



KNEWSLETTER IN A KNUTSHELL



- ✓ For over 2300 years
- ✓ Boar Hunting with a Knife
- ✓ Japanese Show theme
- ✓ Snakewood
- ✓ Club Knife Order form
- ✓ Model Number two
- ✓ Custom Knife Competition

Our *international* membership is happily involved with "Anything that goes 'cut'!"

February 2015

Twenty Three Hundred Years of Swords

Michael Bell

For over 2300 years the smiths in Japan have been smelting and forging iron and steel to make a wide variety of tools, weapons and agricultural implements. Around 900 a.d., the Japanese sword, that iconic artifact of skill in forging, coupled with heroic feats of battle, had achieved the form it retains to the present day. In the late 16th century a new method of reducing ore and refining the iron and steel was developed which resulted in greater production at a lower price. This shows up in swords made after that time, known as *shintō*, or "new swords."

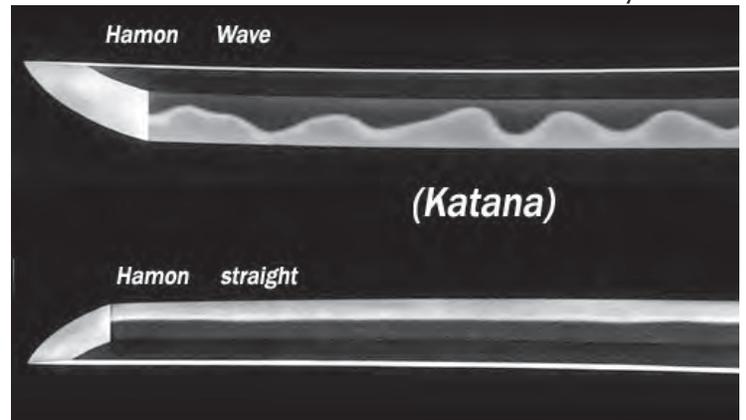


But swords, the "glamour boys" of Japanese cutlery, were not the only beneficiaries of the new technology. A wide variety of cooking and work knives were soon developed along with myriad new patterns of wood working saws, chisels and planes. The quality was high as was availability, while prices were lower.

These methods of iron and steel production remained largely unchanged until the West came knocking on Japan's door in the mid 1800s. The Japanese soon realized they would need a more modern steel making capacity in order to participate in the modern economy.

And modernize they did and at a furious rate. By 1900 modern mills were producing the steel that built a modern navy, railroad system and consumer economy.

Today, Japanese steel is highly thought of, and their cutlery and tools are exported and used all over the world. A long tradition of pride of craftsmanship and a strong work ethic has earned the cutlery industry in particular a strong customer base..



Along with Japanese exports of knives and tools went new words, like *sanmai*, meaning three layers, *santoku*, three functions or uses, or *hamon*, the pattern of a differentially heat treated edge. And it is not uncommon now to see a bowie knife made with a *hamon*, forged from *sanmai* constructed steel. Likewise, American smiths are successfully practicing arts hitherto done only in Japan, such as swords and traditional cooking knives and woodworking tools. Japanese patterns for knives used in the kitchen have grown in popularity to the degree that the big names in Europe, such as Wusthof and Trident and many of our own cutlery companies, make a version of the above mentioned *santoku*. The Western appetite for *sushi* has also generated new approaches to knives for this purpose, as well as keeping traditional smiths employed using the old ways.

The sword, too, continues to attract interest and respect as people come to learn more about its history and the challenges it presents to the smith. Many are attracted to the refinement in shape and finish of a well-polished blade, or the pictorial art of the mountings, often of the highest artistic merit. Still others find a superbly sharp and well balanced weapon that will work as intended if required. In this regard it helps that there are still traditional schools teaching the various sword disciplines.

At one time not so long ago, the words "Stainless Japan" was the most common cutlery marking in America. This is now replaced by the word "China." 



Boar Hunting With A Knife

Owen McCullen

At the December 2014 OKCA Show, I saw a knife that caught my eye and sparked memories I had not experienced in many years. It had a long blade, really too long for most purposes, more blade than you generally need. Further, it had a wicked shape that bespoke menace – double edged and sharply pointed. The non-slip rubberized grip was thin, with a forefinger grip to aid retention. It was a Cold Steel, model OSS, with Japanese Aus8A stainless steel blade. As soon as I saw it, the blade shape immediately reminded me of a blade I had seen years before in Germany.

Some years ago, I was stationed aboard the USS Saratoga, CVA 60, a dadgum big US Navy aircraft carrier. We were cruising in the Mediterranean, with a nuclear strike mission against the Soviet Union and for other purposes. So, how did I wind up in Germany where I saw the knife? It all began with a photo F-8 Crusader, an unarmed photo plane that had been dispatched to collect certain pictures of the Libyan dictator Khaddafi (spelled 4 or 5 different ways) and whatever he was up to, being your somewhat typical Muslim terrorist.



