


ISSUE 46 AUGUST 1994
ISSN 0959-2881

Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



INTERNATIONAL
GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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KNOTTING MATTERS

**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER of
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS
ISSUE No. 46 AUGUST 1994**

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THE SECRETARY'S BLOTTER

The summer is here now in England, with temperatures in the upper eighties Fahrenheit, just over thirty Centigrade, which is quite unusual, and always makes the front page in the newspapers. It is said that this is a good time for knotting, as it does not require to much physical effort, and with the increased consumption of alcohol, could result in the discovery of that elusive "New Knot".

My little contribution to KM is called notes from the blotter, well life has been so hectic of late, that the pile of correspondence on the desk is so deep that I can't actually see the blotter!

Since we last met, the Annual General meeting was held in Nottingham. What a splendid meeting that was, even the weather was kind to us. It always amazes me how many members travel so far to attend our meetings. Having been involved with a number of organisations over the years, there has been all sorts of arm twisting and inducements offered to get people to attend AGMs, however with knot tyers things seem to be a little different, as we are having to find larger premises each time.

Our thanks must go principally to **Penny Bodger** and her family, and to **Bernard Cutbush**, who were responsible for most of the arrangements. Our thanks also go to all those who helped and supported them in putting on such a lavish day, not forgetting of course the splendid crew of TS Orion. The only real damper of the day was the Secretaries Report, which did drag on for three quarters of an hour, however with the irregular appearance of KM of the previous

year, there was a lot of background information to pass on. I shall do my best to get this down to about 45 mins for the next meeting.

A criticism of previous meetings has been that there has been little time for an informal chat with one another, so this time we experimented by offering a chance to stay overnight. This appears to have been quite a success with those who did stay, even if it were only for the evening meal, which is a nice way to end a busy day. In fact, the dinner party proved so large that we had to split into two groups!!

I for one will be looking forward to our next meetings, which will be in **Farnham** on the **8th October**, and at **Weston Super Mare** on the **6th May 1995**. Both will be weekend events and I am sure that they will be as enjoyable as the last.

One observation was made that perhaps the business part of the meeting should be held after lunch, giving members more time to get there, however until now it has been traditional to get this part of the meeting over as quickly as possible, in order to move on to the more pleasant part of the day, and what better incentives to do this, that the promise of food!!

I have received a number of enquiries about membership cards. These were issued as an experiment in 1993, which so far has proved unsuccessful in several ways. Firstly, at present there is little need for such a card, as there no requirement to show it anywhere, although this could change as arrangements are made with museums which house knot displays.

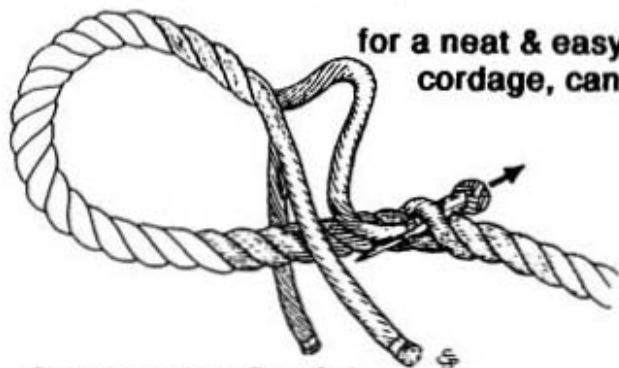
Secondly, the issuing of the cards proved an absolute nightmare, although we have learnt a lot from the exercise, and will tackle it differently should the need arise in the future. Hence we do not propose to issue any cards this year, although we remain open minded for next year.

Perhaps the most significant happening in knotting this decade, was the publication of an article in the American magazine "Popular Science", which was about the rapidly gaining interest of mathematicians in the theory of knots. My feeble brain finds this subject rather complicated, and I am sure that many of our more practical knot tyers find this subject somewhat mystifying. However it is a tremendous change in the fortunes of what was until the formation of the Guild, thought to be the dying art of Knot Tying.

Before I end this missive, I must mention **LuAnne Kosma** and her "Knotting Experience" in America, which was a tremendous success. I will not describe the event here, as those who were fortunate enough to attend will be writing about it. All I can say is that having spoken to those who did go, they were all ecstatic about it, and I am sorry that I was unable to get there. However, on behalf of the membership, I must record a big "Thank You" to LuAnne for all her hard work, and for arousing and stimulating interest in knot tying, both locally in America, and here in Britain.

Finally, did you see the IGKT in Weymouth at the Tall Ships Race? If you didn't get there perhaps you heard members on the wireless, or saw them on the television. More about that next time. Best wishes *Nigel*.

GRIPFID



for a neat & easy tuck with all kinds of cordage, cane, rush, seagrass etc.

**SPLICING
HITCHING
KNOTTING
STITCHING**

Splicing with a Gripfid

Handmade, polished brass with a Turkshead handle, a tool to cherish. Standard 3/8 inch size including U.K. postage & packing £9.95 each.

STUART GRAINGER, Cuckamus End, Cuckamus Lane, North Leigh, WITNEY, Oxfordshire OX8 6RR, England. Tel: 0993 881453

AN ORIGINAL KNOT FOR YOUR GEAR SHIFT

By Clifford W ASHLEY

An article from "The Sportsman" September 1927

Reproduced by kind permission of **Pheobe Chardon** (Clifford Ashley's daughter)

Ashley's #2217 mentions that the knot was originally described and illustrated for *The Sportsman* magazine - here, thanks to **Des and Lis Pawson**, and on the 50th anniversary of the publishing of "**The Ashley Book of Knots**", is that article in full.

EDITORS NOTE. - This mazelike perplexity holds all the charm of a cross-word puzzle. But its solution, unlike a crossword puzzle, gives a tangible result. If successfully tied, a knot is formed that may be used as a decorative covering on your gear-shift lever knob. Although the author thinks this a simple problem, the editor advises no person with an excess of thumbs to attempt it.

o o o o o o o o o
 First copy diagram No.1, making sure the circles are correctly traced, as these govern the over-and-under arrangement of the knot. Then procure a piece of fishline, curtain cord or other handsome material about thirty feet long and approximately an eighth of an inch thick. Make a pencil-size hole in your diagram center at the point marked "X" and stick

your cord through this hole with half the length on the top side. Place your apparatus on the upholstered seat of a chair. Take the cord which issues at X and, beginning at 1 lay it along the line of the diagram, pinning it at 2, 3, 4, and so on, ignoring the intervening points not in numerical sequence. Wherever the cord crosses itself

