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Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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KNOTTING MATTERS

**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS
ISSUE NO 62 SPRING - FEBRUARY 1999**

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KNOTTING MATTERS 62

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EDITORS BYTES AND PIECES

by Editors

This is the first issue that has so very few letters of comments from the membership. Barring the supporters of the "Ditty Bag" there have been no reactions to last issues B&P or the large articles. Perhaps no news is good news, it means everyone is happy with that format? Good, we will try to do more like it later. 🎣🎣🎣

The question of including articles and letters about Ditty Bags, 'Splicing Knives', the other crafts that have their own publications like Spinning and Weaving, or Lace Making, in Knotting Matters is obvious to me. If it will be of interest to our members and it makes sense when read, then it should go in. Member's profiles are not strictly about knot tying, but are very interesting to other knot tyers. I once had a very interesting article about wig making, (history, source of materials and how to make wigs) which I had trouble putting together as an article because there wasn't enough explanation of terms

and I didn't know enough about it to expand it for the uninformed. I returned it to the author, a lady teacher, with many notes and suggestions and questions, hoping for a printable article, but she never replied. Perhaps I put her off or she was just too busy to do the work. Pity, it would have been a cracking piece of not strictly knotting. 🎣🎣🎣

While discussing some ideas about what to do for the Millennium, with Ken Yalden, the other day, I was reminded that we have decided, as a Guild, to put our main efforts into the Birthday celebrations. But surely we should try to do something to mark the passing of the end of this last one hundred years. Ken reminded me that Tony Fisher; (KM57 p 46) had an excellent idea. Tony works on the Chatham Islands, which is the first place in the world to see the sun each day and on that day it will be the first place to see the first day of the new millennium. He would tie a knot, say the symbol of the Guild, a 3L x 4B Turks Head, at an agreed time on that first day and start a chain of knot tying

around the world as the sun rises at each location. Tony called this idea;

KNOTTING IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The Guild could send a certificate to every tier who claims to have participated. The time could be calculated to be at exactly the same time all over the world, involving someone, somewhere working out what time locally for you would be midnight there. Although we all live in different time zones, the hour does not come at exactly the same time within a zone. For example, before time standardisation in England, the local time at noon in London would be several minutes ahead of noon in Oxford and earlier still than noon in Bristol. This played the very Devil with the train timetables since it appeared to take longer to get to Oxford than to get to London from Oxford! Steam powered jet lag! Now all of England is considered one time zone and have the same time even if the sun cannot be overhead for all of us at the same time. Therefore at 24:00 on Chatham Island Westward, it might be 11:50

p.m. in Wellington, NZ; it might be 7:18 p.m. in Oxford; and it might be 7:52 p.m. in Penzance; etc. Otherwise, we could all tie them at the same time of the day, like 12:01 am on the day, at your New Years Eve party perhaps, or at 12:01 p.m., (lunchtime) to get over the 'dehydration sickness' that usually follows a party.

Personally, I will be glad to tie a flat turkshead at the New Years Eve party, at 12:01 am, on 1st January 2000 and glue it to a greetings type card, (purchased from the Guild for the purpose perhaps) to have as a keepsake. Does anyone think anything about this at all?



Due to two close family bereavements in the last three months of 1998, I have not been able to cope with getting this issue out to the printers on time. Please accept my apologise and I hope to be back up to speed and return to being full of joy and enthusiasm for this job again in time for the next issue in February.



Notes From The Secretary's Blotter

Already it is time for me to sit down and attempt to write a few words, which of course has always been the problem, I can write lots of words, never just a few. First of all I must take this opportunity to wish you all a happy New Year, and to thank all those who sent me their Christmas greetings.

I must then apologise to all those who have received somewhat premature subscription reminders in some cases more than a year in advance. Should you receive one of these, please point out the error of my ways, as I am quite likely to have made a simple typing error when entering your last payment details. As I often work late into the night, this is not uncommon, especially as we now have more than a thousand members. (Loud applause). On the other hand, *I may be correct*, in which case please pay promptly, and if you use a credit card, which is by far the easiest method of payment, please remember to put your name on the form - it is very difficult to remember every members hand writing. Don't forget that if this years payment is late, then next years reminder arrives that much

sooner. We are quite happy to receive payment for more than a single year at a time, which may be of benefit to overseas members, who may have difficulties with the currency.

It was nice to see those of you who managed to get to the Gilwell meeting, which was a very informal do, with plenty of time to chat and get to know one another. The venue was the Pack Holiday Centre, which prove to be much more palatial than I had imagined. Even the sleeping facilities were quite pleasant which was most unexpected!

I must record our thanks to David and Jane Doy who spent the day providing us with our drinks and a splendid buffet lunch. So good was the lunch that an extra six disappeared without having been paid for, despite my vigilance as dinner ticket monitor (I wonder if I paid?)

Now that you have your new diaries, don't forget to enter the dates of the AGM to be held in Nottingham on the 8th May, the 9th October for the Autumn gathering, and the 7th August for the US meeting in New Bedford. If anyone has any other interesting dates, please tell Jeff Wyatt so that they can be published.

For the third time of asking, I will mention the debate on Postal

Voting. So far this subject has generated three replies, one in favour, one against, and one with an alternative suggestion. As this was the predicted response level, unless there is a significant change in enthusiasm, then we shall maintain the status quo.

I am often asked about starting a new branch of the Guild. I have written a separate article on this subject, which hopefully will appear elsewhere in this edition of KM, space permitting, otherwise look out for this little gem in the next edition.

Whilst on this subject, I must mention Klaas Kuiper who would like to start an informal local group in The Netherlands. Klaas lives in Delfzijl, and would be pleased to hear from you if you are interested in a little social knot tying. His number is 0596 619513. Another popular query is regarding suppliers of string, rope, cord, tools and other materials and equipment. David Walker has started to collate any information he can find on this subject, as is Martin Combs in Alaska. Either of these two will be pleased to learn of any sources you may have found. Most of these will probably be factories or wholesalers who will only supply in bulk, and on receipt of an official order. A good piece of advice is to come to the

Guild meetings, where there is usually someone with something suitable on offer. Alternatively, this information is traded by word of mouth, in exchange for some useful hint, or a quick demonstration your knotty special. On the European front I have heard recently from Peter Willems in Germany who has a stock of what he refers to as Hempen Cordage, both natural and tarred.

By the time that you read this, we shall be well into 1999 and the new millennium will be less than twelve months away. We have considered numerous schemes and project, but the one most likely to succeed is the brainchild of Tony Fisher in New Zealand. Details of his idea were published in KM57, but in principle we would knot in the New Year, wherever in the world we would be. This should be fun, as we should not have to get up early to do this, but simply stay late at the party. Do check that all of your knots are 2000 compliant, otherwise they may all come undone on the stroke of midnight - which could be interesting. Best wishes - Nigel

MEMBER'S PROFILE

of David Fukuhara
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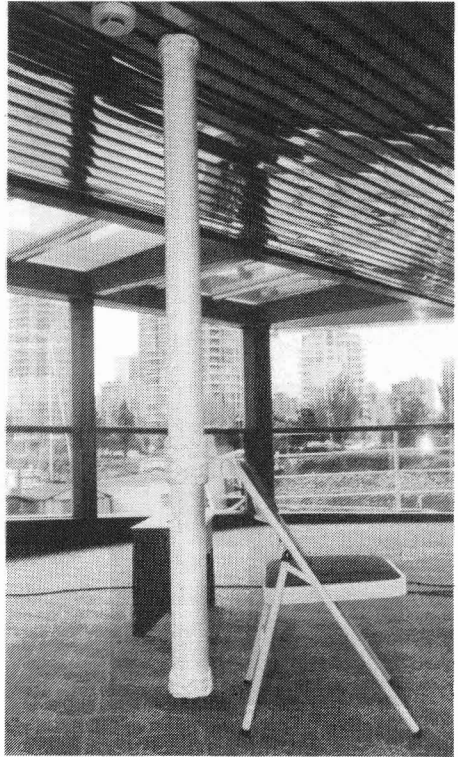
Although I have been interested in knotting all of my life, I began to focus in on the knotting associated with sailing when I learned to sail in the 1960's. Later I bought a Spencer 35 and sailed it for about 15 years and sold it in the late 1980's.

After blindly stumbling along through my 'knotical' life for some 30 years, one day a friend told me, "Most people just use the knots, they don't try to analyse them each time they are tied". With this wake up call, I made a conscious effort to study knotting in more depth.

Since then, I have been teaching knotting to boaters and have been teaching a specialised course called "FANCY KNOTTING", for the past 10 years, for the Bluewater Cruising Association based in Vancouver, BC.

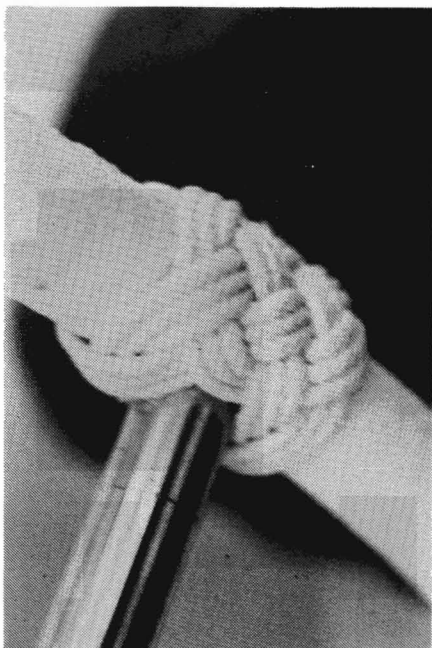
In 1984, after 10 years, of, on

again and off again research, I made a breakthrough discovery I found the easy way to tie the large running Turk's head knots. With this discovery, I can now tie the Turk's head knot in any length and diameter. Patterns can also be tied into these knots easily, using this method.



Part of 1800' of 1/4"-3 strand nylon coachwhipping with a 5 L x 9B TH'd at top and bottom. The bumper (fender) in the lower 1/3 is a patterned 9B x 11L Turkshead.

Through this research I also learned how to design and tie many more styles of flat knots. Some of the circular flat knots are Turk's head knots made into flat knots.



The spoke knot (5B x 6L - TH'd) with a hole designed in one area of the knot for the spoke. I tied three in parallel with #3 nylon braided starter cord. Total length of approximately 9'-0".

Both types of knots share a common characteristic. With each knot design I produce, the end of the cord always comes back to the start. All of the knots are tied with a single length of cord.

The inspiration for the intricate designs of the knots is directly attributable to the ancient Celtic artists. I increased the size of one of the Celtic border pattern outlines. This allowed me to incorporate more of the teardrop loops, hearts, and interlocking loops into the designs.



Here I am repairing the Commodore's boat brush handle with a 5B X 6L ordinary turkshead knot.

Each series of designs (five to date) have diagrams, sized for the cord or rope used. Therefore all knots of the same knotal dimensions (bights), made of the same cords, are dimensionally the same sizes. The mats intended as hot trivets are made

of natural fibre cords, cotton in most cases. The mats made of synthetic fibre cords and rope, are intended as cold trivets or for display only. Most of the knots are mounted on heavy cotton canvas of contrasting colours and are doweled for display purposes. The hangers are usually made of the same cord as the knots.

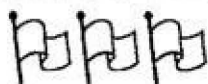
All of the cords used in my knotting are selected for dimensional stability, texture, firmness, size, weave, wearability, and appearance, I try wherever possible, to use common materials, readily available.

I also tie multistranded knots and other 3 dimensional configurations. I have Turk's head knots made into boxes of many sizes and shapes, knots around drinking glasses, mugs, spice bottles. I have knot handles for hand tools and decorative knots for use as jewellery.

I also tie a signature piece, comprised of a combination of three knots, made into a personal key holder. This piece is not offered for sale. I give this knot to each student of my knotting classes, as a parting

gift and as an incentive, to carry on knotting.

I also make a number of pieces for the commercial and recreational boating community, both functional and decorative. There are approximately 400 designs of new flat knots and Turk's head knots at the present time. This has been a very condensed history of my interest (passion?) in knotting.



