



In this week's Midweek Moments we begin a brand new column that's all about the humble hat. Yes, you read correctly – hat. What, you may be wondering, can there possibly be to know about hats? Surprisingly more than you could ever expect, as you'll find out. We'll be looking at all kinds of different hats worn by all kinds of different people from all different walks of life and periods of history, including contemporary hats such as the ubiquitous baseball cap and the great Aussie Akubra. You may never look at people's headwear in the same way again. We also have a fantastic workshop coming soon, new fabrics in store and a profile on one of our tutors. Enjoy!

### [Who wants to be a Milliner?](#)

#### The secret life of hats, Episode 1 - The Bowler

As it became the first hat to cut across all of the usual class, cultural and social boundaries normally defined by headwear, it seems appropriate to begin our romp through the world of hats with the humble, but versatile, bowler.

Also known in America as the derby, the bowler is a rounded, hard-topped hat with a small brim. It is almost always black in colour and is made from felt and the waterproof underbelly fur of rabbits and hares.

The bowler was first created in 1850 by London milliners George and James Lock. The brief from their client, a wealthy country gent named William Coke II, was for a sturdy hat that wasn't tall so that it could be worn by his gamewardens when on horseback without getting knocked off by low hanging branches, a frequent occurrence with the top hats that were worn at the time. The original prototype for the Lock's design was by another London milliner – William Bowler, whose name quickly became the official name of the hat. When Lock first picked up his new hat from the milliners, he jumped on it several times to test its toughness and, satisfied with the results, paid 12 shillings and walked out of the shop with the world's first bowler hat.

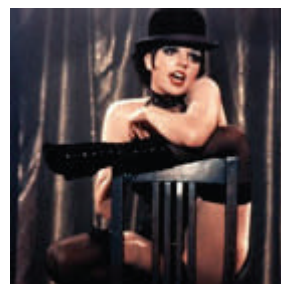
It was principally because it had been designed as a working hat that men of all professions and across all social classes began to wear bowlers. It became the hard hat of its day, sturdy, practical and immensely popular. Throughout the twentieth century it was appropriated as the trademark headgear of such iconic popular figures as Charlie Chaplin's cane-twirling tramp, bumbling comic duo Laurel and Hardy, various incarnations of Agatha Christie's famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot and Liza Minnelli's nightclub singer Sally Bowles in the 1972 film version of Cabaret.

*continues next page...*

### ***Famous bowler wearers of the 20th century***



*Charlie Chaplin*



*Liza Minnelli's  
Sally Bowles*



*Hercule Poirot  
(played by David Suchet)*

Rather unexpectedly it also became a popular choice for the Aymara women in the Bolivian and Peruvian highlands, the only place outside of England where the bowler is still an essential item of everyday headwear. This South American development is an incongruous one, and has been attributed to a canny Bolivian outfitter back in the 1920s, who, after accidentally ordering too many bowlers for European workers, decided to market the surplus ones as women's headwear. The trend caught on quickly and they are now made locally where they are known as bombins. Aymara women believe wearing a bombin will enhance their fertility.

#### [Workshops with Kellie Wulfohn from Don't Look Now!](#)

Blueberries is pleased to present Kellie Wulfohn from [Don't Look Now!](#) Be inspired by Kellie's fresh new approach to quilting and join her for a fun filled workshop of raw edge appliqué, free motion stitching and quilting.

You may remember our blog [Happy Snaps of Newcastle CraftExpo](#), which pictured quite a few of Kellie's creations.

#### **Workshop A**

**Dates:** Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th April  
Two day workshop.

**Time:** 9:00am to 4:30pm both days.

**Cost:** \$200 includes pattern, morning tea and lunch both days.

**Project:** Any one of the four cushions from the "Pretty 'n' Pink" set of cushions. Pictured here to the right.

Click [here](#) to register.



#### **Workshop B**

**Dates:** Saturday 17th April  
Four hour workshop.

**Time:** 6:00pm to 10:00pm.

**Cost:** \$55 includes pattern and supper.

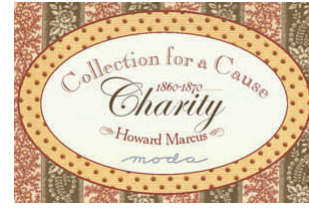
**Project:** The very cute little cushion "Wish you were here too...". Picture here to the right. You must have previous free motion stitching and quilting experience to complete workshop.

Click [here](#) to register for the workshop.



*continues next page...*

## New Fabric



## Tutor Profile with Chris Timmins

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

I've been quilting for about 14 years. I was a textiles and design teacher at a high school in Grafton. The students needed to learn a creative craft so they could compete in local design awards, so I went off to a patchwork course with the idea that I could pass it onto them. I was absolutely hooked by lunchtime.



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

I've been tutoring for about 12 years now. I began locally by teaching the parents of some of my high school students. I specialise in strip piece quilts, mainly bargellos. I sell my bargello patterns all over the world. People are always asking me how I come up with the ideas.

### What inspires your creative ideas and/or projects?

I'm inspired by the colours. Before I started patchwork I thought trees were just green, but now I see there's thousands of greens. I love subtleties of colour and different tones.

### Do have a favourite colour or design style?

I particularly like strong bold colours, like blacks, whites and reds. I also love autumn colours.

### What do you enjoy most about being a tutor at Blueberries?

I love sharing in the excitement when my students achieve what they make. I've found that patchwork can be a very social thing as well. Sometimes there are people who are going through difficult life experiences, and they can find a real sense of camaraderie and bonding with the patchwork classes. There's such a lovely atmosphere down there at Blueberries. I also love it when my students win competitions with their work. So far, 35 kids have won a sewing machine from doing patchwork with me.

*Last week we featured Chris' next class, [Bargello](#), which has now been moved to 17th and 18th July. Chris also has two other classes at Blueberries this year, [Anything Goes](#) and [Spinning Blocks](#). Click on the class names above to register.*

Til next week!

The Blueberries Team.