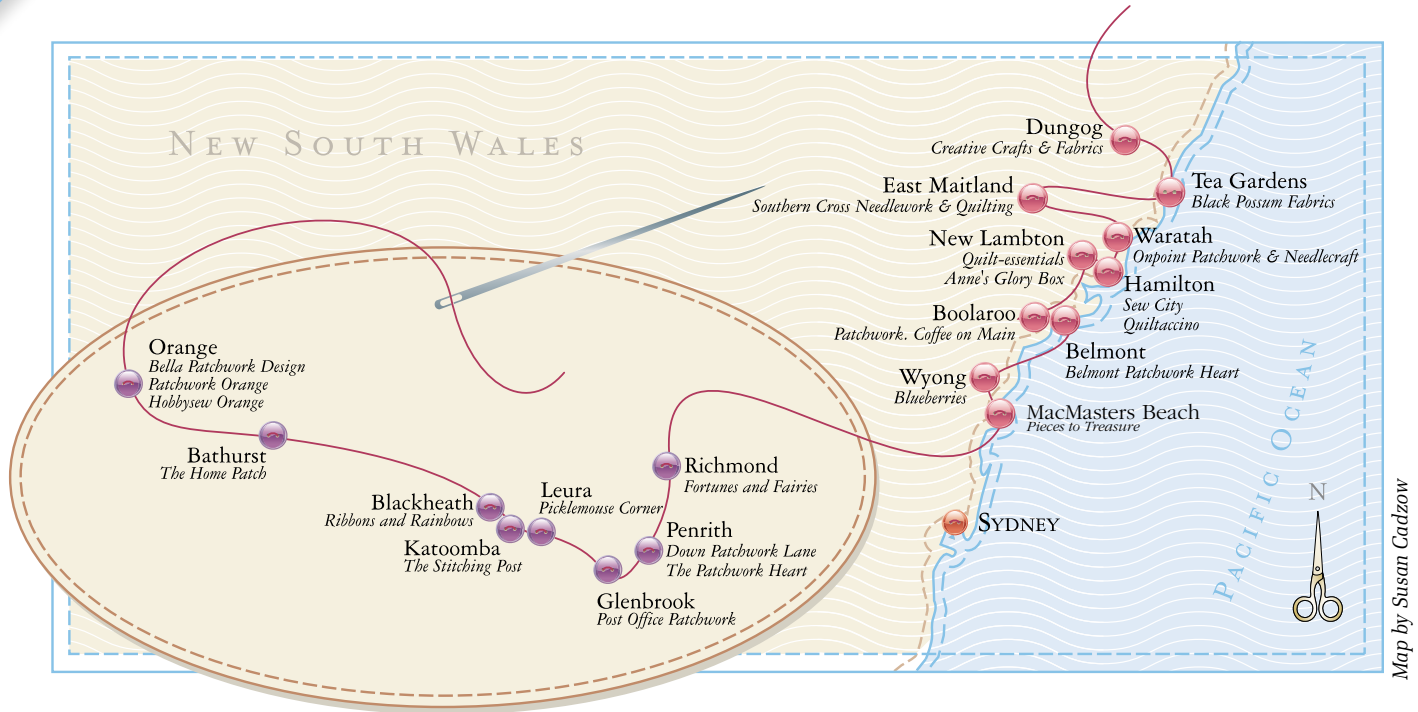


# Country Exploring

By Jeannette Vermeulen



Follow the needle and thread, button by button, as we make our way around Hunter/Newcastle/Blue Mountains.

From sun-kissed beaches, to forests and rolling plains, New South Wales has a lot to offer. Whether you fancy sunbaking on the sand, a mountain retreat in the snow, drifting lazily along a river or a quiet getaway in the country, you can find it all here. In this instalment of *On The Road*, we explore the tranquil Hunter Region, the dynamic hub of Newcastle and the stunning Blue Mountains area, visiting all the fabulous craft shops that call these picturesque regions home.

First stop on our tour is at Creative Crafts & Fabrics in Dugong, a town rich in natural assets and magnificent rural vistas. We head along to the coastal town of Tea Gardens, a boat lover's heaven and home to Black Possum Fabrics.

