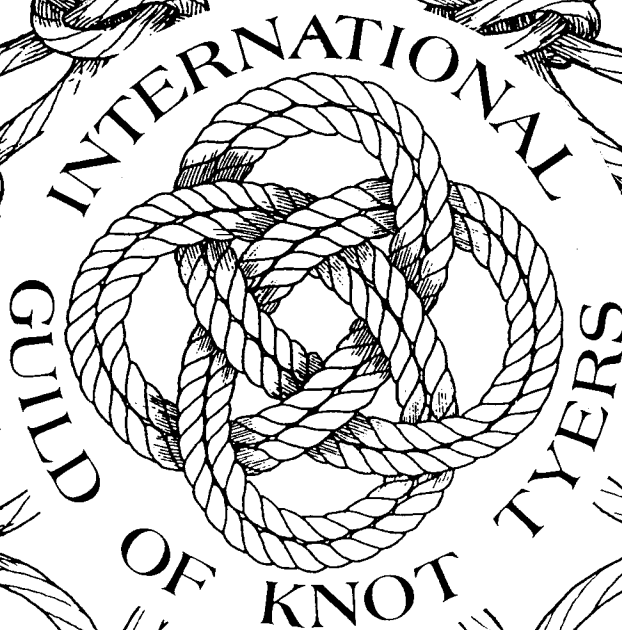




# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL  
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

# "KNOTTING MATTERS"

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

President: GEOFFREY BUDWORTH

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October (Autumn) 1987

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## ***Editorial***

A successful old confidence trickster I knew when I was young told me his secret. It was to spot a need not being met, then to move into that vacuum, expanding to fill and exploit it. That way, he explained, he had no competition and met no resistance. Indeed he was welcomed by those he had selected as his target. Although he added the element of dishonest deceit to multiply his profit, I have found from experience that the principle also works in honest business dealings.

Well, a void in the world of ropeworking has been identified by several members and it needs to be filled. Whoever has the wit to do so must, it seems, be a winner. What people tell us they want, and cannot find anywhere, is instruction in making boat fenders. So, it would be sensible if we - the I.G.K.T. - seized the opportunity and quickly produced a videotape or something.

Fenders come in different shapes and sizes, and that is a snag, but they all serve the same purpose. Maybe the answer will be to design a handy and adaptable all-purpose fender. Then again, it might be best to work out one straightforward method of making all kinds of fenders; half (or needle) hitching, that versatile covering, comes immediately to mind.

Several members have addressed the problem. Perhaps it should be a team effort. So far, nobody has decided what to do. So the race is on. Someone can make a name for him or herself, and mayhap a little cash too, if they can be first to show the world's boating types that fender-making is really a do-it-yourself job.



Sailorcraft, Firbank, Canada Hill, East Ogdon,  
Devon TQ12 6AF. Telephone: 0626 61534.

Most of us do rope work because we enjoy it. Some of us try to sell our products, to make our hobby pay for itself and even to contribute towards everyday expenses. Others try to make an income from their skills, either to supplement other employment or to provide a sole living. All of us look forward to doing rope work in our old age, and, without a doubt, would like to boost our meagre pensions!

'SAILORCRAFT' is a small business which I started less than a year ago to provide a commercial outlet for useful items made in light cord. This has been my hobby for many years, making for various sailing friends. Initial sales were to chandleries. The subsequent steps may be of interest to others within the Guild of Knot Tyers who are interested in finding outlets for their own handmade products.

Stage 1: Establishing a Commercial Product:- Two products evolved, a key fog (Crown Sennit and Double Wallknot) and a knife lanyard (Crown Sennit, Flat Sennit, and a Turk's Head with a bronze clip), and these were shown around 12-15 chandleries with a view to establishing a price at which the product would sell. High quality was essential and a supply of satisfactory polyester cord became critical. A few "outworkers" were found and taught to do the simple knots. A lesson soon learned was that the knots had to be relatively simple, and easily taught, for items to be made in quantity by people who were not naturally interested in tying knots.

Summary ... Determine product range; simplify knots; establish market; set prices; identify others to do some work.

Stage 2: Marketing:- For most of us this is the difficult area. We know what we like, but what does "the market" buy in terms of style, colour, price? The large wholesalers (no names!) will attempt to get exclusive rights and try to persuade you that prices should be very low. Let us remember that our business is particularly individual, that much skill and pride goes into the work, and - in general - we should not be persuaded to sell products at low prices alongside cheap Far Eastern imports.

I took advice from experts, professionals in the marine market, and I came to the conclusion that WE MUST ESTABLISH ROPE WORK AS A HIGHLY SOUGHT-AFTER, SPECIALISED SKILL, and we should project that image, and retain the separate identity of each small rope work business in so far as this is possible. I concluded that to do business with the bigger people would result in losing this precious quality of a personalised, manmade product. My choice, therefore, was to "go it alone" and try to establish a brand image.

Summary ... Determine your market and method of selling; do not be tempted by the first offer to handle your sales for you (it may be restrictive in the long term).

### 3 Stage 3: Development of Business:-

In the early days it is better not to be dependent upon the income from rope work being sold. It is easier then to take rational decisions. My products, being small, required some packaging and header cards so that they could be displayed alongside other items. A modest programme of advertising in yachting journals requires artwork and certain commitment to expenditure during the first year. An agency or marketing company is desirable to be in contact with outlets around the country and they would require a commission.

A modest, cautious and simple budget should be set out to determine the first year's trading. Work out the quantity of each item you believe will sell at a certain price. Establish the labour content by working out the time required to do each element of the work, assuming reasonable production rate of work (you must be comparably dextrous). Taking a rate of pay (for sub-contract work) of - say - 5 pence a minute or £3 an hour, it is then possible to work out the labour content. Having shopped around for best material prices, work out carefully the material content of the product (including scrap, of course). These two items added together give the prime cost.

Assume that all the labour is put out to someone else and that you sit at home running the business. Calculate an amount to add on for admin. costs and profit. THIS GIVES THE PRICE AT WHICH YOU SHOULD BE SELLING. Don't forget the retailer's profit and the commission. Now comes a problem. If you have set your price too high, then, by the time the retailer has added his selling margin and V.A.T., your price will have increased by a factor of 2 to 2.5 and you may be above the market price. If this happens, re-think your prime cost and method.

There is no doubt that this course is better than selling to a wholesaler. Although it involves more personal effort, it is possible to retain one's own brand image and identity AND to control one's own business personally.

Summary ... Cost everything carefully; establish a rough outline budget do this at the beginning (you will learn a lot looking back at it a year later on).

#### Conclusions:-

One thing is clear. The makers of high class, quality rope work may well be taken advantage of during the next few years by those seeking volume sales and low purchasing costs.

IT IS MY VIEW THAT WE SHOULD JOIN TOGETHER TO ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF OUR PRODUCT AND TO INCREASE THE BUYING PUBLIC'S AWARENESS OF THE SPECIAL BESPOKE QUALITIES OF OUR HAND- MADE ARTICLES.