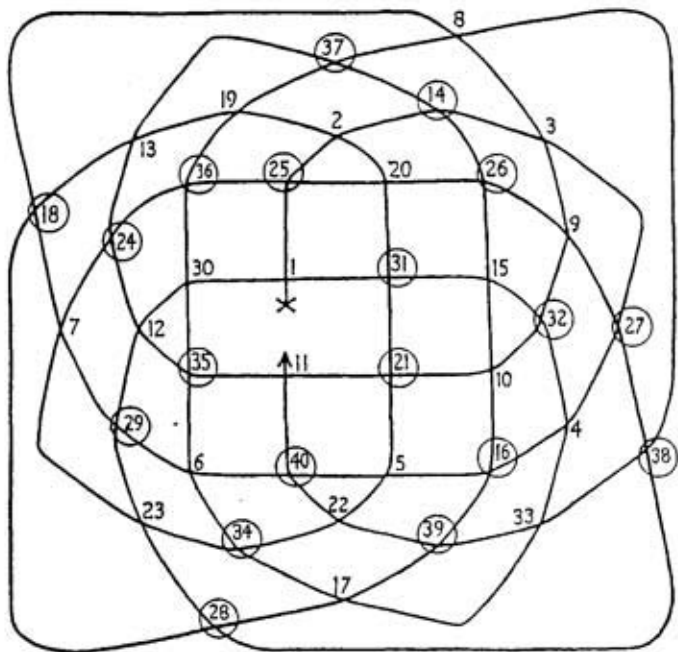


Diagram No. 1

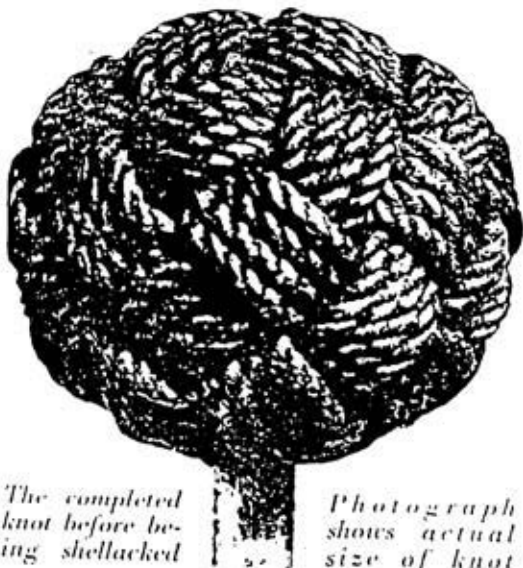
in proper numerical order at a point marked by a circle, the working end should be tucked *under* the bight which is to be crossed. At all other points the cord

an overstrong pull on any of its parts. Continue to work backward and forward from one end of the cord to the other until the knot loosely fits the knob, when it can be told if a fifth or even a sixth additional parallel strand will be needed to provide sufficient covering for the knob. A hairpin may be used to reeve the cord after the knot becomes difficult. For tightening, a marline-spike or an ice pick or sharpened piece of hardwood - is required. Do not be dismayed if your knot appears a hopeless tangle after you have first placed it around the knob. Proceed methodically, drawing the parts evenly, and it will gradually reassume its form. When the knob is completely and snugly covered, the hole at the bottom is opened to receive the gearshift lever, and the ends are trimmed. The final tuck of both ends should be under the same part. Pull an end taut and cut close to the knot; the cord will shrink sufficiently to hide the cut end. Then give the knot one or two coats of shellac, and put it to work.



Diagram No. 2

is overlaid and the circles disregarded. After the knot is laid, weave the cord a second time around the circuit, parallel to the first laid strand, as shown in diagram No.2, continuing to weave until the knot has four parallel strands throughout. Remove the diagram from under your knot and use the material of the under cord end when more length is required. The next operation is to place the knot over the gear-shift lever knob and mould it into convex shape, Start at one end of the cord and work completely through to the other end, tightening each "part" - or reappearance of a strand upon the surface - a small and equal amount. The secret of tying a symmetrical knot is a gradual and unhurried drawing up, without at any time distorting the structure by



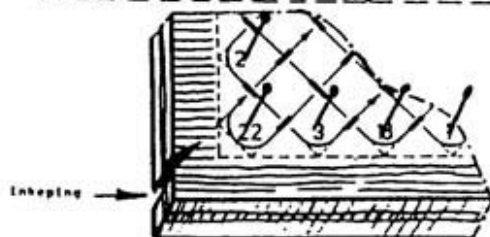
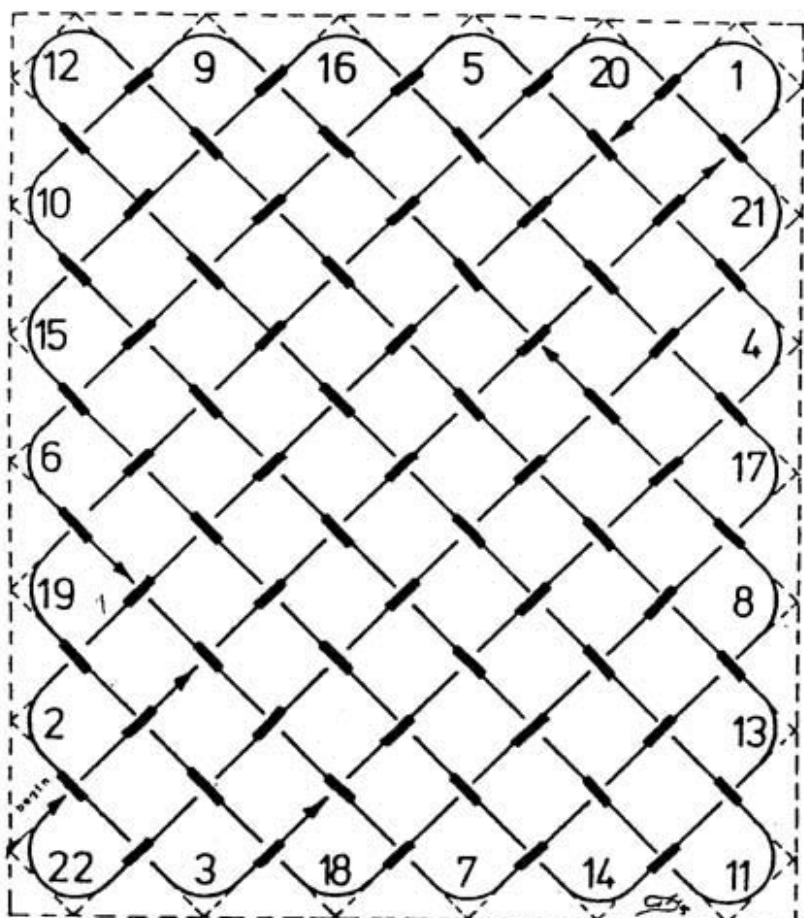
The completed knot before being shellacked

Photograph shows actual size of knot

Jan HOEFNAGEL writes...

