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Knotting Matters

Newsletter of the



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KNOTTING MATTERS

**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER of
THE INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS
ISSUE No. 50 AUTUMN - OCTOBER 1995**

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EDITORS BITS AND PIECES

"Hey, that wasn't so hard was it?" Or so we thought when we sent off the second proof copy to the printers.

Yes, yes I know. Where are the page numbers? I numbered the pages, honest! I may have assumed too much. I need to learn how to give specific instructions. That's what comes from assuming too much on the first date. My apologies for your having to number your own pages by hand. We were so delighted that there were 40 pages too.

Brace yourself, here come the corrections, some mine, for which I apologize, some the printers. Des Pavson's photo should have had an acknowledgment for the professional photographer, Joanne Russell, who did such a good job on it. The very readable article 'A Proper Bellpull' was written by Carl Osborne and thank you for that. I didn't see the Secretary's Blatter until the proof copy and then I missed the lack of any paragraph spacing. It does make it hard to read doesn't it. We have standardized the paragraph spacing now. There seemed to be no point in retyping some items just to change the font over. I used Stuart Grainger's 'Multiple Crown' article on page 36/37 as he sent it in. He always sends in camera ready copy. The book review on page 19 was written by Professor John Turner of Hamilton, New Zealand. This was not made clear as his name was just left dangling at the end of the review, sorry. The letters were a mess. We have standardized the letters

with a title at the beginning and the writers name at the end. You can help by titling your own letters. Then you won't ask "Why have they called it that?" This should stop the kind of confusion that comes on page 28 and 29. Charles Warner's letter is all on page 28 and a letter from Brian A Glennon begins the next page, but looks on casual inspection that Charles Warner's letter continues, giving him the credit or blame for those comments. Thank you all for your really helpful remarks. If there is anything in this issue you think we can do better than, as you have seen, writing does change things.

What next? Well, this issue is off to the printers with all the instructions I can think of. There should be something for everyone. We have been blessed with loads of copy, mostly about KM49 though!

We were saddened very much by the death of 'Albert R.N.'. I knew him for only a couple of years but spent a whole wonderful day with him at his flat in Wellingborough last year. He was an amusing, interesting and pleasantly accommodating man and rope craftsman, who liked to talk and listen to people. He will be sorely missed by many members of this Guild.

To send copy in time for publication in KM51, it must be here by 1 November 95. You can send camera ready copy in A4 or A5 if it really fills the page. If I can retype it to fit better then please number all

drawings. Its not always clear to me which is which.

This issue has been so stuffed to the edges that I have decided to use the seven pages in Part III of Robert Chisnall's exilent series on Knot Testing and postpone it to KM51. I hope no one minds waiting, but sorry if you do.

THE MAYFLOWER SOCIETY

On August Bank Holiday Sunday, we went on a day trip to Poole Quay to fish off the quay and go around the shops, and we made a strange connection. We stopped to eat some lunch and sat in the only free seats in the shade, next to a pan-handler and his bottle of cider. That's probably why the seats were free. George turned out to be good company as we ate. In the course of conversation about how kind people can be, he mentioned the Mayflower boat, where he was given a meal and offered a bunk for the night. This name rang a bell to me. We went to see this marvellous old boat, all wood and real rope. Going on board I felt instantly at home and comfortable. The crew were all jolly and joking around.

The Mayflower Sail Training Society is a charitable trust, formed in 1980 to take young people on low cost sail training cruises, (#300 for 10 children, aged 12 to 18 and 2 leaders for a weekend) run by volunteer crews. One of several boats, the 'Kenya Jacarande' is a Brixham Trawler built in 1923 and maintained as an historic boat to Sail Training Certificate standards. At

present she is tied up at Poole Quay because on leaving Poole Harbour her rudder broke away and damaged her steering gear. Built in 1923, she was only meant to work for twenty years or so. The rudder was old and just broke. The problem now is that about £3000 will be needed to repair her, plus the docking fees which are all extra to the normal running costs and fund raising activities. She should have been at the Boat Show this weekend collecting money at the quayside. Spending so much of my time in working for and with kids, I am always interested in anyone that can offer all children the chance to try out new disciplines that may become their life long passions. Better a sailor than a Joy-rider. If you can help to put her back to sea, send donations of cash, donations of materials (such as paint) or to donate your time and effort as crew, organiser, fund raiser or dogsbody, (they even need week-end captains, real ones that is) then write to: The Mayflower Sail Training Society, The Secretary Mayflower STS, 5 Marina Avenue, Motpur Park, Surrey, KT3 6NE.

After talking to Sue on the quay side and Eileen below decks making the tea, I remembered where I heard of them before. The Mayflower Society own the Golden Hind that Stewart Grainger was asked to begin a Cat-o-nine Tails for in KM49 (pg 35). There then is the strange connection and all to the good from one charity to another.

Notes From The Secretary's Blotter

I started writing these notes a couple of years ago, when KM was a little irregular in its appearance, and it seemed a good way of bring the members up to date with what had been going on. This will now be the forth Km to appear so far this year, and I am running out of things to say, however, when it comes to finding things to say, I have never been beaten yet.

Since KM48 there has not been a meeting of the Council. It being the "Open Season" for knot tying, it was simply not possible to get a quorum of Council Members together under the same roof, at the same time, hence administratively speaking, the Guild is "On Hold", until the summer is over. That is, except for the collection of subscriptions-

As we are gradually tidying up all our administrative loose ends, I have now written to everyone who appeared on my records as being in arrears with their subscriptions. I must apologise for being somewhat tardy in sending out these reminders and also for having one or two (actually quite a few) errors in my records. My thanks to those members who spotted the problem and contacted me with the corrected information. It is my aim that in future a subscription reminder will go out with KM in advance of the due date.

There is very little else to say, especially as we are enjoying a particularly hot and dry summer. I have spent a fortnight in the French Alps with the Suffolk Scouts, who insisted on dragging me up mountains. Having walked up the mountain in the sweltering heat, we were the into our winter woollies, and roped together as we crossed the glacier. We had all spent the previous evening practising our Alpine Butterfly loops, so at least there was a little knotting involved.

The present weather here in Britain is far too good to be wasted by sitting in front of a word processor, hence the brevity of the "blotter". However the hand of fate has stepped in and conscripted me into doing a little decorating about the house. (I did promise to do some just after Christmas and it has now caught up with me). I am actually decorating the hall, which I suppose isn't too bad as there is not too much wall to deal with, just fourteen doors. I think that the summer will have gone by the time I have finished.

Finally, I must close on a rather sad note, by announcing the death of Albert Burton. Albert has been a member for many years, and was always present at the Guild meetings. He will be greatly missed. - Nigel.

ALBERT RN
 by
FRED CARRINGTON

Albert Burton one of our most popular members has recently died. Always known as Albert RN, he and I attended every meeting that it was possible to attend. We also gave more than 30-40 displays and talks to various organisations in the country. Albert was born in Sheerness in Kent, he lived in Southampton and retired to Wellingborough.

He joined the Royal Navy as a boy seaman and served on HMS Hood. During war service he was torpedoed. He also served in the Royal Navy Commandos at Dieppe and Sicily where he was 'MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES'. After the war he worked for the Cunard Line on the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth where he was the Bosun for five years, he certainly 'knew the ropes'.

Locally he was very well liked and did much for charity. It would take many pages to describe his full active life. The last time I was able to talk to him just before he passed away he was tying key rings for the nurses in the ward. He will be very much missed.

President Des Pavson and Liz, together with Harold Scott and his wife Ethel, my wife and myself attended his funeral. A spray of flowers together with our emblem as a centre piece was sent on behalf of all our members.

Thank you Fred for your remembrance of Albert RN. Due to Albert's kind heart and great generosity, many of us have tangible reminders of this very kind man, but perhaps my best memory will be his humour always so evident in the twinkle in his eye, a very gentle man who will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Below is one of Albert's many generous gifts, showing just a part of his great talent.

Margaret Boggs.



ROPE SPLICING KNIFE - HELP PLEASE!

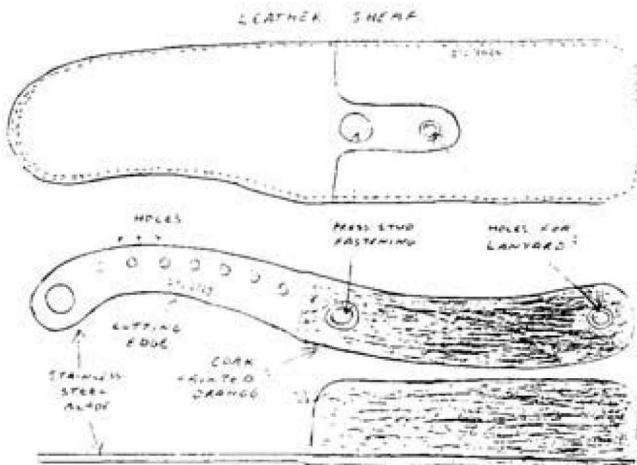
Can anyone help please? Whilst visiting a junk shop recently I came across an item marked 'Rope Splicing Knife'. As an IGKT member I was obviously interested, but at the same time rather perplexed, as to the exact purpose and origin of the knife. The owner of the shop assured me that the person from whom he had acquired the object had told him it was for splicing rope, but the exact technique employed can only be a matter of inspired guesswork.

I have included a drawing of the knife (pencilled around I'm afraid; my drawing skills leave much to be desired) in the hope that someone may be able to advise me of its origin. It would appear to be nautical, in that the handle is of cork and has been painted orange, presumably to aid with retrieval from the water.

