Knotting
Matters

Newsletter of the

INTERNATIONAL

GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

KNOTTING MATTERS

Taxpayers in UK - We would prefer a covenanted subscription, as we can then reclaim tax paid.

EDITORIAL

All voluntary organisations are just that - run by volunteers. The I.G.K.T. is no exception, having no paid staff or secretariat.

Your council meets about six times a year. This commitment alone ties up six whole Saturdays for those who serve the Guild. And that's before any REAL work is done - making sure the day to day correspondence, sales, cashiering and other jobs get seen to.

If you are a 'do-er' rather than a just a talker, can spare a few Saturdays for meetings plus a few hours on a regular basis and want to help the International Guild of Knot Tyers - stand for election to the Guild Council at the A.G.M. This year it will be held in Warrington on either 11th or 18th May.

Even if you are not elected, your involvement will encourage those who are. They will appreciate more how important their work is and that there are others outside equally able and willing to do it.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

A Locked Symmetrical Square Knot from Benjamin Leigh

I am partial to symmetry in bends. I developed this bend in the
spring of 1980 while trying to find a symmetrical bend more secure
than the Rosendahl bend when not under strain. Variations on the
blood knot seemed too hard to untie. I haven't been able to find
anything like it in the literature. All the variations I have tried
on this knot are either less secure or more difficult to untie.

It is certainly original with me, but somewhere someone else may
have developed and reported it.
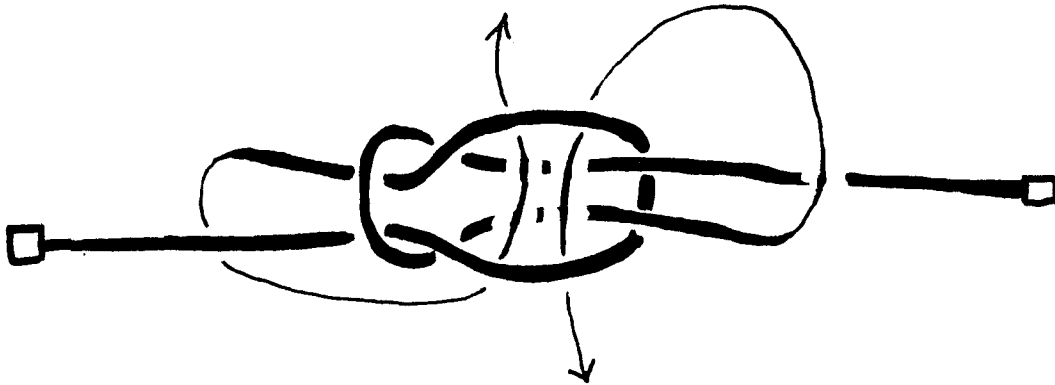
Start with a thief knot and tuck it as shown. This isn't how I
originated the knot - I was attempting to symmetricalise a square
knot.

To untie simply lay one standing part back against the other
standing part, then pry back the loop where the second standing
part passes over the first. Then swap ends and repeat.

Call it the Leigh Bend if no one else can lay prior claim (I don't
think the Ben Bend would go over too well).

Benjamin Leigh   3464 Madeira Dr
18th April '88   Baton Rouge
                                                  LA 70810

MIND BENDING

A sailing instructor reported in the April '90 READER'S DIGEST
having to climb the mast of a 36 foot sailing boat, in the rain,
after she was returned by a hiring club with her pennant jammed out
of reach at the mast-head.

Only *one* end of the flag halyard - *both* of which should, of course,
be secured to the roped-&-toggled flag to make an endless hoist -
had actually been bent onto the pennant. So, when it was hauled up,
it could not then be hauled down again.

When he did retrieve it, he found it belonged to M.E.N.S.A. (the
international society with members whose I.Q.'s are their nations'
top 2%). Tricky stuff - ropework.

PERFECT PINEAPPLE KNOTS - From Neil Hood

A *Perfect Pineapple Knot* may be defined as being a single strand turkshead in which (See Fig. 1):

- each scallop on the rim has two parallel bights, and
- the working end, on completion of tying the knot, is always returned to its starting point by the pattern of the knot.

ENDING POINT

STARTING POINT.
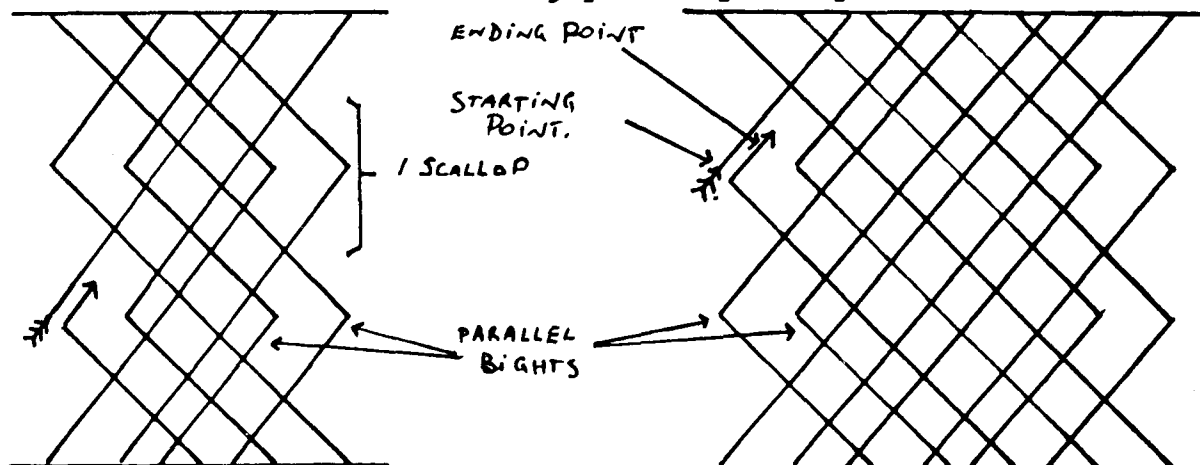
/ SCALLOP

PARALLEL BIGHTS

Fig 1-1

6B x 7P ppk*

Fig 1-2

6B x 11P ppk*

Perfect Pineapple Knots (ppk's) are a group of knots that are within the turkshead family yet have certain characteristics of their own such as the parallel bights.

The only documentary reference found so far is in Grant's *Encyclopedia of Rawhide and Leather Braiding* on pages 432 and 433 where instructions are given for tying a 6B x 7P ppk and then raising this ppk to a 10B x 11P ppk. (There is a misprint in my copy which refers to the 6B x 7P ppk as a 5B x 7P ppk - this is impossible as ppk's must have an even number of bights.) The Name "Perfect Pineapple Knot" is that assigned to the group by Grant.

As an introduction to tying these knots have a go at a 2B x 3P and a 4B x 5P (a raised version of the 2B x 3P). Remove the distortion before doubling and working the knots up firm. (See Fig. 2)
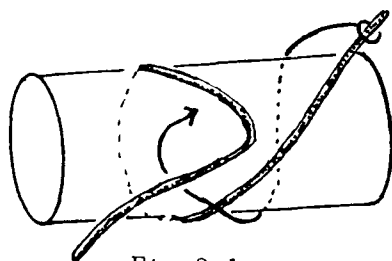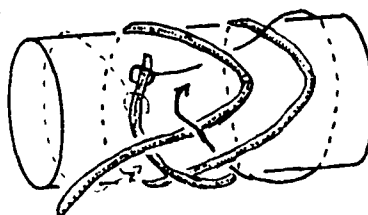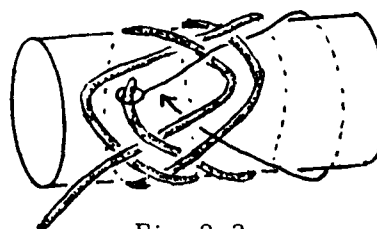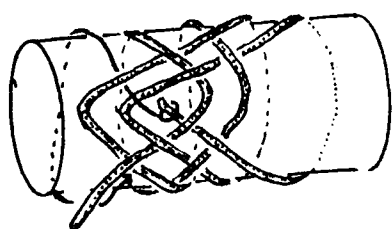
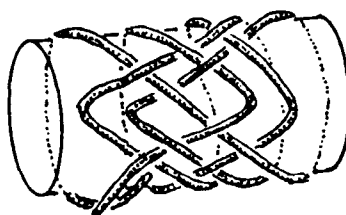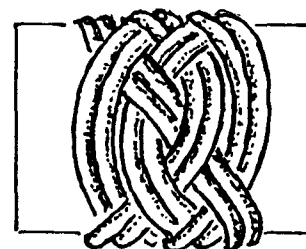Fig 2-1

Fig 2-2

Fig 2-3

Fig 2-4

Fig 2-5

Fig 2-6

N.B. in fig. 2-2 the broken line on the far left completes the 2B x 3P ppk.

KNOTLORE from John Turner

WILL THE REAL TRUE LOVERS KNOT PLEASE STAND UP?

In Issue 33 of Knotting Matters, I.G.K.T. member Frank "Winkle" Ide took a publican to task for displaying the 'wrong' version of the True Lovers Knot on his inn sign. He referred him to the 'right' one in Ashley's Book of Knots.

Readers will be interested in the following version of a true lover's knot which I recently discovered on a Valentine card in the Old Grammar School Museum, Hull. The card was in a glass case in the Courtship and Marriage Room, being an item in a large display of social life in Hull through the ages.

The card was hand-drawn by a Mr Geo. Sherwood and dated 1741. It has clearly been treasured by his lady-love and their descendants (assuming he wooed her successfully) for 250 years. Perhaps the publican would like to use this version on his sign?

Do members know of any earlier, authenticated versions of this knot?

