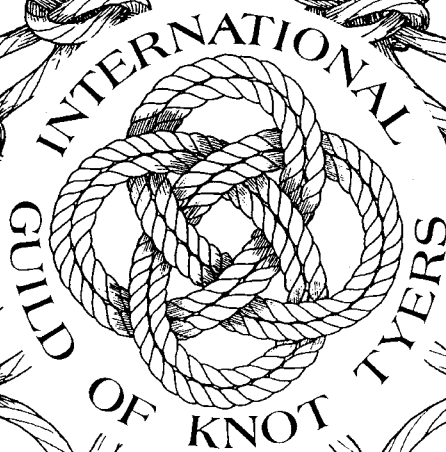


ISSUE 71 JUNE 2001

ISSN 0959-2881

# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL  
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

# Guild Supplies

## Price List 2001

Item	Price
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Individual Charts	£0.20
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IGKT - Member, with logo (excludes stamp pad)	£4.00
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# Knotting Matters

**Newsletter of the  
International Guild of  
Knot Tyers**

**Issue No. 71**

**President: Brian Field  
Secretary: Nigel Harding  
Editor: Colin Grundy  
Website: [www.igkt.craft.org](http://www.igkt.craft.org)**

**Submission dates for articles**

**KM 72            07 JUL 2001**

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Cover design by Stuart Grainger



*Des Pawson at work on Isle de  
Tatihou*

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# From the Editor

**A**s I write this passage, the UK is in the grip of a foot and mouth epidemic. While this disease only effect animals and poses no threat to us humans, the restrictions placed upon the countryside is having some effect on our knotting community. Unfortunately some branch meetings have been cancelled due in part to the venue closing to prevent the spread of the disease. Also the canal network has been effectively closed for a while and this must have a knock-on effect for those who make their living from fenders and similar ropework. Let us hope by the time you read this, the restrictions on movements will have been lifted and the disease brought under control.

Past President and long time Guild member, Stuart Grainger has recently taken the decision to pass to the Guild the rights to most of his knotting publications. The only exception is Creative Ropecraft - 4th Edition, which has recently been published by Adlard Coles. In addition, Stuart is also passing on his stock of books to our Supplies Secretary. Stuart has taken this decision for medical reasons. This will not only prove a valuable boost for the Guild funds, but also ensure that these books continue to be available for knot tyers in years to come. Stuart is to be thanked for this magnanimous gesture and he hopes it will encourage other authors to follow suit.

Artists occasionally make mistakes when drawing knots, Clifford Ashley made a few, and our own “Knotmaster” is no exception to the slip of the pen as has already be spotted in No. 8 in the series. The telephone line has been hot with those eagle-eyed members who noted the mistake with “Vice versa”, diagram 3. To put matters right, the correction is printed on page 15

Karl Bareuther has e-mailed me to say that fellow Guild member Matthias Boeving has posted some picture from Karl’s exhibition, Von Hundepints, Schweinsrücken und Neunschwänziger Katze on his website. The address of the website is [www.klabautermann.de](http://www.klabautermann.de) and some of the pictures can be found under the headline “Klabautermanns Knotentafel”. Details of the exhibition can also be found in the Knotting Diary.

It is now less than twelve months to our twentieth birthday celebrations. Ken Yalden already has preparations well in hand for what will surely be a most memorable week. I’m sure you have booked the dates in your diary, I have.

# Letter from a President

Here in the U.K. the clocks have gone forward, the first day of Spring has arrived, (together with snow and frost!), and I have started to make stock for the coming season. For me, the season starts when the Thames Sailing Barges, which form the background to my pitch on Maldon Quay, start to re-rig. The sight of thousands of square feet of red brown canvas, brailed or billowing in the breeze, never fails to lift my spirits after a dull, drab winter.

In March I attended the French meeting of Knotters at the Tatihou Maritime Museum to the east of Cherbourg. Thanks to the generosity of the Museum Director, and to the work of Graham macLachlan, a member of the museum staff and IGKT member, the meeting was memorable as well as significant. Over thirty members turned up, including contingents from the UK and The Netherlands. The rope work on display was of a high standard and there was much that was original. The hospitality, food and accommodation matched the ropework, and for those Brits waiting for the return ferry there was the added attraction (?) of seeing themselves on French T.V. sandwiched between, and curtailed by, news of that days local elections and reports on Foot and Mouth disease.

At the moment I am considering ways by which ropework can be brought to the notice of the man in the street. After almost twenty years we still have only about five hundred members in the UK. I feel we are missing out somewhere! Your ideas and comments to me please.

*Brian Field*

## Knotty Limericks

### **From Rick Miles**

A Turk's-head creator called Kaiser  
Scorned the law of the common divisor.  
While other exponents  
Were ardent proponents  
Of the rule that one-strand knots were  
wiser.

### **From Eric Klim**

Systems analysts Derek and Eric  
Thought that knotting was too esoteric;  
But they made it worse  
With their groupings diverse  
And taxonomies alpha-numeric.

### **From Europa Chang Dawson**

If you tie a Reef knot in some string  
It makes a neat buckle or ring,  
But on its own, as a bend,  
It may slide off the end -  
And then it won't hold anything!

# Heraldic Knots

by Richard Hopkins

A bookbinder friend of mine recently acquired a book for repair. It was *“The Institutions, Laws and Ceremonies of the most noble Order of the Garter”* by Elias Ashmole, first produced in 1672.

Among the illustrations were the knots shown here. One is the badge of Black Rod and the other shows the collar and Great George insignia of the Knights of the Garter.

The pictures immediately put me in mind of the Sealed Knot device and the search for the method of tying it (KM 50, 52 and 55). The knots shown here differ slightly from the Sealed Knot, but were drawn very soon after the end of the English Civil war when, as I have been told, the device was used as identification by the royalist equivalent of a secret service.

On the collar of the George, it seems possible that the side loops are in fact fixing rings on the body of the garter roundels and not in fact part of the knot at all.

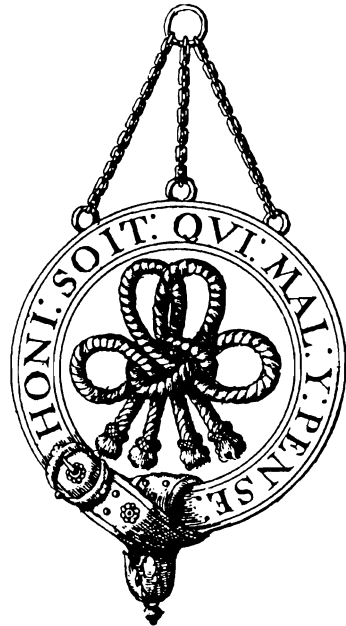
Black Rod’s badge certainly requires that all four loops be part of a knot and poses similar problems in tying as the Sealed Knot did.

Can members come up with a solution, or shall we blame an ancient heraldic artist who did the knot?

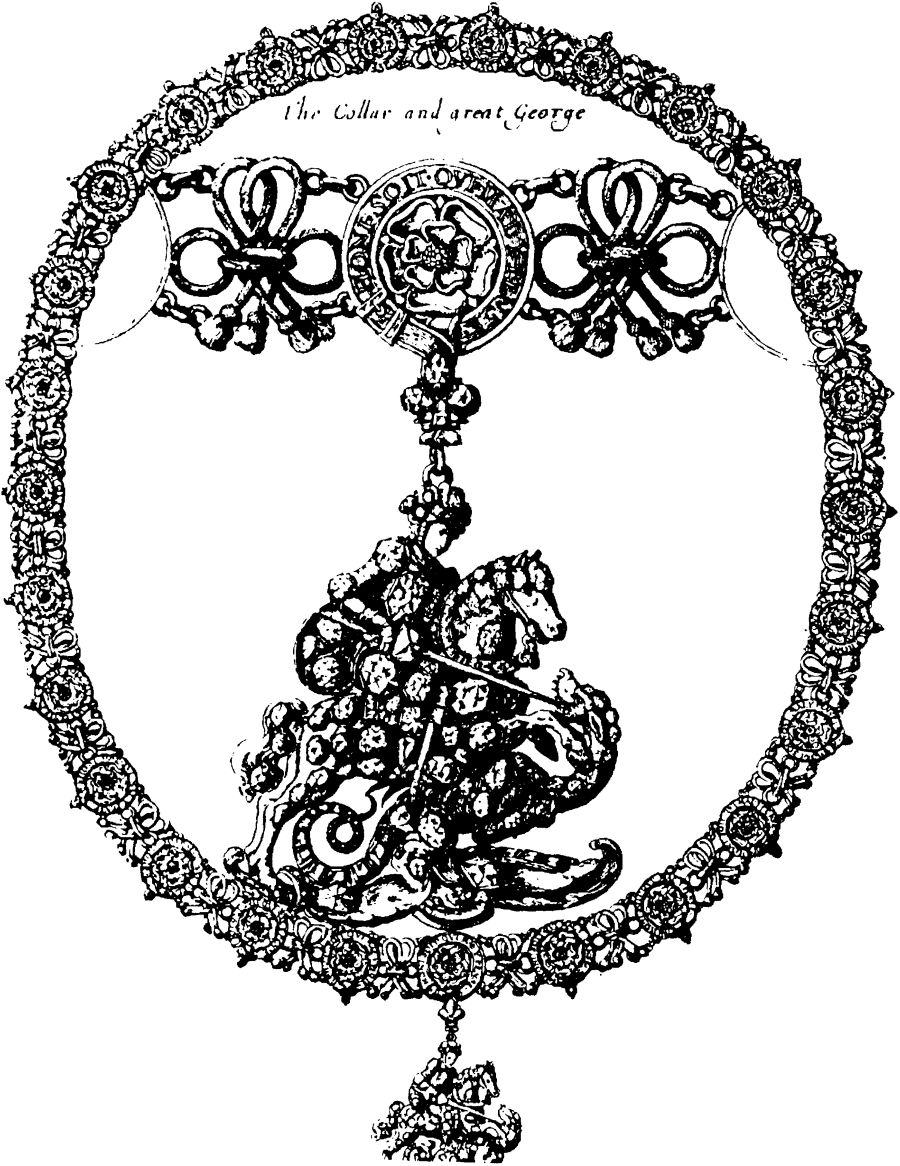
“Black Rod” who’s title in full is “GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD”, an office of the British House of Lords, instituted in 1350.

“The Most Noble Order of the Garter.” English order of knighthood founded by King Edward III in 1348, considered to be the highest British civil and military honour obtainable.

*Encyclopaedia Britannica*



*Black Rodds, Badge.*



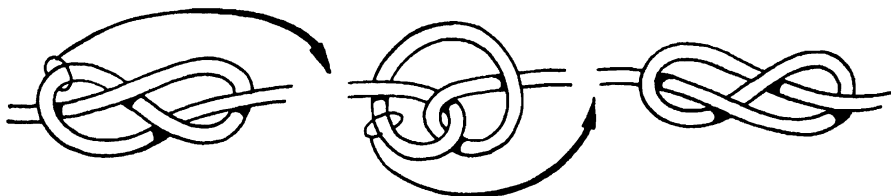
# Definition - Flyping

By Cy Canute

A flype is a 180° rotation of a cordage entanglement, enabling one basic knot projection to be converted into another without an increase in the number of crossing points. Flyping is a flexible word, that may be applied to John Smith's 'Umbrellas Flip' (see KM 14, pages 2-3) or turning a sock (or glove) inside out). All knot tyers should add it to their vocabulary of knotting jargon. It was rescued and revived for the Guild by the late Harry Asher; for his article 'Flyping the Figure of Eight Knot' in KM 26, pages 10-12.

Editors (except, of course, the editor of our own KM) are unfamiliar with it, so be sure - when submitting written articles for publication - that they understand it is NOT a misprint, or they will replace it with what they guess it ought to be (usually 'flipping', but sometimes 'flying').

Maybe it was a regional dialect word. Whatever its origin, it seems to have been first used rigorously in the 1890s by the Scottish physicist Peter Guthrie Tait (1831-1901), an early convert to the cause of knot theory, in his *Tait Flyping Conjecture*. Tait was -incidentally - the man who worked out how golf balls actually fly through the air.