We loop back inland to East Maitland in the Lower Hunter Valley where we drop by Southern Cross Needlework & Quilting to catch up with Rhonda. Our next stop is Onpoint Patchwork & Needlecraft in Waratah, just west of Newcastle. We hop on to Sew City in Hamilton, where we also pause for a break at Quiltaccino, before stopping in New Lambton and two fabulous craft shops, Anne's Glory Box and Quilt-essentials. As our tour takes us through the extended Newcastle area, take some time to stop and explore this fascinating region. Newcastle was included in Lonely Planet's top 10 cities for 2011, and has plenty to offer.

Our journey takes us to Patchwork. Coffee on Main in Boolaroo next, followed by Belmont Patchwork Heart in the unique lakeside

coastal community of Belmont on the eastern shores of Lake Macquarie. We now head through the beautiful central coast region, and explore the gorgeous Blueberries in Wyong.

Our next port of call is the lovely MacMasters Beach area. Here, surrounded by beach, bush and coastal lagoon, we discover the charming Pieces to Treasure.

Making our way towards the mountains, we call in to see Leanne at Fortunes and Fairies in Richmond next, and then it's to Penrith, the largest mini-city on the outskirts of Sydney. Here, we find Michelle Marving's terrific shop, The Patchwork Heart, and the wonderful Down Patchwork Lane.

On our way up the mountain, the first stop is Post Office Patchwork, located in the picturesque town of Glenbrook. Another 30 minutes up the road is Picklemouse Corner in charming Leura.

Next we stop at Karen's The Stitching Post in Katoomba — also home to the world-famous Three Sisters. Heading on, Ribbons and Rainbows in Blackheath is next, before starting our descent down the mountains to the agricultural plains to the west. In Bathurst we call in to Anni and Peter's gorgeous store, The Home Patch.

Our final stop on this tour is Orange, home to three great patchwork shops: Hobbysew Orange, owned by Patricia; Bella Patchwork Design, owned by Delma; and Patchwork Orange, owned by Lucy.

## Creative Crafts &amp; Fabrics

Dungog

This cheery shop in the lovely town of Dungog in the upper Hunter Valley is a pure delight for eager stitchers. Carol-Ann Cummings has owned Creative Crafts & Fabrics for the past eight years, getting into the industry through a shared familial love of craft. “I’ve wanted a craft shop since high school,” Carol-Ann says. “My mum and nana both sewed, so I was brought up on sewing!”

As you enter the shop, you are greeted by quirky self portraits of all the class ladies hanging on the walls, as well as a gorgeous array of quilts. It sets the tone of the store’s fun atmosphere perfectly as your shopping experience will soon feel more like a meeting with old friends.

Creative Crafts & Fabrics is simply bursting with stock, so you are guaranteed to leave with some fabulous new goodies and big smile! The shop



carries Janome sewing machines, and has an extensive selection of wool, ribbons, buttons and general habby available. There is a fantastic selection of around 1000 bolts of fabric, including Moda and Michael Miller to name a few, as well as a large range of chenille and quilt backings.

A quilting service is available, and there are a variety of classes held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9.30am–2.30pm, and Thursday nights from 7–10pm.

**Local knowledge:**

Dungog is located in a valley adjacent to the Williams River, and is 74km north of Newcastle. “We are at the foothills of the Barrington Tops and offer great bush camping areas,” Carol-Ann says.

**Address:** 120 Dowling Street,  
Dungog NSW 2420

**Phone:** (02) 4992 1232

**Fax:** (02) 4992 3587

**Email:** [creativecrafts1@bigpond.com](mailto:creativecrafts1@bigpond.com)

## Black Possum Fabrics

Tea Gardens

Jenifer Gimbert and her mother-in-law Hazel Gimbert have run Black Possum Fabrics together for the last 25 years and say they do it for the love of fabric and the opportunity to help others create beautiful quilts.

Located in the gorgeous coastal town of Tea Gardens, Black Possum Fabrics services a wide range of customers – locals, visitors and those who return

each year to take part in the store’s popular workshops and classes, special quilt days and weekend retreats.

