



Image: Pixabay/Maatkare

## A Brief History of Paper Sewing Patterns

*Did you know that paper sewing patterns have been around for over 150 years?*

Although there are records of clothing patterns dating from 1589, this story starts in 1860, which is when William and Ellen Demorest began the home sewing pattern industry by holding fashion shows in their homes and selling the patterns. Patterns were of unprinted paper, cut to shape, and could be purchased “flat” (folded), or “made up” whereby the pattern pieces were tacked into position to compensate for the absence of detailed instructions. The Demorests published a magazine, *The Mirror of Fashion*, which listed hundreds of different patterns, most available in only one size. One of Ellen’s patterns would be stapled into a magazine with illustrations of the latest fashions with instructions for ordering more. Ellen also added her sewing tips and fitting instructions to the magazine. This marketing innovation was copied by various later pattern makers including Vogue.

Home sewing had just begun to proliferate with the introduction of the sewing machine in the mid 1800’s. The sewing pattern was invented at just the right time to keep the Demorests’ business prospering even through the CivilWar. William ran the pattern factory, magazine, and finances, while Ellen concentrated on fashion and expanding their market. She soon had men’s and children’s pattern lines, with scouts in London and Paris to keep her informed of the latest fashions.

By 1865, their magazine, renamed and now a monthly, had a circulation of 100,000 subscribers, and they had a network of 300 shops which carried Demorests’ paper patterns. The tragedy of the Demorests is that William never patented the Demorest paper pattern. In the 1880’s, Ebenezer Butterick obtained the patents for his patterns and soon became the leading competitor. With pressure from Butterick, McCall and other emerging pattern companies, the Demorests sold their pattern business in 1887, setting the stage for a new generation of pattern makers.

The Butterick Company was launched in 1863 by Ebenezer Butterick with heavy cardboard templates for children’s clothing. Butterick’s innovation was offering every pattern in a series of standard, graded sizes. Family members cut and

*Continued page 5*



BERNINA 570QE 9mm\*

## BERNINA News

### *5 Series re-engineered.*

BERNINA have recently released a re-engineered range of 5-series machines - B535, B570QE, B590 and the embroidery only B500.

Some of the features include: front loading jumbo bobbin, holding up to 70% more thread than standard bobbins; a 4.3 inch (10.9 cms) intuitive colour touch screen; a longer forearm with 8.5 inches (21.6 cms) of space to the right of the needle; semi-automatic threading system; LED lights to brightly illuminate your workspace and the needle area (16 in the B590 and 12 in the other models); foot control with needle up/down function; automatic thread cutter and adaptive thread tension.

The B535 has a maximum stitch width of 5.5 mm whilst the B570QE and the B590 have a maximum stitch width of 9 mm. The BERNINA stitch regulator (BSR) comes standard with the B570QE

and B590, and is an optional extra for the B535. All machines come with the Free Hand System (knee lift), touch pen and the new magnetic accessory box.

If embroidery is your passion, the B500 is designed to do only that. New features include Pinpoint placement, Group/Ungroup, Colour wheel, just to name a few. With 275 built in embroidery designs, there is plenty to choose from.

We have a B535 available in store to test drive. And don't forget that the the BERNINA Mother's Day sale is on now until the end of May - a perfect time to upgrade, or to get those extra presser feet you may have wanted.

This is a big year for BERNINA, as they are celebrating '125 years of Swiss passion'. A big celebration is planned for later in the year in Sydney - details will be provided once available.



Mini Strawberry Thief in Aqua

## New In-store & Online

*For sewists & knitter/crocheters*

### For the Sewist

Autumn/winter stock is starting to filter in, as well as some non-seasonal fabrics. The include:

**Boiled wool:** we have been able to source more colours of this popular viscose/wool fabric for this year. Currently in stock we have petrol, peacock and moss green, to add to the fuchsia and camel (this one is 100% wool) from last year. In a couple of months we will be adding navy, olive and yellow, and will possibly be able to get some black if there is interest. These fabrics are perfect for the Tessuti patterns we have in stock.

**Nani Iro double gauze:** this selection is mostly spotted in a range of different colours

**Avalana printed jersey:** remember the monkey fabric we had last year? Due to its popularity we have brought it back again this year, and have added a few more designs, for both children and adults, with more coming. This Danish designed cotton/spandex fabric is certified Oeko-tex which means it has been tested to ensure no harmful products remain.

