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# Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL  
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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.

# Guild Supplies

## Price List 2002

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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<b>Certificate of Membership</b>	£2.50
Parchment membership scroll Signed by the President and Hon Sec For mounting and hanging	

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**email [bruce.turley@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:bruce.turley@blueyonder.co.uk)**  
**Telephone: 0121 453 4124**

# Knotting Matters

**Newsletter of the  
International Guild of  
Knot Tyers**

**Issue No. 74**

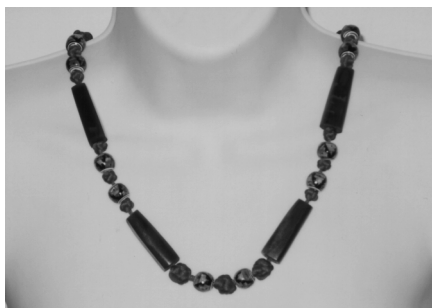
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**Submission dates for articles  
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Cover design by Stuart Grainger



*A beautiful necklace by  
Suzen Milodot*

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# Notes from the Secretary's Blotter

By the time this hits the street, the first signs of spring will be here, but at the moment is cold and wet and horrible. I must start by thanking all those who sent me Christmas greetings, either by the traditional method, or by email. They are all greatly appreciated, and really make the job worthwhile.

Over the past couple of years, I have mentioned difficulties at home. This has been because Sylvia has been living away from home, helping her elderly mother look after her grandmother. This has been quite a strain on us all, leaving very little spare time for any of us. However, over this Christmas period, at the age of 105, Granny sadly passed away. Sylvia has now moved back home, and with all my new found spare time - I am having to catch up on two years worth of clearing and tidying up. Hopefully, life will be a little more stable for us both in the foreseeable future, and I can spend more time dealing with your queries.

December saw the second time we have used a Mailing House to distribute KM, and it all appears to have gone well, except for a couple of members who received two KM's - each with a subscription reminder. I am still investigating what went wrong, and my apologies to those affected, however from my point of view this has been a successful venture.

I am still looking to outsource the collection of subscriptions, hopefully from the beginning of April. I shall write separately about this, and if there is not a supplement with this KM, then there will be one to follow at the appropriate time.

The introduction of the Euro will probably help our European members, however, I am still looking at payment in US dollars as this may no longer be an option - watch this space.

The first four dozen of the Celebration Tankards were despatched almost in time for Christmas, and have been well received, despite the fact that they did not match precisely the description given in KM72. This is the problem with trying to describe something that is still in the making, however I can't wait for mine to be delivered.

May will be here soon, and I for one will be off to Fareham. I look forward to seeing you all there at some time during the week. The team has put a tremendous amount of effort into organising the event, for which I would like to thank them on behalf of the membership as a whole. A particular mention should be made of Ken Yalden, without whom none of this would have come to fruition. His vision and sheer determination over a period of nearly three years, made all this possible.

To mark our 20th Birthday, Geoffrey Budworth has written the second edition of *Much Ado About Knotting*. This little gem will be given to all fully paid members as a souvenir to mark the occasion. The Council, on behalf of the membership, would like to thank Geoffrey for his hard work. I for one am particularly grateful, as the Council had initially suggested that I should write it - believe me, Geoffrey has spared you all.

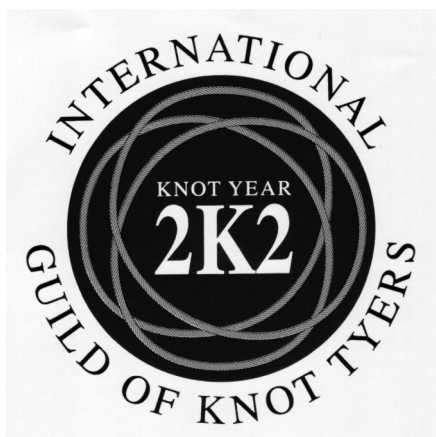
By the time you receive this, I shall be quite advanced with the next Members



Handbook. If you have any last minute alterations please let me know soon, as it may already be too late to make any amendments.

That is all I have to note for the moment, other than to wish you all a pleasant summer (or winter depending upon your latitude) and to wish those who are coming to Fareham, a safe journey.

*Nigel Harding*



## **2K2 Birthday Update.**

### **Knotting Academy Day.**

**H**aving been approached by quite a few people interested in the format for the proposed 'Knotting Academy Day' that will be held on the Wednesday of the 2K2 Birthday celebrations, commencing Monday 20 May to Saturday 25.

I felt it would be helpful to explain to

## **OBITUARY**

It is with regret that we have to record the death at the age of 84, of Louis Heofnagel, brother of Jan Heofnagel.

Louis was a Guild member from 1985 to 1989 and did a lot of work helping found the Guild in Holland. Many of the older Guild members knew Louis very well. Unfortunately he had to give up knotting after suffering a stroke.

Louis passed away on 31st October last year.

all of you out there the idea behind the 'Knotting Academy Day' concept.

Initially we are asking for your thoughts on subject and tutor. How this works is as follows: You, the students put forward your suggestion of subject, no matter how simply or complicated, and the name of a tutor if known. Then I will endeavour to make your dreams come true!!!

As an example, last year we had a request for that ever-popular technique of 'Bell Rope' making, which was facilitated by Jeff Wyatt and appreciated, I might say, by all who attended.

So you want to learn something at 2K2 or know something or even teach something.....NOW is the time to speak!!!

You only have to fill in the postcard you have already received with your 2K2 call for papers and send it to me, Ken Yalden. Details of the arranged classes will be displayed at the event.

. Yours Aye...

*Ken Yalden.*

# Letter from a President

One of the pleasures of this job is that although housebound on some days I can still chat to new members who are on the Web. Unfortunately Skip Pennock IV is a new member, like many others, who has no

access to the Internet, but his work was of such quality that I have been happy to correspond in snail mail. I believe him to be a Flat Knot designer with few equals in the Guild and look forward to seeing more of his designs.

*Brian Field*

*Finally, the, Presidential New Years Honours List for 2002*

**Dan Callahan**

for forwarding the aims of the Guild  
via the Internet.

**Willeke van der Ham**

for services to the IQKC  
in the Netherlands

**Ed Morai II**

for his work via the Internet  
for the Guild in North America

**Joe Schmidbauer**

for his work on behalf of the  
Pacific Americas Branch

**Gary Sessions**

for his services to the Guild in Texas

**Charlie Smith**

for his promotion of the IQKC  
in general and for his work with  
the Scouting movement

**Peter Suber**

For work in promoting the Guild  
in North America via the Internet

# Col's Comment

Well, we've finally made! On the evening of 7th December, *Knotting Matters* achieved national fame, being broadcast on BBC television. The programme "Have I Got News For You" - a satirical panel game - features a weekly guest publication, whereby panel members have to guess the missing words from headlines taken from news and the guest publication. While these types of programme may not be everybody's cup of tea, as a Guild approaching its twentieth year must surely be big enough to have the rise taken out of its publications. More importantly, the Guild gained a few minutes of free publicity on national TV. It will be interesting to see if we gain any new members as a result of this airing.

Many of you will no doubt be wondering where your correction page to the Knotmaster "Ossel knot" went that was promised with your last KM? The truth is, it slipped through the net at the printing stage. Hopefully it will be posted with this edition. Please don't berate your editor too much, I'm doing my best!

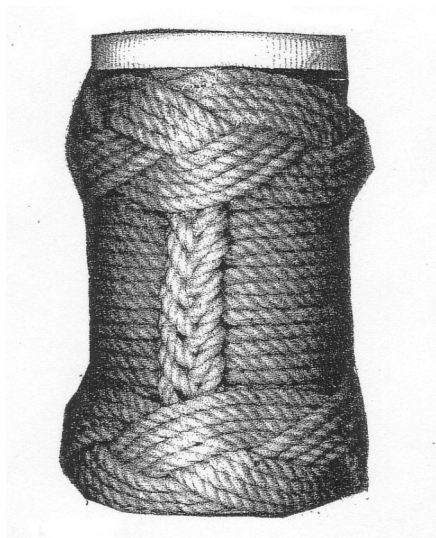
When you read this, it will only be a short while until the birthday celebrations at Fareham. I'm sure it will be a memorable week, and I'm looking forward to meeting many of you and putting faces to the names of members who have corresponded with me over the past two years.

# Covered Cans

By James L. Doyle

I have taken to covering small cans with hitching or other knotwork. At knot displays, I find that people enjoy picking these little cans up to take a close look at the work.

When you are trying to help a customer select some knot work to put on the tiller of their sail boat or new bell lanyard, they are an excellent sample.



# Mobiles for Masterpieces

by Frank Brown

I was recently invited to give demonstrations of ropework at a local Wooden Boat Festival. Most of my activity was centred on constructing fenders and swabs, but I was encouraged to show some handiwork. So I trotted out my knot boards and a few items I have made or collected. As I have been specialising in making small animals from string, the idea occurred to my wife that a mobile would be a useful method of display. Naturally this was on the day before the event, so the construction was fairly rapid. My full menagerie comprises of nine animals, so I divided them into pairs, which were suspended from four pieces of dowel using a strong nylon thread and a constrictor knot. A crosspiece of two pieces of dowel lashed with string provided four suspension points. Each single dowel with two animals attached was attached to the crosspiece with string of differing lengths, moving the dowel backwards and forwards to determine the balance point. Each knot used for attachment was treated to an application of PVA glue. This was to increase security against slippage during transport and possible handling by curious children. The remaining animal was suspended from the centre of the crosspiece.

The only problem encountered during the Festival period was the inevitable tangle during transport to and from the site. This was a minor matter and easily resolved each morning. During the day the mobile was exposed to stiff breezes, prying fingers, and collisions with heads, hats and backpacks. It survived the lot and gave rise to a lot of comment, some very complimentary. The special

advantage was that the displayed objects could be examined from almost any angle.

It struck me that it would be a useful method of displaying other items of member's works, e.g. keyfobs, bell ropes, etc. In addition it is a fitting application of our craft, hanging objects made of rope with lengths of string from a few bits of wood lashed together with cord.

## Caption Corner



*Even this seems a little beyond our master of the Turk' Head, Charlie Smith. Have you got a suitable caption for this picture?*

# How to Make a Sling

By Gino Pietrollini

The sling (fig. 1) is made of an eye (a), where is put the forefinger, a link (b), a small basket or cup for the stone (c) and another link (d) made as a mouse-tail.

