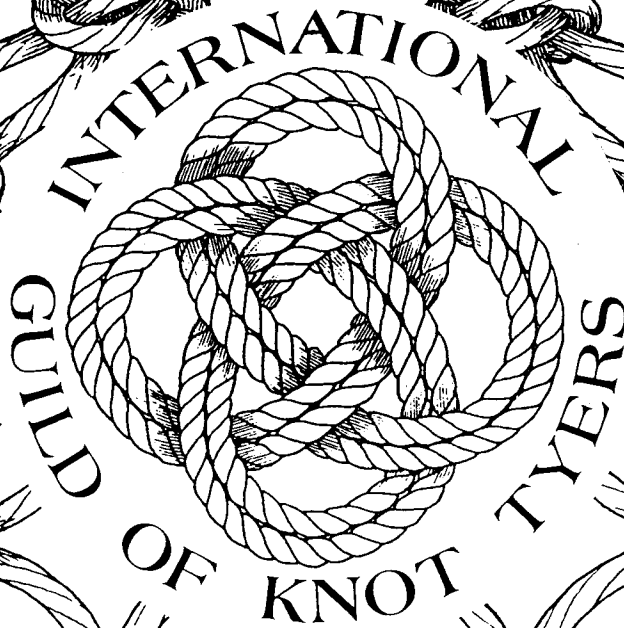


# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL  
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

## KNOTTING MATTERS

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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PRESIDENT - Jan VOS

Issue 33  
October (Autumn) 1990

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Seniors.....£12.50;  
Families.....£19.00;  
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Taxpayers in UK - We would prefer a covenanted subscription, as we can then reclaim tax paid.

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SECRETARY  
Frank HARRIS  
14 Games House  
Springfield Grove  
Charlton  
London SE7 7TN  
ENGLAND

Tel 081 858 6728  
Or UK+81 858 6728

EDITOR  
Robert JACKSON  
10 St Helier House  
Melville Rd  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B16 9NG  
ENGLAND

Tel 021 454 0849  
Or UK+21 454 0849

### BRADFORD '90 - An Independent View

"I was drawn to Bradford Cathedral to find the South Porch crammed with both exhibitors and practitioners. While doing nothing for the ease of progress round a very cramped space the enthusiasm was exhilarating....

"The exhibits ranged from small decorative pieces, including the ubiquitous macrame owls and traditional charms to protect sailors, to two large, wonderfully designed hangings made by a Dutch sailor during his long voyages. Another Dutchman was constructing a heavy boat fender...

"Though some of the artefacts were designed for the tourist market there was much that was new and of interest.

From a review by Margaret SEAGROATT in the Journal for Weavers, Spinners & Dyers 155 July 1990.

(This issue's editorial is on page 2.)

## EDITORIAL

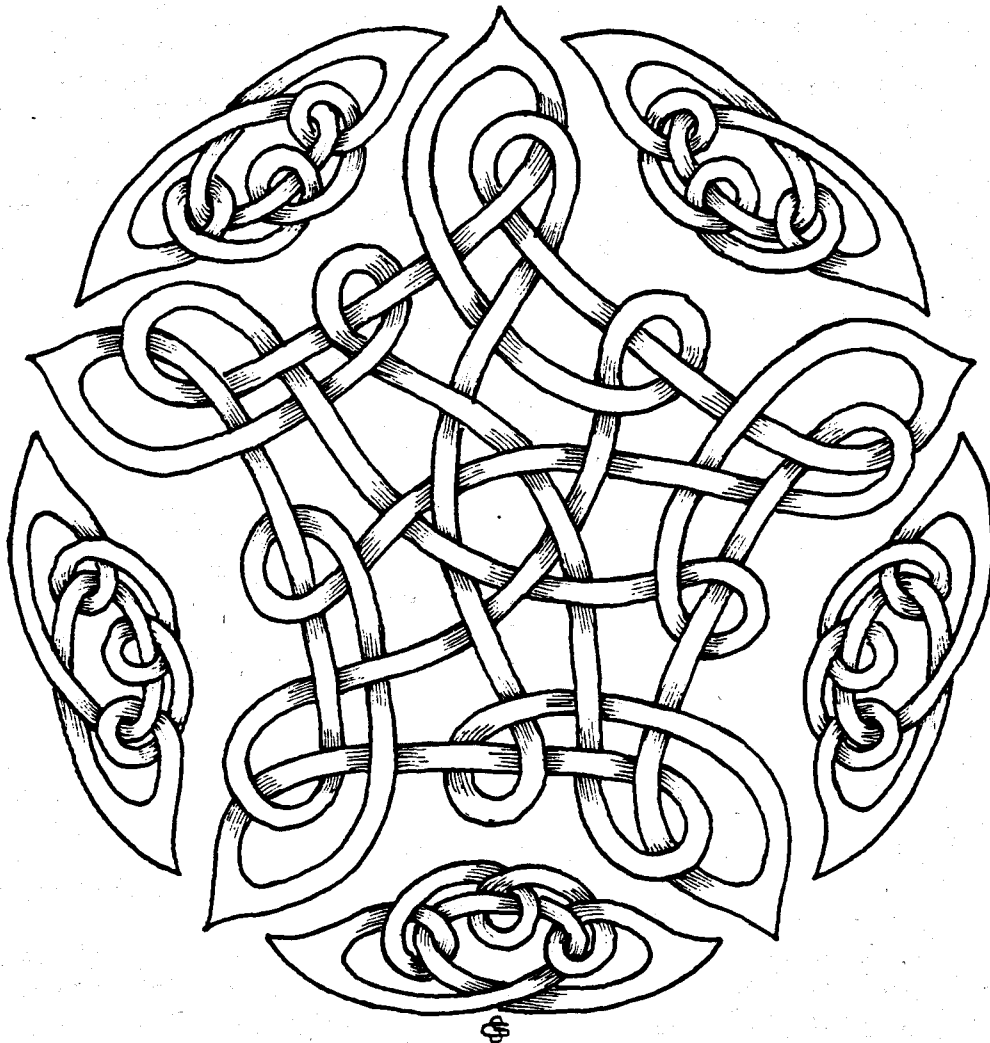
Le 7 août 1990 s'est Créé au bord du lac Léman la section Francophone de l'I.G.K.T. La création d'une section francophone de notre Guild est une section positive avec seulement trois buts.

1. Faire connaître la Guild et son travail.
2. Partager notre "savoir" avec des non-anglophones.
3. Dernier point mais *le plus important*: permettre à nos Francophones de participer à nos activités et de répandre leur savoir parmi les "Noeudtiers" du monde.

These words were composed by I.G.K.T. member Chris EATON, of St Légier in Switzerland. Chris insists very heavily that the section of the I.G.K.T. which he is striving to develop will be *French speaking* thus embracing Switzerland, Belgium, Quebeque, France and French speaking Africa.

The 7th August 1990 marks a major event in the history of the International Guild of Knot Tyers and is another remarkable achievement in Knot Year '90.

Well done indeed, Chris!



A Seasonal Motif from Stuart GRAINGER

## BOOK REVIEW

KNOTS (Chapman's Nautical Guides) by Brion TOSS, illus. Gae Pilon.

Price: \$14.95

ISBN 0-688-09415-5

Published by Hearst Marine Books,  
William Morrow & Company Inc.,  
105 Madison Avenue,  
New York, NY 10016  
U.S.A.

Brion TOSS will be known to I.G.K.T. members for his brief yet rather painful visit to London in June 1986 for the I.G.K.T. Knotting Extravaganza - a sudden back injury turned his attention from international knotting to English ceilings.

To others, especially in the United States, Brion is better known as an expert rigger and ropeworker; famous for his regular articles in 'Sail' and 'Woodenboat' Magazines, his earlier book 'The Rigger's Apprentice' - sold in the U.K. as 'The Complete Rigger Wire and Rope'. He has also broadcast as Mr Knot and hosted and written a knot tying video, 'Sailors Knots and Splices'.

In 192 pages we see Brion's enthusiasm for knotting - through chapters on binding knots, hitches, loop knots, bends, splices, belays, coil handling and whippings and seizings. There are also sections on tackles and a little fancywork. In all, over a hundred knots are explained and discussed - advantages, disadvantages - with clear line drawings by full-time illustrator Gae Pilon.

As with Brion's earlier writing this book leaves the reader itching to tie knots!

R.L.J.

## LETTER

Dear Editor,

As a new member may I mention the Gourock ropeworks (now defunct) that flourished up here on the river Clyde from 1736 until recently - having works at Port Glasgow, near Greenock, and at Govan.

In 1745 it was so successful that Bonnie Prince Charlie demanded 'donations' from them for his campaigns to capture England.

I am thoroughly enjoying my attempts at this fascinating hobby.

CORDially yours,

J Stewart  
14 June '90

71 Blairmore Rd  
Greenock  
PA15 3JP

(Mr Stewart - there are several artefacts from the Port Glasgow factory in the Greenock Museum. At my last visit they had a set of rope scales, a device for measuring rope coil lengths according to the rope's size and its moisture content - R.J.)

## KNOTTING IN DORDRECHT

Dear Robert,

Just a line to you on my set up in Dordrecht for teaching beginners to knot, giving them the tools so that they can go on on their own. It gives me great pleasure to see people advance in a trade they did not know existed before - it is like opening a window for them.

In November last year I was approached by a friend at a local community centre in Dordrecht to put on a new ropework course - all voluntary and without pay, and a course not offered by any other centre in the area.

