



"Properly practiced, knitting soothes the troubled spirit, and it doesn't hurt the untroubled spirit either."

— Elizabeth Zimmermann, in *Knitting Without Tears*



a newsletter from
Meg Swansen

Dear Knitters,

There has been a gratifying response to this online newsletter; thank you for your positive feedback. For this issue, I will start at the top of the ever-growing **List of Things to Discuss** and see how far I get...

Casting Off

Please tell me a tidy and stretchy way to Cast Off. — Susan

Dear Susan,

A simple and handsome method is Elizabeth Zimmermann's Sewn Casting Off. It is particularly beautiful on garter-stitch and, even if you work it snugly, it remains stretchy.

Thread a blunt sewing-up needle. Go through the first two stitches on the needle from R to L and pull the wool through (Photo 1).



Photo 1

Now:

A. go through first stitch as if to knit and slip off (Photo 2)



Photo 2

B. go through second and third stitches as if to purl and pull wool through. (Photo 3)



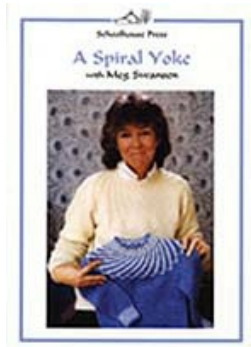
Photo 3

Repeat A and B.

See how handsome the result is? (Photo 4)

On the Website

[Spiral Yoke Sweater DVD](#)



Kits for the *Spiral Yoke Sweater*
[available here](#)



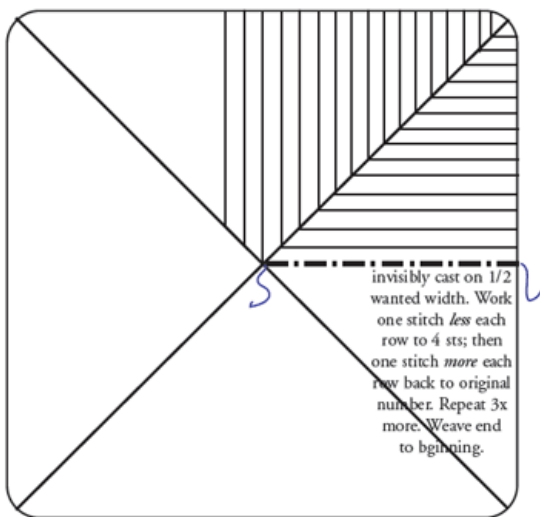
Photo 4

Garter-Stitch Blanket

I tried a small sample of the baby blanket shown on page 92 of the *Knitting Workshop* book by Elizabeth Zimmermann and was stumped. What's more, I showed it to 2 old time knitters and they had the same problem I did. We all ended up with separate triangles linked by the few stitches at the top/side of the triangle and could not get the triangles to connect. This pattern was supposed to have only one seam located in the middle of the triangle where you start and finish. Is there anyone around who could give me a clue as to where we went wrong? The concept seems like a good one.— Georganne

Dear Georganne,

This square garter-stitch blanket of Elizabeth's is worked by turning 4 complete corners (8 triangles)—all in the same direction—using short rows and a continuous strand of wool. Invisibly cast on HALF the width you want for your blanket— let's say 20 stitches. *Knit 19. Turn, knit back (the 20th stitch remains, temporarily abandoned, on the needle. Knit 18. Turn, knit back (2 abandoned sts on other needle). Knit 17. Turn, knit back (3 abandoned...). Continue as established until you have only 4 sts remaining (16 have been abandoned). Now you will begin to rescue the abandoned stitches—one by one—as you turn the corner back up again as follows: you ended with Knit 4. Turn, knit back ... then: Knit 5. Turn, knit back. Knit 6. Turn, knit back. Knit 7. Turn, knit back, etc., until—one by one—you are back up to Knit 20. Turn, knit back. One full corner completed, as shown in the following drawing:



Immediately begin the second corner by repeating from *...
Repeat again for corners 3 and 4.

At the end of corner 4, when you have 20 stitches once again, check the alignment of garter-stitch ("valley" on one needle and a "ridge" on the other) and invisibly weave the end to the beginning.

The diagonal rows of holes that form between each pair of triangles, are part of the design—but if you wish to eliminate them, you can incorporate "Wrapping" with each Short Row and close them up. I hope this will help both you and your two Knitting Buddies.

Norwegian "Lus"/Lice

I was just reading some of the descriptions for the [Spun Out](#) publications. Number 44's description reads: 44. Norwegian Pullover* - a classic dropped-shoulder style pullover with plenty

of possible motifs; plus ascending or descending lice. Is it possible that you meant to say "lace" instead of "lice"? (Golly, I hope so! Ewwwww!)—Susan

Dear Susan,

I actually meant LICE... When I first encountered traditional Norwegian "Lus" sweaters (with the speckles on the main body and color patterns across the chest and upper sleeves), I thought the word translated into dainty little "lights" ... or snowflakes. No such thing! A practical people, the Norwegians ... "Lus" means lice!

