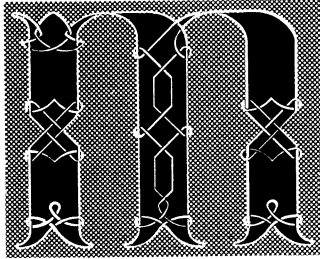
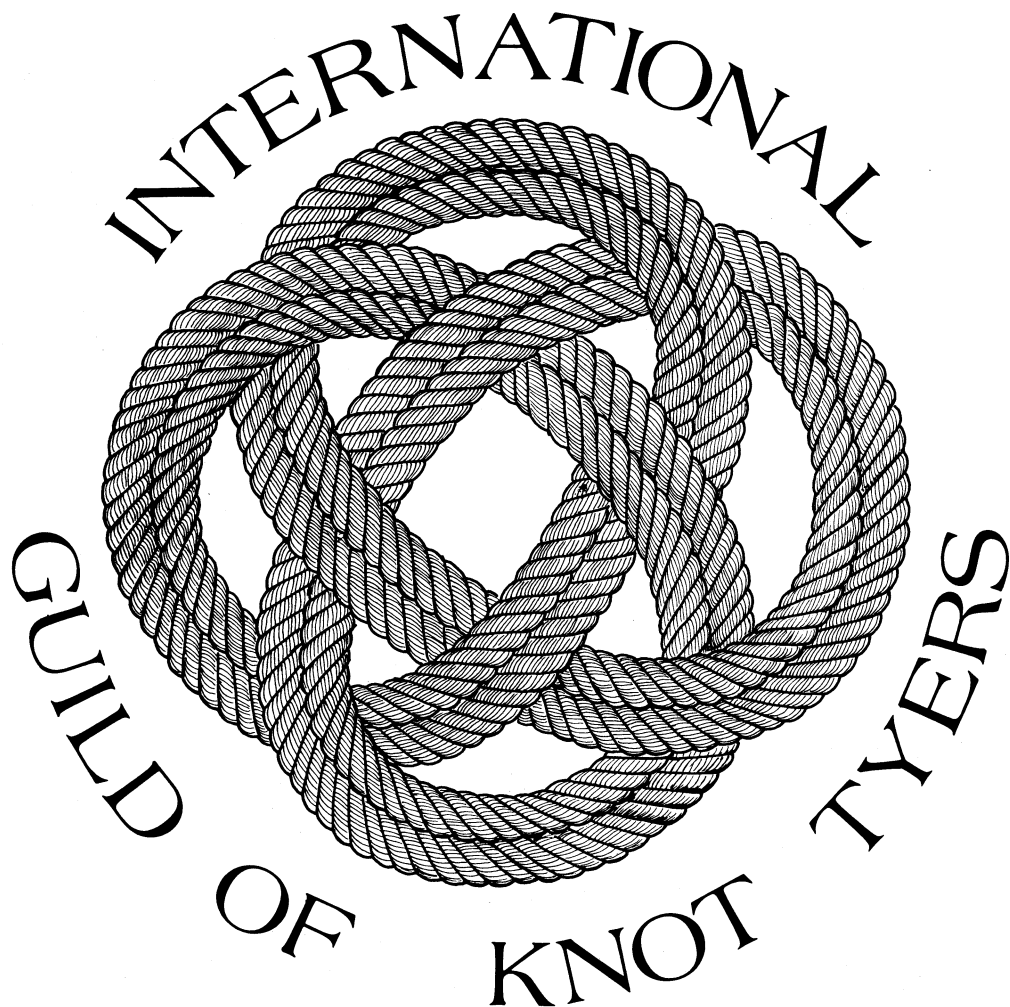


Knottling



Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE



'KNOTTING MATTERS'

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Maybe you did not know you had one, but at the meeting on 16 April 83 you did me the honour of voting me into this position. I do not know why, but maybe some of you do. Perhaps I should tell you a little about who you have got.

My introduction to ropework came through Scouting, like it did for many more of you. I joined as a cub aged 8 and am still a member 62 years later. My introduction to writing about knots came in the early thirties, when I had already sold a few practical articles. I saw what I thought was a terrible knotting article in an American yachting magazine and thought I could do better. The editor welcomed my article and the thing developed into a long series.

Before World War II I was an engineer, but with a family craftwork tradition and a growing interest in boating as well as writing. I spent six years in the RAF. At one time I was the only man on a station able to do hundreds of splices in fiddly 7-strand tiny spring steel wire. After the war and ever since, I have lived on my wits, writing, drawing and photographing for publication, as well as travelling the world and designing boats - I guess some older readers have paddled PBK canoes they built from my plans

I have written for a large number of magazines and produced a variety of practical books. I have kept up my American connections and still do a lot of work for publishers over there. My most recent book (my 80th.), on an aspect of furniture-making (of all things), has just been shipped across the Atlantic.

Ropewise, I am not really a fancywork man. I am more concerned with practical applications of knots and splices. I have done quite a lot of rigging, in some unusual applications besides marine, including a brewery.

Thanks again for the honour (as a mid-Atlantic writer I nearly spelled it 'honor') you have given me. If there is anything I can do for you, please get in touch.

Best wishes

*Percy W Blandford*

T H E A L P H A B E N D An up-to-date Alphabet of  
Knots & Bends

It could be a schoolboy's dream - to construct a code by which close secrets can be communicated along a length of cord - and has been attempted before, most notably on behalf of the blind (as a sort of alternative to Braille). But not, I think, with the thoroughness of what follows, which has occupied the writer, on and off, for the space of twenty years.

KNOTS, for the vowels, and BENDS, for the consonants, have been individually matched to the letters of the alphabet. Roughly half, for a start, were chosen by the initial letter of a NAME in common use (some bends of course have several); the other half by SHAPE. The thing is, that for some, names are lacking; or those available are hopelessly technical and longwinded. This should not disqualify any really worthwhile bend: a bend of simplicity, symmetry, interest, utility or some combination of these qualities. It has not been allowed to do so. Vowels can 'speak' for themselves, and need no names; the KNOTS assigned to them have been chosen with the greater care. But for some BENDS (including one or two believed to be original it has been necessary to coin a name. Single quotes '....' are used to identify these 'invented' names.

Not all such attempts will be equally successful, and NEWSLETTER readers will judge this matter for themselves. Suffice it to say that, when read aloud in alphabetical order, with the vowels for pauses, they constitute a light-hearted rhyming jingle, which may make it just that much easier to memorise the names and shapes of twenty-two significant BENDS, and to appreciate the variety in six simple KNOTS.

The six knots may be matched, as here, with the five vowels of the alphabet and the ampersand (&); on the other hand, and in a slightly different order, with the numbers 0-5. Further seven knots for the numbers 6-12 inclusive are held over for another occasion. So also are seven 'candidate' bends, each of undoubted merit, which just failed to make the alphabet; these are provisionally assigned to the letter combinations ch gh ph sh th wh and -ng. Punctuation, the numbering of sentences in a sustained text on cord, the family relationships of the bends, and so on - all such matters must await another opportunity. Today, the A L P H A B E N D may speak for itself; and the many dilemmas that dogged its construction are best glossed over, at any rate for the present.

DESMOND MANDEVILLE

**A** A simple back-tuck on E (below) gives rise to a three-part KNOT, which serves agreeably both for letter A and for figure 3.

the Barrel Knot

**B** Ashley rates it highly. When fully drawn up (he says) it may have the ends cut right away, till you no longer see them. That way it looks like a knot - a barrel-shaped knot - but is in fact a secure bend.

the Carrick

**C** The classic over and under structure from which many other bends derive. As tied it makes a decorative flat bend, that distorts on drawing up, but remains secure. The leads should enter opposite.

the Drawbend 'Double'

**D** A typical drawing bend is the Harness Bend but a slight variant is the more effective to handle. They are so alike in function that I call them DeedleDum and DeedleDee. Both are needed here (and 'Dum' is the Colly Knot, 1961).