---

# Double Loops

by Owen K. Nuttall

Most double loop knots fall into two categories, two loops that are interconnected and two independent loops. (Ashley #202 says that a sailor would use a Spanish Bowline to sling a ladder. This method would have a disastrous effect if weight were placed on one side of the ladder causing it to twist over). Most knot tyers using a double loop knot stick to one or two depending what the double loop is intended for.

The following six double loop knots are the ones first tied a number of years ago. The Bosun's Double Loop and the Double Loop Lark's Head were sent to the Guild in the eighties.



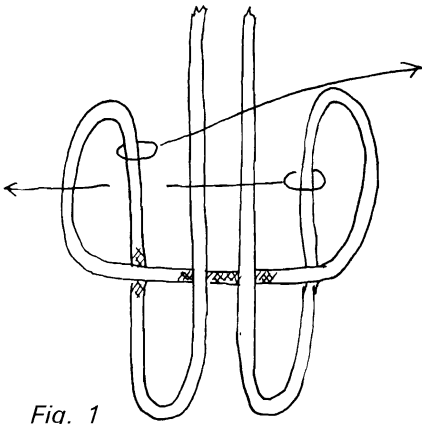


Fig. 1

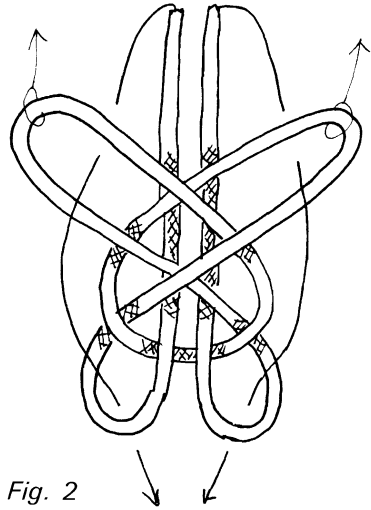


Fig. 2

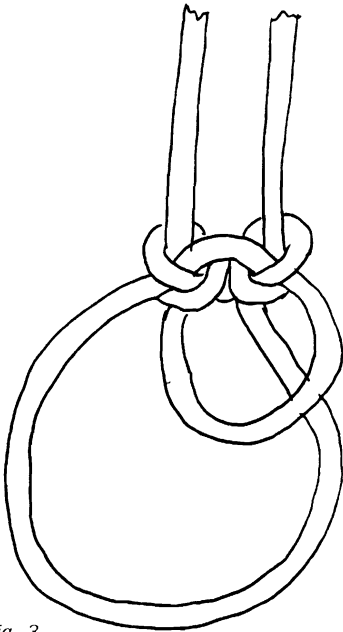


Fig. 3

### Eclipse Double Loop

This is a tongue in cheek knot; the two independent loops are adjusted to the shown finished knot. This knot is for a knot board or a talking point among fellow knotmen. (After all that is what the I.G.K.T. is about).

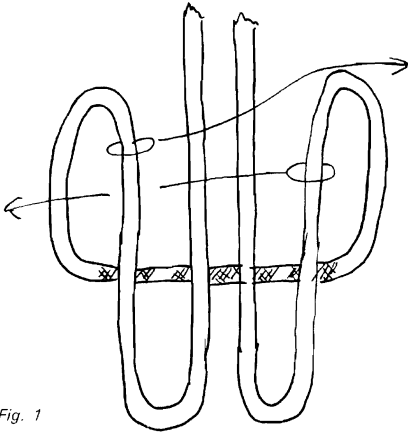


Fig. 1

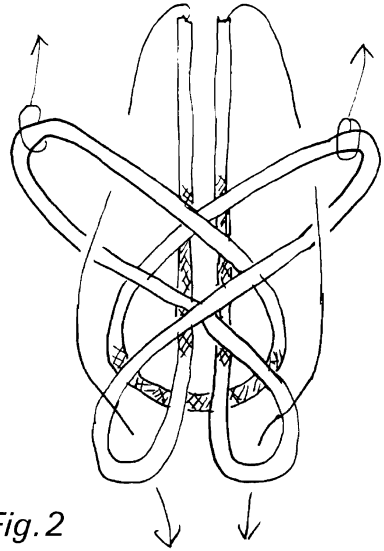


Fig. 2

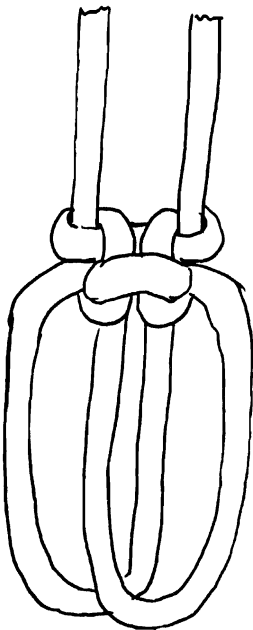


Fig. 3

### All Square Double Loop

Again a knot with two independent loops (only wish I could tie this knot on a bight) makes a strong secure loop. The drawback being to thread the working ends through the two loops.

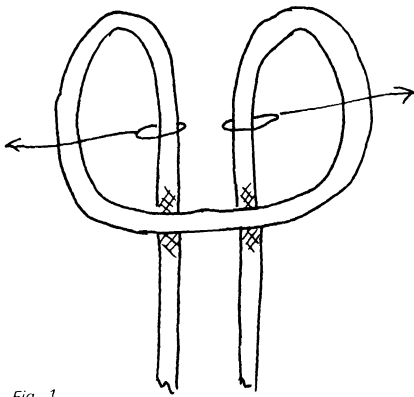


Fig. 1

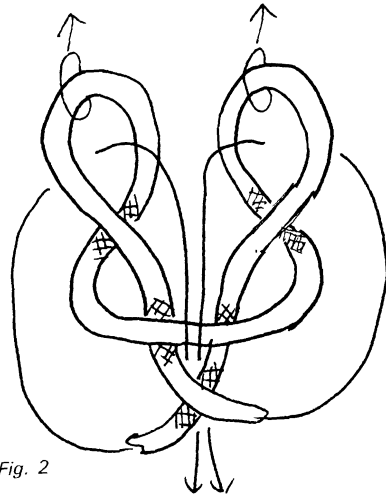
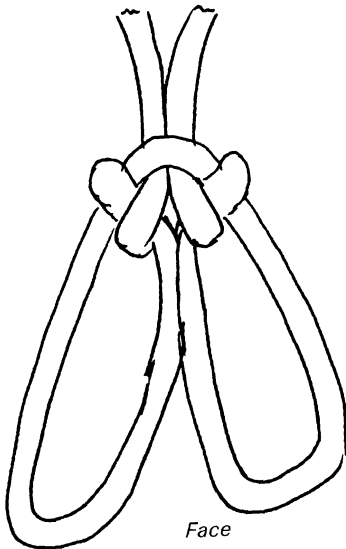


Fig. 2



**Monkey Face Double Loop**

A simple double loop knot more decorative than useful.

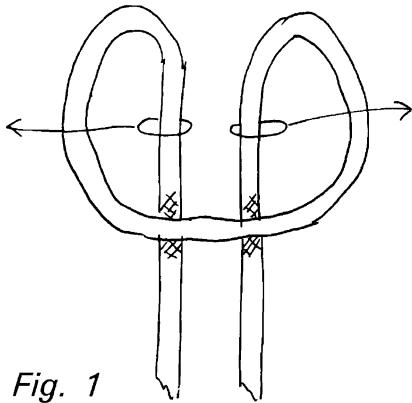


Fig. 1

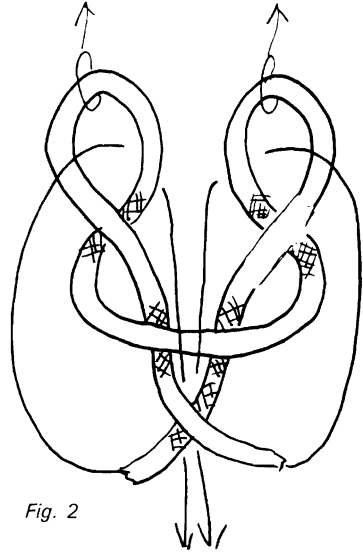
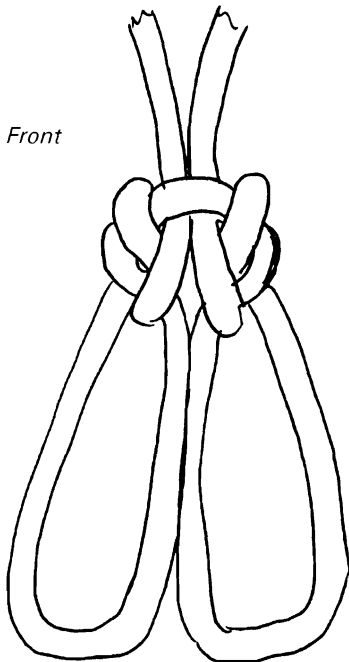


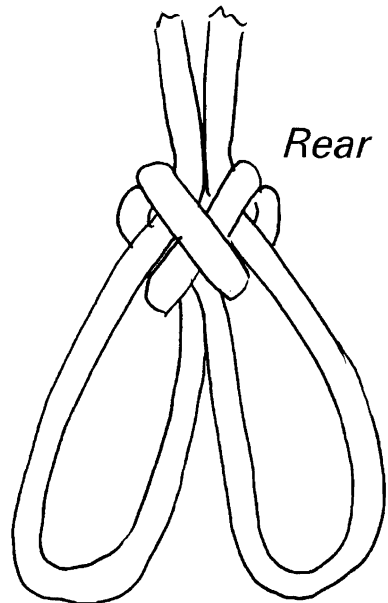
Fig. 2

### **Pennine Double Loop**

A strong secure double loop. The finished appearance of the knot has a rugged attractive look to it, hence its name.



Front



Rear

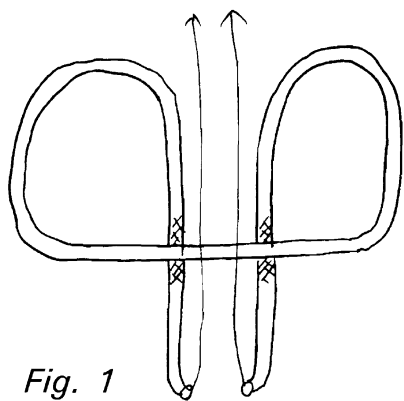


Fig. 1

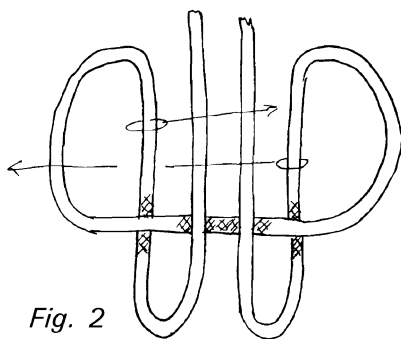


Fig. 2

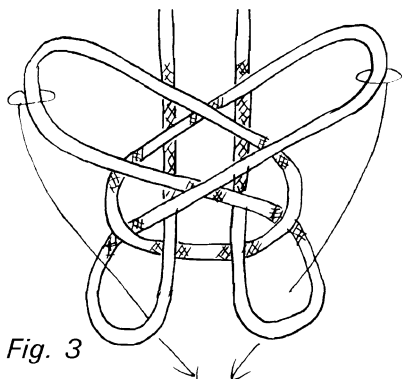
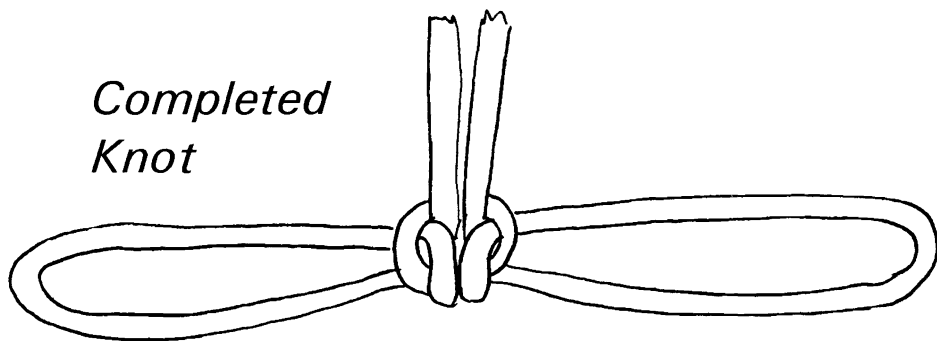


Fig. 3

### Double Looped Larks Head

On a bight, a simple knot to tie. I often use it as a puzzle knot (not as easy to tie from just its finished appearance).



