



HISTORICAL CROCHET

As part of the 'LEARN' objective of the CGA, Kathleen Hansen will be presenting a crochet pattern from our past, reworking it in a yarn that is easily accessible now, and with any changes to the language of the day that is necessary to make the pattern relevant and readable. Kathleen plans to use one pattern and designer each quarterly edition of the Newsletter, with pictures showing the original work, accompanied by any information she can find on the designer or publishing house. She will then present the reworked pattern with color photos of the process and finished object. The first contribution is a cushion pattern, named A Handsome Cushion, in the 1937 issue of COSIES Series No. 1, distributed by Madame Weigel Pty Ltd.



Who was Madame Weigel?

Madame Weigel was born in 1847 in Prussia (Poland). She went on to become arguably one of the most influential persons in Australasia's fashion history. During the 90 years of her pattern printing

and publishing business' operation, 9000 patterns (high end and everyday) were published. Her pattern series spanned the period from 1878 to 1969, her journal was published from 1880 to 1950.

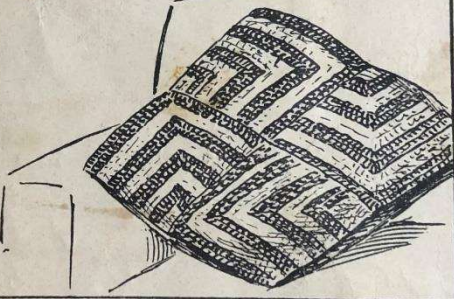
Johanna Wilhelmine Astmann was born the second of five children on 11 February 1847. In her 20s, Johanna left Prussia and went to the United States of America where she worked as a designer at McCall's in New York. It was there that she met an Engineer called August Louis William Oscar Robert Carl Weigel, who was born into a noble family in Germany. Johanna and Oscar married in 1876 in New York at the ages of 29 and 32, and honeymooned in Melbourne Australia, meaning to only stay for six months.

the 2 corner stitches.

A Handsome Cushion

This very effective cushion cover is worked throughout in treble, in two shades of wool. It is formed of four ten-inch squares, worked separately and joined as shown in the illustration. The original was worked in vieux rose and black wool, in rows of four. A medium-sized crochet hook was used.

Using the vieux rose wool, work 4 ch., join in a ring.
1st Row.—3 ch. to stand for 1 tr., 5 tr. into ring, turn.



2nd Row.—3 ch. to stand for 1 tr., 1 tr. into each of next 2 tr., 4 tr. into next sp. (this forms the corner), 1 tr. into each of next 3 tr., turn.

3rd Row.—3 ch., 1 tr. into each of next 4 tr., 4 tr. into next space, 1 tr. into next 5 tr., turn.

4th Row.—3 ch., 1 tr. into each of next 6 tr., 4 tr. into next space, 1 tr. into each of next 7 tr., turn.

Break off vieux rose and join in black.

5th Row.—2 ch., 1 tr. into each of next 8 tr., 4 tr. into next space, 1 tr. into each of next 9 tr., turn.

Continue in this manner, the number of treble each side of corner increasing by two in each row, and each row being increased by the 4 treble at corner, until 8 sections are worked, consisting of 4 rows of each colour, as small diagram shows.

Make four squares in this way and slipstitch together, as shown in diagram. Work another side to correspond, or, if preferred, it may be made of material such as sateen, satin or velveteen, in black or vieux rose.

Johanna began drafting sewing patterns for her friends who admired her dress sense. These patterns were very popular because of their easy-to-understand instructions for cutting, fitting, and sewing. Because of this interest, Johanna and Oscar opened their first business in 1877 in Richmond, but soon had offices in Sydney and Melbourne, and agencies throughout Australasia and New Zealand. Weigel's Journal of Fashion was first published in 1880 as a monthly subscription journal, claimed to be the first of its kind published in Australia. These illustrated fashion magazines had a huge impact on the women of Australia, particularly country women and their families.

Johanna and Oscar became naturalized Australians in 1893. They had built their home in 1890 on an 11 hectare property at the foot of Mount Macedon, but it burnt down in 1903. the couple then moved to South Melbourne. They were known to be philanthropists, but many of their contributions to charities were made anonymously.

Oscar died while the couple were on a business trip to Los Angeles in February 1915. Johanna returned to Australia two months later with Oscar's ashes. She continued to travel extensively around the world. In 1928 Johanna and a friend and companion moved to the Oriental Hotel where she lived til her death in January 1940, aged just shy of 93 years. In death, Madame Weigel continued to provide for her employees until their deaths. She also bequeathed 20 000 Pounds to set up the Oscar Weigel Charitable Trust for Engineering students. What remained of her estate after the last employee died in 1960, was distributed to five hospitals named in her will.

