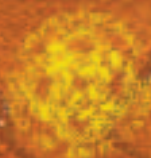


# Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International World of Knot Ties



Issue 82  
March 2004

# Guild Supplies

## Price List 2004

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# Knotting Matters

**Magazine of the  
International Guild of  
Knot Tyers**

**Issue No. 82**

**President: Jeff Wyatt  
Secretary: Nigel Harding  
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*Bellrope by Guild member Barry Brown.*

*Back Cover: Making a very tarry block  
strop by Graham McLachlan*

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# Notes from the Secretary's Blotter

I have had a disastrous couple of months due to a catastrophic failure of the Guild's computer system. Fortunately the Guilds complete membership database has been rescued, although I did make a backup copy only few days before meltdown. Unfortunately I have lost all my administration files for the last six years, which has made life very difficult. I have also lost all email received in December, hence if you wrote to me during that period, and have not had a reply, you will not get one, unless you write to me again. I have spent hours, if not days, with the invaluable help of a colleague from my work's I/T department, trying to get the whole thing working again. At present it seems to be up and limping which hopefully will allow me to catch up on the last months work.

The only compensation has been all the wonderful Christmas cards I have received. Sylvia and I would like to thank all those of you who sent them.

We are now well established with CAF collecting our subscriptions, which has taken a lot of work off my shoulders. We are now a year into the process, and we are identifying a number of minor problems. One was the apparently random renewal notice that were sent out, which I trust have now stopped. Another problem that is manifesting itself is the difference between the renewal dates CAF have recorded, as compared with those that I hold in my records. My records are completely accurate, (except of course for those where I have made a mistake). This is due to the way in which we initially

created our account with CAF. It will prove easier, and less costly for my records to be brought in line with those of CAF, rather than the other way around. Hopefully you won't notice the difference, but it will mean for some members their renewal date will slip back a month or so.

Finally, there has been some discussion about a Travel Bursary Fund, with the intention of providing a modest grant to a member to help towards the travelling expenses involved in attending a significant meeting of the IGKT. A number of members had indicated that they would like to contribute to such a fund, following the death of Brian Field.

The Council has spent a lot of time debating this matter, which appeared to have a lot of support from the members present at last year's AGM. The Council has looked into this matter, and apart from their own individual concern as their own personal liability in such a scheme, as they are the Trustees of a Registered Charity, they are concerned about the financial viability of the scheme.

Most charities exist to distribute monies to worthy causes; hence the concept of the IGKT doing this is not in itself a problem. However the IGKT is an educational charity, and the Council Members (Trustees) are mainly concerned with the day to day running of the Guild, and creating an environment which best serves knot tying, knot tyers, and educating those who are not.

A great deal of work was done in identifying a suitable financial



framework within which the Trustees could satisfactorily operate, however, with the anticipated size of the capital available, combined with the relatively low interest rates, the administrative charges would have quickly drained the fund.

The Trustees were also unhappy with the concept of choosing one particular member from the Guild to receive such a bursary, and would the bursary be large enough to make a difference.

Having spent three Council meetings discussing this (there are four each year), plus an open forum debate at the Autumn Meeting, the majority vote of the Council was not to continue with this scheme,

The Trustees generally do their best to satisfy will of the members, but in this case, they felt that they could not. If there are members who feel strongly that the Trustees have made the wrong decision, please put your name forward for election to the Council in time for the next AGM that is to be held at the Chatham Historic Dockyard, on the 8th May 2004, details of which have been enclosed with this KM.

*Nigel Harding*

## **Advance Notice October '04 Meeting**

**T**he venue for this meeting is on County Council premises, so there may be certain differences from the usual arrangements for access. Details will follow at a later date.

This is notice for the attention of the Sleeping Bag Brigade.

The Local Education authority has a Field Studies centre 800metres from the museum and 150 metres from the cafe, which can sell you breakfast. There are two by 18 school-dormitory bunks, showers, toilets and a kitchen. We inspected the centre on a wet day and the roof did not leak.

It is possible for us to book the centre, but we would need to have a minimum of two by 20 beds used over the two nights. In this case, the estimated cost would be no more than £8/night. If we cannot manage to use 20 of the 36 beds each night, we cannot hire the centre.

To be certain of the booking, we need to know the numbers by 31st July, and have your deposit of £6.50/night. We need to confirm the booking by 5th August; after this date, school bookings take priority. If we cannot guarantee the use of 40 beds your money will be returned, but if you change your mind after we have booked the centre you will forfeit your deposit.

Bear in mind that only 18 of the beds are at floor level.

If you are interested in using the Field Centre, please will you write to Don Woods, enclosing your cheque for £13.00 (or £6.50 if you plan to stay for one night only).

Cheques payable to D. Woods.

Don Woods  
10 The Rodings  
Upminster,  
Essex  
RM14 1RL

# President's Letter

The beginning of the New Year saw the sad occasion of the funeral of Frank Harris, one of our Vice Presidents, who died on 20th December. Frank had been one of the original 25 founder members of the Guild, and will be sorely missed. Several members of the Guild, including Jan Hoefnagel who travelled over from Holland on behalf of himself and the Dutch Branch, attended the funeral in addition to Frank's family.

I'm sorry to have to say that at the last Committee Meeting, the Travel Bursary was finally put to rest. To be able to generate enough interest in order to run the Bursary effectively, there would have had to be a balance in excess of £10,000 in the Funds' account. So it was decided, after considerable discussion, that it was not a viable proposition.

I also attended the Essex Branch Christmas party at the Small Boat Museum in the Watt Tyler Park, Pitsea. Again an enjoyable occasion and this time I actually managed to drag my wife along (kicking and screaming!) As always Don and Dorothy Woods put on a good spread and it was nice to see some new members as well as 'old' familiar ones.

We are off to Australia in March and are hoping to tie up (sorry - couldn't resist it) with as many Aussie members as possible, plus some pyrography artists for Lesley. I will include an account of our Antipodean adventures in my next report.

***Jeff Wyatt***  
***President***

*Below - The late Frank Harris*



# A Philosophy of Knots

## muses Knut Canute (the successor to Cy Canute)

*‘Only the other evening I picked up Bertrand Russell\* and I said to him: “Well, Lord Russell, what’s it all about?” and, do you know, he couldn’t tell me.’*

(attributed to a London cab driver by the US-born poet, playwright and critic T.S. Eliot, as later told by his widow Valerie Eliot in a letter to *The Times* newspaper, 1970)

\*English philosopher and mathematician, 1872-1970

What, I ask you, is knotting all about? What is it for? Forget practical applications. I mean did being endowed with an aptitude for knots somehow boost our prehistoric ancestors’ fitness to survive and evolve? It seems to me a question that merits debate.

As for the knots themselves, where do they come from? Are they natural phenomena, or mere human contrivances? Such conundrums are, incidentally, already part of the ongoing philosophical disputations in mathematics and science, although NOT in law - as far as I am aware - unless one invokes the nebulous notion of ‘natural justice’.

Philosophy arises from asking questions so simple as to seem not worth investigation, yet which can lead to mind-stretching paradoxes. How many knots are there? A few thousand? More? In fact there are uncountable zillions. The Turk’s head, to take just one

example, has an unending series of lead-x-bight permutations (and that is without adding extra factors such as ply and weave). Only a tiny portion of them could - in reality - ever be tied. It is possible to think of a TH with dimensions represented by numbers so huge that humankind as a species would become extinct before sufficient time had elapsed to complete tying it ... let alone that the planet does not possess the raw materials necessary to manufacture the required amount of cordage. So in a world of the imagination there is an infinity of knots. But, if a knot will never be tied, does it really exist?

Phew! Excuse me. I came over all metaphysical for a minute. But such musing is justifiable since it gives us a glimpse of a philosophical arena in which scientific and mathematical minds could fruitfully compete and contend.

A number of philosophers have been scientists. Some still are. Many more were mathematicians, and those who today pursue both real and classic knot theory continue to lay the foundation for a philosophy of knots. In their quest for an ultimate and perhaps unattainable ‘theory of everything’, concepts may be encountered along the way that could bring our fuzzy notions of knotting - currently based upon superstition, tradition and time honoured authority - into sharper focus. ‘Nodeo, ergo sum,’ as Descarte said. Well, if he didn’t, he should’ve.

# Proud to be High

by Tony Fisher, FNZEI.

**I**n this article, Tony Fisher shares some of his experiences as a rigger and the 16 Maxims that he uses to stay alive whilst working at heights. The article is designed to be a 'for the record' publication to be lodged with the library of The International Guild of Knot Tyers.

**It is Tony's hope that ideas expressed here trigger other people to record their ideas and experiences, thus building on the store of knowledge within the Guild.**

## Foreword:

I was delighted to learn that Tony Fisher, President of the New Zealand Chapter of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, had written this unique collection of guiding maxims related to working-off-the-ground. For all who go aloft, or aspire to, it is an invaluable master-class; and it gives to the rest of us a fascinating glimpse of an industrial scene which is ordinarily beyond our reach.

This is not an instruction manual, but more of a counselling session, with an accomplished artisan whose hard-won knowledge is guaranteed to eliminate much needless trial and error.

Tips like: confidence can kill; even simple tasks are harder and take longer at height; do it right and you will only

have to do it once; are in fact useful in my own experience-when working underwater as a diver. And, I guess they would apply to the astronaut undertaking an extra-vehicular 'space walk', or to many other potentially hazardous occupations.

The golden threads that link all these items together, however, are an unswerving dedication to health & safety at work, combined with a respect for the integrity of each individual colleague and team.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to meet Tony soon after his arrival here in the UK. This article is a bonus.

**Geoffrey Budworth.**

*Co-founder and ex-President, the International Guild of Knot Tyers.*

*Tony Fisher is President of the New Zealand Chapter, International Guild of Knot Tyers. He started rigging and working at heights in 1958 and specialises in safe working practices using full suspension harnesses and associated equipment. He spent 19 years 9 months and 3 days building what he claims to be the biggest bridge to one house in an urban setting in the Southern Hemisphere (he kept running out of money!). Every two years he travels to the remote Chatham Islands, 800kms east of New Zealand, to do*

*rigging work on a telemetry operation associated with the recovery of a long thought to be extinct, small member of the albatross family. (The Chatham Island Taiko, the magenta petrel) Tony has worked on masts, bridges and cranes throughout his working life, but has earned his keep as a primary school teacher (13 years), science adviser to schools (17 years), union organiser (2 years), editor and gofer for NZ's Royal Society (18months) and as an education officer at NZ's National Observatory (5years). He was awarded a Fellowship of the New Zealand Educational Institute in 1992, for his contribution to curriculum development in science and for his work as National President of the Schools Advisory Services, where he led the fight for the service's survival during a period of dramatic reorganisation. For the last five years he has been Chief Rigger on Wellington's floating crane, the "Hikitia", where he has specialised in heavy lift operations and splicing wire ropes. His interests include drumming in music halls, stage shows and old time dances. He is currently in England where his wife is teaching English. During his time there he plans to work on rigging projects. His first was on the re-rigging of the "Golden Hinde" at St. Mary Overie Dock, Southwark, London.*

## Introduction

Whilst visiting one of he co-founders of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, Des Pawson, recently, he encouraged me to put on record perspectives of my experiences as a height working rigger since 1958. I was also encouraged in

this by another founder of the Guild, Geoffrey Budworth.