This is a diagram we give to children at fairs and exhibitions to make an ocean mat.
It is best stuck to a piece of plywood, into which you position nails for the outer bights.
We sell them for 10 pence - it keeps them occupied!

patroon



lange de atippelijjn afsnijpen

FARNHAM '94

THE EVENT

SSSSSSSSSSSS

HALF YEARLY MEETING - WITH 3 DAYS OF DISPLAYS
AND STANDS GROUPED BY FUNCTION. THE GUILD
LIBRARY OF VIDEOS AND BOOKS, PLUS ALL THE FUN
TO REPEAT OUR FESTIVAL OF KNOTS WEEKEND!

THE DATE

SSSSSSSSSS

Friday. Saturday & Sunday 7th, 8th, 9th OCT 1994

THE VENUE

SSSSSSSSSS

T.S. SWIFTSURE

Lower Weyborne Lane, Badshot Lea, FARNHAM Surrey

T.S. SWIFTSURE, Headquarters of the Farnham Sea Cadet Corps, lies midway between Farnham (a market town on the river Wey) and Aldershot, (the home of the British Army). both served with good rail and road links. Accommodation arrangements will be the same as for the Festival of Knots: Ample space for camping or caravans, a mattress on the deck(floor), or if you need home comforts, there are plenty of local hotels or boarding houses (book through Tourist Information Centre, 28 West Street Farnham Surrey GU9 7DR - 0252-715109). The galley and bar will be available and as before the food will be at 'cost only' to members.

CO-ORDINATOR: Ken YALDEN, 'Campion' 53 Old River, DENMEAD, Hants P07 6XS



Repeat as often as required to form chain long enough to overlap and link the ends.



2.
The Chain.



3.
The Link.

Then double the lead in either direction or both.



The Grommet after Doubling.
Decorative Chain Grommet V.



© 1911

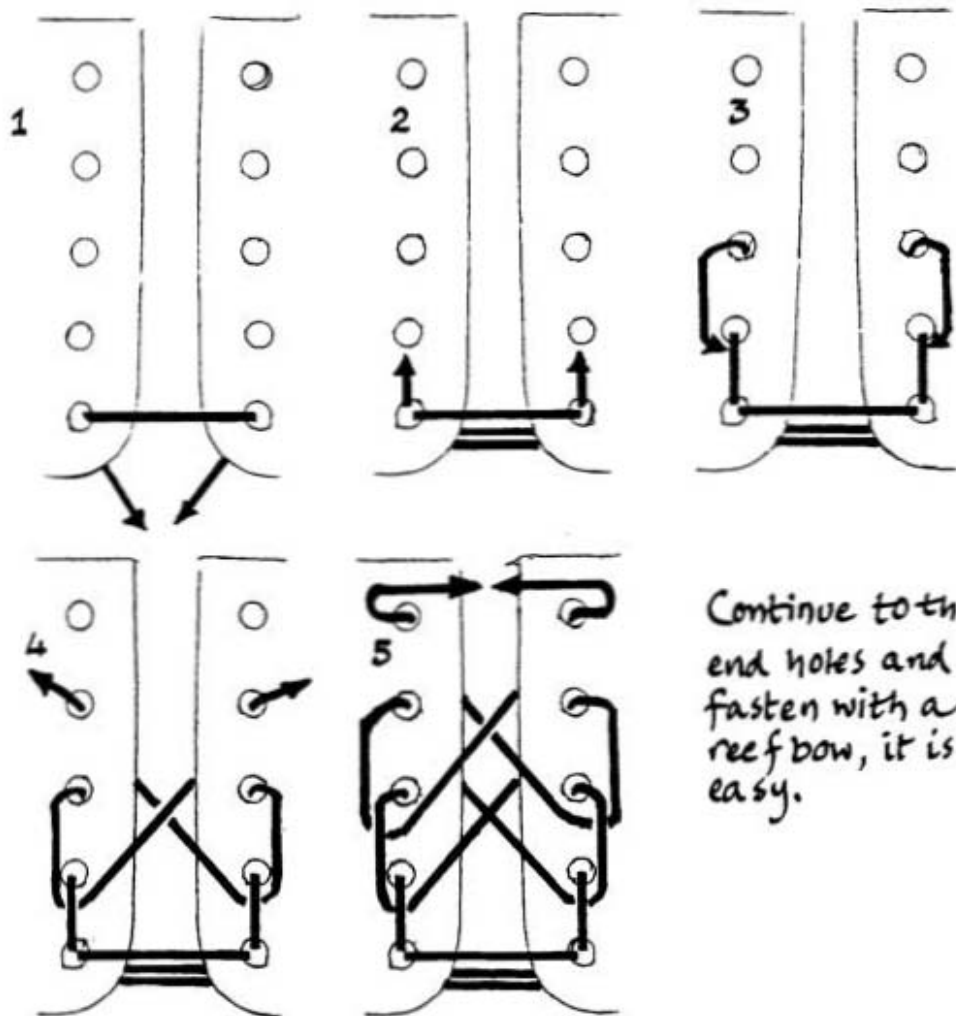
A Mat using six repetitions of the same sequence.

BOOTLACING

Tom SOLLY writes....

I saw this fastening in high boots worn by a Portuguese guard and realised that it was missing from Ashley.

This method of lacing gives long diagonal leads thus allowing a springy flexibility in wear. It is very comfortable for 'trainers' too.



Continue to the end holes and fasten with a reef bow, it is easy.

Impressions of LANCING '94

Brian FIELD (Vice President & UK Liaison Officer to the N. AMERICAN Branch) writes.....

It was my wife who said "Go for it, you'll always regret it if you don't go" - and that is how I found myself four thousand miles from home, shaking hands with Chris Malhoit at Detroit airport and meeting a wormth of hospitality and friendship that I will remember as long as I live. I'd arrived a day early for the meeting and following a night somewhat spoiled by heartburn, and heat (it took me 24 hours to realise that American hotels have air conditioners!), I set out for the Michigan State University Museum with its "Marline Spikes & Monkey's Fists" exhibition.

The rest of the day was spent wandering around what was the finest display of ropework that I have ever seen. The breadth of the work shown, from the knotted picture frames of Les Pickard to the basket ball cap with a Turks Head on its back strap; from the beautifully crafted chess set, to the grapevine service on the handle of a five foot ice chisel, all showed that there was little that the craftsmen of the Old World could teach to those of the New World. As impressive as the material itself was the manner of its presentation. I have never seen a collection of ropework so well displayed and so professionally presented and it gave me great personal pleasure to see the art I love given the prominence it deserves. This exhibition sets the standard to which all other Guild displays should aspire.

The evening was spent getting to know the other members who had turned up and the only sour note was at the end of the evening when it was decided that the group should meet for breakfast - "and is seven o'clock OK for you guys". I suggest that 10 am was a little more civilised hour so a compromise was reached and we ate in the nearby restaurant at 7.30 the next morning. It takes a lot to beat a traditional English breakfast but dollar cakes and blueberry muffins run it a very close second!