The cost of materials was met by a grant of Fl.600 (Fl.5 = £1.70) from the centre which was recouped partly by way of a fee from each person attending the course. The centre advertised the knotting course in the local papers and on the Town T.V.

Initially we had 24 applicants for the course but we had to cut the numbers down to 15, which is really the limit for a class otherwise you cannot give attention to everyone. Also I did not have teaching experience! I bought over 1,000m of different sized cords and rope, pliers, knives and electrical tape. I also copied a lot of knot charts. (The only things not included in the students fees were coffee and minerals - they were sold by the centre.

The objective of the course was for each student to produce an original, artistic display board about 60cm x 40cm holding around 40 knots, all to be learned in 15 weeks.

Starting in February with the help of my brother Louis we had a class of 15 which had dwindled to 11 halfway into the course. We kept about this number until the end. Half were women and most had a yachting background. I found that preparing for each class took a lot of time - a two hour class needed almost two days preparation!

We had a very pleasant atmosphere and were all rather sad when tim ran out at the end of May. At our farewell coffee party one of the class read a poem composed specially for me.

We did not reach our goal of being fully self financed - we finished Fl.275 short in our calculations, but the social club funds met this and my expenses were fully repaid. An average of 9 attended each lesson and 3 joined the guild - a nice result.

Best of all, 10 signed on for the next course in October, which will run for over 20 weeks and will be suitable for advanced knotters as well as beginners.

We will have all of this new ropework displayed in September.

But what this does show is that there is really a need for teaching ropework. I would say, with a little bit of personal initiative we can all do something to propagate the guild.

With best regards,

Jan C. Hoefnagel.  
3rd June '90

23 Willy Martensstr  
Dordrecht 3314XV  
Nederland

## KNOTS IN HERALDRY by Brian LAMB

Friar in his "NEW DICTIONARY OF HERALDRY"(1987) explains the functions of knots in Heraldry as follows:

*"Intertwined cords in the form of slackened, symmetrical knots are widely used in Armory and are particularly effective as badges. Clearly the origins of many knots are practical, though others may be traced to the interlaced patterns of Celtic art and decoration. Knots are generally named after the families who adopted them, and are often used in conjunction with badges acquired through marriage and inheritance, the badge of the lords Hastings, for example, in which the sickle of Hungerford is united by a knot with the garb of the Peverels".*  
(see Sketch 17)

Serpents, a snake-like reptile, in Heraldry are most frequently "nowed"(see Sketch 1), that is, interlaced in a knot, or "double nowed".

(see Sketch 2).

The serpent is an heraldic device to symbolise "medicine" and may be found "erect" or "glissant", that is, gliding.

In the "nowed" form(see Sketch 1) it is in the form of a Figure-of-eight knot(ASHLEY 420 and 520), in the "double nowed" form(see Sketch 2), it is the form of Ashleys Intermediate Knot (ASHLEY 521).

Knots, or intertwined cords, found in the various volumes on Heraldry(see bibliography at end) are:

THE STAFFORD KNOT: Borne as a badge by the Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham(see Sketch 3). This is the heraldic name for the Thumb Knot(ASHLEY 515).

THE BOU(R)CHIER KNOT: This is used by the Hon. Robert Mitford Bowker of Cape Colony and whilst, on first glance(see Sketch 4), looking like a Reef Knot, is in fact a Granny Knot(ASHLEY 80)



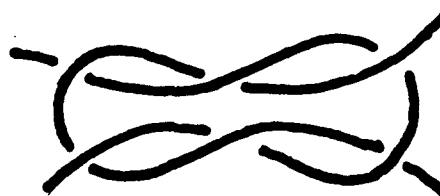
Sketch 1.



Sketch 2.



Sketch 3.



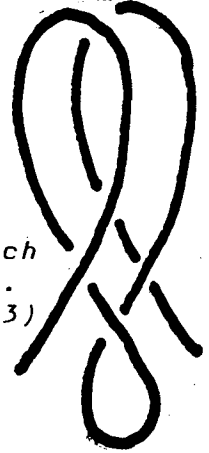
Sketch 4.

THE HENEAGE KNOT: This is composed of three loops; two on top with one below (see Sketches 5 and 6), if the knot were pulled taut it would collapse or form a Thumb Knot (ASHLEY 515). It is a purely figurative knot form. The two forms shown are from Brooke-Little (1975) that shows a crossing at the top and the centre of the two upper loops, and Boutell (1983), also by Brooke-Little, shows no crossings.

Sketch  
5.  
(1975)

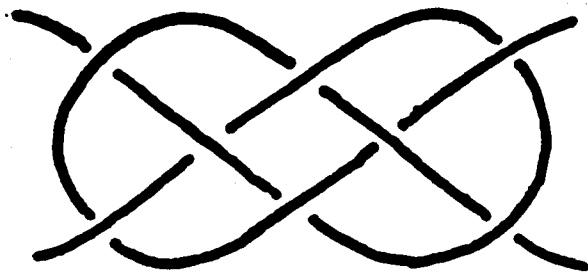


Sketch  
6.  
(1983)



The Heneage Knot is borne with the motto-*"Fast tho' untied"*.

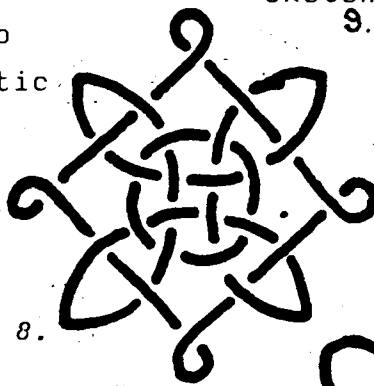
THE WAKE or ORMONDE KNOT: On the assumption that the Wake family are descended from the famous Hereward, called "Wake". The Wake knot (see Sketch 7) has been attributed to him, and commemorates him in the crest of the Isle of Ely County Council. The Wake or Ormonde Knot is the more well known Carrick Bend (ASHLEY 1428). According to Ashley, if the Carrick Bend is tied in needlework, so that all four ends are to be employed, it is called a Josephine Knot.



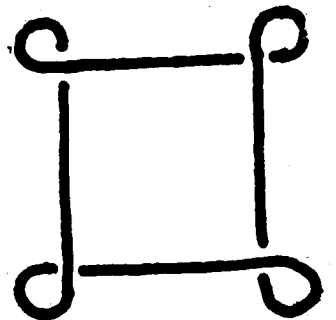
Sketch 7.

THE LACY KNOT: This is allusive to its name and appears on the counterseal of Roger de Lasci, Constable of Chester, 1179-1211. It is also similar to the strap-work on Celtic Crosses. It is doubtful whether the Lacy Knot, unless formed and mounted on a firm base; or wired through the cord, would stand as an unsupported form.

Sketch 8.

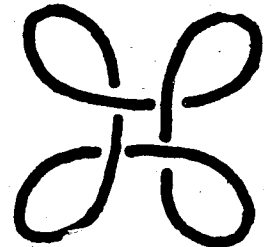


Sketch  
9.



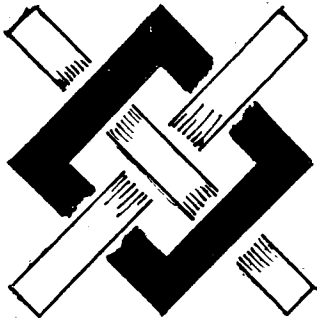
THE BOWEN KNOT: Again, like the Lacy Knot, the Bowen Knot, is allusive to its name, ie: Bow-en, or four bows; which is a double allusion by the forming of four bows, or loops, each bearing a resemblance to one form of the Greek letter "B".

Sketch 10.

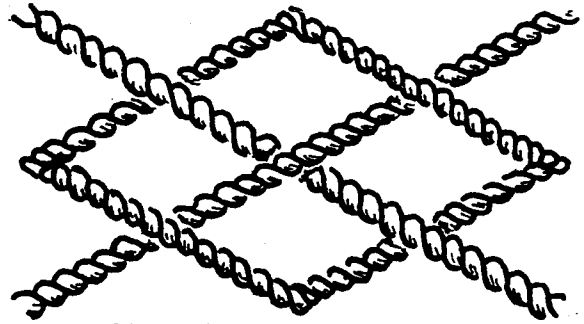


Brooke-Little (1975) shows a square of cord with each corner looped (see Sketch 9), and Boutell (1983) shows a smaller closed and flower-like form (see Sketch 10).

THE HARRINGTON KNOT or FRET: This is derived from the arms of the Harrington family and is assumed to suggest a herring-net(see Sketch 11 and 12)



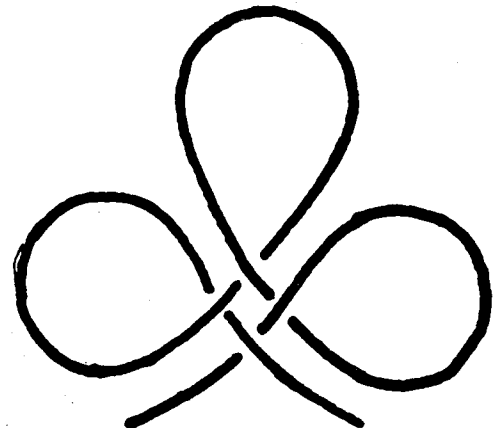
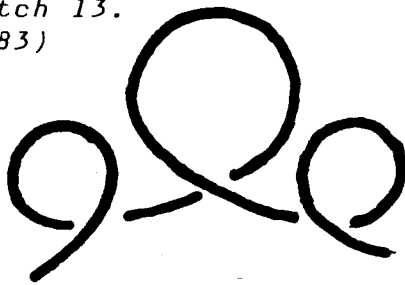
Sketch  
11.