They argued that the men who taught me my craft in the 1950s, had learnt their skills in the 1930s from men who had learnt THEIR skills from men in the 1880s from men who had learnt THEIR skills in the late-19th Century.... and that I was a repository of that knowledge with a duty, as a member of the Guild, to record. Initially I was daunted by their challenge.. but I agree that those people who have taught, guided and supported me over the last 40 years would want this task completed.

This account, therefore, does not purport to be a treatise of expertise, but a personal record, which in turn could be used as an ideas springboard for other Guild members to add to the store of knowledge within the Guild and to similarly record your own perspectives and ideas.

## Format

I will list sixteen ideas or maxims which have determined my work. I will then take each in turn and explain my perspectives on it. Then I will end with a brief conclusion.

This article precedes a fuller publication of the same name which I plan to write featuring individuals who are at the top of their respective fields (literally). People who have become icons within their field. The best role models of their respective crafts.

**And yes, I have been proud to be high, in the sense of working at heights, to use my skills to help others achieve their dreams.**

## **The Main Maxims: -**

1. **Anything above 10 feet, (3 metres, approximately), is hazardous and anything below 10 feet is dangerous.**
2. **It is a job, you're there to work, not to entertain others.**
3. **If you feel confident whilst working at heights, hold on and shout for help.**
4. **Focus two inches (50mm) below your feet.**
5. **Climb - do - descend.**
6. **Harnesses are for real riggers.**
7. **Learn and teach the concept of "Sight Lines".**
8. **The two inch (50 mm) death.**
9. **Three limbs secure.**
10. **"Under-below". "Watch out below". "Below".**
11. **Avoid vocal distractions.**
12. **Twice as hard, twice as long.**
13. **Do it right, do it once.**
14. **Risks.**
15. **You don't have to be rough to be tough.**
16. **7/8ths of the job is completed before you start to climb.**

**Above all show respect to your work mates. Snide comments and put downs are not part of showing respect, they hide deep felt insecurities within yourself...**

**Anything above 10 feet (3 metres approximately), is hazardous. anything below 10 feet is dangerous.**

I don't like falling. Even with my Judo training, where learning to fall is

a major part of early development in the sport, I still find falling a dis-orienting experience. I detest people who laugh when they observe others falling. It is also painful, no matter how slight the fall.

A couple of years ago, I was showing one of the owners of the floating crane I was working on, where I had been painting at the jib-head, forty metres above us. I took a step back to better admire my handiwork and tripped over a deck fitting, I broke my wrist.

Most of my falls have been at ground or deck level, thankfully rarely whilst working aloft. Indeed; most of my problems aloft have been through cuts and the ever present bruising.

Therefore, I treat all aspects of my rigging work, no matter where as a dangerous and hazardous experience.

**It is a job, you are there to work, not to entertain others.**

I have no respect for those who put on an act whilst working at heights, the 'performing monkeys'. In this regard, I am not decrying performers or actors who are earning their living doing just that. No, my comments are aimed at riggers; builders or other types whose job is not entertainment, but never-the-less perform to ground based audiences.

At best, they are not focussing on the work they are being paid to do. At worst they could distract others, with fatal consequences. My message to them is simple

You should be totally task-focussed



whilst working at heights.

In this regard, I ignore what is happening below, unless it is a message from those in my team. We have sets of recognised signals where we respond accordingly, which I will detail below.

## **If you feel confident whilst working aloft: hang on and shout for help**

‘Bluey’ Welch\* was my first height-work rigging boss. He was a Leading Hand Rigger in the Wellington Harbour Board in 1958. When he explained this idea to me he said that it’s the over confident ones who fall... and usually take one of their mates with them.

\* I never did find out his real name! In those days workers often had more than one job to feed their families and they often used aliases to save on tax. This mechanism meant that they only paid primary rates of tax. Secondary rates were (and still are) much higher. When I tried to meet him some years later, I couldn’t find any record of a ‘Bluey’ Welch!

Later I learnt the real lesson in this one:-

That fear or apprehension whilst working in a dangerous situation is a normal human survival defence mechanism

For 17 years as well as being a rigger, I was also a specialist who, as a science adviser to schools in New Zealand, had as one of my responsibilities, the task of inspecting camp sites used by school groups. It was my particular job to inspect adventure courses. These

places usually had swings; flying foxes; ‘commando’ type bridges and other challenging facilities. It was also the nature of my job to run training courses for teachers who would use the courses to assist and challenge their pupils.

One of the greatest problems I had was to change teacher attitudes towards the hesitant child. Teachers often pushed children beyond their natural fears and apprehensions in the belief that they had to ‘challenge’ each child.

I still do not believe that this is correct. I agree that people should be given challenges; that risk taking is part of the human condition. But I feel that humans should always measure up the situation that they find themselves in and if they are to go outside their comfort zone, then it should be with care and consideration. And people supporting them, should nurture them gently in their endeavours.

Many people, seeing what I do, say that I can’t be afraid of heights. Yes, I am. It is only through preparation and training and the use of sensible gear and safety equipment that I do what I do. I am confident that I can do a task before I set out, if I am not, then I don’t venture into the danger.

## **Focus 2 inches (50 mm) below your feet.**

I minimise the time that I look below me. The time that I spend aloft is more determined by need to go to the toilet than the restrictions of work or equipment! Equally, time spent looking down can minimise any fear that you experience.

When working aloft it is worth

training yourself to focus just below your feet.

Obviously you do have to look down when engaged in lifting or lowering operations.

## **Climb - do - descend.**

1. Climbing at heights successfully has much to do with energy conservation.
2. Things like keeping warm; energy intakes and water intake regularly;
3. I find that a sweet lolly or some chocolate excellent to keep energy levels up. Barley-sugar sweets are instant energisers.
4. Having on hand a salt tablet is worth while if you ever get cramp.
5. Shift your body weight within your harness regularly.
6. You do have to make a study of hypothermia and be able to recognise its effects on you and your work mates.
7. You must also remember that climbing down after a job requires a lot of energy AND concentration. Always come down from a job earlier than you plan to, don't be tempted to stay up there longer than is sensible, especially if bad weather is approaching, there is always a lot of work to do once you get below.

Some of the best moments in rigging come whilst you are aloft, having a rest, a drink and a sweetie. Just looking at the beauty around you.

Every two years, I travel to the remote Chatham Islands. They are 800 miles east of New Zealand. I work on a small, one foot (300-millimetre), triangular

section, 75 feet (21-metre) high, radio mast as part of a telemetry operation in a conservation project.

(The Taiko Expedition, the magenta petrel, *petrodroma magentae*, a sea bird, a small member of the albatross family, which was thought to be extinct, and had not been seen for 100 years, but rediscovered by my colleague, David Crockett).

The bush line is about 30 feet (10 metres) high. Once you get above this level, you hit semi-Antarctic conditions. When aloft here, I have a person on the ground who assists me. His or her main task is to monitor my work, to keep verbal contact with me and to bring me down as soon as my speech slurs or any other hypothermic reactions are noticed.

Europa Chang, from the International Guild of Knot Tyers in the U.K., also asked about height people working in hot climates and the need to beware of sunstroke. I am not experienced in working in hot weather situations. I would appreciate comments in this regard from people who have worked in these conditions. I do think that water retention and the need to take salt tablets are at least two points here.

## **Harnesses are for real riggers.**

Among my pet hates are some of the macho, 'he-men' practices of the past. To us in those days a lot of ideas such as:-

- line to a hook;
- riding a crane hook without fall restraints of any kind;
- working with harsh wires or ropes

without protection;

- working in noisy environments without ear protection;
- refusal to wear any form of eye protection;
- working with unidentified chemicals;
- breathing in toxic fumes without breathing protection;
- not wearing a hard hat...

In those days doing any of these things were deemed to be proof that you were a 'real man'. Absolutely stupid!

What happened was that workers were getting killed and injured or sustained injuries that have come to haunt them in later years.

In commenting on this article, Geoffrey Budworth mentioned:-

"When Lord Robens, the respected Chairman of the National Coal Board in the UK, presided over the commission that led to the Health & Safety at Work. Etc. Act: 1974, he commented that the biggest obstacle in industry to the concept of health and safety was 'inertia'. By this he meant not simply the acceptance of risks, so much as the perverse sense of male pride in submitting to them, which showed itself in remarks as:

- "You're not a miner, lad, until you cough up black phlegm."
- "You're not a deep-sea diver, son, until you have ruptured an ear drum."
- "Call yourself a metal turner? I bet you've never had a splinter in your eye."

In rigging terms, it used to be: "Only sissies use harnesses." "

In my early years there was an adage: "One hand for the boss, one hand for yourself"

One of the joys of working with modern Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is that once secured you can devote two hands for the boss! So among the many benefits of using this gear is that the boss gets much, much more productivity. I often found with a bosun's chair that within 20 minutes, my lower legs got pins and needles and I really couldn't work on the chair for too long because of circulation problems.

I use a Petzl C-71 (Navaho Complet). It is a full body harness, which I find excellent for climbing. Another type of harness, closer to the old bosun's chair is the 'Bucket'-type harness. It has a full seat and is excellent for tree work and jobs like window cleaning where your main task is abseiling. The Petzl C-90 (Navaho Boss) is one example.

Real riggers and height workers use this Personal Protective Equipment at all times, and do so with pride. They do not take unnecessary risks and ban from the job the short-cut merchants.

Short cuts in the rigging sense are short cuts to death or hospital...

But for me, one of the greatest needs for harnesses aloft are simply that if you get injured, you can be lowered quickly and efficiently and professional medical help can treat you that much sooner than if we have to waste time setting up a jury rig to lower you.

I have never tried to put a harness on someone aloft, but I have tied a fireman's chair knot to lower someone and I didn't find it easy. It also took quite a while

and the patient suffered rope bruising afterwards.

One matter, which Bob Dean of LGH Rigging Services Ltd., of London mentioned to me recently that I was not aware of, and I would like to share with you now...

Should someone have collapsed aloft and have been suspended prior to rescue, the chance that their inert body may have caused circulation problems (When in a harness you are adjusting your body continually) has to be recognised.

So don't lower them completely to the ground, just let their feet lightly touch and try not to move their body around in the harness too much.

There has been instances where toxins have been trapped in parts of the body by the harness acting a tourniquet and by lowering them completely to the ground, these toxins have poisoned other parts of the body. Let the paramedics or doctors treat the patient before lowering completely.

***Riggers like lifting things up***

***&***

***Lowering them gently.***

One point raised on this issue, again by Europa Chang, mentions accounts of jousting in mediaeval times. There are tales of men, she says, who have sat in the saddle all day, and then being knocked off their horses by other knights. By the time that they have been released from their armour, they have died. Could these stories be related?

## **The concept of 'sight-lines'.**

I have not seen this concept in documents, and I apologise if it is old

hat to you. One of the real dangers of working aloft is the problem of being distracted by something happening below you.

I call it the problem of "Sight-lines"

I like to rope off all that area below where I am working. It is usually an area much larger than directly below me. It allows for the possibility of anything falling, hitting something on the way down and ricocheting. But more important to me is that area where there is a possibility of someone straying into my sight line area.

A sightline area is that area below, where any unusual movement could distract a rigger working above.

Unfortunately few people understand this and I have had a lot of difficulty in the past with workmates, who in all other respects were great at this work.

Dare I mention it, but yes, I must. I rarely allow my loved ones see me at work. A mate of mine nearly killed himself one day when on a scaffolding job. It was in the middle of Wellington city and his wife saw him aloft and screamed so loud that he lost his balance! Fortunately he grabbed on, these were the days before scaffolding safety clips and harnesses.

