
Billets & Blades

Official Newsletter of the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild
Mark Gottesman Editor

Spring is on the way!! Time to break out the rototiller knives. The meeting at Tommy's was a great way to start off the New Year with lots of great demos and good food. It was a real treat to see everyone and talk with some people I hadn't seen in a couple of years.

There was lots of discussion on making and selling knives and an update on how the September show is shaping up. Everyone is invited to call Chris Latta or Tommy McNabb and volunteer for any of the various support jobs. People will be needed for table-sitting, ticket sales and various other things. If everyone helps a bit the show should run smoothly.

A nod to Alan Patterson for a nice folding knife photo in this months Knife World and to Robert Livingstone for his catalog entry with Lark[?] books. Robert, drop us a line and let us know how your 2 day course went and I'm sure anything you could pass on about your catalog venture would be appreciated.

Upcoming Meeting

The next meeting of the NCKKG will be on April 29 and 30 at Tim and Kathy Scholl's in Angier. There will be elections for President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Director. Nominations are now open. Contact Gary Gaddy with your nominations. There will be directions and more info in the next newsletter. The rest of the agenda has not been set, but Tim said that there would be a knife testing session. There will also be an update meeting on the NCKKG show.

NCKKG Knife show

Members!!! We need you to do the following.

*Send your mailing lists to Tommy McNabb so that he can get them entered into a mailing database. Customer lists are the most valuable. Whatever you can send is useful. Getting customers to the show is one of the main priorities.

I would like to thank Alex Moss, Tim Scholl and Tommy McNabb for taking the time to get a list together at the meeting. Please indicate if you list is a customer or knifemaker list.

*** Please send in your forms and money to reserve your table space. Also call the hotel and make your room reservations. Table spaces along with requests for special locations are being assigned on a first come first serve basis. So far more than Thirty tables have been sold.**

* Chris Latta said he still needs one more knife for the knife giveaway. There will also be a knife raffle which we will use to get info on how well our advertising worked and to build next years mailing list. Other items, of a less expensive nature, will be added to the give away list. Possibly, knife making supplies or something similar.

* Chris is still looking for demonstrators. If you can do one or know of someone who can let Chris know. We hope to provide 5 demos a day. Also if anyone knows of collectors who might like to display a CUSTOM knife collection, let us know.

Chris mentioned that we won't be able to set up the show till early Saturday morning. We will need all hands available for that. There was also mention

made of printing up a number of complimentary tickets for people to make available to special customers. There will be more on that.

Other topics that were discussed were the award categories and who would judge them. There will be thirteen categories. These will be Best Art, Fighter, Folder, Minature, New Maker, Bowie, Hunter, Value, Forged, Scrimshaw, Fantasy, Damascus Pattern, and Best of Show. This was also tied into a talk about what magazines we should invite. If we can get some magazine editors to show, maybe we can get them to act as impartial judges for the show.

Anyone that will be attending a knife show should call Tommy and get show flyers to take along and pass out. One maker took 1500 to the Charleston outdoor show and figured he would pass at least 1200. A knifemakers supply house is sending out our flyer in every one of his shipments. We would like to thank them for doing this as this represents a great savings to the Guild. So if you can get these flyers out and around to potential buyers call Tommy for them. I have started dropping them off at the gun shops here in Winston-Salem. So far the three shops have been glad to leave them out.

Another area where we could use a suggestion or two are recommendations for a bookseller and a lead or two on miniature knifemakers.

So right now things are marching right along and we will keep you posted on what is going on with the show. If you can help, please call and volunteer. You will get a special Staff T-Shirt. If you have questions or suggestions, please call and we will get things sorted out for you.

Winston-Salem Meeting

About 30 members plus family members showed up at Tommy McNabb's Studio for a very productive weekend of knife related events. Tommy, Trena and the guest lecturers put together a great weekend. We do appreciate their time and effort.