Completed  
Knot

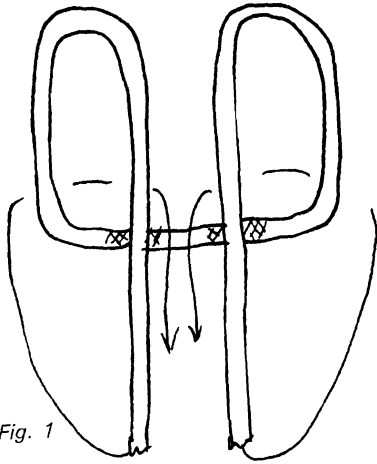


Fig. 1

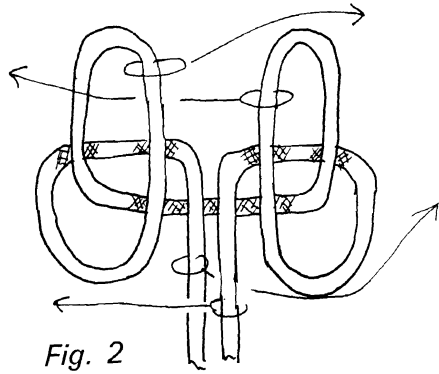


Fig. 2

**Bosun's Double Loop**

On a bight. A very secure double loop slightly complicated to tie hence its name.

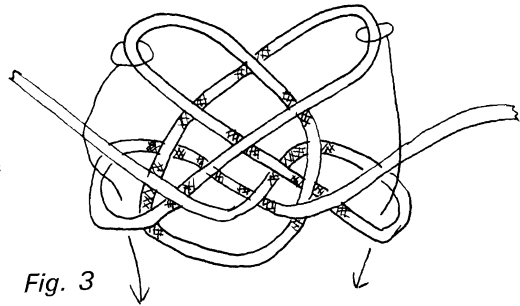
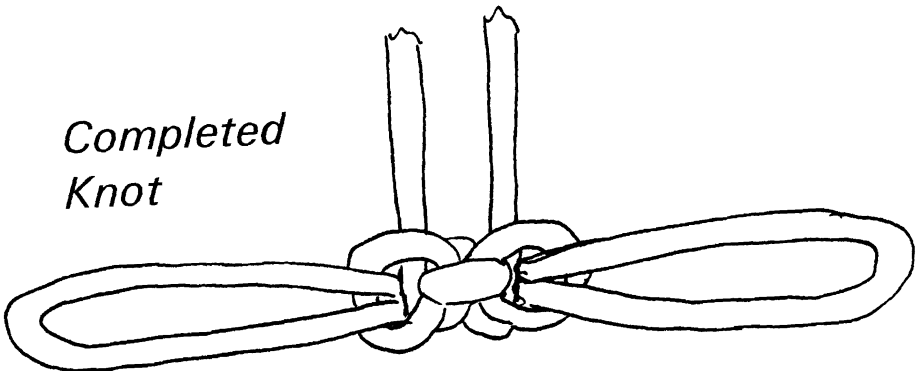


Fig. 3

*Completed  
Knot*



# Who are the Guild Members?

By Olivier Peron

Since my request was published ("Who are the Guild Members?" KM69) a lot of time has gone. I have been very busy, but particularly I was waiting to collect enough answers to give fair results to these four questions:

- \* Are there members earning their living thanks to knots? If yes, in which jobs?
- \* For the other members, what is their motivation in joining the Guild?
- \* If there are knotting activities which have no connection with the nautical world what are they?
- \* Which are the most appreciated knots?

I have received 13 answers, which is indeed a low percentage compared to the thousand members of the Guild (thanks for those of you who replied to me). In such conditions it is difficult to define the main points to illustrate, and to formulate conclusions exploiting numbers.

Without making serious conclusions with this data some comments can be made (you can see these quantified results at the end of this article):

The persons who replied were mainly men, living in English speaking countries, writing in English, earning rarely their living with knots, being rarely seamen but living very often near or at the seaside.

People wrote quite as much by post mail than by e-mail. Members seem to be keener on fancywork than on practical knots.

I think Howard Denyer will be pleased to see the Surrey Six were often cited (Figure of 8, Sheet bend, Bowline, Constrictor, Rolling hitch, and Round turn and two half hitches).

Personally, being now an acrobat worker I earn my living thanks to knots.

The knots I prefer are the figure of 8 loop (the faithful companion of the rock climber and caver that I am), the Flemish bend, Constrictor, the Corkscrew knot (try it!), Valdôtain and Machard, and still some others.

Most of the members of the Guild live in English speaking countries. But knot tying is not an exclusive English activity, so if the Guild wants to increase the number of its members, a great effort has to be made on the language used to communicate. Creating local branches can do this. During the meeting in Tatihou French members were thinking to create one. This would include creating a French web site as well.

If we succeed by the language (including on websites) increasing access to the Guild, and consequently to its exchanges of information, then should we be able to discover and promote "rare" and "specific" knotting activities.

In Tatihou (which was my first meeting) I could observe on one hand almost everyone was interested in ropework and fancy knots, whereas on the other hand there were some rare people having an isolated knotting activity. It can be resumed like this: I think from 80 to 90 per cent of the people and activity of the Guild come from the nautical world, well I am interested in exploring the last 10 per cent! (e.g. Don Lewry who enjoys bow string making, or Patrick Lefour who enjoys studying scientifically "impossible" Turk's heads).

I know Robert Chisnall, Dan Lehman and Heinz Prohaska are interested in "vertical activities" (alpinism, climbing, caving.), I would be pleased to know if

there are other “acrobats” in the Guild so as we could reflect together on our specific technical problems (solo climbing, full length abseil).

By the way, each person who thinks they practice an “isolated” knotting activity should introduce him or herself and make it known, so as everyone could benefit from this specific knowledge. For instance, is there among the members a specialist for ties and bow ties, any circus artist, any parachute maker, any palm tree-braiding maker? (I know someone who does; I’m trying to persuade her to show her work).

Results of 13 answers:

3 women, 10 men;

12 answers in English and 1 in French;  
6 from UK, 4 from USA, 1 from Australia,  
1 from Nederland and 1 from Portugal;  
6 e-mails, 7 letters;

Only two “professional” seamen: the main surprise; four people earning their living from knot tying.

Professional activities: a Scout leader, a teacher in textile art, a forestry worker, a toolmaker, a phone company employee, a volunteer in rescue organisation, a teacher in physical education, a bow string maker.

Two different style knots can be distinguished: practical knots and fancywork

Practical knots:

Bowline: eight times cited

Sheet bend, Rolling hitch: five times cited

Clove hitch: four times cited

Round turn and two half hitches, Figure of 8: three times cited

Constrictor, Reef knot: Twice cited

Overhand knot, Fisherman’s bend, Alpine butterfly, Manharness hitch, Prussik loop, Zeppelin bend, Carrick bend: Once cited

\* Some other practical knots: Timber hitch, Marlinespike hitch, Ground line hitch, Midshipman’s hitch, Boa (for these

knots I would be please to know if there is an ABOK as I do not know how they look like).

Fancywork knots: Turk’s heads, Crown hitching, Matthew Walker’s knot, Monkey’s fist, Star knot, Double diamond hitch, Ocean mat.

\* Some other fancy knots: Footrope knot, Manrope knot, Braided pineapple (once again I do not know the ABOK of these knots).

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# Knotmaster Series No. 9

*“Knotting ventured,  
knotting gained.”*

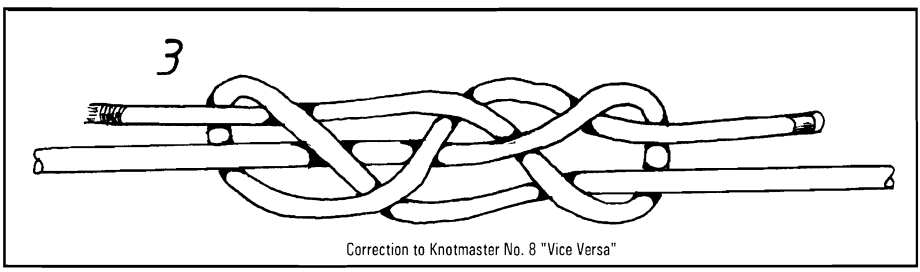
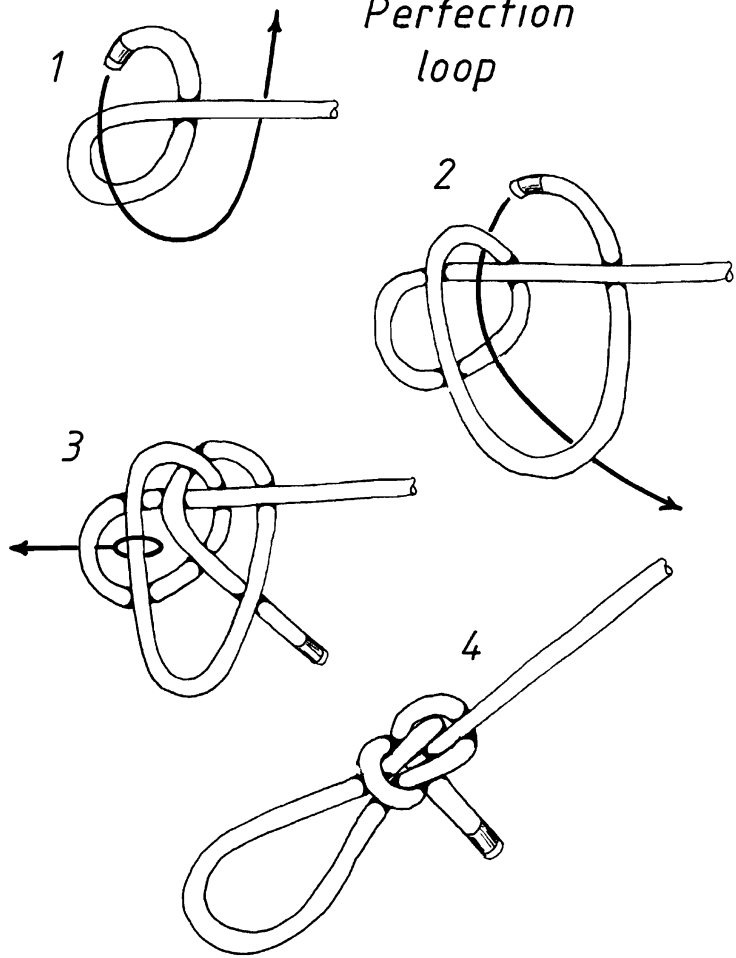
## Perfection loop

This knot was once used in horsehair, gut and silk fishing lines, hence its older name (angler’s loop), at a time when it was viewed with disfavour by sailors and suchlike. Now increasingly popular with knot tyers in general, because of its suitability for synthetic cordage, it has all but been discarded from the angling repertoire.

Form an underhand loop (one with the working end beneath it) (fig. 1). Take a turn with the end around the standing part of the line (fig. 2) and a second turn to lie beneath the first (fig. 3). Pull out a bight as shown and tighten the knot to form a fixed loop (fig. 4).



