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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.

INTERNATIONAL
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

Guild Supplies

Price List 1998

Item	Price
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Full Set of 100 charts	£10.00
Individual Charts	£0.20
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IGKT - Member, with logo (excludes stamp pad)	£4.00
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Long, dark blue tie with Guild Logo in gold	£8.95
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Enamel brooch	£2.00
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Certificate of Membership	£2.50
parchment scroll signed by President and Hon sec for mounting and hanging	

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Supplies Secretary:- Bruce Turley
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KNOTTING MATTERS

**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS
ISSUE NO 63 - APRIL 1999**

PRESIDENT Robert Chisnall

HON VICE PRESIDENTS

Dr Vaughan Jones FRS and Frank Harris BEM

PAST PRESIDENTS

Percy Blandford - Geoffrey Budworth - Eric Franklin - Jan Vos

Stuart Grainger - Glad Findley - Des Pawson

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KNOTTING MATTERS 63

APRIL 1999

CONTENTS

03	Ed's Bytes and Pieces	Lonnie Boggs
	Secretary's Blotter	Nigel Harding
04	Members Profile	David Fukuhara
05	New Loop?	Dan Lehman
	2000 or 2001	M.N.Collis
06	Constrictor Knot	Gary Summers
07	Comments on KM62	Philip Noble
08	Change of address	Nick Mitchell
	Book review- The Young Sea Officers Sheet	Dan Cashin
	Anchor – by Davey Levers	
	Whipping Tape	Bill Dengler
09	Raffia Weaving	Dennis Chow
	Belgium Exhibition	Pieter van de Griend
10	"New Knots", some Considerations	Tony Doran
12	Knotting in the Millennium	Mike Wilson
	Knotted Goblet	Des Pawson
13	Navy Hammock	Bryan Trew
14	Branch News: New Zealand	Tony Fisher
18	More on the So-called Gordian Knot	Noemi Speiser
21	Dearth of Research?	Cy Canute
22	A Kind of Lashing	E.Z. Stringer
24	Death Notice- Alf Langford	
25	Walking Stick	James Doyle
28	A Mathematical Discussion of the Single Line Turks Head Knot	Lorenzo Damewood
30	A Puzzle for Nutty Knotters	Ann Dyer
31	Thoin's Knot	Graham MacLachlan
33	Speir Knot	Joe Schmidbauer
34	Pre-history Comments	Charles Warner
	A profile - Darcy Lever	Geoffrey Budworth
36	The Sheepshank	Roger Carter
37	Six-Knot Challenge	Tony Doran
	A Proposal for regulating the "World Knot Tying Speed Record"	Peter Suber
39	Knots and Crosses	Jack Fidspike
40	Diary	Membership

EDITORS BYTES AND PIECES

by Editors

The 'Supplies Secretary', Bruce Turley, is pleased to unveil the new Guild Tie. The new tie is dark blue with the guild logo embroidered in gold and the logo is ghosted into the weave of the tie, this is very effective. He has managed to keep the cost of the new tie to the same price as the old one, which is £8.95. I think this is excellent value.



In reference to the article in KM62 'those knot charts', it is possible to get a list of the Charts either by sending a self-addressed envelope or an E-mailing to the Supplies Secretary.



At the AGM in 1996 at Gilwell Park, I saw a smart little double walled cooker that heated water very well by burning twigs and small bits of dry kindling. I did get the name of the maker but lost it and now I want to buy one. Dose anyone know where I can get one, what it's called or who makes them? Please E-mail me.



SECRETARY'S BLOTTER

nigel@nigelharding.demon.

It does not seem that long since I sat down to write the last set of notes. As KM62 only went out about a fortnight ago, there has not been much time for anything new to report. I must mention John Jamieson who is putting on a knotting display for the Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race, which is visiting the Shetland Isles between the 9th and 12th August. He is asking if anyone can loan him any completed items of work for his display. Due to the practicalities of transporting items to the Shetlands, Ken Yalden will co-ordinate their collection at the AGM in Nottingham, their return being organized for much later in the year. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Personally, I am not that well traveled, (although you would not think so when looking at the mileage on me), but Sylvia and I visited the Shetlands back in 1968, when we were courting. The North Sea oil industry did not exist then, and the experience even then was like turning the clock back. The Tourist brochure proudly stated that

70% of the roads had been Macadamed! - It was my first flight, and we flew in a Viscount - which went once around the lighthouse and down.

We are now coming up to the display and mating, sorry, meeting seasons, starting with the AGM in Nottingham. If anyone needs anything for their event, please let me know and I will see what I can do. I can have details of our Public Liability Insurance, application forms, information sheets, and to a limited extent, some spare copies of past editions of KM. I feel a little guilty about this because someone recently asked me for some of these items, and I have lost his address - if it was you - please give me another ring, and if I am not too late I will get something in the post fairly smartly.

On the subject of meetings, we are often asked why the media is not present. - Well it is not for want of trying. For many years I have been issuing Press Releases, I have even been on a course of instruction run by a freelance journalist. Despite a tremendous effort, the return has been hardly noticeable. These have generated some

enquiry's, even a few promises, but at the end of the day little result. We shall of course keep trying - and hoping for the best. I look forward to seeing you all in Nottingham.

MEMBERS PROFILE

from: David Fukuhara, Canada.

A member of The International Guild of Knot Tyers, as of September 1998, but a Knot tyer for the last 40 years or so!

I have read with great interest the back issues of Knotting Matters since becoming a member

I have been teaching both basic knotting for sailors and a more advanced course on decorative knotting, for about 23 years. Because of the need for a more simplified form of teaching knotting, I have looked to many other sources on knotting and have settled on a knotting method used by Ashley. I use diagrams in my classes, modeled after Ashley's diagrams with the circles (for underpasses) and the numbering system on alternate crossings. I have found that my students can follow and tie very complex knots successfully, with a minimum of instruction

POSTBAG

NEW LOOP

From: Dan Lehman, 75 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84101. USA. (801-531-0800) [New Address]

As is my wont, I would like to include this bit of knotting, ornamental (non-business).

This is a nice strong, easy to tie and easy to untie loop of my own invention. (And I've another like loop but looks even better!)



2000 OR 2001

from: Cdr. M.N. Collis MBE
RN. Bedford, UK.

I hope that Guild Members have a splendid time with their Millennium knots on 1 January 2,000 (Editorial, Issue 62). This date marks the first day of an AD year starting with the number 2. It is NOT, however, the start of the Third Millennium of the accepted Calendar, as a moment's consideration will show.

Christ was supposedly born at the start of AD1. He was, by this reckoning, one year old at the start of AD2. 1,999 years later he will be 2,000 years old at the start of the year 2,001.

The confusion arises because the unthinking assume that the Christian era started at the beginning of the year zero. This would have avoided the confusion but was impossible in any case, since the concept of zero was not accepted when the Calendar was made. Does this mean that every country, government and religion in the world has made an error? It does indeed! It only really matters; of course, to the small minority who are practicing Christians. The intelligent ones will be able to enjoy TWO celebrations!

CONSTRUCTOR KNOT

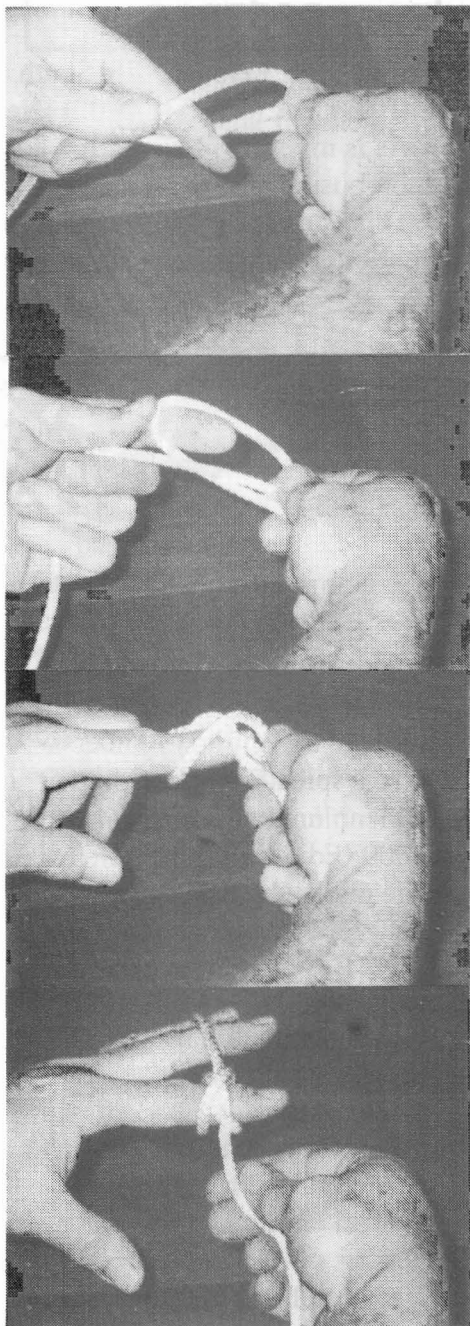
from: Gary Summers, Indiana,
USA. E-mail

sgsummers@iquest.net

In my work with the Boy Scouts of America, I often teach various types of knot classes. Quite often I am required to cut up lengths of manila rope. I always try to put a temporary whipping on the lines. I like to use the constrictor knot.

