

# Knot



# News

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS - PACIFIC AMERICAS BRANCH

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Joseph Schmidbauer-Editor

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## Radical Ideas from the Great North Coast

*by Bob Solon*

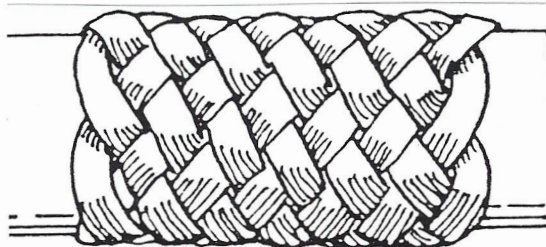
Miss Madonna occasionally appreciates the squeezing of the grape. One of Paul Masson's works comes in a carafe that is pleasing to my eye and pleasing to Miss Madonna's palate. Such a deal! If you buy the wine for Miss Madonna the carafe comes free. If you don't like that deal you can purchase a 1-liter carafe for about \$3.00. I prefer the Paul Masson carafe because it has a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " groove about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " up from the base.

Believing that the Turk's Head knot is the most beautiful knot in existence, I could picture a wide TH around the neck of that carafe. Your ordinary 3 lead by 5 bight TH would look too much like a cheap choker on a giraffe. A 5 x 4 was better but far from right. What to do?

I retreated to the nether regions to consult the Prophet<sup>1</sup>. When in doubt, consult the Prophet! In chapter 17 of the ABOK is everything you want to know about Turk's Heads loaded with drawings and diagrams. We of the Great North Coast Knot Consortium like *lots* of drawings. Actually we prefer comics. At this point I came afoul of The Law of The Common Divisor and other statutes. It quickly became apparent that the

GNCKC are tiers and quite unlike you "tyers" of the IGKT-PAB.

We "tiers"<sup>2</sup> like short sentences. With one syllable words. And, preferably, not too many of them. We can understand "Dogs eat meat" but scratch our heads when we see "Canines are carnivorous." As a true follower of the Prophet, I had reached a crises in faith. Does the end justify the means? Is it better to beg forgiveness than to ask permission?



At this point, up jumped De Debble (He made me do it!) in the form of Marty Combs<sup>3</sup>. Among the books he most courteously supplies is one called *Turk's-heads* by Ron Edwards. Would I be more of an outlier than I already am for consulting a heretical book? Or, would Ron Edwards be like unto the apostle Saul of Tarsus? Hmmm? The book only cost \$6.50, including postage. At most, it would have to be considered a minor sin.

And so, in the goodness of time, I consulted the 16<sup>th</sup> Book of Edwards. On page 5 Brother Edwards espouses enlarging TH's by splitting pairs (not hairs!). Drawings. Small words. Short sentences. There is opportunity here. And hope.



It came to pass that Brother Edwards preaches that a 5 x 2 TH can be expanded to a 9 x 4 TH and then to a 13 x 6 TH. Even a tier can construct elegant TH's! Oh the joys of enlightenment! Fid handles. Bosun starters. Carafes. Walking sticks. The opportunities are endless. All you have to do is learn to tie a couple of TH's, which you already know anyway.

I could not wait to get started. Disaster! Pain, suffering and agony on me. I had forgotten that my knot tying partner, Brother Murphy<sup>4</sup>, had also read the 16<sup>th</sup> Book of Edwards. #120 cotton cord turned into Chinese noodles. Gozover, gozunder, everything's asunder... it sounded like something from the Beach Boys. Murphy was having a field day! I came to realize why TH's are called Faith Knots. You just gotta have faith. Press on. That extra loop will get picked up later. You don't have to understand. Just do it! A Faith Knot is truly a beautiful thing.

Eighty-seven tries later and Murphy was down for the count. There it was. A 13 x 6 TH - doubled. Something you can put your hand upon. In the groove around the base I put a 3 x 14 TH - doubled. A couple of coats of boat soup and it was finished and up on Miss Madonna's mantle, ready for wine, dried flowers or whatever. Maybe you can teach an old dog.

Arise ye Ashleyites! Make the world more beautiful! Turk's heads rule!

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<sup>1</sup>Clifford W. Ashley was a Yankee!

<sup>2</sup>Ain't got no Limey "Y"!

<sup>3</sup>Martin Combs; PO Box 9573; Chesapeake, VA 23321

Email: Roundturn@hotmail.com Check out Marty's page at: [www.knotstuff.com](http://www.knotstuff.com)  
You will appreciate it!