Anything unusual within your sight lines can be hazardous to you.

---

Tony Fisher concludes this interesting article in the next issue of *Knotting Matters*

## OBITUARY

### Frank Harris, BEM (1915 - 2003)

Frank was a founder member of the IGKT, which he served with verve and vigour in several roles, notably as Honorary Secretary between 1987-1992. He conceived and coordinated the Guild's Knotting Extravaganza in 1986, followed by the numerous events collectively known as Knot Year 90. In the Autumn of 1997 he was made a Guild vice-president for life.

Frank Gerald Harris was born on 2nd February 1915, in Greenwich, a Thames-side borough of south-east London, England, and was educated at the school in Royal Hill. He then worked as a shipping clerk, prior to enlisting in the Royal Artillery in 1940, and the following year married Edna. He became an army pay clerk and quartermaster sergeant, and at the end of the war was awarded the British Empire Medal.

He had a life-long involvement with the Scout movement, rode motor cycles, played hockey, performed in olde-time music halls, and followed junior rugby football. His abiding passion, however, was cricket. He played for Wingove C.C and later - as a spectator - supported Kent County C.C. (when his book-keeping mind focussed on batting averages and other statistics of the game). He also knew a lot about trees, acting as a guide during organised rambles around Greenwich Park.

For more than 40 years Frank was proprietor of a sweet shop in Greenwich, where many of his customers were children from the nearby school that he had once attended in Royal Hill. He also taught them knots.

Frank Harris died in his sleep on 20th December 2003. He is survived by his five children, 10 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. The family hope to hold a short memorial service some time during 2004, at the Greenwich District Scout Camp Site, Downe, Kent, when they will plant a tree with a seat in Frank's memory.

*G.B.*

## In Memory of Frank Harris

### IGKT Founder Member

Frank Harris was one of the original members of the Guild, and was at the inaugural meeting in 1982. He was the Secretary when I joined in 1990, and we first met at the Farnham AGM that same year. We often met at the Essex

Branch meetings at Pitsea. His help and encouragement over the years to myself and other knot-tyers will always be greatly appreciated. I for one will miss him; the IGKT has lost a very good Vice-President and Guild member.

Fare-ye-well, old friend.

*Jeff Wyatt (President IGKT)*

The Dutch Branch members, that knew Frank well, are sad to hear of his passing away. We would like to express our condolences in this way. Since 1984 he has been for me more than a friend, who guided me through the period of birth of the Dutch Branch, corrected my pronunciation and was very hospitable in putting me up in his flat, the Eldorado of every knot-tyer, where we had endless discussions over ropework and the use of them. I always admired his quick brain and solutions.

In the following years we travelled together to nearly all the AGM's in the country taken there by Charley in his van. Also he has acquainted me with most of the older members. I was responsible to bring him out the first time to the continent, to Rotterdam Museum in 1986 for a week of knots. Since then we spent a lot of time together on various meetings in England. I will always have happy memories of him, the kind man that I consider the FIGURE-HEAD of the Guild, and a real loss for me.

REST IN PEACE FRANK

*J. Hoefnagel*

Never met Frank [but read a lot about him in *Knotting Matters*]... that's my loss.

Condolences to his family.

*Nick Hill*

Heel veel sterkte en liefde voor hen die achter blijven.

Condolences from us

*Leo en Fredy from Holland*

I've known Frank since 1982 when we met aboard the Discovery as founder members of the IGKT. He also attended the Essex Branch meeting from its inauguration until poor health intervened

often running one of our workshops. Apart from knotting we occasionally met socially to attend our local barn-dance, Frank staying overnight with my wife and I at my home.

He will be sadly missed by both of us.

*Don Woods (Essex Branch)*

Then the signal was given for the grand fleet to anchor,

And all in the Downs that night for to lie,

Let go your shank painter, likewise your cat stopper,

Haul up your clew garnets, let tacks and sheets fly.

*Jim Bartlett*

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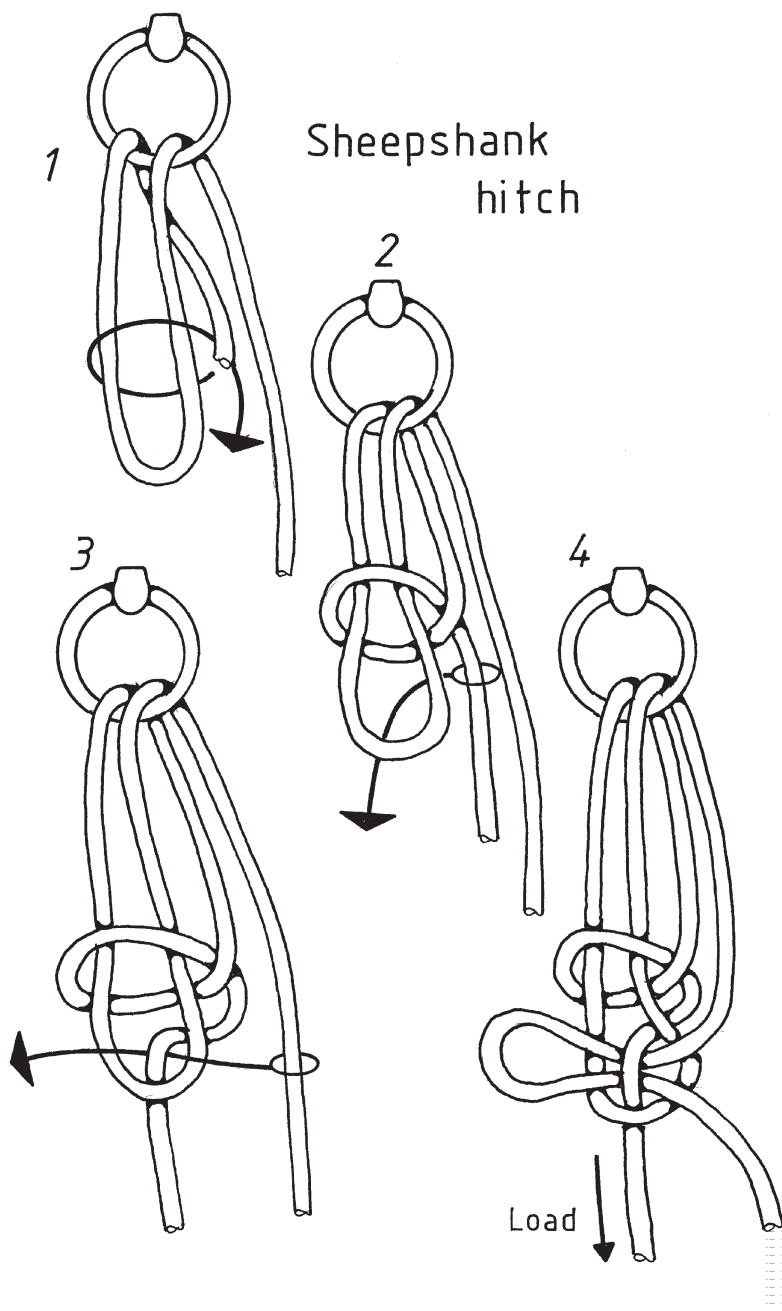
## Knotmaster Series No. 20

*'Knotting ventured,  
knotting gained.'*

### Sheepshank hitch

Use this hitch on those occasions when, after a bight of line has been passed around a rail, ring, post or other fixture, that anchorage point will be out of reach (fig. 1). With the standing part of the rope - which will in due course be loaded - make a half-hitch and slip it over the initial bight (fig. 2). Pull the other end through, over-under-over, in the form of a draw-loop, to act as a locking tuck (fig. 3, 4) as well as a quick-release. Guild member Charles Warner (New South Wales, Australia) featured this unusual knot in his commendable book *A Fresh Approach to Knotting and Ropework* (published 1992).





# 18-sided Monkey's Fist

by Luc Prouveur

*Those of us lucky enough to travel to Fecamp at the end of March 2003 had a very hospitable meeting at the Grand Banks Fishing Museum. As well as all the usual attractions of France we were very fortunate to have as our hosts Odile & Luc Prouveur. Luc has a wonderful knob covering knot he calls 'Pomme a 18 faces'. I have copied his instructions to various interested parties with his blessing. The instructions are in French but with the normal bilingual drawings I had no problem in tying it first time. It was not possible to get the original French instruction published in Knotting Matters but with the aid of one of my son's have managed to produce an English translation. I'm sure my version does not read as good as the original, but here goes!*

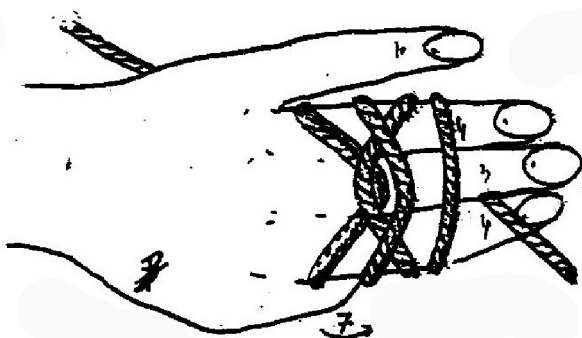
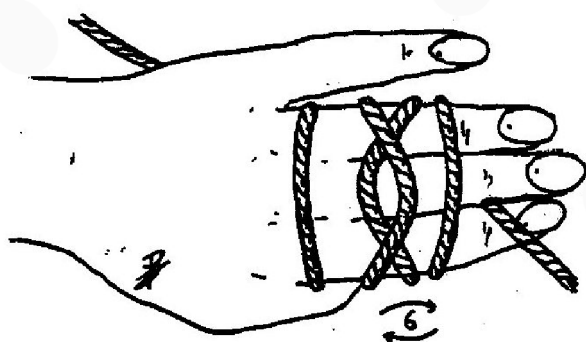
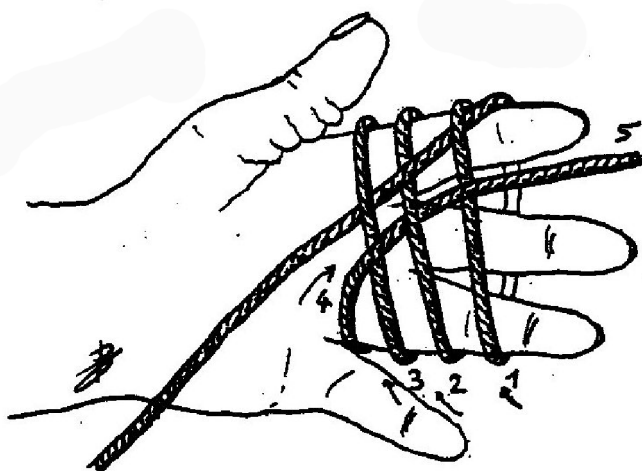
**Terry Barns**

