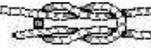




International Guild of Knot Tyers **TEXAS BRANCH** **NEWSLETTER**

August 2002

Issue 16



The Prez says...

Is the summer already over? I must be getting older!!

School is starting already and it is back to the routine again of kids, PTA, and teaching knots. The last TxB meeting was interesting with a visitor or two and Mr. Baker teaching the splicing of braided line. That is a trick indeed.

The growth of the TxB is moving slow but moving. Please spread the word and bring a friend. The long-term success of the branch will hinge on more people being interested and involved.

Program ideas? Please send them in. The group always has good attention on the program for the day (except when Gary is talking). However, the programs should be designed to meet the needs of the branch members so please contribute your needs and ideas.

Please bring your projects for show and tell. It is always interesting to see what others are working on. Frequently I am in awe of the creativity of some of our members and what they come up with. Please show the others your work and if you have time, prepare a set of steps involved in the process. If you have pictures to share, perhaps we can print them in the newsletter for worldwide distribution.

I am proud to say the brand is in good shape and doing well. Also, I want to take a brief moment and recognize the officers of the branch and the hard work they do in supporting the branch. They take their personal time to get the newsletter out, the programs planned, etc. and it is appreciated.

Charles Holmes

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"A number of years ago, R.R.M. Carpenter, author of Game Trails from Alaska to Africa (Scribner's, 1939), said to me: "I hate to take the chance on sailfish and tarpon. I'm afraid they'll spoil me for trout and salmon." Fortunately, I was in a position to reassure him. "You don't need to worry about that. I find that I enjoy swordfishing now just as much as I did before I went whaling!"

Clifford Ashley, The Ashley Book of Knots

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August Meeting

Ah, the dog days of summer. But we had our August meeting anyway. There were 8 intrepid knot tyers in attendance and we had a good time. Members at the meeting were Tony Barrick, Ed Baker, Phil Lipoma, Harry Yankuner, Rob Higgins, and Gary Sessions. We had Rudy Rodriguez and his lovely daughter, Shelly, as visitors.

The meeting was called to order by the Prez and Gary (there he goes, talking again) threw out the idea that the TxB host an IGKT meeting in the fall of 2004. Likely venues for the meeting might be the Texas Maritime Museum in Rockport and the Texas Seaport Museum, home of the *Elissa*, in Galveston, Texas. The Texas Maritime Museum has announced that the annual Music of the Sea Festival will occur in February 2003. Sam Lanham was told that the TxB would be invited again.

There was no regular program for the meeting but everybody huddled in small groups to demonstrate. Chas. and Gary brought their new braided line splicing tools that they purchased from Brion Toss, Dee had a couple of pieces of horse gear, and Jack had his portfolio of breast plate designs.

Ed and Chas. worked to perfect splicing braided line and turned out two good-looking eye splices. Jack and Dee shared ideas and several of the members worked to charm Shelly and her father, Rudy. Rudy and Shelly have worked on some fancywork on their own.

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TxB Calendar

October 6, 2002 – Next meeting of the Texas Branch.

Feb 14-16, 2003 – Music of the Sea Festival – Texas Maritime Museum, Rockport, Texas.

Fall 2004 -- Rockport or Galveston???

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Membership

Membership in the Texas Branch (TxB) of the International Guild of Knot Tyers (IGKT) is available to all. The only requirements for membership are paid up membership in the International Guild of Knot Tyers and the TxB annual fee of \$6.00 payable to Rob Higgins, the TxB Treasurer.

Annual subscription to the IGKT costs £16.00 (British Pound Sterling) which equates to about \$25.00 (US Dollars). The easiest method of payment is with credit card (Master Card or Visa). Provide your credit card details and write to:

I.G.K.T. c/o
The Charities Aid Foundation
Kings Hill,
WEST MALLING
ME19 4TA
England

Subscription through the Charities Aid Foundation is a new procedure implemented to relieve the Hon. Secretary of the IGKT, Nigel Harding, of one of the more onerous tasks of his office.

Please keep your IGKT subscription (and your TxB dues) current.

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Activities

On Thursday, August 25, 2002, several of our members conducted a Knot Clinic at the REI Store on LBJ Freeway. Charlie Holmes, Ed Baker, Jack Keene, Tony Barrick, Rob Higgins, Phil Lipoma, Ken Miller, and Gary Sessions made up the crew. Despite the publicity by REI staffers, Michelle Mudie and Tim Marker, our audience stayed away in droves. We had a total of, perhaps, four folks walk up and take part. We had one nice gentleman who wanted a refresher course in splicing and two young ladies who captivated, or were captivated by, Ed Baker. Tom Marker, the REI Manager on duty that evening proved to be a pretty good knot tyer and several of us compared knots and swapped sea stories with him.

