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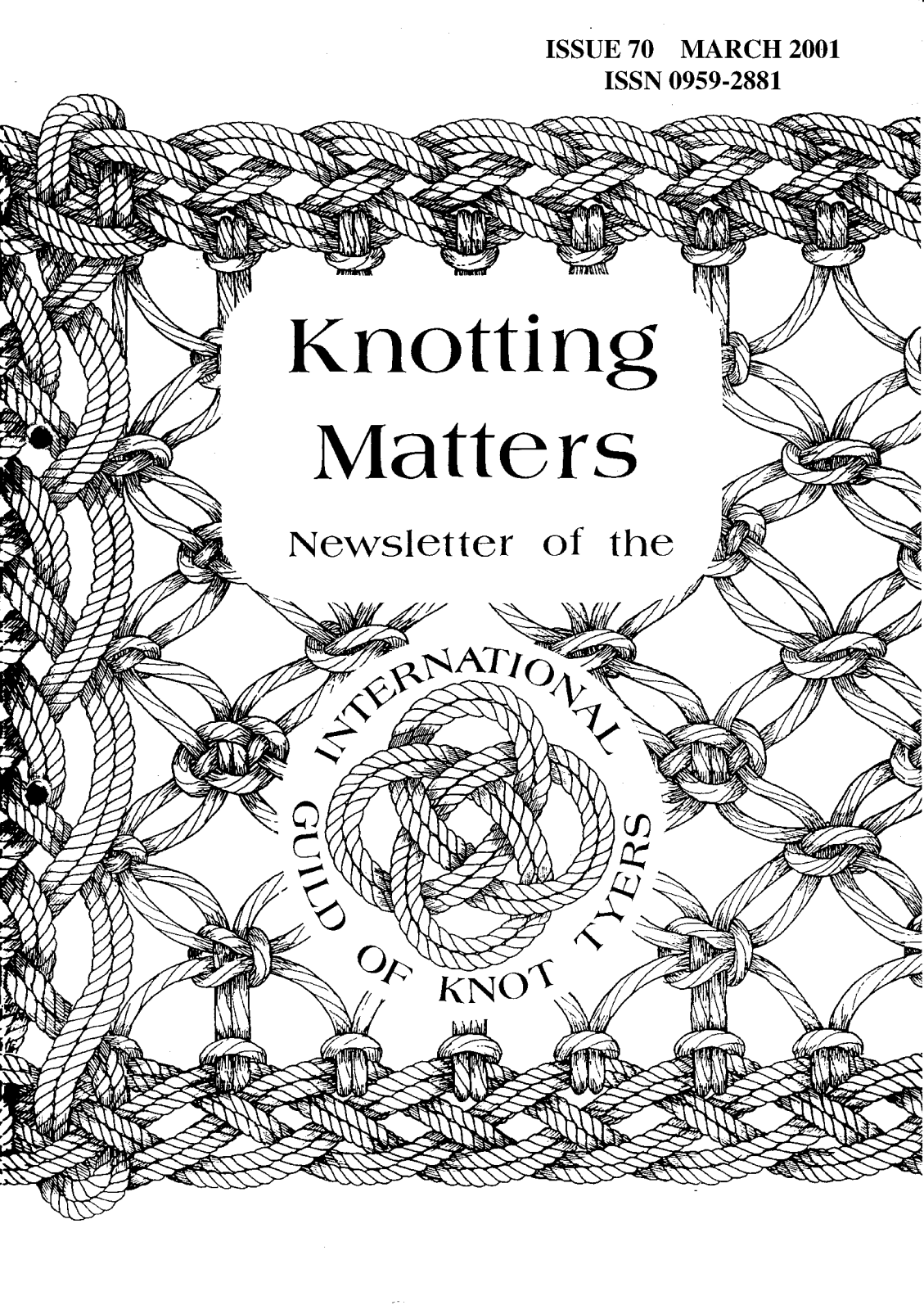
Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



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Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue No. 70

President: Brian Field
Secretary: Nigel Harding
Editor: Colin Grundy
Website: www.igkt.craft.org

Submission dates for articles

KM 71	**07 APR 2001**
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Cover design by Stuart Grainger

Master splicer, Pat Cunningham, New Zealand Chapter at work.

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Notes from the Secretary's Blotter

Looking out of the window the snow is gently falling, which at least makes a change from the incessant rain we have been having for the last three or four months. The tide has finally gone out in Uckfield and now at least, I can walk rather than swim down to the post box to send these notes off to the printer.

Christmas has been and gone, which means that the new subscription season is upon me. Cheques and credit card details have been falling through the letter box like er, snow? Speaking of subscriptions, there is a rumour going around that I stuff a reminder in EVERY Knotting Matters. It's not true, and there must be a member out there somewhere who has not received one.

The system I use is generated from my records, based on the individuals renewal date. I have been sending out my little notes, even to those who pay by Bankers Order, under the mistaken impression that I was helping by reminding them that the bank was about to dip their sticky little fingers into various accounts and take some money. This year, Knotting Matters having gone out just a week ahead of the end of the year, when more subs are due, I seem to have caused all sorts of mayhem and confusion. What with some members feeling embarrassed because they thought they were late paying, and other who have forgotten the Bankers Order, and have sent a cheque as well, it will take me weeks to straighten everything out. I shall not be quite so generous with the 'red letters' in future. My apologies to those members who have been inconvenienced.

Most of my time spent as secretary is enjoyable, but just occasionally I have a difficult task to perform, and at this moment it is to announce the recent death of Barbara Murphy, wife of Denis, secretary to the Devon Branch. Barbara has always warmly greeted me at all the Guild meetings that I have been to. She was a lovely lady and will be fondly remembered and sadly missed by all those that knew her.

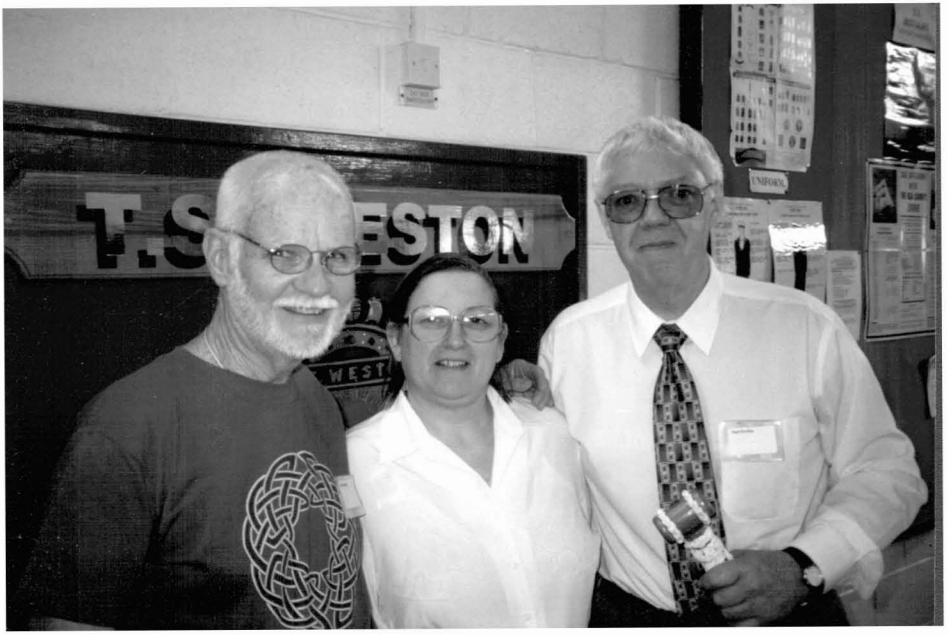
Speaking of the job of the Secretary, which I have thoroughly enjoyed over the last nine years. I have been trying to pass it on to someone else, so as not to keep all the fun to myself. It is now almost a year since I announced my retirement, and as yet there has still not been a single applicant. I was not particularly anxious to go but decided that it was time really for the benefit of the Guild, so that there would be someone fresh at the helm, full of new ideas, and enthusiasm. As a result of the absence of an immediate successor, it looks as though my retirement is on hold for a little while, and, how shall I put it, it looks as though you are stuck with me for a little while longer. At least that gives me up to three years to find and train the next

Hon Sec.

There must be many of you who are reading this at the moment who have dreamed of writing their own book of knotting. Well your luck is in, for there is a whole army of publishers out there looking for YOU. I am quite serious. I have had numerous enquiries this year, and even Geoffrey will admit that there is a limit to the number he can write each year. Admittedly, most of the publishers have a fixed idea of what they want, often with the artwork already complete, and just need some words to go with the pictures. It might not be exactly the book you had in mind, but there will be a modest fee, perhaps verging on the meagre, but it would get YOUR name on the cover, and once you have been published, you will have gained a lot of experience. You will have joined the ranks of the Published Authors, and have a better chance of creating YOUR OWN book in the future. Don't be shy, just let me know, and I will point the next publisher in your direction.

I am always late writing these notes, usually because I am looking for some inspiration, but once I get going, I have a job to stop. I will stop now, otherwise there will be no room left for any Knotting Matters - Meanwhile, I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM in May.

Nigel Harding



Nigel Harding (right) at the 2000 AGM, T. S. Weston with Dick Chisholm and Lynda Turley.

From the Editor

You will find there is an awful lot to read in this edition of Knotting Matters. The postbag for the Branch news must surely be the biggest I have ever received. It's nice to know that there is such a lot of knotting going on out there, and new branches springing up or older ones being revived.

The bug of writing limericks has certainly bitten some members. I have received many from around the world. Some members may consider this as nothing to do with knot tying. It does show however, that they are creative in more ways than with just string. You will find a small selection again in this edition.

Brian Field mentions in his Letter from a President of a request for articles on knots and projects aimed at some of our more novice members. As he rightly points out, I can only print those articles I receive. I could quite easily fill an edition of Knotting Matters with articles on Turk's Head knots. Those on other more practical knots or other decorative knots are few and far between. I'm sure there is a lot of expertise among our members who work in these other areas. Perhaps you would like to put pen to paper and write on sennits or practical ropework. What about those working with wire rope or even life support knots? Have I given you food for thought?

The time is rapidly approaching for the Guild to celebrate its twentieth Birthday. Did those founder members realise when they met in 1982 that the Guild would be over one thousand strong in twenty years time? You will find details of the lead up to the birthday celebrations later in this issue.

The Knot Gallery seems to have proved a success, not only for the colour pages, but also the standards of work that some of our member's turn out. The stock of pictures however are starting to run low. I try to include a range of work in the Gallery, but again I can only put in pictures that members send in. So if you have good quality photographs (nice and bright please), send them in so we can keep the gallery going.

While on the subject of the Knot Gallery, in the last issue, the wonderful covered bottles on page 23, I wrongly attributed to Joaquim Paulo Escudeiro. Paulo was quick to point out this mistake (see Postbag). Fortunately the answer to who made them came just before this edition went to print, so I am therefore able to correct the matter. They were in fact made by Marc Lauwereyns of our Belgium branch. My apologies go to both Paulo and Marc for this error.

It will soon be time for the AGM, this time at Farnham. Members have often commented that the AGM and half-yearly meetings fall flat on the Sunday morning, with no activity going on. This year will be different. Activities and workshops are planned for both events, details in this issue. I look forward to renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. See you there.

Letter from a President

Life has more or less returned to normal following my trip to the States. I managed to work a fair number of days on the quayside at Maldon during August and September as the weather was reasonable in this part of Essex (I am not allowed to have any kind of shelter or superstructure). The fleet of eighty foot masted Thames Sailing Barges (still working) which form the background to my pitch attract many visitors from all over the world and have helped recruit a few members to the Guild over the years.

In October I attended the half-yearly meeting in The Netherlands and was able to renew friendships forged at past meetings. Willeke can be pleased that the great deal of work, which she put into organising the event, succeeded in producing a meeting that I shall long remember.

