Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue 85
December 2004

Guild Supplies

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	Long, dark blue with Guild Logo in gold	£8.95
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Cheques payable to IGKT, or simply send your credit card details
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Knotting Matters

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Front Cover - Ditty bag by Barry Brown
Back Cover - Chest becket by Yngve Edell

IN THIS ISSUE

Notes from the Secretary's Blotter

This morning I am sitting at my desk thinking about the various notes on my blotter, and at the same time, looking out of the window, watching fluffy white clouds scudding across the sky. We are expecting a cold and miserable winter ahead of us, and last weekend, as I drove to the Council meeting in Northamptonshire, in central England, one could see the remains of the previous weeks snow lying on the roadside verges.

It was only a few weeks ago that I was at the Autumn Meeting in Pitsea, where all those who attended had thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Even the local Mayor had been attracted to our gathering, and spent a lot of time touring the various displays. In response to the member's complaints, those speaking were invited to use microphones, which proved quite successful, although we have yet to fully master the technique. Ken Nelson gave a preview of the next AGM, to be held at Beale Park in Berkshire. This will give us all something to look forward to through the cold winter months ahead.

The question of whether we should pay to attend Guild Meeting has been hotly debated over the years, but at this meeting David Walker offered an interesting compromise, by inviting donations. An envelope was left on every seat in the auditorium, and members could opt to leave it there untouched, put the empty envelope in the collection bucket, or put a donation in it and place in the bucket. A mixture of full and empty envelopes were received, but with donations exceeding seventy pounds, this opportunity is likely to be offered at future meetings

Shortly after that I took my extended family, Sylvia, her mother, (and the *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*), for a short break in Brittany to catch the last of the summer weather. Whilst there, we had the privilege of meeting Henri Phillipot, who invited us to his home in Hennebont, and showed us his fascinating collection of knots and rope work. It is this camaraderie amongst knot tyers that makes my job so pleasant and worthwhile.

Since I last wrote, I have issued the latest edition of the *Membership Handbook*, and since it landed on your respective doormats, I have been inundated with errors and omissions. My apologies for the errors, most of which have proved to be the result of my typing errors. The main body of the handbook, is produced directly from my database, most of which is accurate, however the first few pages, listing the Council Members, and Branch secretaries, are all hand typed by me - and that seems to have been the problem. I am not sure whether it was the result of too much wine, or more likely, not quite enough. Hopefully, by the next issue, all these little problems will have been resolved.

I don't know which year this would be in the Chinese calendar, but in mine I call it the Year of the Knot. This is because of the vast quantity of 'New Knots' I have received. Some of them prove to be long

forgotten, or not recently published, but whatever they turn out to be does demonstrate that there is still lot of interest in knot tying, both by those who are members, and those who have only just discovered our existence.

All this waffle was really trying to put off the inevitable bad news. At our last Council meeting we had to discuss and agree next years budget. Although the final year-end figures are not yet available, it does look as though there will be a significant shortfall of income over expenditure. For next year, we have cut our planned expenditure to the minimum but I must issue a warning that subscriptions will have to increase again in 2006, and a case to that effect will be put before the membership at the AGM, in May. Although the figures are not yet available, we shall be looking at two options, one is to make a small, but regular increase, the second would be to make one much larger increase, and maintain that level for a much longer period. Do you, the membership have an opinion on this? Having said that, I will go and wipe the beads of perspiration off my brow, and have a lie down.

I will take this opportunity to wish you all the compliments of the season, and I hope that 2005 will be a good year for you. Finally, I must say a big thank you to all those who have sent me their Christmas greetings, for which I am most grateful.

Nigel Harding

Col's Comment

Recently, Jane and I were able to meet up with Guild member Frank Brown in Hobart, Tasmania. Firstly, I must thank Frank and his wife Lynn for their wonderful hospitality. Wearing my council hat, I asked him what the Guild could do for those members who live somewhat remote from the slightly closer knit American and European members. His considered reply is given in this issue of *Knotting Matters* as 'The Isolated Knotter'. I urge you to read this and make your views known in *KM*.

Another issue that Frank raised was suppliers of materials and tools. This subject has been raised before. As knot tyers, we often come across a veritable gold mine of a supplier, but so very often this source is not shared with other members. There have been some that have advertised in this magazinem ore recently and in the distant past, but they are few and far between, and members are often asking, "Where can I get.....?" So if you have a supplier that you use, share it with the rest of us through the pages of *KM*. In this issue, I give you a small handful to start you off. So start sending in brief details, and hopefully we can compile a database of suppliers to give our members a quick reference.

2K7

THE SILVER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION of the IGKT.

If you are a new comer to the Guild or you missed the fun of 2K2 - now is time to set the scene.

As the world moved from the 20th century to the 21st century much ado was made of the event with world-wide events. The International Guild of Knot Tyers used the momentum of events to launch 2K2, the Twentieth birthday of the Guild, with members tying their first knot of the new millennium, and then sending a postcard of the details to Ken Yalden. By doing this, a bond was woven world wide as individual knot tyers joined into a wonderful fraternity of friends with like interests. The following two years were used to promote the Guild and the forthcoming 2K2 to be held in the year 2002. The culmination of 2K2 was a weeklong event in Furnham Hall Fareham with Displays, demonstrations and practical workshops every day. Combined with the frisson and momentum of Knot Tyer, meeting Knot Tyer, and exchanging ideas and wonder, from a multitude of countries.

January 2005 will see the beginning of the two-year lead up for 25 years of the IGKT. So, now is the time to think what you can do for the celebration, will you teach or will you learn? Or maybe do both !! There will be general and branch meetings of the Guild, before the main event, so you can try out your ideas and get into practice.

The Solent Branch has recently had an 'On the Spot' session, where a tutor or subject was requested, and given a teaching spot for a future meeting. How about doing that for future meetings, don't just turn up and ask for things when it is too late to make arrangements. We can try this out at the next AGM-May 2005 at Beale Park. Get into contact with Ken Nelson or Ken Yalden with your ideas or requests.

Overseas members are not let off the hook either, if you have ideas or request for particular subjects, please write to me so we can work on them before 2K7.

Please note I am not the NEW KNOT DEPT, you need to contact the Guild secretary about those.

As an appetiser for 2K7; I am planning a daily sailmaking workshop at 2K7, so that allcomers may make their own dittybag during the week, more details on this later.

Ken Yalden

Would you Demonstrate?

Would you demonstrate knot tying to groups? The Guild is composing a database of members who would be prepared to do demonstrations or talks. As the Guild's object is 'the advancement of education of knotting' we are being proactive in encouraging others, whether through youth groups, such as Scouts or adult groups such as Women's Institutes. Please put your name forward, you would be entitled to charge travel and costs but his would not be a money making exercise.

Do let me know if you would be interested and any other additional information such as, area you would cover, type of group you would take. This is not an exercise to commit members, more a point of contact. Please let me know on 01798 342802

Nicola Chandler

Supplies Box

Here is your opportunity to let the Guild build a database of suppliers of materials, tools and books and maybe find that special item they are searching for. So get writing and let KM know. Details should be brief, i.e. name, address, telephone, website or email address and brief details of what is available. Here are a few to start you off:

Footrope Knots

501 Wherstead Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, England IP2 8LL
Tel: (00 44) 01473 690090
Email: knots@footrope.fsnet.co.uk
Cords, Rope, Tools, Books

K J K Ropeworks,

Puddington, Tiverton, Devon, England EX16 8LW.
Tel: (00 44) 01884 860692
Web: www.kjkropeworks.co.uk/cords
Cord, Rope, Fittings

Tradline Rope and Fenders

Braunston Marina, Braunston, Daventry, Northants, England NN11 7JH
Tel: (00 44) 01788 891761
Web: www.tradline.co.uk

Twistlink Ltd

Stadon Road, Anstey, Leicester, England LE7 7AY
Tel: (00 44) 0116 2361860
Web: www.fabmania.com

The Isolated Knotter

by Frank Brown

Why do people belong to organisations such as the IGKT?

1. To make contact with people with similar interests.
2. To exchange information relating to their interests.

Members are encouraged to form Branches/Chapters to facilitate contact and information exchange. Many members are unable to attend meetings due to geographic, health, wealth or other limitations.

Can the Guild do anything to assist these members?

The IGKT provides two publications that aid isolated members to achieve contact and exchange at least to some extent.

Knotting Matters

KM is an informative document containing a wide range of articles of general interest. Members can contact the authors in order increase their knowledge on the particular subject, make observations, seek clarification, etc.

Book reviews give members an indication of a book's contents and value, as well as advertising its existence.

Photographs of rope articles demonstrate techniques and skills.

Advertisements enable members to identify material sources.

Can KM deliver a wider service?

Membership List

The list is a comprehensive, user friendly document containing contact details of each member.

Can the Membership List be made more useful?

1 Technical Bulletin

The concept of a Technical Bulletin has been aired previously, and is still a matter of interest to some members. In this age of electronic communication, it should be possible for an organisation such as the IGKT to produce a periodic publication for members through this medium. Considering the number of members now existing in the USA, then why not encourage one of the Branches to take on such a project?

This concept should assist greatly in spreading specific and technical information.

2 Membership List

The field of interests of knot tyers is extremely diversified. No one member would ever have mastery in all of them, although they could be interested in all. Could the Membership list contain an extra line of information with each member's entry showing fields of expertise or interest? To save space, this information would need to be codified.

The main fields of interest that I have determined are (A) Nodeology, (B) Tools and (C) Materials, (D) Crafts and Techniques, and (E) Literature. There are a number of sub-categories that can be associated with each of these fields. An entry after a name, addresses, phone number could be something like D1, 3, 4,8. This could indicate that the member was interested in Crafts and Techniques (D) of Macramé (1), Flatwork (4), Turks Heads (6) and Chinese Knotting (7).

3 Knotting Matters

Could consideration be given to a "Lonely Knotter's" column in KM? Contributors could seek contact with members of similar interests with a view to exchange information. Entries should be brief and could be encoded as per example above.

Special Interest Fields

Possible arrangement, not exhaustive

A Nodeology
1 Types of knots, categories.
2 History and Archeology
3 Uses and applications, recommendations and contra-indications
4 Tying methods
5 Knot Security

B Tools
1 Descriptions and use
2 Sources
3 Manufacture

C Materials
1 Types---- Synthetic, natural.
2 Properties
3 Sources
4 Principle uses

D Crafts and Techniques
1 Macramé
2 Fancy Work
3 Flat Work
4 Turks heads
5 Plaits, Braids and Sinnets
6 Lanyards and Bell Ropes.
7 Mats and Fenders
8 Chinese Knotting.
9 Rope Making
10 Etc
11 Etc
12 Etc

E Literature
1 Books
2 Articles

ROPE ENDS

Knotty-Potty

Anon

A splice can be nice
And a seizing quite pleasing,
But a lashing is smashing.

A noose has its use
And I whoop at a loop,
But a whipping is gripping.

A bend's a godsend
And a hitch never kitsch,
But a binding is blinding.

The Six Knot Challenge

by Geert 'Willy' Willaert

Here some news from the deep south of Belgium, with its mystical forests near the borders of Luxembourg and France.

I would like to tell you more about my contribution to the project to bring knot tying closer to the people and to promote the Guild.

During 2001, I made my version of the Six Knot Challenge. I was inspired by Richard Hopkins' *Six Knot Challenge*, in KM57. I don't know if he has a copyright, but however, my display is referred to him, because I don't want to steal the ideas from someone else. So I made a display in wood that fits right in my car with the following 6 knots:

Figure-of-eight, reef knot, clove hitch, sheepshank, bowline and a fisherman's knot.

I found two sponsors to realise this project. The first one is a wholesale dealer of ropes, Ledent Ropes, who paid the costs of the making of the display (about £100). He sells his ropes in almost all DIY-shops and rope shops in Belgium.

