

# Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers



Issue 98  
March 2008

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# Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue 98 - March 2008

www.igkt.net

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# Knots from the Mousepad

Technology is once again upon us, this time it's 'Skype'. I'm not sure but I think that it's best described as a telephone based on the Internet. The benefits are it's free, it's easy to use, just download the programme and follow the instructions. If I can use it, so can you. My Skype address is, dave walker 65. Hopefully the Trustees of the Council may be able to use it to cut down on the travelling expenses.

This year the Charity Commission will bring new changes that will affect the Guild. In future we will have to prove/demonstrate public benefit. To do this we need to show how we get the knotting message across to the public. You can help the Council to show "Public Benefit" by sending to me a list of your activities. Who have you spoken to, for example

W.I. groups, Scout Groups, etc. And who you have demonstrated to and what workshops you have organised. It does not need to be complicated, just the basic details we will get in touch with you.

At our last Council meeting, the Trustees thought that we needed to put some more effort in to our website, you can help us. Please send in to our Web Mistress, Glenys Chew, details of all your local events, none of the events will be too small to be included.

At the October Meeting at Quarry Bank, someone left a bag of knotting materials behind, if it's you please get in touch and I will get it in the post for you

*Happy Knotting,*  
Dave Walker.

## Erratum

KM97 must have had a bad day last year. Page 29 - "Tying the Gripper Hitch" with the picture of Warren Messer should appear immediately after page 28 "Tuffy Turner's Idiots Guide". The Knotting Diary on the inside back cover and the back cover appeared from the previous issue (KM96) and not the pages that should have appeared. The production team sincerely apologise to KM readers.



Photo - Frank Brown

Dan Machowski - President Elect

## President's Letter

For those of you who may have been reading my letters since I became President back in 2005, we are now three years older, and this will be my last letter. The Tenure for President is for three years, and when I was invited to take on this role I was informed that it is the custom for the retiring President to bring the name of his successor before the Executive council, and if approved that name is then taken onto the AGM for ratification.

Over the years each President has had his own personnel way of conducting their role as President, which I knew very well from my time as chairman of the Council; in fact the day to day running of our Guild is in the hands of the Chairman, Hon Sec and the Hon Treasurer, with the able support of a competent Council. Therefore with today's various modes of communication distance is no barrier, and as I am planning to put the 'I' into International with our Guild, it makes my choice somewhat easier. Also having popped across 'the pond' just before Christmas to join the IGKT NAB in their Tenth AGM and conference (not to mention topping up with Chinos and shirts whilst the US dollar was having a rest) I am reassured just how really International our family of Knot Tyers has become.

My only dilemma is with the time delay in me passing this letter to the Editor of KM so enabling him to meet his deadlines, and because the date of our next Executive Council meeting has been

delayed by 14 days, putting me the wrong side of my deadline, it may be that by the time we get to the AGM the name of the new President is different to the one in this letter, in which case democracy rules. However, in the meantime I am hoping to name as the next IGKT President Dan Machowski (USA). Dan was the driving force behind the IGKT NAB meeting in South Carolina and moreover he has the support of a sub-branch giving him local assistance, to name two: Skip Dickens and Keith Hudson whom some of you may well remember meeting when they came over to 2K2 and subsequent meetings. Dan is much involved with *The Spirit of South Carolina* which is a Topsail Training Ship project, so will have a non stop supply of young folk to introduce to the skill of knot tying, as well as the public shows these craft draw in. On a personnel note I can only thank the Solent Branch for the support I have been fortunate to receive from them.

So as well as establishing our International credibility I am sure we will have three stimulating years ahead of us, starting with the AGM in May at the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, West Sussex (UK) and then onto a venture into Europe for October's meeting at Fischereimuseum Cuxhaven Germany, with thanks to Karl Bareuther and the German branch.

This just leaves me time to thank you for support given to me during my ten years as Chairman, and more recently my three years as IGKT President. I hope to remain active within the Solent Branch with whatever mischief we can get up too, much like the *Last of the Summer Wine*.

So my last thought to you all is that in May of this year it will only be four years until the IGKT is 30 years old. So, what are we going to do about it?

Yours Aye  
Ken Yalden

## Obituary

# Ron Edwards

Members of IGKT will be very saddened to hear that Ron Edwards - author of the very popular *Australian Traditional Bushcraft* series of books - finally lost his long battle with illness on Saturday 5th January 2008. Ron would be particularly well known to many members through his ten volumes of *Australian Traditional Bushcraft* publications and extensive series of "must have" booklets on leatherwork, plaiting, decorative knotting (particularly Turk's heads) and knotting generally. All beautifully detailed with superb draftmanship and illustrated in Ron's unique artistic style.

Ron's passion for the preservation of Australian bush skills resulted in the foundation of "The Australian Whipmakers and Plaiters Association" in 1985. Ron retained his passion for the Association and remained the driving force, President, Editor and principal contributor to the Association's journal until the end. The Journal of the Association now represents an unparalleled record of, what was, rapidly disappearing bush craft skills, as recorded by what could have been, but for Ron's foresight, the last generation of true bush craftsmen.

Few would also be aware that, in addition to his passionate interest in the preservation of Australian bush skills, Ron Edwards was equally passionate about Australian folklore. He was President of the Australian Folklore Society, Editor of the Australian Folklore Society Journal and had published 12 volumes of *Australian Folk Songs*.

Ron was formally trained in Art, Design and Illustration and an exhibition of his paintings was held at Cairns in 2001.

Among his many achievements were studies in Eastern Calligraphy and Brush Painting and surveys of Aboriginal rock art in North Queensland. Ron had also, for many years, conducted very rewarding Art, Writing and Craft workshops for children in remote aboriginal communities.

Among his many awards were: -

- The Australian Folk Trust Fellowship 1985
- Order of Australia Medal (OAM) 1992
- Advance Australia Foundation Award 1995
- Australian Folk Trust Citation 1997
- Doctorate, *honoris causa*, by Swinburne University, Melbourne 2000

A truly remarkable life and an amazing legacy

*Jim Caswell*

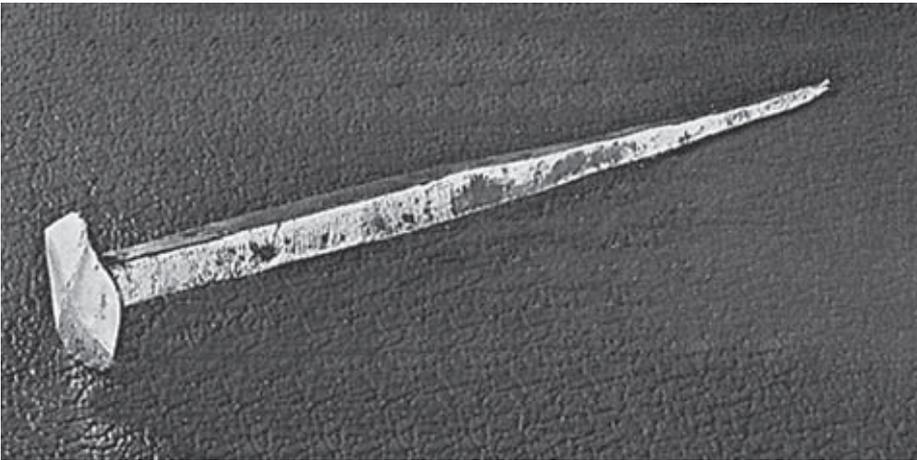
# Regarding Marlinespikes

Louie Bartos

It has always interested me how the word “Marline Spike” or historically Marling-spike, and other “sea words” are used and in what context. For example, the use of “Marlinespike seamanship”, to mean the working of knots and splices. This is possibly correct since the marling-spike and the fid were some of the earliest tools used in working with rope, knots, and splices. But how do we interpret the word marlinespike today? A good example of this appeared in *Knotting Matters*, Issue 96. Terry Ridings, the author, could be correct in stating, “Marlinspike Seamanship represents a form of knot-tying that has been practiced

for hundreds of years.” However, I believe he was misled when he stated that, “the marlinespike, as a tool, is used on wire rigging - wire rigging did not come into common use until late in the 1800’s.” Here is where he and history diverge and a little explanation is needed.

The term marling spike was commonly used in nautical references in the early 17th century. The term “spike” no doubt comes from the tool’s possible beginning as a boat nail. Like a boat nail it was tapered though square and flat on the end. The evolution of the spike went from the flat end to the rounded end and from square taper to a round taper, however its use remained the same. The early marling-spike was used for working small stuff, splicing cordage and tightening knots and splices and the like. Sometime in the early 19th century the size of the spike changed from the small boat nail to a large marlinespike of 12 inches in length. The sailor’s marling-spike evolved to a straight round spike around 10 inches in length with no knob on the head end. A hole through the blunt head



MARY ROSE MUSEUM

*Photo of a boat spike from the excavation of the Mary Rose - 1549. This boat nail or spike has a striking resemblance to a “marling spike” though still retaining its squared sides.*

end of was used to secure it to a lanyard. Exactly when the hole in the after part and the lanyard appeared in the traditional marlinespike is presently a mystery. We do know that it was prior to 1781, since it appeared in a drawing by Romme, Plate 5, *L'Art De La Voilure*

The sailmaker's marlinespike did not have a hole through the head end; this distinguished it from the sailor's marlinespike.

One of the earlier descriptions of the "marling-spike" was written by Capt. John Smith, *A Sea Grammar*, 1627: "The marling spike is but a small peece of iron to splice ropes together, or open the bolt rope when you sew the saile."

He also made note of the fid, but gave no indication as to the shape and size

of either. There was a footnote in the annotated version that related to fids and also had a reference to "a small marline-spike."

Mainwaring, 1620, stated, "a small spike of iron made of purpose for splising together of small roapes; and also to open the Boltroape, when they soaw in the saile."

Boteler<sup>1</sup>, 1688, referring to marling spikes wrote, " They are small Nails of Iron made of purpose for the splising together of small Roapes; as also to open the Boltroapes when they sew them into the Sailes." His comments are similar to those of Mainwaring?

The tools in the following photographs were made by or for the author to illustrate the evolution of these tools.



*These two boat spikes show the possible evolution of the boat spike to the marling spike. This was done by slightly beating down the edges in the fore end of the nail to something that is more comfortable to use and easier the handle. The lower example is a more refined version.*



The illustration on the left shows reproductions of two significant early rope working tools, the "cow horn fid" and the possible evolutionary leap of the marling (marline) spike from the spikes shown in photo 2.

Steel, 1796, *The Art of Sailmaking*, illustrated a pair of sailmakers "marline spikes", having wood handles, straight and curved spikes very typical of old sailmakers spikes even to the present day. The following is a copy from that document regarding the marlinespike.

**MARLING-SPIKE.** A tapered iron pin, either with or without a short wooden handle, bent, towards the point. It is used to open the strands of a rope for splicing, and to strain tight the seizing of clues, &c.



Translation: Marling-Spike. A tapered iron pin, either with or without a short wooden handle, bent towards the point. It is used to open the strands of a rope for splicing, and to strain tight the seizing of clues, &c.