Thoughts on Starting a New Group

by Nigel Harding

From time to time I am asked how to go about starting a new branch of the IGKT. The Guild has for many years recognised that its future development will be through the expansion of local networks of Knot Tyers, and so the Council offers a great deal of support anyone embarking on this route, all except money that is!

The first question to be asked is, 'what type of group do you want'

Existing groups' range from merely a local contact, acting as a focal point for members in the locality, to formally constituted branches with regular meetings, speakers, organising committees,

newsletters, treasurers, accounts and all the other paraphernalia.

Before going too far, one must gauge the likely support for your group. How many members are within reasonable travelling distance, and how many are likely to come? Where would the gathering be held, and what is it going to cost. How is the group to be financed, it is amazing how much just a few letters or phone calls can cost.

There are some groups that simply get together in a pub, and entertain each other, as well as the other drinkers - until they are asked to leave. Others meet a couple of times each year, and pass the hat round for a contribution towards the hire of the room, and the cost of the next mailshot. Yet others are formally constituted, and raise money through their own membership fee.

Our aim is to be completely flexible, so that members need or need not be a member of a local, or even national group, although we hope that it would be to their advantage if they were. Hence an individual living in Texas, for example can simply be a member of the IGKT, and deal only with me, or they can also be a member of the Texas Branch, or the North America Branch, or both.

Under the terms of the Constitution, any group must have its rules ratified by the Council of the IGKT. This is a big step from just being a group of friends getting together occasionally, as a formally constituted group must have a ruling committee, with an elected secretary, chairman and treasurer. Committee meetings must be held in a business like manner, with minutes taken, and a copy of the approved accounts being submitted to the main body of the IGKT annually. In addition, the activities of the group must be within the declared objectives of the Guild, as written in the constitution.

This all sounds very overwhelming, but this has not stopped a number of Branches becoming formally recognised. My advice to anyone would be to start small, and see what happens. It can be quite lonely sitting in a bar all on your own, especially if you have to pay for the privilege. Make it known that you are trying to start something, either by writing a note for Lonnie to publish in KM, or by letting me know, and I will include your name as a contact in the next edition of the Membership Handbook which is due out in the summer.

Above all else, keep knotting, and enjoy sharing the experience.

Thoughts on a Headquarters Building

by Nigel Harding

I am sure that it is true that every organisation dreams of having its own headquarters. In fact, I am often asked by those visiting the UK if it is convenient to just drop in, and have a look around. Of course any visitors to my home in Uckfield would be made most welcome, and Sylvia and I would be pleased to chat over some tea and biscuits.

Somehow, I don't believe that that is quite what is expected. For many years I have been involved with Scouting, and as a result I have had some experience of owning a headquarters building. I can appreciate the advantages, but sometimes these can be outweighed by the disadvantages, particularly when it comes to finance. However, I will try and be objective, and offer thoughts both positive and negative, and leave the membership to enter into the debate.

It would be wonderful to have a building in which the IGKT could store and display its possessions. At present there are

knotted items spread all over the world, with different individuals entrusted with them. A central building would keep all these together, probably on display, and everyone would know where to look for them. The same argument goes for the Guilds library, a wonderful collection of literature on knotting, which at present only sees the light of day twice a year, when it is brought to the meetings.

This would be a place where the central administration of the Guild could be carried out, with all the information under one roof. A place with a permanent address which would be most useful. A venue where not only meetings could be held, but also training sessions, workshops, demonstrations etc.

It would, of course, need to be in a location that is easy to reach either by private or public transport. In the case of private transport, car-parking facilities would be required, as would vehicular access, preferably for a van. Perhaps a unit on an industrial estate might be the answer. This could even be rented

in order to avoid the capital cost of buying a building.

On the other hand, once the Guild has property there are organisational changes which have to take place, including formally creating and running a Company, and where should our HQ be situated? London would seem the obvious choice, where property and land prices are at a premium, and access by car is particularly difficult. How about going to Mid Suffolk, where I used to live, where buildings are relatively cheap to rent. Unfortunately Stowmarket was 50 miles from the nearest motorway. How about Portsmouth, or do I hear Liverpool?

Wherever it is, who is going to be there to greet the visitors? Would this be a team of dedicated volunteers, or should we be faced with having to employ a caretaker or someone just to sweep up, if nothing else. Who will mend the guttering, unblock the drains, change a light bulb are all problems which can be solved, but the responsibility needs allocating before, rather than after the event.

An HQ of our own could also provide office space for the ad-

ministration of the Guild. This may mean that the secretary would not be able to work from home so easily, and may result in the need to employ an administrator, albeit only a part time basis.

There are certainly problems in owning or leasing property, but none of them insurmountable. There are also organisations that can help provide finance towards projects like this, such as the National Lottery. Not only is there a need to be aware of all the implications for ourselves, any would be benefactor would want to satisfy themselves that we have done this, in order to be sure that their money would be put to good use, and not bring about the eventual collapse of the organisation.

If I sound a little paranoid about the financial consequences of becoming a property owning charity, this is because all the members of the Council, including myself, are Trustees of the IGKT, and therefore personally liable for any financial catastrophe.

Perhaps another alternative would be to find a body who

might like to accommodate members of the Guild, such as a museum, or stately home that is looking for an organisation to exercise its craft, and entertain the visitors at the same time?

On the other hand, it may all be pie in the sky, - I hereby declare the debate well and truly open.

Bob Bob

Re Gilwell Meeting

by Jack Sheehan

I would have loved to be there as it would have marked 50 years since I visited a school time pen friend that lived in Chingford Hotel. Her name was Bridgette North

About 20 naive Kiwis replaced those who jumped ship in NZ back in 1948. By the time that I got to the queue end, they only wanted trimmers, so I put my age up and said yes I have been in the stokehole before, so without benefit of passport, or income tax clearance, we all set off for Liverpool in two hours

The ship being the SS Mahara of the Shaw Saville Clifton line. We came to the UK via Panama, Norfolk Virginia, and the Kiwis went straight down to London awaiting the company

to ship us back to NZ as we had signed repatriation papers before departing NZ. - at 16 quite an adventure. Departed London 6 weeks later on the MV Wai-fawa via the Suez Canal.

Bob Bob

EDUCATIONAL CHARITY?

from: Europa Chang, Essex, UK.

An old friend, who has been helping with Design & Technology classes in primary schools, wrote recently and described the first term's work with 7-8 year olds, one sentence is quoted below:

"I was a little taken aback by many of the children not knowing how to tie knots with string and wondered whether to let them learn by trial and error or through seeing me do it for them."

The IGKT is registered as an educational charity. While individual members do work hard at teaching kids, we don't appear to have a defined course of action, nor even a corporate policy about teaching. What are we going to do about remedying such a sad state of affairs?

(Ed, Is there the will to have another look at IGKT teaching packages?)

East Anglian Branch Meeting
Saturday 24th October 1998

Held as usual at the Museum of East Anglian Life in Stowmarket, with 25 members and friends.

Our old (?) friend Brian Field was the main speaker and he chose "The Regular Knot Tree and it's practical applications" for his subject. Brian had produced hand-outs in his customary clear layout to illustrate the theory of making Turks Heads without going into the often confusing mathematics of the job! Pieces of cord appeared from pockets and hand-bags and, following his demonstrations, it wasn't long before the knots were made.

On a purely personal note, I have only been able to make a 4 lead, 5 bight Turks Head using Charlie Smith's method - in the hand. Now, I hope, with a bit of practice and a lot of patience (something my wife seems to think I lack!) I'll be able to put the same knot on a rail without having to take the rail off the wall.

Coffee and biscuits followed which gave a chance to get to know the new faces. Needless to say they were given membership forms in the hope that they will join, we

try to keep Nigel busy if we can !

After the break Ken Higgs showed us a Rope Making machine he has made from a drawing in a very early Knotting Matters and briefly demonstrated the art using three different colours of wool.

I would to express my thanks to all for braving the elements and making the journey to Stowmarket in what could only be described as lousy weather. Hope the homeward run wasn't too bad.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 27th March 1999 at the same venue and starting 1.30p.m. We are not having a speaker on that occasion and it was agreed that we would ALL (*Vee ave vays of making ziss appen*) bring along a piece of work to "Show & Tell." Hope my overhand knot will do!!

For further information please contact John Addis - Secretary on

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John Addis

2 Terence Airey Court

HARLESTON

Norfolk IP20 9JP

WEST YORKSHIRE BRANCH ACTIVITIES IN 1998

- **JANUARY TO MARCH:**

Monthly meetings, planning the season ahead.

Some members assisted the North West Branch at the Antiques Fabric Fair in Manchester. David Pearson discovered the Boomerang Knot!

- **APRIL:**

Our normal meeting used to practice erecting our new walk-in market stall to be used for display events.

We displayed for the 2nd time at Colne Valley Museum, near Huddersfield. All Museum staff and craft exhibitors in Victorian dress. We did think the museum staff a little unkind referring to one of our team as "Dracula". We thought that Tim Field looked rather splendid! Opportunity to try other crafts, made some Corn Dollies.

- **MAY:**

Four members attended the IGKT AGM at Portsmouth and had a great weekend renewing old friendships and making new ones. Thought it well organised and a very good venue.

The end of May saw the arrival of our youngest member - GARY- born to Graham and Christina Smith. Welcome Gary.

- **JUNE:**

Wakefield Canal Festival, and our first outdoor event of the year and able to test our new stall with high winds and torrential rain! No problems! We can now work on improving our displays in the new space available. This was Gary's first knotting outing....He slept a lot!

Brighouse Canal Festival. Roy Dales from Driffield joined us with his lovely leatherwork. He was a great asset despite the poor chap not being West Yorkshire born.....no discrimination here! Lots of rope making on two machines that weekend.

- **JULY:**

Dewsbury Canal Festival...not well attended by boaters or public, and not a very good site. However, we are told that improvements are planned, so may try again next year.

• AUGUST:

A weekend display in the Captain Cook Museum in Whitby by David and Sheila Pearson, assisted by Dave and Anne Walker from the NW branch. Also joined by Roy Dales and James Nixon from Whitby and two IGKT members not previously known to us. We had two very keen potential members spend a lot of quality time with us. It was a very enjoyable weekend and a good one for the IGKT membership.

Leeds Waterfront Festival...it's second year, sighted at the Canal Basin adjoining the Royal Armouries. Well organised this year and potentially an important festival. Learned a new rope game!

Had a day visit to the National Narrow Boat Festival at Salford Quays, to watch the NW Branch at work!

• SEPTEMBER: normal Branch meeting.

Hull Sea Shanty Festival, whilst not really a Knotting event, the Smiths and Pearsons enjoyed a good day out there and met up with several other IGKT members. A suggestion was raised that perhaps we

should form an IGKT Shanty Choir!

• OCTOBER:

The Pearsons, Tim Field and Roy Dales attended the IGKT meeting at Gilwell. We tried to organise a conker tournament...well, we had a plentiful supply of conkers in the beautiful grounds of Gilwell Park, and where else could we be sure that everyone had access to string! Despite over 40 conkers being handed out to bemused members, only 6 took up the challenge. A short but good tournament. Come on you members south of the Watford Gap...bring your sense of fun along next time! A good weekend in a lovely warm Pack Holiday Centre.

• NOVEMBER:

Graham Smith and David Pearson gave a talk and demonstration at Battyeford Boat Club. Very well attended and received, and a good evening.

• Summer is over and we are planning a winter project of a six-week static display at the Colne Valley Museum, with lots of new work being especially knotted for this event.

We've had a very successful season. However, as one door opens ...another closes. We have gained Gary, [whose knotting abilities may not be a HUGE asset for some time], and we have lost Nick Wilde [who IS a huge asset], as he has moved to Portsmouth to work. GOOD LUCK Nick, we will miss you in Yorkshire!

If there are any W.Y. members who have not previously been active, and you would like to join in any of our fun weekends, PLEASE DO, and contact David Pearson, 44 Water Lane, Fernley, Leeds, LS12 5LX, (0113-257 2689).... Secretary of the W.Y. Branch.

