

November 2008

Wandering the Web -- Hobby Sites: Purls of Beauty -- The Art of Knitting

Lesley L. R. Montgomery

Western Kentucky University, lesley.montgomery@wku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Montgomery, Lesley L. R. (2008) "Wandering the Web -- Hobby Sites: Purls of Beauty -- The Art of Knitting," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 20: Iss. 5, Article 37.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5215>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Magical healings, ghostly encounters, and alternate realities have been a part of American society since the first colonial settlements. Author Jack Montgomery provides ample historical and personal material to reveal a largely hidden world, primarily influenced by African, Celtic, and German roots, that still exists today. It is a spiritual journey into the depths of American folk religion, shamanism and applied mysticism that spans over three decades of research.

Jack G. Montgomery was born in Columbia, South Carolina. He earned his B.A. from the University of South Carolina and his MLS at the University of Maryland-College Park. He is currently an Associate Professor and Librarian at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

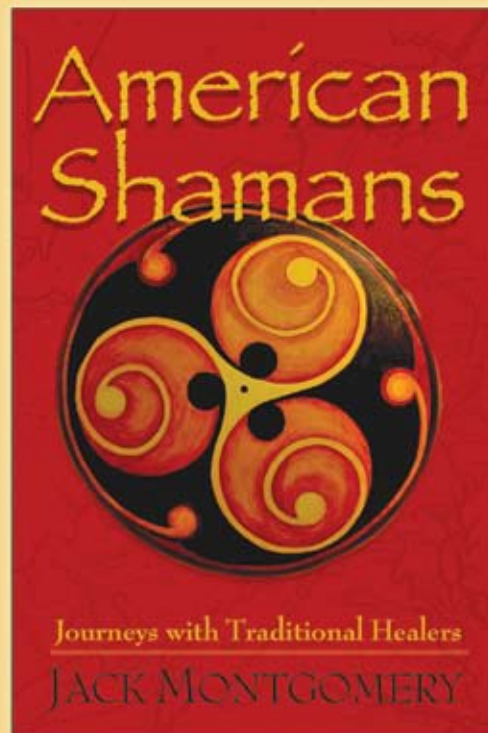


"A fascinating journey into a little-known world."
—John Plummer, Nashville, TN (amazon.com)

"I think Jack Montgomery's wonderful book may be ... what you are looking for. Jack's book is real. He lives it. **He understands it on the deepest levels** and values its survival."
—The Backdoor Hexologist

"American Shamans is an **important addition** to the worlds of folklore, cultural anthropology, social history, spiritual studies, and personal memoir."
—Library Maven (amazon.com)

"**Fantastic!** ... In *American Shamans* Jack takes us on a very personal journey through years of first hand experience in a world of folk magic and medicine that few people even know exist." —Hannah P, Knoxville, TN (amazon.com)



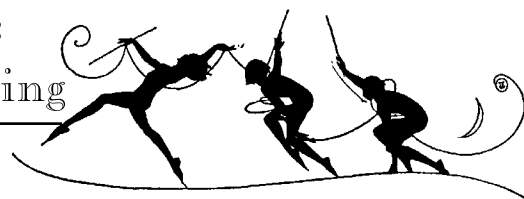
Order Direct online: www.buscainc.com | 607 546-4247 | 607 546-4248 fax



ISBN 978-0-9666196-9-0 | 304 pages, 6 x 9 paperback | \$19.95

Wandering the Web — Hobby Sites: Purls of Beauty – The Art of Knitting

by **Lesley L. R. Montgomery** (Secretary/Bookkeeper, Multi-media Artist and Author) <lesley.montgomery@wku.edu>



Column Editor: **Jack G. Montgomery** (Western Kentucky University) <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>

Column Editor's Note: *The overall purpose of this column is to provide the reference librarian with on-line resources to recommend to patrons on selected topics. The traditional fabric art of knitting is experiencing a renaissance recently, with yarn shops and knitting classes springing up everywhere. When looking into a series of articles on popular hobbies, I remembered that my wife Lesley has become fascinated with knitting and pursues this art with great intensity. I asked her if she would be willing to recommend and provide annotations for some sites and she graciously consented. Already a recognized artist, Lesley always studies her art in great depth and detail, so you can rely on her selections. — JM*

