

# Knot



# News

## International Guild of Knot Tyers Pacific Americas Branch

March 1998

Joseph Schmidbauer-Editor

Issue #9

### Rope Beds

by Marty Combs

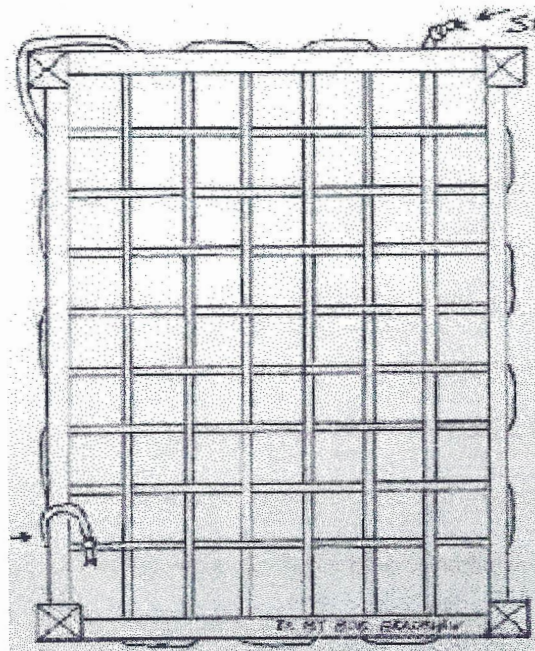
Now we have mattresses with names like Serta, Sealy and Kingsdown. There is also Buckwheat form fitting pillows to help give us a good night sleep.

It wasn't always like this, people used to sleep on whatever was to be had in their local area like straw, feathers, cornhusks or even dried seaweed. Mattresses were stuffed and laid directly onto a bed frame; one style of bed frame that seems to have been in common use was a rope or corded bed. The one drawback was they had a tendency to sag and would have to be tightened up once or twice a year.

To make a rope bed you simply build a frame to the dimensions you need that has four end posts and four side pieces. Bore a row of holes through the sideboards, spacing them nine to ten inches apart. They should be directly opposite each other on the paired sides. Now you are ready to begin the actual rope weaving. Begin at the headboard and string the bed lengthwise as shown in the diagram. When the last hole in the headboard is filled, bring the rope around the bedpost to the first hole in the side of the bed and begin the over and under

weaving. When the last hole is filled, loop the end of the rope around the sideboard and tie it securely to one of the laced ropes.

I remember sleeping on a bed in one of the back rooms at my Grandparent's house. It had holes drilled along the sideboards but I thought it was some kind of decoration. There wasn't any rope on it because it had been modified for a set of box springs. So if you see a bed frame with holes along the sideboards in an antique shop or museum, there is a good chance at one time it was a rope bed.



## Monthly Meeting

10 March 1998

San Pedro, California

Members attending: Lindsey Philpott, Darrell McNurlan, Joe Schmidbauer, Chris Rybak, Tim Howard, Mike Waring, Sean Vattuone and Mike Bowan. Captain Al Sorkin of the brig *Pilgrim* came on invitation and ended up joining the Guild.

At the meeting in January, there was a discussion about the changes made to the newest edition of *The Ashley Book of Knots*. It was suggested that Joe contact Geoffrey Budworth to see if there was a complete list of these corrections. Mr. Budworth responded with a nice letter that explained that he no longer had any record of his editing efforts but he did send a copy of his new book *Knotlore* instead.

Brion Toss has sent a letter confirming his attendance at the Second Annual Meeting. His lecture is going to be "From Spun yarn to Spectra: How Knots Keep Pace With Technology." Brion will be giving his talk on Friday evening, June 26th and it will be open to Guild members only. There will be a public Knotting Show and Demonstration on the following Saturday, June 27th.

A discussion was started on the best ways to go about advertising our Annual Meeting. Some of the suggestions put forward was to post flyers in bookstores, nautical stores and chandleries, local libraries and yacht clubs. It was also thought to be important getting the word out to the local newspapers and waterfront rags. Joe will develop a form letter to be mailed out to alert the newspapers and he will also work on a poster for distribution by the members in their local area.

There was also some talk on whether to try and gain support from a sponsor. Joe had found the address of the American Group, a rope making conglomerate, on the internet and was wondering if we should ask them for either donated rope or just financial support. Sean questioned if having a sponsor was worth the

deal making. What would we have to offer these sponsors for their support? One idea that came up was to use their aid to reach out to school children about knotting. Lindsey is very keen on the idea of pursuing this program with the Branch's help. Some details still need to be worked out such as how does this fit into the school curriculum?

Darrell is planning a meeting on the *Star of India* in San Diego to try and generate interest in his area of the Branch. He says there are some half dozen to a dozen people who have shown a desire in the Guild. The meeting will be at 2 P.M. on April 5th. To those who don't know how to get there, take the 15 fwy south to the Kettner Blvd exit. Turn south on Kettner to Hawthorne. Right on Hawthorne, this will take you to the *Star*. Joe and Lindsey have expressed interest in attending but any member is welcome to come join the fun.

Lindsey made mention of two more upcoming events. May 11th to the 15th the Banning House Museum will have a 5 day celebration of maritime history. This will be a chance to reach some 1500 kids as they come through in their different groups. Also at Racho Los Cerritos on May 17th there will be a display on Early California. Lindsey will be doing a demonstration on ropemaking and knotting. Although Lindsey has been the one to set up these events to help spread the word of our existence, again, any member is welcome to come forward and help make each event a success.

