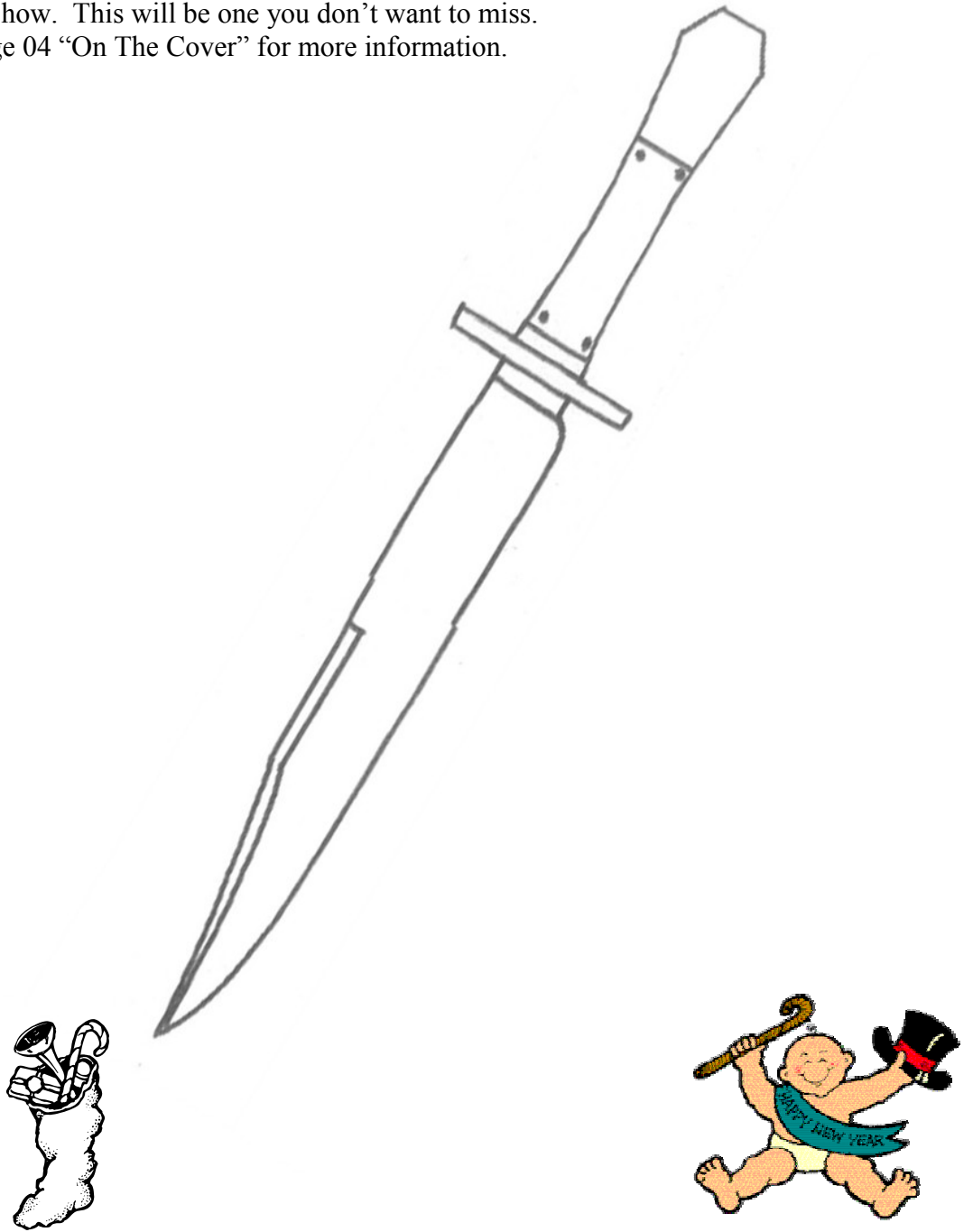


# Billetts & Blades

## Could this be your design?

Plans being made for the 10th Annual SouthEastern Custom Knife Show. This will be one you don't want to miss. See page 04 "On The Cover" for more information.