DETAILS

Hand drawn in black ink on card; decorated elaborately with coloured hearts and flowers. The knot line is doubled as a thin ribbon.
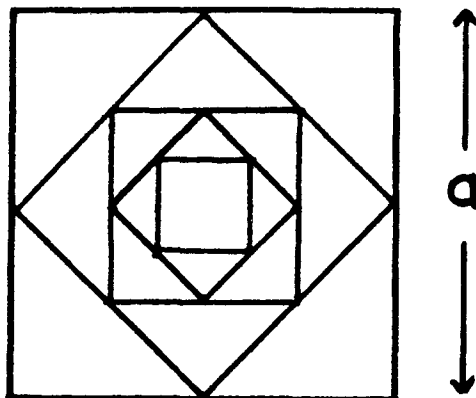
WORDS

Signed Geo.Sherwood; dated 1741.
There is a poem on one side:

"There in Knot Crosses in Store
But in True Love there Many more"

Words run all around the ribbon of the knot; they are too fine for the naked eye to read.

DESIGN

The design is based on a sequence of five diminishing and rotating squares, thus:

SUITABILITY

The knot is formed from a single continuous string, symbolising an eternity of love.

The design can be viewed as a sequence of opening petals of a flower...a flowering of love.

The sequence of squares can be imagined to continue as an infinite sequence, continuing the knot indefinitely. If we take the side of the first square as 'unity'(i.e. a=1) then the sequence of areas of the squares is 1, 1/2, 1/4,...; the sum to infinity of this sequence is 2. This clearly shows how the one shall become two and so is an excellent symbol for marriage! Of course, as the poem hints, the number of interlacings increases steadily as the design sequence develops. This could symbolise the 'increase of love', the 'deepening of entanglement' or, perhaps sadly, the 'accumulation of troubles' in marriage.
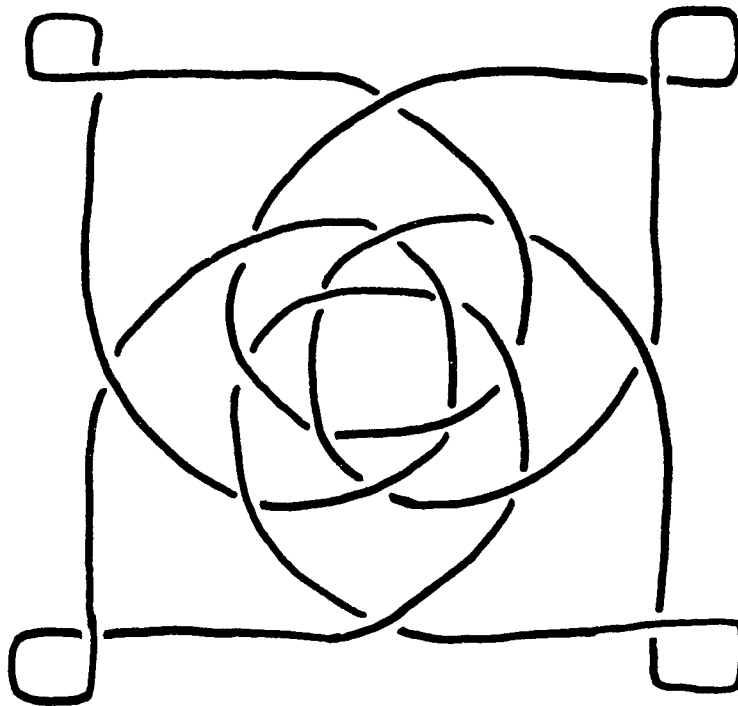
THE TRUE LOVERS' KNOT
Geo.Sherwood, Valentine Card, 1741

QUOTATION

"Now," went on the Vicar, "lash me up taut with a running 'Chink'."
"You mean one of them dodgy knots what the Chinese juggler taught us in Malay?" asked Mipps.
"That's exactly what I mean," assented the Vicar.

The Further Adventures of Doctor Syn

Russell Thorndike 1936

FINNISH MATS

Thanks to Finnish members Arvo KINNUNEN and Lennart HEINRICHS the Guild has been offered on loan for the six months January to June 1991 thirty mats for display in the U.K.

These mats will be seen at the FESTIVAL OF KNOTS at Farnham in April and at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at Warrington in May, but I am anxious that they have other showings in late January, February and March. I am keen to hear from members in the U.K. who have opportunities to display.

To my mind this is a great opportunity to show the International aspect of the guild. Arvo and Lennart tell me it might be possible to make the same arrangements for another time too. I feel we should take the chance to exploit these new possibilities. Who knows – it could lead to a Netherlands exhibition in Switzerland, a British exhibition in Finland and so on ad infinitum.

Frank Harris
November 1990

BOOK REVIEW

PURJELAIVAKAUDEN KOYSIMATOT
SEGELFARTYGSEPOKENS REPMATTOR

By Arvo KINNUNEN

ISBN 951-99965-9-1
Published by the Finnish Seamen's Service, 1988

In 96 A4 pages we see how 79 different mats are worked. By using over 250 clear black and white glossy photographs I.G.K.T. member Arvo KINNUNEN gives us mats for all occasions** – in many sizes and shapes. The photo's are quite good enough to work from without referring to the text. The book is bilingual, being written in both Finnish and Swedish.

For those of us with well thumbed copies of *Matter og Rosetter* by Kaj Lund, Arvo Kinnunen's presentation and techniques seem very familiar – using the same well tried pins and cork board methods to good effect.

This book will be useful to any knot tyer looking to extend his or her skills in mats.

Available from FOOTROPE KNOTS, price £17.95.

** Some of these mats will, no doubt, be on display in England in 1991. Regular show organisers will probably want to snap them up for their own early season knotting events – so look lively, give Frank Harris a ring or write to him if you can put them to good use.

PLAITED MOEBIUS BANDS
Originated by Geoffrey Budworth

Augustus Ferdinand Moebius was a mid-1800's German astronomer and an early topologist ('topology' is a type of geometry). He identified some of the curious properties contained in an endless band of paper.

Cut an untwisted band completely in half along its centreline and - obviously - it falls into two similar bands, each half the original width (fig. 1a). If, however, you insert one or more half twists before joining the two ends, then sever such bands by cutting them along their centrelines, you get some odd effects. Insert half a twist (180 degrees) and the result is one single band half the width but twice as long as before (fig. 1b). A full 360 degree twist once more yields 2 bands, but they are interlinked (fig. 1c). With one and a half twists another double-length band appears but this time with a simple overhand or thumb knot in it (fig. 1d).

Fig. 1
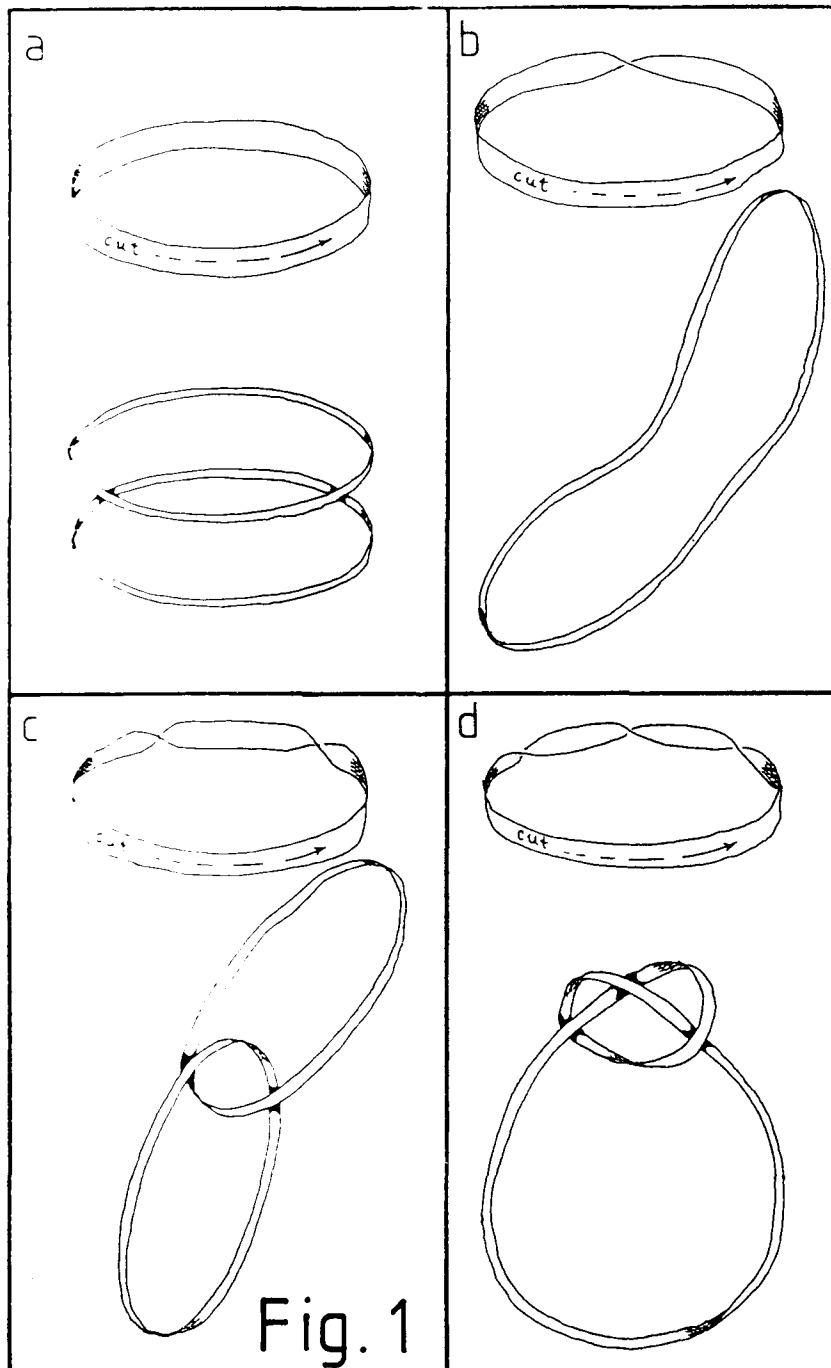
Magical entertainers have been using Moebius bands for over 100 years and have devised even more complicated variations.