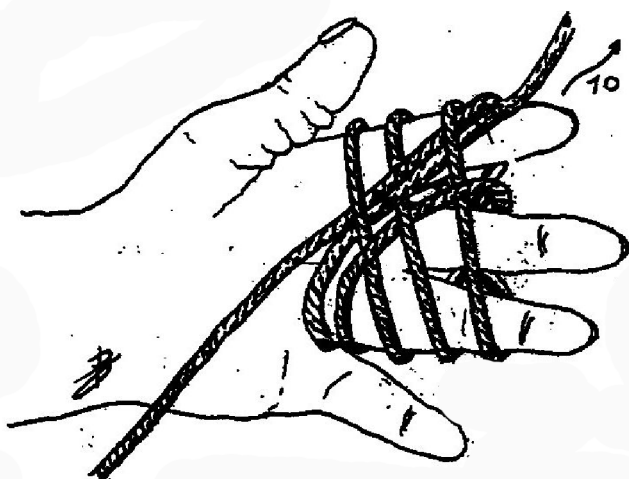
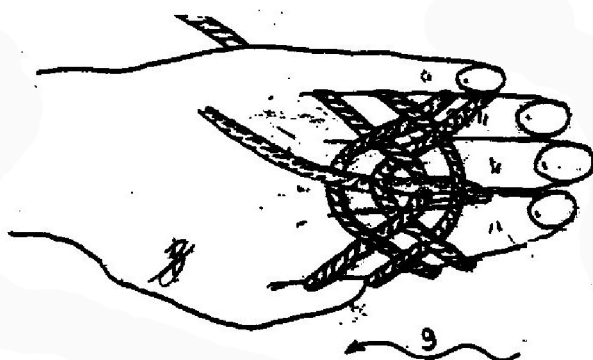
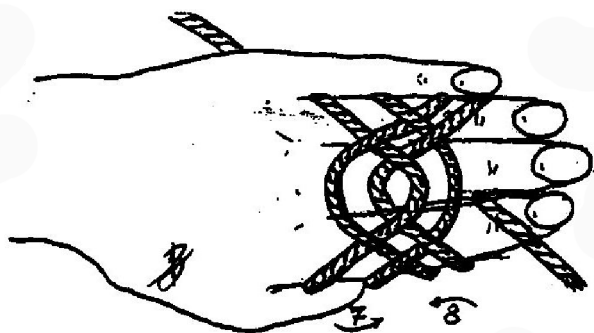
This "Monkey's Fist" has the advantage of being easily and quickly moulded by hand into a clean regular shape (at least by the first pass, however to cover a central ball requires at least two or three passes to cover well).

Take in your favoured hand, a length of rope sufficient to cover the ball that will constitute the centre of the monkey's fist. Place your other hand in front of you, palm facing. Hold the rope in your palm with your thumb.

1. Make a first turn around the hand, taking the working end over the standing end.
2. Make a second turn, towards your wrist, the working end passing under the standing end.
3. Make a third turn, without crossing the two previous, the working end over the standing part.
4. Make a fourth turn, come back towards the end of your fingers passing over the third turn, under the second and over the first.  
Your hand should now be wrapped by a spiral of four turns.
5. Turn over the hand so that you can see the top. There are four turns side by side not crossing themselves.
6. Take the second turn from the end of the fingers, passing it under the third and over the fourth going towards the arm.
7. Take the first turn, pass it over the third (which appears as the second, as you have already shifted the second), under the fourth (which appears as the third for the same reason).
8. Take the working end, passing under, over, under and over in the order that the turns present themselves.
9. In coming back towards the standing part, always turning in the same manner, your first pass is complete.

To finish the monkey's fist, all that remains is to follow round the necessary number of additional passes and to adjust the tension.





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Of Knot Tyers and its Members,  
I give a Thank You! to those Skilled  
As Creators, Mentors, Teachers.

Decorative Woven Flat Knots  
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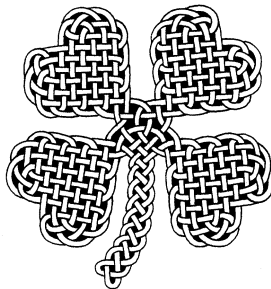
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I hope You will enjoy the book,  
And being a Part of The Guild,  
As I hope, With Favor, You look  
On the Total Knotting You Build.

Skip Pennock



# The Hidden Power of Knots

by Richard Hopkins

Over past millennia many people have succumbed to magic created, caused by or involving knots. Knot magic seems to derive from knots tying things up, imprisoning, constricting or tangling them, whether for good or evil. However in order for the knots to achieve their magic it is sometimes necessary to untie them.

In many societies it was forbidden to tie knots during the marriage ceremony as barrenness or impotency could result. In some places it was an offence punishable in law and in parts of medieval Europe could lead to excommunication.

Around the world from Scotland to China and in some Mediterranean countries a custom existed where any knots in the clothing of the bride or groom would be ritually untied during the ceremonies (and, no doubt, shortly afterwards, also). This is in contrast with our expression “to tie the knot” although in some churches the priest will knot his stole around the hands of the bride and groom once they have made their vows.

Following the theme, during childbirth it was the custom to unlock all doors, untie all knots and even unbraid the plaits in the mother’s hair to aid an easy birth. When the family was big enough, old Scandinavians called their last-born son Knut, or “knot”, to signify the end of the child bearing. Does this give the origin of the phrase “to tie a knot in it”?

We have all heard that Laplanders could summon winds by untying knots in strings, and there are various nautical traditions about luck, good or bad, brought by having a Lapp in the crew. In *Moby Dick*, the Manxman was suspected of having similar magical powers when a wind was required.

Shetland fishermen used to buy winds from old “wise women” tied up in a handkerchief, or as a knotted string. The wind became stronger as more knots were untied.

As knots brought luck to sailors, so they also protected life on land. The fathers of Masai warriors would tie a knot in their hair for each of their sons going out to battle. This was accompanied by prayer to keep life bound to the body.

Zulu hunters are supposed to have tied a knot in the tail of the animals they killed in order to prevent stomach pains when eating them, and Russian hunters tied knots in a thread to protect against shooting themselves.

Knots are widely held to have a connection with health and medical matters but the method of application varied.

In Gujarat, a man could be released from a fever if someone took seven cotton threads to a place where an owl was hooting. He was to tie a knot at each hoot and then return to tie the thread around the right arm of the patient.



Of course, magic works best if the victim believes in it, so witchdoctors in Togo could “bind up the life” of their enemies by knotting a piece of grass. I expect this led to work for another witchdoctor to reverse the action of the knot.

Ancient Babylonian wizards would seal a man’s lips by tying knots in a cord and chanting a spell over it. Did the knots act as a mnemonic for the curse, or did they act in their own right to effect the magic?

Pliny the Elder describes a cure for diseases of the groin. It requires seven knots to be tied in a thread and naming a widow for each knot. What is supposed to happen next is not clear, but it sounds, at first glance, to be decidedly unfriendly.

As the Church became more important one might expect that the older superstitions would die away, but in 1718, in Bordeaux, someone was burned alive for ruining the lives of a family through a curse involving knotted cords.

Indeed the ideas still persist, as the award-winning book *The Shipping News* shows. The bad guy threatens other characters with winds involving knotted cords. My memory is a little hazy on the details but I am sure that, given its popularity, the reference will be easily remembered by members.

It was not only the common man that was affected by knot magic. The prophet Mohammed was taken ill one day but no one could diagnose the cause nor could they find a remedy. According to legend, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mohammed and revealed that one of his enemies had bewitched him by tying nine knots in a cord and throwing it down a well. A trusted servant was then sent to fetch the knotted string. The

prophet recited nine magic verses over it. With each verse a knot untied itself, until, with the last knot, Mohammed was cured.

Another tradition states that when someone dies, knots should be loosened so that there will be no obstacle to the soul when leaving the body.

Finally, it is believed that should an English lord be condemned to death, he could choose to be hung using a silken rope. In this case, however, the knot would pull tight and gravity, rather than magic, would do its work.

---

## **The Stafford Knot and The Thumb Knot**

Have you ever tied a thumb knot

At the tail end of your cotton?

If you never tied a thumb knot

Might it have been forgotten?

Have you never darned a jumper

From a matching yarn of wool!

At the end tied in a stumper

Just to hold it when you pull?

If you open out a thumb knot -

Called a stump knot or a stopper -

You have got yourself a Stafford

And you won’t be asked to swap her,

For a herald’s knot whilst lovely’s

Seldom used by you or me -

If you want to join the lovelies

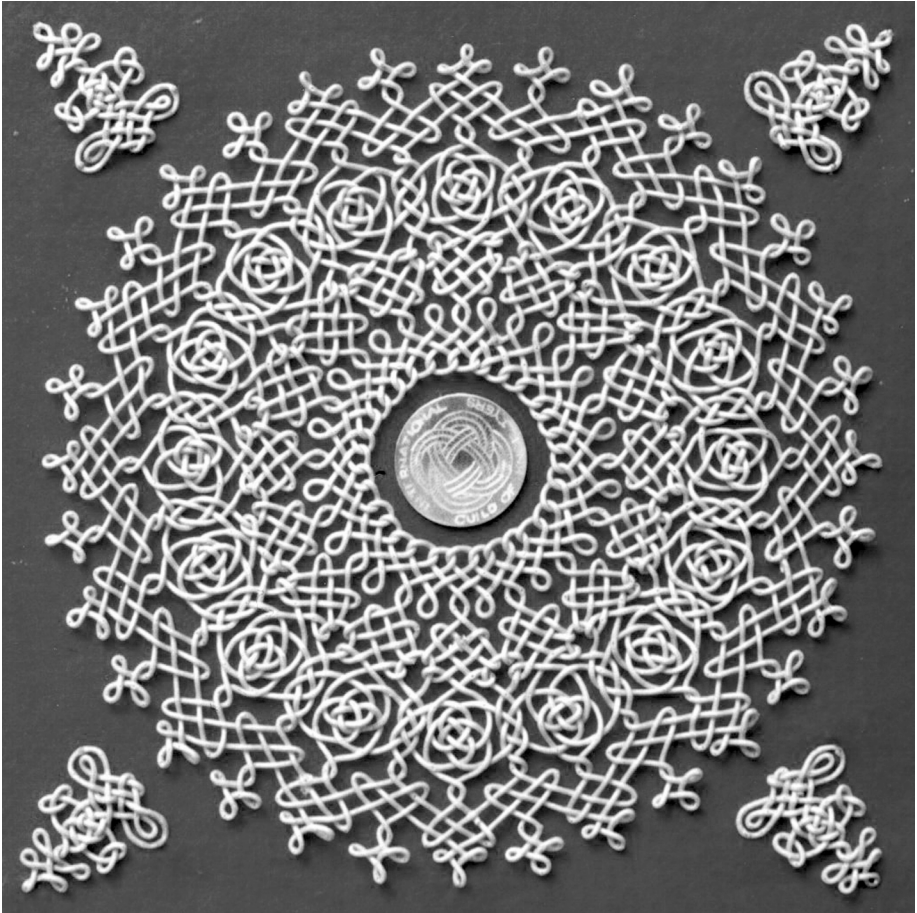
You must pay the herald’s fee.

***Knot and their Vices -  
Michael Jenaid***





# Knot Gallery



*Above: The 'Leonardo' knot by Colin Grundy*

*Facing: Rope sculpture, Cardiff, South Wales. Photo - Geoffrey Budworth*

*p24: A pharmacy jar covered in needle-hitching by Yngve Edell*

*p25: Keyfob from Joaquim Paulo Escudeiro*

*p26: Cowboy braiding by Geert 'Willy' Willaert*

*p27: Bellrope by Richard Hodge*













# Notes on Wire Splicing

by Andrew S Lyle

These are a few pieces from my notebook that I used when an apprentice on the subject of splicing wire rope.