Council has recently taken two decisions, which will have repercussions for members in general. They have agreed that Council minutes should be circularised to all recognised Branch representatives. At least you will now know what decisions are being taken on your behalf, and with so many extra eyes on our activities, future meetings may have a little extra edge.

Council also agreed that I should issue what amounts to a Presidential Honours list. There are many individuals who give much time and effort in running Branches, organising events and generally doing a great deal of good for the Guild. These workers make the Guild what it is and their efforts deserve recognition. Unfortunately I am not aware of every individuals work so would you please let me have your recommendations for such a list, and your reasons for putting them forward. Rest assured that the list would be limited to prevent devaluation, and to prevent claims that the Presidency has gone to my head, there will be no similar Honours List on my birthday!

In November I accepted the invitation of the West Country Branch to pay them a visit. Among the points raised was a request for K.M. to include knotting projects for the less advanced knotter. This point has been raised at every branch meeting I have attended in this country and abroad so the demand for such items exists. The Editor can only select items for publication from the material he receives so here is a request that those who have a little more ability; please submit your projects to the editor for the benefit of the rest of us.

Brian Field

ROPE ENDS

The term "Choking a Stump" was used by Mississippi River Steam Boat men. It meant slinging a rope around a tree when mooring to the bank.

Clint Funk

IGKT 20th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

THE EVENT	20TH Birthday for The International Guild of Knot Tyers In the form of an International meeting of the worlds knot tyers.
Date	20 May- 25 May 2002
The Co-ordinator	Ken Yalden
The Venue	Fernham Hall, Fareham, Hants. England
Duration	Five days of a public show of knot tying and static displays of world-class work. One day Open International Meeting / with AGM Formal acknowledgement of 20 year Milestone.
The Build Up	Knot Year 2K2 commenced with the First Knot of the Millennium. Word-wide, Members have been encouraged to display and demonstrate their own work, as part of a Global activity; Guild Members have also been requested to make a knotted contribution to be displayed at the 20th Birthday Show.
Events	As well as the internal events, external coach parties will be arranged. Schedules including visits to the Royal Dock Yard (rigging shed), Iron-Age Farm, Waterways Museum (canal boats), Stonehenge and a whole host of venues dreamed up by Knot Tyers for their non-Knotty partners.
Publicity	Guild Members will receive updates to their Millennium Pack, to ensure total awareness as the event unfolds. The skills of Fareham Borough Council Publicity Team shall be employed to ensure there are no missed opportunities with all aspects of the media. World announcements can be made via the network of local radio stations as each member has a local show- linking all events into Knot Year 2K2 and the Main Event.

The Party	After a short AGM- limited Key Note speakers will acknowledge 20 years of the Guild. The 20th milestone shall be commemorated with a birthday cake and champagne.
The Dinner	A Knot Supper for 200 will be arranged, if possible among the displays, to ensure it has the correct knotting ambience.
International Concord	Full use will be made of local guesthouses willing to accept international visitors. Local taxis or hire companies will be invited to collect international travellers, as knot tyers arrive from various parts of the world. Fareham Borough Council and the Chamber of Commerce shall be invited to be part of the International Concord.
Education, Art & Craft	Schools, craft and youth organisations shall be invited to visit the week-long show of work and demonstrations; named Guild members will host these. Some of the Associate Organisations invited to display will be, Scout Association (Hampshire) Wessex Guild of Spinners and Weavers, Flag Institute. Boy Seaman Associations (Ganges/St Vincent) What about local branches of Sea Cadet Corps
Support	It is intended to seek the aid of grants for the promotion and development of Arts & Crafts, also for the promotion of an International Event in Farnham. Full use shall be made of sponsorship.
Commemorative Programme/Catalogue	It is intended to publish a booklet of the event as a milestone, as well as the sequel to 'Much ado about knotting' to the first 20 years of the Guild.
Book Signing	The Commemorative Booklet plus other books will be available for signing by the authors.

Knot Noticed?

On the matter of the knot error on the newsletter cover referred to, but not identified, by Rus Hammond (Postbag KM69). I reckon, like me, the entire IGKT membership now has the cover permanently etched, in great detail, into their mind. For what it is worth, the only detail I can see that I might take issue with is the depiction of the "granny" knot tied about the two strands at the bottom row in the south east corner on the front cover.

The bottom strand entering from the north west is not in what I would call 'good alignment' with the continuation of the loop emerging from under the strands on the eastern side of the bend. This, of course is not so much a knotting error as a 'sloppy illustration'.

I look forward to seeing what more experienced knotting eyes than mine can find and do hope that Rus supplies his answer before this becomes a major mystery.

Jim Caswell
Sydney, Australia

I would hardly call Stuart's illustration 'sloppy', I would dearly love to be able to draw knots as good as he does - Ed.

Having read Rus Hammond's letter in Postbag KM 69 I had a look and soon noticed a bit of 'artist's license' or an error? Whether it is what Rus is referring to I am Knot sure, but I thought I would share it with you.

The top and bottom of the cover design comprises three strand braiding, doubled, with the main 'net' design hanging from the lower strand of this by Cow Hitches.

At the top left of the front cover, and the bottom right of the back cover the Cow hitches nearest the spine are not tied round anything! They are trying to hide behind the braiding but should be tied round the front strands, if they are to follow on the sequence of the rest of the design.

If this is not the right answer we shall have to keep looking! If I am right could I claim a small prize! Maybe a signed photo of 'The Maldon Knot Man'! Only joking.

My knotting interests stem from boating, Scouting and having met Brian Field on Maldon Quay many times, and Des Pawson introduced me to the Guild.

Peter Best
Ipswich, England

Rus Hammond challenges the IGKT to find the "error" in the KM cover illustration. I surmise that he's both right & wrong:

I think that he believes Stuart's artfully accurate drawing of a single-rope *endless* design in the centre is wrong to not have the ends match up, to run into each other. Stuart will of course defend this image as rightly intentional, as a drawing of just such a real knot (though one could, also, tie a 2-rope version and make the ends match).

But I find an apparent (I don't see how to reconcile) error at the spine (technically, this isn't on "the cover"!). It seems that the centre crossing point of the 4 paired horizontally running ropes (interweaving up and down amongst them-selves) is wrongly showing the upper ropes of this crossing to both lie over the ropes rising from below. Note that the cover's TOP ropes centre-cross such that the TOP ropes are rising rightwards (= falling leftwards), whereas on the back the same ropes' crossing is reversed, and they lie under. (The bottom is similarly drawn, similarly wrong (?).)

Again, in short, the top/bottom centre crossing of the paired ropes running horizontally as borders show an apparently impossibility of the left & right top pairs being both on top (at the top crossing) or both on bottom (at the bottom of page).

This is more readily seen on the larger covers of older KM #s.

Dan Lehman
Virginia, USA

On the same subject, Jeff Wyatt rang to say that the knot at the ten o'clock position to the front cover Guild logo has been drawn different to all the others. In it, he says that the top right hand cord comes in front of the two vertical cords whereas on the other knots, it goes behind. Jeff has always thought this error as too trivial to mention - Ed.

Stuart Grainger Replies:

I have received a considerable postbag as a result of the letter from R. F. Hammond published on page 44 of Knotting Matters #69. So far none of my correspondents has been able to provide the answer to the vexed question of what 'mistake' has been published for so long on the cover of this magazine, but they expect me to provide it. I must insist that Mr. Hammond provides it, if he can, without further delay, because I can not. I am beginning to suspect that this is another example of the famous Queensland export of bovine excreta.

I think it is fair to all concerned to mention that I drew this as a straightforward design exercise. It was not drawn as a puzzle, nor was it drawn from a physical example and, if there is some mistake in it, I for one am not particularly surprised, not being infallible in my own opinion. The interesting thing is that only Mr. Hammond has been able hitherto to discern this claimed mistake. I would greatly prefer that those who so minutely peruse my design for mistakes take similar, but more creative, trouble to produce an alternative cover design. If you can design an alternative, please do so and let us all pick holes in yours for a change.

Stuart Grainger
Dunchurch, England

The cover design has served the Guild well for most of its existence. As Stuart so rightly points out, the drawing is a design exercise (and a very good one at that) and not a copy of a physical example. Other than to call on Rus Hammond to put his money where his mouth is, so as to speak, this subject is now closed - Ed.

Origin of a knot

by Sten Johansson

In 1930 a book called "KODIN TAITOSANAKIRJA" was published in Helsinki, Finland. The name of the book means "An Encyclopedia of Knowledge for the Household". A lot of knots were published in the book and they were made by the Finnish Scoutleader M Ropponen, who was the first to show a drawn Constrictor Knot in her book SOLMUKIRJA (A Book of Knots) in 1931.

At page 173 she shows "KORISTESOLMUJA KIINALAISIA" (Ornamental Chinese Knot). At the top is shown in drawings how the Chinese Button Knot (Pyjama Knot) is tied in a hand. These are the exact same drawings as shown in Ashley Book of Knots published in 1944, page 101 #599. The only difference is, that Ashley has drawn a nail on the thumb of the hand.

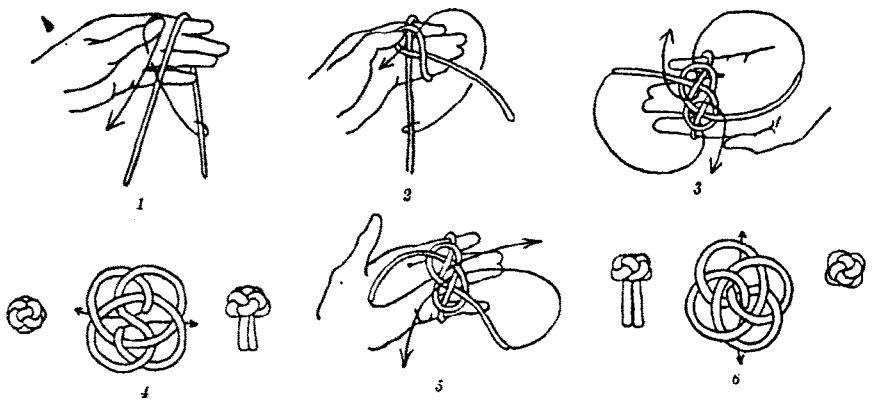
This book is not mentioned in Ashley's bibliography and Ropponen does not show the knot in her book "Solmukirja" 1931.

Now to my query. Have any of IGKT members seen these drawings in any other books? As Ropponen was the first to show these drawings, where did Ashley copy them? If Ropponen and Ashley corresponded, how come she is not mentioned in Ashley's book? Ropponen is mentioned in Cyrus Day's book "The Art of Knotting and Splicing". At page 116 he writes about the Constrictor Knot "Martta Ropponen-Homi, in her SOLMUKIRJA (1931, preface dated 1930) was the first to illustrate it. She called it the WHIP KNOT (Finnish RUASKASOLMU) and show how to tie it in the bight. In a letter to me dated December 5 1954, she says she never saw it in Finland, but got it from Raphael Gaston, of Zaragoza, Spain. She translated the name WHIP KNOT into Finnish from Esperanto, the language in which she and Gaston corresponded"

Could it happened so that Ropponen in the 1930's only spoke Finnish and maybe exchanged knots in Esperanto with Gaston, the Constrictor for the Pyjama Knot. Easier to draw a knot, than to explain in words in Esperanto how to tie the knots.

Ashley then had some connections in Spain (Gaston?) who sent him the drawings. Ashley then added a thumb to the hand to make it look more natural and published it his book in 1944.

Is there anyone with other ideas about this knot?



Autumn Meeting - Ellesmere Port

I would like to take this early opportunity to invite you to the Autumn meeting which will be held at the Ellesmere Port Canal Boat Museum on Friday to Sunday, October 13th to 15th, 2001.

At this meeting, along with the usual Friday evening and Saturday events, I am having a Sunday timetable. So far, I have planned:

Ply Splitting - originally Indian camel girths, a talk, demonstration and display by Anne Dyer.