Perhaps others within the Guild could usefully set about marketing the total concept of decorative rope work and, by so doing, make sure that the hard work and experience of our members receives just reward

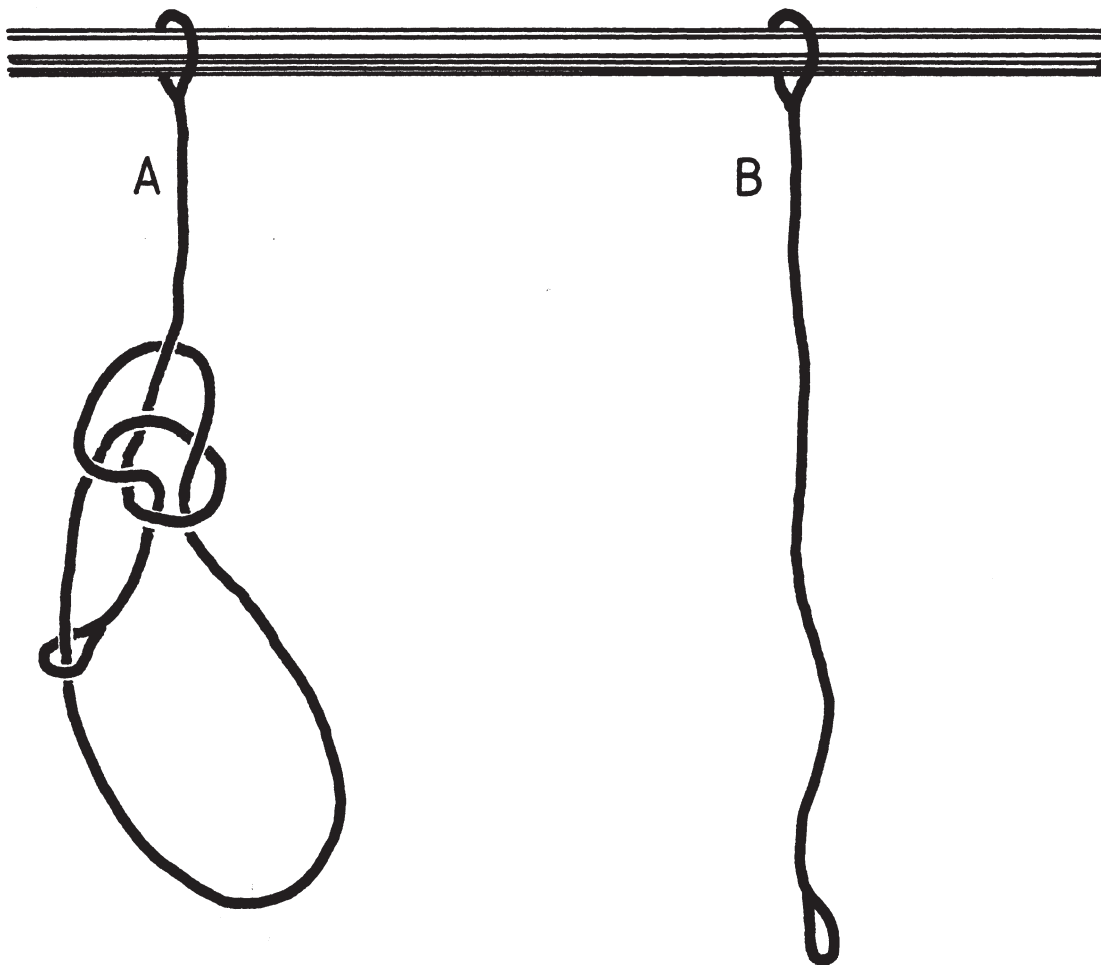
The broad ideas aired above are intended to encourage some debate amongst us, and to inspire individuals and small groups to work closer together. My own efforts are in a narrow field ... but they may yield some useful outlets for related handmade rope work.

ANYBODY INTERESTED IN TRYING TO SELL THEIR PRODUCTS ALONGSIDE MINE in 'Sailorcraft' should drop me a line and send a sample or two, so that I can assess possible product compatibility.

Mike LUCAS of  
'Sailorcraft'

## **Puzzle**

contributed by A.J. BYRNE



A bowline has both ends secured as shown. The proper standing end is anchored and cannot be used.

STAGE 1 - Convert 'A' to 'B'.

STAGE 2 - Restore 'B' to 'A' once more.

(Solution in next issue of 'K.M.')

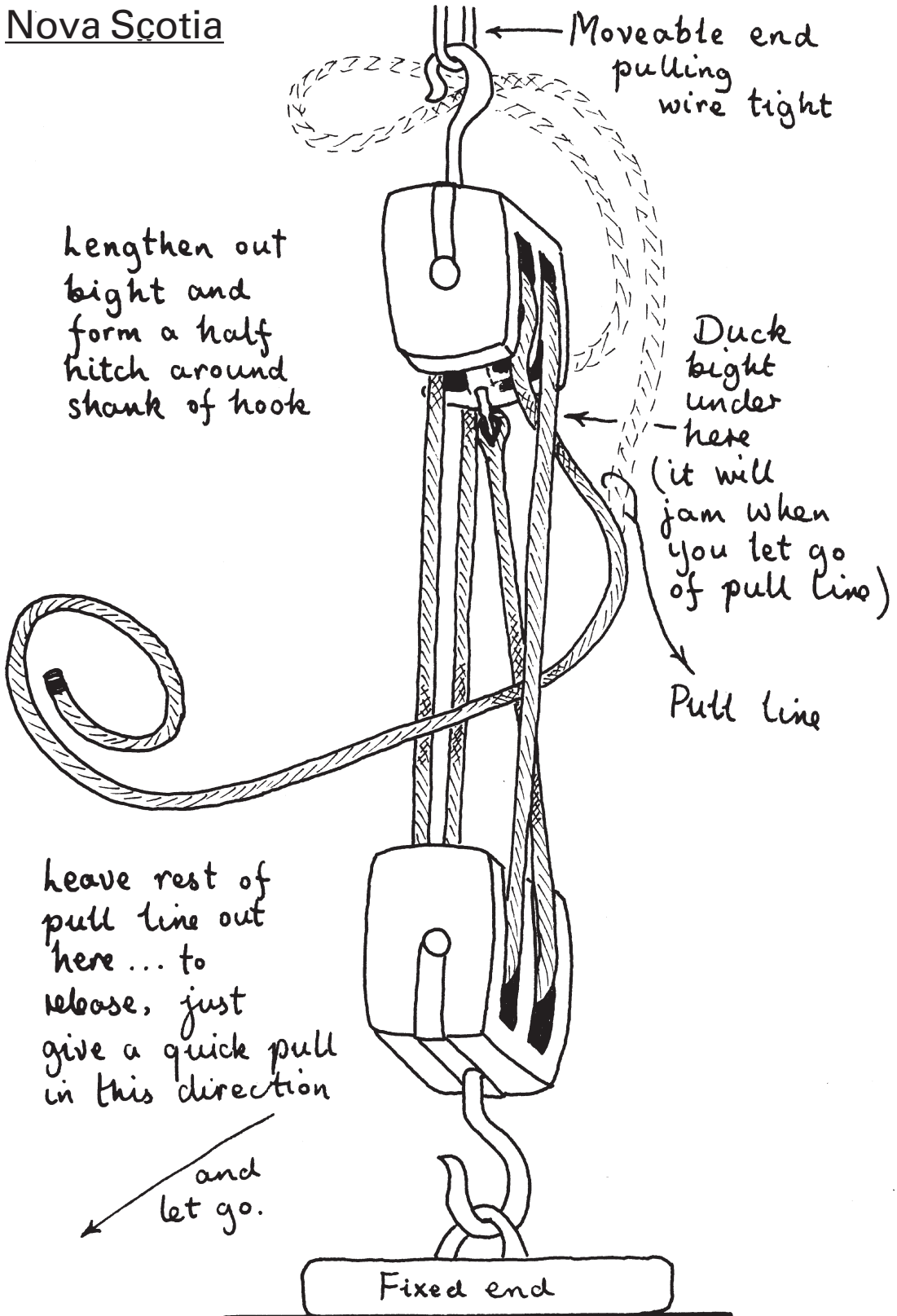
# The Linesman's Belay

done by

Grover W. CROWE

of

Nova Scotia



Following on from Stuart GRAINGER's 'Circus Belay' (K.M. No. 18, pages 2-3), my drawing shows another method of locking blocks-&-tackle effectively without losing any tension. I am a lineman with a Power Company here in Nova Scotia, Canada, and we often pull a wire up tight this way on power poles. Our way is similar to Stuart's but with a little different twist.