The Official Publication of  
The North Carolina Custom  
Knifemaker's Guild

Dec 2003

Dedicated to the Art & Craft of Custom Knifemaking

# Billets & Blades

NORTH  
CAROLINA  
CUSTOM  
KNIFEMAKER'S  
GUILD

## Guild Officers and Directors

Billets and Blades is the official publication of the North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild. It is compiled and published in four issues annually with two additional special publication dates possible each year. Compiled, published, and distributed by The Knifemaker's Guild.

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The North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild was formed to meet the needs of a growing body of custom knifemakers in the southeastern United States. The purpose of this newsletter is to serve as a medium of exchange for the members of the NCKKG.

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Please address correspondence about this newsletter to the President or the Editor at the above addresses. Please direct requests for information about the North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild to the President, Tommy McNabb, at the above address.

## The President's Letter

In June of 2004 our Guild will be twelve years old, and in September we will hold our 10th annual SouthEastern Custom Knife show. I think this is something I would have been afraid to dream about in 1992, but **WE** made it happen. My congratulations and thanks to each of you. Now we can look forward to making our Guild even better, with a little more effort from each member we can be even better.

Elections will be held at our April 24-25 meeting (President, etc). Make your nominations known to one of our Board members and we will get that name on the ballot for our April elections. Spend some time thinking about who you want to lead us into our second decade. This is important to each and every one of us.

2004 is not to be a year to look back on with the words like "coulda, shoulda, woulda". Life is short so take every opportunity to enjoy it.

Our January 24th meeting will be a little different from our previous meetings, Wayne Whitley and I will build two types of gas forges. Raffle tickets will be sold, winners will be determined by a drawing to be held at this meeting. Two lucky winners will take home a forge. You must be present to win.

We have some great classes scheduled again this year. Treat yourself and sign up for a class this year. Some of these classes will not be available again.

Thanks for your help and support and lets have a GREAT YEAR!

Tommy McNabb  
President  
North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild

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The Board of Directors for the North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild, their families, along with John and I would like to thank you for your support this past year and wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

## Demonstration Schedule

**January 24, 2004**  
**Montgomery Community College**  
**Troy, NC**

### Saturday:

8:30 a.m. Board Meeting

9:00 a.m. Guild Meeting

10:00 a.m. **Gas Forge Construction** – The meeting will be spent constructing two propane gas forges. The forges will be made start to finish during the meeting, and then raffled off at the end of the meeting. So two lucky individuals will go home with working forges. Not one to miss!

5:00 p.m. Departure

**Iron In The Hat will follow Lunch at noon.** Lunch will be provided. Bring a side dish to share, and don't forget something for the iron table.

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## Directions to Montgomery Community College

### From Winston-Salem:

Take Hwy. 52 South to Lexington; then take Hwy.64 East to Ashboro; from Ashboro take 220 South to Bisco Exit; turn right & go approximately 9 miles until you see Montgomery Community College sign on the right; turn right at the sign, and go approximately ½ mile to the college entrance. Look for marked parking.

### From Fayetteville:

Take Hwy. 24 & 27 West through Bisco, go approximately 9 miles until you see Montgomery Community College sign on the right; turn right at the sign, and go approximately ½ mile to the college entrance. Look for marked parking.

### From Charlotte:

Take Hwy 24 & 27 East through Troy, go approximately 2 miles until you see the Montgomery Com-

munity College sign. Turn left and go approximately ½ mile to the college entrance. Look for marked parking.

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### Area Hotel Accomodations

Days Inn Biscoe, NC 910-428-2525	Comfort Inn Albemarle, NC 704-983-6990
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Holiday Inn Express Albemarle, NC 904-986-2100	Sleep Inn Albemarle, NC 704-983-2770
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Uwharrie Mountain Lodge  
Troy, NC  
910-572-3701

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### On The Cover:

#### 10th Annual SouthEastern Custom Knife Show's Director's Knife.

This year will be the SouthEastern Custom Knifemaker's 10th Anniversary Show. Considering the great talent within the members of our Guild, for the "Show Knife" this year, the Board of Directors thought it should be a piece designed and constructed wholly by the North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild. The blade steel will be made from a Ron Newton Mosaic Damascus billet.

