

ISSUE 56    JULY 1997  
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# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the

The logo is a circular emblem. The outer ring contains the text "INTERNATIONAL" at the top and "GUILD OF KNOT TYERS" at the bottom, separated by small gaps. In the center of the emblem is a detailed illustration of a reef knot (square knot), also known as a reef knot or reef knot.

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# **KNOTTING MATTERS**

**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS  
ISSUE NO 56 SUMMER - JULY 1997**

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# KNOTTING MATTERS

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**PUBLICATION 1ST MAY `97**

## **KNOTTED FABRICS**

**by Stuart E. Grainger.**

115 drawings 48 photographs

A manual of little known knotting techniques  
for making mats, covers, baskets etc. with advice  
on tools, frames, materials and sources of supply.

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## Notes From The Secretary's Blotter

I am sitting here looking wistfully out at the sun slowly setting on the garden. This will be the last Blotter that I shall be writing from this room, as Sylvia and I are soon to move to a new house in East Sussex, in the South of England. It is with some sadness that we are moving away from East Anglia but such is life. Please note the new address and telephone number, at least its shorter than the last one.

My apologies for not appearing in the last KM, but like many of you, I was stricken with various strains of flu and other unpleasantness and was laid low for so long that I missed the deadline. Whilst still in the apologetic mood, ~~The~~ 1997 Membership Handbook did have rather a lot of unexpected errors. This was a combination of the method by which this edition was produced, and the quality of the proof reading, which was done three times, and took me about ten hours each time. We have

now organised a (teetotal) proof reading team for future editions.

The Millennium is now nearly six months closer since I wrote last, and so far not a single suggestion has come from the membership. I console myself with the thought that you are all waiting for the warmer weather, when, to the sound of leather against willow, the ink will flow a little easier across the page. The Council have floated a number of ideas, including a 'Big Meeting' with lots of members present; an 'Extravaganza' type event; 'Circulating Knot Boards' made by one individual/group/country, passed on to and displayed by another; Twenty Bell Ropes (or any other type of knot) from twenty countries for a twentieth birthday; Two Thousand Turks Heads for the year 2000; a one week 'Knotting Orgy', a Magical Mystery Knotting Tour, and an Around the World 24hr Communications based knotting event. Any, or all of these would need the support of the membership in either organising or supporting such events. Hopefully there are some of you

who can develop or organise one of these, or perhaps even have a better idea than any of these.

In KM54 I used the expression The InterKnot. I will mention it again - *The InterKnot* - What is it? Why is Ken Yalden so furtive, and what is he up to? Watch this space (or K Y himself).

Last weekend I attended the AGM at Bridgwater, and what a wonderful event that was. Only one thing marred the day, and that was the formal business. The Council and the Hon Sec in particular, have been taken to task about this, and are looking at ways of improving their performance for future meetings. Hopefully you will notice the difference at the Autumn meeting. Other than that, the meeting was a great success with over a hundred in attendance, sixty of whom stayed on for dinner. Our most sincere thanks go to Denis Murphy and his team for such an enjoyable weekend.

At the AGM, Des Pawson retired as President, and Council Member of sixteen years. In fact Des was a founder member of

the Guild, and has served on the Council from the very beginning. His presence will be greatly missed, although I suspect like other founder members, he will watch quietly from the wings and will soon tell us if he feels that we are straying from the straight and narrow. For some years it has been customary for the Retiring President to have the privilege of nominating his successor, and so Des nominated Robert Chisnall, who is a well known and highly respected Canadian knot tyer. The nomination was supported wholeheartedly by the Council and an impressive testimonial was given by another former President. Robert was duly elected by secret ballot of those members present at the meeting.

This year saw the departure of Lonnie from Council. Lonnie puts in a tremendous amount of work on our behalf as Editor of KM, and was finding the double commitment just too much. He will be missed on the Council, and we shall be losing the direct contact between the Editor and the Council, which proved so useful when Lonnie first took

on the role. David Walker was elected to take his place on the Council.

At the AGM, the question of travelling expenses for Council Members attending Council Meetings was raised. Although entitled to such out of pocket expenses, the Council wished to have the endorsement of the membership before any claims were made. A motion to this effect was carried by a large majority, with only five against and ten abstentions.

Following the presentation of the Accounts, the Council, having due regard for the Guilds immediate and future financial commitments, found it necessary to recommend to the Membership that **subscriptions be increased by £2, for Adult members from January of next year.** It was pointed out that the subscriptions have been pegged at their present level since 1991, and despite much improved housekeeping, and now satisfactory capital reserves, it was time to consider a modest increase, rather than delay and need a much greater increase at a later date. A mo-

tion to this effect was carried by a large majority, with four against, and three abstentions. For those who pay by bankers order, (having only just sorted them all out) it will be necessary to make the appropriate adjustments in time for the 1998 payments. Those due between now and the end of December 1997 remain at the current level.

Whilst still on the subject of finance, the Treasurer has asked me to mention the 'Deed of Covenant'. This is a means by which the Guild, as a Registered Charity, can claim a refund from the Inland Revenue of the amount of income tax you have already paid on your subscription. Last year we claimed nearly £450 which is a significant contribution to the Guild's coffers. If you are a UK tax payer and have not yet covenanted your subs, please give me a call and I will send you a form.

This years AGM saw the unveiling of the Guilds new flag. This is a full size flag, and was flown magnificently from the flagpole (mast?) at TS Blake. It is proposed that this flag be



flown at all of our General Meetings, and if there is no flag pole on site, then our first knotting project on site, will of course be to make one. Interest was shown in the concept of a 'flag', and a number of ideas floated as to size material cost etc. The cost of a commercially manufactured flag may prove to be prohibitive unless significant quantities are ordered. If you have any thoughts on this, or are anxious to buy one, please either let me know, or write to Lonnie with your observations.

I am now pleased to announce that the Secretary is now on the Internet, and what a traumatic experience that was. Needless to say there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth. Having finally chosen a provider, I loaded their free software only to find that there are no instructions - many expletives deleted. Having failed to overcome that problem I got back to the routine Guild admin., only to find that my new software had locked me out of MS Office. Thus with the AGM coming up with all the associated administration I could not gain access to any of my computer files -

many more expletives deleted. It actually took a fortnight, and innumerable telephone calls to people who insist on speaking an obscure dialect of Cardasian, before I cracked the problem, and then finally it took another fortnight before I managed to send my first email.

I hesitate to publish my email address, just in case it provokes a deluge of correspondence, and I have enough trouble dealing with the *snail mail* which, incidentally, is a new phrase in my vocabulary.

Incidentally, could the credit card numbered 4418 0237 2548 0883 belong to you? If so do let me know as the owner forgot to give me his name when he tried to pay his subs in January of this year.

Meanwhile until next time, I must start to pack all my goods and chattels, and - I wonder if my email address changes when I move home. Best wishes - Nigel. - Address 16 Egles Drove, Uckfield, TN22 2BY



**MEMBER'S PROFILE**  
**ON**  
**DAVE PUSILL - SOMERSET -**  
**ENGLAND**

**How I became interested in knot tying:**

The fascination of watching Turk's Heads and bell ropes being tied when I was a young Junior Seaman in the Royal Navy.

**How I found out about the Guild:**

I attended a canal boat display in Taunton several years ago and the Guild was there with a lot of bell ropes on show. Dennis Murphy gave me a joining form and the rest is history!

**What aspect of knotting is MY main interest:**

Mainly decorative knotboards, key fobs and bell ropes, but I enjoy playing with bits of string in general.

**What other interests besides knot tying do I have:**

Photography, mainly landscapes - writing, for fun, and being taken for walks on the Quantock Hills by my two Springer Spaniels!! My other main hobby is collecting the music of Glen Miller, of which I have quite an extensive collection of both the civilian and army bands.

Past life includes ten years undetected crime as a seaman in the Royal Navy. Thirteen years as an instructor in the Sea Cadet Corps and some fifteen years terrorising the natives by driving coaches in the West Country.

*Ed: Good one Dave. Anyone else want to do a profile?*

## SIMPLE MATHS HELPS TURKSHEADS

### Ammendments

The editors ask you to make these corrections to the article by John Constable in KM 54 page 38, "*Simple Maths Helps Turksheads*" as noted by the author.

Page 38	Right column	Take down lines 1 and 2 to below the four asterisks.
Page 39	Left column	For "or" in lines 20 & 21 read "of".
Page 39	Left column	Before the last sentence insert, "The number of Compartments or Parts in a knot is always greater than the Overlaps because of the single-layer Bights at the edges"
Page 39	Right column	Insert the following para before the third para, "Most of the larger TH's are intended for a specific use so that the destination determines its ultimate diamenter and, in some cases, the desirable length along the cylinder. The variables affecting the shape of a knot are cord diameter, Bights, leads and Timesings. TH's are reasomably accomodating about their size but there is much to be gained from a little thought before becoming committed to a less than ideal solution"
Page 39	Right column	In line 16, delete "of the larger".
Page 40	Left column	Line 8, for 22/8 read 22/7
Page 40	Right column	Line 6, insert "as" between "values" and "both"
Page 42	Right column	Three lines from the end, for "21/2" read "2 1/2"
Page 43	Left column	Line 16, for "original" read "origin".
Page 44	Left column	Line 3, for (25+2=7) read (5+2=7).
Page 44	Right column	First word, for "Do" read "So".
Page 46	Left column	Line 17, for "by" read "of"
Page 46	Left column	Six lines from end, for "Timings" read "Timesings"
Page 47	Right column	End of first para, for "Multiplications" read "of Timesings"
General		For "multiplication's" read "Timesing's" Throughtout the articles

## GUIDELINES

**Colin Grundy - Coventry - England**

In KM34, Des Pawson wrote about a breathing apparatus guideline which had come into his possession. In it, Des asked if the origin of the phrase 'Get Knotted' was connected with this particular piece of rope-work. Whilst I very much doubt that this phrase did originate here, this article aims to show the history behind the development of these very essential items of British Fire Service equipment.

Imagine if you can, going into a very large building or basement which is on fire. The building is full of very dense black smoke. Often you cannot see any further than your hand in front of your face, and that's if your lucky! Quite unlike any of the firefighting films you see on the television or at the cinema. Your only senses are those of touch and hearing, and the feeling of burning on your ears or the back of your neck as you approach the area of the

fire. You are totally disorientated.

The purpose of guidelines are to enable breathing apparatus wearers to find their way out of a smoke filled building and for subsequent teams to find their way to the scene of operations. However, the fire service has not always had the benefit of guidelines. They are only a relatively recent development, born as the result of tragedies where firefighters have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Self contained breathing apparatus was developed for use in the mines as early as 1881, but it was not until about 1912 that this type of equipment was really adopted for fire brigades in the UK. Although breathing apparatus enabled firefighters to enter smoke filled buildings and still breathe clean air, it would be many years before procedures were developed to ensure their safety whilst using this equipment.

In 1943, the *Manuals of Firemanship* were first published, which dealt with all aspects of firefighting. In this book, it was recommended that 'a bobbin line' (a 4mm line at-

tached to a belt) 'be trailed to enable men to retrace their steps.' The normal method was for firefighters to feel their way out by following the hose lines with their feet. It was not unusual, however for hoselines to become submerged in water, especially in basement fires.

On 20 December 1949, a disastrous fire occurred in the basement of Covent Garden Market, London. The fire burned for two days before it could be got under control. Many lessons were learned from this fire, including the need for guidelines so that firefighters could find their way about and return to the point of entry. Although the problems were recognised, the fire brigade took no further action.

In the early hours of 23 January, 1958 a fire occurred in the basement of Smithfield Meat Market, again in London. Smoke was discovered in the labyrinth of basements and the incident soon saw many breathing apparatus crew being committed to search for the seat of the fire. The fire burned for 40 hours before being brought under control. During the early

stages of the fire, two firefighters failed to emerge from the basement when expected. Eventually they were found unconscious and partially buried under piles of meat. Unfortunately they died.

As a result of this tragedy there was a call for procedures to be implemented for brigades to follow when wearing breathing apparatus. The Home Office set up a sub committee to look into this and they gave their interim report in October 1958. Although the report recommended methods of recording and supervision for wearers among other things, which were adopted immediately, they could still not make up their minds on the provision for guidelines. They did recognise the need, and recommended that a guideline of at least 150 feet be used and that breathing apparatus wearers be clipped to it with a personal line of no more than 20 feet in length.