The meeting started off with Gary Gaddy reading

the minutes from the last meeting and also delivering the up-to-date financial report. The balance as of 12-30-94 is \$2,747.52. After a little discussion about bank charges, Gary summed up everything to date and showed us the new briefcase the Guild has bought for the secretary/treasurer position. Gary also requested any address or phone changes be sent to him ASAP.

Tommy displayed a large size placard with the NCCKG logo that people could display at a show. It is like a large version of our membership ID pins. The going price is \$16.00 [?].

Engraving with Jessie Hauser

After all this official stuff was done Jessie Hauser, the engraving instructor from Montgomery Community College, set up a workstation to display his craft. He started off with a talk about the history of embellishment and the combination of hand and eye skills with original design. In talking about the reasons that people want to purchase custom items, Jessie mentioned the fact that they are attracted by several things. These are craftsmanship, quality, uniqueness, and that measure of individuality that comes from owning a handcrafted item. It was also said that knowing the person who makes the object increases its worth to the owner. Engraving a knife helps to add to its value and this extra decoration may also increase the demand for this type of quality object.

Designing for direct engraving falls into two schools. The first is the one that works with traditional existing designs that almost fall into the production arena. The other is to draw a new and special design that looks good is unified with the object. Both of these methods still require that the engraving visually agrees with the item being decorated.

Jessie demonstrated impact engraving where the cutter is propelled by a hammer. The other style he mentioned was push engraving which is mainly used to decorate jewelry and other shallow cut decorations. Harder materials need the hammer to

power the tool and get depth of cut. The main difference between these tools are the angles that are ground into the face and heel. These will determine the strength of the edge and the turn radius for the tool. One highly recommended tool for this work is an Optivisor which allows you to do closeup work and comes in a variety of magnifications.

Jessie went on to show us how to draw a design and transfer it to the metal. A piece of plastic was used to draw the pattern on, which then was scratched to follow the pattern. Then bone black or graphite was wiped into the scratches. Tape was pressed against the plastic to lift the powder. The work site was painted with Damar varnish and the tape applied and removed to this. The varnish holds the powder that was sticking to the tape.

Other methods shown were how to use a burnisher to push metal back into a scratch. He also cautioned to be aware of where your hands were when cutting and to never have any flesh in the push line. You develop a lot of pressure in push engraving as you are driving with your body while your arms are locked up. If a grave jumps you could end up stabbing yourself.

Jessie brought along a couple of knives that he had made and engraved. They were nice clean looking knives with engraved bolsters of very good quality. One blade had the tang engraved to look like an anchor chain. A very nice effect.

Another thing that he pointed out was the fact that if you are pinning an item together that the pins should be upset into tapered holes rather than just bradded over into a shallow countersink. If this item is engraved later on the pin may be cut loose or a seam may show up.

The final part of the demo was devoted to small airpowered engraving tools like the Gravermax and Gravermeister. He pointed out that there was a little loss of hand control and sensitivity, but there was a lot of speed to be had. The work station was left up for the rest of the day and many people took time to try their hand at this under Jessie's guidance.

Silversmithing with Nat Norwood

Nat Norwood of Old Salem then started to show us the fine art of forging a silver spoon out of a strip of silver that was 2" long by 3/4" wide and 1/8" thick. Tools consisted of a 24oz(?) crosspein forging hammer, a small beak anvil and a charcoal fire for annealing hammer. Nat uses a technique that is consistent with the founding Moravian craftsman. He first filed off any burrs and annealed the blank to a dull red. The item was quenched in Sparex to remove the fire scale. Annealing is very tricky in that the silver does not show much color and melts at just a bit over that temperature. He also pointed out that both hammer and anvil must be mirror smooth to avoid marring the spoon during fabrication.

If you check out the sequence picture you can see how the bowl is necked in and the both the bowl and handle are slowly peened and worked out to the proper width and length. The shape is monitored by using a brass template and there is the ever present annealing and quench sequence. Close watch is needed not to wait too long between anneals as the work hardened silver is prone to cracking. When he started he was using up to 12 anneals, now he is down to less than half that.