If you are interested in being a part of this project, submit your design for this Sheffield Bowie to Barry Jones or John Poythress by the January meeting. Of the designs submitted, the Board will select the winning design for this year's knife. There will also be a selection of members to construct the knife.

The construction of the knife will be on a tight schedule to allow for the completion of the piece in time to photograph and sell raffle tickets. If you would like to submit a design, you can e-mail or "snail mail" a copy to Barry Jones or John before the January meeting. Also, you can take your drawing to the January meeting and submit it then.

Imagine, in the list of credits on this knife could be "Design By \_\_\_\_\_" You fill in the blank.

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### NCKKG Officer Elections

In April the offices of President, a Vice-President, and Treasurer are to be decided upon again. If you would like to serve, please let one of the Board of Directors know this so you can be placed on the ballot. If you know someone who you think would be the person to take the Guild to the next level, ask that person if you can submit their name. Remember the President and Vice-President have to be residents of North Carolina.

The elections for these officers will be held at the April meeting in Troy.

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### Sneak Previews

There are many things going on this year with the 10th anniversary of the SECKS and this being the 12th anniversary for the NCKKG.

To commemorate these past years, we have decided to have the April meeting be one to be remembered. Special plans are in the works so this will not be just another knife meeting but a family event that will also grow you as a knifemaker and excite you as a knife enthusiast.

We will be having a cookout, swimming, and boat rides on the lake. Within just a few miles of Troy are the renown House of Pottery. For the ladies, we are planning a tour of these establishments.

More details will be given in the next issue of Billets and Blades but you will want to go ahead and make your plans to attend. The dates are April 24-25 and the place will be the Montgomery Community College in Troy, NC.

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The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

## Blades International showcases SECKG and NCKKG

Mr. Bud Lang, Editor-In-Chief of Blades International was in attendance at the SECKS this past September. Mr. Lang visited with several of our Guild members and has done a very nice article on our show, on the Jones Brothers, and on Andrew McLurkin. If you would like to read the article, you can access it on the Blades International website at [www.bladesinternational.com](http://www.bladesinternational.com).

The year 2003 has been a year of loss and grief among the NCKKG family with the deaths of Doc Baker and Terry Cash. Our hearts grieved with their families.

But along with the sadness, there has also been events of great joy within our own NCKKG family.

Guild member, Koji Hara, hurried back to Japan from the SECKS in September to attend the wedding of his son the following weekend. Congratulations to Koji and his family!



Thomas Clegg also had some "hurrying home" to do with the arrival of his granddaughter. As you can see, mom (Thomas's daughter) and baby are fine.



The Hoffman family has also had a new addition. Just this month, Terrill has entered the ranks of Granddaddy with the arrival of his pretty new granddaughter

And of course John & I were quite thrilled to attend the wedding of Melanie Poythress Parker to Frank Bowen, Jr. this past March.



Members of the NC Guild,

I would like to express my appreciation for the honor bestowed upon Barry, Phillip, and myself at the Southeastern Custom Knife Show. To be included with my sons was unexpected and very rewarding.

Barry and Phillip are very committed to the Guild and I thank each of you for the support shown them.

Sincerely,  
Peggy Jones

The North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild expresses sympathy to James and Kay Poplin in the death of Kay's father. You can send your condolences to them at 103 Oak Street, Washington, GA 30673.

Earlier this month Tony Kelly underwent triple bypass surgery. He is home and beginning the task of recuperating from the ordeal. He is making plans to attend the meeting in January at the Montgomery Community College. If you would like to send him a word of encouragement you can send it to him at 348 Bell Road, Kinston, NC 28504.