Des Pawson's document, *Marline Spikes, Fids & other related tools*, Monograph #4, Museum of Knots and Sailor's Ropework, 2006, is an excellent and comprehensive treatise on marline spikes and fids.

These historical references show that the Marlinespike is not a tool meant only for or originated in the working of wire and that it has been in use for over 200 years. ☺

<sup>1</sup> Boteler, Nathaniael, 1688, *Colloquia Maritime, or Sea-Dialogues*, London

## **IGKT- Half-Yearly Meeting**

10th-12th October 2008

Fischereimuseum Cuxhaven

Ohloggestraße Halle VII, 27472 Cuxhaven, Germany

The Council of the International Guild of Knot Tyers has invited the German branch membership to host the 2008 October meeting, they in turn would like to invite the membership to attend the meeting.

### **Cuxhaven**

Cuxhaven is home to an important fisherman's wharf and ship registration point for Hamburg as well as the Kiel Canal. Tourism is also of great importance. The city long belonged to Hamburg. The Island of Neuwerk, a Hamburg dependency, is located just northwest of Cuxhaven in the North Sea. The city's symbol is a beacon or lighthouse; the wooden landmark on the mouth of the Elbe marks the boundary between the river and the North Sea and also adorns the city's coat of arms.

The High Sea Fishing Museum is located in the historical fishing industry area just behind the river Elbe. The museum itself offers an inside look to the visitors into the cities more than 100 years old fishing history.

### **Other points of interest:**

Ships Wreck Museum

Seemanns Museum (small private museum)

Seaside "Duhnen"

Shopping area nearby

### **Cuxhaven Fishing Museum weekend details:**

#### **Friday 10th October**

We can start putting the displays together from 12pm. There will be directions to the rooms in the museum. There is ample parking close to the museum. Tables (2 metres) arranged by the museum).

All day "Knots & more": Focus on children & youth.

#### **Saturday 11th October**

Morning meeting in the Museums Lotsenraum (Pilots-Room).

From 0900 Welcome by the President of the IGKT.

Welcome from the German branch and details for the weekend.

Further points of interest set by the Counsel

1000 to 1200 Visiting Cux-Trawl.

Demonstration of Wire Splicing. On completion back to our tables in the museum.

Does anyone wish to have some lunch? There are several good places for lunch in the historical fishing port area close to the museum.

1400 Workshop hosted by Andres Beisswingert, who is a rigger of Gleistein Ropes, Bremen.

Raffle: To be set by the Council

1700: The museum closes

1900: Knot Tyers Dinner "A la carte" (Seafood & All other restaurant)

**Sunday 12th October**

1000: Arrive at the Fishing Museum

A chance to take a stroll around the historical fishing port. See the famous light ship *Elbe I* which once was positioned at the estuary to the river Elbe. Today *Elbe I* serves as a museum ship and it is berthed just a few steps apart of the "Alte Liebe" (Old Love) a place where many emigrants in the 19th Century sailed for a better life in America. Displays will carry on during the day. Everyone knows that you need to get on the road but it would be nice to keep our displays open for as long as possible.

**How to get to Cuxhaven:****Flights:**

From several UK- Airports direct flights to Hamburg International and Bremen Airport.

Bremen might be the better option (closer to Cuxhaven). Please check the internet!

From the Airports: Take trains/buses to central railway station Hamburg vers Bremen.

At the Railway Station pick up trains to Cuxhaven- Central Station.

Leave the train and pick up Bus Nr: 1001 (best) or 1004, 1006, 1007 to Duhnen/Dorf where Brabands Gästehaus is located.

Transport between Brabands Gästehaus and the museum will be managed by knot tyers who come by car.

**Participents please contact:**

Peter Willems

Bauer Landstr.-200c

D 24939 Flensburg

Email peter@fancyworks.de

Registrations please not later then 15th.August 2008

Phone: +49 461 73176

Mobil +49 173 4634679

Fischereimuseum Cuxhaven: Phone 04721 665262 (if you call inside Germany)

**Accomodation:**

Gästehaus & Landhaus Braband

Rugenbargsweg 21 & 23

D 27476 Cuxhaven

Phone:049 4721 48332

Fax: 049 4721 445127

Email: inf@gaestehaus-braband.de

Reservations please before August 15th.

24939 Flensburg / Germany

Phone: +49 461 73176

Fax.: +49 461 7749318

Email: peter@fancyworks.de

Brabands Gästehaus offers 15 double and 8 single rooms. All the rooms are reserved for Guild members only, until August 15th. Otherwise there are many hotels and guest houses in the area for Cuxhaven is a well known holiday place in Germany.

For the German branch:Karl Bareuther

# Disk Covers Tied in the Hand

Luc Prouveur

(Translation and supplementary drawings by Maurice McPartlan)

Partant du principe que je n'ai pas pour habitude de me déplacer avec des épingles et une planche de liège ou un tube en carton, il me semble plus logique, même si ce n'est pas toujours plus facile, de développer des techniques de nouage uniquement avec les mains.

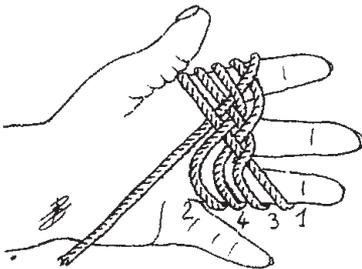
Starting from the principle that I don't generally carry pins and a cork board or a cardboard tube around, it seems logical to me, even if not always easier, to develop knotting techniques using only the hands.

After the 18-sided spheroid (5 leads, 2 x 3 bights, *Sac de Noeuds* Nr 2<sup>1</sup>, Ashley #? - if an Ashley specialist finds the reference, please let me know!), which if tightened on a flat object gives a triangular shape, there is the 24-sided spheroid (5 leads, 2 x 4 bights, Ashley #2216) which tends towards a square shape.

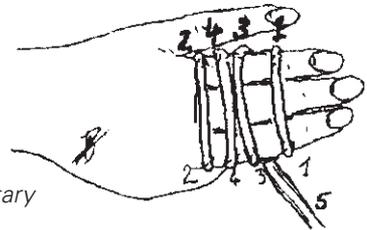
Then there is the 36-sided spheroid (7 leads, 3 x 3 bights, Ashley #?) of triangular shape.

Then follows the 48-sided spheroid (7 leads, 3 x 4 bights, Ashley #?) which, though of square shape gives good results as the number of crossings allows the different parts of the knots to adapt to the shape of the support.

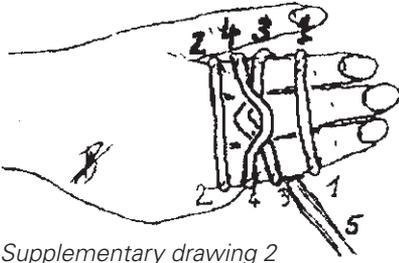
## 24-sided spheroid (5-4-2 = 5-lead, 4+2-bight)



Make four turns crossing as shown (in the diagram) in the palm, the lines remaining parallel at the back of the hand. Keep the working end, which has passed under the first turn, ready and turn the hand over. You should see four parallel lines (Supplementary drawing 1).

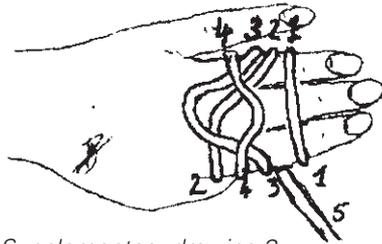


Supplementary drawing 1

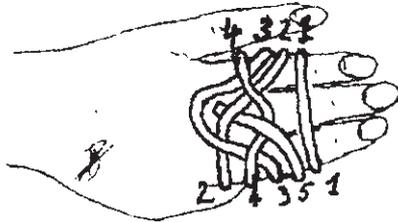


Supplementary drawing 2

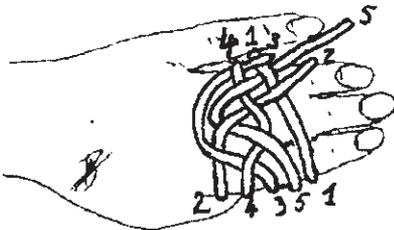
Turning in the same direction as the working end, plait the four turns as in the (Supplementary drawings 2-5) [diagram] and lock them using the working end to complete the fifth turn. Complete the fifth turn by rejoining the standing end. This is not in the drawing as it would happen in the palm of the hand, but you should find it.



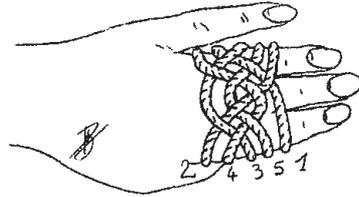
Supplementary drawing 3



Supplementary drawing 4

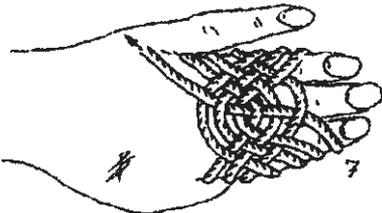
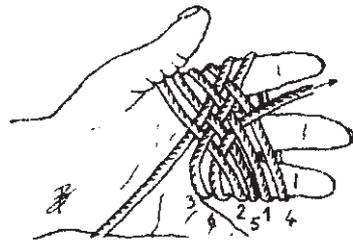


Supplementary drawing 5



### 36-sided spheroid (7-3-3 = 7-lead, 3+3-bight)

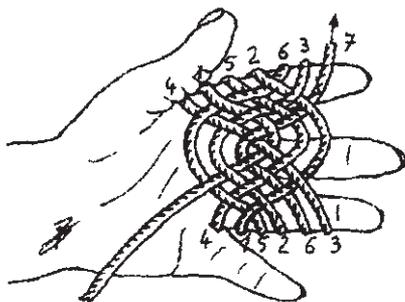
Make six turns crossing as shown in the palm (the first passage under happens on the fourth turn) keeping the turns parallel in the back of the hand.



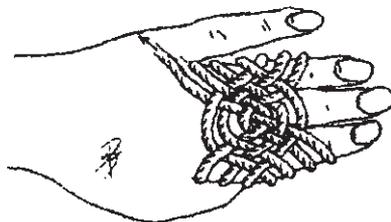
When you turn your hand you should find six parallel strands, which you plait as in the diagram, locking them with the seventh turn.

That's it, one of the simplest isn't it?

### 48-sided spheroid (7-4-3 = 7-lead, 4+3-bight)



Make six turns crossing as shown in the palm (the first passage under happens on the fifth turn) keeping the turns parallel in the back of the hand.



When you turn your hand you should find six parallel strands, which you plait as in the diagram, locking them with the seventh turn.

Nearly as simple as the preceding one and often with better results on a flattened spheroid. If you had to choose only one it would probably be the latter, but what a pity to limit oneself when there are still so many models to explore on the same principle of the Turk's head with parallel internal bights. Another time I will perhaps talk to you about the one with a pentagonal form at the poles, which have the peculiarity of not closing but are particularly elegant. ❄️

---

This article was originally published in *Sac de Noeuds* (Sack of Knots), No 3 pp. 14-15

<sup>1</sup> *Sac de Noeuds* is the bulletin of IGKT France. The knot mentioned was published as "18-sided Monkey's fist", *Knotting Matters* No82 pp16-17, translated by Terry Barns.