**E** Of all letters the most common in use, E enjoys the simplest Morse sign, and merits too the simplest KNOT - which serves also for figure 1.

the Fisherman's

**F** In form two E knots that slide together and lock. Excellent in slippery gut. Derives simply from the Reef R. (Strictly, it's the Fisherman's Knot the Fisherman's Bend is something different and really a hitch)

the Granny

G

An old favourite. Tends to slip, but not to capsize like the Reef. Is in fact of higher symmetry than the Reef. Converts readily to C, H, J, K, L. and M, and to the elegant, centre-tucked 'candidate' bend ph.

the 'Hubble Bubble'

H

Discovered in 1978 by Dr. Edward Hunter and often named after him, this bend led indirectly to the founding of the I.G.K.T. A simple, twin-tuck derivative of G, and cousin of M and N, it fully deserves a place here.

I

A slender figure-of-eight suits letter I; as a two-part KNOT, it serves very well also for figure 2.

the 'Jinx'

J

A Jekyll-and-Hyde bend, existing in two forms, one stable and one very unstable. Here we have the stable form, but a switch can occur, and hence the name - better surely than the Whatknot coined by Ashley. Important.

the 'Kilkenny'

K

A single extra tuck to a G, a J, or an L yields this very dependable bend  
- a flat bend that does not lose its shape, as C does. In Irish history, Kilkenny castle took the place of Carrick.

the 'Latin Lasso'

L

Hitch a Constrictor over a cord's end, and pull tight. The two capsize to give this useful, L-shaped, short-end bend. Often described as the single Carrick Bend, it merits better than Ashley in his book allows.

the Matthew Walker

M

Used here with opposed leads, i.e. as a bend. Derives simply from G, and converts to F, H, and V. Shares with G, C and N the top class for structural symmetry, the triaxial symmetry class.

the 'Neat & New'

N

An improbable bend - will it ever hold together? It does! All bends of this high symmetry, however, will distort under a heavy pull. Will convert to H and (a little surprisingly) to Z.

O

Phoebe Ashley's little KNOT is the natural for both letter and figure 0.  
The cross-tied variant suits equally for symbol &, and figure 4.

the 'Poor Man's Pride'

P

The invert of N and a most reliable bend, better even than B. Was used in the 1930s by Rosendahl for tethering American airships (the name here was coined in 1961, unaware of the earlier use). A centre-symmetric bend.

the 'Querrv'

Q

Two knots that need not touch, making a secure bend yet adjustable for length, like a sheepshank. Put a twist into the ends, if you wish, before drawing tight, and so lay up the mid-part into a two-strand rope!

the Reef

R

More popular than it deserves; but used e.g. for reefing sails, the propensity to capsize is an asset rather than a risk. Converts readily to F, J, V; to Drawbend Dee; and to the Carrick with adjacent leads.

the 'sure' sheet Bend.

S

The one really indispensable bend to master. Known also as the Weaver's Knot (after a particular way of tying it); identical in structure, too, with the Bowline. Very closely related to T, (below).

the 'Tumbling' Thief

T

The Thief exists in 'both stable and unstable forms. As shown, it draws up well and is secure. Like the Reef, however, it will capsize - in two stages. Tucked centrally, it gives a fine 'candidate' bend th.

U

A double overhand KNOT is simple enough to tie, and will serve equally for letter U and for figure 5.

the overhand

V

Not the popular, rather weak 'bend with parallel leads, which deserves no place here, but the similar structure with opposed leads : the Ring, or Water Knot - a secure bend, related to F, G, M and R.

'I Wonder ...? and'

W

'I wonder will it hold me - and will I survive' - the bend used by rock-climbers to join climbing ropes. (As the Fisherman's is a double E, so this, the Double Fisherman's, is a double U, i.e. a W -!)

the 'hot-X-bend'

X

Flat like a bun, cf. K; but the ends merge opposite, not on the same side. Consists of two E knots, back-to-back, and is a centre-Symmetric structure, related to P and T. Shown me in 1979 by W. Ettrick Thomson.

'Yippy aYe, Yippy aYe'

Y

Letter Y is both vowel and consonant; and this structure can be read either as a KNOT with a protruding bight - or else, with the bight cut, as a rather unusual BEND; The name reflects the tying of it (Farmer's Loop).

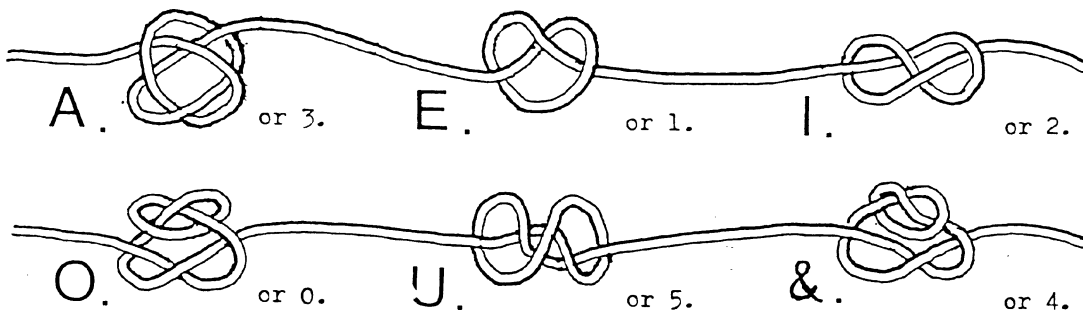
for the 'izzard'...