Sketch 12.

THE HUNGERFORD KNOT: This shows three loops, and brings back memories of tying a sheepshank from three overlapping loops by pulling the inner, or central, loop through the outer loops. The Hungerford Knot can be formed into a sheepshank but the left-hand loop should be reversed to show a crossover as in the other two loops. Sketch 13 shows Boutell's (1983) form of three loops spread out.

Sketch 13.  
(1983)



Sketch 14.  
(1987)

Sketch 14 shows Friar(1987) in a more symmetrical form, more like a clover leaf(ASHLEY 1162).

THE FRIARS KNOT: This is an open Cat's Paw formed about a rope (see Sketch 15) (ASHLEY 1891 and 2164)

Sketch 15.



THE CAVENDISH KNOT: This is the well-known and easily tied stopper knot or Figure-of-eight(see Sketch 1 and 16)

(ASHLEY 420 and 520)

Sketch 16.





OTHER KNOTS: Some other knots are shown and described in the following badges:

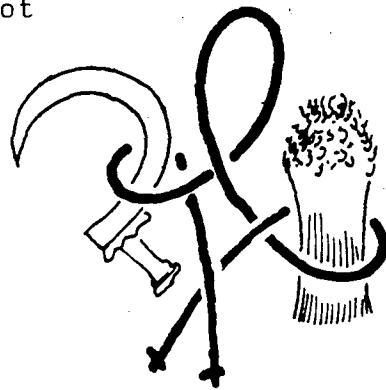
LORD DACRE of GILSLAND: The heraldic description is- *"a knot gules linking a silver escallop (from the Dacre arms) with a ragged staff argent"*.

This comprises a "form" of the Hungerford knot with a Clove Hitch (ASHLEY Chapter 15), round the ragged staff and looped through the lower loop, linking and tying the escallop and forming a Dacre knot. (see Sketch 17)



Sketch 17.

LORD HASTINGS AND HUNGERFORD: The knot unites the Hungerford Sickle with the "garb" of the Peverels. (see Sketch 18)

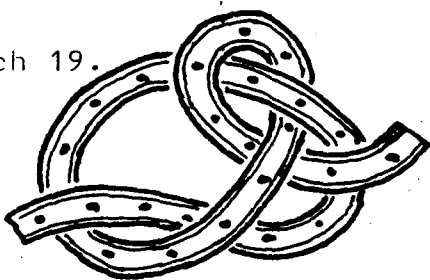


Sketch 18.

In Elvin(1969), plate 43 shows some other knots-

ANNE OF BOHEMIA: This is depicted or tied with a belt in an open or loose form, and comprises two entwined loops. When tightened it forms an Intermediate Knot (ASHLEY 521). (see Sketch 19)

Sketch 19.



Sketch 20.

A WRESTLING COLLAR: This is illustrated in Elvin(1969) plate 43 item 43; and Fox-Davies(1892) plate 165 item 12. It has not been identified due to the bad illustration and any information would be appreciated(see Sketch 20).

In Papworth's Ordinary(1961 of 1874) under Knot are given- LONG BOWSTRING MAKERS COMPANY. LONDON. A hank or knot of bowstrings, on a chief three bows.

(\* see note at end.)

COMPANY OF SILK THROWERS. LONDON. This company were incorporated in 1630 and show three bundles or hanks of silk, on a chief a silk throwers mill.

COTTON FAMILY. GLOUCESTER. (three) "*over all as many cotton hanks*".

- Combermine: three hanks of cotton.
- three cotton hanks.
- three bundles of cotton.
- of Elmslie: three love-knots.

\* GARB: This is a wheatsheaf. The word 'garb' is of old French/German origin, it is now obsolete in modern English useage, except when used in Heraldry (see Sketch 18)

The forgoing is not a definitive study of the knots used in Heraldry, but is only a write-up of the knots the writer has noticed whilst carrying out family history research. It does show, however, what is available for a more in-depth study of the subject. It would form the subject for a display showing the knots, and possibly the crests, used in Heraldry.

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Brian Lamb.  
11 Eastfield Rise.  
Holton Le Clay.  
Grimsby.  
South Humberside.  
DN36 5AJ

**KNOTS TO YOU**

Dear Frank,

A special interest for me is the search for a true method of teaching the tying of knots and marlinespike in general.

I have taught knot tying since the 1930's when I was a Boy Scout and as a leader in scouting. During the last 24 years, as a member of the United States Coastguard Auxiliary, I have been teaching classes and individuals. My wife and I have been sailors for 25 years and have had a power vessel for the past 6 years.

In many years of teaching the "Arts of a Sailor" I have learned some methods which help me. For instance I found that if, before I started, I sat next to a student holding the line it was easier for me to hold the line the same way and develop the knot using the capability of the student.

Trying to learn from someone facing you is always difficult. Do you reverse your hand or not? The side-by-side method is especially helpful when teaching someone who is left handed if the teacher is right handed. A good marlinespike teacher will become somewhat both right and left handed.

Most teach each knot as if it were the only knot in existence, without relating it to other knots. If you think about various knots and how they are tied, it becomes apparent that they are related in many ways. When we teach mathematics, reading, etc., we expect to build on previously learned skills. We should do the same when teaching knot tying.

I have written a short booklet called "KNOTS TO YOU" on how to successfully teach basic knots. Many instructors have used this technique and found it very useful. I hope to make a video of "Knots To You" sometime.

Barry Binns

24 March '90

101 Highland Greens No.3  
Port Ludlow  
WA98365  
U.S.A.

*KNOTS TO YOU* is a 36 page soft bound A4 booklet produced by Barry Binns with drawings by Else Stitt - 1986, revised 1988.

Available from Barry, price on application.

**DERRICK**

A condemned English criminal turned public executioner, Derrick (active around 1598-1610), may have been the one who tortured and hanged Guy Fawkes. In James 1's reign the scaffold itself became known as a 'Derrick'. Thus - due to its appearance - the familiar old ship's hoist, with its topping lift and guys, is said to have acquired its name from this hangman of the Stuart era.

## NEW(?) FARMER'S KNOTS

Dear Mr Budworth,

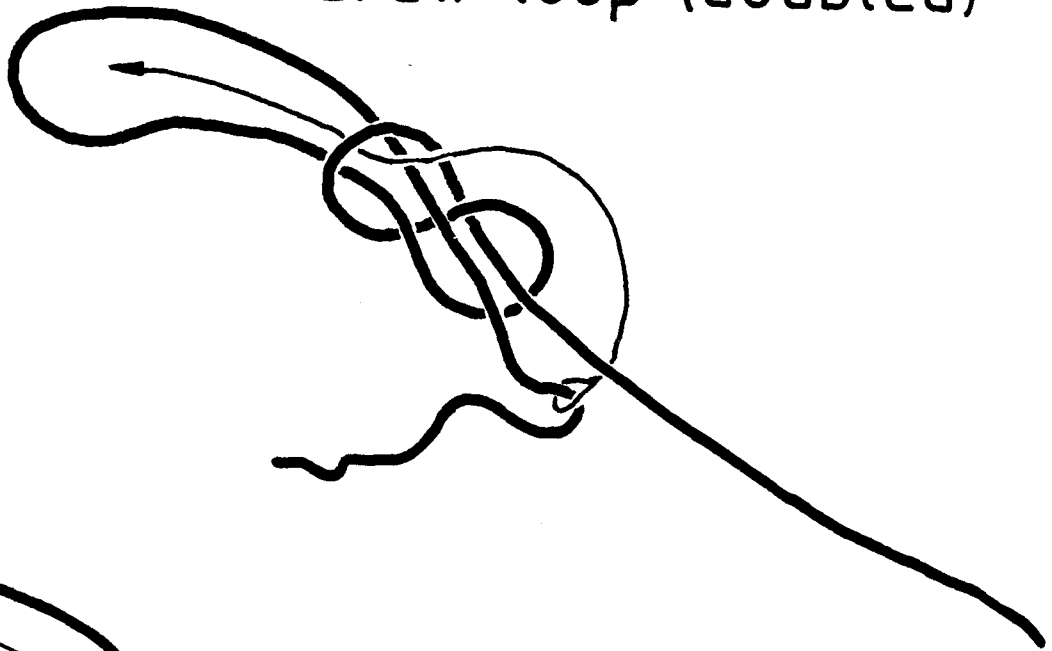
One day whilst tying up a bundle of bags on the farm my father accidentally formed this knot and subsequently found a variation of it. He first discovered the knots about eight years ago and he uses them a great deal, often in rope. He finds them to be very strong and, no matter how much pressure is put on them, they still come undone. He uses them for lifting and carrying, for towing and for tying up bags - even for slinging a Victorian fireplace.

Are either of my father's knots original?