## Knotmaster Series No. 36

'Knotting ventured,  
knotting gained.'

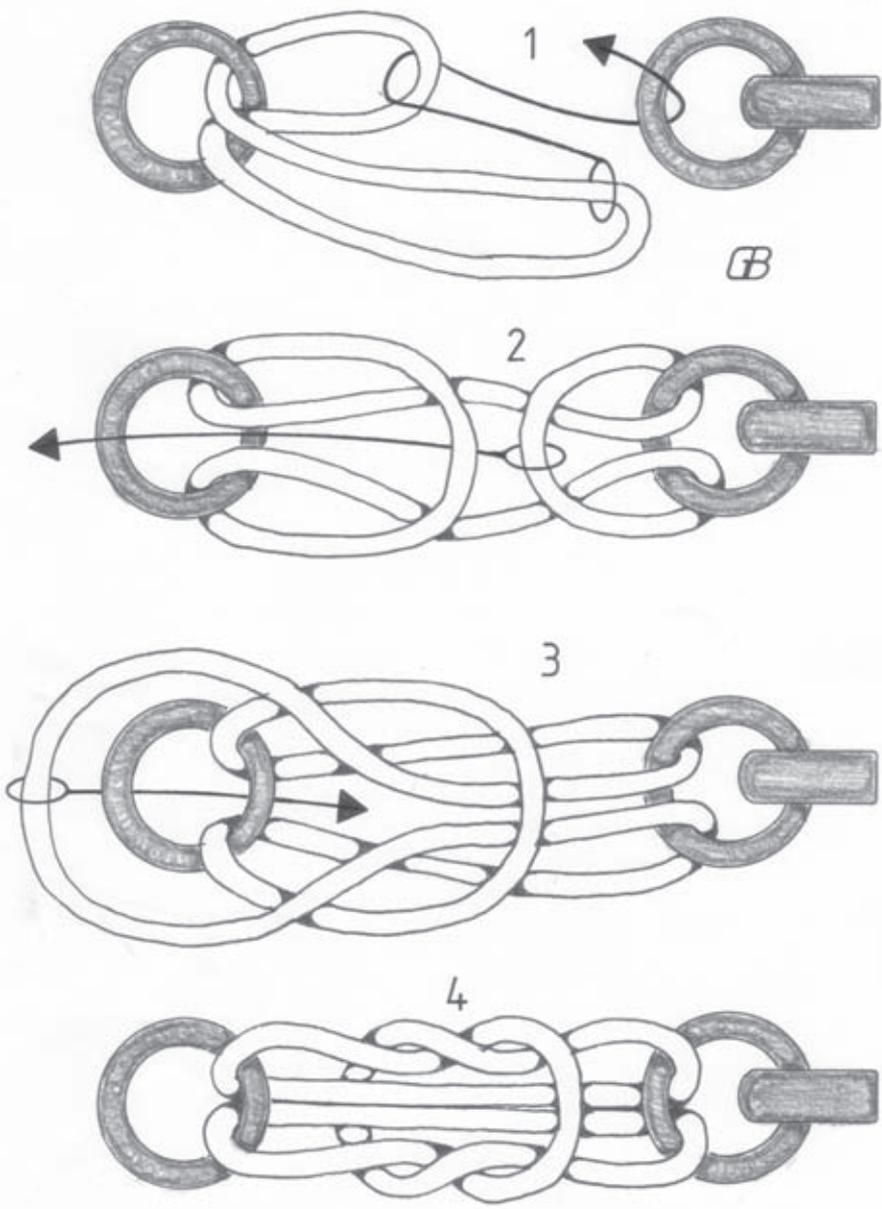
### Ring hitch (double-ended)

Use this hitch to join two rings, eyes or swivels by means of a continuous sling or strop (or even a rubber band), provided one of the eyes can be gone around during the tying process. For instance it secures labels to luggage. It is easier than it looks.

\* First tie a ring or bale sling hitch onto the loose eye [fig. 1].

\* Next take the long loop around the fixed eye and tuck it up through the initial hitch [2].

\* Pass this loop over and down behind the ring [3]. Pull the rings apart and the arrangement will slide and interlock [4].



Ring hitch (double ended)

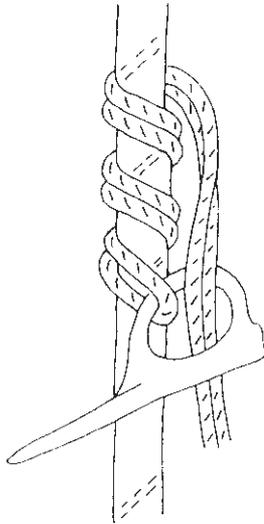
# Knot Prusiks

## Four Ways to Friction Knots Easy Movable Upwards on the Rope

Heinz Prohaska

How easy a friction knot can be moved up on a rope depends from the structure of the knot, the extent of the load, the resistance against deformation of rope and sling through the load, and the friction in the knot. A high influence has the friction in the point where the sling leaves the knot. This friction can be decreased in several ways.

Fig.1 Semi-mechanical knot



One of the traditional ways is the use of mechanical tools - karabiners, rings, pitons, and the like (fig. 1). These solutions need additional equipment. Another way is to load both ends or bights of a Prusik sling together (fig. 2). Disadvantages of knots of this kind can be time-consuming making, difficult adjustment to the rope diameter, and great knot elongation through the load.

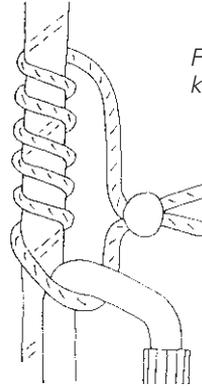


Fig.2 Penberthy knot

A third way, used by the author in the seventies for a Hedden knot in tape, was to add an overhand loop to the bight. This allowed to make the knot loose with gloves (fig. 3).

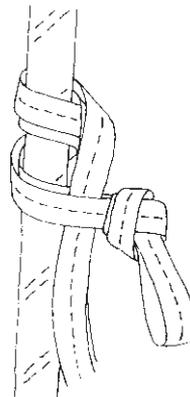


Fig.3 Hedden knot with overhand loop

The fourth way, also developed by the author, looks similar, but works quite different. It began with the ascent of a tree with Prusik slings in the sixties. Since the length of Prusik slings is calculated for the use on a rope and not on a trunk, the tree required another knot. The author used a noose known from parcel making (fig. 4). The idea to use such a friction knot with more than one coil for the ascent on a rope was obvious, but not tested at this time.

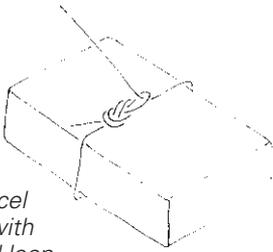


Fig.4 Parcel making with overhand loop

the German mountaineering magazine *Alpinismus*.

In the nineties, after the development and publication of other knots, the author came back to the old idea of the sixties and realized it with single and double slings on ropes (fig. 6). A comparison

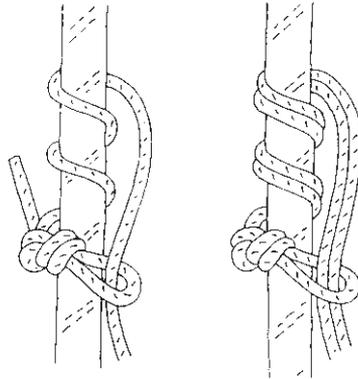


Fig.6 Knot Prusiks

Some years later, in the seventies, the author experimented with the kind of knots shown in fig. 2. A problem of such knots is their instability. They move towards a shape with just as many coils inside and outside. The friction on the rope decreases with that. The author stopped this process with a knot in the sling (fig. 5). The resulting friction knot, named "Steigknoten", could be very easily moved up on the rope. On the other hand, in comparison with the traditional friction knots of mountaineers, the new solution was more complicated. It was published in

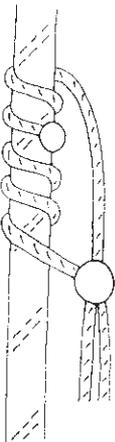


Fig.5 Steigknoten

with traditional knots showed that these "knot Prusiks" could be moved up on ropes much easier than e.g. the similar Hedden knot (fig. 7). One of the reasons may be the movability of the loop. The main reason seems to be the reduction of the friction of the sling in the loop through the knot. The knot in knot Prusiks works like the disk in the shiver hitch (fig. 8). This is proved through the smaller

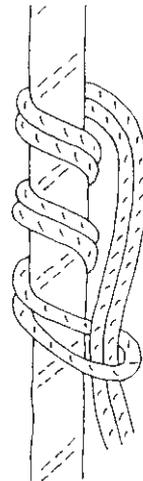


Fig.7 Hedden knot

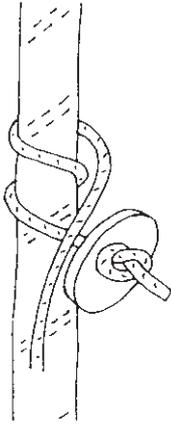


Fig.8 Shiver hitch

diversion of the Prusik sling in the loop (fig. 9).

The idea can be realized in numerous ways. Tests showed, e.g., that an overhand knot in thin slings can be too

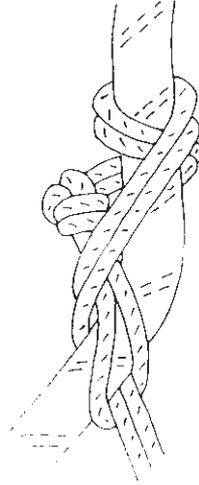


Fig.10 Instability through a small knot

small. The sling slips in such a case over the knot (fig. 10). A double overhand knot is thicker and lessens wear and tear in the bight (fig. 11). Another solution is shown in fig. 12. To discuss all variations here isn't possible. ❄

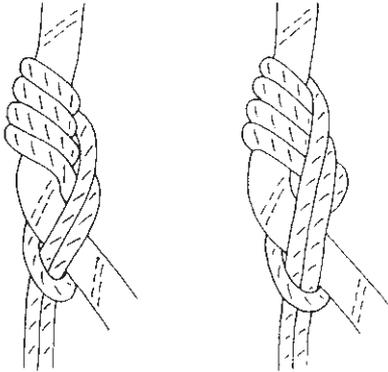


Fig.9 Reduction of the friction in the bight through the knot

"Steigen" is the German word for "ascend".

Franz Bachmann, Switzerland, who didn't have knowledge of this knot, developed it lately a second time.

