

Knot



News

International Guild of Knot Tyers – Pacific Americas Branch

December 2012

Darrell R. Ausherman - Editor

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AGM 2013 for the IGKT worldwide is to be in the USA!!!

- When: May 9 through May 12, 2013.
- Where: The Queen Mary, Long Beach, California USA.
- What: IGKT AGM and Knotting Symposium.
- Who: You, your family and all other interested parties

We, the Pacific Americas Branch of the IGKT, are hosting the first ever meeting of the IGKT in the USA.

We will be looking to you, our members, to assist in any way possible with this first-of-a-kind meeting.

What we offer: We will have displays, demonstrations, classes and, of course, the Annual General Meeting of the Guild.

This will be established by live video-conferencing at 0900 on Saturday, May 11, 2013.

Participants will be aboard the Queen Mary, CA USA and at Henley-on-Thames, UK.

Displays will include the PAB's collection of knots from around the world, members' collections and displays and vendor's displays. Demonstrations include rope making, kumihimo, macramé, bottle covering, knot-tying contest

Registration starts on Thursday evening from 1700 to 1900.

Friday there will be visits organized to places of interest locally, depending on registration;

Including Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Universal Studios, LEGOLAND, or a trip to see the building of the galleon San Salvador in San Diego

–Register interest and get details from Lindsey Philpott, president@igkt-pab.org

– Friday evening there will be cocktails and informal meet & greet in the Promenade Bar & Grill on board QM

Some set-up is also possible Friday evening

– Saturday morning set-up and late registration 0745 to 0845

– Saturday 0900 to 1000 IGKT AGM in the Royal Salon

– Saturday 1000 to 1700 displays, demonstrations, classes, talks etc. in the Queen's Salon and the Royal Salon

– Displays and demonstrations will be open to the public; AGM, classes and talks are for members only

– Saturday 1800 to 1900 cocktails and reception on the Verandah Deck

– Saturday 1900 to 2100 The Knot-Tyer's Supper (formal dinner) in the Verandah Grill

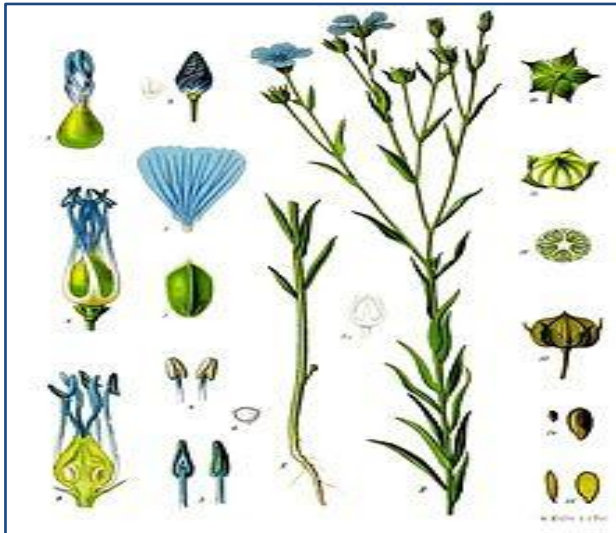
Sunday 0900 to 1200 More displays, demonstrations and classes

- Sunday afternoon – 1400 to 1700 possible sail aboard brigantine Exy Johnson or Irving Johnson (details dependent on registration)

Flax to Linen

Darrell Ausherman - from Wikipedia

Flax (also known as common flax or linseed) (binomial name *Linum usitatissimum*) is a member of the genus *Linum* in the family *Linaceae* (family of flowering plants). It is native to the region extending from the eastern Mediterranean to India and was probably first domesticated in the Fertile Crescent. It is known as *Λινάρι* (*Linari*) in Greek.



Flax was extensively cultivated in ancient Ethiopia and ancient it as the first domesticated species in human history. New Zealand flax is not related to flax but was named after it, as both plants are used to produce fibers.

Flax fibers are amongst the oldest fiber crops in the world. The use of flax for the production of linen goes back at least to ancient Egyptian times. Dyed flax fibers found in a cave in Dzudzuana (prehistoric Georgia) have been dated to 30,000 years ago. Pictures on tombs and temple walls at Thebes depict flowering flax plants. The use of flax fiber in the manufacturing of cloth in northern Europe dates back to Neolithic times. In North America, The Puritans introduced flax.