*Perfection  
loop*



Correction to Knotmaster No. 8 "Vice Versa"

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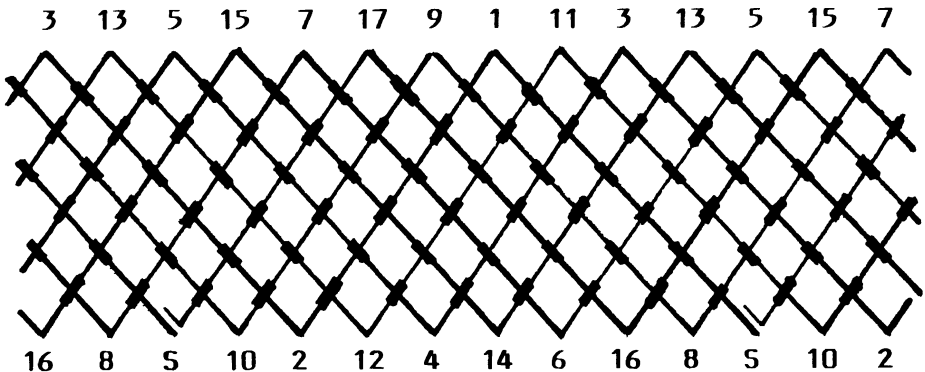
# Turk's Heads by Diagram And Step Sequence.

By Thomas Simpson

This article has been prompted by my 'Turk's heads with built in mouse' articles (KM 65 and 67). Not wanting to leave readers/knot tyers hunting around for suitable Turk's heads, the procedures described here gives one the opportunity to construct any size Turk's heads (observing the 'Common Divisor Law') from narrow to double square sizes. A 'double square' Turk's head is when the parts/leads are twice the number of bights (plus or minus one), e.g. 12 bights x 23 or 25 parts/leads.

If at the first reading the instructions appear a little intimidating - be patient and stick with it - as a predictable pattern soon emerges in the diagram, allowing one to coast through the instructions at less than maximum concentration.

The objective is to work out a step sequence to construct an untried, unfamiliar Turk's head. The exercise starts off by forming the following diagram, let's use a 9 bight x 7 part/lead Turk's head. The measurements mentioned are just a suggestion, use any you find convenient.



*Diagram of 9 bight x 7 part/lead Turk's head, with over/under dashes in position.*

On a sheet of paper, mark off a horizontal line of one-centimetre marks, one more than the number of bights in the Turk's head (ten in this case). Place an S (for start) below the left and right end marks. Now add two extra marks at either end of the line - making fourteen in total. About four centimetres above mark out another line with the same number of marks - each mark directly above a lower mark.

The actual Turk's head's circumference lies between the two S's in the diagram. The overlap at either end of the diagram is to ensure that each pair of line numbers have at least one continuous run within the diagram; this provides the simplest means of extracting the step sequence from the diagram - later in the procedure.

Two main tasks are performed within the diagram. The first concerns the number of parts/leads in the Turk's head. Our exercise Turk's head has seven parts/leads, these are divided 4 and 3; the 4 is assigned to the top marks on the diagram and the 3 to the bottom marks.

With a Turk's head of 15 parts/leads - the division would be 8 and 7.

With a Turk's head of 5 parts/leads - the division would be 3 and 2.

With a Turk's head of 8 parts/leads - the division would be 4 and 4.

and so on...

The division of the number of parts/leads also indicates the number of overlap marks required in each diagram. In our 7 parts/leads exercise Turk's head the division is 4 and 3, either number can be subdivided and used, 4 (2 left - 2 right) or 3 (2 left - 1 right). I normally use the lower number, but for the diagram in the article I have opted for the 4 (2 left - 2 right) - mainly to show a little more detail and to display the diagram evenly centred.

To draw in the diagram, take up position on the top line mark directly above the right side S. Count four marks to the left (not counting the mark you are located on). Indicate this mark as 1, now draw a line diagonally between S and 1.

From 1 drop down to the lower mark directly below, count off to the left three marks (not counting your location mark). Indicate this mark with a 2; draw a diagonal line between 1 and 2.

Move from 2 to the mark directly above; count off four marks to the left (not counting your location). Indicate this mark with a 3 and draw in line 2 - 3.

You have now run out of left diagram - time to introduce the second main task. To relocate the 3, count back to the right nine marks (not counting your location mark); count back is dictated by the number of bights in the Turk's head. Indicate this mark as 3. Repeat again to relocate the 2. Draw in the right side 2 - 3 line.

The left to right relocation is a repeated occurrence in the diagram's construction. Sometimes both numbers will relocate, as in the above instance. Sometimes only the high (value) number of the pair under review will relocate, and the low (value) number - on count back - will go off the diagram to the right. When this occurs, just disregard the count back instructions for the low (value) number.

From the right side 3 drop down to the lower mark and count three marks to the left (not counting your location). Indicate this mark as 4. Draw in the 3 - 4 line.

Move from 4 to the mark directly above; count off four marks to the left (not counting your location). Indicate as 5 and draw in line 4 - 5.

You are again running out of left diagram, relocate the left side 5 by counting back nine marks to the right (not counting your location). Indicate as 5. Attempting to relocate

the 4, you will notice that the nine mark count back will not fit within the diagram, so just ignore the 4.

From the right side 5 drop down to the lower mark, count three marks to the left (not counting your location) - indicate as 6. Draw in line 5 - 6.

Continue to 4 and 3 and relocate/count back when necessary until line 17 - 18 meets up with S (18 and 5 are at the same location). Some of the missing shorter lines at each end of the diagram will need drawing in, to tidy up the diagram. Make certain all the numbers are present and in their correct locations. At this stage it is advisable to indicate the S's as S/18. I have not indicated the 18 in the exercise diagram in case it causes confusion in the early instructions.

The emphasized over and under dashes are next. On the S - 1 line the first crossing is always under, so mark it with an obvious under dash. Continue from this crossing to over and under (alternatively) with pronounced clear dashes throughout the diagram. Double check that all the overs and unders are correctly positioned in the diagram.

The step sequence can now be extracted from the diagram. Each line must be checked for its under/over pattern. I find it easier to work backwards through the diagram, though it can be done either way.

Although working backwards, please note that each individual line is recorded in its forward direction (see next sentence).

All last lines always have all the unders and overs present, so in line 17 - 18 (not 18 - 17) the under - over sequence reads - U O U O U O.

Scanning the second last line 16 - 17, check all the crossing lines' numbers, if any of the numbers are higher than the line under review they will not be present in the construction stage. On this line (16 - 17) the crossing lines' numbers are 6, 14, 4, 12, 2, 10. (only one number from each crossing line is required for checking - read off the numbers from the top or bottom of the diagram whichever you find easiest). All the numbers are lower and therefore present, so the under/over dashes in line 16-17 are - U O U O U O.

The next line 15 - 16, all the crossing numbers are lower 5, 13, 3, 11, 1, 9, so all are present in the construction stage and the under/over pattern is - U O U O U O.

In line 14 - 15 the crossing numbers are 4, 12, 2, 10, 18, 8, all are lower and present except 18 which is not present in the construction stage. The appropriate under and over dashes in line 14- 15 are - U O U O O.

Line 13 - 14 reads 3, 11, 1, 9, 17, 7, all lower and present except 17, so line 13 - 14 works out to - U O U O O.

In the next line 12 - 13, the crossing numbers are, 9, 17, 7, 15, 5, four are lower and present 1, 9, 7, 5, and two are higher 17, 15, and not present in the construction stage. The relevant under and over dashes for 1,9,7,5, are - U O O O.

Continue to work backward through the diagram until line S - 1 is reached the unders and overs dwindling until eventually there will be none.

The righted step sequence to construct 9 rights x 7 parts/leads Turk's head on a stem follows.

S	1st bight	at top	Nil		(no Over or Under)			
1st	2nd bight	bottom	Nil					
2nd	3rd bight	at top	Nil					
3rd	4th bight	bottom	Over					
4th	5th bight	at top	Over					
5th	6th bight	bottom	Over	Over				
6th	7th bight	at top	Over	Over				
7th	8th bight	bottom	Over	Over	Over			
8th	9th bight	at top	Over	Over	Over			
9th	10th bight	bottom	Over	Over	Over			
10th	11th bight	at top	Over	Over	Over			
11th	12th bight	bottom	Under	Over	Over	Over		
12th	13th bight	at top	Under	Over	Over	Over		
13th	14th bight	bottom	Under	Over	Under	Over	Over	
14th	15th bight	at top	Under	Over	Under	Over	Over	
15th	16th bight	bottom	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over
16th	17th bight	at top	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over
17th	18th bight	bottom	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over

Then under the first crossing to the left or right of the start strand (depending on future progress).

When constructing an actual Turk's head, crosscheck with the diagram to roughly position the early bights around the stem. Once the first few bights are in position the rest will fall into place automatically.

Use tight, thin elastic bands (top and bottom) to hold the bights in position on any particular stem. Choose your elastic bands carefully, too much tension is better than too little.

The diagram in the article is the 'upmarket' version (for reproduction in KM). For practical 'on site' construction, I usually just pencil in the diagram and mark the over and under dashes with a pen.

The diagram instructions, earlier in the article, are written specifically for the exercise Turk's head that belongs within the narrow - square sizes. After drawing a couple of diagrams within the narrow - square range and having grasped the instructions' significance, one can move on to try a couple of diagrams in the square - double square range to experience the instructions' full range of usage.

The same basic instructions are used throughout all the Turk's heads; some minor localized variations in the instructions will be encountered over the range of different size Turk's heads. These variations are all logical and don't cause any problems. As an example, in the square-double square Turk's heads the left to right relocation/count

back is used much more often - after every or nearly every line. Also be prepared to use more overlap marks at each end of the diagram, as the number parts/leads increase.

On the plus side, these square - double square Turk's heads assume a predictable pattern very quickly. With some of them, after drawing in four lines, the instructions are no longer required - the knot's progress is clearly visible in the diagram. Whilst at the familiarizing stage try to resist the temptation to follow the diagram at the expense of using the instructions.

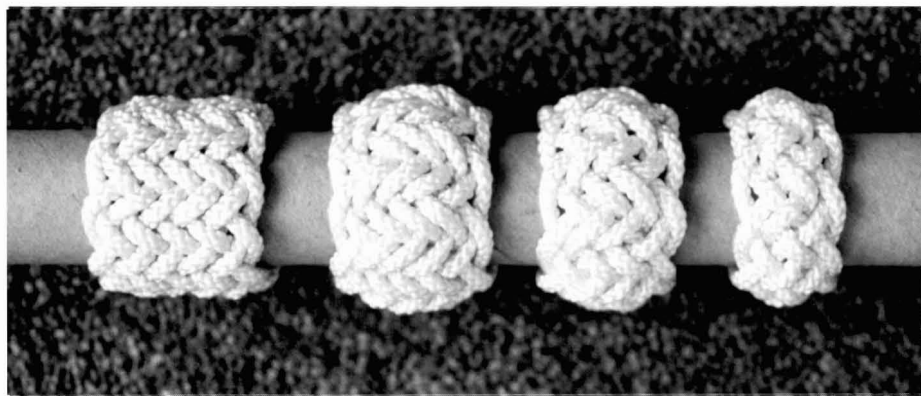
To clear up any uncertainty concerning the make-up of square and double square Turk's heads.

A square Turk's head has the same number of parts/leads as bights (plus or minus one), e.g. 9 bights x 8 or 10 parts/leads. The line between bights travels half the circumference of the stem.

A double square Turk's head has twice the number of parts/leads as bights (plus or minus one), e.g. 9 bights x 17 or 19 parts/leads. The line between bights travels the full circumference of the stem.

Any single strand Turk's heads, deeper/longer than double square Turks' heads, are made by the helical/spiraling turns around the stem method.

To readers unfamiliar with single strand Turk's heads, there is one restriction which must be heeded whilst constructing these knots. Called the 'Common Divisor Law' - it states that in any particular Turk's head, if the number of bights and the number of parts/leads can both be divided by the same number (e.g. 12 bights x 15 parts/leads [common divisor 3]) the Turk's head can not be completed by a single strand. In practice this isn't a big problem, as the 'Law' only rules out 40% of all combinations, allowing 60% to be constructed. Ashley (in his *'Book of Knots'*) has some worthwhile reading on pages 233-235.