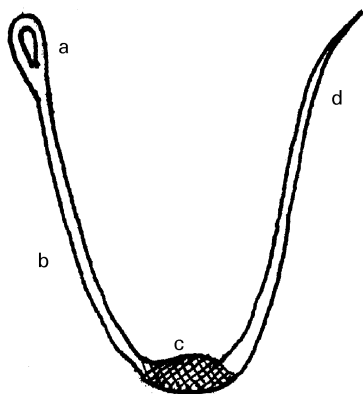


Fig. 1

## Parts of the Sling

Eye: it must not be thin, better of leather or braided hemp;

Link: a good a link of leather or braided hemp where the diameter increases approaching the cup. To increase the mass where the velocity is at its maximum, do many plaits in the middle without knots (a-c).

End link: as a mouse-tail, the release should be soft. With a knot the release may be insecure or uneven. It is held

with the thumb pressed against the forefinger in the palm of the hand.

Cup: may be of leather stitched to the two links (fig. 2) or of leather with knots in the outside (fig. 3). It may also be of fabric (fig. 4a or 4b). The eye is put on the forefinger (in Algeria on the little finger), while the mouse-tail is pressed between the thumb and the forefinger.

## The Throw

The throw is made with the man standing obliquely, facing the target (fig. 5).

Vertical rotation. The length of the sling is proportional to the height of the slinger. If it is too long it touches the ground and is cut. It is possible to take a good aim and to strike a pole but the point in the height is insecure. It is possible to obtain the maximum height and range with this method.

Horizontal rotation over the head. The sling may be much longer, increasing the range. It strikes to a sure height but the direction is inaccurate.

A rounded stone is good for the slings with a cup and flies well. An elongated stone is good for slings with the strips but the fly is irregular. The weight of the stone should be 120-150 gr. for a throw aimed at a target. It is possible to throw stones of weights greater than 300-400 gr. at shorter distances with greater effects.

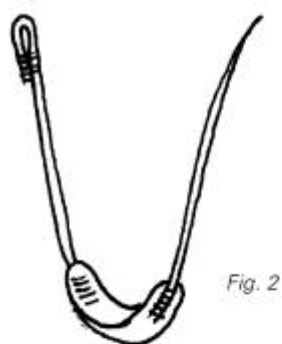


Fig. 2

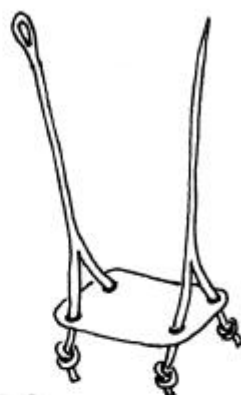


Fig. 3

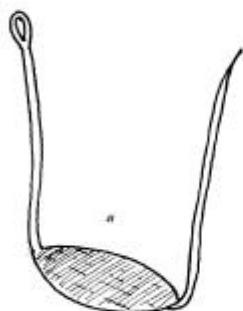


Fig. 4

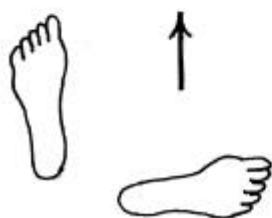


Fig. 5

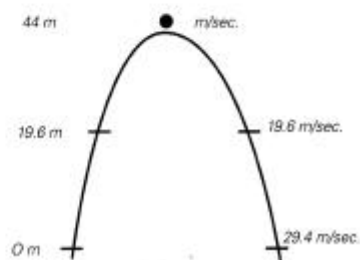


Fig. 6

Shepherds to drive the flock, to strike the branches of oaks, pears, etc. and make the fruits fall used the sling. In the war it was used as artillery in the role of howitzer or mortar. The grenadiers in 1700 used it to throw the hand grenades.

Figure 6 shows the speed of a stone thrown vertically at different points of the parabola. The initial velocity is about 29 m/sec., the range about 70-90 m. I aligned 20 stones of about 120 gr. and have been able to throw 13 stones in a minute. At the end they were in a cone of 45°, at the range of 40-50 m.

The sling is a dangerous thing; it must not be given to the children. It must always be possible to see where the stone will fall. Every slinger has his personal sling, which he is accustomed to throw. The Italian word *fionda* (sling) comes from Latin *funda*, *fundae*, *funditor*, and *funditoris*. It may originate from *fune* (rope). It means to get away (to throw) a stone with *fune* (rope).

According to some studies it was used in the Superior Paleolithic period.

The best slingers of Roman Army came from Balearic (from this word come: ballistics, ballistite, etc.) Islands; they were used as light infantry for troubling the enemy array.

The sling is drawn in Atlantic Code by Leonardo da Vinci.

The sling is drawn in the Relief Tomb at Cerveteri and in the Hunt and Fishing Tomb at Tarquinia (Etrurian). A shepherd - who ignored these pictures - made the same sling for me. In *The Bible* a boy called David with a sling killed the giant Goliath and became the King of Israel. Sculptures of immortal fame of him were made by Michelangelo, Bernini, Verrocchio, Donatello etc. At The Egyptian Museum of Cairo there are

four slings of silk founded in the Tutankamon Tomb.

Here are some names: Morocco, *mocler*; Mexico, Guatemala, Spain etc, *honda*, *tiradora*, *funda* (*yun-tun* for the Maya); Arabs call it *mieglah*; Greek, *sventona*. In India (Zangskar) I have seen the sling used by shepherds.

In TV News I have seen the sling used by Palestinians (Intifada) against Israeli Police, the same in Afghanistan.

I have seen a Peruvian who carried a shoulder bag of wool with the shoulder strap made with a sling, with the links sewed to the bag, the cup was on the shoulder.

The Eskimos threw a stone with a hitched belt, as the Olympic hammer. It was necessary to have a belt for every stone, after these stones were recovered they were thrown again. After this I think was born the sling.

## How to do a sling with hemp

Take some textile fibres, make three strips and braid them. After 10 cm take the initial part and braid together the others, making an eye (fig.7). Continue the plait adding more hemp, after 80 cm (it depends from the height of thrower) divide the hemp to make two independent tails about cm 25 long. Then join the hemp to make only a single plait, reducing the thickness as a mouse-tail (fig. 8). Fix the plait with an overhand knot of a strand, leaving a tuft. Instead of two plaits in the middle, it is possible to do a little gate or a X. Make two plaits, immediately divide into four plaits. After 3-4 cm the two central plaits hitch themselves or exchange one of the strands (fig. 9). After 3-4 cm make two



Fig 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



plaits and then a single plait. The plaits in the middle must be a little longer than the two in the sides, to make a cup.

## How to do a sling with a twine

Take the twine and make a Honda (Spanish word that signifies sling) knot. With this knot or a similar one you obtain a ring or an eye (fig. 10), which will turn around the finger. After 80-cm make two bights and an overhand knot as in fig. 11, after 20 cm make another of the same knot. After a further 80 cm make an overhand knot. I have made for myself a sling as fig. 12.

Take 170 cm of twine. Twist it like the lay to take in the middle of the twine making a rope with two strands. Where the two tag ends are sewn a leather strip of about 12-cm to make an eye for the finger. Near the middle insert between the two strands a piece of twine and continue making a spiral (fig. 13), passing through the twine every time, making an oval. Put this oval over the knee forming a cup, and sew the spiral with needle and thread. In the end where the bight is insert some textile fibres of hemp. Join them and then divide into three strands to make a plait as a mouse-tail. Fix the plait with an overhand knot of one strand. Make a little more plait and another overhand knot, leaving a tuft.

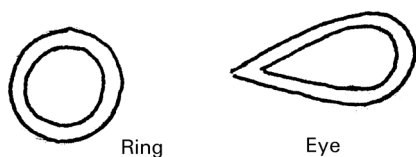


Fig. 10

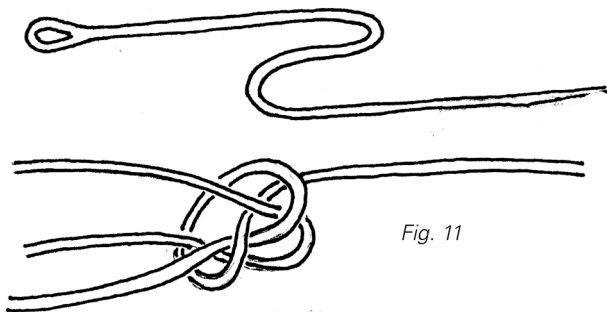


Fig. 11



Fig. 12

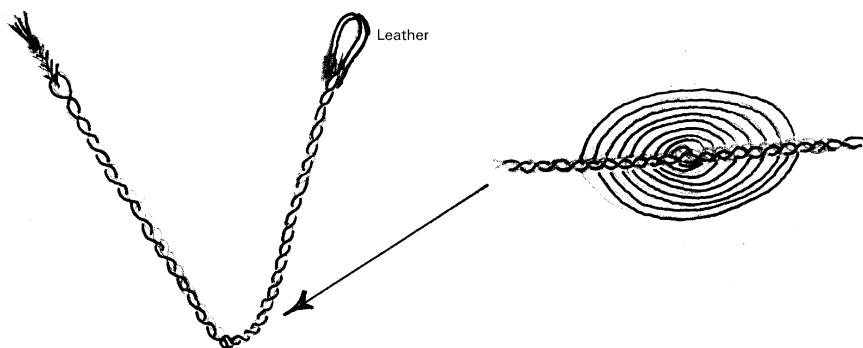


Fig. 13

## How to Make a Sling with a Palm Leaf

Take a green palm leaf (fig. 14); divide it into two parts starting from the point, leave the base (petiole) joined. Divide again the two parts of the band. Now there are four strips. Take one lateral strip and weave with the other three (fig. 15) and put aside. Take another leaf and make the same. Then take the two leaves and pass them

through each other (fig. 16). Every tag end follows that in the front, to leave toward the petiole. So you have made a cup. Take other leaves and divide them completely into many strips. Take some strips and put them over a tag end of the cup, twist to make strands. Do the same in the other tag end and twist all together making a rope. After about 95 cm, make a bight in the link and make an overhand knot to make an eye to put the finger. In the other link make an overhand knot at about 80 cm.



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

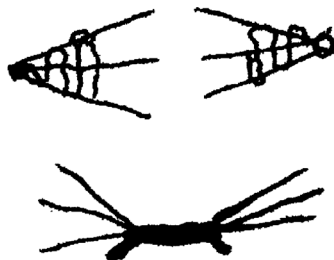


Fig. 16

## How to do a sling with leather

Take a thick twine of leather and make a Honda Knot. After 80 cm hitch a short leather twine. Then take a rectangular piece of leather, where in the corners there are four holes (fig. 3). Pass the two tag ends in the holes and fix them with an overhand knot or tape (water, ring, or gut) knot. Do the same at the other side. Make an overhand knot in the working end. The best piece of leather for the cup is obtained from the knee of the front leg of the goat, already concave and without bristles that is tanned and greased to make it soft when it is cold. The two links may be thick belts sewed to the cup and to the eye (fig. 2). The eye may be as fig. 17 (Eskimo splice).