An Introduction to Netting by Willeke van der Ham.

Public Speaking and Presentations by Brian Field and myself.

Decorative Square Knotting by Tony Doran.

Hopefully this will make an interesting weekend

If your partner finds this boring, may I recommend Ellesmere Port as a base for a long weekend? The museum itself is a major attraction, housing many boats and displays over a once busy port centre. The new Cheshire Oaks Shopping Outlet is nearby. The Wirral itself has many attractions. Great views over the Dee marshes to the Welsh hills. The Port Sunlight Village is not far away. Also it's just a few miles from Liverpool and the historic walled city of Chester, with its famous "Rows" and cathedral.

Don't forget to put this date in your diary, and if you want any more information, get in touch.

Happy knotting
David Walker

The History of Knot Boards?

By Des Pawson

One of the joys of knotting is that there are so many things still to be discovered, so many questions to be answered. The other day I was asked, "What is the origin and history of the Knot Board?" This question got me thinking about just how old the knot board may be, why they were made and who made them.

At first thought I imagined that they had been around forever, made either as a training aid on board ship or in a Naval training establishment. Or as a demonstration of the tyers skill, either to be displayed in a rigging loft or chandlers, or perhaps given away as a gift.

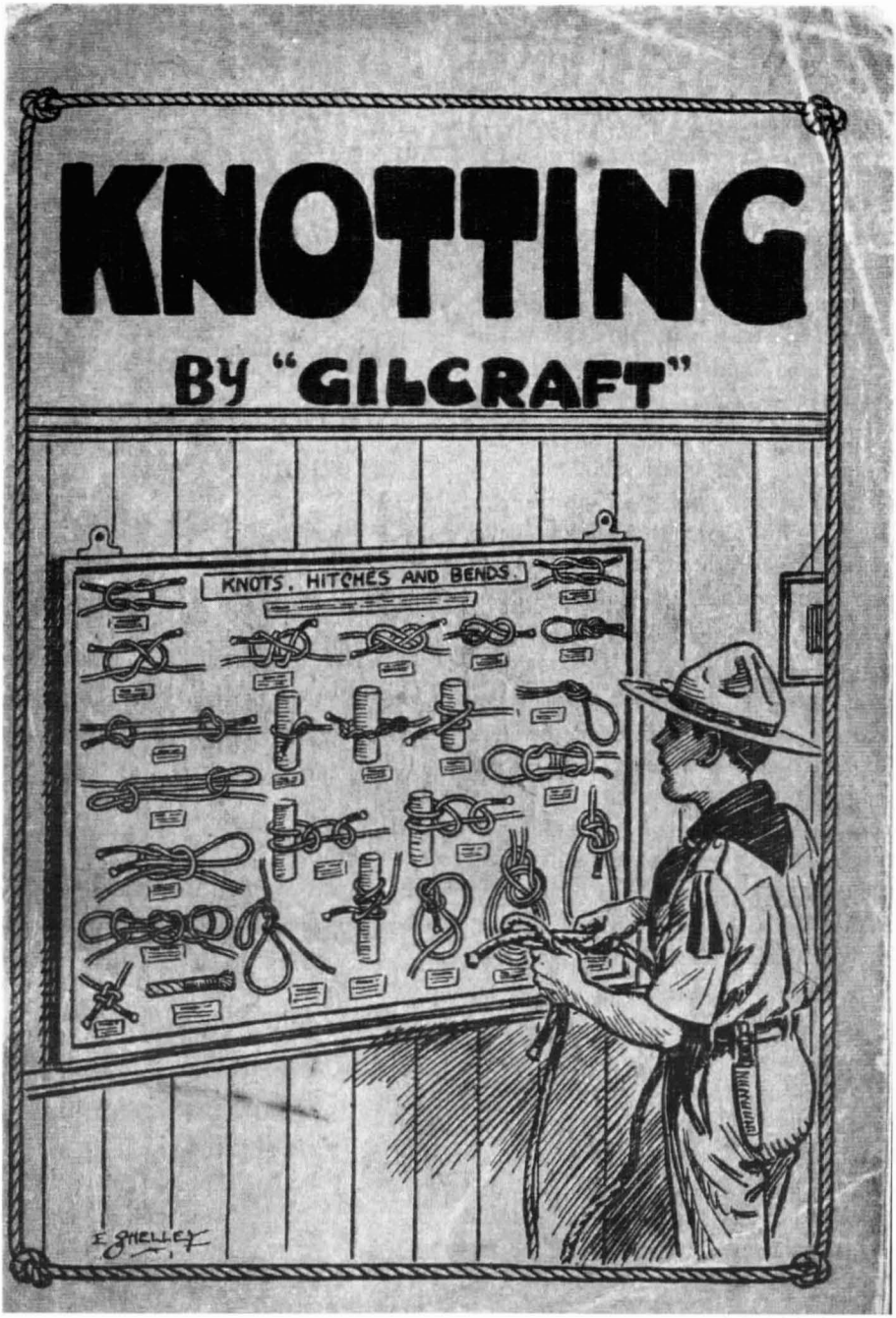
To prove this idea is not so easy. searching my library, the earliest evidence I could get was only as far back as the 1920's. Photographs of a knot board were used to illustrate certain parts of the *Laerebok I Pratisk Sjømannsarbeide* [handbook of Practical Seamanship] by F. W. J. Paulsen, published in Kristiania, Norway, 1924.

In the same year, the Portuguese, Joaquim Marques Esparteiro published his book *Arte de Marinheiro* in Macau. At the front of this book is a photo of a fine knot board made by Saul Gomes da Costa and Alvaro Pereira for an exhibition in Macau, February 1924. This knot board shows a wide range of rope work. A couple of years later in 1929, the first edition of *Knotting by Gilcraft* published in London, has as its cover a drawing of a Scout practicing a knot whilst looking at a knot board.

As far as actual knot boards are concerned, C. W. Ashley certainly made displays of knots, probably about this sort of time. The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich has a rather fine knot board in the form of a wooden book. The various pages showing how to make knots, splices and how to rig tackles. No date is given for its making, but it has the feel of the 1930's. Some of the Guild members may remember it from an early meeting of the Guild held at Greenwich. Others will have seen it illustrated as part of the article by Percy Blandford in the *Decorative Arts of the Mariner*, edited by Gervis Frere-Cook and published in London, 1966.

I have in my collection a fairly old knot board, but just how old is hard to say. It certainly had a lot of dust on it when I got it, but I doubt that it goes back further than the 1920's or 30's.

None of these leads get us very far back. I wonder if any members have knowledge of earlier examples, or perhaps have come across an account mentioning the making of a display of knots, perhaps giving us a lead to the why and when they were first made.


KNOTTING
BY "GILCRAFT"
KNOTS, HITCHES AND BENDS.
E. SHELLEY

Knot News

from Geoffrey Budworth

Knotting received a brief airing on Thursday, 3rd August 2000, at 4 p.m. (repeated on Sunday 6th), during the British Broadcasting Corporation's Radio 4 half-hour 'Word of Mouth' programme, written and presented by Michael Rosen.

Recording on the upper deck of the Cutty Sark, in her dry dock at Greenwich in southeast London, the interviewer quizzed Guild members Simon Waite (master of the historic clipper ship) and me about knot names and knotting words.

Forty minutes of our conversation resulted in just seven edited minutes of actual air-time; but listeners were then treated to a rich distillation ranging from the myth of Matthew Walker (fooling the hanging judge), and how to tie one's shoe laces (with a double reef bow), to blood knots (on a cat-o'-nine-tails). Even the whimsical knot names of the late Desmond Mandeville (poor man's pride, tumbling thief, etc.) received a mention.

It was an ephemeral outcome for all the prior preparation, and then the inspired but useless post mortem after-thoughts that come with unwinding from such excitement; but then, if one had to pay for this media exposure, it would cost a lot of money - assuming it could ever be arranged. And who knows what the result might ultimately be for the Guild? Knot tyers do it ... anyway we can!

Knotmaster Series No. 8

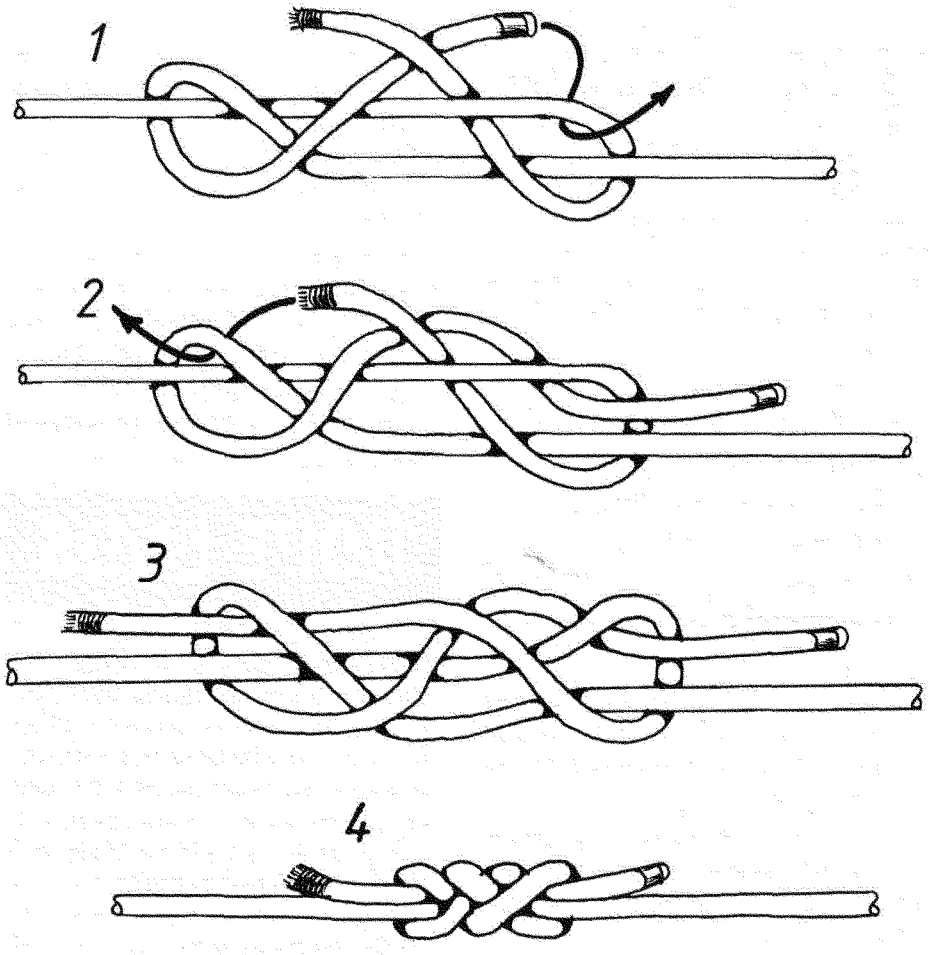
"Knotting ventured, knotting gained."

Vice versa

Use this bend - devised by the late Harry AsherIGKT - to render captive bungee (shock elastic) cord, polythene ropes and any other slick or slippery materials that escape from other knots.

Lay the two lines parallel and together, ends pointing in opposite directions, then wrap and tuck as shown (fig's 1-3). Tighten the knot with care by repeatedly pulling, a bit at a time, on each working end and standing part in turn.

Vice versa



Knots and Sailorizing have pride of place at Brest 2000

By Graham McLachlan

The organization "La Touline, Bretagne & Internationale" (The Monkey Fist, Brittany & International), of which the objective is to help professional sailors find work, put together an international contest of knot-tyers (concours internationale de matelotage) during the grandiose festival of ships and sailors at Brest, France, last summer.

A dozen participants took part, all from very different knotting backgrounds.

The contestants had to complete 4 tests:

* a knot board of at least 20 pieces
* a rope mat
* a bell rope
* and a personal creation (freestyle!).