*Examples of Turk's heads with a built in mouse. Left a standard interweave Turk's head, alongside raised Turk's heads with three, two and one interweave.*





# Knot Gallery



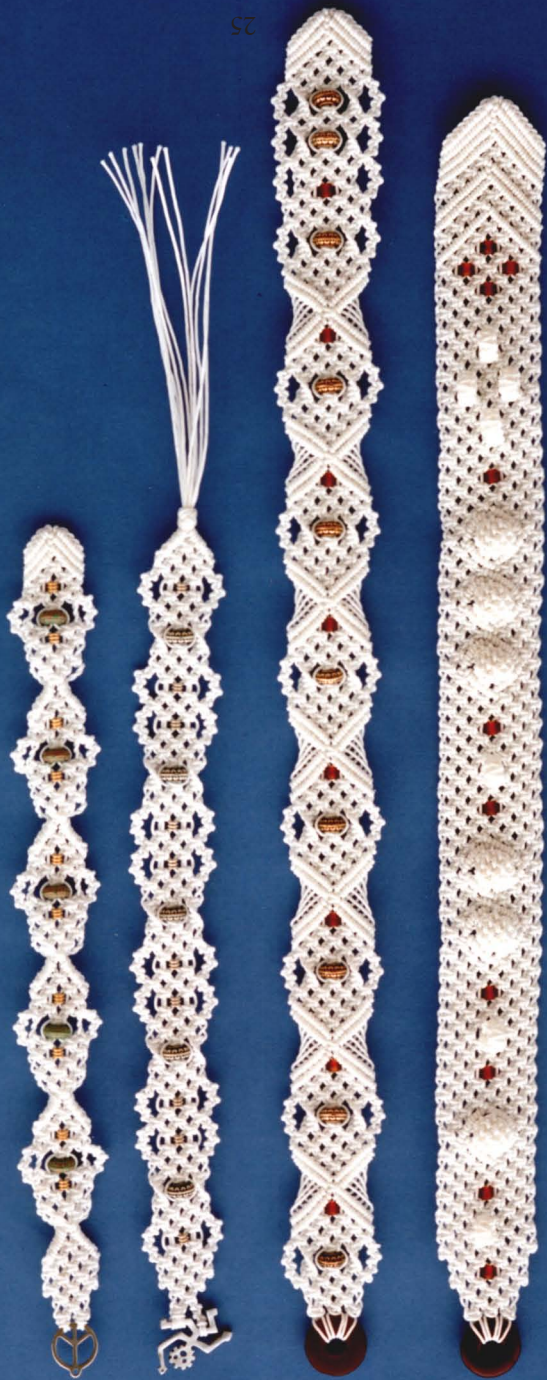
*Above - Celtic Knotwork design Cross by Harold Scott*

*Left - 121 strand Pentalpha Bellrope by Jeff Wyatt*



*Above - Horse by Joaquim Paulo Escudeiro*

*Right - Macramé by Geoffrey Budworth*

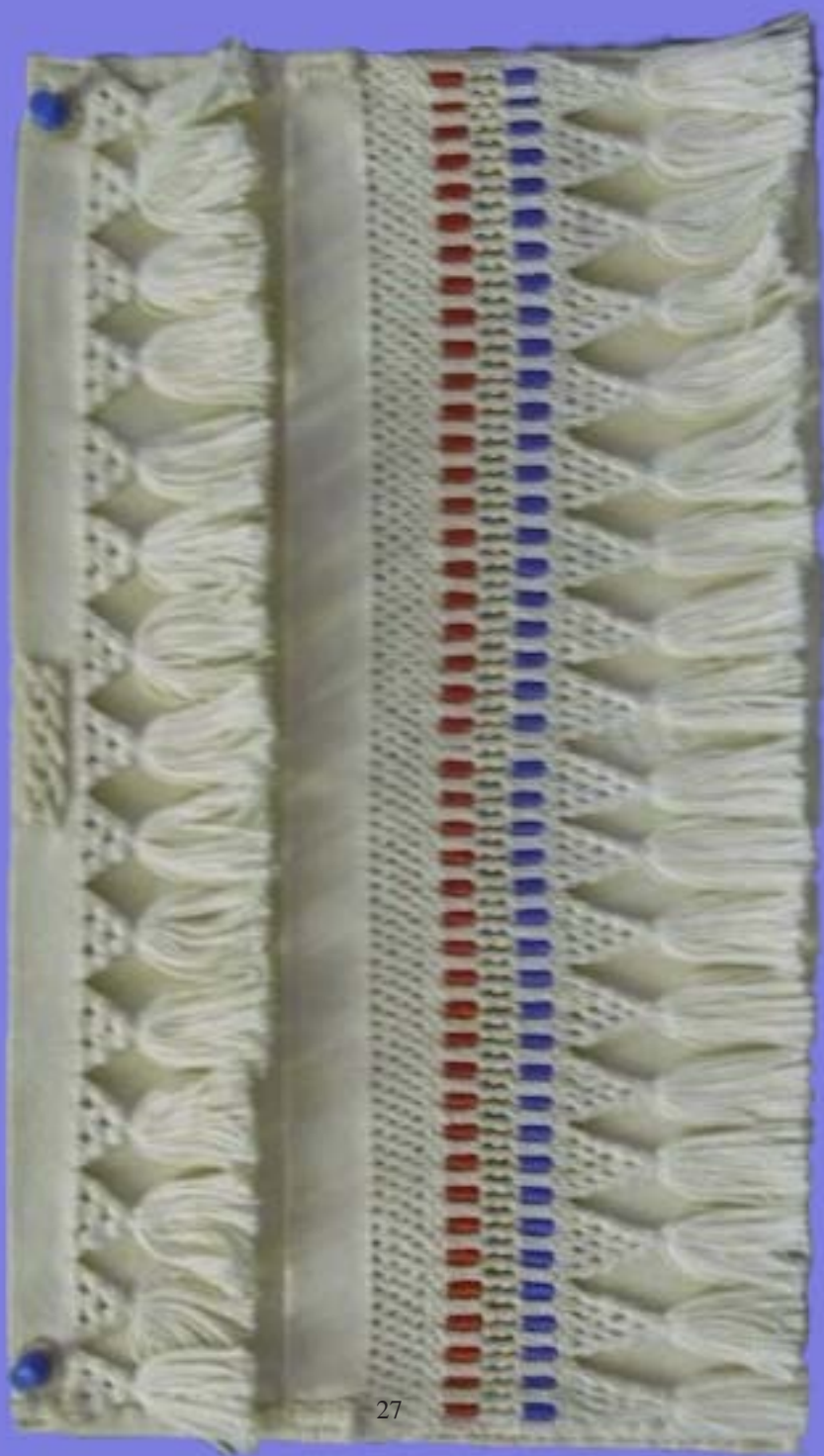




*Above - Lighthouse Bellrope by Kenneth D. Burrhus*

*Right - A Wall Bag, drawn thread and tassel work by Tony Doran*





# Turks Head Knots With Four Leads and 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, ... Bights Tied as Mats

by Jesse Coleman

In a previous note, I discussed how to tie the 4 L X 6B Turk's Head knot. In this note, we will see how to tie the 4L X 2B and the 4L X 10B THK. With less detail, we will see how to extend the method to THKs with 4 leads and 14, 18, 22, ... bights. The drawings for these larger knots become too difficult for me to draw.

The 4L X 2B THK is the smallest in a family of 4 lead THKs. This family of Turk's Head knots consists of those with four leads and bights numbering 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, or  $L = 2(2n + 1)$ , where  $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, \text{etc.}$  These related knots with more than 6 bights are best tied as mats on a table as the shortage of fingers on most hands leads to difficulty if one tries to tie them in the hand.

The rule of the greatest common divisor states: "The number of cords needed to tie a THK is the greatest common divisor of the number of bights and the number of leads in the THK." The number of leads in this knot is four. Four is divisible by the integers 1, 2 and 4. The number of bights is  $2(2n + 1)$ ,  $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, \text{etc.}$  This number is divisible by the integers 1, 2 and  $2n + 1$ . The largest number that is in both of these two sets of numbers (1, 2, 4 and 1, 2,  $2n + 1$ ) is two. Notice that  $2n + 1$  is always an odd number so that 4 will never be an integral divisor of the number of bights in this

family of knots. Therefore, two is the greatest common divisor of four and  $2(2n + 1)$ . Thus, two cords are required to tie this knot.

## Tying the 4L x 2B THK

Cords of any colour may be used. To make this discussion easier, let's call them white and blue. We begin by tying a 2L X 1B THK, using white cord, as shown in figure 1. The second step is to weave the blue cord through the white cord of first 2L X 1B THK as shown in figure 2. The completed 4L X 2B THK is shown in figure 3.

## Tying the 4L X 10B THK

To begin the 4L X 10B THK, we first tie a 2L X 5B THK using white cord, as shown in figure 4. The general scheme for tying this knot, is to start the blue cord with an over two, under two, pattern until we return to the blue cord. This requires going under and over two cords five times before returning to the blue cord. At this point, we switch to the familiar over one, under one pattern until returning to the starting point.

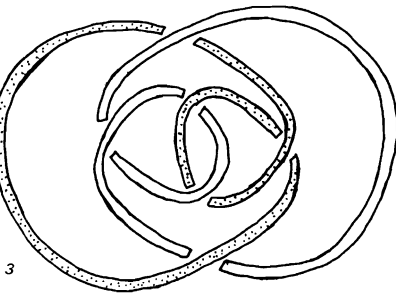
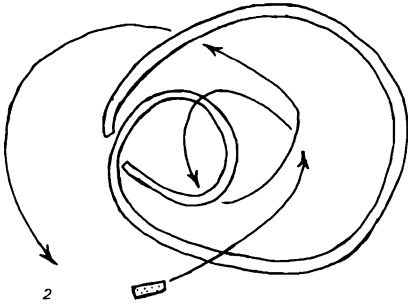
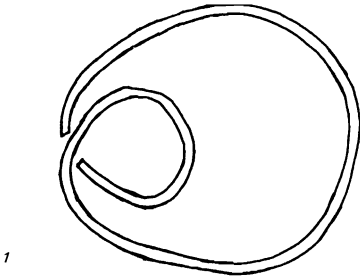
The circuit of five over two, under two weaves is shown in figure 5. The remaining over and under weaves are shown in figure 5. The completed 4L x 10B THK is shown in figure 7.

### Tying the 4L THK With 14, 18, 22, ... Bights

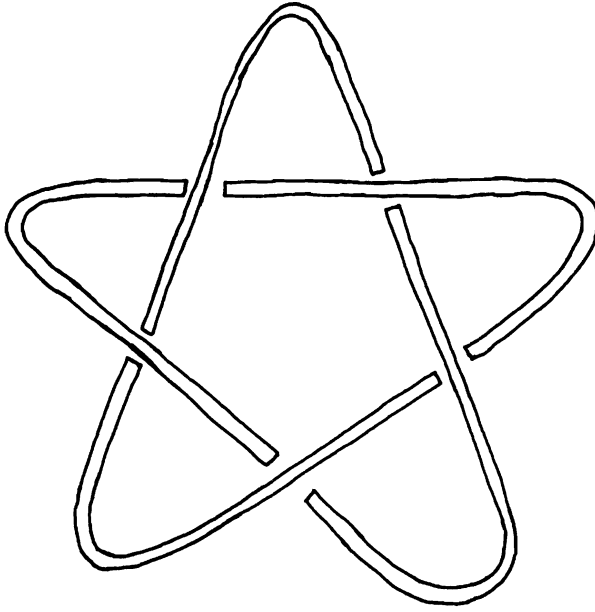
Extensions of the 4 lead THK to bights numbering 14, 18, 22, and higher numbers of the form  $2(2n+1)$ ,  $n = 3, 4, 5$ , etc, follow this same pattern. For example, to tie a 4L X 14B THK, first tie a 2L X 7B THK and weave the second cord through the first 2L X 7B THK using the under two, over two pattern until the working end of the cord completes one circuit of the THK. We then switch to the over one, under one pattern for the second circuit of the THK, completing the knot.

To tie a 4L X 18B THK, first tie a 2L X 9B THK and then weave a second 2L X 9B THK through it, etc. There are infinitely many THK designs in this sequence. As KM has only a finite number of pages and I have very limited drawing skills, I will stop the drawings and their discussions with the 4L X 10B THK.