Recently while playing around with some cord, I found a different method (for me) of tying the constrictor knot. I think it is the quickest method of the 5 or 6 that I am familiar with. I like to tie it on my left hand so that I can transfer it to the line with my right. I use Blue Mountain 415 beeswaxed nylax that is fairly small. To cut 40 pieces at a time, I nail two small brads 8" apart into a scrap piece of wood, wrap 20 turns around the brads, lift them off and cut through the end loops.

Make a loop, Fig 1. Insert your finger tip and rotate it in a clockwise motion, fold the end over. I used 3/16" nylon for clarity. Can you tell me if this method is new or has someone published it?



KM62 COMMENTS

from: Philip Noble, Ayr, UK.
philipdnoble@
mail.easynet.co.uk

Firstly, thanks for the latest copy of KM. I really found it very interesting I have already written to Dick Blackmer as follows:

"Dear Dick,

I saw your request for ideas for a symbol for Survivors of Suicide. I like the suggestion of the mathematical un-knot. This can either be a tangle or if made into a loop woven on the fingers into a beautiful pattern.

Details of string figures that might be suitable could be obtained from the International String Figures Association web site.

Further, it might be just the thing to get survivors to be able to learn how to make the simple string figure also. Not just a symbol but a loop of string they could carry and entertain show/tell others visually.

There was a song used in the 1970's to introduce a radio program in California called, 'Living and Free'. The first line of the song is -"Bound, I am bound, like the knots on a

string..." The chorus is -"I will untangle myself, now that I can see." And ends -"living and free".

Now I don't think we really can untangle ourselves but the other sentiments are really good and the tune is great. Do you know it? If not, I'll try to find out more.

Secondly, I was fascinated to read about the 1959 article in Scout Magazine. I remember seeing it then and making the Chinese Lanyard. I then lost the article soon after. Would it be possible to get a copy of this article from anyone? I seem to remember that there was a second article also about that time or am I mistaken?

Thirdly, I'm so impressed by John Halifax's solution to the 'Six Knot' challenge. I have always felt that the Guinness Book of Records time was impossible without some form of 'special' technique. Or having six people holding six separate ropes ready to be tied. John's solution seems to me very good indeed. I'm going off to try it out now. With thanks for the inspiration



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

From: Nick Mitchell, Surrey,
UK.

<nick@fidstick.freemove.co.uk>

Thank you very much for a most interesting and informative Spring addition of 'Knotting Matters' but I only just nearly got it, it went to Bagshot about 14 miles from my new home address before I got it. Please could you update my address

Mr. NC Mitchell
95, Badshot Lea Road
Badshot Lea
Farnham
Surrey
GU9 9LP.

Sorry to be a pain, but I would really hate to miss a copy of my much-loved journal that I always look forward to reading.



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

From: Dan Cashin, Pennsylvania, USA.

I'd like to wish you and the entire Guild a safe, happy and prosperous New Year. I'm looking forward to the last year of the 1900's and the coming of the new century in 2001.

I'd like to let the Guild know that Dover Publishers has just

reissued Davey Lever's "The Young Sea Officers Sheet Anchor"! (ISBN 0-486-40220-7), US\$15, 8 1/2 X 11 paperback, 126 pages. It's great. I'd also like to ask you folks in the UK if a company named "SHILL-CRAFT" is still in the knitting/textile craft business? A friend of mine is looking for their latch hook.

When am I due to renew? Could you list who's due in KM?

(Ed: I think Nigel's computer sends reminders almost by it's self when you are due.)



WHIPPING TAPE

from: Bill Dengler, Oklahoma, USA.

As a member of the Knot Tyers Guild, I enjoy reading Knotting Matters. It is nice to get helpful tips from other members as well as learning from the informative articles. Thus, I'd like to pass along a tip that might be useful.

While cutting some lengths of synthetic rope for a project, I noticed a roll of plumbers Teflon thread seal tape and decided to try it for whipping the ends

of the rope. I took a few wraps of the thread seal tape around the rope, cut through the middle of the wrap, and melted the ends of the rope and tape into a secure, compact whipping. Although the tape has no glue, it held the rope securely during cutting and readily fused with the rope when melted in a lighter flame. This provide the best, and easiest to use, whipping for synthetic rope that I've found to date.

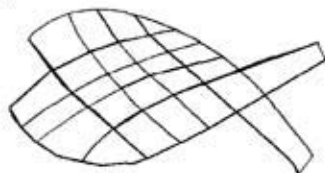
Thanks to you and all the other folks who make The International Guild of Knot Tyers and interesting organization.



RAFFIA WEAVING

from: Dennis Chon, 10 Kendrick Lane, Dix Hills, New York, Zip:11746

I have a question. As a teenager, 30 years ago, on a school trip to Schorndorf, near Stuttgart in Germany, I was shown how to weave raffia or ribbon into a fish shape, roughly like this



(Ed: In KM56 page 16 is an article by Willeke van de Ham on making a rattan dog. She has demonstrated and taught at IGKT AGM's how to make balls and animals. Contact her directly (address in membership book) to find out if there is any other published work and encourage her to do more articles for KM.)



BELGIUM EXHIBITION

from: Pieter van de Griend,
vdgriend@euronet.nl

Ahoy dear Knotter! This E-mail is intended to let you know about an international knotting exhibition which is being arranged by Willy Willaert from Bornem in Belgium and for which I have promised him some Internet support. Yes, you will be able to read about it in KM at some point in time, or perhaps by then the show will all be over and you weren't able to contribute. So, here's your chance!

The exhibition will be held at the local museum of Weert "De Zilverreiger", close to Antwerp. De Zilverreiger's theme is life and crafts around the old

river Schelde. The expo starts at Easter 1999 and will run to October. The range of items already collected for display runs from cowboy braiding, sailor's decorative marlingspike seamanship, examples of practical sailor's marlingspike seamanship, ropemaking, braiding, fishing, ... form all over the world. There's going to be a few meetings, but the exact dates and such are not yet known. To stay informed you can check out ;

<http://www.euronet.nl/users/vdgriend/homepage.htm>

Dan Callahan will also post information on his website and knotboard:

<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/5182/>

If you would like to exhibit any of your knotwork at the first ever-international knotting expo in Belgium, you can send it to:

WILLY WILLAERT

DULFTSTRAAT 21

B2880 BORNEM BELGIUM

Please also indicate whether you would like it returned after the exposition, or would like to donate it to the museum at which the show is being arranged. If your work must be

insured, then please also indicate the value for which it must be insured.

By the way, this will be a one-off mailing, if you want to stay informed about the show by e-mail, let me know and I will append you name and address to the news list.

Hope to see you and/or your knots in Bornem too!

☒☒☒

NEW KNOTS – CONSIDERATIONS

from: Tony Doran

<TonyDoran1@compuserve.com>

From time to time submissions are made of 'new knots', the implication being that the authors will be named as the 'inventors' or 'discoverers'.

Regrettably, the authors usually neglect to state the purpose of the knots.

The existing canon of 'useful' knots has been developed over centuries, users of ropes, cords or even strings having identified knot forms with properties suitable for specific purposes, often indicated by a knot's name. These properties may be different for different knots. A 'menu'

of knot characteristics would include properties such as:

- simplicity (easy to tie)
- reliability (unlikely to slip under load)
- will jam (becoming more secure under load)
- will not jam (can be untied after use)
- raises a significant 'bump' or profile
- presents a low profile
- suitable only for small line
- etc.

Some of these properties are mutually exclusive, and the optimal knot form for a given purpose will combine the properties that are 'desirable' for the application whilst having no serious 'undesirable' properties. An example is the reef knot. It is eminently suitable for securing furlled sails or awnings because it can be spilled to untie it when apparently jammed, but this property makes it unsuitable - in fact dangerous - to use as a bend.

Rather like the analogy of the monkeys and the typewriters, if a sufficient number of knotters 'twiddle' cords for long enough, the inevitable result will be some novel knot forms. If these

forms have no real purpose, it would trivialize our craft to 'authenticate' them as knots.

I wouldn't want to dampen the enthusiasm of the potential developers of tomorrow's knots, but I suggest the IGKT set the ground rules for authenticating genuine new knots. I offer the following for the Guild's consideration. Authors presenting a 'new knot', should be asked to:

- outline the origin of the knot (where and when observed, created)
- describe what he or she considers are the distinguishing properties of the knot
- specify the function or application for which the knot is suited
- identify an existing knot having performance characteristics similar to the new knot
- suggest a name for the knot.

If the IGKT council view the knot as a genuine contender, they can arrange:

- formal testing of the claimed properties and performance,
- a search of knotting literature to verify its originality.

Only when a new knot has been verified should it be

named and published, say in KM.

I am opposed to naming knots after originators. IGKT acknowledgement of authorship should be sufficient recognition. It will avoid mistakes such as that made in naming the Hunter's Bend. Firstly, the knot has nothing to do with hunting, as the name could imply; secondly, Dr Hunter may indeed have re-discovered the knot, but naming it after him has deprived the originator, Phil D. Smith, of due recognition.