The blade is of stainless steel and has several holes along its back edge, again presumably to reduce weight and aid with flotation. I can only assume that the larger hole at the end of the blade would be used rather like the eye of a needle to pull fibres back through the rope, having been pushed through the lay. It is secured into its sheath by means of a press stud and there are holes in the sheath and handle which I assume were intended for some sort of joining lanyard. There is no belt loop on the back of the sheath. Embossed in the sheath is the serial number 276/2024, engraved on the blade is 27c/2023.

It may be that I have acquired something very common and of little significance, but I would be very interest in any information you may be able to let me have. Perhaps its nothing to do with splicing at all!

A L D SUMMERLEY - CORBY, NORTHANTS



YOUR COMMENTS ON KMS PAST

Several comments from Charles Warner, Picton, Australia.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Richard Hopkins and you, the Editors, are a bit anxious about the 'correct' name of some specific knots in KM49. There are NO 'correct' names, NO national or international standards, NO United Nations treaty. NO Knotting Academy; NO generally recognised authority.

You can, if you like, take Ashley as the authority, but note that he gives several names to quite a number of knots (eg #1414 is called the Water Knot, Waterman's, English, Englishman's, Fisherman's, True Lover's or Angler's Knot) and quite a number of names are shared between several knots (eg the True Lover's Knot is given to the different knots #798, 1038, 2301, 2421, 2424, 2425, 2526). If you want to use Ashley as authority on what knot should be called a Rolling Hitch, note that Ashley gives that name to #61, or to different arrangements of the same basic structure (#1190, 1230, 1856), which is about equivalent to calling a Bowline a Sheetbend, and to quite a different knot, #1884; and #1856 is exactly the same knot called a Midshipman's Hitch in #62, though that name is also given to the different knots #1027, 1855.

If Ashley is confused about names, we need feel no shame in our own confusion!

Of course, Ashley describes a large number of

knots, in almost every Chapter, without giving them any name at all, and there is an even larger number of simple knots that just don't appear in Ashley.

And if you look around at other knotting books, which may be as authoritative in their own fields as Ashley is in his, you will find at least equal confusion.

All you can do if you are speaking or writing to anyone who does not fully share your own knotting background, is either show or illustrate each knot as you name it, or give a specific reference (page and figure number) to some common book or publication that uses the name you want. Otherwise, no one can be quite sure what you mean.

LEFT OR RIGHT HANDED-N, S, Z?

The anonymous author of 'A Comment' in KM49 objects to the use of Z or N instead of right handed or left handed, partly because he or she seems to have trouble reading letter's lying on their sides. I haven't come across Z/N in this context, but have often seen and used Z/S to describe the direction of twist of fibres or yarns etc in threads and cords, or of turns or twists in the inner structure of knots. This corresponds to the International Standard for Textiles, No2 (1973) of the ISO, which gives the unambiguous definitions. The product has S (or Z) twist if, when it is held in a vertical position, the spirals or helices formed by the fibres or filaments around its axis incline in the same direction as the central portion of the

letter S (or Z).

The troubles with using 'left handed' or 'right handed' are firstly, they are not used in all countries to describe the twist in rope etc; secondly, one needs a particular kind of visual imagination and/or experience to instantly remember which way the threads go, (I always have to remember right handed is when the twists are clockwise going away from you), thirdly, fastenings involving bolts and screw are becoming less and less frequent, and less familiar. So far, S and Z are instantly recognisable to many more people than left or right handed threads. Finally, in trying to describe the internal structure of knots, I find it much easier to recognise S or Z twists or turns than to work out whether it is left or right handed.

Personally, I would encourage the adoption of the terms 'S' or 'Z' to describe the lay of cordage or the direction of twists or turns in the parts of a knot. They are readily determined in practically all circumstances, and are recognised internationally by an ISO standard.

ANY NEW KNOTS?

Heinz Prohaska and the Editors get a bit agitated in KM49 about whether a particular knot is a new invention, and indeed, this topic is often raised in KM.

We need to give thought to how much knotting has been practised all over the world and throughout the ages. There is good indirect evidence that people have been tying knots for at

least half a million years, and it is not at all unreasonable to infer that *Homo habilis* tied knots two and a half million years ago, if not his ancestors even earlier. For tens if not hundreds of thousands of years, practically every single person alive either tied or had tied for them several different knots every day of their lives, for clothing, tools, weapons, containers, dwellings and much more. The life of a hunter-gatherer allows long stretches of time not needed to keep alive, but devoted to social activities like religion or politics, or more individual activities like arts and crafts. We know, from the art that has survived, that people had a strong sense of pattern, and considerable manual dexterity at least 30.000 years ago in virtually all the inhabited regions of the world. Surely some of these people would have played with knots and braids.

My guess would be that every simple knot has already been tied somewhere, by somebody, at some time. Because of difficulties of communication and, for many knots, lack of incentive to learn from other people, many knots are unknown to most people. Of course, knotting records are very limited, so that anyone who tries can tie a knot they have not seen before, but that doesn't mean that no one has ever tied it before.

On the other hand, it is quite possible to be the first to record or publish a particular knot, though it is rather more difficult to

prove that you are the first even if you confine your research to mainstream publications in English. So it is very unlikely that the Piwich knot (KM47,p13) was truly invented by Robert Pont's son or by his Native American friend, or for that matter by Heinz Prohaska's source, though any of them might well have tied it entirely from their own resources. As for the Clothesline 'Knot' (KM47 p13) a fossilised two ply laid rope 17,000 years old was found in Lascaux Cave; surely in that many years, several people would have thought to poke something into the lay.

The question should be, not 'have I invented this new knot?' but 'has anyone recorded this knot before?'. (Mr Warner, far from getting agitated in KM49, surely the letter to which you refer, and the Editor's comment, re-enforce your argument that there is nothing new under the sun. Ed.)

CLOSED CURVED THEORY

Brian A Glennon rightly outlines (KM49, no page numbers), the bemusement and disbelief which we finger fiddling knot tyers feel for the work of knot theorists. 'Closed curved theory' is an illuminating alternative name for this abstruse pursuit. It's probably too late to convert its exponents (although we might try); why, in any case, don't we of the IGKT adopt the term unilaterally? It would show a nice discrimination.

I differ from you, Brian, over whether or not

there is an overlap between the two fields. I sense, on sketchy evidence (admittedly) at present, that perhaps a bridge could be erected between them. The late Cambridge Natural Science Tripos, Desmond Mandeville, a keem' Guild member, came to believe from his research into 'Trambles' (KM4,10,18,19,23,24,25,27,29 and 34 together with copious unpublished notes in my possession) that they were a serious and substantial area of study....and might be that bridge. Of the existing schism he wrote; "I seek an ergonomic, rather than a topological, explanation".
Geoffrey Budworth, Kent

ERRATUM

from
GOEFFREY BUDWORTH

MEMENTO MORI

This does not appear to be in KM. I can't find a reference to it in any of the indices; and I've scanned each page of every issue from 1 to 48. Maybe it was a loose enclosure.

Anyway, I wrote it (not Frank Harris) and I think you'll find the original punctuation was better. (Sorry about the ownership of the piece and the info on previous inclusion, duff information I am afraid from the Secretary - punctuation, we will try harder what can we say. Leaving ownership and punctuation aside, it is still worthy of printing and thinking about. Ed.)

SURFER'S SECTION!!

Internet letter

Thank you for taking on the task of Editor from me, I suppose I will have to

keep you fed with articles now, to practice what I (tried to) preach!

I seem to be surviving civilian life, although the retirement bit did not happen! I have been back to sea and still pass the White Ensign on my way to an office in the morning. The difference is that I don't have to wear a uniform any more and the work is in civilian style communications systems (e.mail and TCP/IP, FTP and the like) a bit like going from wire splicing to macrame (but it pays better). This leads me to the real reason for this letter, The Internet/World Wide Web and should The Guild have a 'page'. Well Tom Skemp is willing to do that bit, the Sec has an e.mail address (that he is keeping secret), James Smith is also keen, so it looks like a goer. All that remains is to share the information with those members who do not have access to a terminal or who may have limited access (like a campus terminal or I see that some Cafes are now opening with terminals that you can hire!, yes, here in the UK at last.)

I think I can contribute to KM with the occasional 'Web Knotters' page. If all those members on the Net will feed me their 'bookmark' lists on knotting pages and their e.mail address I will get it going. Also will you please indicate if you are willing to print pages off for other members, or go surfing on their behalf, or act as a postbox for knotting exchanges between members

where postage costs knock a hole in the enjoyment of exchanging printed information.

Gordon's e.mail address:
gordon@g-cise.demon.co.uk
GORDON PERRY, HAMPSHIRE

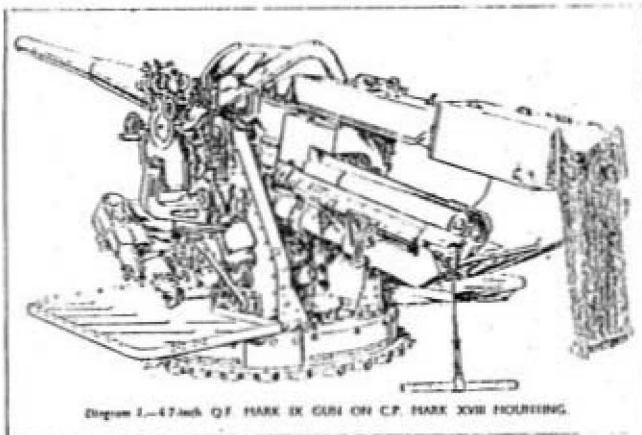
LEFT HAND LAY, MANTLETS AND TOM BOWLING

Well done Ed. for KM49, I read it as a knot tyer, the printing comments I shall leave to others.

I was only half-way through your issue when I was taking time out to dive into my bookshelves to answer some of the questions. I shall use this letter as a small article and report on these matters.