The second one is the Paragliding School of the city of Bertrix, where I'm a paragliding instructor. The director of the school allows me to give a one-day paragliding initiation to the winner of the six-knot challenge (value about £40).

So each day that I'm on display, somewhere in the province, at the end of the day I'm allowed to give a gift token for one day of paragliding initiation, to the fastest knot tyer of the day. If I have more than 100 challengers on one day, I'm allowed to give 2 gift tokens.

This display is an ideal publication for Ledent Ropes, the Paragliding School and of course for the IGKT.

Until now, most of the winners were scouts or sailors However, I also got two winners who had never made a knot before but wanted to win a day of paragliding, and trained themselves about an hour or more in front of the display and tied the six knots in 51 and 58 seconds. The record time was 48 seconds.

At the same time I created a small keyfob, the Nobressart knot, named after the village where I live at the moment. This knot is a combination of a Mathew Walker and a doubled Chinese button knot, made with a 4mm climbing rope. I know these are existing knots, but the fact it is named after the village of Nobressart give it a special meaning for the people of Nobressart.

I've already been asked to organise some workshops on knot tying, because the people start to realise the fun of making knots.

Start with an Overhand Knot. .

by Ken Higgs

Prompted by a conversation at an AGM about how many structures can begin with the most basic knot, i.e. half/thumb/Stafford/overhand knot, another doodle began for me to find out how many?

First a premise - make an overhand knot and by manipulating one or more of its parts, or adding to it, make another structure. Some practical knots to start with:

A knot that seems to have no particular name makes a loop in the end of a cord known as the bowline (the King of knots).

A perfect knot to give a perfection loop.

A butterfly knot to give a butterfly/ alpine butterfly/linesman's loop (the Queen of knots).

To digress here, this structure tied as a bend has a confusion of names - butterfly/strait/ABOK #1048/Ashley bend!

Turk's heads

The overhand knot is a two by three Turk's head.

The three by four Turk's head is the Guild logo and can be started as an overhand knot and can be raised to three by seven, three by ten, etc. The four by five series is possibly the largest comfortable Turk's head to be tied in the hand to start with an overhand knot.

Mats and Breastplates

The ocean plait, a six strand flat plait that can be made longer in sections of three side bights each repeat. Eight of Brian Field's designs start with an overhand knot. The three by four Turk's head start is a frog known as the Pretzel knot and is the start of another six strand plait - the Prolong knot. A sinnet of three-strand plait, made with a single strand starts with an overhand knot. This is a good exercise for beginners.

Food for thought? Can you add to my list?

The Vice Versa Bend and the Reever Knot

by Dick Clements

In his chapter *A History of Life Support Knots* in *The History and Science of Knots* (J C Turner and P van de Griend, World Scientific, 1996), Charles Warner draws attention to a paper *Knots for Climbers* by C E I Wright and J E Magowan which appeared in volume 40 of the Alpine Journal in 1928. One of the bends featured in this paper, and recommended for joining two ropes, is described as the Reever knot. Study of the photograph of the knot shows that it is identical to the Vice Versa bend described by Miles in his book *Symmetric Bends* (World Scientific, 1995) and shown in figure 1. Miles shows the Vice Versa as a lanyard bend (by which Miles denotes a knot in which " two ends of equal status emerge from the knot in each of two opposite directions") and credits its invention to Harry Asher. Asher does indeed show a version of the Vice Versa bend in his book *The Alternative Knot Book* (Adlard Coles, 1989) and annotates it as a 'new' knot. Budworth, in *The Book of Practical Knots* (Adlard Coles Nautical, 2000), also shows the Vice Versa bend and credits its invention to Asher.

Being a lanyard bend there is no obvious choice of which ends of the Vice Versa should be the standing parts and which the working ends. In figure 1 the corresponding ends of the two cords making up the symmetric bend are labelled A and B. When the bend is used to join two ropes, in order to maintain the symmetry it is necessary to choose either both ends A or both ends B as the standing parts. Interestingly Asher (and subsequently Budworth) illustrate the Vice Versa bend with one A-end and one B-end chosen as standing parts. So Asher's variant of the Vice Versa is, in this sense, not strictly a symmetric bend. Asher's choice however is possibly understandable because it allows the two standing parts to emerge from the same side of the knot structure. But Wright and Magowan show the Reever knot with both A-ends as the standing parts. Figures 2a and 2b show the two symmetric variants of the Vice Versa bend, the first variant, figure 2a, being the version illustrated by Wright and Magowan.

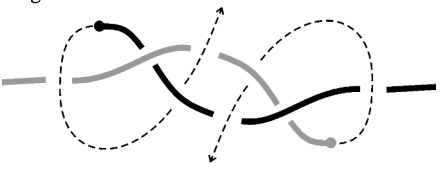
If a bend is to be useful and usable it is necessary that there should be a fairly

Fig 2b

simple and easily memorable method to tie it. Both of the variants of the Vice Versa bend shown can be tied fairly simply.

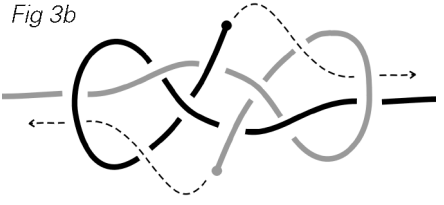
To tie the first variant start as for a reef knot, by taking one cord in each hand and making an anti-clockwise turn of one cord around the other as shown by the solid lines in figure 3a.

Fig 3a



Then, as shown by the dotted lines, pass each working end over the opposite standing part and up through the central space formed by the first turn giving the form shown by the solid lines in figure 3b (at this point we have, in fact, tied a double harness bend).

Fig 3b



To complete the Reever knot tuck the two working ends through the end loops parallel to their own standing parts as indicated by the dotted lines in figure 3b. The completed knot in figure 3b is the knot in figure 2a viewed from the other side.

To tie the second variant of the Reever knot start with an anticlockwise (lefthanded) Whatnot (figure 4a) and rearrange it into the form of figure 4b. Now take the two loops in figure 4b, one in each hand, and rotate each anticlockwise through 180(about the longitudinal axis of the knot to obtain the configuration shown in figure 4c. Finally tuck the working ends through the end loops parallel to their own standing parts again as indicated in the figure.

Fig 4a

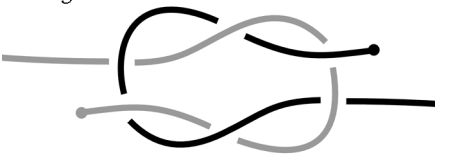


Fig 4b

Fig 4c

Both variants of the Reever knot can be worked up tight and secure by pulling alternately on the two standing parts and the two working ends. Which variant of the knot is the better? Informal testing in a variety of cord and moderate sized rope

suggests that both variants are quite secure (that is proof against working loose when subject to intermittent loads). It is my strong suspicion that the first variant, as recommended by Wright and Magowan, would be the stronger in the sense of causing the least reduction of strength of the ropes joined. This belief is based on the relatively straight run of the standing parts into the bend and modest curvature of the standing parts at the entry to the bend. I hope to be able to do further tests to substantiate this belief at some future time.

The Reever knot can be untied by grasping the paired working ends and standing parts on either side of the knot close to the knot and alternately pushing and pulling vigorously. The knot will usually loosen sufficiently under this treatment to allow the working ends to be withdrawn from the end loops and the bend can then be easily untied. The bend is distinctive and it will normally be obvious that it has been correctly formed. The most likely error is that the working ends are passed the wrong side of each other in the centre of the knot and in that case the knot collapses immediately into a reef knot.

So the Reever knot can be tied by a method which is easy to learn and easily remembered. It is proof against mis-tying and correct tying is easily recognized. It is a secure bend (in the sense of resisting alternating loads without loosening). It is compact and streamlined in form and the working ends lie neatly alongside the standing parts. I believe that the Reever knot deserves to be more widely known and used.

References

Asher, H, *The Alternative Knot Book*, Adlard Coles, 1989

Budworth, G, *The Book of Practical Knots*, Adlard Coles Nautical, 2000

Miles, R E, *Symmetric Bends: How to Join Two Lengths of Cord*, World Scientific, 1995

Turner, J C and van de Griend, P, *The History and Science of Knots*, World Scientific, 1996

Wright, C E I and Magowan, J E, *Knots for Climbers*, Alpine Journal, vol 40, 1928, pp120-141

The Clove Hitch, Handcuff Knot and Chair Knot.

A hitch alone is nothing-it is like a bit of fluff-
But hitch it onto something and you cannot call its bluff.

To cast yourself a clove hitch work the centre of the rope,
For one short end to work with leaves you not enough to cope.

However, if you' re clever, you can carry on from there
And create yourself a handcuff for other men to wear.

This knot you've made is tough enough to hold a madman's fists
But if your bad man's not too rough release his wretched wrists.

Now tie it in the same array-that's if you need a chair-
But tie the knot in such a way that when you pay your fare
It carries you in comfort and adjusts to you with rare
Dependence on half-hitches which you throw in for your care.

Knots and their Vices - Michael Jenaid

The Petal Knot

by Willeke van der Ham

Place your string on your worktop, like the spokes of a wheel.

1) Take your first string and make a loop, not necessary but it helps in the last stage. Put the string on the table across the second string.

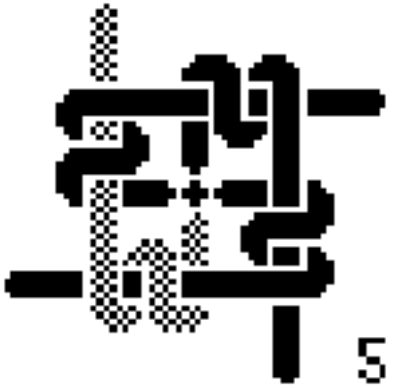
2) This second string makes one round turn (or more) around the first string,

3) Before it is placed across string 3. Which does the same, keep the same amount of round turns.

4) You may keep the turns tight while tying but I had to leave a little slack in the drawings.

5) The last string has to go through the round turns of the first string. If you had

not made them before you need to make them now.



You can make this knot with one or more round turns, with 3 or more strings.

And you can make this knot in series of increasing numbers of round turns.

If you start with the one above and follow it with one with more turns you get a disk. Increase the next one with the same amount to keep the knot regular and you have created a flower.

I haven't seen this knot published before but I can not have been the first one to find it, so if you know a name for it, please let me know.

In *KM*77 was published '*How to make...Animals*'. I have been working more on that theme, and now it is a Web site. You can visit it at www.home.zonnet.nl/willeke_igkt

I am still adding more but while I write this there are animals, flowers and knot boards, with the knot needed for most projects, all in English and Dutch.

Knotmaster Series No. 23

'Knotting ventured, knotting gained.'