For many years, I have had a great desire to learn how to knit. As a long-time crocheter who has successfully completed many complex garments — while eschewing the comfortable Granny Square — I am very familiar with the concepts of stitch tension, choosing the right yarn for the right project, using high-quality products, the importance of blocking finished pieces, etc. I simply could not overcome my hesitance to engage in the counter-intuitive process of looping and sliding slippery yarn between two long, pointy needles! Initially, I learned Tunisian stockinette — unkindly nicknamed knitting for dummies; also shepherd's knitting or Scottish knitting — and for which I list a Web link below, in an attempt to overcome the reader's possible aversion to this form of needlework. However, Tunisian stockinette does not, in fact, produce the fine fabrics of standard knitting. So I set out on a quest to

learn how to knit, using *only* the Internet as my guide. I hope the reader finds the following Websites as useful and enjoyable as I did.

A Variety of Knitting Websites

Lion Brand Yarn — <http://learntoknit.lionbrand.com/>

This is it! This is *the* Website that started me on the fulfilling, creative journey of learning the wonderful art of knitting! **Lion Brand Yarn** has assembled the most concise, logically-delineated and best-illustrated Website on How to Knit, taken from a complete neophyte's viewpoint. Their "Select a Topic" table of contents links are unfailingly useful, beginning with a brief introduction intended to put the new knitter completely at ease. Knitting instructions and numerous helpful hints are clearly stated, starting with #1 Casting On and ending with #32 Knitting on Circular Needles. As a visual learner, I appreciate the excellent pen-and-ink illustrations that accompany literally every step. The pictures are large (great for aging Baby Boomers' bi-focals!) and numbered for each step, so the reader knows exactly which illustration accompanies which knitting procedure.

Of course, the **Lion Brand Yarn** company has its own marketing agenda ... They want us all to learn how to knit and *buy their yarn*. They have three full-color pages of their yarn products, all available for immediate purchase, with page after page of eye-candy colorways for each yarn style. They also offer a full range of knitting and crocheting tools, including an absolutely adorable French Knitter, which is billed

continued on page 18

Against the Grain NEWS CHANNEL



Fall in love with ATG
all over again...

More of what you love from our print journal, plus
new features to keep you current on what's
important in the library world.

Daily Rumors—Forums—Announcements—Jobs

www.against-the-grain.com

Wandering the Web from page 16

as being a "... charming lacquered wood spool knitter [which] is a delightful and entertaining craft tool for children." (And who amongst us has not occasionally delved into the childhood world of spool knitting, just for fun?!) According to **Lion Brand Yarn**, "Using a spool knitter (essentially a very small round knitting loom), you can produce a variety of items. For more about spool knitting, visit the Lion Blog 'Spool Knitting'." More opportunities to learn a new craft *and* purchase their yarn!

However, that all being said, I highly recommend this Website. It is not an exaggeration to say I started learning how to knit in late February 2008 and solely using the **Lion Brand Yarn** <http://learntoknit.lionbrand.com/> Website, I progressed quickly to the stockinette stitch, learning how to retrieve dropped stitches — always useful for beginners — increasing and decreasing, and ribbing. Eight months later, I am well into knitting an eyelet lace shrug, have knitted several small lace projects, and completed a "real" sweater with raglan increases, using circular needles and those mysterious knitting markers and stitch holders!

Knitters Review — http://www.knittersreview.com/article_how_to.asp?article=/review/profile/020704_a.asp

"The Essentials of Knitted Lace" is an on-line article with large, full-color photographs and instructions that take the reader through all procedures needed to knit lace. The basic logic behind knitting lace is presented in a clear format. With these friendly instructions, you will be knitting their *free* easy lace scarf pattern in no time. I have tried the pattern, and it is, indeed, appropriate for a beginner, lending fabulous results. You will impress your friends with this exotic scarf!

See Eunny Knit — http://www.eunnyjang.com/knit/2006/03/majoring_in_lace_introduction_1.html

See Eunny Knit's Web blog, "Majoring in Lace: Introduction," has something for everyone ... interesting, well-researched history on lace knitting, descriptions of different varieties of lace and the logic behind how these fabrics are created, as well as informative advice for knitting different shapes of lace shawls (square, circular, triangular). Her site is fun to browse with its many links to photographs of her lovely creations in exquisite colors and intricate patterns, as well as instructional links. It's a good site for all skill levels.