I can answer part of Tim Field's question - "What was left hand lay rope used for?" The answer is in print in the Admiralty Manual of Seamanship, Vol II 1951, page 140, I quote, 'Hammock lashing is also made from sisal. It is laid up left-handed because when used for lashing up with a marline hitch it is less likely to unlay than a right-handed rope'. I include a diagram from BR 1938. I slept in a hammock for 2 years before I knew the lashing was left-hand lay myself. (Fig.7)

A bit more information on the next page of the manual, this time referring to signal halyards - 'rot-proofed sisal, soft-laid, from one quarter to one third of the yarns in each strand are reverse spun (left-handed) which gives increased flexibility'. Note: this has now been superseded by 12 mm braided poly-stuff.



From seamanship to gunnery.

Mantlets: I remember a guided tour of the gun emplacements in the casements dug out of the Rock of Gibraltar, where wrought iron curtain rails had been fitted to the ceiling, in front of the gun, but behind the muzzle, to suspend mantlets (rope curtains) to deflect shrapnel and rock fragments from incoming fire.

Meanwhile, back at sea, at the other end of a gun and one hundred years later, a rope net, or later matting, was suspended to the rear of a gun. A second drawing is included. There was more danger and deaths to the rear of a gun mounting than the front, a point not put about too much when recruiting loading numbers. After the gun had fired, the ejected brass cylinder (incorrectly called shells by non-gunnery folk) leaves the breach with enough force to break bones. The gun loading numbers

would shelter from wind spray, sleet and snow (Russian convoy stuff) to the rear of their mounting, standing in danger as they did so.

The rope shield would deflect the case to the deck leaving the loaders only then with the problem of how to stand up with rolling cylinders under foot on a heaving deck. It was much safer ashore singing about **Tom Bowling**.

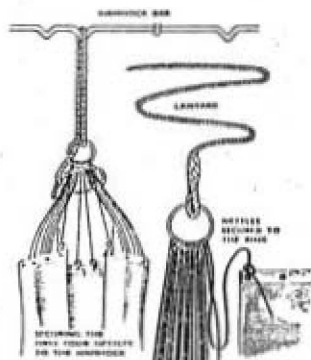
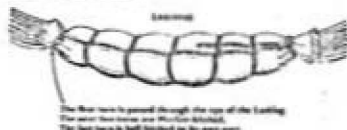


Fig. 7. Slings a lanyard

My thanks to Floris Hinn and to Lester Copestake for the sheet music they sent me. Lester went one better, he even sent me a tape of the last night of the Proms when it was sung. I was lucky to watch it at home as well, so now I have read it, heard it and seen it, but this Chairman is a 'talker' so I will not be singing it.

Those points answered, it leaves me with my 'Chairman' hat on to say to the inventors, not too many new inventions please, they have been the plague of all our editors. There is not much new in knotting, only the Guild, so please use your creativity to recruit more members so they may enjoy what we have.
Ken Yalden-Hampshire

TOW LINES (ROPES)
by
GORDON PERRY

I was recently invited to go gliding with a colleague from work, I had been some years previous in a far off land but so long ago it was to be a renewed experience for me. Gliding, as I soon discovered, is not about soaring around with the birds all the time, but a constant round of pushing, pulling and even running with the aircraft. One task I had to perform was to recover the tow line from the runway and present it to the next tug and glider, easy until the last tow was airborne, the tug returned over the runway, dropped the line and I, being a 'sailor', began coiling it in my left hand, as one would. "No Gordon we don't

do it like that!" came a sharp retort from my friend.

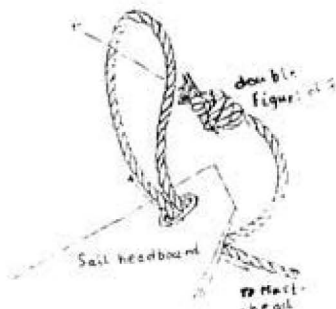
This is how they do it: Lay the line out on the runway, bring the two ends together then the bight up to the ends tie, you now have eight parallel parts, this you then chain shorten (Ashley #1144) so that it can be hung in the equipment van or on the hangar wall, then be pulled out without tangling.

Having seen it done, I guess there are many other applications for a similar way of stowing a line or immediate use. Does anyone know of other people's, hobbies or profession that use this method?

A GREEK KNOT!

I thought I would have a go at drawing a knot myself. I chose this simple hitch that a friend of mine copied from a Greek fisherman.

My picture represents use of this hitch as a means of attaining the mainsail halyard to the head of the sail. This does away with expensive shackles, and the distance gained can get the sail up higher to improve Cuff tension. Does anyone have a name for it?



GAME SLING
by
R. A. STEEMAN

Here's an up to date twist on Ashley's method (#437 & 438) for carrying dead game.

I made my sling with 3.5mm diameter white nylon 3 strand cord, the kind used in trawl nets. Two loops go around the creature's forelegs and the other on the hind legs. That way it will hold eight ducks or rabbits, two hares, a roe, or 16 wood pigeons. The load can be comfortably carried in the hand or slung over one shoulder.

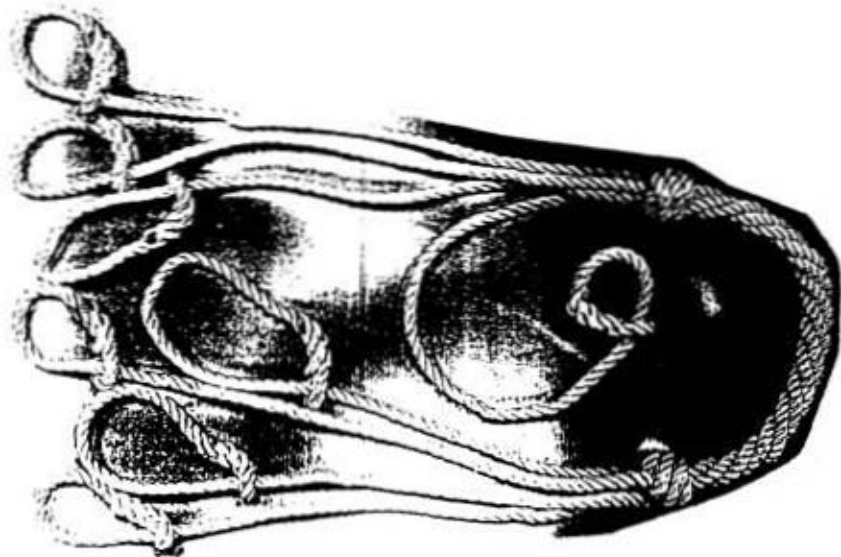
TO MAKE IT

a. Cut 4 x 110cm lengths of cord and melt the ends to seal them. Form a sliding loop in one end of all four cords by splicing small eyes and threading the other ends through them.

b. Mark and seize the cords together 27cm from these loops. Make a Matthew Walker Knot (#682); then cable-lay the 4 righthanded strands up together lefthanded for a distance of 14cm. Secure with a matching Matthew Walker (spiralling the other way for symmetry).

Alternatively, you could have a Solomon's Bar handle (#2496), when two of the cords need to be cut 25cm longer.

c. To complete this sling, sliding loops must also be contrived on the 4 working ends. This entails splicing 4 more small eyes - but this time around the standing parts of the cords. All 8 loops should be the same distance from the handle.



Knotmaster Series

N° 1

*Knotting ventured,
knotting gained.*

OYSTERMAN'S STOPPER KNOT

It's doubtful if the oysterman who inspired this knot - devised and named by Clifford Warren Ashley around 1920 - ever used it. Anyway, it's Knotmaster's favourite hole blocker.

The simple Overhand or Thumb knot is too small and weak. The Figure of Eight is better; but don't believe those who tell you it's fatter. It'll pull through the same sized hole as an Overhand Knot. Both have limitations. Often just not big enough, each wraps imperfectly around the standing part of the rope with a sort of hare lip.

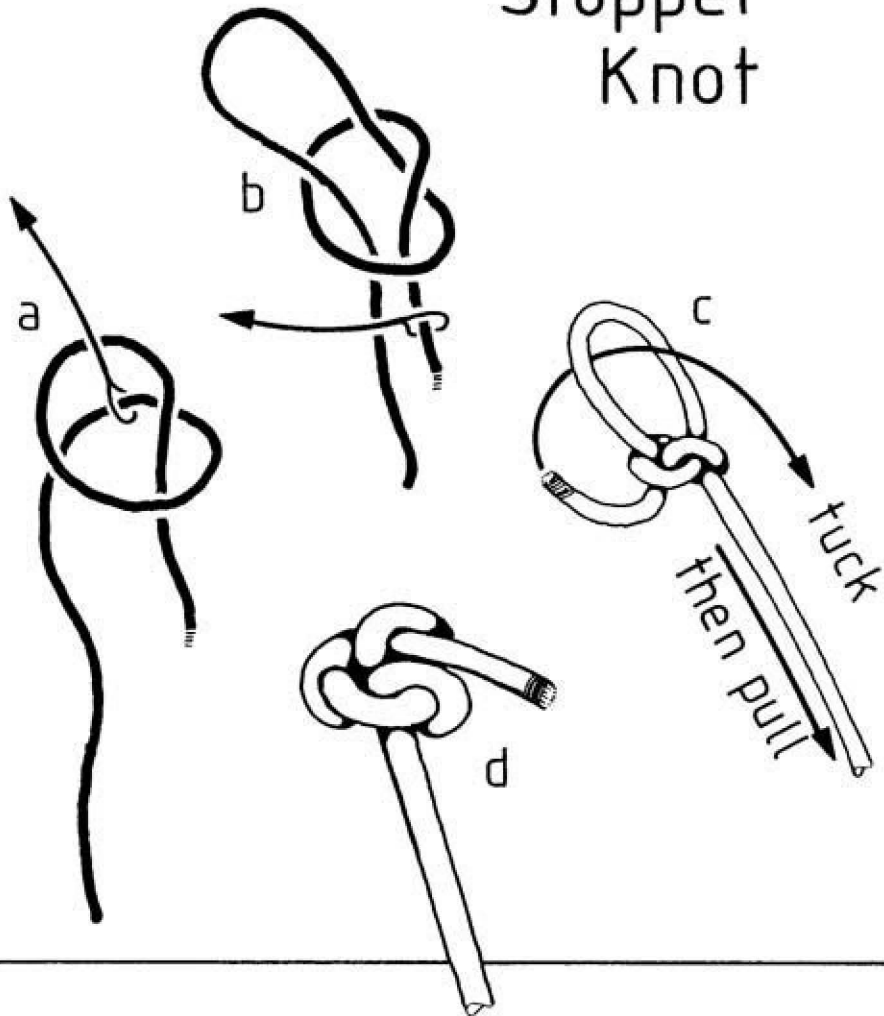
Use the F.o.E. when you can. For bigger jobs, try the unbeatable Oysterman's Stopper Knot.