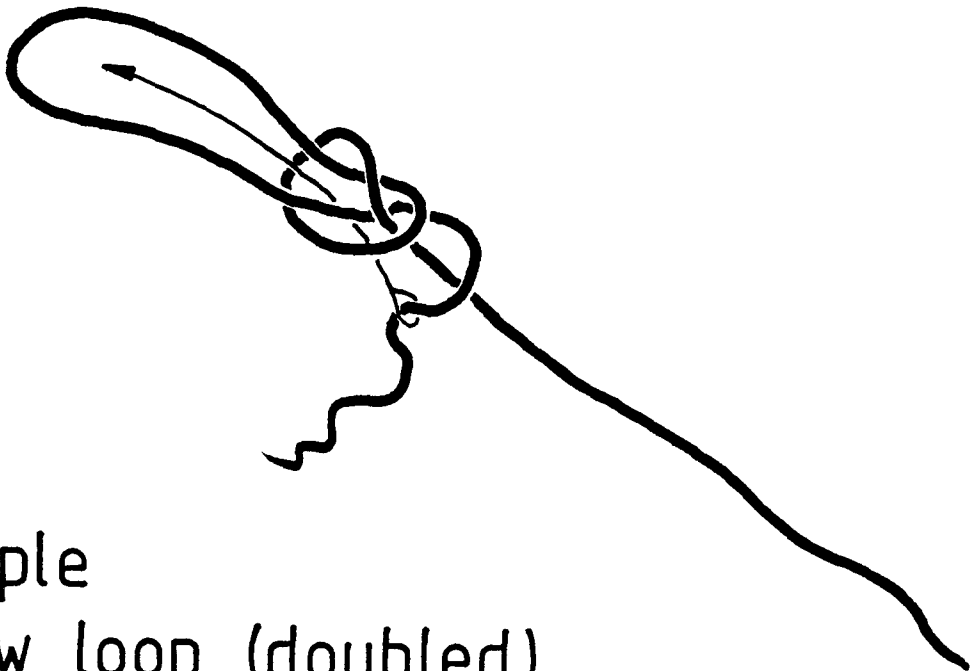
Yours faithfully,

Diane White (Nee Smith)

Figure-of-eight  
draw loop (doubled)

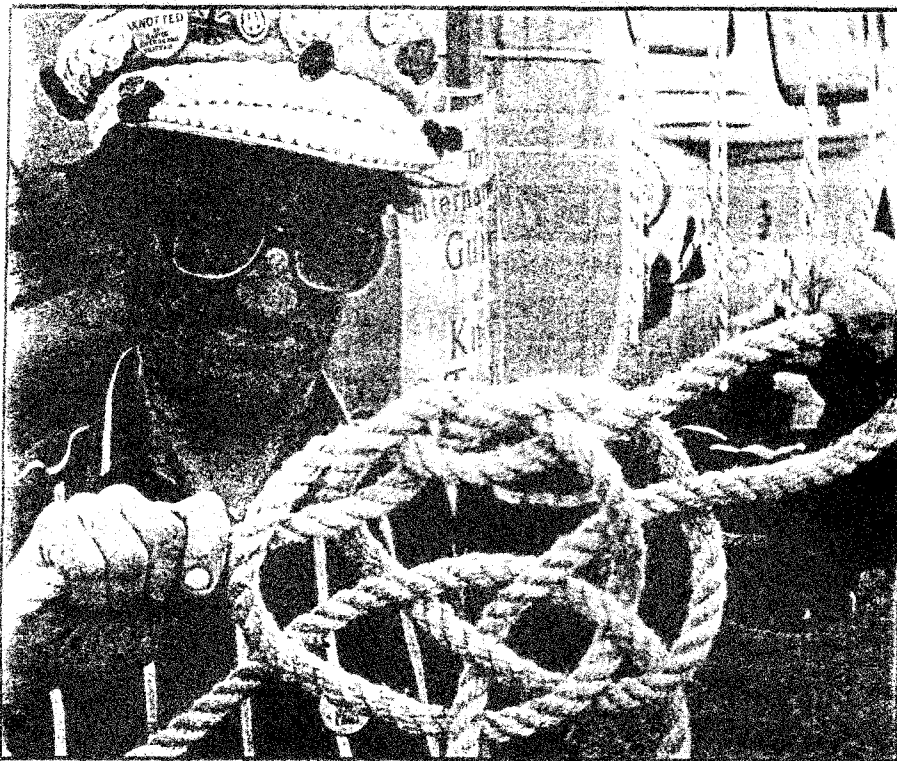


Simple  
draw loop (doubled)



## FROM "THE CITIZEN"

London branch member and the I.G.K.T.'s keeper of the archives, George ALDRIDGE tying knots at the Inland Waterways Association national rally - Gloucester, August 1990.



George Aldridge, of the Guild of Knot Tiers, displays his craft

## ASHLEY ERRORS

Another in the occasional series of apparent errors and misprints noted by IGKT members when working their way through Clifford Warren Ashley's magnificent book - *The Ashley Book of Knots*.

This time Midlands member Colin Jones draws our attention to page 516, Chapter 40 - Practical Marlinspike Seamanship.

"The two sketches for knot #3106, coiling an anchor cable over a grating to dry, are mirror images. The upper *plan* diagram is incorrect for left lay rope because, as Ashley states in the text, a cable is usually coiled counter clockwise."

"In a similar vein, the sketch for knot #3104 is confusing. For right lay rope it is correct - but do our eyes deceive us? Has the master switched the shading from right to left lay in parts of the upper left diagram? It goes to show that possibly one of the clearest knotting artists this century is open to the odd faux pas."

## HOW IT CAME ABOUT by Harry Asher

*I asked Dr. Asher what it was that pushed him to join the growing band of I.G.K.T. members who have won through to write a book on knotting. Here is his story.*

For every author there must be some circumstance which drives him to his task. I was entranced at an early guild meeting by Eric Franklin's talk of how he made his way into the world of knots.

I learnt a few basic knots in the late 1930's when I was assistant scoutmaster in a school where I taught science. Knotting then lapsed until Christmas Day 1973 when my wife gave me the Ashley Book of Knots. By 1983 knotting had begun to bite and I had got to the stage of thinking I had invented a new knot which I sent to the publisher Faber & Faber. They sent it on to their technical adviser...here we go...Geoffrey Budworth. He pointed out that my knot was certainly not new and was in fact Ashley #1421, the double harness bend with parallel ends; but...astonishing coincidence...would I like to attend the inaugural meeting of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, about to be founded.

I attended, and joined. Geoffrey most kindly trained me in a lengthy exchange of letters, and Desmond Mandeville told me how to invent new knots. His recipe was: Start symmetrical and add symmetrical tucks. The method worked a treat and led to my two volume book for the guild "A New System of Knotting" in 1986 in photostat form.

With the fire now kindled, aiming at a printed book I sent the "New System" to fourteen publishers whose names were shown in knot book reviews in "Knotting Matters". Two showed interest. After nearly a year of negotiation I signed with Nautical Books, an imprint of A & C Black.

The book was to include the basic knots...Clove, Cow, Constrictor, Rolling Hitch etc. etc., as well as my new system. The hardest part was to add the new system to the old without exceeding the space normally allotted only to the old set. A fearful squeeze, especially with a publisher who took a special pride in generous spacing, and an author who likes large clear figures! Whipping and splicing had to go overboard.

Because I cannot draw even the simplest knot, an illustrator was essential. I had to decide between finding an expert who was both knoter and artist with whom I would have to correspond, or someone living nearby who could sit beside me as we worked. I chose the latter course. The first artist I found, from a dip in the "Yellow Pages", turned out to be a terrible fellow. He thought he was clever, and dammit he was; but he criticized my English, and went absent without leave, so he got the sack. The next was Phil Vernon, who did a first rate job, and we became friends.

It has been a long struggle. Now Phil and I sit back to await the response. Already there is the good news that the publishers Sheridan House, New York, U.S.A. are producing an American edition.

Harry Asher  
December 1989.

("The Alternative Knot Book" was reviewed in K.M.29, October 1989.)

## BOOK REVIEW

SEAGOING KNOTS by Frank ROSENOW

Published (1990) by W.W.Norton & Co. Inc.,  
500 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, NY 10110,  
U.S.A.

Price - \$19.95

ISBN 0-393-03338-4

Frank Rosenow - an I.G.K.T. member trained as a sailmaker, has sailed all his life, and is an award-winning artist as well as being a columnist ('Sail' Magazine) and author of those other excellent books 'Canvas & Ropecraft' and 'The Ditty Bag Book'.

In this latest book he looks at 30 or so trustworthy bends and hitches for work of all kinds aboard yachts. "For tugboats," he tells us, "the choice of knots might have been different."

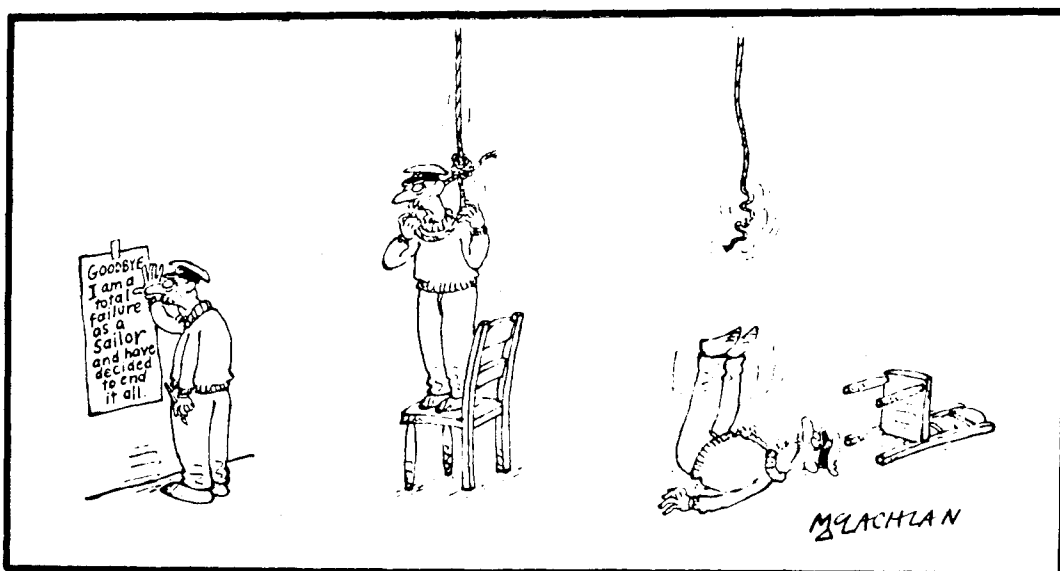
The author suggests that to appreciate a knot you must see it in use; and that a knot is best remembered when passed from one user to another. So in a series of boating anecdotes, he introduces us to real-life characters such as his Swedish uncle Emil, retired master pilot; Margaret Roth (finishing school grace and impeccable seamanship); Colonel Bertie Bloomer, late of the Royal Engineers; and many others who one way or another showed him handy ways to knot ropes.

I liked especially the sheet bend variant incorporating 3 mooring lines.

The hard cover contains 102 pages amply illustrated by the author with his pencil drawings of boats, places, ropes and people. It is an easy to follow instruction book as well as a pleasurable read. A few sketches are marred by faint handwritten labels but this is the book's sole flaw. I recommend this new work by an established I.G.K.T. rope and rigging expert who can also spin a yarn.

Sten Johansson...please note, here is a worthy addition to your growing International Catalogue of Knots and Ropework - G.B.

## CARTOON from Private Eye



## REAL TURBANS from Lester Copestake

I have recently read Harry Asher's stimulating but puzzling article in *Knotting Matters* (issue 31 pp 3-5). The first puzzle is why a new name is needed. Ashley speaks of Binding Knots of three kinds of which the second kind are Turk's Heads and these are classified as square, broad and narrow. I find these puzzling enough without adding to the confusion. However if a new name is really needed, please let it not be *TURBAN*.

For me a Turban is a headgear. And in particular the kind worn by a Sikh Captain in the Indian Army with whom, in 1943, I shared a bedroom in the transit camp at Bombay. In the morning after tidying his long black hair and beard with truly regimental precision he asked me to hold the end of his khaki pugaree. *Pugaree is the Urdu word for what is called a turban in the persian languages.*

Call it pugaree or turban, it was a piece of fine cotton cloth say 300mm wide and a good 5 metres long.

First we pulled it tight and folded it lengthwise between us till it was no more than 60mm wide. Then he held his end against the back of his head with his left hand, leaving enough spare end for the finishing off tucks done later. Next, with his right hand, he turned neat bights round his head.



I kept a gentle tension on my end so that a twist formed in the pugaree at each turn. He arranged these twists to lie flat above his forehead giving a very neat and smart effect. The turns overlapped upwards on one side of his head and down on the other to leave no more than 6mm of each turn in view, except of course the last. Finally he tucked the ends in neatly.

This is a typical method as far as I can tell though I am told that turbans can be worn in many ways to suit the wearer's fancy.

I tell this tale because I think that turbans, by which I mean the type of headgear, can be regarded as a proper study for the Guild of Knot Tyers, but a real turban is quite clearly neither a Turk's Head, nor the knot illustrated in Harry Asher's article. If a new distinctive type of Turk's Head has been found, by all means give it a name but please keep the names Turban & Pugaree for headgear!

Lester Goodall-Copestake,

2 June '90

50 Priory Road,  
MALVERN  
Worcs. WR14 3DB  
Tel 0684 562642



**BUT...WHERE IS IT?**

Dear Frank,

Here is a picture of a pub sign - the True Lovers Knot. The first glance will tell you that, though the sign painter has done a nice neat job, he's also got the wrong knot! I knew it too, and now the landlord knows it!! We went in the pub as a matter of courtesy to ask the landlords permission, and to sample his wares, and explained the whole thing to him. Since then, as I promised him, I have written to him explaining the correct true-lovers knot and how to tie it, complete with diagrams...all taken from the gospel according to St Ashley...so he can now settle arguments and teach his regulars how its done.

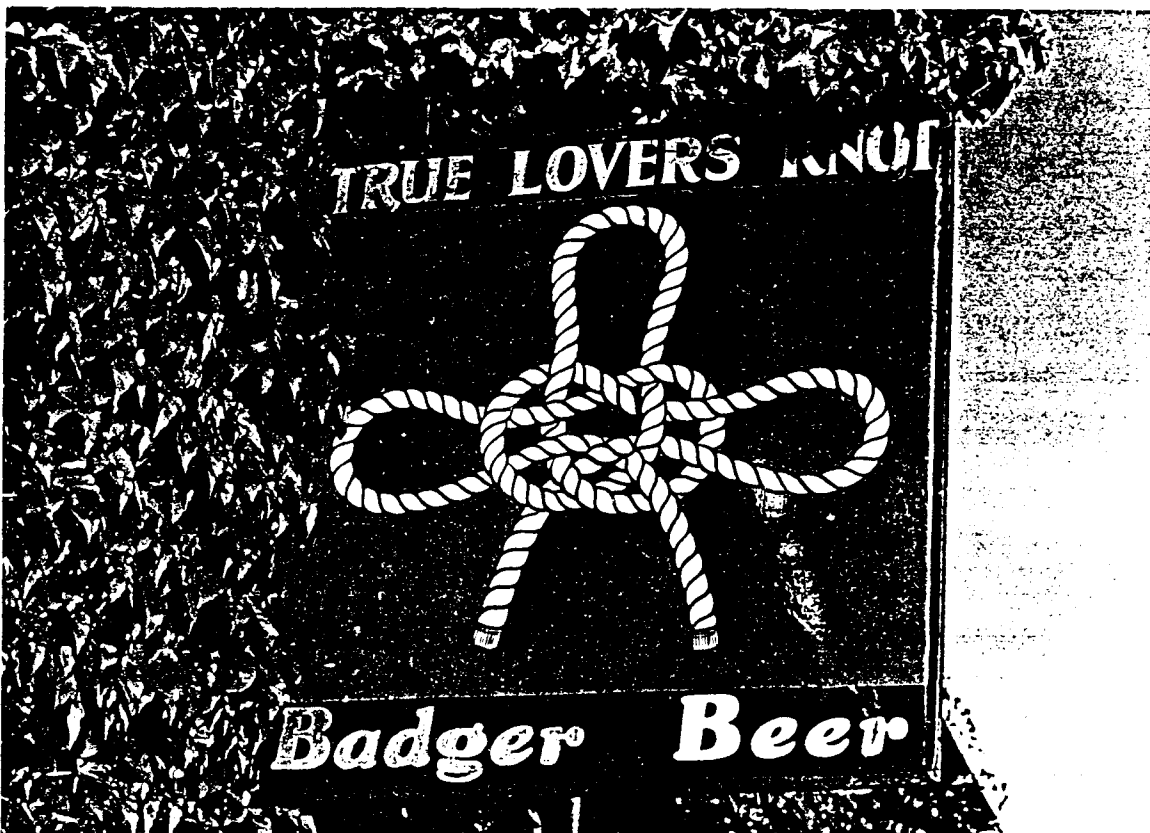
I'll keep my eyes open for other suitable pub signs in my travels, though I don't know of any hereabouts - I don't often look at pub signs as I am usually looking for the door handle. But I will keep a look out.

I'm still busy working in the R.N.L.I. rigging loft, but much of the work is rep, reppit, repeati...the same jobs over and over again. The vast majority, as you might guess, is strictly functional. The only things even remotely 'tiddley' are monkey fists in the heaving lines and the occasional paunch mat.

Yours sincerely,

Frank "Winkle" Ide  
RNLi Rigger  
Ex-Coxwain, Poole Lifeboat.  
Summer 1990

30 St Julians Rd  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 1EQ



## OLD WOMAN'S BOW

Dear Robert,

I would like to describe to you what I call the "Old Woman's Bow" for my shoe laces. After tying an overhand knot, one usually ties a standard bow by effectively making a bight in each end and then tying an overhand knot with the bights.

The "Old Woman's Bow" is formed by starting to form the standard bow and then pushing the first bight through the knot - i.e. a double overhand knot with the bights. You have probably seen this bow before, but my introduction to it makes a nice story.

As a boy I was on my way home from school and bent down to retie my shoelace. An old lady said "small boy you are tying the wrong knot", and proceeded to show me how to tie them. I thanked her and endeavoured to leave, but she was too quick with her umbrella handle and insisted that I show her that I could tie them. I, of course, got it wrong and she kept me until I had mastered it. I was embarrassed and cross but it was probably the most valuable 15 minutes I have ever spent.

The bow has three good features: first it is neat; second it does not come undone in use; and third it is quickly undone by pulling the ends. It is invaluable for a dinghy sailor's shoes.

Incidentally, my son who is a national sailing champion has found that a left handed bowline is more trustworthy than the true bowline! (i.e. with the working end leaving the knot outside the loop, rather than inside it.)

Yours

6 Ormond Avenue  
Hampton upon Thames  
Middlesex  
TW12 2RU

R.D. (Bob) Parslow  
11th May '90

## QUOTATION

Reef, a portion of the sail which may be tied up or taken in, to abridge the surface of a sail. Sails are at intervals perforated with small holes in rows, to allow the reefs to be taken in by cords.

Bantlines, the ropes which move the body of the sail, the bant being the body.

Bowlines, the ropes which spread out the sails and make them swell.

Halyards, the ropes which extend the sails.

Of the numerous ropes used for various purposes, called lifts, braces, clue-lines, backstays, points, earings, lanyards, tye and jears, tacks &C, it is unnecessary to speak, in this general account of a ships details.

*The Sea - Narratives of Adventures and Shipmens tales and sketches illustrative of life on the ocean.*  
Pub by William and Robert Chambers 1840.

## ROSARY KNOTS

We have received from the Bishop of Leicester an enquiry about the knot used in Greek Orthodox rosaries. When a monk or nun is professed in the Orthodox Church he or she is given, as part of the investiture, a knotted cord. He has already identified the knot as being Ashley's footrope knot (#792) - produced by a deliberately complicated way in the traditional Orthodox method.

There appear to be very few published descriptions of the tying of the knot which is surprising in view of its great religious symbolism. The Bishop knows of one\*. Sadly, there is a flaw in the text and diagrams which prevents the knot being tied in the prescribed way without an 'over' or 'under' ending up out of sequence.

The Greeks call this knotting  $\kappa\omicron\mu\beta\omicron\sigma\chi\omicron\iota\gamma\iota\omicron\upsilon$  from  $\kappa\omicron\mu\beta\omicron\sigma$ , a knot, and  $\sigma\chi\omicron\iota\gamma\iota\omicron\upsilon$ , a cord. The Russians call it "Tchotki" a word derived from the verb meaning "to count", but the old slavonic name was "Vervitsa" meaning a cord, or "Lestovka", a ladder.

American Cyrus Lawrence Day, a respected writer on knots, put together a scholarly work "Quipus and Witches' Knots", pub. by The University of Kansas Press (1967), in which he explores primitive knotlore and beliefs. He only mentions rosaries briefly, stating they probably originated in Asia and were made with knots first, rather than beads. The Sikhs of India - he tells us - still use a rosary of 108 knots tied in woollen cord, while the Greek Orthodox monks of Mount Athos use a rosary of 100 knots divided into equal parts by four large beads. That's all.

So, ladies and gentlemen, what is our collective knowledge of rosary knots and can we help the Bishop of Leicester in his search for information?

\* STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION - pages 98 to 105, a chapter by D.M.Deed entitled *The Sword of the Spirit, The Making of an Orthodox Rosary*. (Publisher/date not known.)

## CARVED KNOTS

Dear Mr Jackson,

I was saddened to read in 'Knotting Matters' of the death of Dr Edward Hunter. I am very new to knotting so I did not know of him until I read his obituary, but I feel I had something in common with him as I also try to carve knots out of wood, and would have liked to see his work.

Do other members share this interest?

Yours faithfully,

Brian Wall  
15 July '90

2 Beaufort Grove  
Morecambe  
Lancs  
LA4 6UF

(Brian - the photograph of your carved mahogany overhand, multiple overhand and carrick is remarkable. A photocopy such as I normally show in 'K.M.' would not do you justice - R.J.)

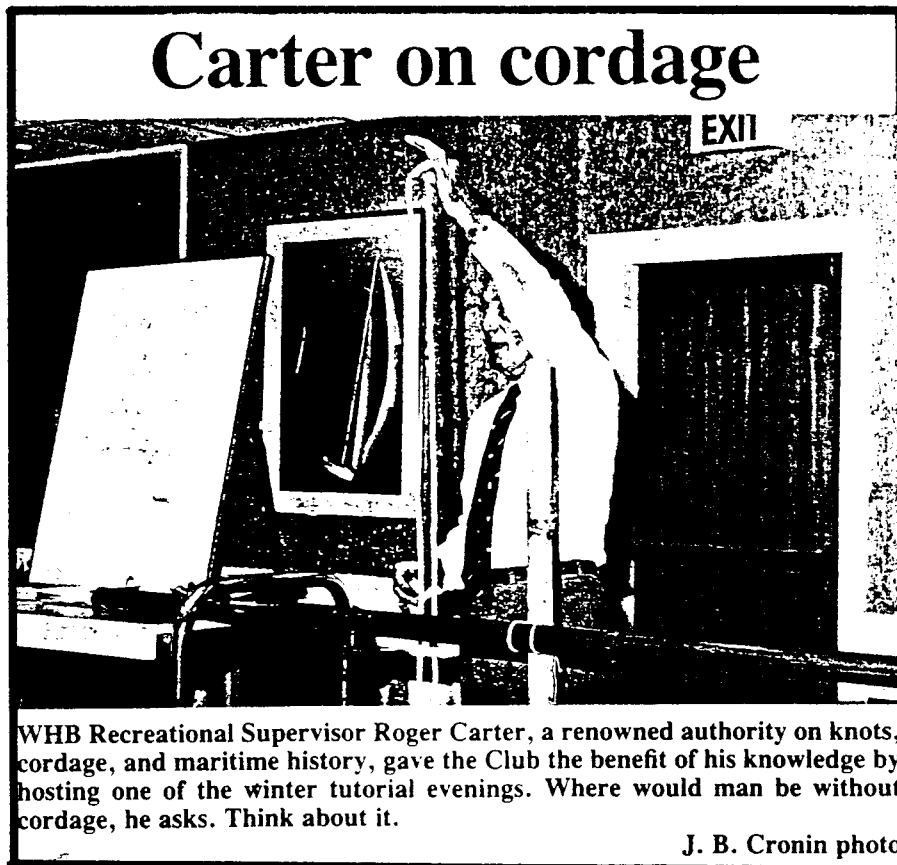
## KNOTTING CHAOS - a QUOTATION

A thread is effectively one dimensional and a particle has effectively no dimension at all.

Then what is the dimension of a ball of twine? *Mandelbrot* answered, it depends on your point of view. From a great distance the ball is no more than a point, with zero dimensions. From closer, the ball is seen to fill spherical space, taking up three dimensions. From closer still, the twine comes into view, and the object becomes effectively one dimensional, though the one dimension is certainly tangled up around itself in a way that makes use of three dimensional space. The notion of how many numbers it takes to specify a point remains useful. From far away it takes none - the point is all there is. From closer it takes three. From closer still, one is enough - any given position along the length of twine is unique, whether the twine is stretched out or tangled up in a ball.

And on toward microscopic perspectives: twine turns to three dimensional columns, the columns resolve themselves into one dimensional fibers, the solid material dissolves into zero dimensional points. *Mandelbrot* appealed, unmathematically, to relativity: "The notion that a numerical result should depend on the relation of object to observer is in the spirit of physics in this century and is even an exemplary illustration of it."

"*CHAOS - Making a New Science*", James Gleick, Penguin 1987.



I.G.K.T. member, Roger Carter of Plimmerton, New Zealand, about to tie a knot!

P.S. ALL guild members - Don't be shy, send in your press cuttings (preferably a decent photocopy) and let us see what you look like!

## SECTION FRANCOPHONE

Dear Frank,

13 August '90  
ST LEGIERWE DID IT

Thanks to an impromptu visit from our President, Jan Vos, we put our show together in less than two weeks. We had a small but pretty stand, lots of public interest and five new members, and even more important an invitation to do it bigger and better next month in another town!

Also important, we have learned from our inexperience so next time we will do better. Just for the anecdote:

- a) No madam, we are not a political party.
- b) No, we do not sell ice-creams.
- c) Even if we were selling anything, Popple's chest handle (made by Chris) would cost more than two pounds sterling.

Anyhow, I imagine you have all gone through all that. I enclose our press cuttings. Even if Switzerland is a small country, the papers should touch about 6,000 readers. The national radio gave us three times two minutes this morning. I know that it's the silly season, but publicity is publicity.

Less than 24 hours after the show the phone hasn't stopped ringing - I'm beginning to think it's a mistake to get mixed up with nuts like you! I have heard from a lady who does lace work to stop the tradition disappearing; she is willing to set up a training course and already we have two students.

I'm much too old to believe in instant success, but the media and public reaction has set me back on my heels. When the noise dies down, we will see what is left and then work with that.

We will shortly be holding a meeting to form officially the *French speaking* section so as to continue the idea of "international". I have accepted to chair for one year only. Next year's chairman must be a natural French speaker in the interests of the Guild, and by my trade I'm much happier back-stage.

By the way, this coming winter a genuine Englishman has been asked to re-rig a genuine Chinese Junk on the Lake of Geneva. How international can we get?