Once the proper size is reached the bowl and handle are sawn to shape and the surfaces, especially the inside of the bowl, are filed and polished by planishing with a lighter domed hammer. Forging of the bowl and handle combined with annealing are done so that when it comes time to sink the bowl to shape the bowl is soft and the handle is work hardened. He also pointed out that if you worked so that one side of the spoon was always against the anvil it would have no hammer marks and need less finishing. The bowl is shaped by driving it into a lead die with a matched steel top die. The Winston Library carries a good technical book on Silversmithing and other metal raising techniques.

Sheath making with Jack Hyer

Jack proceeded to show us how to make a proper fitting pouch sheath out of 8-10oz chrome tanned leather[?]. He mentioned that the better hides are worked (drum tanned?) so that they are a consistent weight and thickness. If you are going to be making more than one of these sheaths make a pattern, it will save a lot of time.

Start by taping the edge of your knife if it is sharp. Draw a centerline on the leather and lay the knife on it with the edge facing up. Next roll the knife to each side and mark off the profile about an inch off the profile. Cut this out with a shear or razor sharp knife. You can then wet and start to wrap the leather around the knife. The spline that contacts the edge and prevents the edge from cutting the stitching is cut out by going back to the hide and taking an extra 1/2" cut that extends past the center line of the previous cut. Next comes the critical fitting and sizing where you again fold the pouch insert the knife and place the spline in for the rough cut and trim. This spline can also be used to stop and lock the blade or the sheath can be wet formed to do this. Depending on how you want the knife to lay against the body you can center or offset knife/spline relationship to achieve this effect. The sheath should provide safe easy access to the knife and to provide this Jack suggested that you look at as many sheaths as possible. The location of the knife and the spline are refined so that a trim line for excess leather can be established. After the pouch, spline and spline spacers are made and cut to almost final shape thought should be given to what type of hanger would best suit the sheath. An 1 1/2" loop type might be a good place to start and also figure out what angle you want the handle to hang at. Next the mating edges of the sheath are pared or skived down where they meet the spline to reduce the thickness. Gluing is done with contact cement and then profiling is done with a 60 and then 120 grit belts. The edges are buffed on a grooved hard felt wheel with beeswax to help roll and seal the edges. Stitching is marked with a spacing wheel and holes are made with a drill and a rounded polished wood backer. After the holes are drilled a groove is

made for the lacing to lay into. Lacing is done using a hand awl and waxed linen thread to form a lock stitch. Tension is the key here. Attach the belt loop and finish by treating with a mixture consisting of 1/2 neetsfoot oil and 1/2 mink oil with a small block of beeswax melted into it. Heat carefully [it will burst into flame] and apply to sheath. Apply several times and buff off the excess. Finally, find someone to do this for you so you can get back to knifemaking.

Some of the other suggestions were as follows. Don't use acetone to wet and shape the leather as it pulls all the oils out of the leather, also it is bad for your liver and very flammable. Alcohol is not quite as bad, but it also is not good for the work. You can keep the leather treated and polished with a product called leather balm that can be found at shoe stores. Another type of contact cement that can be used is "Master Cobblers Cement", excess glue can be removed by rubbing it down with a piece of crepe rubber.

Grinding and Buffing with Travis Daniel and Tommy McNabb

Tommy showed how to grind a double edge fighter and Travis ran thru a drop point knife and showed how to buff to a mirror shine. Many of the questions were about how to correct grind errors and how to use the grind to change the balance of the knife. Points that were made were:

- * Profile was done after sawing entirely on a contact wheel without switching sizes to do finger grooves or flat areas.
- * Mark your centerline and chamfer the edges of blank to line up the edge. By doing this you can hollow grind into this area and not distort your edge line.
- * Balance is adjusted by how you place your grind area and other metal removal. Also look at weight and placement of bolsters, butt caps and handle material.