The knot-tyers were put to work under a huge tent at the centre of the festival and visitors were able to pass among them to admire their work.

At the end of the third day, the pieces were sold by official auction to the highest bidder, with all proceeds going to "La Touline, B & I".

The jury, made up of a leading yachtswoman, the editor of "Almanach du marin Breton", a director of "La Touline" and myself, gave a much deserved first prize to Denis, who is bosun aboard the famous tug "Abeille Flandres". Second place went to Sylvain, just 18 and passionate about knotting, and third went to Graham who works for the promotion of maritime heritage at Tatihou in Normandy.

Des Pawson made a welcome appearance and naturally set about making a much appreciated contribution to the objects to be sold... many thanks Des.

In all, a great succes for participants and public alike, and let's hope we can do it again sometime!

ROPE ENDS

'Prefect Corin drew a length of cord from his tunic and tied one loop around Pandaras 's wrist and another around his own. . . He stood up, jerking hard on the cord so that Pandaras was forced to rise too. "There are threads of plastic through the cord, "Prefect Corin said. "They can dull the keenest blade, and they have a certain low intelligence. Try to tamper with the knot and it will tighten its grip, and by and by cut off your hand".'

(Shrine of Stars - The Third Book of Confluence, by Paul J. McAuley - 1999)

How to "Have a Knot Tyer's Meeting

By Willeke van der Ham

I have just made sure the people coming to the IGKT Beverwijk 2000 meeting had a place to meet food to eat and a place to sleep. If they wanted, they could stay in a Dutch home or the hall. I would like to tell you how to do the same.

Knot tyers are a friendly bunch; the only thing they insist on is a place. They meet in pubs, scout buildings, museums, private houses or other peoples backyards. So set a time for the meeting. Ask your barkeeper, scoutmaster, museum owner, partner, or the people next-door with the big backyard if you can use their building or grounds. Ideally, a meeting place is just a little bigger than the amount of people you expect. A friendly bunch will find a cosy corner in a big space or just fit in another chair in a small a place.

The next thing knot people appreciate is water, bread, tea, coffee and cookies. If you are on somebody's home ground, appoint him to find a volunteer to buy the food. If you rent a place have somebody check whether to bring things like a water boiler and teabags. If you are having a full day affair, do not forget lunch, bring sandwiches, or arrange lunch in a nearby place, if not too expensive. Meeting in a pub takes care of these details.

For a multi day, or big meeting you have to think about dinner and drinks like wine or beer, and whether they are allowed on the grounds. Do you want them to be used, because it may change the group? For a big meeting you need more people to take care of catering. A talk with a local restaurant may find them willing to take care your knot tyers.

Times, Numbers and the Like

The more informal the meeting the shorter the preparation time. Phone your friends, tell them you are in your local pub tomorrow and they are likely to come. To be sure everyone can come; you may need to phone a week before the meeting.

If you want a formal meeting with speakers from outside the group, using an often booked place, you may need to rent the place and publish the date as far as two year ahead. If you are willing to change your venue, or adjust your date, a couple of months may be enough for a meeting.

I have found that coffee and tea takes two volunteers on the day at any time. If the volunteers want to take part in the meeting as well, you won't have coffee during the meeting. So you will need a rota so every volunteer has some free time as well.

Preparing lunch will take a group of trained people who will tell you their

requirements and the numbers they can handle, or some willing volunteers. At Rotterdam in 1996 we had four to produce a simple lunch for 40. They missed the meeting until well after the lunch. At Beverwijk, we had the lunch brought in by a caterer. Setting it up took ten minutes, and at about the same cost per person. For serving we needed a few but they where spelled by others so everybody could eat.

To cook dinner for any large amount of people you will need a group of people who have done it before. For a group half the size, you will have to make a judgement on numbers and amounts. We did not have the facilities and volunteers, so we went to a restaurant. Beverwijk, being a place with an abundance of restaurants, I had a fair choice and did not have to book too early. In fact I booked too late and was lucky my first choice of restaurant was available, but I knew there were more. Also caterers who will wait at the table's as well)

The other thing important is 'Do they know how to get there?' No problem if your group meet at your local pub. But it is a really important point when the people come from out of town, or from other countries.

As soon as you have rented or arranged your spot have a look around. Ask a couple of friends, who do not come there, "Do they know the place and how to get there?" If not tell everybody, in your invitation how to get there, and in such a way that they do not need additional signs.

If the meeting is aimed at a bigger group, like your entire county, province, state or even country, or the entire guild, make a route and supply them with a map. Make sure the place is well signposted. We have had meetings in buildings such

as museums, opposite well signposted places, (I remember a horseracing track) near railway stations, motorway exits and so on. If you're spot is not signposted, make the signs yourself. If you are allowed put a sign on every corner from an easy to find spot onwards. A small sign on several lampposts will help the people walking. For people in cars, the signs have to be big and distinctive. If local laws forbid you to place signposts, use the landmarks like churches and schools, and ask permission to place one (big) sign in the trouble spot. Maybe you are allowed to place the signs behind windows at the appropriate corners.

The last couple of years we have used, among other things, white (cardboard) signs with the guild logo and/or IGKT in black, or used a blue backdrop with a yellow Turk's head knot. Sometimes, a white backdrop for IGTK, and an arrow.

I had the logo photocopied onto yellow paper, cut it out along the line to tape to a blue board. The leftover knots, a small size, I taped to lampposts along the road.

Because of weather and folks returning from pubs at nights I did not put up many signs till early Saturday morning. Only the ones on the trouble spots I knew about where up on Friday, and of course some people showed me some new difficult spots in the route.

Organising in headlines.

Set a date - as early as possible.

Rent a place - or talk people in to letting you use the building for free.

Soon after above - Check route for difficulties.

ASAP again - publish the date, time and place as soon as they are confirmed.

Find or appoint volunteers - for catering, or professional caterers. They need to be local to the town if possible. Check with the caterers when they need a final reservation, and the numbers confirmed.

Make a 'How to get there.' - another job for your local contact, but a driver and a public transport user should check directions. Early, if possible months before the meeting check again just before going into print.

Make a 'shopping list' - for those things the caterer does not supply, signs, nametags and luxuries like decorations for the building if needed.

Keep a second list - with who is going to do what and where. What is already done and by who. With what companies are you going to deal and why not.

Use telephone meetings - if those organising together cannot meet in person. Use the knowledge of those who have organised before. (Phone me, I offer my help.)

In the last days before the meeting.

Check with all people who work on this meeting.

-Are numbers confirmed?

-Is the route clear?

-Are the signs made?

-Who is going to place them?

-Are the people who host guests informed about their guests and when will they arrive?

-Is coffee, tea and so on available in the building for those coming in to help and for those arriving early?

-Are all your volunteers well, and do they know they have volunteered?

-Do they know when to come and what to bring?

-If the building is always used on that day and time, will it be empty?

Lengthen this list with all those things that are appropriate in your case.

Ideally every meeting should be organised by a small group of people, one of them being the co-ordinator, the rest doing the actual work and checking the co-ordinator for missing details. But if you live rather far from the others, many times it is you that is the one on the spot, and the local contact. All those others are just not able to help, or it is so much easier to do it yourself.

Make sure you have a backup, and do not worry about worrying, it is part of the job. If you want to organise a big meeting, and you are just not sure how to do it, start with a small one, save the big one for a second try. Big meetings are at times only 50 to 100 people.

And say what you are not able to do, sometimes it can be done by someone not on the spot, or by a friend who is not part of your organisation. Help will always spring forward from an unexpected corner.

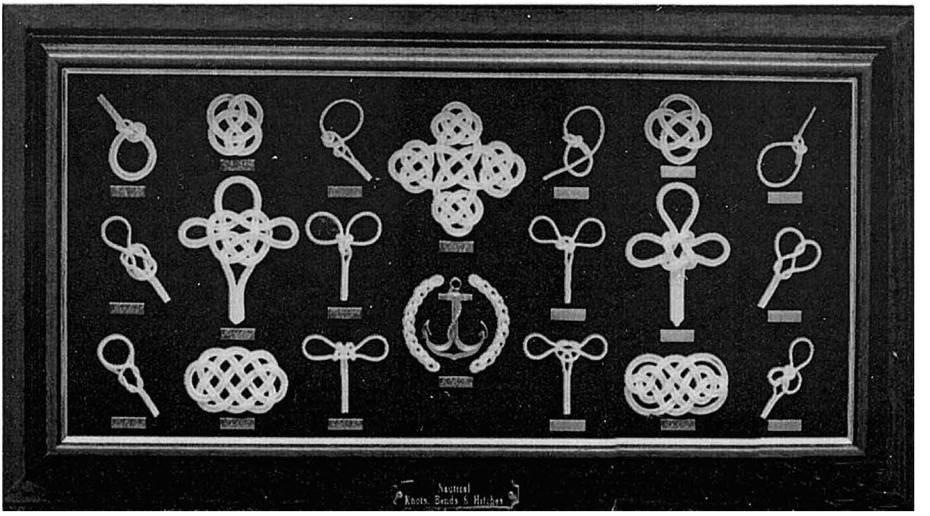
Good luck and many happy meetings.

Picture frame by Jeff Wyatt, pyrography by Lesley Wyatt

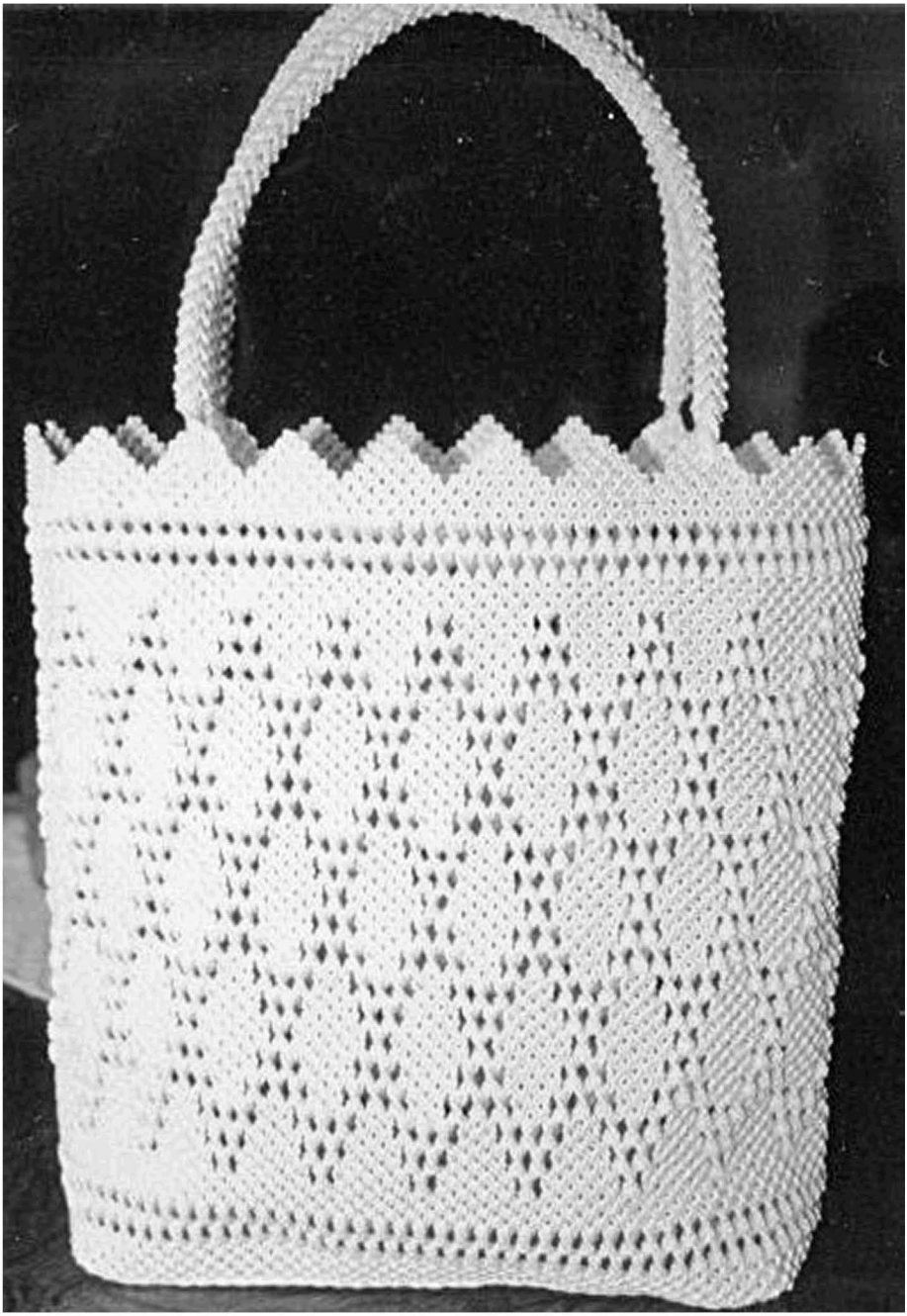
Knot Gallery

Above: Key fob by Dan Callahan
Six strand Footrope knot, sennit and Matthew Walker Knot,
Eight strand Little Lump Knot