Z

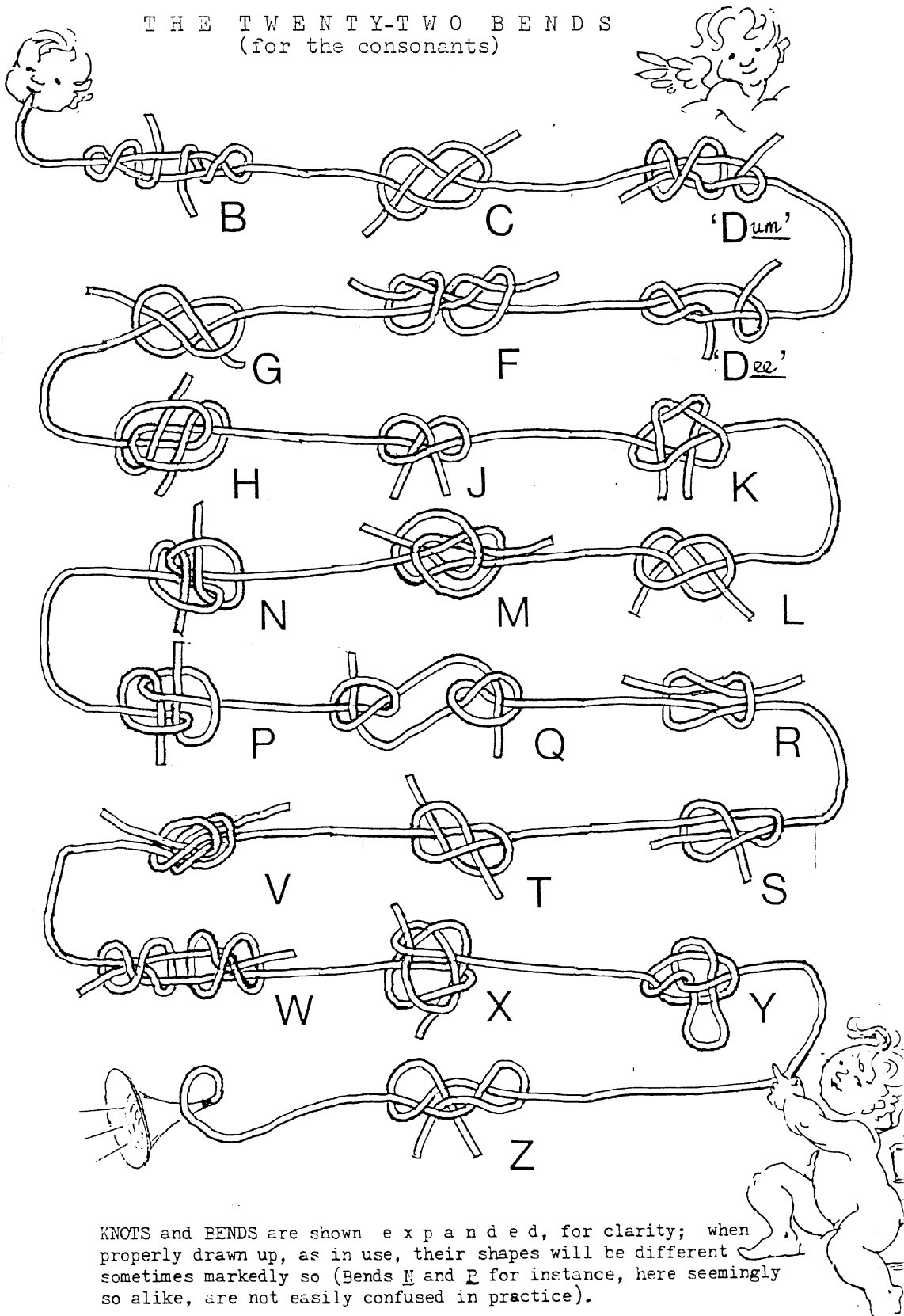
Izzard is an old name for letter Z. The structure here - a double Harness bend with parallel ends - is very important, quite well reflects the shape of the letter Z, and probably deserves the simpler name.

is the End.

THE SIX KNOTS  
(for the vowels)



THE TWENTY-TWO BENDS  
(for the consonants)



KNOTS and BENDS are shown e x p a n d e d, for clarity; when properly drawn up, as in use, their shapes will be different sometimes markedly so (Bends M and P for instance, here seemingly so alike, are not easily confused in practice).

PROFILE OF A KNOTSMAN by the Editor

When trans-Pacific, single-handed oarsman Peter Bird was taken aboard the Royal Australian Naval patrol boat 'Bendigo' off the Great Barrier Reef in the Coral Sea on June 14th. this year, he may have spotted some superb fancy ropework. For 'Bendigo' was due - the last I heard - to be presented with a bellrope and a set of lifebuoy rosettes from the hands of an I.G.K.T. founder member: and when the storm-tossed mariner subsequently stepped ashore at Cairns, in Queensland, he was close to where that particular Guild member farms and raises his large family, when he is not serving with his Sea Cadet Unit or engaged in knotting.

CHARLES THOMASON's name came to notice in this country a couple of years ago when he wrote to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, enquiring about the U.K. knotting scene. Prince Philip put him in touch with us. Photographs and specimens of his work soon followed, confirming his claims to be considered a ropeworker. When the inaugural meeting was arranged aboard R.R.S. 'Discovery' on 15th. April 1982, Charles THOMASON was one of two overseas founders (the other being Rob CHISNALL - see Issue No. 3) whose money and good wishes helped launch the Guild.

Readers will already know from previous issues how Charles was inspired during service with the R.A.N. by yarns of the old-timers' knotting know-how to produce even better stuff himself. Other members attending meetings will have marvelled at his magnificent bellropes formed like Parliamentary maces with Imperial crowns atop.-

He joined the R.A.N. as a youth and was allocated the number J25/52. The R.A.N. College had 4 entry names - Cook, Philip, Flinders and Jervis, so his number denoted that he was 25th. in alphabetical order of entry during the Jervis year 1952. This individual identifying mark is now stamped into the stainless steel eyebolt securing each of his bellropes. He is also proud of family origins at Fetlar in the Shetlands, feeling that perhaps his affinity for knots stems from them.

Now aged 45, Charles visited Britain as a student at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth; and, when next he comes, it is likely to be as a knot-sman. For, since the untimely death of his wife in 1980, his heart has not been in farming. She was, he tells me, the best critic of his ropework and encouraged him greatly in the transition of his work ". . . from bulk to balance". He hopes to come to the U.K. in due course, when he will no doubt be exploring the possibilities of a living earned through ropeworking.

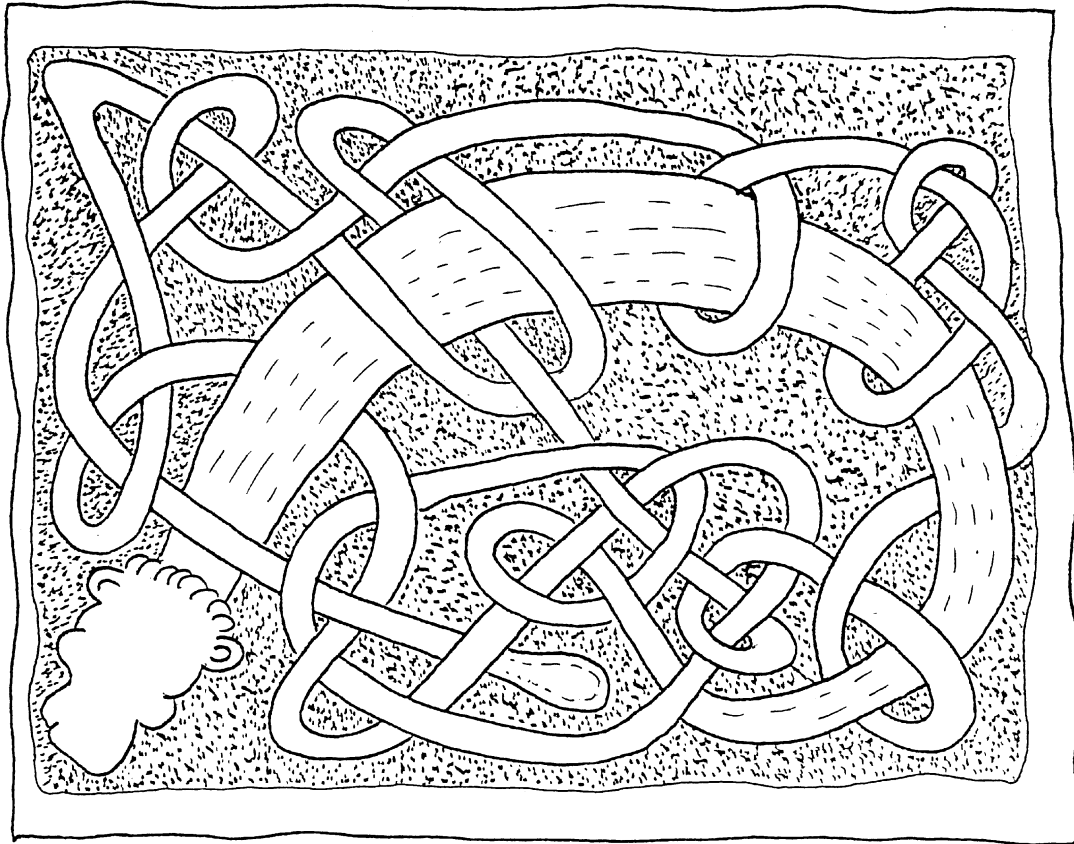
Charles THOMASON was our first Australian member. His work is on many R.A.N. warships, and - of course - one bellrope is displayed aboard the Royal Yacht 'Britannia'. He also gave a bellrope to the Governor of Queensland (an old C.O. from R.A.N. days) together with information about the I.G.K.T. He is a man with a high regard for traditional knotting and an inventive craftsman with an artist's eye, keen to learn yet seeking mastery of his medium. We're proud of him, and assure him of a warm welcome anytime.