Fig. 17

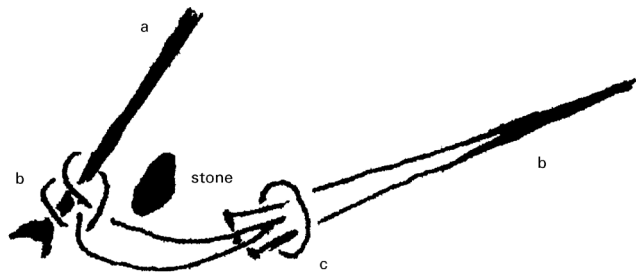


Fig. 18

## The Stock Sling (mazzafionda, fustibalo)

The whip is a thick belt of leather (fig. 18d) with a cut at the end, which is troughted by a bight of twine. In that bight insert the working end of belt (c). The bight is fixed to the stock (a) with a clove hitch (b). It is used with two hands, letting go of the leather belt. I have verified that is better to take hold with the left hand the stock and with the right hand the stock and the belt. Pay attention not to throw weighty stones with less accuracy.

# An Expensive Rope

by Thomas Simpson

Following public hangings, with their attendant carnival atmosphere, which took place in England (and other European countries) during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, it was common practice for the hanging rope to be sold off in small lengths of 3 or 4 inches, as souvenirs. Reputedly, a guinea wasn't an unusual price to pay - it all hinged on the notoriety of the hanged. As to be expected, it was mounted on a wooden plaque and suitably inscribed.

A conscientious professional hangman sought out the best materials. His preferred rope was a 2 1/2 inch circumference (20mm dia.), four stranded, extra hard laid with a right (Z) twist, of the finest Italian hemp - usually Bologna 1st Corpo (considered the world's best), containing a 70/30 fibre mix of Primo Basso and Primo Cordaggio fibres, both of the long fibred variety, extra hackled (combed), and lightly lubricated with a hybrid blend of oils having a low viscosity.

This rope was the perfect tool for the job - a double edged sword - smooth and silky on the skin, in deference to the hanged's anxious state of mind, before his imminent, centre stage, final performance. Then, following a quick, clean, drop - a bite - the equal of any piano wire, achieved without cutting the skin.

# Knotmaster Series No. 12

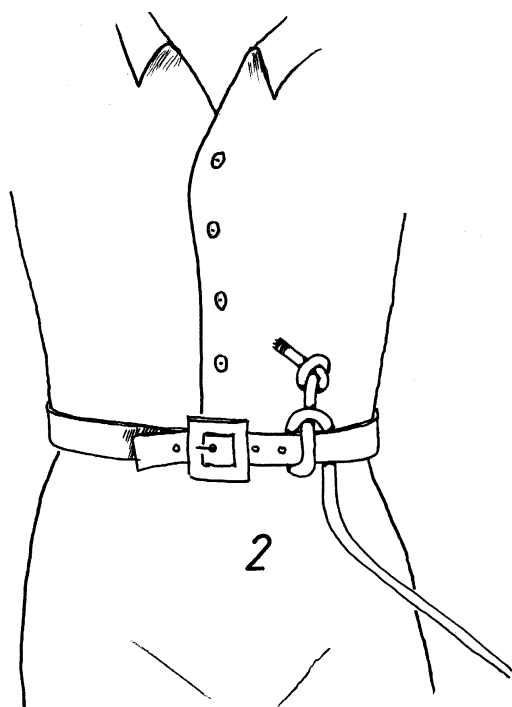
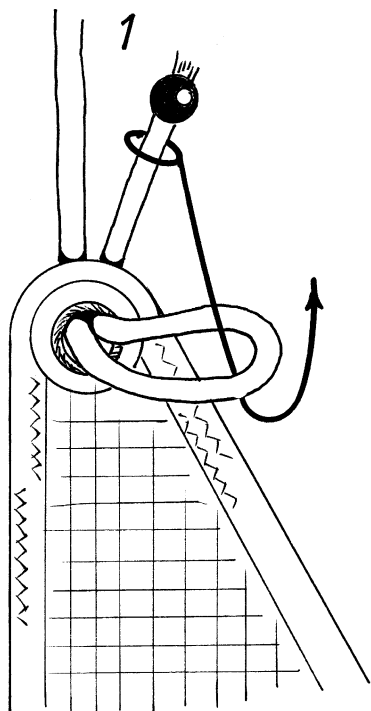
*"Knotting venture - knotting gained"*

## Knute hitch

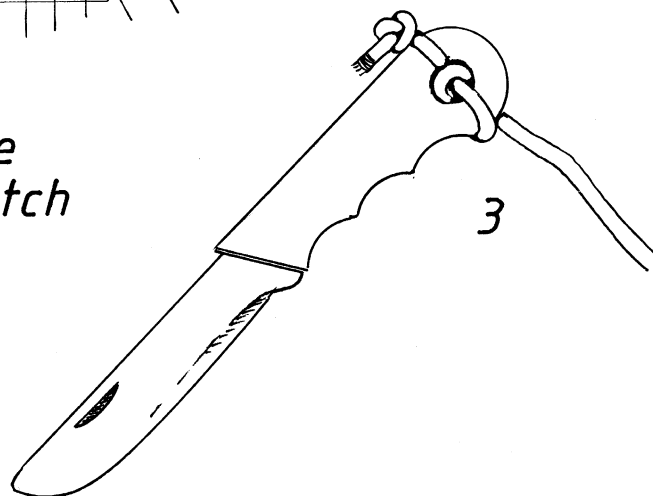
Knotmaster uses this versatile hitch to attach the main halyard to his dinghy's mainsail, as well as to trap the inert end of a throwing line on his belt (fig. 2) so that it doesn't fly off after the monkey's fist. It will also fasten a lanyard to a knife or other tool.

Merely push and pull a snug-fitting bight through the eye and tuck the working end as shown (fig. 1). For extra security, add a stopper knot, or one those big plastic beads that chandlers sell.

Brion Toss<sup>IGKT</sup> seems to have been the one to name this knot in 1990.



*Knute  
hitch*



# Book Reviews

## **Pocket Guide to Knots and Splices** by Des Pawson.

Produced 2001 by PRC Publishing Ltd.

ISBN 1 85648 604 4 (Soft back)

ISBN 0 7858 1446 9 (Hard back)

UK Publishers price £12.95, but can be obtained for about half this price if you shop around. With hard or soft covers this book has 256 pages measuring 140mm by 165mm.

When a person who makes his living from knots, splices and ropework, puts his name to a book, you know that the content will be of worth. You may find new knots, forgotten knots, or different ways of illustrating or tying knots, but whatever you do find will be of interest.

An introduction to the book gives some historical detail to the traditions of knotting. This is followed by descriptions of Materials, Tools, and Techniques used for tying knots.

There are then ten sections each devoted to a particular type of knot or ropework: Stopper knots, Whipping etc., Binding knots, Bends, Hitches, Loop knots, Lashings, Plaits and Braids, Splices and Decorative knots. A contents page precedes each of these sections, but I feel that the addition of a comprehensive index at the back of the book would prove useful.

The book, which contains instructions for tying over 100 items, is profusely illustrated with excellent colour photographs which can help one to understand more easily the construction of many of the knots. However, some of the colours used are less successful than others. The Royal Blue cordage used on its own tends to confuse the detail in the knot, especially in the smaller illustrations.

I particularly liked the variation shown for the Truckers Hitch, which appears to add to the security of the knot, but I feel that the Oyster Man's Stopper Knot needs different illustrations. There is one caption, which gives an incorrect name to the knot illustrated. I'm not telling you which it is, I will leave you to buy the book and find it for yourself - in searching through the book to find it I am sure that you will find many items of knotting interest!

This book can be recommended, and will be of interest to beginner and expert alike with the quality of the text and illustrations appealing to all. The beginner will appreciate each stage of the tying of a knot being covered in rather more detail than is usual with "pocket books", and the expert will enjoy the clarity of illustrations, particularly for the complex and decorative knots.

*S Maurice Smith*

## **"Knot Rhymes and Reasons"** by Geoffrey Budworth.

An IGBT publication, price £1.50 from the Supplies Secretary (available from May 2002).

ISBN 0-9515506-3-2

This entertaining booklet contains a miscellany of facts and limericks, nicely

blended with jokes. Some of the thoughts stimulated by the mixture are serious, others startling. (Should we for instance, include gorillas as honorary members of the IGKT?) The text is intricately constructed as any Celtic interlace, and never boring.

In addition to being 'a good read' the author writes about knots in a way that should capture the interest of the uninitiated. Demonstrators manning Guild stands will find useful snippets with which to amuse the public, and the book itself may induce people to find out more about knots - or even join the IGKT.

Once again, Geoffrey Budworth has conjured up a new facet of the subject - a fantastical tour through the peripheral aspects of knotting.

*Europa Chang-Dawson*

# What Knot For A Time Capsule?

**asks Geoffrey Budworth**

**T**ime capsules have become almost commonplace. Here in the UK these robust and durable containers, in which are preserved artefacts and documents judged to be typical of contemporary culture, are buried by schoolchildren as social study projects, and by town councils seeking a

morsel of immortality. To mark the new millennium, one was interred within the ruined Norman castle near to where I live. The contents never, as far as I know, include a knot ... but it occurs to me that they should.

What goes into such a capsule, destined for recovery by a later generation, can be as mundane as a collection of coins or a can-opener. Changed values may render certain choices questionable. For example, the 'photographs of 12 of the most good-looking Englishwomen of the day' (c. 1878) included in a cache of items buried beneath Cleopatra's Needle on the River Thames embankment in central London, England, cause some gender-conscious activists to squirm nowadays; but as a record of the period they remain valid. A less controversial alternative, surely, would have been a knot.

One can also imagine a time-capsule boosted into space on a trans-galactic journey that could ultimately be intercepted by an alien intelligence. In this instance nothing cultural would be reliable. Coins might be mistaken by another life-form for food. (Yum, yum! Save the little cupro-nickel ones for me - they're my favourites.) Instead, scientists would no doubt choose to portray our carbon-based evolution and development with mathematical formulae they believe to be universal phenomena of nature. Here too, I suggest, a knot would do as well.

So, when next you hear of a time capsule being put together, do urge the organisers to adopt a knot. Which one - tied in what material? It could be fun to find out. Send your ideas now to our editor, Colin Grundy, for publication in a future issue of Knotting Matters.