Hand rubbing a finish with Jack Hyer and Gary Gaddy

Jack hooked up a horizontal backer board for him to

Jack hooked up a horizontal backer board for him to secure the blade to. He uses a piece of heavy brass [3/16"] with a body putty squeegee glued to it for a rubbing block. He lubricates the abrasive paper with mineral spirits to flush grit and swarf from the surface. Keep papers clean and separate to avoid contamination. You want to start out with the say 120 grit and cut strips of paper about 1/4" larger than the surface you are polishing. You need to sand in long strokes in 2 or three different directions. This will show you if you are removing scratches. Play around with you light angles and look the blade over carefully before you go onto the next grit. To do a rounded ricasso leave a little paper hanging over the edge and ride the rubbing block up onto the surface. Watch it at 600 grit and fine as paper wrinkles will add noticable scratches to the blade. Rinse the blade between grits to avoid grit traveling back to blade and when you finish a side tape it off to protect it.

Gary did a hand rubbed finish on long a hollow ground bowie knife as opposed to Jack's short flat ground blade. He applies the grit paper to a 1/2 round profile [looks like a slice off a billet] that matches the radius of the wheel he ground the blade on. He uses a spray contact adhesive or carpet tape. He then holds the blade and works it back and forth over the abrasive. If he runs into bad scratches he will go back and wash them out with a 60 micron belt. This method allows you to get a lot of grinding pressure on the blade. Watch out for adhesive buildup as this causes ridges that will plow grooves in the blade. When he gets to 600 grit Gary starts using a lubricant like WD40. Final polish for both of them can be at 1200 to 2000 grit. They both said there is a lot a variable due to different grits, steels, heat treatment lubricants and types of rubbing blocks.

Wooden buttcaps with Wayne Whitley

I couldn't get around the table to see Wayne do this, but here goes. He starts off by drilling a 3/8" hole in the Stag handle [hidden tang]. A piece of wood is worked up with a matching stub, and a metal spacer with a hole is all glued together and then profiled on the grinder. A slick little way to add a nice touch to

a knife. You could also use a Dremel to carve matching texture lines into the wood from the stag.

Advertising Idea

Alex Moss sent me a note about some Iron work and knives that he had donated to to a public radio fundraiser. He got a lot of good publicity out of it and also two knife sales. In response to a gate he donated a contact developed with a man that did stained glass work for the National Cathedral in DC and some wealthy fol in the Wilmington area. He feels the money he invested in this was as good as or better than a magazine ad.

New members

We would like to welcome the following.

Wayne Short
Route 2 Box 154
Littleton, NC 27850

Dan Winkler
PO Box 2166
Blowing Rock, NC 28605

Edward Van Hoy
RT 8, Box 244-A
Greenville, NC 27834

Henry Clay Runion
33 Jernigan Trail
Dunn, NC 28334

Phillip E. Barlow
3301 Brookview Drive
Rocky Mount, NC

Calendar

[Ed. I put this list together from Knife World, Blade, Knives Illustrated, Fighting Knife and a few other odd publications. If you know of something that should be listed that has been missed please let me know. On the other hand if it is felt that this calendar is a waste of space let me know that also.

March 9 - May 18

Knife making Class taught by the nationally known Knife Maker Tommy McNabb at Montgomery Community College. For Info call 1-800-839-6222 or 1-910-576-MCCC EXT. 256 Ask for Wanda Jackson.

March 17-19

East Coast Custom Knife Show at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza in Manhattan. Contact Stephen D'Lack at (417) 335-2170

March 19-25

The American Hand-Forged Bowie Knife, with Jim Batson. John C Campbell Folk School, Rt. 1, Box 14A, Brasstown, NC 28902
1-(800) 365-5724

March 20-31

Intro to Bladesmithing with J. Hendrickson at the Texarkana College Bladesmithing School

March 24-26

New Bern Wildlife Show, New Bern, NC
Call for info.

March 26-April 1

Damascus patterns for Bladesmithing, with Chuck Patrick. John C. Campbell Folk School.

April 8-9

4th Greater Shenandoah Valley Knife Show at the Rockingham Co. Fairgrounds, Harrisonburg Va.
Contact Wes Shrader at (703) 433-1434

[ED. If you have done this show please call and tell me about it. (910) 765-7128.]

