KNEWSLETTTER IN A KNUTSHELL

- ✓ Damascus Steel Part 3
- ✓ Lanham Scrimshaw
- ✓ Unfinished Projects
- ✓ WG Nessmuk
- ✓ No meetings for awhile

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

April 2021

Damascus Steel Part 3

Gene Martin

So far we've talked about the origins and basics of making Damascus, or pattern welded, steel. Since there is a reason for it being called pattern welded steel, this missive will discuss actually putting patterns in the steel. While the article about making Damascus was very broad and general, now we're going to get much more specific.

As we discussed before, a billet of pattern welded steel starts life as a stack of steel pieces of alternating types of steel. Forge welding that stack into a billet produces basic random pattern Damascus. While random pattern can be really attractive, it is seldom exciting. Manipulating that pattern starts down the road towards exciting.

Some of the basic patterns are ladder and twist pattern. Let's discuss how those patterns are created. Ladder pattern is created by creating vertical grooves, hopefully evenly spaced, down the length of the billet. Those grooves can be created with a file, a grinder, or dies in a press or power hammer. More on dies later.

If those grooves are done by cutting into the material, that changes the layer count between the grooves and billet surface. To take advantage of this, the billet is forged flat. That compresses the layers next to the grooves. The result is a tighter pattern/looser pattern contrast.

Using dies changes the process a bit. Dies are made by raised and recessed areas. Unless the grooves are really deep, the raised areas are then ground down to remove the raised layers. After that the billet is forged flat. This again produces a compressed layer contrast. Deeply grooved billets can sometimes be forged flat without grinding the raised areas.

Twisting a billet to make a twist pattern is fairly simple but with some quirks that need to be addressed. The billet must first be squared before twisting. Rectangular billets create problems. Once the billet is squared, it's a good plan to then forge it round. There is a quirk that the raised corners of a square billet create stress risers and form cracks. Forging the billet round reduces those stress points.

Once the billet is forged round, it is heated to welding in a vise and a wrench is used to twist the billet. That wrench



Image 1580 - A low layer billet with reverse twist. Three pieces will be stacked to form the full billet.



Image 1583 - A fold too far. The pattern is so fine it's hard to see.

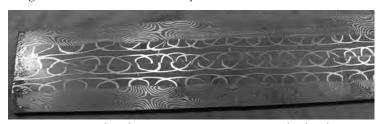


Image 1590 – A four bar composite pattern. Bought this from Tru-Grit from an estate. No idea who made it. My hat is off to whoever did it.



Image 1591 – A stretched pattern



Image 1592 – Pattern from a tree shaped die

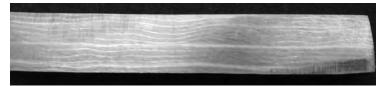


Image 1607 – Billet with tiree thicker layers of 15N20

temperature and removed from the forge, one end is placed is often a pipe wrench with a handle welded to the top jaw.

The Seek-Re-Tary Report

elayne

This *Knewslettter* is supposed to be the April Show issue. Obviously that ain't gonna be this issue. We also did not have a 2020 April Show issue. We can but hope that we will have a 2022 April Show issue. (If the creek don't rise.) Some of us are optimistic, which I think is a very good attitude.



Thank you **Roy Humenick** for your coordination of our 2021 OKCA Club Knife. We were overwhelmed with orders. It was something for which we were not prepared. We received orders in excess of the 100 knives we were able to purchase. We believed it was necessary to supply the orders from the individuals who had previously purchased knives in support of our organization, therefore it was necessary to issue refunds to many. We also refunded the membership fee paid

by those who had not been members and were required to join to purchase a Club Knife.

The Board of Directors issues a thank you to all who have renewed their membership and expressed support of our organization and its goals. We are especially appreciative of the number of individuals who have contributed articles to be printed in our *Knewslettter*. This month we thank **Bruce Lanham**, **Gene Martin**, **Merle Spencer and Clay Stevens**.

We are still on hold for monthly meetings and the Holiday (December/Mini/ Winter) Show. Too early to know what will be. Our crystal ball is too cloudy.

Lisa Wages deserves a special thank you for maintaining the Facebook page. It has received a lot of requests to join and post items for comment or sale. Without her we would not be able to maintain our page.

This *Knewslettter* will be mailed to only current members (2021). We thank you for your support of our organization during these very uncertain and challenging times. Remember to advise us if your address information, phone numbers or email address change. Also be sure to advise if an item you listed for sale is no longer available.