## Powder Mosaic Damascus

Ron Newton, Instructor

Article by Bill Bisher

### Part II

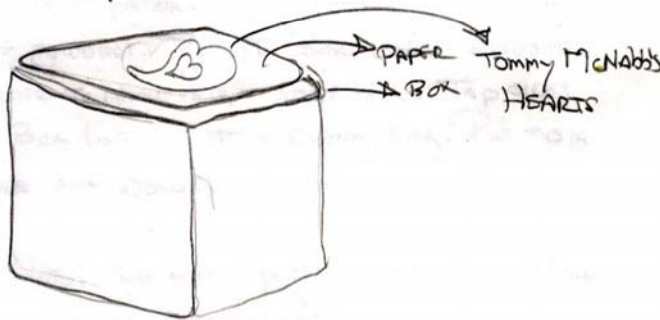
(“This past August I had the privilege of taking the Powder Mosaic Damascus class under Master Bladesmith Ron Newton. The NC Knife Guild and Montgomery Community College sponsored the class. I hope to pass on some of this information to you in the article.” (Bill Bisher) This is the 2nd part of the article Bill wrote for us. If you did not get the first part in the last newsletter please contact me and I will forward it to you-Editor).

## Picture Pattern Damascus

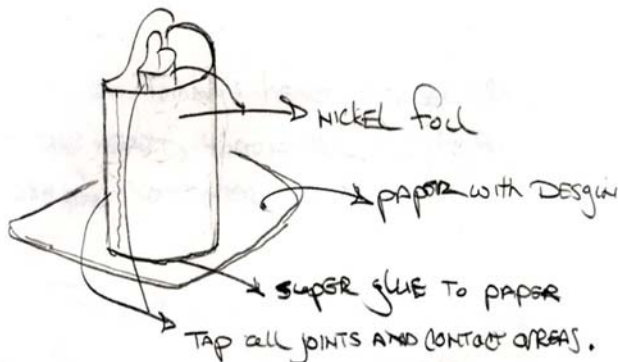
or

## Cookie Cutter Technique

Ron started this off the same way with the 3”square tube box with the bottom welded in place. Draw out your design on a piece of the folder paper cut to fit inside of the box..



To make the foil pattern, cut nickel foil to length and shape to fit the design on the paper. Tape (masking tape) and/or superglue all joints. All joints and contact areas need to be sealed so the



powder metal will NOT leak out and mix!!! Super

glue cookie cutter to the paper and carefully place into the box.

Once you have the design in the box, fill around the outside of the pattern with the powder metal of your choice. (Ron & Tommy used 1084) Fill about 1/2 the way. Now use a different color metal and fill inside of pattern. Try not to over fill and mix the powders. Top off the box with the powder to about 1/8” to 1/4” above foil. Tap sides of box lightly to settle everything. Put top in place and weld closed.

**Note:** Do not tip box until the top has been tapped in place and welded.

Weld on the handle and you are ready to forge the box into a billet. Follow the same procedure as for the “W” pattern (in previous issue).

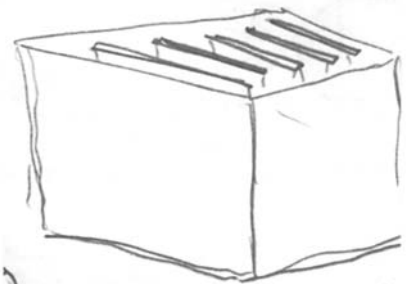
The Picture Bolster can be used for bolsters or blade material using the “tile” welding method as described before.

**Note:** On Tommy’s heart, he used 1084 on the outside of the heart, 4600 nicel for the big heart, and 1084 for the center heart.

The Picture Mosaics can be used for bolsters or blade material using the “tile” welding method.

## Other Patterns and Ideas Discussed in Class On Damascus

You can make a straight line pattern the same way as the “W” pattern — with straight pieces of foil or sheet nickel. Once the billet is forged out into a rectangle billet, you press alternating groves in it, to the blade thickness.



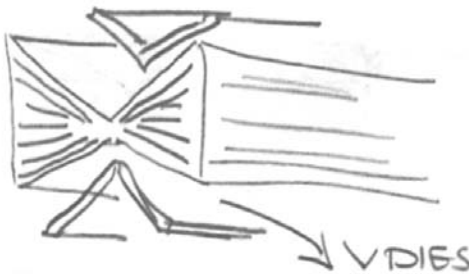


Grind off the grooves, to blade thickness, and you will have a ladder pattern.