# A Wire Rope Eye

By Roy Chapman

I learned the basis for this eye from a telephone construction manual 30years ago, but have since modified it for field use.

Safety is paramount so wear gloves and safety glasses. Of course under conditions of “wilderness stress” you wouldn’t have either so work extra carefully. Watch out for flailing ends (a whack in the eye is more than enough)! Watch out for broken wires that will go right to the bone in half an instant.

This is the “field expedient” eye that is very fast and very useful. You can make this eye in any size cable up to about one-inch without any tools (bigger if you are hardy). If well made it will be as strong as any eye splice, just not as pretty. This eye can be formed without tools, other than a means for cutting the cable. Cable can be cut with oxy-acetylene torch, abrasive cutoff wheel, cold chisel driven against any old steel, abrasive blade in a hacksaw or wire by wire with hand clippers. You can “draw” the temper to make it easier to cut by heating with a torch or in a charcoal fire or even over the kitchen stove (not electric) if you have the time! I’ve seen cable cut with an axe.

To keep the sketch small, the ends are too short and the standing part almost looks like an end - but isn’t.

Step one is to unlay a goodly length, by dividing the cable into two halves. You can take the core (if present) with

one half. It helps to stop the cable at the crotch with wire, cord or tape, but you don’t have to. It also helps to whip the ends. The minimum length to unlay would be seven pitches for the eye and seven more pitches for the tail. I am calling a “pitch” one full turn of a strand in the lay of the rope. An odd number of pitches used for the eye portion allow the ends to re-marry as shown in the sketches. Any length for the tail will work, but longer is stronger.

Step two is to form the eye. I like to put a stop on at the bosom but you don’t have to. Just keep passing the ends through the eye and reform the cable as you go around.

Step three is to marry the ends. If you have the right number of pitches in the eye the ends will almost marry themselves. If you don’t then unlay the eye and start by making the eye one pitch larger or smaller.

Step four is to lay the ends up into a tail. Almost done now. Your cable will look so good; it will almost look as if you hadn’t done anything to it but all of a sudden there is this neat eye in it.

Step five is to pull the tail tight against the standing part. Stop it there. No, NO, don’t quit! I said stop it there. Tape will work.

Step six is to serve, seize or otherwise retain the tail against the standing part. If you form this eye right then even one of those miserable bolted cable clamps will



hold the very devil, but then if you had cable clamps you wouldn't have needed to make this eye. But a few hose clamps will work. I guess 100mph tape would too, if you use enough. To proceed by plan; lay a length of soft iron wire, copper wire, bailing wire, fence wire or what-have-you along the standing part, a bit past the tail end, working end headed toward the eye. At the crotch turn the wire through the eye and start serving back towards the tail. If all this is in "big" material you may need to use a serving stick to get it drawn down tightly. Any handy stick will do. Take a turn around the serving stick and use the stick to pry against the work, pull the serving down good and tight. Just before you reach the end of the tail lead the serving wire to the standing part of the cable and serve the standing part alone

for a bit, seven or nine turns works nice. Tuck the end of the serving wire under the last turn or two, draw tight and twist the ends. You are done. Finis. O.K., take off the safety glasses and gloves.

You can also use wire to form the seizing, just as if it were marline. Three round seizings will hold this tail down just great.

It would be good to tape the whole mess up now so there can be no cut fingers, but the formed eye will never care if you tape it or not. If you must reeve it somewhere then bash the heck out of it with rock or hammer to close the eye a bit. There is no thimble - this is not that sort of work - but it could be.

I have put these in permanent place in lieu of eye splices, but the serving gets rusty if you don't oil or paint or tar it. But then so does the cable.

Fig. 1  
Unlay

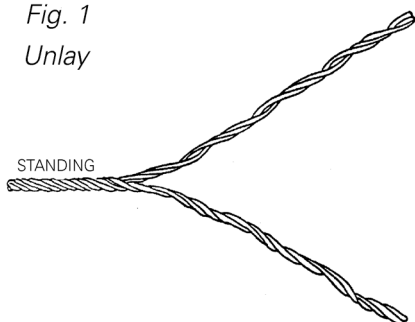


Fig. 2 - Form Eye

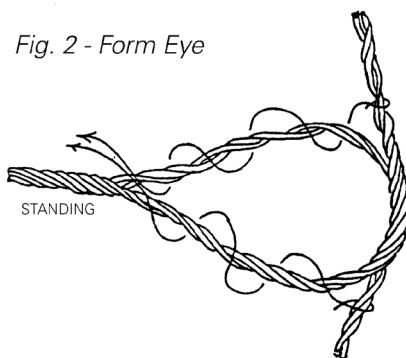


Fig. 3 - Marry Ends

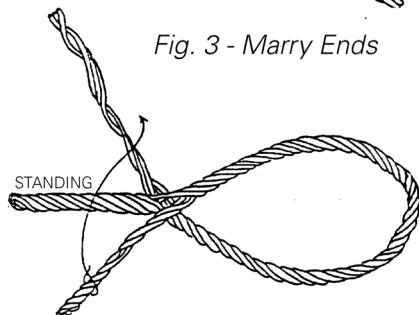
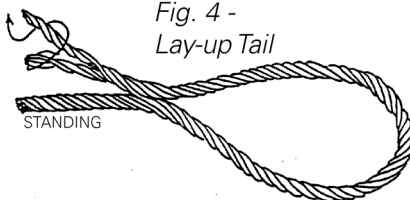


Fig. 4 -  
Lay-up Tail



The only eye I have seen put in more quickly is a “Northwest Logger’s Eye” done by two very strong, young, men with T-handle marlinespikes during

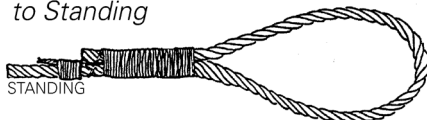


*Fig. 5  
Pull Tail Against Standing*

Please remember cable breaks (even this fine eye) and can have some stored energy to release when it finally lets go. Be careful

competition at a logging show. By the way, you can borrow a trick from them and use RR spikes to hold the eye to a stump while you serve the tail down.

*Fig. 6 - Serve Tail to Standing*



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# A Simple Display Case

by David Pusill

This idea came from Richard Hopkins when he gave me a couple of chart drawers at one of our meetings. Like most Knotters, I never turn anything down and they lay in my shed for weeks while I thought of a use for them. I daren't bring them into the house, my wife would go ballistic, and our front room resembles the cable locker of a frigate as it is!

To cut a long story short, Richard suggested that I use them for a display of some sort by hinging them together to make a portable presentation case. I slapped on some wood stain, put the hinges on at one end and bought a nice brass catch for the other, screwed on a

brass carry handle and, hey presto, job done!

The display itself is quite basic. I cut out four squares of hardboard and on each one I stuck some baize Fablon of different colours. On these squares I did some varying items of ropework and fixed them on with PVA glue, complete with typed labels. The squares were then arranged in a 'tidy order' and secured to the wooden surface of the drawer with Velcro. This is so that they can be removed for cleaning and storing in a dry environment when not in use.

To add a bit of colour to the display I cut some short lengths of broom handle, stained and varnished them and covered

them with half hitching using different styles and different coloured line, namely black and purple as an eye catcher, and placed them between the squares. All this was in one half of the pair of drawers.

In the other half I made an unglazed knot board and placed it in the centre of the display. I find that when I show knot boards in the open, particularly in sunshine, the inside of the glass steams up and ruins the presentation, hence the un-glazing!

Then I cut two more short lengths of broom handle, rubbed in some French polish, tied on a couple of different Turk's Heads and glued them to the drawer below the open knot board.

I have found that the display is compact and easy to store. It is also light in weight and simple to assemble. At the moment I am on 'phase two' by making another similar display but this time using literature in the form of laminated sheets of A3 incorporating scanned photographs of my own.

## Plug Aids a Knotty Problem

Mathematicians in Pennsylvania are using a robot arm and a bath plug chain to help magicians master a conjuring trick.

They are trying to improve the odds of flicking a rope and successfully making a knot in it.

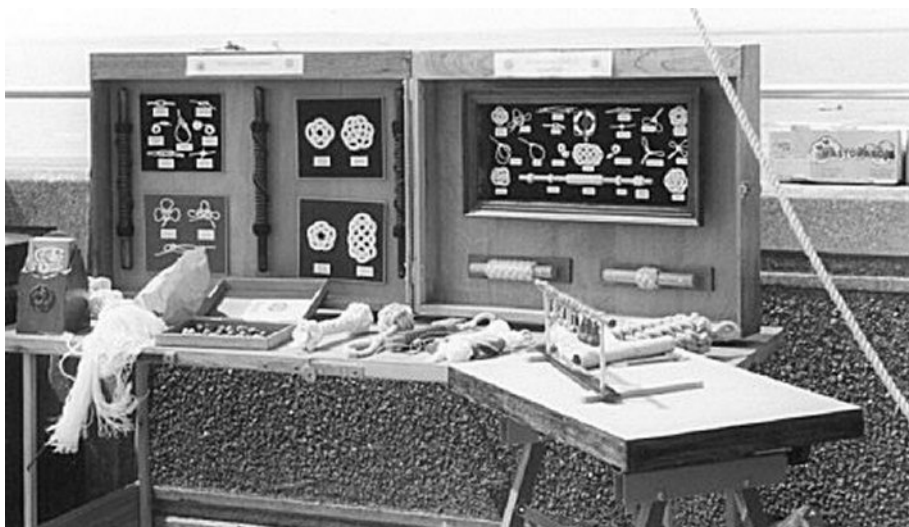
Experts say a rope only knots itself within a certain range of shaking motions - shake too little or too much and no knot will form.

Andrew Belmonte of Pennsylvania State University attached one end of a chain to an arm, which vibrated up and down.

At very low frequencies the hanging chain moves up and down but later starts to swing.

Later, the motion is chaotic and experiments show knots only appear when the motion is in this phase.

*Express and Star*





# Knot Gallery



*Above – A necklace of dyed horn beads, Greek ceramic beads and button knots by Suzen Milodot.*

*Left –A tiller covered in coachwhipping and Turk's Head knots by Martin Combs.*







*Above – A narrow boat tiller decoration by Ken Nelson.*

*Left – TomFoolery – an abstract macramé piece by Geoffrey Budworth.*



*Above – A range of decorated walking sticks by F. J. Wilkinson.*



# Guild 20th Birthday Souvenir Mug

These Jacobean style mugs with the Guild logo picked out in 22 carat gold, have been made by the Coalport China Museum.

Five hundred of these limited edition mugs have been made to celebrate the twentieth birthday of the Guild and will be on sale at Fareham. Many have already been sold and well received by members.