When we use tackle, we almost always pull on the movable block thus giving a little more mechanical advantage (the opposite of the Circus Belay) but it works either way. We pull the block normally until the wire is tight enough, then take a bight on the pull line in about 2 feet from the other block if space permits. Cross the bight under the next rope in the block, still holding the tension, and jam it up under it. Then release the tension. The weight of the tight wire will start to pull the other block awry and jam the bight under the next rope even tighter. This is so effective that you can literally drop the pull line altogether and everything will hold ... but we usually lengthen out the bight and take a half hitch or two around the hook shank of the outer block, or around all the ropes in the block (just to be sure it won't slip out).

The tighter you pull this, the better it works. To release it is easy too. Just undo the half hitch and let the pull rope slide out to its normal side. Grasp it and give a quick pull. The jammed part will snap out, releasing the weight on the blocks.

(I could not get the Circus Belay to work very well. Is it the same as mine but I am reading his drawing wrongly? It would be interesting to know.)

Daily Mail, Saturday, August 15, 1987



**MEDICAL NOTEBOOK**  
By JOHN ILLMAN

### Surgeons who fail to leave you in stitches

TRAINEE surgeons tying together stitches tend to tie themselves in knots, according to a recent study.

The Journal of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh tells how 19 trainees were subjected to tests involving blocks of foam rubber. They were asked to tie a series of knots.

Only four of the 19 were found to be competent in their handling and tying.

I H A R O

# ***Video (Latin; "I See")***

by Stuart GRAINGER

(Stuart GRAINGER has produced a trial videotape of nearly an hour's length demonstrating his style of half-hitching (needle-hitching) and how to make decorative but highly practical articles by means of it. The sequences are cleverly put together, backed by folk songs and shanties played by Stuart's own accordion accompaniment. While - he admits - you can "see the joins", it is still a very well made and original production. Anyone sitting through it will be entertained and immediately able to have a go at good Fancywork themselves. Stuart has generously donated this prototype to the Guild. If you wish to see or own a copy, contact the I.G.K.T. video Librarian Howard DENYER.)

- - - o0o - - -

We are, I believe, in a privileged situation as the first generation with the opportunity to supply future generations with a permanent record in moving visual images of our knowledge and expertise with commentary, where appropriate, by the experts concerned. Whilst it is true that cine film has been available for half a century or so, I know from personal experience that it raised far too many problems - both technical and financial - to be a really satisfactory medium for archive use. In videotape we now have a medium that can be relied upon to preserve actions recorded today virtually for ever. No craftsman in history has had such an opportunity to pass on acquired expertise to those who are yet to be born; and I suggest we have a duty to make the fullest use of it.

It is always difficult to be objective about one's own efforts in a creative field. I am conscious of technical faults in the tape I have given to the Guild and some sequences towards the end were a bit rushed. Still, it IS "in the can" and I have no objection to its use by the Guild.

I am no accomplished musician, so this is an area where members with greater talent could help. It is important to remember that, if we are going to make such tapes widely available, we must avoid infringing Copyrights (and it is all too easy to do this inadvertently). That's why I stuck to shanties and folk songs. Fortunately such music suited my purpose. Perhaps some members could record instrumental music, free from Copyright, that would be suitable to lighten a repetitive sequence. Light chamber music - Vivaldi, for instance - might be a possibility, but I am sure someone knowledgeable could do a better job than I could in this area. All I need is a standard sound cassette.

Producing videotapes is quite expensive in terms of capital investment, as much as £10,000) so it is not within everyone's pocket. Nevertheless, there are plenty of video cameras and recorders about, in private ownership but also in educational and industrial establishments. A diplomatic approach, stressing the educational purpose of the exercise could result in these being borrowed. Then, fortunately, the actual use of such equipment is NOT an expensive proposition, particularly if we could buy tapes in bulk through one of our members. Could Howard DENYER advise us on this matter? I suggest standardising on 60-minute VHS tapes, that being the most widely used format for playback. It does not matter what format the



camera uses so long as the final outcome is a VHS tape. For instructional purposes a tape of one hour's duration is quite long enough; less is uneconomical.

Some people are mystified by the term "computer graphics". Let me explain. I have never yet seen a technical book as well illustrated by photographs as it could have been by good drawings. Photographs do not delineate clearly enough all the required detail. Then again, if human hands are involved, the hands themselves will often obscure some vital point. Take, for instance, a short splice with six ends to show precisely where each goes. It would be all but impossible to treat it well with photographs but you can have a reasonable try with black and white drawings. Well, a video camera has the shortcomings of any other camera. It shows you what your eyes see, true enough; but, for some reason (perhaps because you have two eyes while the camera has only one), it is not always easy to comprehend what is being demonstrated.

By using a COMPUTER one can draw six strands, each in a different colour, and make them splice themselves together without the intrusion of a human hand in the picture at all. Animated computer graphics are simply animated drawings, made by a human hand but produced on a T.V. screen, and then made to move about. It is the same process that Walt Disney used for Mickey Mouse but in electronic impulses instead of frames of transparent celluloid film ... and the computer takes much of the drudgery out of the job.

Given the right equipment - and I think I am close to pinpointing it - I do believe I can do for knots what Disney did for mice! Animated sequences of this kind, combined with good demonstrations to camera, could make very superior instructional video tapes, second to none for clarity of exposition and easy understanding. I should add that the same would be true for many other crafts and I do not intend to limit my activities to knots alone, but they will get the treatment first. I am delayed at the moment by lack of suitable accomodation for all the electronic machinery but I hope to overcome this obstacle in a few months time.

Please note my change of address:-

Corner Cottage,  
Main Street,  
Merton,  
BICESTER, Oxon. OX6 ONF  
(tel: 086733 562)

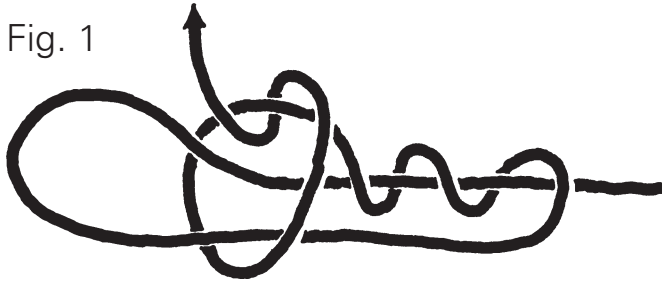
## **Quotation**

"One object particularly took my eye. It was a knife lanyard, made up in white cotton. Nearly every kind of ropework used on shipboard was intermingled in a most artistic design. Sinnets, Turk's heads, footrope, diamond and rose knots, bannister bars, and cock's combing were so cunningly blended that the lanyard was a thing of beauty and I never saw its equal in all my later seagoing."

'SCHOONERMAN' by Captain Richard England (no other particulars available)

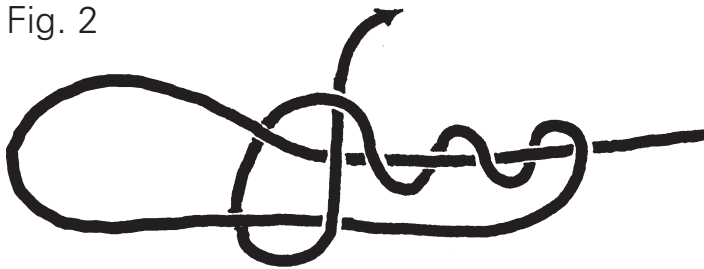
## ***Adjustable Knot (variant)***

Fig. 1



D. J. variant

Fig. 2



Original  
Adjustable Knot

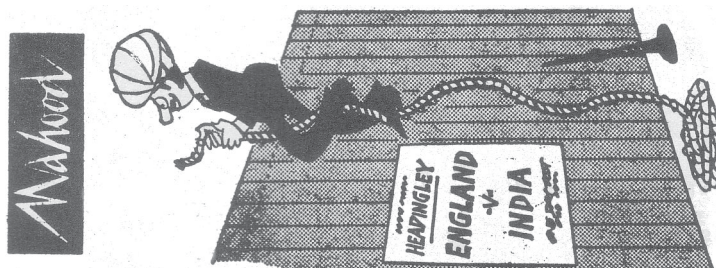
The Adjustable Knot invented by Canadian I.G.K.T. founder-member Rob CHISNALL (find out about him in 'Profile of a Knotsman, K.M. No. 3, page 2), is gaining acceptance amongst cautious knot tyers.