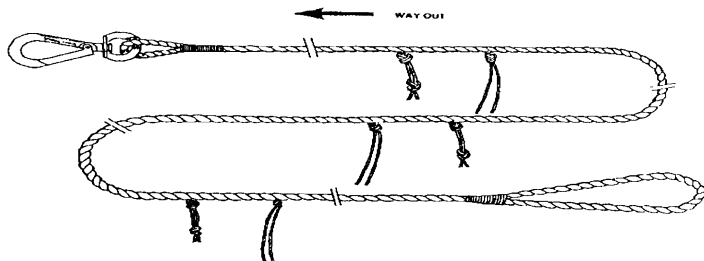
Many fire brigades went their own way in devising guidelines and personal lines. There was as yet no standardisation. One early line used plastic cones attached at regular intervals as a

means of marking the way out. Birmingham Fire Brigade utilised a snap hook on the end of the personal line which had serrations on one side only. The snap hook was clipped to the line with the serrations on the wayout side. The standardisation of guidelines was soon to become a major issue.

On 16 February 1966, a fire broke out in an underground store at RAF Neatishead in Norfolk. The distance between the main entrance and fire was some 500 metres. The hose being used as a guideline was so long and snaked under pressure it was sometimes impossible to follow. Firefighters got separated and lost, and three men died. The fire burned for nine days. Guidelines were now a pressing issue, but it took until 1969 before the standard guideline that is used today and the procedures for its use was fi-

nally issued.

The guideline that was adopted is 60 metres of 6mm or 8mm hawser laid or plaited line. The running end terminates in a snap hook, and the other end in a 150mm spliced loop. Along its length at 2.4 metre intervals are pairs of cord tabs spliced into the lay of the line. One tab is 125mm long and plain, the other 50mm long and knotted using an overhand knot. The knotted tab is on the 'way out' side of the plain tab. Firefighters can feel for the knotted tab in the smoke and dark to find the way out. The fire service is fond of mnemonics as memory aids, hence they are taught, 'Get knotted and get out'. Early guidelines were of No 4 Propeller Cotton Cord supplied by Marlow Ropes, these were later replaced with polyester and covered kevlar is now making an appearance.

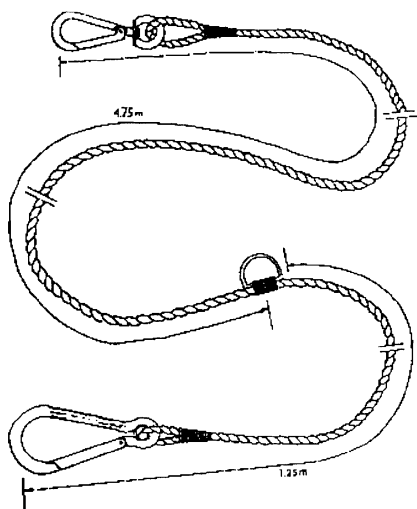


The spliced loop is attached to a snap hook on a short tail within the guideline bag

The guideline is stowed in a cylindrical canvas bag which is attached to the breathing apparatus set. The running end of the line being secured outside the building and the line is paid out as the firefighter moves along, being tied off to points inside the building at intervals to keep the line at waist or shoulder height. The line can be extended by clipping a second or subsequent lines to the spliced loop as it runs out.



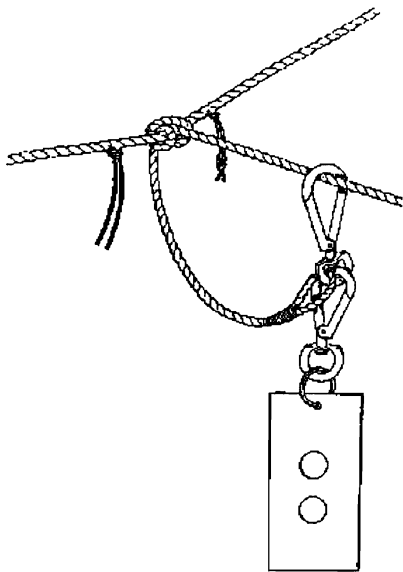
**Teams consist of a minimum of two breathing apparatus wearers.**



Also attached to the harness of the breathing apparatus set at the waist is a personal line. This is carried in a small compartmented pouch. It's full length is 6.1 metres and is of 6mm polyester. Both ends terminate in a snap hook, with one end being attached to the breathing apparatus set. The other end is clipped to the guideline providing a means for the firefighters to remain in contact with the guideline. The personal line is divided into two sections by means of a "D" ring seized to the line 1.2 metres from the running end. This enables the firefighter to follow the guideline using a "short personal line", or by releasing a clip search off the guideline to the full 6 metre length, but at all

times remaining attached. Many fire brigades have replaced the snaphook with a carabiner, which is easier to handle wearing gloves.

If it is necessary to search off a main guideline further than the 6 metres, such as along another corridor, then a branch guideline is used. This is a guideline which is tied off to the main line and identified by means of a rectangular tally. The tally has one to four holes drilled in it to be identified by touch in the smoke



**A branch guideline is tied to the main line using a clove hitch. The tally is then clipped back onto the branch guideline.**

In addition to the standard guidelines, there are also versions available which have a communications cable incased in the plaited version of the line. This enables direct speech communications between the team leader and the entry point.

The current guideline system has served the British fire service well for 25 years. Following another tragedy in 1993 where two firefighters died in a warehouse fire in London, there has been recognised a need for a review. Health and safety now require firefighters to wear thick gloves which make it difficult to feel the knotted tabs and perform the delicate task of operating the snap hooks. The personal line system has always been a problem, knowing what to do with a bunch of line after searching off to the full length, and identifying branch lines by touch is more difficult when wearing gloves.

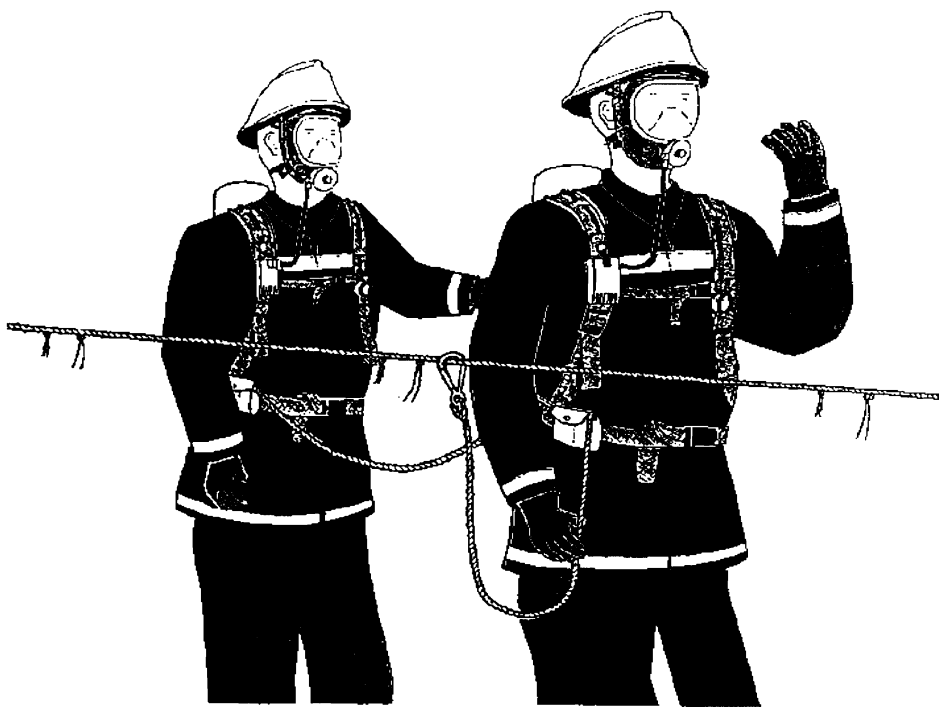
A revised system, which is currently on trial with selected brigades in the UK has large plastic arrowhead markers to replace the knotted tabs as a direction indicator, a clamping system for branchlines, and a



large carabiner type snap hook to make operation with gloves easier. To solve the problems with personal lines, a retractable line, similar to those used in retractable dog leads is also being trialed.

The only other country that I am aware of that uses a guideline system similar to the U.K. is the Netherlands, this is no doubt due to the fact that many Dutch fire officers are trained at the Fire Service College at

Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire. The organisation of the Dutch Brandweer however is not like the U.K. and different brigades use different systems. An alternative version uses a hollow braided line, with what appears to be cones inserted in the centre of the line in place of the knotted tabs of the UK version. Carabiners replace the smaller snap hooks and a retractable personal line is used.



**When traversing a guideline, the team leader is clipped to the line by means of his personal line. Other team members may either be attached to the guideline, or to the team member in front.**

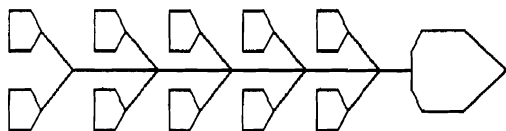
## LOOPS ON A BIGHT

Willem Taal - Netherland

Translated and retold by

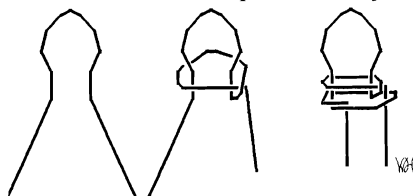
Willeke van der Ham

In KM54, #3, Dec '96, Joe Schmidbauer tells about a single bowline on a bight. This reminded Wille, Taal, Scheveningen, N.L. to his days in the Dutch Royal Navy. In 1958 he had to bring ten 'Draken' (Dragon's) boats about 5 meters long, from Den Helder to Leiden, (about 150 km) using one tugboat. To do this he took one towline and tied one eye for every two small boats, at such distances that the second knot was just behind the stern of the first boat. In each small boat was someone holding the helm to steer away from the towline.



The eye he used was a different one. It is the Improved Englishman's Knot, (Ashley #1039) but tied in a different way. Willem ties it in the bight. He takes a loop in one hand, he then makes a half hitch with the other end, over the loop and the

first half hitch. When you close the knot you will see two right overhand knots. It is also easy to undo the knot, move the overhand knots apart and you

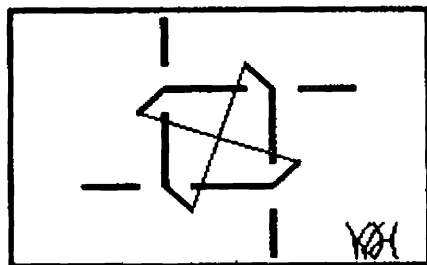


see the knot is made of two slipknots.

## TO MAKE A RATTAN DOG

By Willeke van de Ham

At the last AGM I was given a figurine of a dog. It was made of rattan strips in cross knots worked besides each other.



**Fig I**

Having not rattan to work with I tried the technique with the plastic strap readily available to

me. You can also try strong paper cut into small strips or packaging ribbon.

You make the first knot by crossing two ends, and make a normal cross knot, fig I. to make the second knot beside the first is a little tricky. You can follow fig II, but it is easier if you make a knot in two new ends, undo it carefully, keeping the creases, and follow fig 11 with the precreased end.

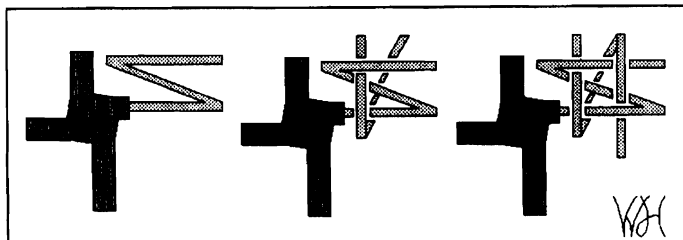


Fig II

As you can see in fig III the knots make a flat square in which each knot is askew. It is difficult to tell the knots apart, in the drawing as well as in the knotwork.

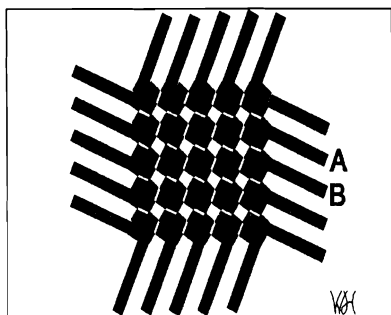


Fig III

If you want to make a basket or a figurine you need to make corners. This you do by tying two ends already in the work together as A and B in fig III or by continuing around a corner. Adding a new end you do by making one knot with the two ends together then cut the excess. This is also the way to finish a round row. If you need to finish at an open edge, jut fold your end and stick it back

into your last knot or into the one beside it. If your strips are slippery you may want to use a bit of glue.