The photo bird had been escorted by another F-8, a conventional fighter armed with 20mm cannons and two air-to-air Sidewinder AIM 9 missiles (Sidewinder for short). AIM was military short hand for Air Intercept Missile. Missiles were intended to replace guns and be a “one shot, one kill” weapon, avoiding all those wasted shots so common in aerial gunfights. Missiles solved another problem. After all, planes had reached speeds where they could outfly/outspeed conventional bullets. There is a classic video of an F-100 Supersabre who fired in a strafing run, dove steeply

accelerating and arrived, much to the pilot’s chagrin, in the vicinity of the target before his bullets. Shot himself down, he did – and it was all caught on film. Missiles were supposed to correct that problem because they could “fly faster than a speeding bullet.” Besides, missiles are larger and easier seen by a pilot who may perhaps avoid a midair collision with them.

The photo bird had returned unharmed from its original mission, but its escort fighter was lost in the desert. The photo bird was refueled and sent out to find its missing escort. It returned again with pictures. Those pictures were the reason I



had my first experience relating remotely to boar hunting with a knife. The heart of the problem was that the escort bird had been armed with the latest and greatest air-to-air missiles in the US inventory – the Sidewinder. The Sidewinder, a wholly US invented infrared missile, had been licensed to several of our good allies and a couple of neutral countries. Sweden was one of those neutral countries. The plans and specifications for building the Sidewinder were given to the Swedish Air Attache, Colonel Stig Wennerstrom by name, for transport from the US to Stockholm. He traveled via Finland and made a side trip to Moscow to deliver a copy of the plans to the Soviet Union. That was an intelligence disaster for us and a great boon to the Russians. They developed the AA-2 Atoll, a somewhat unsophisticated copy of our Sidewinder.



We had made quite a few improvements to the Sidewinder since then which we had no desire to share with the Soviets; and since Libya was a client state of the Soviets, our lost plane with its missile would have been almost as much of a disaster as the stealing of the plans for the Sidewinder in the first place. We were already in the phase of combat operations where everything is micro-managed by higher ups. They felt that they had to know everything that was going on with our search for the missing plane and recovery of the missile. It was obvious from the photos that there was no need to be concerned about the pilot.

The US was also not in favor of the Libyans knowing we were flying at will around their desert. It was all very hush-hush. The problem was how to let higher authority see our photos so those higher authorities could tell us in great detail just exactly what to do. This was before the internet, satellites and instantaneous transmission of pictures. That meant that an officer courier had to hand carry the photos to the higher ups. Given the highly classified nature of the subject material, the courier had to be someone with a Top Secret, Extremely Sensitive Information clearance, based upon a SBI, or Special Background Investigation. As it happened, I fit the description and could be spared for courier duty.

Once the pictures were developed and packaged appropriately, I was issued an airweight Smith & Wesson .38 special and

Continued on page 5

The 2015 April Show

As of this writing, call it a Sold Out Show. I am so pleased that the table sales have been as brisk as they are. Yes, there are a few tables not spoken for; but there ain't that many. Like, really, just a slight few. We have experienced a full Show, a few cancellations, a full Show, a few cancellations etc. By this reading we could be sold out once again if the bouncing ball settles down.

2015 Great Eastern Split Back Whittler

The Oregon Knife Collectors 2015 Club knife will be unique with an etch of our state logo and a Beaver shield. The tang stamp will be Northfield. The handles will be peach seed jigged chestnut bone and the three blades will be 1095 polished carbon steel. The blades are a clip, pen and coping/sheepfoot. Size closed is 3-7/8". There will be a total of 52 knives of which 50 will be serial

numbered. The knife will come in a Great Eastern tube with the OKCA label. This offer is only available to OKCA Club members. This is an organizational funding project and allows members to support the organization and get a great return on their investment. Look for an application form in this issue or on our website.

Display award knives

We have three display award knives in hand at this time. **John "Slim" Coleman, Jim Ort and Blair Todd.** In keeping with our theme, these knives follow the pattern of the Japanese *tanto*. They are beautiful and well executed. Go to the OKCA website to realize the beauty of these knives and the effort that each maker has put into this project.

Articles herein....

I want to thank **Michael Bell, Larry Davis, Ray Ellingsen, Owen McCullen, Rick Miller and John Priest** for their words in this issue. More words are needed, and I know that they are out there. Please share your knowledge, as this *Knewsletter* is a perfect medium for contributions from our membership.

The Sizzler...