Below: Knotboard by Brian Jarrett



Above: Rope Sculpture, Hermitage Basin London (photo-Geoffrey Budworth)
Left: Ditty Bag by Gary C. Sessions
Lanyard in 144 thread cotton, bag decorated with drawn thread work



Macramé bag by Jorgen Friis-Christensen

Ropework by Jack Grice
on the replica steamboat
"Ernest Kemp"
Lake Taupo, North Island,
New Zealand
(photo's - Willeke van der Ham)

The Four Lead by Six Bight Turk's Head Knot Tied in the Hand and Other Ways

By Jesse Coleman

The four lead by six bight Turk's Head knot is an attractive knot when tied using two cords of contrasting colours. This knot decorates several jars, bottles and sticks around my house. This note discusses several ways to tie this knot.

The rule of the greatest common divisor states: "The number of cords needed to tie a THK is the greatest common divisor of the number of bights and the number of leads in the THK." The number of bights in this knot is six. Six is divisible by the integers 1, 2, 3 and 6. The number of leads is four. Four is divisible by the integers 1,2 and 4. The largest number that is in both of these two sets of numbers (1,2,3,6 and 1,2,4) is two. That is, two is the greatest common divisor of four and six. Therefore, two separate cords are required to tie this knot.

The 4L X 6B THK Tied in the Hand

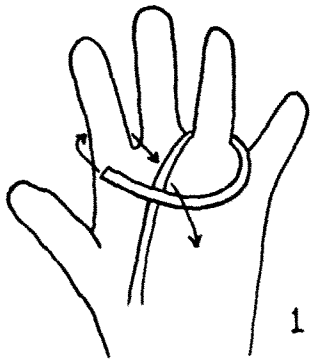
Cords of any colour may be used. To make this discussion easier, let's call them white and blue. We begin by tying a 2L X 3B THK in the hand using white cord. Begin by going around the ring finger and then the index finger as shown in figure 1. Figure 2 shows the completed 2L X 3B THK. If you want a 2L X 3B Turk's Head knot, you could stop at this point, remove it from the hand, double it once or twice and use this simple but attractive knot for whatever purpose you desire.

We tie the 4L X 6B THK by weaving the blue cord through the 2L X 3B THK that we just constructed using white cord (and left on the hand). Begin by bringing the blue cord between the thumb and index finger. Go over two white cords and then under two more white cords as shown in figure 3. Bring the blue cord around the little finger then over two white cords, as shown in figure 4. With the working end now in the center of the figure, begin the familiar over one cord and under one cord pattern, up to and around the ring finger, as shown in figures 3 and 4. Finish by continuing the over and under pattern until the starting point is reached. See figures 5 and 6.

The knot may now be removed from the hand, doubled once or twice and used as desired.

The 4L X 6B THK Tied as A Mat

This knot may also be tied as a mat by using pins or tape on a tabletop to hold the cords in place while tying the knot. Again we construct a 2L X 3B THK using white cord, except this time we construct it as a mat, flat on a table. This is shown in Figure 7. To construct the 4L X 6B THK, we again weave the blue cord through the completed 2L X 3B THK. The weaving pattern is the same: over two,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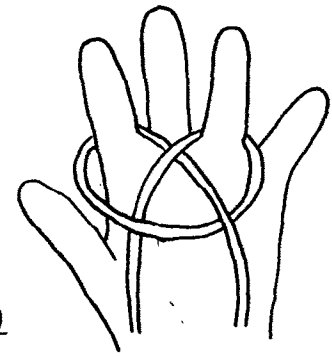
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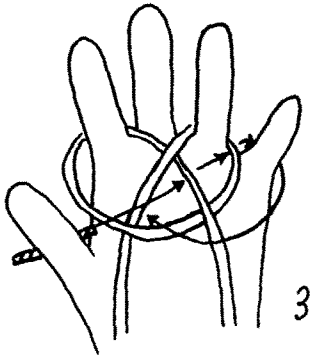
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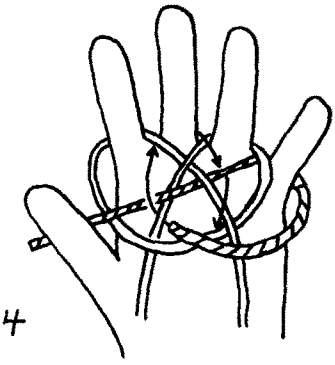
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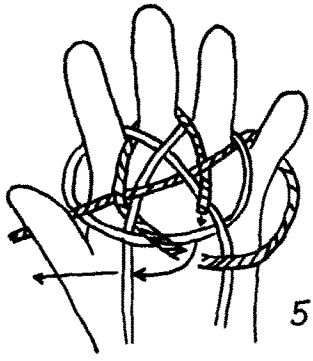
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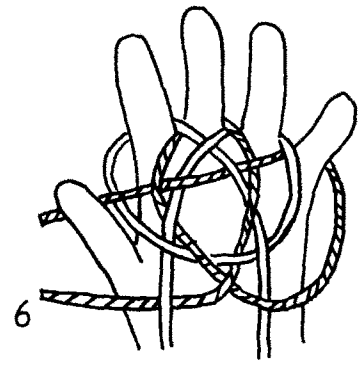
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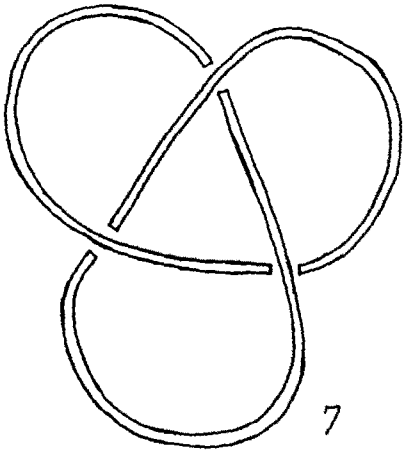
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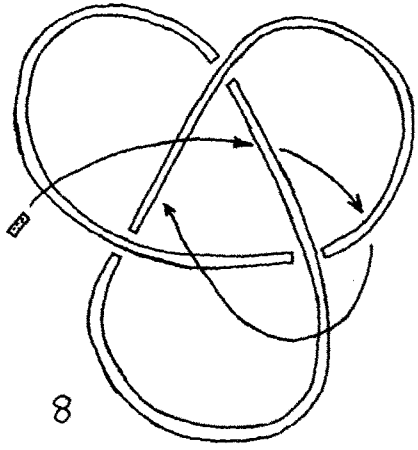
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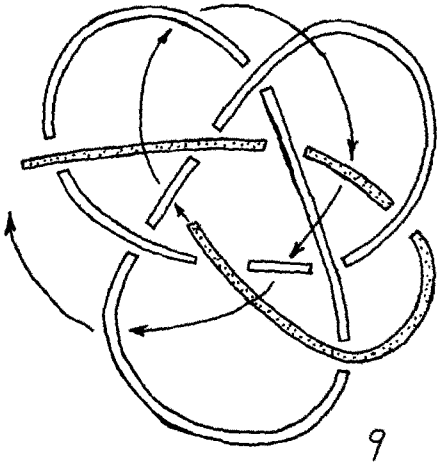
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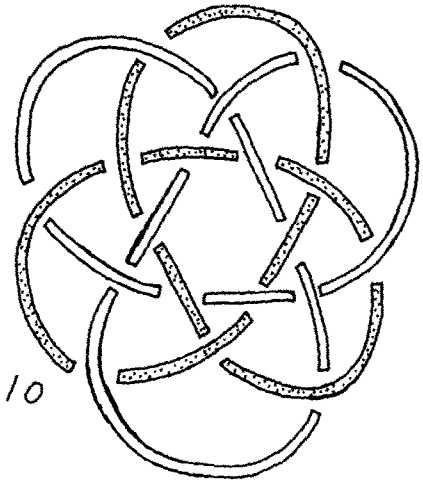
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under two, over two, then over one, under one, repeated until the starting point is reached. This is shown in figures 8 and 9. The completed Turk's Head knot in mat form is shown in figure 10.

The 4L X 6B THK Tied as A Three Legged THK

Brion Toss (*The Rigger's Apprentice*, first edition - I only recently found out that it has been published in a second edition - I must buy my copy soon) published a way to tie a 4L X 5B THK covering a T-junction such as where a spoke meets a wheel. He called it a three-legged Turk's Head knot. Geoffrey Budworth (*The Complete Book of Decorative Knots*, 1999) presented Toss's method of using the 4L X 5B THK to cover the simple T-shape. The 4L X 6B THK that we have been tying in this note may be used for the same purpose. Indeed, I suppose any 4L THK could be used for that purpose. Indeed again, I suppose that any THK with an even number of leads could be used to cover a T-shape.

As shown in Figure 11, we begin by tying a 2L X 3B THK around the wheel (upper part of the tee) with one lead on each side of the spoke (the lower part of the tee). The second cord is woven through the first THK in the usual over two, under two, over two and then under one, over one, as shown in figures 12 and 13. The completed knot is shown in figure 14.

A common way of drawing the instructions for a Turk's Head knot is to draw the knot being tied on a rod or stick. If you prefer that type of drawing, just use figures 11 through 14 and remove the spoke or lower part of the tee from the illustrations.

We have just tied a four lead THK by first tying a normal two lead THK and then weaving another separate cord through it. You may wonder if you could, for instance tie a 6 lead THK by first tying an ordinary 3 lead THK and then weaving a separate THK through it. This is not possible, using a single cord. It is possible to enlarge Turk's Head Knots and several authors have discussed that.

To tie a multi-strand Turk's Head knot that is as attractive as possible, be sure to use cords that are of the same thickness, stiffness and firmness.

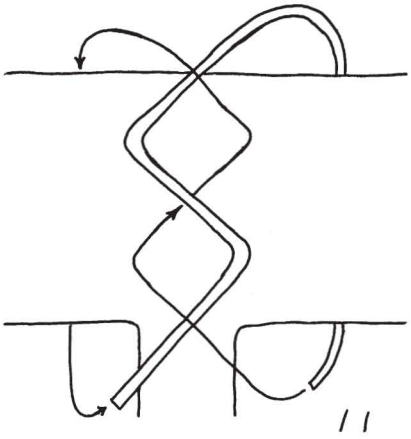
A person tying this knot as a mat could have a problem with parity. That is, suppose that one tied the 2L X 3B THK as the mirror image of the one shown in figure 7. If you began the second cord with the over two, under two pattern shown in figure 8, the knot would not be tied correctly. If you begin with the mirror image of the knot shown in figure 7, then begin the second cord by going under two then over two, etc. In any case, begin the second cord by making sure that the over and under pattern is correct from the very first cord that is crossed.

