

# Long Buckby Machine Knitters

## Special edition Newsletter

During the shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Long Buckby Machine Knitters will issue special editions of our newsletter. This can be found on the website and will be issued monthly.

# July 2020



From the Editor



We are now into the fourth month since our last face to face meeting [which I missed, so it is even longer for me!]. I am continuing to keep going on the craft front, but the pile of yarn, fabric and fibre still looks huge! So, I must carry on....

Long Buckby Community Centre asked us if we would consider returning in September, but our committee felt that it was too early to commit. If any member wishes to add to our discussion, please get in touch!

Meanwhile....

This month I am focusing on finishing. Those who know me will find this either brave or foolish, since I am certainly not proficient in this! My brain likes to do things quickly, and I struggle to focus on detail, but I do realise how important it is [alongside other facets of making].

Whether you are novice or expert, I hope there is something for you here.

I have also linked to my new pattern *Cascade*, which I was using as a project last month. If you are interested, it is fairly easy to do, and lends itself to lots of variation.

Stay safe!  
Lynda Fiendley



## Finishing Touches

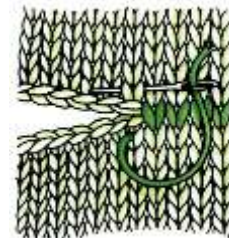
Finishing should start at the design stage! Although this may sound crazy, it is best to consider how you are going to finish your work before you start: it may be crucial to the possibilities.

I have suggested it before, but I thoroughly recommend subscribing to [Susan Guagliami's blog/newsletter](#), where you can then download lots of free worksheets, including a pattern titled Bridging the Gaps, which includes information about preparing your knitting for finishing. There is a fact sheet on finishing, too, which gives clear information about seams. She also has a [YouTube channel](#), with masses of helpful videos.

## Joining

Earlier in the year, we presented Modular Knitting at the club, and that included lots of suggestions for joining pieces together. If you are making garments to wear, you may well need to consider this first. Some options are:

- Joining shoulders
- Joining side seams
- Joining sleeves
- Joining sections



## Shoulders

The consensus in the club seems to be to finish shoulders by doing the graduated cast-off, normally included in patterns, in holding position, so that the shoulder finishes complete with a sloping edge on the needles. This should then be taken off on waste yarn.

When both front and back are complete, the pieces are joined at the shoulder by transferring the relevant shoulder stitches of both back and front on to the needles and knitting a row before casting off loosely.

This makes a neat seam.

If you want to make a feature, you can also use crochet to join the pieces, either in the original yarn or in a contrast yarn.

## Side seams

These can also be joined on the machine, by picking up 'stitches' from the side on to the machine [although normally these will not be stitches already, but a knitted edge].

Alternatively, the best hand stitch for seams we consider to be mattress stitch, which is done on the 'public' face, so matching stripes etc. is easier.

[https://youtu.be/AzdUc\\_72cRg](https://youtu.be/AzdUc_72cRg) is a good video on sewing mattress stitch.

And the crochet option is also a possibility.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLrPm7BLTg4> shows you how!

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## Sleeves

Decreasing for the sleeve cap is best done in fully-fashioned mode: Use the three pronged transfer tool to lift the three end stitches from the needles and transfer them inwards by one needle, the innermost of the three stitches will now be on a needle with another one.

This will give you a good edge to use for your sewing, and a straight line for the decreases. Likewise, this is best for the decreases in the body at the armhole.

Diana Sullivan has this [video on joining raglan sleeves](#)

There are also ways of joining sleeves on the machine.

### Set in sleeve top down

[Diana Sullivan on set in sleeves](#)

[Roberta Rose Kelly on set in sleeves](#)

[The Answer Lady Knits on set in sleeves](#)

It is not very difficult, but needs a bit of calculation and practice!

### Raglan sleeves top down

[A baby jumper knitted flat](#)

[Roberta Rose Kelly on raglan sleeves](#) and [the raglan body](#)

## Sections

Sections of modular knitting can also be joined on or off the machine. Some options are:

- If you have opposing pieces with live stitches, you can graft these using Kitchener stitch, illustrated in these videos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH7dFu0eruQ> Roberta Rose Kelly grafting on the machine/  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuPG7Cv\\_uHY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuPG7Cv_uHY) Diana Sullivan
- Crochet, using live stitches or side seams or cast off/on edges
- Joining on the machine: you need to knit one piece with holes on the edge, then join to the second piece by placing these holes in turn on to edge needles. An example of this is shown in the [Crescent Shawl pattern](#) on our website.



