and dark - like we just did for the stripes - and make 36 HSTs, each 2-1/2 inches square (unfinished size).

Don't forget you can "cut big and pare down" - a good idea with these little pieces!

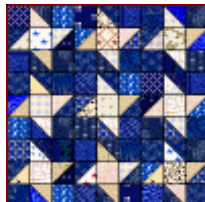


If you look at the stars now, you will see each one is really a nine-patch with a light-colored center square, a star point on four sides of it, and solid blue squares in the four corners. Make the nine Friendship Star blocks, each one measuring 6 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches, unfinished. Piece o cake!

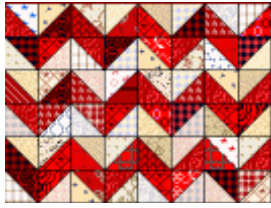
**Making the quilt top**

You have made 104 HSTs for the stripes, and 9 Friendship Stars. You have cut 12 long rectangles and 8 little squares for the borders and the cornerstones. Right so far?

Okay. Now lay it all out to match the picture of the quilt. If you turn the HSTs in the right directions, your stripes will wave.



Sew the nine Friendship Stars together first into what I have called the "blue star field," and it should measure 18-1/2 x 18-1/2 inches.



Next, sew the red and white HSTs into rows. Press the seam allowances on odd-numbered rows this way, and press the seam allowances on even-numbered rows that way. When you sew the rows together, the seams will nestle up close and make a perfect match. I know you can see that you sew the top six rows of stripes together, and then sew them to the blue star field, before you add the last four rows of stripes.



The borders are easy to sew on. Sew two of the first border pieces (the shorter pieces) on both ends. Then sew a cornerstone on each of the other two first-border pieces (the longer ones) and then sew those borders to the quilt. Sew gently - don't stretch! The second border goes on the same way. The third border has no cornerstones, but the sewing-on of it is the same as the first two.

Press the whole quilt gently. There's a lot of bias in those HSTs and we don't want the lines to be wavy. The final assembly is quick. Put the backing right side down; put the batting on top of that (take the batting out of the package the day before and let it breathe, or put it in the dryer for five minutes). Pat the quilt top into place, right side up, on top of the batting. Baste. (I know, I know ... I'm sorry! But choose your favorite way: pins, actual stitches with a real needle and thread, spray basting, fusible batting, or the tacker.)

Now quilt it! Probably you will want just simple machine quilting in the ditches. The fabrics and design of this quilt carry it ... no fancy stitching required. When the quilting is finished, put on the binding.

### Binding

I think if a quilt is meant to hang on a wall, it should have a binding that is not made of bias. It needs the strength of straight-grain fabrics to help it hang straight and true. I cut strips that are 2-1/4 inches wide for my bindings. I sew them together at right angles, to get the required length with a not-ugly seam (which I trim to 1/8 inch and press open to lessen the bulk), and then I press the binding strip in half the long way, wrong sides together.

Using a 12-1/2 inch square ruler, I square up the corners of the quilt and check the straight-ness of the sides, making a chalk line to follow as I sew on the binding. I match the raw edges of the double binding to that chalk line (with the folded edge of the binding toward the center of the quilt), measure everything (see next paragraph), attach the walking foot, lengthen the stitch just a fraction, and sew on the binding. I trim the seam allowance down to 1/4 inch, being careful to leave enough fabric and batting so that the binding will be "stuffed." A binding should be padded enough to be softly rounded, but not so much that the fabric is stretched. I flip it to the back and use an invisible stitch to hand-sew it in place.

I measure the length and width of the top - after the quilting is finished - through the middle of the quilt and not along the borders! I write those numbers down, and after I have pinned the binding in place, I measure it to be sure the measurements along the sides match those measurements taken through the center. If they aren't the same, I take the pins out and make adjustments. Maybe I have to ease a little binding here, or stretch a little there - but I'll be sure my quilt has square corners and straight sides before I sew on the binding.

### Documentation

Write your name, the date, and home state on the back. Write with a Pigma pen right on the quilt, or make a unique label and sew it on. Just PLEASE do it. You might make the label before you begin the quilting so that the stitches anchor the label to the quilt permanently.

Don't forget that I can be reached with e-mail [tishdouglas@aol.com](mailto:tishdouglas@aol.com) if you need me. I don't think you'll have a minute's trouble, though. We would love a picture of your quilt for the gallery, when you are finished! Please e-mail a graphic to [anotherpat@gmail.com](mailto:anotherpat@gmail.com).

We hope this little quilt brings you comfort and promise. May it be, for you, a symbolic reassurance of our national unity.

Tish Douglas  
11 September 2001  
God Bless America