Good Knotting - Willeke

*Ed: Willeke also sent us a certificate given to her by Alber Vlietstra born 1918. The certificate was given as recognition of passing a school for fishery, and for the certificate Albert had to show competence in at least 40 different knots. Willeke seems to think that the school no longer gives out these proofs of knot tying.*

*The wording on the certificate Willeke has translated for us as*

*follows: Because of the law on technical education. Given to Albert Vlietstra born 24 August 1918 in Delfzijl. As proof of attending education in Mending Nets, Making Nets, Splicing and Tying Knots, at the Municipal School for Fishery in Ijmuiden with good results. Ijmuiden 17 June 1965.*

### **FURTHER NOTES FROM THE AMERICAN WEST**

By Michael Storch - Colorado - USA

For many years now my focus has been on knots of the working cowboy. The popular image of a man on horseback, big hat, boots, lariat at the ready to rope a longhorn, is a Hollywood image. The knot tying fraternity here in the American West includes wranglers, packers, hikers, climbers, campers, farmers, ranchers etc. The fraternity also includes, in what dwindling numbers they still exist, the cowboy of popular image and legend. It is of them that I speak now.

Knot tying for the cowboy is nothing at all like knot tying for the sailor. For the sailor, knot

tying may have been his sole occupation, his ship was his work, his parameters well defined. The cowboy has to know knots as well, though only so many as necessary to wrangle, ranch or whatever else his particular job might be. In volume he might have to know twenty or more knots occasionally up into the dozens. Few perhaps, but still important, for without them he could not do his job. Here something else needs to be said of his knots. Though the sailor may have had to know many and the cowboy relatively few, it is not to be though nautical knots included those of the cowboy. Knots of the working cowboy can be quite unique.

All this makes cataloguing knots more difficult than in the nautical world where a select few individuals know a great deal. I've worked with many folks in various professions, each knowing a few knots quite well, and oblivious to those that do not apply to their particular profession. Case in point. A fellow taught me the 6 bight Pineapple Knot (which he had been competent at for years). I reckoned if he knew the Pine-

apple, then surely he would have a strong background in Turk's Heads. Not so. In fact, he was stumped by a 4 strand Crown/Wall; he had simply memorised the many tucks of the Pineapple without understanding it.

Aggressively I began accumulating knots wherever I could find them. Other than giving me a greater knowledge of knots, it has also given me an overview, a perspective. One thing I've noticed too often to be coincidence is that the cowboy consistently prefers to work with bights or loops. Seemingly impossible knots are accomplished in this matter.

Middle a rope, then middle it again. At one end you will have two ends and a bight. With this end it appears impossible to tie a 4 strand Diamond Knot, yet it can be done. The cowboy calls it the 'Fiador' Knot, a bit tricky for sure, but possible. Then take the various hitches used to lash a load to a pack mule. The diamond Hitch in particular is a fascinating study. Even the Box, Pipe, Squaw and other pack hitches rely heavily on bights/loops. Incidentally, one

does not 'tie' a hitch on a pack animal, one 'throws' a hitch. This use of bights runs through all the cowboy's knotting, though why it does I confess is beyond me.

As for braiding, my own area of study, I have also observed much. To use an example, it will be easy to show how even though the sailor knows more knots, they don't necessarily include those of the cowboy. Consider (once again) my favourite, the Pineapple Knot. It is a Turk's Head of even bights and odd parts braided into a Turk's Head of even bights and a different number of odd parts (eg 6B x 5P into a 6B x 7P). Ingenious, and I've never seen its like in a nautical setting. The sailor uses rope which lends itself well to doubling (ie two or more ply). Leather and rawhide, being flat, will not 'shoulder' strand against strand as rope will, so doubling never became popular. The fancier method of braiding Turk's Head upon Turk's Head (single ply) evolved. This is not surprising, I believe knots 'evolve' according to both need, and materials at hand. The needs of the sailor

are far different than those of the working cowboy.

Terminology also differs. Rope of hemp is known to the cowboy as 'grass' rope. This identifies it as being of plant fibre, as opposed to rawhide, or the increasingly popular synthetic fibres.

As for materials, they too have an obvious effect on knot development. In the previous century, rope was available, though on long cattle drives or isolated ranches it may not have been readily accessible. The materials closer to hand for the cowboy were the by products of the cow or horse, hide or hair. Rawhide was the untreated hide, while leather was the tanned hide of the animal. Hair was used as well for braiding, hitching etc. Examples are in order.

To train a horse to 'neck rein' the mecate was developed. This is nothing more than horse hair laid up into coarse rope. Much coarser than grass rope, it was advisable to wear gloves when working with it. Used as a rein and laid across a horse's neck, the horse soon learned to turn

away from it without pressure, 'neck reining'.

Rawhide, in its most romantic incarnation, was made into 'La Reata'. Corrupted into cowboy lingo, 'La Reata' became the lariat. La Reata was braided to fantastic lengths compared to the Americanised lariat of grass rope. In fact, two different styles of roping evolved the 'dally' and the 'hard and fast'. A steer, roped but still running is stopped by taking a turn (a 'dally') around the saddle horn with the inboard or 'jerk' end of La Reata. The steer can be 'played' to stop by 'paying out' line, longer lengths were needed. Lariats, being heavier (and nowadays of synthetic fibre) could withstand shock better, and so the jerk end would be tied hard and fast to the saddle horn. As a matter of fact, the western stock saddles also became modified to suit the users of the two different styles of roping, evolution or another sort.

In any event, I believe it was need, combined with available materials that allowed braiding to develop to such an incredible degree. Here in the American

West, braiding is often referred to as the 'cowboy's craft', and all through the Americans (north and south) superb examples of the craft are the rule, not the exception.

So as not to constantly magnify the differences between sailor and cowboy, a parallel exists that needs mention. To fill time on a long voyage, the sailor either knotted or practised Scrimshaw. His counterpart here in the American West was (and to a certain extent still is) the inmate of the prison system. With time on their hands, and given access to materials, prisoners developed braiding to an incredible degree. Museum quality work came out of the penitentiaries regularly. Much of the work of the last century still exists. To a lesser extent in the twentieth century, the penitentiaries still produce high quality work.

Continuing to meander through and touch briefly on various aspects of cowboy knotting, there is one other thing that ought to be mentioned; there is not a single, all inclusive book on the subject that I know of. There are excel-

lent books dealing with specific types of knotting such as packing or braiding, and occasionally a magazine article will deal with a specific knot that a cowboy would use. But these articles are always short and very limited.

I've thought all along that such a book would fill a long felt need. I would be glad to share thoughts on the subject.

In ending, my thoughts turn to my own braidwork. I have come a long way, and certainly my nautical experience has helped tremendously. Most (but not all) of my work fits and goes with the cowboy way of life, horse tack and personal accessories predominate. I braid exclusively with leather, sometimes using hair as a tassel. In time I'd like to try my hand at rawhide braiding, it seems the next logical step. There is much to learn.

If you're ever out in the back country of the American West, and see a fellow sitting on a log and working on a braid, introduce yourself. There's probably a lot we can learn from each other.

## MILLENNIUM PROJECT

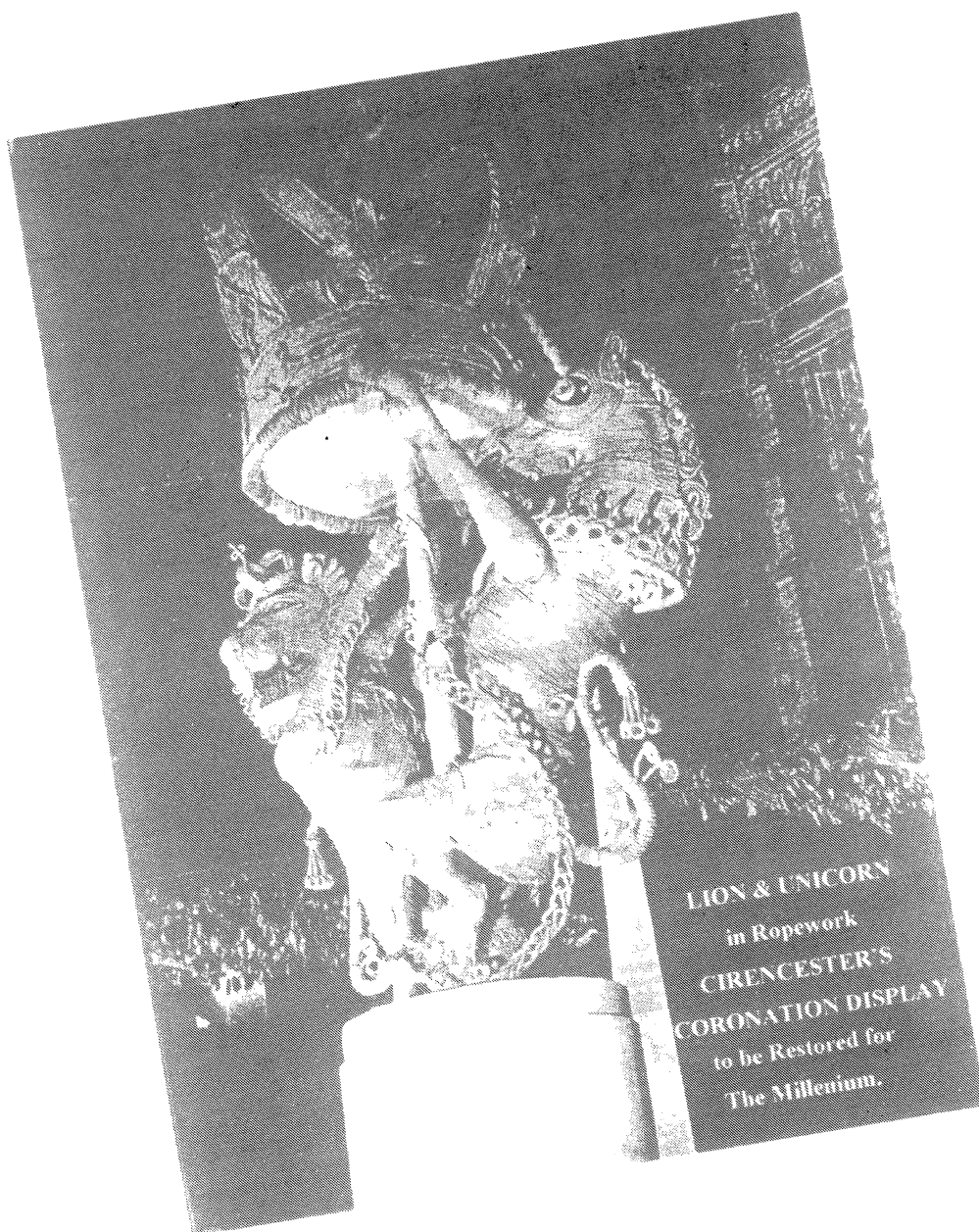
In 1953, at the time of the Queen's coronation, the citizens of the beautiful old market town of Cirencester displayed a magnificent sculpture, of the Lion and Unicorn supporting the Crown, in a central position opposite their renowned "wool" church. The sculpture was designed by the architect Oliver Hill and was made by laying rope over an internal armature of willow rods and wire. This remarkable piece of work has survived the intervening years, largely intact, although missing the surmounting crown, but it does need some Tender Loving Care in order to restore it *ready for resurrection and display for the Millennium.*

New sisal rope of the right size has been acquired and covered working space has been rented to enable the beasts to be raised for inspection. What is lacking at present is a crew of volunteers, who are used to handling rope, palm and needle, and are capable of making a few long-splices, so that new rope can be introduced to replace the old where necessary. The Guild has been seeking a Millennium project and I have already volunteered my services, not only for this restoration work, but also to design a new crown, incorporating some genuine fancy ropework. I do hope that we can find some willing and enthusiastic volunteers to help with this worthwhile project. The only snag is that, at present, the sculptures are not easily approachable by public transport, but if those who are interested would like to let me know, further consideration can be given to the matter of organising transport.

Stuart Grainger,

Cuckamus End, Cuckamus Lane, North Leigh, WITNEY, Oxon.  
OX8 6RR. Telephone 01993 881453.