The second day was spent in touring the exhibition (I noticed that others shared my opinion of its worth), and in getting down to the business of starting a North American section of the Guild - The election of a steering committee, and plans for a future meeting, were duly dealt with and the formal session was brought to a close with an illustrated lecture on fenders by Des Pawson which included a frantic practical demonstration "against the clock". There then followed an informal get-together swapping ideas and knots, problems and solutions, and as usual on such occasions, friendships were formed and other peoples skills appreciated.

The next day was spent in Detroit visiting the Coastguard station, the Mariner's Church and the Great Lakes Museum on Belle Island. The temperatures were in the low 90's and air conditioning in cars no

longer seemed to be a frivolous luxury. Odd things that stick in the memory - Americans pronounce "buoy" as "boo-oy" or "boo-ee"- the five year old who took me by the hand in the Mariners Church and led me to another room, saying "There are lemonade and cookies here if you'd care for some refreshment, sir." - Our Editor leaning against a cannon labelled 'Perry's Victory 1812', and the accidental discovery of an Afro American courting ritual on Belle Island - hundreds of single sex groups parked in cars along the waters edge, doors and tailgates wide open and ghetto blasters full on, whilst hundreds of other groups slowly file past in their cars happily making comments through open windows. All in all, a wonderful and memorable weekend thanks to LuAnne and her colleagues who put such an immense amount of detailed work into ensuring that everything went well. I came away convinced that the Guild in North America was in good hands and that I had been present at a significant event in the history of the I.G.K.T.

By **Gordon PERRY...**

I, (and I am sure Liz & Des PAWSON) certainly feel the same about this event as Brian does - The U.S.A. was not new to me, but the experience of such a superb exhibition of ropework certainly was. **Lu Anne KOZMA** deserves the highest accolade from the Guild for her unstinting efforts, not only in the exhibition (which is her work) but for eventually getting some North Americans together and forming a branch. I had hoped that before I put this edition to bed, I could have included news of a happy event for her too, as her second

child is due about now - (I bet it's late like this edition ...did I hear you say?!). Just incase Brian missed out the list of those present for the sake of brevity I will include it for the record...

Chris Malhoit, President - **Brian** ('I'm put off by the 'honorary'; but attracted by the 'vice') **Field**, Hon Vice President - transatlantic liaison - **Jim Williams**, Vice President (Treasurer) - **Tom Skemp**, Secretary. **LuAnne Kozma**, **Alex Rayman**, **Gus Erickson**, **John & Kay Burke**, **Linda Williams & Tom Gergen** were the U.S. members, with **Brian**, **Gordon**, **Liz** and **Des** representing the U.K.

So what of the future? Chris tells me that the aim is to:

- * Solidify arrangements for the 1995 meeting in New Bedford. (The exact time and place will not be known until after the 94 Wooden Boat Show)
- * To work on a formal structure for the North American Branch
- * Follow up on Mexican and Canadian involvement.
- * Recruit new members.

Chris would also like to thank the Guild for the "Welcome Rope" (which was constructed by members at the AGM at Nottingham), and for the IGKT 'starter-kit', both of which did much to get the branch off to a good start.

Finally I am hoping that LuAnne will have sent a copy of the Exhibition Catalogue to one of us, in time for the U.K. half-yearly meeting at Farnham - so that those of you who are there realise - we are not kidding!

FISTFUL OF COLLARS

By Jack FIDSPIKE

Here's a bit of fun. Hold five identical short lengths of cord in your hand, so that the ends project top and bottom. Invite someone to tie together any *two* upper pairs of ends. Do the same with *two* lower pairs. Then marry and tie the two *single* ends left over at the top and bottom. Now release them and see what you've got.

There are several possibilities (fig.1)

- (a) a big circle made up of five knots and all five bits of cord;
- (b) two similar circles of two and three knots;
- (c) two dissimilar circles of one and four knots;
- (d) three separate circles of 1-knot, 2-knots, 2-knots.

The pairs or trio of circles may be separate or interlocked (fig. 2(a)), and the single circle may have an overhand knot in it (fig. 2(c)).

Wizards of gaming arithmetic can no doubt calculate the numerous combinations, and the probability of each one turning up. But, as my fingers are more reliable than my figures, I just tried it out 100 times. And here's what happened.

*** The big 5-knot circle emerged 53 times. So I reckon that's just about fifty-fifty (an even money bet). The most it missed was six times running, after which it turned up four times in succession.

In fact, it had four runs of four...and one of six. And eight times it came up twice in a row.

*** The next good bet was separate 2-knot and 3-knot circles, which appeared 23 times, almost four-to-one (a good three-to-one against).

All of the others were long shots:

- separate 1-knot, 4-knots combination = 7;
- interlinked 2-knots, 3-knots = 6;
- separate 1-knot, 2-knots, 2-knots = 2;
- interlinked 1-knot, 4-knots = 2;
- the 5 knot circle with an overhand knot included = 2;
- a separate 1-knot, with both 2-knots interlinked = 1;
- a separate 2-knots, & 1-knot, 2 knots interlinked = 1.

This idea is not original. I found it in 'Notes on Knots' (1993) by Pieter Van De Griend who mentions it as a mild turn-of-the-century superstition. Girls in Jutland would pick and tie grass stems, and wish for the 5-knot circle as an omen of forthcoming good luck.

By the way I've outline here, it might make a harmless game to play with the crowds who gather around our Guild displays and exhibitions. You will need just five half meter lengths of 3 to 5 mm diameter stuff..... and extra lines in talk and trickery.