It was hailed as a viable new knot by Geoff BUDWORTH in his paperback knot

book published in 1983: and Cliff BURRAGE, writing in the 'Letters' section of this issue, mentions its use on that most challenging construction (if hazard is to be avoided), the aerial runway.

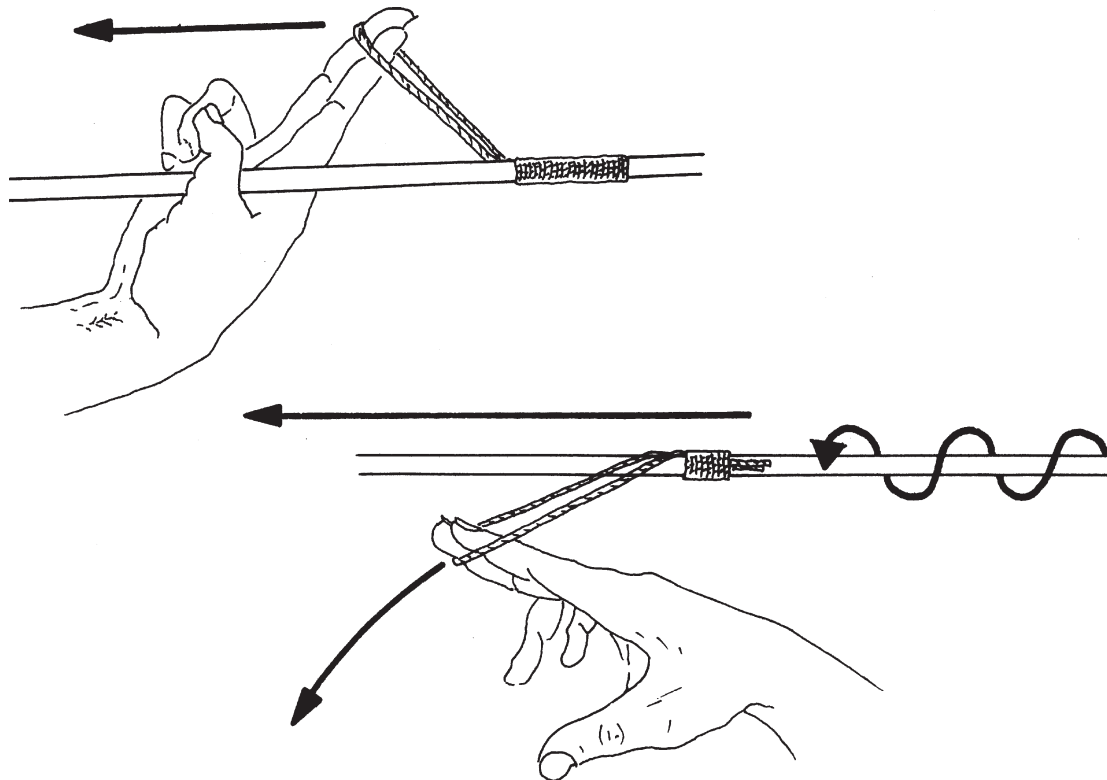
Now Guild member Davis JANSONS suggests there may be an advantage in making this knot with the final tuck of the working end going the other way (see Fig. 1 - 'D.J. variant'). As always, only time will tell. Try it and see what you decide.

**Cartoon**



# **Ancient Greek Know-How**

extracted from  
'ATHLETES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD'  
by Norman E. Gardiner (1930)



Creating rotation to impart control in flight seems to have been known to the athletes of the Olympic Games during classical Greek times according to Gardiner, when accuracy in casting (rather than distance) was sought. A clever thing, string!

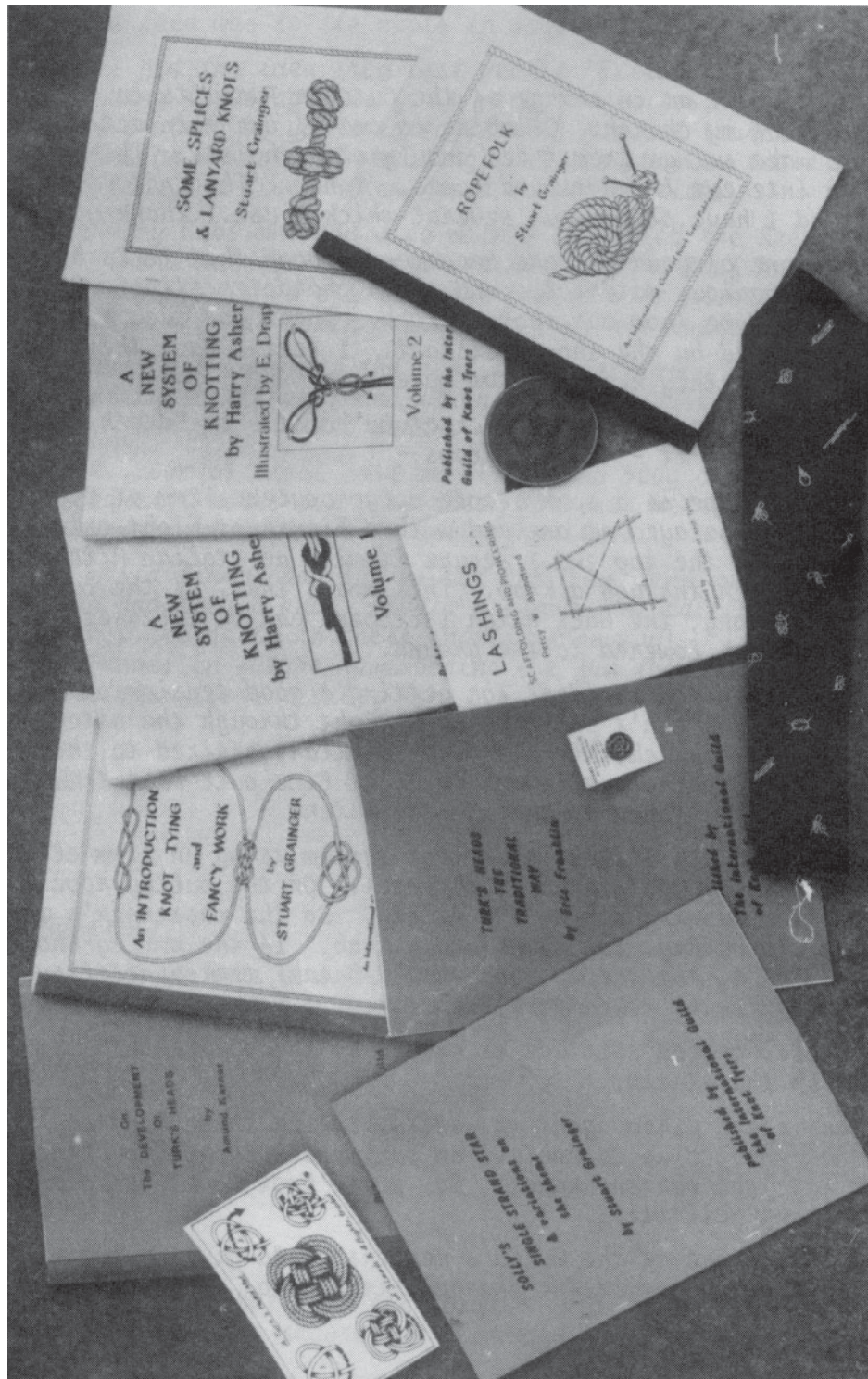
## **Definition**

### "IRISH PENDANT"

Derogatory nickname for a loose end of rope or twine left hanging or blowing free in the wind; anathema to I.G.K.T. members

# Shop Window

The illustration below features the I.G.K.T.'s various original book(let)s, in print just as long as stocks last, together with other items. Our unique postcards, with first rate drawings by Stuart Grainger that actually teach a knot, seem an especially good way to spread the Guild's gospel.