--- oOo ---

STOP PRESS:

LATE NEWS: Since going to press, I have learnt of the death, on Saturday 2nd September, of founder member Dr. Harry Asher. Obituary in KM51. — Nigel

Oysterman's Stopper Knot



From a Bend to a Lanyard Knot

by

Pieter van de Griend

One day, during a break between lectures, I found myself playing with a piece of netting twine I then kept in my briefcase for some personal nostalgic reasons. Half-dreaming about my wild trawlerman days on the North Atlantic Ocean my fingers automatically clapped Ashley's Bend into it by a method which is shown in figures 1-7. The name of this bend is due to Cyrus Day [2,p60,#47], as Clifford Ashley [1,p264,#1452] gives no name, but a date instead. Day seems to have already christened this knot *Ashley's Bend* in 1947 [4,p48], but he was not the first to name it, though. That honour fell to the little known Philip Tossijn in his excellent series of knot books which began to appear about 1942. In [5,p16] he called it an *Omega Knoop*.

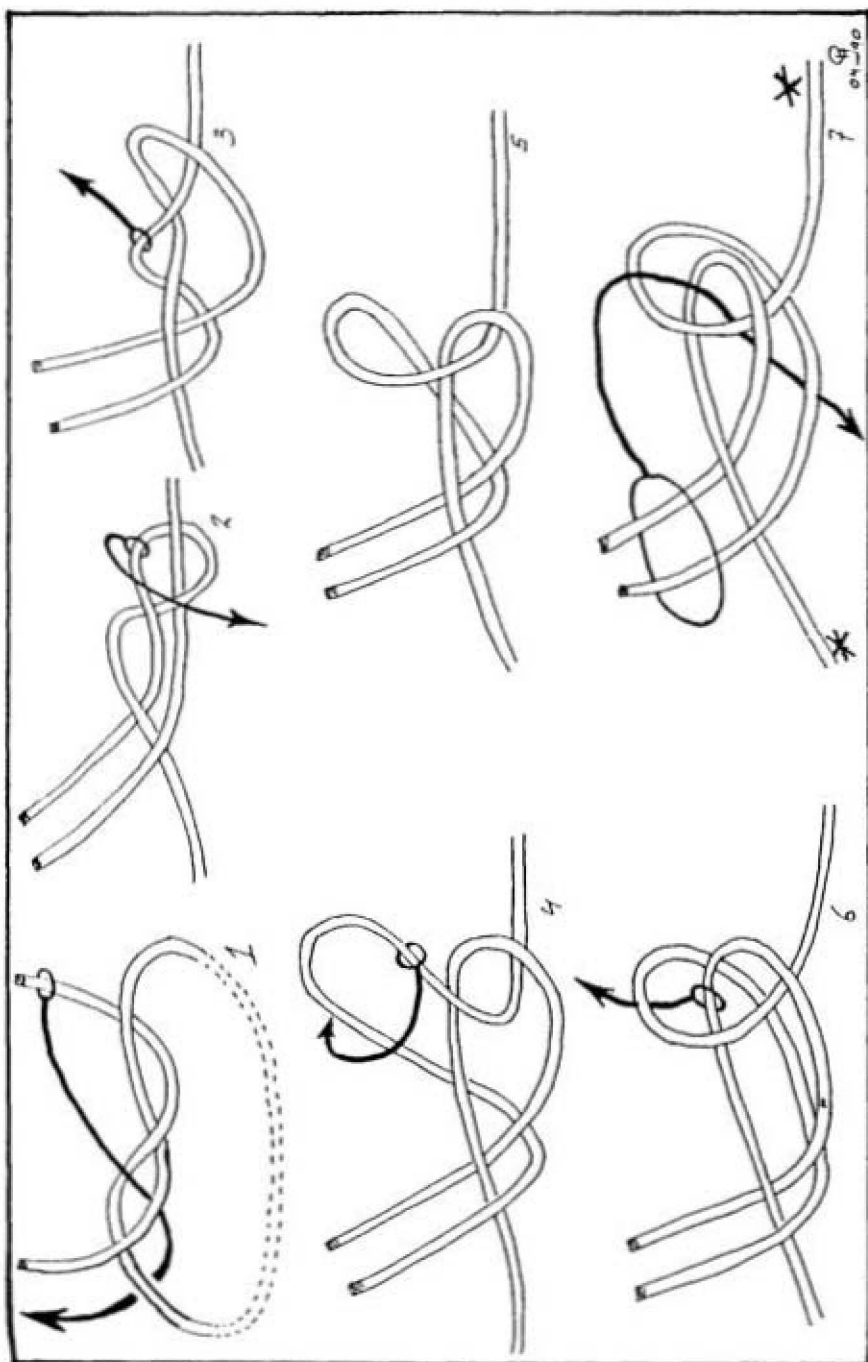
Tying methods for Ashley's Bend are given by a number of sources, but I once developed my, apparently unrecorded, tying method in a non-serious fashion one night working on the deck of a wild rocking trawler in a snowstorm whilst mending a ripped trawl. A much annoying piece of trouble lay in the springiness of our synthetic twine. Knots simply jumped away and were off into the darkness before you could use them. I knew Ashley's Bend could take up a lot of slack and still tension itself once its wends had been nipped. So with a bit of experimenting my method resulted.

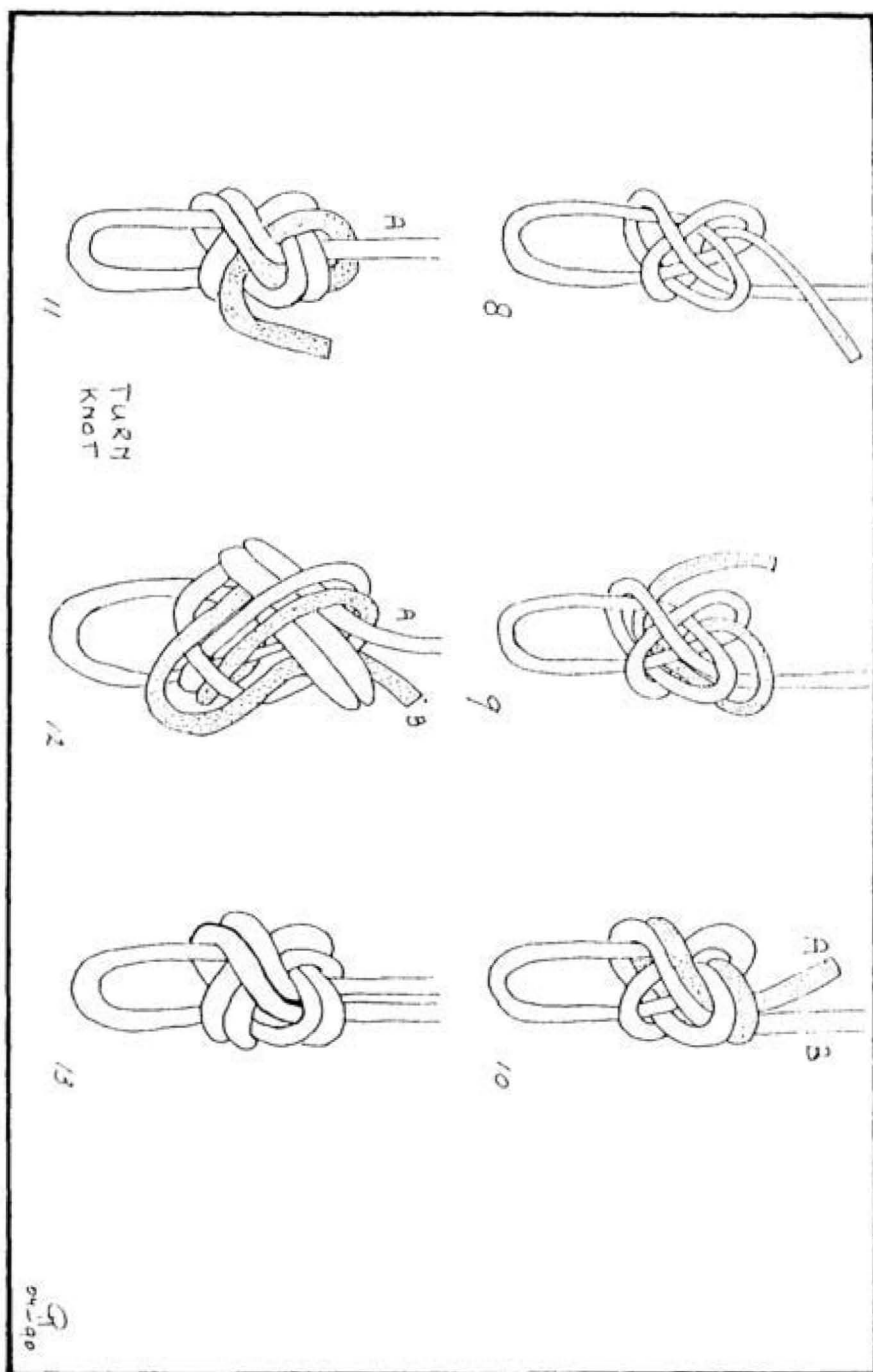
Fiddling with my bit of twine in the auditorium I noticed that, once learnt, my tying method sticks. Being a confirmed trambler I did a wend-stend interchange by capsizing the bend (pull the strands marked with an asteric *) till I held in my hand the structure shown in figure 8. There my eye fell on a potential 1-ply 3-stranded structure which could be elaborated to a sort of Diamond Knot, much like the Carrick Bend (and numerous other knots!) lends itself to similar fancy knotting. I followed the strands about. Tuck here, tuck there and tension till I had a sort of Lanyard Knot. For a moment I felt quite pleased that I had found what I thought was an unrecorded structure. When I came home and had a look through my files on Ashley's Bend, I seen that Brion Toss had already gotten a Mr. John Fud Benson to hint at such knots' existence [4,p49]. As it turned out, Graumont and Hensel in their encyclopedia in fact showed the actual resulting Lanyard Knot, but ofcourse none of the ways to tie it [3,p64,pl.25,#56] [3,p64,pl.26,#61], [3,p74,pl.30,#123]. Well, apparently some ideas have the ability to spontaneously generate themselves in different locations in time and space!

