

Crochet Guild Australia Q & A



Shelley Husband

Q) Congratulations Shelley on the release of your latest pattern book. How many patterns does it contain and how long did it take you to write?

A) Granny Square Patchwork is my latest book, released in July 2021. There are 40 granny square patterns of 6 sizes. The idea of the book is for folks to create their own patchwork style projects mixing and matching as many or as few patterns as they like. There are also 12 projects included if you just like to follow a plan. I loved designing and writing for it all. It took roughly 18 months from the first design to publication.

Q) How do you start designing a pattern. Are you inspired from something you see in nature that you try to copy - or is it just trial and error while watching Netflix or in front of the TV?

A) Ah it varies. Most often, I just sit and play and see what happens. Other times, I might have a shape, stitch, or technique I want to use. Sometimes I am guided by the intended audience's skill level, while other times I don't worry about that and go crazy. I can't be watching anything while designing more complex things, but there is always music on. I watch streaming tv when making large projects though.

Q) Crochet is obviously your full-time passion now. You have a YOU TUBE channel, your blog, Website, and other social media sites - which one do your followers mostly go to and why do you think that is?

A) Most folks look on Instagram and Facebook, but there are some who don't use social media, so they subscribe to my newsletter and blog instead. The feedback I get is usually along the lines of appreciating my openness about what I do, the help I give and how I feel. As well as the pretty photos. That's a big part of it too.

Q) Australians are obviously the biggest fans and purchasers of your patterns and pattern books - what other countries do you find that your patterns and books sell well in?

A) The folks who use my patterns really are world-wide. Australians account for about 25% of my pattern users. I had a look at my stats to answer this and I saw that folks from 95 countries have accessed my patterns this year alone, just from my pattern shop. And they are all over. The US and the UK, all over Europe, Asia, and South America. I think that's pretty cool! My books are available on online retailer sites around the world. It's a bit harder to find the stats on that quickly, but generally, people from the US and the UK are the most common book purchasers from those sites.



Q) Who are the Crochet designers that you follow and like - and why?

A) I am not really a follower of many. That's not to say I don't like what they do, it's more so I am not influenced in my design work and keep it truly my own. Having said that, I have connected personally with a few folks over the years, and they tend to be the ones I follow and keep up with what they're doing. I had the pleasure of being on a crochet cruise with Dedri Uys (Sophies Universe designer). We had a lot of fun. I also chat regularly with Emily Penn (The Loopy Stitch) and Joy Clements (Crochet Road). Pony McTate is a fabulous NZ quirky crocheter who's work I love. I admire and have a few chats with Tatsiana Kupryianchyk (Lilla Bjorn Crochet). She is a crochet genius!



Q) Tell us a little of your career history. What was your paid career before crochet became your income generating business? And what was the trigger that made you change to crochet full time?

A) Oh so many things! Prior to this, I was an integration aide and primary school librarian. I have also done a lot of admin jobs - admin for family businesses, accounts, personal assistant, superannuation and insurance to name a few. The trigger for me was the realisation that I deeply understood crochet and how it works, and, in particular, for granny squares. It was more a case of thoroughly enjoying designing new things. It was never the plan that it would become my day job. At the start, I picked up crochet for a new hobby, but once I began designing and others seemed to like what I was coming up with, I thought why not have a go at it as a job.

Q) You self-publish your pattern books - why do you do this? Is it because you couldn't convince a publisher that there was a market for crochet books?

A) Oh they know there's a market. So many great crochet books being released all over the world at the moment. Self-publishing was a choice I made. I was in talks with a publisher at one stage, but honestly? I am really glad I went the self-publishing route. There are many reasons, but big ones were total control of the content and the way it's presented, and the longevity of my work. Sure, I miss out on the power of a publisher with some aspects of getting a book out there, but my books have a much longer life this way. I am still selling as many of my first book *Granny Square Flair* released in 2018 now as I was a year after it's release. It doesn't happen alone though! I still need professional proof reading, graphic design and photography and many more things I have had to learn about. It's not an easy way to go, but it was right for me.