KNOTTING MATTERS 56 - JULY 1997

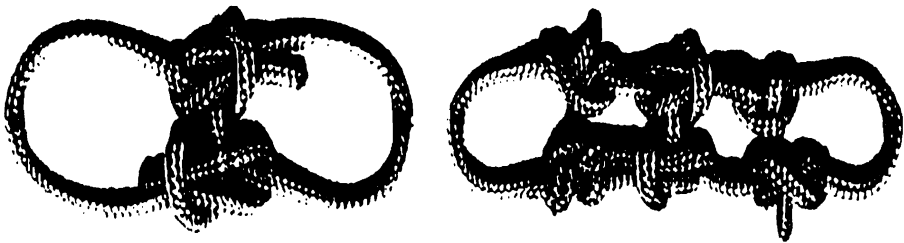
***'THE ENDEAVOUR'***  
***(Side by Side Bowlines)***  
***(1994)***

***For use as a stretcher, sling or chair  
in First Aid or Mountaineering Rescue.***

When researching The Ashley Book of Knots and the Encyclopaedia of Knots Fancy Ropework by Graumont & Hensel to make a Bowline Knot Board Display and at the same time researching the Girl Guide Association knots in relation to a 'Chair Knot'; I happened to create the 'Side by Side' bowlines from a single piece of cordage for use as a 'Chair Knot' for looping the bights over two persons shoulders with the injured person sitting between or the additional use of four 'Clove Hitched' adding extended support, enabling it to be used as a stretcher. Very handy if no proper stretcher of tree branches available and with limited rope to use. Padded out with blankets or coats of course to cushion the lumpy knots.

The following references depict similar bowline scenarios but using 'Two' ropes.

1. 'Two Bowline Bends' and 'A Bowline Bend', Ashley 1454/1455.
2. 'A Bowline Hitch', Graumont & Hensel; page 97; Plate 45/315.
3. 'An Interlocking Bowline Bend' (Bowline on the Bight type)  
G&H page 26; plate 6/134.



John Halifax, Endeavour Ropecraft, Lowestoft, Suffolk

## SIMPLE CELTICS

*Brian Jarrett - Kent*

As many members are aware, to tie a more elaborate plait, knot or bend requires either the use of a static board or the tyer develops three hands and prehensile feet to hold the whole assembly in a recognisable shape.

I thought members may be interested in my way of tying a Celtic Cross. There is nothing more frustrating and patience trying than to spend hours tying an elaborate plait only to see it destroyed when the bight is pulled through and tangles on some obstruction resulting in a bunch of **B-B-B's**.

Many years of snagging at the critical stage in the development of a show stopping sennet or plait I have learned to tie the easy way. To tie the Celtic Cross, see illustrations, produce four Carrick Bends in line, figure A. You may fine other bends more suitable. Decide on the size of the cross required which will dictate the distance between each bend.



FIG. A

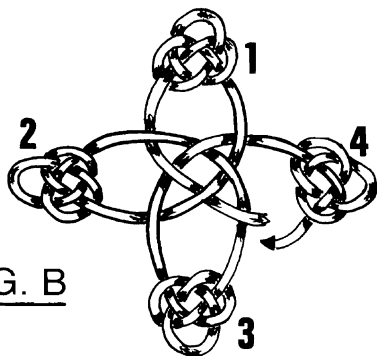
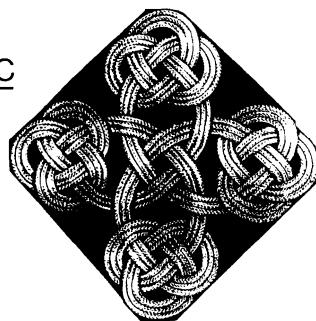


FIG. B

### CELTIC CROSS

Once you have tied all four bends, form the shape of the cross in strict sequence as shown in figure B. Before arranging Carrick Bend number

FIG. C



four pull it tight to allow it to be tucked through the central weave. Once this is passed, re-

adjust to the original size i.e. to match the rest. Now follow around in the normal manner.

You will find the whole plait needs very little adjustment and is very near to perfect symmetry. Figure C is a photocopy of the actual finished cross tied in the hand.

## A PEEP INTO KNOTTED FABRICS

Stuart Grainger's new book

The knot which is here referred to as a Reef Knot, is arguably something else, the problem being that it is not a Square Knot or a Thief Knot either, although it is closest to the last. A Reef Knot is, strictly speaking, tied with two ends, as also is a Square Knot, but must of my readers are likely to be familiar with the Reef Knot and its appearance, so pedantry will be abandoned and a knot that looks like a Reef Knot shall be known as one.

The Reef Knot is not an ideal netting knot, because it easily slips and becomes displaced, however it does have one major

advantage over other netting knots, in that it allows the use of a unique netting technique, illustrated in F 8v, which permits continuous knotting of an almost unlimited length of cord, wound in a ball or on a reel of a size far larger than the mesh of the completed netting. This method was published in 'Knotting Matters' No 54 in December 1996 by Gordon Court of Somerset, who described it as being in use in Portsmouth Dockyard.

Instead of passing the working end of the cord through the meshes already formed, in this method a bight of the cord is passed first upward through a preceding mesh (see fig 8v 1) and is pulled out until sufficiently large to allow the ball or reel of cord to pass through it. The reserve of cord is passed upward through the bight from underneath, (fig 8v 2). The next step requires that the end farthest from the working end be pulled steadily (fig 8v 3), so that the Half Hitch which had been formed around one leg of the mesh above becomes transferred across to the other leg. The bight can be pulled out

again (fig 8v 4) until it is big enough to allow the reserve of cord to pass through it downwards from above (fig 8v 5), thus forming a Cow Hitch through the preceding mesh (fig 8v 6) which can be re-adjusted to form the upper loop of a Reefings, in order to save space, the ball of reserve cord has been shown smaller than it could be in reality. In fact it could be several times the size of the mesh.

**Report of the annual meeting  
of the Flemish  
KnotGuildsmen Sunday  
16/2/1997 at Blankenberge  
Vuurtoren, Zeedijk 1.**

Present : Philippe Casteleyn, Marc Lauwereyns, Willeke, Jan Hoefnagels, Jean Paul Hasselle, Ronny Wouters, Pieter van der Griend, Willy Willaert, a local sea scout leader.

The meeting was held in the old lighthouse. It is a 15 minute walk from the station. It nowadays serves as a museum for fishing apparatus. Marc is one of the volunteers who run it. In return they hoist the flag

of the pilotage. Some of his work is hanging on the walls.

Jean-Paul and Ronny showed their photographs. Willeke showed her plaited horse. Jan was keen to have a look at whatever he laid his hands on. Or was it the contrary? The locals showed how to hold the fingers while braiding nets. I showed the Petzl catalogue for rope, climbing and descending. None of us was able to swing a special rope swinging rope. Not even with Will Roger's book at hand. I distributed Dr. Wolffe's paper on overhand bends. Willy made a trefoil with my long balloons and sold me a paragliding holiday in France. He also showed a T formed upward pointing aluminium fid. Pieter found a sheet bend in balloons quite interesting, he said something like "vortices". His dutch bi-monthly knotting magazine is doing very well. Pieter made himself useful as an instant standup lecturer. He entertained us with the possibilities of braiding strings and the possibility of connecting them to form a turk's head of 1 string.

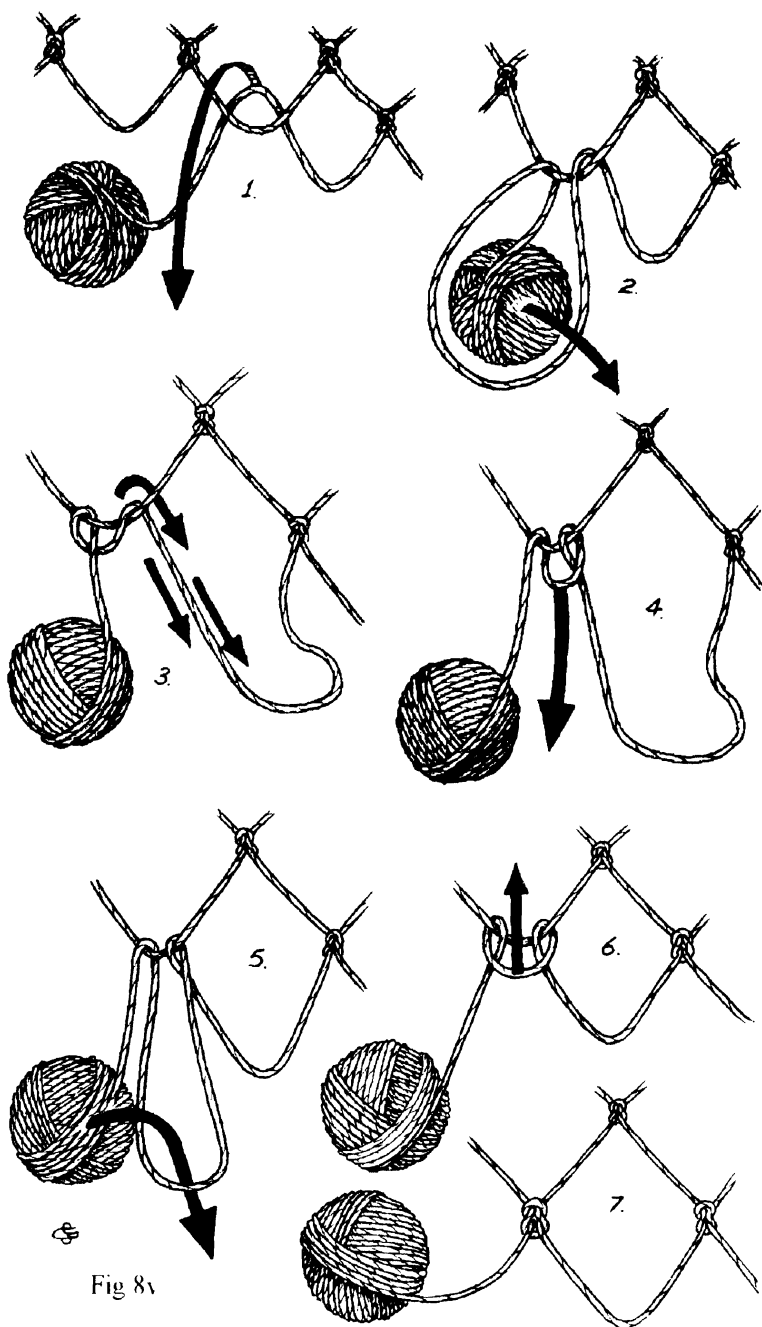


Fig 8v

# STUARTS 'REEF KNOT'

Later in the evening four persistent knotters decided not to wait one year for the next annual meeting. It will be held at the same place on Sunday 12 October 1997 from 1000 to 1700 hr. There will be a tap dancer, lassoer to attract an audience for Pieter's lecture at 14 hrs.

A tip : I just got hold of Microsoft Gif Animator. It makes it easy to show how the knots are being formed. It is a pity Mr Mandeville isn't there any more to use it.

A riddle : It is about our hobby, I'll give clues, so don't read too quickly.

Question : Last summer I was in a place where I wasn't allowed to put one leg over the other.

Where was I ?

Clue 1 : There was much noise

Clue 2 : It was a small place.

Clue 3 There were 8 people around me.

Clue 4 : It was above ground level.

Clue 5 : Religion is involved.

Clue 6 : The people were pulling ropes.

If you don't know it by now, you will never never find it, so

Answer: I was among campanologists. There was foot hitching danger.

Ph. CASTELEYN

*Ed: It is good to get news of Guild branches, this one was sent in on disk. Thank you Philippe.*

## **SPLIT PLY BRAIDING**

by Ken Higgs - Suffolk

An ideal way to make a belt using 3 ply cords. You need cords where the plies will remain firm when they are half untwisted. The only tool required is a crochet hook or, better, a latchet hook as used in homemade carpet making.

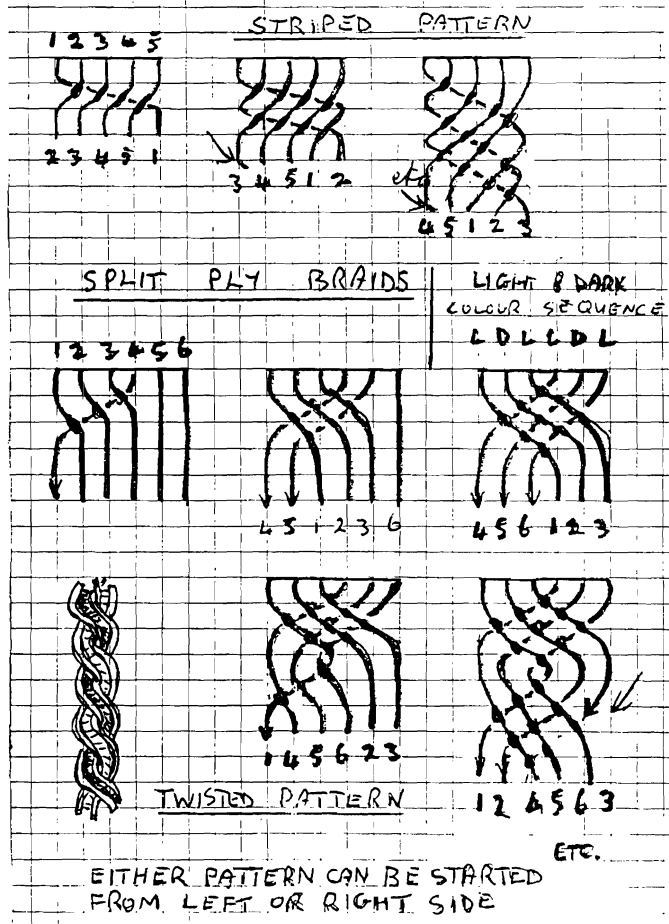
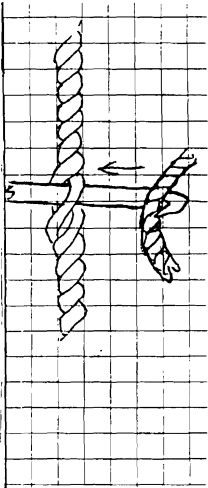
Cut cords  $\frac{1}{4}$  longer than the finished length. This will vary slightly with the intricacy of your pattern. Glue, whip or heat seal all ends.

