

Billets & Blades

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE NORTH CAROLINA CUSTOM KNIFEMAKERS GUILD

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The next **North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild** meeting date: January 21, 2023 at MCC



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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION AND OUR GUILD

Billets and Blades is the official publication of the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild. It is compiled and published in four annual issues, with two additional special publication dates possible each year.

The North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild was formed to meet the needs of the growing body of custom knife makers in the southeastern United States. The purpose of this newsletter is to serve as a medium of exchange for the members of the NCCKG.

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Advertising Policy:

The NCCKG accepts no paid advertising as a matter of policy. From time to time, advertisements may appear that are deemed by the officers to be in the best interest of the Guild. Space for advertisements is offered free to Guild members who wish to promote a service or offer specific items for sale. The officers and editor reserve the right to edit advertisements for brevity.

Members, please submit ads to the one of the board of directors listed on the following page.

FROM THE EDITOR

If you are a new member, please make sure that we have your correct email and physical mailing addresses. You may send this information to us via email.

If you are currently receiving *Billets and Blades* but are no longer interested in receiving it please let us know.

If you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a member, please let a board member know and we'll be happy to mail a copy of the current newsletter to that person.

Existing members, please check the website to verify that we have your correct information. Especially your correct email address so you may be contacted should the need arise. We are always in need of pictures, articles and ideas on how to make the website and newsletter better. Please contact a board member with any suggestions.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Members,

Well we made it threw 2022.

The Covid crap is behind us. So is all the election BS, at least for a year then it starts all over again.

I hope this has been a good year for you all.

For me it was a bad year and one of the best years of my life.

In Oct. I was diagnosed with lung cancer. That was the worst part of the year for me. Yesterday Dec. 13 after 30 days of radiation and chemotherapy The Dr told me I was Cancer free, My immune system is almost completely recovered. This was the best part of my year.

I still have immunotherapy treatments for a year. But the outlook is good.

I have so missed being in the shop and posting work as it goes along. The Dr. has cleared me to go back in the shop and I can be around people so I will be at the Jan meeting.

I have been working on doing a Go-Mai steel with copper. Also think I may have a way of doing copper /steel damascus.

This may be an upcoming demo in the future. I'm not sure if I like it or not . But it does open the door for other things.

The last couple of months has made me see life a little different.

I made my peace with death long ago.

But seeing the worry in the eyes of friends and family was rough.

My wife is one of the strongest people I know. She showed me that strength and love everyday.

So to all of you I say keep your friends and family close. Let them know what they mean to you every chance you get.

Well, I hope everyone has as good a Christmas as I am going to have.

I hope you all had a safe new Year.

Remember Barry need articles for the Newsletter and people to do demos.

May God Bless and watch over you all.

Andy Sharpe
President NCCKMG

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Barry Clodfelter

Making a knife guard press and anti-slip bar for your hidden tang knives

By Don Quinn

I'm sure anyone who has worked with knives has seen, used, or even owned a guard press. A guard press allows the maker to set a guard on a hidden tang knife, without the use of a hammer. This is especially helpful when the guard is finished and polished. The one problem that I always have had, is when I tighten the screws to press on the guard, the set screws (the ones on the side) tend to slip. Keep in mind that the side tension screws are intended to center and hold the press tight, and not necessarily used to hold the press in place. Well, I looked at the problem and made several modifications to some of the presses I had. I have come up with a way to ensure the press won't slip.

In this article I am going to try and go through the steps in not only making a guard fit press, but also the simple mechanism that will keep your press from slipping and allow you to close up any small gaps with this tool. As many makers will do when using a press, you can lock your knife in a vise after you center and tighten your press. The problem becomes that you will have a hard time tightening the press screws while it's in the vise. The second part of this project will eliminate the need for the vise all together and still give a solid press fit of your guard, with the use of the anti-slip bar.



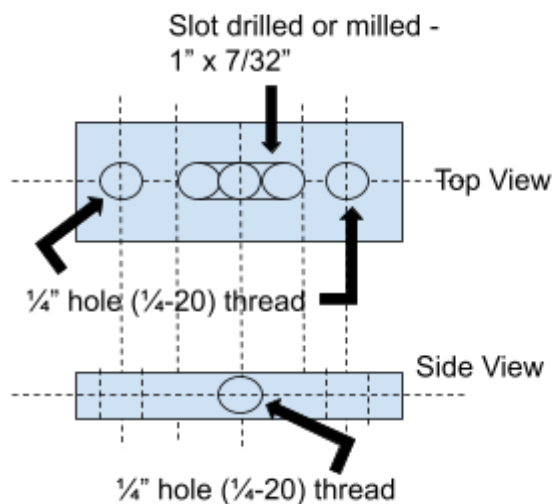
Now keep in mind that you can add to this design or modify it to fit your needs. But this simple design will get the job done very well.

Making the Press

In order to start the first part of this project, you will need to start with a piece of 1 inch wide mild steel. I found that the minimum thickness for this is $\frac{3}{8}$ " stock. Because you will ideally be using $\frac{1}{4}$ " screws, it can't be any thinner than this. You could use $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick stock, which would give you plenty of room from drilling, if you prefer.

I cut the stock to length at $2\frac{3}{8}$ ". I then use a disc grinder to flatten and smooth all the surfaces on my block. Using layout fluid, I coat the entire block and then mark center lines on all the surfaces of the block. (Tip: if you own a height gauge, it will make quick work of this part. (Refer to Fig. A which shows where I scribe lines on the block)

Fig. A. Guard Press



Scribe the center lines so they can be clearly seen. On the top surface, find the center and scribe a square that is 1" long by $\frac{7}{32}$ " wide. (fig A.) This will be the size of the slot we will be cutting. You can modify this size to make it larger if you make very large knives.