Firstly, I will deal with the Admiralty splice that is usually illustrated in the Seamanship manuals. Note that in the Admiralty splice, the heart (core strand) is cut off as short as possible before splicing is commenced. If it is a steel core strand, it is divided up equally and paired anti-clockwise with the ends that are being spliced, and the heart is spliced for at least three full tucks

All the splices illustrated are seen from above and only represent the first interlocking tuck of the splice. Then proceed to splice either the Admiralty or Liverpool splice.

In my experience of splicing wire, I have found it most satisfactory to splice vertically. This gives you more control while splicing. You can easily move around the splice, eliminating the need to turn it as in horizontal splicing on a workbench, which is clumsy and more difficult to do.

When splicing wire under 28 mm diameter it is spliced three full tucks, two-thirds and one-third. When the wire is 28mm diameter and above the wire is spliced four full tucks, two-thirds and one-third tuck. In the South African mines the only splice is with seven full tucks.

Secondly there is the 'Admiralty Lock' which is not so common. In the

diagram the lock is put in during the third and fourth tucks and great care must be taken to put the lock in neatly. When the first tuck has been put in take a few loose strands and make a clove hitch around the splice and heave it tight by means of a heaving mallet. Pull the ends to be spliced down without crippling or kinking the wire and proceed to put in the second tuck.

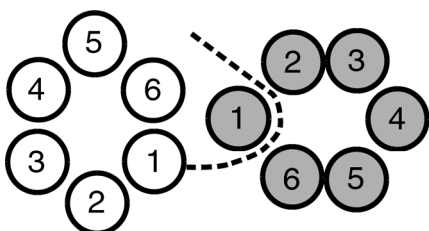
Next there is the Liverpool or 'round-and-round' splice. It is spliced with the lay and each strand is tucked under the same strand each time, unlike the Admiralty splice which is spliced against the lay, over one strand and under another or 'over-one under-one'.

In the Liverpool splice, the heart is laid into the splice. The Liverpool is a very neat splice, and out of experience I have learnt that it is easier to do than the Admiralty splice, and also takes less time.

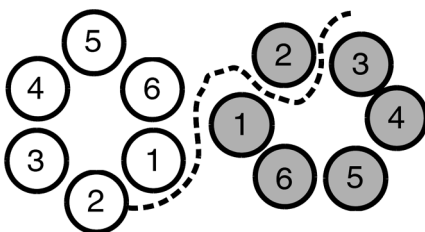
When the required number of tucks has been put in, unlay the splice and bend the ends back and forth until they break off and a hook is formed under the holding strand to prevent the ends from drawing. After the ends have been broken off, the splice is tallowed, parcelled and served.

Finally, there is a note on how to make a sling a specific length. Another method of getting a sling a specific length is to break in the eye. From the bearing of the eye, measure one metre down the length and make a mark. Proceed to splice.

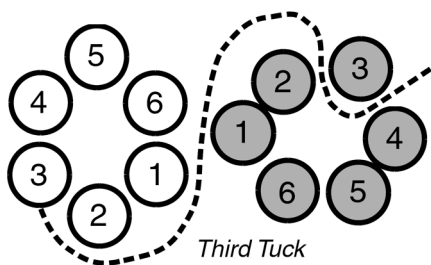




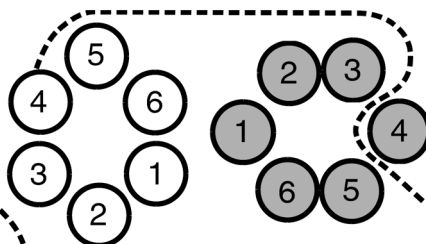
*First Tuck*



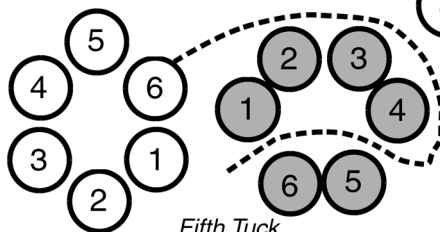
*Second Tuck*



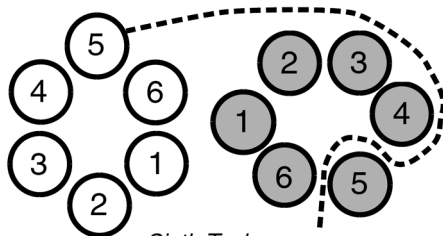
*Third Tuck*



*Fourth Tuck*

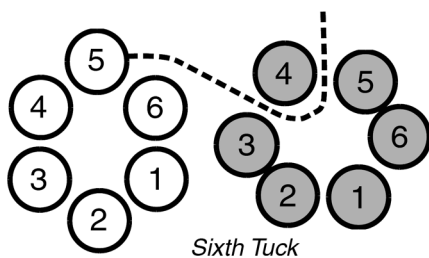
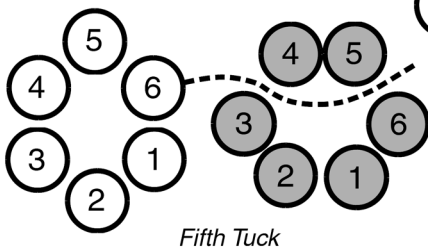
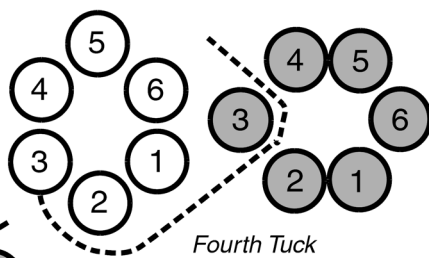
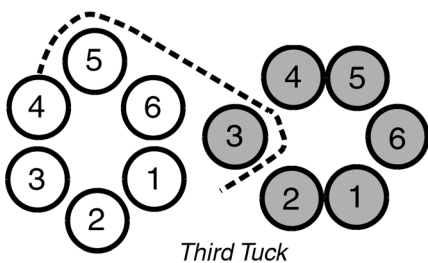
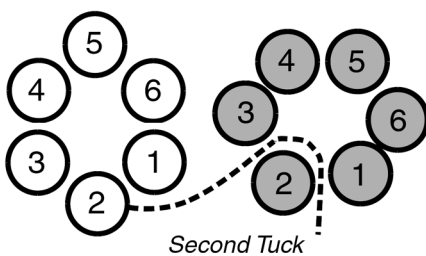
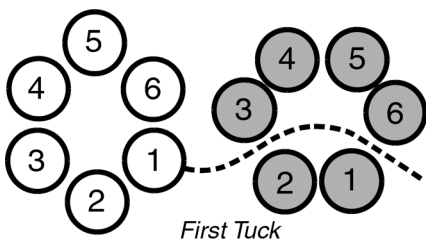


*Fifth Tuck*

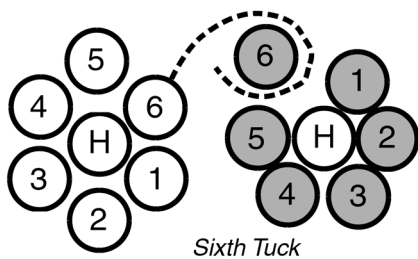
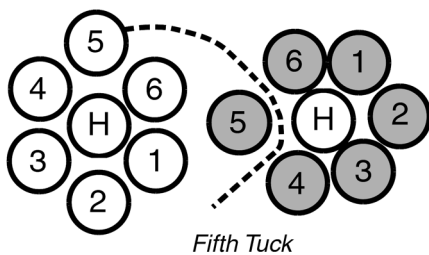
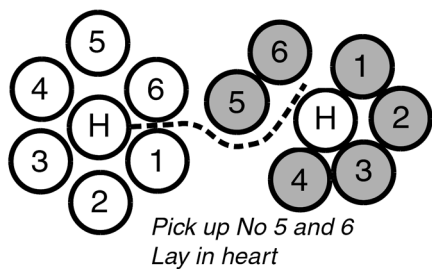
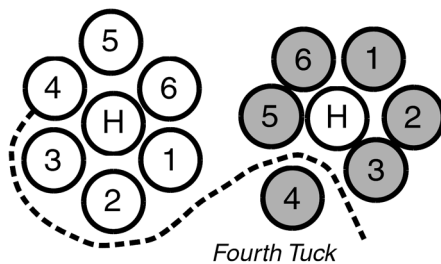
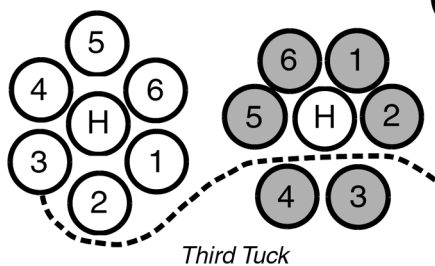
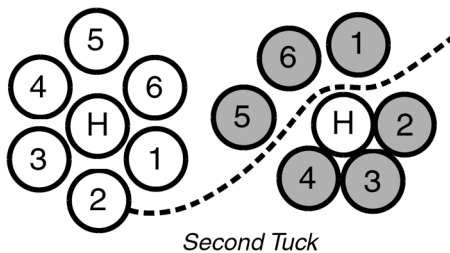
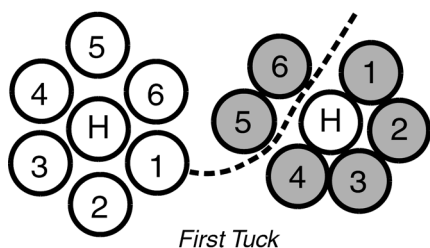


*Sixth Tuck*

## Admiralty Splice



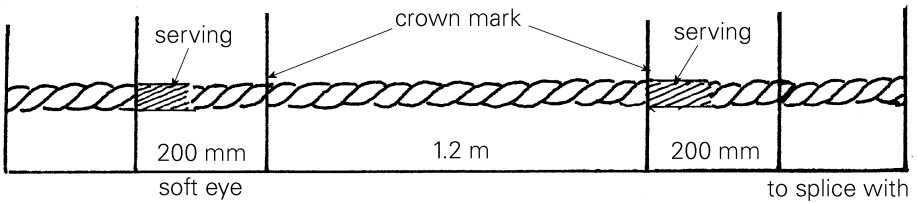
## Admiralty Lock



## Liverpool Splice

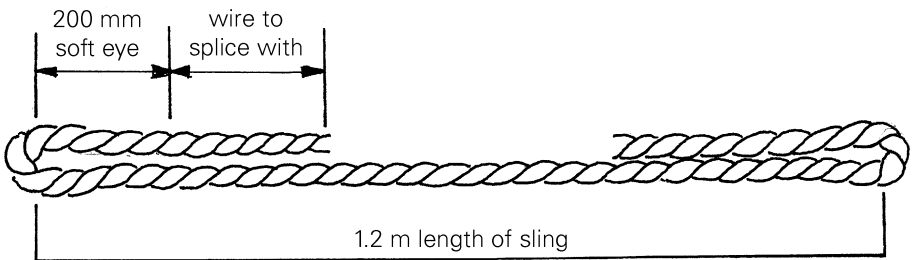
After the splice is completed, re-measure from the bearing of the eye and the measurement will be shorter than one

metre and that distance must be added to the length of the sling, and the other splice will correct the length of the sling.