A few years ago I was putting together a stage turn to gain membership of the exclusive Magic Circle; and, conscious of my reputation as a knot tyer, I was trying hard to dream up a new knotting effect. I thought that Ashley's 'False Braid' (#2585½) had possibilities. The fact that it peeled apart like a zip-fastener reminded me of Moebius bands and so I determined to plait some with coloured ropes.

a

b

Pull
apart
as
shown
by
arrows
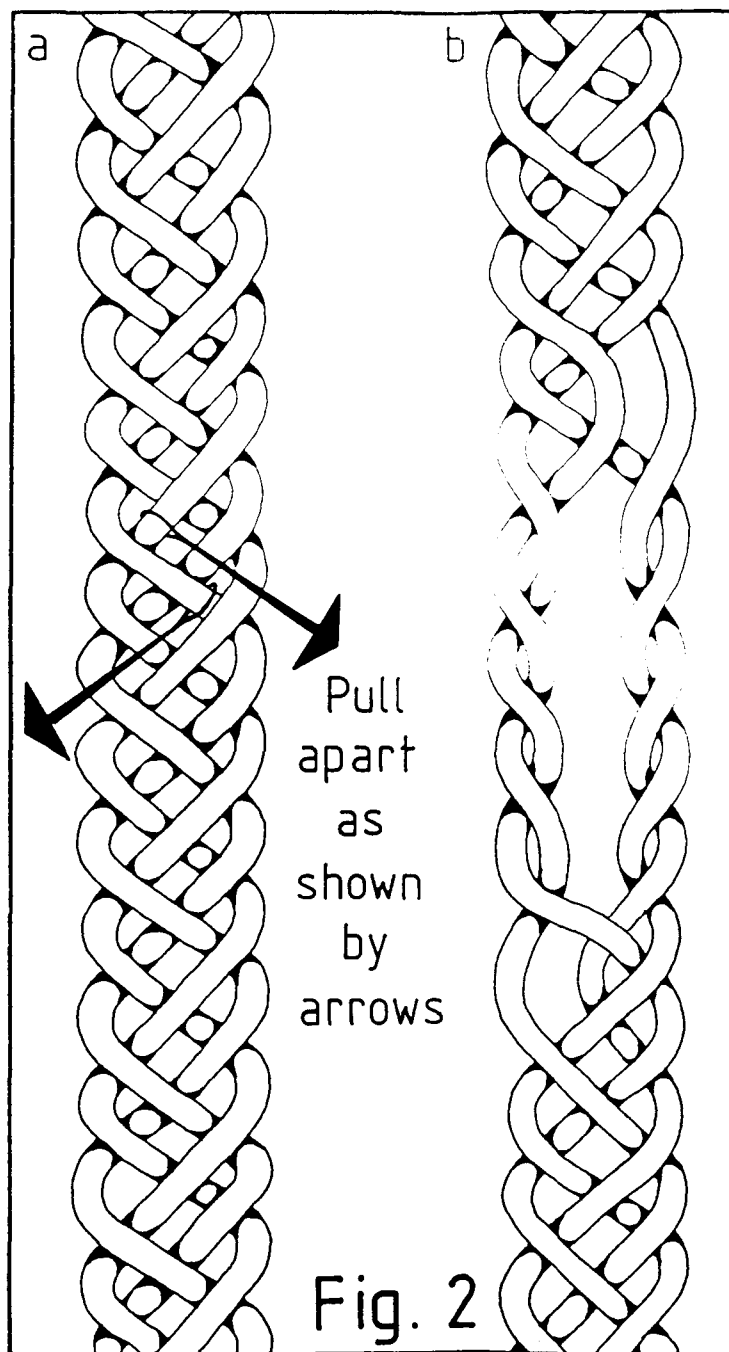
Fig. 2

Trial and error taught me which ends to plait together - and it worked. I could produce what looked like 4-strand woven rope garlands; then, by inserting my fingers and thumbs (fig. 2a), I could split them in a second (fig. 2b) to end up with interlocked loops and other oddities.

Re-plaiting used bands can easily be done in minutes, once you know how.

I first performed my plaited Moebius bands routine at the I.G.K.T. Surrey Branch Christmas Social at Woking in 1987; and then on Monday, 14th March 1988, I did it in London's West End at the Magic Circle's own theatre in its Chenies Mews club premises.

Plaited Moebius bands are - I honestly believe - wholly original. The idea was mine alone. The Guild is welcome to share what small credit might come our way because of it.

So that the technique is not lost I have now written down (with explanatory drawings) how to make and use plaited Moebius bands. The result is a soft-covered A4 booklet of 20 pages or so.

Anyone may have a copy. The price is £10. This includes packing and postage (but add £2 extra for airmail beyond the U.K. and Europe). Please note that the cost does not reflect the quality of this booklet, which is a homemade job no better than an early issue of our I.G.K.T. newsletters. It is based rather upon the convention that buyers of magical effects and routines must be prepared to pay to acquire trade secrets which may have been years in the making and depend for their impact upon a degree of rarity.

1991 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I remind you that subscriptions are now due for renewal?

The rates were increased at the 1990 Annual General Meeting to the amounts shown on page 1.

If you are a taxpayer in the U.K. the Guild can reclaim the tax paid - but only if you complete a *deed of covenant* and agree to pay by standing order direct to the I.G.K.T.'s bank.

R.L.J.

IGKT SUPPLIES - Introducing Mary HARRISON

We have a new I.G.K.T. supplies secretary:

Mrs MARY HARRISON

YEW TREE HOUSE
GOOSEY
FARINGDON
OXFORDSHIRE
SN7 8PA

Mary will be dealing with sales of the Guild's BOOKS, TIES, BADGES.

N.B. - KNOT CHARTS will be available ONLY from the Secretary, Frank HARRIS.

A POINT TO POINT TRAMBLE By Desmond Mandeville

With the Reef as both starting line and finishing post, the
challenge course visits ten other important bends, which are
sketched in oval frames on the plan of the course. One bend is
visited twice, both on the outward and on the return legs of the
course. This bend is the Tumbling Thief.

An obstacle is shown between each pair of bends – proceeding in
numbered stages round the course in the direction of the arrows.
The obstacles consist of a fence or fences, occasionally
accompanied by a ditch.

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to complete the course without falling. *Falling*
means failing to surmount an obstacle. i.e. being obliged to untie
completely and start afresh.

It is possible to complete the course without falling. That is to
say – start with the Reef and convert it successively into each of
the other bends returning eventually to the Reef without ever
making a fresh start.....TRUTHFULLY!

THE COURSE AND OBSTACLES

The stages are numbered 1 to 12 in order round the course, and the
obstacle to be encountered at each stage can be read from the plan.

Attention is drawn to the KEY – it is good HINT as to how to move
between the bends:

A *THIN* line is a <u>wattle</u> or brush fence crossing the track calling
for a tuck to be executed with a <u>wend</u> (or working end).

A *THICK* line is a <u>stone</u> wall or fence across the track calling for
a tuck to be made with a <u>stand</u> (or standing end).

A *PAIR* of similar fences calls for two similar tucks: two thin
lines require similar tucks with both wends, two thick lines with
both stands.

N.B....No distinction is made between tucking and <u>un</u>tucking. A tuck
as shown on this course may therefore be either.

A *DITCH* calls for neither tucking nor untucking, but merely for a
<u>switch</u> of the leads within a bend – the sort of switch, for
instance, that converts the stable Whatknot, sometimes called the
Jinx, into the unstable form, and vice versa. (The Whatknot or Jinx
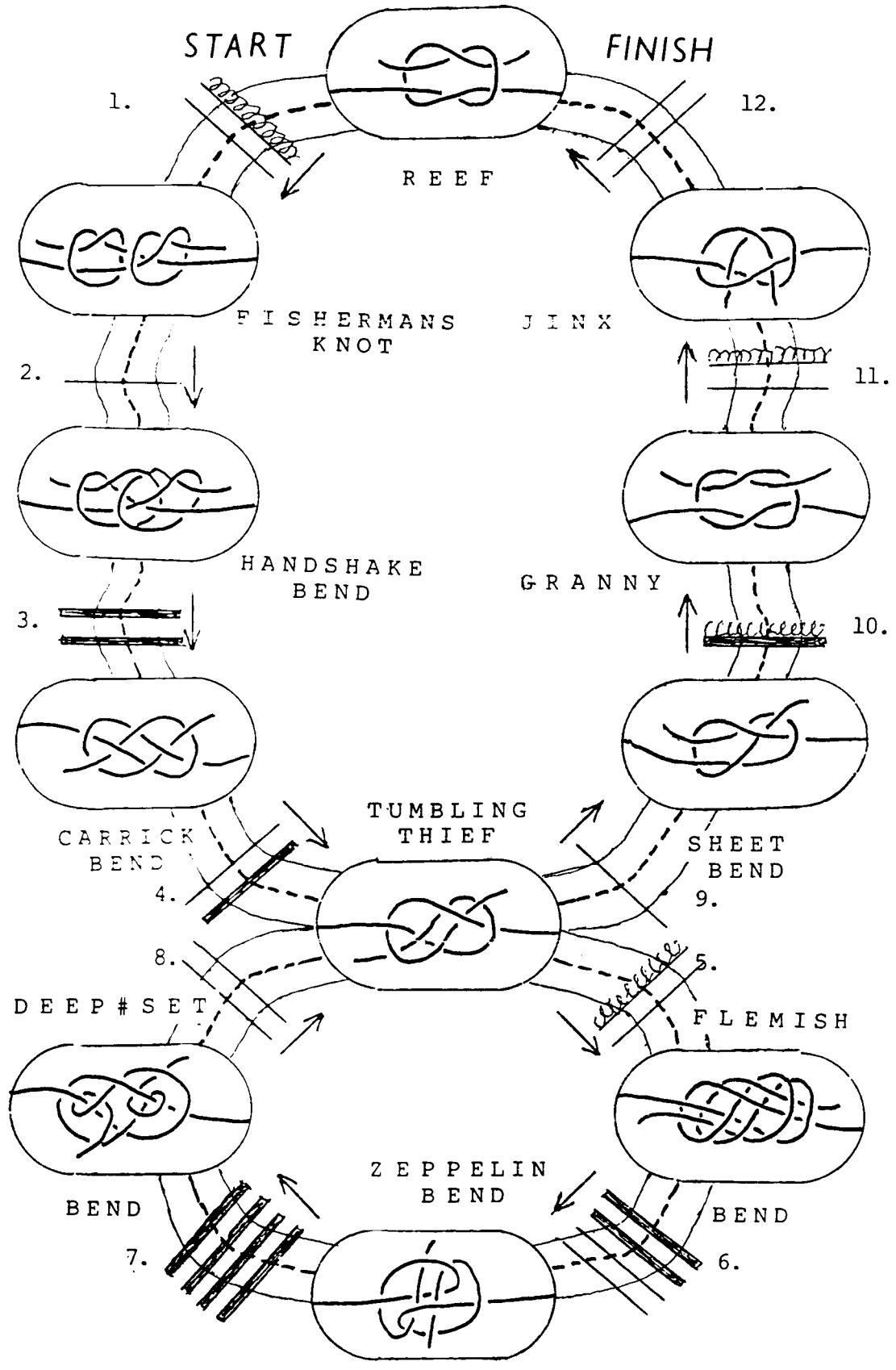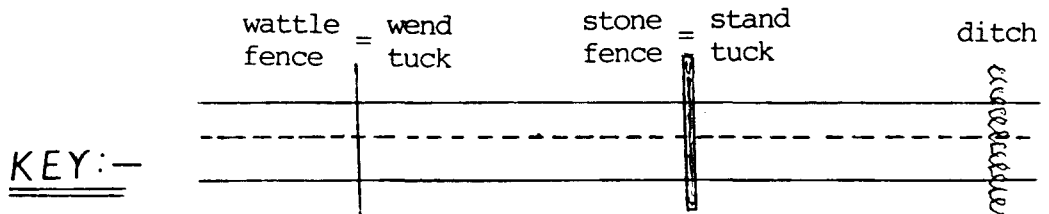switch occurs in fact at stage #11 of the course.)