Fig. 1

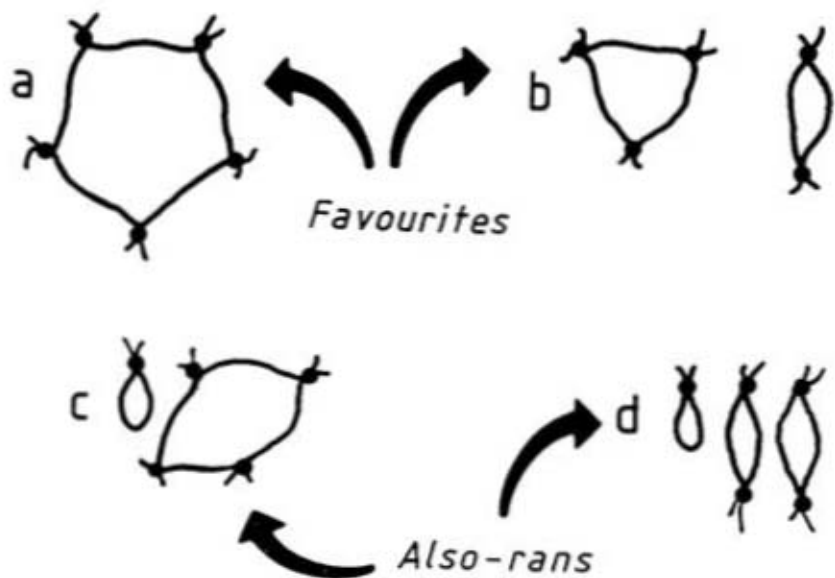
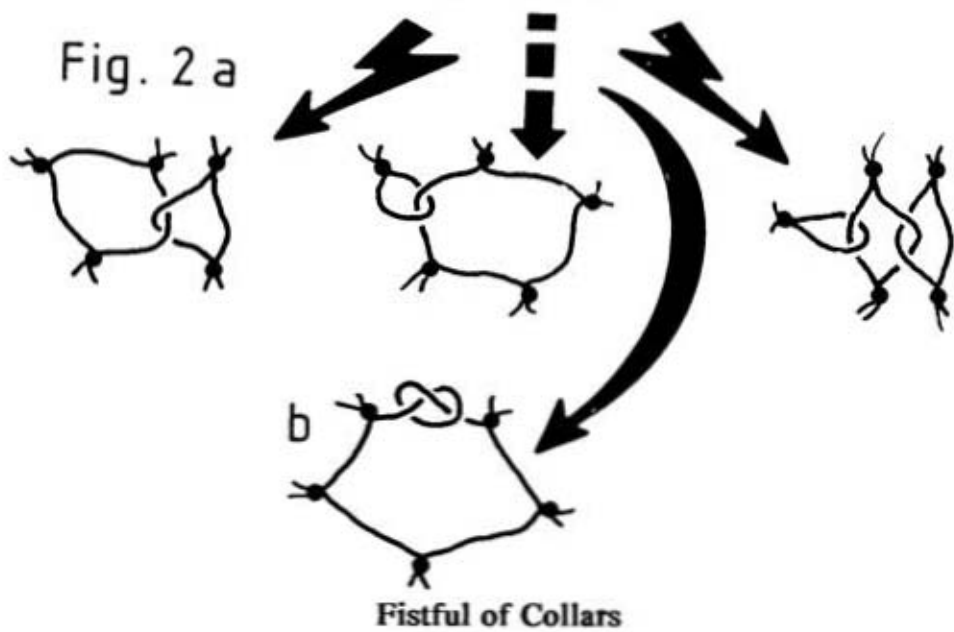


Fig. 2 a



KNOT SEARCH

From **Eric FRANKLIN** comes this familiar word search matrix - but this one has a twist!

Concealed in the grid below are the names of twenty knots or terms used in knotting. The words may read horizontally from right to left or left to right, vertically either up or down or diagonally from left to right or right to left - but ALWAYS in a straight line. As you find the names ring them (see example). When all the names have been ringed the remaining letters will spell a well known phrase which, however, has nothing to do with knots.

H	C	T	I	H	E	V	O	L	C	T	H
B	R	O	P	E	E	L	G	N	I	R	C
N	O	O	S	E	W	A	P	S	T	A	C
E	U	W	Q	U	A	I	C	P	U	K	D
B	N	R	L	O	L	W	N	L	R	F	N
O	D	X	J	I	L	U	M	I	K	P	E
S	T	A	R	K	N	O	T	C	S	S	B
T	U	R	N	<u>R</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	E	H	O	T
C	R	O	W	N	V	E	R	T	E	Y	E
H	N	E	F	I	D	L	P	R	A	W	E
A	Z	Y	D	B	I	G	H	T	D	O	H
G	X	K	N	A	H	S	P	E	E	H	S

LETTERS

Owen K NUTTALL writes:

Re KM43 - Jack REINMAN's Symmetric Hawser Bends, which he submitted for assessment and publication. Both are identical to my method of tying Little Beauty and Double Eight bends and are thus not original. I submitted both these knots, along with others, to Geoffrey Budworth in 1985, and to KM in 1991 - copies of which are in the Guild Archives.

I have used both knots for a number of years in my work as a Builder, prior to their first submission in 1985.

Brian A GLENNON (USA) writes....

I am sorry to say that while conducting research on two of the books mentioned by Cyrus Lawrence Day in "*The Art of Knotting & Splicing*", I discovered that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts no longer carries "*Toke Musubi-ho Roku*" (Record of the Method of Knotting in My Family), or "*Musubi no KI* (A Note on Knots). Neither of the other libraries in the Boston, Massachusetts area have these books. I am afraid they are lost to the general public. Being a native Bostonian I know every university, general and private library like the back of my hand, but still I could not find these books anywhere. The museum of fine arts moved to its present location about twenty-five years ago and was not situated in its current address when Cyrus Day wrote his book.

By Ed...perhaps someone knows where there are copies...if so please let Brian know.

Brian A GLENNON (USA) writes...

I would like to pass along to other Guild members some information regarding the Samurai binding arts of Japan called 'Hojo-jitsu.

Two (1 hour long) VHS video tapes on Hojo-jitsu by instructor Don Angier have been made available from:

*DRAGON BOOKS,
870 Hampshire Road
Suite C,
Westlake Village,
California 91361
USA.*

Tel: (805) 371-6222 or 6223

Fax: (805) 371-6224.

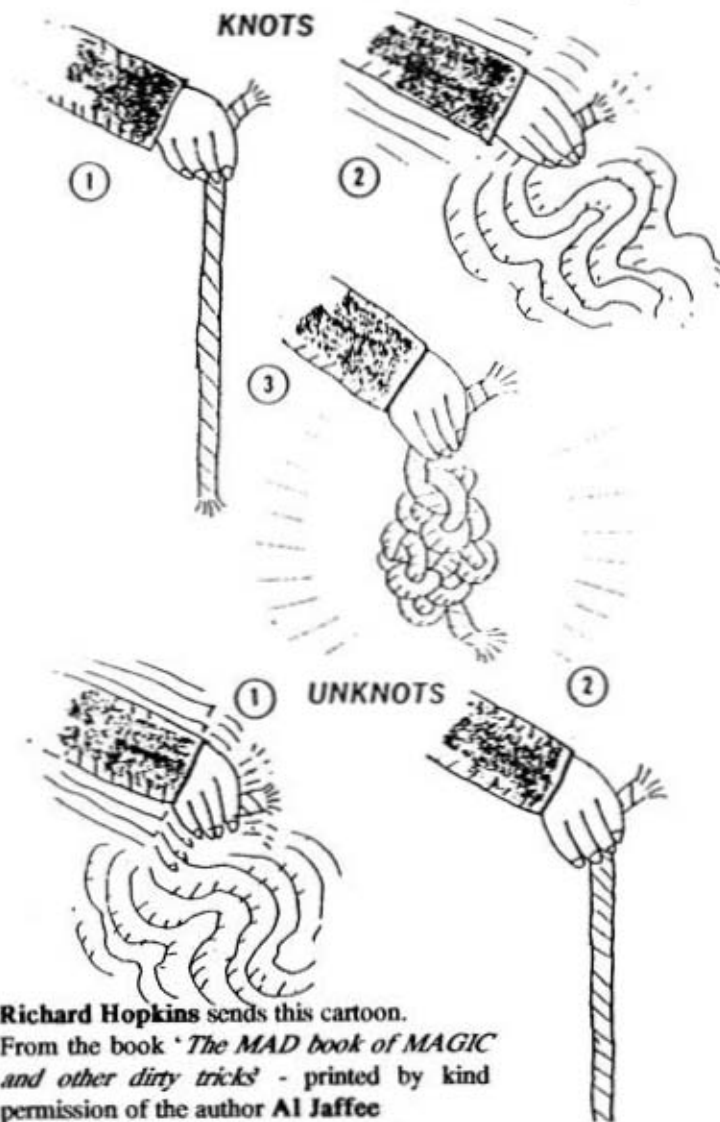
Hojo-jitsu is the science of binding a prisoner with a small cord after he has been subdued with one of the many martial arts; aiki-jitsu, Karate and Judo are some examples.