## Necklines

You can treat the neckline as any other edge, or you can add collars.

<https://youtu.be/M7Art3U5C2U> shows how to knit a v neck mitred band

<https://youtu.be/tUI4XYRsCnc> and this is a round neckline

<https://youtu.be/DkQXWsWyYj8> and this one is Knit It Now but on YouTube, with a range of finishes for necklines

Diana Sullivan, mentioned above, also covers necklines.

One of our patterns [Ali](#) has an interesting neckline: [right]



## Blocking, Steaming and Pressing

Blocking your garment pieces is important to ensure a good fit, as well as enabling the stitches to 'set' and the yarn to take its shape in the garment.

## Wet Blocking

Wet Blocking is good for wool: it enables you to stretch the yarn into a good shape and lie flat, particularly when used in shawls and scarves. Wash the knitting, then pin it out on a blocking board or mats. Leave to dry, unpin, and it is done.

## Steam Blocking

Blocking with steam is used for other fibres. Pin the pieces to the required measurements, then lightly steam [do not press].

Much more detailed instructions are available here: [along with blocking mats and pins]

<https://www.provenancecraft.com/blogs/news/finishing-and-blocking-garments>

## Edges

Finishing the edge of your knitting can be as important, and take as long as, knitting the main pieces. You may wish to finish these on or off the machine, and there are lots of suggestions on Knit it Now [paid website] or on the following:

<https://guagliumi.com/category/edgings-and-trims/> is a small collection of blog posts on edgings for machine knitting

<http://www.needlesofsteel.org.uk/techniques.html#edge> is a larger collection of links to instructions for edgings

And <https://www.youtube.com/user/dianaknits/videos> Diana Sullivan has several videos on edgings on her YouTube channel.

## Embellishments



Once you have knitted your garment, you may want to add some surface decoration, especially if you have knitted it in plain stocking stitch.

You can add motifs, embroidery, or solid shapes. There are lots of suggestions to be found, some hand knitted

<https://www.studioknitsf.com/category/accessories/embellishments/>, which you may wish to translate to machine knitting

Or machine knitted

<https://www.eileenmontgomery.com/Freebies/Patterns/machineknitflowe.html>

You can add embroidery or beads <https://wildflowerknits.com/embellishments-knits/>

<https://kelbournwoolens.com/tips-and-tricks/embroidering-on-knitting>

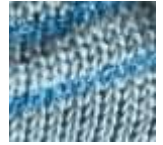
<https://www.adknits.com/blogs/news/knitting-how-to-embroidering-a-flower-on-your-knitted-fabric>

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I have tried some embroidery on my first waterfall project from last month: I found that I needed a bit of practice, but once I got over the initial part, it was easy. You need to match your stitches in size to the knitted stitches, and then it is relatively simple. This was my first attempt - the garment is not going to be worn, as the plating problems messed it up, but it makes a suitable canvas!

I also tried a bit of machine embroidery, using the stitches included on my electronic sewing machine - it worked reasonably well, I would need to plan it well to make it work! I did not use any backing with any of this, the cotton knitted fabric stood up well to the stitching.



<https://youtu.be/SXD3TdbpDbM> is a video showing Swiss darning, which is another way to embroider on knitting, exactly following the knitted stitches, to make it integral to the knitting.



Last year, we were lucky to have Erica Thomson demonstrating Tassels, which could also be used as embellishments. She has kits available with instructions at <http://www.ericaco.uk/tassels/kit.htm>



And, if you have fringes to finish, think about twisting them: <https://youtu.be/bfXOZmHQSIs> shows you how to do this without a fringe twister. If you like the idea, you might like to invest in a battery operated hair braider <https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/Electric-Hair-Braider-Plait-Twist-Styling-Braiding-Machine-Quick-Braid-Tool-Hemp/401784693056?hash=item5d8c3be140:g:3RUAAOSwwPtcbEa8> this one

costs £6.99

## Closures

Closures include buttons, zips and ties.

**Buttons** can be bought, or made from yarn, modelling clay, wood and much more [[see our tips page for more information](#)]: this is a Dorset button I made for one of our patterns



## Buttonholes

These can be made by creating gaps in edging [I-cord edging is good for this], or by incorporating holes in your knitting. Here are some links:

Diana Sullivan <https://youtu.be/tPqE8NCye9E>

June Clark [https://youtu.be/93un1l8R\\_Do](https://youtu.be/93un1l8R_Do)

The answer lady knits <https://youtu.be/LQe9Q5khxEQ>

**Ties** can be made from I-cord, which can also be used for embellishments. To make an I-cord on the knitting machine, cast on 3-5 stitches [or so, you can experiment]. Knit in one direction, slip in the other, for as long as you need. You will have a tubular tie or the foundation of an embellishment.