SCORING

The numbered stages vary in difficulty of execution. This is
reflected in the scoring:

Stage #7 = 12 points; Stages #1, #3, #4, #6, #10 = 4 points each;
Stages #5, #11 = 2 points each; Stages #2, #8, #9, #12 = 1 point
each.

Maximum 40 points – Target 24 points or more.

Practise the easier stages first to gradually build up an
impressive score over the course as a whole.

KEY:—

wattle fence = wend tuck | stone fence = stand tuck | ditch

START   FINISH

1.   12.

R E E F

F I S H E R M A N S
K N O T

J I N X

2.

11.

H A N D S H A K E
B E N D

G R A N N Y

3.

10.

C A R R I C K
B E N D

T U M B L I N G
T H I E F

S H E E T
B E N D

4.

9.

8.

5.

D E E P # S E T

F L E M I S H

Z E P P E L I N
B E N D

B E N D

B E N D

7.

6.

DOWSE THAT LIGHT!

Knotting at Gloucester in 1988 I met Veronica WILLIAMS. As a child she was evacuated to the village of Thurnby in Leicestershire where she befriended the station master who was an ex-navy man and a knot tyer.

He had turksheads and cords with Matthew Walker knots worked onto the signal box levers to identify them in the blackout.

R.L.J.

MACRAME HAMMOCK SEAT (Opposite)

Dear Robert,

I enclose a page of drawings of a netted hammock-seat, which was brought to me during one of my demonstration mornings at our recent exhibition. I was asked whether I knew anyone who might be interested in making these commercially, because the lady concerned believes that she has an outlet for them. She is an Occupational Therapist working with the Leonard Cheshire Homes and told me that this hammock-seat had been acquired in Argentina.

I do not know of anyone personally, but I have prepared these drawings in the hope that "Knotting Matters" might publish them and, perhaps, find a potential supplier. In any case, it is an interesting project, not too difficult, and the finished product is both useful and comfortable.

I understand that there would be no objection to the netting being made in the more conventional way, with a netting-needle, like a fishing net, instead of the double mesh using Reef Knots as on the original.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Grainger.

CUCKAMUS END
CUCKAMUS LANE
NORTH LEIGH
WITNEY
OXON OX8 6RR.

20th November 1990.

NEWS ITEM...NEWS ITEM...NEWS ITEM

Did members see that New Zealand knot-man Dr Vaughan JONES was in 1990 elected a fellow of the Royal Society?

Later he was awarded the *Fields Medal* for his discoveries in knot theory. This is the mathematicians equivalent of the Nobel Prize; although no money award is given.

He has discovered several polynomial knot invariants; and his work has been found to have application to study of the D.N.A. molecule.

Both mathematicians and bioscientists are very excited by these discoveries.
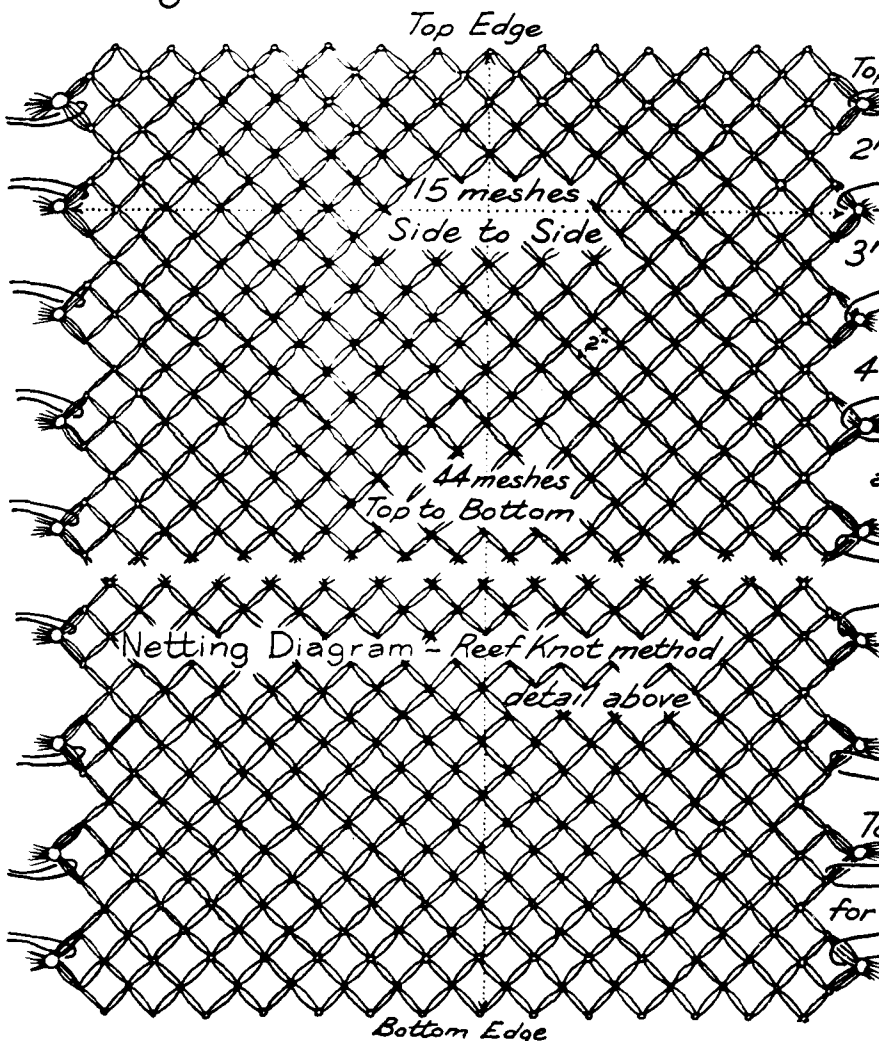
22 pairs of Nettles
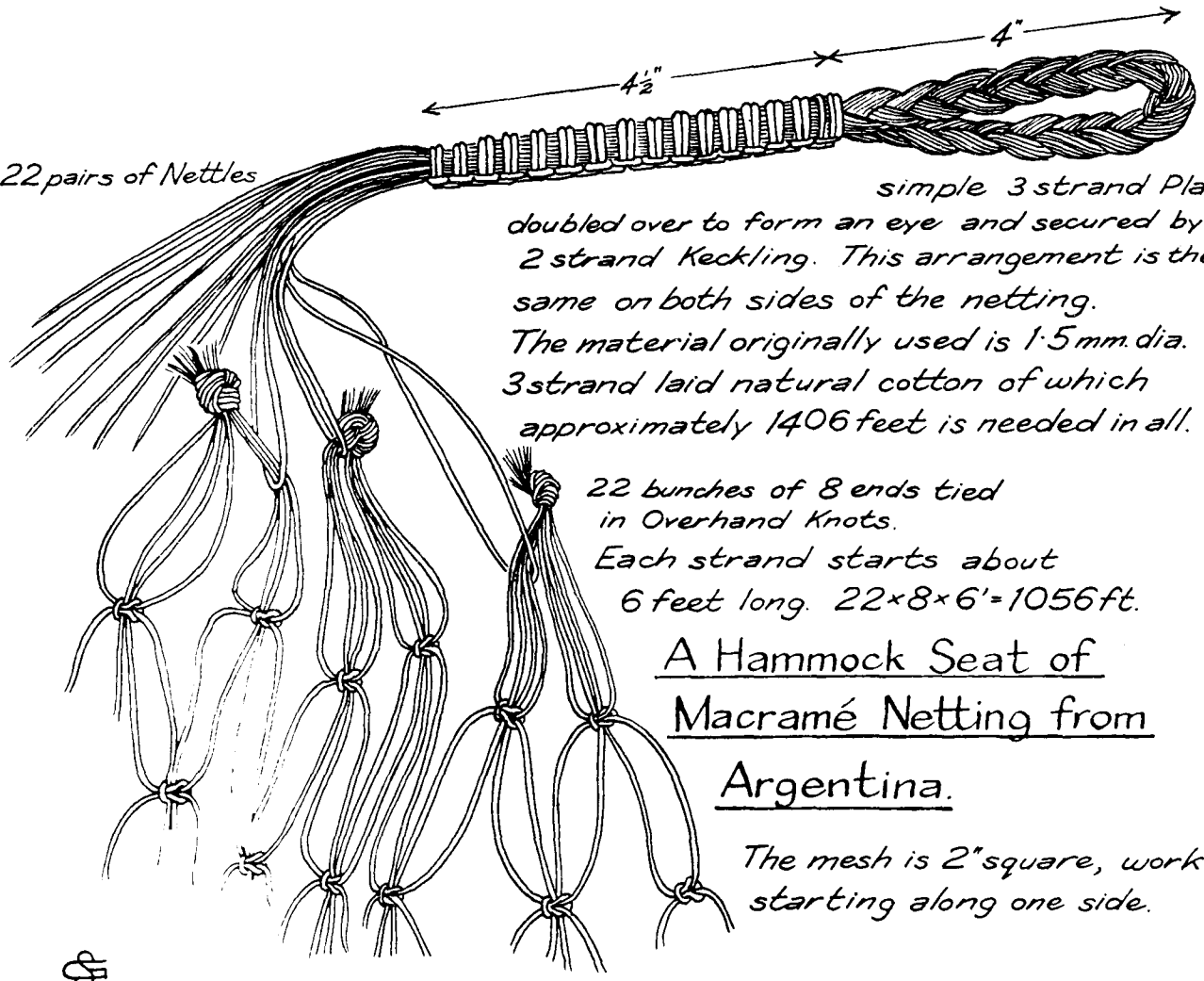
simple 3 strand Plait
doubled over to form an eye and secured by
2 strand Keckling. This arrangement is the
same on both sides of the netting.
The material originally used is 1·5 mm. dia.
3 strand laid natural cotton of which
approximately 1406 feet is needed in all.