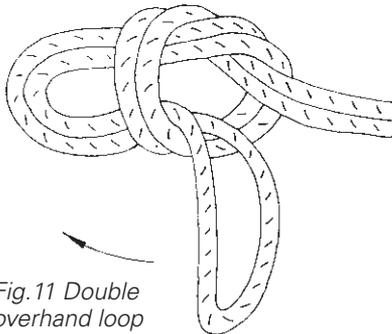


Fig.11 Double overhand loop

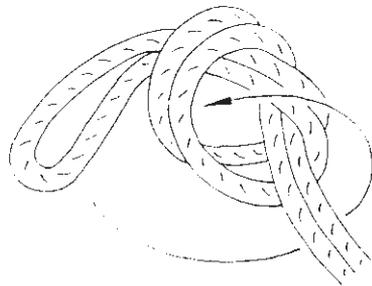
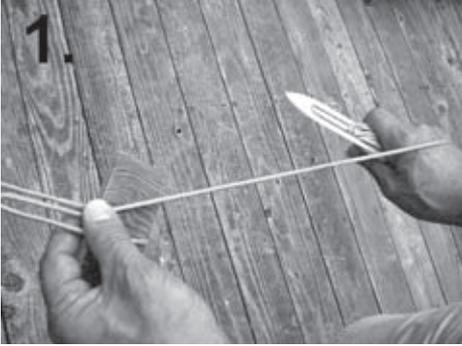


Fig.12 Enlarged overhand loop

# Netmaking a Different Way

Tony Emery

At one of my net making demonstrations years ago a spectator who was a tating expert suggested this method. It eliminates the need to make a bight to the left of the loop you are tying into. This results in a increase in the speed of the netting process.



1. Instead of making the bight to the left, bring the needle to the right with the cord around the back of your hand.



2. Bring the needle behind the 2 strands as usual, the cord stays around the back of your hand.



3. Back your hand out of the loop and tighten as usual. 

## THE WHATNOT

Jack Fidspike

Clifford Ashley wrote of this knot (A#1208) that it was ‘... *hardly a practical binding knot*’ and (A#1406 and 1407) ‘... *the most insecure bend there is*’. Tied as illustrated here by Geoffrey Budworth (fig’s 1-2) one can see why. It combines the weaknesses of a Thief (short ends on opposite sides) as well as a Granny (bodily twist or torsion), and for these reasons has been called by the alternative names ‘Grief’ or ‘Thranny’, but the resulting lack of nip and grip also renders it (A#2579) ‘... *one of the prettiest of rope tricks*’.

I once heard - although I regret that I cannot now recall who told me -how a Japanese garden expert used a series of these trick knots to secure the crossing points of an improvised bamboo trellis at an indoor trade exhibition; and I have since utilized the knot myself, in

its slide-&-lock mode, as a minimal seizing concealed in odd bits and pieces of ornamental knot work.

First tie both ends of the lashing or seizing as one would a two-strand Wall Knot (fig. 3). See how the two knots share a common layout, a further instance of the pervasive nature of the Parsimony Principle first outlined in September 2000 (see *KM* 68) by my fellow columnist ‘Cy Canute’. The trick is then to pull both ends apart (fig. 4) and cause the knot to slide down close to whatever is being tied (here omitted for simplicity). To lock the knot, yank the two ends first one way, then the other, so that they swap positions (fig’s 5, 6 and 7). Finally, the ends of synthetic cords may be cut-&-sealed, not only to each other but also to the body of the knot itself. ☼

## JOKE (for knot theorists)

In order to appreciate this gag, KM readers need to be aware of just two topological terms - the Arf invariant and the mu [ $\mu$ ] invariant - as well as the acclaimed Jones polynomial.

Okay, here we go. A woman walked into a bar accompanied by a dog and a cow and she tried to order drinks for them all, but the barman said, ‘We don’t serve animals.’

‘Ah,’ said the woman, ‘they’re not just animals ... they’re knot theorists.’

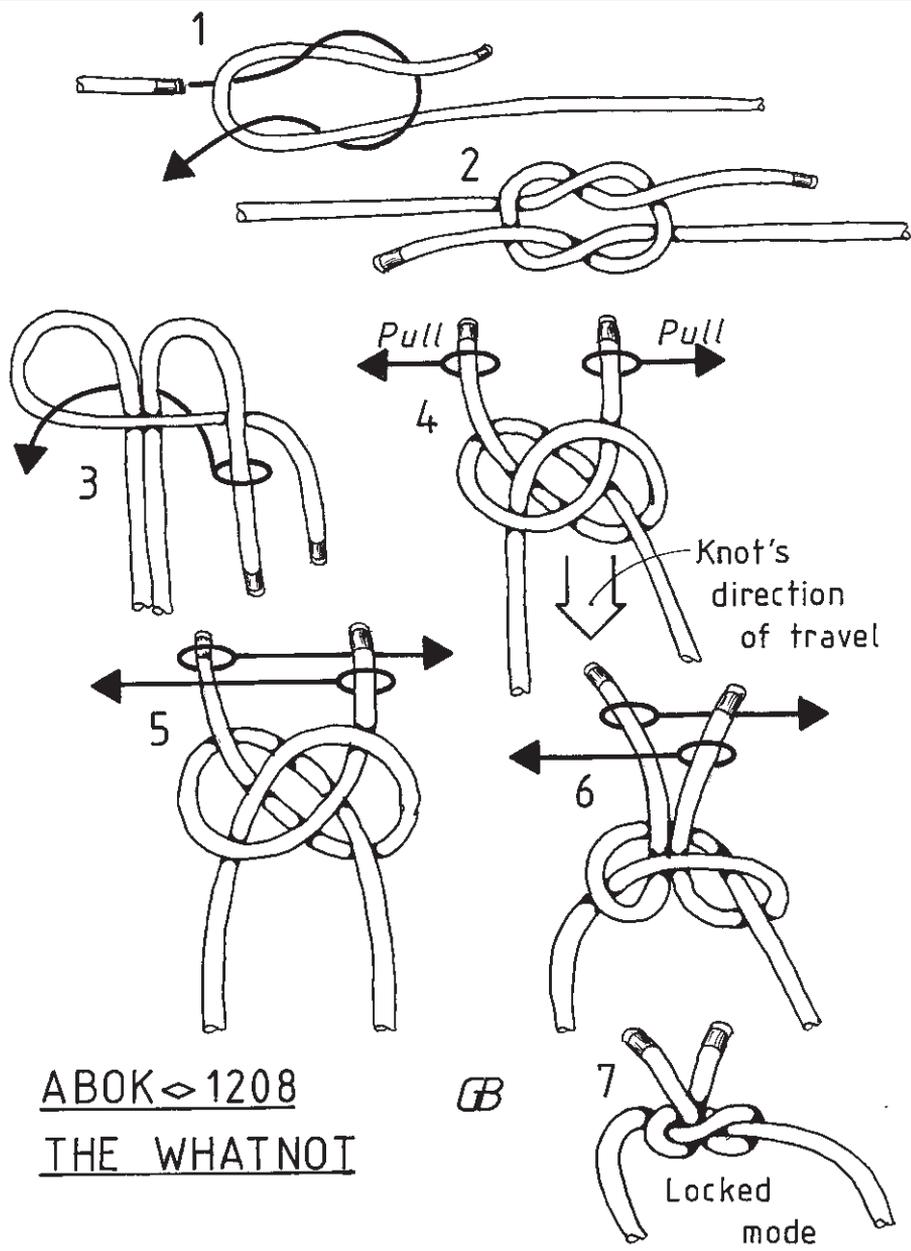
‘Well,’ said the barman, ‘I’ve known a few knot theorists who I thought were animals, but I’ve yet to meet an animal who’s a knot theorist. Alright then, name a knot invariant.’

The dog said; ‘Arf! Arf!’

The cow said, ‘Moo!’

‘Get out of here,’ said the barman.

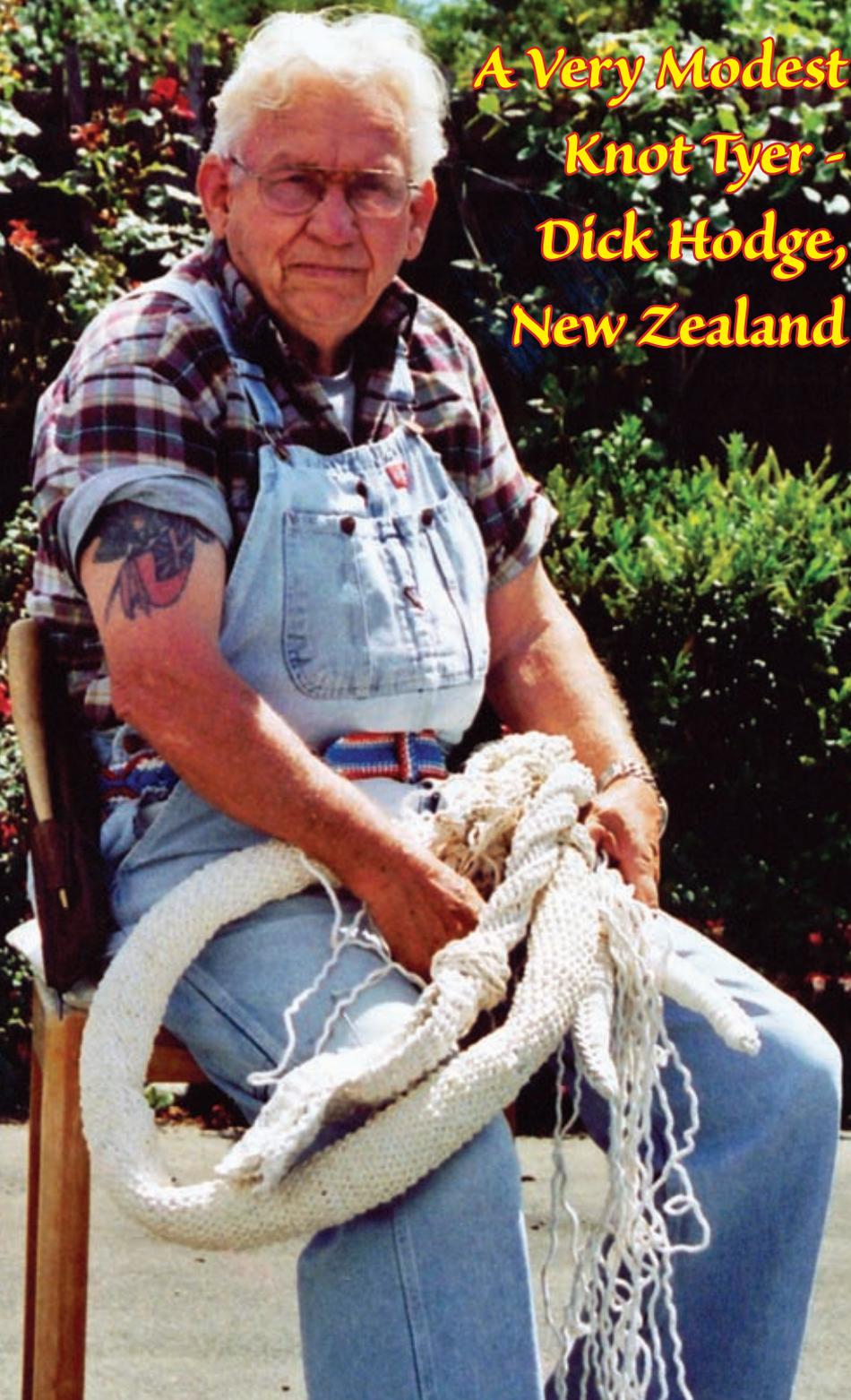
As they left, dejected, the dog turned to the cow and said, ‘Perhaps I should have mentioned the Jones polynomial.’