References

- [1] C.W. Ashley: *The Ashley Book of Knots*, Doubleday, New York 1944.
- [2] C.L. Day: *The Art of Knotting and Splicing*, United States Naval Institute, Annapolis 1955.
- [3] R. Graumont: *Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work*, Cornell, Camden, 1939.
- [4] B. Toss: *The Complete Rigger Wire and Rope*, Stanford, London 1985.
- [5] P. Tossijn: *Sterknoopen*, S.V De Pijl, Leuven 1942.

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April 1990 ©





AROUND THE WORLD IN 47 DAYSby KEN HIGGS

No, not a speedy clipper trip but a long awaited chance to visit relatives and friends in New Zealand. Elizabeth and I called at Hong Kong and Australia en route for a month in New Zealand before a homeward journey via Honolulu and the USA.

We spent all October in New Zealand and in the previous April I wrote to the New Zealand Chapter asking if I might meet any members during our stay. As a result I was met in Wellington by Jack Sheahan, taken to the Maritime Museum and given a guided tour by Ken Scadden, the curator, then out to spend the rest of the day with Jack and Roger Carter. The knowledge and the workmanship I heard and saw was wonderful. Combine this with a second day of unstinting hospitality and I could easily say, 'I want to go again and see more of the Chapter'.

The extracts from the New Zealand newsletter (KM49) highlights the need to 'let people know' if and where you are travelling. There are many here in UK who would have welcomed Rod and David 'if we had known' they were coming!

As a last thought from Ken.....

Sennet - sinnet -
sinnit - synet!!!! Most
dictionaries list 'sennet' -
'a clarion call announcing a
dramatic stage entrance!

However, only the
larger dictionaries give any

alternatives that might suggest a plait or braid, or a line that has been plaited or braided. To save any confusion I prefer the sinnit version!

DE-FENDERS

It has been said before but it is still true. There isn't enough written on how to make boat fenders. I became interested when a retired couple now living on a narrow boat, asked me to show them how to make a fender for their boat. I instantly called on the font of all available publications knowledge, Des Pawson. He is now in the process of writing a book on making fenders, as well as teaching knotting skills at the local university. The only book available at the moment is a naval book on very big fenders. I wrote to Geoffrey Budworth and he wrote back. (Editor)

FENDERS - Geoffrey
Budworth,

There are bits and pieces in a few knot books: Ashley, Graumont & Hensel, Poole, Rosenow and Smith. IGBT members who demonstrate fender - tying include: George Aldridge, Derek Chipperfield, Colin Jones and Des Pawson.

Then some of us have odd fragments to contribute. For example, a coiled mooring line held in the disappearing gap between boat and destination will save many a needless crunch. In Thames Division (London's river police) we used car tyres on all our craft - including the gov'nors' posh launches - but there's a right and wrong way to hang them (the fenders, that is!)

Adlard Coles (the nautical publisher) told me in 1989 that there wasn't enough material for a book on fenders, maybe a magazine article. They're wrong, of course. Still, it might best be tackled by a triplet team of Guild members - the ropeworker, an artist and a writer in collaboration.

I agree with the Editor that there is very little written about making Boat Fenders, I enclose a copy of my 1987 (October) editorial on the subject.....

A successful old confidence trickster I knew when I was young told me his secret. It was to spot a need not being met, then to move into that vacuum, expanding to fill and exploit it. That way, he explained, he had no competition and met no resistance. Indeed he was welcomed by those he had selected as his target. Although he added the element of dishonest deceit to multiply his profit, I have found from experience that the principle also works in honest business dealings.

Well, a void in the world of ropeworking has been identified by several members and it needs to be filled. Whoever has the wit to do so must, it seems, be a winner. What people tell us they want, and cannot find anywhere, is instruction in making boat fenders. So, it would be sensible if we, the IGKT, seized the opportunity and quickly produced a videotape or something.

Fenders come in different shapes and sizes, and that is a snag, but they

all serve the same purpose. Maybe the answer will be to design a handy and adaptable all purpose fender. Then again, it might be best to work out one straightforward method of making all kinds of fenders; half (or needle) hitching, that versatile covering, comes immediately to mind.

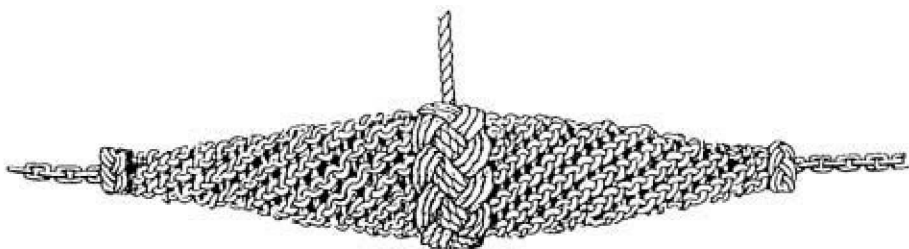
Several members have addressed the problem. Perhaps it should be a team effort. So far, nobody has decided what to do. So the race is on. Someone can make a name for him or herself, and mayhap a little cash too, if they can be first to show the world's boating types that fender making is really a do-it-yourself job.

THE USE OF ROPEWORK FENDERS ON INLAND WATERWAYS

by STUART GRAINGER
(previously published in Canal & Riverboat July 1992)

Everyone knows of course, that ships and boats are ladies, but whether this is because of their unpredictability, or because they tend to be graceful and a little frail, is debatable. It is an indisputable fact, however, that ships and boats that are likely to come into contact with any solid, ground based structure need protection, and that is customarily provided in the form of fenders.

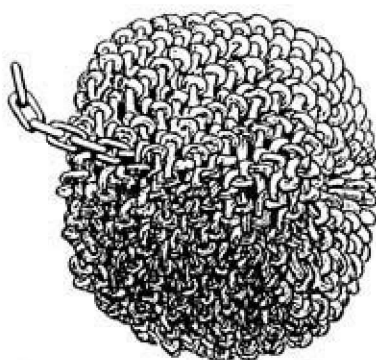
Craft habitually using inland waterways need such protection more than others, because they are constantly encountering irresistible objects in the form of quays, locks and canal banks, which are relatively



A Bow Fender covered with hitching and Turk's Heads.



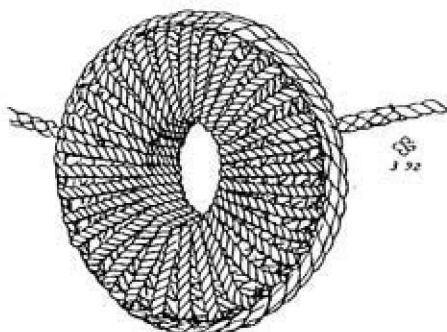
*A Side Fender -
continuous Crown Sennit.*



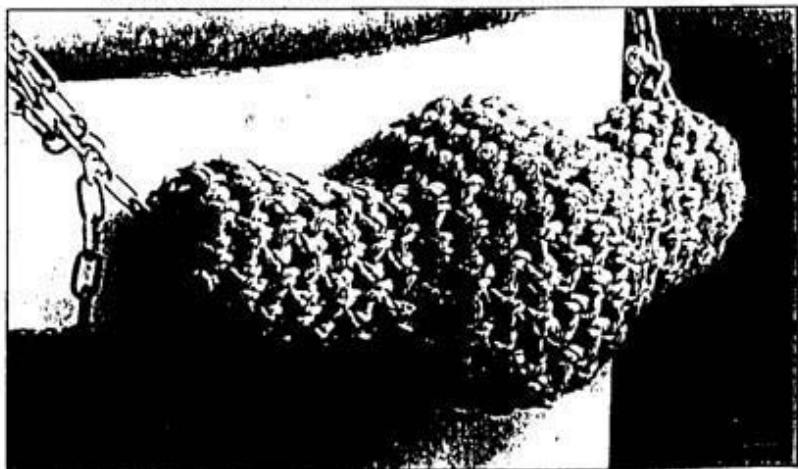
*A Button or Pudding Fender
Hitched all over.*



*A Side Fender -
alternating Crown Sennit.*



An Annular Fender - Ringbolt Hitched.



unfamiliar to deep water vessels. The fender is therefore a vital and ever-present piece of equipment along canals and rivers.