Fans of fun and bright fabrics will enjoy browsing through the delicious range as the store specialises in a wide selection of bright, unusual quilting fabrics. From whimsical fairy designs to captivating Bali pops, there’s something for everyone.

You can also find all your quilting needs amongst the patterns, including Monica Poole’s Moon Shine Designs bag patterns, kits, haberdashery and gifts. The displays of finished quilts in various styles and gorgeous colourways are sure to inspire you too.

If you can’t make it into the shop, head over to the website where you can view and buy their products and fabrics. You also have the option to place

phone orders with a credit card. Be sure to also join the mailing list to be the first to know when new stock arrives and to keep up to date with coming events such as new workshops and retreats.

Black Possum Fabrics is open seven days a week, from 9.30am to 5pm. Drop by any time to explore the variety this wonderful store has to offer.

**Local knowledge:**

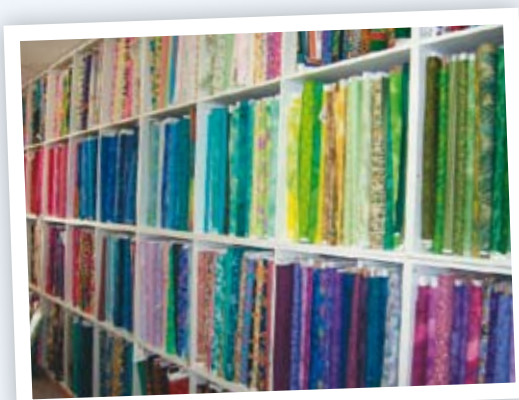
The Myall Lakes National Park is located near Tea Gardens. It is one of the state’s largest coastal lake systems, and contains 40km of beaches and rolling sand dunes.

**Address:** Shop 1, 197 Myall Street,  
Tea Gardens NSW 2324

**Phone:** (02) 4997 0866

**Email:** [blackpossumfabrics@bigpond.com](mailto:blackpossumfabrics@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [www.blackpossumfabrics.net](http://www.blackpossumfabrics.net)



## Southern Cross Needlework & Quilting

*East Maitland*

**S**outhern Cross Needlework & Quilting first opened its doors eight years ago, and has been in its present location for four years. The well-stocked shop is owned by Rhonda Eddy, who started out designing her own embroidery designs, then progressed to include patchwork fabrics and the rest is history!

The heritage-listed building the shop calls home has a quaint charm all of its own, and once you step inside and receive their warm welcome, you will never want to leave. Simply relax and explore the wide variety of stock, including quality fabrics and needlework essentials. There is also a wonderful range of books, especially ones focused on techniques and how-to information, and a variety of patterns, kits and designs unique to Southern Cross Needlework & Quilting. The shop specialises in romantic fabrics, traditional, Kaffe Fassett, reproduction and softs for baby quilts.



Extensive classes with national and regional tutors are held during the week, including Saturdays from 10am. The shop is open Tuesday to Friday, 10am–4.30pm, and Saturday 10am–12pm. If you can't make it into the shop, visit the online shop with its prompt mail-order service. "If we don't have it, we can suggest someone who will!" Rhonda says.

**Local knowledge:**

Many events in the local area bring



visitors to Maitland and surrounds. Steamfest is held in Maitland in April, while historic Morpeth, a five-minute drive from Southern Cross Needlework & Quilting, hosts festivals regularly.

**Address:** 94 Melbourne Street, East Maitland NSW 2323

**Phone:** (02) 4936 6600

**Email:** [scn5@bigpond.com](mailto:scn5@bigpond.com)

**Website:**

[www.southerncrossneedlework.com](http://www.southerncrossneedlework.com)

## Onpoint Patchwork & Needlecraft

*Newcastle*

**I**t's known for its variety of fabrics that cater for most patchworkers' needs, and at Onpoint Patchwork & Needlecraft, "I knew I'd find it here" is a common phrase to hear. Husband-and-wife team Pat and Cath opened the store

in Waratah, Newcastle, after making a sea change.

Fabrics from most leading distributors are available and when you enter the store you are greeted not only by an array of colours and prints, but also by a wide range of general sewing odds and ends, books, patterns and new stock lines. "If we don't have something in

stock required by a customer, we do our best to locate it and get it in as soon as possible," says Cath.