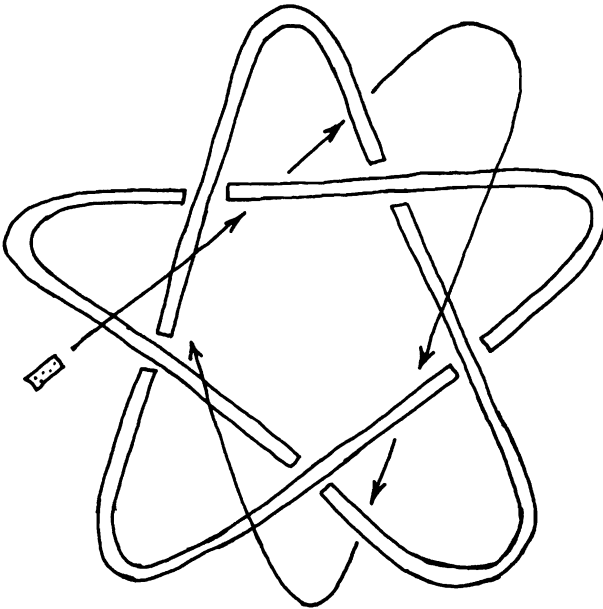
All Turks Head knots with four leads will be tied with one, two or four separate cords. All of the 4L THKs tied with two separate cords may be tied using the technique discussed here. The 4L THKs with bights numbering  $4n$ , where  $n = 1, 2, 3$ , etc, must be tied with four separate cords. The 4 lead THK with odd numbered bights may be tied with a single cord.



4

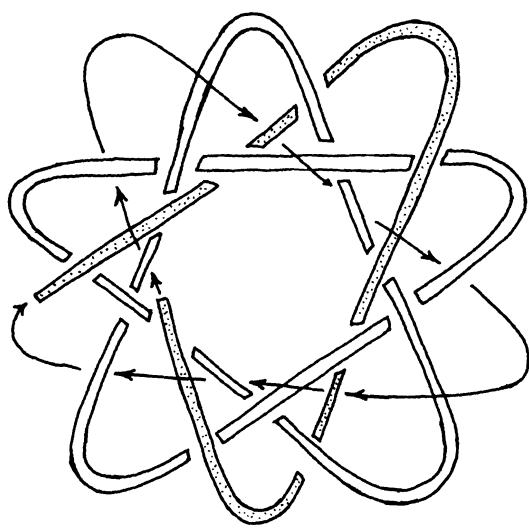


5

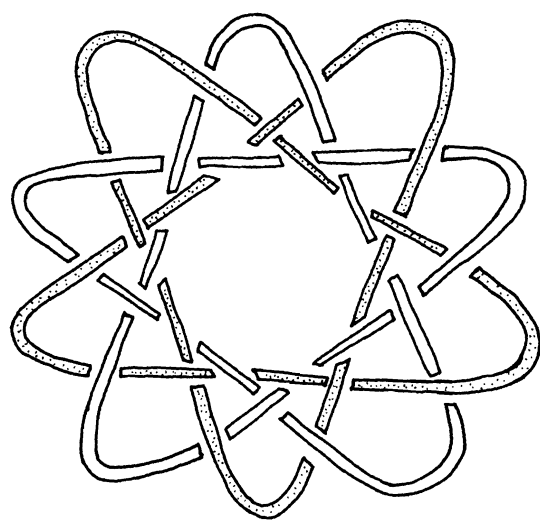




6



7



# Rogue's Yarn

by Gordon Perry

I am sometimes asked the significance of coloured yarns in rope and the origin of the term "rogue's yarn". The "rogue's yarn" is the coloured thread(s) that were put into rope during manufacture, originally to identify the fact that they belonged to the Admiralty. From that I can only surmise that the term "rogue's yarn" came about because it also

prevented the odd "rogue" removing it from it's rightful owner! Another theory I have heard is that if a rope with, say a blue thread, was found in Chatham Dockyard it was "rogue" rope.

*Below are two lists of those colours, which I know were used in the Royal Navy.*

To distinguish the origin:

<b>ROGUE'S YARN</b>	<b>ROPERY</b>
RED	PORTSMOUTH
BLUE	PLYMOUTH
YELLOW	CHATHAM
BLACK	HAULBOWLINE

To distinguish the rope and or material used in its construction:

<b>ROGUE'S YARN</b>	<b>ROPE</b>	<b>COLOUR</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
YELLOW thread in ONE strand	COIR	COCONUT BROWN	Sometimes called BASS.
YELLOW thread in TWO strands	SISAL (Admiralty)	PALE STRAW	
RED thread in EACH strand	HEMP	PALE STRAW	Tarred Hemp is a Dark Brown.
RED thread in EACH of TWO strands	MANILA (Admiralty)	DEEP GOLDEN BROWN	
RED yarn in TWO strands	SISAL (Commercial)	PALE STRAW	As a general rule only rope over 2" circumference was marked.
BLACK yarn in: ONE strand – Grade 3 TWO strands – Grade 2 THREE strands – Grade 1	MANILA (Commercial)	DEEP GOLDEN BROWN	As a general rule only rope over 2" circumference was marked.

Forgive me for not lamenting on the myriad of colours used in today's multi-plait, braided or sheath and core rope

construction; there are far too many with each manufacturer having their own colour codes.

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## **Spliterati-01**

An exciting and unique event, to include an exhibition "Expanding the Girths"

West Ox Art Gallery, Town Hall, Bampton, Oxfordshire

28th September - 21st October 2001

Tuesday - Saturday 10.30am - 12.30pm & 2.00pm - 4.00pm

Sunday 2.00pm - 4.00pm

Spliterati-01, the first ever Ply Split Braiding Convention will be taking place in Bampton, Oxfordshire. Described as "a celebration for the curious, the initiated and the addicted" Spliterati-01 will be an international gathering featuring an exhibition and ten days of lectures and workshops offering instruction and inspiration at all levels.

Central to the event is the major exhibition of traditional and contemporary ply-split braiding. Visit "Expanding the Girths" at the West Ox Art Gallery, Town Hall, Bampton, Oxfordshire from 28th September - 21st October. On show will be fine examples of camel trappings and regalia made in Rajasthan and Gujarat as well as innovative work by leading

exponents from as far afield as Japan, India, Europe and USA. A special souvenir catalogue will be available. Entry to the exhibition is free.

Ply split braiding is a rare textile technique almost unknown outside India until recent in depth research by Peter Collingwood OBE, but is now developing new potential in the hands of specialist textile artists and fashion designers. Leading the way is Erroll Pires from India, whose stunning one-piece seamless dresses will be featured in the exhibition.

For Programme and further details send SAE to

Jennie Parry, 21 St. Philip's Road, Leicester, LE5 5TR, UK

# The Elusive Matthew Walker

by Geoffrey Budworth

**M**atthew Walker is no longer the only person after whom a knot is named - but he may have been the first. In that illustrated seamanship manual *The Young Officer's Sheet Anchor*, originally published in 1808, author Darcy Lever refers to the multi-strand lanyard knot in question as Matthew Walker's knot (the apostrophe 's' causing some later commentators to wonder if Lever knew its namesake). Other knotting writers conjecture he was either a sailor or more likely a rigger in one of the British naval dockyards.

Ashley in 1944 related the tale told to Dr. Frederic Lucas of the American Museum of Natural History in 1869: A sailor, having been sentenced to death, was offered a full pardon if he could show the judge (an ex-seaman who felt some affinity with the convicted man) a knot that he could neither tie nor untie. The sailor called for ten fathoms (60 feet, or upwards of 18 metres) of rope, then retired to his cell where he covertly unlaid the rope halfway, inserted this knot, and laid up the rope again. So the sailor, whose name was Matthew Walker, won his pardon - and the world gained a classic knot.

Knotting writers nowadays state or imply that Matthew Walker's identity is irretrievably lost in time; whereas, in fact, there is a clue to where and when he lived.

Since W. Clark Russell, in *A Book for the Hammock*, published (1889) by Chatto & Windus, quoting from the Newcastle Weekly Chronicle (date unknown), wrote:

'Over 60 years ago, an old sailor then drawing near to eighty years of age, said that when he was a sailor boy there was an old rigger named Matthew Walker who, with his wife, lived on board an old converted hulk moored near Folly End, Monkwearmouth Shore; that when new ships were launched they were laid alongside this hulk to be rigged by Matthew Walker and his gang of riggers . . . and that Matthew Walker was the inventor of the lanyard knot, now known by the inventor's name wherever a ship floats.'

This is no recent revelation, it having appeared in KM issue No 12 (July 1985). Back-tracking by means of the anecdotal clues takes any investigator to around 1750 and Sunderland on the River Wear (rhyming with 'veer' and 'fear') in the north-east of England, where a port has existed for 1,000 years and was a major ship-building centre - second only to the Clyde on the west coast of Scotland - until well into the 20th century. But, even if Matthew Walker was active there and then, the knot was far from new, as a magazine article *'The Knot & the Legend'* (Yachting Monthly, November 1975) revealed: For after the Swedish warship

Gustavus Vasa, otherwise referred to as the *Wasa*, was raised in Stockholm harbour, subsequent preservation and study revealed a double Matthew Walker knot (as it would later be known) clinging to the leech of a 17th century mizzen bonnet. Given that the ship sank in 1628, this knotted artifact was at least 100 years older than its supposed discoverer.

Nevertheless, it would have been neat to end my account with confirmation that a master rigger named Matthew Walker actually lived and worked in Sunderland during the 18th century. For several months I corresponded with local contacts, including an IGKT member, a police sergeant-cum-author, librarians, archivists and recorders in Durham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Sunderland, hoping one of them might find Matthew Walker's name in some church tithe account, trade directory, parish register, electoral roll, apprenticeship indentures or other document for the relevant period. So far, however, the paper trail has been a

series of frustrating dead ends. If his name does survive in faded ink on some archaic manuscript, it has yet to be found. One might still get lucky, but the search parameters have taken on an unacceptable outlay (for me at least) in time and effort. So I am handing over the challenge. Can anyone else pin down the elusive Matthew Walker?

Meanwhile I leave the last words to a couple of knotting writers. A Hyatt Verrill, in *Knots, Splices and Rope-Work* (New York, 1912) averred; 'The most difficult of ending knots and one which you should certainly learn ... splendid ... handsome ... and useful ...' Then, 67 years later, William P. Maclean in *Modern Marlinspike Seamanship* (UK, 1979) stated; 'Whoever Matthew Walker was (or whoever invented this knot), he deserves considerable credit. I am continually amazed that such a deceptively simple sequence of tying produces such a beautiful result.'



# Branch Lines

## North American Branch

### NAB 2001

The IGKT-North American Branch will hold NAB 2001 from August 24th - 26th at the Texas Maritime Museum. The Texas Maritime Museum is located in Rockport, just north of Corpus Christi, Texas.

The Official Airline for NAB 2001 is American Airlines. Meeting attendees can receive discount off published fares by calling American Airlines Meeting Services Desk toll free 1-800-433-1790 when making individual reservations. When calling the toll free number, please use the following code: #A2181AL. In addition, members will be able to make rental car reservations by calling AVIS at 1-800-331-1600 and receive special Rental Car Rates using the "Avis World Wide Discount #D006483".

Our headquarters will be the Best Western - Inn by the Bay. The IGKT-NAB will have a hospitality room available for the membership during NAB 2001. The Best Western - Inn by the Bay is holding 30 rooms for members. These rooms will be held until July 15, 2001, then released. Members must call the Best Western directly to make reservations and indicate that they are members of the International Guild of Knot Tyers - North American Branch. The Best Western's telephone

number is 361-729-8351. FAX 361-729-0950 do not use the Best Western 800 number.

We are planning a dinner for Saturday evening. Details have not been finalized at this time. Information will be sent to you as soon as details have been finalized.

### OHIO Scout Outing

Each fall since 1985, boy scouts have gathered at Burr Oak State Park for the annual scouting outing campout. Attendance at this popular event tops 1,000 each year. Participants have a wonderful time as they learn about nature and build their outdoor skills. The Girl Scout round-up campout, held for the first time last fall at Burr Oak, brings outdoor skill and environmental education programs to the Girl Scouts of America.