#### QUOTATION

String was not sold in balls until about 1820, consequently most boxes must date from the 19th. century. Most of them are turned in wood and have a circular aperture, but examples can be found in the shape of barrels, fruit or eggs. Occasionally, the collector may be lucky enough to find one with a cutting blade.

( 'Boxes - Collecting for Tomorrow' , by Brian Cole, pub. in Lon-. don by Pitman Publishing Co. Ltd. (1976) )

#### ANGLO-SAXON CARVING.



Drawing of a cast taken from part of a stone cross at Rowberrow church, near Winscombe in the County of Avon, now exhibited in the museum at Weston-Super-Mare.

#### HAULBOWLINE ISLAND

In the harbour of Cork, located on Ireland's South coast, is the site of the earliest yachting association, the Water Club, formed in 1720. Founder members were local aristocracy and gentry, members of the country's English ruling class; but what a delightful name, given its cruising associations, for this location . . . Haulbowline Island!



BRITISH ROPES NEWS RELEASE

UK NYLON ROPE BEATS WORLD RECORD - British Ropes, a Bridon subsidiary, has received an order for the world's largest and strongest man-made fibre ropes. Ordered by Field Enterprises Constructions (UK) Ltd., a member of the Heerema Group, on behalf of Conoco (UK) Ltd., the ropes will be used for a temporary mooring system for the Hutton Field tension leg platform (TLP) currently being constructed in Scotland.

The 30 inch circumference (240mm dia.) Braidline nylon braid-on-braid rope will have a nominal breaking load of 1,200 tonnes and will be supplied in the form of ten grommet assemblies each measuring 110 metres on the double complete with a galvanised thimble at either end, thus giving an assembled breaking strength of 2,400 tonnes. The grommets will be manufactured at the Charlton, London, plant of Bridon Fibres and Plastics (British Ropes' sister company).

These nylon grommets will form part of an eight-point temporary mooring system which will anchor the hull of the TLP in the Moray Firth, Scotland, during the mating of the deck to the hull and also during the outfitting period. Two grommets will be connected to each of the four main hull columns and each grommet will pass from the hull to a tensioning barge. The remaining section of the temporary mooring system will consist of anchor chain up to 114mm dia. connected to high holding power anchors. Two grommets will be kept as spares.

Nylon Braidline was chosen for this purpose in preference to steel wire rope because of the extreme flexibility of the rope and its high strength to weight ratio as well as its excellent stretch characteristics and ability to absorb shock loadings during storm conditions.

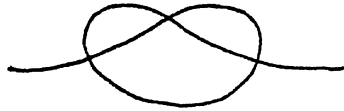
The largest Braidline rope made by Bridon Fibres and Plastics to date at the Charlton plant is 24 inch (192mm dia.) for use on offshore single point moorings. It is understood that no other rope manufacturer has yet made a 30 inch circ. man-made fibre rope. However, back in 1858, a 47 inch circ. coir or natural fibre rope was made by John and Edwin Wright of Birmingham to launch the British liner "Great Eastern". British Ropes recently completed the production of a 7.1/2 inch dia. wire rope, which is another world record in wire rope manufacture. This rope will be used in connection with the final stages of construction of Phillips Petroleum's Maureen Field platform in the North Sea.

The Hutton production platform will be the world's first commercial application of a Tension Leg Platform and will eventually be moored by vertical tubes or 'tethers' to piled foundation templates on the seabed in a water depth of 485 feet (148 metres). It will be operated by Conoco on behalf of the other Hutton Field partners: Britoil, Gulf, AMOCO, Gas Council, Mobil, Amerada and Texas Eastern North Sea Inc.

HOW TO DRAW KNOTS by Geoffrey Budworth

Tying knots is sometimes easier if you can draw them too. No artistry is needed - just a little know-how:-

Stage 1 Reproduce the knot pattern with a single line in pencil.

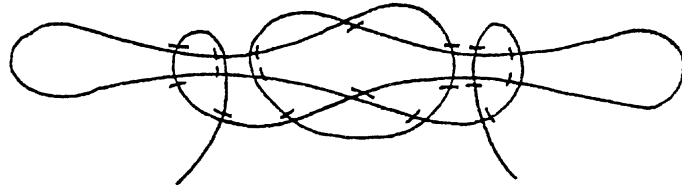
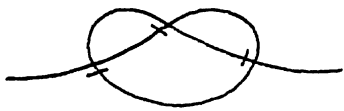


simple, overhand  
or thumb knot



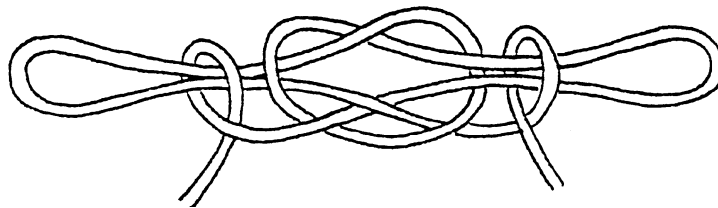
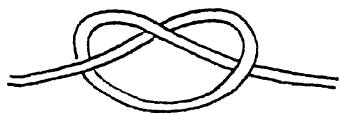
fireman's chair knot

Stage 2 Indicate the 'over-and-under' sequence; copy from a book illustration or a specimen tied for the purpose, until you can do it without such examples.



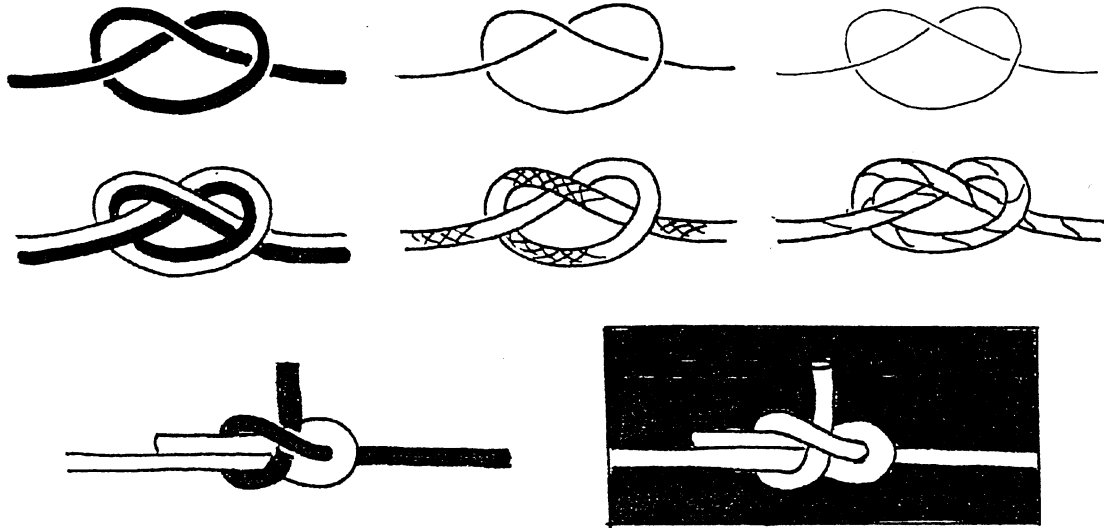
This may be adequate for a working drawing which is to be laid on a cork board or similar surface and the knot created by pinning the cord over it, going over and under at all the right places.