The social aspect of patchwork is important in this store and classes are regularly held for ladies to carry on the tradition of patchwork as they gather to share their love of stitching and each other's lives.

**Local knowledge:**

Onpoint Patchwork & Needlecraft is located in the Newcastle suburb of Waratah. In Newcastle you may find some wonderful cultural events held at the beautiful Art Deco Civic Theatre and exhibitions at the various art galleries.

**Address:** 61A Station Street, Waratah NSW 2298

**Phone:** (02) 4968 0094

**Fax:** (02) 4968 0096

**Email:** [onpointpatch@spin.net.au](mailto:onpointpatch@spin.net.au)

**Website:** [www.onpointpatchworkandneedlecraft.com](http://www.onpointpatchworkandneedlecraft.com)



*Left: Various Moda Bake Shop Jelly Rolls, Turnovers and Charm Squares, perfect for small projects, are available. Prices vary. For more information, contact Onpoint Patchwork & Needlecraft.*

## Sew City

## Hamilton

Sharon Hutchinson took over this wonderful shop in the suburbs of Newcastle from its long-term owner in July 2009. Sew City has been well-established for 30 years and could not have asked for a more enthusiastic new owner. "I have always loved sewing since I was a child, have completed TAFE courses in Fashion Design and Technology, and I absolutely adore beautiful fabrics," Sharon says.

The shop boasts outstanding, friendly customer service and carries a simply gorgeous modern selection of patchwork fabrics and patterns, including fabrics from Moda, Michael Miller, Amy Butler, Saffron Craig and Joel Dewberry, among others; and patterns from Amy Butler, Monica Poole, Melly & me, Janelle Wind, Polli and many more, as well as fabulous books.

Sew City is a Janome sewing machine specialist, and carries a range of machines including sewing, embroidery,



and overlockers, as well as parts and accessories. The shop also stocks Horn sewing cabinets and tables, Hoop Sisters embroidery design CDs, haberdashery including Rasant and Mettler thread, Hemingworth and Isacord embroidery thread, batting and lots more!

Hands-on classes are offered in sewing skills, specialising in machine and overlocking skills. Patchwork and quilting classes include basics, general patchwork and BOM classes. There are also appliqué and free-motion quilting workshops, bag and garment



construction classes, and Janome machine embroidery, customiser and digitiser program computer classes.

### Local knowledge:

"Hamilton is well known for its cafes and restaurants and individually-owned boutique businesses," Sharon says.

**Address:** 19 Beaumont Street,  
Hamilton NSW 2303

**Phone:** (02) 4969 8255

**Fax:** (02) 4969 8277

**Email:** sales@sewcity.com.au

**Website:** www.sewcity.com.au

## Complete Craft

See what's coming up in your favourite magazine, read great articles and win fantastic prizes!



Visit [www.completecraft.com.au](http://www.completecraft.com.au) online!

## Quilt-essentials

New Lambton

Quilt-essentials was opened six years ago by Jenny Wheeler, fulfilling her long-held dream. “I have been knitting since I was eight and made my first quilt in 1989 after doing a course at the local WEA,” Jenny explains, and her passion for the craft has never lessened. She loves meeting all the fabulous quilting women out there and enjoys helping people turn projects into a reality.

The dynamic shop is located in the suburb of New Lambton at the bottom of Blackbutt Reserve, an inner city sanctuary for native wildlife right near the heart of Newcastle. This tranquil setting will create the ideal frame of mind for exploring every nook of this jam-packed shop just bursting with stitching surprises!

In store there is a friendly and eclectic atmosphere so you can peacefully survey the vast amount of fabric ranging from contemporary to civil war

reproduction, wool, quilting supplies, books, patterns, haberdashery, doll kits and much more. Quilt-essentials specialises in catering for beginners and there is always something exciting going on. A dressmaking class is currently offered for young mums, and a machine-quilting service is also offered, run by Jenny’s husband Stewart.