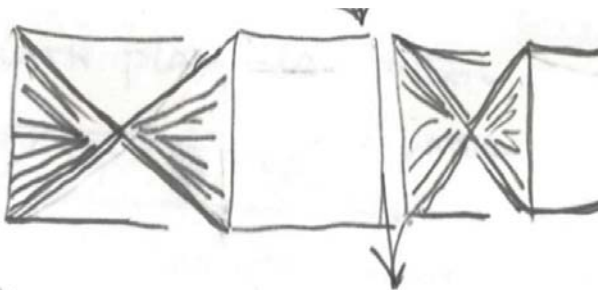
Straight Line Pattern billet again, squared.



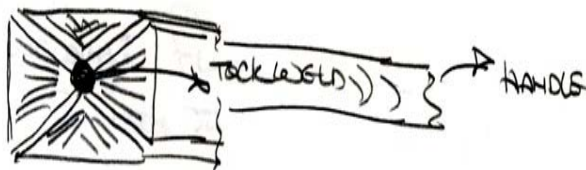
Press down center with "V" dies



Cut pieces into 1/2", which will give you 4 triangles



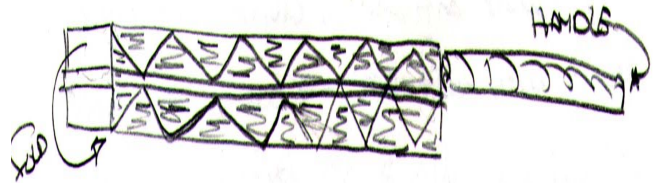
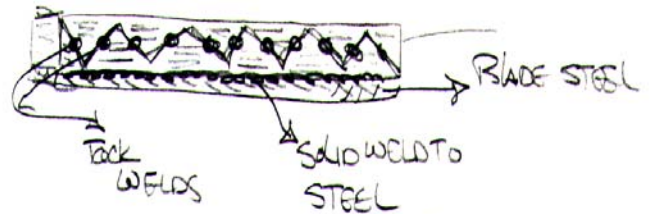
Stack together and forge weld into a billet



Square up billet. If you have enough material from the billet and can cut the amount of triangles needed you can lay them on a piece of blade steel as illustrated and forge a blade blank.

Forge weld out and cut in 1/2, fold blade steel to blade steel. Forge weld and draw out into blade

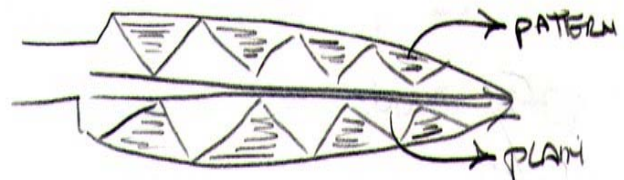
blank.



Pattern would be good for a dagger.



If you don't have enough pattern triangles, alternate with plain blade steel.



Forge Welding: Flux: Ron uses plain store bought Borax. You can use Androx Borax, but after a period of time it will gain the moisture content back.

When to Flux: First flux is done just as the billet come up to a dull red heat. Second flux just before welding heat is reached.

How Much Flux: A lot of flux is not needed on tag billet, just a light dusting on all surfaces. It is not a glue—just a material to keep the surface area from scaling or oxidizing.

You will know when the billet is ready to weld—the

flux will bubble and play across the surface in a liquid state.

Take the billet out of the forge and hammer or press lightly and fast. To hard or to much press pulls the layers apart. Don't let the billet lose to much heat—Reflux and Reheat.

Repeat the above steps.