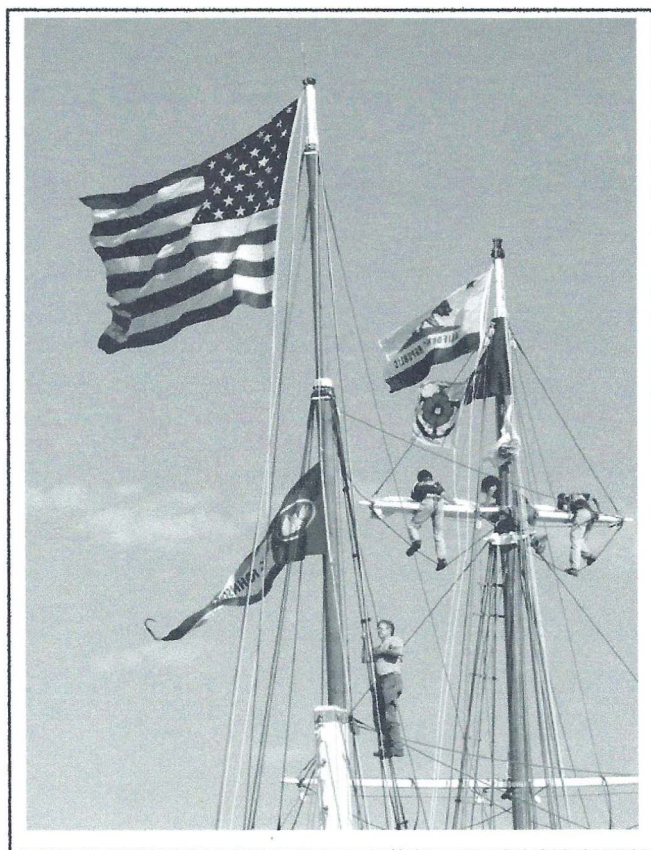
<sup>4</sup>Of Murphy's Law fame: "If anything can go wrong, it will!"

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Please support your editor by contributing to *Knot News*!

### Branch Bits

**Darrell Ausherman** of California sent in this report: "The fellow in yellow shirt at the top of the aft-main mast of the *Irving Johnson* is I. This is the first time I have climbed this mast. Last Saturday, I climbed the main mast. That was the first time I climbed any mast. It is not too difficult if you follow the Sierra Club Mountaineering rules: keep three points fixed and move only with the forth hand or foot. The hard part was learning how to rest; you cannot keep your muscles clinched or you would soon tire yourself out.



The Twin Brigantines (two identical ships-the *Irving Johnson* and the *Exy Johnson*) are being built at a cost of 5.6 million dollars for the TopSail Youth Program. The TopSail Youth Program takes kid who are at risk from becoming good-productive citizens. The Program has two ships, the *Swift of Ipswich* and the *Bill of Rights*, which have been taking kids out for about ten years. I started out

crewing for the Program before the Brigantines were going to be built.

I have been working on the project since January of 2000. I worked full time as a volunteer on the lofting of the ships (lofting is where the naval architect's plans are drawn full scale: 90 feet on the deck and 111 feet overall, including the bowsprit), and I have been active on the project since. The ships are scheduled for completion by the end of the year. If anyone would like a tour, let me know (310) 370-9731.

However, the day did not go without accident. When I first got there, I went below to stow my gear. There was a 3 ½ by 3 ½ foot hole in the lower deck. Since I mainly work on the top deck or in the rigging shed, I was not familiar with the compartments below deck. The hole looked dangerous, particularly to people not familiar with the ship at all. Recognizing the danger, I found a line and rigged a safety net. Five hours later, I was gathering up my gear to go home. I started up the ladder and remembered I forgot my hat. I stepped backwards without looking and promptly went down the hatch. As I fell, my right arm was over the safety line I had placed there earlier and I fell about four feet before I caught the safety net. Had the safety net not been in place, I would have fallen about eight feet. Moreover, I was falling backwards, which means I would have hit my head either on the ladder going down the next deck or on the deck below. Thank God I installed those safety lines! I placed those lines to help some of the people manning our information booth and who were not familiar with the ship; never dreaming I would be the one who needed the safety lines. I suffered a mild contusion of my right forearm and a lacerated thumb. I iced the wounds down right after the accident and I will be ready to climb again tomorrow!"

Dan Cashin of Pennsylvania had this to say: "I had an amiable disagreement with Stan Berry, the Operation Manager for the USS *Constellation*, on the proper direction to wind right lay, three

strand manila line when flemishing it on a deck.

He says COUNTERCLOCKWISE and I have always been taught CLOCKWISE. I went to the books and found loads of conflicting advice. The majority of the references support my way but there are almost as many that support Stan. In addition his method is in agreement with the usual manufacturers method of removing new line from a coil.

If Stan is right then loads of books and some real heavyweights are wrong. Check out the list of citations below supporting both sides. I would be interesting in starting a discussion on what other knot tyers think about this.

I think the conflict comes from where you start your winding. If you start from the inside you wind up with my way. If you start from the outside then you get Stan's way.