To order your mug prior to the birthday celebrations, contact Nigel Harding. They are priced at £7.95 plus postage and packing.



# Sliding Template Method For Constructing Cruciform Turk's Heads

by Harold Scott

In 1997 and 1998 I published two booklets on the tying of *Cruciform Turk's Heads*. Unfortunately the tables giving the number of strands to tie CTH's were incorrect; I published the corrected tables in KM68 Sept 2000, even then the parameters column 11L + row 22L should read five not three. I used the text of the aforesaid article as the supplements to the two booklets; Supplement ISBN 0-9532608-3-6 issued to title *On Various CTH's*. Supplement ISBN 0-9532608-1-X issued to title *Sliding Template Method*. My apologies for any confusion caused. It is a difficult subject.

I have designed a device I call a 'Sliding Template' Fig 1, The six bight table in KM68 is used for all calculations in this article, referral to KM68 is recommended if/and when the occasion arises.

By sliding the even numbered TH horizontally and/or perpendicularly round the axis for each set of parameters one can quickly determine the shape, and the number of leads on each arm; also the number of strands required to tie any of the shapes see Figs. 2 and 2a. The axes for Figs. 2 and 2a are heavily outlined, all tied with an open crotch) hexagonal shape. The columns on both sides of the central column are mirror images of each other. Fig 3 is complementary to Figs. 2 and 2a giving the number of strands needed to tie the knots in Figs. 2 and 2a.

Method: for finding the number of strands needed to tie any shape of knot. Using the Sliding Template, lock off the selected shape with rubber bands which will also denote the six bights on the appropriate arms. Using a soft-leaded pencil mark a bight to start "S" follow the run of the basket weave and spot mark each bight as one follows the run, returning back to the initial start. If all bights have been marked off then the knot can be tied with a S.STR; if some bights are not marked off then choose more starts and continue until all bights are accounted for. The number of strands needed to tie each knot is equal to the number of starts.

The full six bight  $6 \times 6 = 36$  grid table is repetitive sideways, and downwards; the number of strands needed to tie CTH's of any shape having larger parameters can be found by using the formula on page 3 of KM68, using multiples of 12 instead of 20.

Example:-  $\frac{X157L-6B}{Y76L-6B} = 233L-12B,$

takes three strands to tie simply by reducing the larger X,Y. factors by multiples of 12 to

$\frac{XI3L-6B}{YI6L-6B}$

takes 3 strands to tie. Refer to table 'A' six bight CTH (KM 68).

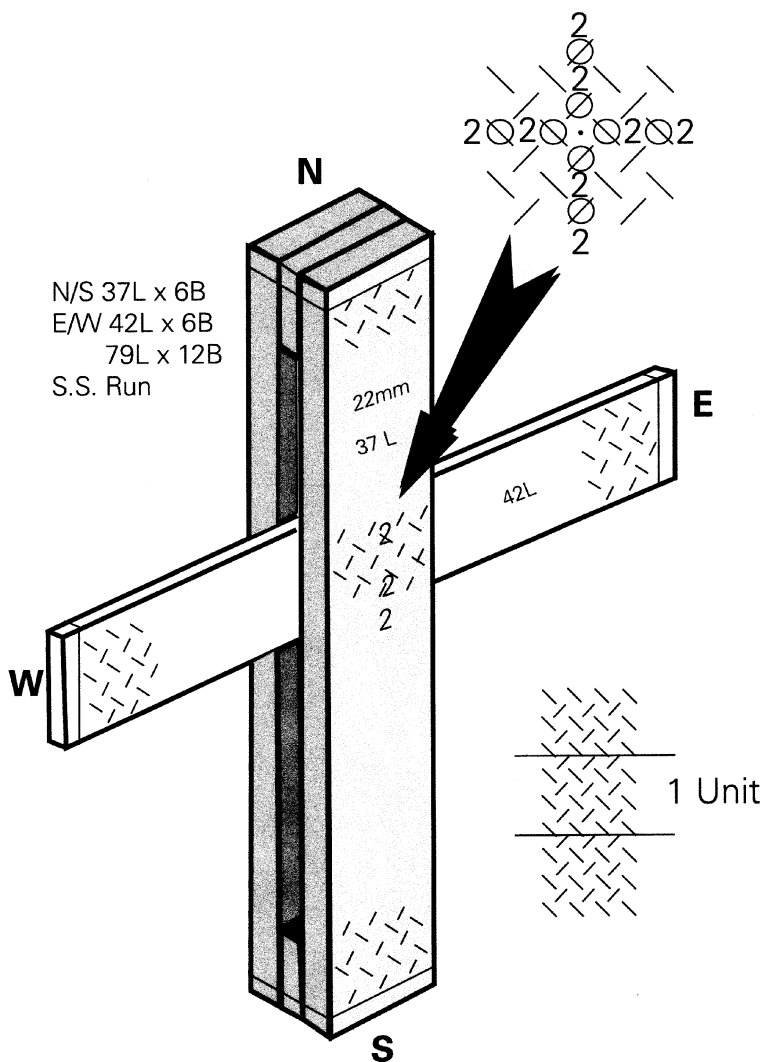


Fig. 1

The total number of C.T.H. shapes that can be tied within the parameters of the full six bight table given in KM68, is 1188. A breakdown of this number is shown in Fig 4. Only the 11L column has been formulated, see Figs 2 and 2a,

leaving five more columns to be assessed i.e. columns 13, 15, 17, 19, 21 Leads.

Knot tyers are familiar with the Cross and Tee-shape of CTH's but not possibly the right-angled shape Fig 5, which I discovered when researching the use of

Fig. 2

Fig. 2

										CTH	T SHAPE	KNEE KNOT
										6	3	-
										23L x 12B		
										25L x 12B		
										27L x 12B		
										10	5	-
										22	15	2
										38	27	4
										60	42	6

Fig. 2 TOTAL

Fig 2a TOTAL

TOTALS Fig 2 + 2a

Fig. 2 TOTAL  
Fig 2a TOTAL  
TOTALS Fig 2 + 2a

										CTH	T SHAPE	KNEE KNOT	
18L	29L x 12B										10	9	2
20L	31L x 12B										14	7	-
22	33L x 12B										14	11	2
TOTALS 2a											38	27	4
TOTALS Fig 2											22	15	2
GRAND TOTAL											60	42	6

Fig. 2a

Fig. 2a

the Sliding Template. I tied this knot and gave it to Peter van de Griend when he visited me late 1997. Peter remarked that he had no knowledge of this knot whatsoever. After studying the knot, Peter, published an article in Dutch KM No13 on my Sliding Template method, and again in the Dutch KM No 17, with a drawing of this knot. Peter called this knot a “Knee Knot”. Can I claim discovery of a new knot?

It was only whilst I was typing this article that I realised the significance of the Knee Knot, it fits in and completes the cycle composition of a CTH i.e. one arm = TH two arms = Knee Knot, three arms = Tee shape four arms to complete the CTH.

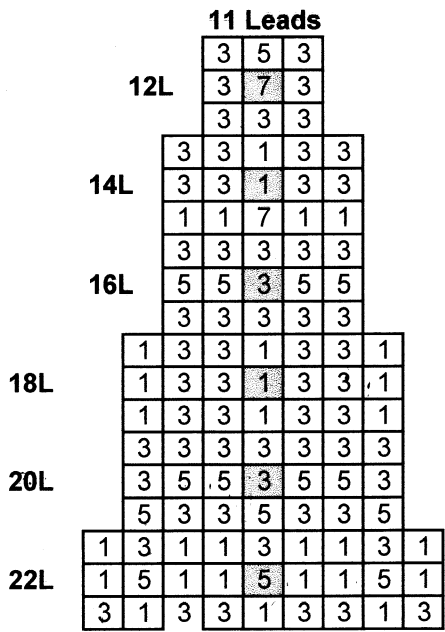
Note: the CTH with parameters

$$\frac{11L-6B}{12L-6B} = \frac{23L-12B}{12L-6B}$$

takes ‘seven’ strands to tie when tied with an open crotch i.e. hexagonal, but it only takes five strands to tie when the strands are crossed at the crotch, replacing the hexagonal with two pentagonals.

Abbreviations

- B - Bights
- CTH - Cruciform Turk’s Head
- GR - Grid
- KM - Knotting Matters
- L - Leads
- R - Run
- S - Start
- S.STR - Single Strand
- TH - Turk’s Head



	11 Leads	13 leads	15 Leads	
12L	$3 \times 3 = 9$	$4 \times 3 = 12$	$5 \times 3 = 15$	
14L	$3 \times 5 = 15$	$4 \times 5 = 20$	$5 \times 5 = 25$	
16L	$3 \times 5 = 15$	$4 \times 5 = 20$	$5 \times 5 = 25$	
18L	$3 \times 7 = 21$	$4 \times 7 = 28$	$5 \times 7 = 35$	
20L	$3 \times 7 = 21$	$4 \times 7 = 28$	$5 \times 7 = 35$	
22L	$3 \times 9 = 27$	$4 \times 9 = 36$	$5 \times 9 = 45$	
Totals	108	144	180	=432

	17 Leads	19 Leads	21 leads	
12L	$6 \times 3 = 18$	$7 \times 3 = 21$	$8 \times 3 = 24$	
14L	$6 \times 5 = 30$	$7 \times 5 = 35$	$8 \times 5 = 40$	
16L	$6 \times 5 = 30$	$7 \times 5 = 35$	$8 \times 5 = 40$	
18L	$6 \times 7 = 42$	$7 \times 7 = 49$	$8 \times 7 = 56$	
20L	$6 \times 7 = 42$	$7 \times 7 = 49$	$8 \times 7 = 56$	
22L	$6 \times 9 = 54$	$7 \times 9 = 63$	$8 \times 9 = 72$	
Totals	216	252	288	=756
			Grand total =	1188

Fig. 4

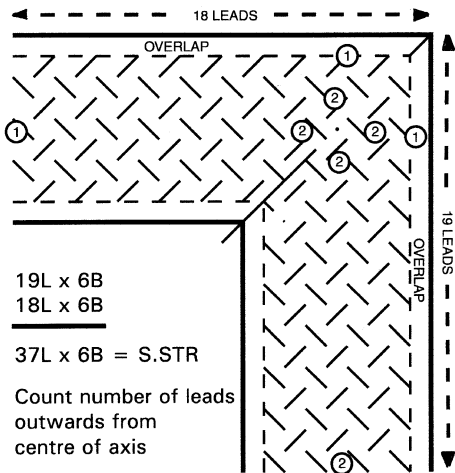


Fig. 5

Two drawings required. Place both round former and glue overlaps. Cut Straight lines and fold dotted lines.