I have concentrated in this article on 'useful' knots. Decorative knots, knots having no purpose other than decoration - are largely derived from existing useful or decorative knots, and so-called new decorative knots are usually just variants. I suggest that new decorative knots should be considered only by exception, when they have a distinctive and original form.

KNOTTING IN THE MILLENNIUM

from: Mike Wilson, Verginia, USA.

Knotting in the new Millennium around the world as sug-

gested in KM 62 is a super idea. I'd be willing to submit a knot done in my nation's capital.

Please allow me to suggest that the individual knot-cards be used to form a large "knot board" for prosperity.

Perhaps all this planning is premature. Correct me if I am wrong but I think the **first day of the next millennium is January 1, 2001 (not January 1, 2000)**. In any event, I'm standing by to earn my certificate ---twice?



KNOTTED GOBLET

from: Des Pawson, Suffolk, UK.

The wine Goblet shown in the report of the Gilwell Meeting KM62 was made by **JOAQUIM PAULO ESCUDEIRO** of Portugal. Paulo sent it to me as a gift for the Guild. Bernard Cutbush had it with him to study. It now forms part of the Guilds Birthday Present Collection, which is currently on display at the Exhibition that Willy Willaert has organized in Belgium. I understand from Paulo that a goblet is a symbol traditionally tied by Portuguese sailors. It appears to me that the

Portuguese Sennit only hints at the wide range of variations that the Portuguese are able to create using combinations of this flat and twisted sennit. Paulo specializes in magnificent rose knots of great complexity including tying one inside a bottle, which some members will have seen at the Portsmouth AGM.

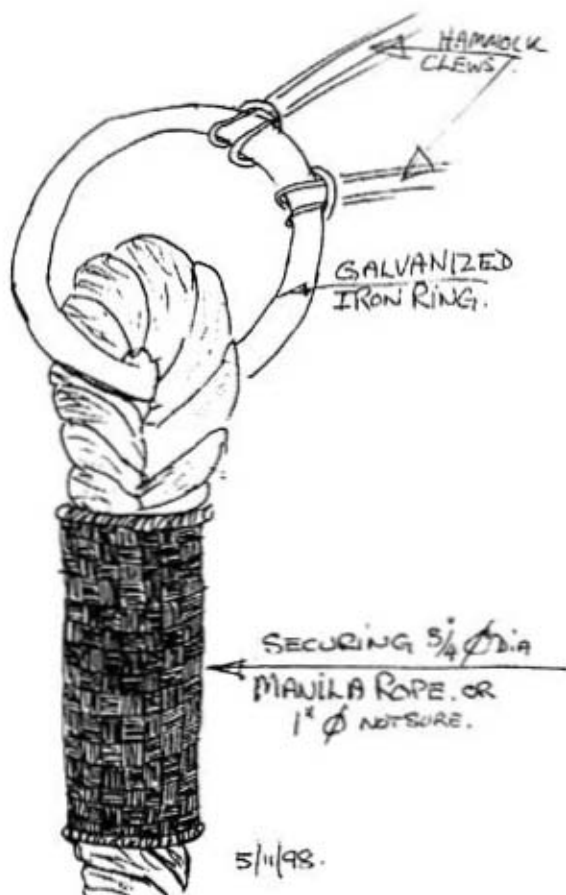


NAVY HAMMOCK
From: Bryan Trew,
East Sussex.UK.

I have been trying to find a book that gives details on weaving the hemp strands over a hammock's ring splice. This was given to the boys trained at R.N. School at St. George Douglas, Isle of Man during the last war. This work had to be done by each recruit, before he was drafted to ship.

I cannot remember how this was done but would like to reproduce this finish for

my son and daughters, so they will enjoy the pleasures of laying in the R.N.'s Hammock, as I did many moons ago. Could there be someone who can help me in this quest?



BRANCH NEWS

NEW ZEALAND

By Tony Fisher

I have been asked by Roger Carter to take over the organization and Presidency of the New Zealand Chapter of the Guild.

This is an honor that I gladly accept. I see my role as a liaison and co-ordination role. As such it is my intention to communicate with those of you who wish to become active members of the New Zealand Chapter. I also appreciate that a number of you will choose to involve yourself only with the Guild Internationally. At the end of this letter, I will invite you to continue/become an active member of the New Zealand Chapter of the Guild. An invitation that will always remain open.

I joined the IGKT in 1989 and met Roger Carter for the first time soon after. We had both lived at Plimmerton for many years! The two of us thought up the idea of the New Zealand Chapter at the beginning of 1990. We corresponded with John Turner and George Schaake about this time. I see in the October(Autumn)1991, Issue 37 of "Knotting Matters", page 8 a note about our formation. Roger was President, myself as Secretary, John Turner as Vice-President and George Schaake as Executive Member. We also announced then that Professor Vaughan Jones from Berkeley University as Patron.

Because of career changes, work pressures (I was a national president of an occupational group going under at the time), I ceased active participation in the Chapter in 1994 and returned on Roger's invitation after the BT Global Challenge event, here in Wellington.

Professionally I have been a primary teacher, a science adviser to schools and am currently a teacher of astronomy at Carter Observatory, Wellington. Prior to that I was a Boy Scout and there developed my love of practical knotting and splicing. A disease I have never shaken, I might add! As a young man I was a rigger in the New Zealand Shipping Company's loft in Wellington and also a rigger with the Wellington Harbour Board. Part of my duties was to be a crewmember on the floating crane, the "Hikitia". Thirty-seven years later I returned and am now the Chief Rigger aboard. Talk about its Rip Van Twinkle!

My interests are safety whilst working at heights, wire rope splicing, heavy lifting and admiring the wonderful work done by other Guild

Members. Each year I spend three weeks rigging on the main Chatham Island on a scientific expedition that uses radio telemetry.

After consultation with the owners of the "Hikitia", I would like to set up the New Zealand Chapter's headquarters on the "Hikitia". It may be a world first. Already the "Hikitia" holds another world first. The first floating crane to contain a Marine Archaeological laboratory aboard. The Marine Archaeological Society of New Zealand has been working for a long time to change a void space into their laboratory. I would like to hold regular monthly meetings aboard. During those meetings any Guild members who happen to be in Wellington will be encouraged to attend.

The owners and other crewmembers have built me a rigging loft aboard the floating crane. It is dedicated to being a vehicle for teaching people rigging/splicing. As my specialty is staying alive at heights, I also train others in safety practices whilst working aloft. I would be thrilled to share this facility with Guild members.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you want to come aboard. I first get the permission of the owners for guests to come aboard and thus need 24 hours notice. I usually work on the crane on Saturdays and a good time to come is between 12:30 and 1:30, lunch break.

Any out of town members who are passing through will be welcome to stay here, at home, in Lower Hutt. We have a number of bedrooms, our young adult children are always all over the place!

I have been an active trade unionist for many years and now that I am semi-retired, I am involved with the education sector union, NZEI Te Riu Roa, establishing an oral history of primary education. We have interviewers all over New Zealand. My responsibilities often take me all over the place. If on my travels any of you would like me to make personal contact with you, please let me know.

Participation in the New Zealand Chapter :-

As mentioned above I invite you to continue/become an active member of the New Zealand Chapter. My contribution will be to keep up communications, do any necessary administration and the co-ordination of any activities we commit ourselves to. I have had two years of unemployment and am not wealthy and if there is a cost factor, that will have to be shared.

I see many roles for active members:- contributing to our newsletter, (like filling in the attached profile!); Hosting visiting Guild members; keeping me on my toes; attending Guild meetings wherever we may call them; sharing your work with us and promoting the International Guild when and wherever. Should an important local event happen where you think we should be involved, let me know. Should you be going overseas, I would like to assist you make contact with our other members.

The New Zealand Chapter has had a very close association with the Wellington's Maritime Museum and in Curator Ken Scadden, we have a wonderful supporter. The Maritime Museum in Wellington is a corporate member of IGKT and the New Zealand Chapter is an associate member of the Friends of the Wellington Maritime Museum. Roger and I plan to meet with Ken shortly to renew our commitment to this important relationship locally.

Roger Carter has done an incredible job keeping us together, since 1991! Doing the newsletters and flying the flag in "Knotting Matters". Here in Wellington, he has been 'Mr. Guild'. As our founding President, Roger has been an inspiration. His erudition on matters relating to cordage lore is internationally recognized.

It's a wonderful time of life now for him. His marriage recently to Jennifer, was a Guild wedding. They and their daughter Amie are very close and as Roger said to me: "I've so much more to live for now!" He also wants to spend more time writing and researching. Whilst continuing to be active locally and internationally in the Guild, I think that its fair enough that he takes a well earned rest from the leadership and running of our affairs! Thank you, sir.

If you are interested in continuing/becoming involved in the New Zealand Chapter, please let me know. One way that you could help me would be to send a few stamped, addressed envelopes. I will also need help with funds for photocopying. Could I suggest: \$10.00? I will of course keep full records and issue receipts and have the books audited annually. If I don't hear from you, I'll assume that you want your involvement with the Guild kept to the International level.

We in astronomy say: "Keep Looking up!"