Hope this stirs some interest."

#### Deck Storage of Right Lay Manila Line

##### CLOCKWISE

##### Wrapped from the INSIDE OUT

<i>Arts of the Sailor</i>	Hervey Garret Smith	1953
Page 182	Flemish	
<i>Ashley Book of Knots</i>		1944
Page 516	Flemish Flake	
<i>Ashley Book of Knots</i>		1944
Page 517	Flemish Down	
[Both of these diagrams reverse names compared to the following references]		
<i>Art of Knots</i>	Marc Berthier	1977
Page 52	Coiling	
<i>Beautiful Boat Crafts</i>	Linda Buckingham	2000
Page 187	Flemish	
<i>Coiling a Rope</i>	Judkins & Davidson	1998
Page 45	Coiling	
<i>Encyclopedia of Knots</i>	Graumont & Hensel	1939
Page 585, 587	Flemish and Coil	
[No photos or drawings accompany these cites]		
<i>Essential Knot Book</i>	Colin Jarmin	1984
Page 45	Coiling	
<i>Fundamentals of Naval Science-Seamanship</i>		1973
Page 15	Faking	
<i>Handbook of Knots</i>	Des Pawson	1998
Page 18	Coiling	



<i>Knight's Modern Seamanship</i>	1984
Page 597 Faking	
<i>Knight's Modern Seamanship</i>	1945
Page 754 Flemish and Faking	
<i>Knots and Ropework</i> Nola Trower	1992
Page 86 Coiling	
<i>Knots, Ties and Splices</i> Burgess & Justum	1934
Page 15 Coiling	
<i>Knowing the Ropes</i> Roger Taylor	1989
Page 28 Coiling	
<i>Marlinespike Sailor</i> Hervey Garret Smith	1956
Page 12, 41 Flemish and Coiling	
<i>Modern Rope Seamanship</i> Colin Jarmin	1976
Page 75 Coiling and Flaking	
<i>Rigger's Apprentice</i> Brion Toss	1984
Page 3 Coiling	
<i>Bluejacket's Manual</i> Naval Institute Press	1943
Page 389 Flemish and Faking	
<i>Bluejacket's Manual</i> Naval Institute Press	1944
Page 417 Flemish and Faking	
<i>Bluejacket's Manual</i> Naval Institute Press	1974
Page 313 Flemish and Faking	
<i>Naval Surface Reserve Force</i>	1986
Page 126 Coiling and Faking	
<i>US Army-Marlinespike Seamanship</i>	1973
Page 1, 2 Flemish and Faking	
<i>US Army-Marine Crew Handbook</i>	1983
Page 12-5 Flemish and Faking	
<i>US Army-Rappelling</i>	1991
Page 1-6 Coiling	
<i>US Army-Rigging</i>	1968
Page 9 Flemish	
<i>The Coast Guardman's Manual</i>	1979
Page 173 Flemish, Fake and Coil	
<i>USCG-Deck Seamanship</i>	1980
Page 4-13 Faking	
<i>US Navy-Boatswain's Mate 3&amp;2</i>	1964
Page 34 Coil and Fake	
<i>US Navy-Boatswain's Mate 1&amp;C</i>	1963
Page 87 Coiling	
<i>US Navy-Seaman</i>	1986
Page 4-8 Flemish and Faking	
<i>US Navy-Seamanship</i>	1953
Page 18 Flemish and Faking	

#### CLOCKWISE

#### Wrapped from the OUTSIDE IN

<i>American Merchant Seaman's Manual</i>	1938
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Page 117 Coiling	
[Rough hand sketch incidental to a drawing of a kedge anchor storage technique in a small boat]	
<i>Bluejacket's Manual</i> Naval Institute Press	1943
Page 389 Coiling	
[Text directs coiling in a clockwise direction, drawing shows opposite]	
<i>Book of Rope and Knots</i> Bill Severn	1960
Page 172 Flemish	
<i>Fundamentals of Naval Science-Seamanship</i>	1973
Page 16 Flemish (1800's photo)	
<i>Handbook of Knots</i> Raoul Graumont	1945
Page 104, 106 Flemish and Faking	
[Text directs opposite of photo]	
<i>Illustrated Encyclopedia of Boating</i> A. Lucas	1977
Page 100 Flemish	
<i>Knots</i> Peter Owen	1993
Page 9 Coiling	
<i>Knots and How To Tie Them</i> Boy Scouts	1942
Page 11 Flemish	
<i>Knots and How To Tie Them</i> Boy Scouts	1981
Page 7 Flemish	
[Text directs you start a Flemish from the outside turn. This fits the interpretation of winding in a clockwise direction. This publication is the only one that directs the user to start on the outside turn]	
<i>Knots for the Outdoors</i> Cliff Jacobson	1990
Page 14 Coiling	
<i>Modern Marlinespike Seamanship</i> McLean	1979
Page 101 Flemish	
[This photo is in braided line. It makes no difference which direction braided line is made up. It has no natural lay]	
<i>Pioneering</i> Boy Scouts	1985
Page 10 Flemish and Coiling	
<i>US Navy-Boatswain's Mate 3&amp;2</i>	1964
Page 35 Flemish	