Both of these video tapes offer a unique perspective of knotting along with interesting background on Japanese history and its medieval culture. What also makes these video tapes interesting is that there are no books currently published on the subject of Hojo-jitsu either in the USA or in Japan. The only Japanese book published on the subject has been out of print since 1961 and cannot be found. Hojo-jitsu techniques are only found recorded on family scrolls with the exception now of these two tapes.

I thought most of the ropework in these tapes to be familiar, but the line handling methods clever and efficient.

THE EDIFYING "EDUCATED ROPE" TRICK

Grasp a two foot length of rope and snap it like a whip. Miraculously, it will knot itself. Another snap and it unknots itself. Your audience will be ecstatic and bright-eyed at this feat.



Richard Hopkins sends this cartoon.
From the book *'The MAD book of MAGIC
and other dirty tricks'* - printed by kind
permission of the author **Al Jaffee**

HOW THE TRICK IS DONE

Practice is the key to this trick. The following illustrations in slow motion show exactly what you must learn to do.



At start of trick, all fingers of rope hand must touch rope.



During snap, twist rope 3/8 inch to right and hold 2/9 second.



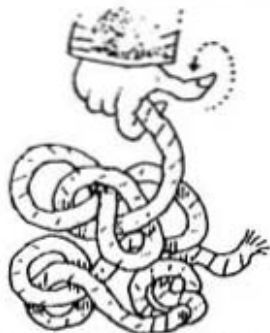
As rope starts upward, bend wrist down 47 degrees for 1/19 second.



As rope makes first knotting approach, tweak it gently with pinky.



As rope goes into second knotting approach, snap index finger.



Finally, spin thumb in a 3/4 inch arc and trick is all finished.

To Unknot: Simply Reverse Above Procedure

The MASURELL SPLICES

Jan HOEFNAGEL writes....

Some time ago member **Frans Masurell** showed me four splices he learned from an old sailor serving in one of the off-shore supply boats, three of them differ from the usual one (Ashley #2725), in the initial tucks. They caught my eye, as being sound splicing and led me to wondering why we always tend to follow the traditional and time-honoured way.

Reproducing the Masurell splices I was struck by the possibility of using other start configurations. I reckon there must be more than twenty acceptable ones, and if you would allow the strands to be tucked with the lay, instead of alternating over and under, you could have many more. My big question mark is - why has nobody tied or recorded those variants? They do exist, for in the 5 years that I have held classes I have often detected a puzzled look in the eyes of the beginners when making an eye-splice, on being told that their start configuration is not correct. After all every strand emerged from a different lay, did it not?

Those novel ways of starting may not be as neat as the common one, but since we often finish a splice off with the standing Turks Head or Ashley's #1282, or even a stopper knot, WHY should those other starts not be as good as the traditional ones? Must one always follow the well trodden path! If your answer is YES, your brain will become rusty and lazy; so your answer should be NO and this loud voiced. BRAINS are there to be used.

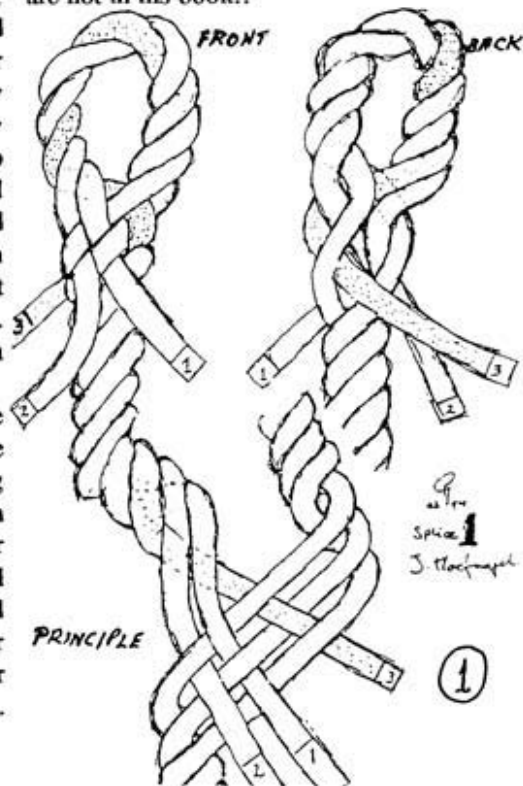
Here then are the Masurell splices which I invite you to try and test. I hope you will let me know what you think of them, also I stand open for constructive criticism.

