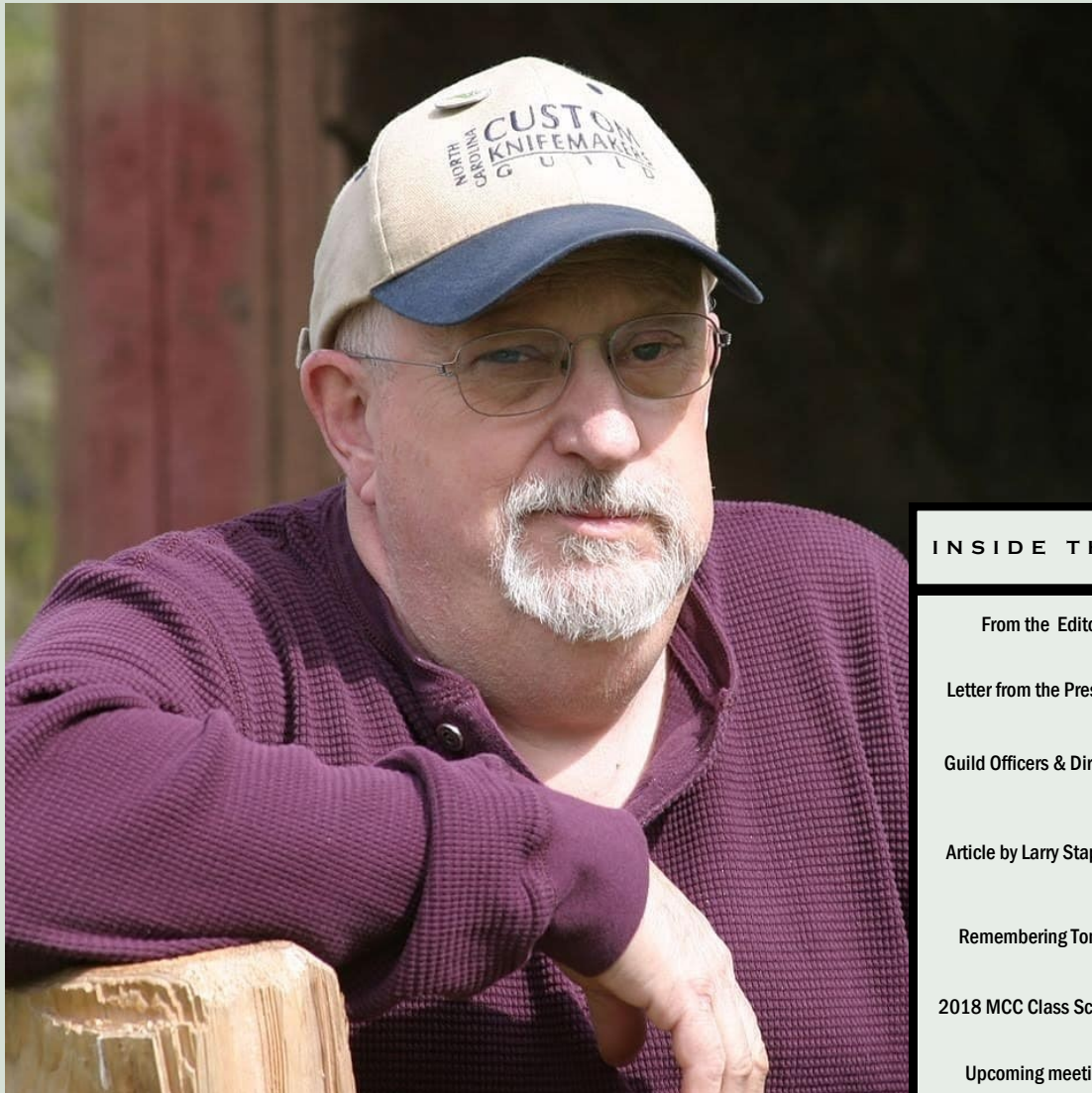


Billets & Blades

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE NORTH CAROLINA CUSTOM KNIFEMAKERS GUILD

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The next **North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild** meeting date: October, 19, 2019 at MCC
- New Tee shirts are in come and get a couple



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

From the Editor	2
Letter from the President	3
Guild Officers & Directors	3
Article by Larry Stapelton	4-6
Remembering Tommy	8-9
2018 MCC Class Schedule	10
Upcoming meetings	11

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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Knife making and related endeavors are inherently dangerous crafts or occupations. The material contained in this newsletter is for information only and is not intended for private instruction. Therefore, the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild and its Officers and Editor specifically disclaim any and all responsibility for damage or injury that may occur as a result of the use of any information that is contained in this newsletter.