Don't forget our monthly meeting at the Sizzler Restaurant. It is the third Wednesday of the month which makes it February 18, 2015. I always look forward to this gathering, so mark your calendar and come be with us. Come smile with us with your latest purchase.



It ain't too early to...

Make lodging reservations for the April Show. The Valley River Inn - (541)687-0123 - which is our partner in lodging for the Show, had a complete remodel; and, from the reports heard, it is one awesome place to stay. Get your reservations in early. The rooms fill up fast. Mention the Show when you register, as we are offered a special rate for the Oregon Knife Collectors. You might also note the Courtesy Inn - (541)345-3391 - the closest motel to the Knife Show. A Budget motel that has worked well with us over the years. ↘

2015 OKCA Club Knife Order Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____



Pattern #3B1315
Split Back Spring Whittler

2014 OKCA serial number if applicable _____

Great Eastern Whittler \$120.00 \$ _____

Shipping if needed - add \$15.00 \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Payment in full must accompany your order to reserve your knife

Delivery on April 11, 2015 at the April Show

The Seek-Re-Tary Report

elayne

The January meeting was held January 21 at the Sizzler Restaurant. We had an attendance of 22. The President, **Craig Morgan**, was absent and the Vice President, **John Priest**, conducted the meeting.

The confirmations and membership cards for 2015 have been mailed. If you have not received your card or confirmation, please contact me (email or phone). Only current (2015) members will receive this *Knewslettter*. You must be a current (2015) member to be admitted on Friday, April 10, 2015 or to be admitted early hours of the Show. We do not renew membership Friday when the Show opens to the table-holders and members. We will renew after 2:00 PM Friday and 9:00AM Saturday. You must have a table-holder badge or a membership card to attend the Show on Friday and early hours Saturday and Sunday.

Please note there are only two table-holder badges per table-holder (not per table). A table-holder must be a member of our organization, and the second badge should also be a member. Their membership can be an individual membership under their own name (receive their own personal copy of the *Knewslettter* - \$20.00), or part of a family membership (\$5.00 additional to a single membership fee). Since the Friday of the Show is only open to members, it is necessary the table helpers be members also. The table-holders receive a table-holder badge available for pick up at the Show. If you are not sure you have advised me the name for the second badge, please contact me so it will be available the day of the Show. If it is necessary to supply a table-holder badge at Showtime, the cost will be an additional \$10.00.

We will be a full Show in April. There are still a very few tables available, but that changes each day as Showtime nears.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to stop at the Club table and express their enjoyment of the December/Winter/Mini Show, the April Show, the *Knewslettter* and also the work of the Board. Positive reinforcement goes a long way to offset the time spent and the challenges we face to manage our organization. Also, thank you to the individuals who contributed money toward our organization to offset our costs. The support is very much appreciated.

An additional way that individuals can support our organization is through the purchase of our Club knife. Unfortunately, we did not sell all the 2014 Queen knife sets. There are several sets available. Please help us with the purchase of a set.

We have an application for the 2015 Club knife in this *Knewslettter* and also on our website. Place your order now for delivery at the Show.

We are hopeful the 2015 Show theme, *Japanese Swords and Cutlery*, will entice some new interest in attendance at the 2015 Show. **Ray Ellingsen** is coordinating this event. Any questions, please contact OKCA, and we will forward them to him. There will be an additional judging category for these displays.

January was the election of officers. All of the current officers have agreed to serve for another term. A motion to nominate the current officers for another term was seconded. By unanimous consent the Board has been elected for another year. The slate of officers for 2015 are: Craig Morgan - President, John Priest - Vice President, Joshua Hill - Master At Arms, Elayne Ellingsen - Secretary/Treasurer, Dennis Ellingsen - Show Chairman. Thank you to all who voted and have supported the officers. We do appreciate the support and hope to continue to do a job of which we will be proud and the membership will approve.

We are currently contacting individuals for the seminars for the

2015 Show. We do not have a completed list of the seminars at this time. It will be announced when we have the completed list. If you are interested to volunteer, please contact us.

Thank you to the individuals who have contributed articles for our *Knewslettter*. It is our vehicle to generate enthusiasm in our Show and in our organization. If you have an interest to write an article, please do so.

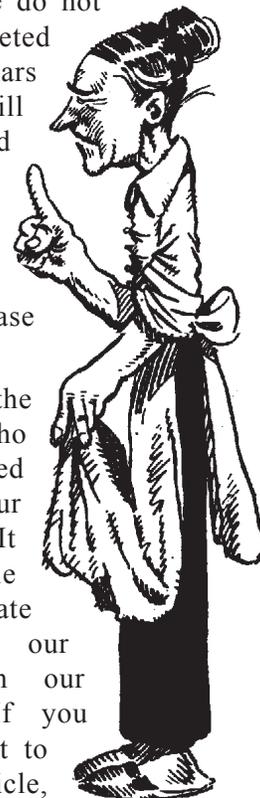
Articles can be emailed. Typed or handwritten articles are also welcome and can be snail mailed.