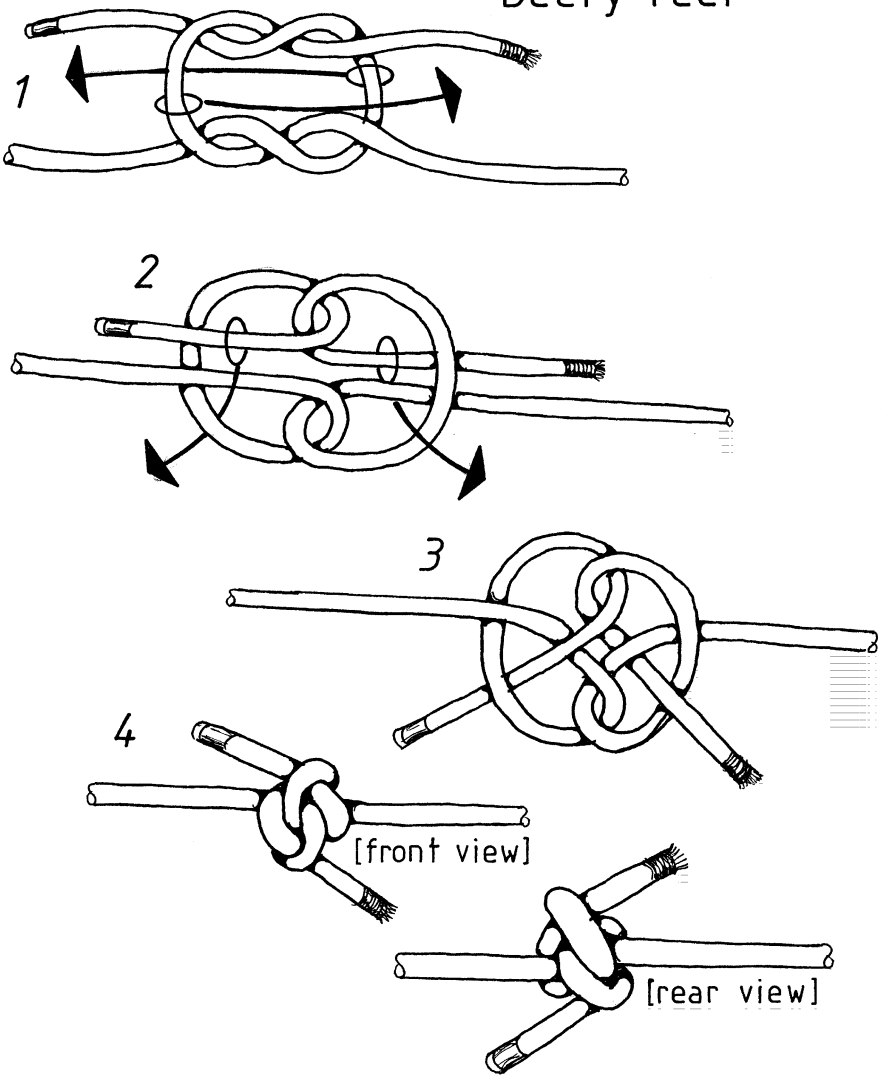
Beefy reef

Never use the simple reef or square knot as a bend to join two working ropes. This tough little knot with a difference can, however, be used to unite and embellish smaller cordage.

It was devised by Guild member Roger Miles, of New South Wales, Australia, and first published in issue No 37 (October 1991) of *Knotting Matters.*

Tie a reef knot and pull each bight back over its respective standing and working ends (fig. 1). Tuck each working end down through the knot, exactly as shown (fig's 2, 3). Tighten with care, as it is possible to distort the completed knot before it attains its distinctive final form (fig. 4).

Beefy reef



Pioneers of the Patent Rope Machine. (In Northeast England)

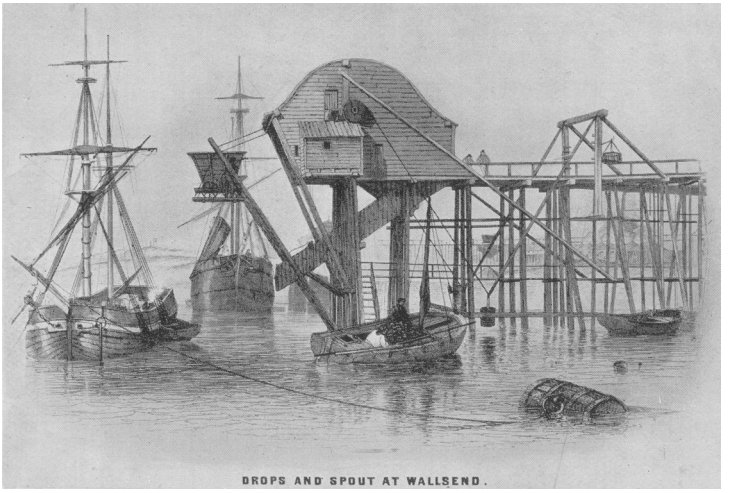
by Thomas Simpson

The 1790's were a great decade for rope. They witnessed the introduction of the Patent Rope Machine; accompanied by a profusion of inventors. Some of the more practical were the Reverend Edmund Cartwright; Richard Fothergill and John Grimshaw of Sunderland; John Daniel Balfour of Elsinore, Denmark; Joseph Huddart of Maryport, and London; William Chapman of Newcastle; James Mitchel of Poplar, London; Archibald Thompson, Lombard Street, London; Mr. Cutting, United States consul at Calais, France; John Curr of Sheffield (a flat-rope making machine for mining); William Hoard (a portable rope making machine). All of these inventors (and many others besides) surfaced around this time, and all had their own supporters, who regarded their man to be the original inventor; news travelled slowly in days of yore.

The common-laid rope of the day suffered from numerous efficiency problems. The biggest culprit was the distortion and compression of the rope yarns in laying up the strand: equal tension between the inner and outer yarns had never ever been achieved. A number of patent rope machine inventors were aware of this problem and introduced varying patented ideas to improve the lateral twist and lengthwise tension of each individual rope yarn within the strand. This, plus important advances in new preparatory machinery that removed much more extraneous debris from the supplied rough hemp, coupled with the significant introduction of the steam engine, produced close to a 50% increase in a hemp rope's strength, which brought it to within 85-90% of its future successor: twentieth century manila rope.

The following information concerning Sunderland and Tyneside's pioneering involvement with the patent rope machine stems from an amalgam of local history and genealogy sources, and a paper read by George Luckley at the annual general meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science which was held at Newcastleupon-Tyne in 1863. The overall theme of the AGM was "The industrial resources of the three rivers: Tyne, Wear (it rhymes with dear), and Tees". Luckley was a partner in the business of Messrs. Thomas & William Smith & Co., a leading ropemaker, shipbuilder, and shipowner, on I700/ I800s Tyneside.

The original designer and builder of the Sunderland patent rope-making machine was Richard Fothergill, a local schoolmaster, whose patent was registered at the Patent Office, London, on April 12 1793 (number 1946). From the outset, recurring niggling glitches undermined the equipment at his Southwick, Sunderland, proving ground. For help, Fothergill turned to John Grimshaw, a friend and fellow Quaker,



Patent Drops invented by W. Chapman C.E. formerly of Willington Ropery
[picture - R. Hood Haggie & Son, Ltd.]

who had started his working life as a joiner and turner, but had progressed to become a highly regarded "hands-on" mechanical engineer, in the mould of George Stephenson, whom he later became associated with on the Stockton and Darlington railway project: the world's first passenger carrying railway. With the various disruptive problems eventually sorted out, and the machinery's potential plain to see, Grimshaw suggested a much larger manufactory than that envisaged by Fothergill. Prospective merchant-venturers, within the Quaker community, were sounded out with an invitation to join the business. Three who responded were Rowland Webster, gentleman, shipowner, Justice of the Peace, and a former mayor of Stockton-on-Tees; Michael Scarth, gentleman, sail-cloth manufacturer, of Castle Eden, County Durham, he was also principle agent to Rowland Burdon, a Member of Parliament for County Durham; Ralph Hills, clockmaker and shipowner, of 108 Low Street, Sunderland.

I have reservations about Ralph Hills just being a financial investor; it's quite possible that as a clockmaker he may have contributed some technical input into the patent ropemaking machine's post construction problems. His clockwork expertise in grouping together toothed wheel gears to transmit motion could have proven helpful in assembling and fine tuning the patent rope machine's much larger toothed wheel gearing arrangements, which carried-out the high degree of intricate co-ordination, essential in manipulating the multifarious twisting and tensioning of the yarns, strands, and ropes.

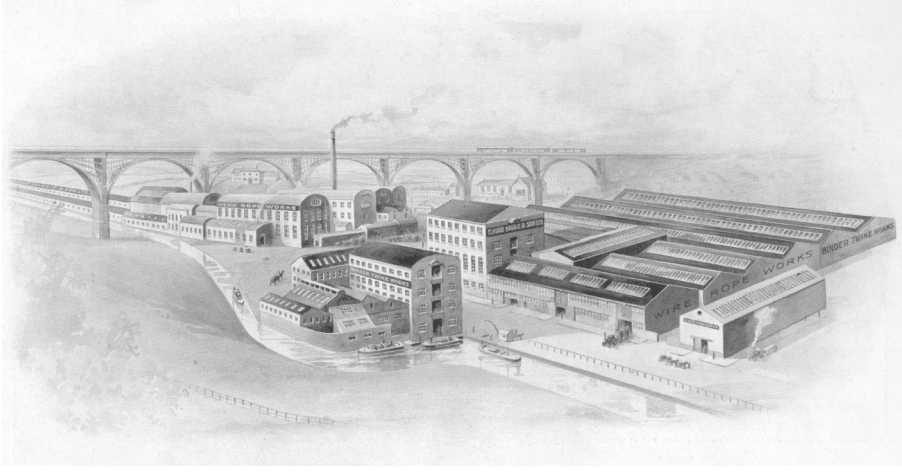
In 1794 Richard Fothergill died. His will was proven, and released from probate at the Prerogative Court, York City, on December 10 1794. Administration was granted to his sole

executor, John Grimshaw. By the terms of the will Fothergill's allotted share of the ropery was divided into two equal parts, one part was shared equally between Fothergill's two brothers and a sister; the other part, plus the patent copyright and fourteen years licence, went to John Grimshaw, who was granted executive control of the whole share. The business was formally named Grimshaw, Webster & Co., and Grimshaw was the managing partner, in day-to-day control.

The company, at this time, was having a new purpose built patent ropery constructed on the riverfront at Deptford; four storeys high, 100 feet long, by 30 feet wide; it is now a renovated Grade H listed building. This site is over the River Wear (on the south bank) from the original location in Southwick. With an eye to the future, the new ropery was completed with the installation of (what was then) a new-fangled James Watt steam engine, making it (probably) the world's first ropery so fitted.

Watt's records (in Birmingham Central Library) indicate that the steam engine installed at the premises of Grimshaw, Webster & Co., Deptford, Sunderland, was a double acting single cylinder design; it had a cylinder diameter of 21¼ inches, a stroke of 5 feet, and was rated at 16-horsepower, it weighed 53,000 pounds, and stood 10 feet tall. The parchment (bill of sale), which contained the names of the four partners, was dated May 01 1795, and the cost was £760 sterling. After an exhaustive running in period, further modifications to compliment certain features of the steam engine were introduced and patented by John Grimshaw.

Over the following years Ralph Hills was forced to leave the business due to financial problems concerning his ships *Restoration* and *Archimedes'* trading difficulties during the Napoleonic Wars; in November 1805 Michael Scarth died,



View of Willington Patent Steel Wire Rope, Manilla Rope, and Binder Twine Works in 1914

aged 39; Rowland Webster died in 1809, and was succeeded by his son, Rowland, junior; around 1818 John Grimshaw departed, to open his new, state of the art, Patent Ropery, in Union Street, Bishopwearmouth (closer to the river mouth). It's described in Sunderland trade directories as Grimshaw's "Improved" Patent Ropery. The Deptford ropery was renamed Webster's Patent Ropery, and it remained so until it closed down in the 1980's.

In 1816, Robert Surtees, writing in his *History of County Durham* (vol. one), mentioned that in that year - "There were nine ropewalk roperies in Sunderland; five of which had adopted some of the modern improvements, and are worked by horses. These improvements apply only to the formation of the strand; but even that is considered as a very material advantage."

Recently, in a local library, I came across an 1806 catalogue and price list for Grimshaw, Webster & Co. The booklet contains 56 pages of interesting and revealing information of that time period, it's entitled *The Shipowner's Guide in the Fitting Out of Ships with Cordage.* There are details of public tests carried out in London, Liverpool, Sunderland, and South Shields; attended by shipowners, masters, and various other interested parties. Also included are various testimonials from shipowners and masters, coalmine owners, their agents, foremen, etc. And most interestingly, the booklet contains numerous tables outlining various comparisons between patent machine-laid rope and common-laid rope (as traditional ropewalk-laid rope was called). The tables include rope specifications for ships ranging in tonnages from 80 to 500 registered tons, the most common tonnages of newly built ships in Sunderland shipyards of that era.