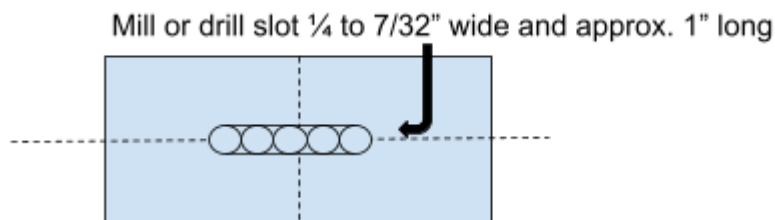
You can find the centers of all of the holes you intend to drill. Now using a center punch, mark and drill each hole. Remember, you will be tapping these holes, so choose your drill size to accommodate the proper tap size. Additionally, **make sure when drilling the side holes you are drilling at 90 degrees to the surface** and drill all the way through the stock with one hole. This will ensure that you can tap your first hole cleanly and the slot will give you enough room to tap through the first hole cleanly. There is plenty of information online for drill and tap sizes.

If you are using a Milling Machine, you can mill the appropriate size slot all the way through the stock. If you are going to drill, pre-drill $\frac{1}{8}$ " holes and then progressively drill larger holes until you reach your maximum size. The next thing to do is file away the excess material to create your slot. (if you have milled the slot this step is not necessary). Tap the appropriate holes in Fig. A and insert 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " hex head screws in the bottom holes and 1" hex head screws in the side holes.

Making the press plate

The Press Plate is simply a piece of $\frac{1}{8}$ " or $\frac{3}{16}$ " mild steel with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{7}{32}$ " slot cut into it. Make the slot the same length as the slot in the press. This plate will allow you to tighten your press screws and evenly distribute the pressure against the underside of the guard, without damaging your work. (see Fig. B)

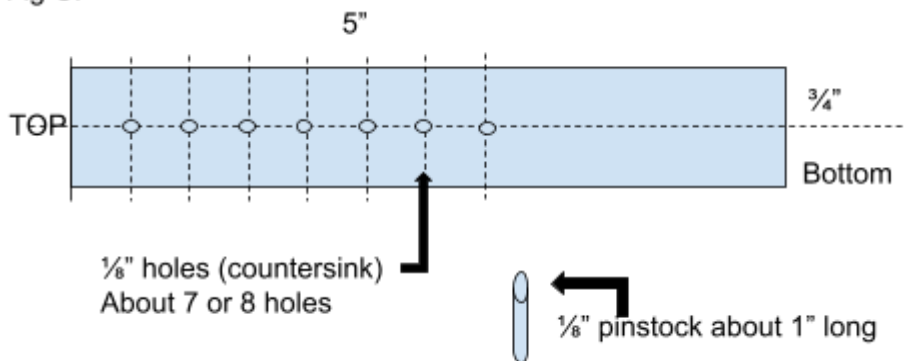
Press Plate
Fig. B



Making the anti-slip bar

This bar is made from a $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick piece of stock about $\frac{3}{4}$ -1" wide and 5" long. You may not need the entire length, but I have found that this length makes it really easy to hold on to. Using layout fluid on one side, find and scribe the center of one side along the entire length of your stock. Now layout center lines for $\frac{1}{8}$ " holes drilled every .350" (see Fig. C). This number can vary according to how many holes you want, but this is how I did it. Just leave some space between each hole. Now drill your holes and relieve each side with a counter sink or drill bit to allow your pin stock to push into the hole smoothly.

Anti-Slip Bar
Fig C.



I then cut a 1" piece of pin stock to use as my set pin. Remember that in using this method, ***you will have to drill a 1/8" hold in the bottom of your tangs.*** This hole will receive your pin. The hole can also be used to hang damascus blades when acid etching.

That's it, your build is now complete. I have really found this to be a useful tool in my shop. This is something you can make really quickly and not have to buy the tool. If you already have a press, I would suggest just making the "Anti-slip bar". I have found this to be incredibly useful. I hope you do too.

UPCOMING 2023 GUILD MEETINGS

Stay tuned for meetings when restrictions are lifted.

Dues for 2024 are due at the October meeting.

January 21, 2023—Guild meeting at MCC

April 15, 2023—Guild meeting at MCC

July 15 ,2023 - Guild meeting at MCC

October 21, 2023—Guild meeting

Events Include:

Board Meeting begins at 8:30am, to be followed be our General Business Meeting, Demos & Iron in the Hat

Demos:

Will be determined and published on the website prior to the meeting.

If you are not a juried member and wish to become one bring at least three knives for the leadership team to review.

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.NCKNIFEGUILD.COM

The **North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild** was founded in June of 1992. Our goals are to:

- Promote the craft of custom knife making
- Seek to constantly improve the craftsmanship of its members
- Provide an educational resource to anyone interested in the craft
- To encourage new makers and provide a forum for their training

Through public knife making and forging demonstrations by a group or individual members, we try to display the craft and to educate the public. It is our intent to raise the general awareness of custom made knives and the people who create them. That is why there is no cost to attend one of our meetings, and we welcome anyone with an interest in knife making.

Our quarterly meetings are organized around speakers and various demonstrations of activities important to our craft. These speakers and demonstrations are from our members or experts in the field who come as our guests. As a training resource, our Guild is prepared to present any aspect of our craft to organizations that feel it would be beneficial and informative.



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