Serendipity Crochet — <http://serendipity.gpvm.com>

This is an attractive site, with its restful aquamarine-colored background and clear photographs of Tunisian and other crochet samples using crimson yarn. The photographs have enlarged links, and some arrows added to show exactly where to insert the hook for that particular stitch. **Serendipity Crochet** walks the reader step-by-step through all phases of crochet, including Tunisian Stockinette. Tunisian crochet ... it's not just for your grandma's afghans, anymore! The site includes excellent instructions on how to create a raglan, top-down sweater using Tunisian stitches, which is very unusual for this needle craft. It has many links to a full range of Tunisian stitches and techniques.

Knitty — <http://www.knitty.com>

Knitty Little Purls of Wisdom on **knitty.com**, features "Techniques with Theresa," various articles by **Theresa Vinson Stenersen** on such topics as picking up stitches along straight edges and curved necklines, seaming your finished garment, and so on. Full-color, large photographs are provided, with contrasting yarn colors used so the reader can clearly see the technique being demonstrated. **Ms. Stenersen** also has extensive archives on her site.

About.com: Knitting — <http://knitting.about.com/od/learntoknit>

"**About.com: Knitting**" features knitting basics for beginners. The photographs are in full color, but some of the photographs are too small to be helpful. The site is sparse in its instructional approach; hence some of the steps are left too much to the reader's intuition. The site demonstrates some procedures not found on other intro sites, such as finishing in a picot bind off, I-cord bind off, mattress stitch, blocking your knitting and so on. Unfortunately, this site has a fair amount of moving ads (not pop-ups), which I find very irritating. If you don't mind a more "commercial" approach to your knitting instructions, as opposed to the more personal and often more attractive blog-style sites, you will find this to be a useful site.

KnittingHelp — <http://www.knittinghelp.com/>

KnittingHelp.com is a good, informative Website for all levels of knitters. The site uses free videos to teach techniques, and has a knitting forum discussion group. The videos use **Adobe Flash Player 9**. Some of the videos do not have sound, so you can just watch the procedure. It also has a "Knitting Chatter" text group you can join, as well as free patterns. The on-line store features books, knitting gadgets, inexpensive patterns ... even an adorable miniature sweater key ring.

HowStuffWorks — <http://home.howstuffworks.com/how-to-knit.htm>

HowStuffWorks.com is a Wikipedia-style site, but more extensive in its instructional value. The drawings demonstrating knitting procedures are black with some blue coloring. The drawings are large and attractively done, and easy to understand. It is a great site for a beginner, since it goes into details like exactly how to make a slip knot, unlike other sites I have reviewed. This is a more "commercial" site in format; it is not a "knitting bloggers" site.

Craftown — <http://www.craftown.com/knitlesson.htm>

Craftown.com: Crafters Resource Center has free knitting instructions ... and a couple of free pop-ups! Along with the instructions for basic procedures, there are links to freebies, want ads, and a link to sharing your ideas with fellow crafters. Not a particularly attractive site with its basic format, it unfortunately has very small black-and-white drawings and scant instructions. It does have a nice chart of knitting abbreviations in English, Spanish and French. It's meant for beginners, but the sparse instructions are actually not very useful.

continued on page 20

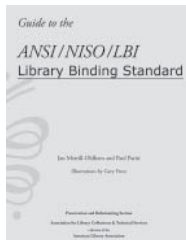
The Latest Titles

from



Guide to Developing a Library Music Collection

By R. Michael Fling
144p. 6 x 9 \$53.95
ISBN 978-0-8389-8482-6



Guide to the ANSI/NISO/LBI Library Binding Standard

By Jan Merrill-Oldham
& Paul Parisi
76p. 8.25 x 11 \$39.50
ISBN 978-0-8389-8484-0



Writing RFPs for Acquisitions Guide to the Request for Proposal

By Frances C. Wilkinson & Linda K. Lewis
84p. 6 x 9 \$47.95
ISBN 978-0-8389-8483-3

ORDER online: www.alastore.ala.org
or call toll free: (866) 746-7252

NEW! Get ALCTS titles through ALA Editions' Approval Plan

Trends ... from page 1

While it may not be true for many consumer-oriented book and audiovisual-based collections, for many years the rule of thumb in many health sciences collections' budgeting was that approximately 80% of a collection budget's allotment was set aside for serials.¹ [p. 106] Journals have been and continue to be a traditionally dominant communication vehicle in the constantly changing biomedical and health sciences fields. It is important to note that other traditional publication types are still becoming "journal-like" in 2008, four years after the **24th Charleston Conference**, with its chosen theme, "All the World's a Serial." The evolving nature of scholarly publishing and dissemination in all fields and across all publication types warrants vigilance and current awareness. For this *ATG* issue, two papers, one by **Meg White**, one by **Elizabeth Lorbeer** and **Nicole Mitchell**, examine a publication format earlier covered in 2001 and 2005 issues of *ATG*, but still very much in flux. **White** surveys the current "topography" of eBooks for the health sciences, **Lorbeer** and **Mitchell** present insights into their use by academic health sciences users and the resulting collection management issues for libraries.