The meeting rounded out with a Star Knot teaching workshop. Lindsey, Mike Bowman and Joe had a hand in explaining how this king of all knots is made. Joe had a handout to anyone needing a pictorial instruction on how it's done. As usual it ended with everyone twiddling over pieces of string.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14th, 1998 at 7:00 P.M. in the rear class room of the Maritime Museum in San Pedro.



## Branch Bits

**Maggie Machado** has taken to teaching Chinese Knotting at a local bead shop in her part of Oregon. She also finds that Celtic knotting is proving to be very popular too. A number of designs were picked up from past issues of KM and of course those great books put out by Brian Field.

Maggie has found that Dan Callahan's screw-eye needle has proved an indispensable too in doing these Celtic weaving projects and it works great with Chinese Knotting too. She pins the pattern to a foam piece and brings the cord from the back to begin. Leave a good length to dangle from the back. Now follow the pattern pinning with U pins as you go until the cord runs out. Then finish off with more passes with the extra cord left over from the back.

**Mike Storch**, the Marlinespike Cowboy, has sent a request from that ranch somewhere in the wilds of Colorado. He is considering a researched history of the Pineapple Knot - a small book that would cover all aspects, i.e. history, uses, how to, etc. Does anyone have any ideas on sources of information for Mike? You can contact him at:

P.O. Box 22; Silverton, CO 81433.

**Dan Callahan** in Alaska submitted a number of his knot pieces in the art and crafts competition during the February 1998 Fur Rondy. He ended up coming away with a number of ribbons for his efforts and even got a few new members interested in joining the Branch.

## Museum Open House San Pedro, California Sunday March 22, 1198

To celebrate the addition of the schooner *Bill of Rights* to the LA Maritime Institute fleet, the Museum held a 'Visit the Vessel' open house. Both the *Swift* and *Bill* were open to visitors and it was quite a crowd of people that showed up. The Guild had its display on

the side of the Museum leading down to the *Swift* and we had a great many interested on lookers and even got a good number of people to sign up for future membership. During the day, Branch members worked on a rope ladder for the *Bill*. The wooden rungs came from a ladder hauled from the museum collection. Lindsey, Darrell and Joe removed the old rope and measured out new line acquired from the LAMI stores. All the loose ends were done up with palm and needle whippings and the ropes were side spliced together to cover both sides of the rungs. Maybe at the next monthly meeting the members can help finish it off?

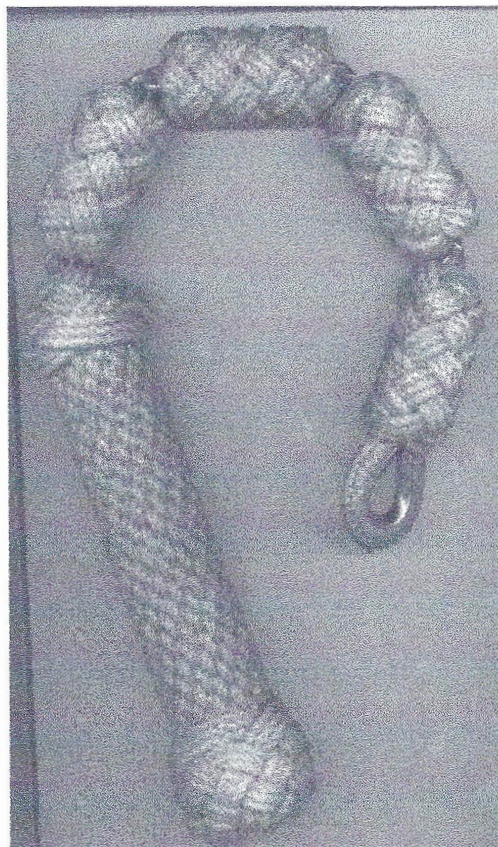
## Member Biography

I started off the first issues of *Knot News* with biographies of the Branch members. Remember? I've gotten a new biography from Marty Combs in Alaska and I would like to start a column of the members who have joined us in the year since. You know who you are, so send in a short bio of yourself and how you came into knotting.

### Marty Combs

I got interested in knots when I joined the Navy in 1983 while I was assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk. I purchased *The Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework* and started out making bos'n pipe lanyards. After I got out of the Navy, I joined the Coast Guard, I didn't do too much knot tying for a spell till someone stole the bell rope off the bell at the CG Station at Quillayute River. I volunteered to make a new one and even got requests to make more after that. I drifted away from knotting again until I got assigned to the construction tender USCGC Primrose where I got geared up again doing lots of hitching on rails, tool handles and even a few fenders. The thing that really got me hooked on knots was an ad in the back of the magazine *Nautical Collector*, it was for Footrope Knots and it mentioned that the owner of the business was a member of the IGKT. I wrote Des Pawson for more info on the Guild and the rest is history. I've been knot

tying pretty regular since I've been up in Alaska since I have a lot more spare time here on Kodiak Island. (*Here's one of Marty's bellropes - Editor*)



"It need hardly be emphasized that the student should make every effort for his own interest to master the methods used in tying the simple basic knots, and should familiarize with each step of the succeeding operations before attempting to execute a more intricate piece of work. He should also learn thoroughly the many ways in which the various combinations of knots are used to form other knots. Only in this way can he hope to understand the different methods of tying and combining intricate designs in fancy creations."

Raoul Graumont  
*Handbook of Knots*