I suppose in the Guild it should be: "Keep Knotting!"

NEW ZEALAND CHAPTER
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS .

NAME:

TELEPHONE: ()

FAX: ()

E-mail:

POSTAL ADDRESS:

Interest in The Guild: (Types of Knotting/Other aspects)

Experience relating to your interest(s):

Ways that you can help the New Zealand Chapter:

Ways that you would like to participate:

Other Matters: (Continue over page if necessary)

ARTICLES

MORE ON THE SO CALLED GORDIAN KNOT

By Noemi Speiser

The Gordian knot was a part of the cart on which the farmer Gordias entered the shrine sanctuary, thus fulfilling an old prophecy, so that he became the original king of the Phrygian dynasty. The ancient cart remained in the sanctuary and became an object of deep veneration, with a legend that the knot could be untied only by the conqueror of Asia.

On such carts, as also on ploughs, the shaft was connected with the yoke by a wooden peg, passing vertically through both. This movable arrangement was secured by a strap or rope of "bast" from the stem of the cornus plant, crossed and re-crossed diagonally in appropriate formation. The knot had to be both firm and flexible as well as capable of being untied and retied whenever needed. The structure and method of tying this knot was a matter of agricultural tradition over generations. But there was an ancient oracle that foretold that a stranger who

could untie the knot was destined to rule over the World.

Many authorities related the story of Alexander and the Gordian knot and two different variations coexisted almost from the beginning. One version was that he slashed through the knot with a forceful stroke of his sword. The other version is less popular, but more beautiful; he gently withdrew the wooden peg or plug, so that the knot fell apart.

Which of the two versions is the more credible?

The first version represents the approach of the soldier; every problem can or perhaps should be solved by brute force.

However, if Alexander behaved as the second version tells us, he showed that he must have been familiar with the agricultural tradition of untying and retying this key part of the harness. Thus he proved that he had mastered the craft of plough and cart, of horse and cattle. The challenge was obviously a mythical test that he passed successfully.

The two versions suggest very different views of the mind and character of the hero. Undoubtedly Alexander was a warrior. At the same time, he was

known to be both pious and tolerant, treating the Gods of a conquered people as meriting equal respect to his own. Destroying a venerated relic with a sword stroke would represent a deep offence, far deeper than merely showing contempt for an interesting knot and cutting a useful strap to pieces, which is in itself bad enough, as every reader of 'Knotting Matters' will agree. Alexander approached the knot with knowledge, wisdom and understanding instead of committing a sacrilege.

I challenge the Knot Tyers to either devise a 'new' knot, or to suggest traditional knots which answer the purpose of securing the crossing point of shaft, yoke and connecting peg in a way both firm and flexible, yet falling apart when the peg is withdrawn.

I take this knowledge from an article published in 'Antaios No 4, 1959'. The author, Leopold Schmidt, is a mythographer, therefore he further enlarges upon the subject. The knot had an eminently practical function, but at the same time it had its cosmic analogy: 'below as above'.

The shaft in upright position was a symbol of the column between the nether world and the firmament, which is represented by the yoke. The point where shaft and yoke cross one another, connected by the peg and fixed by the crosswise tied knot was an image of the North Star, Polaris, which is the axis of the rotating star canopy.

And there is a Swiss contribution to knot wisdom:

In the 15th century we had a wise and saintly hermit called Klaus von Flue. Once some serious discord threatened a civil war to divide the small Helvetic confederation. But both parties agreed to rush a messenger to Klaus' remote retreat, to consult him, as a well-known judge in political troubles. He took the cord from around his waist and tied an Overhand Knot:

'Ask them to untie this knot', he said.

'The weakest child could do this' the messenger replied.

'The strongest men could not do it WHEN THEY PULL AT BOTH ENDS', was his reply, whereupon the fighting parties reached an agreement.

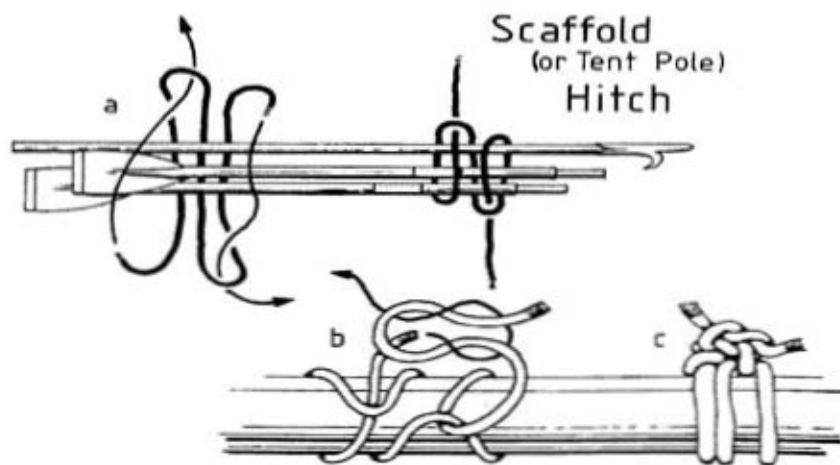
*Knotting ventured,
Knotting gained.*

SCAFFOLD(or Tent Pole) HITCH

A pair of these hitches, plus a couple of Reef Knots, will parcel an awkward armful of bits & pieces. Used in this way it's not strictly a hitch but more of a binding knot.

You could still employ it to improvise a suspended plank seat. Some rigging and lifting tackle manuals show this; but don't recommend it in these litigious, health & safety conscious days.

---oOo---



DEARTH OF RESEARCH?

considers Cy Canute

Dan Lehman (in KM issue 62) urges the Guild to accomplish some rigorous research. I agree with him. After tying knots for 10,000 years (at least), humankind still has not figured out exactly how or why the rascals work. So-called experiments are often little more than haphazard observation and amateurish guesswork; rarely, if ever, could their outcomes be subjected to statistical analysis. Then again, the data generated in the laboratories and factories of the monofilament and rope makers vary from one test rig to another, and suffer from the bias that each company is (understandably) anxious to out-do the opposition in the claims it makes to potential customers for its products. As the late A.P. (Sir Alan) Herbert wryly observed, knots; have each a special duty which they do perfectly discharge (much more than you can say of men or matters, by and large)."

Guild members have, nevertheless, generated some valid work of an objective - if not wholly academic - nature, focussing on subjects as diverse

as: the analysis of personal safety rigging; knot taxonomies; the laterality or handedness of knot tying; Inuit knot structures; knots in DNA; cultural-historical aspects of knots; topology; symmetric bends; forensic investigation of cordage clues, including the analysis of ligatures; braiding and Turk's bead algorithms. Their findings can be read as papers, essays, magazine articles, booklets and several books, the latest and weightiest of which is *The History & Science of Knots* (1996), a compilation of 18 scholarly chapters from 12 contributors (six of whom are IGKT members).

Even so, knotting may be too important to be left to knot tyers. To determine the true nature of knots would occupy scientists and engineers from a number of fields (physics, chemistry, mechanics, mathematics). Many, perhaps the majority of IGKT members, however, prefer their knotting to be rule-of thumb (even folksy) in its application and appeal. For them, repetitious testing of hypotheses and the resulting formulae would dispel the magic, yet the mental gymnastics of abstruse knot theory

can be turned into free-for-all wrestling (string in hand) for active twiddle-&-tuck knot tyers.

I question if it is realistic to expect 'the Guild', as a body, to initiate its own research program. Perhaps it would be better left to inspired and persistent individuals, with aptitude, training, access to the right resources - and inquisitive bees in their bonnets - to pursue and secure the hard evidence that will ultimately quash mere empiricism. If so, then what our Council must do it seems to me - Is unreservedly encourage and back all such efforts (pure and applied, whether or not they appear to be leading anywhere); and subsequently be alert to recognize, evaluate and publish the findings. In which case, a learned journal of the kind already mooted, backed by an expert editorial panel, is overdue.

A KIND OF LASHING

By E. Z. Stringer

In teaching pioneering to Scouts and Cubs, I sometimes demonstrate a type of running lashing I was shown sometime in the passed. It's used to lash the cross pieces of a shelter or the treads of a bridge by single

or double looping the ends of the poles and not needing to pass all the rope around the main poles. Can anyone tell me what it's called and where I saw it being used?

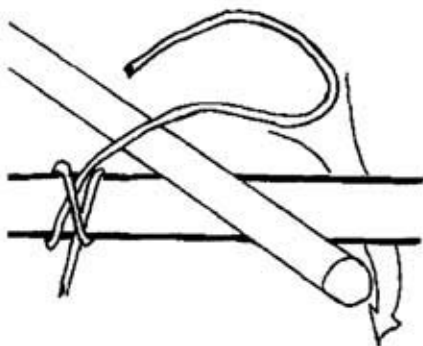


Figure 1; attach the rope to the main pole by a clove hitch, as in all good pioneering knots. Then pass a short loop over the crossed pole and under the main pole.