We are soliciting our membership and companies for items to be sold at our Silent Auction. If you can, please donate. It has been a large contributing factor to the reduced fees we charge for tables and memberships. It also adds an element of excitement to our Show. Let's keep the energy high.

If you are shipping items to the OKCA, please use our special postal address of OKCA - 3003 W 11 PMB 172 EUGENE OR 97402. The mailing address for correspondence, memberships, table payments and articles is OKCA - P O Box 2091 - EUGENE OR 97402. You may always contact us via email or phone. We do return telephone calls if a message is left.

Meeting adjourned for Show-N-Tell.

See you at the meeting, February 18, at the Sizzler Restaurant, Gateway Blvd, Eugene/Springfield OR. 



flown by COD (carrier onboard delivery) from the Saratoga to Naples, Italy, with a leather briefcase handcuffed to my wrist, and from Naples, I was flown directly to Frankfurt Rhine Main in Germany to report to COMNAVFORMED (Commander, Naval Forces, Mediterranean). COMNAVFORMED, a 3 star or Vice Admiral (Vadm) was attending a conference in nearby Garmish, a beautiful spot on the border of southern Germany and Austria. I was put aboard an Army helicopter and was flown directly to Garmish, the site of USAG Bavaria (US Army Garrison, Bavaria) HQ. It was a site of the Winter Olympics. It was close to Germany's two tallest mountains and lots of forests.

Once the photos were delivered, I expected to return immediately to the Sara, as the ship was my duty station. However, COMNAVFORMED's Chief of Staff directed me to wait for a reply to courier to the Task Unit Commander aboard Sara, who was the on scene commander. I had time to burn, and it was arranged that I might visit some of the local attractions. One of those local attractions was a German hunting lodge.

Having always been a hunter, that intrigued me, knowing nothing about hunting in Europe at the time. I was taken by jeep deep into a forest. I do not know how long the trip took; and since any trip in a WWII style jeep over unimproved forest trails can seem a lot longer than it really may have been, the distance is unknown. What I do know is that at the end of the trip, I arrived at what looked almost like a small hotel in the Catskills in New York. It was called a hunting lodge, but I had expected something crude like the hunting camps I had experienced here. Au Contraire! It was the other side of pretty luxurious and with room for about 75 of your closest friends. I did not see a lot of connection to hunting but thought it was probably more of a luxury vacation destination in the middle of a forest. However, shortly, my opinions were changed.

I was introduced to two very taciturn somewhat older German gentlemen,

dressed in lederhosen and wool shooting coats, wearing little trilby hats with a feather brush in the hatband. We filed into an odd little Mercedes truck and headed off into the deep mountains and woods. I was not hunting, I was just being shown around as a guest of the Admiral. We drove through the woods and stopped several times where they pointed out deer or small game. Very late in the afternoon, a solitary pig crossed the truck track ahead of us, and the truck would have come to a screeching halt if it had been on pavement. Instead, it just slewed around on the dirt and rock of the trail. My guides checked out the sign and returned.

We went back to the lodge, and there was beer available all around. Warm, but that very good German beer, unlike our watered down product. After a few beers we became more friendly (funny how that works out) and either I became more fluent in German or they became more fluent in English. In any event, we became friendly, and they told me about their lives at the lodge. It seems that they were at least 4th or 5th generation games' keepers. I made the mistake of referring to them as *Jaegers* which was entirely incorrect, I was informed. They were a *Heger* and *Jagdaufseher*. I had them write that down to be sure I heard correctly. I have never known what those words meant; but they meant something to them, and it had a lot to do with status or pecking order. It was the only job they had ever had and ever would have. They spent the war as games' keepers at the lodge for some old noble family, had actually seen a number of top German generals, including Hermann Goring, head of the German *Lufftwaffe*.

They told me about how their distant forebears had been game managers for the noble family who owned the estate and arranged all the boar hunts for the lords. They were too young for the War; and so assumed the role of their fathers when they went off to War and did not come back. Like so much that was European, boar hunting was apparently stylized and a very big deal. Further, you

could test a hunter's courage by whether he hunted on horseback or on foot, with a boar spear or knife and so forth. A lord who was highly regarded might ride a horse to the site of the hunt; but once the quarry was in sight, would dismount and pursue the boar on foot. A noble lord and brave warrior would carry a boar spear. A more noble warrior would go after the boar with only a knife. It was training for medieval style warfare and was also proof of a lord's actual courage.