# Some Traditional American Braiding

by Mike Storch

## The Stampede String

A cowboy reckons his hat indispensable, and to keep from losing it he uses a “stampede string” - that’s cowboy lingo for a chinstrap that works, even in a stampede. Regionally in the American West, it can also be called a “run-a-way string” or “wind string”, equally descriptive of purpose.

The earliest ones were probably no more than thong or twine, poked through the brim of the hat, and secured beneath the chin with a knot or slider of sorts. Given the cowboy’s ability to braid, it was inevitable that improvements would be made. Today the stampede string is a blend of form and function reflecting taste and ability.

There are several types and styles: commonly they are made of leather, horsehair, or rawhide. The hair I find too coarse and scratchy on the face. Rawhide is better, but it is stiffer than need be, and wetting (rain) changes it entirely. Leather, which is best in my opinion, wears well, will break in with use, and acquire character.

Two types of stampede string currently available are the “wrap-around” and the “cotter pin”, and each works well. The wrap-around requires two holes punched in the brim; the upper ends of the two strings go through these holes, then loop around the crown of the

hat. The cotter pin type needs no holes punched: cotter pins at the upper ends of the strings fit through the stitching of the leather sweatband inside the hat, and are then spread apart. Being between sweatband and crown, the cotter pins will neither be seen nor felt.

As for style, sometimes function rules, and fine yet simpler knotwork prevails. Other times a long fancy tassel, which would be in the way on a working hat, would be just the right thing on a dress hat. Often the stampede string on a dress hat will be worn behind the head, more as an ornament.

For the working cowboy I braid a no nonsense string with Pineapple Knots at the lower ends, the running Pineapple above acts as a slide adjuster. There is knotwork hidden beneath all Pineapples as well.

For a dress hat I add horsehair tassels at the lower ends. I will sometimes add bone beads, vary the Pineapple Knots, or have my wife Judy do a little Indian beadwork (the “peyote” stitch) above the lower Pineapples.

Some years ago I began covering irregular shapes with the Pineapple Knot. This began with some ceremonial pieces I did for the local Indians. These included bear claw and elk ivory neckpieces. Perhaps I should explain:

A while back I was working on a cattle ranch in southwestern Colorado. A black



bear lived on the farthest reaches of the ranch. I did not consider the bear a threat, and in fact enjoyed the times when I caught sight of him in the wild. There came a time when the bear was implicated in some predation, and the ranch owners called in a professional who killed the bear. I felt badly at the loss of the bear, and in time came into

possession of some of the claws with the idea in mind of doing something right with them. I braided an exceptionally nice bear claw necklace, and felt as though some measure of immortality for the bear had been achieved. That necklace now belongs to an Indian that uses it for tribal ceremonial purposes. I am confident that it is looked upon by all



## **A sampling:**

*#1 A working cowboy would do well with this one: basic and functional.*

*#2 For the dress hat: horse hair tassels, bone beads, extra knotwork (2 turn x 4 bight Pineapples), custom dyed.*

*#3 Bear claws covered with 8 bight Pineapples, additional 2 turn x 4 bight Pineapples, custom dyed.*

*#4 Set of small cow elk ivories, extra 2 turn x 4 bight Pineapples, bone beads: I cut the leather somewhat finer for this piece.*

*#5 Mountain lion claws (rare) covered with finer cut leather. 8 bight Pineapples, extra 2 turn x 4 bight Pineapples, bone beads, custom dyed.*

with the thoughtfulness and respect, which it deserves. It is with this attitude that I continue to work with claws and ivories as I receive them.

These are a few pieces of my recent work, a traditional cowboy handcraft; a craft that spans time, and with the addition of occasional ceremonial pieces for tribal members, my craft also spans cultures. I feel as though there is much to do ahead of me in knotting/braiding. So when people ask the inevitable question: "Been doing this your whole life?" I invariably answer: "Well, not yet".

## The Ceremonial

Ten years ago I was asked to look into knotting among the Indians in my area of the southwestern United States. I put it off initially, and then in a slow, random way, began my search. I knew not where it could lead.

At first there was not much to see. Nothing current, and little in the way of extant examples of what used to be: the lashing of tipi poles for shelter, the bow strung to hunt, the animal packed to travel, might be routine examples of knotting needs of the past. Necessity being the mother of invention, their needs being simple and few, it is no wonder that knotting did not develop to the degree it has in other cultures. The exceptional examples I found were some braided sandals of plant fibre from the Anasazi Period, which ended about 800 years ago. These were in a museum, and rightly so. Peripherally, basket weaving goes back a long way in Indian history. And with the introduction of sheep by the Spaniards perhaps 400 years ago, the

weaving of wool became popular. Woven Navajo blankets epitomize this, and are much in demand today. Anyway, there the search rested until, through more personal contact with the local tribe, the flow of information reversed itself. My own braiding was seen and appreciated, and some of my work now finds expression in the Indian culture.

The first of my work to be appreciated was the stampede string on my hat. In a short while the half dozen or so Indians I was working with each had a stampede string of his own. This was followed by braided hat bands and a few other personal items. I eventually taught one of the tribal members how to braid. In time, without practice, his retention proved faulty, and he forgot what he knew.

Then one day I was asked to braid over a ceremonial piece. Considering it an honour, I accepted. I began receiving other requests for braiding: some simple, some for ceremonial pieces, and some for pieces with spiritual significance. I've learned along the way, and have refined my work somewhat. There is a feeling of accomplishment.

My closest friend in the tribe one-day gave me a "cedar bag" of his own making. This is a leather bag large enough to store cedar, or possibly other plant material in, to be used in ceremonies. This particular bag is of deer hide, which has been worked in the traditional way: by hand, with no machinery or chemicals. In a process which takes days, it was first de-haired, then brain tanned, sewn, and finally smoked over a low fire. It is as soft as flannel, and smells of aromatic cedar. For this I braided a leather drawstring which closes with a slide knot. At the drawstring's end I have worked a braided knot over a bear claw. It is a



unique piece indeed.

I have worked bear claws into neckpieces as well. I recently traded one of these to a tribal member who uses it at sweat lodge ceremonies, and the annual Bear Dance. In return I received a beautiful piece of his work: a small clay pot, hand carved to an incredible degree, and hand painted.

Something else I braid now with spiritual significance is elk ivory. Elk have two vestigial canine teeth that do not look or function as the other teeth. These, called “ivories” due to their appearance, can be quite beautiful. The spiritual significance this tribe attaches to ivories is that they will protect against lightning strike. At these higher elevations in the Rocky Mountains,

lightening can be a very real threat. I braid a round string for around the neck, which goes through the ivory at its root. A braided knot of multiple passes covers the irregular shape of the ivory, leaving only the crown exposed. Ivories of older elk usually have a circular accumulation of tarnish on the crown, known as the “eye”, making them more highly prized.

I have also worked these ivories into “medicine bag” drawstrings, much in the manner of bear claw drawstrings. The medicine bag differs from the cedar bag in size and purpose. Being much smaller, it is meant to hold little pieces possessing spiritual significance: the individual’s personal “medicine”. Very small medicine bags are sometimes worn around the neck.

The ivories and claws I work with inherently vary in size and shape. Braided covering knots must be fitted individually, and can sometimes be a challenge. Each finished piece is unique, and the work rewarding.

The three bags pictured include two medicine bags and a cedar bag. They show the elk ivory and bear claw drawstrings braided into them.

Perhaps my inquiry into the knotwork of the local Indian tribes did not produce the desired result. What did result seems far better than what I had imagined. What began as a casual inquiry has become a journey; a meeting of cultures where what is created is greater than its component parts. For this I thank my friends in the tribe who have shared knowledge and trust. The inquiry goes on.

## The Perspective

Generally speaking, everyone can do something well in life. The trick, very often, is finding out what that something is. I knew early on that for me it was tying. Coupled with a nomadic life, I've had exposure to some very different kinds of knot tying. Quite often the situations I found myself in would require knotwork, but knotwork wouldn't be the only necessity to get the job done. And once, while on a schooner in the West Indies, my entire focus was knotwork, and it afforded me six months aboard what is now a treasured memory. Currently, and concurrent with my braiding, I enjoy packing. There is much pleasure in throwing a double diamond hitch on a pack animal and heading into the forest for a few weeks.

So, knot tying has taken on different

meaning for me at different times. But it is with me constantly, to some degree, like a faithful companion who also happens to be a best friend. For ten years now my attention has been fixed almost entirely on braiding. I can look at my earlier work and see the flaws, the errors. And I can fairly tell when in the last ten years a particular piece was made by the progress it shows. I feel I am at a decent level now, and try always to learn and improve.

I do not consider myself a cowboy who can tie knots, or anyone else in the mosaic of my life who can tie knots. Rather, I am a braider who has drifted into some very interesting places in this world.

## ROPE ENDS

### WHAT KNOT?

The logo of the once great Gourrock Ropework Co. Ltd. Established at Port Glasgow in Scotland, U.K., featured what appears to be an impossible knot.



ESTD. 1736

It is odd that the firm tolerated a mere artist's impression, but that appears to have been the case . . . unless KM readers can work out and tell us what knot they think was really portrayed.

# Branch Lines

## Pacific Americas Branch

In October 2001 the PAB had a couple of events on the knot calendar. There was the Autumn Sea Fair at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium on the 21st and the Maritime Arts & Crafts Fair at the Los Angeles Maritime Museum. Both of these affairs were in San Pedro, California. We had a good number of Branch members show up to help with the display. There are always an endless number of questions to answer and lots of knots to demonstrate. It is always a lot of fun and we always manage to make some new friends.

Our meetings at the LA Maritime Institute continue to be a monthly highlight. The best part is where members get to show off their latest piece of fancywork. Mr. Charlie Bell especially continues to surprise us. At the last meeting in January, he showed up with an excellent pair of sea chest becketts and a wonderful bell rope. Charlie has only been involved in knotting for a short while and he has come a long way in a very short time. Retired Master Rigger, Joe Soanes, brought a 100 year-old ditty bag with tarred hemp lanyard and Joe Schmidbauer showed off a Jury Knot Mat made from red and white braided nylon line. Lindsey Philpott topped it all

by bringing a signed, first edition of *The Ashley Book of Knots*.

The PAB has its own website at [www.igktpab.org](http://www.igktpab.org) which is run by our web master, Tom Gergen. He does a great job in maintaining a wonderful and quality website for us. Please give it a visit. For those not into cyberspace, the PAB is also connected with its own Knot News newsletter. This newsletter contains short articles having to do with the knotting craft and it also keeps Branch members updated on knot happenings in their local area.