22 bunches of 8 ends tied
in Overhand Knots.
Each strand starts about
6 feet long. 22×8×6'=1056ft.

A Hammock Seat of Macramé Netting from Argentina.

The mesh is 2" square, work
starting along one side.

Top Edge

15 meshes
Side to Side

2"

44 meshes
Top to Bottom

Netting Diagram ~ Reef Knot method
detail above

Bottom Edge

Top pair of Nettles 5" between
netting & keckling,

2nd pair 9" between,

3rd pair 12" between,

4th pair 15" and

all remaining pairs 19"
between netting & keckling.

Allow approximately 24"
more on each Nettle for
the doubled plaiting in the
Eye.

Total length of material required

for Nettles and Eyes is about 350ft.

4½"

4"

DOR MAKERS OF LAHORE by Cy Canute

Pakistan's kite-fighting festival of 'Basant' is held every Spring in the ancient city of Lahore. Kite fighting entails surviving aerial manoeuvres until you can get into position to cut your opponent's string by slicing it with your own. The loser's kite then falls to the ground. And you win. It is a skilful sport which unites the rich and the poor. Whole families are occupied in friendly competition with neighbours. Some individuals practise for hours each day.

The kite string ('dor') makers are itinerant traders. They set up shop wherever they can in the open air – for example, beneath an elevated section of highway – and stay until moved on by the authorities. The slender Dor is made from grass, twisted between posts stuck into the ground 50 yards apart.

Each yarn must be kept separate from the others until it has been painstakingly daubed by hand with a special paste. The paste, made from wheat, is dyed a bright colour. This helps the kite flyer to trace his kite string aloft and recognise it from all the other different ones.

An unusual ingredient, however, is ground-up broken glass. The powdered glass paste gives the brightly coloured string its cutting quality ('7-Up' bottles being thought by many to provide the best glass for this purpose). Unfortunately it also lacerates the hands of the flyers as they tug on the strings to control their skittish kites. Despite taping their fingers or wearing other protective devices, they suffer uncounted stinging nicks and slices. Serious performers proudly show their scarred hands as evidence of commitment.

Dor makers work from dawn to dusk to satisfy demand in the period leading up to Basant. There are no fat dor makers, as they walk back and forth up to 25 miles a day creating their extraordinary product. The finished dor is wound onto plastic ball-cocks. A ball can be as long as 3,000 yards and it costs in rupees the equivalent of just 23p. sterling.

These humble artisans, unknown outside kite flying circles, deserve a place in our archives with the ropemakers of naval dockyards and large commercial undertakings. For they too are craftsmen.

ROPELORE SNIPPET

Did you know that in 1966 the Royal Yacht BRITANNIA was supplied with 5" circumference mooring lines dyed by the makers, British Ropes Ltd., a special shade of blue to blend with the colour of her hull?

OBITUARY

The Reverend Tom Hodgson was killed in a road accident on the M42 motorway on Tuesday November 6th 1990. Aged 62, Tom was involved in projects helping handicapped people, down-and-outs and underprivileged children. He founded the Ladypool Project which provides canal narrowboat trips for disabled children. Near Christmas he often played Santa Claus on local Radio.

Tom showed knot tricks to his youngsters - and had them splicing bellpulls. In 1987 he appeared on T.V. tying knots for the I.G.K.T...he threw a polished Tugboat Bowline for the cameras.

Few knew of Tom's knotting, but fewer folk in the West Midlands didn't know The Reverend Tom. Some of our most needy young people have been robbed of a friend.

The Reverend Tom Hodgson
Birmingham Boat Show 1986

(Knotting by Bernard Cutbush and Geoffrey Budworth)

SQUARE MESH NETTING

Netting has exercised human minds and fingers since time
immemorial. In the last century net making devices were developed
using the traditional sheet bend, working a diagonal mesh. Examples
of old hand driven (more often leg-powered) machines can sometimes
be found in museums. The beauty of the diagonal mesh is its
simplicity. It needs only a single yarn to knot it - picking up the
hanging bights of nearby meshes.

To form a *square* mesh, on the other hand, needs a rather different
technique - essentially weaving one strand amongst many and
fashioning a link at each crossing point. Scrambling nets are
knotted with coils dropped in buckets, it is said. Safety nets and
cargo nets may have their crossings fixed in other ways...tucks of
whole strands or, much more laboriously, with tucks of part
strands. (Think about it. Either all of the weft strands or all of
the warp strands have one strand unlaid and relaid after each
tuck!)

Erecting fences with diagonal mesh netting can be a messy affair,
needing support wires fixed top and bottom. Or else it sags into a
wiry sausage. That's the problem with diagonal meshes, they're like
cloth cut on the bias - very stretchy.

Better, then, to make fence netting with a square mesh so it can be
suspended and tensioned easily. Unlike diagonal meshes, the meshes
don't have to be square to have right-angled crossings - any
rectangle is okay. No need for a uniform yarn size, either. We can
design our fence with a couple of stout warps, thin wefts and
'filler' warps, spaced as we please. Saves material too. One of the
warps could be electrified for stock or vermin control on farms.

Sounds great, until you come to knot 50 yards of the stuff with odd
mesh sizes in springy orange polypropylene.

Engineer Robin FEARNLEY has devoted the past 10 years and all his
life savings inventing and patenting a square mesh netting machine.
His 1990's high tech factory in Stroud, Gloucestershire, now flips
out 50 yard rolls of sheep, goat, rabbit and poultry netting.

The knot Robin uses is a constrictor formed in the warps capsized
into a secure crossing knot. Imagine forming a constrictor knot in
1.5mm polypropylene, throwing it into the air, picking up another
cord and darting it through the knot ALL with one hand behind your
back. Then give all the ends a quick tweak before the tangle falls
to the floor! That's what his clever machine does in all the warps
at once. Several times a second.

(Robin Fearnley's netting products are made and sold under the
RENCO brand name by the Rodborough Electric Netting Co. Ltd., Unit
K1A, Bath Road Trading Estate, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3QF)
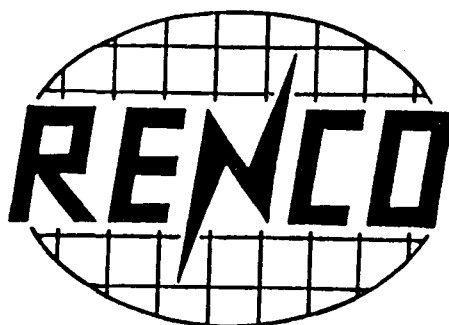
A COMPANION FOR CORRICK by Roger Miles

One of my favourite bends is Ashley's #1451, dubbed 'Corrick' by Dr Harry Asher (see Vol 1, ch 4, of his 'A New System of Knotting' Pub. I.G.K.T.), with the following layout.
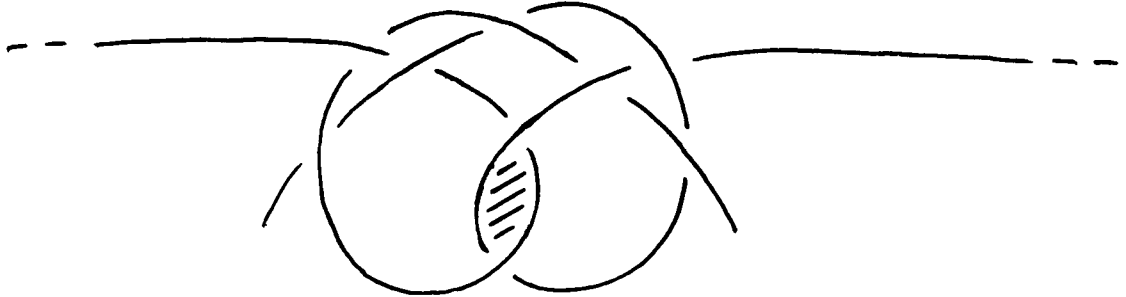
It has a beautiful diamond or 'rhomb' on one side and crossover on the other, as the knot tyer may readily verify.