Stage 3 Diagrams can be easier to follow if the second line has been drawn in, and crossing-points are cleaned up with an eraser.



Stage 4 Use black fibre-tip (Tempo) or rollerball (Pentel) types of pen for permanent drawings and for photocopies. Using different line thicknesses can be both labour saving and effective. Multi-strand knots can be clearer when each strand is a different colour, but colours may not photocopy well. Instead, draw one cord black and the other plain; or suggest the cord's surface texture (strands or braid) with a few lines of cross-hatching. Alternatively, highlight the whole thing by filling in the background.

n.b. Water-based pens are preferable, so avoid spirit-based ones (the smelly 'magic' or permanent markers) unless your drawing really must be waterproof.



Freehand drawings are alright. Indeed, they appear more natural for this subject. However, ambitious Turk's Heads, mats and other decorative two-dimensional designs, will - when tied - need to be symmetrical. For this reason, take a little more care with the drawings; construct guide-lines with a ruler and protractor on graph paper . . .more about this in the next issue of 'Knotting Matters'.

#### QUOTATION

"There were two shops on whose windows my nose would flatten, for beyond the glass lay the world, my world. There were hardwood fids, steel marline spikes, sheath knives, sewing palms, models of ships, or barques and of small coasting schooners, sharks' jawbones with rows of serrated teeth and walking sticks made from the backbone of this fish, whales' teeth with scrimshaw whaling pictures, tobacco pouches of albatross skin, tattered volumes with strange foreign titles in long, long words, British nautical text-books, turnip watches half-an-inch thick and complete with chains and seals, and netting needles, all in a jumbled disarray, designed to lure one into a guessing game of identifying something new and exciting with each flick of the eyes. I considered these shops to be veritable treasure houses!"

('Boy Aloft', by Gavin Craig, pub. Nautical Publishing Co. (1971)

#### LETTERS

Dear Geoffrey,

Many thanks for the newsletter and literature; may I be another member to say I was taken aback by the professionalism of it all. I sincerely hope that we can maintain the membership and quality.

As stated before, I feel buoyant realising that I am not alone with my interest, having never yet met another person in the past 21 yrs at sea with this hobby!

My daughter, taking her Knotter's badge for the Guides, is now in her third week of waiting for someone to test her. Also my wife informs me that a local scout group has contacted the fire brigade to find a capable person to demonstrate knots to the group! As your article mentioned, people are out of contact with the value of even basic knots; is sticky tape taking over?

Please accept my apologies for not being able to attend the A.G.M. but I will, be in the middle of the Atlantic that day. Otherwise, my wife and myself would most certainly not have missed the event.

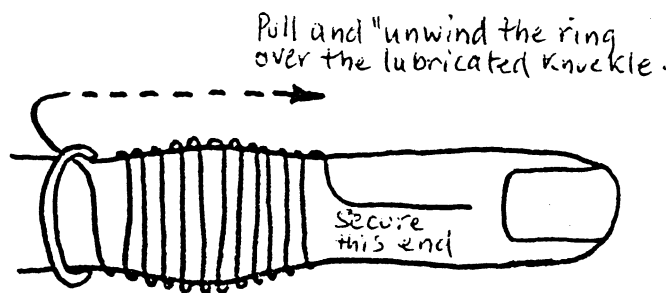
Hoping all goes well,  
Regards, Roger Owen  
m.v. 'Canadian Explorer'  
12th. March, 1983

Dear Mr. Budworth,

Many thanks for the absorbing newsletter... Perhaps fellow Guild members would find interest in my little trick to remove a tight ring from a finger by means of a length of sail twine or stout thread. The accompanying diagram is self-explanatory.

Sincerely, Thomas Solly  
25 Apr 1983

To remove a tight ring.



Dear Geoffrey,

. . . . On page 12 (Issue No. 1), Desmond Mandeville has a query about Carrick-Bend. The word "Carrick-Bend" is only used in the English nautical vocabulary (in modern times also in other countries). Before the 20th. century this bend was called Helling, Heling or Hieling in Dutch, German, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish. The word Hiel means heel or foot. Has this bend been used at a heel somewhere in a ship? In Swedish and Danish it is also called "Greenland Bend". Has it been used in Greenland or elsewhere to bend two thongs together? The origin of the word Carrick is not mentioned in Webster but in "The Sailor's Word Book" (1867) W.H. Smyth writes, quote: CARRICK, an old Gaelic term for a castle or a fortress, as well as for a rock in the sea, unquote. (In a French-German dictionary of 1869, carrick is a small English coat with a small collar used when riding)

The word is not only used in Carrick-Bend but also in Carrick-bitts, which is also called windlass-bitts. Could the windlass have been called Carrick because it was built like a castle or a fortress or as solid as a rock in the sea and the bend used on the cable called Carrick-Bend? The word Carrick is not mentioned at all in Falconer's Marine Dictionary 1780

and Smith writes in his Sea Grammar of 1627 "bend the cables together". No name of the bend is used.

Does anyone of the members know if the Carrick-Bends have been seen on the Celtic Crosses?

As a reply to Cy Canute I say; of course there is a -ology for this sort of thing. It is Knottology.

Many Happy Sailings and Safe Ports,  
From a Swedish Knottologist,  
Sten Johansson

Sweden  
May 2nd. 1983

Dear Geoffrey,

I just want to write a little about the circular mats mentioned in Issue 1, page 11.

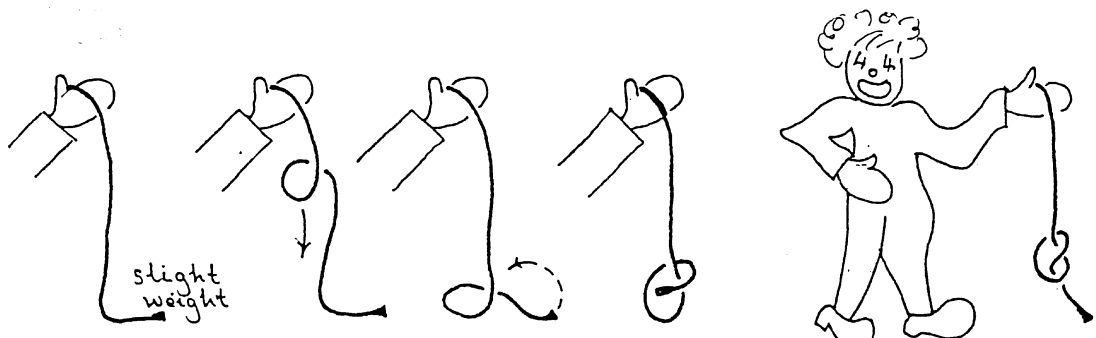
The design is certainly earlier than Leonardo - The Hilton of Cadboll Stone (plate 24. in George Bain's 'Celtic Art') dates from about 9th. century, I would guess, and has a fairly elaborate circular knot of the same design. I wrote an article on the History of Celtic Knot Design (very superficial) for a Japanese book on "The World of Design". Reproduced in this article were several designs of stones in Scotland.

In November, 1982 I visited Tokyo and was taken to a very smart art gallery where a new artist was having an exhibition of his work. Inspired by the knotwork designs he had, made a selection of water colour paintings using knot designs as the basis and colouring the "string" as fire, ice and so on! The texture of the "cord" suggested a vortex - or a fire running along the string and so on. Another design had been adapted into a tall glass effect, again using a basis of intertwining "string lines".