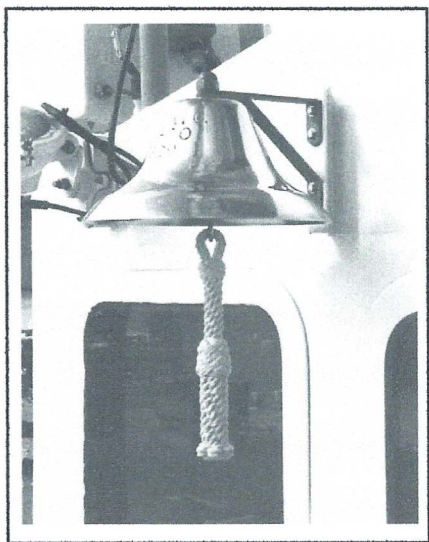
#### Additional Information

Uncoiling a line from a new coil requires the line to be drawn out in a counterclockwise direction. This requires the line to be made up new in the second manner. Or looking down at the coil, the inside end comes in, in a clockwise direction, or the outer end is laid on in a counterclockwise direction.

Faking (or flaking in Ashley and Graumont & Hensel) has its use as quick and easy running out of line when on deck. Only Ashley's has drawings of line laid out in wide, open bights.

[Felix Riesenberg in *Standard Seamanship for the Merchant Service* has these comments on the subject: "The point to be remembered here is the quite general abuse of manila hawsers. Long lengths of hawser are coiled down close to the chocks or pipes through which it is payed out. Often the hawser is *flemished down*, that is, coiled flat and close together. The close coil may often be necessary and the Flemish coil looks nice, but when a hawser is payed out from a coil of this kind, as to a tug, for instance, the line will either be filled with extra turns, as it goes, or it will loosen up. In this connection it must be remembered that in taking turns out of the line, extra twist is put into the strands. Both conditions cause kinks, and do damage to the rope. Remember-*Kinks Kill Ropes*. -Editor]

**Marty Combs** of Virginia sent us this picture and comments: "I donated a bellrope to the USCGC *Cochito*, they sent me a photo of it hanging on the bell. The bellrope has a coxcomb hitched eye, 6 bight 7 part Turk's Head below the eye then crowning then another 6 bight 7 part (I think) then some more crowing, then a 6 part Star Knot at the bottom. It is finished off with clear water based poly/varnish."



### Secretary's Corner

I recently sent out dues notices to all members of the PAB past and present. If you did not receive a notice then you are paid up in your membership. I sent out these notices for two reasons. The obvious one was to refill the PAB coffers and the other was to see if anyone was still interested in carrying on with a Pacific Americas Branch of the IGKT. The response has been spotty so far but encouraging.

Please remember that these dues are only for the Branch and do not cover the dues for the 'home office' of the International Knot Guild in England. That is an additional \$27, which I can forward for you if that would suit.

The PAB election committee has not yet informed me of the next election date. For now I look to be your Secretary for the near future. Is this what everyone wants? Does anybody care? Please send some input so I know what you as a member of the PAB are thinking.

Around animals in general, and on farms in particular, the word *hitch* is used as a verb, which is contrary to sea usage. A horse is hitched when he is tied up, and a rope is hitched when it is made fast. Moreover, when a horse is harnessed to a vehicle he is "hitched up."

I venture to say that before I started to write this book I never used the words *tie* and *hitch* as verbs except in reference to men's neck apparel and trousers, from one year's end to another, and the verb *hitch* passed entirely out of my vocabulary until a pony was added to the children's livestock a few years ago. But I now use both terms glibly, although I have been severely taken to task by several longshore purists for my lapses in these directions."

Clifford W. Ashley  
*The Ashley Book of Knots*



"DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP."

#### FALL 2002 PAB MEETING SCHEDULE

Monthly meetings are held at the Los Angeles Maritime Institute, which is right next door to the LA Maritime Museum, Berth 84, at the Foot of Sixth Street in San Pedro, California. Our gatherings are very informal as well as being very informative. People come to show and tell or to share a new twist on an old trick. The meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Please come join us!

Mark these dates on your calendar:

October 8<sup>th</sup>   November 12<sup>th</sup>   December 10<sup>th</sup>



"Ships our cradles, decks our pillows,  
Lulled by winds and rocked by billows;  
Gaily bound we o'er the tide,  
Hope our anchor, Heaven our guide."

#### **Knot News**

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