Girl Scout Roundup, Burr Oak -Sept. 22-24. Exciting outdoor-based activities add to this campout for girl scouts.

Scouting Outing, Burr Oak -Sept. 29-Oct. 1. Boy Scout troops from near and far are invited for natural resource-centred programming and a weekend of camping in the group camp area.

The IGKT-NAB will be assisting this event by providing events with the theme of Knotting and Rope Work. We are looking for members who would be willing to help during this event. Members may be available for one or both weekends. Remember that this is an out of doors camping event. Volunteers may contact either Glenn Dickey at 614-891-0141 or e-mail dickeygl@juno.com . Or contact John Burke at 313-562-4393 e-mail

knottyrope@prodigy.net .

There are no hot dog stands, quick food outlets, etc. at the outing. You have to carry in the food you need and cook it on-site. Also restroom facilities are limited to porta-potties. So unless people have a room at the lodge, it'll be pretty primitive. Anyone who shows up w/four people and hopes to grab a quick snack will be sadly and angrily disappointed. The lodge is a quick 2-mile hike from the campgrounds. The nearest town, Glouster is about 6 or 8 miles. So nothing is a quick dash to the store.

As we approach the event we may come up with a solution to the meal situation.

**John Burke**  
**IGKT - NAB**

## **New Zealand Chapter**

### ***President Works Over & Beyond the Call of Duty!***

I have just arrived home from a presentation ceremony on the floating crane, the "Hikitia".

The occasion was the awarding of the Presidential Certificate of Honour to Past President of the New Zealand Chapter, Roger Carter.

The highlight of the ceremony was a telephone link up with IGKT President, Brian Field, who spoke to Roger and 'presented' the certificate, via the New Zealand Chapter President, Tony Fisher.

Brian really impressed us by greeting us in our traditional way: "Kia Ora", which means greetings and good health to you. Pronunciation was perfect as well.

Guild President Brian Field should be awarded a special bouquet for his efforts on our behalf. To connect with us here at 6:00pm on a Saturday night meant that Brian had to phone us at 5:00am! He told us that it was VERY cold as well.

We salute you, Mr President, and thank you very, very, much for honouring Roger Carter in the manner that you did.

**Tony Fisher**  
**President - New Zealand Chapter**

## **East Anglian Branch**

After a long and very wet English winter; 23 enthusiastic members and two guests gathered at the Education Room of the Museum of East Anglian Life at Stowmarket, Suffolk on a lovely fine early spring Saturday afternoon the 31st. March 2001. Two new members were welcomed together with the guests.

Apologies for absence were accepted from our President Brian Field and from Brian Walsh who is ill; we wish him well and a speedy recovery. A letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Little of Sheringham, Norfolk told us of the sad demise of member Bill Little on 13th November, 2000 our sincere good wishes and condolences go out to her in her bereavement.

We were entertained by Europa Chang of Essex continuing with the subject of

our previous meeting, 'Mankind's Relationship with Shoes and Knots'. With a talk and hands on demonstration about 'Diagonal Paper Weaving'; the origins of which are steeped in the history of time and from such diverse places as Europe, Scandinavia and Asia. Members enjoyed this unusual craft workshop of making a woven paper shoe. Most eventually got the hang of it, with some personal tutoring by Europa who has prepared a hand-written and graphic thesis on the subject.

After the break Ken Higgs of Felixstowe entertained us with the extremely varied and interesting subject of 'Tassel Making' from the elaborate showy type involving several differing types of foundation components to the more simple 'Swab' type tassel cum brush/handwipe type. All in all, not an easy subject matter for beginners which requires careful planning, study and acquisition of the right materials and components!

Our next meeting is scheduled for the autumn of Saturday 22nd September, 2001 at the same venue unless otherwise advised when we will attempt another of mankind's oldest skills, "Net Making" with the eventual end aim of creating a 'Hammock' for patio and garden use.

Would any member attending who has any skill at this subject and or input, tools, materials, references etc please bring them along. Members are welcome at any meeting to bring along items of their work for display and discussion during free association. It is intended that future meetings will only encompass 'one subject matter for talk and demonstration' to allow more free association of members

to enjoy the company and exchange of goodwill and ideas from those attending!

Our good wishes are extended to all members of our guild, world-wide wherever they may be!

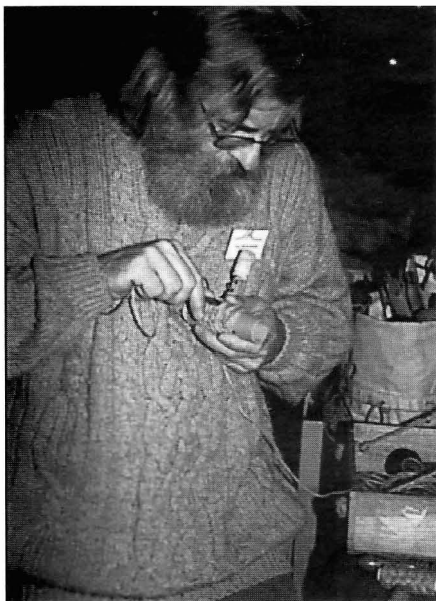
*John Halifax*

## France

At the last moment I got the go-ahead from the director of the Maritime Museum of the Isle of Tatihou to put on a knot-tyer's meeting. It was touch and go, what with the other activities of the museum, and in spite of the lack of publicity 34 European knotters made it for the weekend. The French members of the IGKT have never met in a meeting on this side of the channel, so the Tatihou meeting was a welcome first, producing roughly ten new members to the guild. The idea was to have an informal meeting where interested knotters could show and talk, and to create a proper French Branch of the IGKT. Happily the right people came to the meeting and I can announce that we are in the process of creating an association with Patrick Moreau as president, Norbert Trupiano as treasurer, Luc Prouveur as general secretary and myself as translator and go-between. The great administrative find of the weekend is Luc, who as secretary is willing and experienced in these sort of things (he runs a boat charity too) and has really taken things in hand. We can now look forward to some knotting dialogue over here.

The weekend went more or less to plan





*Luc Prouveur*

with a great turn out from the French, the Brits and the Dutch contingent who arrived at one o'clock Saturday morning, unperturbed by the crossing to the island in a little 15-foot tender (during the day there is a big amphibious ferry or at low tide there is a causeway, Des Pawson knows it well). Everyone expressed their contentment with the meeting and I was well rewarded for my work just listening to the chat and activity going on in the room, people making new friends and catching up with old ones. It was a wet weekend, so we didn't see too much of Joe-public, but the admission figures were up more than ten times for the average, but that's not very difficult out of season. All the local media got involved, TV, Radio and Newspapers - knotting can be of interest to the outside world! Everyone

donated a knot to the museum, of which the curator expresses his gratitude and we will put together what will be a very special knot-board commemorating the first knot-tyers meeting held in France. Thanks to all that came and maybe we can invite you all some time in the next year or two for a bigger and better meeting.

As we say in France,

*Cordagement,  
Graham macLachlan*

### *France - a postscript*

As always at IGKT meetings, old friendships were renewed and new friends were made. We had comfortable accommodation and excellent food. The ferry from St Vaast to Ile Tatihou had little wheels so that it could take us to dry land, I'd not encountered this type of craft before, and found it intriguing. The Museum is well worth a visit.

Some English members of the Guild even figured on French TV, in the local news slot. Ken Yalden working on a miniature earring was the news flash 'trailer'. The meeting would probably have made even more coverage, but an elephant from a nearby circus had died that day.

For me, the most amazing event was discovering that Graham macLachlan's great-great-grandfather and my grandmother's eldest uncle had worked together to bring the railway to China. (Des Pawson promptly came up with the name of the Ipswich firm that had done the engineering!)

More seriously exciting, and more

general interest, was Olivier Peron's classification of knots (I wonder if that can be linked up with Desmond Mandeville's Trambles?). There were knots learned, knots taught, knots

exchanged (as well as addresses) and - most important of all - a committee was elected to run the French Branch of the IGKT.

*Europa Chang Dawson*



*Des Pawson, Jean-François Détrée (curator of Tatihou museum), Pat Moreau and Brian Field*

## **Pacific-Americas Branch**

In early March we did a display and knotting demonstration at the Whale Watch Festival at Dana Point Harbor. This wasn't as busy as the Tall Ships Festival so we were able to enjoy the time together and discuss all manner of knot lore. One member showed us how he used to teach his apprentices to untangle a knotted up cord. Lindsey did the Knot Tying Contest and Tom Mortell gave away a piece of cord to every kid who wanted to learn a knot. Joe Schmidbauer talked knots to a local Boy Scout Troop. He brought most of the knot display items along which

included a working cat o' nine tails. A mother mentioned to him later that she had never seen the boys sit so quiet for so long. Maybe the cat helped? The boys found it so interesting that they invited him back for a second lecture.

Lindsey has also been lecturing to a number of interested groups. He first gave a talk to Huntington Harbor Yacht about knots and tall ships. He talked for at least an hour and they still wanted more! He will be giving another talk shortly about knots to the Sierra Club of Los Angeles.

Our Monthly Branch Meetings are also very interesting. At our last meeting in March, Mr. Joe Soanes, a retired Master

Rigger, told us about the times he was involved in splicing the cable for the cable cars in San Francisco. They used a variation on the Transmission Splice as shown in Graumont & Hensel. He discussed how they would check the cable for flaws and the adventures in doing the actual splice. Lindsey also discussed a ditty bag he was making for a friend of his. He has made a number of bags and

with this one he has culminated all of his talents. There is a wire grommet in the base, hand sewn eyelets and a leather bottom. He completed it with a cotton cord lanyard. It is finished out with fringe work on the outside. All in all a very nice bag.

*Joe Schmidbauer  
IGKT-PAB*



*Jørgen at work on a mat.*

## Germany

Last October 21st and 22nd Peter Willems had arranged a meeting in Flensburg, where we had an enjoyable weekend with participants from Northern Germany, exchanging skills.

Thanks to Peter for his great work arranging the meeting.

*Jørgen Friis-Christensen*

*Right: Peter Willems at work on fenders.*

*Below: Gerd Heinrich and Karl Bareuther busy making chest beckets.*



# Postbag

The views expressed in reader's letters do not necessarily reflect those of the Council. The Editor reserves the right to shorten any letter as necessary.

## A Place Well Worth A Look

Should anyone be in or around the small harbour town of Seahouses, Northumberland, on the northeast coast of England, do visit THE OLDE SHIP public house and restaurant. The bars and restaurant are filled with all sorts of maritime goodies. Pride of place is taken by the many examples of the work of a ships rigger from Walker on Tyne, John Varley (1923-1993) among items of particular note were a number of magnificent bellropes, a knotted anchor knot board, a number of very big knot boards with both decorative and practical examples of rope and wire work. There are also displays of ropeworking tools. All together one of the most interesting displays of ropework I have seen in a long time.

Do stop for a pint and a look or even a meal, the food was pretty good.

*DesPawson  
Ipswich, UK*

## MacNamara Lace.

Admiring the stylish workmanship in the colour photograph of the ditty bag made by Tony Doran (KM 67: page 22), my attention focused on the 'drawn thread work and fringing' - sometimes called MacNamara lace.

I am wondering if readers would be surprised to learn that 'drawn thread work and fringing' far from being a dead and almost forgotten craft can still be occasionally seen in a working setting at sea - on passenger carrying vessels, mostly cruise ships and probably the occasional ferry.

Access to and from passenger carrying ships is mostly (but not always) through shell doors\* in the side of the ship, via gangways to the dockside. The gangways when positioned in the shell door openings cause a slight reduction in headroom. This is more obvious on the older, former passenger liners now engaged in the cruising trade, where the shell doors tend to be a little smaller than those on modern cruise ships.

Across the top of the shell door opening one will often see a very visible MIND YOUR HEAD board, and below this, hanging slightly below the upper steelwork, a made to measure white canvas apron, enhanced with 'drawn thread work and fringing'. When the head of the occasional over tall passenger comes in contact with the fringe the speed of the involuntary 'duck' is always impressive, even with older passengers. The canvas aprons have always been recognised as being more effective than the written signs.

