

April 2008 Cablegram book review by Karen Jo Gustafson

**Knitting for Him—30 Classic Projects to Keep Him Warm
by Martin Storey & Wendy Baker**

I bought this book when I saw a photograph of one of the sweaters and wanted to knit it for myself.

Late last year several books of patterns for men appeared. Though I buy lots of knitting books, this was the only one of these male-oriented books I chose.

The sweaters and vests in this Rowan book, as well as the accessories all have the unfussy style and comfortable structure that appeals to many men. Styles range from a very simple Guernsey in smooth stockinette to an alpaca cardigan with panels of Argyll down each side (the pattern that originally caught my eye) to a bulky shawl-collared jacket with an all-over cable pattern.

Many kinds of pattern stitches appear in the projects. Besides several kinds of cables there are a couple of Ganseys, a two-color textured slip stitch, and a subtle vertical herringbone stitch jacket with garter stitch collar and bands. Or for something simple there is the 7x2 ribbed V-neck cardigan with contrasting 1x1 rib trim.

The 4 stitch-per-inch Bird's Eye Jacket with an all-over pattern of the familiar Fair Isle lice and stripes on collar, cuffs and bottom edge would make a good introduction to stranded colorwork. More complex colorwork includes an Argyll wool vest or a V-neck pull-over Fair Isle done in Rowan's Wool and Cotton.

Though the sweaters here all use Rowan yarns, substitution would be fairly easy. Each pattern has gauge given, but the yarn requirements don't include the yardage, only weights. I plan to note the yardage per skein of the yarns used after some yarn store and YarnDex.com research so I can make my own choice of fiber to use even a few years from now.

The traditional styles and proportions of these garments will still look good in a few years. Other than the specification of recent yarns, almost any of these could be slipped into one of Rowan's various compilations published in the last twenty years.

But their classic natures also function well as casual or rustic styles for women, with maybe a few modifications. Sizing for all of the garments runs from a chest size of 40 to 48 inches in two-inch increments. For myself I'll need to size down one size below this range for anything I don't want to have an oversized fit. Because the shoulder seam on most of the patterns falls beyond the actual shoulder, for most besides the heavily patterned garments I can eliminate width between the necklines and armholes on each side and in corresponding places on the back while leaving the shaping untouched. A small bit of shaping on the line up the side should give me a sweater as feminine as I'd want in these pieces. Oh, and I'll reverse any button bands.

That brings me to my quibbles with the book. Although each pattern has a schematic, only the length, bottom width and sleeve length are given. I'll need to determine any other finished measurements with which I might need to work. There is little technique information. No how-to-knit section expands the front; rather the first page contains the first pattern. About three pages at the end give some information and the abbreviation guide.

The photography and styling are beautiful. Most garments have photos from more than one angle. I saw no obvious use of scarves to hide questionable necklines.