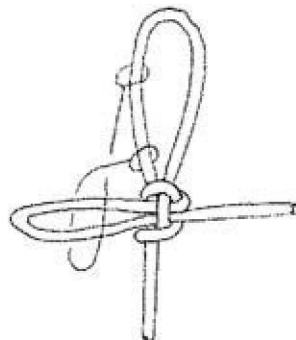
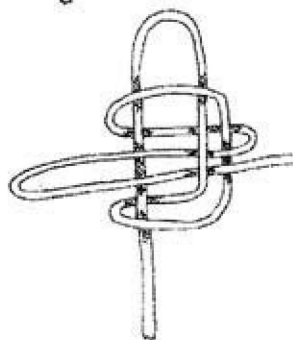
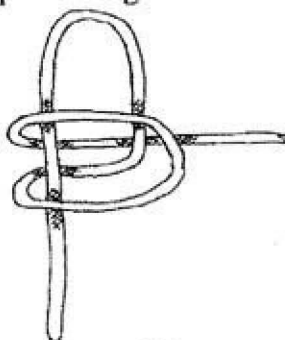


LINFIT QUICK RELEASE
HITCH

from: Owen Nuttall, West Yorkshire U.K.

I have been trying for sometime to find a release hitch that was secure with out any weight on the standing part, which could be shaken then pulled and the hitch would stay fixed. More importantly when the working end was pulled to spill the hitch, there would be no turns around the standing part. The release

hitch would be completely free. This hitch makes a useful slip knot when worked tight to take the Linfit Hitch a stage further, by placing a loop around the release loop, this locks the loop to become a fixed loop knot preventing the noose slipping.



POST BAG

THE "DITTY BAG"

from: Miss. Jane Kennedy,
London.

May I speak up for the article about "Ditty Bags", which I found most interesting. Surely most specialist magazines spare room for the occasional articles on odd, allied subjects which will appeal to a member of the readership.

I read this article on my return from the wonder voyage of a four masted schooner on which the captain not only paid me the compliment of trusting me to complete various ropework tasks about the ship but, with his treasured ditty bag to do them with. The bag, made with great care as a present from a former crewmember, was of canvas with fancy stitching and a rope handle. It contained the usual needles, thread, palm, fid etc. plus some home made gadgets - all for rope work or canvas.

I would only add that Ashley found it relevant enough to include ditty bags on page 576 - enough said I think.

Ed: Pity you didn't include the name of the ship or her captain.



from: Ken Yalden, Hants, U.K.

The article by Louie Bertos in KM58 regarding Ditty Bags is good, because it has prompted replies and interest, but so far no one has answered his questions, having said that, I have one or two answers.

First the name. My Webster's dictionary says 'ditty' derives from 'duty', a course calico, and 'duty' derives from the Hindi word - 'dhote' - loincloth. Calico was spun and woven from cotton in Lancaster and shipped out of Manchester. Calico before any one asks comes from CALICUT where it was first obtained; in England it is unprinted and uncoloured, in the US it is course and usually printed.

"I blame any distortion of the English language or other vagary on the Atlantic Ocean, look what happened to the game of Cricket?"

Manchester (i)- The name of a city and inland port in UK.

Manchester ii- (I first heard this expression in Australia twenty years ago) Confirmed by

the Oxford dictionary. Goods and material shipped out of Manchester mainly cotton.

"Jewing" -- 'Country Life' book of nautical terms 10-11. Sailors term for sewing and repairing clothes. (It's not p.c. of course, named because most professional tailors were of Jewish descent)

Ditty Bags were not part of Royal Navy life, at least not since 1865, when a uniform for the sailors and the structure of the modern navy was agreed by the Board of Admiralty. Thereafter, if it was not in 'The Kings/Queens regulations or Admiralty Instructions' you had to give your reasons why you had it, maybe to a 'Court of Inquiry'. There have been many a good tool goes by the board, over the side, because it was a non-service item. For many years the only sharp tool permitted between decks was a seaman's clasp knife, this was of service pattern, and without a point, to discourage fighting on the lower deck, the theory was that, by the time you got the blade out it was supper time in any case.

Ditty Boxes were issued as kit, up to the last war, mentioned in the 1937 Admiralty Manual of Seamanship. Subsequently replaced by a small brown attaché case.

The 'Housewife' (service issue) looks like a small tool role and is made of heavy-duty navy-blue cotton and it contains all the stuff described by Louie and mine looks just like the one issued to my Dad. Because of its limited size the housewife contained only small items but it can be stowed inside a toffee box/tin with other articles, sail makers palm, twine etc. that may have fallen off a shelf when the ship rolled, and this in turn stowed inside the small brown case.

Further to Charles Warner's comment about 'not seeing much relevance to knotting in a ditty bag'. Our Guild has a declared objective of "The advancement of education by the study of the art, craft and science of knotting past and present." The quote is part of our constitution and it can be as folksy or as scientific as you like. Nothing is said about stifling other people's interests

only advancement of interest, knot tying is such a broad discipline there is room for everyone. Personally I can not digest eight pages of rich text about one knot, so I do not read it, I leave it to others, because someone must understand it, and they can then explain it to me later. I like the small juicy articles that make me reach to my look shelf and make me do some thinking.

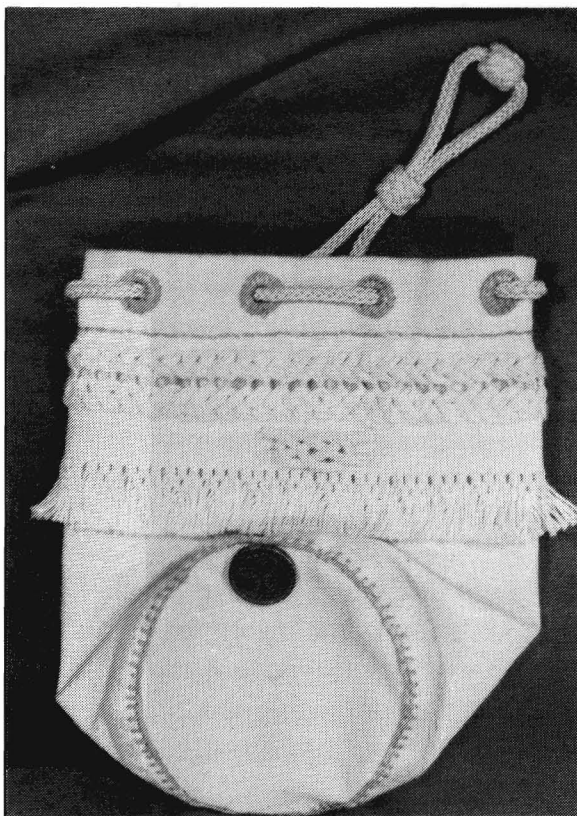
The main reason for this letter is one of a thank-you. I have just become the proud owner of a ditty bag cir. 1998 and made as a commission by Tony Doren. The bag is small 7.5 inch x 4 inch cir. with the finest drawn thread work I have seen for a long time. I hope the coloured photograph by Richard Hopkins and Europa Chang does it justice. Look at the detail, also of the hand-sewn eyes and the 8pt sq. sennit, as its cord. The dark dot is a one pound coin for scale. As to the value of the bagit's **NOT** for sale.... - it's all mine!!

If the flurry caused by Tony when he produced it, like a rabbit out of a hat, one ditty bag from within another, at the General Meeting at Gilwell, has any thing to prove, it is that the craft side of knotting is alive and well.

I thank all the writers of long and short articles and I thank all the readers if you manage to read my articles to the end.

Yours aye.

P.S. Thanks again Tony.



Working Riggers

from: Rob Eardley, Leicester.

Further to Paul O'Regan's plea for a Riggers Club or school. Maybe this will help, the address of the only working rigger I know.

Mr. Andy Gordon
12 Yeolands Road
Weston, Portland
Dorset DT5 2HN



MONKEY'S FIST

or

MONKEY FIST

from: Sten Johansson, Sweden.

The Monkey's Fist is a world wide known knot and is shown in almost any book about knots after the 1960's. The English name has been translated and the knot is called Monkey's Fist (Fist of a Monkey) in all languages I know of.

This knot was first shown by Cyrus D .Day in his book "SAILORS' KNOTS" in 1936 page 126

Ashley claims that this knot was first published by E.N. Little in his book "LOG BOOK NOTES" in 1888. Ashley has never seen Little's book and

there is no MONKEY'S FIST shown in LOG BOOK NOTES. Ashley, page 82 #542 "Apparently it was first pictured.....etc.." Also page 163 #881 (about the Star Knot) "...but the first illustration of it is, I BELIEVE, in...." Also page 353 "The first person to picture and name the Monkey's Fist was E.N. Little....." WRONG! THERE IS NO PICTURE OR NAME OF THIS KNOT IN THIS BOOK. Ashley has never seen Little's book and it is not mentioned in the bibliography of his book.

Where did Cyrus Day get his Monkey's Fist from? I have looked in every book mentioned in the bibliography (excerpt for OSBORN: ROPE WORK) and I cannot find this knot. I have also looked in more than 7 books of Seamanship, but no "MONKEY'S FIST" to be found. Was this knot unknown before 1936? One theory is that it has been shown in some book about needlework or leatherwork, where they make small tassels and balls for decoration.

Now to another matter, what is the name of this knot, is the proper name really MON-

KEY'S FIST? Shouldn't it be MONKEY FIST? In English nautical language they use the MONKEY to show a diminutive form of another word (to say that a thing is small) e.g. monkey sail, monkey poop, monkey block, monkey fore-castle, monkey island, monkey engine and so on. The normal name for the above knot in English is MONKEY'S FIST, which means FIST OF A MONKEY OR APE" I think the name has nothing to do with a monkey or an ape and that the proper name should be MONKEY FIST which means "SMALL FIST".

Graumont/Hensel in their Encyclopaedia of Knots use the name MONKEY FIST and show it in 11 different ways and only 3 years after Day published it in 1936. I think they also have seen it in another book.

Another strange thing about this knot is the translation into other languages. It is Monkey's Fist, but in the Italian translation of Ashley's Book of Knots, it is called "SACCHETTO" (Small Bag). Where did the monkey go?

Can any of the distinguished members of the IGKT lighten up my darkened small brain cells in this matter? Please! Please! Happy knotting and Best Wishes from a Swedish Knottologist.



KNOT SURGERY

from: David Crossley, Greater Manchester U.K.

<david@dacross.demon.co.uk>

My interest/knowledge are surgery, veterinary and miscellaneous knots.

I am not currently particularly active in the purely knotting field as I have been studying for a specialist qualification and now am working part time towards a PhD whilst working to pay for it! However here is a snippet of information you might find amusing.

This week I removed a tumour from a dog's heart using a clove hitch as the primary ligature, secured with a reef knot. I have not mastered constrictor knots whilst wearing surgical gloves - plus the loops are not snug together with this knot making more bulky. The extra 0.4mm does make a difference when tissue is limited.

**Impressions from the International Festival of the Sea -
Portsmouth**
by Tony Doran

Day 1 - 7.30 a.m. Rendezvous with Ken Yalden and Richard Hopkins at Horndean. Ken's a nice guy, but why so early in the day? Off to Portsmouth Dockyard, where Spud Murphy and Steve Judkins are waiting. Off load and set up the IGKT stand. All finished by about 9.30, time to grab a coffee.

10 a.m. Gates open and visitors stream in - and right past us. Butterflies of panic - are they going to ignore us? - but I'm a new boy. The others have seen it all before - they'll be back. On the bandstand a steel band starts up enthusiastically.

11 a.m. Sure enough, they come back, and for the next six hours it's all go. Luckily, Don Bellamy is here as well. A rather mature crowd, seizing the opportunity while many younger people are still at work. The steel band is replaced by pop music - I don't know which is the louder. Then there are the shantymen, and an assortment

of other music plays throughout the day.

Many attempts at the six-knot challenge - best of the day 27.7 seconds.