They had several wicked looking older long bladed knives in a display case; and each carried a slightly shorter, plainer version. The official knives had long blades, with substantial brass cross guards, mixed bone and antler handles or grips and large end bolsters. They were designed so the lord could put both hands on the end bolster and push with both hands, or all their weight, driving the long bladed knife deep into their quarry or opponent. Of course, the knives were not for sale, even to the guest of an Admiral.

A noble who would charge off on foot with only a knife against a Russian black boar was thought to be very brave. He might even end up with the award of the boar's tusks (from one to four, depending on the level of the bravery and skill displayed). When hunting with a knife alone, the tactic was to pursue the boar until the boar tired of being chased, turned around and charged his pursuer. That was virtually guaranteed to happen, given the temperament of the boars. The noble was not to draw his knife until the charge was initiated, in the classic case. Once the boar started its charge, the noble was to stop, prepare to receive the attack and draw his knife. When close

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OKCA Free Classified Ads

Free classified ads will run up to three issues and then be dropped. Available only to paid members. Write your ad on anything you have handy (except Pagophilus leaf paper) and email or snail mail to the OKCA PO Box 2091 Eugene OR 97402. The number and size of ads submitted by a single member will be accepted, or excepted, dependent on available space and the mood of the editors.

The best Koa available outside of Hawaii will again be at the April 2015 OKCA Show. Look for me at table S-06. Also available will be outstanding Mango and the ever popular Spalted Maple Burl. 253-653-8742 Steve Hughes

FOR SALE: Handle material - horn, antler, paired wood slabs. Also blades and some power tools - grinders and buffers. Can deliver to the Oregon Show in April. If interested contact me Dewald Boswell (541)786-9833

Randall Made Knives. Buy, Sell, Trade. Also a good selection of Case knives, and many custom knives for sale or trade. Jim Schick www.nifebuy.com (209)295-5568.

FOR SALE: Remington Bullet knives, new, orig. boxes. 1987-2015. 29 knives plus 4 anniversary editions, plus 2 wood display cases - \$2,000.00. Will deliver in OR/western WA. Roger Metzger (541)593-2988.

I am a jewelry designer and manufacturer in Salem OR, and I do custom work. I can set stones into steel, blades and handles of various materials. I have studied gemology and have a small collection of gemstones and Oregon rocks that can be cut to size and set. I also work in silver and gold and do just about any design. Meghan Donahue Jewelry Design - 189 Liberty St NE Unit B2a -Salem OR 97301 - (503)967-5581 www.meghandonahue.com

Custom leather work. Sheaths, holster and belts are my area of focus. All my sheaths are lined with a fine leather for protection of your blade...The fit on these sheaths is lock tight and strong. See my work on my website www.countyholster.com. John Schnase, Eugene OR (503)501-6067. Table F08.

Sharpening Stone - Non functioning for display only. Make an offer - Ed Holbrook - (503)266-2478.

For Sale - Oregon yearly Club knives, 1979 to 2012. Selling singly, 10% off current pricing. Call Fred (541)915-6241

Looking for 1902 US Saber marked "1st. Lt. Robert M. Porter". Please contact Don Hanham at dwhanham@gmail.com

SOG Knife Collector is a new book by Michael W. Silvey in the military knife series. It covers a narrow area of collecting and helps the collector identify honest specimens and distinguish them from fakes. The format is 8.5 inches by 11 inches and is all in color. The soft cover book is less than fifty pages but includes all the know variations of SOG knives. The information covered by this book will be valuable to both the new and advanced collector. The printing is limited to 2,000 copies. \$20 plus shipping. Mike at (530) 644-4590 or m.silvey@comcast.net

WANTED : Western Wildlife Series knives produced from about 1978 to 1982 (letters B, C, D, E, F). I'm missing the knives with blade etches of eagle, elk, cougar, hunting dog, antelope and bear. Call Martin at (406)422-7490

WANTED: Custom knifemakers and collectors for the first annual Portland Knife Makers Show. The show will be held at the Portland Expo center Oct. 24 & 25, 2015. That's next year. Open to knifemakers only, no Chinese stuff, no factory knives, no factory blems. Limited to 175 tables the first year. The show will be held at the same time, but in a separate hall, as the famous Antique show so there will be thousands of potential customers. Or at least their husbands. For more details contact Dave Rappoport, Hawthorne Cutlery, Portland OR (503)234-8898, or swordrep@comcast.net. You can also contact Christine Palmer at chris@christinepalmer.net.

KNIVES FOR SALE: Antique, custom & factory, pocketknives, folders, fixed blades, dirks, daggers, bowies, military, Indian, frontier, primitive & ethnic. Other collectibles also. Current colored catalog - FREE, Northwest Knives & Collectibles (503)362-9045 anytime.

