

# Master Horner PROFILES

This is the ninth in a series of articles on those members of the Honourable Company of Horners who have achieved the status of Master Horner. Currently there are nine members who have attained this status and each one has played an integral role in the Guild, whether it is in their demonstrated artisan skills, leadership abilities, or being instrumental in the growth and development of our organization. Profiles of all the Masters are featured on the Guild's Website at [www.hornguild.org](http://www.hornguild.org).

John Proud | Roland Cadle | John Kiselica  
Lee Larkin | Art DeCamp | Joe Becker  
Willy Frankfort | Erv Tschanz | Carl Dumke

In accordance with the Guild's Standing Rules, for anyone to become a Master Horner, an individual must "demonstrate a superlative level of ability in carving, heating and pressing, turning, engraving, and integrating woods and metals with cow horn by presenting three horn objects that demonstrate his or her ability to the Awards Committee for evaluation," plus give "an original written and oral presentation to the HCH at an annual meeting or to another accredited organization on some aspect of horn working or its history." Needless to say, this is a high standard that has been met by only a few members and each has played a vital role in making the HCH what it is today. ■

## Carl Dumke *Master Horner*

### The Road to Master Horner

Carl Dumke's road to becoming a Master Horner has been unlike any others who have previously traveled down this path. At best, it is a difficult and arduous journey as substantiated by the fact that it has been five years since any Guild member has advanced to the level of Master Horner. This is not a feat that can be accomplished in a short period of time. It took Carl about a year from concept to reality, to complete his projects which does not include the time taken to research and prepare his oral presentation. It takes dedication, patience and perseverance in addition to research, planning, time in the shop, and coping with setbacks and unexpected obstacles being placed in one's path.

Pretend for a moment that you are a Journeyman, having attained that status five years ago and this year (2014) you are going for your Master's rating. The last individual to advance to Master Horner was in 2009, five long years ago! Since becoming a Journeyman you have researched, planned and labored to complete the three horn objects that hopefully will qualify you for advancement. You have been told that instead of giving a formal presentation, you can demonstrate engraving as part of the Interactive Masters' & Journeymens' Workshop - thus a lot of pressure alleviated. You are all set and feel confident that you are fully prepared to meet all the requirements for becoming a Master Horner.

Now, suppose you happen to attend the Executive Committee meeting on Thursday evening prior to the beginning of the Guild's Annual Meeting on Friday morning. A discussion ensues during the meeting that Standing Rule #1, Section E (Advancement to Master) is not being adequately enforced. It states that a Master candidate



must give an original written and oral presentation on some aspect of horn work or its history. Simply stated, working demonstrations do not meet this requirement. The resulting consensus is that a Master must be able give formal public presentations. The Guild is only as good as its membership and especially those bestowed with the title of Master Horner. As such, Standing Rule #1 would be upheld and all requirements fully met.

What is your reaction? Everyone's attention is directed toward you and the Guildmaster inquires that although you were told you could give a demonstration, are you prepared to give a formal presentation? Do you (1) protest the requirement, (2) request an exemption in light of the circumstances, (3) request a delay in giving your presentation till next year, or (4) meet your commitment to demonstrate engraving as part of the Interactive Masters' & Journeymens' Workshop and agree to give a formal oral presentation on some aspect of horn work? What would you do? It's a difficult situation and an even more difficult decision to have to make.

This is exactly what happened to Carl Dumke on Thursday night, March 6th, 2014. His countenance remained unchanged as he calmly

replied that he wished he had known of the change ahead of time. Despite this, he stated that he was prepared to give a formal presentation and provide the required written documentation on the subject matter. In addition, he would still meet his obligation to demonstrate engraving as part of the Interactive Masters' & Journeymens' Workshop! A truly extraordinary decision and response.

On Saturday morning at 10 o'clock, Carl stood before a filled room and gave a 45 minute presentation entitled *The Hornebook*. His class was excellent and all those in attendance enjoyed the in-depth, well researched and professional presentation. The basis for his class was a 53 page manuscript he authored and published in 2013 entitled *The Hornebook - A Study of History, Form & Function*. It is well researched and written, contains excellent supporting photographs and is a must have publication that is highly recommended for horn workers, collectors and educators alike.

Near the close of events on Saturday, the judging for those submitting work for advancement to Journeyman and Master took place. One could easily surmise, just by looking at the display, that Carl would easily pass the requirements for advancement to Master.

