

# 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: April 15, 2017
- Cutting competition - See details inside



KNIFEMAKER ~ STEVE RANDALL - MS

IMAGE ~ SHARBY

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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 NCKKG.

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### Advertising Policy:

The NCKKG 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.



## Passing of a former member

On Sunday, February 26, 2017 God reached down to William (Bill) Maynard and took him home to his final reward as his family said their final good byes at Southeastern Hospice House in Lumberton, NC.

Bill was born June 14, 1934 in Harnett County to the late Lattice Carr Maynard, Sr. and wife Avalene. After retiring as a minister Bill designed and made knives.

Left to mourn his passing include his wife Shirley Gregory Maynard; daughter, Ava Lynn Brown and husband Bradley Hardy Brown; son William G. Maynard; brother, L. C. Maynard, Jr. and grandson, Garrett Nelson Walters and great grandson, Elijah Wal-

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well we are headed into spring. The January meeting was a great success.

A congrats to Barry Jones for winning the Knife Build off. For those who couldn't attend there were some really nice knives made in just 4 hours. Those guys worked their butts off. The collage is still working hard to give us a knife only area for our meetings and to hold classes.

What we need now are people to sign up with our VP Barry Clodfelter for demos. Without the demos and the sharing of knowledge we might as well be a VFW. Everyone in this guild has the responsibility to share the wealth of knowledge contained at every meeting. The Demo's can also be about jigs you have, or have built to make a job easier. At our last meeting someone suggested just drawing members names from a hat and have them do the demos. That's one idea.

We are also in need for articles for the News Letter. Articles can be about anything knife related, or about yourself and how you do things in your shop. Without articles there is no need for the Guild to mail out News Letters. We could just post new info on line and save the postage.

This is your Guild. It does not belong to just the officers. You are what makes this guild and what makes it work. It can only be as good as its members. I have been a member now for over 10 years. I see the same people doing demos over and over. With the members we have Demo's and News Letter articles should not be a problem. We are here to share what we know.

I hope to see you all at the April Meeting. Barry has a great meeting planned. Don't miss it.

Andy Sharpe

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## Cutting competition chopper requirements are as follows:

Blade length max = 10” This is measured from the tip to either the guard or handle

Overall length max = 15.5”

Blade width max = 2”

Blade and handle thickness = No restrictions

All blades must have at least one visible pin passing thru the handle and tang.

All blades must be accompanied by a sheath or zippered pouch.

All knives are required to have a lanyard hole and wrist lanyard. Paracord works well for this.

All competitors will be required to wear eye protection.

This is the first of hopefully many annual cutting competitions that Montgomery Community Collage is allowing us to hold. So lets have a big turn out and lots of people ready to give this a try!

Bring a knife and a good attitude and see what challenges Andy has in store for us this year.

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### Items of Note:

Congratulations to **Barry Jones** for winning the second annual King of the Guild build off!

Congratulations to Jeb Taylor and Nicholas Nichols on being juried into the Guild as Voting members.



## A Visit with Steve Randall

By Andy Sharpe

Today started like any other day. Nothing special except today I was going to spend the day with ABS Master Smith Steve Randall. A day of making Damascus steel. I have had how to make crushed W's explained many times I just couldn't get it. If I can't see it happen in my brain I can't get it. On my hope list were the crushed W's and a feather pattern. So I grabbed my camera and off I went.

The fun begins with filling up my Corvette and pointing her southwest toward Lincolnton NC. For those of you who have ben to Steve's there is no good way to get there from here. So I just enjoyed driving my toy down the 2 lane back country roads. I had almost forgotten why I bought her, just getting there was a blast.

When I arrived at Steve's he was already at work, had the billets stacked 20 layers thick and arc welded up. After a short conversation we started forge welding two billets. I got to use his press and I must say it is much quieter than mine. Not as mush squish as mine but a lot more user friendly. I also was able to use his new Big Blue 110 power hammer. I got to have one of these. There is a large learning curve to operating new equipment so I stuck with the grunt work. Doing a lot of grinding with the disk grinder and the surface grinder. Steve has a cone shaped grinding stone that eats slag like a bear. Another must have. I really enjoyed the surface grinder. Steve's runs a sanding belt 2X72 instead of a stone like mine runs. Another project I must build in the near future. So I have been at Steve's less than two hours and had added \$8,000 to my wish list. Including that new carbide file guide I was looking at. Good info from Steve "Get an Uncle Al's".



