

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: May 23, 2020 at MCC
- New Tee shirts are in come and get a couple



jimping (uncountable) A series of notches down the spine of a blade created to provide grip on a knife beyond the bolster.

[en.wiktionary.org > wiki > jimping](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/jimping)

[jimping - Wiktionary](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/jimping)

NOTICE: Due to COVID-19 the April guild meeting will be postponed until May 23.

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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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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 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

Letter from the President. Winter 2020

Well, another year has passed us by.

I hope everyone had a safe a joyful holiday. Looking forward to a fun and productive year with the Guild. We have plans for some nice giveaway's. Just do a Demo or write an article for the newsletter and you're in for a chance to win.

The Guild has secured a booth at the Blade Show in Atlanta. If you're interested in working the booth. Contact: Murphy Ragsdale. Come and hangout at the booth and sell some of your knives.

At the January meeting we will be having the King of the Guild competition. You will have 4 hours to build a knife. Forged or stock removal. With the supplies that are provided. The time includes heat treat.

Barry is in need of articles and demo's. They both will get you tickets for this year's give a ways.

Hope Everyone's Ready for a New Decade with the Guild

Andy Sharpe
President NCCKMG.

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Editor & Webmaster

Barry Clodfelter

How I make thumb grooves

Thumb grooves also known as “jimping”, give extra grip for a knife that is going to be used for tasks that may cause the knife to become slippery. Skinning and gutting an animal is one such task. It gives you a place to put your finger and helps it to stay there. They provide traction in wet/cold conditions especially with gloves. The texture also provides a landmark for the thumb/forefinger in lowlight conditions (think camp chores by fire light or cleaning fish after dark). Not every knife needs them but I like a knife with well-placed, well-made thumb grooves. Aesthetically they can also break up the linear plane of the spine on the knife.

Thumb grooves don't need a whole lot of attention to detail depending on the level of OCD you may have. I try to keep them as even as possible because it is on the spine of the blade and will be scrutinized by whomever picks it up.

Have you ever picked up a knife and put your thumb or finger on the blade and thought, Man this could really use some grooves on the back. Some knives you pick up and put your finger on the grooves and think well these aren't very functional. Spacing and depth can affect the functionality of the “Jimping” as well. Now, they can hold gunk (that includes moisture, blood, etc.). Can be tough to clean w/o a toothbrush or access to running water (i.e. camping and hunting). If you use your knife, for longer length of time with some force, hotspots can be an issue. I have never had an issue with hotspots but I don't typically use my knives for hours on end. However, taking that into consideration, A slightly rounded profile will cause less discomfort, whereas a squared off spine may cause some irritation.

I like how they look if they are done right. It just feels right to me.

Here are three different examples.



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[jimping - Wiktionary](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/jimping)

I start with sanding the back of the blade to at least 120 grit. This gives me a somewhat smooth surface to work with. I place my thumb on the back of the blade while holding it to see exactly where it falls naturally on the spine of the blade. I mark with a sharpie both sides of where my thumb rests on the blade.

I then take dykem and coat the area that I will be working. Once it is dry I take my marking ruler and begin marking every 1/8". The reason I use 1/8" is that way when I use my checkering file I can do 2 "lands" at the same time. I will show an example of this later.

Layout Fluid: Needed but an alcohol marker will work in a pinch.

I use Dykem. It holds up better than a marker for me. Cost for a small bottle is around \$10.00. Any knife supply place will have this, even in red!



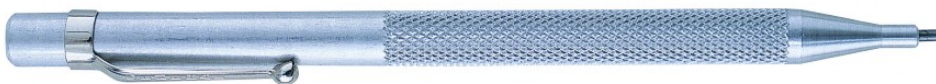
A marking ruler: Extremely helpful doing layout.

The #641 Industrial Precision 6 In. Flexible Steel Rule with 4R Graduations can make very precise linear measurements. A small hole at each graduation enables accurate marking with a scribe or sharp pencil. Polished stainless steel finish. Cost about \$11.00 From General - generaltools.com



A Carbide Scribe: Extremely helpful when using the marking ruler.