Flax fiber is extracted from the bast or skin of the stem of the flax plant. Flax fiber is soft, lustrous and flexible; bundles of fiber have the appearance of blonde hair, hence the description "flaxen". It is stronger than cotton fiber but less elastic. The best grades are used for linen fabrics such as damasks, lace and sheeting. Coarser grades are used for the manufacturing of twine and rope. Flax fiber is also a

raw material for the high-quality paper industry for the use of printed banknotes and rolling paper for cigarettes and tea bags. Flax mills for spinning flaxen yarn were invented by John Kendrew and Thomas Porthouse of Darlington in 1787. New methods of processing flax and the rising price of cotton have led to renewed interest in the use of flax as an industrial fiber. Naturally Advanced's Crailar technology is one proprietary method that is increasing the industrial adoption of this plant.

A Description of Processing Flax into Linen

Taken from *The Life and Times of Oramel Crawford A Vermont Farmer 1809---1888*
Fred E Crawford - Privately Printed 1952

The method of processing flax into linen has not changed in any material manner from that used by the ancients and by the pioneers, except that what was done by hand then is now done by largely by machinery. Flax cannot be cut like most farm products, but must be pulled up by the roots and the plants sorted according to length. The first process of treating flax is [called] rippling and is to remove the seeds and lingering blossoms. This was done by drawing the tops of the plants through a comb consisting of eighteen-inch iron spikes driven through a plank and about one-half inch apart. Then came retting, to facilitate the separation of the useful fibre from the boon, or woody part of the stem, by the removal of the gummy matter in the plant. The process of retting consist in placing the flax plants root down in a pond of water deep enough to cover them and keeping them down by boards and turf. This is the most important process of flax curing, for if the retting [were] carried too far the fiber would be discolored and injured. If the retting pond was of still water the odor rising was said to be far from that of roses. From ten to fourteen days were required for the process of water retting. The word 'retting' is akin to the word 'rotting,' and that is what the process really amounts to. Grassing followed the retting, meaning that the flax stems are placed out on the grass to dry thoroughly. The next process was breaking. The breaker consisted of two members, the lower member being a heavy plank or half a tree sawed lengthwise and standing on four legs of proper height. At the head of this member was a sort of matrix formed with many parallel edges. The upper member was hinged to the lower and had a head, which fitted, into the matrix. A handle enabled the upper member to be worked up and down. The dried plants were passed through the breaker and the boon or woody part thoroughly loosened from

the fibre. Then came the heckle, which was made of many rows of pointed spikes driven through a heavy plank and fastened to the sidewall. Through this heckle the long fibre was drawn many times until it was entirely free from the woody stems. The fibre next to the boon was slightly colored, but the inner part was perfectly white. The fibre was then ready for carding with hand cards, spinning, and weaving.