Choosing a random example from the catalogue, a vessel of 500 registered tons (840 tons burthen) was recommended to carry a hemp best bower anchor cable of 300 fathoms. With common-laid rope, the circumference required by Lloyds (for a vessel of this size) was 16 inches. This cable weighed 160 cwt (hundredweights), and the cost, in 1806 Sunderland, was 70 shillings (£3.50 metric sterling) per cwt, making the cost of the cable £560. (A measurement aid appears at the end of the article.)

A Grimshaw, Webster & Company cable, laid by their patent machinery, with an approximate breaking strain (to the common-laid cable) had a circumference of 12 inches. 300 fathoms weighed 90 cwt, and was priced at 80 shillings (£4 metric sterling) per cwt, making the price of the cable £360. This gave a weight reduction of 70 cwt (44%) and a cost saving of £200 (36%).

The booklet states that the recommended, complete, standard rope package, to equip a newly built, three masted ship of 500 registered tons (840 tons burthen) totalled 1,970 fathoms (this includes the earlier mentioned cable). In common-laid construction, this rope package would have weighed 342 cwt, and at 70 shillings (£3.50) a cwt, it would have cost £1,197.

The above package (1,970 fathoms) of Grimshaw, Webster's patent-laid rope (all rope sizes of approximate breaking strain to their common-laid counterparts) would weigh 198 cwt, and would cost, at 80 shillings (£4) per cwt, £792. This provided a weight reduction of 144 cwt (42%) and a cost saving of £405 (34%). These were substantial savings, and do

not take into account the extended durability of the patent rope's superior construction; some testimonials indicate a two or threefold life expectancy.

Whilst perusing the earlier mentioned James Watt's engine records, I only sighted one other ropery fitted with a Watt's steam engine prior to 1800. This was the Willington Ropery, at Wallsend-on-Tyne; a steam engine, rated at 8-horsepower, was installed in June-July 1799.

Willington Ropery was built as a conventional ropewalk ropery in 1789 by William Chapman (senior), a retired sea captain and shipowner. Originally from Whitby, he belonged to a well-known Quaker family, but had lived for many years in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and was a freeman of that city. He died in October 1793, leaving the ropery to two of his sons, William, and Edward Walton Chapman. William, junior (1749-1832), was an esteemed civil engineer, with a nationwide reputation as a harbour, port, docks, canal, and bridge builder; he remained a sleeping partner, leaving it in the management of his younger brother, Edward Walton. William was also well known for his many diverse inventions; one was a Patent Rope Machine to upgrade the ropery which was patented on September 13 1797 (no. 2191), other improvements were registered in March and November 1798 (nos. 2219 & 2265). Further modifications to accommodate the steam engine were included in the patent of July 26 1799 (no. 2326).

William Chapman published a slim 54-page book in 1808 entitled, *A Treatise on the Progressive Endeavours to Improve the Manufacture and Duration of Cordage* (this is an abridged title). Some items of interest from the book - The ropery's first commercially produced patent machine laid cable was made on May 7 1799 for the Cyrus, a 238-ton brigantine, belonging to Sunderland; the cable is still in good order in 1808.

The ropery is a regular supplier of hemp cables to the Admiralty, especially in the larger 18-24 inch circumference sizes.

Prior to the installation of the steam engine it required 200 men to close a 21-inch circumference cable, with the steam engine in situ only 14 men are in attendance.

The Royal Navy has their ropes and cables made to the same dimensions as the common-laid ropes and cables - thus obtaining the full advantage of the increase in strength. The merchant service tends to lean towards a saving in weight.

By the early 1800s three roperies on Tyneside are using Chapman's patent rope machine under license.

Joseph Huddart made his first full sized prototype patent machine laid cable (20 inch circumference) at his Limehouse, London, ropery on 21 April 1800. A steam engine was only used to lay up the hawser laid ropes. The cable itself was closed by manpower in the presence of Admiral Gambier, other Admiralty officials, and East India Company directors [Huddart was a retired company sea captain].

Chapman also sheds some light on the political scene of the times (the Napoleonic War was in progress), he writes that the UK imports around 38,000 tons of hemp annually, 35,000 tons from Russia. This dependence on Russian hemp greatly disturbed the government of the day. Efforts were made to grow more hemp in Ireland,

Canada and Trinidad. Large subsidies to cultivate hemp were offered to farmers in Lincolnshire, Dorset and Somerset.

Experiments with substitutes were ongoing: Kantala in Bengal, American Aloe, large quantities are growing wild in San Domingo, it is better than Sunn hemp grown in Bengal. [No mention of Manila].

In 1843, with William Chapman now dead and Edward in his eighties and retired, the Willington Ropery was taken over by Robert Hood Haggie, as mentioned in *Knotting Matters* (no. 81, page 42). Stevenson Haggie, a chairman of R. Hood Haggie & Son, writing a short article in the *Newcastle Daily Journal,* dated January 15 1920, concerning the early years of the rope-works and William Chapman, the renowned civil engineer and inventor wrote - "Amongst his inventions was a large vertical rope making machine for hempen rope, which consists of three drums revolving each on its own axis, round a common centre, and it will make rope of any length, and the machine is still being used for a certain class of ropes to this day [1920]." Mind, the Watt's steam engine was no longer in situ, having been destroyed by a fire in June 1873. Amongst the workforce the patent rope machine was affectionately called "The Waltzer", apparently due to its motion in use, which some people likened to a couple dancing the waltz.

Willington Ropeworks (now part of the FKI plc/Bridon group) was still in operation in 2004; in a telephone conversation they mentioned that their present output is nearly all steel wire rope, plus a small percentage of fibre optic cable.

Memory Jogger

1 fathom = 6 feet/1.83 metres. 1 cwt (hundredweight) = 112 pounds/50.8 kilos.
£1 sterling (pre-metric) = 20 shillings.20 cwt = 1 (long) ton/2240 pounds/1016 kilos.

Any readers wishing to convert the 1800 prices to present day price equivalents should multiply the 1800 prices by 50, which produces a close approximation.

Worth reading

A Condensed History of Rope-making. By H W Dickinson. Newcomen Transactions, volume 23, 1942-43; pages 71-91. (These transactions [1921 - to present] are sometimes kept in larger reference libraries).

Rope: A history of the hard fibre cordage industry in the UK. William Tyson. London 1966.

History of the Wire Rope Industry of Great Britain. E.R. Forestier-Walker. London, 1952

Essential books for the Guild's library collection

Technology of Cordage Fibres and Ropes. David Himmelfarb. Textile Publishers Inc. USA (1957)./Leonard Hill (books) Ltd., 9 Eden St., London NW1 (1957).

Himmalfarb was the senior technologist and master ropemaker to the United States Navy Ropewalk.

The Practical Ropemaker. George Lawrie. H.R. Carter Publications Ltd., 17 Linenhall St., Belfast. (1948).

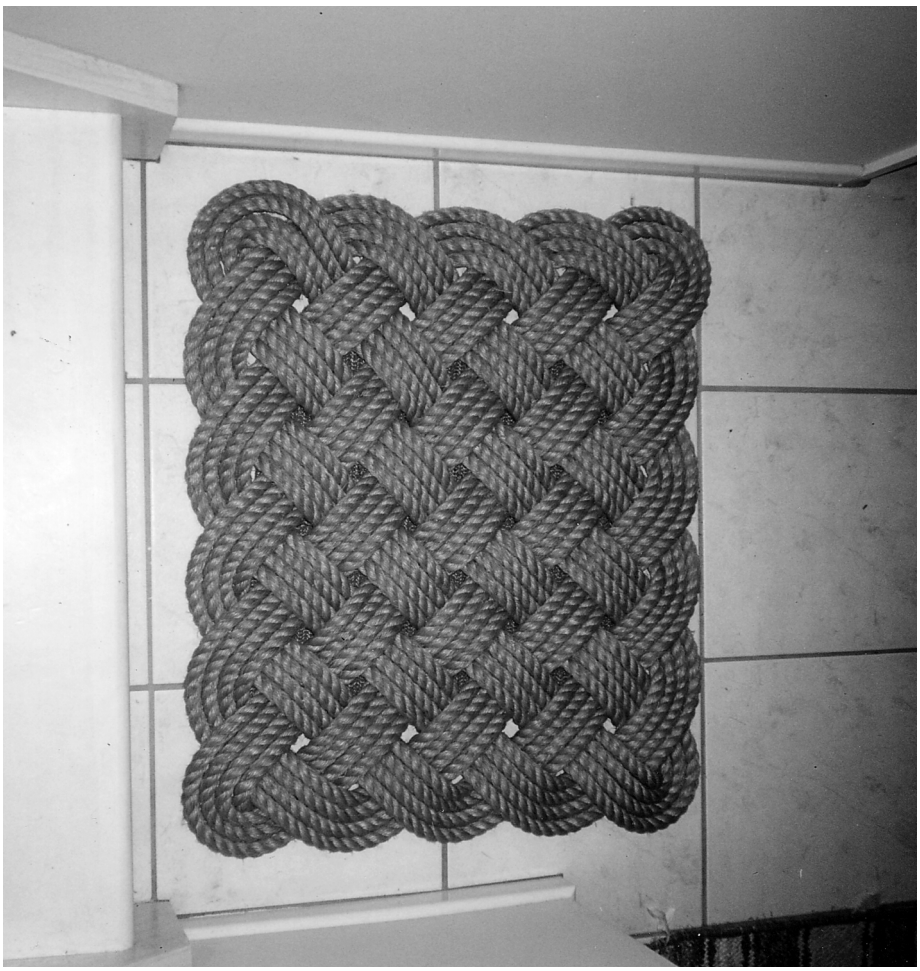
Knot Gallery

Above - Various coverings by Jean-Francois Vanheeghe.

Facing - Intricate macrame owl by Joaquim Paulo Escudeiro

Overleaf - Cruciform Turk's head candelabra by Harold Scott.

Stone pillar from the cloister of a former hospital of Santa Cruz in Toledo (photo - Jane Kennedy)



Above - Boat mat made from Royal Blue 3 lay 16mm polyester. Mat size 58 x 68 cm.
Sewn around bights and spliced and sewn.
Rus Hammond - Australia
Facing - 31 strand pentalpha bellrope by Guild President, Jeff Wyatt

A Systematic Approach to the Regular Turk's-head - A Direct Method

by Jim Caswell

This article describes the method I have developed and use for constructing regular Turk's-heads. I have not seen this approach described before and believe it to be new and different. If it is not (and little is these days) then my only defence is that it was arrived at independently and in complete innocence.

This is a direct method based on the application of a basic set of properties and relationships that I have identified as common to all regular Turk's-heads, regardless of the number of Leads or Bights involved. Once these properties and relationships are understood, any size Turk's-head can be tackled directly, without need of instruction, diagram, template or recipe of any kind.

As with most knots, the process is a lot harder to describe than to demonstrate. Bear with me; once you understand the few basic principles described you will find Turk's-heads of any dimension hold no fear at all.

The method is based on the use of a mandrel and the following definitions and conventions have been adopted: -

- A "regular Turk's-heads" is being defined as a cylindrical knot woven in a single pass from a single strand in the classical under/over pattern.
- Notational convention is LxB where "L" is number of Leads and "B" is number of Bights (E.g. 5x7 refers to a "5-Lead by 7-Bight" knot. 8x7 is an "8-Lead by 7-Bight" knot etc).
- Mandrel is held upright, starting point is at top and strand is worked left to right (If you are used to working in a different orientation you should not find it hard to translate instructions to suit).

Essentially there are two problems to solve. The first is establishing the "strand path" (I.e. The sequence/order of Bights (pins) visited from start to return to start). The second is getting the "unders and overs" in the correct sequence. These are quite independent issues and it is easier to follow the process if each is addressed separately.