The #70088 Utility Carbide Tip Scribe/Etching Pen with Magnet uses a tungsten carbide point to mark and scribe steel, ceramic and glass. Cost about \$7.00 Can be found at Lowes or other hardware stores.



The marking ruler helps to keep everything spaced evenly. Once all the marks are in place I use a small protractor/square like seen below to mark my lines square/ 90 degrees to the blade.

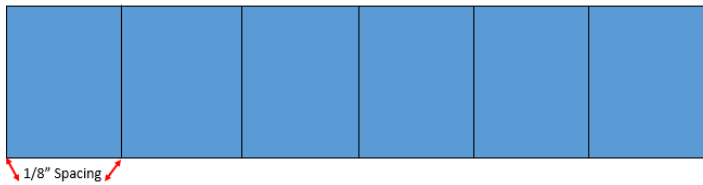
A Small Protractor/Square: Helpful but not required. This is similar to what I use to mark my cross lines.

The #444 Depth/Angle Gage precisely measures the depth of small holes and slots. It also works as a protractor to facilitate setting an angle to 30°, 45° or 60° on either side. It has a graduated stainless steel rule in milled slot at 90° angle to base.



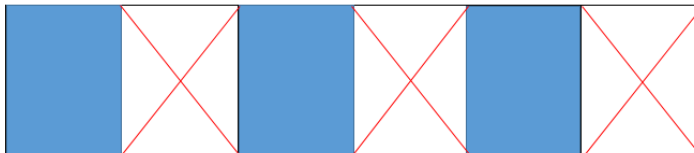
When you are done it will look like this.

Initial layout with dye : Mark 1/8" spacing with scribe



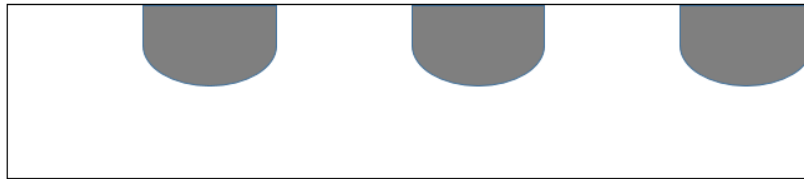
Then you will begin removing material on every other square. Like this.

File with 1/8" chainsaw file

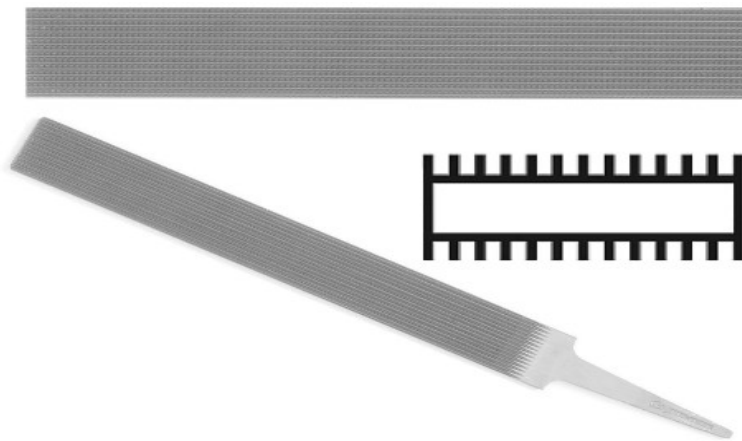


Make sure to stay within the lines that you drew to ensure it is symmetrical. I sometimes use a file guide to keep the file from walking on me. When you are done it should look like this.

