The InterKnot

Newsletter of the International Guild of Knot Tyers
North American Branch

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Up-rigging the Santa Maria – Mains’l

The Santa Maria is located in Columbus, Ohio and is permanently docked on the Scioto river in downtown Columbus. It commemorates the first European voyage to America by Christopher Columbus and the sailing and operation of the traditional square-rigged sailing vessels which made the voyage. The Santa Maria is an educational museum used to teach the importance and impact of the first voyage as well as the technology of the square-rigged ship.

This article has been submitted by IGKT member Glenn Dickey. Both Glenn Dickey and his brother, John Dickey are IGKT members and do regular volunteer work on the Santa Maria.

Ship Statistics:
Overall Length: 98 feet
Height: From the keel to the top of the mast: 89 feet.

Hull Dimensions: At the water line: 72 feet by 26 feet. The hull is 2.5 inches thick below the water line and 1.75 inches thick above the water line.
Weight: 130 tons with ballast
Main Mast: This 65-foot mast is carved from a single Douglas fir.
Hull Planking: 44,000 board feet of Port Oreford cedar.
Deck Planking: and spars 22,000 board feet of Douglas fir.
Frames: 24,000 board feet of Alaskan yellow cedar.
Sails: 2,700 square feet.
Rigging: 4,000 linear feet of line.
Knees: 1,000 board feet of White Oak.
Tar: 55 gallons used to preserve the fixed rigging.
The Santa Maria looks pretty bare before we start our up-rigging. The picture above gives you an idea of the size of Columbus' ship at only 98 feet. And of the fleet Columbus had, this was the largest of the three ships. Notice the bare poles of the masts, no yardarms or other running rigging.

Our first task for up-rigging is to lay out the Main Sail. We check for any tears, clean any areas that need cleaning, and ready it for pre-reefing.
We pre-reef the main sail prior to bending it on the main yardarm. Since the visitor's awning is extended over the main deck below the main yardarm we can't really drop the sail. So we very carefully pre-reef prior to bending it to the yardarm. After pre-reefing the sail, we attach the robands so it will be easier to bend it to the main yardarm.

Roband: a piece of spun yarn or marline used to fasten the head of a sail to a spar.

With robands attached, we carry the Mains'1 onboard.

Because we have volunteers, training goes on all the time. In the picture on the next page I'm showing one of our newer volunteers how to "marry" lines on the halyard for the mains'l so we don't drop the main yardarm. We’re on the quarter deck at the Knights Head working with the mains’l block and tackle. This is the largest block and tackle on the ship and has a six to one ratio.
(To "marry" lines, you twist two adjacent lines three or four times. Then clamp the lines together with your hands. One person can hold the main yardarm (about 3000 pounds) by just holding the twisted lines. This allows us to position our people before moving the yardarm and it also allows us to hold the yardarm while we belay it to the Knight's head. (The top of the Knight’s head can just be seen below the lines on the right side of the picture.)

Before bending the mains'l to the main yardarm, we have to bend the mains'l earrings to the yardarm. Gary’s working on the starboard earring. (I'm sure a lot of salt water sailors would like to have glass smooth water and everything at main deck level!) The mains'l lift and brace lines have been attached.
After we've raised the main yard-arm from the winter cradles to a working level, we bend the robands for the mains'l to the main yardarm.

Fortunately this can be done at the main deck level. A lot less dangerous that way.

This is a good picture of the knot used for the mains’l halyard – a mains’l halyard hitch

Bending the mains’l to the main yard-arm - Pic: DSC-0260
Mike on the left and Gary on the right.

The article on up-rigging the Santa Maria will be continued in the next issue of the InterKnot.

New Editor

Glenn Dickey, IGKT member from Westerville, Ohio will be taking over as editor of the InterKnot. Glenn is retired from a “very large insurance company” where he kept 400 computers running. He is an avid member of the IGKT and does volunteer work in knotting for 4-H, Boy Scouts, and the Santa Maria.

(A full sized replica of Columbus’ flagship located in Columbus, Ohio) Glenn also maintains a website on knots and knotting interests.  www.morethanknots.com
SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES & PICTURES FOR THE “InterKnot”
Please submit written articles in MS Word Document or convertible document. If sending instructions for tying a knot please include black & white sketches with motion arrows would be easier to understand. Pictures are welcome but try to make sure that they are high-contrast black & white photos in jpeg format. Color Pictures are also welcome, but it increases the cost of publication significantly.

Please send submission items to alexd_3@juno.com
Include IGKT article on address line.

Please Note Your Membership Expiration Date is shown on the “InterKnot” next to each member’s name.