April 28-29

The 7th annual Bladesmithing Symposium. A seminar for anyone interested in knives. Contact Jim Batson (205) 971-6860, 176 Brentwood Lane, Madison, Alabama 35758. Fee is \$85.00 limited to 75 people. Highly recommended.

April 29-30

NCCKG Meeting at Tim Scholls. More info to

follow.

May 5-7

Appalachian Knifemakers Rendezvous. A Knifemaking seminar for both Grinders and Forgers. Room onsite for 40 people. Cost including meals is \$130.00. Guest makers are Tim Zowada, Rob Hudson and one other person. They will each make a knife at the seminar and it will be auctioned off at the end. All money goes to the maker. Call Ted Merchant at (410) 343-0380 or Kent Nicholson at (410) 395-9733. Membership in the Appalachian Knifemakers is \$20.00. Call or write for info: Appalachian Knifemakers Association, Ted Merchant, 7 Old Garrett Court, Whitehall, MD, 21161.

May 19-21

1995 Blade Show at the Atlanta Stouffer Waverly Hotel Call for info 1-800-272-5233

June 26 - July 1

"Toolmaking for Woodworkers" 6 day course at Country Workshops. Hans Karlsson, a Swedish Toolsmith, will teach up to 10 students. Beginners welcome. (704) 656-2280 or write Country Workshops, 90 Mill Creek Road, Marshall, NC 28753

June 30- July 2

Jim Batson will teach a course at Montgomery County Community College. The course will be taught along the lines of the George Herron course as it will be mostly lecture. Sort of a master course for advanced makers. Sure to be lots of good info. See info above for Montgomery Community College.

July 21-23

26th International Knifemakers Guild Show. Marriott's Orlando World Center. For Info Call Frank Centofante at (615) 442-5767

September 9- 10

South Eastern Custom Knife Show sponsored by the

South Eastern Custom Knife Show sponsored by the NC Custom Knifemakers Guild. Contact Chris Latta, Show Chairman -415 Bay Drive, Washington, NC (919) 946-9519

Guild Table

If anyone is interested in getting together on a Guild table for the 1996 Southeastern Wildlife Expo in Charleston, South Carolina please contact Tommy McNabb or Cathy Weaver. The show advertises a gate of 40,000 people. This is a juried show and you may need slides to include with application. That's all the info I have to date.

Classified

The following ad was in "The Hammer's Blow" magazine in the winter 94-95 issue.

For a wide range of tool steel and specialty metals such as brass, bronze, monel, and copper - Check out *Southern Tool Steel Inc.* They have no minimum and no cutting charge. 1-800-647-5188 or 5395 Wilbanks drive, PO Box 1116, Chattanooga, TN 37343

Forge equipment: Heavy duty table forge with firepot and electric blower, Sheetmetal Hood and triple wall Stainless steel chimney 6•2 foot sections with hardware. (This was built as a unit.) This unit has enough draw to suck up small dogs and children. Stainless steel quench tank 2'x2'x3'. Hand crank blowers 1 small and 2 large (like the Champion #400) Call Mark Gottesman in Winston-Salem at [910] 765-7128 for more info.

The Final Cut

For those of you that are interested there is a section on compuserve that is for people wanting to discuss knife related topics. It is located in the OUTDOORS forum and the section is Knives. I don't recognize any of the names, but that does not mean much.

Saw some interesting catalogs from Stewart-MacDonald and another Luthier (stringed instrument) supplier. They carry a lot of interesting hand tools and had good prices on Shell for inlay work. You can find the numbers in the back of a *Fine Woodworking* magazine.

Not much of outside interest to report this month. I do have two good reads for that one reader with a few spare minutes. They are both by R. Preston. The first is called "American Steel" which is about Nucor Steel in Charlotte and how they built a steel mini-mill to compete with the Japanese. The next is called "The Hot Zone" which is about an incident involving a biological hazard making its way into a monkey research facility outside of DC. The virus is so lethal that there is a 90% mortality and it does in about 10 days what AIDS takes 10 years to do. Scared the pants off of me.

For a show about the ultimate toy watch the "Carrier" Special.