ROPE ENDS

Knot Stiffening

To stiffen knots I use Speed-E-Namel, a safe, lead free and fast drying enamel, to stiffen decorative knots. This product is readily available in the United States.

Yvonne Chang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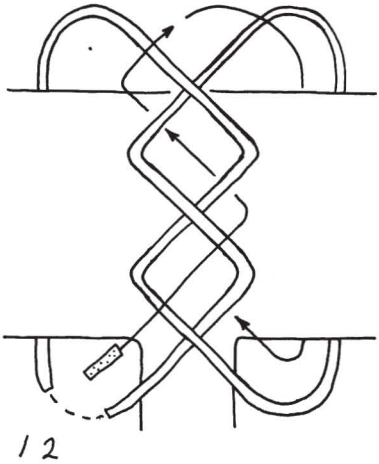
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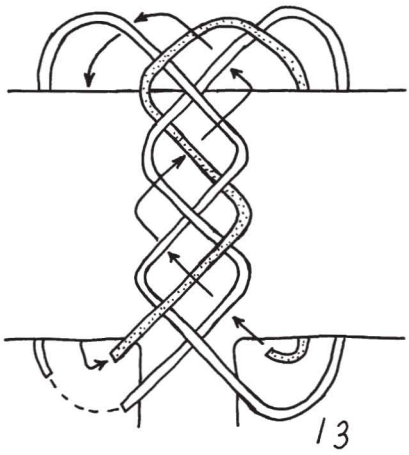
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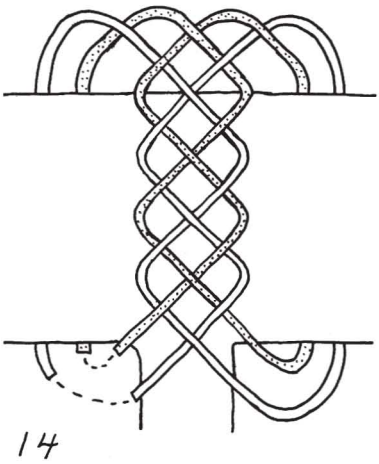
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Presidential Honours List 2001

Sven Eric Andersson (Pille)
for service to the IGKT in Sweden.

John Burke
for service to the North American Branch as founder member, secretary and President.

Roger Carter
for long service to the New Zealand Chapter and for work on the History of Cordage.

Jan Hoefnagel
for selfless promotion of knot tying to the public and for service to the IGKT in the Netherlands.

Denis Murphy
for work with the Royal Navy, Sea Cadet Corps, West Country Branch UK and for other initiatives too numerous to list.

Don Woods
for service to the Essex Branch UK and to the IGKT in general.

This is my first honours list (see "Letter from a President"). There will be others, for there are many whose efforts on behalf of the Guild deserve recognition.

More Knotty Limericks!

From Carol Walker

A sailor who came from Nantucket
Used his fid with finesse when he stuck it
In rope or in line,
Manila or twine.
Any strand that was loose he could tuck it!

From Cy Canute

The Marquis de Sade looked quite pained
When a knotting Guild member explained
'Seizings', 'whippings' and 'lashings'
Were NOT cruel thrashings.
'Then they're no fun at all,' he complained.

A pretentious student at college, he
Called knot tying 'the art of nodology'
But a tutor named Dirk
Said, "it's science you berk!
And it's properly known as 'knottology'."

From Marc Chardon

There was a gay knotter named Smee
Who'd tie with considerable glee
When throwing a bend
He'd flip end for end
And often end up in a tree

From Phoebe Ashley Chardon

Oh, there was a young man named Houdini
Who square knotted himself a bikini
When the twine became caught
It ripped out each knot
The remainder was quite teeny-weeny

From Sam Lanham

Cliff Ashley of New Bedford fame
Could tie knots and call them by name
One day while at home
He wrote a knot tome
And knotting was never the same.

From Maurice Smith

A member who lived in Bridgend
Tied a reef knot and then a sheet bend
He tied Turk's Heads as well
And we're happy to tell
That he now knows his 'send' from his 'wend'

From David Rogers

A star knot takes time to put in
To rush it is really a sin
You must get every tuck right
And pull them all tight
Or it'll collapse to your lasting chagrin

From Jack Fidspike

A critic of knotting averred
"It's a pastime that's truly absurd
Braids, bellropes and beckets,
Mats, Turk's heads and sinnets,
Are hardly an art-form byword."

A self-centred knot tying bore
Crowed he'd invented new knots galore;
But his confidence crumbled,
And his hubris was humbled,
When shown they'd been found heretofore.

From Norman Cockburn

There was a young man called Fred,
Who tried to tie a Turk's Head,
But his wife was called Fanny,
Said you've tied me a Granny
Now put it away and come to bed.

From Saltedog

A romantic young knotter from Kent,
Found rope jargon no impediment,
All the girls seemed impressed,
When he shyly confessed,
That his tongue wasn't tied, it was bent!

From Hank

A lady Guild member from Perth
Tied fancy Turk's Heads round her girth
She used all he might
To pull them up tight
And that's how she came to give birth!

Three F's in Knot Tying.

Not to be confused with the Anglo-Saxon expletives heard at sea, when all is not well.

These three **F**'s will be an integral part of the IGKT over the next two years.

1. **F**arnham; a town 45 miles inland. TS Swiftsure is in Farnham and that is the venue for the 19th AGM in 2001.

2. **F**areham; in the Northwest corner of Portsmouth Harbour. The 20th AGM and **2K2 The Event** will take place there.

3. **F**erneham- The first Queen Elizabeth landed in Ferneham in 1600-ish and said " Oh what a fair town," and the name was changed to Fareham. Ferneham Hall is the site for **2K2 The Event**.

Do not even look in your map for Fernhurst - that is miles away. For the single minded Knot Tyer, who may say what the **F** has this article to do with knot tying? Come to **F**arnham and **F**areham and **F**ind out.

An Invitation -

- TO TEACHERS

We would like to take advantage of the presence of any experienced knotters attending AGM 2001 by running a number of workshops on Sunday, the day after the meeting.

We are looking for members who are available to pass on their skills to interested members and any non-members who may attend. Our current thinking is for the workshops to start around 0900 and end at mid-day.

If you are willing to run a workshop session on Sunday (13th May), please contact either Ken Yalden or Tony Doran, indicating:

Subject

Max number of attendees to the workshop

Preferred timing (if different from above)

- TO LEARNERS

There is usually an abundance of knotting skill and know-how at the AGM and half-yearly meetings, but few formal opportunities for tapping into it. If there is an aspect of knotting you would like to learn more about, why don't you let Ken Yalden or Tony Doran know. We'll try to match supply with demand

- TO NON-MEMBERS

We'll have an open invitation displayed at the meeting, but if anyone knows any non-members who will be coming on Saturday to view the knot displays, please let them know they will be welcome at any of the Sunday workshops.

Branch Lines

Belgian Branch

Some news from the Belgian branch or to be more precise: from Blankenberge, where two members of the Guild lead the local Sea Scouts.

Marc Lauwereyns and myself, are two keen knotters. Marc keeps himself occupied with the making of mats, bellropes and the covering of all kinds of objects (bottles, etc.) As for myself I am more interested in the practical side of knotting (making of splices, breading nets and making fenders, etc.)

What is the news we have? Following the request of the guild to bring knotting to the public and to do something special for the year 2000, we decided to organise a knotting session on January 22nd. Everybody who was interested, parents and friends, was invited. The goal was to make 2000 knots in two and half-hours. We called in the local press, papers and radio, to announce the news.

With a strong spirit and will to succeed the start was given. All our members were there. With us a group of land Scouts from Halle (Brussels) and a few parents.

The cubs (7 to 11 years) made six different knots: half knot, square knot, sheet bend, figure of eight, bowline and clove hitch and this several times. The scouts and guides (aged 11 to 14 years) along with the others, made forty different knots several times. In a quick tempo 1840 knots were thus made. With a hawser the master (Marc) made a 'king size' Turk's Head. I myself made 160 different knot and rope works. As we had now our 2000 knots we were content but we had still some time to spend and so, without saying we had already reached our goal, the boys and girls were given a rope (1 metre long). We asked them to make ten simple knots as quickly as possible. After a short wile the number of knots made reached 2450.

Henri Dehenauw

Kent Branch

On Sunday 29th October 2000, ten of Kent County's knot tyers got together for the first time at the historic dockyard in Chatham beside the River Medway. If you

enter the Thames estuary, and take a left just past the Isle of Sheppey, this venue lies about 10 miles upstream on your port side; although, in fact, arrivals on this occasion came by car or train. Consequently, such outings are undertaken only for sound reasons, and so the actual turnout was heartening.

Those who attended were: Geoffrey Budworth*; Derek Chipperfield (organizer); Andy Glean; Jill Jenner*; Dawn Kenneally; Roger Riddle; Terry Smith; Bob Stroud; Gavin Trigg; and Andy Waghorn. * IGKT founder members

Credit for this initiative is due to Derek, who had obtained the use of a large room above the old (c.1790) - but still commercially active - industrial rope-walk. A donation of just £2 from each person present just about covered his outlay.

With everyone approachable, mingling and chatting soon prevailed. Most sought answers to one question or another, or had brought specimens of their own knot work to show and explain. Among the useful tools produced, handled and discussed were: Dan Callahan's internally-threaded needles; Stuart Grainger's 'grip-fids'; and Vernon Hughes sinnet braiding, lathe-turned, wooden table-tops.

Derek had also arranged an informal but informative walk around the various rope making areas now operated by Master Ropemakers, including the Double Ropehouse (so-called because both yarn-spinning and rope closing processes were carried out there). Its impressive internal length of 346 metres (1,135 feet) was originally required - Bob told us - to accommodate the manufacture of cables for the Royal Navy who specified lengths of 120 fathoms (219 metres/720 feet) to anchor a ship in 40 fathoms (73 m/240 ft) of water. It was amusing to see a member of staff riding an old-fashioned errand boy's bicycle to get from one end of this ropewalk to the other. Better still was finding a large box labelled 'Help yourself!' containing odds and ends of discarded rope.

All things considered, this was a welcome - indeed overdue - inaugural gathering of Kent county Guild members. Before parting, it was unanimously agreed to do it again in the Spring of 2001, after a longer period of written notice, when the invitation would also be extended to include those nice IGKT people in the neighbouring county of East Sussex.

Anyone wishing to become involved in this next outing should contact Derek Chipperfield at 192 Fairview Avenue Wigmore, Gillingham, Kent ME8 OQE (tel: 01634-233603; or email: delc@onetel.net.uk).

Reported by our Kent stringer

British Columbia

Christopher Stask, Terry Ridings and myself were participants at the recently held 13th Wooden Boat Festival held in Vancouver BC, August 24 to 27. Terry did his rope making demonstrations, while Chris demonstrated his techniques on making rope fenders. As for myself I did knotting demonstrations of the simple Turk's head knot and a few other fancy knots along with my class of local Sea Cadets from HMCS Discovery.

While Terry had his own display booth with his rope making machine and his big variety of ropework, Chris shared a booth with my Sea Cadets and me. The Cadets put their work on display as it was being finished. Chris displayed his latest fenders, bellropes, Turk's head knots, and mats. My part of the display consisted of number of large canvas mounted decorative Celtic patterned mats including a clock face in the Celtic style (a 60 bight by 11 lead patterned Turk's head knot tied flat).

Christopher Stask was one of the best students I have ever had. He has for the past year, been teaching my introductory fancy knotting course on Vancouver Island. His interest in knotting is unique. He had an industrial accident about three years ago that left him without the use of his right hand. He had to leave his job and find a new career: He had taken my fancy knotting course a few years before, and with my encouragement started knotting seriously. He now has much of the use of his right hand again, has a new career on the horizon, and has an improved outlook on life.

