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Crocheting an Afghan: My Honors Project

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CROCHETING AN AFGHAN

My Honors Project, Spring, 1974

By Bennie Carol Burgess

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As my honors project for this semester under the division of Natural Science, in the Home Economics Department, I made an afghan, under the supervision of Mrs. Hazel Thomas. Although I have crocheted before, this is my biggest undertaking.

Crochet is a close relative of knitting, which is one of the most ancient forms of handiwork. Pieces of beautifully designed knit fabrics have been found in the ruins of ancient Egypt and in Peru. We don't know what kind of equipment these ancient craftsmen used, but the stitches are similar to those we do today. In more modern times, knitting and crocheting have served two purposes. One, and for practical reasons the most important, was to make garments which will keep the wearer warm. The second purpose was to make garments and other articles which are attractive. My project employs both purposes of crochet, for it is an attractive bedspread, and it is warm.

I began work on my afghan on February 9, 1974 when I picked out my pattern and yarn at Stanhope's Art Supply in Texarkana. I purchased seventeen 4 ounce skeins of Brunswick Orlon acrylic knitting yarn, and a book of afghan patterns published by Brunswick Worsted Mills, Inc. The yarn was \$1.75 per skein, but I received a ten

per cent discount, which made the total yarn cost \$29.45.

The pattern I chose for my afghan is a giant granny square afghan, which is shown as being 54 inches by 72 inches, but because I want to use it as a bedspread for a double bed, I doubled the size to make it 72 inches by 108 inches. The colors I chose are Old Rose, Horizon Blue Heather, Lavender, and Ecu.

The first step in making the afghan was to make ninety-six 9 inch squares. This was the major time consuming part of my project. Next, I had to block the squares. This was a learning experience for me, since I had never crocheted anything before that had to be blocked. I also taught my roommate, who is a beginning crocheter, how to block her work. After this, I had to put the blocks together in strips of twelve with slip stitching, then connect the strips, also with slip stitching. The final step was to crochet around the edges of the afghan twice, the first time with single crochet stitches, and the last time with scallops of three chain stitches between every other single crochet.

The total time required for my project was ninety-nine hours and fifteen minutes. As I said, the major part of the time was taken with making the squares. This took almost seventy-four hours.

I am very proud of my completed project, and as I

will be married in less than a month, I can hardly wait to display it in my new home. I feel like I learned a lot from this project, not only about crocheting, but also about disciplining myself. I knew I had many hours of work to do, and that I had to distribute it throughout the semester in order to have the afghan finished on time. So I had to work on it at times when I really would have liked to do something else, but now I am reaping the benefits, because I have the finished product to enjoy.

Submitted April 30, 1974