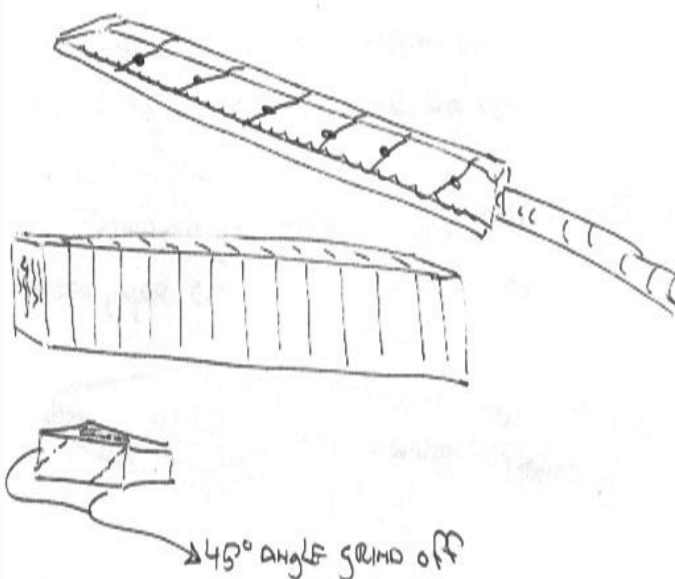
On the third heat, you can use heavier blows or more press to move the metal.

Do not work the edges of the billet unless you have a good welding heat. Working edges to cool may split the layers.

Have fun and I hope I made this worth your while. THANKS to Ron & Tommy for a GREAT class.

***Correction to the information on page 10 of the September issue:***

The square bar is cut into 1/4" tiles and the edges are ground to a 45 degree angle so they will overlap for a stronger weld. The end at the handle is left square or flat.



I am sure you could cut larger size tiles if you wanted to. Ron would be the one to answer that.

If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.

The November meeting was held at the home and shop of Bill and Brenda Pate. As always, Bill & Brenda were a great host and hostess, even helping to make sure John & I were able to get our van repaired so we would have a safe trip home. (Don't ask!)

Andrew had once again put together an interesting slate of demos with Bill Pate and Phillip Jones showing us different ways to make Mokume, Dave Vail showing us how to temper a knife with a torch, and John & myself showing basic engraving techniques—actually John showed the basic engraving techniques—I showed you how not to do the basic engraving techniques.

John and I attended the engraving class taught by Howard Peacock this past summer at Montgomery Community College. It was a very interesting class and covered everything you would need to know if you wanted to learn to engrave. John did extremely well with the class and I enjoyed trying my hand at something creative.

Does this “fellow” look familiar. Took me a while to figure out where I had seen him before. For a few minutes I thought I was on Broadway instead of in a knife shop. Very cute Bill—and a good way to begin to get us in the Christmas spirit.



Phillip did a great job taking us through the steps of making mokume from start to finish. Carol and grandson Jacob took it all in. Tony will be elbow deep in this if Jacob gets his way.



This piece of mokume was etched to bring out the contrasts in the layers of materials. It really was interesting to see the ways this is accomplished., This is the one Phillip made.



This is the piece that Bill made out of some common everyday items you could find in any home or "pocket".

Dave Vail did a very effective demo on bringing a blade up to temperature without a heat treating oven. The simple construction of this backdrop was quite efficient.



The Rosetta design John cut gave him opportunity to show some of what he learned at the Basic Engraving Class we took this past summer in Troy.

And as always, the ladies did a great job putting together lunch for us.



After our trip to the last meeting, this lady could be related to me.



It did not take long with the torch to bring this blade to the bright red you see here.

## NCCKG Represented at Pop's Demo Day

On December 06, James Poplin of Pop's Knife and Supply once again opened his shop for a day of demonstrations, fellowship, food, and fun. Knifemaker's and enthusiasts came from four states to be part of this. As usual, the NCCKG was well represented at this get together with some of our membership stepping out front to do demo's for those attending.



A good crowd gathered for a demo on flat grinding by John.

Hey Barry & Phillip, anything look familiar here?

Travis and Doris Daniel and Ken Simmons of the NCCKG were in attendance.



Wayne Hensley of the National Guild was on hand to help with a demo and chat with those there.

Geno Denning was also in attendance and as always quite willing to show his skills and explain any aspects of knifemaking folks were interested in. Kathleen Tomey was there also; soaking up everything. Kathleen brought 3 others with her.

Thanks Pop & Kay for another great day at your place.