Guild Officers

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Winston-Salem, NC 27106.
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(910) 759-0640 Work

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This Newsletter is mailed to members of the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild four to six times a year. Dues are \$50.00 per year and are due by October 1st every year. Make check payable to NCKKG.

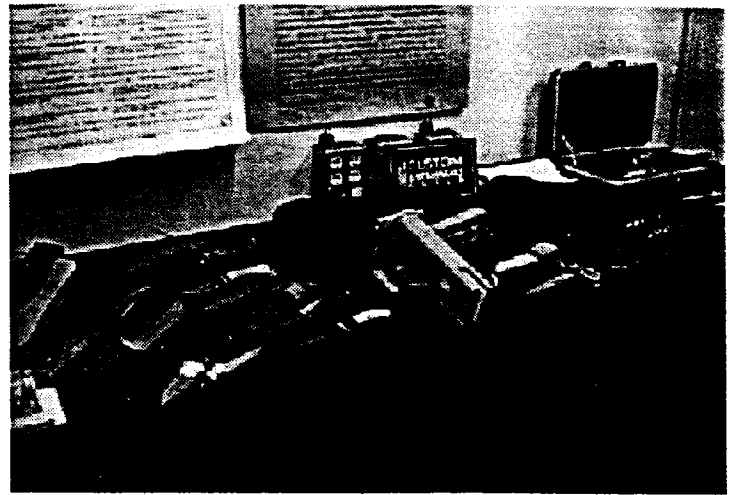
The purpose and policy of this newsletter is to serve as a medium of information exchange for members of the NCKKG, related organizations may copy the information used herein as long as credit is given.

This organization has been formed to help meet the needs of a growing body of custom knifemakers in the Southeastern region. In addition, The Guild seeks to provide a training forum and educational resource for new and veteran makers alike.

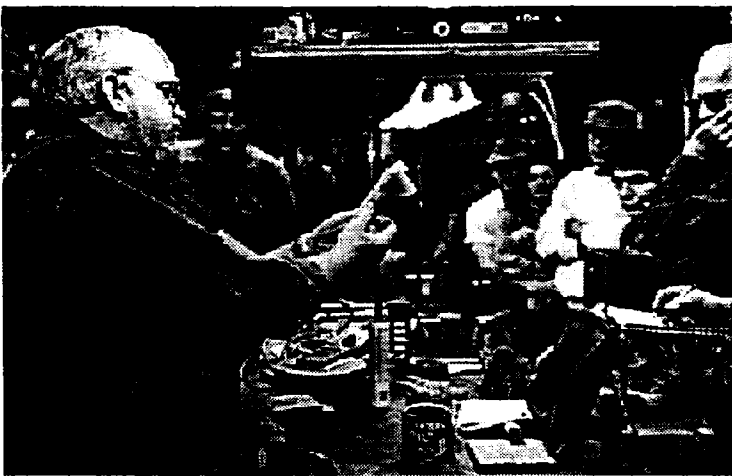
Knifemaking and it's related crafts are inherently dangerous occupations. Therefore the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild, its officers and the Editorial committee specifically disclaim any responsibility for damages or injuries that occur as a result of the use, in any way, of any information contained in this newsletter.



Jack Hyer explaining sheath construction



Display table of members knives



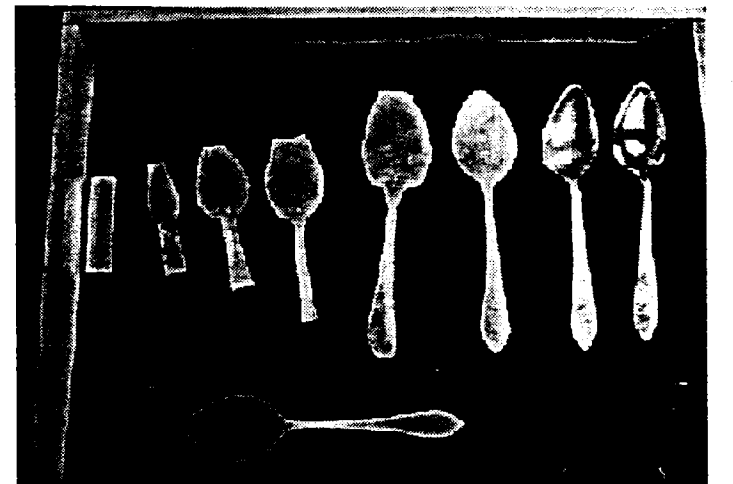
Jack Hyer showing design elements of sheath