Side View after chainsaw file

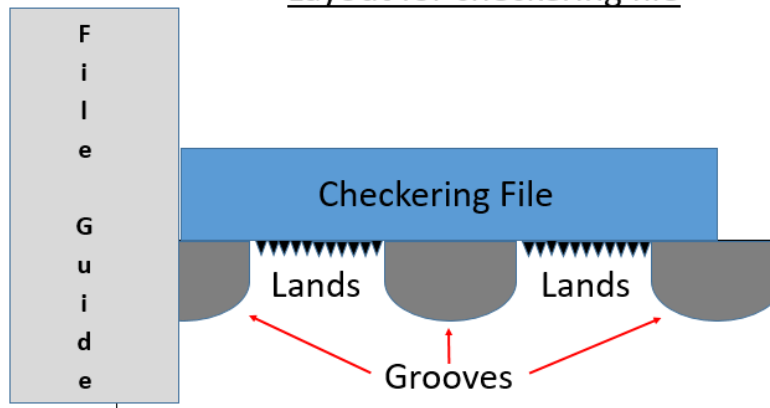


Be mindful of the depth of each groove to ensure they are the same depth when viewed from the side. Once you have all the grooves completed, you can stop there if you want and it will be just fine. However I like to go one step further and add checkering grooves. This adds another degree of “Grippiness” to the grooves. I set my checkering file up beside the groves to see where they will line up. This way I don’t end up with one “land” with 2 and another with 3. Here is an example of a checkering file. They can easily be found on the internet. Mine is ½ wide.

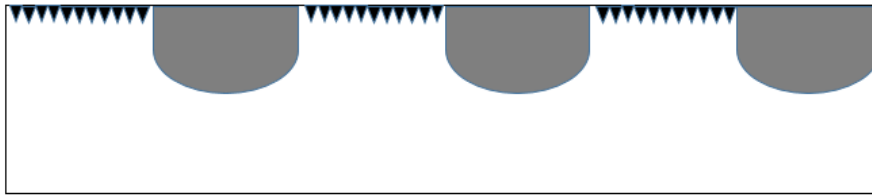


Here is an example of how I place my file guide to ensure I can file 2 “lands” at the same time. I started using the terminology of “Lands and Grooves” similar to talking about the rifling in a barrel. Makes it easier to explain at least for me.

Layout for checkering file

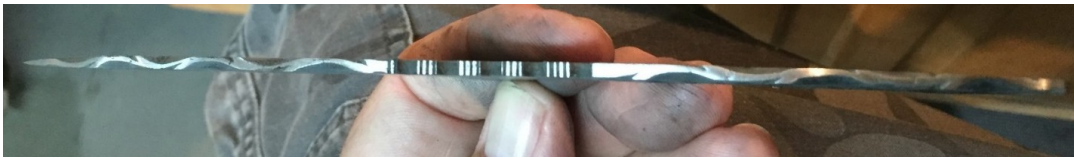


Side View with checkering grooves



You do have to practice a bit to get used to the checkering file. If you don't you can mess up real quick and not even realize it. Especially if you stop and try to restart and you don't get it lined up exactly right. Ask me how I know!

This is what it should look like when you are done.



Here is the picture of my 9 year old Grandson Tanner doing these steps exactly on a knife he is working on.



Hope this helps in some small way!
God Bless.
Joel Sandifer

Cub Scouts Sharpen Their Skills

By David Diggs

I've been wanting to do something for the Cub Scout Pack of 12 young men for my church that ranges from age 6 -10 years old.

The project started in August and ended in January. I thought it would be pretty cool for the young men to have a custom knife that they helped make grow up with.

So I talked to the den leader and asked him if he would be interested if so ask the parents if they were good with it. So I came up with a smaller prototype of my standard hunting knife. So I ordered the steel and bought the leather & dye for the sheaths, then contacted a friend of mine who water jetted the majority of the blanks but after I had them cut out, a few more young men joined so I had to cut those blanks free handed.

Darrin Sirois helped grind and heat treat four of the blades, also donated epoxy and pin stock and brass tubing. Tim Kipps heard about it and donated all the handle material, then we etched their name or initials on the blade, stone washed the blades, glued on the scales, I roughed in the handles and let them finish hand sanding the handles, I cut the sheaths out, they dyed the leather, I glued the sheaths and let the scouts assemble them. I cleaned up the sheaths and sharpened the knives for them.

I had a really good time. Probably the best thing about the project was the appreciation of young men and the leaders. I was greeted with hugs from the kids when I showed up.