In conclusion, Madame Weigel's pattern series spanned 91 years from 1878 to 1969, and her journal was published from 1880 to 1950. She made over 9000 patterns for sewing clothing and homewares, and crochet and knitting patterns as well. Dr Veronica Lampkin has researched Madame

Weigel's life and work for many years, and she has written four hardcover books to date which cover the many aspects of Madame Weigel's career. Dr Lampkin was also the key speaker at the CGA Conference Banquet Dinner and she presented many slides and handouts of Madame Weigel's life and work. Dr Lampkin named Madame Weigel 'The Woman who Clothed the Australasian Colonies'.

A Handsome Cushion – Madam Weigel

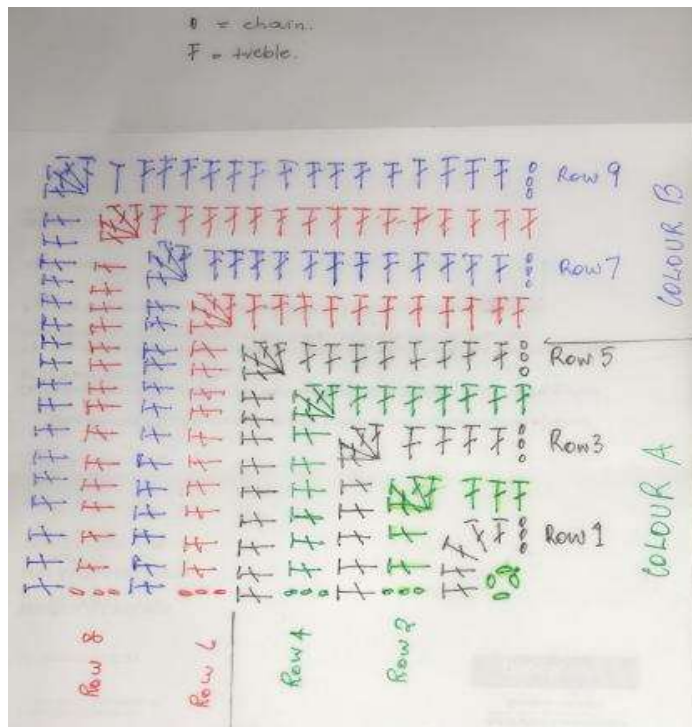
The original pattern was written for a 10" square, but this pattern is for a 7" (18cm) square. The squares are easily up- or downsized, depending on the number of four row repeats worked. Many primary and secondary patterns can be made from this patterns, depending on the placement of the squares. Also more squares can be made to make a throw blanket or bedcover. The original pattern also used wool yarn but did not specify yarn weight. As there weren't so many options available, naming the yarn brand was all that was needed. The hook required was 'medium size' whatever that happened to be.

Requirements

1 x 50g yarn A, 8 ply/DK weight, in cotton, acrylic, wool or a blend.
1 x 50g yarn B, 8 ply/DK weight, in cotton, acrylic, wool or a blend.
3 mm crochet hook

Abbreviations

ch - chain
tr - treble
sp - space
sts - stitches



Method

Using yarn A, make 4 ch and join to make a ring.

ROW 1. 3 ch to stand for 1st tr, 5 tr into ring, turn.

ROW 2. 3 ch to stand for 1st tr, 1 tr into each of the next 2 tr, 4 tr into the sp between the second and third sts (this forms the corner), 1 tr into each of the next 3 tr, turn. (10 tr)

ROW 3. 3 ch to stand for 1sttr, 1 tr into each of the next 4 tr, 4 tr into the sp between the second and third sts of the corner, 1 tr into each of the next 5 tr, turn. (14 tr)

ROW 4. 3 ch to stand for 1sttr, 1 tr into each of the next 6 tr, 4 tr into the sp

between the second and third sts of the corner, 1 tr into each of the next 7 tr, turn. (18 tr)

ROW 5. 3 ch to stand for 1sttr, 1 tr into each of the next 8 tr, 4 tr into the sp between the second and third sts of the corner, 1 tr into each of the next 9 tr, turn. (22 tr)

Break yarn, or carry up the side of the square as you wish. Join colour B

Continue in this manner, making 4 row stripes, repeating rows 2-5 but increasing the number of tr each side of

the corner by 2 each row. Finish off and block the squares. A single finished square with 4 stripes and 17 rows will measure 7" blocked, 6 stripes and 25 rows will measure 10" blocked.

Join the squares using the method you prefer.

To make a cushion cover you might make a matching four squares for the back of the cushion, or sew the four-square panel to an existing cushion cover. Sit back and enjoy.



Some of the pattern designs you can create with different placement



Finished section and Cushion complete



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