There are almost as many kinds of fender as there are of craft to hang them from and they all have their advantages and disadvantages, their protagonists and their detractors. The traditionalist will deplore the modern widespread

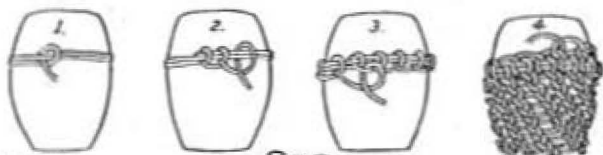
deployment of old motor vehicle tyres for the purpose, but it is a practical and economical extension of the life of an otherwise wasted commodity, which must be good sense in commercial employment. It is a pity, no doubt, that they are black and tend to mark cosseted paintwork, but they do offer good structural protection and last for a remarkable long time. The only fender that might compare with an old tyre for cost would be perhaps the bundles of cane or rattan that are commonly used in those parts of the world where climate makes such a vegetable commodity

readily and cheaply available but the useful life of a cane fender must be very much shorter.

For the small boat or yacht, modern hollow plastic fenders provide a combination of lightweight protection and smart appearance, but their working life can be deceptively short for no small cost and, once punctured, they are useless.

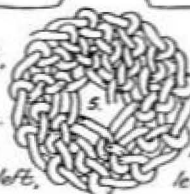
Traditionally made ropework fenders offer an excellent compromise in terms of protection, appearance, life and cost. Furthermore, they are not too difficult for a keen owner to make, so that they can provide a unique and individually identifiable part of a vessel's equipment. There are several forms of ropework fenders, often tailored to fit a particular part of the craft they are designed to protect and adorn. The narrow boat enthusiasts will know all about those which are specifically used by them, which have their own special name such as buttons and tipcats, but even these

Side Fenders are usually covered in Crown Sennit or Cross-Pointing, but most other Narrow Boat Fenders favour Hitching, which has numerous variations and will adapt to cover any underlying shape.

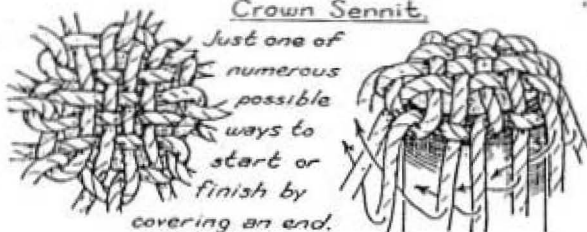


Hitching.

Avoid working too tight, each successive row tightens the one above. Work can proceed from left to right or right to left, from the largest diameter to the smallest or from the centre outward. If hitches become crowded leave out alternate ones.



Crown Sennit.

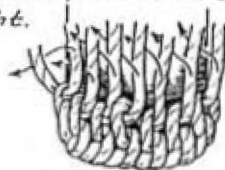


Just one of numerous possible ways to start or finish by covering an end.

Crowning can progress continuously in one direction, or alternately to left and right.



Crowning to the right.



Crowning alternately.

are rarely deployed in exactly the same way, so that no two boats are identical.

Traditional ropework fenders may usually be categorised in one of four basic shapes.

1. The side fender, which is best described as sausage shaped, is moveable and intended to hang over the side on a line.

2. The bow fender, which is made in the shape of a V, is thicker in the centre and tapers away to points at each side. This is intended as a permanent fixture to protect the stem of the boat.

3. The doughnut-shaped or annular fender, of similar shape and purpose to the much maligned motor tyre. Often used at the bow and on the quarters, but may be seen strategically placed almost anywhere, always as a fixture.

4. Pudding fenders, which, like puddings, may vary widely in their individual shapes and dimensions, but are basically either spherical or drum-shaped or somewhere between the two. On big ships these are often used as side fenders and are movable, but on narrow boats, for instance, they are fitted with chains, like bow fenders, and are permanent fixtures, often placed to protect the rudder and steering gear.

Any of the above-mentioned types may carry a Turks' Head knot, applied over the finished fender, partly for additional protection, but mainly for he sake of appearance. There is also, of course, the wrap around fender, but that is

simply a length of rope or special rubber moulding fitted all the way round a boat's gunwale.

Rope is an excellent material from which to construct fenders as it is strong deforming and reforming well under pressure. It is little affected by extremes of temperature and is reasonably light in weight, although it does tend to absorb moisture, which increases weight, and it will eventually rot if allowed to remain wet. Fortunately most permanent fenders are positioned where they will readily drain, so rot is not a major problem. Portable fenders should always be dried out before being stowed.

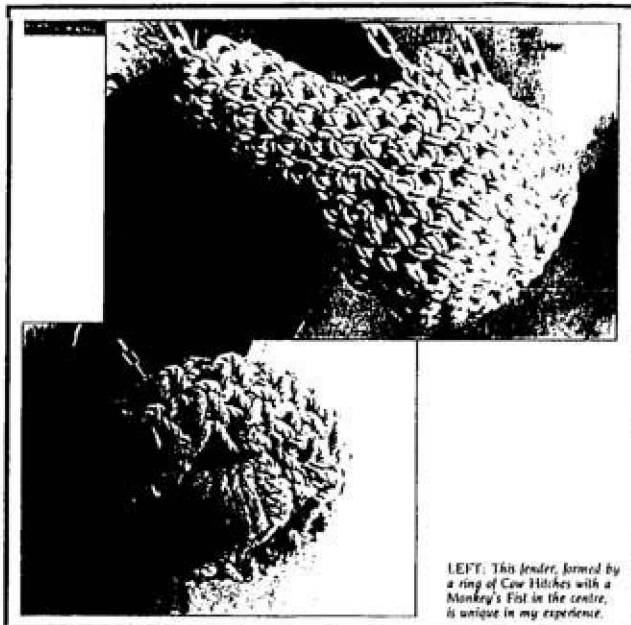
Natural fibres seem to perform better for fenders than man-made ones, which can suffer from actinic degradation due to the ultra-violet part of sunlight, but are otherwise less prone to rot. Sisal, coir, jute, hemp and even cotton rope have all been used to make fenders, but cost usually dictates a preference for one of the first three, coir being the lightest, but hardest to work. Cotton would only be used where appearance was the main consideration.

It is not possible in the space of a magazine article to provide detailed instruction on making ropework fenders, although the accompanying drawings may provide guidance concerning their outer covering techniques. Fortunately there is an excellent and inexpensive

little book available called *Advanced Ropeworking* by Leonard Popple, ISBN 0 85174 137 1, describing the methods of fender construction used in HM Dockyard, Chatham. Despite the title, it is not really very advanced, published by Brown, Son and Ferguson Ltd, Glasgow.

The various covering methods that can be used are described and illustrated in detail in *Knotcraft*, ISBN 0 9515506 0 8, published by the IGKT. If you do not feel able to tackle such work yourself, but would like to obtain hand-made ropework fenders in traditional materials and designs, Footrope Knots, 501 Wherstead Road, Ipswich IP2 8LL, phone 01473 690090 can supply them, and the above mentioned books by mail order.

Finally, two small suggestions about fenders. If you are thinking about making some for the first time, it is a good idea to start by making a miniature or two, in smaller material, before progressing to full size. You will thus learn, and make a few almost inevitable mistakes, at minimal cost and still have something worthwhile to show for your labour. The second tip is that it can pay to give a newly fitted permanent fender a deliberate direct bump or two to 'bed it down' and deform it symmetrically, which avoids the skewed appearance a glancing blow on a new fender can produce and which can never afterwards be satisfactorily remedied.



LEFT: This fender, formed by a ring of Cow Hitches with a Monkey's Tail in the centre, is unique in my experience.

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

Calender of events - 1995/96

1995

DATE of EVENT	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT NAME	TEL. NO.	HELP NEEDED
Sept 19 (Tues) 8pm	IGKT Yorkshire Branch Meeting	The Beulah Hotel, Tong Rd, Farnley, Leeds 12	D R Pearson	01132 572689	
28 Sep/5 Oct/12 Oct 19 Oct/2 Nov	Evening Classes - Practical Knots for Yachtsmen	Felixstowe	Des Pawson	01476 690 090	No
October 7th	Half-year A.G.M.	Leeds			
Oct 7th - Mar 24 1996	Textiles of Imperial China (knot-stitch embroidery)	Saffron Walden Museum	Europa Chan	01245 467617	No
Nov 12 (12noon)	IGKT Essex Branch Bi-monthly Mtg	Nat Motorboat Mus, Pitsea	Don Woods	01708 229178	
Nov 21 (Tues) 8pm	IGKT Yorkshire Branch Meeting	The Beulah Hotel, Tong Rd, Farnley, Leeds 12	D R Pearson	01132 572689	

1996

Jan 14 (12noon)	IGKT Essex Branch Bi-monthly Mtg	Nat Motorboat Mus, Pitsea	Don Woods	01708 229178	
March 10 (12noon)	IGKT Essex Branch Bi-monthly Mtg	Nat Motorboat Mus, Pitsea	Don Woods	01708 229178	
May 11 (Sat)	IGKT 14th AGM	Gilwell Park, Essex			
June 13 - 16	Wooden Boat Show - Footrope Knots (London Knot Tyers (George Aldridge))	Nat'l Maritime Museum, Greenwich	Des Pawson	01476 690 090	No

MORE EVENTS REQUIRED, PLEASE!!!!!! Advice of overseas events would also be most welcome.

(To those who have sent information on forthcoming events, many thanks, but I am still awaiting the 'veritable flood of notifications'!!)

Jeff Wyatt

Notifications and enquiries to: 91 Luton Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4LW Telephone No. 01582 664504

(Anspahone!)