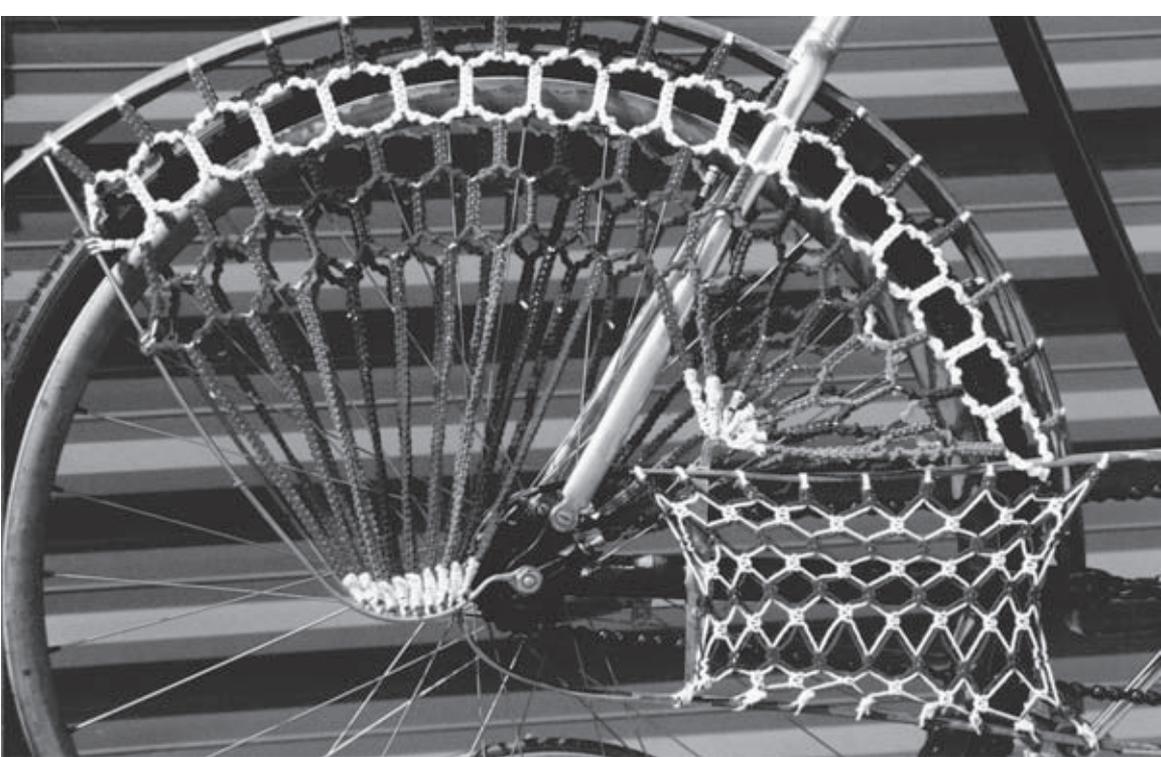


ABOK ◊ 1208  
THE WHATNOT

GB

*A Very Modest  
Knot Tyer -  
Dick Hodge,  
New Zealand*





Dick was asked a few years ago if he could make a skirt guard for a bicycle. Working from old photographs, this is what he came up with. Then around 2005, he was approached and asked if he could make a Tangaroa for the Royal New Zealand Naval Museum in Auckland. Once again, working only from a sketch, he produced the finished article, and they are very pleased with what he produced.

Dick has spent all his working life at sea in the British and New Zealand Merchant Navies. A more skilful and dedicated knot tyer would be hard to find, and a great asset to keeping the art of knot tying alive.

Due to him spending all his life at sea, he's very good on practical knotting, both in wire and rope. He's also very good on the fancy work, his biggest asset being that he can design something I can't do.

I've been trying for some time to get him to submit some of his work for publication, but he has been reluctant to do so, but now he has sent me these photos, I am hoping to do it for him. Unfortunately I don't see as much of him as I'd like to. When we do meet up, I always come away having learned a bit more about knot tying.

Words written by Rod Orrah  
(New Zealand Chapter)



*Background - the Tangaroa destined for the New Zealand Navy Museum.*



*Above - A fancy belt and some of Dick's working tools.*



*Decorated kit bag and bell rope.*



*Bell rope. Now in the Petty Officer's Mess on H.M.S. Cambletown.*



*Chess set made entirely of knotted cord.*



*Right - Dick with a bellrope that he made and gave to the North American Branch when he went to a boat show in New Bedford some years ago.*



*Left - Work in progress on a pair of chest beackets, and below left, the completed beackets.*



## **Tangaroa - The Navy Museum's Icon**

The icon of the Royal New Zealand Navy Museum, Devonport represents Tangaroa, the mythical Maori guardian of the oceans and waterways. It symbolises the role the Navy plays as guardians of the oceans and honours the contribution the Navy makes to the security and prosperity of all New Zealanders. In 2006 the museum had a representation of Tangaoroa created using the traditional and intricate decorative knot work that sailors and mariners are renowned for. It provides a link between New Zealand's strong Navy and Maori cultures.

*(Information supplied by Roger Carter)*

# Conjecture, Hypothesis, Rule or Law?

*the fourth instalment on a philosophy of knots  
by 'Knut Canute'*

*'Mathematics is to be relished for its beauty and power - not shrank [sic]  
from for its supposed difficulty.'*

(J.C. Turner & A.G. Schaake, April 1991)

After Clifford Warren Ashley and George H. Taber had independently surmised that only Turks' heads with a combination of bights and leads sharing a common numerical divisor could be tied in a single strand, Ashley published their discovery as the Law of the Common Divisor<sup>1</sup>. Strictly speaking he was wrong because, although the numerous TH's cited by him did suggest such a dependant relationship, his conclusion was derived from empirical and inadequate evidence. It would have been more prudent for him to have adopted the term Conjecture of the Common Divisor.

**Conjecture:** an inference or interpretation (based on guesswork) from inconclusive evidence.

Perhaps, however, Ashley had experimented with many more combinations than he mentioned, and found them all to comply, in which case he might then justifiably have proposed the Hypothesis of the Common Divisor.

**Hypothesis:** a supposition put forward to explain observed facts.

Scientists feel comfortable with hypotheses, which can be tested and may ultimately be disproved. Indeed, if Ashley had tried out one million single strand THs, all of which had bights and leads with a common divisor, who can say whether or not the one million-&-first might have turned out to be the exception that invalidated that hypothesis. Without Teflon-coated proof to the contrary, such a knot might have materialized at any time - at least until April 1991 (about which more shortly) - to create the not infrequent scientific tragedy, a beautiful hypothesis murdered by an ugly fact. On the other hand, with every failure to falsify it, any hypothesis is reinforced example by example until in time it becomes accepted as a Rule.

**Rule:** a description of something that generally prevails or pertains.

Irrefutable proof is an altogether more rigorous concept. Usually expressed in the form of algebraic formulae or theorems, it must be constructed from logical statements underpinned by indisputable axioms, and be universal in its application. For instance, dedicated KM readers will recall an earlier article of mine<sup>2</sup> in which I mused on the possibility of a TH with dimensions so huge that humankind as a species would become extinct before sufficient time had elapsed to complete it (let alone that the planet does not possess the raw materials necessary to manufacture the required amount of cordage). A mathematical proof would have to establish that even this metaphysical

image of mine was subject to the same need to have a common divisor for its bights and leads if it was to be tied with a single strand. Only then could we confidently adopt the term Law of the Common Divisor.

**Law:** a formulation of the observed recurrence, order, relationship or interaction of natural phenomena.

Well, in April 1991 the Dutch-born engineer and multi-talented craftsman A. Georg Schaake at Waikato Polytechnic, with his co-worker Dr John C. Turner, Foundation Dean of the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences at the University of Waikato, New Zealand, published a comprehensive mathematical proof of the Law of the Common Divisor<sup>3</sup>. So, as it turns out, Ashley was right all along.

Six years on, in the autumn of 1997, IGKT member Jesse Coleman (Alabama, USA) revealed<sup>4</sup> how, for every TH which contravenes the Law of the Common Divisor and which cannot therefore be completed with a single strand, there is a way to determine how many strands will be required. Simply identify the greatest common factor for bights and leads. If the answer is 2, then it will need two strands, 3 will need 3 strands, and so on. He named his discovery the Rule of the Greatest Common Factor, neatly placing it between hypothesis and law. Geoffrey Budworth called it 'a nifty insight', while erroneously referring to it<sup>5</sup> as 'The Law of ...'

This seems to have been an isolated lapse by him as, in an earlier work<sup>6</sup>, he used the correct term when describing how a rectangular mat published by Graumont & Wenstrom<sup>7</sup> also obeyed the Rule of the Greatest Common Factor. In addition to the example illustrated, he tested three others. Well now, if one swallow does not a summer make, then four mats may be a reasonable Conjecture, but not yet a Hypothesis and a long way from being a Rule, let alone a Law. Can some KM reader - I wonder - do the maths that will establish beyond all doubt the status of the Greatest Common Factor in relation to mats?

The English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) observed, '*They are ill discoverers that think there is no land, when they can see nothing but sea.*' Conversely, we should refrain from calling out 'Land-ho' from a viewpoint shakily built upon any new research data until we can agree the subtle shades of uncertainty represented by the terms Conjecture, Hypothesis, Rule and Law. ☹

<sup>1</sup> Ashley, Clifford W., *The Ashley Book of Knots* (New York, 1944)

<sup>2</sup> Canute, Knut, 'A Philosophy of Knots', *Knotting Matters* #82 (March 2004)

<sup>3</sup> Turner, J.C. & Schaake, A.G., 'A Proof of the Law of the Common Divisor in Braids', *Knotting Matters* #35 (April 1991)

<sup>4</sup> Coleman, Jesse, 'Turk's Head Knots and the Rule of Greatest Common Factor', *Knotting Matters* #57 (September 1997)