A slightly more bulky, but no less beautiful, 'carbon copy' of Corrick has the basically different layout:
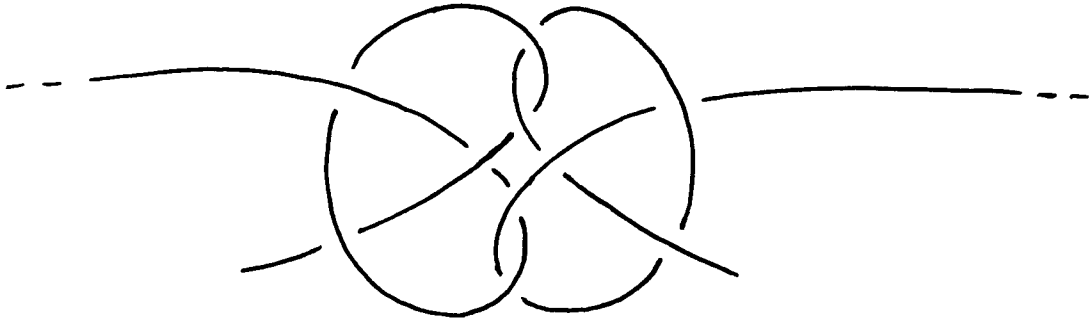
comprising two inter-penetrating overhand knots, this is more stable and probably stronger than Corrick. I propose the name 'Rhombic Bend' for it.

Actually, one may proceed from the above layout for the Corrick Bend to the Rhombic Bend in two ways:

a)   by introducing a 'twist' at the highest central crossing, so as to get the Rhombic layout;

b)   by completing two overhand knots, by passing the ends through the shaded area from opposite sides.

Alternatively, one may proceed from a completed Corrick to a Rhombic by 'lifting' the crossover, and forming overhand knots by passing the ends through the 'hole' so formed. However, in reverse, it seems one cannot easily proceed from a completed Rhombic to a Corrick.

SQUARE KNOTS A NEW WAY by Henry Gillespie

Greetings.

I recently discovered a bend I cannot find in Ashley and wondered if you were familiar with it. It seems closest to #1467, #1469 and #1471 although the method of tying seems different. For want of a better name I call it a hinge lock bend although I use it most often as a binding knot in the way a reef knot should be used.

It is a three stage, locking adjustable bend with a two-faced decorative final form otherwise known as a Square Knot, Chinese Crown Knot (Ashley #808) or Rustlers Knot (IGKT knot chart #12).

It's most secure in its final form.

Two characteristics seem to make it useful for situations where frequent adjustment is necessary or where, as in wrapping packages, tautness must be maintained until the knot is completed:

1.   The hinging action tends to maintain the proper tension of the moving parts.

2.   Throughout the closing/locking action the standing portions of the rope do not seem to appreciably loosen or tighten.

TO TIE

Rotate an open loop counterclockwise one turn and fold the closed loop down over the standing portion to form a figure-8 with one tucked end.

The other end of the loop is led in along the tucked end of the figure-8 and weaves over/under/over the unlocked segment of the figure-8. Now adjust the size of the loop by pulling more material through.

PULL TO SECURE
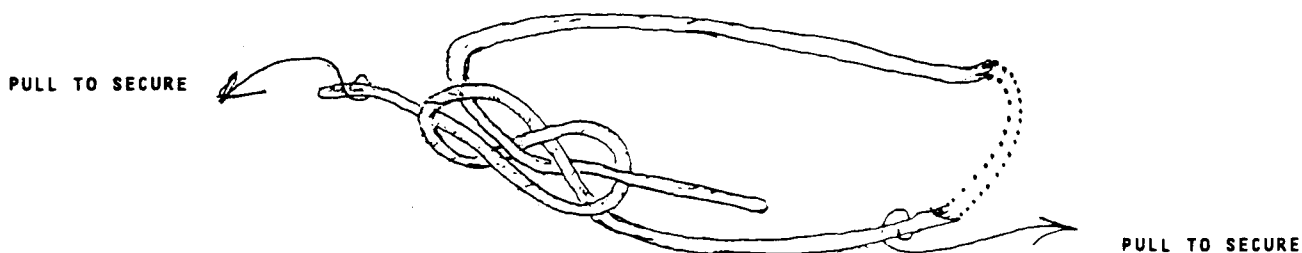
PULL TO SECURE

To secure the knot pull the ends of the figure-8, letting the working end be turned and nipped by the shrinking of the left bight of the figure-8.

PULL TO UNLOCK

PULL TO THIRD STAGE

PULL TO UNLOCK
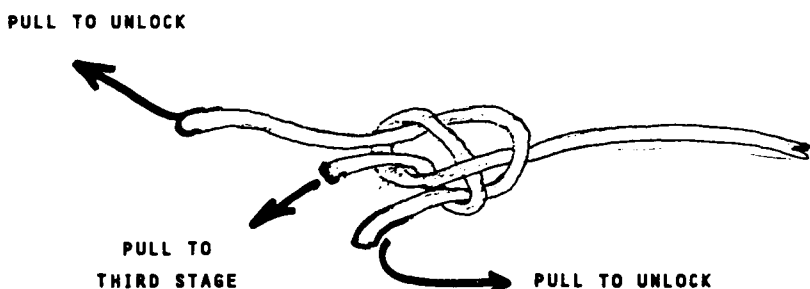
This is the second stage completed. It is reversed or unlocked by easing and pulling the ends

If the knot is kept loose and the swallowing action continued it
enters its third, more secure, phase – that of the square knot.
This cannot be reversed nearly as easily as the second stage but
makes a decorative lanyard knot.
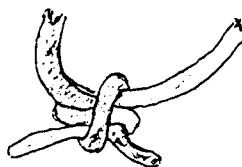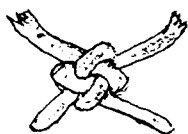
SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS

The knot works best in flexible braided nylon and not at all well
in stiffer materials. If a heavy load is placed on the rope it may
need to be loosened before it cycles (locks and unlocks) easily.

I find it most useful as a binding knot around a sleeping bag, the
cord of a stuff sack, the flap of a knapsack or the like where it
will not be untied but simply used to change the length of the
binding cord.

*It is NOT a knot for suspending valuable objects, especially
people, from buildings or cliffs.*

GET K*****D! Suggests Des Pawson

ACTUAL
SIZE
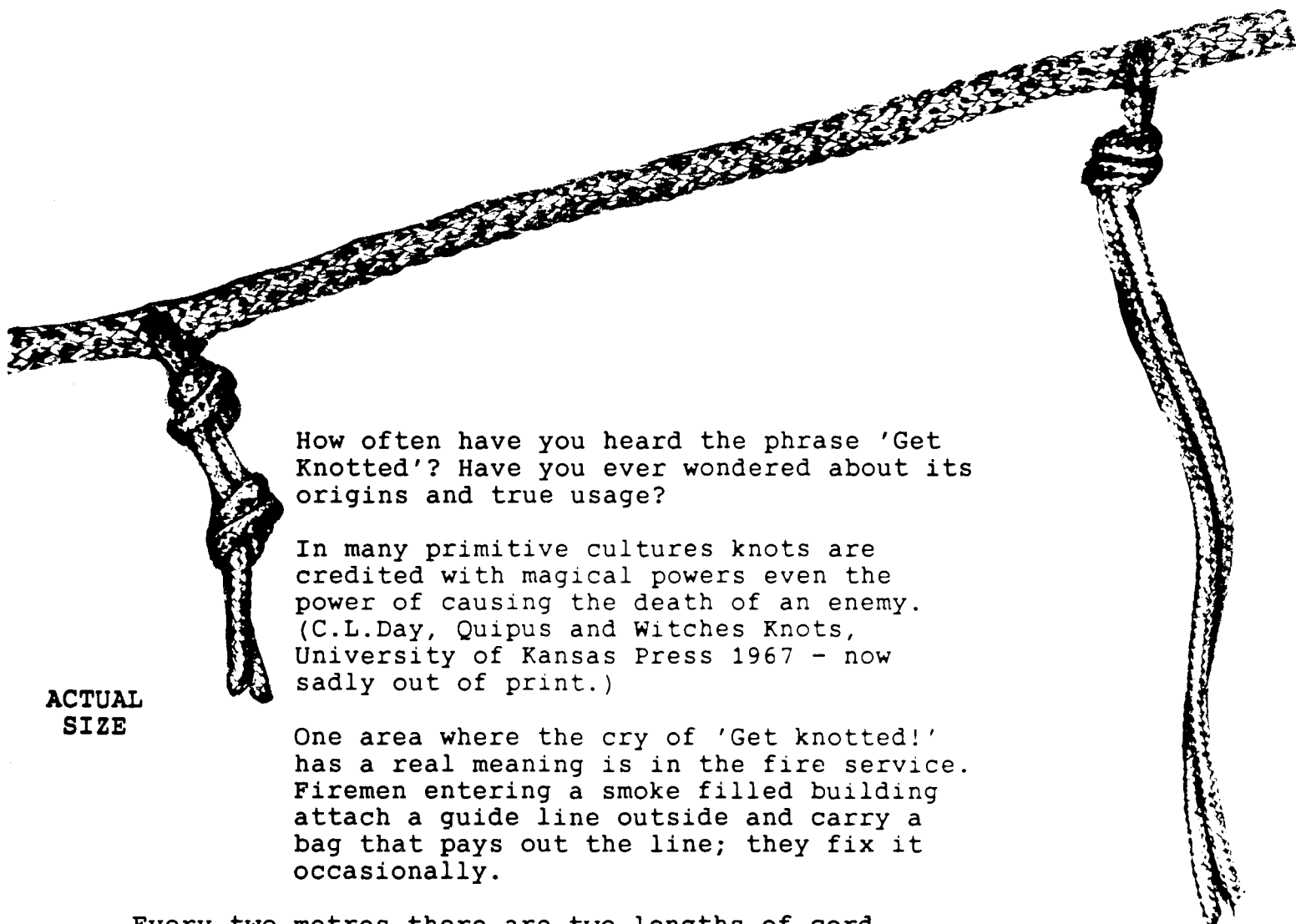
How often have you heard the phrase 'Get
Knotted'? Have you ever wondered about its
origins and true usage?