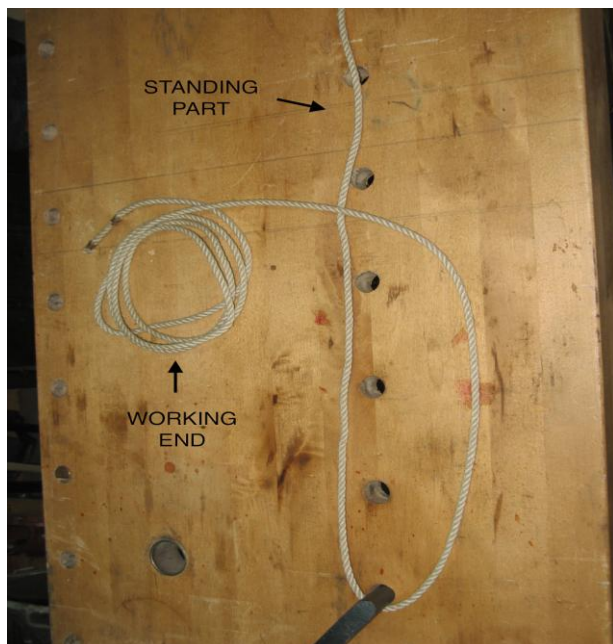
Tying a Trucker's Hitch: One Method

José Hernández-Juviel

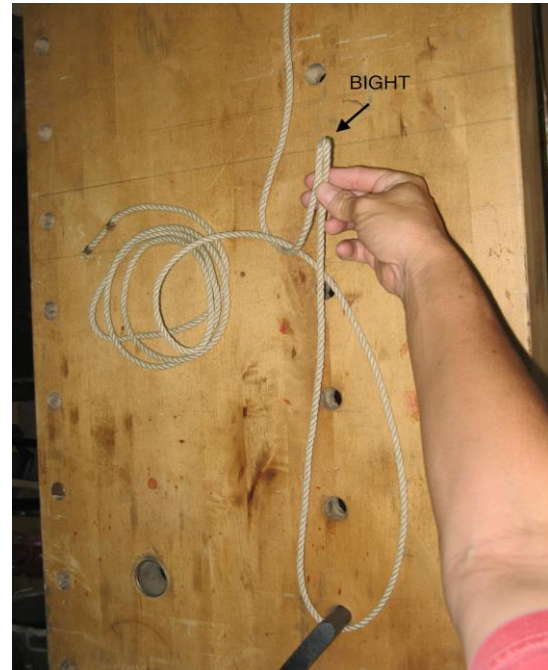
There seems to be a myriad different ways to tie a trucker's hitch. Some methods are better than others. This method that I'll be showing you was taught to me by Ray Michalski, who at the time was the engineer on the research vessel "Mako" when I worked as a scientific aide for the California Dept. of Fish & Game. He learned it as a boatswain's mate in the US Navy. For many years I did not come across another individual who knew this method until I met Master Rigger Joe Soanes. He learned this while rigging for the U.S. Navy.

How to tie it

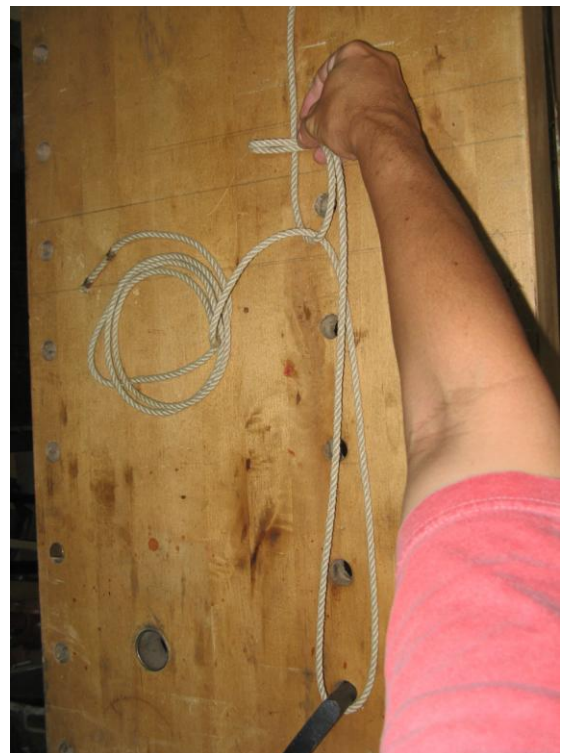
After securing the standing part of your line and passing the working end around a fulcrum, lay the working end across the standing part.



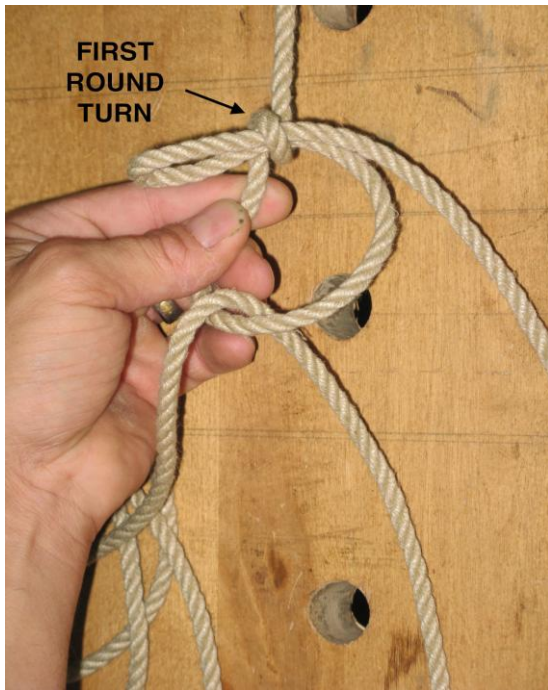
Create a bight in the standing part below where the working end crosses it. Notice that this automatically creates the loop through which the working end passes to give you the added purchase.