## Perks of being over 60...

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you will be released first.
3. No one expects you to run into a burning building.
4. People call at 9 PM and ask, "Did I wake you?"
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can eat dinner at 4 P.M.
9. You can live without sex but not without glasses.
10. You like to hear about other people's operations.
11. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
12. You have a party and the neighbors don't even realize it.
13. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
14. You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
15. You sing along with elevator music.
16. Your eyes won't get much worse.
17. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
18. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
19. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
20. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.
21. You can't remember who sent you this list.

## TOP 10 THINGS TO SAY IF YOU'RE CAUGHT SLEEPING AT YOUR DESK:

10. They told me at the blood bank this might happen.
9. This is the fifteen-minute Power-Nap they raved about in the time management course you sent me to.
8. Whew! Guess I left the top off the White-Out. You probably got here just in time!
7. I wasn't sleeping! I was meditating on the mission statement and envisioning a new paradigm.
6. I was testing my keyboard for drool resistance.
5. I was doing a highly specific Yoga exercise to relieve work-related stress. Are you discriminatory toward people who practice yoga?

Continued on page 11



## Profile In Steel

Danks and Renee Seel live in Waxhaw, North Carolina. Danks has a B.S. in Business and for 30 years he was the Division Manager for Consolidated Freightways. But today you will find Danks in the local Lowe's Hardware helping others find what they need to complete their latest vision for their home, yard, and gardens.

Danks has been making knives for six years. His specialty is the 18th century primitive style fixed blades and tomahawks. Danks employs both stock removal and forging as he crafts his knives. His favorite steel is 5160 and he prefers wood, horn, or antler as the material for the handle.

Crafting an average of 9 knives per year, his prices range from \$100 to \$150 per knife with presentation pipe hawks ranging from \$300 to \$600.

Bill Moran and Mike McRae head the list of people who have helped him in his craft of knifemaking. He is very proud to have been able to attend the forging class taught by Mr. Bill Moran.

Danks enjoys camping and hunting. He is quite an accomplished marksman using both a rifle and bow. His hobbies and craft of knifemaking allow him to bring "real life" experiences into his memberships in the NRA and ABANA.

Danks would like to see a demo on forging knife blades (small ones) with an oxygen acetylene torch and fire bricks for the chamber. I'm sure Andrew will be following up on this suggestion.

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Continued from page 10

4. Why did you interrupt me? I had almost figured out a solution to our biggest problem.
3. The coffee machine is broken....
2. Someone must've put decaf in the wrong pot....

And the #1 best thing to say if you get caught sleeping at your desk:

1. ...In Jesus' name, Amen.

Look what I found under my tree on Christmas Morning!!



John took out the batteries :(

## Calendar of Events

### January 2004

**NCKKG Meeting:** January 24, 2004 Montgomery Community College, Troy, NC

### April 2004

**NCKKG Meeting:** April 24-25, 2004 Montgomery Community College, Troy, NC

### June 2004

**The Blade Show:** June 4-6, 2004, Cobb Galleria, Atlanta, GA

### July 2004

**NCKKG Meeting:** July 17 & 18, 2004, Norm Gervais' Shop, Hardy, VA

### September 2004

**10th Annual SouthEastern Custom Knife Show:** Sept 11-12, Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem, NC

#### *\*\*Tentative Dates and Details.*

Complete details on classes at the guild website at [www.ncknifeguild.org](http://www.ncknifeguild.org)

(Directions and meeting details will be sent in the Newsletter preceding each meeting)

(Register for classes at Montgomery Community College; located in Troy, NC. Lodging is available close by.)

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Date:		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip
Phone:		
Email:		
Website:		
Choose One:	New Member:	Renewal:
Choose One Membership Category:	Collector:	Student

Membership / Renewal fees are: \$50.00 per year

Collector membership fees are \$25.00 per year

Student memberships are \$10.00 per year

Please send this form with a check or money order to:

NC Custom Knifemaker's Guild

Attn: Tony Kelly

348 Bell Road

Kinston, NC 28504

<http://www.ncknifeguild.org>