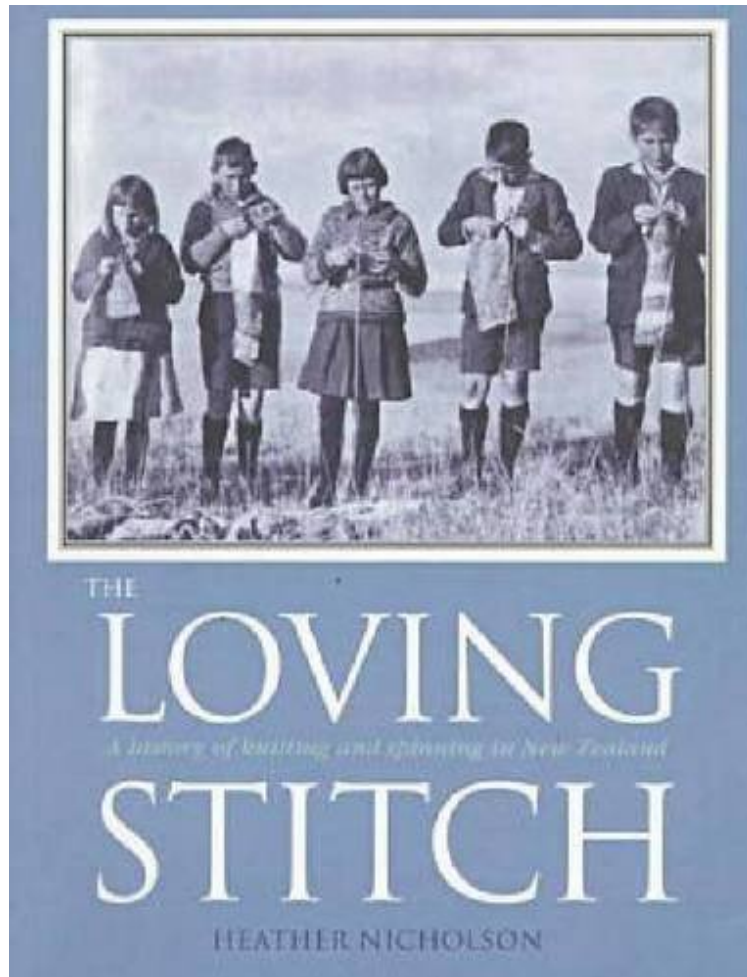


(Download) The Loving Stitch: A History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand

## The Loving Stitch: A History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand

Heather Nicholson

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**Heather Nicholson : The Loving Stitch: A History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Loving Stitch: A History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy A Customerexcellent resource for wartime knitting in an effort to comfort soldiers.12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. An award-winning history of knitting but some odd omissionsBy Joanna D.This is a very well-researched discourse about the history of knitting and spinning in New Zealand. The book takes you from the early days of the English and Scots settlement of the twin islands up to present day, and reveals how knitting fit into daily life.A good portion of the book is devoted to war knitting, which was a major volunteer activity in World War I and somewhat less, but still important in World War II.

The interesting theme that runs through "The Loving Stitch" is that of privation and shortages; knitting yarn was often hard to obtain. During rationing in World War II, baby yarn was almost impossible to get, yet people were limited in clothing coupons. What to do for a newborn who needs clothes and plenty of them? The ingenuity of the Kiwis who wanted or needed to knit was amazing--#8 fencing wire became needles, tapestry yarn (not rationed) patiently gathered until enough was available to make a vest. One enterprising young girl unraveled loosely-woven sugar sacks to make a child's sweater. All this is of course set against the ironic background that New Zealand is a world-class producer of wool. Yet raw wool was merely sent overseas to be spun into carpet and other wool, and the New Zealanders found that the finished product, knitting wool, was hard to obtain and expensive, too. What I found odd in this book were a couple of omissions and subjects only briefly touched on. One was the contribution to knitting by New Zealander Margaret Stove. She is contemporary, but this book does go up to present day, and including her would have been appropriate. I expected to see pictures of her handspun lace designs and perhaps a short section on how she learned handspinning (with a wheel and raw fleece donated by her sister so she, a schoolteacher on a limited budget, could clothe her family) . But Stove only merits a brief mention in the index. Other contemporary artists' knitting was pictured, so this omission seemed odd to me, especially because Mrs. Stove is well-known worldwide among handspinners. The other deficiency was that Kiwicraft, which is a technique handrolling wool roving to make a thick and attractive yarn, was mentioned but the Kiwicraft yarns were not pictured. In general, the contribution and collaboration by Maori women was obliquely mentioned. While knitting and spinning is a Western contribution to New Zealand history, Kiwicraft was developed by a collaboration of missionaries and native women, and merited more illustration. It's unique to New Zealand. I wanted to know more and see more about it. However, for a history of knitting, this is a fine addition to the library and is a fascinating insight into life in New Zealand. 17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. You don't have to be a kiwi to enjoy this...By A Customer My family is from New Zealand thought I have always lived in Singapore (so naturally, I'm the only one to knit). I picked up this book while down there on holiday. Now a little creased from being loaned out around the family, this is a treasure. If you don't knit, it's a wonderful way of looking at New Zealand domestically for the last century - the archive photos are fascinating, the details packed in and always a real sense of love for the craft and respect for the many women (and few men) who knit. If you do knit, it's great to read an entire book about other people who knit. No techniques, source ideas, just a lot of interesting and occasionally inspiring stories (The baby layette laid out to dry and eaten by a goat...) Heather Nicholson writes fluidly and the extensive endnotes help for more research - I visited a lot of museums there, armed with this book! It's a thick, interesting read and a great coffee table book, like Knitting in America.

This is a history of knitting with its main focus on a chronological picture of antipodean knitting and is also a history of the domestic lives of women, of their resourcefulness, their talent and sociability. The author follows the growth of pattern books, the role of knitting for troops in the two world wars, knitting in the Depression and the recent interest in art knitting. She also explores the different items produced by the skilled knitter, from jerseys and guernseys, to counterpanes, socks and stockings and a scarf that stretched right round Parliament Building. It also includes material on spinning and on local woolen mills.