I've recently come across 'MAORI STRING FIGURES', by JC. Anderson (1927), which includes the following:-

6. Tying a knot - "One youth only was able to do this, which requires considerable dexterity, though several were acquainted with it. A heavy single cord is better, and it must be of such a length that when one end is held in the hand of the persons standing some 9 inches of the other end are on the ground. The cord is jerked so that a part forms a loop, the far side of the loop striking the cord a few inches from the free end, which causes the end to spring up and turn through the loop, so tying a knot."

I've found a way that works for me - using a 5' length of soft (magician's) rope, slightly weight the end (I use a wood screw taped into the end). The movement is an overhand throw with firm downward movement. Experiment to obtain just the right strength of throw.



Thanks for the help and inspiration,

Philip D. Noble (Rev.)

Dear Geoff,

Very pleased to receive the newsletter. Can I comment on Dr. Asher's Russian Knots (Issue No. 2 - for which item we are actually indebted to Jack Heming of "Multihull International" - ed.).

No. 3 - I had not seen a Reef Knot tied that way before. I tried it in string and it made a very nice looking knot; in rope it did not look as good but would be much safer but then it would not be a Reef Knot.

No. 13 - I was taught that you sat in the long loop and the short one supported your back, but I only used a Bos'n's Chair.

No. 18 - must be a Jury Mast Knot.

No. 21 - It is a stopper knot, one of at least 3 kinds, i.e. for wire, fibre or manmade. In the Navy of my time everything was done with "Armstrong's Patent" (Could this be what I knew as the "Mandraulic System"? - ed.). Berthing, there was plenty of bodies. Imagine my surprise when I joined the Merchant Navy and discovered that the Mate and I handled the berthing hawsers on the fx. After insulting my mother, he showed me how to secure a stopper to the hawser to transfer it from the bollards to the winch and every move had to be thought out and never let the wire take charge or you could go through the fairlead with it,

No. 23 - Brings back memories of being dropped on top of a wave (we hope), towed by the ship. Sometimes it felt very rough and fast. The boat was towed by a boat rope made fast as far forward as possible in the ship, so that the rope would sag and act as a spring; the other end had to be made fast in the boat so that it could be slipped while under tension. The Russian slip knot would do that, but we had an eye in the end of the boat rope and it passed under the first thwart and up. A piece of 2" x 2" wood passed through the eye and rested on the first and second thwarts. To release, lift the aft end of the 2" x 2" and pull and everything seemd to go quick. From the minute I climbed into the boat until the relase my shoulders ached; my knees felt funny; there was always something to go wrong. Like the time we were taking a very new doctor to a ship. The man on the after falls did the drill but did NOT take out the safety pin. When I pulled the release, the bow dropped, the stern hung up. Most of the crew rolled to the bow and it was being pressed down. I was telling the Doc. to hold on and hoping the bow would not turn towards the ship, but it was starting to turn away and someone let the boatrope go; but I think before that they had let go the after falls. So we finished up towing miles of rope behind. We could not be hoisted until the falls were rove. In the meantime we were being towed by the boatrope and by using rudder kept the boat away from the ship and the Doc. vowing he would resign.

I drive the rescue boat in the local sailing club. I find most people cannot tie a knot. Example, boats drift away from the jetty. Throw a heaving line to a capsized boat and they can't bend it to the foresheet. I saw the Elementary Manual issued by the Royal Yachting Association and it has 8 knots including the Sheepshank. In over 40 years I have only seen it used once, along the keel of a ship's lifeboat as a goatline for excess people. Would it not be better to have say three knots, and learn these well? i.e. Figure of Eight, Round Turn & Two Half Hitches, Sheetbend.

Yours faithfully,

J.GARSIDES

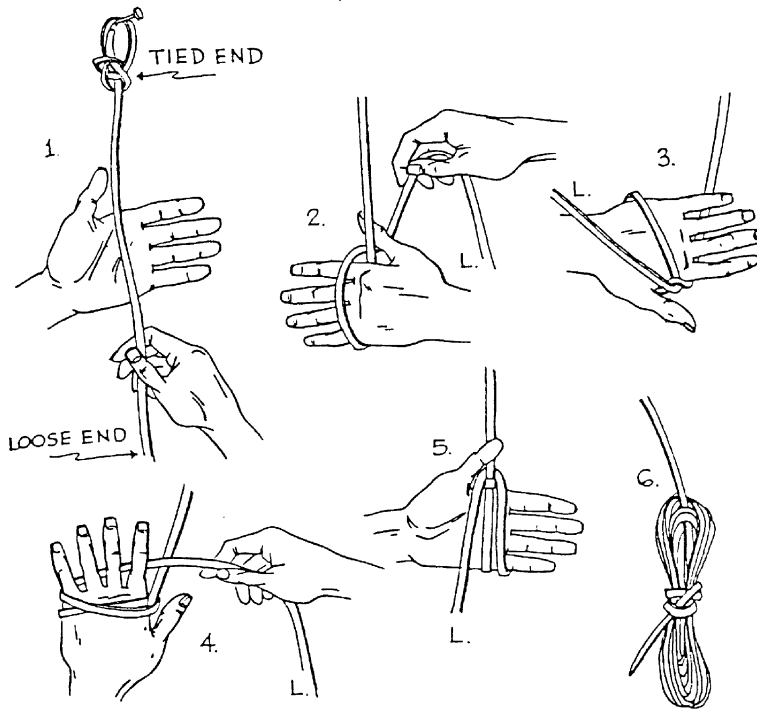
Airdrie  
May, 1983

BUTTERFLIES v. TAMALES

Knotting or plaiting with very long lengths can be difficult. Strands tangle repeatedly. To speed the work the strands may be made up into butterflies (fig. B, 1-6), the idea being to draw out the working line from the centre of the hank as you proceed; but working with butterflies can be just as troublesome. Apart from tangling strands as before, the end withdrawn from the butterfly can snag several bights and jam the whole device.

The best method is to work with uncomplicated strands all lying loosely in a heap at your feet. If this isn't practical a neat alternative is the 'tamale' (fig. A, 1-6) from Bruce Grant's 'Encyclopaedia of Rawhide and Leather Braiding' (to be reviewed in the next issue of this newsletter). The trick with a tamale is the way the surplus line winds each time around the working part, as shown, alternately behind then in front of it. It will then pay out readily every time. The method illustrated is that used by Mrs. Mary Fields of Bonanza, Oregon, U.S.A., clearly a most competent lady for she "...skins her cow, cures her I hide, cuts it into strings and braids everything from head-stalls to reatas."

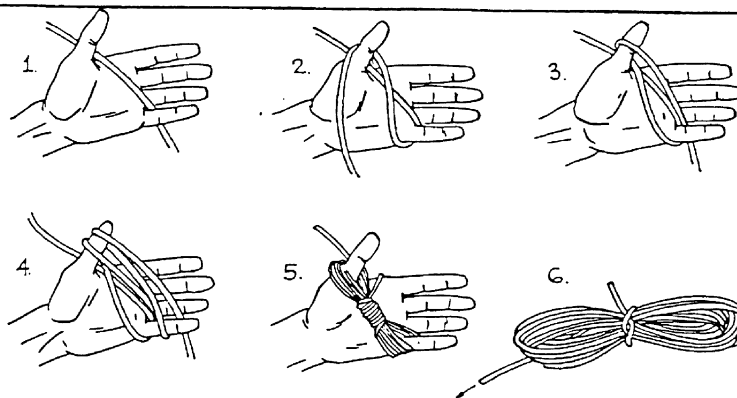
A.