The Strand Path

The strand path problem turns out to be deceptively simple. The only concept that needs to be defined is what I call the "Lead increment". This is the distance the strand progresses each pass across the knot (mandrel) (See Fig.1).

The Lead increment is in fact a dependent variable of the number of Leads and quite independent of the number of Bights. When expressed in terms of "Bight spaces" (see Fig.1) the Lead increment is always equal to half the number of Leads. It was the discovery and proof of this relationship that resulted in my "AHA! I've got it!" experience and development of this

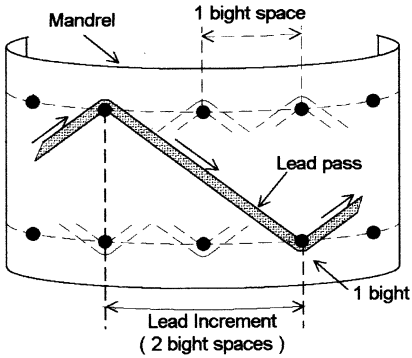


Figure 1

generalised method. I will not distract you with the details of the proof at this time.

An unexpected (but obvious) aspect of this relationship is that, when the number of Leads is "even", the Lead increment is a whole number (E.g. 8xB, 10xB, 16xB knots will have increment values of 4, 5 and 8 respectively) but, when the number of Leads is "odd", the Lead increment contains a 1/2 fraction (E.g. 7xB, 9xB, 15xB knots will have increment values of 31/2, 41/2 and 71/2 respectively). The secret to managing this aspect is in the set-up of the mandrel. Where the number of Leads is even the bottom pins are located opposite the top pins but where the number of Leads is odd, the lower pins are staggered (I.e. offset) from the upper pins (See Fig. 2).

Figure 2 shows mandrels set up for 5-Bight knots. Note the lower pin positioning and numbering for the two cases. Note also that the number of Leads to be worked is separate and independent from the number of Bights and, as such, Fig.2 mandrels are common for all 5-Bight knots regardless of

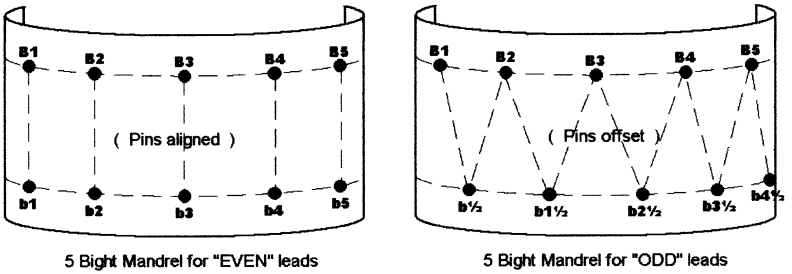


Figure 2

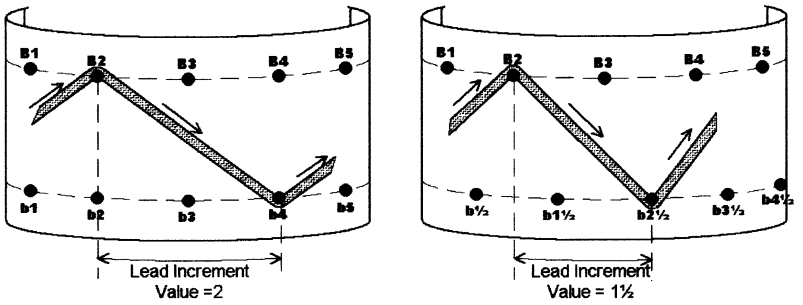


Figure 3

number of Leads. The pin numbering is for illustration only and not really necessary in practice. The use of "uppercase B" for upper Bights and "lowercase b" for lower Bights is whimsical but meaningful.

Figure 3 illustrates the Bight space concept showing the importance of pin placement to accommodate the 1/2 space unit for odd Leads. The even Lead example will result in a 4x5 knot (4÷2 = 2). The odd Lead example will result in a 3x5 knot (3÷2 = 11/2).

Given the "Lead increment" property, establishing the "strand path" is a relatively simple matter summarised in the following steps (Ignore the "under" and "overs" for now and refer to Fig's. 4a and 4b for example): -

1. Decide knot parameters to be worked. Verify there is no common factor of the number of Leads and the number of Bights (I.e. the two numbers must be prime to each other).

2. Establish Lead increment as number of Leads divided by 2.

3. Insert one pin for each Bight (evenly spaced) around top of mandrel (See Fig. 2).

4. a) If number of Leads being worked is even; insert lower pins (one for each Bight) directly beneath upper pins (see Fig.2a).

b) If number of Leads being worked is odd; insert lower pins staggered from upper pins (see Fig.2b).

5. Attach strand to start pin at top of mandrel (Note: All steps are relative to previous step so, any pin will do).

6. Take strand directly down (perpendicular) to bottom pins. Count, to the right, a number of Bight spaces equal to the Lead increment. Position strand below and around pin at this location. If the Lead increment is greater than the number of Bights being worked then continue to count past the start pin forming one or more (as necessary) complete turns about the mandrel. (Note that, by offsetting the lower pins for Odd Leads, the half Bight space is accommodated automatically).

7. Take strand directly up (perpendicular) to top pins. Count, to right, a number of Bight spaces equal to the Lead increment. Position strand above and around pin at this location.

8. Repeat steps 6 & 7 until strand returns to start pin to complete strand path (In practice, you will find that after a very few Leads have been laid the pattern will be well established and you can "follow the leader" to the end).

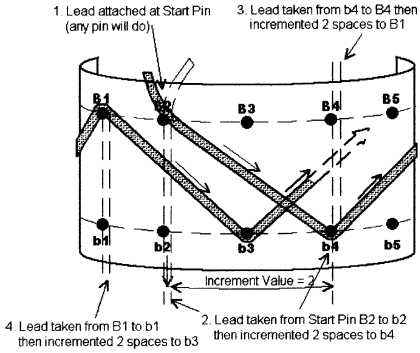


Figure 4a (4x5)

While not necessary to complete the strand path process ignoring the "under and overs", I find this is a very useful exercise that not only checks the Bight pins are correctly positioned, it also validates the number of Leads and Bights (I.e. there is no common factor and the knot "works") and, is a simple means of measuring the length of strand that will be needed

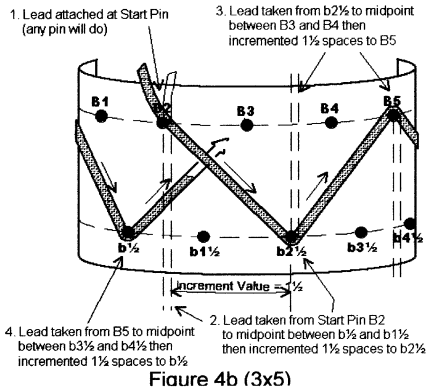


Figure 4b (3x5)

The second problem (under and overs) also turns out to be relatively simple and able to be generalised for all cases.

The "Under and Overs"

This issue is greatly simplified by reducing the crossing patterns to their basic elements. There are only two possible crossing types, which I call "S" and "Z" (see Fig. 5) for obvious reason. The "under" or "over" decision is a very simple deduction once the crossing type has been identified.

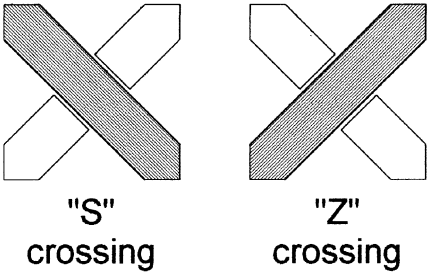


Figure 5

The crossing type is in fact a constant relative to the parity (odd or even) of the number of Bight spaces separating (subtended by) the two crossing strands at the top of the mandrel. For example, the crossing point between strands to/ from B2 and B4 at Figure 6, is type "Z" and is subtended by two spaces (B2 to B4). It can readily be demonstrated that, where one crossing of type "Z" is subtended by an even number of Bight spaces, ALL crossings subtended by an even number of spaces will be type "Z" (conversely, ALL crossings subtended by an odd number of spaces will be type "S").

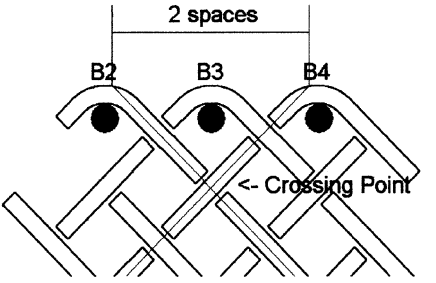


Figure 6

That sounds a lot more complicated than it actually is but it is this relationship that allows the crossing type ("S" or "Z") for any crossing to be readily established. The basic decision process is (I have adopted as my standard that Odd's are "S" Evens are "Z"): -

When the active strand encounters a passive strand (I.e. a strand that has already been laid), count the number of Bight spaces separating the two strands at their supporting Bights at the top of the mandrel: -

- If the number of Bight spaces is odd then the crossing will be type "S".
- If the number of Bight spaces is even then the crossing will be type "Z".
- The following examples (see Figure 7) illustrate this concept.

Example 1 (Number of Leads is even): - At Fig.7a the active strand b3-B5 crosses the passive strand B2-b4 at

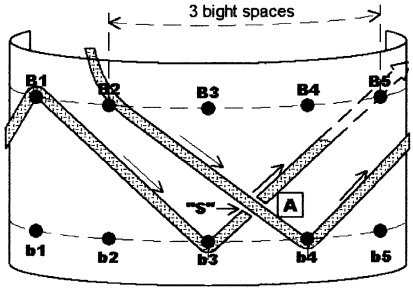


Figure 7a (4x5)

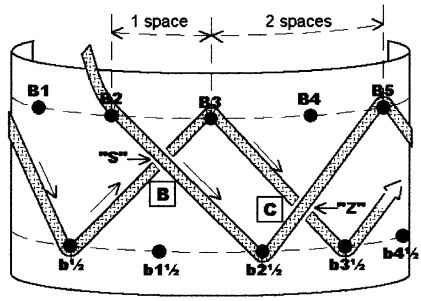


Figure 7b (3x5)

intersection A. The Bight space separation for this intersection is Odd (3 spaces - B2 to B5) therefore crossing is type "S" (active strand is ascending so strand is under).

Example 2 (Number of Leads is odd): - At Fig 7b the strand b1/2-B3 crosses strand B2-b21/2 at intersection B. The Bight space separation for this intersection is Odd (1 space - B2 to B3) therefore crossing is type S (active strand is ascending so strand is under).

Example 3 (Number of Leads is odd): - At Fig 7b the strand B3-b31/2 crosses strand b21/2-B5 at intersection C. The Bight space separation for this intersection is Even (2 spaces - B3 to B5) therefore crossing is type "Z" (active strand is descending so strand is under).

That's it! But don't be put off by how complicated it all seems. In practice the process is actually quite straightforward and can be summarised as the following basic steps: -

1. Decide on size of knot and check "no common factors".

2. Set up mandrel with one pin per Bight (top and bottom).

- Where number of Leads is "even" insert pins "opposite"

- Where number of Leads is "odd" insert pins "staggered"

3. Attach strand at top of mandrel (any pin).

4. Work strand around mandrel (alternating top to bottom to top etc.) migrating forward at each pass, a number of Bight spaces equal to half the number of Leads.

5. Where an existing strand is encountered, count number of Bight spaces separating the supporting Bights of the active and the passive strand at top of mandrel: -

-where count is odd crossing is type "S" ("Over" if descending. "Under" if ascending)

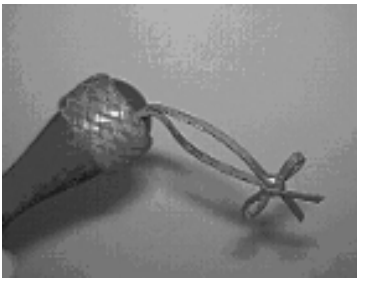
-where count is even crossing is type "Z" ("Under" if descending. "Over" if ascending)

6. Continue till strand returns to start pin to complete knot.

That is really all there is too it and, in practice, you will find that after a very few strand passes have been completed you can usually simply work in parallel with strands already laid.