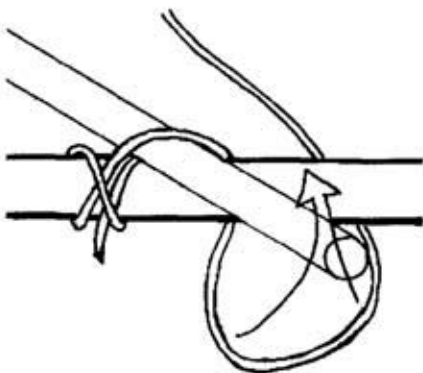


Figure 2, pull the loop over the end of the crossed pole and pull up on the end to tighten it.

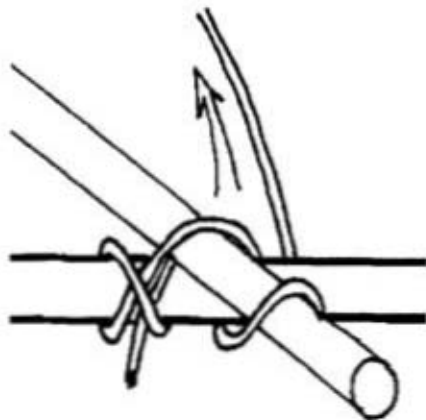


Figure 3, Pull the crossed pole tight against the clove hitch and keep the rope tight as you apply the next loop, which will lock this first loop down, tight.

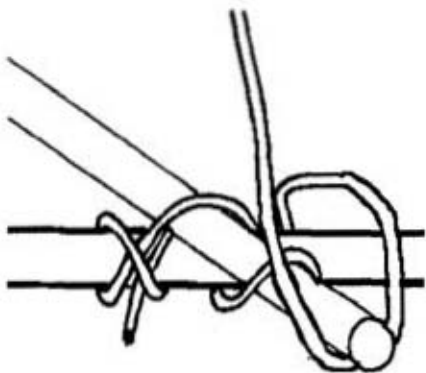


Figure 4; Pull the end tight and over the main pole to loop under the crossed pole to lock the first loop down. Now you are ready to pull the next crossed pole over to lash it in the same way.

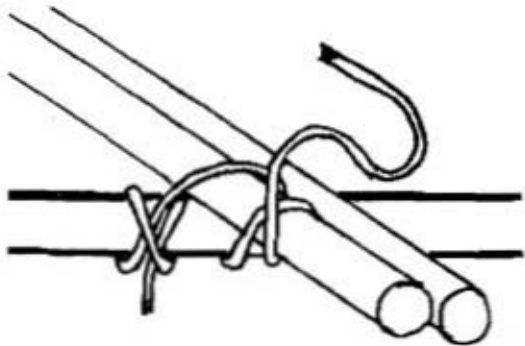


Figure 5, Working to lash both ends of the crossed poles at the same time secures them well enough to walk on safely.

DOUBLE LASHING

The single lashing works well if the crossed poles are being tied at both ends. But if they are being tied only one end, (like palm branches lashed by the stem only, to make a shelter) then the Double Lashing is better.

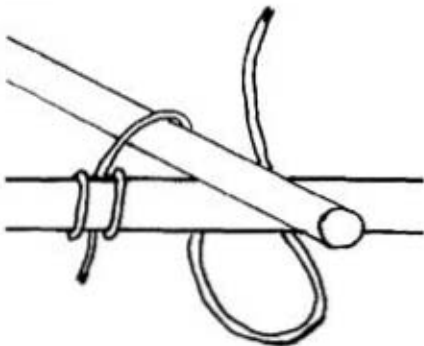


Figure 6; Pull the crossed pole through a loop thrown behind the main pole. Then throw the loop as before.

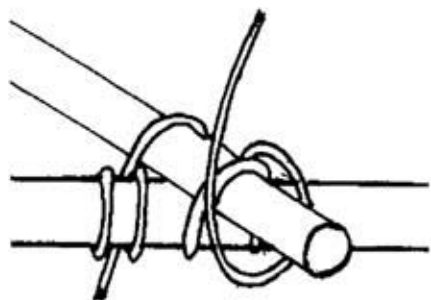


Figure 7; Pull the locking loop over the end of the crossed pole again as before.

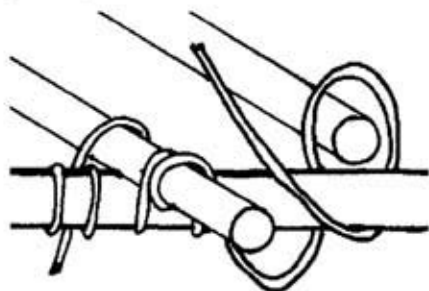


Figure 8, Throw another loop behind the main pole and snug the next crossed pole up close to the last.

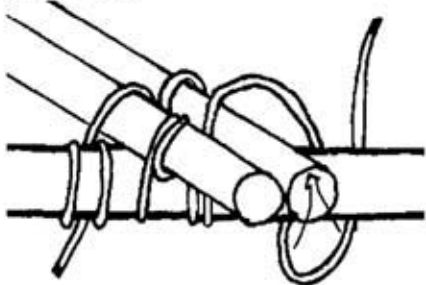


Figure 9; Throw the outside loop and locking loop on as before.

These are quick and easy lashings to learn. It's also quick and easy to demolish them, as the rope falls away when the crossed poles, or palm fronds, are removed. Since you need not drag the bulk of the rope through each time, it is easy to tie on new rope if you need to, without dragging the knots over the poles.

I think I saw this being used on the television while watching one of those anthropological 'fly-on-the-wall's' of a bridge being built in Brazil or some where.

Answers to Knotting Matters please. ☒☒☒☒

**It is the Editors sad
duty to announce the
death of
Alf Longford**

**Although a member for
only a very few years,
he was a well known
"Knotter" and canal
side character in the
world of canal boat life,
rope work and history.**

**We hope to have a
proper profile and
obituary for the next
issue.**

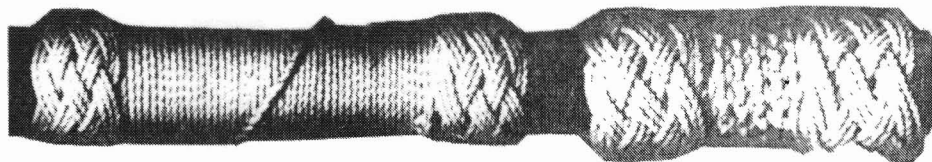
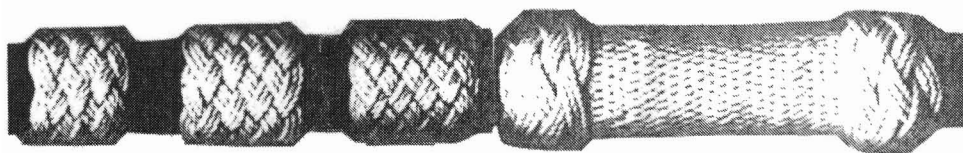
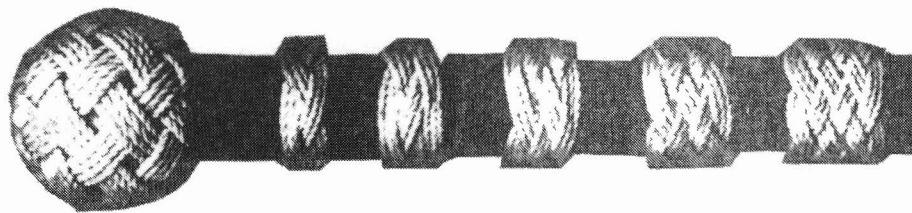
ARTICLES

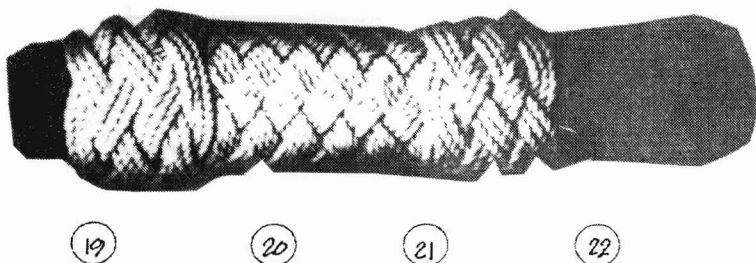
WALKING STICK

from: James Doyle, Mass. USA.

I have enclosed for your interest some photographs of 1 and 1/8 inch diameter by 38" "Walking Stick", and a couple of Hammer Handles.

I have applied some "Marlinspike Seamanship" to these items to give them a nautical flare. (Coverings of Single Strand Fancy Knots, Drummers Plait, Grafting, Cross Pointing or Coachwhipping, (Round Sen-nits)





SPECIFICATION SHEET

WALKING STICK (1^{1/8}" Dia.) Finish: Polyurethane, Clear Gloss (7) Coats.

1. Wooden Ball covered with an 8 lead/ 7 bight Turkshead Knot
4 strands. Ball attached to the stick with a "dowel screw."
2. 3 leads/ 4 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
3. 4 " 3 " " " " "
4. 5 " 4 " " " " "
5. 6 " 5 " " " " "
6. 7 " 6 " " " " "
7. 8 " 7 " " " " "
8. 9 " 8 " " " " "
9. 10 " 9 " " " " "
10. 6 " 5 " " " " "
11. Outside Spanish Hitching
12. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands
13. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands
14. French Hitching or Grapevine Hitching.
15. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
16. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
17. Drummers' Plait, wrapped around the stick and pushed together.
18. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.

19. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
20. Coachwhipping 12 leads, all 4 strands.
21. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
22. Rubber Tip on the end of the stick.

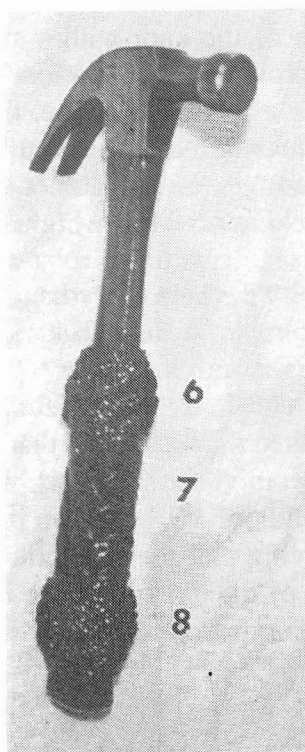
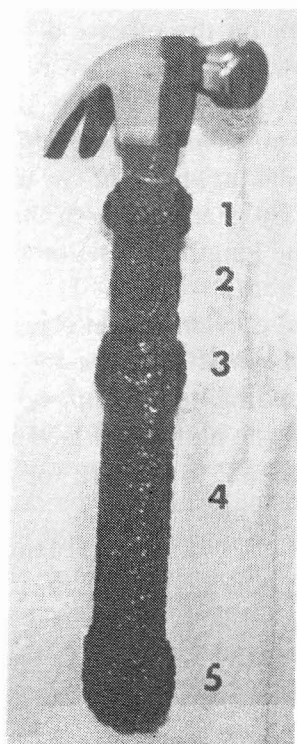
HAMMER HANDLES: No. 1

1. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
2. Outside Spanish Hitching.
3. 8 leads/ 7 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
4. Coachwhipping, all 12 leads, all 4 strands.
5. 8 leads/ 7 bight Turkshead Knot, all 4 strands.

HAMMER-HANDLES: No. 2.

6. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.
7. 10 leads Coachwhipping. 1/2" width canvas.
8. 6 leads/ 5 bight Turkshead Knot, all 3 strands.

Finish: Mahogany Stain and 4 coats of Orange Shellac, this gives a leather look finish.



A Mathematical Discussion of the Single Line Turk's Head Knot.

from: Loren S. Damewood,

<lorenzo@mailhost.intnet.net>

A question that comes up from time to time with reference to the Turk's Head knot involves the length of the line that is required for a given size and style of knot. In my own knotting, which involves precious wire, it is pretty important to know how much material will be required to complete the piece, so I have developed a couple of mathematical models which help me to estimate how much to start with. These models work fine for regular line, too, of course, so it seems to me that I should share this knowledge with the knot-tying public.

First off, one must understand the structure of the single-line Turk's Head (TH) knot. Any possible "single-line" TH has one path through the entire knot, and this path can be considered to consist of a number of segments, each of which is the length of a line connecting a bight on one side of the knot with a similar bight on the other side, along the path. I provide an illustration which shows that this segment is the hypotenuse of a right triangle, the other two sides of which are, respectively, the width of the overall knot, and an easily computed fraction of the circumference of the knot. We are speaking, here, of an ideal line of zero thickness, with the bights replaced by sharp changes of direction, and the segments being ruler-straight. The length of a segment is easily found with the help of Pythagorean' Theorem.

For example: A 5L-11B knot consists of eleven segments joining each lower bight with the upper bight two-and-a-half bights to the right, and another eleven segments similarly extending to the upper bight 2.5 segments to the left. (Note that that is half the number of leads. For a 4L knot it would be 2 segments to the right and 2 to the left, for a 7L knot you would use 3.5, as shown in the illustration.)

Observing that the total circumference is 11 bights, the length of the fraction of the circumference is found to be $2.5/11^{\text{ths}}$, or $5/22^{\text{nds}}$, of the total circumference of the knot.

Therefore, should you wish to tie an ideal (remember, infinitely thin line, no smooth curves) 5L-11B Turk's Head with a width of 1 inch and a diameter of 5 inches, you would need:

$$\{(5 \times \pi \times 5/22)^2 + (1)^2\}^{1/2}$$

(the square root of the sum of the diameter times pi times five/twenty seconds, squared, and the width, squared)

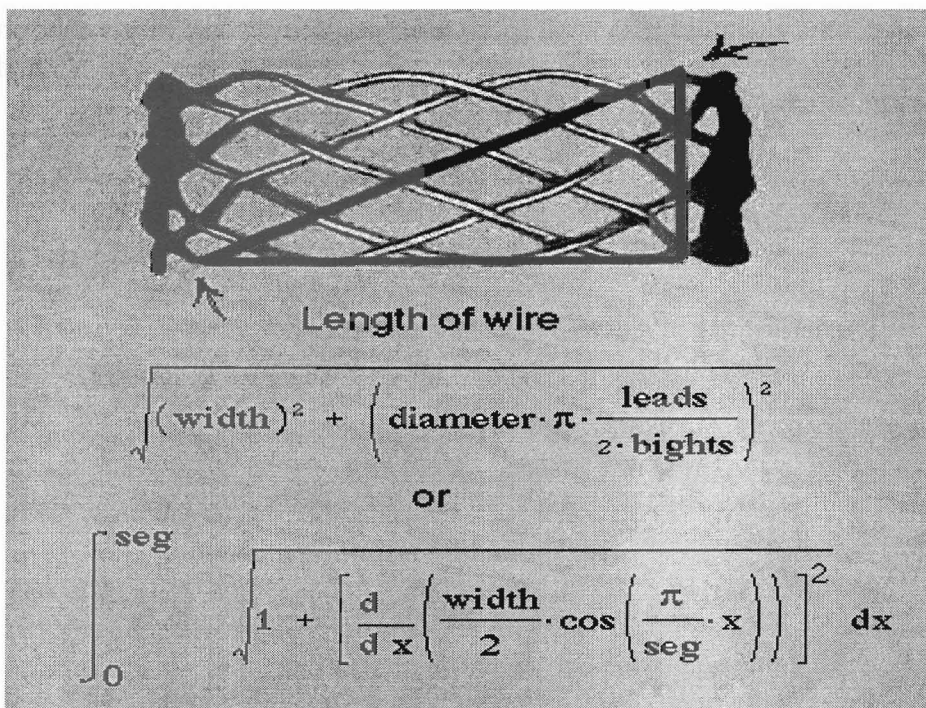
$$\times 22 \text{ (the number of segments)} = 81.56 \text{ inches}$$

This is very cumbersome unless you're used to it. Having worked through one of these, it is clear that the same results can be obtained by multiplying the number of leads by the circumference (pi times the diameter), to get one leg of the right triangle, and multiplying the width by twice the number of bights, to obtain the other leg.

$$\{(5 \times \pi \times 5)^2 + (1 \times 22)^2\}^{1/2} = 81.56 \text{ inches}$$

Much easier, as I'm sure you will agree. In the real world, there may be a considerable difference between this result and your actual usage of material, so this should be regarded as a conservative estimate! The curvature of the line, and its diameter, will both add to the overall length required, but as a rough estimate it is a good start.

Looking at a nicely tied Turk's Head, it occurred to me that the path described a cosine through a cylindrical space. While I was sure that I could use three-dimensional equations to describe it, I chickened out and decided to model it as the same curve over a linear distance in two dimensions, that distance being the product of the number of leads and the circumference of the knot. I will not weary the reader with the calculus required to determine the length of a curve in space, but having performed this calculation on the same starting dimensions and obtained a number somewhat less than 1% larger than the previous result, I would venture to say that there is little to choose between them for accuracy, and a great advantage in using the simpler one with a fudge-factor of two or three percent over the calculated result.



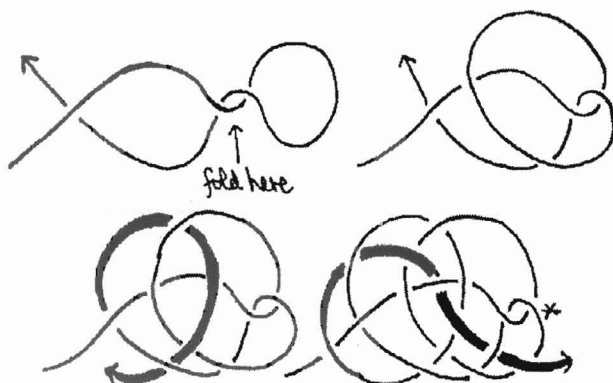
A PUZZLE FOR NUTTY KNOTTERS

From Ann Dyer – Shropshire

I don't know if this round knob is in Ashley, because I always get lost trying to look things up in him. I found it on the end of a silk rouleau cord from Singapore, and it interested me because of the way the end was just pushed inside and sewn to anything handy.

After stage 4, place

the construction on the end of a finger, with the thumb at the star to prevent this twist turning over as you tighten up. Finally, push the end inside the knot and sew it to the main stalk.