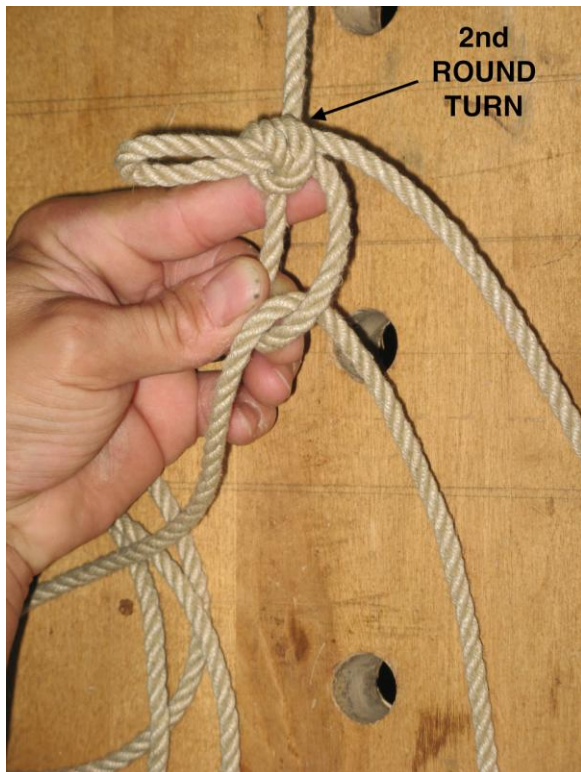
Next lay the bight across the standing part.



Now, grab the standing part below the intersection of the bight and standing part, and use it to make a round turn tightly around the bight.

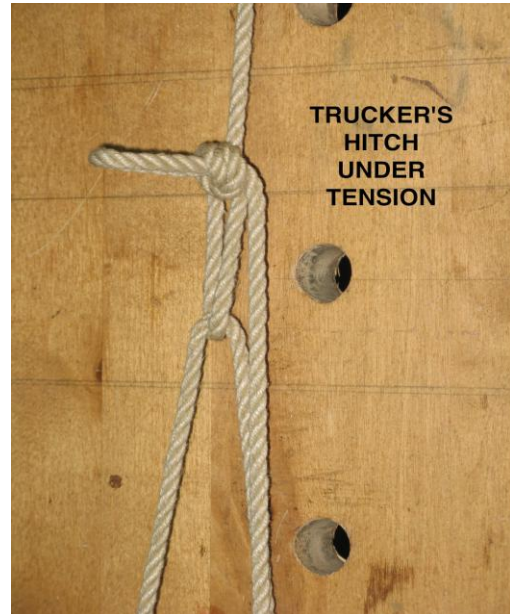


Follow this by a second round turn and be sure to make it tightly to the inside of the first bight.



This is the "locking" mechanism that keeps it all together! If you make the second round turn to the outside of the first, then the whole thing will fall apart as soon as you apply tension.

At this time the original bight protruding from the round turns resembles an "ear". Hold the "ear" up as you begin to pull on the working end until the line is under tension.



After that add as much tension as you need without holding onto the "ear". Photo below shows an overview of the trucker's hitch.



What virtues are we seeking in a trucker's hitch? You should be able to tie it quickly and easily. If you have 300 feet of line, you shouldn't have to pass all of that line through the loop if you only need to use 50 feet of line. The trucker's hitch should hold under constant tension. When not under tension, it should come apart easily. This method I've chosen to share with you possesses all of these virtues.

Important Caveats

Make the round turns tightly. If you make them loosely and then expect them to tighten up when put under tension, you run the risk of them capsizing and the whole thing will fall apart! Trucker's hitches only work if they are under a static tension load. If whatever it is holding can still move around so that the tension load fluctuates then the whole thing will come apart!

Once you master this knot, you will be impressed, as am I, with how quickly and easily you will be able to secure things, whether its furniture in the back of a pick-up truck or securing a dinghy on deck. Enjoy.

Paracord Camera Strap

Jimmy Williams

I made the strap from black nylon Paracord that was pre-shrunk by immersing in hot water. Nylon shrinks about 20% when exposed to water. The strap has two parts: one part holds the camera from your neck and the other holds the camera from your hand.