SPYDERCO KNIVES wanted. Entire collections. River Valley Knives (715) 557-1688.

AL MAR, BENCHMADE, PACIFIC CUTLERY wanted. Entire collections. River Valley Knives (715)557-1688.

Wanted: 2012 Case XX USA medium stockman #6318 PU CV jugged bone w/punch w/signature of Skip Lawrie. Ralph Nuno Sacramento (916)682-9305.

For Sale: Buck knives. Large consignment. List available from Larry Oden. Typically have Buck standard production, limited edition, BCCI, Buck Custom and Yellowhorse models. Email lodan@dka-online.com or call (765) 244-0614 8AM-8PM EST.

Spyderco/Goddard Model C16POD \$85.00; free shipping when you mention OKCA. Goddards 473 Durham Ave Eugene OR 97404 (541)689-8098 email: wgoddard44@comcast.net.

For Sale: Duplicates of my old "WOOD HANDLE" Coke knives, \$100.00 each.. email: ronjoyceedwards@comcast.net

For Sale: older knives. Please visit HHknives at www.allaboutpocketknives.com. Thanks for looking.

Knife Sheaths: Many, many different sizes and styles. If we don't have what you want, we can make it for you. Ray Simonson Wild Boar Blades P.O. Box 328 Toutle WA 98649 (360)601-1927 www.wildboarleather.com - ray@wildboarleather.com

Mosaic pins and lanyard tubes by Sally. See at www.customknife.com, email at sally@customknife.com. Phone (541)846-6755.

Hot off the press - 2ND edition *The Wonder of Knifemaking* by Wayne Goddard, revised and in color! \$30. shipped by priority mail. Get your autographed copy now by calling Wayne at (541)689-8098.

Blades and knifemaker supplies. All blades are ground by Gene Martin. I also do custom grinding. See at www.customknife.com, contact Gene at bladesmith@customknife.com, or call (541)846-6755.

Useful reference books on blades. Collectible knives, custom knives and knifemaking, military knives, swords, tools, and anything else that has an edge. E-mail for a list. Quality Blade Books C/O Rick Wagner P O Box 41854 Eugene OR 97404 (541) 688-6899. or wagner_r@pacinfo.com

Knife Laws on-line. Federal, state, local. Bernard Levine (541)484-0294 www.knife-expert.com.

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OKCA Club Whot-zits & Whos Zits

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Knewsletter by elayne & dennis

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enough, the noble was to knock the boar off his feet, grab a front leg once the boar was down on its side, pull the leg up and stab the boar with an angling knife thrust up under the boar's leg into the armpit like area of the boar directly into the boar's heart. Russian black boar, I am informed, can weigh between 220-600 pounds of pure meanness and muscle. They can allegedly jump up to five feet and run at top speed up to 25 MPH.

Done correctly, one clean thrust of the knife would kill the boar very quickly. Apparently, according to the two gamekeepers, there was a technique to hit the boar just so, knocking it over so its front foot was available to grab. Doing the deed following the correct technique brought great respect to the noble. Nothing was said about when the noble on his first boar hunt filled his



trousers with smelly brown fecal matter after the boar's charge. Perhaps that is why Scots wear kilts, sans underwear. But, admittedly, it would take a fair amount of courage to stand stock still in the face of the charge of an enraged 600 pound black boar with murder in its heart. No wonder the noble who did that was respected and thought a worthy leader.

At the time, I was pretty sure you had

to be crazy to be hunting wild boar, on foot, with a knife. I might do that with a big rifle, perhaps even with a big pistol (which I did do later when stationed in Florida); but I did not at the time or now think I would do that with a knife. What about you?

Like some of my other work in the Navy, this entire episode was highly classified. I was unable to discuss it with others outside the immediate command circle on the ship and could never write home about it. It had to stay in my memories for just almost exactly five months short of 50 years. I had not thought of it in years before seeing the knife at the December Show. Now I have the opportunity to finally share it with someone who will understand and appreciate my fascination with wicked German blades and fierce Russian boars. 🐾

Japanese Show Theme for 2015

Ray Ellingsen

As most of you may (or may not) know, the theme for the Oregon Knife show this year is Japanese cutlery (see last month's *Knewsletter* for details). Since we are only two short months away from the Show, I thought it was about time that I lay out some of the particulars and details.



Displays: If you would like to present a display of Japanese cutlery, be it a collection

of swords, Japanese culinary knives, or any other type of Japanese cutting curiosities, you are highly encouraged to do so. The awards for best display this year are pretty impressive and worth taking a look at (you can see them on the OKCA website if you're curious).