David Fukuhara

West Yorkshire Branch

In the year 2000 we have met regularly as a branch and had several outings where we have been displaying to the general public and doing talks and workshops with interested groups.

Our first event of the year was a weekend display in one of our local museums Armley Mills. It was quite a large room that we had to fill and we managed to cover a lot of aspects of knotting which included a large work table in the centre of the room for practical work and instruction groups.

We put on a display for The Lace Makers Guild Convention in Scarborough where their members showed a lot of interest particularly in flat knotting and needle hitching. This was also a learning experience for us seeing how much work can go into making a piece of lace.

We were welcomed again at the Brighouse Boat Gathering where we had our display stand and put on a full and interactive display for the general public, and met up with friends from previous years.

It was a pleasure to attend Wakefield Canal Festival again, we have attended for the last six years and I think we are accepted as regulars now. They save a regular space for us.

Scammonden Sailing Club had an open day where we put on a small display, there

was limited knotting interest, but we did have perfect weather and a chance to go sailing

When the Grand Turk (Sailing ship from the Hornblower television programme) visited Liverpool, we helped with the guild display on board the ship. It was good fun and the most intensive display and demonstration that I have ever been involved in.

It was unfortunate that we did not have enough members available to man a stand at the Leeds Waterways Festival and we had to give this a miss.

We had representation from our branch at both international meetings with Tim Field going to Weston-Super-Mare and Sheila and I going to The Netherlands.

We have also done various talks and workshops throughout the year and are enjoying ourselves promoting the guild and knotting as a hobby

David Pearson

New Zealand Chapter

It has been a good year for the New Zealand Chapter. We started with our January meeting hosting the International Vice-President, and our Patron, Professor Vaughan Jones. He told us how much he values his participation in the Guild, especially the meetings he has attended of the North American Branch. Our monthly meetings on the "Hikitia" have been great meetings where we have continued to share ideas and experiences. Chapter members Richard Hodge and Rod Orrah have attended important meetings of the Guild in America and England.

IGKT President Brian Field will report to you on another highlight of the year for us!

The Wellington based team continue with various Guild related tasks: Supporting the restoration of the floating crane, we have painted the public face of the main support structures using harnesses, bosun's chairs, flying foxes and gin poles. Pat Cummingham led a team to do a Long-Splice in a 24mm diameter Lang-laid 6X7 wire for the Cable-Car Restoration Society. Those of you who have worked

Pat Cunningham entering the second, lead spike. NZ Chapter President, Tony Fisher on hand to supervise! Photo: Celia O'Neil.

with this type of wire will appreciate the skill that Pat needed to bring to the job.

I want to take this time to impress on you all the International importance of our organisation. We are more distant from the activities of the Guild in Europe, than most of you and many of us are not weathly. But we are as important to the organisation as everyone else is. In my advocacy for the New Zealand Chapter membership, I have strived to emphasize the point that when the Council or the AGM is deliberating on matters, the far-flung membership be consider more actively. I want to place on record, particularly, the kindness and warm humanity that President Brian Field has accorded my diatribes and me! I have come to value his sage council and personal letters.

On a personal note: my wife Carolyn is visiting my daughter Clare in London at Easter and I hope that she can meet some of you during the month that she is in Great Britain.

I would like to claim having done the first eye splice and the first short splice in Greetings rope in the true millennium. I finished them at 12:05am January 1st, New Zealand time.

Tony Fisher
President, NZ Chapter

Texas Branch

November 2000 was a busy month for the Texas Branch. On November 4th and 5th several members of the Texas Branch visited the Texas Maritime Museum in Rockport, Texas in conjunction with the Museum's Music of the Sea Festival.

There they demonstrated knots, knot tying, and rope making. The members who attended were Charles Holmes and his son Carson, Sam and Missie Lanham, Ed Baker, and Barbara and Gary Sessions. On Saturday the 4th the weather was so bad that all of the activities had to be moved inside the museum but on Sunday the skies cleared and everybody could move back outside on the lawn. Ed Baker had his rope making machine set up and made rope throughout the day when he wasn't making his famous dragonfly pendants. Charles Holmes helped some visitors tie Turk's heads and also taught some splicing. His son, Carson, tied dragonflies and key ring fobs. Sam worked on one of his beautiful knot-covered bottles. Gary put Turk's heads on some marbles and Monkey's fists on some wooden balls for necklaces.

The weekend was a success and Allison Lakin, the Educational Director for the Museum, has plans for a Knot Tying Workshop early in 2001 and wants the Texas Branch to participate.

On November 18 Ed Baker and Gary Sessions made a 20-minute presentation about the history of rope and knots before a local Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Ed, again, made rope and Gary attempted to explain to the ladies that rope making and knot tying were ancient and honorable skills.

Gary C. Sessions

France

The Maritime Museum of the Isle of Tatihou proposes a spring-time meeting of knot-tyers, open to all, on the weekend 17th & 18th March, 2001. Tatihou is to be found in the Normandy region of France and lies a short distance off the east coast of the Cotentin peninsula, about 30 kms from Cherbourg.

The objectives of the meeting are:

- An informal meeting between people who are interested in knots
- A presentation of individual work, an exchange of information and know-how
- A debate concerning the communication of knotting matters on the European mainland (e.g. the publication of Knotting Matters articles in other languages.)

The meeting will be conducted in French and English.

Accommodation is available on the island at the reduced price of 160F a-day (full board), unfortunately space is limited to 55 persons. There are many campsites (for the brave) and hotels in the vicinity, the museum can provide contact addresses. Meals are available on the island. The ferry crossing from the port of St. Vaast-la-Hougue will be free to all those participating. For logistical reasons, reservations and acknowledgements of participation must be made in advance.

The weekend is organized by France's branch secretary of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, Graham macLachlan, who is also an employee of the museum.

Contact: Graham macLachlan
Musée maritime de l'Óle Tatihou
50550 St. Vaast-la-Hougue
Tel: (00 33) (0) 2 33 54 33 33
Fax: (00 33) (0) 2 33 54 33 47
E-mail: ile.tatihou@wanadoo.fr

Solent Branch

The inaugural meeting of the Solent Branch of the IGKT was held at The Ashcroft Arts Centre in Fareham, Hampshire on Tuesday 28th.December 2000.

There were seventeen persons present, thirteen Guild members and four potential members. After a welcome and introduction by Ken Yaldon when he set out some ideas for a way forward for a new branch, Don Bellamy invited everyone to introduce themselves and their reasons for being there in the time honoured format.

The appointment of officers was a little more difficult, Bob Pearce volunteered to be the Hon Treasurer (he thought that would let him off anything else) and Don Bellamy offered his services as Membership Secretary. We still need a Minutes Secretary. Don was accepted unanimously as Chair/man/person. The number and dates of future meetings was discussed and agreed as follows:

Four times a year.

One: Just before the Guild AGM in May.

Two: Just before the Butser Hill event in July.

Three: Before the Half-Year Guild AGM in October.

Four: Just before Christmas.

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 24 April 2001. The venue is yet to be decided and we are hoping that one

of the members who volunteered to arrange a venue will come up trumps and let us know in plenty of time. If there is anyone out there who would like to come along, please let us know, you will be most welcome.

After the formalities of the meeting were finished we moved on to the real business - Knots and Knotting. Several members had brought examples of their work which all attracted a great deal of interest. Ken Elliott's bottles were carefully scrutinised (has he made a mistake anywhere?) and admired. Gordon Perry's netmaking was observed with great interest. Ken Yalden's sea chest, fenders and decorative star knots were also on display.

The item which probably aroused the most interest and discussion was a Knot Board (25 inches by 37 inches, with 65 knots, bends & hitches, a couple of tackles and two types of anchor) which had been bought at auction for Jim Welsh by his son. A really splendid board except for the fact that all the labels were in Spanish. Literal translation produced names, which were at variance with the opinions of those present, and, dare I say it, with Ashley's in some cases. Ken Yalden looked at the board for a while then disappeared for a few minutes (I learned later that he had gone off to practice) when he returned he named and demonstrated a knot that was baffling everyone else with the skill and artistry as befits the Chairman of the IGKT.

All in all, it was a very good meeting and we hope to see even more faces in April.

Bob Pearce

Devon Branch

A very busy summer started at the national year garden party and the Looe festival of the sea. The whole summer was helped along by various National Trust events. The craft fair at Saltram House and a weekend at Cothele House were well attended by the public. We also did a four day stint on the trusts Grand Turk tour whilst in the Plymouth Naval Base Museum. Also the Devon group displayed

during the American Thanksgiving festival. Thanks to Charlie Smith who made three visits to Devon during the season.

Denis Murphy and family would like to thank the many guild members who offered sympathy after the death of Barbara, who will be missed at Guild meetings. All the best thanks.

Denis 'Spud' Murphy

Pacific Americas Branch

The Pacific Americas Branch holds monthly meeting at the Los Angeles Maritime Institute in San Pedro, California. We normally have from 10 to 15 people show up, a fact that never ceases to amaze the Secretary. In January there was a discussion on how to make a Rope Mat a la Hervey Garret Smith. In February, we will have Mr. Charlie Bell show us all how to make Pieter van de Griend's "Little Lump Knot." Charlie picked up a few tips from Dan Callahan when Dan was down here in June for our AGM. Hopefully we will all learn a thing or two.

The branch is scheduled to have a display booth at the Whale Watch Festival in Dana Point Harbor, California in late February.

The Secretary, Joe Schmidbauer, will be talking to a number of Scout Troops. He will talk to a Girl Scout Troop in Lakewood in March and a Boy Scout Troop in February. He learned of these troops through contact with the different Scout Troop Leaders at his work. The girls want to learn about braiding and the boys want to learn about lashing.

Our President, Lindsey Philpott, has been especially busy. To begin with, he held two knot-tying seminars. The first seminar was in September on behalf of the Association of Santa Monica Bay Yacht Clubs. The seminar was co-sponsored by WestMarine, Boat/US, Boater's world and ASMBYC, who donated prizes for the participants and many lengths of line for people to practice with. The second seminar, in October, was given on behalf of the American Sailing Association. There he taught students twelve knots to help them look their peer knot tyers in the eye!

As a member of Boat/US Speakers Bureau he gave a talk to about 50 members of the San Fernando Valley Yacht Club in November. The topic was the fifteen or so knots that a sailor would need aboard, why they are needed and how to tie them. There was a warm and friendly discussion on the benefits or otherwise of the outside bowline and the sheetbend. Many members learned for the first time the proper way to tie the trucker's or waggoner's hitch.

Lindsey also taught a limited-attendance nine-week class titled Marlinespike Seamanship at Orange Coast College's School of Sailing and Seamanship. There were some dozen locals in attendance. They covered about seventy-five knots, splices, whippings, etc., canvas-work, fancywork, working wit wire, braided line splicing, rigging and tackle systems. Projects attempted by the students included a ditty bag, knot-board and a fishing net.

Finally, he has also taught would-be captains who are studying for their USCG license as master or mate, the finer points of rigging and marlinespike seamanship. This is just one class in a series of classes that these students will receive to train them to pass the licensing exam for the Coast guard's license.

Joe Schmidbauer
Secretary IGKT-PAB

Postbag

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

The Figure Eight Bowline

In the article The Bowline by Owen K. Nuttall of Knotting Matters 67 there is a mistake in the drawing of figure 1, page 30 of the Figure Eight Bowline. The working end is shown as having gone under then over going through the loop before the move of the directional arrow.

Tom Hall
Lonetree, USA

Isomorphic Knots

Responding to John Smith's letter on page 46 of KM67, there is a word for identical knot layouts. They are isomorphs [biology: isomorphism - structural similarity, due to resemblance of corresponding parts]. Where the function is also altered - for instance, sheet bend to bowline, or the reef knot into a mesh knot for nets - these knots are then referred to as metamorphic (i.e. physically changed) knots.

