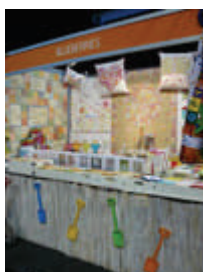




In this week's issue of Midweek Moments we begin a fortnightly profile of Blueberries' many tutors, giving you a bit of insight and background on the people who share their skills and knowledge at the regular classes. These profiles will alternate with the popular Show and Tell column, so keep offering up those finished creations for their own turn in the spotlight.

**Newcastle [CraftExpo](#) starts tomorrow, gates open at 10am.
Stop by and see us at stand D32. Here is a sneak peek of our stand.**



[Stitches Through Time - Part 5](#)

When the Puritan pilgrims first arrived in the 'New World' (later to be known as America), in the early 17th century, they brought their quilting and sewing skills with them. As new fabric was almost impossible to acquire, every little scrap of fabric was used and reused when making clothing and bed covers. The scraps were cut into complimentary geometric patterns, which was how modern-day patchwork first came about.

However, quilting was far from being a common pastime, in spite of the stereotype of colonial women sitting by the fire hunched over their work. Most women had to spend most of their daylight hours cooking and cleaning. Only women who were well off enough to afford paid domestic help to look after these chores, were able to spend more time quilting, appropriating styles from their European countries of origin.

Most of the quilts from this early era of American history haven't survived, but the few that have indicate a couple of recurring styles. Broderie perse (which is French for 'Persian embroidery') is a style of appliqué that involves printed elements to create a scene on the background fabric, and it was a method favoured by early American colonial women for extending their available fabrics. Medallion style quilts, where several borders surround a central motif, were also popular.

One thing that is certain from these early colonial times is that life was extremely harsh and difficult, with poverty, hunger and disease running rife throughout the newly established communities. On top of this, women were often treated as second class citizens, rarely having the opportunity to read and write and remaining subservient to their husbands and fathers throughout their lives. For those women who were able to quilt, it was probably one of the very few areas of life that was exclusively theirs.



An example of a colonial American quilt, pre-civil war.

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Elm Creek Quilt and Book Club with Susan Carr

To coincide with a visit from Jennifer Chiaverini the internationally renowned best-selling author of the Elm Creek Quilt Novels we are introducing the "Elm Creek Quilt and Book Club".

Membership to this club will entitle you to a personally signed copy of her new quilt book "Sylvia's Bridal Sampler" which contains over 140 traditional blocks, 10% discount on fabric purchases for your quilt, a comprehensive list of all Elm Creek Quilt Novels, access to the Blueberries library of novels and an "Elm Creek Quilt and Book Club" membership card and pin. You will also be invited to an exclusive meet and greet with Jennifer, where you will be able to show her your quilt and have any of your books signed.

Leading up to Jennifer's visit to our store in August 2010, a monthly class will be available for all Elm Creek Quilt and Book Club members. The monthly class will be held on the fourth Friday of the month at a cost of \$20.00 per month (Bookings Essential). Susan will provide tuition and assistance with your chosen quilt blocks. The class will also contain a book discussion on the current novel you are reading and morning tea.

Membership - \$60.00

Includes:

- Membership card and pin
- Personally signed copy of Sylvia's Bridal Sampler book
- 10% discount on quilt fabric purchases during class
- Comprehensive list of the Elm Creek Quilt Novels
- Access to the Blueberries library of novels

Monthly Class - \$20.00

Includes:

- Morning Tea
- Tutoring and support for your quilt
- Book Discussion

To register your interest email us at enquiries@blueberries.net.au or phone us on 02 4355 4400.

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Tutor Profile with Susan Veness

How long have you been quilting and what got you started?

I've been quilting for about 19 years. I started when I was pregnant with my daughter, just as something to keep me busy. I'd always wanted to try it and it seemed like a good opportunity.



How long have you been teaching and what do you specialise in?

I've been teaching for the last twelve months. At the moment I specialise in what I call Fabric Impressionism. This is a form of colourwash quilting where you produce a picture, using the colourwash technique of quilting, to make a wall hanging. To me it's like the old-fashioned Impressionist paintings, but using fabric instead. The idea is that it's an impression rather than a photo realistic version of something.

What inspires your creative ideas and/or projects?

I've always been a creative person. I've been an artist and sold water colours, I've done patchwork, lino-cut, but only got into this particular technique recently. I do some of the painting and dying of the fabrics. It's a culmination of all my other creative pursuits.

Do you have a favourite colour or design style?

I tend to favour bright, deep colours like reds and purples.

What have you learnt from your students as a tutor at Blueberries?

I find I pick up something in all of my classes. What I've found is that everyone's picked up different things of their own and it all gets pooled in a class. This even just applies to little practical tips, like the rubber mat someone might sit their sewing machine on, or bringing along sandwiches they've made the previous night.

Click [here](#) to find out more about Susan's Fabric Impressionism class held at Blueberries.

Til next week!

The Blueberries Team.