Q) Before COVID - we were all excited to see you had started out travelling around Australia to conduct workshops to teach your patterns to your fandom. Will you resume that in 2022 and what is your workshop program timetable that you have planned for this year? We would all love to attend wherever we can.

A) I am so excited to be getting back out there! While my planned trip up through NSW and Queensland planned for Jan/Feb 2022 has been postponed until November, I am booked to teach at retreats from South Australia, to Tasmania, NSW and Qld and Victoria. When I have a timetable of workshops I am running personally, there will be a page on my website with all the information. I share about them in my weekly newsletter at the moment.

Q) Have you another pattern book brewing or in draft - or are you changing things up? What can we expect from Shelley Husband next?

A) I have 3 books in progress. I am always working on the next thing. One is due out this March and is the pattern that will be made for my next CAL. It's called Nimue and is a large, mostly one piece, granny square blanket. Then, Granny Square Academy 2 is due out in July 2022 possibly. I have also started the design work on a book due out July 2023. So much fun! Apart from that, while I don't have a plan for any stand-alone patterns at the moment, the inspiration for a new thing is always bubbling away and I am sure will lead to something else being released this year.

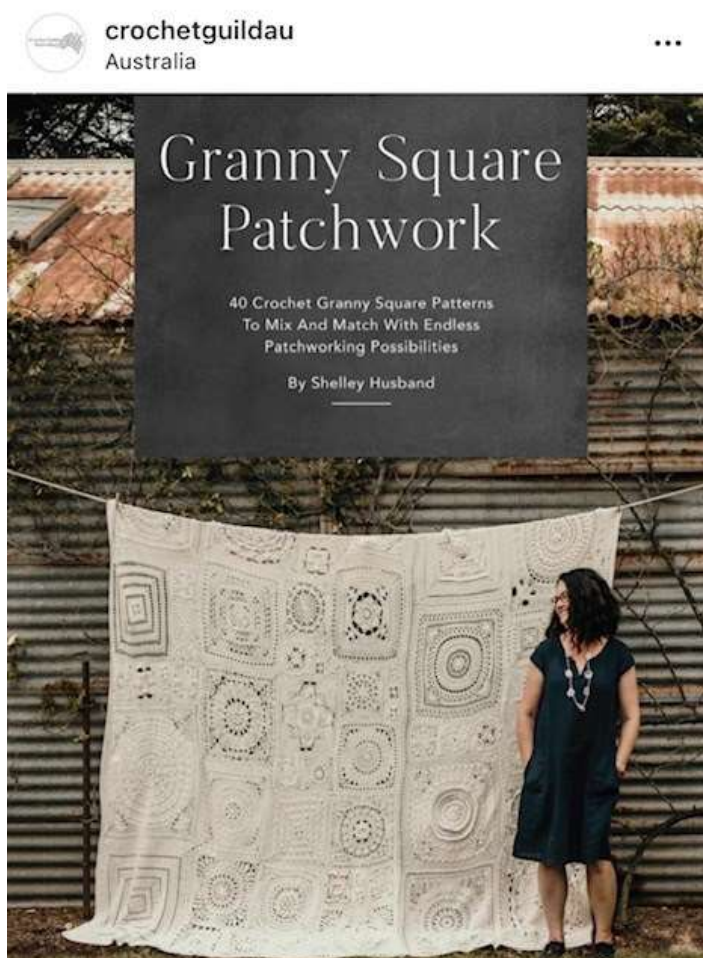
Q) Are you attending the Crochet Guild of America Conference in New Orleans this year in July 2022?

A) No. I have not really even looked at what they do and have no connection with them.

Q) Shelley - would you be able to provide a discount code for CGA members when buying your book?

A) Sure! If the members head to my shop, add what they like to cart and enter the code CGAFUN at checkout, they will get 10% off. Valid until 31 March 2022 and one use per person.

<https://shop.spincushions.com/>



Check out our
MEMBERS ONLY
Zoom
on
Wednesday April 6th
7pm NSW and
Victoria time.
Yah!! So excited, we chat to
Shelley and explore her
creative endeavor's, you
won't want to miss this!
www.crochetguildaustralia.org.au