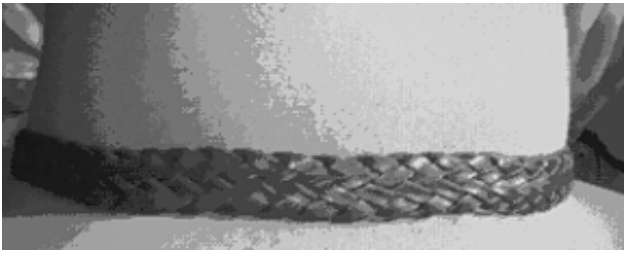
Using this procedure I have worked Turk's-head as simple as 4x5 and as complex as 17x2 (around a pencil for

Trimming Knife handle (25 x 7)

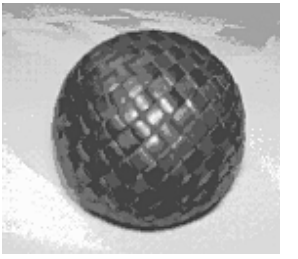


Fid Loop (10 x 9) with lanyard knot

fun) and 64x7. The extended Turk's-head's make excellent covering knots for all sorts of projects. The photos show a couple of examples I have completed using this technique: -
Enjoy!



Hat Band (7 x 64 with herringbone weave)



Stress Ball 55cm diam (25 x 24 spherical TH)

'Today We Have Naming Of Parts...'

by Geoffrey Budworth

That small vertical cleft or dimple on the upper lip below your nose - and mine - is called the 'flicrum'. It's a word that's rarely needed; but, when it is, nothing else will do. Knottology sadly lacks a comprehensive anatomical vocabulary, I was reminded recently, when a book illustrator queried the diamond space in my sketch of a reef knot and wondered if he should eliminate it.
'No,' I said. 'It's a feature of all reef knots.'
'What's it called?' he asked.
'I don't know,' I admitted.
What a pity, because something that neat and nice ought to have its own name. Perhaps a *KM* reader will come up with one.

What is this?

Branch Lines

Essex Branch

The Essex Branch played host to the Guild's half yearly meeting on the 9th October 2004 when about 68 members converged on the Motorboat Museum in Pitsea. They were greeted by the colourful character of Tuffv Turner and after signing in were guided into the main museum area.

The displays were mainly set up on the upper floor of the museum with an overspill located on the ground floor. Among notable displays were those of Barry Brown with exquisite examples of chest beckets, the knotted frames by Bernard Cutbush and more knotted frames from Jeff Wyatt surrounding the excellent pyrography illustrations by Lesley Wyatt. Among the displays and demonstrations was rope making with Charlie Smith and 'Scooby Doo' demonstrated by Willeke van der Ham, an item from my long forgotten past. To all who displayed and demonstrated, a big thank you. After the business meeting and lunch the chairman of the council, Sandra Hillier, visited us and spent an enjoyable afternoon talking to members and even being persuaded to get into a rope making harness for a photograph for the local paper. We also had representatives from hospital television taking video footage for hospital patients to view. Thanks to Dennis Hodges for arranging this. After the day's event, 47 members assembled at the Innkeepers Lodge, formally the Thomas Kemble, for an excellent meal where a good time was had by all. In conclusion I would like to thank the museum staff for all their hard work and co-operation to make the day a success in particular Julie Graham for her unstinting support and Steve Prewer for arranging the visit by the chairman of the council. My thanks also to my wife Dorothy for keeping us supplied with tea and coffee all day and to Sylvia Harding for selling the raffle tickets. Finally thanks to my team for their support and hard work in particular Chris Selfe our press officer for arranging newspaper coverage and the BBC Radio Essex interview.

I had few complaints but among those that I did get was lack of tables and no accommodation at the venue.

First: tables. I had requests for eight tables and I had access to 20. If we ran out of tables it was because some people who took them hadn't booked them. Please, in future make sure you book your tables. Be fair to the organisers.

Secondly: accommodation. It was well noted in *Knotting Matters* that accommodation was available in bunk rooms at the park providing we had at least 20 applications to make it a viable option. We had only three requests for accommodation therefore it was a no go.

Thanks to everyone for attending the meeting and I hope you enjoyed the day. It was hard work but in the end worthwhile.

Don Woods.

Pacific Americas Branch

Here in the Pacific Northwest we had a wonderful turn out and excellent public exposure at the Commercial Fishermen's Fall Festival in Ballard Washington, held on September 11, this year. This is an annual charity event, held on the waterfront, which fattens a fund for the widow's and orphans of the fleet. The venue is "salty" and we were glad we were invited back this year. It is a one day event with between 10K and 15K visitors. This year our secretary, Patrick Ducy, did all the leg work so when I arrived there was little to do but set up

my display tables. Soon Patrick arrived. Maggie and Doug Machado drove up from Oregon as did Clint Funk. Carol Wong and her husband came down from Canada. Our collective display was impressive. There was never a quiet moment. Clint tended his training table, which always had young and old working at this interactive knot board. Maggie and Carol demonstrated and taught their skills. There was always a cluster of visitors learning Chinese knotting, split ply braiding and breast plate making. Patrick and I worked non-stop, using his design for a four bight cruciform Turk's head knot, the details of which we wish to present for a future article in KM. We finished all the "goz-over-goz-under" but didn't get it faired and tight. What's the big deal? Well, we used 100ft. of hawser laid 7/8in. manila line to complete a two ply knot. All members present pitched in and the result was impressive. It was a crowd catcher. Our flying hands, the singing rope and flashing marlinespikes and probing fids got the audience's attention. Doug was our photographer and got some good snaps. In an eye-blink the day was over and we were packed off toward home.

While we were at the FFF fellow members, Dennis Armstrong and Brion Toss, were plying their trade at the three day Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival (Brion's home port). Since FFF was a single day I managed to trek to PT on Sunday. It was great, getting to see the lovely boats, visit old friends, give away a knot or two and watch in awe as the show closed and the fleet sail off into the sunset.

On the same weekend in Southern California our PAB members held forth at the Tall Ship's Festival. I hope Lindsey and others present will add a note about their event.

I have found that presiding over such a widely separaated group is a challenge. As an example, Ballard is about half way between Maggie and Carol, who live 390 miles apart. I have 120 miles to travel to be there, return home to travel another 120 miles to be in Port Townsend. We, in Washington , are separated by 1500 miles from our friends in Southern California. Many members are spread along the way. The E-mail is helping us keep in touch. Our news letter *Knot News,* edited by Joe Schmidbauer, reaches all of our members (contributions from all quarters are most welcome). As yet I've not been sucesssful in setting up our monthly meetings on-line but I believe that too will come with time. One last line, not from the PAB but from Roy Chapman... My "Cover the End" in issue 84 of KM implied that it was original. At the time that is what I believed. It is actually ABOK #2222. I have extended it to great lengths by working on a mandrel. It is wonderful for covering tool handles and all sorts of leavers, but I am (once again) humbled.

Roy Chapman

September Meeting of PAB in S. California

Our September meeting of the group that meets in San Pedro, California, went well, attended by our staunch supporters (in the order I remember them sitting at the table) Charlie Bell, Joe Soanes, Joe Schmidbauer, Jose Hernandez-Juviel, Lily Morales, Joe Smolen and Jimmy Ray Williams, together with a guest (Marian?) who left early. It was Joe Smolen's turn to "Show and Tell" so he pulled out his samples of the fenders that

he had made using each of several cords and methods. The fenders all started out as a length of three-strand line that was then seized together in the middle and a crown knot put in place at the junction of the separated strands. Joe followed Des Pawson's method outlined in his latest and greatest "Projects" book; modified to include what Joe felt was an improvement that helped him to make the fender tighter. Suggestions from the group included tucking the ends up into the fender when complete using a hollow fid or other suitable tool. Thanks for all of your excellent efforts Joe!

Jose announced that a donation had been received from Maggie in Oregon of a book by Linda Hendrickson titled *Single-Course Oblique Twining.* This booklet explains in some great detail the methods Linda used to achieve a very attractive look in what this simple author might refer to as split-ply braiding, although I feel that I am not doing Linda any merit by such a simplistic statement. We are very grateful to Maggie and to Linda. Other donations include a copy of Algrove Publishing's *Manual of Seamanship for Boys and Seamen of the Royal Navy*, 1904, and *Spars and Rigging from Nautical Routine*, 1849 by John McLeod Murphy and WN Jeffers. Both of these last were made by Jose. Thanks Jose!

Joe Schmidbauer gave us all a very exciting and interesting account of his visit to a dude ranch in Wyoming, including quite vivid explanations (thankfully no photos!) of young bulls being branded and castrated. Joe also told us that he was honoured with a visit to the *Spirit of New Jersey*, a new military plane, through his workplace. Joe was born and raised in New Jersey, so his boss thought it would be good for Joe to be present at the rollout of the plane. Joe said that it was quite the honour for him to be selected.

A discussion of the possibility of having a virtual meeting took place with several internet-savvy cognoscenti present and offering their own suggestions for such an event. The original suggestion came from Roy Chapman at the June AGM, because Roy wanted to be more inclusive in any group discussions, which our group heartily endorses. Our discussions hovered around the subject of authoring or scripting such a meeting by e-mail or any other such Instant Messaging system. The question arose as to what kind of "censorship" could be expected of any discussions and how that could not be monitored other than by telephone. Telephone calls with multiple persons around a speakerphone would necessitate a telephone connection being available, as would an Internet connection of any kind. Several questions arose as to the usefulness of a "live" connection of this sort that, logistically, would not produce much more than static! Your thoughts?

Our discussions for the evening rounded out with an agreement to meet again in October, at which time our pending visit to the Autumn Sea Fair at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium would take place - more to come!

Our meeting went well at Cabrillo, but we had a prior invitation issued by the Los Angeles Maritime Institute (LAMI) with whom we have worked many times in the past, to be present at a relatively short-notice Tallships event in the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, at Ports o'Call. We agreed and, to our delight, we got covered accommodation, with a free banner provided by the Port of LA.

Joe Soanes, Tom Mortell, Jimmy Ray Williams, Joe Schmidbauer, Jose Hernandez-Juviel and I, peopled the station for the weekend, and then Jimmy and Tom both operated the station at the Aquarium the following weekend at the Cabrillo Sea Fair! Whew! It makes my head spin just to think of the exposure! Because of our co-operation, we have been invited to appear at the Tallships event in Los Angeles in September/ October, 2005, and to show off our talents at the Cabrillo Aquarium Annual Dinner for 400 people this coming May 2005! Not bad for a weekend's work, but not possible without the fabulous dedication of Tom, Jimmy, Joe and all else that helped bring it all together. Now, what's in the upcoming months? Our calendar is now printed for your edification in this month's KM as well as in our own KN. See you at the rope's end!

Lindsey Philpott

New Zealand

I had a wonderful letter from New Zealand Guild member, Forrest McDougall, which I want to share with Guild members. In it Forrest tells me about the 'wonderful' (my word, T.F.) work that he is doing promoting the Guild. To me it is an example of the far-flung nature of out organisation. Here is a member, isolated at the top of the South Island of New Zealand, making a great contribution to promoting the Guild.

Forrest lives in the busy port of Picton at the top of the South Island of New Zealand. The district is called Marlborough, which is one of the main winegrowing areas of New Zealand, famous for a number of good wines such as Montana; Daniel le Brun and Hunter's. The main town of the district is Blenheim. Forrest is Bosun on the Cook Strait freighter, the *Kent* and has spent his professional life at sea.