In many primitive cultures knots are
credited with magical powers even the
power of causing the death of an enemy.
(C.L.Day, Quipus and Witches Knots,
University of Kansas Press 1967 - now
sadly out of print.)

One area where the cry of 'Get knotted!'
has a real meaning is in the fire service.
Firemen entering a smoke filled building
attach a guide line outside and carry a
bag that pays out the line; they fix it
occasionally.

Every two metres there are two lengths of cord
thrust through the main line as a pair, as
illustrated. With this guide line firemen in
breathing apparatus mat find their way in and out
however disorientated they are in the dark, smoke-
filled building. They run their hands along the line
until they can feel the tails. The plain tail is
into the building and danger. The knotted tail is
the way out.

2m to next
pair

Hence their saying: GO AWAY...GET OUT...GET KNOTTED!

I understand from IGKT member and fireman Colin Grundy that this
refinement of the guide line was probably introduced about 30 years
ago after a serious incident in some smoke-filled basements in
London.

Des Pawson

OBITUARY

Ron Christian died in the autumn of 1990.

Born in the village of Ystradd Mynach, in the valleys of South Wales, Ron became a "Warspite Boy" and spent much of his life in the Merchant Navy. He developed his hobbies of knotting and modelling in bottles in between watches at sea. He served on cargo vessels, liners and tankers; being shipwrecked off the Newfoundland coast during the 1939-45 war on the *DANA II*.

Before his retirement Ron worked in the rope trade, splicing fibre ropes for Wrights Ropes in Birmingham. His knotting was shown by the I.G.K.T. at Wombourne in 1986.

Every artist does a self portrait and Ron was no exception. One of his dimple bottles had infixed a caricature of himself complete with his bag of tools building a model ship.

ChemText - for Drawing Knotted Structures?

Back in the spring of 1990 Desmond Mandeville pointed out that *chemical* structures have been fully systematised for close on a hundred years now. So why not knots?

More recently, the arrival of relatively cheap personal computers has been followed by improvements in software for drawing molecular structures, chemistry report writing and even setting up a database of structures. A company called *Molecular Design* of San Leandro, California has produced a set of computer programs including two called ChemText and ChemBase for doing just this.

Have we any knotting Chemists with experience of this kind of program? Would it help with classifying knots - differentiating the crossing points or giving a better view than a plane drawing?

CLOVE to CONSTRICTOR by Theo Slijkerman

Since 1886 I have written knot news
for scouts in the magazine of
Scouting Nederland - "Actie".

In the 16th of my articles entitled
"IN DE KNOOP" I published this
method for tying the constrictor
knot starting with a clove hitch.

Sometimes I prefer to teach
children new knots from already
well-known knots.

Theo Slijkerman
13th Oct 1990

Valkenhof 45
3862LK Nijkerk
Holland

fig. 1

fig. 2

fig. 3

fig. 4
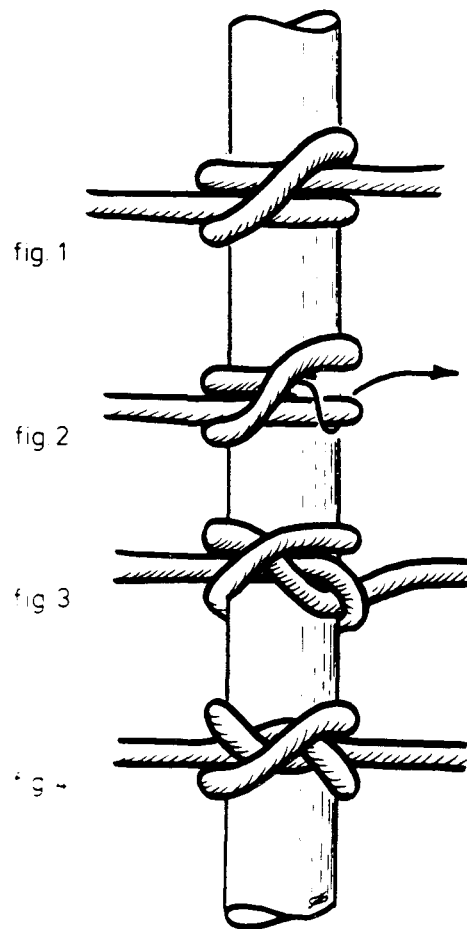
LETTER

Dear Robert,

Others might be interested in this tip, the effectiveness of which
surprised me.

To attempt to repair some storm damage, I needed to drive in wooden
stakes to support young trees with a pronounced lean. The first
couple of course split badly (even when the hammer did hit centre).

Believing that most problems can eventually be solved with a piece
of rope, I put on a simple whipping. The stakes were somewhat less
than 2 inches square and I used sash cord. Five or six tight turns
were enough; a couple of half hitches temporarily finished the
whipping. After each stake was driven home, the rope was removed
and used on the next one. It wasn't even necessary to cut the
trailing end.

Very simple, very cheap and very satisfying.

Regards,   50 Arethusa Way
                                                           Bisley, Woking
John Smith   Surrey
9th February 1990   GU24 9BX

PATENTED KNOT TYER

Dear Robert,

The original of this paper was sent to me by my daughter who lives very near the patentee of this "Devise used for the tying of a proper Bowline knot" - I do not know how or why she knew about the patent.

I tried to contact Mr Henderson and could not. I'll always be puzzled and entertained by wondering about the intentions of the inventor. Obviously he has given much time and effort to this with little prospect for gain.

Best Wishes

1647 East Earll Drive
Phoenix
Arizona

Edgar Sinder
2nd Jan '90

AZ 85016
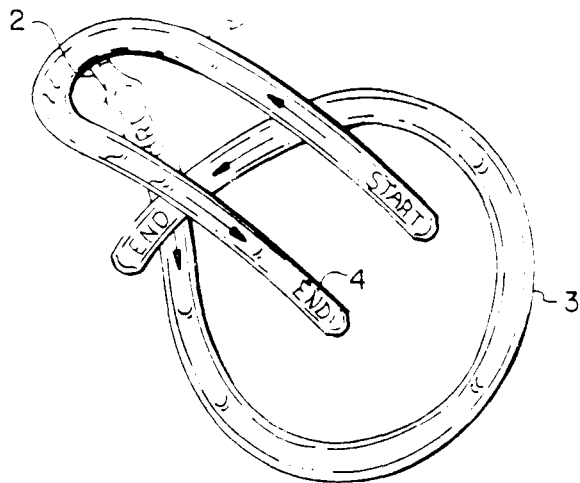
FIG 1
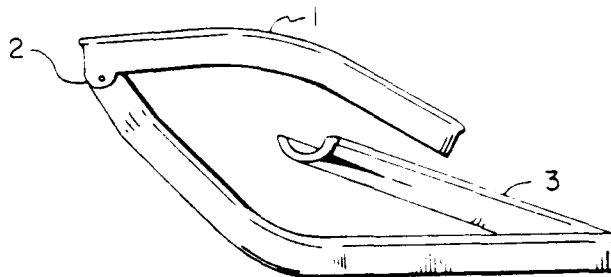
FIG 2

FIG 3

United States Patent [19]

Henderson, Jr.

[11] **Patent Number:** **4,572,555**

[45] **Date of Patent:** **Feb. 25, 1986**

[54] DEVICE USED FOR THE TYING OF A PROPER BOWLINE KNOT

[76] Inventor: Joseph R. Henderson, Jr., 9 Wilde Rd., Newton, Mass 02168

[21] Appl. No.: 710,476

[22] Filed: Mar. 11, 1985

[51] Int. Cl.⁴ B65H 69/04

[52] U.S. Cl. 289/17

[58] Field of Search 289/2, 17

[56] **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

1,210,845 1/1917 Roth 289/17

1,446,525	2/1923	Tischhauser	289/17
3,336,063	8/1967	Remmers	289/2
3,591,217	7/1971	Melzer	289/2

Primary Examiner—Louis K. Rimrodt

[57] **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed is a device which acts as a guide in forming a particular knot with rope, string, wire or other cordage. The guide consists of 2 pieces or lengths of a rolled, formed or shaped material, the top outer surface of which is concave (in the preferred embodiment) to hold the rope, string, wire or other cordage as the knot is being formed.

1 Claim, 3 Drawing Figures

Extract from United States Patent Number 4,572,555
Dated Feb.25,1986

LETTER

Dear Robert,

I saw a computer comic called "Lets Compute" No.3 aimed at 12 year
olds. I thought - that's suitable for me. When I bought it and
looked inside there was a program in *LOGO* to draw a Cowboy Hitch on
my Amstrad computer.

The young man who wrote the program was Neil Melville, aged 10, of
Maidstone, Kent. I use the knot as a party trick and have never met
anyone that could tie it. Where did Neil learn it?