Highlight - an ex-Guide Commissioner in her mid-seventies zapping through the challenge in 54 seconds.

Day 2 - 7.30 start again (slave driver!). Much more relaxed and ready for the crowd, who are admitted half an hour early. Jeff Wyatt arrives and sets up his Celtic knotboards and bell lanyard display. Definitely a crowd-puller to augment Spud's knot boards. Busy all day again - just as well Gordon Perry is here to give his support. Hardly time to eat. Same pattern of business, but more family groups in evidence.

Highlight - a family of four boys, 6-12, ranged like a set of measuring jugs in front of Ken's knot rig, solemnly tying bowlines in unison - all succeeding!

Day 3 - Don't ask me what time we started. Another busy family day. Richard manning his challenge rig all day virtually single-handed (why do all the dolly birds go his way?) Jeff is pulling visitors in with his dis-

plays and demonstrations of fender making. Spud and Steve at the display tables, making anchors and key fobs like crazy and handing out 'how to' leaflets as though they were going out of style! Gordon and Don are all over the place, pitching in to relieve the pressure. Ken and I work out a strategy whereby one distracts the fussy parents while the other coaches the kids.

We all take a turn round the Festival site after we close, but we've been on our feet all day, and can't do it justice.

Highlights - Ken working with another 'foursome' while I keep the parents amused. An elderly gentleman, obviously an ex-mariner, fighting his failing co-ordination to tie a perfect bowline and clove hitch.

Day 4 - Great Bank Holiday mood, but it's a very windy day. We've a lot of trouble keeping everything lashed down. Every hour a load of our leaflets is distributed by a great gust of wind. Just as much interest in the knot displays. Despite the wind, one man completes the Challenge in 29.1 seconds. The organisers estimate that the

Festival will have had over 400,000 visitors. Feels as though they all called in to see us!

Highlight - Steve Judkin holding a Master Class for Spud, a bell lanyard, complete with star knot and cross grafting.

Visitor profile - age 6 to 76, mostly, but not exclusively marine or scouting background. A few smart alecks (easily dealt with). Some parents seem determined to sap the confidence of their children. Overall, a cheerful and appreciative crowd.

Unanimous verdict from Ken's team: a successful exercise to spread the word about the Guild. Response, especially from the children, indicates that there are a large number of prospective Guild members out there.

Footnote: A strange dream tonight. I'm by a tree and there's a rabbit hole at its base. An endless line of rabbits pop up through the hole, round the tree and back down. What does this mean?



POSTAL VOTING

from: Dan Lehman, Virginia, USA.

I received, by re-directed mail from my old address, KM60 today. My current address is: 134 Chanel Terrace, Apt. T-1 Falls Church, VA 22046-4112 USA. Since I've been out of contact with the IGKT for some time, just want to let you know I'm indeed still alive and interested with good intentions! Also this Friday sees me out of a job and hence an e-mail address, until.....sometime well in the future--so I'd best write while I can, e-wise.

With my expected free time soon, I hope to put my personal affairs in order, many things having been pushed aside by demands of work and cycling, a main social and physical-fitness interest. (In addition to inventing knots, I design cycling routes and lead rides for an area bike club.) So, while I sort out what next on a grand scale for me, I'll hope to devote some energy to IGKT matters.

In KM60, you muse about changing from an in-person voting system to a mail-based one. Well, I must say that I've

been quite dismayed that this obvious need wasn't effected from the start! How can one expect an *INTERNATIONAL* membership to come together for business--it's prohibitively costly for those at any great distance from whatever meeting site is chosen! Certainly there should be a mechanism that avoids such exclusion and involves the full membership.

Some of the recent letters discussions seem to be finally getting around to some more important topics for the IGKT. Frankly, I ask the question ; What has the IGKT contributed, technically, to the field of knotting? So much of KM's contents seem to rehash well-known knot matters and other items show much less rigor of examination and analysis than one would hope for. The IGKT should re-read it's stated purpose with care and then evaluate itself on each count, alas. By this time of our existence, we really should have some definite technical accomplishments of furthering knotting to point at--such as a comprehensive cross-listing & categorisation of known knots, of knots newly

introduced (recall that it was a new knot that precipitated the formation of the IGKT!), and a better understanding of strength and other behavioural characteristics of working knots. But I don't see the IGKT taking a lead in doing way of this work!? E.g., there are debates about which way to tie the sheet bend--ends on the same or opposite side(s)--; but where are the test results for repeat verification and understanding? (I think that in one of the more recent KM's there was perhaps a better treatment of this question but even there, I don't believe we were presented with the full details of testing.) And so on.



Ed; We can't please all the people all the time but we try always to be pleasing.

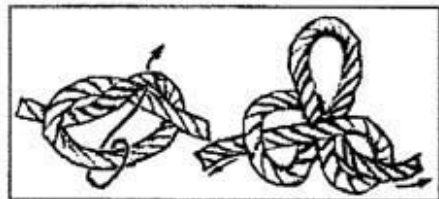
ASHLEY MEETS Y2K

from: Mike Wilson, Virginia, USA.

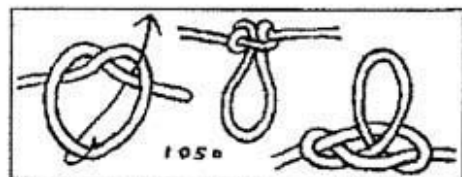
The year 2000 (Y2K) will have an adverse effect on more than computer software. For example, the text for suspending jear blocks (number 3415) in the "The Ashley Book of Knots" will become obsolete. I

suggest the text be changed from, "in the last century" to read, "before the twentieth century."

Many thanks to Mike Storch (KM60-p47) for showing us the 'Ridge Loop' knot. The casual observer may mistake the ridge loop for an Artillery Loop of the Manharness knot (Ashley #1050). (*Re- as Editors bracketed footnote mistakenly stated on page 48... Sorry*) They are not the same. The Ridge Loop knot starts with an overhand knot and is therefore not made in the bight. Whereas the Artillery Loop is made in the bight. That is a significant difference. An easy alternative to both and, my favourite especially when wearing gloves is the simple Overhand Loop (Ashley # 1046)



Ridge Loop Knot (above)



Artillery Loop (Ashley #1050)

A WORLD FULL OF KNOTS

April 1999

An Exhibition of Knots
at the museum

"De Zilverreiger" near Ant-
werp.

This is to announce that I am organising an exhibition of international knots, ropework, fancy knots and tools, etc. The material of the 10-year IGKT exhibition will be there and I am asking mem-

bers to show some of their work. The showcases available mean items can't be touched by the public. Deadline for items is the end of February. Tell me if you want them back or donated to the museum and the value if insurance is required. Please contact me at: Geert "Willy" Willaert' Dulfststraat 21, 2880 Bornem Belgium. Tel: (0032)(0)3/889 86 03 backup. [wwill@CARAMAIL.com]

GOLDEN WEDDING POEM

from: M de Koning, Netherlands.

...At a dinner party to celebrate our Golden Wedding, one of our guests surprised us by reciting this poem, which she wrote for the occasion. The author is Mrs. Annette Samson, an experienced Yachts woman who certainly knows her knots!

The "KING" in the text is my nickname; the literal translation of my Dutch Surname; 'Alcatraz' (misspelt in the text) is our 32 foot pre-war motor cruiser - a recognised 'Floating Monument'.

As the poem contains so many references to knots and their symbolism, we thought you would like it.

A Knotty Problem

The question, answer yet unknown:

Why King loves ropes and knots AND JOAN???????

Is it because she's small and nice

And was a handy one to splice?

We made a study of the thing

And found the findings interesting.....

A book on knots and bends and hitches
Can leave the reader quite in stitches...
The sheet can bend, a Turn is Round,
A rolling hitch seems quite unsound,
A Bend joins two ropes close together
A Hitch is bad in heavy weather..
A Knot is not so negative..
A Knot in need can also give..

But what has this to do with Joan????
The listener asks with stifled groan...

Aha! We find their **Marriage Knot**..
And that's the best one of the lot.
It's strong and lasting to the end
A Double Sheet (and blanket) Bend.
The purposes it serves are many,

It is the strongest one of any;
If tied aright from pril begin
It weathers storms without, within;
It is a joy for all to see
As strong as Everlasting Pea;
It doesn't slop, or not too far,
It thrives on bread or caviar,
It gives the space for lengthy chats
Or stillness on the Alcatraz.

In short your **Marriage Knot** was tied
With loving care on either side.

We're glad it's lasted **GOLDEN YEARS**
And Toast you both, you lovely **DEARS!!!**

Why No New Zealand Newsletter.

from: Roger Carter, N. Z.

You may have noticed that there hasn't been a N.Z. Newsletter for 18 months or so. The reason is two fold - firstly nothing much has happened hereabouts for quite a while, and we haven't been invited to exhibit at all since the B.T. Challenge. Secondly, The Wellington Maritime Museum has closed down for a couple of years. The building dates from the last century and has been put into the hands of civil engineers for a spot of "Earthquake Strengthening"! Which, regrettably precludes my using their postage franking machine. The chapter is in a period of suspended animation until the place is occupied again.

During this period I have only heard from our Rod Orram who represented us in Pompey. The others are obviously the strong silent types (I hope their subs are still arriving.), so I've no idea what they have been up to. Hopefully by the time our next subs are due we will have more to report.



The Angel Halo

from: Granville Angell, Staffordshire, U.K.

A member of your Guild suggested that the continuous rope circle which is part of my "Grant of Arms" embodied by Royal Assent at the College of Arms London, should be at least registered, patent, trade marked or whatever.



I served in the Royal Navy for 23 years with some limited examinations in Knots. I am well aware that since "time immemorial" the tying and usage of knots has been an integral part of mankind's progress. Hence it is, I would imagine quite rare for some "new" knot to appear so the family device, termed the ANGEL HALO, might be of

interest not only to yourself, but a wider audience.



A single knot of the design would be termed after another county family as a Stafford Knot, through common usage sometimes incorrectly referred to as a Staffordshire Knot. Myth has it that this knot was used to hang three men with just one piece of rope. If that is the case, our Angel Halo could accom-

modate a small ships crew (ideal for mutinies).

My lineage goes back direct to 1535, we have thus been in Staffordshire for centuries. The name Angel, it is believed, derives from the tribal name Anglo-Saxon or Angels. We therefore go back quite away. I am the 46 holder of the title Lord of Cannock since its inception in 1066.

I would be interested in any information you may have, not only your Guild, but also any similar design to my own family one.

HON. SEC. ANSWERS from Nigel Harding

Thank you for your fascinating letter. I have no personal knowledge of such devices, but I would have considered that being registered with the Collage of Arms would be sufficient to 'patent' it. I am no expert and would suggest that you take advice, either legal or from the Collage of Arms.

I know that in the past I have investigated registering a trademark, another approach to the same problem. I concluded that the cost of legal advice and

fees were prohibitive and did not give exclusive rights nor was it in perpetuity, registration was only for about ten years. It appeared that the best form of claim to a given design was that of use, in that, if it is regularly used in a given context, then the rights to it are by association.

Lets hope that some of our members will be interested in this subject and copyright for all material published in Knotting Matters remains with the author.



Ships Wheel Knot

from: Ron Haralson, California USA.

I have recently moved and my new address is;

Ron Haralson
642 Silvertop Way
Vacaville, California
95687 USA
1-707-449-0498

I need advice on a "ships wheel knot" that I made using Graumont's pattern. Is there a solution like starch that I can apply to it to stiffen it up and still retain the original white colour of the rope? I'm aware that a wire can be added but I tried it and

didn't really like it as the wire was still partially visible and of course the completed knots were still loose. Also what is a simple but attractive way to mount and display such a knot?



Better than Dusting.

from: Bert Nudds, Shropshire, UK.

Thank you for the Knotting Matters received this morning, I now have reading matter for the day - at least it's better than doing the dusting!! (I live on my own.)



ANY OLD ROPEWALKS?

from: Warren Anne Flixton, Suffolk, UK.

As a direct result of trying to find out how to make ropes myself, I find myself seriously researching into the history of rope making in all its aspects. At first I thought there was very little information available, but then realised that all over the country there was evidence of old ropewalks to be found. The first edition ordinance survey maps of 1884-5 have ropewalks marked on them in surprisingly

large numbers but they soon dwindle in later editions as the industry declined. These are late records as far as rope making is concerned but in conjunction with town directories information can often be pieced together for this period and then traced back further.

My request is that if you know of the site of an old Ropewalk in your area, or any other information related to local rope making, I would love to hear from you. Information please to Carolyn Reederm Warren Anne, Flixton Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 5PH or phone (01502) 730781.



A NEW/UNKNOWN KNOT?

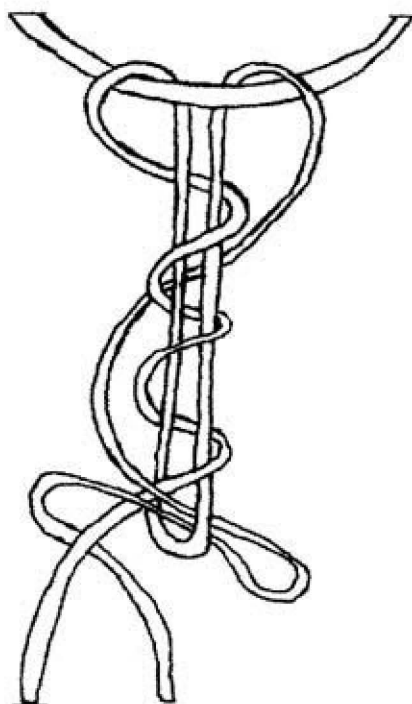
From: Olivier Peron, France.

As a new member, I would like to publish my knot in *Knotting Matters* for two reasons. Firstly because I still do not know if my knot is new or not. So, asking all the members' opinion, I should have a definitive answer to this problem. Secondly, I trust my knot and want everybody to learn it!

If you have already seen this knot, can tie it, know someone

who can or have a book showing this knot, **please do give me the information you have about it!** (Through *Knotting Matters*)

I have registered this knot to the in November under this name: "The Corkscrew Knot". Two booklets have already been written: "Corkscrew Knot", and "The Corkscrew Knot Now Tied On Several Anchors With 3 New Techniques". Further diffusions with technical features could be planed, depending on your interest in this knot?



POST BAG

SURVIVORS SYMBOL

from: Jana Hinkle,
<MR2JMH@aol.com>

[An e-mail to Dick Blackmer]

I am trying to come up with a special knot to use for a special group I am working with, Survivors of Suicide and Suicide Prevention. The program here in California doesn't have a "symbol" to use for their program and I had thought that some kind of a knot would be very symbolic and the victims of suicide are usually emotionally in knots and the Survivors are left in knots.

Can anyone recommend a knot that would be befitting of this organisation to use?



from: Dick Blackmer,
<easy@wizvax.net>
New York, USA.

At first I thought your email was some kind of prank and started a reply by recommending Ashley #366 (The Hangman's Knot). When I realised that you were serious, I was embarrassed and challenged. By copy of your email and this re-

sponse to KM, I'll solicit help from real knot experts. Since I am barely competent with utility knots, I may be missing an ideal "symbol" for your organization. Here are some thoughts.

Selection Rationale: Name of knot, function/use, graphic significance

- as the 12 loops for AA's "12-step program"
- Religious symbolism; e.g., Mats or Celtic knots in the form of a cross or a star, (Star Knots?),
- Pleasing logo patterns; e.g., Trefoil Knot, ABOK #2285.
- Security; The Ashley Bend (ABOK #1452) is the most secure way I know to tie two like ropes together. When partially tightened (drawn up), it has a pleasing symmetry for logo purposes.
- Rescue; The Spanish Bowline (ABOK # 1087) is probably the prettiest of the two-loop knots used as slings to lift a victim to safety.
- Hope; The mathematical unknot is any tangle that can be resolved into a perfect circle without cutting an endless rope. See Rob Scharein's "Mathematical Knots". Try

<<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/nest/imager/contributions/scharein/knot-theory/knot-theory.html>> I'm stretching here for "hope symbolism," visualising a tangle within a perfect circle. There are links within the above URL to dazzling graphics and to Rob Scharein, who might have better recommendations.

I think you are on a promising search. Good luck and lets hope other members have some better ideas.



HEMPEN CORD SUPPLIES

from: Peter Willems, Bauer
Landstrabe 200 C, 24939
Flensburg, Germany. Tele/Fax-
0043-461-73176.

As a new member I have heard that there is a problem getting small size cordage. I have spent some years in the German Navy and there I made my the first steps in knot tying. Knots have become my favourite hobby and a kind of little spare-time business too.

It might be of interest for guild members that I am able to offer a variety of hempen cordage in natural and tarred. Samples and costs available at

above address. I hope this helps other members out.



PREHISTORY COMMENTS

from: Bob Schwartz, Washington USA.

In KM61 page 41 (The Prehistory of Knots, discussing the first hitches 'MAN' may have made), Charles Warner states that "These first tucks are not in general at all secure;", and this should not apply to the fourth example 'pdc', as this represents the very secure Buntline Hitch (ABOK #1711). This is also referred to on page 43 and page 44 as 'pdc 24' and 'pdc Standing Part Hitches'. I just think that the aforementioned (pdc) example should not have been shown on page 41.

On a different subject, two months ago my personal project was to refurbish my Scouting Scrapbook that goes back to my Cub Scout days (1941). I transferred everything to 4 large 3-ring binders with everything, including photos, in to plastic 'sheet protectors'. Among the memorabilia was a copy of 'The Scout magazine, dated 'week ending 26th December 1959. On pages 516, 517 and 518 is an

article by Eric Franklin - "More About Chinese Lanyards". The material I have from my time in the UK takes up one complete binder.



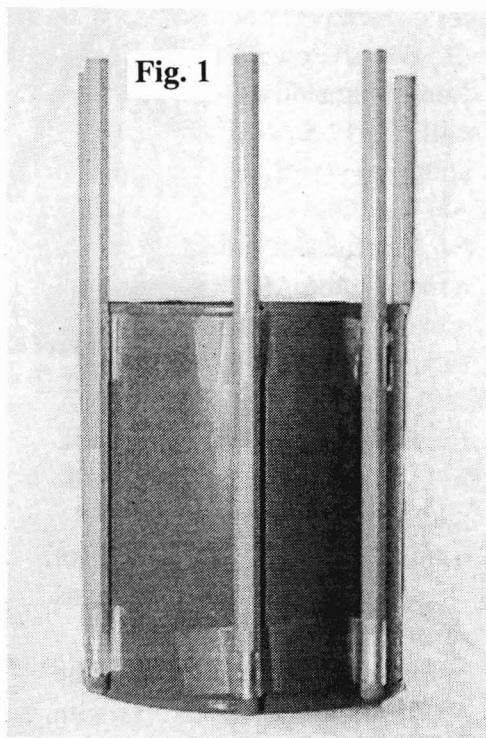
TURK'S-HEADS from T.C.E.D.'s

from: Mike Wilson, Virginia, USA.

The use of **T**emporary **C**ircumference **E**nhancement **D**evelopments (TCED) in the implementation of Turk's-Heads.

A common problem in the initial stages of tying a Turk's-head around a cylinder is that it becomes overly congested with the crossings of cordage. This problem can become severe even before the lead is doubled or trebled. A method to relieve the congestion is to form the knot very loosely. Unfortunately, this causes a jumble of unmanageable slack. The results of this approach may be frustration for the tier, an unfinished knot of a knot whose appearance and symmetry is compromised. These problems can be

avoided by using the following technique, which manages the slack in a Turk's Head while it is being formed. This technique requires that the circumference of the cylinder be increased temporarily before the knot is started. This is accomplished by placing material on the surface of the cylinder perpendicular to the eventual path of the knot. An efficient way of doing this is to tape dowels to the cylinder. Flat sticks such as tongue depressors can be used. This principle is illustrated in Figure 1.



It shows a tin can with pencils (Small Dowels) taped horizontally and individually around its circumference. The size of the dowels will be proportionate to the overall size of the project. Also, I recommend the length of the dowels should be at least six or seven times the width of the finished knot. When the dowels are secured in place, temporarily, form the knot on top of them. Then, whenever congestion impedes progress, remove one of the dowels. Removing a dowel will add needed and manageable slack in the line. Be careful not to remove the last dowel too soon.

Figure 2 shows a Turk's-Head of five-leads and eight-bights (5L x 8B) formed on top of pencils that were taped to a tin. (The construction of the knot chart for this Turk's-Head was illustrated in KM 61)

To finish the knot, remove the remaining dowel(s) and, as with

any other Turk's-Head, pull out all the slack evenly, tuck by tuck taking care not to skew the knot. It must be noted that this is not a "compression" technique. Therefore it can not be used to tie knots that are physically impossible. This Technique can be helpful when a Turk's-Head that was made flat,

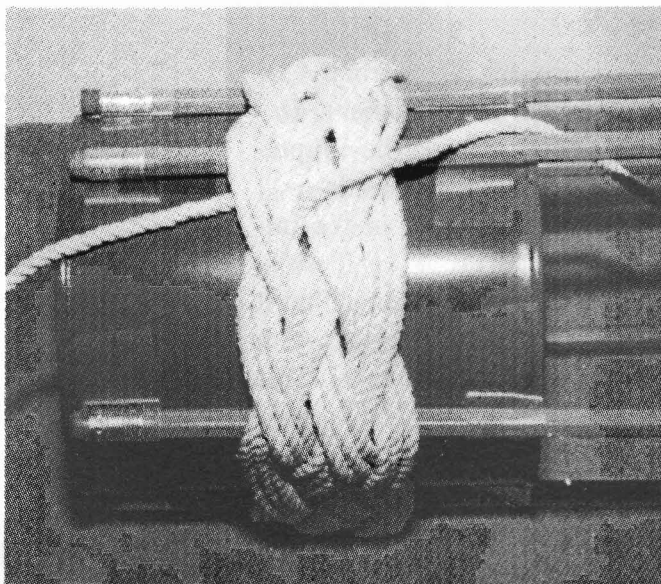


Figure 2

on a chart, is transferred to a cylinder. I'm confident that after you try this technique you will use it for all your Turk's-Heads.



THE DISC METHOD TURKSHEADS

from: Jesse Coleman, Alabama, USA.

Turks Head Knots, The Disc Method and the Law of the Greatest Common Divisor.

I enjoyed reading Mike Wilson's article in KM61 on how to tie Turks Head (TH) knots using the disk method. Mr. Wilson gave clear instructions that fleshed out Ashley's brief instructions in his #1362. However, I must disagree with Mr. Wilson's statement "...The Disk Method cannot be used to tie a knot that violates the common-divisor rule. For example, The Disk method cannot be used to create a Turk's-Head knot of 4-leads and 8-bights."

I must also disagree with Ashley in his #1362, where he wrote: "When certain that the diagram contains only in line (the number of bights and leads have no common divisor), you are ready to tie the knot. But if the diagram is found to consist of more than one line, add another tier of legs."

Ashley's "Law of the Common divisor" (#1308) states that a TH knot, tied with one line, is

impossible if the number of bights and the number of leads have a common divisor. This is true, but must a TH knot be tied using only one cord? No, a TH knot may be tied with any number of cords as long as the "Law of the Greatest Common Divisor" is obeyed. This law states that the number of cords needed to tie a TH knot is the greatest common divisor of the number of bights and the number of leads. The law of the common divisor is a special case of this more general law.

The Disk Method may be used to create TH knots with any number of bights and leads. Simply follow Mr. Wilson's instruction: start with the desired number of bights and add the required number of rows of triangles to reach the desired 4-leads, one could take figure 3 on page 65 of KM 61 and add one additional row of triangles. Then finish the drawing using the procedures that lead to figures 4 and 5 of that article. The drawing will have 4 separate lines. The greatest common divisor of 4 and 8 is 4. Therefore, tying this TH knot will require 4 cords.

BOOK REVIEW
KNOT & ROPES
For CLIMBERS

By Duana Raleigh
Illustrations by
Mike Clelland

A Review by Frank Brown

A few thousand generations after the first hairy anthropoid tied two vines together and founded knot craft, another tied a couple of logs together and built the first boat. From then until a couple of centuries ago, the mariners were the leading exponents of the craft. Then slightly less hairy beings started scaling rock faces and developing rope and knot craft with a view to control planned and unplanned descents. Inevitably some of these rock hoppers decided to record their knowledge and experiences for the benefit and amusement of potential climbers and arm chair dreamers. Any collection of texts on the craft is incomplete without at least a couple of books about the technical aspects of getting high in the hills using suitable bits of string, cord, line, webbing and rope. Duane's book

sits very comfortably in my collection.

There are a couple of features in the text that I found a little irksome. The author has introduced some "new" terms into a term-ridden field that tends to confuse instead of clarify. He refers to the rope's end as the "Falling Part". I would not have used this term considering the nature of the topic.

He also confuses with reference to the double Overhand in one place and then calling the same knot a Double Fisherman's and Half a Double Fisherman's in others. He acknowledges that his Figure Eight Fisherman's is actually the Figure Eight Bend, and then happily continues to use, in my view, the misleading term.

He has entered into the long ongoing debate on the use of the Bowline, and goes as far as to call that beautiful arrangement a "traitorous knot". I would love to sit down with Duane and debate the issue over a couple of Foster's, Budweisser's, Watney's or other brew.

A reference to the Water Knot does not appear to be supported with a drawing or other de-

scription in the text. Given the tendency to allocate new or different names, this is a bit of an oversight. An index would have been appreciated.

That is enough nit picking. This book reeks of experience. Been there, done that, wrote the book. And what about those drawings? Some decades ago I was a keen 'Mad Magazine' fan and it was pure nostalgia (they don't have nostalgia like they used to). I tried to find some titchy thing to carp at, but failed. Lovely stuff. This is a fun book, an instructive book, and an easy read.

Published by Stackpole Books.
ISBN 0-8117-2871-4

**A PROPER SPLICING
STATION
by
BRIAN GLENNON**

After I returned to my old job, at a Boston ship chandlers, being away almost nine months, I discovered a few changes had been made in my absence. My beautiful rope room had been converted into a paint storage facility and there was nothing left of the company's magnificent forty-foot long splicing

bench. Economics being what they are, the simple truth of the matter is that more money can be made selling protective coatings than rope.

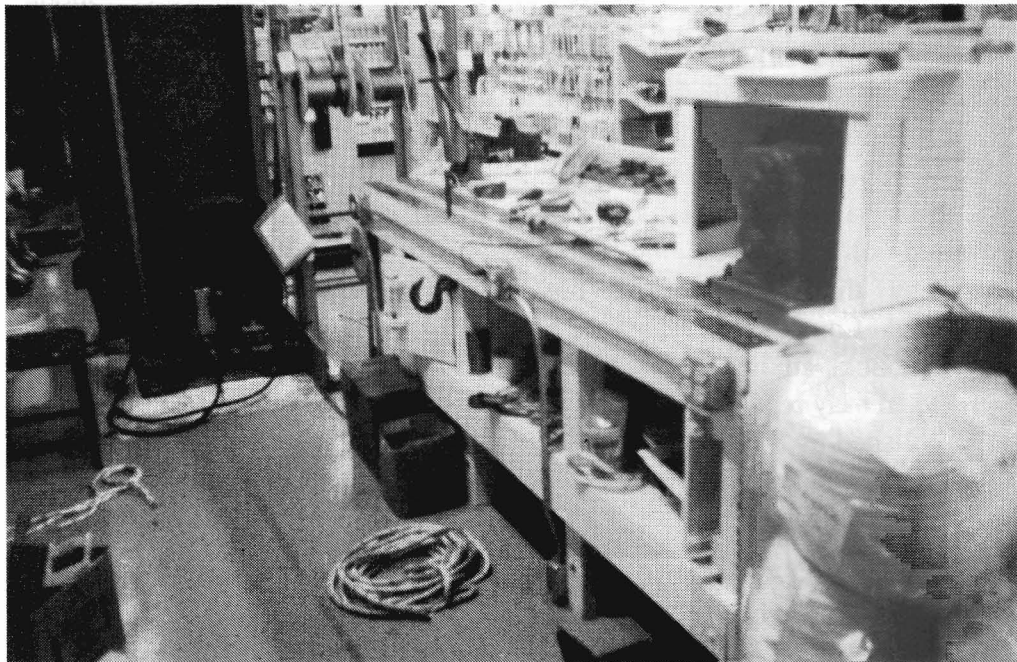
My newly appointed tack was to construct a smaller splicing bench in the chandler's retail store if I wanted to continue my trade in rigging. The job was daunting since I know nothing about carpentry, yet in this instance, wood served a higher purpose in life which was raw material to splice rope, and that supplied the creative impetus for me to tinker together a proper splicing station.

The winter months of 1997/8 were spent constructing a small comprehensive splicing bench out of scraps of wood and timber leftover from the chandler's building restoration. Discarded nails, old planks, and pallets supplied the raw material for the bench and adjacent rope rack and shelves.

I designed the bench to be multi-functional: wire rope splicing, braided rope splicing, three-strand splicing, and to accommodate a rotary swaging machine, a mounted wire rope cutter, and a pipe vice. A tau-

larit-swaging machine is located at the lower left of the bench and both machines will swage up to 3/8" (10mm) wire rope. The bench hook in the photograph is for setting the eye in braided or stranded rope.

Two one-inch thick sheets of marine plywood were fastened to the top of the timbers to accommodate the heavy pipe vice and swage machine. A pipe vice was chosen over a forming (splicing) vice for its versatility.



The bench measures eight feet long by three feet wide by three feet high. There are eight 4"x4" timbers as legs, which are lag bolted to the cement floor. All the timbers are fastened together with carriage bolts, and pegboard was used as an outside covering to suspend merchandise.

Bending thimbles, holding boards, and other general purpose work cannot be accomplished with a riggers vice and wire splicing can still be done with a pipe vice (as portrayed in SPENCER, p. 202).

A thick coat of white paint was applied to hide the mistakes and finally electrical outlets were attached to provide power.

After three months of inspired woodwork the splicing station was operational. Because most of the material was improvised, the total cost of the bench in parts was under 100 American dollars or less than 60 British pounds. So far I've made several moorings, duplicated two sets of shrouds, hand spliced two wire-to-braid main hal-yards, and done four dumb-waiter pulley lines, and the season is just beginning.

STRENGTH OF KNOTS

by Percy Blandford

Over the recent issues we have been shown new knots, which is all very praiseworthy. This is one reason why the IGKT exists. It seems easy to devise a new knot, but not so easy to invent a good new knot that does a new job or is better than one of the old faithfuls.

Some knots I have seen drawn do exhibit weaknesses. Some could distort or give way. Most of them would be almost impossible to cast off.

So what? Some time ago I was involved in some fairly scientific experiments on the strength of knots. Some of you

may have more information than I have, but these observations may set you thinking.

Many tests to destruction resulted in the cord breaking where it entered the knot, so the knot had weakened the cord.

Sharp turns and doubling back a part of the knot was weaker than easy curves and usually resulted in distortion and jamming and impossibility of undoing.

The joining knot, which was the best example of how a knot should be tied, was the sheet bend, coupled with its same form in the bowline. Note the easy curves. We did not find it mattered if ends came out on the same or opposite sides.

What may be surprising is that when a rope is attached to something solid it is a round turn on the object that takes most of the load - well over 60%. The round turn and two half hitches is as strong as you are likely to get for withstanding a direct pull near square to the object. It did not matter in the test whether the turns round the standing part made a clove hitch or a cow hitch.

After wartime experience in the RAF I am not sure if tucked turns are always needed. We towed aircraft with a rope behind a tractor. There was first a round turn on the tractor hook, then the end was taken round the standing part, then back round the hook before passing the other way round the standing part and back to the hook. We left it at that, without any tucking turns, it held. There was no actual knot. It was easy to cast off.

Almost any knot will hold if there are enough turns and tucks, but that does not make it a good knot.

THOSE KNOT CHARTS

by Percy Blandford

In the details of Guild Supplies, there is the rather bold statement that we have 100 knot-charts at 20p each or £10 the lot. The salesmanship is not very good. Let me enlarge on it a little.

When the Guild was a little over one year old we were invited to what I think was our first public appearance - the Gilwell Reunion. The informa-

tion of those unfamiliar with the Scout Movement, Gilwell is a sort of university of World Scouting. Those who successfully complete its fairly extensive training programme are awarded the Wood badge, and for them there is an annual reunion on the first weekend in September, with a varied programme. Thousands turn up each year. For that year a very large number of bases were set up all over the park offering participants opportunities of learning a large range of subjects of Scouting interest. We were invited to extol the virtues of knotting.

Our team consisted of Eric Franklin, with my wife Ivy, myself (all Wood Badge holders) and Geoffrey Budworth. We set up shop and spent a very long and busy time teaching knotting and encouraging its greater use in running Scout activities. We also recruited many new members.

At his own initiative and expense Eric Franklin drew and had printed a quantity of charts showing six knots and some of their variations - just A4 photocopied sheets. They quickly

sold out. It was obvious that Eric had a good idea.

The charts were reprinted and added to them. They sold in large quantities at IGKT meetings. Ivy was supplies secretary and she must have sold thousands in those early days. They had the advantage of not involving the Guild in any capital expenditure. We did not photocopy from master sheets until we got an order.

So what are these charts? Many of them deal with basic knots and their variations. There are some unusual knots and different ways of tying some common ones. There are many splices. There are the basics of decorative knotting. There are several things not published elsewhere. Numbers crept up and we called a halt a 100. I hope the Supplies Secretary can send you a list of chart titles.

Many members contributed knots. I drew many of the charts. There is a limit to what can be put on one piece of paper, but I would venture to suggest that if you buy a set of 100 charts, you will have the equivalent of one of the most comprehensive knotting books

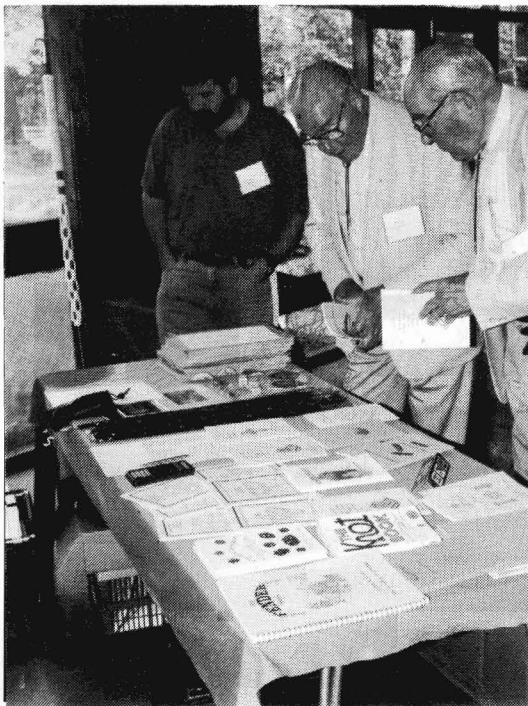
available. Yes, I have heard of Ashley!

You will also have a bit of IGKT history and will be doing something in memory of Eric Franklin.

AGM GILWELL REPORT

by Don Bellamy

About 75 members attended the Gilwell Park meeting on a wet October weekend. Some were accommodated in tents!



(The Guild Supplies table and Colin Grundy, Gunner Fagerlind and brother)

It was good to be able to welcome some overseas members among whom were Willeke van der Ham and her friends from the Netherlands, Gunner Fagerlind and his brother from Sweden, James Harvey from New Zealand and Marco Piersanti from Italy. I am sorry if I have anybody out.

There were six exhibits:

- Edna Gibson had a wooden frame, on which she was demonstrating some work that originated in Japan. This description does not do it



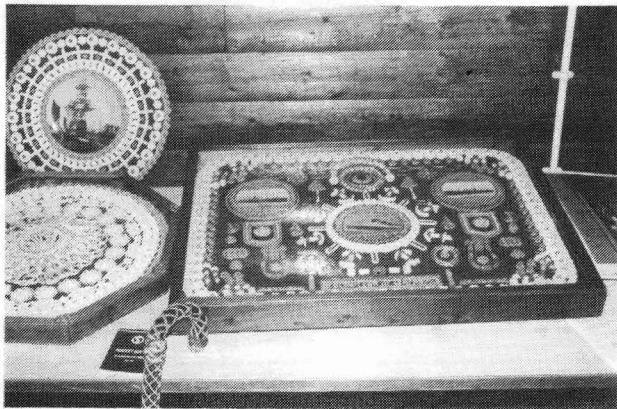
justice, like saying Charley Smith had a bit of string. I made notes at the time about this and the other exhibits but have lost them, so am having to rely on my memory which has never been all that good.

(Edna Gibson had a wooden frame)

- Colin Grundy had some intricate knots displayed in frames and a chest becket and a decorated walking stick.

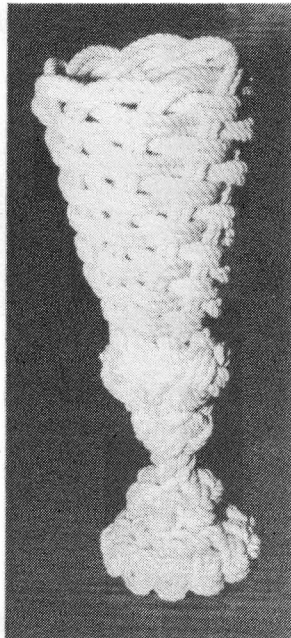


- Don Bellamy had tied some rope and cord anchors and a decorated boat hook. One of the anchors was on his cap, which he wore whenever he had to go outside, so sometimes it was on show a little damp!
- Bernard Cutbush had some interesting knot boards on show and a



(Bernard Cutbush's table)

photograph of Guild members taken at Whale Island (HMS EXCELLENT), Portsmouth at the 1989 AGM. He also had on show a wine goblet made of cord.

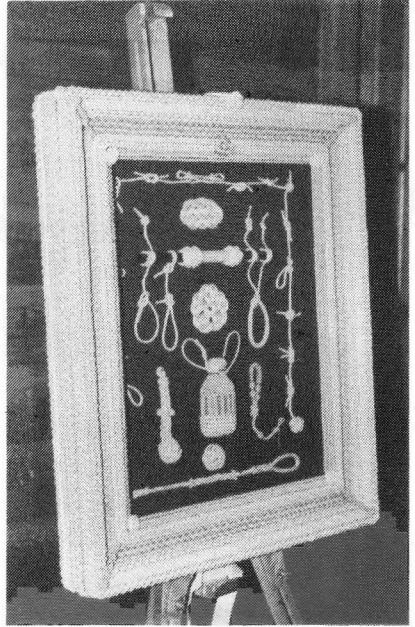


(Harold Scott's table at Gilwell)

- Harold Scott was showing cruciform Turks Heads and a knot board of rigging and 'blocks and tackle' as would be used on ships.



- Bill Meakin had made some table place settings in various colours and also some floor mats



A rope picture frame, made by Liz, was on display in Des Pawson's area. It was really excellent and must have taken hours to make and a lot of practice.



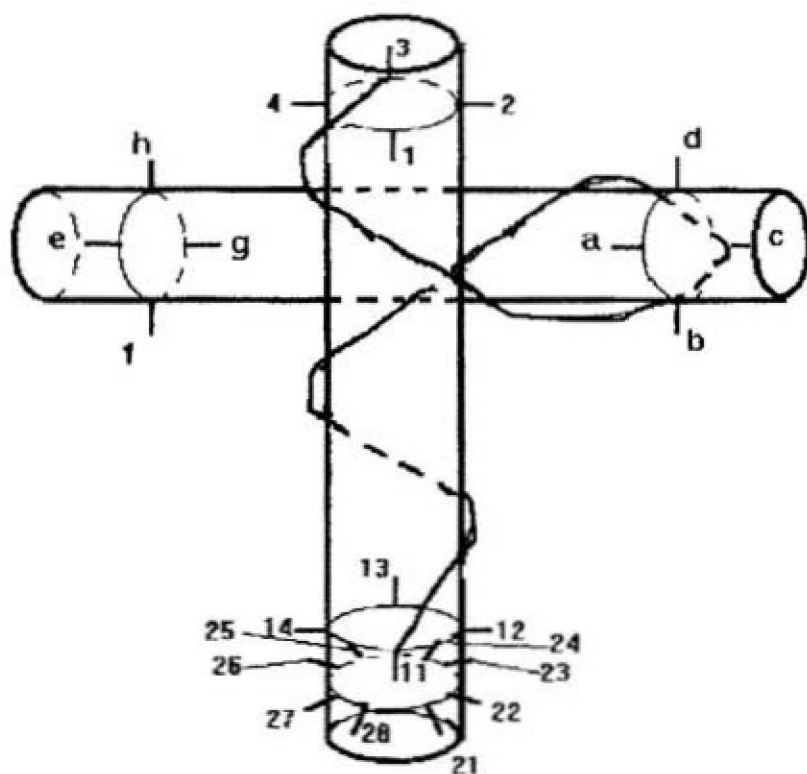
The raffle table, the brown paper bags are full of walnuts from Des and Liz Pawson's garden.

4 BIGHT TURKSHEAD CROSS

by Patrick L. Ducey
19502 14th NE
Shoreline WA 98155
USA

Here are some interesting knots that my grandfather, RADM L.W. Perkins taught me many years ago. Like the

Spherical Turk's Head I wrote about in KM54, these knots use combinations of Turk's Heads to create a finished piece. Although the instructions look difficult, they are easier to follow than the construction of the cross "loom" to tie the knot around. Of course, the most painstaking part of tying any Turk's Head is in tightening it



up to the finished knot.

There is also a Turk's Head cross in Ashley (1397), that has a six-bight post, and four bight arms. I prefer the symmetry of four bights all around. Tom Hall, who has had several letters published in KM, sent me some instructions for a six bight cross which is also symmetrical. A six bight cross can also have a strand added the same way that this four bight cross has one.

To tie a Turk's head Cross with or without a stand first requires finding two tubes of different diameter. It does not matter which tube, the post, or

the arms, is of a larger diameter. Fashion a hole through the larger tube so that the smaller one will slide through it, and they will form a cross. I use a tube from a toilet paper roll, and the core of a ball of string. If you use a tube of light material like a toilet paper roll, stuff some newspaper into it to make it more solid. Place a mark where the tubes intersect, so when you put them back together, they will line up correctly. Place nails in the tubes and label them, as in the diagram.

4 BIGHT TURK'S HEAD CROSS WITHOUT STAND

11 - C	(over the arm)	13 O U O U O U O F	(over the arm)
C O 3		F O U O U I	
3 O H	(under the arm)	1 U O O U O U A	(under the arm)
H O U U 14		A O U O U U O U 12	
14 U O E	(over the arm)	12 O U U O U O U D	(over the arm)
E U O O 4		D U O U O U O U 2	
4 U O O B	(under the arm)	2 U O U O U O G	(under the arm)
B U O U O U 13		G U O U O U O U O U 11	

4 BIGHT TURK'S HEAD CROSS WITH STAND

28 - D	(over the arm)	24 U U O U O U O E	(over the arm)
D O 2		E O U O U 4	
2 O G		4 U O O U B	(under the arm)
G O U U 1 23	(under the arm)	B O U O U O U O U U O 27	
23 - 13		27 U 11	
13 - 26		11 O U 22	
26 U U U O O C	(over the arm)	22 O U U O U U O U O U O F	(over the arm)
C U O O 3		F U O U O U O U 1	
3 U O U O H	(under the arm)	1 U O U O U O U A	(under the arm)
H U O U O U U 1 21		A U O U O U O U O U O U O U 25	
21 U 12		25 O U 14	
12 U 24		14 O U 28	

Tie a string at the starting nail, and wrap it around the tubes as shown. Pass the string around the next nail, and continue as in the instructions. When crossing other lines that have already been wrapped around the tube, go over (O) and under (U) in the order that you come across them. When finished, pull out the nails, slide the tubes apart, and slop off the knot. The knot can be doubled, and tightened so that it will produce a modest rope cross that requires no internal support.

The added 3L x 8B Turk's Head on the cross with a stand, makes a base that will let the cross stand by itself. You can make a loop to hang the cross without a stand if while doubling the knot you take the lead up through the core of the knot and leave enough line to form a loop to hang it. Then re-enter the knot, and complete the doubling. This will make a sturdy loop that is part of the knot.

WEST COUNTRY KNOTTERS

We meet at Almondsbury (Bristol) in the local Scout Headquarters on the last Saturday of every other month at 1400 hrs. We usually have a short meeting before getting knotted! This year we are holding demonstrations of various types of ropework, from decorative to practical. We are a very informal group of people who are keen on continuing an interest in the art of ropework. If anyone is interested in joining the West Country Knotters please contact the honorary secretary: -

Dave Pusill

West Country Knotters
19 Cross Street
Burnham-on-sea
Somerset. TA8 1PF
Tele: 01278 789545

Future programme:

Sat 30th Jan – Fenders /Bellropes
Sat 27th Mar – Turk's Heads
Sat 29 May –Sea Chest Handles
Sat 31 July – Mast & Rigging
Sat 25 Sept – T.B.A.
Sat 27 Nov – T.B.A.

From: John Halifax, Lowestoft, Suffolk.U.K. 10.7.98.

'Is This New'

'A Reef Knot in Tandem with a Figure Eight'

Make a 'Figure Eight' knot and position the two ends horizontally across the body of the knot to form two triangular cavities in the centre. Now pass each end under or over anti-clockwise beyond/around the central diagonal bar of the knot; up through or down through the triangular cavities to form a 'Reef Knot'. Now double the ends round inside the bights and tuck under the double central bars for a lovely finished effect. This will make a nice design for a pair of 'Earrings' glued on the 'Finding/Mounts'. Which in turn caused me to research into how often different knots appear within the structure of a given knot that you are tying as 'foundation knots' and took me to my next interesting article. 'Knots in Tandem'



From: John Halifax, Lowestoft, Suffolk.U.K. 27.7.98.

'Could this be the Answer to the:'

'The Six Knot Challenge'

I refer to Richard Hopkins article on the Six Knot speed challenge vide K.Ms.57 page 10-17 and previous published material on the subject.

Not wishing in the least to detract from his or Ken Yalden's or any Scouting Enterprise attraction which must continue as an Educational Theme.

I offer my idea of what could be an alternative answer after months of study on the subject and might well be seen by many as cheating but it doesn't alter the fact that the 'Knots' are all there.