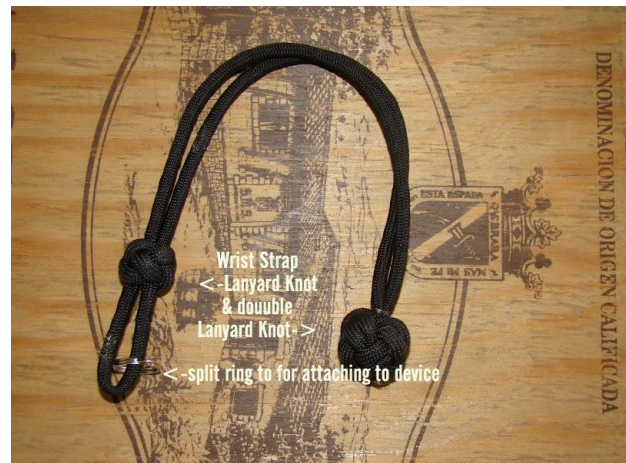
The following photos show the neck and wrist strap and the various knots used in its construction.



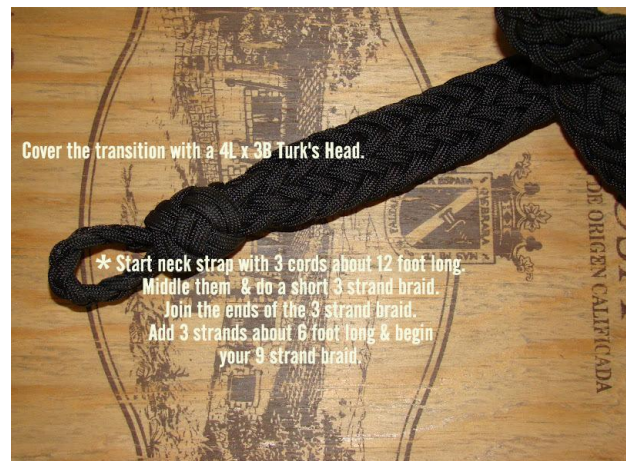
Neck Strap



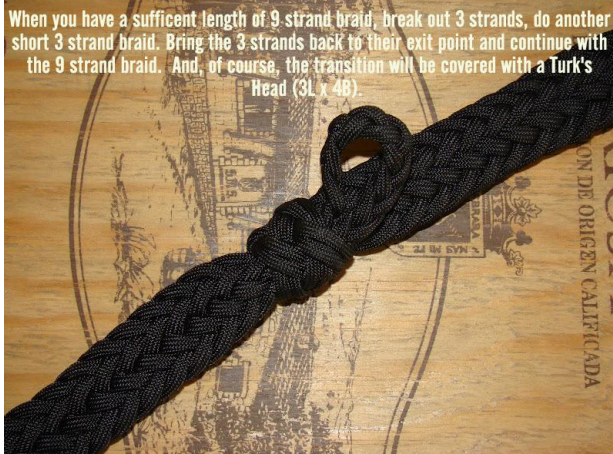
Wrist Strap



Lanyard Knot & Double Lanyard Knot
Add split ring for attaching to device.

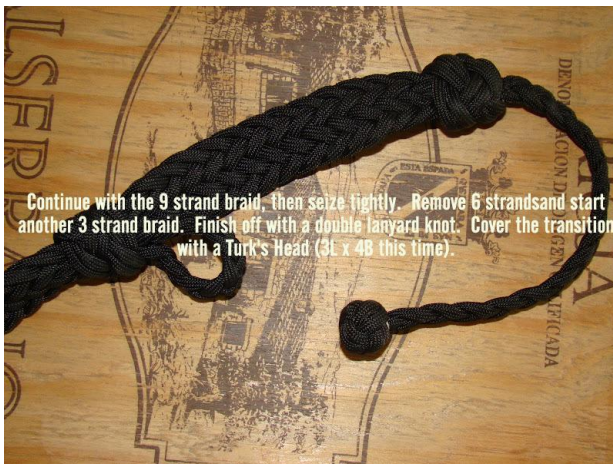


Start neck strap with 3 cords about 12 ft long. Middle them & then do a short 3 strand braid. Add 3 strands about 6 ft long & begin your 9 strand braid. Cover the transition with a 4 x 3 Turk's Head.