*How to manufacture a sling to a specific length.*

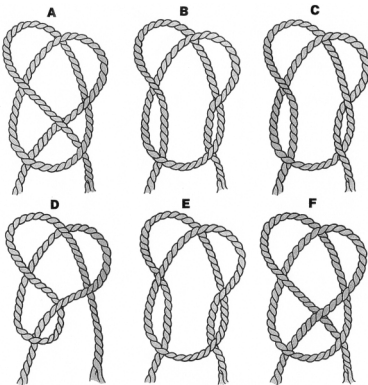
*The total length is measured from crown mark to crown mark.*



*Proceed to splice using the Admiralty splice, Admiralty Lock or Liverpool splice.*

Before splicing is commenced, one must calculate by how much the splice will shorten the sling. Usually a splice will use up two times the rope diameter, so for a sling with two splices, the length

of four times the rope diameter must be added to the length of the sling before splicing is commenced and the end result should be very accurate.



## ROPE ENDS

Grasp the two loose ends firmly in your mind, then imagine yourself pulling them until you have a straight piece of rope - either with a knot or without one. Which of these six will give you a knot?

# Rare Knot, or Not

by Thomas Simpson

I'm not aware of having led a sheltered life, but after fifty years at sea and a sixty years interest in knots and ropework, I have only ever sighted one other example of this knot. To me it's always been known as a *double monkey's fist*.

Many, many, years ago, as a naïve, very young, cocky AB, I strutted onto the forecastle head, for docking stations, at the first outward-bound port-of-call of a particular voyage. I had with me a newly made-up heaving line, terminating in my latest pride and joy - a double monkey's fist.

Little did I realise that this was about to scupper a possible amiable voyage; especially when I was saddled with the mischievous nickname, *Poseur Pete*. After a couple of punch-ups this nickname lingered until the end of the voyage. Tactfully, the double monkey's fist was retired from use - it was just too much for a scruffy old tramp ship and deck-crowd of tossers.

It's worth mentioning in passing that this was in the days of compulsory national service (the draft), when the

merchant service, a reserved occupation, was always over subscribed with army-dodgers, whose foremost interest appeared to be counting off the days until the arrival of their 26th birthdays. This was the date when their military conscription obligations expired. During these years the craft of seamanship was hardly ever subjected to any intense curiosity.

Only recently, whilst browsing in a local reference library, I happened upon a large, well illustrated, coffee-table type book, entitled, *The Decorative Arts of the Mariner*, edited by Gervis Frere-Cook, published by Casseu, in 1966. In it, I was startled to see the only other example of this knot I have ever seen. It was in the guise of a small fender on a canal boat, and appears in a black and white photograph on page 215 (numbered 18). According to the credits at the back of the book it was at the Canal Museum, Stoke Bruerne, Northamptonshire.

All the individual chapters in the book were contributed by subject specialists. The relevant chapter, "Decorative Rope and Canvas Work" was assembled by our esteemed guild member, Percy Blandford. Percy has certainly earned his long service citation for the advancement of knotting matters; I have been reading his articles and books with interest, since the 1940s.

To me it still look's a beautiful knot - but then I'm possibly carrying just a tad too much baggage not to be biased.



# Knots to Know

by Jerry Cronan

**M**ountain climbers, cave divers and rescue teams are now using man-made (slippery) rope and webbing. Webbing - in some cases - is superior to rope. It can be lighter than rope with equal strength, and takes less room to stow.

When life or death hangs in the balance, knot tying takes on a new meaning. Here are a few simple knots that have proven to hold fast in modern rope and webbing.

Tied correctly and tightened properly they will not slip or come undone.

A 'knot' is formed in a single line.

A 'bend' ties two lines together.

A 'hitch' ties a line to an object.

Most people call them all 'knots', that is OK.

## Pile Hitch

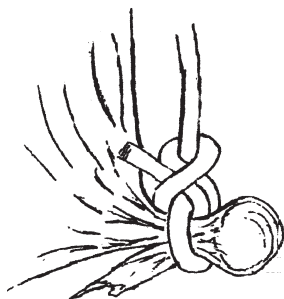
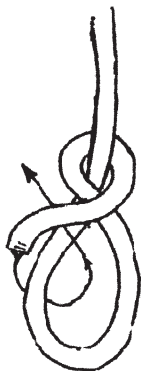
The importance of the pile hitch becomes obvious when we secure a temporary toggle in a line. With a toggle we can use the full strength of our legs and body to heave on a line. Otherwise, we are limited to the strength of our grip, which diminishes quickly when our hands are wet or cold or the rope is of small diameter. Examples: to pull a person out of a pit, free up an anchor, super tighten the bindings on a load or drag a deer out of the woods. It can be tied any place in the length of a line.



The pile hitch is most secure when the short end is in the bight (loop) as shown. I always carry a 1-1/4 inch by 10-inch dowel in the car and on the boat for a toggle. It would take up little room in a backpack. Any piece of wood, pipe, flashlight etc., would work for a toggle.

## Buntline Hitch

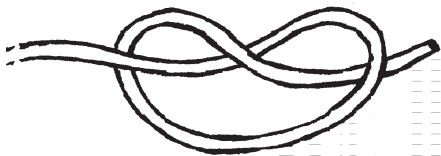
The buntline hitch will not come undone or work loose if tied and tightened properly. The buntline hitch forms into a small compact knot, ideal to secure a snap shackle or carabiner.



If a grommet pull out of a canvas or plastic cover, or a strap pulls out of a tent, fold in a small stone or golf ball, and tie it all in with a buntline hitch. Problem solved.

## Water Knot

This is also the knot used by mountain climbers and cave divers to join two lengths of webbing or tape together. Carefully align webbing/tape; work out the slack and leave the ends long to allow for initial slippage.



First tie an overhand knot in the end of one line.

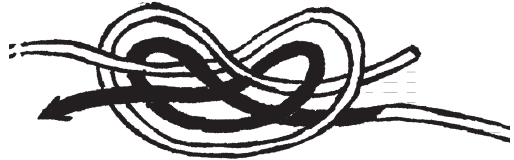
Next, weave the end of the second line into the overhand knot as shown.





Continue to weave until the overhand knot is doubled.

Adjust the strands neatly, side by side, then tighten.



## Figure-Eight Loop

The figure-eight loop is the knot used by mountain climbers and cave divers when tying a loop in slippery synthetic rope or webbing. Tied correctly and tightened properly the figure-eight will not slip, capsize or come undone. The added bulk adds strength. You can see at a glance if it's tied correctly. It will slide over a cliff edge or wall or through brush easily.



## Figure-Eight Loop (through a ring/eye)

Tie a figure-eight leaving the long end to pass through the eye or around a pole. Then weave the long end back through to double the figure-eight. Adjust strands side by side and tighten. It is a safe knot to tie into a safety harness, scuba gear, rappel line, carabiner etc.



# The 'Johnson Hitch'

by Captain Roger L Johnson  
Ramona Fire Dept. California

I created a knot to use on the California hose packs. It is a tremendous improvement over any other knot used to date, because it will not spill accidentally when being carried or handled. It will only spill when the rope is pulled.



together. Make sure the hose is tightly packed together.

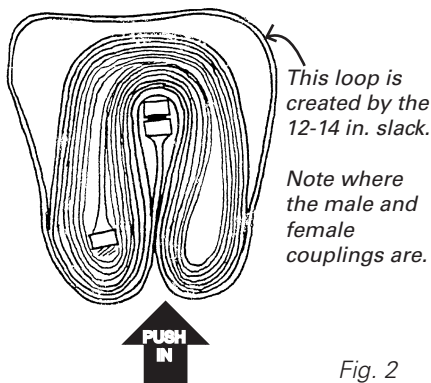
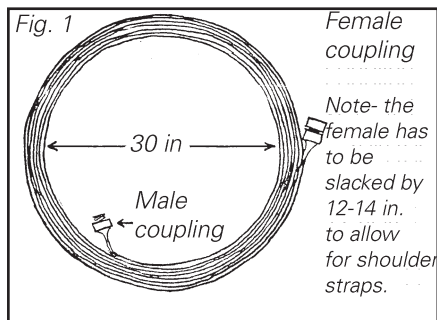


Fig. 2

## The California Hose Pack

Items required - two 100-foot lengths of single jacket hose (1½-inch diameter). Six pieces of nylon parachute cord of various lengths.



Roll the hose in a loop, turning the loop in a clockwise direction with the male coupling inside. The inside diameter should be 30 inches. This works best if two persons turn the hose

After the loop is completed and the slack has been allowed, push the female coupling up inside the loop to form a horseshoe shape with the slack loop only on the outside. This will be the first of two parts of the California pack and goes against the wearer's back.

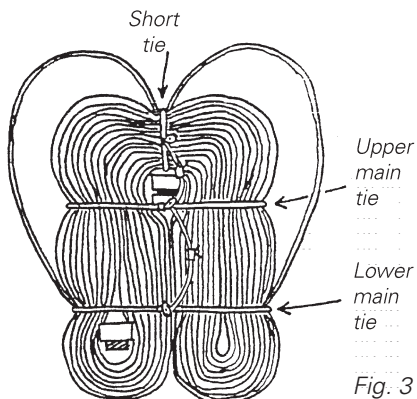


Fig. 3

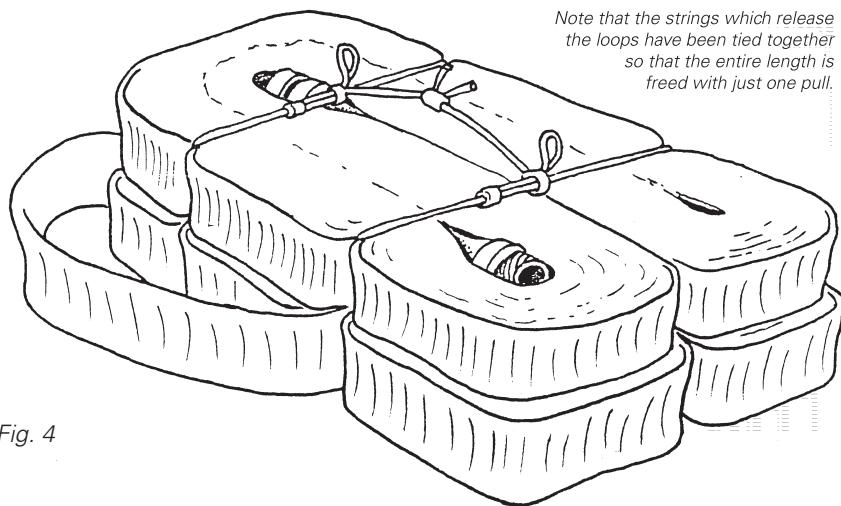


Fig. 4

Fig. 3 shows what the bottom of the hose pack will look like. Note the location of the three ties used on this layer. The short tie at the top maintains the shoulder straps lengths and separation while the two main ties hold the hose tightly together. Note that the upper main tie doesn't go around the shoulder straps while the lower tie does.

Fig. 4 shows the completed California hose pack from a slight angle with all ties in place. The outside or second

layer of hose is wound exactly as the bottom layer, but no shoulder straps are created. This outside layer is laid on top of the tied bottom layer and secured to the bottom layer with two longer lengths (approx. 6 ft long) of nylon rope in the same locations as used on the bottom layer. Be sure to leave the shoulder straps free when tying the upper main tie.

