

# The One And Only Monthly Newsletter of the Eugene 5160 Club – January 2011

January Meeting will be Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the Woodcraft store in Sheldon Plaza on Coburg Road, Eugene. To plan and/or take responsibility for future meetings or events, come to the McDonald's (also in Sheldon Plaza) at 5pm.

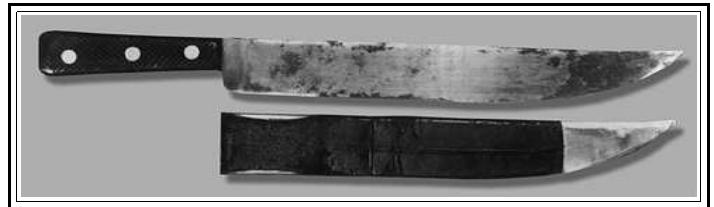
My pitch for a separate “steering committee” meeting each month fell flat. Instead, we are going to meet at the nearby McDonald's at 5pm before the regular meeting. This is for anyone who wants to participate in planning our meetings and events and to take responsibility for making them happen. There were several specific ideas tossed around at the last meeting that we've got for starters.

In my world we have something planned when somebody says “I'll see to it that it happens.” I'm not as skilled a knifemaker as a lot of you and not that connected to potential speakers – but what I can do is keep a list of ideas and be the guy to check in part way through the month to see if the plan is working or if help is needed. And I can host another etching workshop (in Summer, when it's **warm**).

Wayne launched into the eternal “what is a Bowie knife” discussion. He had brought along a copy of Flayderman's book “The Bowie Knife: Unsheathing an American Legend.” This book documents the creation, marketing, and development of this most American of big blades (with considerable influence from the smiths of Sheffield, England)!

So does a Bowie need to have a clip point? No, the knife at the Sandbar Fight probably did not have a clip point, and many knives accepted as “Bowies” are spear points.

Does it require a D guard? No. Again the Sandbar Fight knife probably did not have a guard at all – nor does the Edwin Forrest Bowie knife – purportedly as close to a “true” Bowie as you can get.



So along with a tall tale about why Jim Bowie decided to add a guard to his famous knife, Wayne concluded that a Bowie is a big knife primarily to be used for self defense, and that's about all you can say about it.

And here are a couple of Goddard Bowies. The top one was inspired by the Forrest Bowie – which Wayne fondly remembers handling at the Atlanta show.



The bottom Bowie is one that Wayne made in the Bill Scagel style. If you were at the meeting you got the pleasure of feeling the weight and balance of these fine blades!

When I last spoke with Wayne he was assembling jigs and samples to show how he does stacked handles. I bet the Scagel style Bowie will make a repeat appearance this Thursday. And maybe some of those spacers from Scagel's shop...

Wayne told some Scagel stories.

There was some talk about fitting guards to blades – including a tip to use a hydraulic press to (gently) get a good tight fit on the guard – then knock the guard off and clean up any marks and ridges and do the final fit with hand tools.

Wayne went on to describe his method for putting pins into antler handles. He prefers to seat pins in the grooves of the antler, and advised on the process of making and seating a pin. And like a recipe in my ooold version of Joy of Cooking that starts with “first you shoot a squirrel” ... Wayne started with “first you make a pin peening vice.”

To make a pin peening vice, clamp a business card you don't want into a metal vice that you don't mind making some channels in. Then drill directly down into the vice jaws. The business card will (1) guide the drill and (2) ensure that a pin the diameter of the drill bit will be held tight. Drill for all the sizes of pin that you want to work with.

Put your cut piece of pin stock in the appropriate channel you drilled in the vice, with just enough sticking up to make a head. Peen a head on the pin. Insert the pin into the handle and seat it to the antler. Using a ridge or bump on your vice to hold the peened end firmly against the antler, carefully peen the opposite side with a hammer that has been modified to have a very small peening surface.

Wayne then showed us a sample of how he makes patterned (soft) metal by creating a pattern in a steel plate, then pressing the plate and (for instance) a sheet of copper in the hydraulic press. In this way you can make the pattern once, but use it many many times.

Here are some of those hammers for peening the end of the pin.



From there we had one of our free flowing discussions... Need to remove pitch? Paint remover. Need to clean antler? Simple Green and a toothbrush – then let dry. Want to restore that natural coloring to antler? Put just enough potassium permanganate into water to see the purple color, and apply with a Q-tip. Want to seal antler? Try Minwax penetrating sealer – apply it, wait 10 minutes, then wipe off the excess. Antler cracked by natural freezing and bleached by sun and time? Do the potassium permanganate thing and seal cracks with superglue. Want to buff some stag? OK, but then clean with Simple Green and a toothbrush and take it out to natural light (you may not see green buffing compound under indoor lights) – and re-seal it after it dries.

Then some general talk of good and bad knife design (Bowies and hunting knives mainly), and we were off into the December night.

So: January meeting will feature Wayne's tips and jigs for making stacked handles. Plus anything the rest of us bring in (I've got a curiosity question based on a Viking swords book I was given).

And to help us steer 5160 into the future, show up early at the McDonald's!

Keep Well!

Michael Kemp