There will be a number of PAB members attending the 2K2 Festival in Fareham. Lindsey Philpott, the PAB President, will be there with his wife Kim. Charlie Bell will be traveling with Lindsey to help show the flag in England. Maggie Machado of Scappouse, Oregon also plans to attend and I believe that Dan Callahan of Anchorage, Alaska is hoping to make it, too. Our Branch is planning to make a bid to have the 2K2 display piece sent to us for display at our own 6th Annual General Meeting in June 2002.

Some upcoming events that the PAB plans to attend are the Whale Watch Festival at Dana Point Harbor, California as well as the ASTA Tallships 2002 Series of Races.

***Joe Schmidbauer & Lindsey Philpott***

## North American Branch

We had a good year in 2001. The branch members attended several events including the Wooden Boat Show, Duxbury Maritime School, and the Ohio

Scouting Outing, in addition to our NAB 2001 in Rockport, Texas.

We encourage members to seek out and attend events. This promotes the Guild. The North American Branch has two banners and fliers prepared for such events. If you have an event and would like to use any of our resources please contact John Burke.

Several branch members are planning to attend "Knot Year 2K2" in England this May.

For Knot Tyers that are internet connected please visit our website at [www.igktnab.org](http://www.igktnab.org) . We have a chat session on Sunday evening between 6PM and 9PM Eastern Time. The website has directions on how to access Yahoo Chat. We encourage you to join us in the near future.

Have a Great New Year and the best knotting to you.

*John Burke*

## Texas Branch

On November 10th & 11th, Sam and Missie Lanham and Barbara and Gary Sessions represented the Texas Branch (TxB) in Rockport, Texas, at the Texas Maritime Museum's Second Annual Music of the Sea Festival.

The Museum invited singing groups from all over the United States to perform. The theme, naturally, was songs of the sea, with emphasis on the square-rigged ship sailor's working music.

We of the TxB had our hitched bottles, Celtic Crosses, ditty bags, and sea chest on display. Allison Lakin, the Educational Director of the Texas Maritime Museum (TMM), asked us to

run a knot tying session in the afternoon of each day. During those sessions Missie Lanham and Barbara Sessions stayed busy teaching kids to tie dragon flies while Sam Lanham entertained some other children with some knotting slight of hand. I found a Boy Scout who was a capable young man and I soon had him teaching some other Scout age boys, and a couple of grown men who happened by, some basic Scout knots. The teaching sessions worked out very well. In fact the whole Festival worked out very well. The weather was perfect, the music was excellent, the seafood was outstanding and the Txb members had a grand weekend.

*Gary C. Sessions*



*'Baron of Fredericksburg', Sam Lanham sporting the official TxB t-shirt. The logo is a Star knot surrounded by a 5B x 3L Turk's Head knot.*

## West Yorkshire Branch

We are at the end of another knotting year and it has been a good one for our branch.

We have met six times as a branch throughout the year on an informal basis where we have had time to sit and chat about our individual knotting and discuss the branch activities where we meet the public.

Our first outing of the year was an Educational Resource Day at Filey on the East coast, where we were called upon to give an interactive display on knotting and netting, to staff of various East coast museums in the hope that they would use us in their own museums (they didn't).

We were invited to and attended the Heritage Boat Gathering at Burnley, At this event they try to get as many original Leeds and Liverpool Canal working boats together as they can. There are not many left and it is good to see them. Whilst there were not many people about there was a lot of interest in our display.

Our biggest event this year was Leeds Waterways Festival. The venue had been changed this year and it was at Thwaites Mill that is a museum where all the original machinery is still in place, driven by waterpower. There were plenty of people interested in our demonstration and if boat owners are as good as their word they will now be making all their own fenders.

Due to staffing problems we were only able to do one day at Wakefield Canal Festival. That was a pity because it is one of our oldest bookings, however it was a good day with a lot of our regular contacts turning up.

*David Pearson*

# Postbag

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

## Mooring Hitch

I enjoyed the piece in KM73 regarding the Mooring Hitch. It is interesting how a misunderstanding can lead to a very nice new knot.

I wish to gently emphasize misunderstanding; for ABOK #1191 is most definitely not a Mooring Hitch, nor does CWA recommend it as such. Equally importantly it can be quickly be tied on a bight and there is no need for pulling all that rope through". Please note that the chapter in which #1191 appears is "Clove Hitch and Other Crossing Knots". I refer you to the first paragraph of chapter 15, "The general purpose of a crossing knot ..... Of #1191 Mr. Ashley states "Of the next four knots the first (that is to say #1191) and #1194 can be tied in the bight. He is correct. You need not reeve ends. You could secure one end in Marblemount, USA and the other end in Dartford, UK and make thousands of CROSSING KNOTS from here to there while never disturbing the ends. Notice that the pull is at 180 degrees, as it should be for a crossing knot. It is designed to do that and to be used for purposes such as cordoning off a driveway on temporary stakes, the line continuing from stake to stake and no wasteful reeving of ends required.

The knot will not slide down the stake (very important as such usage is usually done without much tension) and is very quick to tie and untie (also important for who ever has enough time when setting up an event and once an event is over the grounds often need to be dressed up quickly). Please note that CWA offers #1194 (a variation of a mooring hitch #1815) as an alternative CROSSING KNOT. You might refer to the chapter 23 “Hitches to Stake and Post, Pile and Bollard for the real MOORING HITCHES.

I think your new hitch belongs in chapter 15, as the lead is definitely at 180 degrees, it ties in a bight, it doesn’t slip down when slack, in short; a most admirable crossing knot. I have pasted it at that spot in my ABOK. And I’ll be using it and teaching it as the “Jarrett Hitch” over the coming years. Thank you.

**Roy S. Chapman**  
*Marblemount, U.S.A.*

## Mobius Turk’s Heads

I am interested in obtaining copies of whatever information is available on Mobius Turk’s heads.

According to Geoffrey Budworth’s *Complete Books of Decorative Knots* the initial article by John Turner and George Shaake appeared in KM32 with subsequent information provided by Jane Kennedy, Europa Chang Dawson, Frank Harris and Charlie Smith. These and many other materials would be much appreciated.

I am also looking for a source for a castnet, made from natural fiber (linen, hemp, or whatever). All of the

commercial sources I have found use nylon or similar synthetics. I’m sure these are more durable, but, aesthetically, they won’t work for my purposes. I’d appreciate any help you can give me.

**Steve Lincoln**  
*Denver, USA*

## A Most Delicious Knot

One of my Christmas presents (from some non-knotting friends) had on the label, “We know you will like this because you mention the name with such enthusiasm.” The present was a Christmas pudding made by the firm of Matthew Walker! I wonder what a knot would taste like served up with rum butter?

**Europa Chang-Dawson**  
*Chelmsford, UK*

## Another Knotting Material

The following item appeared in the *New Scientist*.

“Spaghetti lubricated in olive oil is shedding light on why knotted ropes or strings used by sailors, anglers and mountaineers snap where and when they do,” we learn in the current issue of the *New Journal of Physics*, the online publication from the Institute of Physics and the German Physical Society.

In a paper entitled “Localization of breakage points in knotted strings” in the current issue, Giovanni Dietler of the University of Lausanne in Switzerland says: “Finding the breakage point on a rope with some degree of accuracy is very difficult. Materials like nylon break



so fast that it is impossible to see where or why a break occurs, even with a high velocity camera. Instead, the best material to see a breakage turns out to be well cooked spaghetti.”

I think I have heard reference to a “Cook’s Knotboard” using spaghetti but not for the location of breakage points.

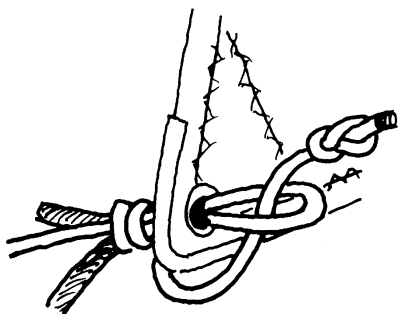
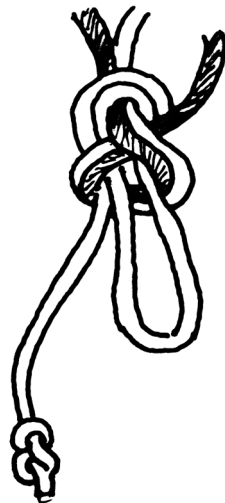
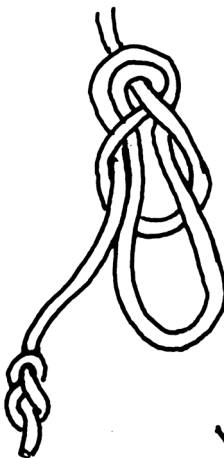
*Alan King  
Cottingham, England*

## The Bubble Knot

This knot appeared in No. 403 of *Practical Boat Owner* (July 2000). It is a variation of the Dutch Soft knot, used for attaching the genoa sheets.

I used it this season on the jib sheets of my Red Fox 200E 20ft sloop trailer-sailer instead of a Bowline. This was because I have invented two twin-jibs on a single forestay rig for running in heavy weather. This involves a rapid changeover of one sheet to the second jib. I use Bubble knots on both sheets and they have never shaken loose - even in a force six across the North Sea.

*Michael Collis  
Bedford, England*



## Globe Knot Tied in the Hand

I have come up with an easy to tie globe knot that has the same number of leads as Clifford Ashley's #2217, i.e. Uranus which has 7 leads and has the same characteristics as # 2218, i.e. Saturn, which when laid out flat has the first four leads of the working end looping to the outside circumference.

It is easily tied by raising a 3Lx4B Turk's head to 5 leads and then 7 leads without increasing the number of bights as the ends, i.e. four.

Lay the cord over the left hand with the standing end hanging down the front of the palm. Take the leading end around the hand bringing it back to the front on the right of the standing end. Pass over the standing end, going from right to left, around the hand appearing this time on the left of the standing end. Weave over, then under, going from left to right. Now reach behind the hand and pull the loop on the left over top of the loop on the right. Now weave over and under from right to left. Follow the original lead over and under. You have now completed the 3L x 4B Turk's head.

Now continue to follow the standing part over then under then over again. This brings you out on the left side of the knot. Stay on the outside of the knot until you come back to the standing part. You now weave the ladder going u, o, u, o, u. This last under is under the original lead and brings you out once again on the far left of the knot.

Repeat the last two steps. Put a small ball inside the Turk's head. Carefully work the cord into the ball. Follow the original knot around once, or twice more and you have a perfectly good globe knot tied in the hand.

Want a bigger one?