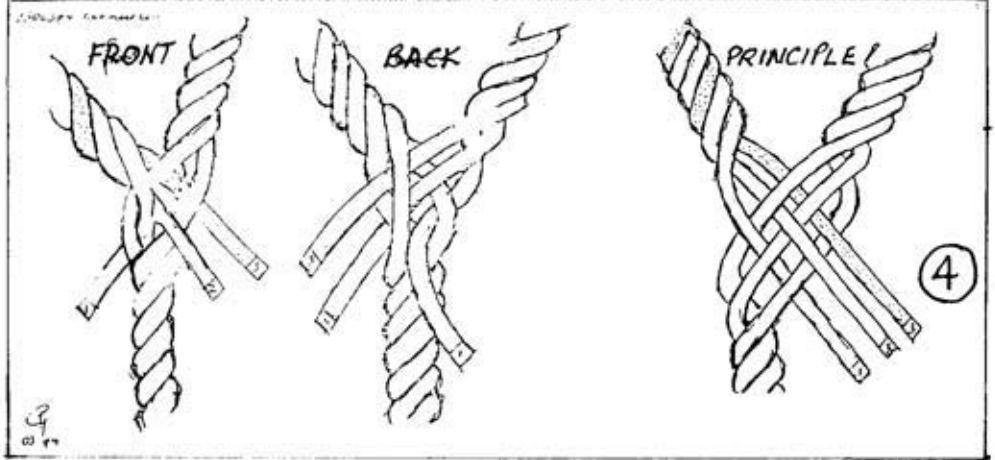
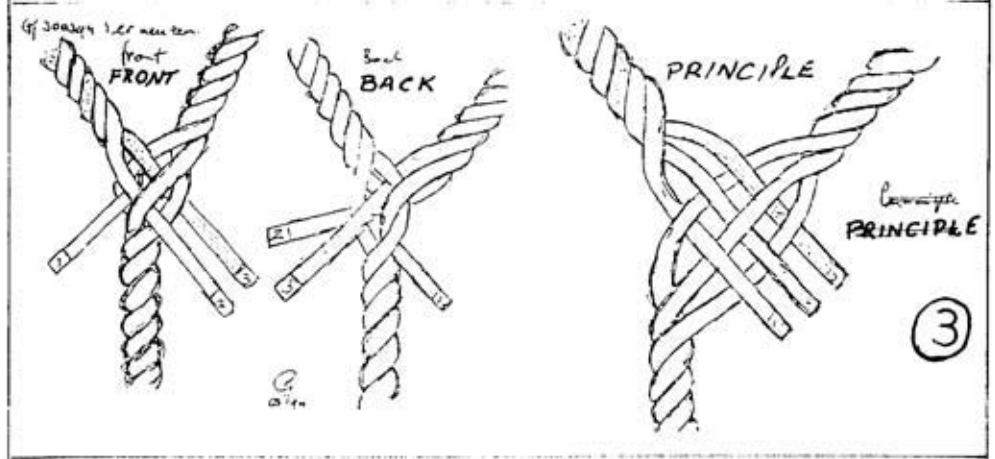
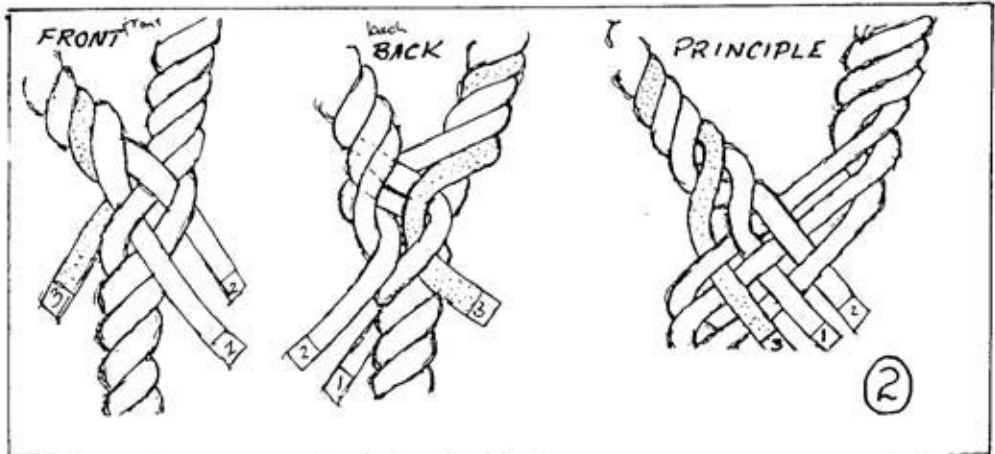
Note the different starts, the splicing is done the traditional over-one-under-one..

The fifth specimen, with start No.4 was spliced away in an over-one-under-two, three times.

Another observation was a better fit around the thimble.

No.2 is Ashley's #2725 - No's 1,3 and 4 are not in his book!!





LETTERS

From **Stuart GRAINGER** comes this newspaper cutting.

QUESTION: 'Here we go gathering nuts in May' says the nursery rhyme. Why May, when surely nuts are gathered in the autumn.

THIS nursery rhyme, first recorded in written form in 1867, is one of many singing games passed down from generation to generation and thought to date back to at least the end of the 14th century. The word 'nuts' is merely a corruption of the work 'knots', which in Chaucer's day used to mean flower buds.

The nursery rhyme refers to the gathering of the May bloom. It changed to nuts because most Victorian children had no idea what a 'knot' was.

Iona Opie - published in the Daily Mail 11/6/94.

Roger CARTER (N.Z.) writes.....

I thought it might interest Richard Hopkins (KM44) and Geoffrey Budworth (KM45) as well as the Membership, concerning the tarring of cordage.

"At the end of the 18th Century, William Chapman found that certain substances of tar actually encouraged dry rot in ropes, and he patented a special tar oil which was supposed to lead to better results in cordage impregnation.

Duhamel du Monceau undertook various experiments in Rochefort in 1741, 1743 and 1746 with tarred and untarred cordage,

in which he stretched prepared cordage of 3" circ. to breaking point. He established that untarred white cordage was 25 to 30% more durable than tarred ropes".

Awareness of the better quality of untarred cordage must have been common among Master Riggers long before these experiments; Falconer reported that: "In 1758 the shrouds and stays of the sheer-hulk at Portsmouth dockyard were overhauled, and when worming and service were taken off they were found to be of white cordage. On examination of the Store-keepers books, they were found to have been formerly the shrouds and rigging of the Royal William of 110 guns built in 1715 and rigged in 1716. She was thought top-heavy and unfit for sea, and unrigged, and her stores laid up. Some few years later her shrouds and stays were fitted to the sheer-hulk, where they remained in constant very hard service for about 30 years, while every tarred rope about her had been repeatedly renewed".

"This note confirms that shrouds and other standing rigging were not always impregnated with tar; sometimes a coating of tar was simply applied to the surface". All this from "Eighteenth - Century Rigs and Rigging by; Karl Heinz Marquardt.

WANTED

Black & White PHOTOGRAPHS are desperately needed for publication in KNOTTING MATTERS..Please, Pretty Please, or any other begging gesture you desire.....Ed

AROUND THE REGIONS

PONA TIKANGA

(Maori - 'Knotting Matters')

From The New Zealand Chapter - **Roger Carter** sends news of a thriving and ever growing chapter of 16 members and several 'possibles' in the offing. New members include; **Rodd ORRAH** from Nelson, who specialises in Mariners Fancywork - **Leith McDUGALL** from Paraparaumu Beach, an Embroiderer - **David BLOGG** from Napier, who is another of the Seamen in the chapter who creates beautiful Mariners fancywork - forty examples of which he has just presented to the Museum. He visits the UK in October to receive the 'Frontline Britain '94' Medal and Citation the mark the 50th Anniversary of the end of 'Frontline Britain' so we at 'home' hope to see something of him. - **Capt Gil INKSTER** also of Nelson, now retired and busier than ever, and relieves in the "Straitsman".

Bil de Lnage has completed an order from "Fashion Down Under" for knot boards for their retail outlets and Roger Carter is still busy manufacturing miniature boat fender key fobs. Roger's 'Hands on' knotboards that he made for the British Council Travelling Science Show proved very popular, the show visited six major centres and the Co-ordinator estimated that some 10,000 pairs of hands had "Had a go" - the show now over, the boards are now part of a permanent display somehow pertaining to - Wait for it!..... -

MATHS in the Science Discovery Place in Palmerstone North. The Chapter have now been asked to make another set for permanent display in Capital Discovery Place in Wellington.