The process involves one simple action, that of pulling one cord through a single ply of the next cord(s) as per diagram. Patterns are made by the order in which this process is continued. The diagrams show 'striped' and 'twisted' designs.

I first saw this used as a 5" wide camel girth in 3 colours.

The finished product has a 'right' and 'wrong' side to it. In the diagrams the dotted line shows the cord that goes

through the heavy marks on the others. As it is easily unpicked a set of trial cords can be used for several different pattern attempts.





## FROM OUR POSTBAG

*From Ex-President Percy Blandford Warwickshire, England.....*

When I was a young scouter (65 years ago) I campaigned against boys or anyone else learning the so-called common whipping. In those days a scout had to know a whipping (type not specified) as part of the tenderfoot tests.

I argued then, and I still do, that if you put on this whipping tightly, as you should do, you cannot pull the loop through. If you can pull the loop through, the whipping is too slack and will come off. I advocate the West Country whipping in just about all circumstances. Boys, or you, do not need to learn anything else. Every turn is tightened as you go and it is neat as well as secure if made in fine line.

Now I find the authority on knotting (issue 55 page 17) telling us how to make that unsatisfactory thing. Sorry

Woody! I may have been born in the West Country, but that is nothing to do with it.

*Ed: Does this continue the question of what should the modern '6 basic knots' for Scouts be?*



*From Richard Thomas Hertfordshire, England*

Whilst spending some time on the Thames tug 'General VIII', I have seen frequent use of a modified form of the Bargee's Eye Splice (p29 Shell Combined Book of Knots and Ropework).

In the version used, the tail is brought down after the tuck and threaded through the initial overhand knot as additional security.

Richard Hopkins and I have searched through Ashley and other books in his extensive library but cannot find this particular variation.

Does anyone know if there is an "official" name? Has anyone any comments?

*From Darren Samphier dsamphier@g-cisc.demon.co.uk off the Internet to Gordon Perry <gordon@g-cisc.demon.co.uk> and hard copied to us via post.*

Thought you may be interested in what's happening in Melbourne, Australia with regards to the IGKT.

In June I wrote to the guild members stationed in Melbourne with the recommendation that we begin regular meetings. Seven members were written to and five responded. One had moved to New Zealand, one getting past attending meetings and one whose interests (high ropes courses and the like) lay along different lines to what I was proposing. So in July three members met at the Polly Woodside Maritime Museum together with "Gypsy", the resident knotting guru (no amount of persuasion can get him to join the Guild) and discussed our future. Briefly we decided to meet every two months to learn of each other and attempt to get together on an outing basis in between meetings. Like a lot of knot tyers we have gained a lot of book knowledge but need to be

shown how to practically apply this. This is where *Gypsy* has stepped in to help.

To date we have had three meetings now with *Gypsy* showing/teaching us how he makes keyrings and turks heads. We have had a trip to the local science museum and viewed two magnificent knotboards created by a Petty Officer Boxsell in the 1930's. We have also spent some time meeting with the riggers of the replica of the schooner *Enterprise*. This schooner carried the party who discovered the site for Melbourne. When finished in 1997 it is intended to re-enact the voyage from Hobart to Melbourne each year. Erik Bjorgson is the rigger and has incited us to go and help him whenever we wish over the next couple of months.

We are setting up some visits to local rope makers, one of which still has an original rope walk and tarring tanks. Also, recently, the Old Melbourne Gaol, where Ned Kelly was hung, has discovered a book/diary of the executioner and some original hanging ropes. We have been invited to

view these. The book contains details of types of ropes and how they were made. Could be interesting.

If any Guild Members are coming to Melbourne please ask them to contact us; we'd love to get together to kibbutz about knots.



*From Bill Smothers, Illinois, USA*

Another year! Doesn't seem possible. I enjoy KM but I have troubles with most of the articles. They are difficult, usually impossible, for me to understand. I blame this on my limited ability and interest. I recommend an article such as the bell rope that was described several issues ago at least once a year.

I know there are no end of books that describe knots. Could KM provide a list and synopses of books that describe and/or illustrate items such as the bell rope noted above?

*(Ed: The problem is, anyone of sufficient skill and confidence will write such articles for a book of their own. The odd sin-*

*gle article on 'How To' is wonderful to see. I will speak to the Guild Librarian or the Supplies Secretary about compiling some short book reviews into a series of short articles.)*



*From Ettrick Thomson - Suffolk - England*

The letter from Tom Hall in KM55 refers to an article by Patrick Ducey on Spherical Turk's Heads in KM43; I cannot find it in KM43. But the various Ashley knots referred to make it clear that the Spherical Turk's Heads are basically the same as the Double Disc Knots of my article 'Disc Knots' in KM6 (January 84); the name was chosen on the strength of Ashley #2232, which can cover a disc. The Double Disc Knot can equally well cover a sphere.

The list of Ashley Disc Knots in my article has four in common with Tom Hall's list, #2216, #2218, #2219 and #2220 but each of us includes knots that the other omits.

*From Jim Doyle - Salem - Mass  
- USA*

Just a letter to thank the IGKT for the material that has been sent to me, all very interesting.

World War II, 1943 was my last time in the UK, I was a crew member of the USS Ranger CV4 an American aircraft carrier, as part of the British Home Fleet stationed at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands.

The fleet was under the command of Sir Admiral Bruce Fraser RN. We made a raid with the Home fleet, operation 'leader' on the German held town of Bodo, Norway (4/10/43).

My history with knots started in 1939 when my dad bought me a small 14' sail boat. With this boat he also gave me a great book from the UK 'Knots, Splices and Fancy Work' by Chas L Spencer. My dad stated, at the time of presenting this book to me, "son you should learn to splice and take care of all the lines you have on your boat."

After learning to splice all my lines on the boat, I started to learn more of the other great

'Fancy Work' in Mr Spencer's book, and found it a wonderful form of art. I am now 73 years old and still think its a great hobby.

Can any of you in the IGKT help me locate a particular cord that I want. It is polished cotton or linen called 'Belfast Cord', used for macramé work, belts, handbags and other fancy work. Years ago it was sold in the USA by a company called P C Herwig Co Brkln, NY, they have gone out of business. If any one can help please could they send me samples and costs.

A few years ago I went aboard a US Army vessel (Tank carrier). While aboard I noticed the fancy rope work on rails leading up the ladder to the bridge. I had to ask a crew member how the rope work was made, as I could not figure it out. The crew member stated they had made this rope work by making the 'Chain Plait' also called the 'Drummer's Plait'. When the plait is made long enough, it was wrapped around the rails with the flat side down and pushed tight together, then a couple of Turk's Heads one at each end. The exterior has

many knobs, which give you some very interesting work, plus a wonderful grip.

*Ed: Jim's address for any information you can help him with: 41 Columbus Avenue, Salem, Mass, 01970 5911, USA.*



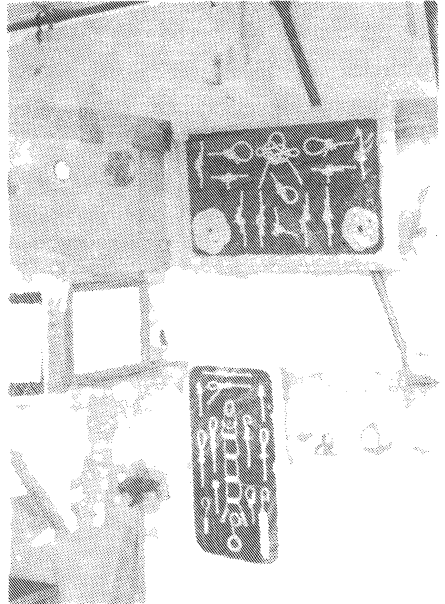
*From Jens Gunne Johansen - Porsgrunn - Norway.*

A very late report from the Wooden Boat Festival in Risør August 1996.

A friend asked me if I would be interested to go with him to the Wooden Boat Festival in Risør. I said yes and took as my partners two model boat makers.

On 8 August, in horrible weather, I installed myself ready for the opening of the show. I had worked very hard since I had known I was coming at Christmas and made key-rings, knotboards, lamps, mats, fenders and so on. When the opening shot sounded on Friday, the sky went clear and we had a good time the rest of the festival. Our view from the tent was very good, we could look at all the shiny wooden boats that were floating in the harbour.

People in Norway seem to be more and more interested in ropework, although it has to be good quality and it must be made of natural fibre. These



few days gave me a lot of experience in what people like, when their hobby is wooden boats.

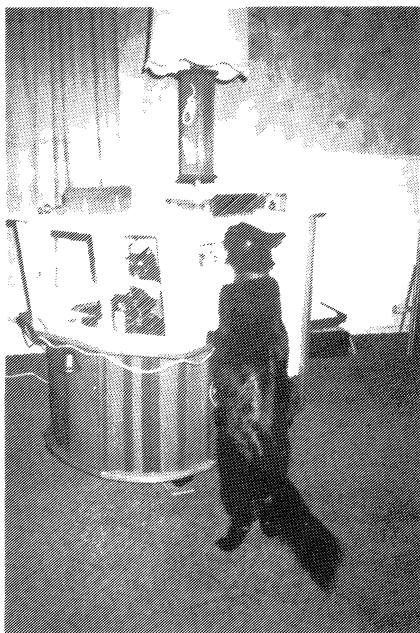
Best wishes to all my knotting friends



*From Wally Scott and Blanche Sawyer - Niagara Falls - USA*

Some months ago, the 'Thump Mat' knot appeared in the newsletter. I tied one of these, which sat on the coffee table for a time while I wondered what to do with it. I sub-

sequently used it as a base for a table lamp and made a pair of same. I also made a wheel-house table, to which I have added some ropework, including of course a monkey's fist bell pull. A picture is enclosed with our cat, Captain Fred, examining the finished project.



*From Stuart Grainger - Witney - England*

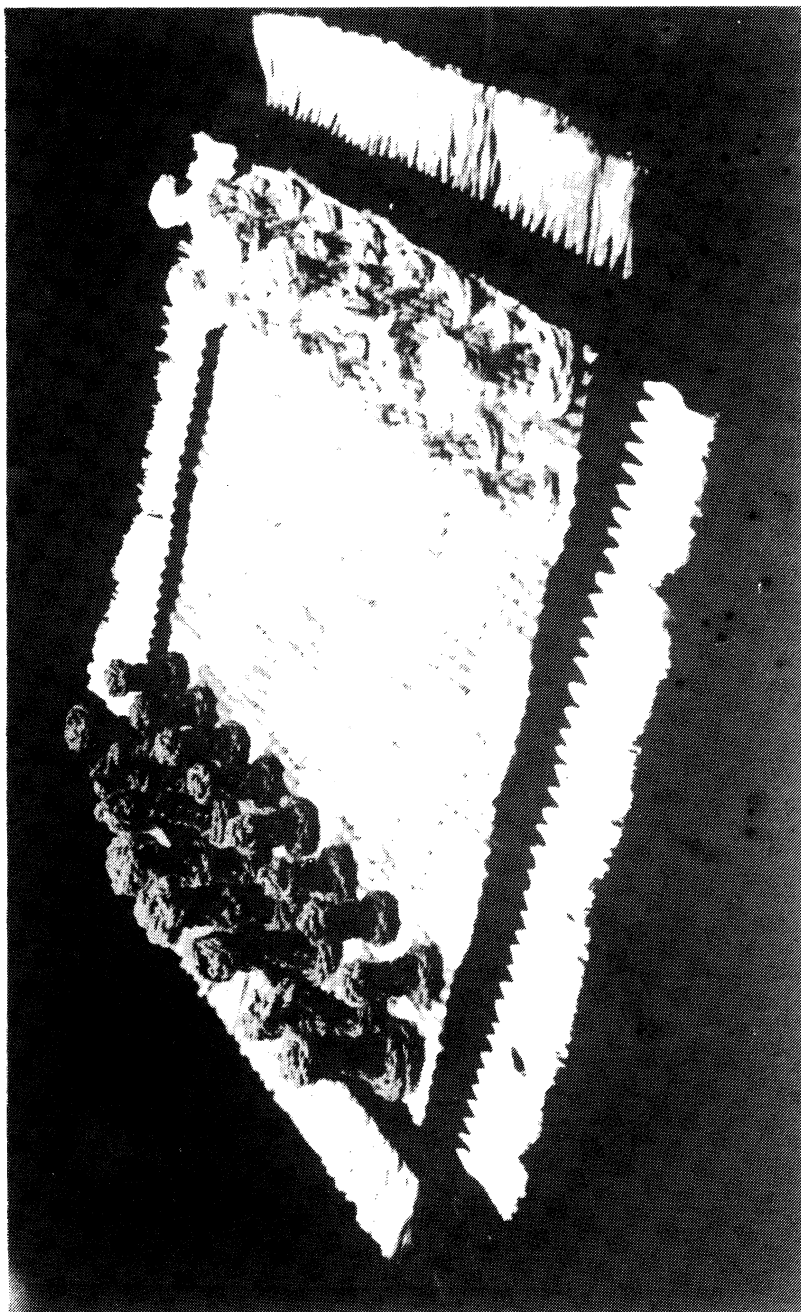
Great minds think alike! further to Geoffrey Budworth's letter concerning the chess set made by Richard Hodge in New

Zealand, I enclose two photographs of a chess set which I made for an exhibition in 1978. One of these photos appeared later in 'Popular Crafts' magazine. It is particularly interesting to see that Richard Hodge and I, presumably independently, both made the chess board in Cavondoli work - otherwise known as Clove Hitching. My chess men were of a rather simpler design, worked in sisal and hemp and my board was made, I think, of jute cord.



*From Rolf Kvicklund - Karlsborg -*

About the IGKT and the issue of a Guild HQ. It seems to me that owning or renting a place will be too expensive and laborious. Wouldn't it be possible to co-operate with some institution within the sphere? There must be museums with rope and knotting exhibitions. I saw one in Appledore, Devon. It had a small section, 'Hands on Knotting in Garden' where visitors could try to tie knots and there was a booklet on the subject. In Wivenhoe, Essex, I visited the 'Nottage Institute'. There were



Stuart's chess set made in 1978

a lot of information on the sea, ships and rope work. In the booklet 'Rope, Twine and Net Making' four places are pointed out where ropework is to be found.

I suppose there must be a lot of museums, institutes and companies, even more than the ones mentioned in the booklet, which may be worth contacting for possible co-operation.



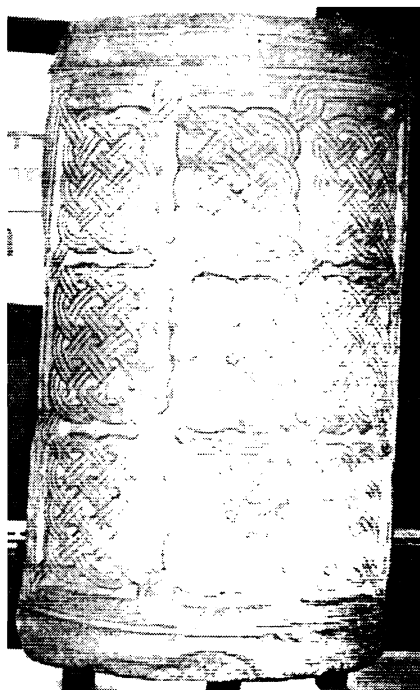
*From John Heapy - Cheshire - England*

Re: KM54 'Knots and Splices a cautionary tale' I bought a copy of Knots and Splices by Jeff Toghill from the Maritime Museum, Liverpool. This was my first knot book, I was disappointed to note even with my limited knowledge on knots, a number of errors. The worrying aspect was that the information contained could put people in danger, as was pointed out by Tim Field. Well done Tim. The books I would recommend for beginners are: 'The Knot Book' by Geoff Budworth and 'The Complete Guide to Knots' by Mario Bigon and Guido Re-gazzioni.

*Ed: Please do send in a Members Profile, we look forward to receiving it.*



*From an obvious man of few words a nevertheless very interesting picture of a pillar from a Roman Villa in Lombardy now in Citadel Museum in Milan, the man of few words who sent*



*the picture is Dennis Murphy:*





*From Tom Long - Norfolk -  
England*

In May I had a wonderful reunion and sailed once again on the French Yawl that I joined in 1941, having been taken off the HMS Punjabi in Scotland and sent to the Helford River in Cornwall. Soon afterwards I found myself dressed as a French Fisherman catching Tunny fish in Biscay and then taking part in many SOE operations in North Africa and the Adriatic. The French Yawl was a wonderful sea boat, very similar to the Brixham Sailing Vessels only she drew about 2' more aft than them and would sail very close to the wind. When I left her in 1945 deep down I had always hoped to see 'Mutin' again. To sail her back to her wartime base at Helford with 4 wartime shipmates really put the icing on the cake. We had a week of VIP treatment, the highlight being at Flam-bards Theme Park, Helston where a permanent 'Cornish Secret Navy' exhibition was opened. Some French SOE were brought over. After some tree planting and a very fine meal, I was given a Navel Offi-

cer's sword and invited to cut the large celebration cake.

*Ed: this must be the dream of many an old sailor, to sail his old ship again.*



*From Gordon Perry's Internet page (I think it counts as post)...*

*From           Jessie           Coleman  
<coleman@hiway.net>*

This regards the Turk's Head knots. It is often written that the number of bights and the number of leads must be relatively prime to each other. That is, the two numbers must not contain any common factors. Just below the paragraph for his knot #1314, Ashley list many combinations of possible and impossible bights and leads for Turk's Head (TH) knots. Ashley states that these knots are those that may be tied with one cord. He stated that other combinations may be tied as multi strand knots. However, I have not seen this discussed in his book.

Ashley called his rule 'the Law of Common Divisor'. I have developed two things. First, I have a method for creating drawings for simple TH

knots, such as #1306 or #2215 and making them more complex by adding as many leads as one desires.

These drawings have lead me to my second idea, a generalisation of the Law of Common Divisor. One may tie a TH knot with as many leads and bights as desired. However, the number of cords required to tie the knot equals the greatest common divisor of the number of bights and the number of leads.

For example, if one desired to tie a TH knot with nine leads and six bights, three cords are required. Six has divisors of 1,2,3 and 6. Nine has divisors of 1,3, and 9. The greatest common divisor of these two sets is three. Sorry for the elementary regression. Anyway, three cords of three colours may be used for a very decorative knot. I tie them in red, white and blue.

If the number of bights and the number of leads are relatively prime and 'have no common divisor', they really have a common divisor of one and my 'Rule of the Greatest Common Divisor' becomes

Ashley's 'Law of the Common Divisor'.

Is this 'new' rule really new and does the Guild have any interest in this sort of thing?



*Another E.Mail from Terry Ridings*<tridings@raven.bc.c>

Some feedback to Knotting Matters... Joe Schmidbuer's 'Bowline on a Bight' KM54, is the Angler's Loop Ashley #1017, also Brion Toss's tugboat (or flying) Bowline is basically the same knot only it is a mirror image. Life just goes round in circles!



*From Dr Ian Crabbe - Essex - England*

As a new Guild member I would appreciate drawings and instructions on the use of 'The Dolly Knot'. This was referred to in KM54 in Owen Nuttall's article reference 'Wagon Drivers have for years used half a Sheepshank as a Dolly Knot and still use it today.' My brother Jim has seen this knot in use and has requested I find how to tie it. As yet I have only

a few books on knot tying and I will appreciate another guild member's assistance. I thoroughly enjoyed May's AGM and hope to attend again this year.



*From Gary Sessions - Texas - USA*

I was very interested in Peiter van de Grind's letter in KM53 concerning covering knots. My solution to a similar problem uses knot #2217 from Ashley as the beginning part of a lanyard, not the end of it. The knot is laid as per the instructions and then formed around the object one wishes to cover. Continue to follow the lead as many times as required to cover the core. Then, before working the knot snug, tuck a separate piece of line under the covering strands at the point where the strands emerge from the knot. This piece is tucked in such a way that it forms a loop and both ends are stuck under strands of the covering knot. In this way there are four emerging ends to use to form a sinnet around the loop. With four strands the sin-

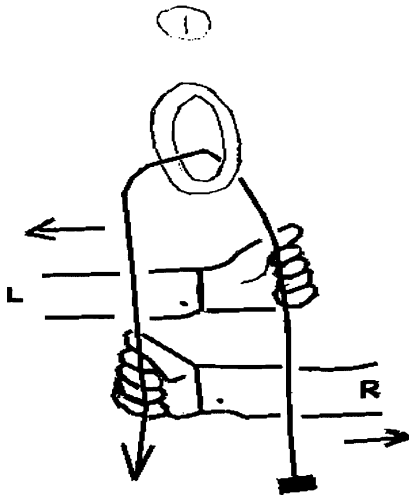
net can be terminated with a double Wall and Crown Knot. A fifth strand can be added and the sinnet terminated with a Star Knot. In any case, of course, the sinnet is terminated leaving enough of the loop to attach the finished lanyard to whatever it needs to be attached to. This will work with either #2217 or #2218.



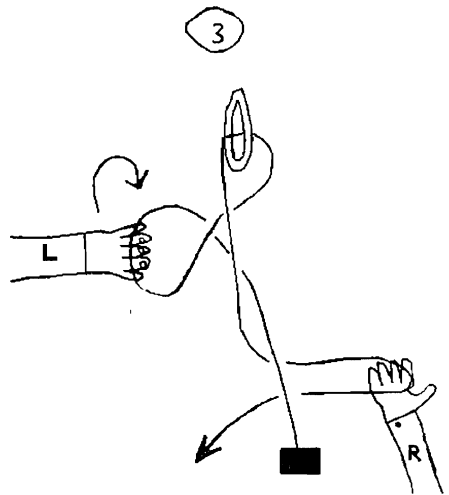
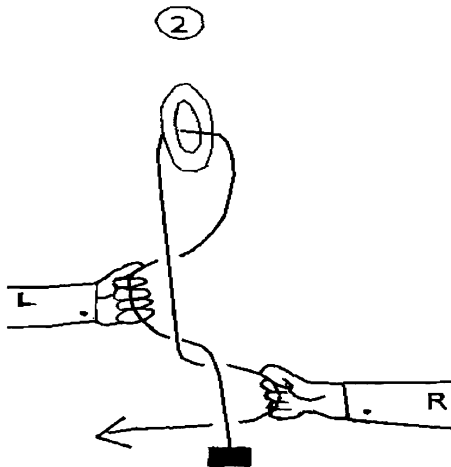
*From David Scarisbrick - Pennsylvania - USA*

I thought other members might be interested in a knot which I recently came across while talking to a friend. Whenever people hear that I am interested in knots and knot tying (I'm a psychologist by training) they always want me to demonstrate some knots. In return, I often will ask if they know any knots. Recently, I was showing someone the Highwayman's Hitch which I learned from the Knot Book by Geoffrey Budworth. This friend is an ironworker by training and taught me a quick release knot that is similar to the Highwayman's Hitch but in fact seems more secure to both of us. It is called the 'Speir Knot'.

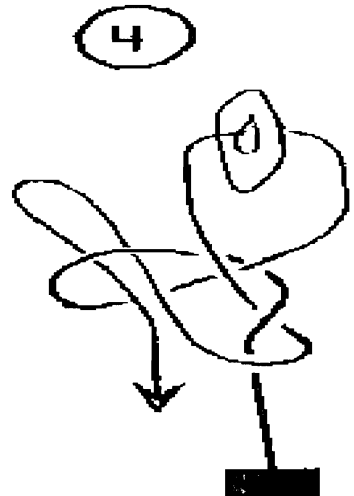
This is my first attempt at drawing a knot and I hope fellow members will be kind.



*Grab with each hand palms up.  
Bring each hand across midline*



*Turn Left hand over creating 2 loops.*



*Bring right hand bight over midline rope and through loop, draw tight.*

# Bridgwater 97

The International Guild of Knot Tyers  
15th Annual General Meeting  
and  
Weekend of Knots  
on board  
T.S Blake



SHORT SPLICE



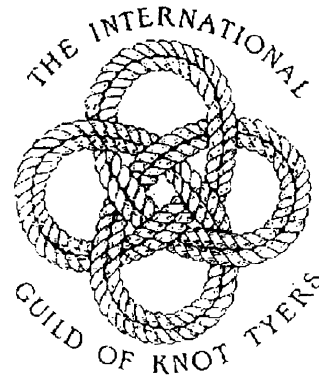
MAN ROPE KNOT



EYE SPLICE



BACK SPLICE



**IGKT 15th AGM  
BRIDGWATER 97  
on board  
T.S. BLAKE  
9th - 11th MAY**

Old friends and old situations. Most AGM weekends are like this, arriving anxious to find out where I'm sleeping and which way the bar is. Going around the hall between groups of two or three saying hello to every one and watching all the knots, tricks and banter, leads to the less hardy going to bed early, i.e. before midnight. Charlie Smith and Willeke van der Ham are again the last to feel the weight of the wee hours and crash out for three or four hours sleep before some bright spark starts moving the gear onto their stand at seven in the early **AM!** Between instructions on how to do the 'single stroke' netting technique and the 'LONNIE EXPRESS' rumbling through the building all night no one gets much sleep, especially because we can't figure how to turn some of the lights out and

still be able to get to the toilets without tripping over. All is forgiven after one of Dan Hillman's wonderful cooked breakfasts. The day roars into life as the crowd begin to gather, more old friends, Hugs and Hi's all around.

Des Pawson opened the business meeting and asked 'Spud' Murphy to explain the domestic arrangements and a little about the venue. Training Ship Blake is a Sea Cadet establishment for the training of young people to the disciplined life aboard ship. This fine large building was ideal for us. The main hall is big enough for the one hundred or so members and the firing range makes an excellent rope walk with room for all the stalls and demonstrations going on. Dan Hillman, our cook from this morning, is in charge of the junior cadets and will be the named member of the Guild for his Cadets.

The new post card, now available from the supplies Secretary was an idea of Spuds and he was presented the original art work, mounted and well framed as a 'Thank You' for his continuing efforts for the Guild.

The only condition was, he is not allowed to put it for auction or raffle to raise money!! We know you of old.

Secretary's report began by Nigel saying he only had one page to read. Ignoring the comments from the members about that not stopping him before, he points out that this will be our first meeting under a Labour Government and perhaps there will be some surprises in our elections too. Labour have just had a landslide victory in the British Parliament after 17 years of Conservative Control.

Des Pawson exercises his privilege as outgoing president to nominate the next president. The president of the Guild should be someone who is known outside of the Guild as a knot tyer and help our desire to be taken seriously as an authority and our professional standing with outside organisations. Robert Chisnall is a well known and greatly respected Knot Tyer, Rock Climber, leading member of MENSA in Canada, and holds the Canadian record for 'Single Handed, Two Finger and One Finger' chin-ups. A

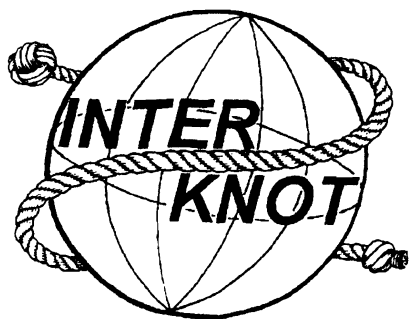
letter from Geoffrey Budworth, who could not be here today, in support of Robert was read out.

While the votes are being counted Nigel continues with his report. 750 membership handbooks were posted, most of the new members



are coming from interest generated on the Internet. They are Riggers, Lace Makers, Spinners, Weavers, Dyers and Braiders. The Guild is mentioned and advertised in the Braiders News Letters. Geoffrey Budworth can't be here because he is watching the arrival of the ENDEAVOUR. It only happens once every 200 years and he is confident that there will be another AGM next year. Fair enough.

There are a few new branches. The Pacific Branch (on the West Coast of USA). Lets hope



that KM will get some information or a copy of the first Branch News Letter. Most people over here would be interested in hearing more about the over seas branches. Paul Evens (Tyne & Wear) has started the Merchant Navy Branch and would like to be

contacted by any members world wide interested in joining this branch.

The official Guild flag was unveiled (sorry no picture or drawings). A survey of what size people would be willing to buy was made before ordering as stock for the supplies secretary. The results were mixed and most people wanted to know the sizes and costs for each size. Ken Yalden will get more information from the manufactures and submit the information to KM when available. But overall everyone was enthusiastic about having a flag available to buy. Ken also reminded everyone to look out for the INTERKNOT information coming out soon.

Terry Barns is still looking to catalogue all the Guilds property. If you have any bits and pieces of knots, knot boards, books, tools or anything belonging to the Guild, please contact Terry.

There has been no response to the constitutional matters raised in KM 54 (page 7) so no discussion is necessary. Supplies are going well, we have a new Post Card for sale. There are



new books; 'The Fender Book' by Colin Jones (price £9.95 + p&p), 'Concerning Crosses' by Brian Field (price £1.50 + p&p), and hot off the presses is 'Knotted Fabrics' by Stuart Grainger (price £9 no p&p in UK) published the 1st of this month.

There is a new instructional video 'Knots Made Easy' by Richard Phelan (price £10 plus £2 p&p) and was previewed in the lounge bar, soon to be available. Richard is taking orders for delivery in June.

Membership certificates have been suggested and designed but more discussions needed by the membership about how, when and to whom they are to be given, sold, issued or presented.

A letter from Australia commented that our knotting supplies are manufactured for other purposes,

and used by us as best as we can. He has made various sizes of twisted cord - hard laid - left and right hand for use in knot tying, knot boards and model making. Everyone had a good look at and a feel of it. It really looks the part of a large, three stranded rope, but in miniature. What did the membership think? Would something like this sell? If a large enough stock could be brought over and a more local, distributor could be found, would it be popular? What do you think. Let Nigel know.

The many post cards from



members are interesting as they show some of the wonderful sea craft worked on by our members.



The council have voted themselves travelling expenses to and from council meetings. It was decided, since this would mean an expenditure of money that it should go to the membership for approval. Des Pawson outlined the question as follows. As council members, we are paying out of pocket much more for our membership than anyone else and doing the work of organising and making decisions for the Guild. Surly this is

unreasonable. This council could, on average, claim a maximum of about £1000 per year in expenses if we all trav-

elled alone and claimed for each meeting. However since most of this particular council travel together, at most only 4 claims could be made. This would be to pay only reasonable expenses, no flights from the states or continent allowed. The only objection from the floor was that there was no previous consultation and this was being pushed through (Railroaded) hastily. There was no second for this point and there were very

few votes against the motion. The council are allowed to claim any out of pocket expenses anyway but we felt it would be more open to ask the opinion of the membership at the AGM about this specific item.

The increase in subs by £2 was the next topic. Nigel pointed out that the subs had been held for seven years and before that it had been raised two years in a row, because it hadn't been put up by enough, early enough. This rise, taking effect in Jan 98 should be the last for several years. It was proposed that the financial report should be read before we vote. Bruce Turley read the report and discussed the projections distilled from it. After some discussion the proposed rise was passed and the financial report was also accepted.

The next 1/2 AGM is on 11 OCT 97 in Chester on the Albert Docks, being organised by David Walker, or at least in the North West of England. The next AGM on 9 May 98 will be at Portsmouth. The following 1/2 AGM will be somewhere in the midlands, to be announced.

The candidates for the Council were read out and stood up to be recognised. Frank Harris was nominated from the floor and before the vote was collected he stood up to give a short bio-pic as his details were not on the voting form like the others who were nominated in time to be included on the ballot. Your new Council is; Terry Barns, Brian Field, Charlie Smith, Bruce Turley, Dave Walker, Jeff Wyatt and Ken Yalden with Nigel Harding - Secretary and Linda Turley - Treasurer.

During the count we were treated to two members profiles from John Noone and Charlie Tyrrell.

John Noone joined the Sea Cadets at age 11 and then joined the Navy at 16 for ten years service. He then became involved in knot tying through an other Seaman who had a copy of Ashley's, then he was hooked. He heard about the IGKT from listening to Radio 2. He enjoys all types of knots and doesn't have any time for anything else.

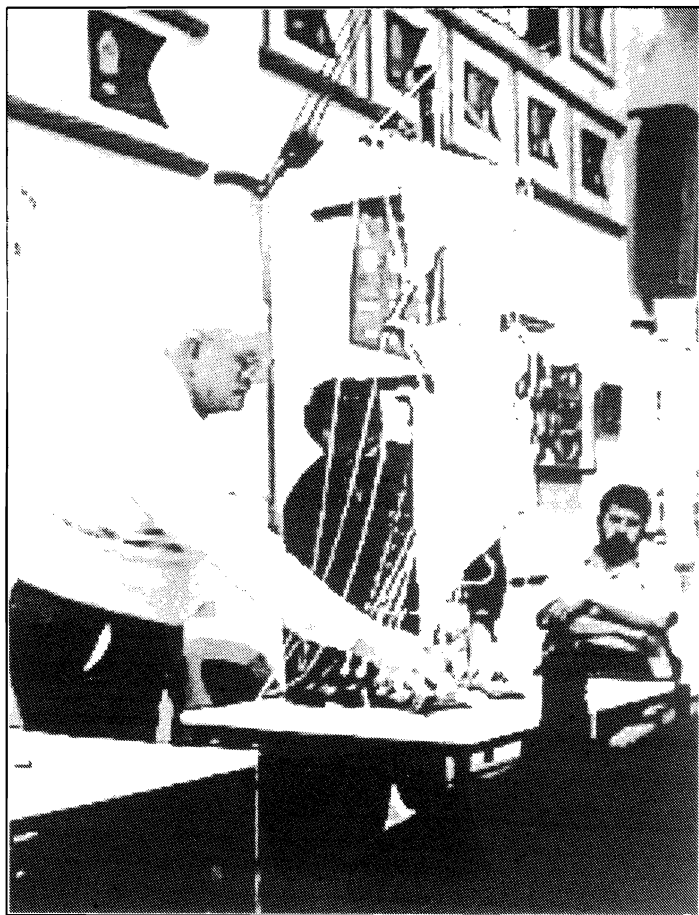
Charlie Tyrrell become interested in knot tying through

Scouts. He became more interested when he first met Charlie Smith at a W.I.N.G.S. event at Windsor. He now teaches knotting to Scouts and does Turkeys in between Cricket, Shooting and Hill Walking.

After an excellent lunch, Dan Hillman and (eventually) Clive Woodrow, gave us a spell binding talk and demonstration

of the Main Mast Rigging using a wonderful, fully working scale model of a three sail mast. Our attention was complete and the tension was immense, even getting coffee was done quietly. So everyone could listen. They were naming, describing and demonstrating the ropes to pull or ease off to get the sail up or down, turned into or out of the wind or furled back up and reefed to the mast. Everyone was interested and I just wish I had a tape recording of that talk and what a teaching aid.

Richard Hopkins was next to give a talk, strapped in a harness and hanging from the ceiling, about Rope Working, and Industrial Rope Working Techniques as opposed to amateur climbers and covers Rope ac-



cess techniques are used where it is impractical or too costly to put up scaffolding or drill holes on a cathedral ceiling.

## THE STALLS

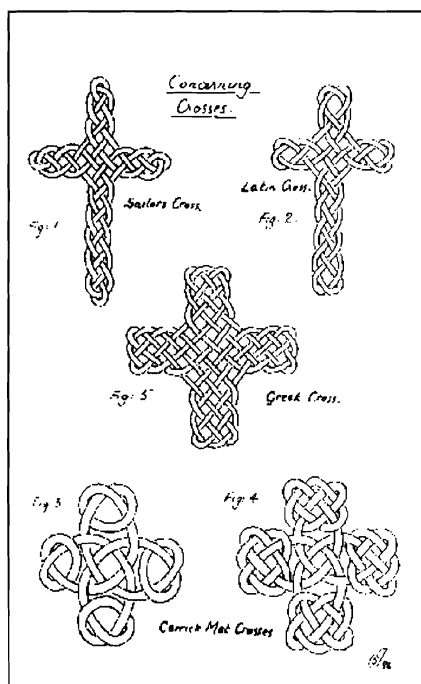
The stalls were set up in the firing range where they were very busy all day. The first table has a tee-shirt on which you are asked to write a birthday wish for 'CINDY' who is 21 today. Happy birthday Cindy.

Next table has no name or attendant but is covered with Macramé hooks made from hardwood moulding and broom handles, and covered needle cases which Margaret has been after me to make for her! He had some key rings and knot boards of decorative knots, good show.