For those who are not keen on scientific tags, preferring more colourful labels, I recommend a bit of whimsy from the late Desmond Mandeville. Musing over the drastic difference in reliability between the metamorphic reef and thief knots, in which just one wend and one stand have been swapped over, put him in mind of Robert Louis Stevenson's fictional doctor (and his awful alter ego); so he called such dissimilar pairs 'Jekyll-&-Hyde knots' . . . because they exist in two forms, one stable, the other extremely unstable

Geoffrey Budworth
Tonbridge, England

Watch telescopes

If John Constable ever 'took a look' through a naval watch telescope, he would immediately revise his percentage assessment figure to 100% ceremonial.

Decidedly more so, if he got the opportunity to compare a naval telescope with a pair of Zeiss binoculars - standard issue on all RN ships.

Thomas Simpson
South Shields, England

Origin of the Bowline

I write with some hesitation, as a very new member of the Guild, in response to this question in Owen K. Nuttall's article (KM 67 p.28). I believe Captain John Smith was right, though he expressed it less explicitly than Collins Dictionary of the English Language, which defines it as "a line for controlling the weather leech of a square sail when the vessel is close-hauled" (C14: probably from Middle Low German bÙline, equivalent to "bow + line").

In the book *The Viking Ships*, a brief introduction to The Viking Shipping Museum, Roskilde, Denmark, they show a diagram of the rig. There is also a drawing with its terminology in English and Norse that includes Bowline/bolina.

The rope that is fastened to the bows and used for mooring is usually called the painter (C15: probably from Old French penteur strong rope), although I know of one instance where the words "bow line" are used instead, in the Class Rules of the International Topper dinghy.

I have observed a bowline knot untie itself, twice, when everything was against it: tied in stiff cord to the handle of a bailer in a sailing dinghy. It was not under tension, and was rattled around in the water in the bottom of a boat during a race

David Lambeth
Chertsey, England

Hervey Garratt Smith

In his interesting article on a Sea Chest (KM 62, p28) Daniel E. Smith asks for more information on Hervey Garratt Smith. Like Daniel, I learned much of my early rope and canvas work from his writings and excellent drawings. I have never been much of a worshipper at the shrine of Ashley. His book is a terrific reference, but to learn knotting you need other books and *The Marline Spike Sailor* by Hervey Garratt Smith is one of the best in its line.

Before World War II, HGS and I contributed articles to the American yachting magazine *The Rudder*. I still have cuttings of some of his articles.

About 30 years ago I was on one of my six months stints in America. In those days I was almost an American! Ivy and I were using a motorhome while collecting information that I was to use in articles and books for American publishers; this time on the eastern seaboard. From Canada we had worked down the length of the Maine coast. We had to make a visit to Newtown, Connecticut before going south.

Just after returning home to England I had a letter from HGS about a knotting article I had written. I have not kept his letter or address, but from memory, his home was about 30 miles from Newtown and we had almost passed his door.

So Hervey Garrett Smith is or was an American and a New Englander at that. I got the feeling that he was older than me, so he may be dead by now. Who knows? I am 88.

The certain way to find out about this or any author is to contact his publisher. Even if they will not give the address, they will forward a letter.

Percy Blandford
Stratford-upon-Avon, England

Quick Release Loop

In reply to Jan Midtflaa's question about a quick-release loop in KM68 p47, it is the Speir loop, shown twice previously (KM56 p42 & KM63 p33).

This loop is similar to Olivier Peron's 'Marion's' loop, although the Speir doesn't directly load the quick-release bight.

Joe Schmidbauer cited this knot from an Army technical manual, and described his use of it on the job at Boeing. I believe that the earlier KM reference was of someone citing learning of the knot also from a seaman.

Dan Lehman
Virginia, USA

I have also come across this knot, described as a 'Quick Release Bowline' in a US firefighter's manual - Ed.

Knotting Bamboo?

On the twenty second of June listening to Mysteries of Lost Empires I was intrigued to hear of the uses of bamboo. I was already familiar with the use of fine strips as lashings but the construction of bamboo rope was new to me.

The programme referred to suspension bridge cables being constructed wholly in

bamboo. The core was rope laid and the covering made of plaited bamboo of a different type.

John Constable
Pershore, England

Grocer's Knot

I have been reading the *Hamlyn Book of Knots* by Geoffrey Budworth. This interesting book has made me wonder if any of your members can answer a question which has puzzled me for seventy years.

When, as a boy, I had to accompany my mother to the Grocer's shop I watched the assistants packing, say, sugar and was intrigued by the way they finished the final knot and then broke the string. They did this even though there was a blade on the string dispenser.

Their method seemed to be to wrap one part of the string, the fixed end I think, around a thumb and snatch the loose end across it. Needless to say whenever I have tried to copy it I have a mangled thumb and fingers. However thin or weak I have made the string I have failed.

Have any of your member's long memories?

Peter Coulthurst
Cheltenham, England

Signs of the Zodiac

Could KM readers suggest 12 knots, which could represent the signs of the zodiac. So far I have found one, Brian Field's 'Bull Head' design which is in his book *Breastplate Designs*, that I think could represent Taurus. Please send me your ideas.

Dave Walker
Cheshire, England

Beautiful, But Not Mine

The magnificent Knot gallery of KM 69 p23, show covered bottles by J. P. Escudeiro.

Well, no, no! I have not made them.

This is only a misunderstanding in the proposer of information. Quite natural I imagine with thousands of photo's coming to the Guild, for the Knot Gallery.

Paulo Escuidero
Cacém, Portugal

Thank you to Paulo for bringing this to my attention. Marc Lauwereyns made those fine bottles. I apologise for this error - Ed.

Old Salts

As an "Old Salt" I cannot let the "One for Old Salts" rest at two responses. I agree with the naming of the seas, but there is so much bilge talked about how many ropes there are in a ship.

It depends on the type, class, rigging and purpose of the ship as to how many "named ropes" are onboard. This could be one, two, three, or many. Two ropes not yet mentioned are the "Mast Rope" and "Bull Rope" (no bull - it is genuine).

Gordon J. Perry
Horndean, UK

Ibo Knot?

Could you take a few moments to explain how to tie an Ibo knot? I understand it is a traditional Japanese knot used to secure bamboo poles together. The "helpful illustrations" I have found are very confusing! Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Jena Peterson
via E-mail

Knotting Diary

AGM's & 1/2 YEARLY MEETINGS

IGKT 19th Annual General Meeting
Farnham, Hampshire
12th May 2001
Contact: Nigel Harding

IGKT Half-yearly Meeting
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
13th October 2001
Contact: David Walker
Tel: 01244 682117
E-mail: getknotted@appleonline.net

BRANCH MEETINGS

Swedish Branch
10th March 2001, Visit to Alvangen Rope Yard, north of Gotenburg
Contact: Olof Nystrom
Tel: 08 265 065
E-mail: olof.nystrom@nybnd.com

French Branch
17th - 18th March 2001
The Maritime Museum, Isle of Tatihou
Contact: Graham macLachlan
Tel: (00 33) (0) 2 33 54 33 33
E-mail: ile.tatihou@wanadoo.fr

Kent Branch
Spring 2001
Contact: Derek Chipperfield
Tel: 01634 233603
E-mail: delc@onetel.net.uk

Solent Branch
24th April 2001
Contact: Bob Pearce
Tel: 01489 691643
E-mail: BatswainB@lineone.net

West Yorkshire Branch
20th March, 15th May
Beulah Hotel, Tong Road, Farnley, Leeds.
Contact: David Pearson
Tel: 0113 2572689

EVENTS

28th September - 21st October 2001
'Spliterati 01'
A Celebration of Ply-Split Braiding, Traditional and Innovative.
Bampton, Oxon.
Exhibition; opening lecture by Peter Collingwood; programme of workshops and seminars. For full details and booking forms, when available, please send an SAE to Jennie Parry, 21 St Philip's Road, Leicester. LE5 5TR

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The Knot Book		£3.99
Brian Field		
Breastplate Designs		£2.50
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Turkesheads the Traditional Way		£1.50 *
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Knotting Matters copies of past editions		£2.50

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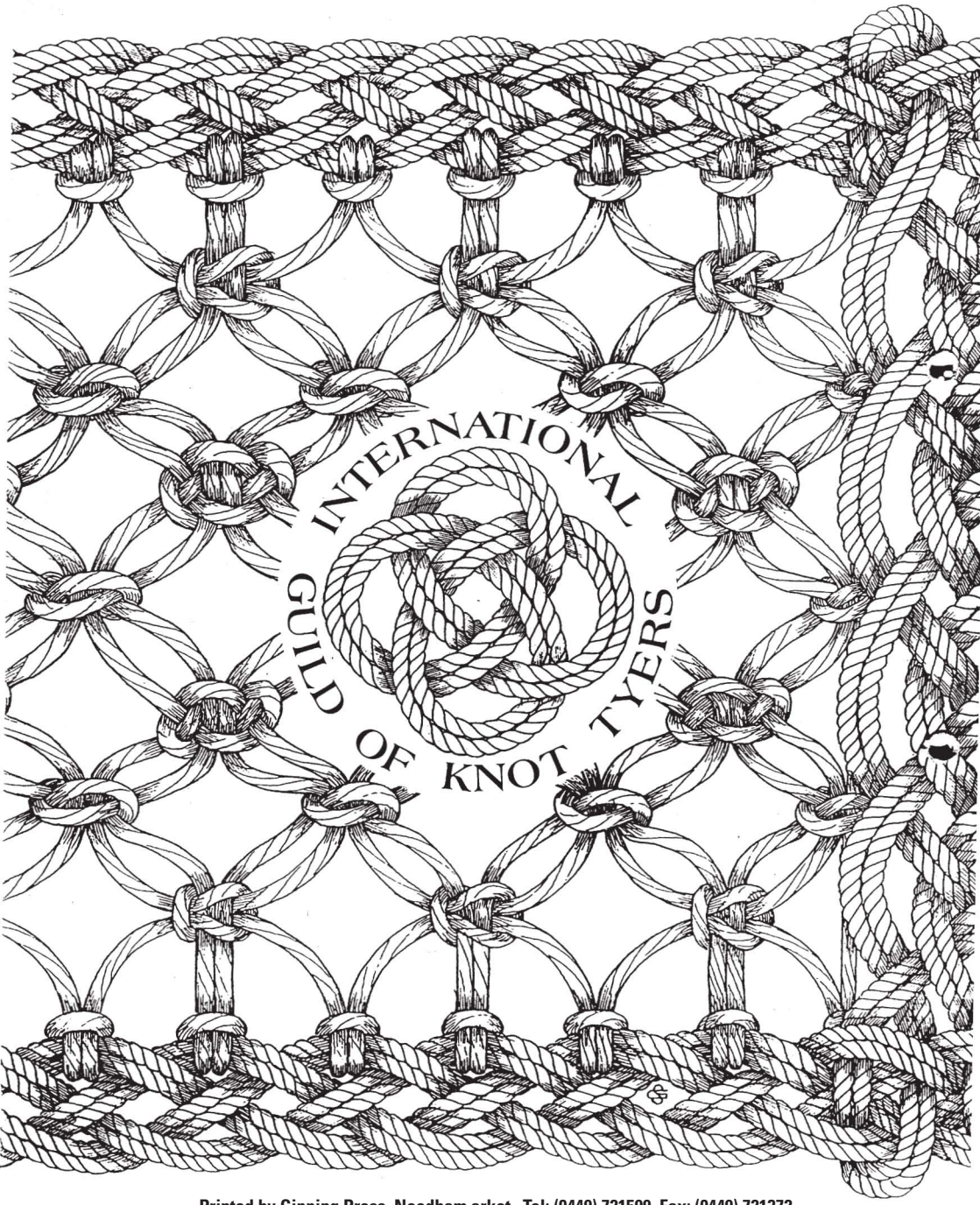

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