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From the Ditty Bag

I just received a message from Jack Keene that he sent out to let everybody know about his open-heart surgery, or in his own words, a 5-jump bypass. I know you will join me in wishing Jack a speedy recovery.

Congratulations to Sam Lanham of Fredericksburg! He recently won First and Second Prizes at the Gillespie County Fair in the Knotting Category with two of his Celtic Crosses. Sam suggests that other TxB members enter next year so as to give him some competition. His Celtic Crosses are very nice. He has taken Brian Field's design, added a couple of bights to the lower vertical section, and made some really large crosses, one of the latest is 40 inches tall, made from two sizes of hemp.

I recently received the following article from Jack Keene. I visited the Museum a long time ago and got to view this sculpture and it is, was very impressive. Jack has submitted an item to Knotting Matters and I hope that Colin Grundy, Editor of the Knotting Matters, can fit this in some future issue.

Thanks Jack!!

Dallas Unties the Knot - (Pulling up stakes)

On Monday August 6, 2002 the *Dallas Morning News* front page proclaimed "DMA to dismantle its signature sculpture" above a photo of the *Stake Hitch* sculpture.

Stake Hitch is the work of renowned artist Claes Oldenburg and his wife, Coosje van Bruggen. Oldenburg and van Bruggen are noted for their extraordinarily sized sculptures of ordinary objects. This sculpture depicts in a much larger than life rope tied off to a monumentally large stake in the floor. The stake is said to extend some twelve and a half feet below the floor of the museum gallery. The line then climbs upward at an angle for some 53 feet to the 40 foot ceiling of the Barrel Vault gallery of the Dallas Museum of Art. The rope itself is 20 inches in diameter and the stake extends 15 feet above the floor.

The magnitude is hard to grasp unless you have stood at the stake looking toward the ceiling. The rope itself ascends with the lay of the line taking on the appearance of a whirlwind swirling skyward. It is certainly much grander than any hitch I have tied to a tent stake or canoe.

A myriad of images comes to mind in viewing this work. Some people are reminded of the lines holding a circus tent, others recall the cowboy and his rope, and others even see it as a line anchoring the building to its place in Dallas. The range of interpretive views is from whimsy to philosophy but no matter how you see it, you cannot certainly forget it.



When I first saw the work more than a decade ago, I had not yet begun my interest in knotting. I simply marveled at its size and simplicity. Since then I have at learned a few knots and appreciate this one even more.

The decision to put the work into storage came as a surprise when the DMA board announcement was made. The work has stood as the anchor point (no pun intended) of Barrel Vault gallery and the Dallas Museum of Art since the museum opened in 1984.

DMA says that the move is a temporary one to allow the display of other large works, which are only possible in a gallery of this size. When will the *Stake Hitch* see the light of day again? Well the DMA says they intend to return the work to its original location before the end of the decade.

While there have been protests to the decision, it seemed like little hope existed for a reprieve. With that in mind I took a quick trip down to the museum to get a last look.

When I arrived at the museum on Thursday the scaffolding was already in place for the removal and it was clear that the fate of the work was sealed. As I looked into the barricaded gallery the Stake Hitch looked even larger than I remembered as I saw it in its temporary frame of scaffolding. It was time to unhitch and move on.



Oh yes, there is one final note. What is the knot? It is a slipped half hitch, which after 26 years is being untied.

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Editorial

As the Prez noted in the beginning, your ideas for program material are solicited. Would it be beneficial to have more than one topic for discussion/demonstration at each meeting in the manner of Special Interest Groups? Or would it be better for everyone to concentrate on a single topic?

The skill levels of our group vary considerably and several groups doing different things might work. But, then again, mastering the Turk's Head and learning to promote a simple TH into more complex variations could easily take two or three meetings to cover, assuming that everyone would work on the techniques involved between meetings.

I do not have an answer so let me propose a survey. Listed below are several knots that might be a topic of discussion/demonstration. Look over the list and let us know what you would like to see done at your meetings.

- Turk's heads and TH promotion.
- Bell rope/lanyard construction, to include:
 - Matthew Walker knot
 - Double Diamond knot
 - Star knot
 - Sinnets
- Basic knots.
- Three strand splicing
 - Eye splice
 - Flemish eye splice
 - Back Splice
 - Short Splice
 - Long Splice
 - Shackle splice
- Suggestions?

Please contact one of the following with your comments.

Chas. Holmes
Ed Baker
Gary Sessions

And I promise not to talk. Well, not too much, anyway.

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