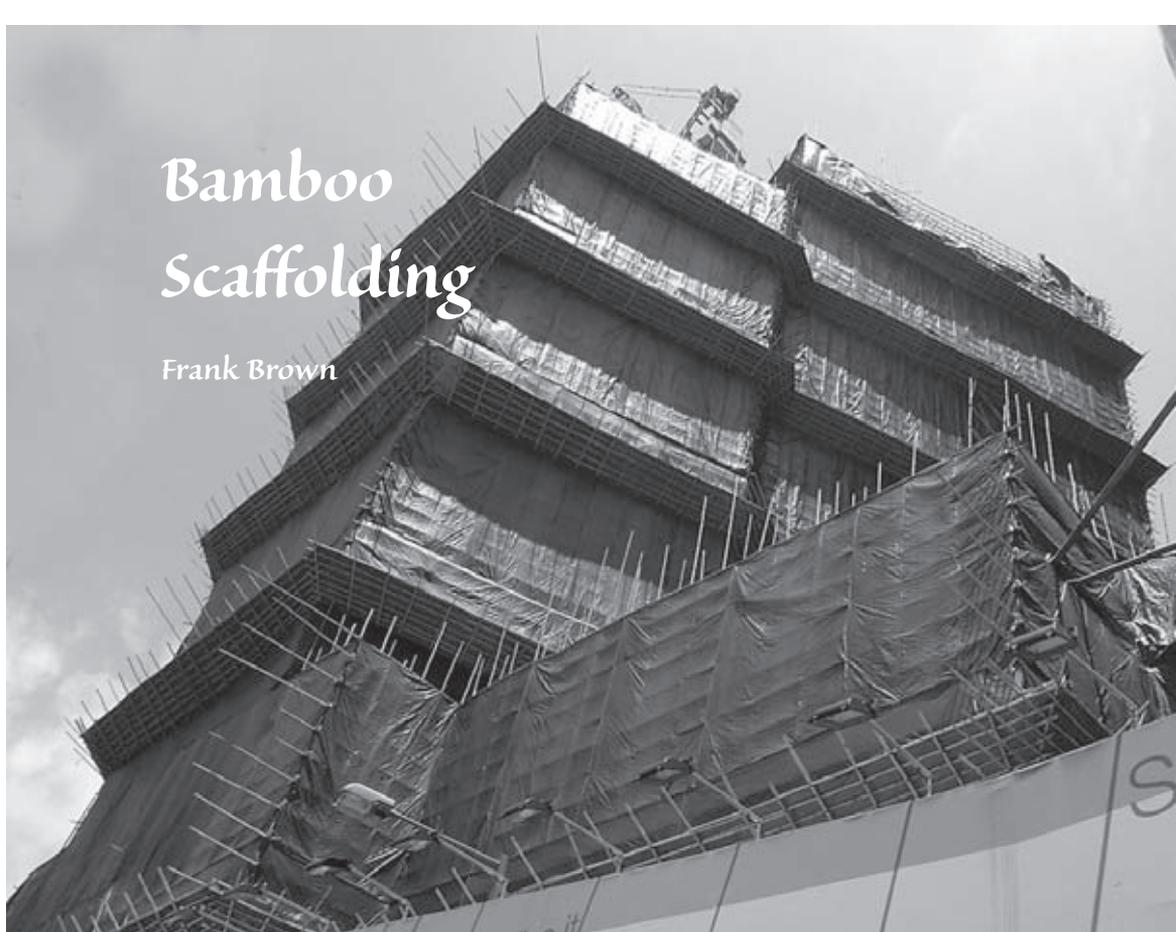
<sup>5</sup> Budworth, Geoffrey, *The Knot Scene* (IGKT, 2004)

<sup>6</sup> Budworth, Geoffrey, *The Hamlyn Book of Knots Ornamental & Useful* (1998)

<sup>7</sup> Graumont, Raoul, and Wenstrom, Elmer, *Square Knot Handicraft Guide* (New York 1940)

# Bamboo Scaffolding

Frank Brown



Some of the most striking sights for a knoter visiting Singapore or Hong Kong are the monumental structures of bamboo scaffolding. These fragile looking creations soaring skyward appear primitive at first. But umpteen multi-storied buildings have all been erected using this technology; so primitive is the wrong word. It is certainly practical, and quite possibly “best practice”. I leave that analysis to the engineers. My interest is in the



way the standards; ledgers and braces are tied together.

In Singapore about 20 years ago I managed to get close to only one lot of scaffolding. This was on a building undergoing some renovations, and the scaffolding was extended out over the footpath. As seen in the photo, the material used for lashing appears to be some natural split cane. It also seems that the poles are not bamboo in this case, at least not the type that I am familiar with.



Twenty odd years later I visited Hong Kong and saw a dozen sites employing traditional

bamboo. The real thing this time as far as I was concerned. Close inspection revealed that

the main difference this time was the lashing material. Plastic! The tying method appears to be reliant on a couple of

twists and a tuck or two. No clove hitch or timber hitch starts as I was taught, but I could be wrong.

To me it was immensely satisfying that an ancient technology was utilising modern materials. A very successful blend. 🌿



# Rural Knots in Portugal

Joaquim Paulo Escudeiro

At the time I was beginning my life as a knot seller. I was beginning a professional activity in 1991, and so for me it was vital to be selected for this type of fair with a good selling provenance. Usually only half of the candidates are selected. I started thinking that sailor's work at any place without seamen was a serious disadvantage for me - and that was when I decided to make a field research of rural knots.

Helped by my father, Lopes Escudeiro, I visited by his car every corner of the Sintra rural area; drawing and photographing every

In the year of 1994 I held a knot craft exhibition at a handicraft fair in Sintra town. Sintra is the only Portuguese municipality with a large seashore border but no maritime port! The sea slabs are much too rocky and do not support any fishing or mercantile docking place. The chalice photo on page 24 of *Knotting Matters* 72 was taken at Sintra shore.



piece of rope I could lay my eyes on. The fact is, in 1995 I was a big attraction at the Sintra Fair, with a knot board of Sintra knots! I made a

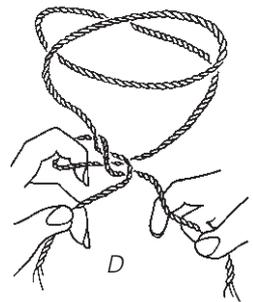
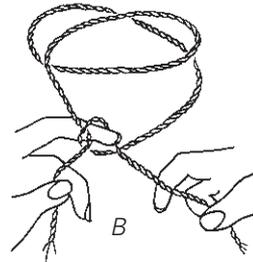
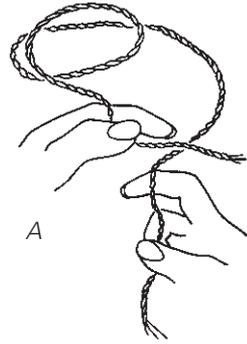


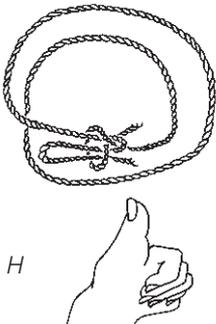
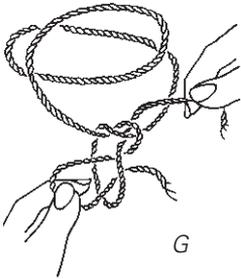
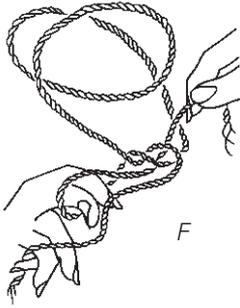
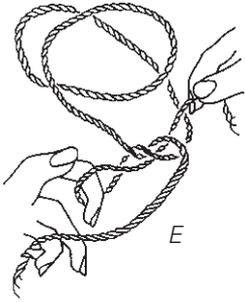
board of the Sintra map and made a miniature of each knot and secured it at the place I encountered them. That board was offered to the Cultural department of Sintra Town Hall. A newspaper made an extensive report on it and called it History Knots.

I look to those days in amazement. I closed my professional activity in December 2004. So now

making a cool judgement, it is kind of funny to understand how needs make us go for things that one could not imagine.

Some fairs began at 12 midday and ended at 12 midnight! I remember making key chains and hair holders in such a rush that eating a regular meal was impossible. I used to eat a cookie between knotting; even going to the bathroom

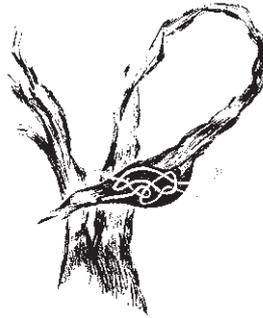




was running! It was not only a question of making money, the table gets empty very quickly, and organisations do not like that. That is how for 15 years of my work, I got medical problems. Life is hard but could be worse. Actually everything served my purpose well - I live in retirement and am quite alright, almost cured, but most

of I am free! Free to do some writing about this absolutely first class art of knotting. Not only that, but now I can dedicate myself to more complex and artistic pieces.

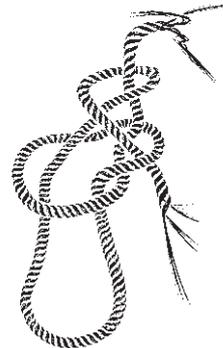
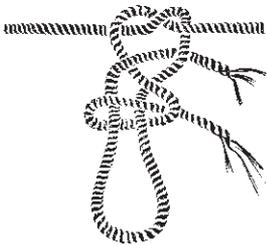
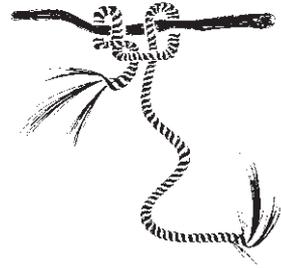
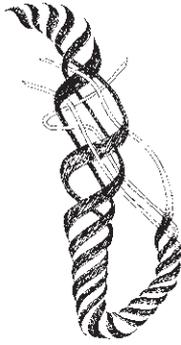
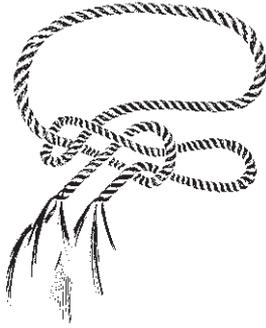
I couldn't find a publisher for the work on rural Sintra knots. Much too expensive with almost 150 photographs and 200 drawings.

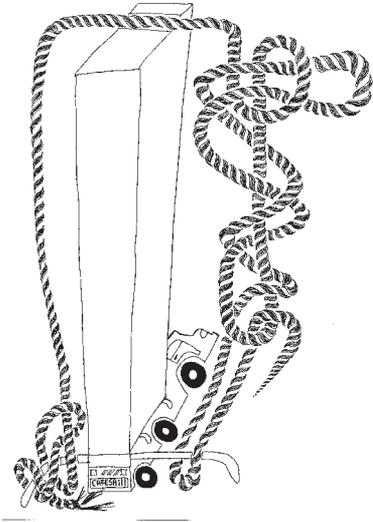


I decided to bind it all together and offer it to the IGKT Library. So the main body of this work includes two register field books and 120 photographs. If it stayed with me, it would ultimately become lost. Only an International organisation can preserve it properly. It seemed a fairly good compromise solution, this article being a summary or presentation of it. I excluded windmill knots, because I am preparing a specific article for *Knotting Matters*.

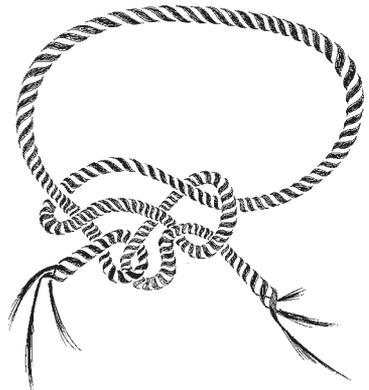
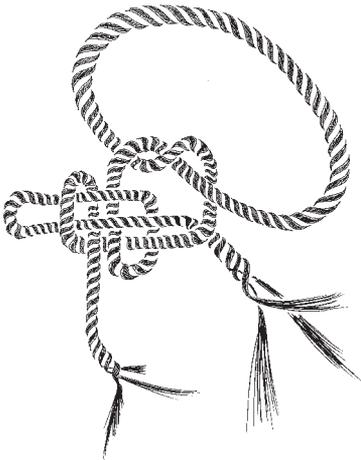
Rural man uses the easiest knots in a naïve way, but its simplicity lays in its power - they work!