Nat Norwood answering questions during Silversmithing demonstration



Jesse Houser giving Engraving Lecture



Forging sequence for Silver Spoon

*Annual
Show*

**SOUTH
EASTERN** **CUSTOM
KNIFE**
S H O W

September 9 and 10, 1995

-  **Omni Hotel & Convention Center –Durham, NC**
12.5 miles from the Raleigh/Durham Airport
-  **Special Room Rate of \$69 – \$75 double**
-  **Only Custom Handmade Knives**
-  **World Famous Knifemakers**
-  **Investment Quality at Affordable Prices**
-  **Valuable Custom Knives as Door Prizes**
-  **Prizes for Visitors**
-  **Awards for Knifemakers**
-  **Knife Supplies for Sale by Koval Knives**

Saturday 10:00 – 6:00

Sunday 10:00 – 4:00

\$5/day – \$8 for both days

*Demonstrations in Scrimshaw,
Engraving, Bladesmithing, Knife Grinding*

**Greatest Custom Knife Show
Between New York and Atlanta!**

See top makers and beautiful knives in a comfortable and modern setting.

Show sponsored by the NC Custom Knifemakers Guild
Chris Latta, Show Chairman • 415 Bay Drive • Washington, NC 27889 • 919-946-9519
Tommy McNabb, President • 910-759-0640

**NORTH
CAROLINA** **CUSTOM
KNIFEMAKERS**
G U I L D

Annual
Show

SOUTH
EASTERN
**CUSTOM
KNIFE**
SHOW

September 9 and 10, 1995

Omni Hotel & Convention Center - Durham, NC
(12.5 miles from the Raleigh/Durham Airport)

Special Room Rate of \$69 - \$75 double

Only Custom Handmade Knives

Business Name _____

Maker's Name _____

Address _____ City & State _____

Phone _____ Date _____

Table Location Preference _____ Types of Knives Sold _____

Tables 8ft. @ \$100 ea. Total for Tables \$ _____

Awards Banquet Saturday Night
(one free ticket with each table purchase
additional tickets, \$20 ea. Total for Banquet Tickets \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____
Minimum Deposit of 1/2 of total required
Checks payable to NC Custom Knifemaker Guild

Signed _____

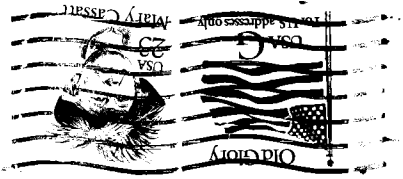
Thank You!

Show sponsored by the NC Custom Knifemakers Guild
Chris Latta, Show Chairman • 415 Bay Drive • Washington, NC 27889 • 919-946-9519
Tommy McNabb, President • 910-759-0640

NORTH
CAROLINA
**CUSTOM
KNIFEMAKERS**
G U I L D

Barry & Phillip Jones
Jones Knives
221 North Ave.
Danville, VA 24540

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Billetts & Blades
Mark Gottesman, Editor
5433 Hanover Park Drive
Winston-Salem, NC 27103

CUSTOM
NORTH CAROLINA
KNIFEMAKERS
GUILD

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

CUSTOM
NORTH CAROLINA
KNIFEMAKERS
GUILD

Please send to: NC Custom Knifemakers Guild
\$50 Attention: Gary Gaddy • P.O. Box 2574
Washington, NC 27889

DATE _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE: _____ HOME _____ WORK _____

In which category would you be interested in applying: Knifemaker _____

(How long have you been making knives?) _____

Collector _____ Just Interested _____