LOOK AT WHAT YOU,VE MISSED (Previous events appearing in the Calender - not necessarily known when the last Knotting Matters went to print, but information available at the telephone number shown)

DATE of EVENT	EVENT	LOCATION
July 3 - 7	Summer School	Suffolk College
July 9 (Sun)	Hants County Fair & Sheepdog Trial	Butser Hill, Hampshire
July 15 & 16	Model Boat Show	Weymouth
July 18 (Tues) 8pm	IGKT Yorkshire Branch Meeting	The Beulah Hotel, Tong Rd, Farnley, Leeds 12
July 28 - 30	Classic Boat Show	Plymouth
July 31 - Sept 9	The Art of the Sailor	Falmouth Art Gallery
Aug 5, 12, 19, 26	Hands on Gallery / Knotty Solutions	National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
August 17 - 19	Navy Days	Plymouth
August 27 - 28	Chatham Maritime Festival	Chatham, Kent
Sept 2 & 3	Huddersfield Waterways Festival	Huddersfield
Sept 3 - 7	Footrope Knots	Hull Shanty Festival

Of Strings

by

Cy Canute

*"An ill stringe breaketh many a good bow,
nor no other thinge half as manye."
(Roger Ascham (1515-1568))*

An Elizabethan archer's bowstring was not just any old length of twine. It was made from as many as 60 or more tough threads of hemp, flax or silk, laid together and twisted. A loop was formed in one end to fit a smoothly round nock (notch) cut in the upper horn of his bow. The lower end went around its own nock to be secured with a bowyer's knot. Both ends were thicker than the middle, which was reinforced to withstand wear from arrows in all kinds of condition.

A string's strength had to match that of the bow for which it was made, with a safety margin up to five times as much. It had to withstand repeated shock-loading as each arrow was discharged. When bowstrings broke, it was after the arrow was shot; and, when a string parted, the bow too often broke.

Thinner strings made faster bows that shot further; but they were fragile and tricky to use. Thick strings lasted longer and were easier to shoot but they limited an archer's skill. So bowstrings made or marred bows, influencing smoothness and ease of shooting, speed and accuracy; while the craft - and craftiness - of the stringers could win a war or lose a crown.

Modern archers still prefer tailormade bowstrings to mass-produced ones, making their own or buying them from trusted stringers. They use Dacron™ or (more and more) Kevlar™, which they serve over with dental floss or cotton thread soaked in Superglue™.

NYLON NOVELTIES**ERIC FRANKLIN**

ISBN 0 9515506 4 0

Published IGKT 1995

Price 2 pounds.

Eric Franklin's contribution to knotting is tremendous, his articles on lanyards, mats and Chinese priest cords published in Scout magazine in the 1950s inspired many to take up decorative knotting. The Council of the Guild were honoured when Eric offered them the chance of publishing a little booklet he had put together, yes he is still knotting after all these years! This booklet, Nylon Novelties is subtitled 'making knots work for you'. It consists of just one brief page of text then 22 pages of ideas and projects shown by Eric in a step by step manner, mainly flat knots, mats, keyfobs, belts, curtain tie backs, pendants and earrings etc as well as a clever method for a picture frame. Reproduced from Eric's own sketches the drawings have not come out as well as they might have but are easily understood and give us the privilege of sharing Eric Franklin's knotting knowledge. All for 2 pounds from Guild supplies. By Des Pawson.

INFALLIBLE EXPERTS

Ann Norman has recently drawn my attention to an error in one of my drawings on page 56 of 'Knotcraft'. In the top right hand drawing, the second in the Footrope Knot sequence, the dotted lines indicating the next step are incorrectly placed and should show the strands being tucked directly up through the Crown. If they are tucked as the drawing shows, a Crowned Matthew Walker knot is produced, which is a handsome and quite acceptable terminal knot, but not the Footrope Knot illustrated as the final drawing in the sequence.

It is remarkable that this mistake has not been noticed before, considering that some two thousand copies of the book are in circulation, it was proof-read at an early stage by Geoffrey Budworth and examined by the council before its original publication. It proves again that there is no such animal as an infallible expert!

STUART GRAINGER-OXFORDSHIRE

Ed: we are happy to point this out to members Stuart, well come on did anyone else spot it?

KNOT NOTES - TRAINING AID

The following sheets were prepared for a teaching session for cub leaders who mostly were unfamiliar with any form of knotting, short of tying shoelaces. I attempted here to provide them with an exercise to see if they learned anything from the hands on sessions as well as a few notes to consider about the whole

business. I am sure that the KNOT NOTES (see article section of KM51) could be expanded and annotated by IGKT membership but they represent a few of the principles I have gleaned from my short experience.

The 'pet-rope' idea was a life saver as we waited in line for 2+ hours in Washington at the White House as part of our 1993 National Jamboree Tour. As we waited, I produced a few 'pet ropes' (about a metre of 3mm nylon cord) from my pockets and the scouts had an impromptu knotting exhibit to pass the time. About a year and a half later I overheard another leader back in Dallas talking about a 'crazy leader who had the boys tying knots at the White House.' I confessed to being the 'crazy leader' and pointed out the value of this form of hands on teaching for idle moments.

Considering my own personal experience, I was a granny bow person up until about 4 years ago. At that point, I was determined to learn the basic scout knots so I could teach them to the kids. However, I got a bit carried away. Next thing you know, I was looking for knot books and found one by Harry Asher and another by Geoffrey Budworth and I was too far gone to reverse the trend. It was the result of this personal experience that led me to compose a **WARNING!!!** sign that should be posted wherever there is the possibility of exposure to knotting.

The index to KM was interesting to look through and certainly whets the

appetite of those of us who are new on the scene. Perhaps a 'Best of KM' edition should be considered as a separate KM publication.

Regarding the scout knot record in Guinness. This has been a puzzle to me for some time now. It would be interesting to know if Guinness has a bit more info on it.

The current required knots for a First Class Scout in BSA are:

- *1 Square knot
- *2 Two half hitches
- *3 Clove hitch
- *4 Bowline
- 5 Tautline
- 6 Timber Hitch

The Guinness Book (1993 edition) states that Clinton R Bailey Sr of Pacific City, Oregon established a record of 8.1 seconds by tying:

- *1 Square knot
- 2 Sheet bend
- 3 Sheep shank
- *4 Clove hitch
- *5 Round turn and two half hitches
- *6 Bowline

So the US standard has changed a bit since 1977. Those noted with * are common to each group with the exception that a Round turn and two half hitches is not quite the same as the current two halfhitch loop in the 1995 BSA Scout Handbook.

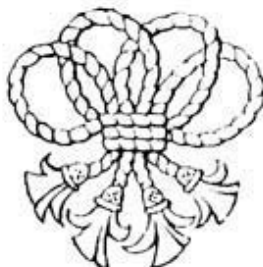
I would suggest that one should study each knot for the 'trick methods' of tying in order to even approach the record time. The type of line as well as the layout of the tying station would also be important factors.

Additional factors to study are the order of tying and the number of lines used. The Industrial Engineer in me will not let this time standard pass me without further investigation. I will let you know what I might find.... Any thoughts from our membership on this?

I am interested in collecting cartoons and knot humour (excluding really horrible puns --- of course the definition of really horrible is not known to the serious punster) that might add a bit to teaching sessions. If anyone out there has collected anything, I would appreciate knowing.

JACK KEENE - DALLAS, TX

THE SEALED KNOT



This is the famous Sealed Knot, the heraldic device used by the society of that name, whose members dress up in period costume and reenact, for charity, the famous battles of the English Civil War between Cavaliers and Roundheads. The original Sealed Knot Club was a royalist association of much earlier origin, according to my Encyclopaedia Britannica, so this emblem is presumably at least 250 years old.

Ann Norman was asked by a Sealed Knot member to

produce a real example of this knot, but found some difficulty in doing so and asked me to try. After a frustrating afternoon of effort, I asked for Geoffrey Budworth's help, feeling that his magical brain would see what we were missing and sure enough, he worked it out and sent me samples over a weekend.

I thought that other members might like to have a go at solving this puzzle, for that is what it is, the heraldic drawing being a mildly misleading view of the finished knot (assuming that we have tied it right). I feel sure that its component parts have a significance that is not apparent to modern eyes, being intended to convey some Royalist symbolism to the initiated. A careful observer will notice that, of the four ends hanging down from the three horizontal turns, two are laid left handed and two right handed, the rest of the knot being right hand laid throughout. Whether this has a secret significance, or is just a mistake by the artist I cannot say.

If any members know more about the symbolism of the Sealed Knot, we shall be very interested to learn from them. Editors permitting, I shall tell you Geoffrey's method of tying it in the next issue.

STUART GRAINGER -
OXFORDSHIRE

FIRE SERVICE KNOTS

A request for help. I am an Operational Officer with the British Fire Service, and an embarking on

a study of knots and lines (ropes) used within Fire Brigades around the world. The aim is to produce a collective work on the application of knots used in the Fire and Rescue situation.

I would be grateful if any members in the Guild who are firefighters or know of friends who are could get in touch with me. I am interested in any of the following information.

- 1 What knots are in use (do they constitute a standard knot in your Brigade/Department?).
- 2 What applications are the knots used for?
- 3 What lines (ropes) are in use which are specific to your Brigade/Department?
- 4 Any history on the development of knots and lines within your Brigade/Department.
- 5 Details of any reference material, ie Training Manuals, Specifications, Bulletins etc.

In anticipation, thank you for any help you may be able to give in this project.

Colin Grundy - Coventry

A SAD RESIGNATION

I am sorry to have to write this letter to advise you of my resignation from the Guild. It has been brought about by my suffering from an eye problem which is fairly rare called Benign Essential Blepharospasm. (Benign because it is not life threatening or malignant; essential because at present the cause and cure is completely unknown and Blepharospasm for involuntary closure of the

eyelids) that is it in a nutshell. Although my eyes focus ok concentrating my vision for reading or knotting makes them ache, and all light is too bright for comfort. So you can see that along with reading this stops me from doing detailed work like knotting.