If you want us to list your website on our links page, please email. It shall be done upon request.

Stay safe and keep a distance from others (especially those we have designated as partners). It reduces the arguments and frustration. Also wards off contagious diseases.

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OKCA Club Whot-zits & Whos Zits

Craig Morgan

President (541)968-5278

John Priest

Vice President (541)517-2029

Elayne Ellingsen

Sec/Tres. (541)484-5564

Joshua Hill

Master at Arms (503)580-8961

Dennis Ellingsen

Show Chairman (541)484-5564

Knewslettter by elayne & dennis

Web page --- http://www.oregonknifeclub.org/

Club email --- okca@oregonknifeclub.org

Letters to.....

OKCA P O Box 2091 Eugene OR 97402

Packages to.....

OKCA 3003 W 11 Ave PMB 172 Eugene OR 97402

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OKCA Knews & Musings

ibdennis

The 2021 OKCA Show

Of course it did not happen. The constraints for group gathering would have been in effect and our usual volume of attendees would never pass. We are very optimistic that 2022 will be a reality. Vaccine shots will be over, and this thing called herd immunity will take place. So mark your calendars for April 08 - 10, 2022.

Elayne's article this month pretty much sums up the news of the day and more. I was going to be wordless but was encouraged to go deeper into the Club Knife fiasco.



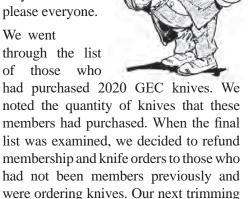
The 2021 OKCA Club Knife

In 1979 we decided to have a Club Knife as a souvenir for members of the organization. The Case 21051 LSSP lockback was a popular knife of the day, and we offered it for \$20.00. Every year since 1979, we have offered a Club Knife. The purpose was to provide a collectable that was not run of the mill. The by product was also a fund raiser and helped promote our Shows. There have been some really special knives offered over the years, and proof of that can be seen in the list of knives and their honest-fortrue values today. They are listed on our website. (www.oregonknifeclub.org)

In 2011 we had our first Great Eastern Cutlery (GEC) knife. Roy Humenick was the promoter and organizer who made this knife available. To date we have had nine patterns of GEC knives offered to our OKCA members. All have sold out. Even when it was necessary to go from quantity 50 to 100 to make minimum order, we still sold out. Roy came up with the 2021 offering of the #380321 whittler with a warncliffe main blade. We thought it would be a popular item, but it far exceeded all expectations. Right out of the chute we had orders for well over 160 knives, against our standing order of 100 knives ordered from Great Eastern. Our mailbox was stuffed with requests. Our idea was to offer a knife to our existing members to encourage membership renewals and maintain the unity of our organization. Our existing membership was supportive, and orders were increased by members to help the organization.

with a solution for allocation of these knives. Not easy for us to please everyone.

We went through the list of those who



There were many restless nights with lack of sleep trying to provide an equitable solution. In our attempt to make everyone happy, it came down to: we did our best.

limited members to the quantity that they

purchased in 2020. Refunds were issued

for the orders we could not fill. This got

us down to the number of 100 knives.



Then an announcement on one of the knife forums. The cry was to join the Club, and then you might be able to purchase a GEC knife. But it had not been designed as a membership drive. We attempted to increase our GEC order; but production schedules at GEC had already been made, no more knives would be available. Now it was decision time for us to come up

Now it has come to a massive chore mailing out these knives. We have mailed out knives in the past for those who were not at that year's Show, but this year is at 98% as Elayne and my knives would not need mailing. Thus endeth the story. Thank you to all who understand. And to those who do not....try.

April 2021 Page 3

Wayne Goddard - Nessmuk

ibdennis

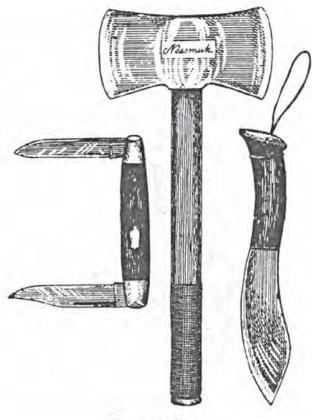
Wayne Goddard is known for his many different knife patterns. He was inspired by many styles and patterns of knives, and his diversification was endless. Not only did he work with many different handle materials from tree to pearl, but experimented with many materials untried in the knife world. Wayne did commemorative knives as well as knives of historical events.