Recently, "translational medicine" has become an increasingly prevalent phrase. Since it involves research that goes "from bench to bedside," many institutions are building their biomedical basic research enterprises to span


the bridge to clinical research and patient care endeavors that are already in place. The introduction to an April 2008 *Journal of Medical Internet Research* article, "Supporting emerging disciplines with eCommunities,"² addresses the changing nature of science as evolving, "from a solitary pursuit into a team-based collaborative activity and, more recently, into a multidisciplinary research enterprise." Increasingly, commercial information products, portals, and "toolkits" are announced that aim to funnel or pull together information resources produced by or needed by clinicians or researchers. **Jaron Porciello**, **Medha Devare**, and **Jon Corson-Rikert** write about the challenges of meeting collaborating researchers' information needs and share the experience of their academic institution's library as it addressed these needs, utilizing a "build it and they will come" approach. The research discovery tool about which they write was initially designed for life sciences researchers, and the authors report on its evolution and new developments that expand the project's utility to biomedical and other researchers.

Last but not least, interest continues in the history of biomedical and health institutions, scientific advances and medical accomplishments (especially those of affiliated alumni and faculty). There is still value seen in locally produced, or locally available, or unique, or rare resources. The **U.S. National Library of Medicine** houses one of the world's largest history of medicine collections and its **History of Medicine Website**, www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/index.html, includes links to several regularly

Wandering the Web from page 18

The Knit Witch — <http://knitwitch.com/> and <http://knitwitch.com/videos.htm>

The Knit Witch — A Site for the Knitting and Crochet Enthusiast at <http://knitwitch.com/> is an excellent Website for all skill levels. Check out **The Knit Witch** mini-workshops at <http://knitwitch.com/videos.htm>! Using large-gauge yarn and needles, she carefully describes and demonstrates how to make a yarn over correctly (in purl and knit), how to slip-slip-knit, knit one front and back, etc. The videos run about two minutes, each covering only one procedure. Many of her videos appear on **YouTube**, so they are more accessible than some other knitting sites that require special downloads to play the instructional videos. **The Knit Witch** also features videos for crocheting techniques, many products such as attractive pottery yarn bowls and spindle bowls, hand-dyed yarns in several weights, available in beautiful colors, and even all natural lotions and creams for "yarn addicts ... to keep those hands and fingers ready for the needles and hooks!" **The Knit Witch's** Website features a cute logo of a knitting witch riding a wooden knitting needle in front of a full moon made out of glowing yellow yarn! This site is very useful for knitters wanting to find out quickly how to do a specific procedure when they are in the middle of a project or for those interested in enhancing their skills by learning new techniques. 

updated directories of history of medicine collections. **Melissa Nasea** and **Ruth Moskop** share their experience, insights and advice on some recent trends and challenges for biomedical and health libraries and librarians "on the frontlines," in serving one of the most revered traditional roles of the library profession — preservation of the past. 

Column Editor's Note: Thank you to all of the special issue authors who agreed to share their thoughts, insights, and experience. Thank you to **Katina Strauch** for her guidance. This special issue is a snapshot in time. Themes of **Charleston Conferences of the past**, "Plus Ça Change" (1987) or "And the Beat Goes On" (1999) resonate ... Someone will quite likely need to revisit trends in health and biomedical sciences content again soon! — **RK**

Endnotes

1. **Morse, David H.**, ed. *Acquisitions in Health Sciences Libraries. (Current Practice in Health Sciences Librarianship, v.5)*. Chicago, IL: **Medical Library Association**, 1996.
2. **Spallek, Heiko, Brian S Butler, Titus K Schleyer, Patricia M Weiss, Xiaqing Wang, Thankam P Thyvalikakath, Courtney L Hatala, and Reza A Naderi.** "Supporting Emerging Disciplines with e-Communities: Needs and Benefits." *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 10, no.2 (2008): e19.