### Local knowledge:

The Blackbutt Reserve is a large bushland reserve spread across 182 hectares of urban bushland, and includes a wildlife sanctuary for koalas, kangaroos, emus, wombats, native birds and more. It provides nature trails, wildlife exhibits, children’s playgrounds



and recreational facilities, and is an ideal place for a relaxing family picnic or to explore the wonders of nature.

**Address:** 64 Orchardtown Road, New Lambton NSW 2305

**Phone:** (02) 4952 4444

**Email:** [info@quilt-essentials.com.au](mailto:info@quilt-essentials.com.au)

**Website:** [www.quilt-essentials.com.au](http://www.quilt-essentials.com.au)

## Anne’s Glory Box

New Lambton

A familiar name in the Australian craft scene, Anne’s Glory Box is a delightful decorative embroidery studio, with an international reputation, located in the suburbs of Newcastle. It first opened its doors in 1976, and continues to flourish today thanks to the vision and dedication of owner, Gloria McKinnon and store manager Fay King. The original series of 12 *Anne’s Glory Box* books is a hallmark for needlewomen the world over, with a new series coming soon.

The store has recently relocated to a quaint cottage, which makes a delightful stitching studio where women can create. The walls are covered with fabulous embellished crazy patchwork quilts that inspire all who visit.

Anne’s Glory Box caters for all your embellishing and decorative embroidery needs with an extensive array of stock available, including gorgeous silk and fancy fabrics, books, silk prints, laces,

silk ribbons, stunning buttons, beads and cloth-doll patterns. The beautiful block of the month embellished quilts



are purchased worldwide via the website and the store.

The shop runs monthly embellishing classes and occasional workshops with international tutors. There is also a very popular doll club that meets on the fourth Saturday of each month. Check online or in-store for details about how to become involved in the fun at Anne’s Glory Box.

### Local knowledge:

New Lambton is just west of Newcastle’s city centre. There are many things to do in the area – visit the working harbour the city is famed for and relax on some of Australia’s best beaches.

**Address:** 5 Portland Place, New Lambton NSW 2305

**Phone:** (02) 4952 4452

**Fax:** (02) 4952 4657

**Email:** [annesglorybox@bigpond.com](mailto:annesglorybox@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [www.annesglorybox.com.au](http://www.annesglorybox.com.au)  
[www.gloriasglorousembellishments.com](http://www.gloriasglorousembellishments.com)

## Patchwork. Coffee on Main

*Boolaroo*

**I**f ever things were meant to go together, it must surely be patchwork and coffee, stitching and cake. Both are fun and relaxing, and both have a way of bringing friends together! That's why Maureen Bowman's two shops are such pleasant places to visit.

As you enter Patchwork. Coffee on Main, you will be astounded by the gorgeous displays of giftware and the enormous amount of patchwork fabric. There is also an amazing aroma from the cakes, slices and soups cooking in the convenient little café that will make your mouth water.

Maureen has had the business for almost five years and has worked in the industry at various stores for 35 years. "I love the people you meet and sharing ideas around. It's a great business to be in!" says Maureen.

Patchwork. Coffee on Main has over 8000 bolts of fabric in store and also



sells patterns, haberdashery, ribbons and laces, threads, batting, backing fabric and a variety of giftware. A quilting service is also available.

Maureen's other shop, Quiltaccino is similarly lovely, complete with delicious slices, large fabric selection, patchwork supplies, and a vast range of giftware. Classes and workshops are also available. Quiltaccino is located at 75 Tudor Street, Hamilton 2303.



### Local knowledge:

There is always something happening in Newcastle. Visit the Hunter Street Markets held every week from Wednesday to Saturday; or if you're in town on the first Saturday of the month, stop by The Olive Tree Market, Newcastle's handmade artisan market.

**Address:** 58 Main Road,  
Boolaroo NSW 2284  
**Phone:** (02) 4965 8418

## Belmont Patchwork Heart

*Belmont*

**F**inding that perfect patchwork store with fantastic customer service, well-established industry experience, and an enormous selection of quality fabrics is as easy as stopping in at Belmont Patchwork Heart. As friends and patchworkers for many

years, owners Sharon and Chris share a wealth of knowledge and have used it to develop a wonderful shop with all the frills!