The Nessmuk knife was one such knife. Nessmuk was the pen name for George Washington Sears (1821 - 1890). Nessmuk wrote books about wilderness survival called *Woodcraft*. His choice of wilderness things that go cut were a hand axe, a two bladed folding knife and a fixed blade sheath knife. The fixed blade knife was his own design, and there is only one surviving picture of this pattern. The reading of these *Woodcraft* books are quite interesting.

From the book:

A word as to knife, or knives. These are of prime necessity and should be of the best, both as to shape and temper. The "bowies" and "hunting knives" usually kept on sale, are thick, clumsy affairs, with a sort of ridge along the middle of the blade, murderous-looking, but of little use; rather fitted to adorn a dime novel or the belt of "Billy the Kid," than the outfit of the hunter. The one shown in the cut is thin in the blade and handy for skinning, cutting meat, or eating with. The strong double-bladed pocket knife is the best model I have yet found and, in connection with the sheath knife, is all sufficient for camp use.

Apparently Wayne Goddard found this to be of interest and proceeded to make his rendition of the Nessmuk fixed blade knife. He used one of his favorite handle materials, a graceful shape of stag that closely resembled what the original Nessmuk looked like. The blade shape is spot on with the flowing belly and drop point. As described by George W. Sears, Wayne captured every single point of the description. From the "WG" mark, this knife was made in the 1970s.









Scrimshaw

Bruce Lanham

Most readers of this publication don't have to have scrimshaw explained to them but let me explain how I came to it and my attitude towards it.

I first was exposed to the art form through an article in a nautical antique magazine about 45 years ago. I don't know why, it fascinated me; and before long I was scratching some of my mom's ivory jewelry. (I still have them; they're awful but priceless to me.) It didn't take long before I soon acquired some more ivory, and, yes, sperm whale teeth (they were available and legal back then); and I was soon doing arts and craft shows. Never had any art training and still haven't. I focused on jewelry. Women were my market, and I have come back to that market in the last few years.



My pitch-line is, eye candy for eye candy; women love jewelry. It's been challenging coming up with a substitute for ivory. I do want to add a high end line in fossilized. I have found sources of bone and horn, as I can't afford the quantity of fossilized that I need for the hundreds of pieces that I produce.

I don't have the attention span of other scrimshanders who work with microscopes and put hundreds of hours into a piece. My eyes and hands are not up for it. I'm impressed with their work, I just can't do

it. The most amount of hours I've ever put into a piece is about 40 hours. That was a nine foot long piece of bowhead baleen with a dozen images. I don't have to worry about doing many of those, as I can't resale them; so they're for myself or gifts for friends and family.

As for an overall view of my scrim, I usually demonstrate at shows and often am asked, "How did you get into this?" and "Why do you do scrimshaw?" I often would stumble through an answer; but finally put my finger on it, it's therapy and an artistic outlet. I miss it if I haven't done a piece in a few days.

Because my time invested is limited and the material affordable, I'm able to keep my price point down. My goal is to build a stock of hundreds of pieces, in every subject you can imagine. Every show I attend there is someone who would walk up and ask for something I didn't have:

> penguin, sloth, gecko. There's no accounting for personal taste. It became a challenge and joke. Recently I was thumbing through one of my reference books and I turn the page; and there's a duckbill platypus. I couldn't help it. When I sent an image to a friend, his wife had to have it. I haven't had much luck at pitching custom pieces to people. They just can't describe what they want, but they know it when they see it.

I work with a sharpened sewing machine needle. I

like bone, nasty, grainy and porous; but I can stain it with colors and that is fun to play with. My outline is inked with black grease pencil (can't use India ink like you do on ivory, it fills every pore and cavity). The horn is black water buffalo, and I use a white grease pencil to fill the lines. It works easily, soft, but is terribly unforgiving. One scratch out of place or that runs wild; and you can't erase it. The white on black is striking though. I should add, I work in the reflection; and wherever I scratch, I can see the line.



I started with swords but have switched to jewelry as a focus. The swords are interesting and were largely what took me back into the scrim world; but they're a hard sell, too difficult to display and the price point. I will continue working and displaying them--great attention getter.

I think one of the things I like about scrim is the permanence. There're pieces that I did still in existence, not talking about whaler's stuff from over 200 years ago. I take a certain pleasure in the idea my stuff will be around after I'm gone, hanging around women's necks and handed down to their daughters.

Another pitch line from shows, "I should have my head examined. If I was painting or drawing, I could go to the art store and buy paper and canvas; but no, I engrave images on pieces of dead animals, whales and fishes and have to stock up on material whenever I can."