Thanks to Guild member Bob LOYNES of Sheffield for this contribution.

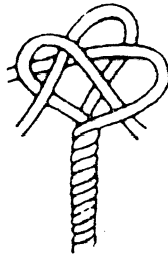
n.b. The Mexican "La reata" (Spanish for 'the rope') became the cowboy's "lariat". "Lasso" (from Spanish "lazo" meaning 'snare' or 'slip-knot' was rarely used and then only by visitors from California as a verb.

B.



"Lass rope", "rope", and even "string" were casual terms used by the men who worked with the reata.

THE ROPE SHOP stocks a vast range of natural and synthetic cords and ropes, of all sizes and colours; and also supplies knotting books.



## The Rope Shop

26HighStreet  
Emsworth  
HantsPO10 7AW  
Telephone-Emsworth 2642

Proprietors: John & Veronica HOLLISS  
(I.G.K.T. members)

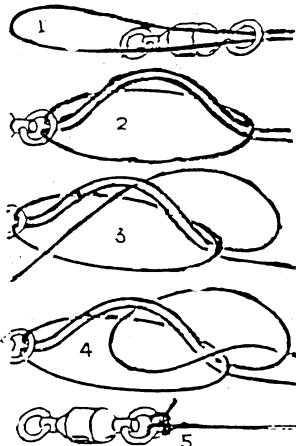
If you can visit the shop you will find cordage of every description, as well as a miscellany of beads and rings, tools and all those other things beloved by knotting enthusiasts There are also knotted items for sale. Prices are reasonable, so - if you're in the area - do come and see us. We cater for everyone, from the local fishermen to London-based craftswomen!

Alternatively, send a large s.a.e. for our latest mail order Price and Book Lists. The Book List includes over 100 titles of macramé books, booklets and pamphlets; as well as -a number of good knot books. The Price List too is mainly intended for those doing macramé. As Lt is NOT possible to send out samples of all available-cords, knotters attempting more complicated work should write explaining their requirements as fully as they can (including a sample of cord if possible) and we will do our best to find the right thing.

### THE WORLD'S FAIR KNOT SCOOPS \$2,500 PRIZE!

#### IT REALLY IS: A NEW KNOT

LAST YEAR THE DU PONT STREN® PEOPLE OFFERED \$2,500 TO ANYONE WHO DEVELOPED A NEW KNOT HERE'S THE WINNER, BEST OF 498 ENTRIES.



CALLED THE WORLD'S FAIR KNOT, IT HAS 95-100 PERCENT STRENGTH.

QUOTATION - Whichever form of saddle was employed, its load was made secure by a lash rope, which was a continuous line some thirty feet in length cunningly interlaced about the load, and connected with each end of a special cinch that rested below the horse's chest. One species of this interlacing, if made in strict accord with established formula, produced on top of the pack the figure of a diamond, and thus gave to this species its name of "diamond hitch". It would be so called regardless of whether it were either a "one-man diamond" or else took the slightly different weaving of a "two-man" or "government" diamond. The hitch, when correctly thrown, was remarkable for its ability to absorb the slackness generated at any particular point, and firmly to imprison the held packages within its grasp.

('THE COWBOY' by Philip Ashton Rollins, pub. Chas. Scribner's Sons - 1922)



CALL FOR AN I .G.K .T. KNOT PHYLOGENY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Phylogeny is the study of the evolutionary relationships of various forms of life. Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778) devised the fundamental concepts of the phylogenetic classification system used by biologists today. Two examples of the application of the classification system are now given.

	<u>Wolf</u>	<u>Red Oak</u>
Kingdom	Animalia	Plantae
Phylum	Chordata	Tracheophyta
Class	Mammalia	Angiospermae
Order	Carnivora	Fagales
Family	Canidae	Fagaceae
Genus	Canis	Quercus
Species	lupus	rubra

This system permits biologists around the world to have a common and Standard name for any particular plant or animal. Clearly, it is of fundamental importance that some method be devised to provide systematic names for knots.

I.G.K.T. member Frederick Browne has been thinking about this problem for years, but has not come up with any practical solutions. However, now that we have an international organization, it seems appropriate to encourage all members to think about the problem. While Browne does not have any solutions, he does have at least some desirable features of a knot phylogeny scheme. These features are:

- 1)The system should be easy to apply by all knot tyers. Methods based on topology and mathematical group theory are not practical for use by most knot tyers.
- 2)The system should be numerical rather than based on any language such as Latin. Latitude and longitude are excellent examples of numerical designations that do not depend on language. Also, in the computer age, numerical designations are certainly preferable to names in some natural language.
- 3)Ideally, it should be possible to tie the knot from information contained in the knot's "scientific" name. This feature would be truly amazing if achieved and is in the "frosting on the cake" category.

Browne is willing to serve as an informal head of an I.G.K.T. effort to develop a knot phylogeny scheme. Please send your suggestions and proposals to him. Hopefully, it will be possible to publish some positive solutions in future issues of the Newsletter.

Frederick Browne  
P.O. Box 327  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139  
U.S.A.

QUOTATION

"Jack had been at sea ever since he was the height of a marline-spike."

(Landsman Hay, c.1805)

ROLLING A MAGNUS

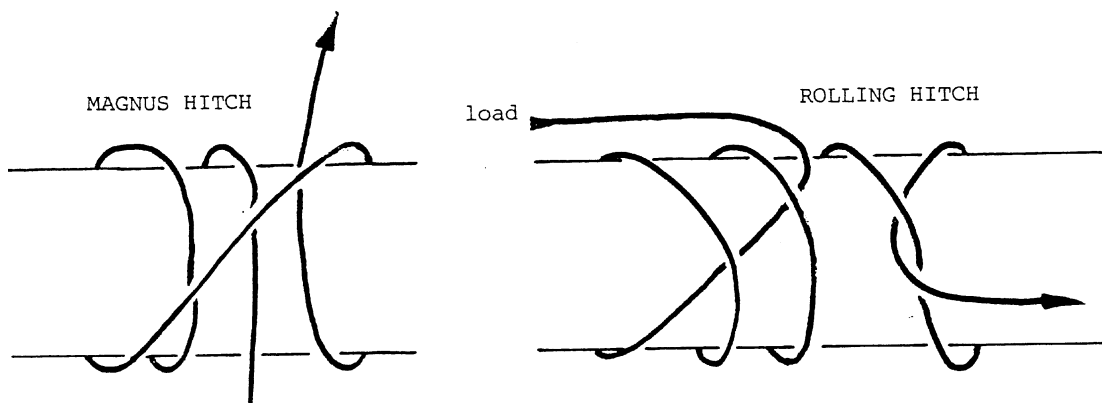
At one of our meetings there was some confusion when members speaking were obviously not referring to the same knot (hitch). Maybe it depends on which older book you rely on. The names 'magnus hitch' and 'rolling hitch' have been interchanged, but as I see it today, the differences are as follows and we ought to standardize on the names.

A magnus hitch is a clove hitch with an extra turn. It serves the same purpose as a clove hitch, but is more secure if what is being encircled is slippery. Note that the working end makes a full round turn before crossing to then make a half hitch. Normally both ends are under load.

A rolling hitch is intended to take a load in the direction along the spar or a thicker rope (as when attaching a handy billy). The working end goes twice over the standing part (which will take the load), then there is another half hitch. The end may go on to be seized or merely held, if it is to only be a brief pull.