Photograph by Percy W BLANDFORD.

## Letters

Dear Geoffrey,

Concerning 'Knots in May (K.M. No. 18, p.21) , a description "KNOTS OF FLOWERS" is offered by Walter J. Dillings in the Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, VII (1915) .

Kind regards from  
20 Mar 81 Pieter van de Griend

Argjavegur 39,  
Argir ,  
FØROYAR (via Denmark)

Dear Mr. Budworth,

I am in charge of the Outdoor Pursuits in the young people's work of my church. Climbing is one of our main activities but we also make swings from trees and Tyrolean hoists. This has given me an interest in knots and ropes. I have 'The Knot Book' (your own book) and I have picked out several which I use ... thank you.

Can any one of your members recommend a book that tells how ropes are made, the various materials, and their characteristics? Recently I bought a 45m rope from our shop in York. There was such a variety, I had to be guided by the shop assistant. I feel I have the rope I wanted but I certainly need to know more.

Just for interest, the way I erect my hoist - or "death slide" as some people call it - is as follow:-

The pulley rope is a spun staple polypropylene 12mm at 2,030 kg.b.s. This is belayed at one end with a Figure-of-Eight onto a Krab-&-sling. At the top end I secure it with an Italian Hitch and slipped Half Hitch through a Krab. This means that, if the pulley stuck halfway along, the Half Hitch (slipped) can be released and the stranded passenger lowered to the ground.

The Italian Hitch is ideal for getting a good tension on the rope. Although you can't pull the rope tight through the hitch, an Adjustable Knot, Prusick, Klenhiest, or similar, affixed to the pulley rope as a tensioning rope allows a straight line pull past the hitch so the slack can be taken up through the hitch.

Parallel to this I erect a similar system using an 11 mm climbing rope with a screewgate Krab as a runner. On the pulley rope I also put a Krab running behind the pulley. So the passenger's weight is taken on the pulley, but then onto a Krab. If the pulley should break (and then if the pulley rope should break) the parallel system of climbing equipment would take the strain.

Of course, a good altitude is needed so the parallel system could take up the strain.

If this seems extravagant on safety, taking these kind of measures has enabled us to achieve an outstandingly good public liability rate for our insurance. So, your 'Knot Book' has played its part in our activities.

As I say, if one of the Guild's members could give me the title and publisher of a book on the characteristics of ropes, it would be good.

24 Jan 87

Yours sincerely  
Cliff BURRAGE

127 Carr Lane  
Acomb  
York YO2 5HL  
England

Dear Geoffrey

On June 21st. I and my other Cub Scout Leaders manned a base at the Essex County Cubs Fun Day at Gilwell Park labelled 'SPAGKNOTTI'. As the theme of the days activities was 'International' and the various Scout Districts were divided into Continents, the idea was to tie knots in spaghetti!

Did I get the idea from last year's 'Extravaganza'? Anyway, after cooking the spaghetti for a mere 10 minutes, it was easy to tie knots as long as you treated it with respect (pulling a knot tight takes on a whole new meaning). I was able to tie a Sheet Bend, Bowline and Clove Hitch (on a cocktail stick).

The many Cubs who had a go mainly attempted the Reef Knot or Granny. There were quite a few versions of the Reef Knot I'd never seen before. Finished efforts were placed on a piece of card and covered with film as mementos. Some Cubs ate their knots.

Most of the Cubs saw the knot tying initially as another chore, unfortunately, but then found it enjoyable because of the unusual material. One put it into words; "This is fun; this is messy"

Cost ... 60m of sisal cost me £1.49p and 500g of spaghetti was 33p. Spaghetti works out very cheap for each metre, although it is no use when constructing a fagpole from staves.

It was a tiring day for us but the Cubs went away pleased to be told they had tied a knot, albeit a simple one called a "Thumb Knot" (which they tie daily in their shoelaces anyway). Let's hope they approach knots in future remembering the fun they had this time, and that more knot tyers result.

3 Jul 87

Yours sincerely,  
Peter DYER

17 Gosfield Road  
High Garrett  
Braintree  
Essex CM7 5NZ  
England

Dear Geoffrey,

I have now found the mat diagram I sent you (K.M. No. 20, page 22) in Graumont & Hensel's "Encyclopedia of Knots & Fancy Rope Work" (page 317, plate 163, fig. 379). That will teach me to pay more attention in future

Regards,  
Neil HOOD

13 Catamore Court,  
South Hedland,  
W. Australia 6722.

Dear Geoffrey,

In "What's it All About?" (K.M. No. 20, page 13) John WOOSEY asks about the decorative knots on Japanese swords - a welcome change from the many reports

about the impractical ways in which Scouts tie their shoelaces.

There are three distinct types of Japanese sword; the Tachi is a long sword carried slung from the belt, cutting edge down. The Katana is carried thrust through the belt, cutting edge up, and the Wakizashi which is shorter than the Katana is worn in the same way. There is also a short dagger-like sword called Tanto.

When drawing a Katana or Wakizashi, the Saya or scabbard is likely to be pulled out of the belt (Obi) unless the scabbard is fastened either round the waist or the belt; with the braided cord called Sageo. The button-shaped fitting through which the Sageo passes also assists in keeping the scabbard in the belt and is called Kurikata. It is always placed on the outside of the scabbard when the sword is seen in the carrying position.

When not in use, swords are kept in a sword rack with the Sageo tied in a more or less elaborate knot. There are dozens of them, and all they have in common is that they are slipped knots which can be undone quickly by pulling both loose ends (when a Japanese warrior needed his sword he generally needed it quickly) and they are invariably decorative. The knots have no symbolic meaning and all those I have seen, including John WOOSEY's one which is certainly the most common, can be made without any tools.

In battle the Sageo could be used to tie back the long flowing sleeves of the costume, and they were often used to bind prisoners (when they were called Tasuki). If John is interested to try his hand at a few other decorative knots he can write to me and I will send him photocopies of some really complicated ones

14 Jul 87  
Yours sincerely,  
T.F. NOLF

1 Francis Street,  
Wick,  
Caithness KW1 5PZ,  
Scotland.

Dear Geoffrey,

Thanks for the latest copy of K.M. It was as much interesting as the previous 19 issues. I enclose a copy of page 209 of the Japanese book of knots 'ZUSEISU NIHON NO MUSUBI' in reply to John WOOSEY'S article "What's It All About?" Unfortunately I am not able to translate the text but there should not be any problem with that at the Japanese Embassy.

Can anyone help a non-English knottologist by clarifying the ,tight plural of Turk's Head? Is it Turk's Heads, Turks' Head, or Turks Heads. I hope some I.G.K.T. member is a better linguist than me, Webster and Oxford!

Many thanks and my best wishes for Happy Sailings and Safe Ports in Fair Winds and Smooth Seas to all those who put in all their time and effort to ensure the successful administration of the I.G.K.T. and editing of K.M.

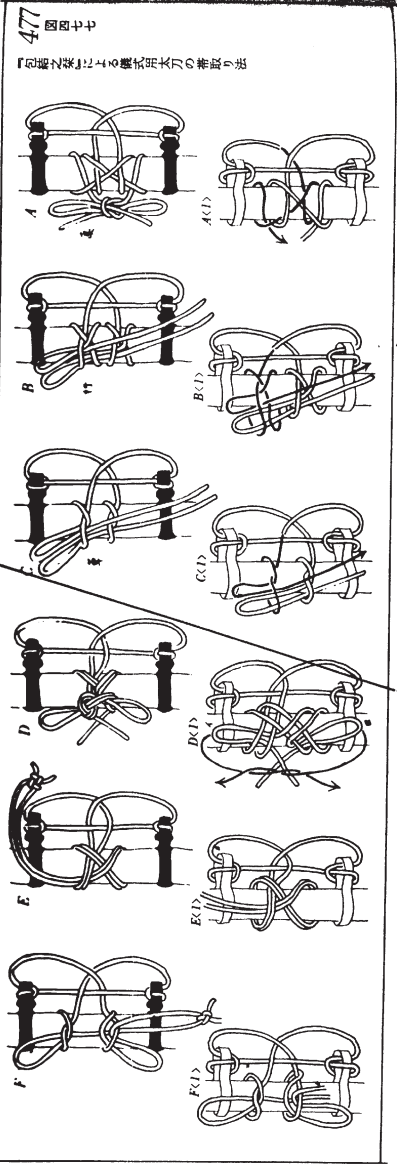
31 JUL 81  
Regards from  
a Swedish Knottologist  
Sten JOHANSSON

Skebokvamsvaegen 123  
S-12435 Bandhagen  
Sweden

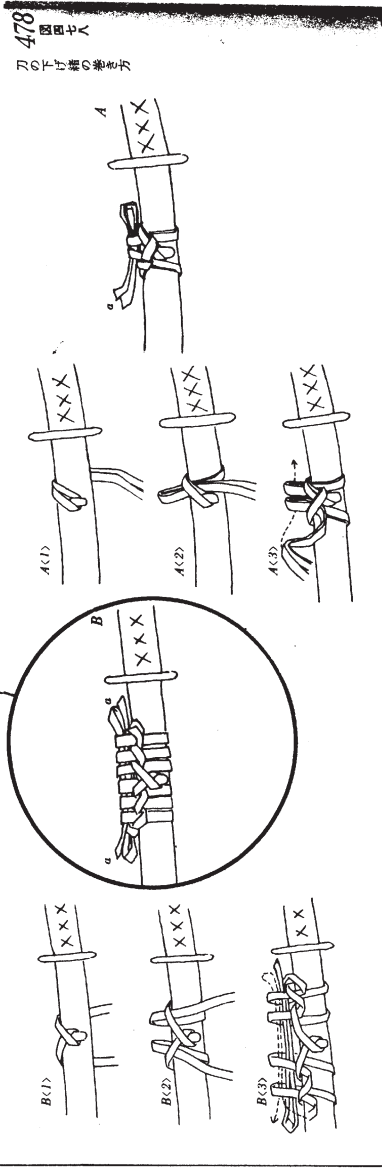
SEE LETTER (OPPOSITE) DATED 14 JUL 87 FROM T.F. NOLF

この図は、刃の下の糸の結び方を示している。図中の各ステップは、糸の結び方を示している。図中の各ステップは、糸の結び方を示している。

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477 図四十七  
「刃の下の糸の結び方」の各ステップ



478 図四十八  
「刃の下の糸の結び方」の各ステップ

209 糸の結び方



Dear Frank (HARRIS) ,

Thank you for the continual receipt of "KNOTTING MATTERS". It is much looked forward to and appreciated.

In the last issue No.20 there was one aspect of "Outdoor Survival Skills (or"Aboriginal Skills') -a subject that interests me particularly-and that was about making thread and cordage from plant materials. I have had little or no success in doing this, despite having tried various plants including Stinging Nettle which at one stage in our history was used for making a type of linen.

Is there anyone who can give me precise instructions, or point me in the right direction, as to how one extracts plant fibre, processes it, and spins it into cordage by hand, using only such resources as nature provides? I would be very pleased to hear from them, and most grateful, as I like not only reading and finding out about these skills, but being able to execute them myself.

Apart from making fire, this is a vital aboriginal skill, and one I would like to master.

20 Jul 87

Sincerely  
Joe PRATT

720 Clyne Court,  
Sketty Rock  
Sketty,  
Swansea,  
West Glamorganshire SA2 8HZ,  
South Wales.

## ***Effective Displays***

outlined by Geoffrey BUDWORTH  
& Ken YALDEN

Individuals sometimes ask us how to go about creating an I.G.K.T. display stand. Well, it depends who you are, where you will be, and what you aim to achieve. Are you a loud extrovert happy in front of a crowd, or a quiet and earnest type prepared to talk to people a few at a time? Do you simply have a knotted object or two of your own to show, or can you call upon a wide range of ropework from many pairs of hands? Is it a recruiting drive you are planning or merely a day out in the sun? Anyway, anyone can do something and make it work, as long as it is tailored to your resources. There are some general tips, acquired through doing things wrongly before the right way dawned on us, and these we gladly pass on.

### 1 . VENUES

Time, bear in mind, is the most precious commodity. When it's all gone there is no more. Presumably no display is a total waste of your time and energy; but, if you fail to entertain and educate the public and send them away knowing who we are (so that sooner or later another keen knot tyer discovers us -and joins the Guild), why did you do it? So choose each venue with care. Don't be content with a corner in your local library when you could be at the county's leisure centre. Mind you, biggest isn't always best. Geoff spent 4 exhausting days a couple of years ago at Britains leading craft show, surrounded by lively crowds of onlookers, but - as far as we know - didn't bring in a single new member.

Don't meekly accept it if a show organiser tries to foist on you the worst position in the layout of stalls, or one that doesn't suit your display. The man who carves totem poles from tree trunks is used to being out in the rain; but, if you have borrowed a number of fine and irreplaceable bits of knotwork, it won't suit you. Say so. Don't even unload the car. Politely point out that you might as well go home again. An alternative spot will be found for you. It always works.

Only sell goods if it is allowed.

Always be prepared to demonstrate; stall rentals are often cheaper if you undertake to entertain visitors to the show this way.

## 2 . ADMIN.

Some organisers may offer to pay YOU for appearing. Ask a realistic sum, including your expenses. Whatever arrangements are agreed, have them committed to writing.

Always take advantage of publicity which is offered you. Think what it would cost if you had to buy such advertising. If you are invited to submit a few words for inclusion in the show's programme (whether it's 50 or 500), do it... or find someone who can. It's too good a chance to miss. Similarly, give interviews to the Media in its many forms. Be clear and unambiguous. They do not generally misquote you, but, if you leave them scope to interpret, they may take a line you don't like. Writers and broadcasters alike tend to play knots for laughs. Well, a little lightheartedness does no harm... but don't allow to go unchecked the impression that we're a load of eccentric odd-balls. Always stress, in order, (a) the practical nature of knots and ropework, hinting tactfully that those who lack such skills are not very useful, and (b) the inherent decorative possibilities.

## 3 REQUIREMENTS

- + a flat display surface - anything from a trestle table (or two or three) to a prefabricated market stall - covered with a suitable material to show off the exhibits;
- + adequate seating for you and your helper(s);
- + an overhead framework for hanging displays, notices, etc;
- + portable screens, backcloths, boxes and other containers;
- + a range of finished display items from fine art to crude craft matched to the venue and crowd (predominantly nautical stuff for a boat show but appropriate fancywork for a craft fair);
- + tools, books, and accessories (shackles, thimbles, deadeyes, etc.) to display;
- + a few working tools for demonstrations, probably no more than a fid or spike, a wire loop, and a knife;
- + a few manageable lengths of rope and smaller cordage for demonstrating;
- + cut lengths of smaller stuff for visitors to have a go at knot-tying (sell them at cost price and they can then keep them);
- + one or two half-completed articles add interest, and also show just how clever ropework really is.

## Notes

If outdoors and exposed to the weather, everything must be anchored down.

Even moderate gusts of wind can lift an entire stall up-and-away like an ungainly kite. We've seen it. Books and papers must be weighted. Also knotwork gets dusty and dirty. Have a small brush handy to clean them off at intervals. A marquee, secured with guyropes, is ideal if it is big enough for folk to step inside and walk around. Then you can even have a compartment to retire to for privacy and a drink and chat.