Steve's shop is nothing like mine. It is twice as big and I'll swear he has a maid that cleans it. My shop is more organized chaos every piece of large equipment I have is on wheels. I have to move A to use B. Steve has room to actually walk around stuff. With the forge going and the fans running it was a warm 94 degrees or so the thermometer said. The fans provide a breeze that still made it quite comfortable.

At around 12pm we broke for lunch. I had all intentions of taking Steve and his wife Alison out for some restaurant food. Steve then informed me that his most gracious wife had prepared lunch and we'd be eating there. I never turn down food so we trudged into his kitchen and sit down to some homemade, broccoli cheese soup and homemade sub sandwiches. I am now learning after my heart episode to try new foods. I have never had, nor would I have chosen broccoli cheese soup. But, being a guest I thought I'd give it a shot and not be my normal rude self. The stuff is really good!!! I do like broccoli with cheese sauce on it so I guess it seems reasonable I'd like the soup. So I added a new menu item to my diet.

Well now, after a short after dinner break and setting our game plan for the afternoon we are back at it. Adding layer count and grinding like a couple mad men. I did find one fault with Steve's shop. His vise for grinding is chest high. By the time I left my shoulders and arms were worn out. I know this sounds wild but all that's involved in crushed W's is to diagonally crush the corners of your billet and make c's also the fact that you are working the stack side. Then you just make your layer count and ladder the billet. Now you have crushed W Damascus. This was not meant as a tutorial but when I saw it it was like a light came on. Now if you want feather you just split it and weld it right back together. I know that makes no sense. If you split it and weld it back it looks the same, right? Not if you use a hot cut! A very important part that everyone who has explained it to me left out. Again a light came on "OK", I see how it works now. At this point we went to a complex operation the "Ferry Flip" how to make the inside of your pattern the outside of your pattern. Steve explained it a couple times then actually brought it down to my level with the help of a training aid he made out of wood. Again the light came on! I got it!

So our day was coming to an end and I needed to start that joyous drive home. So with Good-bye's said I headed north up Hwy 150. I was thinking that life is good and today I received one on one training from an ABS Master Smith. Hey people pay good money for that. I was also blessed with a wonderful day with a great friend and his beautiful wife. I also now have a working knowledge of making Crushed W, and feather Damascus and how to do a Ferry Flip. On the down side I found a bunch of new toys I need and a project of converting my surface grinder. All in all, a great day. If any of you get a chance to spend time with another maker I highly recommend you do so.

I would like to give a special thanks to Steve Randall and his wife Alison for having me. You guys are the best.

Andy Sharpe



Here is the only shot of the billets made during the trip. Both of them still needed more cutting and stacking to get the layer counts higher.





Surface grinding the steel to be all shiny and clean.

Measuring the billet to get equal cuts for the next stack.



Andy playing with the Big Blu power hammer!



Earl the Knife Guy.

Hey yall,

I'm Earl the knife Guy. That's what they call me here at the Flea Market anyway. I am a collector of all kinds of knives. Big uns and litlens. I really like the hand made stuff from Pakistan. Them Paki's do some fine work. I even got some Damikscus knives they are the best because the steel is layered and that makes it stronger. Kinda like plywood is stronger than plain wood. I got one that has a gold plated wolf head on it. If you don't believe it just come by booth K-18 an I'll show her to ya.

So you see those guys that talk about being knife makers , talk all that crap about temper and blade steels they just try'in to take your money with fancy talk. Everybody knows the best knives in the world are made from files and lawn mower blades . You don't need some fancy steel. Just go on E-Bay and buy you a blade made in Packistan and stick some deer antler on it and you have just as good a knife as them knives you see in the magazines that sell for hundreds of dollars.

I had an uncle that had a friend that made knives out of files. Them was the best knives ever made. They were already hard so all you had to do is take a bench grinder and sharpen them. He put deer antler handles on them and could sell them fast as he could make them. Hell said he got \$20.00 for one , one time. I ask him once what made those knives so good and he said that was a secret only knife makers could talk about to other knife makers. Like how the Japanese kept the secret of how they made a Samrie Sord . I read in a history book that in WWII a Japanese soldier with a sord cut an American soldiers rifle in half steel and all. They don't make them anymore because the secret was lost and even with all our modern computers and new steels we cannot make as good a steel as Japanese sord makers did 300 years ago. I wish I knew that secret I'd be rich.

Well, If any yall need a good quality knife just swing by the Flea Market and see me in booth K-18 . I got knives from \$1.00 plum on up to \$30.00. If nothing else come on by and lets talk knives . I'm always here to answer all your knife questions.

Come See Me, till next time be safe and keep em sharp

Earl the Knife Guy

That's booth K-18 right next to the Funnel cake guy.

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.

