



Wednesday 2 September 2009

Welcome to your Midweek Moments and to spring, which has finally burst upon us this week with its budding flowers, verdant freshness and tantalising promise of summer (although to be honest it does seem as though it's been like that for a couple of weeks already). On the down side, hay fever sufferers will be silently cursing the arrival of September, while rummaging through the bathroom cabinet for last season's bottle of Rhinocort. I suppose that old adage of having to take the good with the bad is true after all.

It's girl power this week, with an article on our first female sew 'n' sew, plus some thoughts and reminiscences from Blueberries co-owner Jackie.

Sew 'n' Sews Part 6

A brief and roughly stitched together history of the people who invented the sewing machine

Helen Augusta Blanchard – 'Lady Edison'



As regular readers will have no doubt noticed by now, all the people involved in the invention of the sewing machine and profiled in this column so far have been men – until now. Introducing Helen Augusta Blanchard, philanthropist, wife, mother and inventor of the famous zig-zag stitch.



Okay, so inventing a certain stitch isn't quite the same as inventing the sewing machine itself, but Blanchard's zig-zag stitch was to become so widespread, that we think it qualifies her as a sew 'n' sew.

Blanchard was born into the family of a wealthy shipping magnate in Maine in 1840. It was only after her family lost its fortune that her brilliant mechanical mind came to the fore. Her soon to be famous zig-zag stitch sealed the edges of a seam better than any preceding stitch, therefore making the garment sturdier.

She patented the first zig-zag stitch machine in 1873, the prototype of which is now on permanent display at the Museum of American History in Washington D.C.

In 1881 she established the Blanchard Over-seam Machine Company of Philadelphia and kept churning out new and inventive ideas for patents, earning her the nickname 'Lady Edison'. Sewing was obviously her favourite area and one that she kept returning to. Of her 28 patents, 22 of them related to sewing. She worked industriously until the age of 76 when she suffered a stroke and died six years later in 1922.

Next week's final instalment: And the rest is history....

continues next page...



From Tuesday 1st to Saturday 12th September
9:30am to 4:30pm each day
(excluding Sunday 6th September)

There is a massive 25% off all Patchwork Fabric, including pre-cut fabric packs, such as Jelly Rolls, Layer Cakes etc.

This sale is available instore and from our website www.blueberries.net.au
If purchasing from the website, enter discount code: 091267.

[Click here to view our Fabrics online.](#)

Every effort will be made to keep our website up to date, however some fabrics may sell out.
Sorry no rainchecks.

The discount does not apply for fabric ranges "coming soon", block of the months and QuiltAid.

Don't forget to check out the fabrics already on special, the 25% discount applies to these already reduced fabrics, [click here to be taken to the Specials page.](#)

continues next page...

Co-Owner Profile on Jackie Leybourne



Practical and Personal

Blueberries co-owner Jackie Leybourne cites her mother's influence as the prime reason she originally became interested in sewing and patchwork. "Mum was always making clothes for my brother's and I when we were young" she explains.

The leap into patchwork came when Jackie's mum suggested they attend a patchwork class together. "I wasn't too keen on the idea initially, but I went along and found I enjoyed it. The patchwork bug bit me and I was hooked" Jackie recalls.

In a few years Jackie's passion for patchwork grew from a hobby into a business venture when she opened her first patchwork store in 2003. "I'm not really a creative person myself, but more of a practical person. Which I guess is what has helped to get Blueberries up and running" Jackie says.

Jackie also mentions that it's important to keep the business modern and fresh by not only keeping abreast with market trends but also by implementing important business tools such as our website and weekly newsletters, things many similar businesses have not done.

"I like helping customers pick their fabrics when they come in with a particular project in mind. At times it is nice to work with a customer who is willing to move out of their comfort zone. The best part about my job, however, is when customers bring their finished projects back in, you can really see the joy they had in making it." Jackie says.

By popular demand

As you may have read in last week's newsletter we mentioned our very helpful and loyal canine assistant, Toby!

By popular demand this week we have included a photo of him.

Til next week!
The Blueberries Team.