If you look at drawings A to H, you can see a prop vine knot exemplified by an 80 year old person at Carvalhal. You can see after all it is only a slipped square knot. But look how it is made, beautiful yes? Also notice how the single end stays not parallel to the near strand, but stays





under two parts. Looking at the way it is done one can clearly see that it is meant to stay there - exactly there and not parallel - this is what I mean, the rural knot in its particular, peculiar way! So, yes it is a square knot, but it is not a square knot. It is what it is, an end of the question.





In issue 71 of *Knotting Matters* (p24) you can understand why it is the rope donkey on top of photos; the ropes on follow what I saw on real field animals.

The ones with the arched bush are knots to prop vines, in Portuguese "*Nos de Empar*". They are interesting and assume many variants. A field for future research to anyone who may be enthusiastic.

After so many times over, it pleases me that I could make it so nicely with so much lack of everything. ❄



# Amazing Discovery

*From your special correspondent*

The IGKT France AGM, on the 1st of April 2007, in Dieppe, was the venue for the unveiling of a major new knot discovery, the Apple Pie Knot. Three years ago, after an interview with Gabriel Richir, this knot was first mentioned in the press, who of course know all about these things. At that time the reporter [not this one I hasten to add] was asking Gabriel about the kinds of knots that people were interested in. Gabriel mentioned the Pineapple Knot, amongst others, and the journalist, who surely must know a great deal, reported in his newspaper the “Apple Pie Knot”.

As it was in the newspaper it must be true, and there followed a very long and intensive hunt for this elusive knot.

I am pleased to say that the Apple Pie Knot was finally discovered by that renowned knot tyer, Luc Prouveur of Boisguillume, Secretary of IGKT France, who found that it was a combination of a single strand star knot and Ashley’s #1407. This knot was presented to the co-founder and past president of the IGKT, Des Pawson, who to much applause and general celebration, declared the knot to certainly be the true and elusive Apple Pie Knot! ❄️



# Branch Lines

## West Yorkshire Branch

We have just had another meeting in our area with a talk on Decorative Rope work for Canal Boats.

Ken Nelson gave a very comprehensive talk with on screen illustrations of what is traditional for canal boats and what is becoming tradition. I hadn't realized that fancy rope work developed as a form of one one-upmanship i.e. I can do mine better than his. There is a new terminology to be learned if you are to understand the language of boaters, words like cratch, swan necks and cheeses, but what the heck it's just another part of life's learning curve. We had eighteen members attended, that is a goodly number for a meeting, though its sad to think that only eight of those came from Yorkshire, out of a possible thirty four (the majority of whom don't even acknowledge invitations).

Our meetings are always informative, informal and fun which is why we regularly get people doing a 150-mile

round trip to attend. We are delighted to have them swell our numbers. We are proposing to hold another meeting in March 08 final date to be arranged. Will any new/interested people please get in touch?

David Pearson

## New Zealand Chapter

A meeting of New Zealand members was held on Sunday, 27th January 2008 at Picton at the top of the South Island of New Zealand. We had held a display at the Marlborough (Picton is in the province of Marlborough) Maritime Festival.

Our participation was organised by Guild member, Forrest McDougall and his wife, Joan. Guild participants were; Richard Hodge of Christchurch;

*Roderic Orrah and his wonderful display of knotcraft.*

Roderic Orrah of Nelson; Pat Cunningham, Jack Sheahan and Tony Fisher attended from Wellington. At the meeting two other Guild members who were working the day before, joined us: Tony Cooper and Nicky Jenkins.

Tony Fisher was re-elected Chapter President for his sins! We invite any other New Zealand members who want to participate in the NZ Chapter affairs to contact Tony at 3 Manuka Street, Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt 5019 or e-mail him at [tony67.fisher@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:tony67.fisher@yahoo.co.nz) His phone number is 0064 (04) 977 7019.

I e-mailed Vaughan Jones to see if he would honour us by continuing being the NZ Chapter



Patron. I also asked him if he wanted to continue to be one of the IGKT's Vice Presidents.

His very positive reply to both I forward to you. Unfortunately had we made contact earlier, we may have had him at our Chapter meeting, as he was in Wellington only ten days previous. His sister lives there.

Professor Vaughan Jones' reply to my request for him to continue to be the NZ Chapter Patron and also his interest in continuing to be one of the IGKT's Vice-Presidents included,

"I am delighted to be Patron. As regards being honorary vice-president of the guild, that is a great honour for me. You should know that I bring it up and publicise the Guild at every public talk

I ever give. Several times recently with my talk "Flatland, a great place to do algebra". I always have a copy of *Knotting Matters* with me which I pull out and encourage the audience to sign up with the Guild. I further say in my talks, quite correctly, that I always read *Knotting Matters* with more attention than most of the mathematics papers that cross my desk. I am very happy to continue receiving it from the Guild.

My only regret in this regard is that I never seem to be able to make the Guild's AGM's which happen in England at times that are always difficult for me. One day it will work, perhaps next year when I hope to be on sabbatical."

**Tony Fisher**

## Midlands Branch

The Midlands Branch held their annual Christmas dinner at the Old Swan, Netherton near Dudley during December. Some dozen members enjoyed what has now become a regular event. For a change, string and knots was not the centrepiece of conversation!

By the time you read this, we shall have held our February meeting where the subject is tools. Each of the members will be bringing and talking about the tools they use for their ropework and knot tying. Our next meeting will be in April and will be Ashley's Lucky Dip! Do come and join us.

*From our Midland's Stringer*



*NZ Chapter members at the Marlborough Maritime. L-R: Jack Sheahan QSM; Richard Hodge; Forrest McDougall; Roderick Orah and Pat Cunningham. Kneeling in front: Tony Fisher.*

## IGKT-NAB-2007

The IGKT-NAB-2007 was held at the Holiday Inn Express in Orange City, Florida in early December 2007 and was a big success. About 30 knot tyers were present including members from many states in the US and a healthy contingent from the UK as well.

There were some new faces and we even had some new members join the IGKT-NAB on the spot. Everyone had a grand time.

We had several visitors on Saturday while we were open to the public. While some of our guests were only there for ten minutes, some spent upwards of four hours with us! This turned out to be a big success as we spent “quality time” with a small number of individuals as opposed to past events where we

spend a very brief time with a large number of individuals. Feelings were mixed as to the overall success of this approach

Many individuals brought wonderful displays and examples of their work. Knot boards were plentiful. Richard Wilcox brought his extensive collection of knotboards which are ingeniously built from a collection of smaller sets of related knots mounted on 11”x17” foam core boards and designed to fit inside of standard copier paper cases for easy transportation. When displayed, these foamcore boards fit in grooves in wooden rails to hold them together as a set. The overall display is portable, attractive, and instructive all at once.

The Chance Auction of dozens of items including donations from R&W

Rope Warehouse, Marty Combs, Skip Pennock, as well as other books, tools, and knots donated by many of the members that were present for the weekend. The Chance Auction raised over \$600 for the IGKT-NAB operating funds.

Workshops held included fancy splices, fenders, and herringbone covering knots.

A few of us Americans even learned some U.K. geography thanks to Google Earth.

We all got a lesson in priorities from Bob Dollar who, in light of restrictions on the weight of his checked baggage, opted to bring a large ball-peen hammer instead of... well, let’s just say ‘other stuff’.

After the Saturday evening Banquet, we were treated to a great collection of Sea Chanteys performed by some of the attendees.

The business meeting was productive and included discussions regarding the current *InterKnot* newsletter and the need for discussion at a higher level in regards to the Guild needing to put more content on the web.



*Learning and teaching is a two-way street.*



Specifically, the issue of having the content of the *Knotting Matters* publication not available to the general public via the web is doing the Guild a disservice in terms of visibility of the organization and outreach.

Discussion also raised the issue that that the

IGKTNAB web site needs a complete overhaul and needs a much more extensive collection of links and some actual knot tying content that would be of use to the general public.

It was also noted that Nominations and Elections would be held

for the open Leadership positions in the NAB.

Some photos from the event have been posted at the photos page of the [igktnab.org](http://igktnab.org) web site.

For those who were unable to make it this time, we hope that we will see you at the next IGKT-NAB meeting!

**Don Burrhus**



# 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.

## Joy in a Dining Shelter Guy Rope

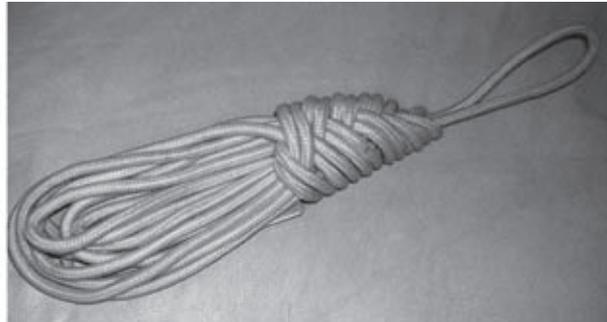
I bought on Ebay three dining shelters and patrol cooking boxes that were left over from the Scouts' Centenary Jamboree. I spent a while queuing in a cold warehouse in Writtle and when I got home I took everything out of its packaging to check what I had bought.

When I opened up one of the dining shelters, I found that its four main guy lines tied up, as per attached photographs, in a beautiful hank incorporating a knot I had never seen before.

I suspect that there must have been several thousand of these shelters erected and then taken down for the Jamboree and it must have been pretty frantic to do this with the deadline of the rock band V Festival following the Jamboree in Hylands Park last summer. For somebody to go to the trouble to

hank the guys using this attractive knot says a lot for the standard of volunteers who did the work.

I took one of the hanks apart and figured out how the knot is tied although I don't know its name. From now on, all my tent guys will be hanked like this.



Somebody in the Jamboree take-down crew made an old Scout Leader very happy!

Colin Burrough  
3rd Billericay Scouts  
Orion Troop (UK)

## Marlinspike Seamanship

In answer to Terry Ridings query on marlinspike seamanship, as he rightly says the marlinspike was introduced mid 19th Century with wire rope. The expression arose when engineering and electricity went to sea, so that the older traditional seaman differentiated himself from the "new boys" who were not really regarded as real sailors!

Roger Carter  
Parparumu, New Zealand

## Comprehend or Develop

Further to 'Discovery versus Invention' by 'Knut Canute' in KM#96 (September 2007), knotting philosophers might prefer the adaptable word realize, with its two distinct meanings: (a) to grasp mentally, recognise, comprehend or conceive (discover); and (b) to achieve, develop, implement, make, perfect (invent).

Geoffrey Budworth  
Salisbury, UK

## Left-handed bowline

I was intrigued by this knot (Knotmaster Series No34) in that, although I am sure it would be a useful one it struck me that it was a very cumbersome one to tie. It requires adjusting the working end to just the required length for mooring before tying - or pulling the boat as well through the knot!