**Zips** can be inserted in knitwear: here is a video showing how

<https://youtu.be/PY9Z6uXQklQ>

## Further links

A 'local' tutor who runs knitwear courses, including finishing [not currently, but normally]

<https://www.nickimerrall.co.uk/beingknitterly/knitwear-finishing-techniques-workshop/?v=79cba185463>

A short guide to finishing <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/how-to-finish-your-knitting-2115858>

<http://www.exclusiveyarns.co.uk/page6KNIT%20to%20FINISH.htm> links to Nina Miklin's sale page of books on finishing [available in pdf format]

## Projects

My first project this month was to raise my knitting machine to a standing height. I have just clamped it to a plank, resting on two storage units on my table, for the moment, until I am sure I want to keep it like this. I am hoping to improve my posture this way and avoid backache.

Then I did a bit of knitting:

I wanted to use some offcuts from a weaving project to finish a knitted cardigan. I started to handknit it, because I like to knit raglan cardigans bottom up without seams. But then I got bored after knitting the sleeves [in 4 ply cotton] and decided to machine knit the body. Then I continued to hand knit the top:



I did a lot of cut and sew along the way, but finally got something I might wear.

The project evolved from a weaving I did, which turned into two bias cut tops: I changed the warp thread for the second piece.



The left one was a commercial pattern, the right I managed to make from my own Garment Designer pattern. The commercial one has a

neckline which leaves my back neck a bit exposed, so I wanted a cardigan to go with it. My own pattern is a bit different.



Another way of using scraps to protect my neck is as a 'scruffy' bandanna style scarf [actually two, one from each weaving]. I just pieced together lots of bits, and machine stitched close to the edges twice. Then I pulled the fabric into a fringed edge.

Mary has also been busy, with a virtual 'open studio' here:

<https://www.warwickshireopenstudios.org/galleries/2020/mary-stephens>

And we would like to mention Sally Butcher's [Kalamunda Crafts](#) page on Facebook. Sally is an inspiring machine knitter, with lots of ideas and videos to keep you busy!

## Pattern

Cascade

Last month's project is this month's pattern. Pat kindly test knitted from my pattern, and

here is the result. She was happy with the knitting, but, like me had some issues with setting in the sleeves neatly. Crochet might be a good way of joining them. She was also unsure if the shape suited her [I know the feeling].

[The pattern itself is available here.](#)



I may well try other variations on my original. In particular, I think it would be fairly easy and effective to knit the straight sections as knitweave. Or they could be lace sections, or fair isle.



## Suppliers

These are still operating an online supply

[www.wools.co.uk](http://www.wools.co.uk) - Uppingham Yarns

<https://yeoman-yarns.co.uk/> Yeoman Yarns

<https://www.yarnoncone.co.uk> Yarn on Cone

and this one deals in recycled fibres <https://www.iinouiiio.com/>

## Other information

Metropolitan sent us this email:



Dear Customer

You wait for a bus and then three come along all at once..... You did not hear from me for a couple of months and now you hear from twice in one month!

We wanted you to be the very first to know about our latest News.

The Metropolitan School of Machine Knitting which is the Correspondence Course Division is now under new Ownership we are delighted to say. This secures the long term future of these highly thought of Courses.

Mrs Pam Wigglesworth is the new Owner. Pam has an excellent reputation in the Machine Knitting World and has taught a number of Courses at Metropolitan already.

She will be able to guide Students through the Lessons in a helpful and encouraging way and bookings can now be made with immediate effect.

Contact [pamwigg1489@gmail.com](mailto:pamwigg1489@gmail.com)

Send for free Syllabus, and to be put on her mailing list and then you will be kept up to date with any new features with the Courses.

Metropolitan Machine Knitting

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<https://ocean.exacteditions.com/magazines/21416/issues/> is a web page full of downloadable links to Craft Council journal back issues: until the end of August you can read them free!

<http://handymachineknitting.libsyn.com> is a regular podcast

<http://knitwords.blogspot.com/> is a blog

### And Finally

I would like to involve others in this newsletter, so please let me know of anything I can include

[Administrator@longbuckbymk.com](mailto:Administrator@longbuckbymk.com) is my club email address.