Go around twice more. You now have nine leads. Unfortunately this globe is distorted by having too many latitude leads, i.e. 8, and too few longitudinal leads, i.e. 5. The cord tends to bunch up at the poles and separate at the equator.

*Doug Williams  
Via E-mail*

## Kai Lund

Thank you for the introduction to Kai Lund in KM 72. More than 20 years ago I got the German editions of his books *Tovvaerkkunst* and *Knob og Spejs*. His pictures and descriptions are very clear, so I learned to tie different types of Turk's heads myself.

Thank you Kai Lund.

*Jürgen Schwalm  
Waltrop, Germany*

## A Knot Garden

I have had it in my mind for some years now; the idea of the Guild becoming involved in a project that I feel will last for many years as a work of art and lasting legacy.

The Elizabethans (16th Century) were very keen on formal gardens and to this end were tireless in their search for interesting shapes to adorn their landscape gardens.

Some years ago I visited Hatfield House, Hertfordshire which has the most interesting knot garden in the grounds of the Great hall. It is extremely old (500 years) and is reputed to have been in existence when Queen Elizabeth I was a young girl - she spent much of her young life at Hatfield.

With the above in mind and the recent publicity surrounding Highgrove House (HRH Prince Charles' private residence) which highlights this wonderful place with its superb formal and informal gardens that I thought maybe the IGKT may like to involve its extraordinary talents in producing a design for an original knot garden; which would be submitted to Prince Charles for consideration and approval to be incorporated in the Highgrove landscape.

This design would be on the lines of the Elizabethans i.e. separate knots and plaits which would be outlined in practice by the use of yew hedging or even brickwork and enclosed again in yew hedging.

Would members be interested in submitting individual designs? Perhaps one knot or plait per country. Once we have enough individual designs they could be incorporated into an overall plan.

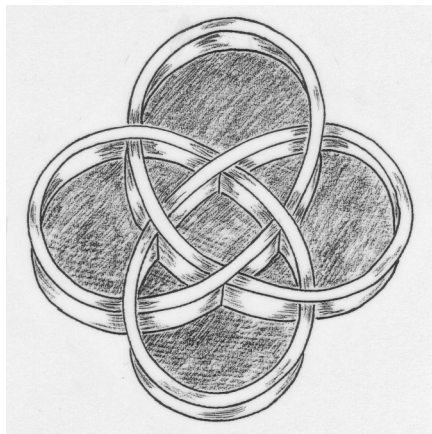
As an illustration, I have enclosed a composite photograph of Hatfield House knot garden and example sketch that may be considered in the overall plan. Please note that the heavy shaded areas are for the various plants, shrubs or flowers. The enclosed area is the outline of the knot or plait which could be made

of any durable material, but since it is ostensibly a garden, box hedging would be preferable.

Finally the whole plan would need a central feature. Seeing KM73, perhaps Harold Scott's World Sphere on a plinth?

Just an idea.

**Brian Jarrett**  
**Dartford, UK.**



## Tethering Goats

In *National Geographic Magazine* for June 1987 there is a photograph showing a herd of goats tethered shoulder to



shoulder by a single rope waiting milking.

One pull on the rope was supposed to free all the animals when they had all been milked.

The goats were in two rows with the heads towards the middle and the working parts to the rear allowing easy access for the milker.

Can anyone suggest a suitable system to show how the goats were tied? It will have to be easy to tie, as the animals would be possibly resisting restraint, quick to tie and be fast to release. There was no suggestion that the goats wore collars through which the line could be threaded.

I cannot reproduce the picture because of copyright.

**Richard Hopkins**  
**Bristol, England**

## Help, Please

In KM 67 a review was included of *The 85 Ways to Tie a Tie*. I have been in touch with the publishers who state that it is now out of print. Has any member of the IGKT a copy he would be prepared to lend to me for a very short period?

**John Constable**  
**Pershore, England**

## Comments on KM73

R.G. Robertson asks (KM73 p45) about the status of a particular hitch - is it "new"? I surmise that the answer is given well by Heinz's (KM73) remark that determining such things requires the examination of all knot fiddlers' "waste baskets" - where they send things to

oblivion! I doubt that one will find the illustrated hitch in any knot book.

Now, what an inveterate knot fiddler does upon seeing such a thing, is revise it to yet something else unseen (and maybe add to the wastebasket). In the particular case, by imagining the standing part to run, not directly down and up on the left side, but over to the right (and subsequent connections then made as they must be). One sees a maybe more interesting hitch - one that is similar to the Ossel hitch (KM72 p15), in that the end pinches the standing part against the collar, even over relatively larger diameter objects (which the Ossel hitch doesn't do hence the need for the Netline hitch [aka "Ossel knot"]). It's not easily untied once loaded, but I think that a marlinespike can lever the standing part's side of the collar sufficient to break the knot. I've seen it hold tight fairly well in 3/8" laid sisal and kernmantle polyester/nylon ropes around a 2-3/8" PVC pipe, whose slickness helps tension draw the knot tight.

What of the original knot? At least it served as inspiration. It's one way to make a cow hitch secure, but it suffers from requiring a tuck - harder than making a half-hitch, and maybe a bit harder than the tucked version named "Pedigree cow" by Asher.

In a letter (KM73 p43), Peter Hughes claims that he got "the hump" from Ashley. But Peter needs chiding on his research skills! He claims that ABOK contains nothing like his "awning knot", instead showing the knots #19, 304, 310, 325, and 411 that don't even show an awning! Peter, really: why, two of those references don't even show KNOTS (and others are for angling)! Surely, such a mismatch should shake one into reflection, a little of which will show you

that ABOK's index, like most, gives PAGE numbers, not knot numbers (though we often wish for the latter). On the cited pages, one sees one "awning knot"--an unfinished, so to speak, midshipman's hitch (ah, another battle of nomenclature), indeed nothing like Peter's.

But, what is wanted is a "Roband" hitch, and ABOK has several of these (though, still, not the simple thing Peter used - which is a couple of reavings and a slipped half hitch) - viz., #1263.77. Cyrus

Day's Art of Knotting & Splicing gives nearly the same hitch as #134 (on same page as two variations of "Ossel hitch" - small world). This is also shown in Charles Warner's wonderful book *A Fresh Approach to Knotting* (I recommend that members run over to Des's Footrope Knots and buy a copy).

Maurice Smith writes (KM73 p46) to cite, I guess, the "mistake" claimed by Colin (KM73 p3) for which our KM's were to contain a correction! To me, the issue is simply the common one of there being no definite authority for naming knots and nothing much to take issue on. I imagine in the practice both hitches served the same purpose almost interchangeably (or were used with some preference dependent upon circumstances). Let me give another change to the KM72 p15 top knot: have the end exit in the opposite direction from what is shown there - i.e., to run leftwards Over, then back Under, rightwards/upwards (of the standing part beneath which it's nipped). This variation seems to better resist pulls and to stay tighter; it is just a one-off from a double constrictor, and should replace that knot where a hitch or more easily loosened binder is wanted - as it's more

easily loosened, by tugging upon the end.

This is an extension of ABOK #1674, called "Spar hitch" by someone (and which C. Warner shows backwards?).

Finally, reference Heinz Prohaska's reply (KM73 p15) to KM66 p32 - fig.138. Not only did this overhand double loop knot go into his wastebasket, but it went into the *Encyclopedia of Knots & Fancy Ropework* (along with a vast amount of knots that should have been left in a waste basket - why did Graumont & Hensel include such nonsense?)

*Dan Lehman,  
Falls Church, U.S.A.*

## Bosun's Knots?

I was wondering if there is a proper name or title for the knots and splices a bosun learns? We call them fancy knots etc...

I am unable to retrieve the answer in books and such could you please lend a hand in helping me to obtain this information.

*Albert Kennedy  
Nova Scotia, Canada*

## What a Surprise!

What a pleasant surprise my 20th birthday mug arrived. A superb piece of porcelain, which makes the contents taste better.

The guild should be proud of the mugs, thank you Charlie.

*Denis 'Spud' Murphy  
Plymouth, UK*

# Knotting Diary

## **AGM's & 1/2 YEARLY MEETINGS** **IGKT 20th Birthday Celebrations**

Fareham, Hampshire  
20th - 25th May 2002  
Contact Ken Yalden  
Tel: 023 9257 8603  
E-mail: kennethyalden@lineone.net

## **IGKT Half-yearly Meeting**

Hanover International Hotel,  
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire  
11th - 13th October 2002  
Contact: Bruce Turley  
Tel: 0121 453 4124  
E-mail: bruce.turley@blueyonder.co.uk

## **BRANCH MEETINGS**

### **French Branch**

6th - 7th April 2002  
Douarnenez  
Contact: Graham McLachlan  
Tel: (0) 233 076704  
E-mail: graham.maclachlan@club-internet.fr

### **East Anglian Branch**

23rd March 2002  
Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket,  
Suffolk  
Contact John Halifax  
Tel: 01502 519123

### **West Yorkshire Branch**

19th March 2002  
Beulah Hotel, Tong Road, Farnley, Leeds  
Contact: David Pearson  
Tel: 0113 257 2689

## **EVENTS**

### **Skipton Festival & Canal Heritage Weekend**

Saturday 4th May 2002 (one day booking  
only)

Contact: David Pearson  
Tel: 0113 257 2689

### **Inland Waterways National Festival**

24th - 26th August 2002

Huddersfield  
Contact: David Pearson  
Tel: 0113 257 2689

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## **Advertising Rates:**

	Members	Non-members
Full page	£32	£49
Half page	£19	£22
Quarter Page	£10	£15

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## Price List 2002

Item	Price
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Notlore <i>a miscellany of quotes from fact and fiction</i>	£2.50
The Knot Book	£3.99
Plaited Moebius Bands	£2.50
<b>Brian Field</b>	
Breastplate Designs	£2.50
Concerning Crosses	£1.50
<b>Eric Franklin</b>	
Turksheads the Traditional Way	£1.50 *
Nylon Novelties	£2.00 *
<b>Stuart Grainger</b>	
Knotcraft	£3.60 *
Ropfolk	£1.30 *
Turks Head Alternatives	£2.20 *
Creative Ropecraft (Hardback - 3rd Ed.)	£9.95
Knotted Fabrics Hardback <i>price includes UK postage</i>	£9.00
<b>John Halifax</b>	
Something Different <i>with over 50 Button Knots</i>	£3.20
<b>Colin Jones</b>	
The DIY Book of Fenders	£9.95
<b>Harold Scott</b>	
On Various Cruxiform Turks Heads	£2.50
Sliding Template Method for Designing Cruciform Turks-Heads Vol. 2	£3.00
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