My reason for all this detail is not for sympathy for I am able to pursue many other interests such a lawn bowls and playing the keyboard. No, I thought I would give you all the details because we who have this problem know that one of the difficulties is getting the problem diagnosed, it took me 18 months, in America it can take as long as 4 years before one finds a specialist who can recognise it. If you know anyone who may have this problem perhaps point them in the right direction for an early diagnosis, if left the eyelids can clamp shut completely.

I am typing this by touch type, my wife does my corrections.

I have very much enjoyed my membership of the Guild with its friendly attitude and I wish the Guild every success for the future.

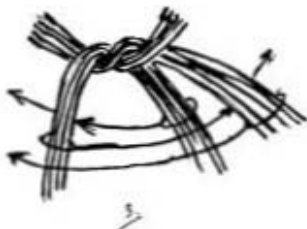
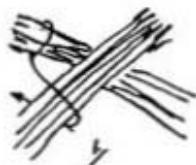
I would also like to submit details of a knot that I learned as a schoolboy during the war in Kent where I used to live. In the early days we were encouraged to go farm-working and this knot was used to tie up sheaves of corn when the binder failed to tie properly with string. It is surprisingly strong and I have done my best with

three small illustrations. The heads of the corn stalks lock this knot, the untied sheave of corn is then placed in the length created by the two handfuls of cornstalks. These handfuls are then pulled round the sheave and the final knot used to finish off is that shown in Ashley page 234 knot number 1235. The advantage of the knot I have drawn is that not only is it strong but it can be used to tie up a really large sheave.

Well there we are, I thought that having got so much pleasure from Knotting Matters I would like to make a contribution.

David Pettit, Kent

(so sorry to hear about your problem David, we would like to wish you good luck from the Guild, and many thanks for your contribution. Ed.)



MAKING FRIENDSHIP BANDS

by **LYNETTE SILVER**

Published (1994) by Sally Milner Publishing, 558 Darling Street, Rozelle, Australia - now (1994/95 reprints) by Milner Dodgem Books.

ISBN 1 86351 135 0

UK Price 3.85

What are Friendship Bands? How are they made? What do you need?

In this soft covered A5 booklet, of just 36 pages, the author, a former primary school teacher, explains and then goes on to describe five lovely designs (rainbow, watersnake, arrowhead, tropical fish and crisscross). She is writing for children but even grown ups unsure of this patterned macrame half hitching could enjoy learning from her easy prose and Susie Poland's gorgeous coloured step by step drawings.

It's a little gem of a booklet, for anyone from about the age of six upwards, and with it our first multicoloured hank of threads comes free.

Geoffrey Budworth, Kent

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Guild's responsibilities so far as education, training and passing on the absolute wealth of knowledge available, is clear and unmistakable to me. "The object of the Guild shall be the advancement of education by the study and practice of the art, craft and science of knotting, passed and present". I do not know all of what has been done before. We still do not have any education or training

scheme for teaching except the individual acts of patience and dedication given by our more experienced and talented members. Sometimes the knowledge is given personally in little groups or individually at Guild meetings, in formal classes or as part of a visit to people's homes. Sometimes teaching is in the books the members write for the Guild to publish, and in the articles sent in to share this knowledge with the membership. Perhaps this is enough and this is what was intended. Perhaps we need to do more, have more of a structure to training. Here is where we start to discuss this subject openly and see what has been done so far. We have asked several of the members of the Guild that we know have spent many hours discussing and writing about education and training to outline their ideas and hopes, for the whole Guild to discuss and perhaps come forward with their own ideas based on the knowledge of what has gone before. In this issue we have the thoughts of Stuart Grainger and Geoffrey Budworth to start the ball rolling.

Lonnie Rogers

Badges, Scrolls & Medals

A contribution to
the IGKT's education & training debate

from

Geoff Budworth

(who earns his living teaching, lecturing and examining)

The *lure* to learn must first be created. Look at thriving craft movements, youth clubs, sports governing bodies, even professional and trade associations. All rely upon a structured award scheme. Designed to promote and then recognise the progressive acquisition of skills, knowledge and judgement, it is actually the badges, medals and certificates which are the attraction.

Back in the 1980s I mooted:

- (a) Bronze, silver and gold badges for beginning, intermediate and advanced knot tyers, whether Guild members or not;
- (b) Medals (with the designation 'Craftsman', irrespective of sex) for Guild members submitting an elaborate piece of knot or ropework;
- (c) Scrolls or parchments (designation 'Expert') recognising a member's writing, research or other innovation.

Guild members who dislike tests and badges
need not bother with them.

They are for the many, of all ages, who do
(and especially the wider NON-membership).

Candidates chose from a pick-&-mix menu of ropework tasks, some mandatory and others optional, to assemble an award content which matches individual needs, aptitudes and interests. The onus is upon candidates to seek out tuition (or teach themselves). The location of Guild branches, together with a guided reading list and details of award criteria, would be mailed to all enquirers.

Signed postal award applications (co-signed by acceptable witnesses), whom the candidate also finds, eliminate the need for a central panel of instructors and examiners. All are honour-bound.

The awards business must quickly repay the initial outlay and become self-financing. Subject to any safeguards imposed by the Charity Commissioners, it should also be profitable. One honorary Awards Secretary could handle it.

Such an operation might relieve others - e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme - of their own knot tying commitments. It could even become - I've seen it happen elsewhere - an indispensable trade training requirement.

You don't agree? Fair enough. Tell us YOUR alternative.



STUART GRAINGER, "CUCKAMUS END",
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OXON OX8 6RR. TEL: 01993 881453.



TRAINING - A PERSONAL OPINION FROM STUART GRAINGER.

The Editors have asked me to state my personal view of the much discussed topic of the Guild's role in "training". I do so knowing that many members disagree with at least some of what I have to say. A very important part of the Guild's reason for existence is an obligation to educate and inform, so this is a subject worthy of discussion among members and I do have some experience and knowledge of it to offer.

There is little value in trying to teach those who do not want to be taught. In Oxfordshire, after mounting several free and well-publicised open "events", we have found only a minuscule interest in classes teaching knotting skills, although there is relatively strong demand for publications on the subject. I remain unconvinced that there is widespread demand for structured training courses in our craft of knotting. Certainly there are local, specialist requirements in particular areas, which market forces have already been effective in meeting through some of our members providing courses. An example is Colin Jones's courses in fender making, sponsored by the Inland Waterways museums. In the main, however, it has been my experience that the most common requirement from a potential student is to locate sources of published information, supported, if possible, by personal advice on a one-to-one basis.

It is untrue and unjust to claim that the Guild does nothing towards teaching its craft. A great deal of time, money and effort has been invested in our magazine and our publications, which stand creditably alongside those of any other similar organisation of our size. There are gaps in our list, no doubt, of which our Council is aware, but such gaps can only be filled by knowledgeable and, to some extent, talented volunteers, who need to be motivated. Certainly we should publish a recommended reading list, regularly updated, and a comprehensive bibliography of our subject, although the latter is a long and scholarly job. The provision of the former would solve many of the problems of a serious student in finding sought-after information.

Most of our members who have specialist knowledge of a particular knotting application or technique are willing, indeed eager, to share their expertise, if and when they are asked to do so. This does not necessarily mean that they will be keen to teach a class, or to write and illustrate a book or article, but they will happily give advice and guidance on the telephone, or in a personal conversation. Those who have such special expertise are mostly known to Council and could be asked to permit their nomination to a list of members who are willing to be consulted by letter, telephone, or personal appointment, as appropriate. The list of consultant members could be included in the regular Membership List, perhaps by simply adding appropriate hieroglyphics or notes beside the relevant names, denoting the particular members specialities and preferred means of contact.

I am not in favour of any complex system of examinations, badges and diplomas, because such schemes are expensive to establish and administer. There is a tendency to lose early momentum as reality catches up with expectancy. Also there are difficulties associated with establishing acceptable examiners and criteria, which could cause undesirable resentments and rivalries to arise within the Guild. It is far more desirable, in my opinion, for the Guild to strive to become the acknowledged authority on its subject, so that it is asked to advise and adjudicate in educational schemes organised by other bodies, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, who will bear the costs associated with such exercises. If the Guild has money to spare for fancy badges, diplomas and the like, I suggest that it would be better spent on donating a couple of hundred copies of "Knotcraft", or even ten copies of "The Ashley Book of Knots" to suitable educational establishments. If the Council cares to draw up a list of such establishments and contributes the cost of postage, I will happily donate a hundred copies of "Creative Ropecraft" to start the ball rolling.

710 words. Copyright Stuart E. Grainger 3rd July 1995.

GUILD SUPPLIES
I.G.K.T. STOCK LIST 1995

ITEM	PRICE
KNOTCHARTS	
100 to choose from	£0.10 each
POSTCARDS	
Set of 8 instructional (Brown & Cream)	£1.50 Set
Set of 8 Single Strand Ornamental Knots (White on Blue)	£1.50 Set
RUBBER STAMP	
"IGKT - Member" (excludes stamp pad)	£4.00
TIES	
Polyester (Dark blue, with white Knot motifs) LONG	£8.95 each
BADGES	
Guild LOGO Enamel Brooch Type	£1.80 each
Cloth, Blazer Type	£1.00 each
Car Sticker (Soft Plastic)	£1.00
7" Display Stand Logo	£7.50 each
KNOT CRAFT - THE VIDEO elementary teaching aid	
VHS or NTSC	
Stuart Grainger	£8.50 each
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3 Walnut Tree Meadow Stonham Aspal STOWMARKET Suffolk IP14 6DF Tel: 01449 - 711121	