**Printed ponte:** we have been able to get more stock of the popular 'Squares' and 'Geo' ponte from last year, as well as four new prints. These fabrics are softer than our plain pontes,

and are perfect for a range of garment styles.

**Linen:** we have source linen from another of the Baltic states, Estonia. These are medium weight fabrics with a lovely soft hand which will work well in shirts or blouses.

**Outback Wife:** if you have not been in store for a while you will not have seen these beautiful 100% printed cotton barkcloth fabrics. These are a good trans-seasonal fabric as they are slightly heavier than standard cotton. We have some plain colours to augment this range, expanding the options for how these fabrics are used. Vintage style dresses and skirts will make up beautifully in these fabrics.

**Sewing patterns:** Thread Theory is the latest indie pattern designer now in store. These are menswear patterns, and we have started with a shirt, two styles of pants and a t-shirt style top.

**Have you seen our display of Marimekko fabrics?** Some of these fabrics are available for sale, the only caveat is that they cannot be taken until after the Marimekko exhibition finishes. Please let us know if you are interested.



Noro Ganpi Tape Kasuri Colour 137

#### For the Knitter/Crocheter

ONLine is a range of 100% super wash space dyed merino wool. This yarn is very soft, and uses 3-3.5mm needles. Perfect for shawls, scarves or cowls.

New colours of the Lang Mille Colori Sock and Lace yarn are now in store, and are already proving popular.

Alpaca Superfine is a 100% baby alpaca yarn from Borgo de'Pazzi. Made in Italy, this yarn uses 3-3.5mm needles. So far we have three colours - rust, grey and mauve. It is sooo soft and luxurious!

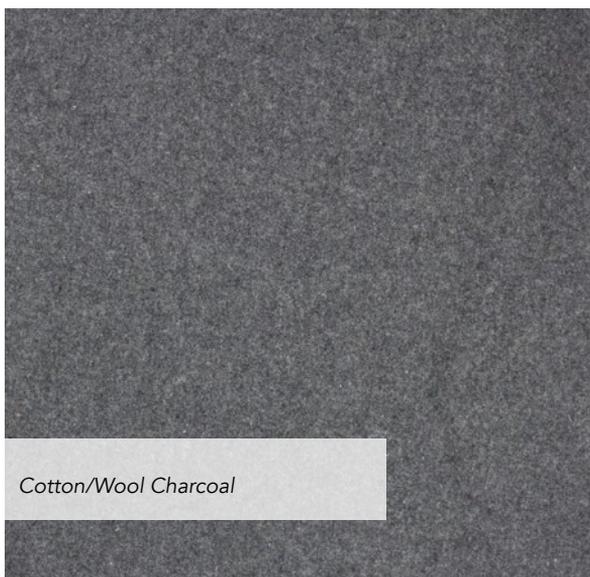
We have a handful of Noro Rainbow rolls available. This is 100% wool pencil roving in gorgeous colour combinations,

and can be spun into yarn or used as embellishment with felting.

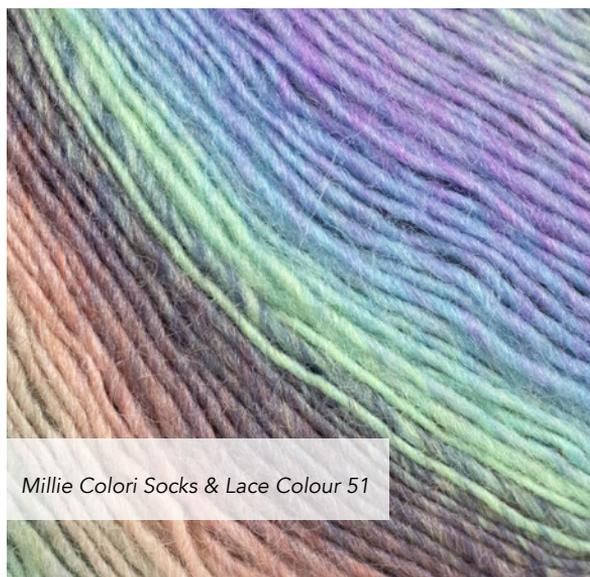
Have you seen the Noro Kasuri yarn? A mixture of rayon, Japanese Ganpi paper and nylon, this yarn is soft but stiffer than the usual yarn. The label indicates no washing but we have knitted up a sample and hand washed it without problems. However, it is not a yarn you would wash often or machine wash. This yarn comes in the lovely colour combinations Noro is known for.