Roger now thinks it time to hold a N.Z. AGM and has put the question of - should we, where, when and what sort of things the membership would like on the agenda. *(By Ed - I hope you are as successful as the U.S.A - and that there will be some representation from 'home' - I would love to visit N.Z. but now that I am retired to civilian life I don't have the time!!)*

The Museum, with the blessing of the Guild Council, has been made an Hon. Corporate Member of the Chapter, and Roger attends each Wednesday to run a workshop - where he is currently re-rigging a Napolionic Prisoner of War, Bone model of a 110 gun ship of the line, about 200 years old.

QUOTE...

"Modern Piracy occurs where poverty is endemic"... "almost anything can be of value"... "even polypropylene ropes which make excellent WIGS in Nigeria".

From "Piracy Today" by Capt. Roger Villar 1985

THE TALL SHIPS RACE MARITIME FESTIVAL

By Ken YALDEN.....

A small dedicated group of knot tyers attended the Maritime Festival at Weymouth, the start of this years "Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race", with the intention of promoting the Guild and introducing knot tying to the young international crews.

After some background work by the Guild Council, the Race committee welcomed the idea of having the IGKT present and so it was that Ken YALDEN, Fred CARRINGTON, Albert BURTON, Dennis MURPHY, Geoff & Lesley WYATT, Richard HOPKINS, Peter & Katherine GOLDSTONE, Terry WEEKS and Charlie SMITH descended upon Weymouth for what turned out to be a very busy four days. Dennis had arranged for bunk space and car parking through the local Sea Cadet Unit, which because of the popularity of the event turned out to be invaluable.

Confronted with an infectious nautical atmosphere created by the presence of so many majestic vessels all "dressed overall" in resplendent bunting, the intrepid team set out for the first day 'on show' - at their allocated pitches - however comma! the "Best laid plans....etc these were not to be and one team ended up 'on the beach' and another within the Sea Cadet boat station - flexibility saved the day. Later, a third venue was set up at the Mini Tall Ships Race at Radipole Lake, which proved a good day with a dedicated group of model makers as enthusiastic about their hobby as we are in the Guild. Set up with Richard's

6 knot challenge rig, Ken made up the challenge team and Katherine demonstrated making her bespoke macrame jewelry.

Soon truly international knot tying was underway, the only language available between the team and a Polish crew - were the knots themselves! The beach team were enjoying many visits and Geoff and Charlie working "Alfresco" were causing pedestrian traffic jams with their Turkshead demonstrations. Having discovered a suitable water hole the dusty and weary team retired at the end of the day to recount the days events.

Sadly Albert (having only left hospital on the Friday) found the going tough and, so as not to be a burden on the team, he decided to return home, but not before he had donated two of his knot boards as prizes for the knot races.

More challenges the next day, with a tote board organised by Lesley - who soon discovered that Russian and Polish sailors can have very long names! But perhaps the event of the day was the "Knot Supper" for the team at.....none other than the "Turks Head" a local pub with a sign depicting a sailor holding a 'Monkeys Fist'! - Help was on the way! - It is amazing how much line knot tyers can get in their pockets - Charlie with pockets like a midshipmans sea chest came up trumps and by the end of the evening guess who knew what a real Turkshead was. Day three saw many of the challenged returning

returning for more. It became apparent that running the 6 knot challenge as a race on the scale we did, requires a separate team with another rig to teach the basic knots, while the main rig is used for the competition. Certificates, printed in joint names of the Guild and the Race Organisation were presented to all the participants, to take back to their part of the world and remind them of the Guild in years to come. The Fastest Individual prize went to Steve MORGAN (15.94 secs) of "Morning Star of Revolution" - the vessel which also took the Fastest Crew Aggregate time (Agg of 3 crew members) in 57.6 seconds. Fastest Blindfold time (20.3 secs) went to Helen GARRINGTON of "Jean-de-la-Lune".

Not surprisingly the route back to the bunk was via the pub, where Ken thanked the team and gave an impromptu demonstration of making ear-rings with string around the leg and a clothes peg - using fine line by Anne Norman.



Ken YALDEN and Steve MORGAN of "Morning Star"
Photo: Dorset Evening Echo.

BOOK REVIEWS

SOMETHING DIFFERENT - over 50 button knots -

By **John HALIFAX**

Published 1993 by Endeavour Ropecraft.
Price 3.95p + post & packing (100g)
(Available from IGKT Guild Supplies
Secretary)

In 1991 the author - a Guild member - discovered a new family of one-strand knots which he named the Suffolk Knot series. From a single (sometimes double) overhand or thumb knot, 54 practical buttons can be tied, to adorn clothing or be used as earrings, flat crests, etc.

In this booklet photocopies of the knotting enabled me to tie many of John Halifax's knots on sight, and his concise written guidelines beside each stage of varied tucks and twists made clear the rest.

I worked through the lot in three sittings. After just a few knots I fell into his method, then it all got easy. At the end I could tie some unaided. So I certainly learnt something and had my money's worth.

He tells us what tools are handy, and how to seal, colour and harden our completed items. And there's a useful list (as long as it remains true) of suppliers for all these bits and pieces.

This is an A5 effort of 60 pages, centre stapled between a thin card cover. It is a modest example of desk top publishing, the kind of thing that puts into print useful stuff real publishers reject.

John Halifax promises us a sequel, the Norfolk Knot series, and I look forward to it. It may depend, however, upon whether or not sales of this current booklet recover his costs. That seems to me another good reason to buy a copy now. **G.B.**

(F)ACTUALLY FICTION

Geoffrey BUDWORTH writes...

"And without the inspiration of Clifford W. Ashley's wonderful 1944 work, the Ashley Book of Knots, which I had the good fortune to find in a yard sale for a quarter, this book would have remained just the thread of an idea." So Ms E. Annie Proulx acknowledges one stimulus for her acclaimed second novel *The Shipping News*, published by Fourth Estate (London 1994).

Reviewers quoted on the dust jacket describe it as "...an irresistible, inspiring comedy of human life and possibilities ...inexhaustibly inventive....a stunning book, full of magic and potential."

I couldn't get into it. Shows how much I know. It won the Irish Times International fiction prize. Which is why Desmond Mandeville's widow Norah saw it displayed by Hatchards book shop in London's Piccadilly.

Anyway, all the chapter headings have pictures of knots and knotting quotations (mostly from Ashley). Indeed chapters 2, 3, 5, 8, 9 and 13 are entitled Love Knot, Strangle Knot, A Rolling Hitch, A Slippery Hitch, The Mooring Hitch and The Dutch Cringle. And the anti-hero is named Quoyle ("coil")

Determined hunters of knotting curios may decide to add this book to their collections. In which case it costs £14.99 - in hardback - here in the U.K. The author lives in Vermont and U.S. readers can no doubt track down the original 1993 American publication from the latest ISB Number 1-85702-205-X.

GUILD SUPPLIES

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