One last thought, at my first Show I wasn't sure what to expect; but the other scrimshanders were glad to see me. There's a scrimshaw contest, and they needed three entries. I was the third and was no competition with them. It's the only Show I've done with multiple scrimshanders there, and I don't have to put up with the comment, "Scrimshaw! I haven't seen it for years; I thought it was gone." I would feel like a dinosaur or caveman.

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Damascus Steel - Part 3 continued from page 1

Typically we twist until the billet cools too much. Then it is heat and repeat.

While twisting, the rate of twist slows as the billet cools. Since the billet doesn't cool uniformly, one end generally cools slower than the other. This quirk causes part of the billet to be twisted tighter than other parts. To make the billet twisted more uniformly, the first fix is to switch ends in the vise. The vise itself will suck heat out of the billet. And yes, a billet can be over twisted and torn in half.

So once we have the billet twisted as much as desired, now we have to decide just what to do with it. The majority of the time we will flatten it, so we can make a blade from it. There will still be a certain amount of edge cracking from the twisting process present. We just grind it off and keep going.

As we start drawing the billet out to make it longer and flatter, we run into another quirk. As we draw the billet out, it starts to untwist. It seems unfair in that we put all that twist in just to take it back out, but that's how it is. The stretching takes place in any pattern that is drawn out, some patterns just show it more than others.

Basic twist pattern is something beyond random, but basic twist isn't all that exciting. It's a good starting point, though. There are a few tricks to make it more exciting.

One trick is to forge the twist billet square, then cut or grind off two opposite sides. Make the square a rectangle. Make sure the rectangle is big enough for the next step, whether making a blade or stacking billets. Save the removed portions for another project. The retained center portion will display the stars at the center of a twist billet.

Another exciting twist billet is to create two billets, each twisted the same number of turns but in opposite directions. Cut the billet in half lengthwise, then remove the sides. Forge weld the two billets together center to center. This produces a feather look with stars down the center.

Yet another interesting twist pattern is something I call composite twist. I take two 112 layer billets and twist them. Then one layer of 1095 and two of 15N20 were sandwiched in between the twist billets. The new billet is then twisted again. It makes an intriguing pattern.

Another really great twist pattern is called Turkish Twist. This pattern is created by making a number of twist billets. The billets should be alternating twist, that is right and left hand. The billets are trimmed on all four sides, then stacked and forge welded together. This produces stars twisted in opposite directions running the length of the billet. It looks fantastic.

Cable Damascus also can produce some really interesting patterns. The pattern is primarily made of spots and short bars of varying shapes. Manipulating the pattern can make it more exciting. Wayne Goddard once told me that the most interesting pattern he'd ever seen was ladder pattern cable.



Image 1611 – Some dies. Only one side is shown.

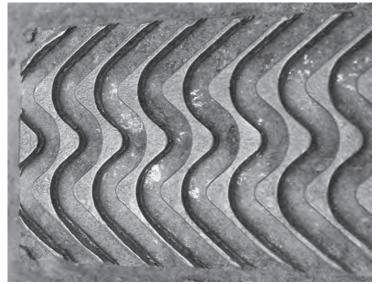


Image 1612 – Another die. More herringbone than ladder.



Image 1613 – Ladder dies.

Another simple yet great pattern is raindrop/pool and eye, or frog skin. It's all the same pattern. It can be created with dies, a drill, or a ball peen hammer. Either raised or recessed places



Damascus Steel - Part 3 continued from page 6 are created with dies, recessed spots with a drill or a hammer. The hammer is used by beating the dickens out of each side of a billet while it's hot.

The dies used for the pattern can be dies that force the hot steel up into small cavities or dies that use ball bearings imbedded in steel blocks. When used, these dies create depressions into the metal, which compresses the layers. Either way, the billet is then ground flat. The compressed/non compressed pattern is developed. I personally use dies that force the steel into the cavities. It's a personal preference, nothing more.

Another dimple pattern is a basic shark tooth pattern. This is not to be confused with Devin Thomas' shark tooth, a much more intricate pattern. The basic shark tooth pattern is done by filing alternate grooves into the cutting edge of the blade. A round file is used at the angle to create a tapering "V" along the edge. This is done on each side of the edge, alternating the grooves. Grooves will form the shark tooth pattern along the edge, simple; yet it makes a random pattern more exciting.