When placing the outside layer on the bottom layer. Be sure that the knots holding the bottom layer together end up between the two layers, this will protect them from inadvertent release. Note - there is no reason to put a short

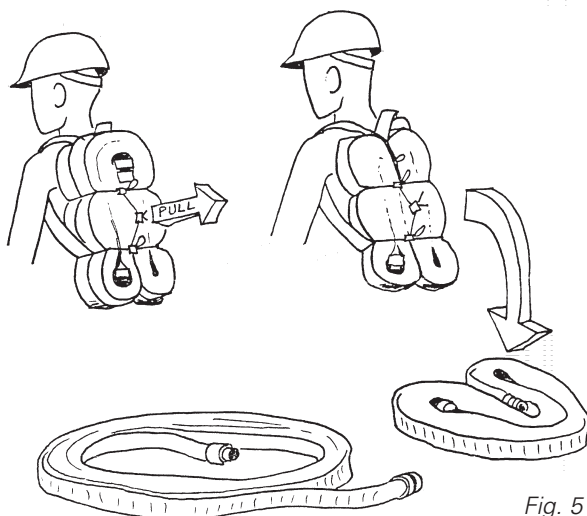
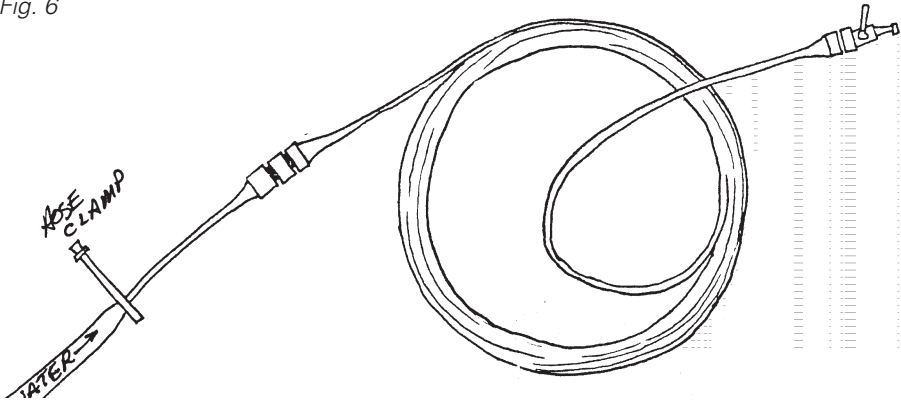


Fig. 5

Fig. 6



tie at the top of the outside layer.

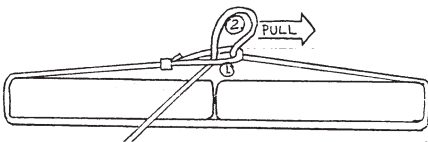
Fig. 5 shows what the pack looks like on a person's back before deployment. To release the pack, pull straight out on the cord holding the outside pack and it will fall to the ground.

Fig. 6 is the arrangement of the hose loop and how the pocket clamp, nozzle and male to female coupling hook-up is made. When the hose is charged (by removing the clamp), the nozzle man continues to advance his line while the hose uncoils from the centre of the loop.

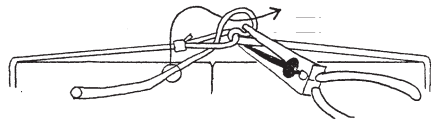
## Step by step guide

Having already made a 30-inch diameter loop of single jacket hose and formed it into a horseshoe, this procedure works best with two persons, both using a pair of needle nosed pliers.

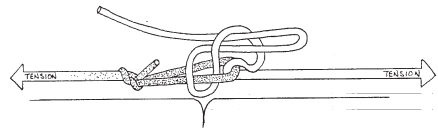
- a. Cut off an appropriate length of nylon parachute cord (four or six feet long) and tie a bowline in one end (1).
- b. Wrap the cord around the horse-



shoed hose at the upper or lower main tie position and pull a bight (2) through the bowline.



Using a pair of needle nosed pliers, pull the cord as tight as possible and then lock the cords as pictured while you tie the rest of the knot.



Now look back at step two's picture and see how the cord goes through loop 2. Once you have passed it through, remove as much slack from the knot as possible and slowly release the pliers. The knot will lock itself.

# Tying Single Strand Globe Knots

by Doug Williams

**T**urk's Head Knots (THK) can be quite simply converted to Globe knots using the following steps.

1. Tie the THK. Use 2L X 3B, 3L X 2B, 3L X 4B, 4L X 3B, or 5L X 4B
2. Double the THK. When you come back to the standing part, follow the knot until it is doubled.
3. Weave into the middle. On returning to the standing part, instead of coming alongside to triple the knot, weave into the middle of it.

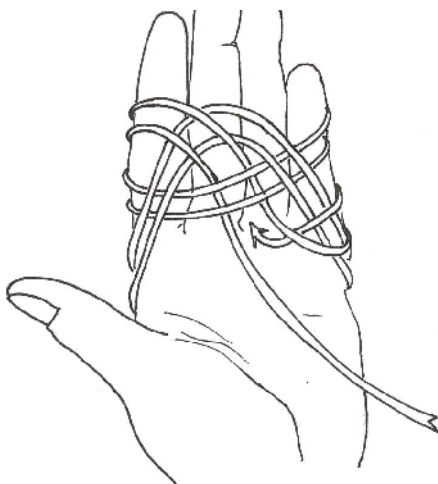


Figure # 1

4. Now stay in the middle and weave the whole knot.

Whenever you come to two parallel lines that are over your path, go over them as follows,

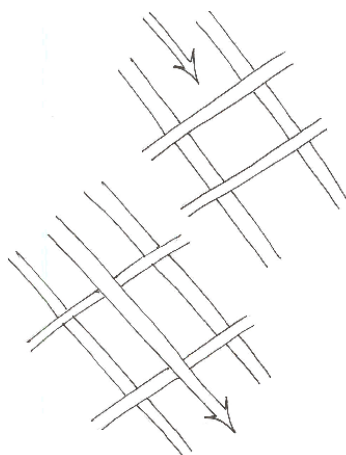


Figure # 2

If they are under your path, go under them.

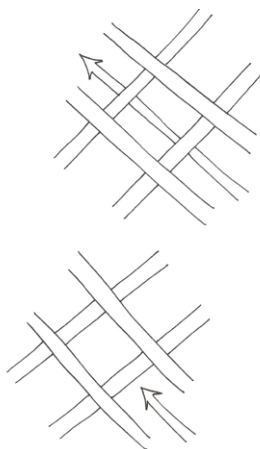


Figure # 3

When you come to three woven lines that cross your path, weave them as follows,

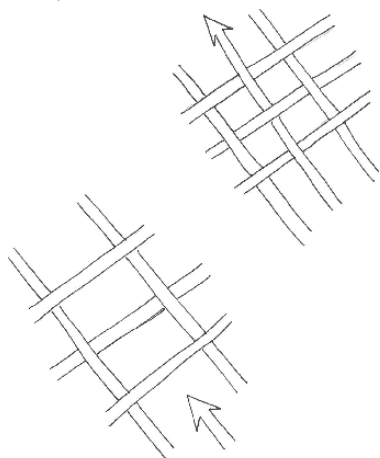


Figure # 4

Continue the weaving pattern until you come back to your standing end. You have now completed the globe knot.

4. Mount the globe knot onto a ball. Insert a ball into this tubular knot. It is best to use a ball that fits snugly. Carefully close up the ends by stretching the middle weaves outward and pushing the end ones inward.
5. Finish by following the knot around and pulling out the slackness. Double or triple as desired.

## Smaller Globe Knots

Very satisfactory globe knots can be readily tied by weaving just a portion of the THK.

1. Tie the THK.
2. Double only the first lead by follow the knot around for only one complete loop. This should bring you

back to the standing end. Actually you may be one or two weaves away from the standing end. If this is the case, simply pull the standing end through these weaves to the point where your working end intersects it.

3. Now weave into the middle and stay in the middle while weaving this extra loop.
4. Mount and finish the knot as above.

## Avoiding the Five Sided Opening

All weaves in a globe knot should have only three or four sides. You can usually avoid a five-sided opening by understanding the following principle.

After doubling the THK, when you first weave into the middle, the opening that you weave out of will increase by one side and the opening that you weave into will also increase by one side.

The trick is to come out of a three-sided opening and go into a three-sided opening; thereby creating two four-sided openings.

Follow your double along until you find two adjacent three sided openings.

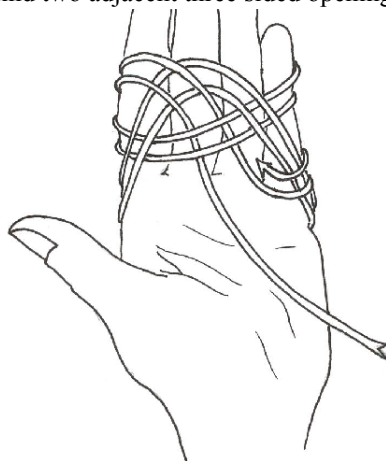


Figure # 5

Weave into the middle at this point.

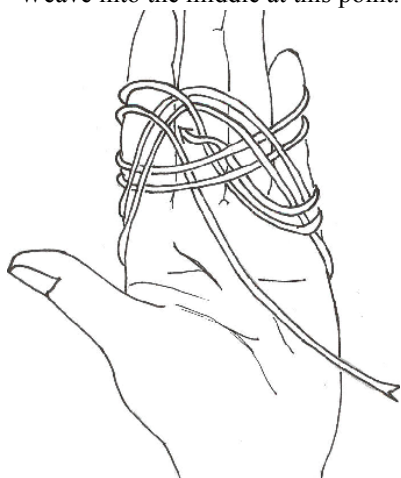


Figure # 6

Pull your standing end through to this point.

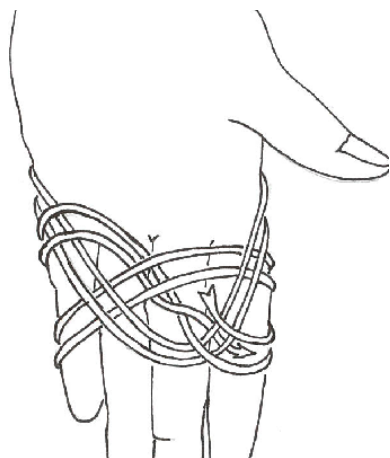


Figure # 7

## Supersize Your Globe Knot

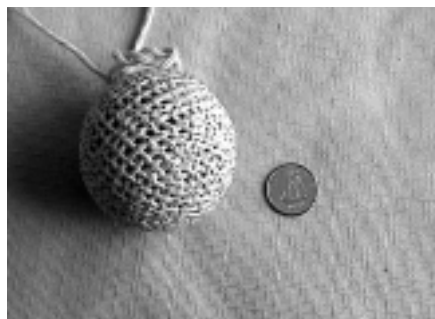
1. Tie a THK. A 4L X 3B works well.
2. Convert it to a globe knot by doubling and weaving.
3. Size it up again by doubling and weaving.

4. Mount and finish the knot as above.

## Globe Knot Sizes

Here are the number of weaves of just a few globe knots

3L X 2B	full weave	38
3L X 4B	one lead weave	18
	two lead weave	42
	full weave	73
4L X 3B	one lead weave	19
	three lead weave	51
	full weave	83
	supersized	865
5L X 4B	full weave	146



# Wot Knot?

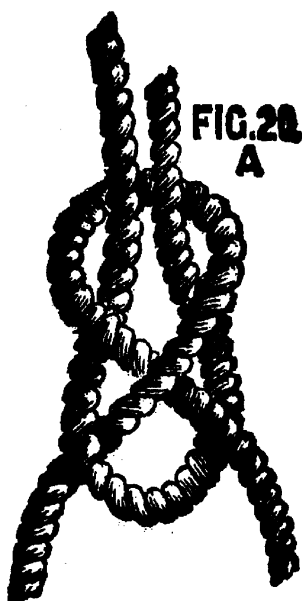
asks Cy Canute

The knot drawings reproduced below appear in *How to Make KNOTS, BENDS AND SPLICES as Used at Sea*, by Tyrrel E. Biddle, published (London - undated - probably early 20th century) by None & Wilson

Under the sub-heading *A Sheet Bend* the text relating to figure 20A reads 'This is generally used for bending one rope on to another when in a hurry' and, although no obvious distinction is made between

free and standing ends, these can readily be deduced. Okay so far.