Yours Aye

Chris Eaton

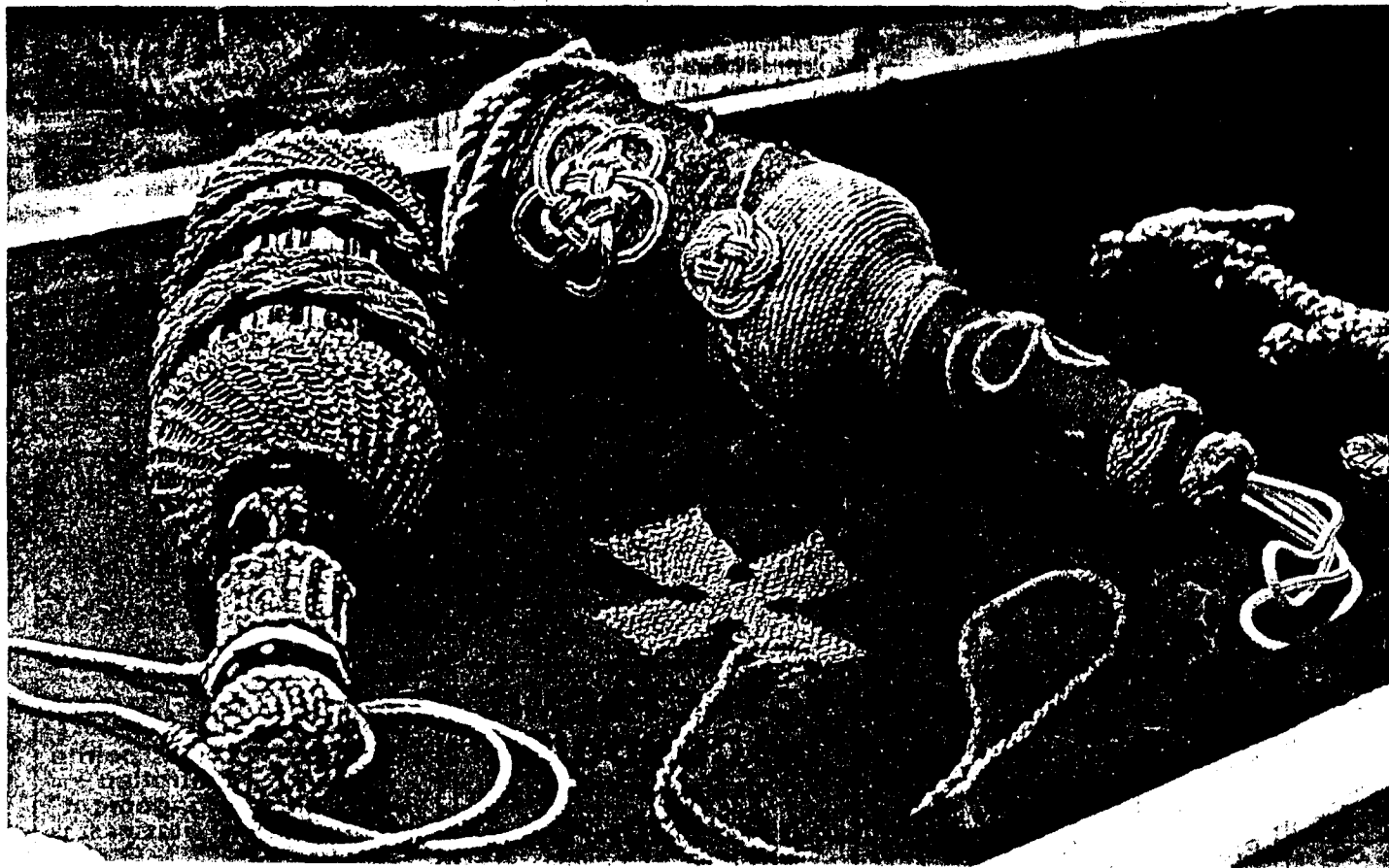
Section Francophone  
P.A. Chris Eaton  
Rte Châtel st Denis 23  
1806 ST LEGIER  
SUISSE  
tel.(0)21 943.14.10

# L'EST VAUDOIS

JOURNAL DE MONTREUX, FEUILLE D'AVIS D'AIGLE ET COURRIER DE LEYSIN RÉUNIS

L'étonnante passion de Chris Eaton, de Saint-Légier

## La Riviera, siège francophone des nœudtiers



Dimanche est née, dans le port de La Tour-de-Peilz, la première section francophone des nœudtiers. Grâce à Chris Eaton, de Saint-Légier, cette confrérie aura son siège sur la Riviera.

On ne s'imagine pas l'importance du nœud dans notre société. La connaissance des nœuds peut notamment être utile en criminologie, en micro-chirurgie. Les alpinistes et les navigateurs seraient bien empruntés sans nœuds! Et ils permettent aussi de réaliser de jolis objets d'arts (notre photo).

# Naissance d'une section francophone des nœudiers

«Le nœud est la première invention de l'humanité. Les Troglodytes faisaient des nœuds bien avant d'inventer la roue ou de faire du feu. En chirurgie par exemple, les nœuds sont d'une importance vitale. Dans beaucoup de métiers, ils sont un outil de travail fondamental» explique Chris Eaton, de Saint-Légier, qui se passionne pour les nœuds depuis plusieurs années. Il en fait même des objets d'art. Avec des amis, il a constitué hier dans le port de La Tour-de-Peilz, en première mondiale, une section francophone des nœudiers et a présenté les activités de cette «confrérie» dans le cadre de la fête du Doyen. Surprenant.

«The International Guild of knot tyers» (qui signifie approximativement Confrérie internationale des professionnels du nœud), regroupe actuellement plus de 600 membres du monde entier répartis sur les cinq continents. Ces passionnés du nœud pratiquent tous les métiers.

De l'anthropologie à la zoologie. «Certains ont 60 ans de nœuds derrière eux, d'autres 60 devant eux» écrit avec humour Jean Vos, le président (hollandais) de l'IGKT.

Chris Eaton, président de la section nouvellement créée, a toujours joué, dès sa tendre enfance, avec des ficelles sans vraiment savoir que le nœud deviendrait sa passion. Son père lui a parlé de l'IGKT quelques jours avant sa création. C'était en 1982. Il a fini par se piquer au jeu et voilà maintenant cinq ans qu'il travaille à la création d'une section francophone.

## ■ Un cadre de rêve

A l'heure actuelle, toutes les sections sont anglophones. Elles se trouvent en Australie, Amérique, Hollande et aux îles Féroé. «La Riviera vaudoise m'a paru l'endroit rêvé pour donner un siège à cette section. Dans un cadre helvétique magnifique proche de la France. Entre l'eau et les

montagnes» explique Chris Eaton. Ce lieu prend donc une allure hautement symbolique: pour les gens du lac, le nœud est d'une grande importance, ne serait-ce que pour amarrer les bateaux. En montagne, que feraient les alpinistes sans nœuds?

## ■ Rencontres internationales

Saint-Légier sera donc la capitale des «nœudiers» et la Riviera pourrait accueillir occasionnellement pour des rencontres des Belges, des Québécois, des Français et des Africains.

Avec un accent anglais qui ne laisse planer aucun doute sur ses origines, Chris Eaton souligne qu'il a accepté de «mener» le bateau pour un an seulement. «Le président doit être un vrai francophone, pas un expatrié». Quoi qu'il en soit, la section conservera son siège sur la Riviera.

Le but de cette confrérie des nœudiers est de conserver et faire progresser l'art des nœuds, que ce soit dans le domaine de la marine, de l'alpinisme ou de la microchirurgie.

## ■ L'utilité de bien connaître les nœuds

On n'imagine pas l'importance que peut représenter la connaissance de

nœuds. Lors d'un assassinat à Istanbul, les Turcs ont demandé l'aide de la police anglaise. Grâce à la corde retrouvée autour du cou du malheureux étranglé, l'agent anglais, spécialiste des nœuds, a pu se rendre compte que la façon de faire le nœud était propre à celle des militaires d'une base aérienne de Chypre. Ce qui a permis de mettre la main sur le meurtrier.

«Chaque nœud a une signature» explique Chris Eaton. La bible du nœudier de Hashley en recense 4000. Ce qui représente, paraît-il, le dixième de ce qu'il en existe. Rien que pour nouer ses chaussures, on peut faire 400 nœuds différents!

## ■ Pour la médecine

En médecine aussi, les nœuds ont un rôle important à jouer. En Hollande, un groupe de microchirurgiens étudie la possibilité d'inventer un nouveau nœud capable d'être réalisé en matière synthétique.

En Angleterre, chaque régiment a une façon différente de nouer ses lacets. Ainsi le connaisseur peut savoir de quelle région vient tel ou tel soldat en regardant ses godasses.

Les pompiers, les gens du cirque et du théâtre, les dockers et les camionneurs mettent en jeu leur vie sur un simple nœud...

## ■ Deux projets fous

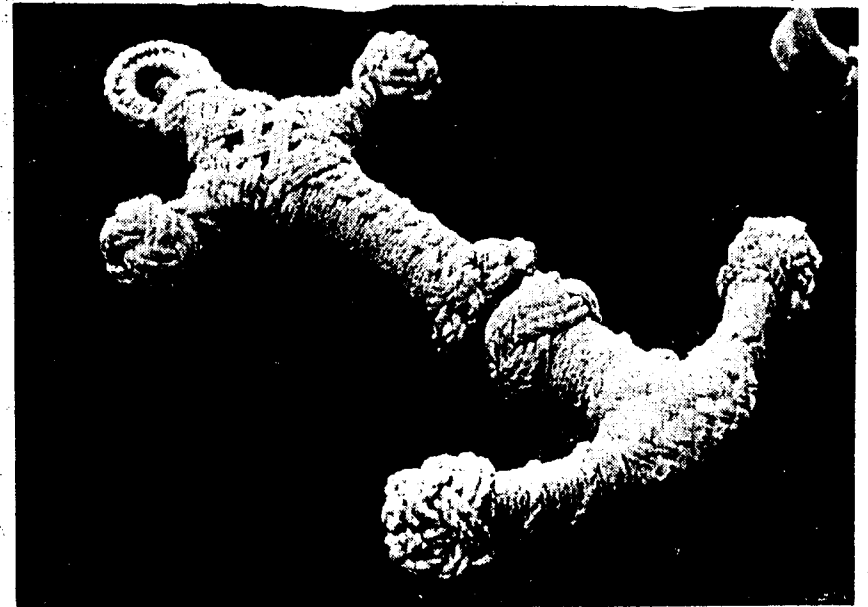
Les nœudiers ont deux grands projets. Le premier: mettre tous les nœuds en langage binaire. C'est-à-dire les informatiser. Le second: réaliser un dictionnaire du nœud pour permettre aux membres de la confrérie de se comprendre entre eux. Car tel nœud se dit mouton en anglais et sardine en russe. Quel sac de... nœuds!