As you can see, patterns are limited only by the maker's imagination. Devin Thomas has more imagination than most; but then again, he lays awake at night dreaming of patterns.

I spoke a lot about dies. For the more intricate patterns, dies are almost a must. To use those dies, a hydraulic press or mechanics hammer is a must. A treadle hammer or power hammer work. A treadle hammer is a low budget way to do it. Power hammers and presses cost more. A maker with the abilities can make any of these.

Patterns can also be formed by making composite billets. These are created by forge welding different patterns together, such as sandwiching different billets together, such as a ladder pattern between layers of twist pattern.

Next time we'll discuss mosaic and "canned" Damascus. That's where things can really start getting exciting.

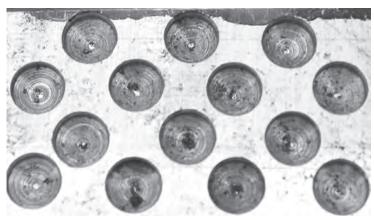


Image 1614 - Raindrop dies in the making.



Image 1618 – Jim Ferguson corduroy pattern Damascus.



Image 1625 – Devon Thomas vines and roses.

Charter members to the OKCA - September 18, 1976

Wayne Goddard - President Dennis Ellingsen - Vice President # Loy Moss - Sec/Treasurer * Bob Stone - Master at Arms * William Allen II Marvin Anderson * Phil Bailey # Murry Brooks * Marylin Callendar Jim Chartier * Larry Cook # **Bob Daly** T J Daniel William Dodge Dennis Ellingsen#

Peter Faust #
Ernie Feldman *
Melton Ferris *
Lomar Formelly
Wayne Goddard *
Harry Hall *
Dick Hamilton #
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Thurston Johnson *
Jeff Klein
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Leon Thompson #
Howard Troop *
L P Vanouer
Rick Wagner #
Paul Wellborn *
Bob Wilkinson *
Roy Wooldridge *

51 members then -11 (#) current -23 (*) deceased

* Updates would be helpful

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Unfinished Projects

Merle Spencer

At one of the monthly meetings of the OKCA several years ago, during my presentation, I mentioned that I had several unfinished knife projects I hadn't worked on for a long time; and I wondered if I would ever get them all finished.

Another long-time member spoke up and asked if I knew what would happen if I got them all finished. When I said, "No," he said, "You'll die."

I replied that such a circumstance wasn't a preferred outcome, and I wouldn't be too concerned. I would just let time go by and get to them if and when I could - or not. And that is exactly what I have done.

Now here I am in my early nineties, and there they are - unfinished.

Oh, I have spent a little time on each of them during the two years we have lived at this senior living facility, an hour here, half hour there, with long gaps in between. When we come back to the apartment after lunch, the rocking chair draws......

There are only two that I am actually concerned with at present, gotta save some; so I don't get them all done.

The first one that I plan to apply myself to is an 8-1/2"full tang piece with the blade taking up

the first 4". It must have been 15 years ago when I got it, because I remember working on it soon after I learned how to do Bob Engnath's eight-hour hand sanding method. Yep, eight hours. You need to see your reflection in the finished blade. This blade, however, I had bought already finished, except for attaching bolsters and handle material. It can still take 20 to 30 hours of fitting, shaping and sanding before you have a finished knife.

I tried some back filing, as Woody Woodcock had showed me. The metal easily responded to a chainsaw file; but I wasn't happy with the rope

design, so I took it over to the belt sander and sanded it off. This made the blade shape more pleasing, anyway. Oh, I do miss that old belt sander.

I had attached nickel silver bolsters and water buffalo scales with no problems. From there on some problems began to arise, and you can see why this knife ended up on the shelf for so many years.

While I was working on shaping the buffalo horn and bolsters, I had covered the blade with a double layer of good old masking tape. I accomplished a nicely shaped handle with a palm swell; and the horn took a nice polish, a finished knife.

The black horn had a whitish streak curving from the bolster to the butt. It looked like smoke from a campfire. By then I had learned to do some scrimshaw and metal engraving. I pictured a campfire at the bolster with the smoke drifting past an Indian maiden facing the fire. The profile of an Indian brave just showed between her and the fire. I had even drawn a sketch and put in color. It was

what I wanted.

Then I decided the handle was too bulky and heavy. That's when I started grinding on both sides with flexible shaft Foredom hand piece, and that's what it looked like years and years later.