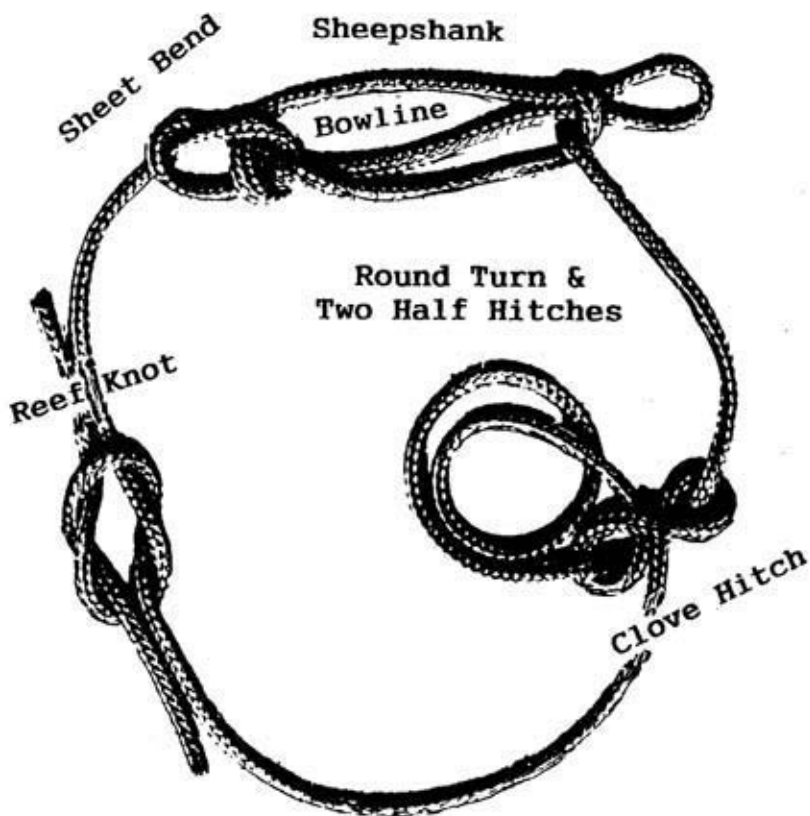
If it is accepted that there are at least three ways of finishing off a 'Sheepshank' i.e. 1. Stopping the bights to the working part. 2. Toggling the working part through the bight. 3. Locking the knot by passing the working end completely through the end bights, then I will begin.

Take a single line about one yard/36"/90cms. long and about 3/4mm/1/8th" thick.

Tie a 'Bowline' No.1 using the 'Dolly Knot or 'Waggoners Hitch' method i.e. using the bight into a 'Half Sheepshank' about 5-6"/15cm from the end and place the bight over the end. Hey Presto a 'Bowline'. Now put a 'Half Hitch' over the other end of the bowline and you have a 'Sheepshank'(keep the sheepshank about 3"/8cms. long)No.2, locked at one end. Now quickly working on the other end tie a 'Round Turn & Two Half Hitches' No.3 'Loosely' around your index finger near the 'Sheepshank' and quickly but carefully shed it off without disfiguring it. Quickly tie a 'Reef Knot' No.4. joining the two ends together. And that's it!. Where are the 'Sheet Bend' No.5. and the 'Clove Hitch' No.6 I hear you say. They are there as combinations of the 'Bowline' and the 'Round Turn & Two Half Hitches' clearly and plainly in evidence. If you are quick you can do this in about 10 secs. Keep to the order and measurements and it will work.

'Six Knot Challenge'

Alternative Method



3 x 4 TURK'S HEAD

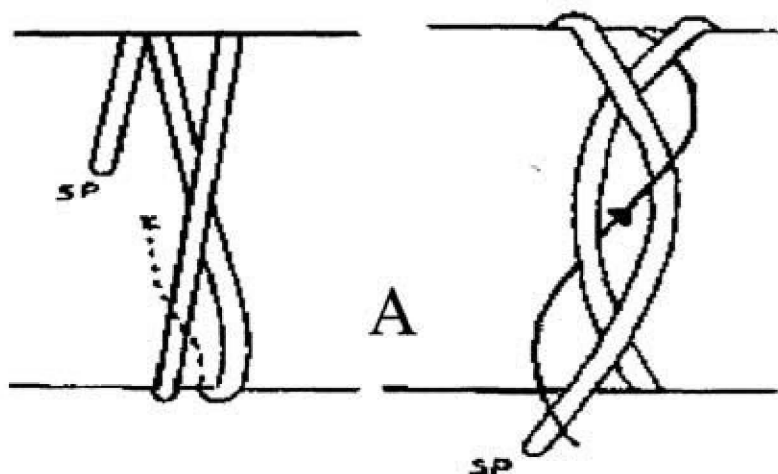
by

James E. Harvey

This 3 x 4 Turk's Head is not an extract from my new book, "The Comprehensive Text of Turk's Heads", but just a controversial article which I would like to have published in the IGKT Journal. I hope the article will stir up a lot of interest and questions with my fellow knot tiers.

This knot must be tied in the orthodox manner, as the Rule applies, when raising a Formula A knot to a large size. The Rule - the working part must lead under standing part to parallel the established lead with identical under and over sequences until the standing part is reached. Then lead over standing part to split lead to complete knot.

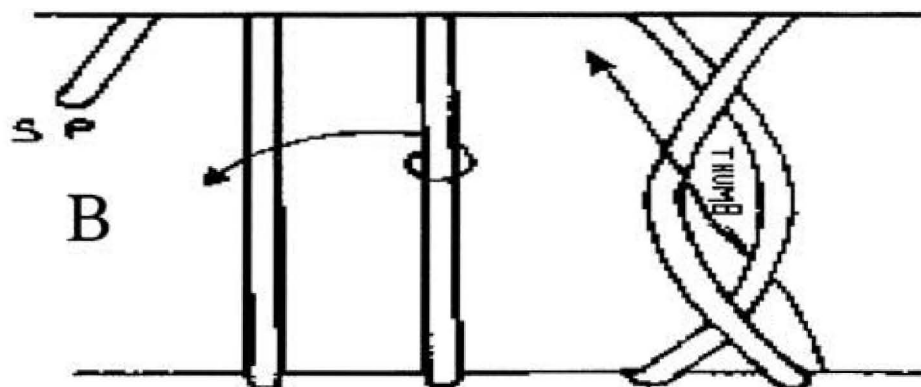
There are two ways to tie the 3 x 4 Turk's Head. The first method, tie a 2 x 3 base. The leads are under all = Base, Lead over Standing Part (Diagram A). To split leads U1, O1, U1, O1, to complete the knot.



This is the way my grandfather taught me 65 years ago (Diagram B).

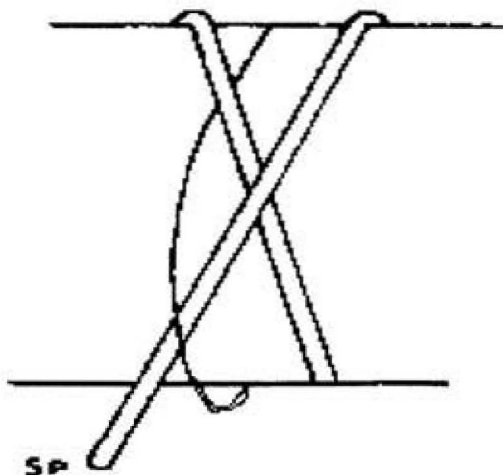
Start. Take a round turn around the hand. Lead under to left at the back of the hand. Bringing working part around the hand. Lead O.S.P. = 2 x 1 Base.

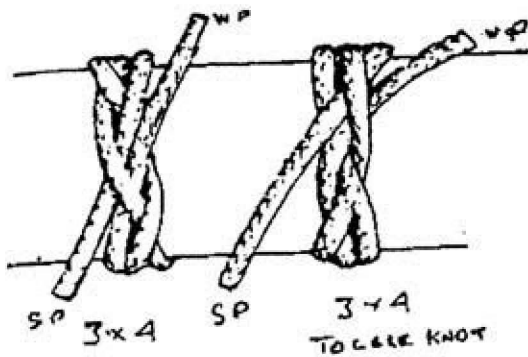
- Tuck to right Under one Over one at the back of the hand and at the front of the hand.
- Pass the right bight over the left bight, stick your thumb between centre.
- Tuck to the left. Under one Over one to complete the knot



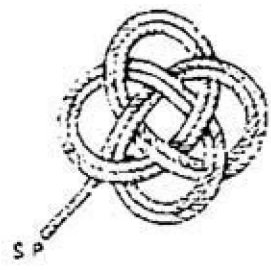
To lengthen the knot, as the Rule applies.

1. Parallel B lead U1, O1, at the front of hand.
2. With thumb and forefinger, rotate knot anticlockwise around the hand, to create a space to form bight
3. Pass the right bight over the left bight.
4. Stick your thumb between centre.
5. Tuck to left Under one, Over one to complete a 3 x 7. Repeat the same movement as above to lengthen the knot by three bights 3 x 10, 3 x 13, etc.

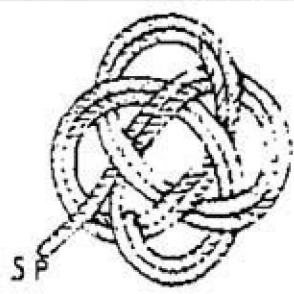
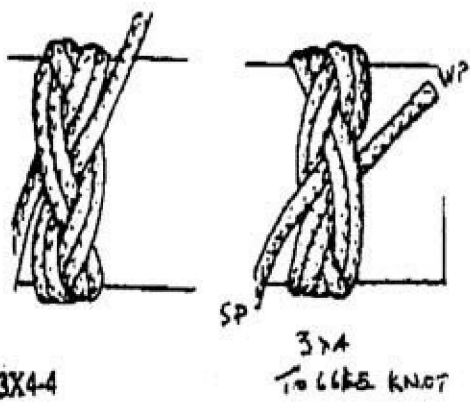




ORTHODOX 3x4 RH



The 3 x 4 Scouting Woggle



To set the record straight with my fellow rope tiers, I would like to submit the following.

Similar to the Law of the Common Divisor

THE RULE: All knots must adhere to the Law and Principles of Turk's Heads. The 3 x 4 Turk's Head, when tied around a cylinder, the pin numbers are 1, 2, 4, 1, 3, 4, 2 = 1 x 1A x 2 x 3B Base. Starting from No.1 pin the leads are under all the No.4 pin right, lead over to No. 2 pin as the Rule applies = Base. The same principles are used when tying by hand.

The 3 x 4 Turks Head is a very important knot. It is a Base Knot, raised to a 5 x 6 - 7x 8, etc. by Formula A or raised to a 7 x 10 - 11 x 16, etc. by Formula B. It is also a base for a host of Sennit Knots.

KNOTTING DIARY

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
APRIL to OCT 1999	Exhibi- tion of Knots	Museum De Zilveriger near Antwerp	Geert "Willy" Willaert Dulftraat 21 2880 Bornem	(0032)(0)3/889 86 03 <wwwill@CARMAIL.com>
8 May 99	IGKT AGM	T.S. ORIAN NOTTINGHAM	Penny Bodger	01530 222633
7 AUG 99		NEW BEDFORD	US-John Burke UK-Brian Field	313 562 4393 01621850491
9 OCT 99	HALF AGM		Peter Goldstone	01483 763054
14 May 2000	IGKT AGM	PULBOROUGH WEST SUSSEX	Nigel Harding	01825 760425
<u>CONTINUAL EVENT</u>				
Last Sat of every month	West Country Knotters	Scout H.Q. Almondsbury (Bristol) At 1400 hrs.	Dave Pusill 19 Cross Street Burnham-on-Sea Somerset TA8 1PF	01278 789545

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Guild Supplies

Price List 1998

Item	Price
Geoffrey Budworth	
Knotlore <i>a miscellany of quotes from fact and fiction</i>	£2.50
Much Ado About Knotting <i>history of the 1st 10 years of the Guild</i>	£2.50 *
The Knot Book	£3.99
Brian Field	
Breastplate Designs	£2.50
Concerning Crosses	£1.50
Eric Franklin	
Turkesheads the Traditional Way	£1.50 *
Nylon Novelties	£2.00 *
Stuart Grainger	
Knotcraft	£3.60 *
Ropefolk	£1.30
Turks Head Alternatives	£2.20 *
Creative Ropecraft	£9.95
Knotted Fabrics	£9.00
	<i>Hardback price includes UK postage</i>
John Halifax	
Something Different <i>with over 50 Button Knots</i>	£3.20 *
Harold Scott	
On Various Cruxiform Turks Heads	£2.50
Sliding Template Method for Designing Cruciform Turks-Heads Vol. 2	£3.00
IGKT	
Knitting Matters <i>copies of past editions</i>	£2.50
<i>(Some past editions available – contact the Secretary for details)</i>	
* bulk purchases of these items available at a discount – phone for details	

Cheques payable to IGKT, or simply send your credit card details
PS Dont forget to allow for Postage

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