A range of KnitPro stitch markers are now available

Shawl pins to keep your shawls in place



Cotton/Wool Charcoal



Millie Colori Socks & Lace Colour 51

*From Cover*

folded the first patterns that were sold from their home. In 1866 Butterick began manufacturing patterns for women's fashions, and later added some articles of men's clothing, both of which were publicised in a fashion magazine introduced in 1873. Their patterns started as unprinted tissue paper cut to shape, folded and held together by a pinned (later pasted-on) label with an image and, later, brief instructions. Envelopes to hold the patterns were introduced in the early 1900s followed by a separate instruction sheet in the 1910's. In 1948, they purchased two new presses specially designed to print markings directly onto the pattern tissue. It is estimated that Butterick had sold 6 million clothing patterns by 1871!!

The McCall Pattern Company was established in 1870 by a Scottish tailor named James McCall. Patterns were unprinted until 1919, when they started printing information directly onto the pattern pieces. In the 1920s, selected patterns had full colour illustrations on their pattern envelopes. In 1932 they started printing full colour illustrations on all pattern envelopes. McCall usually printed the date of release on their envelopes (the only company which consistently did so before mid-century), which makes it easy to date their patterns.

A spinoff of Vogue Magazine's weekly pattern feature Vogue Pattern Service began in 1899. In 1909 Condé Nast bought

Burda patterns has a slightly different history. Hubert Burda Media (founded by Hubert Burda's grandfather, Franz Burda I) is a German magazine publishing company that started back in 1898. In 1949, Aenne Burda, Hubert Burda's mother and Franz Burda II's wife, decided to introduce a fashion magazine focused on sewing in order to make high fashion more accessible for every woman, particularly those who couldn't afford to shop designer and those who didn't have access to fashion because of where they lived. Thus began BurdaStyle magazine (initially called Burda Moden) in 1950. The Burda sewing patterns were included in the magazine a short two years later.

Kwik Sew has been creating home-sewing patterns since 1967. Kwik Sew's success can be credited to its founder, Kerstin Martensson. She began as a ready-to-wear manufacturing pattern maker, then shared her sewing techniques for knits and stretch fabrics, and eventually became an international business owner. It was her life-long passion for sewing, coupled with her dedication to creating patterns for sewers of all skill levels, that set the foundation for Kwik Sew's success and made Kerstin Martensson an innovative industry leader.

Kwik Sew became a part of The McCall Pattern Company at the close of 2011, embarking on an exciting new era while continuing Kerstin's vision and Kwik Sew's style that its customers love.

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Vogue, resulting in the formation of the Vogue Pattern Company in 1914. In 1961 Condé Nast entered in a licensing agreement with the Butterick Company.

The first 'Madame Weigel' pattern was issued in Australia in 1878 by Johanna and Oscar Weigel, who had recently emigrated from the United States. The first issues of "Weigel's Journal of Fashion" appeared in March 1880. Weigels dominated the paper pattern industry in Australia for over 90 years, and their patterns are now considered as collectable.

Simplicity Pattern company was established in 1927 by Joseph Shapiro. Simplicity aimed to create and reproduce patterns that were easy to use and affordable to the average household, being sold for about 15 cents (US). Their unprinted patterns ended in 1946 and were all printed thereafter. In 1931 Simplicity partnered with the Woolworth company to produce DuBarry patterns, which were manufactured from 1931 to 1946, and were sold for 10 cents (US).

Other pattern companies from around this time included Advance, which produced patterns from 1933 to 1966, and the New York Pattern Company which started in 1932 until early 1950s. These patterns had drawn figures rather than photos on the envelope and the paper was non glossy.

In recent times, many independent (indie) pattern designers have sprung up. At time of writing there are over 350 pattern designers listed in the Sewing Directory. Many of the patterns on offer are PDF downloads only, some are for lingerie only, some for children's wear, some for active wear. This list includes the indie pattern designers we have in stock, such as Tessuti, Colette, Grainline Studio, Merchant and Mills, Thread Theory, and Tadah, with more to come. There has been a rise in popularity of this industry, as evidenced by the sheer number of designers available. This could be due to the fact that indie pattern designers have recreated the sewing pattern. The most successful indie patterns are much more than just templates and instructions. Many are in effect sewing lessons, chock full of photos, videos, and helpful tips. Instead of assuming you already know, they assume you could use some guidance and happily give it, not only in the pattern but online, where their blogs often include sew-a-longs where garments are made step by step online. There is also more ready access to the designers when questions need to be asked, which is not generally available through the big four companies.