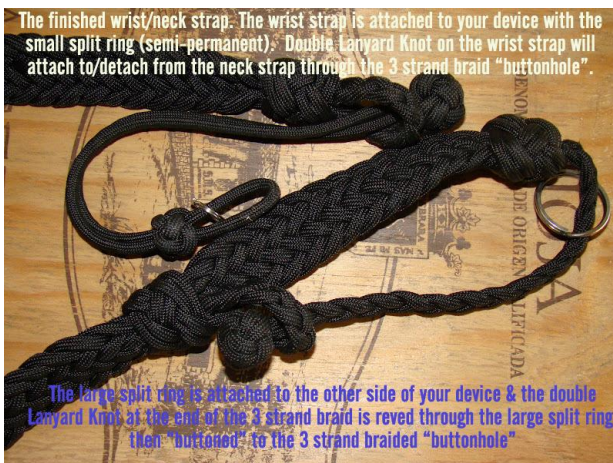
When you have a sufficient length of 9 strand braid, break out 3 strands, do another short 3 strand braid. Bring the 3 strands back to their exit point and continue with the 9 strand braid. And, of course, the transition will be covered with a Turk's Head (3L x 4B).

When you have a sufficient length 9 strand, break out 3 strands, do another short 3 strand braid. Bring them back to their exit point and continue with the 9 strand. Cover the transition with a 3 x 4 Turk's Head.



Continue with the 9 strand braid, then seize tightly. Remove 6 strands and start another 3 strand braid. Finish off with a double lanyard knot. Cover the transition with a Turk's Head (3L x 4B this time).

Continue with the 9 strand braid then seize tightly. Remove 6 strands and start another 3 strand braid. Finish off with a Double Lanyard Knot. Cover the transition with a 3 x 4 Turk's Head.



The finished wrist/neck strap. The wrist strap is attached to your device with the small split ring (semi-permanent). Double Lanyard Knot on the wrist strap will attach to/detach from the neck strap through the 3 strand braid "buttonhole".

The large split ring is attached to the other side of your device & the double Lanyard Knot at the end of the 3 strand braid is reeved through the large split ring, then "buttoned" to the 3 strand braided "buttonhole"

The finished strap

A Wheel Goes Aaround and Aaround (And so must the Cord)

Roy Chapman

Hitching a wheel? Why of courses everyone thinks of yacht wheels and powerboat wheels but there is a large market in enhancing motor vehicle steering wheels.

One of my yacht customers steers with his foot and likes soft cotton hitching, which would never work too well for your Tin Lizzy or lawn tractor. The tasks are different.

Fact is the effort to steer in the era before "power everything" demands that the hitching be tight, well secured or even bonded in some way or you will be seeing your work over and over again. When I start I prefer to lay a coat of shellac and when it is dry work the hitching. After the hitching is complete I wash the wheel with alcohol that softens the shellac and when it dries the cord is bonded as if bedded in epoxy. Next I add any Turk's Heads or other embellishment and shellac again (sometimes cut thin and sometimes full 3# cut... "over the counter" strength). If I am varnishing or painting the finished work I like to keep all the earlier coatings a bit thin. However if the finished job is to be "leather look" I keep all the coats fairly thick and build up the filler.

While we are still thinking about finishes I'll tell you that being in a closed truck cab with a pine tar coated steering wheel isn't everyone's idea of perfection.



Completed Pierce Arrow Wheel

Modern car steering wheels, with air bags and cruise control (and who knows what all as more and more 'lectronic aids come our way) may never become a standard for me. I think that Hot Rods, Racing Cars and Antiques will keep me busy. I like them. The wheels from the early 1900's have the rim and spokes bolted or screwed together and this separation makes a lot of free space for passing the cord. Without the interruption of spokes the job goes pretty easy. That said; the interruption of spokes gives me a smaller ball of cord to work with, which makes it seem like less work. I use netting needles, simple balls of cord or a winding stick (like for a kite) the choice driven by cord size and spacing of spokes.

For finishing up I think the Split Turk's Head (or similar T shaped THK) looks good and sets off the hitching.



Spoke Detail



Completed Stanley Wheel



Stanley Wheel Detail – Front

I am very fond of the wheels on cars and trucks from the eras before power steering, such wheels tending to large diameters but the customer's equipment drives the project.

Most wheels take me between 6 and 12 hours but I make a little section of hitching on the clock so I can bid before starting.

With modern materials (or modern dyes on cotton) color matching the car paint makes it a special project. How about John Deere Green?

One thing I haven't yet done is to make up a sample for my display table. I have not done this because it is using up productive time on a sample and even scrap yards want a gosh awful price for a used wheel (if you go out some morning and your wheel is missing don't think of me.)



Toyota Wheel



The Queen Mary - Long Beach, California