Children, and even adults, appreciate a cheap item to buy as a souvenir in passing. Guild postcards, lengths of "real" cordage, beads, the choice is yours.

Whatever assembly you plan, 1.5 metres x 1.0 m is about the maximum size for any one piece which will fit into a European hatch-back car.

A Black & Decker 'Workmate' bench or its equivalent is a useful base for parts of the display.

Indoors, it's easier, but consider enhancing your static display with lighting. Have some items towards the front which visitors can handle isolate valuable articles which you don't want touched.

#### 4 . ACTIVITIES

##### (a) Demonstrations

- (i) Entertaining and educational mixtures of stories and busy fingers. Keep them short (3-5 minutes). Have 2 or 3 prepared and use them in rotation, so that even the visitor who returns to your stall can have some variation. Start talking and tying knots and a crowd will gather. You don't need a magnetic personality; we're lucky with our subject.
- (ii) In between times, talk to individuals. Keep it simple: don't bemuse and bewilder. Be complicated only with those who invite it and can cope. Sell knot tying and ropeworking in any way you can. Point out to the preacher that it might make a powerful topic for a sermon. Tempt the potter into glazing a few knot patterns on his wares. Ask the schoolteacher to consider a knotwork project with the class. Teach the housewife a useful knot her husband doesn't know.
- (iii) Have a half-finished ambitious piece of work nearby and work on it sometimes.
- (iv) Give V.I.P.s a conducted tour of your stand. It will be such a curiosity (amid the usual potters, spinners, weavers, wooden toy makers, etc.) that the show's organiser will make a beeline for you, bringing Press and visiting celebrities. Act naturally.

##### (b) Workshops

- (i) You can simply teach knots to anyone who is interested and willing to pause awhile and try their hand throughout the day

- (ii) Better might be to display set times at which you will be available to teach (say) 6 people at a time a prearranged knot or two. Try the Constrictor Knot or the Angler's Loop, or whatever you choose.

(c) Games/Puzzles

Have a corner where people can play a game or solve a puzzle. There can be a modest charge. The Guild favours quoits, the rope kind. The fastest time for tying the original 6 tenderfoot Scout knots is also popular. Have a prize for the best of the day (or show). It is hoped to have shortly an official Guild certificate which can be signed and presented as a souvenir on just such occasions.

Don't put out complicated manipulative puzzles unless you have endless patience to untangle them after every failure. Quick "now-it's-entangled/now-it's-free" puzzles (e.g. nail or bent wire puzzles) are better, provided they're allied to knotting.

5 MISCELLANEOUS

Knots are an art, a craft and a science. . Have something of each on display, if possible.

Have an abundance of items but NOT a cluttered stall.

Label everything concisely

Have books, photographs, and more detailed graphics available

Obtain a "membership packet" from the Honorary Secretary, which contains all you need to cope with a serious membership enquiry (Don't leave this expensive stationery out for all to take.)

Keep a knot book close by for quick reference. Ashley is best. Then, if you are asked about something of which you are uncertain, you can say; "It will be easier if I show you." You then turn up the required subject, and look over the enquirer's shoulder!

Be ready to suggest suitable books to buy when people ask about them. Recommend particularly those by Guild members.

The 2 main aims of putting on these displays are, we suppose, firstly to discover those rare individuals with knot-tying in their blood who do not yet realise that the Guild exists for them, and secondly to secure converts to our pursuit. While we wait for these souls to pass by, subordinate goals are to impress and gain the respect of others who will spread word of what we do and where we can be found. We are also pleased to entertain and educate lay folk.

Guild display stands may be grand or modest ... but they MUST portray the highest possible standard. Poor quality, untidy finishes, inappropriate materials (we've seen so-called "traditional' cats-o'-nine-tails made in synthetic cordage! Why bother?), should have no place with us. Oddly, we offend worst of all (and Ken gets cross about it) at our own meetings, yet public and guests often have free access. We should be more on our guard and discipline ourselves to higher standards.

## REMEMBER

"Efficiency" ..... is doing things right  
(the world is cluttered with efficient  
people, but they're not often very  
successful)  
"Effectiveness" ..... is DOING THE RIGHT THINGS.

From picking the venue at which you will present the Guild to the public, to deciding what sort of image you will project, aim to be EFFECTIVE.

## **Amendments**

### **1**

'TURKS HEADS - THE TRADITIONAL WAY'

by Eric FRANKLIN, published by the I.G.K.T. (1985)

page 7, first complete paragraph, lines 3 & 4, after (fig. 29),  
AMEND "over/under/over" to read "under/over/under".

### **2**

'KNOTS & CRIME'

by Geoffrey BUDWORTH, published by the Police Review  
Publishing Co. Ltd. (1985)

page 67, Group III, fig. (e1)  
AMEND over/under, sequence so that-existing Overhand Knot  
(wrong) becomes a Marlinespike Hitch (correct).

## **Poem**

An extract from the Ironbridge Gorge Museum's  
Information Sheet No. 6 - 'Shropshire Tragedies'

SUDDEN DEATH OF THREE POOR COLLIERS (Ketley 06.12.1851)

by Jeremiah Morgan

(3rd. verse)           Pritchard and Hayward and Rigby,  
                          Two of them men, and one a boy,  
                          The rope it broke and down they fell,  
                          What shrieks and cries, no one can tell.

(4th. verse)           What shrieks and cries, no one can tell.  
                          In the dead hour of the night,  
                          Some evil person cut the rope,  
                          And two were killed at a stroke.

(12th. verse)         To any person that can tell,  
                          How the sad accident befell,  
                          They may receive one hundred pound, .  
                          If out the mischief can be found

## Bad knot 'killed a daredevil'

A YOUNG parachutist-undergoing a test to join an organisation of daredevils- died because he tied a granny knot in his static line an inquest heard yesterday.

Guy Gibbard, 25, was killed after he jumped from Cheddar Gorge in Somerset. Friends who were with him fled from the scene of the tragedy, although they later came forward.

Mr Michael Rose, West Somerset coroner said: "It does them no credit that they scarpered at such a time."

The Taunton inquest heard that Mr Gibbard, of Westbury on Trym, Avon, was trying to join the BASE club -an American organisation which specialises in spectacular jumps and is frowned on by the British Parachute Association.

His father, Mr Paul Gibbard, told the inquest in a statement that his son had made more than 200 parachute jumps.

Mr Timothy Osborne, 25, of Beer Street, Yeovil, Somerset, also a parachutist, was with Mr Gibbard before the fatal jump. He said a mountaineering rope was tied to a tree and attached to the static line which would open the parachute.

Warrant Officer Douglas Hall, an RAF expert who inspected the parachute, said the malfunction was probably due to a granny knot, which would come undone very easily.

Verdict: Accidental death.

## Risky Reef

WORSE than being unaware of the unreliability of a Granny Knot must be believing that a Reef Knot is a secure all-purpose holdfast.\*

Virginia Hunt Newman - a respected swimming teacher - who, living in California, taught the children of many film stars there, describes in her book 'Teaching an Infant to Swim' (published by Angus & Robertson (U.K.) Ltd. (1968) how to join together a rope and towel to make a harness in which babies may be safely suspended in the pool. She writes;

"I wasn't in the Navy, but somewhere along the line I learned to tie a reef knot, and I have found that it does the most efficient job of staying tied. Ask your friendly neighbourhood Boy Scout to explain the reef knot - and how to tell it from a granny."

\* (For anyone still unsure, the Reef Knot should be limited to bandages and parcels. It is NOT a reliable knot for the workplace and could even prove dangerous. Any Scout who is contacted, 19 years on, by a reader of Virginia Newman's book should recommend something more stable.)

## Quotation

"These are the good fellows whose duty it is to steer our ship, to haul on the ropes and do strange things with our sails in positions which must surely be perilous, so high they go! ..... they create marvellous structures from the very substance of rope itself! I had not known what can be done with rope! I had seen here and there on land ingenuities of wood carving in imitation of rope; here I saw rope carved into the imitation of wood! ..... They seem to be people of infinite ingenuity.