A word of warning though. There are a very limited number of display tables available as of this writing, so if you are

planning to enter a display you should contact Elayne immediately. Unless of course, you are reading this article and it is after midnight. I can tell you from first-hand experience that placing calls to the Ellingsen residence after 12AM is extremely frowned upon by that particular establishment, and you will not like the results of such a decision... Trust me.

This year we are also creating a special judging for Japanese cutlery. There will be two categories. The first will be for Japanese swords. The criteria for entry into this category is somewhat broad, in that it can be an older sword forged by a maker five hundred years ago, or a custom sword by a new maker. The swords in this category can be *katana* or *wakizashi* only. Judging will be based on uniqueness, rarity, quality, artistic creativity, finish, etc...

The second category will be for Japanese cutlery. This will include culinary knives, *tanto*,



razors, machetes, and any other smaller traditional Japanese blades. Judging will be based on the same qualities as those in the sword category, and the same rules of entry will apply. These cutting implements can be older, traditionally forged cutlery by makers long since passed or new custom makers.

To enter into either of these two new categories, you will need to bring your entries to the custom knife judging room on Saturday during the hours of 2PM - 3PM. As with the custom knife competition, you will be able to reclaim your entries once the judging is completed.

The winner(s) for each of these new categories will be awarded one of the display award knives that have been embellished by some of the top knifemakers in the country. Again, you can take a look at these award knives on the OKCA website.

There's not much time left, so whip together your displays and dust off your old Japanese cutlery now. As always, if you have any questions, suggestions, or ideas, please contact us directly at the OKCA. See you all at the Show. 🐾

About The Handmade Knife Judging

John Priest

The following rules are in effect for the 2015 Oregon Knife Show Handmade Knife Competition. Any violation of these rules will make the knife and the maker ineligible for awards. Any infraction identified after the awarding will result in forfeiture of the award.



The categories for the custom knife competition are: **ART KNIFE - BOWIE KNIFE - DAMASCUS - FIGHTING KNIFE - FOLDING KNIFE - HAND FORGED - HUNTER/UTILITY - MINIATURE - NEW MAKER**

1) Knives can be submitted and accepted only from table-holders at the 2015 OKCA Show. The exception is the New Maker category which can be entered by any OKCA member. A "New Maker" is one who has never entered any competition, anywhere, ever.

2) The maker must personally submit the knife and identify himself as the maker of the submitted knife.

3) The Oregon Knife Collectors shall not be held liable in any way for the submitted knife after it has been turned over to the Oregon Knife Collectors Association.

4) If there is a question by the judges as to the class/division/category into which the knife is submitted for judging, that knife may be ineligible for that class/division/category. The judges, at their discretion, may change that knife to a more suitable category.

5) The submitted knife must have been made after April 15, 2014 and never previously received an award to be eligible for competition.

6) Knives submitted will have their marks covered and will be numbered. Cover material will be provided if you do not have any. **You will be asked to cover your mark on your own knife. This must be done before you submit it for judging.**

7) Awards will be announced Friday afternoon about 5PM. - Winners knives

will be kept for display until 6:00PM. All other knives will be returned after judging is completed. The winners will also be announced at the Saturday Nite Awards Presentation.

8) The submitted knives must be 88% made by the knifemaker who submits the knife for judging. Disclosure of the other 12% must be noted.

9) Damascus knives can be placed in any category, except hand forged. Hand forged knives can be placed in any category, except Damascus. A knife can only be entered into one category.

10) Knives for the **Custom Knife Competition** will be accepted in **Meeting Room #3** during the hours of **2 PM to 3 PM Friday - April 10, 2015**. The cut off time will be **3 PM sharp**.

It will be the responsibility of the knifemaker to abide by these rules. The Show Chairman shall be the absolute decision maker on any conflicts or questions, should it become necessary.

FAQ

Why do I have to cover my logo? (Answer) To keep the judging fair and not distract the judges and also to have somewhere to put the contest number. We realize that some makers have a very distinctive style, but this is the most equitable way we have found.

How many knives can I enter? (Answer) One per category.

Who are the judges? (Answer) We aren't telling. It's hard enough to get people to leave their table for an hour or so on Friday without making them justify their decisions. I will say that we have three judges: one local, one a maker and one a collector. They are all highly qualified, and we couldn't have

the contest without them.

What time do I enter? (Answer) 2PM - 3PM on Friday April 10, 2015.

What time do I get my knife back? (Answer) After the judging is completed, there will be an announcement. We ask that you pick them up as soon as possible. The only exception: If you win, then we will keep them long enough to take pictures and display them.

I'm undecided about which category to enter. (Answer) The judges can change the knife to another category if, in their opinion, it's better suited to a different category.

What about disclosure? (Answer) We are judging knives that were carried from concept through finished product by one person. We realize that this isn't always possible, but we also expect you to tell us what you did not do to the knife. We do not want a knife made by committee.