The knife had laid there beside my rocking chair (we still use them) for a couple months while I got a notion to work on it. Now, of course, the masking tape had become stiff and hard, almost like pasteboard. Using a knife, I cut all the



hard stuff off. The once sticky stuff had become hard. It resisted all my attempts to scrape it off with a sharp edge of a discarded brass bolster. Next, I coated the blade with vinegar. No effect. I tried alcohol. Same result. While wiping the blade after washing it with water, I found that the stuff had become soft. Good old water! The good cleanser.

After cleaning off all the sticky stuff, I could see my face in the blade again. I have done some sanding on the handle since then, but not much.

The other project I plan to do more to soon concerns a Bob Engnath blade, the last one I have kept all these years, two nicely stabilized maple burl scales and two buffalo nickels.

The blade is just under 8" long, the tapered tang taking up about half of that. The blade has an unusual back shape, straight halfway to the point and then a raised hump before it curves down to the point. I thought someday I would make a knife for myself. I have sanded on it sometimes, but it still is not up to mirror finish.

Years ago, at a show, I found some buttons made of buffalo nickels that had been slightly dome shaped and an eye attached to the underside. Two of them, one each with Janie and my birth dates, I plan to use as bolsters for the blade of this project. I know there will be problems, easier in my old shop - how to attach the nickels, how to cut out the scales to fit halfway around the nickels. But what better way to display them?

I have not worked on either one of these projects for more than two months. But I dream.





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 banana peels) 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.

David Boye Knives are available for sale. Dan Pfahning. qcutery@yahoo.com or (406)261-4873

For Sale - Mint Randall 50 year commemorative #257 - Call Jim, (562)-716-9857 or email jpitt306@ earthlink.net,

Custom Leather for 43 years. Horsehide and brass nailed knife sheaths. (951)303-4666. Visit website mountainmikecustomleather. com.

Wanted: Sequine Knives that are unusual, such as custom orders, gut hooks, or any other unusual models. Please email jh5jh@aol.com with a picture attached or call (805)431-2222 and ask for Jack.

Loveless Style Sheaths: made to order. Call or text Zac & Sara Buchanan (541)815-2078.

Niagra Knife Steels: email zacbuchananknives@gmail.com for a quote.

Wanted: Remington scout/ utility knife with pioneer boys or highlander boys shield or heroism shield. Email jpitt306@earthlink.net or phone Jim (562)716-9857.

Buying OKCA Club knives for my personal collection. Looking for the 1998 Wayne Goddard with the wood beaver handle. I would consider buying other Club knives and Wayne Goddard knives. Also looking for Spyderco Kopas. Call or email Jordan (310)386-4928 - jgl321@aol. com

Randall Made Knives. Buy, Sell, Trade. Also a good selection of Case knives and many custom knives

knives and many custom knives for sale or trade. Jim Schick www. nifeboy.com (209)295-5568.

Wanted: Western Wildlife Series etched knives as follows: 532 bear, 532 eagle, 521 eagle, 534 antelope. Will pay fair price for any. Call Martin at (406)442-2783 leave message.

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.

Wanted: 2012 Case XX USA medium stockman #6318 PU CV jigged bone w/punch w/signature of Skip Lawrie. 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 Yellow horse models. Email loden402@ gmail.com or call (765) 244-0614 8AM-8PM EST.

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

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.

Eugene 5160 Club: A Club for knifemakers of all stripes, meeting monthly. Check out our newsletter archive to get a feel for the group: elementalforge.com/5160Club.

Sign up for newsletter & meeting reminders by finding us on Facebook at "5160 Club" and click the "Newsletter Sign up" tab. Non Facebook users can still find us at: facebook.com/5160Club.

Want to Learn to Make a Knife? The \$50 Knife Shop by Wayne Goddard is back in print and available from Steve Goddard. Also has copies of the Wonder of Knifemaking. Books are \$25.00 plus shipping. Call Steve (541)870-6811 or send an email to sg2goddard@comcast.net

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A Kings Valley Story

Clay Stephens

There's a stone that sits in the rose garden of Avery Park in Corvallis, Oregon. Its story starts on the docks of Portland in 1850. Hauled in a wagon to a small valley in the coastal mountains of Oregon, it found its home in a grist mill on the Luckiamute river. The mill not only provided flour to the homesteaders but also to the garrison at Fort Hoskins, where a young Phil Sheridan was posted.

The stone is witnessed by this butcher knife that originated from Kings Valley during the same time period. Its heavy blade has been refashioned from a previous unknown pattern, possibly a cleaver.