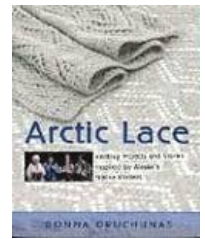
EZ's I-Cord

I have a bet with a knitting friend. The bet is that I-Cord was "invented" by Elizabeth Zimmerman or was "an old technique" modernized and popularized by her. Can you please settle this dispute. The winner gets to buy the other a new knitting book! If the I-cord was an old technique, do you have any of the history of it?? The more we learn of knitting (40 + years for me and only about 4 for her, LOL!) the more we have to learn!—Reba

Dear Reba,

I think you and your Knitting Buddy each owe the other a new knitting book—as both of you are correct. As a child, EZ had one of those little wooden spools with bent-over nails on the top and she used, laboriously, to make lengths of what was then called Idiot Cord, which she used as reins when she played "horsey". Around the late 1950s, Elizabeth found a metal Idiot-Cord machine which clamped onto a table top that had a handle to spin the "spool" while the little hooks went up and down, extruding knitted cord out the bottom. That was the beginning. Elizabeth figured out how to achieve that knitted cord on two needles and, thinking "Idiot Cord" rather rude, changed the name to I-Cord. Today, most of the I-Cord variations you see so commonly used are directly from EZ's knitting brain: the list includes I-Cord Cast On and Cast Off, Built-In I-Cord for a lovely selvedge on garter-stitch, plus a series of ingenious and beautiful

Arctic Lace



Jewelry for Knitters

[Shawl Clasps in Sterling Silver and Copper](#)



and

[Knitting Gauge Necklace](#)



buttonholes: Hidden, Looped and Tab, I-Cord Corners, Applied I-Cord (which now has Joyce Williams' variation to eliminate CC blips; Joyce also came up with Braided and Twisted I-Cord). I added Layered I-Cord, 3-Needle I-Cord Cast Off and ree-Form I-Cord. Kathy Lynch thought up Intarsia I-Cord that can only be knitted in the round. More variations are being dreamed up as knitting continues to move forward. Here is EZ's Applied I-Cord (in a contrasting color with Joyce Williams' variation to eliminate the Dreaded Blip):

Decide how wide you want the Cord to be (2, 3 or 4 stitches are most common). You may choose to pick up a number of stitches in advance, or hook them up one at a time as needed.



1. Cast on 3 (or 2 or 4). Immediately transfer the stitches to the pick-up-needle.



2. *K2, slip 1, yo, knit a picked-up stitch.



3. P2sso (being the slipped stitch AND the yarn-over). Replace 3 sts to L needle and repeat from *

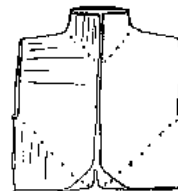


See? No blip. If you are using MC for the I-Cord, there is no need to work the yarn-over.

Ribwarmer Pattern

I was wondering if you could help me find an article about Elizabeth's Rib Hugger. Thank you for your help (and inspiration for all these years!)—Bev

Dear Bev,
Elizabeth's Rib Warmer was originally published in McCall's magazine in the 1950s. A slight variation appeared in *Wool Gathering* No. 7, 1972. *Knitter's Magazine* No. 5 had it on the back cover; then, years later, *Knitter's* ran a variation done by Sidna Farley. We published a new *Wool Gathering* (No. 58, 1998) featuring this popular design (I am wearing one as I type) and, along with Elizabeth's clever collar, I came up with a series of variations: sleeves, shaped armholes, seamless back (first done by Sidna, I believe) and even a knee-length Bea-Arthur version. The *Wool Gathering* quickly sold out and all those variations are now in [Spun Out 42](#).



Sneak Preview of Upcoming Titles

We have a number of new books in the works and here is a glimpse of what we hope may be available in '07. . .

Do you remember that charming, low-key book by the Dowager Lady Veronica Gainford: *Designs for Knitting Kilt Hose & Knickerbocker Stockings*? Apparently we published it ahead of its time, as it languished for years. Once it was sold out, interest began to build so, with help from Lady Gainford's son, we will reprint. Same low-key black and white format; same droll humor; same gold-to-be-mined in the form of traditional Top Turnovers designs that decorate the upper reaches of authentic Scottish Kilt Hose. Over two dozen different motifs plus full instructions for several stockings. pb \$15. Available in the Spring.





M'lou Baber (who is known at Knitting Camp as the Queen of Double Knitting) has done some extraordinary double-faced designs; coats, hats, sweaters, capes, blankets, etc. We have only just begun work on this (no title yet); here is a photo of one of M'lou's coats:

Joyce Williams and Meg are at work on a collaboration of their forays into Armenian Knitting. We envision a slim volume of 7 or 8 garments, charts and some of Joyce's extraordinarily innovative techniques. Here is a back view of Joyce's spectacular Lily Coat:



Upcoming Events

The exhibition "New School Knitting: The Influence of Elizabeth Zimmermann and Schoolhouse Press," curated by Molly Greenfield, opens at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Design Gallery October 27 and runs through December 17, 2006. There are plans for a virtual exhibit for those unable to attend; read more about this [here](#).

Subscribers' Specials

Elizabeth Zimmermann's *Digressions* tape, in which Elizabeth reads her autobiographical digressions from her fourth book, *Knitting Around*, is offered to Schoolhouse Press newsletter subscribers at a 20% discount. Regular price is \$15; for subscribers, \$12. You may order from this issue's sidebar.



And, subscribers can also save on [Wool Gathering subscriptions](#). Regularly \$25, now \$20, plus a free issue (the current issue No. 75), with renewing or first-time subscribers' subscriptions beginning with No. 76. Only for newsletter subscribers, so please order from the sidebar to the right. Offer ends Oct. 31, 2006.

WG No. 75, A Child's Norwegian Sweater

Outward,
Meg



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