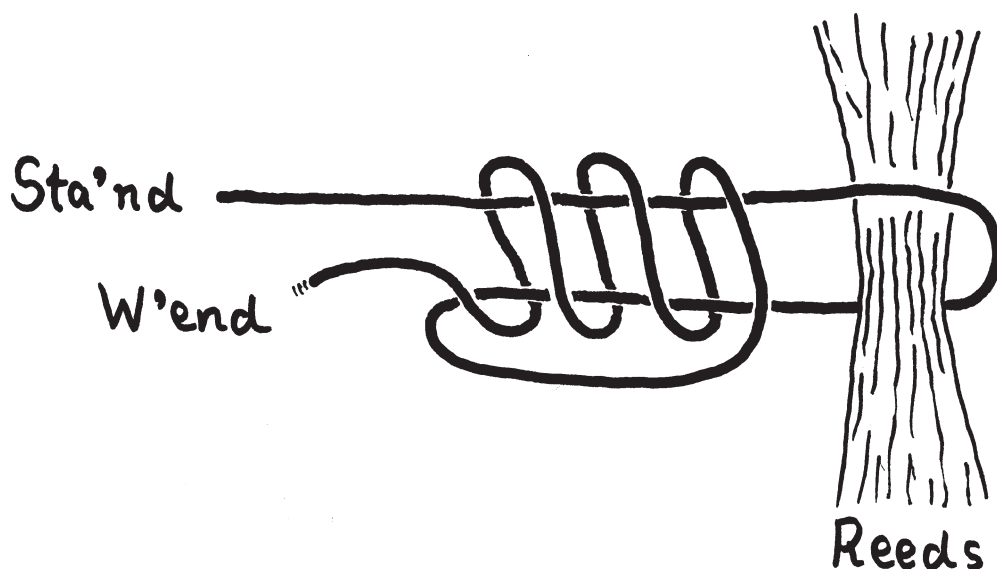
'RITES OF-PASSAGE' by William Golding (no other particulars available)

## "Reed Orl Abaht It"

(For readers coping with English as a second language, the extraordinary spelling of the phrase "Read All About It" tries to imitate the sound of this familiar cry as it was used by London's street newspaper sellers. It is also a pun on the content of the item that follow.)

You may recognise the Duncan Loop (below) used by anglers to tie a leader to a hook, etc. See pages 70-71 of 'Practical Fishing & Boating Knots' by Lefty Kreh and Mark Sosin for details.

I.G.K.T. member Mark NASH-WILLIAMS was recently shown the knot by Alan Briggs, a Cambridge Scouter. He, it seems, had learnt it from an elderly Norfolk reed-cutter who explained that it was used for tying bundles of cut reeds in his part of the world.



## *Preview of forthcoming attractions!*

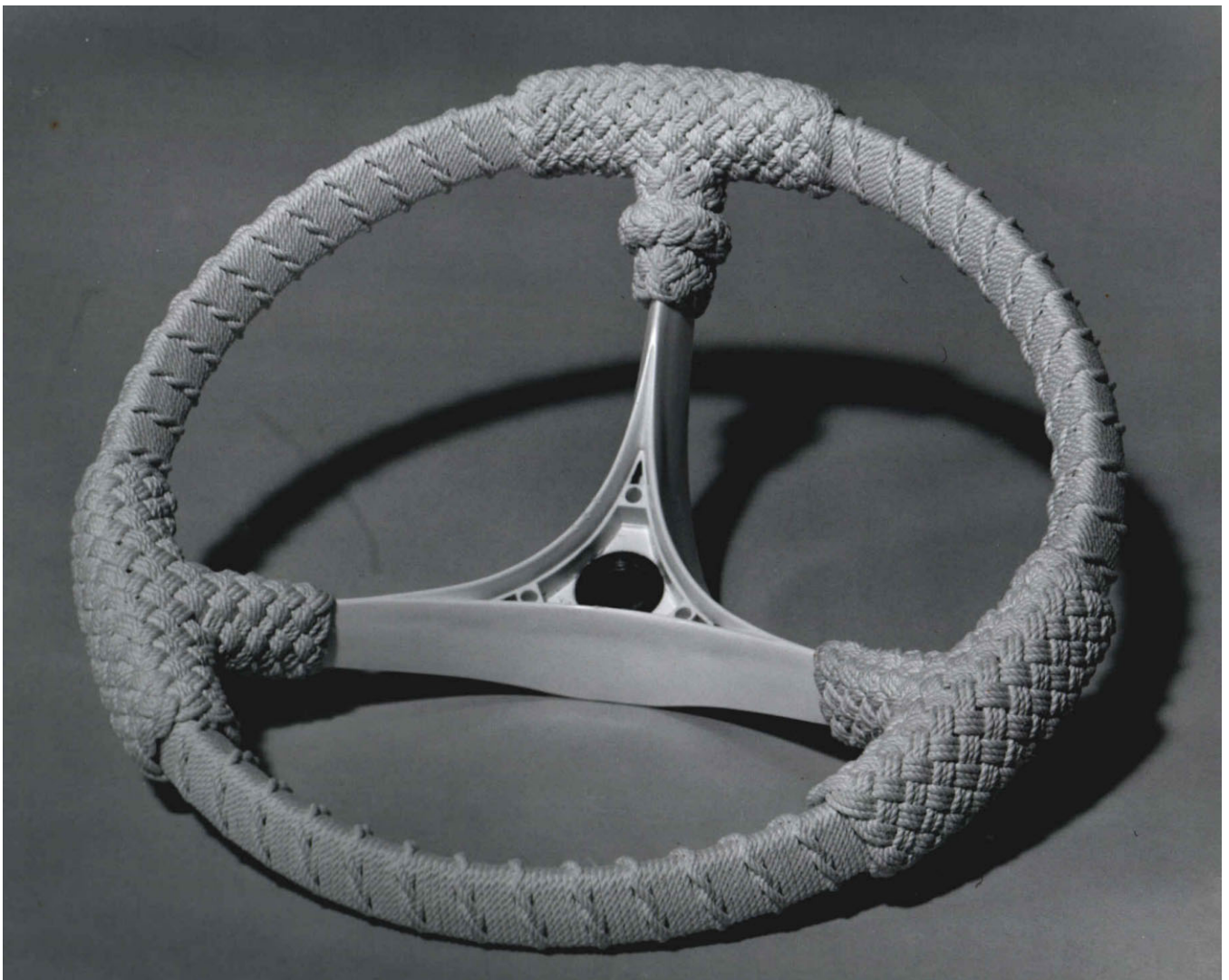
IN THE NEXT (AND SUCCEEDING) ISSUES of 'K.M.' it is planned to include one or two prints of actual photographs; and the mere photocopies shown here give some idea of what a treat that will be. Well, we've all paid our contributions and waited patiently while our doughty officers and committee husbanded our cash and built up a sensible reserve. Now we can afford a superb (for a humble newsletter) illustration or two of what the best of us can do these days with a bit of thought and a ball of cord.

Many of us use Ashley's 'Book of Knots' to learn from, but turn to Graumont & Hensells 'Encyclopedia of Knots & Fancy Work' for ideas of what to do. When you know how to do it, sight of a finished article can be all you need to set you going on a fresh project, a new design, another discovery...but the Encyclopedia's a trifle dated now.

The two photocopies here may give little notion of the beauty of the knotwork creations pictured ... but to isolated knot craftsmen and women they can be the kiss of life to a flagging imagination. With the next issue's photographs we should glimpse a little of the beauty too.

HANDSOME PRACTICAL WHEEL COVER (below)

by Erie DAHLIN, in Santa Barbara on California's Pacific coastline,  
North of Los Angeles in the U.S.A.





TWO ELEGANT TABLE LAMPS

by Jim NICHOL (deceased) of Largo Bay,  
in the Kingdom of Fife, Scotland.