I strongly urge other knife makers from the guild to reach out to your local Scouts and do the same thing, it's a good way to plant something useful to the youth this day and time. You won't regret it!





2020 Montgomery Community College Knifemaking Schedule Spring

Basic Folding Knife Making

This class will cover the basic design and construction of a frame lock folding knife with exposed pivots. All materials for the class will be provided. Class is open to all levels of experience. Some knowledge of knife making or other classes in knife making helpful but not required. Students will finish a completed folding knife. Instructor: Ed and Tanya VanHoy *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

Basic Folding Knife Making | 9/3-9/6 | THFSASU | 9A-6P | \$356.60

D-Guard Bowie Knife

A "D Guard" Bowie was the traditional short sword carried by many confederate troops during the American Civil War. So-called because the closed handguard is shaped like a D, it is a large fighting Bowie featuring a blade about 16 or more inches long. While there are many manufactured versions, there are also many other versions made by local blacksmiths. Making a D Guard Bowie is a good project for someone new to bladesmithing. During the class, students will hammer out, harden and finish a blade and fashion and fit a steel guard and wooden handle. Instructor: John Hege *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

D-Guard Bowie Knife | 9/11-9/13 | FSASU | 9A-6P | \$316.60

Advanced Folding Knife Making

This class will cover the design and construction of a knife consisting of more advanced parts including the use of hidden pivots, bolsters, and liners. The class will be open to all levels of experience. All materials will be provided for the class, some knowledge of knife making helpful but not required. Students will finish a completed folding knife. Instructor: Ed and Tanya VanHoy *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

Advanced Folding Knife Making | 10/1-10/4 | THFSASU | 9A-6P | \$366.60

Mokume Gane: Precious Metal Damascus

Students will learn the ancient technique of Mokume Gane: Fusing together of layers of copper, silver, and nickel to create a billet of decorative Mokume. The Mokume is used for jewelry, knife guards and bolsters. Learn proper cleaning, fusing, and forge-welding techniques as well as patterning and design. Instructor: Jones Brothers *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

Mokume Gane: Precious Metal Damascus | 10/9-10/11 | FSASU | 9A-6P | \$268.60

Viking Long Beard Axe

In this class I will demonstrate how to make a Viking Bearded Ax. Each student will forge weld their ax from mild steel with a steel cutting edge. Then they will forge the ax to shape, do the initial grind and heat treat. Finish grinding and fitting a handle will be the final steps to a finished ax. Instructor: Tim Scholl. [Tool List](#)

Viking Long Beard Axe | 11/13-11/15 | FSASU | 9A-6P | \$286.60

Christmas Knife Making

Just in time for a great Christmas Gift! MCC is proud to present our annual tradition of the Christmas Knife class with the legendary Ed Vanhoy. In this class, you will learn how to complete a knife from scratch including how to make a custom leather sheath. Students will design, shape, heat treat, cut custom grips, hollow grind, polish, and sheath their own knives. Whether the class is a present for a loved one, a chance to make a present for a loved one, or just a present for yourself you can't beat this annual tradition. All Materials will be provided. Instructor: Ed and Tanya VanHoy *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

Christmas Knife Making | 12/3-12/6 | THFSASU | 9A-6P | \$375

Ferrier Rasp Knife Making

In this class, I will demonstrate how to make a knife from a farrier's rasp. I will discuss and demonstrate both methods (stock removal and forging) and let each student decide which method they prefer to make their knife. Grinding, heat treatment and handle finish will be covered and each student will leave with a finished knife. Instructor: Tim Scholl *(SS) Self-supporting. [Tool List](#)

Ferrier Rasp Knife Making | 12/10-12/12 | THFSA | 9A-6P | \$276.60

What a great line up of classes for 2020! This list will be updated as more are announced.

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

UPCOMING 2020 GUILD MEETINGS

Saturday January 18th, 2020

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday May 23rd, 2020

Location: Montgomery Community College

Elections to be held for VP and a director.

Saturday July 18st, 201920

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday October 17th, 2020

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.

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.