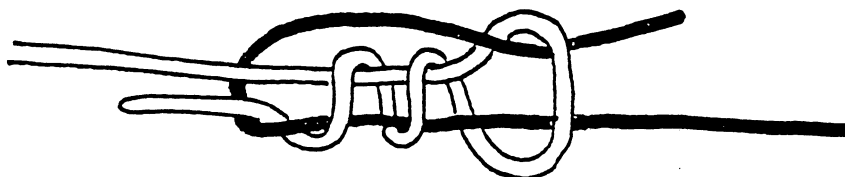
The immediately recognizable difference is the single crossing of the magnus hitch and the double crossing of the rolling hitch.

Do we agree?



BEND OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

This bend was found in a sling abandoned in the Bugaboo Mountains, Summer, 1982 (never seen used as a climbing knot). Information from Rob Chisnall, Ontario.



## BOOK REVIEWS

The Knot Book by Geoffrey Budworth (Elliot Right Way Books) 85p.

This is what the title says - it is a book on ways of joining rope to itself or solid objects. It does not cover fancywork, splicing or other branches of work in cordage. There are 160 pages, packed in about equal quantities with clear illustrations and descriptions, following some introductory matter on ropes and techniques. No index - unfortunately.

As may be expected, there are all the familiar knots and some variations. Some readers may prefer other names and some may want to tuck another way. So what - beginners will be safe if they stick to the book.

The test of a book on a well-covered subject is not how it deals with what most other books do, but what is the reason why this is the book to buy if you already have too many of the others. For one thing this gives us proof that Matthew Walker was not the only man to have a knot named after him. I do not know a book with as many personalized knots as this one. There are many knots or variations that I have not seen described elsewhere, and a lot of these are aimed at general and everyday users, rather than the purely nautical ones of many earlier books.

When most books cost pounds, this one is exceptional value at pence. Anyone interested in knots should have it to add to their knowledge. If you cannot find it in a shop, no doubt our editor can supply it, auto-graphed, for 1.05 including postage. -

Percy W. Blandford

'CELTIC ART -The Methods of Construction', by George Bain, pub. Constable, London (1977)(orig. 1951) 3.95p.

Royal College of Art student, book illustrator and ultimately an art master, the author acquired a unique knowledge of knot patterns in Celtic art; then set about showing students how to recreate these complicated creations by the systematic repetition of a few simple guidelines.

If you need to draw anything from a simple overhand or thumb knot to the elaborate knot engravings of Albrecht Durer and Leonardo da Vinci, this book will show you how. In simple stages, with just a ruler, some graph paper, and pencil and eraser, you could also - after browsing through George Bain's work - create your own original knot designs.

G.B.

## BOOK LIST

'ADVANCED ROPEWORKING' by Leonard Popple, reprinted by Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd. (orig. pub. 1959)

The fundamentals of bench rigging - making boat fenders and splicing on a large scale - explained simply and clearly by a professional rigger who served in H.M. Naval Dockyards.

Price, about 50p.

'CORDAGE and CABLES', by Capt. P.J. Stopford, R.N., pub. by Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd. (1940, or earlier) - a traditional manual of seamanship which is dated in many aspects . . . but nostalgia for ex-R.N. and Merchant seamen alike.

Price, if reprinted, unknown.

'SCOUT PIONEERING' by John Sweet, reprinted by the Scout Association (orig. pub. 1974) - First rate authoritative work on making blocks, tackles and lashings work for you. This manual directs the making of lookout towers, lift bridges and aerial runways which are secure and functional.

Price 2.25p,

'MACRAME, The Art of Creative Knotting', by Virginia I. Harvey, pub. by Van Nostrand Reinhold Co. (1967) - an excellent introduction for improvers wishing to acquire more basic knotting patterns from clear drawings and photographs. Do not confuse this book with her other 1967 book 'Colour and Design in Macrame' (listed in Issue No. 3).

Price about £4

'HANDBOOK OF SEAMAN'S ROPEWORK', by Sam Svensson, pub. by Adlard Coles Ltd. (orig. 1940); reprinted - intended for young seamen entering the Swedish merchant navy, this work remains surprisingly up-to-date for anyone seagoing in larger craft.

Price 3.50p.

'THE SECRETS OF HOUDINI', by J.C. Cannell, reprinted by Dover Publications Inc. (1973)(orig. pub. 1931) - Only one single chapter and some quaint old photographs and drawings feature the rope ties of this gifted professional deceiver; still value for money.

Price 1.90p.

'KNOTS', by George Russell Shaw, pub. by Bonanza Books (1924) with modern reprints - how many know this author's name? Yet he pre-dates Ashley with this overlooked source book of pleasant sketches and minimal text.

Price unknown.

'CREATIVE ROPEWORK' by Stuart E. Grainger, pub. by G. Bell & Sons Ltd. (1975) - Unashamedly about fancywork; from Ocean Plait mats to plaits and sennits; Spanish hitching, grafting, needle hitching and netting. Very clear, easy to follow drawings.

Price 5.25p

'THE TECHNIQUE OF MACRAME', by Bonny Schmid-Burleson, pub. by B.T. Batsford Ltd. (1974) - a feast of design possibilities for the advanced student; make a zulu mask or a monolithic free-standing structure, in wrapped and dyed jute.

Price 3.00p

'STRING FIGURES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM', by Caroline Furness Jayne, pub. by Dover Publications Inc. (1962)(orig. pub. 1906) - a scholarly work outlining the ethnology of the cat's cradle in about 400 pages and nearly 900 drawings.

Price 2.00p.

GUILD NEWS by the Hon. Secretary

Membership is now 105 and growing steadily. I now believe we will ultimately make contact with over a thousand enthusiasts whose existence was previously unsuspected. Do all you can to spread word of our being. They'll find us eventually.

I've had 1,000 new leaflets printed. They look better than the first batch and will be handed out to likely people we meet. Anyone keen to be a regional organiser is welcome to a quantity for their use locally.

We have been most fortunate to secure Guild member Robert JACKSON of Birmingham as our first Hon. Treasurer. Robert is a professional auditor with an insurance company and will care for our monies more competently than I could. His appointment has freed me to continue representing you in the ways for which I'm best qualified.

Does anyone have the use of an IBM typewriter . . . the kind that makes typescript appear as if printed? If so, please contact me if it could occasionally be used by the Guild.

I'm also looking for unwanted but serviceable, pre-fabricated and portable equipment to make exhibition stands.

Later this week I visit the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. Although we have yet to use the Museum's facilities, we are on very good terms with their Education Officer, Miss. Phyllis HALLETT, who has given great encouragement since before the Guild was formed. At her invitation I go to meet the Conference Secretary to discuss just what might be possible in the near future.

Guild members put on a worthy exhibition for Rotherhithe's Festival on June 1st. in the Thameside 'Giant Knot Garden'. The crowds were not what we expected; but the fine day made it possible to sit and consider the whole question of display stands and what we needed to do. Present were Geoffrey BUDWORTH, Frank HARRIS (organiser), Des PAWSON; also Paul HERBAULT and Desmond MANDEVILLE.

I took part in a knotting workshop on June 21st. at the studio of Glad FINDLEY when 10 of her macrame students undertook to master the 6 stages of tying the Star Knot . . . and did so! It's hoped there will be more such very pleasant gatherings.

Throughout Saturday and Sunday, 3rd. and 4th. September, 2,000 Scout leaders will be reunited at Gilwell Park (near Chigwell) in Essex, the traditional home for such gatherings. The Guild has been invited to mount a display and demonstration of its members' work. This must be the best we can do. Eric FRANKLIN (and I hope Des PAWSON) and I will be there throughout the weekend, along with your President, Percy W. BLANDFORD. Anyone else prepared to help even for part of a day will be most welcome. If you have work you would like displayed, do let one of us have it in time.