THOIN'S KNOT

by Graham MacLachlan

Here is a fisherman's knot from the north coast of the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy, France. Charles Polidor, who learned his trade at Barfleur and who is currently first mate aboard the stern-trawler "Liberté" of St. Vaast La Hougue, showed it to me. The knot concerned is an angler's loop that the locals use when they *faire les cordes*, which I believe I am right in saying is long lining in English. This type of fishing consists of numerous hooked lines, *les ravelins*, attached to a head-rope, *la corde*, which is spread between two anchors. Each *corde* is 100m long (standard coil length), while the *ravelins* are spaced out by a fathom, *une brasse*, and two fathoms long. The lengths may vary, as "different ships, different long splices." The hooks are baited with maybe cuttle or mackerel and the *cordes* are coiled down into metal bins called *timbales*. Great care is taken when laying-in the *ravelins* to clear the hooks out to the edge, one after the other. The *cordes* are sent out at spectacular speed as the boat advances. The leading *corde* is bent to a bouyed anchor that is thrown overboard, the rope follows and the hooks start flying! There

are several *timbales* and the *cordes* are set out in one long line with an anchor at every join. The catch is varied.

The anglers loop is fashioned at both ends of the *ravelin*; one is passed through the lay of the head-rope and made up like a cow-hitch, while the other holds the hook. The manner in which the *cordes* are sent out means that the loop must be formed in such a way as to run without snagging. As well as being solid and quick to tie, the knot doesn't look pucker, but it is solid and has of course been proved time and again. All the St. Vaast and Barfleur fishermen use it.

To tie the knot, take a fathom of 2 or 3 mm dia. nylon braided line. Starting at fig 1, hold the line where the bitter end crosses and follow the arrowed line. Pushing the lower part of the overhand knot (dotted line fig. 2) up over the rest makes the nip. The bitter end is kept very short. Front and back views, figs. 3 and 4. Initially the fisherman makes a clove hitch through the ring of the hook, "pulls up its ears" and then ties the loop.

I didn't find this knot in the angler's loop section of Ashley's; perhaps someone has seen it in print. If by chance, no-one

has another name I propose "Thoin's Knot" *Thoin* (said "twan", rhymes with "dix points" as per Eurovision song contest) is French slang for the angler-fish. It is also the nickname of the people of St

Vaast La Hougue, who are reputed to be "big-mouths" like the anglerfish. The next time that you may meet a French fisherman keep this bit of information to yourself; it is probably better that way.

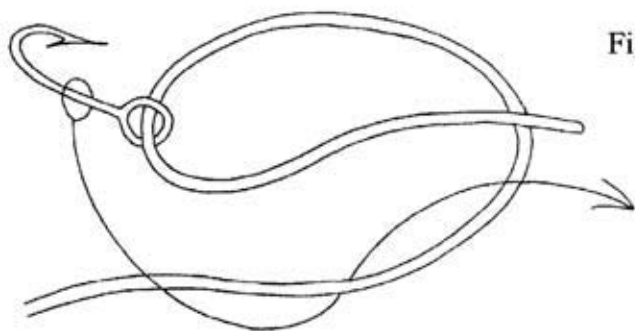


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

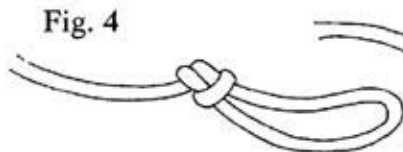


Fig. 4



Fig. 3

SPEIR KNOT

from: Joe Schmidbauer, Secretary IGKT-PAB.

I am writing to compliment you on the latest issue of Knotting Matters. I think it was your best effort yet. It was nice reading some longer 'think pieces' from some of the board members and those photographs from the AGM this time were very clear and distinct. I am already looking forward to the next newsletter.

In response to the article by Owen Nuttall from West Yorkshire U.K., he was looking for a quick release hitch that could take some abuse. I would suggest the Speir Knot. The illustration is from the U.S. Army Technical Manual, TM 5-725 (October 1968). I am a tool-maker for Boeing Aircraft Company working on the U.S. Air Force C-17 program. I use this knot to tie off safety tag lines when doing crane moves. The knot will take a lot of pulling and shaking without working loose and yet, with a tug of the bight, the knot vanishes. Once learned, the knot is quickly and easily tied; it is a very simple knot.

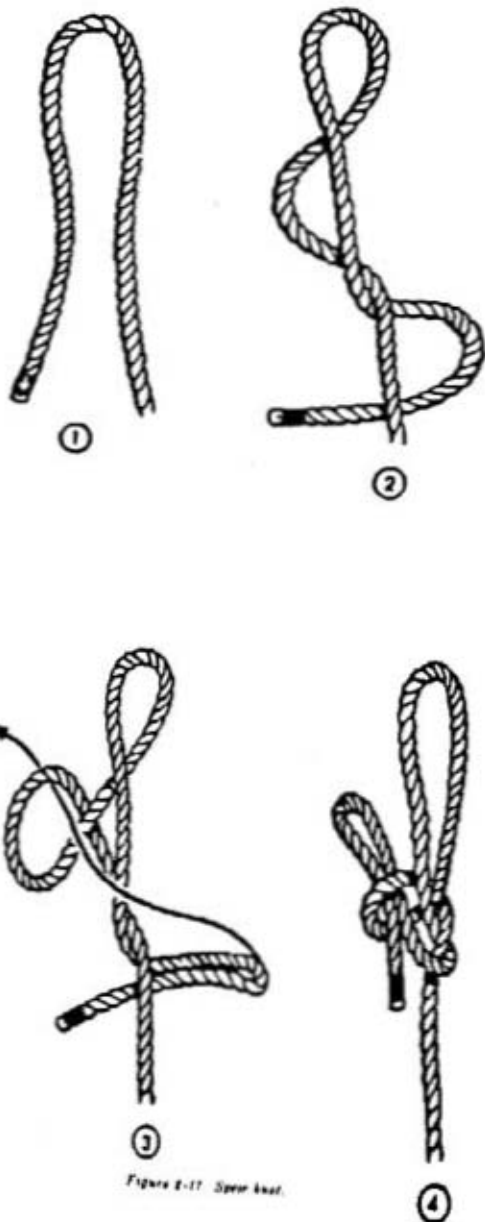


Figure 2-17 Speir knot.

PREHISTORY COMMENTS

From Charles Warner, Australia

I apologise to Bob Schwartz (KM62 p34) for not making my meaning clear; maybe I was trying to say too much in too short a space. The diagram of Standing Part Hitches on p41 of my original article (KM61) was intended to show all possible single tuck hitches within the limits of the definitions and restrictions mentioned earlier. So pdc, the Buntline Hitch, must be included.

I was trying to imagine what might have happened when people first started to tie knots, hundreds of thousands if not millions of years ago. All they had was a dim idea that they should place their knotting medium in the appropriate position and tuck the end in here or there once or twice any old how.

I think that the first thing they would learn was that knots with a single tuck were rarely secure, but things were much better if they made a second tuck; any knot still insecure would be improved with a third or fourth tuck. I assume that all these tucks were, in those early days, made just about anywhere handy. It would take time, perhaps a lot of time, to learn the advantages of specific techniques for each knot: after all, even today some people, not IGKT members, still make knots by poking the end in somewhere a few times, without

any special method; most of them know enough to make several tucks, not just one.

The Buntline Hitch, pdc, would be secure when tied in just about any knotting medium likely to have been used, and the Overhand Hitch, pdo, would have been reasonably secure in many media, but both are a bit awkward to tie in those circumstances, and unlikely to have been tried very often; some of the other knots in the series were much more likely to have been tried. That is why I said that standing part hitches with single tucks are not in general (that is, with only a few exceptions) at all secure, a second tuck was almost always needed.

To mount my other hobbyhorse, if my article had been peer-reviewed, it is probable that obscurities such as this would have been noticed and cleared up.

Ed: Surely Mr. Warner, your articles are peer read by several hundred peers, all members of IGKT. If anyone would like to take on the position of peer reader, please let us know we are open to any help or suggestions.

DARCY LEVER – A PROFILE

From Geoffrey Budworth

This eighteenth century writer on seamanship was born in 1760(?). He was the eldest son of the Rev

John Lever of Buxton in Derbyshire, and the nephew of Sir Ashton Lever (collector of the Leverian Museum). After leaving the Manchester school, where he had been since the age of about 10, he went out to India. His time there was later recorded as 'somewhat eventful', but it also proved profitable enough for him to return to England at a comparatively early age and enjoy a comfortable life as a man of independent means.

Darcy Lever's wife Elizabeth, with whom he had eight children, was the only child of a Rev William Murgatroyd.

It can only be assumed that his adventures as a young man in the Far East were nautical ones; since, while living at Leeds in 1808, he published *The Young Sea Officer's Sheet Anchor* (a 'sheet anchor' being a ship's heaviest anchor, kept as a dependable reserve for emergencies.) In his introduction to the book, Lever stated that it had been planned many years before (he was now about 49 yrs old) and was finally concluded 'for the advantage of a young gentleman whose inclinations led him to the choice of a seafaring life'. The book was dedicated to Joshua Sydney Horton RN, who was Captain of the *Princess of Orange*. He had read and checked the manuscript prior to its publication, and he then brought it to the attention of several senior officers.