## Master Horner's Items

(Lower left) German hunting flask. The mechanical spout is all turned horn with a key to open and close the valve. It is attached to the body with a piece of turned tiger maple. The spout plug is shaped antler crown attached to the body with brass chain. The body of the flask is a band of horn, between two pieces of tiger maple. The braided leather cord is attached to the body by turned, carved antler rings. The rings are fixed to the body by brass oak leaves with a fine rat-tail inverted hook. The cord comes together with a leather Spanish knot ending in turned horn bells over elk mane fur tassels. The front and back are turned white horn engraved with a European stag & wreath, the back engraved with a blowing horn.



Above) Scottish knife called a *sgian dubh* with damascus blade forged by Carl with antler bolster, the handle is made of buffalo horn with black leather spanish knots. Pommel is a jasper stone from Scotland mounted in a silver bezel.



(Above) A jagg wheel that sailors used to make during the mid 1800's from whaling expeditions. Sailors would sell them after returning home to women for use in cutting pie/pastry crust. The seahorse is buffalo horn and the wheel is turned and carved antler with horn washers and a scalloped edge. The horn on the seahorse head is turned and carved antler. The eyes are turned antler beads.

Why is this story being told? It is simply because it clearly demonstrates that Carl possesses those artistic and leadership qualities possessed by the other Masters and that he more that qualifies to become a part of this elite group.

All Master Horners are truly unique individuals and each been featured in *The Horn Book* and appropriately depicted: John Proud-quiet, involved, thorough / Lee Larkin-serious, studious, researcher extraordinaire / Willy Frankfort- artist, designer, fighter, your choice be careful / Roland Cadle-intense, driven, one who leads / Art DeCamp-the quiet loud type / Erv Tschanz-the professor / John Kiselica-the Guild's own Vincent van Gogh. Add to that list Carl Dumke-the indefatigable one! That term simply means one who is persistent, untiring, inexhaustible, unflagging - well,

you get the point. Carl is, in essence, one who gets the job done, has a positive impact on those he meets, and will be a great ambassador for the Guild as a Master Horner. His background prepared him well for this situation as well as his future within the Guild.

Born in Ohio, Carl graduated from The Ohio State University in 1988, where he also received his commission in the United States Air Force. In 1990 he earned his wings at Mather Air Force Base in California and over his 26 years of service has risen to the rank of Colonel. He has held key command and staff positions throughout his career, holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Leadership and is a graduate of both the Air Command and Staff College and the Air War College. Carl is a Master Navigator with more

than 2,500 flight hours and has seen combat action in Operations Desert Storm, Allied Force and Enduring Freedom.

His interest in horn work didn't occur till much later when he met Journeyman Jim Leach at a craft fair in Colonial Williamsburg and saw Jim's personal powder horn. An artist at heart and involved with his own small business of designing and making colonial tavern and trade signs during his free time, he naturally took an immediate interest in horn work. In 2008 Carl joined the Honourable Company of Horners, earning his Journeyman status in 2009.

His family has a rich military past which helps explain his interest in military campaign horns, especially those of John Bush from the French & Indian War period. He has won several HCH awards for his horn work and was featured in the Summer 2012 issue of *The Horn Book* in an article entitled *Campaign Horn: Circa 2012 Afghanistan*. It's a story about a campaign powder horn he made while serving in Afghanistan that depicts his service there. This 'special project' is the one that possesses the most meaning to Carl.

As proof of his interest in horn work, he has visited several museums. The collections he found most interesting include Williamsburg, the Smithsonian and the Abby Aldridge Museum of Folk Art. As a researcher he subscribes to several publications which include *Muzzle Blasts*, *Muzzleloader*, *Early American Life*, *Williamsburg Foundation* and *The Revolution*. It is no surprise that since he grew up shooting competitively that he is now a member of the American Longrifle Association and the Contemporary Longrifle Association and of course, the Honourable Company of Horners.

Carl Dumke's 'Road to Master Horner' has indeed been quite unique from start to finish. His demonstrated skills and the method in which he handled adversity at the 11th hour, makes him a welcomed addition to the ranks of the Masters. It is evident that he will continue to be a major contributor to our Guild and ensure its future will continue to flourish. - wec ■



## Journeyman Items