The shop is known for its staggering range of beautiful fabrics, as well as its wide variety of patchwork and needlecraft supplies, embroidery threads and buttons, and the library of craft books. There are all styles of fabric on offer so there is sure to be something just right for every taste and purpose, from flannels and children's prints, to vintage, Japanese indigos, batiks, pretty prints and country styles.

The warm, welcoming atmosphere makes the shopping experience at Belmont Patchwork Heart a delight, and you will feel completely at ease while you peruse the fabric ranges and sewing lines, buttons, threads, patchwork templates and haberdashery.

A range of wonderful classes are taught as well, including patchwork for all levels of experience, porcelain dolls, beading, Brazilian embroidery, cloth dolls and more with all patterns taught exclusive to the store.

### Local knowledge:

Belmont is a great holiday destination with many caravan parks right on the lake and ocean. With plenty of activities and picnic spots and a great patchwork shop, you almost wouldn't want to visit anywhere else.

**Address:** Shop 2, 468 Pacific Highway,  
Belmont NSW 2280  
**Phone:** (02) 4945 0433



## Blueberries

Wyang

**T**his stylish shop on the Central Coast is everything a patchwork shop should be – big, well-stocked and run with a friendly smile and familial feeling! Co-owned by brother and sister team, Tyson and Jackie Leybourne, Blueberries is a wonderland of the latest and greatest products.

The pair keep the shop well stocked with hundreds of bolts of fabrics, stacks of patterns, books and notions, all of which provide an abundance of inspiration. There is also a large range of block of the month programs to choose from, and you can view them all either in store or online.

Blueberries has been open for nearly four years and is mainly managed



by Jackie, a passionate patchworker and quilter who enjoys making and designing new and exciting quilts, bags and accessories, while Tyson manages the weekly e-newsletter called Midweek

Moments. You can sign up for this at [www.blueberries.net.au](http://www.blueberries.net.au) to keep up with all the latest products and special offers.

While visiting the shop, don't forget to collect one of the Blueberries full colour calendars containing detailed information and photos of upcoming classes.

**Local knowledge:**

The Wyong Shire is a quiet area framed by mountains and boasts a scenic coastline that has long been a drawcard for tourists.

**Address:** 4c Amy Close,  
Wyang NSW 2259

**Phone:** (02) 4355 4400

**Fax:** (02) 4355 4411

**Email:** [jackie@blueberries.net.au](mailto:jackie@blueberries.net.au)

**Website:** [www.blueberries.net.au](http://www.blueberries.net.au)

## Pieces to Treasure

MacMasters Beach

**L**ocated in MacMasters Beach on the Bouddi Peninsula, this gem of a patchwork shop is a stitcher's paradise! The shop has been open in this location for the past four years, and for owner Jenelle Kent it was the perfect blend of passions. "I was designing projects and working as a

primary school teacher, and the store has combined my passion for fabric, design, and teaching," Jenelle explains.

The shop is located on a tranquil private property, with lovely garden views and the soothing natural soundtrack of bellbirds. Pieces to Treasure is best known for stunning original designs and excellent customer service. Patterns are available for all the projects in store, most of which are Jenelle's own designs. There is a wide variety of quality fabrics on offer in different styles, so you are guaranteed to find the perfect fit for your next project. There is also a great range of extra-wide quilt backings available.

Pieces to Treasure offers many different classes specialising in both techniques and projects, and weekend and day retreats are held for sewing groups. Shopping trips for sewing groups can be booked, complete with a scrumptious morning tea. What better way to spend the day than with cake, coffee and shopping with friends!

**Local knowledge:**

"MacMasters Beach is a great holiday location with fabulous beaches, bush walking, cafes and restaurants," Jenelle says. "It is only one hour's drive from Sydney and Newcastle, making it perfect for a day trip."

**Address:** 701 Scenic Road,  
MacMasters Beach NSW 2251

**Phone/fax:** (02) 4381 2337

**Email:**  
[enquiries@piecestotreasure.com.au](mailto:enquiries@piecestotreasure.com.au)

**Website:** [www.piecestotreasure.com.au](http://www.piecestotreasure.com.au)