*Sources available online.*

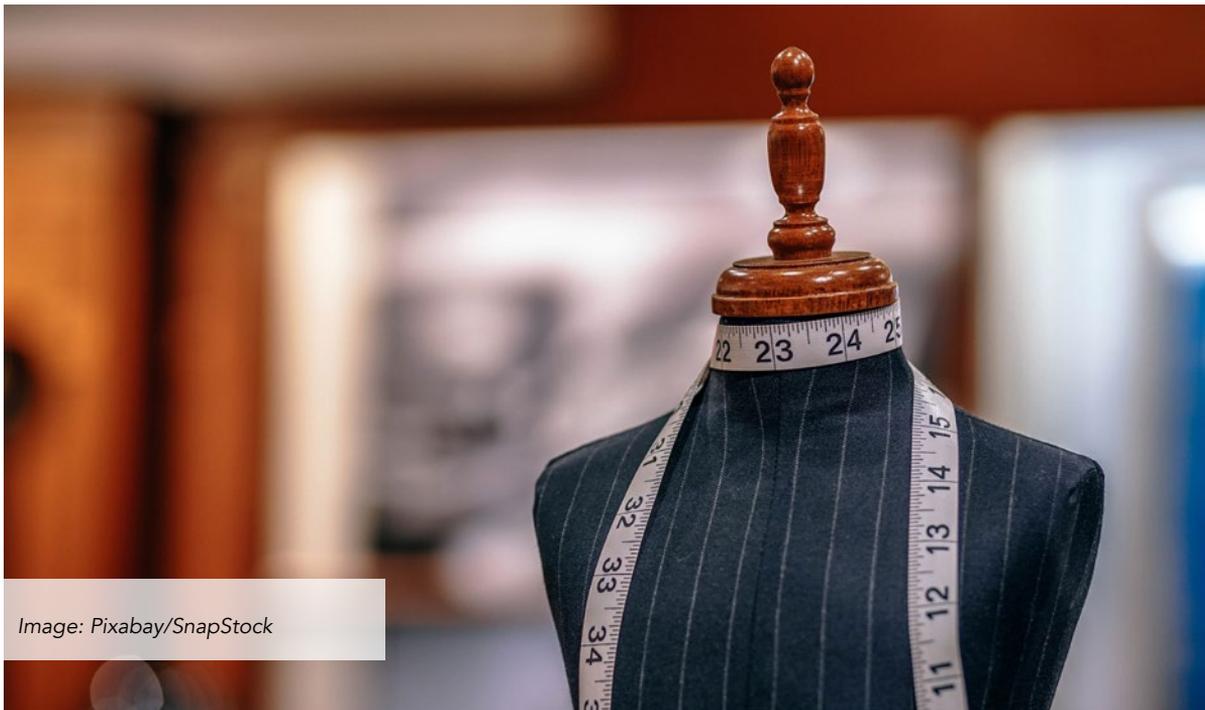


Image: Pixabay/SnapStock

# Classes & Events

## *What, when, where*

### **The Pattern Drafter Two Day Workshop**

Maria Boncaldo will take you through drafting and adapting your own dress pattern on day one, then on day two assist with the actual making of the dress. At the end of the two days, you will go home with a perfectly fitting garment

Places are limited to so book early!

**Date:** Saturday June 30 and Sunday July 1

**Time:** 10:30am to 4:30pm on both days

**Cost:** \$250 per person

**Requirements:** Will be provided at booking.

### **Monthly BERNINA Classes**

A new series of “BERNINA Club” type classes have been established this year. These 2.5 hour classes are project based, and are designed to familiarise you with a range of machine functionality and to learn new techniques that can be incorporated into your own sewing practice. Your tutor will be Deanne Ireland, who has many years of experience with Bernina machines.

**Dates** usually the third Friday of the month—next scheduled Friday 18th May

**Time:** 10:30–1pm

**Cost:** \$15, plus cost of kit where provided.

**Requirements:** Will be provided prior to each class.

Generally this will be a range of fabric pieces. At times, we will provide a kit to cut down preparation time, to maximise your actual on-machine time.



House of Cloth

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