On your next cruise keep your eyes open and watch out for the canvas apron.

\* Shell doors (aka gunport doors): Flush fitting watertight steel doors in the ship's hull plating - nowadays operated by hydraulic rams.

*Thomas Simpson  
South Shields, UK*

## A Sea Ditty

I am a serving member of the Royal Navy Submarine Service and as such haven't really had the opportunity to attend any meetings. I have been in the RN for almost 20 years now and my interest in knots was manifested in me when I was a young able seaman serving on HMS ODIN (a P&O class diesel submarine which has now been scrapped).

Whilst serving onboard the aforementioned submarine I was the 'buoy jumper' for the casing party whilst attempting to come alongside 'Charlie' buoy in Brodick Bay (off the coast of the Isle of Arran) during a particularly nasty gale force 7 during the winter months, at night. I successfully jumped onto the buoy at the appropriate moment and clung on for dear life as the submarine and buoy was bucking against each other like a pair of broncos. I managed to get hold of the 'picking up rope' which is a length of rope with a spliced eye and a spring hook at the end. This end is attached to the buoy, and the other end attached to the submarine capstan. The submarine could then pull itself on to the buoy and allow the ship to buoy shackle to be passed and attached to the buoy. Unfortunately for me, the picking up rope parted with quite a startling 'crack' and I found myself clinging to the buoy whilst the submarine drifted past me (remembering of course, all this during rough weather). I couldn't get back on to the submarine straight away and had to wait almost an hour for a tug to come get me and take me back to the submarine. Anyway, when I got back onboard, the Captain asked me if I was okay. I said I was fine. He turned around

to me and said "Good. I still want to get alongside that buoy and I need the picking up rope re-splicing!"

To cut the rest of the story short, I had to re-splice the picking up rope myself and not having had a hot drink or a chance to dry out and I was freezing cold. After an hour or so the job was done and, I'm glad to say my splicing was successful and we managed to get alongside that buoy at about three o'clock in the morning. After we had finished, and I had cleaned up and dried out, I got a message to go see the Captain in his cabin. I went, and to my amazement and pride, he patted me on the back, said "Well done Stevie and thanks", after which he gave me a tot of rum.

Well, my interest in knots grew from that, and now I mainly take pride in making knotboards that I either give as gifts or sell to people who ask if I make them.

*Steve Card  
Helensburgh, Scotland*

## Members Far Away

Last year, at the AGM I asked your attention because members who live isolated feel they have to pay a lot of money for their guild membership, and they do not feel they get a fair return on their money because they can not go to the AGM. Indeed, many members outside England will never be able to come to the AGM. Only the people of North America can expect to be able to go to a North American Meeting, and not all of them, because of the distances involved. The

next best thing is a local meeting, but even that is difficult. Let's take New Zealand as an example. We have 16 people listed as members in N. Z. Of them only five live in Wellington or close enough to come to local meetings. I have travelled there and I know that it will take many members in N.Z. a couple of hours to more than a day to travel to the meeting unless they fly, and most of a day for the travel on top of the cost.

If I look at the same page of the membership handbook and see one member in Portugal, one in Singapore, three in South Africa and four in Spain, I see another nine members who are just so far away from other members to organise local knot meetings.

The reason I know a few of the New Zealand members is that when I was in their country for a holiday I tried to meet them. With some it was impossible, they lived just so far out of the route I was taking for my travels. But many were willing to meet me. I have stayed with a few, met others at the local knot meeting and even a few when they were at work. It gave a special shine to my travels and it gave them the chance to meet another knot tyer without having to travel.

So if you are going to visit another country or part of your own country, check for members there. Drop them a line or make a phone call telling them that you are going to visit their part of the world and would they like to meet you somewhere. If they are willing to meet you but are unable to be a host during your stay they will mention a day or place to meet up with you. And if you are as lucky as I was you might be invited to visit

somebody at home and go with them to their normal (knotting) outings.

If from the above you read that I want to meet you whenever you come to the Netherlands, you are right. If possible, I will even offer you a place to stay for the night, if not I will tell you, so you will never be a burden. And if I might be on holiday or something, I do know a lot of other members. So if you tell me when you will be coming I can contact one of them, as was done for me in New Zealand, as I hope you will do when you are contacted by members who come to see your part of the world.

I hope this will help those members who are not able to travel themselves, and make us all aware that we are ONE INTERNATIONAL guild.

*Willeke van der Ham  
Velsen Noord, Nederland*

## **Monkey Fist Tool**

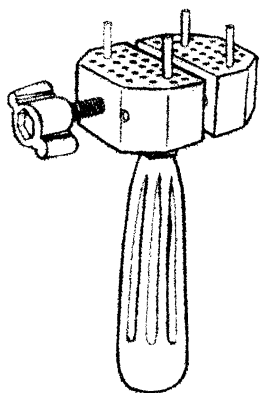
I read with interest the article on 'Monkey Fist Tool', KM 66. I myself have been using for a long time now, a 'tool' which I found in the Proops Brothers Ltd. Catalogue. The tool itself is designed as a universal workholder (code No. H4070) and currently retails at £7.95. I modified the holder to suit the application by adding longer pins. I find that I can easily accommodate up to circa 60-mm beads and have successfully made earrings and keyrings by simply moving the pins as required.

For a catalogue contact:

Proops Brothers Ltd  
Technology House  
34 Saddington Road  
Fleckney  
Leicester LE8 0AN  
Tel: 01162403400

I hope this will be of help to other members, it most certainly has to me.

*Jonathon C. Haines  
Plymouth, UK*



## Hervey Garret Smith.

While on a tour of duty in the U.S.A. (with the German Navy) I visited the Suffolk Marine Museum at Sayville, NY, knowing from the “*Marlinspike Sailor*” that HGS had once been curator of that museum. As a collector of sailor’s and sailmaker’s tools I wanted to see Hervey’s which are drawn in his book. On arriving (somewhere in 1987) I was told by the museums people that HGS had died a few years ago, so he might have joined the Fiddlers Green about between 1980 and 1984 as I remember. There are just a few pieces of HGS tools on display in the museum e.g. his sheath knife, a U.S. Navy Mark I. The

sheath is self-made and decorated with a little knotwork. Most of his tools were said to be in possession of his family who lived still in Sayville at that time.

It might be of interest for guild members that there is a *National Geographic Magazine* (November 1957 issue) which contains an article written by HGS. Title: “*A 20th-Century Saga of the Sea on Canvas*”. The magazine includes a “Special Supplement Painting of *Mayflower II*”, painted by Hervey Garret Smith.

Quiet interesting, isn’t it?

*Karl Bareuther  
Glucksburg, Germany*

## “A Picture Is Worth...”

I hope to clarify some misunderstandings arising from letters by John Smith (KM57 p55), Jack Carlton (KM65 p25), and Owen Nuttall (KM68 p46), and to make a link in response to L.F. Osborne’s QR loop (KM65 p18).

In the first, John Smith opines emphatically that Brion Toss’s “*Complete Rigger’s Apprentice*” introduces the “Tugboat” or “Flying” bowline as distinct from the Angler’s loop. John writes “Brion is precise and accurate in his description, saying that ‘this bowline is really a form of the Angler’s loop.’” But while we can disagree over the sense of “a form of”, the unambiguously precise text is given both in defining the knot and earlier in defining (what is the SAME) the Angler’s loop-to wit: “... although it [viz..



Angler's loop] jammed, it was very quick and easy to tie, whether by the method shown here [p61, fig.3-19] or the show Tugboat (or Flying) Bowline **Technique** (see the following section, 'Seven Bowlines')." [my emphasis]. What has happened to John (and to me, and to others, I surmise) is that he followed the illustrations that accompany the Tugboat's text; these two images, however, conflict with the accompanying text, in showing the left hand turned outwards after its inward turn. The text doesn't mention this, and this hand's position determines which knot is made.

So, although indeed a distinct knot is somewhat shown in Brion's book (nb: a finished "Flying Bowline" isn't pictured), it is by accident of mis-illustration-something that plagues many books, as also...

Owen Nuttall defends John's Icicle Hitch from Jack Carlton's letter of disappointment in using it (with string on a pencil). Owen writes that "when an Icicle Hitch is tied correctly which is relatively easy," but it wasn't, in Jack's source, Budworth's Hamlyn/*Complete Book of Knots*. Geoffrey illustrates the knot loaded backwards-i.e. the standing part and end are swapped (privately, he has explained to me some of his troubles in getting illustrations done!). This near-Icicle hitch is inferior to the Real McCoy (as I tested in 5/16" polycombo plaited rope on a vacuum-cleaner pipe), although one might think it would work well. The book's text, however, is correct (although it ought not to repeat John's KM32 p6 article's stipulation that there be "no separation of the two turns at the thicker

end"-since in the book the object is a spar of presumably even dia.-: rather, "at the end away from the standing part" is what's wanted.).

But Geoffrey does advise that the number of turns needed will vary by circumstance, and so I must wonder how much Jack fiddled with the hitch-even the backwards one, which also has a grip? In dismay, Jack laments that he'll return to his trusty old seamen's knots; but Jack doesn't tell us if any of those come close to doing what the Icicle hitch does!

Finally, let me respond to L.F. Osborne's KM65 p18 presentation of a QR loop that he developed: this loop is the same as what was shown in KM15 p2 (repeating KM13), and said to be used by someone in the securing of horses. (There is also another QR loop on the page, by Pieter van de Griend.) Here again, the illustrations are problematic, looking considerably different (and both different from the drawn-up form).

*Dan Lehman  
Virginia, USA*

## The Origin of Nylon

May I through Knotting Matters, launch an appeal for the true meaning and origin of the word "Nylon".

I am sure it will create as much blah-blah as the old chestnut "How many ropes on a ship?" I know personally of five different stories all pertaining to be the truth and I think through KM we may get to the bottom of it.

*Graham MacLachlan  
Isle of Tatihou, France*

# Knotting Diary

## AGM's & 1/2 YEARLY MEETINGS

### IGKT Half-yearly Meeting

Ellesmere Port, Cheshire  
13th October 2001  
Contact: David Walker  
Tel: 01244 682117  
E-mail: [getknotted@appleonline.net](mailto:getknotted@appleonline.net)

### NAB 2001

Texas Maritime Museum, Rockport, Texas  
24th-26th August 2001  
Contact John Burke  
Tel: 313-562-4393  
E-mail: [knottyrope@prodigy.net](mailto:knottyrope@prodigy.net)

### IGKT 20th Birthday Celebrations

Fareham, Hampshire  
20th - 25th May 2002  
Contact Ken Yalden  
Tel: 023 9257 8603  
E-mail: [kennethyalden@lineone.net](mailto:kennethyalden@lineone.net)

## BRANCH MEETINGS

### West Yorkshire Branch

17th July, 18th September  
Beulah Hotel, Tong Road, Farnley, Leeds  
Contact David Pearson  
Tel: 0113 2572689

### East Anglian Branch

22nd September  
Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket,  
Suffolk  
Contact John Halifax  
Tel: 01502 519123

## EVENTS

Von Hundepints, Schweinsrücken und Neunschwänziger Katze, Seemannsarbeiten aus Tauwerk.

(Pointing, Cockscombing and Cat o' Nine tails and sailor's Ropework) by Karl Bareuther  
July-August  
Papenburg, Germany

### 'Spliterati 01'

West Ox Art Gallery, Town Hall, Bampton,  
Oxfordshire  
28th September - 21st October 2001  
Contact: Jennie Parry, 21 St Philip's Road,  
Leicester. LE5 5TR

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The Knot Book	£3.99
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Breastplate Designs	£2.50
Concerning Crosses	£1.50
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Turkesheads the Traditional Way	£1.50 *
Nylon Novelties	£2.00 *
<b>Stuart Grainger</b>	
Knotcraft	£3.60 *
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Turks Head Alternatives	£2.20 *
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	<i>Hardback price includes UK postage</i>
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Knotting Matters <i>copies of past editions</i>	£2.50
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