'If taken round again, and through the bight again,' Biddle continues, 'it holds better and is less liable to jamb (his spelling, not mine). ' These words refer to figure 20B, and appear to describe a double sheet bend; but, if so, the illustration is seriously flawed and about as useful as last year's tide tables. What do KM readers think?



# Branch Lines

## **Pacific Americas Branch**

From across the pond our doings sometimes may look a little - well - focused on displays, exhibitions and demonstrations. We have taken our Branch a little further in those directions than this writer normally sees reported, and we are starting to increase our presence so much in the community that we get regular requests to appear and show off the Branch collection, demonstrate and talk about this strange habit and get others to share with us. This last three month period has been no different. In September, we attended the annual Tallships Festival in Dana Point, California. The usual suspects included Charlie Bell, Joe Soanes, Tom Mortell, Joe Schmidbauer, Jimmy Williams and yours truly. Our days (it is a two-day Fest!) included showing off to pirates, firefighters and children from two to ninety-two. We were visited by arborists (Tom got one of them to share one of his knots with us) sailors and tailors, but we never were at a loss to explain where ropes and knots came into being and use. In October, we appeared at the Cabrillo Aquarium Autumn Festival and delighted scores of kids, adults and teachers (not that they are different from the other two groups, I hasten to add!) with the fascinating world of intertwined string. Charlie Bell showed off his collection of threaded canvas and canvas buckets while Joe Soanes showed off his

collection of wire splicing, star knots and Russian sennit. Tom Mortell helped kids to understand something about achieving success in tying knots, rewarding the successful ones with a length of string for their efforts. Yours truly was moving around trying to get the adults to help the kids instead of doing things for them. As luck would have it, our display at Cabrillo coincided with the NAB meeting, so Joe went with some of our pieces and showed off for us. Thanks to John and Kay Burke and the NAB members for having put on this evidently great display! In November, we prepared for our own Thanksgiving Feasts and renewed interest in trussing turkeys with a Butcher's Loop, while at our monthly meeting, Charlie Bell showed us and told us about the four lanyards that he had just completed for himself. Great work Charlie! December brought plenty of string from a visitor to our meeting from the US Navy. Gene Smith brought back from Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf a supply of cords in fine cotton made in India that we all snapped up with glee. Joe Soanes introduced us to the mysteries and delights of Russian Sennit. He has the patience of a saint and he was, as always, a gentleman in saying that any of us could have done the same. Not so, Joe! In addition, we learned from Darrell Ausherman that he has invented a new knot. Certainly, none of us had seen one like it before and we have encouraged him to write about it and to send a sample to IGKT for the Committee to check it out. We are now contemplating a New Year filled with more events and occasions to show off our samples and skills. We have some new shows to go to, new members to meet and lots more string to tie with - what could be better? The next epistle



will be a little different, because the shows will be different, but its all still string isn't it? Thanks for reading!

***Lindsey Philpott***  
***PAB President***

## **West Yorkshire Branch**

Last year the branch has supported the canal festival at Skipton and the waterways festival at Leeds. These were both for one day as far as we were concerned for various reasons. We did however have a great time at each and look forward to further events with them.

We had a good day out at Barnsley Scout activity day where we taught a lot of Scouts how to tie knots and make rope.

We have had two full day meetings this year where we have attempted to get

together all the guild members in Yorkshire. Whilst we have not got them all yet our numbers are getting better and we are getting members from further a field.

Our last meeting was "Bell Ropes and Bottles" where Graham Smith gave a talk on bell ropes and I spoke on knots on and in bottles. The rest of the meeting was used for one to one informal instruction, and workshops.

We are holding another meeting on the 7th March where our theme is to be 'Turk's heads'. This meeting whilst being specifically for Yorkshire members is open to any member who can get an entry visa to our county.

Further details can be had by ringing me on 0113 2572689

***David Pearson***

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# 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.**

## Haggie Rand

Regarding the query in KM80 on Haggie and Son Ltd, in South Africa all the rope (steel wire, chain, fibre rope etc.) is manufactured by a company called Haggie Rand Ltd.

Haggie Rand has been manufacturing steel wire rope in this country for 60 or 70 years. Haggie Rand are leaders in the supply and development of steel wire rope constructions to suit the mining industry in South Africa. South Africa has got some of the deepest mines in the world - over three kilometres deep for some of the West Rand gold mines.

On all the wooden drums on which the rope is supplied from Haggie there is an inscription, 'Haggie Son & Love.'

The website for Haggie is - [www.haggie.co.za](http://www.haggie.co.za) and see if they originated from the UK.

*Andrew S Lyle  
Simonstown, South Africa*

## Net Making

I was interested to see the article on *Net Making* by Tony Emery in KM81. Not so many of us have had much to do with this craft. Techniques appear to be much the same on both sides of the Atlantic. Although I have lived over there and even spent some time near the Chesapeake Bay area, I never came

across anyone who knew anything about netting.

As Max Bygraves was wont to say, 'Let me tell you a story.'

In mid-1940 Ivy and I lived in Wembley. The blitz was in full blast and we were spending our nights in a nearby factory air-raid shelter, going down about 6pm and emerging at 8am to go to work. A bomb later brought the house down on top of us, but that is another story.

I was technical teaching by day and writing for several magazines when I could. I had been given my medical examination and knew I would be called up to join the RAF in six weeks,

One magazine I did regular work for was *Motor Boat & Yachting*. I wrote and illustrated a one-page article on netmaking. The idea had come from an old bound volume of the *Boy's Own Paper*. As a result I received a letter from Brown, Son & Ferguson, nautical publishers, saying they were often asked for a book on making nets, and they and no other publisher had one. Would I write one for them? I would, but all I knew was in the article. I looked at football, cricket and other nets and puzzled out the details. In six weeks of evenings in a crowded air-raid shelter I produced the book and went off to be an airman.

The Women's Voluntary Services started making camouflage nets for anti-aircraft guns and used my book as their manual. The Girl Guides also adopted it.

This was the first of my 111 books (mostly nothing to do with knots). There have been several revisions and enlargements, but it is still not a very large book, still in print after 62 years - *Netmaking* by P.W. Blandford, Brown,

Son & Ferguson Ltd., 4-10 Darnley Street, Glasgow G41 2SO.

If I wanted to make a net now, I would have to read my book!

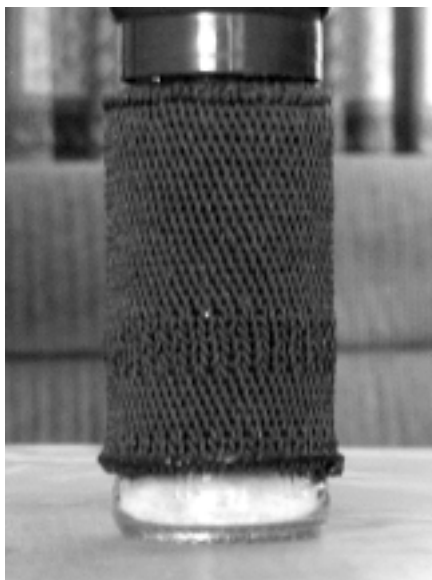
***Percy Blandford  
Stratford-upon-Avon, UK***

## **Polyethylene Cord?**

The material I use for my knots is Polyethylene and is used in the fishing trade and also on football nets, which is white. Nobody imports it into Australia.

I would like to know if it is available in sizes 30 ply and 18 ply. If any member can tell me where I can purchase it from I would be most grateful, as I am a new member of the Guild.

***Ron Hodgens  
1/57 Beach Street, Tuncurry 2428  
Australia***



*Spanish hitching by Ron Hodgens*

## **IGKT Display Events**

The following is a list of possible events at which we may be able to put on a display on behalf of the Guild.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Show</b>
9-11th April	Pangbourne	KN	Easter Steam & Sail Show
1st-3rd May	Pangbourne	KN	May Model Boat Show
28th-30th May	Northamptonshire	HD	Crick Boat Show
30th May	Wendover	JW	Tring Festival
11th-13th June	Pangbourne	KN	Beale Park Boat Show
26th-27th June	Braunston	KN	Heritage Boat Weekend
7th-8th August	Pangbourne	KN	Float Plane & Model Boat Show
28th-30th August	Burton on Trent	KN	IWA National Festival
9th-10th October	Pangbourne	KN	October Model Boat Show

The above are all possible venues identified at this time. Whether we attend will depend upon the response from members.

Contacts:      KN - Ken Nelson      07836 722198  
                    HD - Howard Denyer 01483 536401  
                    JW - Jeff Wyatt      01582 664504

# Knotting Diary

## AGM's & 1/2 YEARLY MEETINGS

### 22nd AGM

7th - 9th May 2003  
Chatham Historic Dockyard, Kent  
Contact: Nigel Harding  
Tel: 01825 760425

### Half-Yearly Meeting

8th - 10th October 2004  
Pitsea.  
Contact: Don Woods  
Tel: 01708 229178[

## BRANCH MEETINGS

### West Yorkshire Branch

7th March 2004  
11 am at Scout HQ, Wesley Road, Armley,  
Leeds Contact: David Pearson  
Tel: 0113 2572689

### Midlands Branch

19th April 2004  
The Old Swan (Ma Pardoes), Halesowen  
Road, Halesowen  
Contact Bruce Turley  
Tel: 0121 453 4124

### East Anglian Branch

3rd April 2004  
Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket,  
Suffolk  
Contact John Halifax  
Tel: 01502 519123

### French Knot Tying Weekend

27th to 28th March 2004  
Rouen Maritime Museum, Rouen, France  
Contact Graham macLachlan  
Email: igtfrance@club-internet.fr

### German Meeting & Exhibition

7th to 9th May 2004  
An Exhibition and Display of Ropework on  
board the former Merchant Navy Training  
Ship "Schulschiff Deutschland" at Bremen-  
Veegesack.  
Contact: Peter Willems  
email: peter@fancyworks.de

### SECRETARY:

Nigel Harding  
16 Egles Grove,  
Uckfield,  
Sussex, TN22 2BY  
Tel: 01825 760425  
E-mail: nigel@nigelharding.demon.co.uk

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### EDITOR:

Colin Grundy  
c/o 16 Egles Grove,  
Uckfield,  
Sussex, TN22 2BY  
Tel: 0794 6841157  
E-mail: knotting\_matters@btinternet.com

### Advertising Rates:

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

# Guild Supplies

## Price List 2004

Item	Price
<b>Geoffrey Budworth</b>	
Notlore <i>a miscellany of quotes from fact and fiction</i>	£2.50
The Knot Book	£4.99
Plaited Moebius Bands	£2.50
Knot Rhymes and Reasons	£1.50
<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 *
Ropefolk	£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
<b>Skip Pennock</b>	
Decorative Woven Flat Knots	£12.50*
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