

Master Horner PROFILES

This is the fourth 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.

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.

This issue's "Master Horner Profiles" will spotlight Roland Cadle, founder of the Honourable Company of Horners, a dedicated and talented artisan, one who is deeply passionate about horn working, its related activities, and the Guild.

Roland Cadle Master Horner

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One of the human qualities I have always been interested in and have come to appreciate more and more over my lifetime is that of leadership. Its many facets include providing guidance and direction, exercising the ability to train and develop others, and setting the example. A leader must be a communicator, manage and embrace growth, be receptive to new ideas, and adapt to changing conditions. The entire membership of our Guild is fortunate indeed that Roland Cadle possesses these qualities and used them in the founding of the Honourable Company of Horners.

Have you ever given thought to there not being an Honourable Company of Horners? I speculate that much of the research would not have taken place, many of the horn construction techniques would have passed into obscurity, the sharing ideas would not have taken place, advancement of skills hindered, and most of all, many friendships would have never evolved. We as a Guild owe Roland Cadle a debt of gratitude for his insight, passion for horn working, and his founding of the Guild and needless to say, his leadership.

As always, I forwarded a questionnaire for Roland to fill out which I use as a basis for this series of articles. In response, I received replies from Kathy, his wife, and Pam Roub, his business partner. Then I received the following response from Roland, which answered all my questions at once, and not item by item. His thoughts were so candidly expressed, and I might add – typically Roland – that I decided to publish them as written. I know you will enjoy Roland's response and be ready for a tad bit of humor from the very start!

"Being born at an early age initially hampered my development as a horner. Learning to talk and walk (something I actually had to learn twice) coupled with the whole primary education experience did, however, lay a good foundation. At age four I could have built my first campaign horn, but that was delayed until I was twelve and needed a powder



horn for my double- barrel, 16- gauge percussion shot gun. Metal flasks had not arrived on Brush Mountain at that time. Our school janitor, and neighbor to my

best friend, instructed me on how to build and then to engrave a horn as a professional would have done. The experience of building my first horn took place along with complications following rheumatic fever (relearning the walking and talking) and becoming a Christian (learning to walk and talk straight)."



"Seven years later, I discovered the S.W. Johnson powder horn in a used TV set during a church youth gathering in Mishawaka, Indiana. Although the man decided against selling me the horn for my entire week's check (\$35), he did say I could borrow it for as long as I wanted. In November of the following year, I sent a \$3 mail order for a 2^{3/4} inch right hand, double twist, white horn with black tip to Schneider in Texas. Needless to say, I did not get quite what I wanted. I did, however, copy the S.W. Johnson horn which is a NY map horn on the outboard side and the map of Cuba on the inboard. I sold that first copy for \$15, meaning my "profit" was \$11.50 (cost and shipping from Texas). I took this vast sum and spent it all on a (the) Christmas



gift for my wife of four months, Kathy. I had lost my lucrative church job and was working for half the wages. We were poor and knew it."

"In 1971, I was installed as the senior and only pastor of the Cedar Lawn Missionary Church in Hagerstown, MD. There I became acquainted with Eagle Mountain Long Rifles and in particular with Jack Cline. Jack is a period blade smith and rifle maker, and also at that time had a wonderful collection of screw tip horns. Several of his friends also had fine collections of these horns and also bags. Where were these horns historically? Who made them? How were they made? These were some of the questions we deliberated in 1972-3."

"As important as those questions were, they paled in comparison to the question raised when I went to the "Baltimore Gun Show" in 1972. The sister of the show's director had two tables for display only of original hornware: boxes, bottles, ink horns, shoe horns, lanterns, scythe horns, powder horns and combs-especially a folding comb fashioned as an Indian Princess who stuck out her tongue. I was mesmerized. I was twenty-two years old and here was something I didn't know. How could this be! I only thought of powder horns, hand- made or, now seeing screw tips, powder horns that were shop- made. But here were scores of items professionally (shop) made. Was horn work an actual trade? If so, there should be a history, a guild in England or Europe. How many other items should one be able to find?"

"If I have developed an eye for what is original and have correctly calculated the methodology, I have to attribute the talent to the opportunities I have had to view private collections, which included this

variety of horn ware items. Sometimes it was the "homely, uncelebrated" pieces which even the owners did not value as highly as the powder horns that were most telling and to me, most valuable."

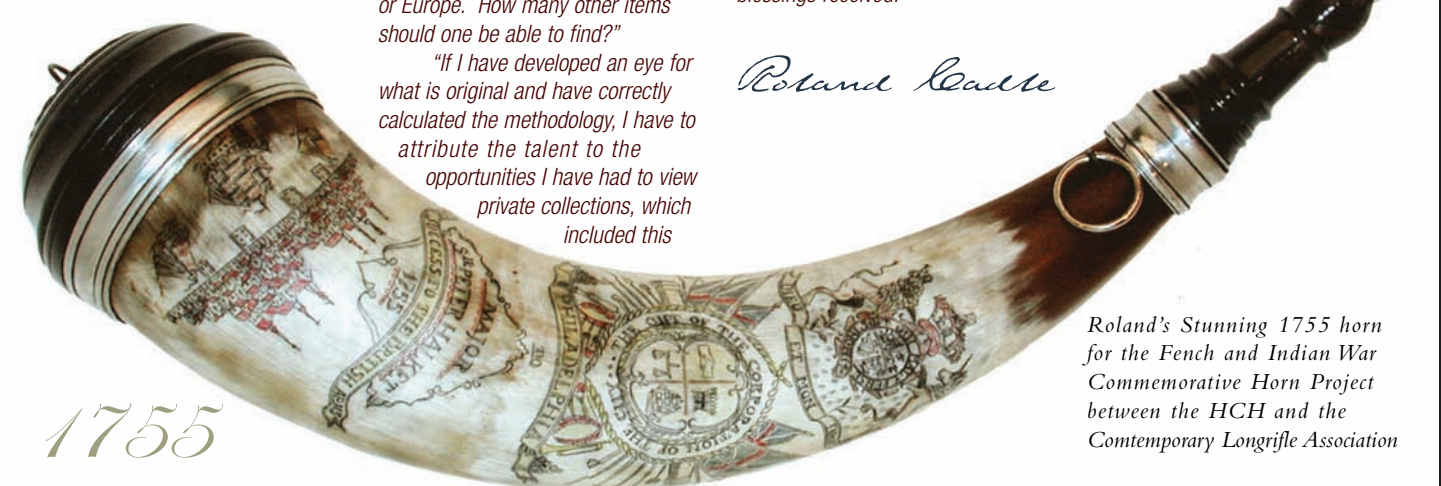
"While viewing that table, I made a decision. If there were such a trade, I would document it through its surviving artifacts, original written material and by recreating the shop, tools, and methods. I would then reproduce as many of those original items as I could. I've always believed if I could set my sights low enough, I might just hit something."

"Twenty years later, I was confident that I knew and could transmit the results of my effort to others. Asking Kathy if she minded mortgaging our house to pay for a horn faire at the Mercer Museum in Bucks County, PA was the next step.

See the detail images of this horn on the previous page

Who would have thought that the future of the guild would hang on her answer? So we borrowed \$4,000 and as some would say, the rest is history. The friendships that support, and the craftsmanship that causes you to strive harder, have been the blessings received."

Roland Cadle



Roland's Stunning 1755 horn for the Fench and Indian War Commemorative Horn Project between the HCH and the Contemporary Longrifle Association