Jérôme CHRISTEN



Chris Eaton, de Saint-Légier (à gauche); et dire que ma femme m'a acheté des chaussures avec des bandes velcro! Avec André Bourqui, de La Tour-de-Peilz (à droite), et Fred Schell, de Paudex (absent), il forme le comité de la nouvelle section francophone.

Dominique Muller



Chris Eaton fabrique des œuvres d'art avec des nœuds. Ici une ancre de bateau.

Dominique Muller

# Comment peut-on être «noeudtier» Une association se crée

**Dans le cadre de la fête de la Société de sauvetage «Le Doyen», un groupe de fanatiques des noeuds, autrement dit des «noeudtiers» s'est constitué en section francophone de la «International Guild of Knot tyers».**

Il y en a qui font des noeuds comme d'autres font des mots croisés, mais dans l'histoire de l'humanité, le noeud est une des premières inventions.

Pratique, symbolique, artistique, le noeud est la première chose qui vous arrive en naissant. Ce peut être aussi la dernière : noeud coulant de chanvre ou lacet discret et fatal.

La Guilde internationale des noeudtiers, fondée en 1982, est partie de l'idée de 27 connaisseurs des noeuds, qui l'âge venant, s'inquiétèrent de la disparition de ce savoir universel, par l'introduction de techniques modernes comme les élastiques et crochets, le velcro, etc.. Tous essentiellement anglophones, Anglais, Australiens ou Américains, navigateurs, alpinistes ou chirurgiens, ils cherchèrent des artisans pouvant accueillir leur connaissance et l'agrandir si possible.

## Les francophones

Chris Eaton, citoyen britannique, navigateur, mais que l'on connaît dans la région surtout comme éclairagiste de théâtre fut introduit très tôt dans la Guilde. Actuellement les demandes de francophones se multipliant au siège de Londres, l'idée naquit de créer une section dont le siège se situe, momentanément, chez le président tout désigné, Chris Eaton. La Guilde compte actuellement 800 membres sur les 5 continents, affairés autour des 40.000 noeuds inventoriés et de tous ceux qui continuent

à s'inventer. La microchirurgie sollicite des «noeudtiers» des inventions convenant aux nouveaux matériaux de suture.

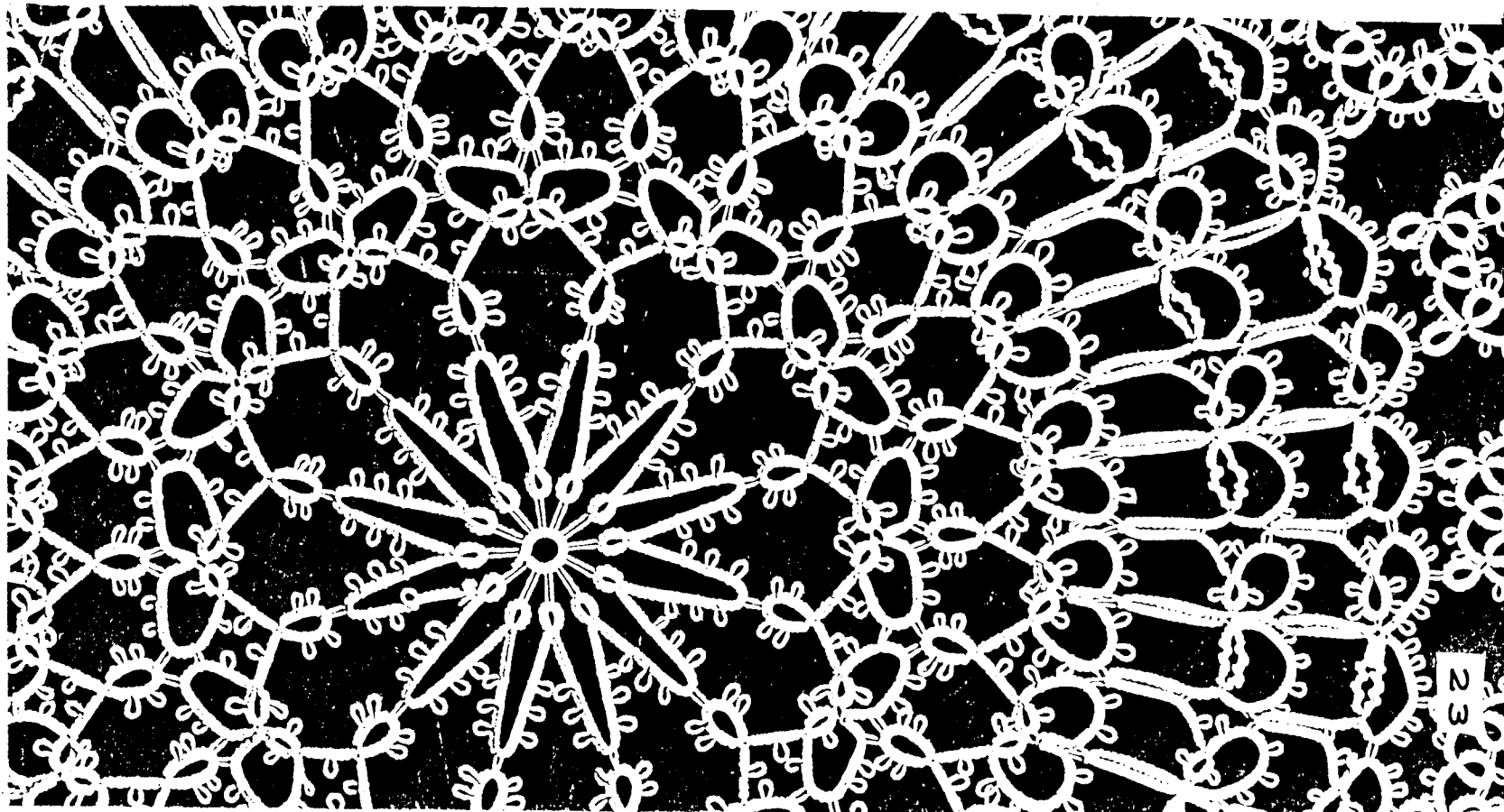
## Entre lac et montagnes

En proposant dimanche, à la fête du «Sauvetage» quelques exemples de noeuds; Chris Eaton, entouré d'André Bourqui et de Fred Schell, estime le lieu idéal, entre les matelots du lac et les alpinistes, parapen-

tistes et autres forestiers, pour lancer la passion du noeud. Passion qui ne se fixe pas de limites : la vannerie, le tricot, le macramé, la dentelle, les entrelacs, et ... les scoubidoues, sont aussi des noeuds, au même titre que les noeuds artistiques que les marins des caravelles devaient pratiquer 4 heures par jour... pour se calmer. Nouons donc en chœur, en groupe, à tout âge et en toute circonstance.

M.S.

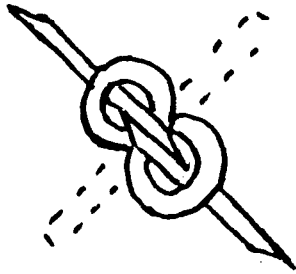
BELOW is a section of a piece of work by a lady respondent to Chris Eaton's efforts. Do we know of any sources of large, complicated patterns - at least one metre square?



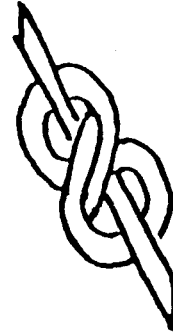


# THE SINGLE STRAND "HUNTER'S BEND"

A VARIATION ON A THEME By John HALIFAX



FRONT



REVERSE

This can be achieved in two ways:

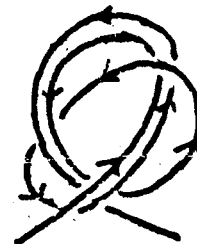
1...By forming two linked overhand knots as at 3 below and gently tightening them together. Then twist the right side overhand knot up and outwards away from yourself and ease it tight. It will take the symmetrical form of the Hunter's Bend of only two ends, not four.

OR

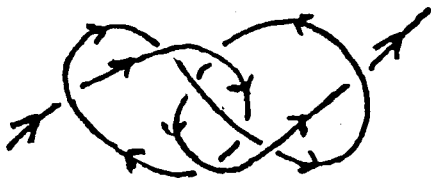
2...Form a single overhand knot (left over right) and follow it round - tucking the left lead to the right over and under and over and gently tightening. It will form two linked overhand knots as described above and depicted at 2, 3 & 4 below.



1



2



4



3

John HALIFAX  
Gorleston, Gt Yarmouth  
Norfolk  
7th March 1990