Among the promotions he wrote to me about are: -

1. A press clipping from the *Marlborough Express*, dated August 29th 2003, which features a photograph of Forrest on Wellington's floating crane, the *Hikitia*, the Guild's headquarters in New Zealand. In the photograph, there is a large Guild sign, which I had placed at the jib head some years ago and took down before I came to England. In the article, it explains Forrest's career, talks about the Guild in New Zealand and internationally, and his love of knotting. It then goes on to promote...

2. Hunter's Garden Marlborough...As explained above, Hunter's wines are a major producer of good wines and their Garden party is a huge event, held each year. Forrest was one of the major presenters at the 2003 show. This would not have been easy for Forrest to organise and I am willing to bet that it cost him a lot of money to put on his display, where the participants could try their hand at knot tying; splicing and net making, along with viewing a display of Forrest's work.

3. Also included in the letter was an article in the prestigious: *Boating New Zealand* dated June 2004, pages 10 and 11. New Zealand has an enormous coastline and boating in all its forms has more participants than rugby. You may remember that New Zealand held the America' cup twice recently. This magazine has wide distribution in New Zealand. The article again features a

photograph of Forrest and has a bye line: - "Top Knotter - Bitter Ends, Bends, Bights and Hitches are Forrest McDougall's work tools at sea and his pleasure ashore." It explains the Guild Internationally and although it is in error in stating that the New Zealand membership is 120, (its less than 20), the article, never-the-less is a great promotion for all of us.

4. Forrest goes on in the article to lament the fact that ..." Young people (the present young generation of seamen) just don't want to learn seafaring skills; they'd rather be down in their cabin watching a video. Its sad because my generation are the last generation of seafarers who have the skills to pass on to others, but the environment these days just isn't conducive to teaching"... The article concludes with information about Ashley, Forrest's love of cordage and information about his own yacht, a Victor40, which the previous owners, a New Zealand couple, sailed out from the UK. Forrest informs me that he has retained the vessel's port of registration, Maldon.

5. An article in *The Seaport News* dated, 9th July 2004. This is the journal of Forrest's homeport Picton. In the article there is publicity of a six-week course that he and another Guild member, Tony Cooper, ran at Queen Charlotte College. It was part of an Aquaculture course with a local education authority called 'REAP'. In Forrest's letter to me he explains: "I was pleasantly surprised at how keen the students and adults were (16 of them) right through the course and on the fifth night I had them up to standard where they were trying their hand at long-splicing. On the final night we set them the Six Knot Challenge with a prize for the winner. Along with Certificates of Attainment for each student..."

6. The letter also had some photographs of decorative work that Forrest has done including a couple of lovely shields and knotting boards.

I think that we should all congratulate Forrest for continuing his promotion of the Guild and it is a challenge to those of us who may not have been as proactive as this valued member of our organisation.

Tony Fisher

West Country Knotters

It's the last Saturday afternoon in September and once again the members of West Country Knotters meet to play with cord, twine, rope and anything connected with knots. Twelve members and one visitor had a very interesting time as Geoffrey Budworth gave a talk on macramé. He showed us numerous examples of his work, spanning many years of effort and explained how he developed his designs. Many intricate pieces can be produced from a relatively small number of knots.

Talking of Geoffrey, we are a little slow off the mark in reporting it but we are absolutely delighted, and honoured, to welcome the IGKT co-founder into Branch membership following his relocation to Wiltshire. It is an honour because he could have limited his participation at branch level to the Solent Branch, which is closer to home. But no! We are in the frame as well, and very grateful for it!

Geoffrey's arrival does present us with the extra challenge of wanting to strive

even harder to work for the ideals and aims for the IGKT that he set when founding the Guild with Des Pawson. As all those who know Geoffrey will appreciate, his wisdom, knowledge and willingness to help and contribute (all delivered modestly from 'the back benches'), are a great asset and stimulus. Welcome Geoffrey!

A decision was taken at the September meeting to move our AGM from our normal date of the last Saturday in March to the first Saturday in April so that members could, if they wished, visit our friends in France who also hold their AGM in March.

One of the aims of our get togethers is to learn and exchange information on our hobby. Many suggestions on how this may be achieved were mooted. They included giving a five minute talk on favourite knot book, lanyard tying and small group teaching sessions.

Our next two meetings will be on the 27th of November 2004 and the 29th of January 2005 at the Almondsbury Scout HQ at 14:00hrs. (last Saturday in each month)

'Tug' Shipp

IGKT-NAB New England Region

I would like to take a moment to update everyone on the status of the New England Region of the IGKT-NAB, also known as *Igitnabner*.

We had our first meeting on March 21st in Quincy, MA at the home of one of our members (Many thanks to Don Timmins for his hospitality). We had 14 people in attendance. It was a great "kick-off" meeting and we tied a Rosebud Button pin. On April 18th, we had a meeting on Turk's heads with 10 in attendance and on May 23rd we had a presentation on "Knot Structure and Stability" (Thank you Dick Chisholm for the presentation) and 11 showed up for that meeting. June 20th was a small meeting (it was Father's Day) with only 3 in attendance and on July 17th and 18th, we worked the Salem Maritime Festival and 8 of the group helped. The North American Branch worked the Wooden Boat Show the following weekend, July 23rd through July 25th and we even saw 6 of our group there..!!

Currently, we are building our "Knotboard" and are looking forward to working many festivals yet this summer. We are interested in contacting as many fellow "knotheads" in New England as possible to help to promote the Guild and its principles. If you are interested, live in ME, NH, VT, MA, CT or RI and are not on my mailing list, please contact me via email and I will add you to the list.

We are planning on having monthly meetings and the attendance so far has been great. Many maritime museums in the area are interested in our participation, so we have plenty of venues in which to promote our craft..!!! I will try to plan more than 1 month in advance and post our meeting times regularly on YAHOO and on the NAB Website.

Steve Coates

Postbag

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

25th Birthday

As you may be well aware, the 25th birthday of the IGKT is on the horizon. I believe that we should not miss this opportunity to celebrate the Guild's achievements.

On the 20th birthday, the Hampshire branch, on behalf of the Guild hosted a week of knot tying activities, supported by many members from around the world. Again the Hampshire branch has offered to host another event.

But, for all those members unable to travel to Fareham, I would like to invite a minimum of 25 groups from around the world to host a 'local' activity, to celebrate a quarter of a century of knot tying for the Guild.

I think it would be fitting to invite the participating groups to send 25 knots to 25 other groups. These knots could be used as part of a local display. Each participating group could book a date, so that somewhere in the world, an official knot tying activity would be taking place. I would also like to invite these groups to submit a design of a poster to support the 25-year/quarter century celebrations.

We are also looking to produce a membership application form/leaflet to run throughout the year. If you have any ideas, let me know.

The objectives of this year of knot tying is to bring together as many members as possible even if you think you are by yourself, get involved. By asking other groups to tie 25 knots you can receive enough examples to organise a display that will enforce our International connections.

If you have any ideas for a poster to support 2K7 please submit your designs.

What I want you to do is register your dates and your support for this idea with me as soon as possible.

Dave Walker
Chair of the Council

Fly Tying

I would like to learn how to tie flies for fly-fishing. So if there is anyone in the Guild who can help me, or can advise me on a good book to learn from I would appreciate that.

John Cottrell
Derby, UK

Wine Lovers Corks

Some time after submitting my article on wine corks, we took a cruise to Alaska. At one stop I visited several vendors who were selling items to tourists. One vendor had an assortment of wine bottle stoppers. He gave me the address of the supplier that supplied the material he was using. I ordered from this supplier and developed a stopper my

way. The major difference is that the cork is not used. As you probably know, cork absorbs wine. What most people do not realise is the fact that absorbed wine can spoil, become tainted. A tainted cork can contaminate a bottle of wine.

From this supplier I purchased a silicone stopper and a dowel rod that has been sized to fit into the stopper. I also purchase 1¼ in. wooded doll heads from a local craft supplier. I drill the doll head and fit the other end of the doweled rod into the doll head. Obviously the dowel is glued. The doll head is covered in Ashley's #2217. This is painted with B Moors Stays Clear.

I am of the opinion that I took my advise and improved the design.

The silicone and dowel was purchased from Craft Suppliers USA 1287 E 1120 S Provo, UT 84606.

Note the silicone is ribbed and will fit most if not all wine bottles that use a cork.

Bill Smothers
Peoria, IL, USA

Hanson Knot

I am sure I shall not be the first, or indeed, the last, to point out the error in the "Hanson twin loops, fixed" knot No.13 on page 21 of *Knotting Matters* Issue 84 of September 2004.

John Constable CBE
Pershore, UK

In Memoriam

Twice this year I have been present during proceedings to auction or sell the knotty paraphernalia left behind by deceased IGKT members. Apparently we can't take it with us. The first occasion was during the Guild's AGM at Chatham in May, when we bid for John Heapy's ditty bag and tool box (both with contents); and the second was in August, at a meeting of the West Country Knotters, where we distributed the accumulated bits and pieces of Bernard 'Jumper' Collins. On both occasions the money raised was divided between a worthwhile charity and Guild or branch funds.

It seems to me that this is a sensible practice, reminiscent of those sales "at the mast" of departed seamen's effects. Not only does it reclaim and recycle usable items, but it brings their late owners to mind once again. I wish we were all immortal, but we are not; and so I hope that, as the opportunity from time to time inevitably occurs, we might continue to commemorate one another's passing in this practical way.

Geoffrey Budworth
Salisbury, UK

Shoe Laces?

Is there any information regarding people of different professions preferring specific types of knots or, different types of laces?

My area of interest is the Victorian England period. However, any and all information addressing the above is greatly appreciate.

Thank you for your help.

Bruce Harris
USA
marxman@comcast.net

The Head Hunter's Ring

It was interesting reading Tug Shipp's article on the "Head Hunter's Ring" of Graumont and Hensel. The ring is of course a 19 lead, 18 bight Turk's head with an over three under three twill-weave.

If any member wishes to make it on a different size former or with a cord that does not fit Tug's diagram then there is a fascinating sequence which will help. Using 18 pins on each side of the former those on the LHS are numbered upwards from one and those on the RHS are lettered similarly from A to R. With the cord starting from 1 move round the former up to J and continue winding using the following sequence in which 'u' indicates a tuck and 'o' a crossover. The pins are in bold for clarity. From J the cord moves to pin 2 crossing under immediately before that pin.

1, **J**, u**2**, u**K**, uu**3**, uu**L**, uuu**4**, uuu**M**, ouuu**5**, ouuu**N**, oouuu**6**, oouuu**O**, ooouuu**7**, ooouuu**P**, uooouuu**8**, uooouuu**Q** etc.

The regularity of the above sequence is readily apparent and in practice the pattern is very easily detected from the previous and adjoining cord. It is a useful characteristic of Turk's heads that where the number of lead and bights adjoin numerically, then so do the cords run side by side as they are laid.

The size of the Turk's head can be reduced or increased and the twill can similarly be varied. The twill need not be uniform across the width of a Turk's head. In starting a Turk's head it is invaluable to remember that starting from peg one on the LHS the cord should always be run to the peg on the RHS which is higher by the number of leads divided by two; any half should be ignored. It helps to set all RHS pins a half space higher for Turk's heads with an odd number of leads as this preserves the 45-degree angle for setting out.

John Constable CBE
Pershore, UK

Knots to the Rescue

I have been using stainless steel hose clamps to stop small leaks in an old ¾in. underground polythene water pipe. The cost of countless clamps is beginning to add up so I considered using constrictor knots instead.

Now, this idea is nothing new and the tightening of these knots is well described in Brian Toss's *Riggers Apprentice*. Here he ties toggles (handles) to the cord and a few feet from the ends and uses feet, hands and back muscles to achieve the desired tightness.

Problem is - how to tighten these knots at the bottom of a 2 ft. hole or using only a short piece of cord.