Brian Field had his new book 'Concerning Crosses' on the next table. This wonderful little booklet of 23 photocopied A5 pages including an insert, is a snip at £2. There are seven designs in the Celtic idiom, together with instructions by which they may be tied in the hand. Demonstrations by the author was available on the day.

Harold Scott's booklet, "On Various Cruciform turksheads'

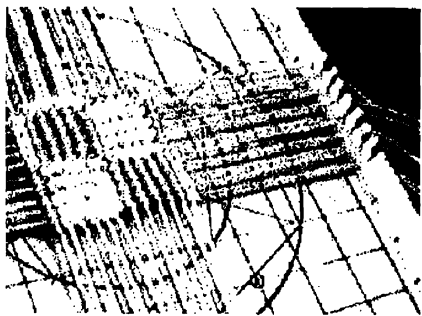
was available and although I meant to buy one, I got distracted and didn't. So I will get a copy and describe it another



time. It looked an interesting book though.

I did get a copy of Stuart Grainger's brand new book, only printed this month (May), autographed by the author of course. 'Knotted Fabrics' is an A5 hard backed book of 96 pages with 115 of Stuart's fine quality line drawings and 48 black and white photographs for only £9 and no P&P in the UK. The title 'Knotted Fabrics', re-

fers to the almost 'textile; coverings that are 'woven' directly onto the object to protect, cover and decorate. Mats, rugs, cushion covers and boat or barge protectors are also easily made using the same easily followed directions on an easily made frame.



The frame, with a demonstration piece hung on it, was there for you to have a go on,. This takes half hitching another 'generation' of versatility. Also there was the Crown model of the Millennium Project for Cirencester's Coronation Display. It was on display but you were allowed to touch. See page 23 of this issue for more details and a photo.

Ernie Bluck displayed his key rings, bell pulls, dog leads and general splicing. I hate people like him. non of my stuff looks anything like as well made and beautiful as any of his. For golf-

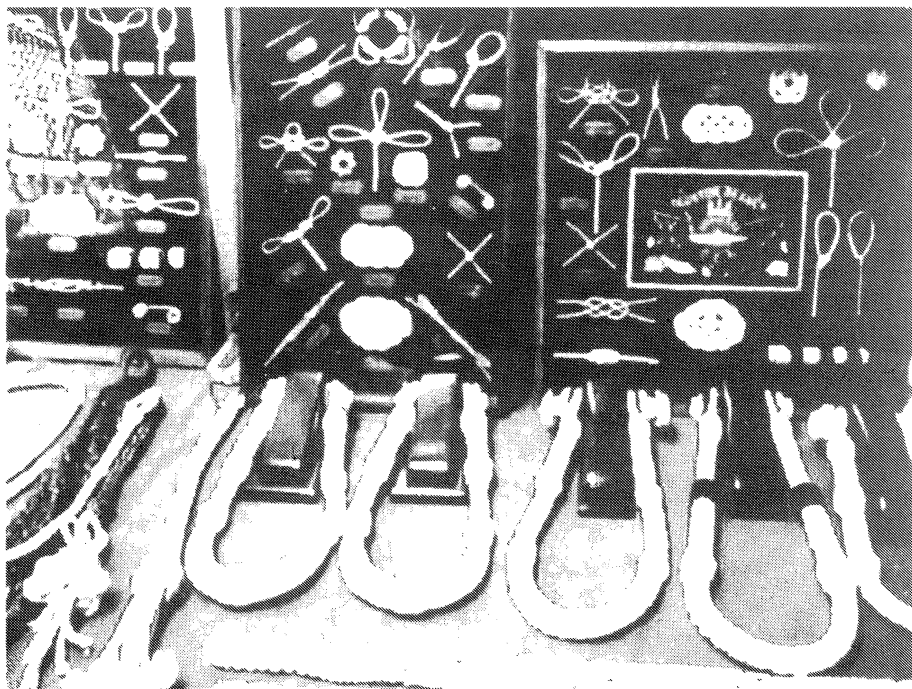
ers there in a 'Stroke Counter' that felt so good in the hand, I just wanted to pull the beads down, one at the time for the rest of the day. Ernie was demonstrating how easy it is to make a Sailmakers whipping. I saw him demonstrate it to several people who went away very happy with their pieces of whipped 3/4 inch, three strand manila rope. He showed me how to hank the sewing lengths (about 2 metres each) so that a single length could be pulled out and used without tangles or creating a loose bundle. Thanks. All the sewing lengths were middled over a dowel. A single strand was Larksheaded onto the loop of lengths to create a loop to hang the bundle from, then the two ends were wound in opposite directions until tied in two overhand knots at the bottom. When the bundle begins to go loose, just tug the ends again to tighten.

On table six was Ron Long from Manchester demonstrating fender making and how to make Thump Mats. His large table was covered, with large and small fenders of all shapes. This

is one of the many stalls that you could spend all day.

Next was the Charlie Smith Rope Walk and this is another place I could spend a whole weekend. Charlie has made two large and very heavy, (I know there heavy because I carried the beggars out to the car on Sunday) rope making cranks. Both were mounted on heavy wooden frames which allowed you to stand on the platform to keep the tension that builds up

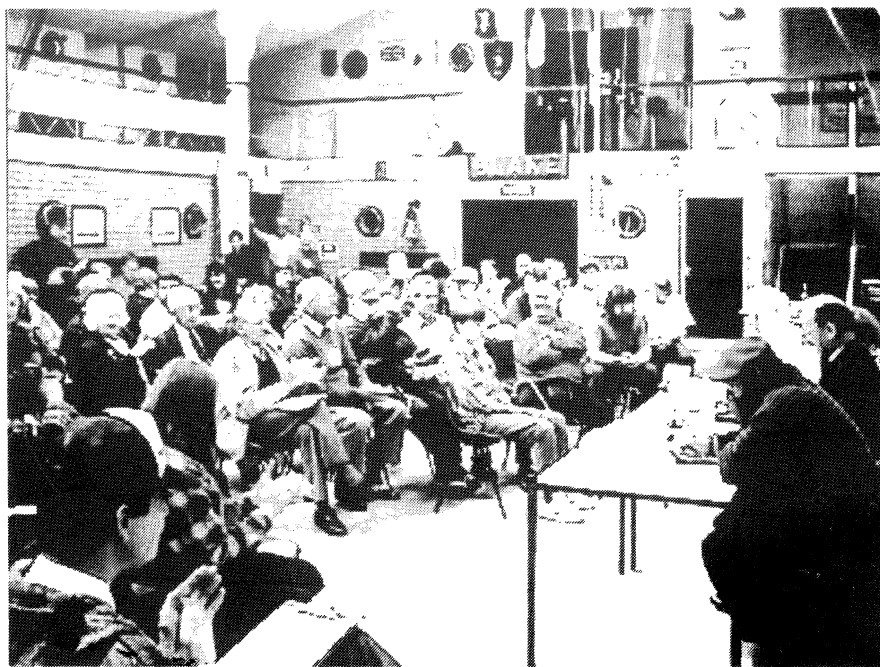
in the strands as they are twisted. There were some good, hard laid ropes made from different materials, but there were also some accidents from experiments that went wrong. The accidents were probably most memorable because of the discussion of what went wrong, that followed. The toilet paper rope was the hardest to try to recover materials from for use later on if it went wrong!



Don Woods from the Essex branch had a display and there was one from Geoffrey Budworth as well. Jeff Wyatt had the library display, making available all the books donated to the Guild. He also had his regular display of crosses, large

knot and a star knot on the bottom and a large Blue and Gold Matt. Also displaying was Bob Stroud from Dover with nets, string bags, long turksheads, large bellpulls and some Japanese Priests Knots.

Colin Grundy from Coventry



bellpulls and chest beackets, lanyards and covered bottles. Standing around with his rope around his neck, everyone was welcome to a little "How did you do that then?"

Terry Weeks from Weymouth displayed bell pulls with a heel

displayed Fire Brigade manuals and photo albums. Note his article on Fire Brigade Safety Ropes (page 9). He also had some the most beautifully covered walking sticks.

The Dutch contingent brought several pieces of excellent work



including dainty little 'Bellpull' keyrings, larger versions and in the Monkeys Fist shape, knotted Butterflies and other animals. I bought the first three issues of the Dutch version of Knotting Matters called Het Knoopeknauwertjé. This is a great little A5 news letter with plain white cover with the line drawings of different knots on the front of each issue. One or two of the articles I recognised as articles sent to KM in English but of course now published in the authors own language. I'm so glad that these fine articles were also submitted to the English version KM.

The rest of the day whizzed by so quickly with the auction

of the supplies left from the Harry Asher collection. The raffle is always a great success, well supported by everyone after the wonderful mountain of prizes given in. The sit down meal was a well served, tasty and a happy occasion. We retired to the bar as the DAY TRIPPERS dissolved away, a few at the time, over the evening, leaving the overnighers to settle into another late night.

Sunday morning was clearing up, breakfast, more clearing up and lots of good bye's until next time. A good weekend was had by all and we leave with grateful thanks to the Cadets and Officers of T.S. Blake for making us so welcome.



# INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

*Calendar of events - 1997 (as at July 1997)*

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT	TELEPHONE
7/8/9 August	Clifford Ashley Retrospective/Commemorative	Maritime Museum, New Bedford, Massachussetts, USA	Des Pawson Des Pawson	01476 690 090 01476 690 090
23/24/25 August	Heritage Afloat	Chatham, Kent	George Aldridge	0181 778 4050
23/24 August	Leeds Canal Festival	Leeds, Yorkshire	David Pearson	0113 257 2689
6/7 September	Huddersfield Canal Festival	Huddersfield, Yorkshire	David Pearson	0113 257 2689
7/8 September	Hull Shanty Festival		Des Pawson	01476 690 090
16 September	IGKT Yorkshire Branch Meeting	The Beulah Hotel, Tong Rd, Farnley, Leeds 12	David Pearson	0113 257 2689
11 Oct	IGKT Half-yearly Meeting	Chester	David Walker Des Pawson	01244 682117 01476 690 090
9 May 1998	16th IGKT AGM	to be advised	Des Pawson	01476 690 090
<b>CONTINUAL EVENTS</b>				
2nd Sunday in March	Essex Branch Bi-monthly meeting	Motorboat Museum, Pitsea, Essex	Don Woods	01708 229178
	Exhibition by David Davenport	Swedish Maritime Museum, Stockholm	Des Pawson	01476 690 090
<u>Events in Portugal</u> (telephone for confirmation)				
All year (except Mondays & holidays)	Museo da Marinha (Navy Museum) (permanent museum with shop)	Mostiero dos Jeronimos, Belem, Lisbon		00351 1 3620019
Saturdays (all year)	Feira da Ladra (a Lisbon Fair)	near the Arch of S.Vicente Church, Lisbon	Joachim Escudeiro	00351 1 9141222

## MORE EVENTS REQUIRED, PLEASE

Don't forget to let me know about knotting events you are involved with, or are aware of, for inclusion in future Knotting Calenders. There must be lots more going on. Guild Members and Branch Secretaries, please let me know about meetings and events in your area so that visiting knotters can meet like-minded souls. Advice of overseas events is also most welcome.

Jeff Wyatt  
91 Luton Road  
Dunstable, Beds  
LU5 4LW  
Tel: 01582 664504 (Ansaphone)

# GUILD SUPPLIES

## I.G.K.T. BOOK PRICE LIST 1995

ITEM	PRICE
<b>THE KNOT BOOK</b> Geoffrey Budworth	£2.50
<b>MUCH ADO ABOUT KNOTTING (The 1st 10 years)</b> Geoffrey Budworth	£2.50*
<b>BREASTPLATE DESIGNS</b> Brian FIELD	£2.50
<b>TURKSHEADS THE TRADITIONAL WAY</b> Eric Franklin	£1.50*
<b>NYLON NOVELTIES</b> Eric Franklin	£2.00*
<b>KNOTCRAFT</b> Stuart Grainger	£3.60*
<b>ROPEFOLK</b> Stuart Grainger	£1.30*
<b>TURKSHEAD ALTERNATIVES</b> Stuart Grainger	£2.20*
<b>SOMETHING DIFFERENT Over 50 Button knots</b> John HALIFAX	£3.95
<b>KNOTTING MATTERS - Past Editions</b>	£2.00*

\*Indicates 33.3% discount available on orders worth £30 or more at retail prices.

Cheques payable to IGKT, or use your VISA, MASTER or EUROCARD simply by quoting your card number and its expiry date.

Don't forget to allow for postage!!

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