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# My Grandmother's Knitting: Family Stories And Inspired Knits From Top Designers



## Synopsis

When most people think of their grandmother's knitting, they might not immediately see the connection to a modern knitter's life. But in *My Grandmother's Knitting*, Larissa Brown shows us that nothing could be further from the truth. Many of today's hippest and most popular knitters found their passion for knitting under the tutelage of their grandmother or another revered family member, and in this book, they share stories and patterns inspired by their memories and their gratitude. Among the 26 contributors to *My Grandmother's Knitting* are STC Craft authors Wendy Bernard (Custom Knits series), Teva Durham (Loop-d-Loop series), Norah Gaughan (Knitting Nature), Joan McGowan-Michael (Knitting Lingerie Style), and Leigh Radford (AlterKnits series and One More Skein) as well as many other popular designers such as Jared Flood, Cookie A., Ysolda Teague, Anne Hanson, Kay Gardiner, and Meg Swansen.

**Praise for *My Grandmother's Knitting*:**

- "This is a pattern book with a twist. . . . Full of useful information and easy-to-knit garments, *Custom Knits 2* is a good choice for knitters looking to adapt designs and venture into designing their own garments."
- "Creative Knitting Magazine" In *[My Grandmother's Knitting]*, Brown weaves family stories and early knitting memories of her interview subjects into poignant evidence that today's knitters have a strong connection to the knitters who came before them.
- "CraftSanity" This is a thoroughly charming book . . . A heartfelt celebration of shared creativity.
- "Knitty.com" "Wonderful family stories are shared by those such as Meg Swansen, Norah Gaughan, Kirsten Kapur and Kay Gardiner. The projects in this book, as you can imagine, with the star-studded lineup of designers, are a beautiful assortment of accessories and women's garments. The look and feel of this book is so inviting and beautiful, with lovely photography by Michael Crouser. In all ways, this book is a true work of art and heart."

—Petite Purls

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

About half of this book is devoted to short, heart-warming stories about the family "roots" of popular knitting designers. The remainder is devoted to designer knitting patterns "inspired by" the designers' grandparents, parents, and their places of origin. Dedicated knitters will no doubt enjoy reading about the family backgrounds of Wendy Bernard, Pam Allen, Meg Swansen, Ysolda Teague, Jessica Marshall Forbes, Kay Gardiner, Joan McGowan-Michael, Kristin Spurkland, Teva Durham, Jared Flood, Norah Gaughan, Anne Hanson, Leigh Radford, Chrissy Gardiner, Adrian Bizilia, Kirsten Kapur, and Emily Johnson. Many (but not all) of these designers contributed patterns, and there are some patterns contributed by designers who did not contribute family stories. Most of the patterns are for small, portable projects (mittens, hats, socks, slippers, scarves, cowls, a dishcloth, a pillow), but there are some patterns for large, ambitious projects (a cardigan, a Fair Isle pullover, a cape, a lace-bordered shrug, an afghan, a lace baby blanket). My personal favorites are Kristin Spurkland's "Rose and Cross Pullover" with Fair Isle yoke, David Castillo's striped "Conover Mittens", Anne Hanson's "Crocus Patch Baby Blanket" with its complex allover lace pattern, and Cookie A.'s "Wan Jai Socks" that have gently undulating, street-like curves along the sock legs and feet. The book does not include any historical "grandmother knitting" patterns--which was a disappointment for me. There are no handed-down family patterns, no patterns actually knitted by or invented by the older generations of the designers' families. Nevertheless, because of the entertaining, anecdotal stories and the variety of attractive patterns, I rate this book at 4 stars. It should make a welcome gift for any serious knitter.

This delightful knitting book has family-inspired knitting stories by many of knitting's greats. Some of the contributors are Meg Swanson, Jared Flood, Pam Allen, Ysolda Teague, Leigh Radford and Ann Hanson. While the patterns in this book are not hand-me-down patterns from families, many are patterns that were inspired by the designer's family. Some of the ones that really spoke to me are the Family Tree Afghan designed by Larissa Brown, inspired by her grandmother's love of knitting afghans. Grandma's Fan Dishcloth by designer Judy Becker was inspired by antique lace medallions that she inherited from her family. Crayon Cowls is designed by Kirsten Kapur who was

inspired by the creativity of her great-aunts. Kristin Sparkland designed the Rose and Cross Pullover based on traditional Norwegian design. Minerva Bonnet by Teva Durham is inspired by one created and worn by her grandmother. The Crocus Patch Baby Blanket is just stunning, designed by Ann Hanson, and inspired by her grandmother who spent a lifetime knitting afghans. This one is in a beautiful lace motif. The Edna Slouch Hat is designed by Leigh Radford who got her inspiration from her grandmother. The Storm Cloud Shawlette by Hanna Breetz is inspired by Elizabeth Zimmerman. The stories are quaint and lovely reading and each knitter adds their own bit of wisdom, advice and learning. The patterns are clearly written, lovely to look at and there are several that I would like to knit.

Beautiful pictures and nice stories, but the FIRST pattern I am trying out of it makes zero sense (I am a seasoned knitter), and I will have to search for pattern corrections online, in hopes that they have made them.

I purchased this book as soon as it came out and since then I have found myself (and others who like to peruse my shelves) returning to it regularly. There is something comforting about this book. Although I am self taught and have no memories of my own learning from a family member I still thoroughly enjoy the stories. The patterns, photography and instructions are all wonderful. I wish more knitting books appeared to have so much thought put into them. This one is a keeper and I look forward to someday passing it on to my grand-daughter.

While my Grandma taught me to knit, it was nothing as cool as the stuff in this book by the author of Knit Along, Larissa Brown. I was privileged to get mine signed by Larissa herself, and then I took it home and read every page. I love the shared knitting stories from all the designers, and the ones that are followed up by the modernized version of those very patterns just read about. I predict there will be many slippers with or without pom-pom's made for Christmas this year, who can resist the charm of Grandma's knitted slippers?

I love this book. The stories are great and I've almost finished one of the patterns (there are many patterns worth knitting in this book). Some of the patterns weren't accompanied by stories and I wish they were. In a day and culture where aging is seen as an unfortunate and pitiful decline, it was refreshing to read of elders who are honored and respected for the lives they lived. Not all the stories are about grandmothers' knitting, but how people were inspired by their elders. I loved

reading stories about how some prominent designers were nurtured in the craft. It inspires me to do the same for the little ones in my life.

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