The following worked well for me.

- Tie a single, double (or triple?) constrictor with the strongest possible non-elastic cord.
- Tie the working ends together as close as possible to the constrictor knot using a surgeons knot.
- Push the pointed nose of circlip pliers into the hole between the knots. Squeeze the handles together - enlarge the hole - push the nose in further and squeeze again. Leverage is increased each time. Larger pliers may be used as the hole gets bigger or the hole may be made smaller by tying half hitches back between the two knots with the working ends.

- Finally cut off the surgeons knot.

This works a treat and exerts enormous constrictive pressure on the pipe. (The triple constrictor using slippery polyester cord appears to exert the greatest force?)

[There are 2 basic types of circlip pliers. We need the ones where the noses move apart when the handles are squeezed together, i.e. opposite to normal pliers.]

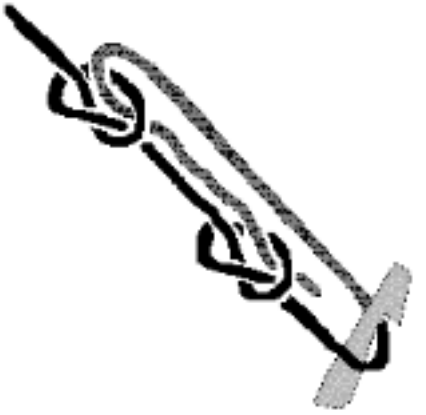
Stephen Wicks
Clare, South Australia.

The Guyline Hitch

Many years ago, when I first joined Scouting in Malta in the early 50's with 1st Sliema Group, one of my main hobbies was knotting. My trade was a ship's rigger and sailmaker anyway and I worked on many yachts, boats and some tall ships, also one in Bristol docks which was used in the original film *Treasure Island*, to repair a broken topmast rig.

Having Ashley's *Book of Knots* as my main right hand in my work, I was surprised to note the local Scouts in Malta using a knot on their ex-army tents which I had not seen before, and which they used instead of wooden runners on guy ropes. The tents we had were all ex-army surplus with many bits missing. What they called the guyline hitch was not to be found in Ashley or any other book in my possession.

When I settled in England in 1974 I passed on the use of this knot to the Scouting circle here and no-one I spoke to had ever seen it used. I run a website



for Scouts here and some years ago dedicated a page to the knot .

I now note that several other websites have picked it up and passed it on, for which I am very grateful. I have even seen one on a Chinese website. Have a look at the link below.

http://www.shurdington.org/Scouts/GuylineHitch.htm

I thought you might be able to spread it round via your fantastic knotting website. I still teach knotting, splicing and macramé in Scouting circles here and assist at an annual pioneering weekend in Gloucestershire where we build some great projects with just spars and rope.

Keep up the good work.

Paul Calleja-Gera
15th Cheltenham (Shurdington) Scouts, UK

Siberian Knot

I was recently watching one of the latest in a series of survival programmes on BBC2 presented by Ray Mears and was intrigued by a knot that he used when securing his hammock to tree

trunks. He used what he referred to as a Siberian knot, and whilst I viewed the demonstration over and over from the video recording, it was difficult to see exactly how it was constructed. The line passed around the tree trunk and he formed what appeared to be a sliding loop which when tightened up against the tree became a non slip knot. However, on the following morning when he was striking camp, the Siberian knot seemed to untie with very little effort. I have looked through Ashley and other books, searched on the internet and cannot find any reference to this particular knot.

I wondered if any other members who may have seen this programme could shed any light on the knot and how it is tied, and also if there is any reference to it in Ashley that I may have missed.

John Woosey
Merseyside, UK

The Bollard Loop

Let me further the discussion of the "Bollard loopknot" or "Swedish Bowline" begun by Messrs Smit, Andersson, Budworth, & Waller in KM83 p33.

Geoffrey writes that what is shown is "a Single Carrick Loop", but what "Single Carrick" is that? Ashley doesn't have it (bend, or loop). Reportedly, it is presented in Ham Gerber's book: does Gerber also show the bend from which it's derived, or cite it?

The loop isn't new to Gerber, though. In that imaginary world of "Hansel & Grettel" *(Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework),* one can find many strange things, and sometimes something of real use. This very loopknot is presented, although in ambiguity all too typical of G&H. It is shown without hint of loading (left, right, both, or neither end!) on Plate 28 figs. 94/95 (which are mirror images), p70. In this dubious world it's called The Japanese Single Carrick. Of course, G&H have nothing to say about its purpose or history (or whether they dreamed it up to boost their knots count). And they show the corresponding bend, p27 Plate 6 fig. 136, "Single or Open Carrick bend".

But I'm previously familiar with this loopknot, and its nearest cognate (where the end is tucked out on the other side of itself - away from the eye vs. towards it) from some small fishing-pot bridles. Perhaps even one bridle had both forms. I deduce that the knot is preferred for two reasons, one of which is contrary to what is exhibited and liked for the bollard loop setting. It can, like the bowline, be tied after seizing the eye - an important quality hard to find, and it will jam in some materials (unlike the bowline). In the case of the pot bridle, it is important for the knot to stay tied as the pot lies in some current and with some disturbance in settling, perhaps, at the sea floor. Fisherman commonly use stainless steel "hog rings" for securing ends, or in the case of laid rope tuck an end through the lay. In polypropylene rope of a firm lay, this knot will hardly hold at all, for jamming; but in nylon kernmantle rope of diamond braided sheath, which has some better compression deformation, the knot can be jammed, especially after new slickness wears off.

And I've seen the similar form described above also in a trawler's mooring line, with the end nicely seized to the standing part (and I think I saw one instance with the end tucked into the standing part's lay). In this knot, all parts that enter it when aligned with the axis of tension make right-angle turns. The knot is also symmetric. And, if one were to load the end in opposition to the standing part, or to ring-load the eye (end and standing part unloaded), the knot would be the whatnot (#1406); loaded qua bend, it is the granny (#1405/1442).

I say that Ashley doesn't show this knot, but his #1445 has the structure if one loads the upper LEFT end vice the upper right. And note that this makes for some interesting bends, both jamming and not, depending on dressing and setting. (Ashley's images are confusingly similar - which he wanted, for comparison, though it hides the differences. In the Bollard loop knots, each component is a "loop" (a crossed bight), and each component's line enters AND exits through the other's loop. So, one can quickly discard those images where one part simply lies ACROSS a loop (entering only in the manner of a bight - in and back out), as for the (full) Carrick Bend. Note also that, contrary to the bowline, the end enters the standing part's loop from the side opposite the standing part; #577 can be quickly dismissed by seeing no such orientation.

Elbert Waller is misled by the name "Carrick loop" and #1033. What Geoffrey meant was some loop derivation from single Carrick bends as presented by Ashley. But Elbert makes a good observation about the result of slipping the knot.

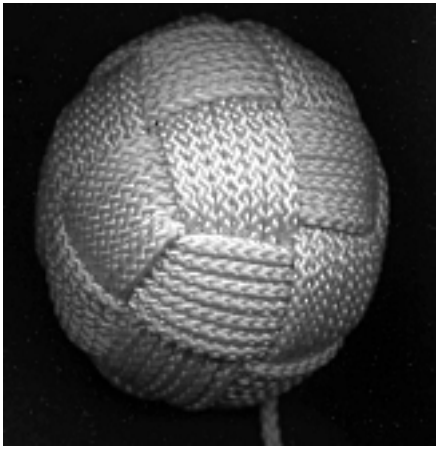
One thing I must remark at. Ashley has done much for knotting, but he also has some outright nonsense, and his unfortunate assertion (ABOK #77-9) that "a knot is never 'nearly right'; it is either exactly right or it is hopelessly wrong" has become a dogma for some at the expense of thinking! (Has some edition of Ashley really put this on some "first page", as Elbert says?) For starters, most knots are not exactly specified. Common examples are the figure eight loopknot and bend, popular for users of kernmantle ropes. The two versions of bollard loopknots I gave above, the so-called left-handed/Cowboy and common bowlines and the concordant vs. discordant forms of the fisherman's knot (c.f. Geoffrey's KM75 p36 query "The Fisherman's Knot Anomaly"). These all show knots that can result from being not "exactly right" yet which are far from being "hopelessly wrong" - at least as judged by usage.

Dan Lehman
Falls Church, Virginia, USA

A Monkey's Uncle?

In KM84 Ken Yalden addressed the question put by Thomas Simpson in KM82, concerning a knot the latter called a 'Double Monkey's Fist'.

In the true spirit of the IGKT, Ken decided to resolve the matter, not with talk but with action. With exemplary perseverance he tied a true double monkey's fist, that is a knot where each of the three cycles was split 50-50. That solved the problem of whether a double monkey's fist was possible, but leaves Thomas Simpson's claim in doubt.



A single monkey's fist has six 'facets'. If each of those facets is split twice (once in each direction) you should have 24 facets on the doubled knot. Looking at the picture of Ken's knot you can see that there are four facets (roughly) in the middle and the edges of another eight on the periphery. As we are looking at half of the knot, it's a safe bet that the other 12 facets are on the dark side.

Now look at Thomas Simpson's knot. You can see four facets in the middle, but barely four edges on the periphery. It would be hard to expect the missing 16 facets to be crowded onto the other side. Although this is a handsome knot I don't think it is a true double monkey's fist. My guess is that it is a 4-bight, 3-lead Turk's head and that it has but eight facets.

As a tribute to Ken's endeavour, and to demonstrate that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery here is a double monkey's fist I've just completed.

Tony Doran
Woking, Surrey, UK

How long is a piece of String?

What a stupid question! For the answer is obvious "Always just a tad too short." So goes our experience often, but with time you learn to gauge the length you need. But is there a way of helping the experienced eye?

I came across this tool as a freebee from the motoring organisation I belonged too while living on the Continent. It is a tool for measuring the distance you will travel on a journey. This tool can be used to help work out the length of material you need. If you use a scale of 1:10,000 you will get a number that is fairly straightforwardly the length.

One easy way is to 'measure' a distance of 5 cm drawn by a ruler and then read the gauge. This will enable you to work out the scale fairly well.

But what I want is not the same size as the drawing, I hear you cry. Yes, indeed, for there is always a need to adapt the drawing to what you want. There are two approaches, either draw the knot full size; or scale it. The first is relatively easy, but can be a bit of a faff.

If you want the knot to be twice as big, that is the length and width will be twice, then you just multiply the distance you got above by two - its as simple as that

You will need a bit more of material than you get by measuring it in this way, but it is a good start.

Amund Karner
Aberdeen, Scotland

Knotting Diary

AGM's & 1/2 YEARLY MEETINGS

23rd AGM
13th - 15th May 2005
Beale Park, Pangbourne.
Contact: Ken Nelson
Tel: 07836 722198

Half-Yearly Meeting
8th October 2005
Netherlands
Contact: Willeke van der Ham
Tel: 025 121 3285

BRANCH MEETINGS
West Country Branch
29th January 2005
Almondsbury Scout Hall
Almondsbury, Nr. Bristol
Contact: 'Tug' Shipp
Tel: 01275 847438

East Anglian Branch
9th April 2005
Museum of East Anglian Life
Stowmarket, Suffolk
Contact: John Halifax
Tel:01502 519123

Midlands Branch
14th February & 11th April 2005
The Old Swan (Ma Pardoes), Halesowen Road, Halesowen
Contact Nick Jones
Tel: 01384 377499

SECRETARY:
Nigel Harding
16 Egles Grove,
Uckfield,
Sussex, TN22 2BY
Tel: 01825 760425
E-mail: nigel@nigelharding.demon.co.uk

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EDITOR:
Colin Grundy
115 Upper Eastern Green Lane
Eastern Green,
Coventry CV5 7DJ
Tel: 0794 6841157
E-mail: knotting_matters@btinternet.com

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