Forthcoming patrons were not only their Lordships of the Admiralty, but also the Court of Directors of the East India Company and the Corporation of the Trinity House of Hull.

Lever's book, sub-titled '*A Key to the Leading of Rigging and Practical Seamanship*', was the most lucid account of seamanship that has appeared up until that time. From splicing a rope, to maneuvering the vast and complex machine that was a sailing ship through the most critical situations, every aspect was divested of difficulty, described and illustrated. The *Sheet Anchor* was an immediate success. One reviewer wrote, 'We can recommend Mr. Lever's work as containing nothing that is superfluous, and all things that are useful...'. Fifty named ship masters, including naval officers from Captain to Admiral, testified to its merit; and for nearly 40 years it would be the manual of seamanship for both the Royal Navy and the mercantile marine.

Lever afterwards settled in Pontefract, where he wrote the foreword to second edition of his *Sheet Anchor* dated 25 March 1819. Towards the end of his life he divided his time between Alkington Hall near Manchester, the original seat of his family, and Edinburgh in

Scotland – where he died on 22 January 1837.

(A modern reprint of the second edition of Darcy Lever's *'Sheet Anchor'* was published in 1963 by Edward W Sweetman Co of New York)

The Sheepshank

Roger Carter

We in the land of the Canterbury Lamb, I love John Halifax's thoughts on the origins of the name Sheepshank, but it's much simpler than that. Our unsophisticated forebears named and described things from familiar things within their experience, and they thought that the Sheepshank knot resembled the tibia, fibula and tendons of a leg of mutton, with the half hitches at each end resembling the ankle and knee joints. The Germans, on the other hand thought that the knot resembled the coils of a musical instrument so they called the basic sheepshank " LANGE TROMPETE" i.e., Long Trumpet, and the Naval sheepshank, they call "ENGLISCHE TROMPETE", i.e., English Trumpet.

The first documentation I can find of the sheepshank is in "A sea Grammar" by Captain John

Smith published in 1627. He called it a "SHEPSHANKET" and says it was much used, particularly to shorten backstays when snugging down topmasts before a storm. This explanation is repeated by Falconer 1760, Steel 1794, Lever 1819 etc.

It might interest John and other Members to mention the fact that the U.S. Coastguard also uses the Naval Sheepshank as a badge. Perhaps I May draw John's attention to the 40 different Sheepshanks in Hensel and Graumont, particularly to p.40~ plate 13, knot # 225, which is exactly similar to the central portion of John's "Gorleston Sheepshank", though the ends are finished differently. As a practical knot I feel that that "Bad Nip" in the centre would injure the rope when a load was applied.

That naughty "Torn Bowling" whose book published in 1876, and has been the cause of many arguments on knot naming, calls the basic sheepshank a "Dogshank"!

Does Anne Flixton of Suffolk, who is researching Ropewalks, know that LIMEHOUSE in London was a ropewalk, the lime referred to is not the chemical, but the lime tree

which was the source of cordage for the English before Russian hemp was imported during Queen Elisabeth I's time. The inner bark of the tree was used, and the rope was called "BASS". By the time of the Armada, virtually all English ships were rigged with Russian hemp.

SIX KNOT CHALLENGE

from: Tony Doran, Surry, UK.

Ships Wheel Knot.

If Ron Haralson has made his Ship's Wheel Knot in a cotton line, he might try using a clear (colourless) lacquer of the kind used to coat polished metal. It will stiffen up a knot without imparting any colour. I don't know how it would work for synthetics.

Six Knot Challenge.

John Halifax's novel idea is ingenious, but I don't think it meets the spirit of the challenge. I believe the end product must be six distinct and separate knots.

In 1997, Peter Suber suggested a set of rules to govern the challenge. What was the IGKT Council's response? (Peter's suggested rules are reprinted for your consideration.)

A PROPOSAL FOR REGULATING THE WORLD KNOT TYING SPEED RECORD

by Peter Suber 1997

(peters@earlham.edu)

1, Knotters must use different cords for each knot.

Rationale. To verify after the event that all six knots were tied.

2, When the contest begins, the seven cords (one for each knot, two for the sheet bend) will be laid out on a firm, horizontal spar provided by the venue. The venue will also provide a vertical bollard for the clove hitch. Knotters may lay-out the cords on the spar themselves, putting them at any distance apart, folding over the spar at any point along their lengths. In the initial position, no cord may cross itself or another cord, or make a round turn around the spar.

Rationale. Who knows enough to stipulate a layout of the cords that won't slow down some contestants? The spar should be firm, like a wooden rail, rather than a length of thick rope, so it will not swing or sway during the contest. No knot should be half-tied already in the initial layout.

We might make an exception for the sheet bend. One cord might be tied to the spar in the initial state, allowing the contestant to use the untied free end for the bend. Or both cords might start tied to the spar, and the bend tied between the two free ends,

Instead of the plain horizontal spar, we might let knotters setup their own arrangement of spars, provided they meet certain conditions. One reason to do so is to bring the times down, just as Olympic pools use cold water to promote faster swimming. One reason not to do so is to avoid complexity in the rules and the appearance that the skill of the knotters is highly condition-sensitive,

3. Knotters may use cord of any length, diameter, and material.

Rationale. Who knows enough to stipulate these parameters without needlessly slowing down some contestants? Let the experts chose the cord that works best for them. I would even let knotters use different kinds of cord (at least different colours) for the different knots.

4. Knotters may tie the six knots in any order they choose.

Rationale. Similarly, who

knows enough to stipulate the order without needlessly restraining someone? Let the players chose the order that suits them best.

5. When a knot is completed, knotters may drop it in any way at all in moving to the next cord and the next knot,

Rationale. This is to prevent neatness from counting. Nothing extraneous to knotting skill and speed should contaminate the contest. This rule really applies only to the sheepshank and sheet bend, since the others will be attached to the spar or bollard.

6. Knotters may use any methods they like to tie the knots, provided that they manipulate the cord only with their hands.

Rationale. Don't limit contestants to canonical methods. Let the contest trigger the development of new and more efficient methods. Don't let contestants stretch the ordinary sense of "knot tying" by using their teeth or feet, let alone exotic tools or helpers

7. Knotters must touch only one cord at a time, except when tying the sheet bend, when they may touch only two cords at a time.

Rationale. Don't allow the last gesture on knot A to be the first gesture on knot B. We might restate this rule to allow knot-ers simultaneously to drop the cord for knot A with their left hand and pick up the new cord for knot B with their right.

8. Reputable people experienced (respectively) in timing sporting events and tying knots shall do the timekeeping, and verification of the knots.

Rationale. Don't require the same person to do both jobs, simply because the combination might be hard to find. Require a experienced knot tyer to verify the knots, but don't require an IGKT official; otherwise, far flung individuals will have little hope of entering this contest,

KNOTS & CROSSES

by Jack Fidspike

Why do listeners groan when any one comes up with a pun? I have never understood this adverse reaction. Mrs. Fidspike makes a face when she sees or hears "knotting ventured, knotting gained", although she tolerates "gathering knots in May" (because there is some etymological justification for it). But I think the heading of this article-

"**knots & crosses**" nicely sums up cruciform Turks' heads or aspects of Celtic artwork; and surely the history of the Guild's 10 years - **Much Ado About Knotting** - could not have been more aptly titled. I also like "**innomiknots**", a cut-&-shut word that occurs in correspondence from the 1980's between Geoffrey Budworth and fellow Guild member Les Osborne, M.D. of Vashon Island in Washington, USA. for innominate (i.e. unnamed) knots, while Sten Johansson's description of himself as a '**knottologist**' always makes me smile.

The English essayist and critic Charles Lamb (1775-1834) complained; "It [a pun] is a pistol let off at the ear; not a feather to tickle the intellect." Despite at least two centuries of this sort of discouragement, punsters are an incorrigible lot. The latest to surface (in KM62) is David Fukuhara, with his quirky adjective '**knottical**'. As knotting is far from being an intellectual pursuit for most of us, it may be no bad thing to awaken it from time to time with a well-aimed pun!

KNOTTING DIARY

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
APRIL to OCT 1999	Exhibition of Knots	Museum De Zilveriger near Antwerp	Geert "Willy" Willaert Dulfstraat 21 2880 Bornem	(0032)(0)3/889 86 03 <wwill@CARMAIL.com>
8 May 99	IGKT AGM	T.S. ORIAN NOTTINGHAM	Penny Bodger	01530 222633
5-9AUG 1999	IGKT- NAB	The Hampton Inn Fall River/Westport NEW BEDFORD	US-John Burke UK-Brian Field Reserve Room (\$93.25 pn)	US 313 562 4393 01621-850491 US 508 675 7185
9 OCT 99	HALF AGM	Mount Browne Police Training Centre Gilford, Surry	Peter Goldstone	01483 763054
14 May 2000	IGKT AGM	PULBOROUGH WEST SUSSEX	Nigel Harding	01825 760425
<u>CONTINUAL EVENT</u>				
Last Sat of every month	West Country Knotters	Scout H.Q. Almondsbury (Bristol) At 1400 hrs.	Dave Pusill 19 Cross Street Burnham-on-Sea Somerset TA8 1PF	01278 789545

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