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 our friend and founding member of the Guild.

On Monday September 23rd 2019 our friend Tommy's anvil rang it's last ring. He was a founding member of the NCKKMG and enjoyed helping anyone wanting to learn about our craft. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Tommy McNabb 1941 - 2019

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Letter from the President. Fall 2019

Well fall is upon us. Soon the holidays will consume so much of our time. Due to some family health concerns this letter will be short.

I am going to try and attend the Oct meeting. If I cannot attend, I would like to take this time to wish you all a great holiday season.

Don't forget: Barry needs articles and demo's for the meetings and the newsletter.

Not only will you receive \$25 for an article you will receive a ticket for next years drawing. You cannot buy these tickets. They are only awarded to those who do demo's or write a newsletter article.

So, hope to see you all at the Oct meeting cook-out.

Stay safe during the upcoming holidays

Andy Sharpe
President NCCKMG

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Barry Clodfelter

The new owners of **Pop's Knife Supply** will be at our October meeting so please bring lots of cash and help make the trip up worth while for them! We hope to have them up in the future once a year so lets all show our support!

Article by Larry Stapelton

Guild, also spelled **gild**, an association of craftsmen or merchants formed for mutual aid and protection and for the furtherance of their professional interests.

Encyclopedia Britannica

Now, I know many of my fellow guild member may be wondering why I would choose to start an article about our July 20th guild meeting with the definition of a guild, well I think it is important to always keep it in the forefront our minds and if you will indulge me, I think what follows will explain it fully.

Our meeting started and Jamin Brackett gave us a rundown on OPERATION GRINDER which was started to benefit one our young members Logan Walton. Logan has been stricken with a horrible condition known as Gullian-Barre Syndrome which has temporarily left Logan with minimal use of his limbs. Logan had only the basic hand tooling required to perform blade work. Our Guild started OPERATION GRINDER shortly after hearing about Logan's condition to provide Logan with all of the tooling to ensure when he is ready his shop will have everything required to press on with his passion of making knives. His parents have expressed how much this help Logan in his recovery and his father was on hand at the meeting to personally thank us for everything we have done.

The meeting progressed with Darrin Sirois giving a fascinating demonstration of powder coating. Darrin is an outstanding instructor and helped to demystify the art of powder coating. Then Andy Sharpe followed up with another really cool demonstration of bluing and how to blue knife parts. Andy explained how for about \$100 you can all the equipment required to start bluing your own parts and as an owner of a knife Andy made for me, I can tell you this bluing is first rate.



Above: Attendees of the July meeting and participants of Operation Grinder



After breaking for lunch the Main event was held! The annual chopping competition!! The for contestant were Barry “ ice “ Clodfelter, using his Viper blade, Tyrell “ T-bone” Johnson with Bigfoot’s straight razor blade, Darrin “ The Warrior” Sirois with one of Barry’s knives called Prybar and last but certainly not least, Steve “ The master” Randall with his “just something I threw together” blade. A large amount of good natured banter had been exchanged on Facebook between Barry and Tyrell and as expected it continued right up to the start of the event. In the end Barry showed why he is the undisputed Two Time Champion! I had the pleasure of handling all of these beautiful knives prior and after the competition and was blown away by the quality of the knives. The quality of the work that our guild members produce has never failed to amaze me, but even more important to me is I left that day with a feeling of belonging to a very special guild. Over half of the prizes won in our “iron in the hat” raffle were donated to Logan. My fellow guildies you have never once failed to answer any questions I had and have gone out of your way to share all of the information you have with me or any other member; to quote Steve Randall a Master Bladesmith, “I have no secrets”. Now I hope it has become clearer to you why I open this article with the definition of a guild. God’s peace to all and keep grinding away.



Clockwise from upper left: Darrin Sirois, Tyrell Johnson, Barry Clodfelter, Steve Randall

Left: Winner Barry Clodfelter



Do you remember how crazy every one was in the movie Willy Wonka and the Chocolate factory trying to buy a candy bar that has one of five Golden Tickets? We all have an opportunity to earn our own Golden Ticket. In our July meeting next year only a select few of these Golden tickets will be put in a hat and a winner drawn. The winner of the drawing will be able to choose from a list of top quality knife making items or even something not in the list with approval from the board.

All that is required to earn a ticket for this special drawing is to write an article or do a demo at a meeting. If you do a demo and write an article you will earn 2 tickets, one for each. Plus you will earn \$25 for each article that is published.