Yours sincerely   24 Station Rd.
                                                   Airdrie
                                                   Scotland
Jim Garsides   ML6 7BZ
13th Oct '90

FANCY WORK from the Archive
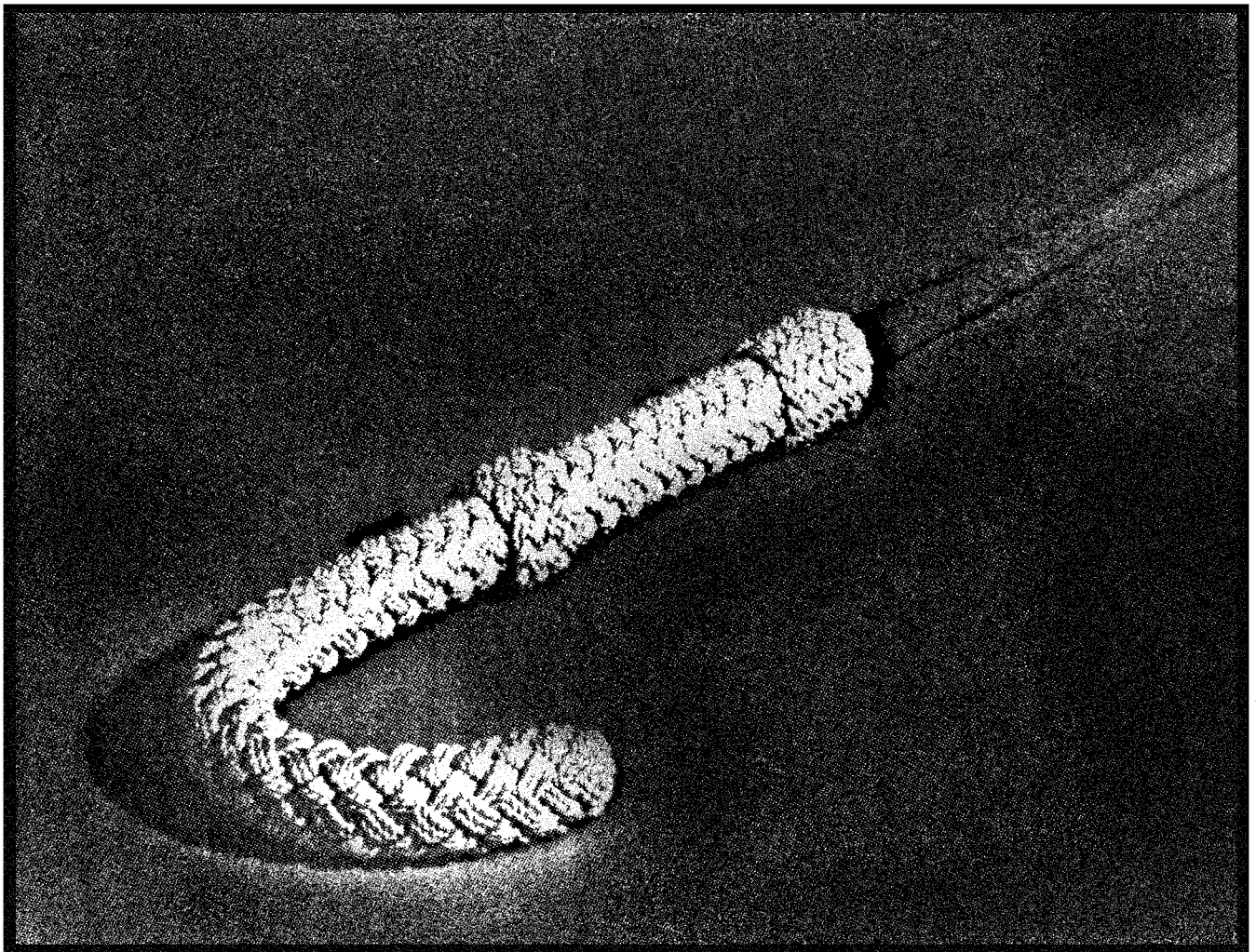
DECORATIVE HANDLE ON WALKING STICK - 1980's

ERIC DAHLIN
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

INDEX - ISSUES 30, 31, 32 & 33

PRINCE OF THE PALACE   BY MIKE ATKINSON

YOU RANG SIR?

From Birmingham Daily News   Nov '89

JUST A LOOSE END

The late Dr. E.A. Hunter, IGKT founder-member who died recently aged 85, was a consultant physician at Redhill County Hospital in the late 1950's and treated James Nicoll, Knot craftsman, although neither one knew of the other's interest in knots.

He went on - it now transpires - to join the New Zealand Shipping Line in the 1960's as a ships doctor. Well, now. The commodore of that fleet was Capt. Paul P.O. Harrison, Master Mariner and author of *The Harrison Book of Knots* published (1964) by Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd. I wonder if they ever met?

EDITORITAIL

LATE ARRIVAL OF KNOTTING MATTERS

The council apologises for the delay some members suffered in receiving issue 33 of Knotting Matters. There was an industrial dispute at one of London's main post sorting offices which, hopefully, will not recur.
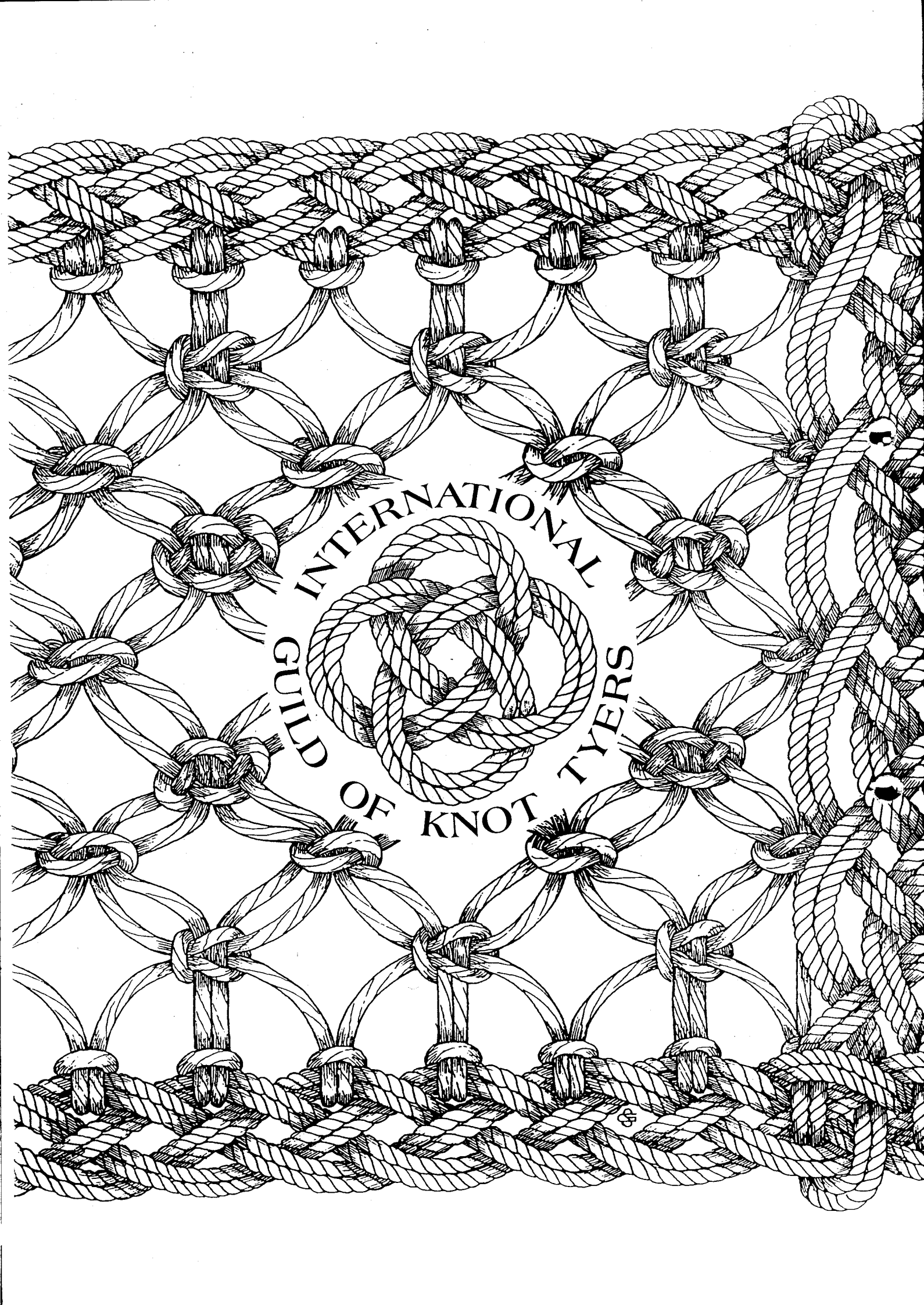
ARTICLES FOR KNOTTING MATTERS

Thank you all for your contributions to K.M. - don't worry if you do not see them in print straight away. All material is kept for the future. I sift through my files each quarter so your stuff shouldn't be accidentally overlooked.

Please, though, bear a few points in mind:

1. I am NOT an artist. If your article needs a drawing then it, too, must come from you. And preferably on a separate piece of paper so I can cut it out and glue it in. (If I receive drawings on the front and back of the same sheet and take a photocopy a shadow comes through from the other side!)

2. Another tip about diagrams - DRAW BIG using a black felt tip pen. I can reduce the size by photocopying on a top quality copying machine. Pencil and blue/red ink copy too feint.

3. Your diagrams will be photocopied a couple more times after I cut and paste them - once to produce the galleys that are sent to the printer and once by the printer to make K.M. I cry when I receive really good articles - camera ready, as they say - that have been put through a clapped out photocopier before I get them. Feint or streaky or wet process waxy copies are useless to me, no matter how well laid out, drawn or typed. They get filed for the next editor and the archive.

4. My favourite articles are no more than a few sides of A4 long - I am very happy to type them up from your handwritten notes slotting in your diagrams or photographs where you indicate. It's a good idea to PRINT any unusual names (of knots or people). I like really short items too - if it takes only two lines to make your point then so be it.

5. If you have a home computer for typing I *may* be able to print your article straight from a disk, saving me the job of retyping. I already do this with a couple of members who have AMSTRAD PCW 8256 machines - they send me items on 3" floppies.

    Shortly I will also be able to insert text files from 5 1/4" floppy disks. (Typically WORDSTAR or ASCII text files produced on an IBM compatible machine such as an AMSTRAD PC1512 or PC1640.)

6. One picture is worth a thousand words - in ANY language.

7. Long pieces, more than about 8 sides, are better sent to the IGKT Council to consider for publication as a special paper, otherwise they are bound to be chopped about - probably beyond recognition and probably by the next editor.

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS