

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: July 21, 2018 at Montgomery CC
- New Tee shirts are in come and get a couple



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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

Letter from the President. July 2018

Well summer is upon us.

I would like to thank all the members that made the table at the Blade Show a success. A special thanks to Murphy Ragsdale and Mark Hall for all their efforts in setting up the table and making sure it all ran smoothly. Also to John Hege, for donating the raffle knife.

The upcoming meeting will include our annual cutting competition.

Rules are simple.

- 1-You must be a paid member to compete.
- 2-Knife length, maximum of 15 inches in length. Maximum width 2 inches.
- 3- Maximum blade length 10 inches.

Event Rules will be gone over at the competitors meeting before the event starts. Also all competitors will get a walk thru.

The cutting competition is a fun event. Bring a big sharp blade and show off your skills.

I hope everyone had a safe and happy 4th of July. There were lots of fireworks here. Seems a good time was had by all.

We still need articles for the newsletter. The guild pays \$25.00 per article. The articles can be about anything knife related. Just send them in to Barry Clodfelter. Pick-up a check at the next meeting. Just that simple.

Also looking for demo ideas. What would you like to see demo's of. Those that missed Barry's demo at the last meeting, missed a great instructional on making a leather cross-draw sheath. Hope to see you all at the next meeting, July 21 2018.

Andy Sharpe
President, NCKMG

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Barry Clodfelter

A Simple Pouch Sheath

By Barry Clodfelter

I believe that every knife needs to have a sheath. Not only is keeping your knife in a sheath safer than carrying it another way it can also protect it and you from damage. I don't think there has ever been a person that carries a knife that has not dropped it at least once. If your knife is in a sheath the chances of blade or edge damage is greatly reduced. Some sheaths with inlays, overlays and lined are a work of art in and of themselves and those that make this kind of sheath can stop reading here (unless you want a good laugh at how an ordinary sheath is made). The sheath I am building here is one of the styles that I make to accompany my knives. The leather I use comes from Wickett and Craig and it is pre-dyed by them in 8 – 9 oz. weight. I think this weight leather is perfect for sheaths as it is thick enough to protect your knife and still malleable enough to bend and will tool nicely. To start I trace the knife on a sheet of graph paper about 2 block or a half inch from the center line. Then trace around the knife outline by about 1/16" to give me the welt pattern. It may be hard to see in this picture but it is there. The sheath outline is laid out on the side with the knife tracing and is transferred to the other side by folding down the line in the center. This layout or outside of our sheath is drawn 1/2" from the welt line. This gives us plenty of room for glue up and stitching. I use a light tracing box I picked up on eBay for cheap to transfer that outline. Shown below is everything in the pattern we need to mark and cut out our leather.



Notice there is a belt loop drawn on the side opposite the knife tracing. The paper was a little too short to get all of it in the drawing. One thing to keep in mind is the width of the sheath's mouth is also the widest part of the knife. The guard here determines that width. Marking the leather is done using a scratch awl and poking holes around the outside of our pattern. This shows all of our sheath pieces marked with holes. The curvy parts are carefully poked and the straight lines are then connected with a ruler. This will be a right hand sheath. When you draw out your pattern on the leather pay attention to how you want this sheath to wear, right or left hand.



All of the pieces have been punched thru our pattern and onto the leather. Now it's time to cut out all of the parts to make up our sheath. I found that using a hole punch at the top of the foot will give you a nice clean fold.





All of our parts are cut out and ready for tooling or glue up. I did tool the front of this sheath but that is not part of this build so I will skip that and maybe to it in a future article.

Now we can glue the welt to the sheath using contact cement or Barge which I prefer. Shown below is our sheath with the first of two coats of Barge. The welt also gets Barge. One thing that will ensure your sheath will not come apart is to use two coats of Barge or contact cement on the fuzzy surfaces. The first coat sticks all the fuzz down and makes a nice layer for the second coat to attach to the mating surface.

I use a Tippman Boss to stitch most of the sheaths I make so I used it. If you manually stitch your sheaths a saddle stitch is one of the better ones to use. Use google to see how to make that stitch.



Before stitching the belt loop in place it is much easier to finish the sides and inside now rather than after all stitching is done. Saddle soap rubbed in with a cloth produces a nice edge finish for the belt loop sides and also the outside of the sheath. After the belt loop is in place you can apply the last coat of Barge or contact cement and fold the sheath over and pressing it down to adhere. When folding I like to line up the mouth of the sheath first then work down toward the point and back up the foot. A new 60 grit belt on your grinder makes quick work of profiling the sheath to its final dimensions.

With a groover set at $\frac{1}{4}$ " make a groove for the outer stitching line as below.

Then stitch it up. During the tanning process a lot of the leathers natural oil is removed so it is a good idea to put it back. Neats foot oil does a great job with this. Rub it on with a small piece of shearling or terry cloth and let it sit for a while. The oil will level meaning that it will soak into the leather and produce a nice even color. With pre-dyed leather this darkens the leather a shade or two and gives the tooling appearance a little more depth. I use two different top coats on all sheaths. The first is Fiebing's Tan-kote which softens and preserves the leather and the second is Tandy's Neat lac which is a lacquer base and waterproofs the leather. Unfortunately Neat Lac is no longer available and the replacement for it is Wyo Sheen and can be bought at BarryKingtools.com. I realize that there is a lot more to making a nice sheath than was covered here but this are the most basic steps to get you on the path of making leather sheaths. I hope you can use some of the methods presented here on your next sheath. Good luck and have fun with your leather work it can be as enjoyable as making the knife if you let it!



Conversion of Fractional Inches to Decimal and Millimeters

Inch	Decimal Inch	Millimeters	Inch	Decimal Inch	Millimeters
1/64	0.015625	0.396785	33/64	0.515625	13.096875
1/32	0.03125	0.79375	17/32	0.53125	13.49375
3/64	0.046875	1.190625	35/64	0.546875	13.890625
1/16	0.0625	1.5875	9/16	0.5625	14.2875
5/64	0.078125	1.984375	37/64	0.578125	14.684375
3/32	0.09375	2.38125	19/32	0.59375	15.08125
7/64	0.109375	2.778125	39/64	0.609375	15.478125
1/8	0.125	3.175	5/8	0.625	15.875
9/64	0.140625	3.571875	41/64	0.640625	16.271875
5/32	0.15625	3.96875	21/32	0.65625	16.66875
11/64	0.171875	4.365625	43/64	0.671875	17.065625
3/16	0.1875	4.7625	11/16	0.6875	17.4625
13/64	0.203125	5.159375	45/64	0.703125	17.859375
7/32	0.21875	5.55625	23/32	0.71875	18.25625
15/64	0.234375	5.953125	47/64	0.734375	18.653125
1/4	0.25	6.35001	3/4	0.75	19.05
17/64	0.265625	6.746875	49/64	0.765625	19.446875
9/32	0.28125	7.14375	25/32	0.78125	19.84375
19/64	0.296875	7.540625	51/64	0.796875	20.240625
5/16	0.3125	7.9375	13/16	0.8125	20.6375
21/64	0.328125	8.334375	53/64	0.828125	21.034375
11/32	0.34375	8.73125	27/32	0.84375	21.43125
23/64	0.359375	9.128125	55/64	0.859375	21.828125
3/8	0.375	9.525	7/8	0.875	22.225
25/64	0.390625	9.921875	57/64	0.890625	22.621875
13/32	0.40625	10.31875	29/32	0.90625	23.01875
27/64	0.421875	10.715625	59/64	0.921875	23.415625
7/16	0.4375	11.1125	15/16	0.9375	23.8125
29/64	0.453125	11.509375	61/64	0.953125	24.209375
15/32	0.46875	11.90625	31/32	0.96875	24.60625
31/64	0.484375	12.303125	63/64	0.984375	25.003125
1/2	0.50	12.7	1	1.0	25.4

2018 Montgomery Community College Knifemaking Schedule

Advanced forging and blacksmithing with Bill Bisher

9/4—11/20 Tuesdays 5:30-9:30P

Cost \$226.60

MCC welcomes Bill Bisher back to teach another semester-long class exploring knife forging, tools for blacksmithing, shop set-up and more. The class will include the finishing of blades, handle materials, grinding etc. This is an advanced forging and blacksmithing class. At least one other knifemaking class is required.

Intro to Bladesmithing with Gabe Mabry

9/5—11/28 Wednesdays 4-8P

Cost \$226.60

This is a beginner knife forging class, but advanced students are welcome. The focus of this class will be on how to achieve a high-performance, forged blade. Learn a variety of techniques that will enable you to forge, heat treat, and grind a blade, including all steps in between.

Fixed Blade Knives With Ed Vanhoy

9/13—9/15 8A-6P

Cost: \$201.60

A class that introduces first-time knife makers to the processes of completing a finished knife blade. The student will start with an understanding of knife anatomy, types of steel, basic layout design, basic heat treating, and basic knife finish. Students will complete one finished knife blade.

Tanto Knives With Daniel Pica

9/28—9/30 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

A beginner-level course on the history, design, grinding and sharpening this multi-bevel design. Students will work hands-on with the goal of completing one Tanto knife of their own by the end of the three-day course.

Basic Blacksmithing and Forging With Liam Hoffman

10/5—10/6 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$146.60

Learn the fundamentals of blacksmithing with popular NC blacksmith and knifemaker Liam Hoffman in this beginner-level course. Focus on proper hammer technique and control, ergonomics, essential and luxury tools, and the techniques needed to make any project in your forge.

Stock Removal Basics With the Jones Brothers

10/25—10/27 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

Beginner and advanced students are welcome to this basic knife class using the stock removal method. Learn the basics of profiling, grinding, heat treating, handle constructing, and finishing. Class includes materials for one knife.

Leather Sheaths for Knives With Travis Daniels

11/8 6-9 PM

11/9—11/10 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

Learn the basics of leatherworking for creating knife sheaths. Bring your own knives and make sheaths for them.

Knife Sharpening 101 With the Jones Brothers**11/17 8am-6pm****Cost: \$80**

Bring your own knives to learn the basics of manual sharpening of knife blades. Will cover both plain and serrated edges, and discuss the tools and options for sharpening at home.

Christmas Knife Class With Ed Vanhoy**11/29—12/2 8am-6pm****Cost: \$201.60**

Students will start with raw metal and leather and construct a full knife and sheath. Topics will include the functions of knife forms and anatomy of sheaths and fixed blade knives. The finished knife will make a great Christmas gift for someone, or for you.

What a great line up of classes for the fall of 2018! 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 27th, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday April 28st, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Elections to be held for VP and a director.

Saturday July 21st, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday October 20th, 2018

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 1-3, 2018

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.