So far the list of items that could be won with your Golden Ticket include:

- 5 gallons of Parks 50 or Parks AAA
- 2 burner Diamonback stage 1 forge
- A knifemaking class thru MCC
- An assortment of grinding belts value approx. \$200
- Surface plate and height gage
- 10" DD tool rest for your grinder

Golden tickets so far:

- Gene Smith—article
- Barry Clodfelter—article
- Andy Sharpe—demo
- Darrin Sirois—Demo
- Larry Stapelton—article

The idea behind this is get everyone to participate in our meetings or sharing knowledge in a newsletter article. Everyone has something they can share no matter how long you have been making knives.

Remembering Tommy McNabb

by John Hege

The guild lost a founding member this week, and I lost a good friend. It will still be a long time before, when I run into a problem in the workshop, I can stop thinking, "I'll have to ask Tommy what to do about that."

I met Tommy McNabb in the fall of '04. I was working as a mechanic at a shop in North Winston-Salem. The shop was right next door to Tommy's photography studio. He was then about the age I am now, and he walked into the shop carrying an old 1960's Volvo transmission. He didn't bother with the office personnel, but walked straight up to me as though he'd known me for years and dropped the transmission on my workbench. He took off the top cover and started talking about what he thought was wrong with it. There didn't seem to be any alternative but to drop what I was doing and listen to him. That would turn out to be the theme in a friendship that lasted for years. As I worked with Tommy over the next few days on his transmission project (he had retrofitted the Volvo transmission into his 1952 MG), I began to appreciate how vast was his knowledge and experience in metals and machines. Even so, he didn't mind admitting when he didn't know the answer to a problem and would go looking for someone who did.

A visit to Tommy's workshop at his home is what got me started in knifemaking. He coached me through my first blade, which is still in regular use, and continued to help me as my work advanced through other forms and styles. In Tommy's shop I learned about forging knives and other tools and how to make Damascus Steel. We traded skills. I helped him with his various old sports car projects, and he introduced me to crafts I never knew existed. That's what Tommy McNabb was all about: exploring, learning, and sharing.

It was that sharing that led Tommy and some other knifemakers to found the North Carolina Custom Knifemaker's Guild. Their goal was to have a space where knifemakers and blacksmiths and anyone interested in the craft could get together and share things that they knew and ask questions about things they didn't. The first meetings took place on Trena McNabb's back porch. Later meetings moved to members' workshops and eventually Tommy and the guild members began working with Montgomery Community College to establish a home base for the group. From there Tommy was able to use his well known powers of persuasion (he just simply didn't give you an alternative) to bring in nationally known figures to give classes in many different aspects of knifemaking. "I just tried to bring in the people that I most wanted to take a class from myself," he told me.

If Tommy thought you had potential, he wouldn't let you off easy. Whenever I thought I'd made something really cool, I'd show it to Tommy and brace myself for the critique which often as not sent me back to the grinder. Sometimes it wasn't easy to take, but it made the rare compliments he gave that much more valuable. Once, not a day after he had taught me to hammer out a tomahawk head from a piece of flat bar, he announced that he'd signed me up to do a demonstration in tomahawk making for the guild. Getting up in front of a group of people and demonstrating a skill that I had barely learned was the last thing I wanted to do, but there seemed to be no alternative so I pushed through. It didn't go particularly well, but I survived and I'm sure that little push from Tommy since gave me the confidence I needed to do more demonstrations and even move into teaching.

I could fill pages talking about the things I learned from Tommy and about the hours we spent in the shop and on the road going to knife shows and bladesmithing events. But so could most of the guild members who have been around for a few years. If we haven't learned something from Tommy, we have learned something from somebody who learned it from Tommy. And the most important thing we learned from Tommy is to share what we've learned. Keep growing your skills; don't hold them secret. Take every opportunity to share what you've learned, and your reward will be to see what other craftsmen can build on the foundation that they get from you.

2019 Montgomery Community College Knifemaking Schedule

Nothing Scheduled

This list will be updated as more are announced.

Contact Montgomery CC for additional class information or to register for a class.

UPCOMING 2018 GUILD MEETINGS

Saturday January 19th, 2019

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday April 20st, 2019

Location: Montgomery Community College

Elections to be held for VP and a director.

Saturday July 20st, 2019

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday October 19th, 2019

Location: Montgomery Community College

Dues are due in October!

Events Include:

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

Demos:

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

Blade Show — June 5-7, 2020

Contact Murphy Ragsdale for table information and volunteer to help!

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

Please note the change of venue to MCC for the Oct meeting as the park had already been reserved on the 19th.

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.

