



Mid Week Moments #73

Wednesday 18 August 2010

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Welcome to your *Midweek Moments*, in which you'll find some of your favourite weekly goodies. Also, don't forget Sue Daley's Trunk Show, which is coming up on Monday 6 September. Sue is well-known throughout the quilting and patchwork communities as being an English Paper Piecing aficionado and as well as displaying her latest creations, she will also be dispensing her vast knowledge and accumulated tips from her travels. At \$10.00 for two hours (including supper) this is a bargain sure to be snatched up fairly quickly. Numbers are limited to 40, so if you want to register, email jackie@blueberries.net.au before you miss out.

Roseville Album by Kim McLean



Pattern available online for \$45

Other patterns by Kim McLean also available online are:

[Flower Basket Medallion](#)

[Lollypop Trees](#)

[Princess Feather](#)

[Flower Pot](#)

[To see larger photos of all these patterns click here.](#)

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Show and Tell

Show us the item and tell us the story

Rhonda Tester's overnight bags



Rhonda displaying her three overnight bags

What attracted you to the pattern?

It was the fabulous choice of colours that Jackie had. Also, I thought it didn't look too difficult to make (although it turned out being harder than I expected).

How long did it take you to make all three bags?

About a month. I was so pleased with the way the first one turned out that I made two more for two friends. We're all going to Hong Kong on 1 September so it was good having a bit of a deadline.

Did you stick strictly to the pattern or did you customise?

I followed the pattern fairly carefully, although the fabric I was using was more heavy duty. A travelling bag needs to be pretty sturdy, so I used stronger fabric for the outside bottom.

How long have you been a sewer?

I've been sewing for 40 years (I've recently turned 60 so I started fairly young). It was mainly clothes in the earlier years, but then about seven years ago my auntie got me onto quilting and I really became addicted.

What's next on your sewing schedule?

I'm making a flannel quilt for a friend who's battling cancer. I'm told her treatments make her feel constantly cold, so a quilt is the ideal gift.

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Who Wants to be a Milliner?

The Secret Life of Hats

Episode 23 - The Witch's Hat

The sight of the stereotypical wicked witch of popular culture wearing her tall, pointy hat has been so common for so many decades that we have virtually come to expect it without question. But where did she get that strange, impractical item of headwear and what is its origin?

A quick gaze into the crystal ball of history provides only tantalizingly limited clues. Paintings and wooden friezes from Medieval times often depict witches wearing a range of different hats and headscarves, and sometimes no hat at all, their wild Medusa-like tresses billowing in the wind. There are also distinctly anti-Semitic theories for the evolution of the witch's hat. Medieval thinking commonly associated Jews with witches as being enemies of Christianity, and they were often forced to wear tall conical "Heretic" hats.



In fact, throughout history it seems that tall pointy hats in general have never really had much kudos attached to them. The tall, conical "dunce's hat" was made popular in the royal courts of the 15th century when people considered stupid or foolish were forced to wear them for public humiliation (a practice that lasted all the way into 20th century school classrooms). Not surprisingly, the church had significant influence in giving pointy hats their negative rap. Anything pointy, especially on or near the head, was associated with the devil's pointy horns and therefore had connotations of sin and depravity.

The exception to this was the pointy hat traditionally worn by male wizards and magicians, who were generally respected and held in reverential esteem, indicating more of that deep-seated and unquestioned sexism at work. In fact, these enigmatic male figures were even allowed to have their hats decorated, often with stars, moons and other astronomical symbols.

But these hats were still brimless. Somewhere along the way, someone decided to add the wide brim to witch's hats, possibly to customize them to female wearers and differentiate them from wizards. It's unclear exactly when this subtle fashion statement began, but as the Spanish artist Goya was painting witches with the brimless version in the early 19th century, it probably wasn't at least until well after his death in 1828. Certainly by Victorian times, children's fairy tales were starting to illustrate witches in the wide-brimmed variety that was to become so recognizable throughout the 20th century.

This trend was well and truly cemented with the 1939 movie *The Wizard of Oz*. Margaret Hamilton's brilliant portrayal of the Wicked Witch of the West seemed to set the prototype for all wicked witches that were to follow, her black pointy witch's hat so forbidding and iconic that it was practically a supporting cast member.

However, as the decades progressed, the number of wicked witches in popular culture was gradually matched by an increasing number of good witches. These were usually attractive, otherwise regular women with magical powers, such as *Bewitched's* Samantha Stevens and the sisters from *Charmed*. This new wave of good witches was almost never seen wearing the traditional pointed witch's hat. This refusal to conform to traditional ideas of what a witch should look like was no doubt a result of the growing influence of feminism. These days, whenever a black witch's hat pops up, you can be pretty sure of either the presence of magical powers or the possibility that there's a Halloween party lurking somewhere nearby.

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Which witch is that in the witch's hat? (l to r) Margaret Hamilton as the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), Idina Menzel as the same character in the original New York production of *Wicked* (2003) and Maggie Smith as Minerva McGonagall from the *Harry Potter* films (2001 - 2011)

And the Last Word...

"Quilters know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em."

Til next week!
The Blueberries Team