What about cheating? (Answer) We work on the honor system. If you cheat, your fellow makers will know; and you will know.

What if you haven't answered all of my questions? (Answer) THEN READ THE RULES. They are available on the website online or at the head table at the Show. In the event of a question not answered, the Show Chairman will be the last word.



A Model 2 Randall Knife Comes Home After Forty Years

Rick Miller

I first became interested in collecting knives when my college gymnastics teammate, Bill Beavers, showed me a 1959 Randall knife catalog. I can still remember how amazed I was as to the beauty of the knives illustrated in that catalog. However it wasn't until 1965 when I purchased my first collectable knife. That's the year I began my career with the U. S. Public Health Service.

In 1969 I was working as a Venereal Disease (now called Sexually Transmitted Diseases) Investigator for the Monterey County Health Department in Salinas, California. I decided to order a Model 2 Randall knife with an ebony handle and requested that my name, Rick Miller, be stamped horizontally on the reverse side of the blade. As I best recall the knife had a price tag of \$75.00, and I had to wait seven months to receive it. Shortly thereafter, and for some unknown reason, I sold this beautiful knife to my friend, Fred Bratmon, a well known military knife expert.

As the years passed by, I on occasion thought about trying to buy back my Randall knife, after all it had my name on the blade. But, alas, Fred could not remember the name of the person that he had sold the knife to.



In 2004 at the Oregon Knife Collectors Annual Show, I told my story to Rhett and Janie Stidham; and they agreed to run an ad in their *Randall Knife Society Newsletter*. I received only one telephone call from a fellow who wanted to know if I collected Model 2 Randall knives! And that was that!

Now, fast forward ten years to the 2014 Knife Expo in Pasadena, California, presented by the Southern California Blades Knife Collectors Club. I again told my story to my friend, Jim Schick, a Randall knife collector and dealer. I'm somewhat surprised that I hadn't told him this story before. At any rate he found this sad tale interesting and said that he would be on the lookout for my knife.

On April 27, 2014, my wife, Evelyn, and I went to a music concert at a local college and returned home about 10:30 p.m.; and bingo, there was a message from Jim who had obtained my cell phone number from our mutual friend and fellow



collector, Louis Chow. The message was simply, "I believe that I have found your Randall knife." It was too late to call Jim, and needless to say I didn't sleep very well that night. The next morning I called Jim at a reasonable hour, and sure enough he had spotted a Model 2 Randall knife with my name on the blade at an upcoming auction. The auction was to close the following Sunday.

I had a bit of a predicament, as I was leaving that very Sunday with my wife to attend our nephew's wedding in Chennai, India. Jim, being the friend that he is, agreed to bid on my behalf. The high bid was at \$440.00, and Jim asked me how much I wanted to bid. Well, that was somewhat more than the \$75.00 I had paid so many years ago. I told Jim that my chances of getting a second crack at that knife would be slim and none! I said, I've got to get my knife back." Jim's response was, "OK."

Now the long wait began. I didn't return home from India until May 7. The first thing I did upon returning was to give Jim a call. He said, "I'm looking at your knife as we speak, and it went for \$475.00."

I'm happy to say that my Randall knife Model 2M in excellent condition with the original #28 leather scabbard now hangs on the wall in my knife room, and it isn't going anywhere!! 🐉

Snakewood: Friend or Foe?

Larry Davis

Snakewood, *Piratinera guianensis*, is also known as Letterwood (which alphabet is arguable), leopard wood (when dotted) and speckled wood (when speckled).

Origin is Central and South America, with the primary source from Surinam and Northern Brazil. Trees are not large (8" diameter average), and only the dark heartwood is marketed. Most stock is imported and sold as half or quarter logs or pieces of logs. Lumber is very rare; and a large board is 3" wide, with most in the 2" range. The timber is very dense and heavy at 81 lb per cubic foot and 1.30 specific gravity. That's heavier than *Lignum Vitae*!!!!

Most working problems originate with using green material. Snakewood is so dense it takes years to dry a small piece carefully without degradation of the material. When a maker uses this partially-dried material, it is a disaster waiting.

Invariably, the handle will split and crack; and the maker will



swear to never use Snakewood again. I swore to never stock Snakewood again for this reason but got very lucky and found some 50 year old dry lumber in Brazil.

Snakewood is not easy to work with sharpened tools because of its hardness and density, although these characteristics make it a beautiful wood with high polishing capabilities. Anders Hogstrom recommends grinding and shaping with a new 50 grit sandpaper belt, followed with a used 50 grit paper for smoothing the shape. Care must be used to not overheat the wood, causing a burn or heat fracture. Always check with the supplier regarding moisture content before purchasing Snakewood to avoid major trouble. 🐉

