



Patrick and Judy Holohan

5240 W Route 113 North
Kankakee, IL 60901

Quilt Block: Maltese Flag

Farm: Was bought by Holohan's in 1994

Age of Barn: Built in 1952

Original Use or Purpose of Structure: Grain storage – now general storage

Miscellaneous Information: Flower Gardens; Garden Art; and Antique Fire Department Memorabilia Display and sales.

Quilt Block Design Information: The Maltese Flag quilt block was created and designed in recognition of the Maltese Cross. The Maltese Cross is the international symbol of the fire services willingness to make sacrifices to protect people from the ravages of fires. It is a badge of courage and honor with a “story” over one hundred years old.

The Maltese Cross symbol began with a group of 11th century knights who were serving in a Jerusalem hospital. They became known as the Order of Knights Hospitaller and later Knights of St. John. They cared for the sick with great compassion.

Later they helped the Knights of Crusaders as they tried to win back the Holy Land. As they attacked the city walls, the Saracen threw glass bombs with flammable liquid and then flaming torches. Many knights were burned and some died from their injuries. Risking death, knights helped their comrades by beating out the flames and bringing them to safety. Because of their heroism, the cross that they wore was inscribed and decorated.

In 1530, the Island of Malta was given to the brave knights. The eight point cross on their flag became known as the “Maltese Cross” – an ultimate symbol of heroism and service.

Today, firefighters wear the Maltese Cross to show their willingness to risk their lives to save others.

Patrick Holohan has been a volunteer firefighter for 35 years. He has served as a firefighter, Lt. Captain, Assistant Chief, Chief, Fire Investigator and Arson Investigator.

The Maltese Flag quilt block was created as a symbol in honor of Patrick and all the other firefighters who risk their lives for others.

Quilt Block History – Maltese Flag

This quilt block was influenced by the Maltese Cross which is used throughout the Fire Service in the United States. The Maltese Cross goes back to 1113 AD. A special group of knights were founded in Jerusalem by a Benedictine Monk. These eleventh century knights, who were serving in a Jerusalem hospital became known as the Knights of St. John. This charitable organization shared compassion for the ill as do today’s firefighters. They were awarded the Island of Malta for their courage. The symbol on their flag, the eight points cross, became known as the Maltese Cross.

Patrick Holohan is a Fire Department veteran and this quilt block was designed by Jerry Legan.