I approve of utilising the bight to make the first part but, having completed fig. 1, I would prefer to use a bight of the (presumably slack) remainder to lock the knot in the manner shown in the modified diagram attached.

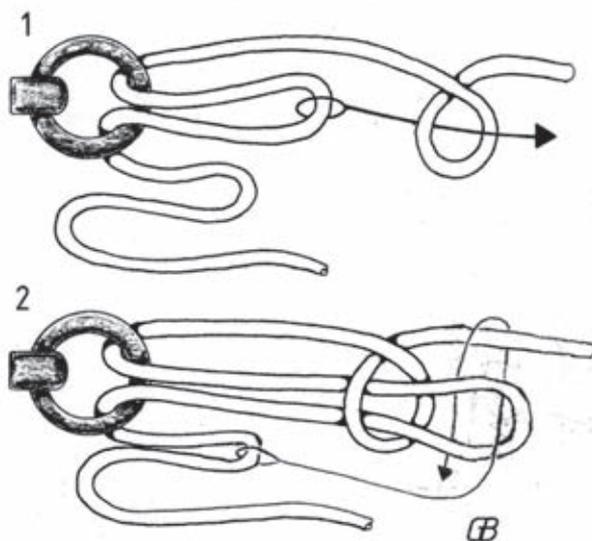
Don Lewry  
Newhaven, UK

## Lady Nelson

Here is a snap of a tyre covered with half hitching that may



## Left-handed bowline



be of interest. The vessel is *Lady Nelson*, a reproduction of 18th century brigantine used to ferry the first settlers to Tasmania and do a lot of survey work. Original she had two centre-boards, which periodically went adrift astern. I think the crew that run it have picked up a hand who knows a bit about rope

work. Some of the rigging appears to be more traditional than before, except the tyres are a bit anachronistic.

Frank Brown  
Hobart, Tasmania

## Knotting videos

With the help of several IGKT members via the forum, I have managed to post some videos on my web site to demonstrate the construction of a lanyard/bell rope. It transpires that some folks actually managed to follow the video instructions and complete the project, which made it all

worthwhile! It's a fact that things may have been better presented, but the exercise proved invaluable, and the next project will be an improved production!

The question that arises is this...

Whilst it's entertaining and fun to tie a lanyard, is there scope to record and preserve practical knots on film? Not an area I profess to be an expert in, but what do IGKT members think?

Love it or hate it, it's a fact that technology is taking over. People don't read books as much these days, they turn to the Internet and to television.

My personal area of interest (note - 'interest', not 'expertise'!) is decorative stuff, but how about preserving practical stuff on film?

The Internet is certainly one medium for publication, although one needs to be mindful of its constraints - quality sometimes needs to be compromised for the sake of file size (i.e. the time it takes to load a video into a browser). Better quality is possible on DVD.

Yes, I can dig out the books and make sure I correctly demonstrate the tying of basic knots, but practical examples would have much more impact. Are there any members

willing to help out with demonstrations?

I know what you're thinking...

"A commercial enterprise, looking to enlist the help of experts to make money". Well, as much as I'd like to make money from the venture, tying knots does not really lend itself to profit, as the market is too small.

That's not to say I would turn down a profit, but I would like to think that the Guild would welcome the idea of preserving a craft/skill in danger of being forgotten.

Any suggestions or opinions most welcome! That includes criticism, as long as it's constructive!

Don't forget - nostalgia isn't what it used to be!

*Phil Cook*

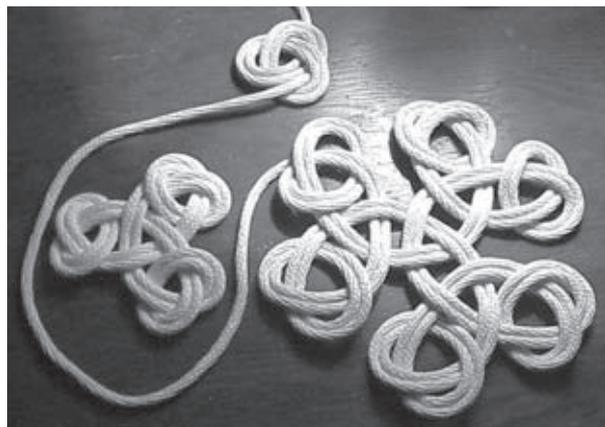
*Wokingham, UK*

### Third Order Trefoil

I may have stumbled upon a new or lost Celtic knot -- at least, I can't seem to find it anywhere. The photo below shows at top a trefoil knot, at left a familiar Celtic round knot which is a triad of trefoils. It occurred to me to take it to the next stage, which I have done at right. I have not seen this anywhere - has anyone else?

I think this could qualify as a fractal progression, but the catch would be that each time you add "branches" they would have to be ever smaller. Keeping them the same size as I have done, the third order is the logical stopping point as further branches would collide.

I invite your comments,  
*Selby Anderson*  
*Helotes, Texas*



### A Bit of History

A few months ago I got an e-mail from Jon Sorenson a retired Master Chief Bosnmate (USN) he has a kind of model ship shipyard up in the Colorado territory. He was looking for some line

to restore a marlinspike style picture frame. He pointed me to a link to his website where he had a picture of the frame he was going to restore. And after looking at the frame in pretty sad condition I thought it looked very

similar to the frame in the *Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework* by Graoumont and Hensel. After a little looking into it Jon found out that it was the same frame and that it originally belonged to the publisher of the *Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework*, the current owner is the daughter of that publisher. Jon bought a few spools of line and said he would send me a photo after he got the frame restored. He sent me a photo the other day and the frame looks great and we hope they take better care of it this time.

It's kind of neat when you run into a knot history artefact.

Jon's site is [www.shipsbosun.com](http://www.shipsbosun.com).

Martin Combs  
Elizabeth City, USA



### Trompete

Geoff Budworth's new book has recently arrived in New Zealand bookshops (an excellent addition to anyone's bookshelves). I notice that with the description of the sheepshank, he tells the classic (English) tale that the knot is named because

of its resemblance to the bones in a sheep's leg. But our Continental confreres apparently see it differently. They see the coils of a trumpet! The handcuff knot sheepshank they call English. As an ex-peeler, that should appeal to Mr Budworth. The photographs are from a knot poster given to me on a German sail training ship about 20 years ago.

Roger Carter

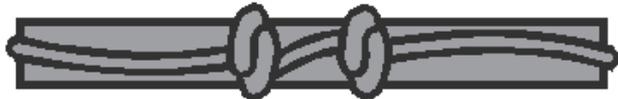
Paraparaumu, New Zealand



## Rope Ends

### Knots Turn Up In the Unlikeliest Places

The US Army Good Conduct Medal uses a series of bars in three finishes (bronze, silver and gold) to denote additional awards. Borrowing from the slang expression for reenlistment (“signing on for another hitch”) the clasp, worn on both the suspension ribbon and the ribbon bar, features rope knots (half-hitch knot) to indicate the number of times the recipient has reenlisted.



# Knotting Diary

## GUILD MEETINGS

### AGM & Meeting 2008

10th - 11th May 2008  
Weald & Downland Museum  
Singleton, Sussex  
Contact: Charlie Tyrrell  
Tel: (0044) 01798 344258

### Half-Yearly Meeting

10th-12th October 2008  
High Sea Fishing Museum, Cuxhaven,  
Germany  
Contact: Peter Willems  
Tel: (0049) 0461 73176  
Email: peter@fancyworks.de

## BRANCH MEETINGS

### Alaskan

Every Wednesday evening 6.30-8.00  
Anchorage Senior Center  
1300 East 19th Avenue, Anchorage  
Contact: Mike Livingstone  
Tel: (001) 907 929 7888

### East Anglian Branch

12th April 2008  
Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket,  
Suffolk  
Contact: John Halifax  
Tel: (0044) 01502 519123  
Email: johnendeavor-knots@tiscali.co.uk

### German Branch

22nd-25th May 2008  
Deutsches Sielhafenmuseum Carolinensiel  
Pumphusen 3  
26409 Wittmund-Carolinensiel  
Contact: Peter Willems  
Tel: (0049) 0461 73176  
Email: peter@fancyworks.de

### Midlands Branch

14th April & 9th June 2008  
The Old Swan (Ma Pardoe's),  
Halesowen Road, Netherton  
Contact: Bruce Turley  
Tel: (0044) 0121 453 4124  
Email: bruce.turley@blueyonder.co.uk

### Netherlands

Last Saturday of each month  
De Hoop, Nr Rotterdam Maritime Museum,  
Rotterdam  
Contact: Jan Hoefnagel  
Tel: (0031) 078 614 6002

### Pacific Americas

2nd Tuesday of each month  
Los Angeles Maritime Museum,  
San Pedro, California  
Contact: Jimmy R Williams  
Tel: (001) (310) 679 6864  
Email: igktpab@yahoo.com

### Solent Branch

8th April & 10th June 2008  
Travellers Rest Inn, Newtown,  
Nr Wickham, Hants  
Contact: Eddie Bentley  
Tel: (0044) 01239 233251

### West Country Knotters

29th March & 31st May 2008  
Castle Quarry Activities Centre  
West Street, Tytherington, GL12 8UQ  
Contact: Richard Hopkins  
Tel: (0044) 01179 867146  
Email: Richard@hwilfordd.fsnet.co.uk

## EVENTS

3rd-4th May 2008

### **Festival of Model Boating**

Beale Park, Pangbourne

Contact: Ken Nelson

Tel: (0044) 07836 722198

Email: knotnut1@yahoo.co.uk

3rd-5th May 2008

### **Skipton Canal Festival**

Skipton, Yorkshire

Contact: David Pearson

Tel: (0044) 113 2572689

Email: wayzegeose\_uk@yahoo.co.uk

3rd-5th May 2008

### **Canalway Cavalcade**

Little Venice, London

Contact: Ken Nelson

16th-18th May 2008

### **Rickmansworth Canal Festival**

Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire

Contact: Ken Nelson

24th-26th May 2008

### **Crick Boat Show**

Crick, Northamptonshire

Contact: Colin Grundy

Tel: (0044) 794 6841157

Email: colin.grundy1@btinternet.com

24th-26th May 2008

### **IWA Trailboat Festival**

Grand Western Canal,

Tiverton, Devon

Contact: Ken Nelson

6th-8th June 2008

### **Beale Park Thames Boat Show**

Beale Park, Pangbourne

Contact: Ken Nelson

13th-15th June 2008

### **Middlewich Festival,**

Middlewich, Cheshire

Contact: Dave Walker

Tel: (0044) 1244 682117

Email: dwfenders@yahoo.co.uk

28th June 2008

### **Stainforth Canal Festival**

Stainforth, Yorkshire

Contact: David Pearson

28th-29th June 2008

### **Braunston Historic Boat Rally**

Braunston, Northamptonshire

Contact: Colin Grundy

12th-13th July 2008

### **Queen Elizabeth Country Park,**

Butser Hill, Hampshire

Contact: Ken Yalden

Tel: (0044) 2392 259280

Email: Ken.Yalden@lineone.net

**To place your Branch Meeting or Knotting Event in KM, please send to the editor by post or email. Ensure you allow sufficient time for inclusion.**



