

MASTER COLLECTOR / HISTORIAN PROFILE

CARL DUMKE



Editor's Note: To date only three Guild members have attained the status of Master Collector / Historian in over 25 years of the Guild's existence. Carl Dumke achieved this status on March 5, 2022 which was the culmination of his collecting original horn items over many years. Each Master Collector / Historian has their own niche and Carl is no different as explained in the article. Those who fill this void are to be highly commended for their dedication, research, expertise, guidance and sharing of knowledge. Their contributions to our Guild is of great importance and hopefully more will follow to become Master Collector / Historians.

Current recipients include:
Glenn Beall
Jay Hopkins
Carl Dumke

In accordance with the Guild's Standing Rules, two of the major requirements to become a Master Collector / Historian are that an individual must "Show a superlative collection of horn articles presented in a historical context. (i.e. carved powder horns, folk art powder horns, screw tip powder horns, snuff boxes, combs, etc.) to be reviewed by the Awards Committee for evaluation at the annual meeting." In addition "...the candidate must give an original presentation to the HCH at an annual meeting on the collection" followed by a written "copy for the study and advancement of current and future Guild members." A high standard indeed, but those acquiring this level have a vital and essential role in our Guild.

Introducing **Carl Dumke** Master Collector / Historian

Something happened last March 5th, 2022 when a new milestone was achieved by Carl Dumke, perhaps one that may stand for quite some time. The achievement: Carl is the first Guild member to attain the status of Master Horner and Master Collector / Historian. Indeed a notable achievement! His path to attaining this accomplishment is notable as well.

Carl's father was an Air Force veteran and as such Carl grew up traveling around the world, beginning in Scott Air Force Base (Illinois), then on to North Dakota, Alabama, Germany, Virginia and finally settling in Ohio.

Following graduation from The Ohio State University and obtaining his Master's Degree from Gonzaga University, Carl was commissioned in the Air Force where he served for 27 years attaining the rank of Colonel. During his career he had several key assignments in addition to compiling 3,000 flight hours and 100 combat sorties as a Command Navigator. He also earned 3 Campaign Medals for his service in Desert Storm, Kosovo and Afghanistan and is a recipient of the Legion of Merit.

Following retirement he became the Site Director for the Air Force Research Laboratory and after 8 years became a Training Analyst for the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center.

It wasn't until an assignment in Virginia that he met Jim Leach and developed an intense interest in horn work. He joined the Honourable Company of Horners in 2008, attained Journeyman status in 2011 and 3 years later on March 8, 2014 met all qualifications to become a Master Horner. In 2015 Carl became Chairman of the Awards Committee where he developed and formalized the current awards and advancement process. Approximately one year later he was elected as Guildmaster Elect and become Guildmaster in 2018 serving a 2 year tenure.

Carl's interest in horn collecting began as a student of history and having a fascination with early American neolithic and Roman conquest histories. He started collecting horn items shortly after joining the Guild. His main concentration was screw-tipped horns after taking a class with Art DeCamp. His first horn project was a screw-tipped powder horn that resembled a Lancaster-style horn but was not quite right. Having an Ohio provenance, he talked it over with Art to solve the mystery.



My wife, Jennifer, has always been my inspiration, my biggest fan and has the patience of Job when it comes to my horn work.

In studying the attributes, they realized it was in the Lancaster School style but could be considered a transitional horn from along the Ohio Road. That peaked Carl's interest in not only the origination of various horn work, but the associated histories of the period. This interest in horn work further evolved into a focused look at European and American powder flasks.

It comes as no surprise that screw-tipped horns and powder flasks of various origins are Carl's greatest interest when it comes to collecting. He is especially interested in flasks with detailed craftsmanship and attention to detail. The work can be as fine as a professional craftsman to that of a folk artist. This is true of the many effigy horns that he has collected over the years.

Carl relies on two primary means of keeping informed of activities in the world of horn collecting. The first source being that of a German auction publication 'Hermann Historica' as well as an online auction database www.liveauctioneers.com which features many notable antique and auctioneer dealers. Second, he has visited various European collections in Germany and England. Here in the United States, he has been fortunate to see some Revolutionary War horns in both private collections and museum back rooms that have not been associated with public exhibitions. He stated that "I was fortunate to see some early horns at the Abbey Aldridge Museum in Colonial Williamsburg and through US Army collections. The most fascinating are those that can be traced to specific individuals as they provide glimpses into specific historical events."

Carl has been involved in several special projects that had special meaning to him. It comes as no surprise that one of the projects was for his advancement to Master Horner which oriented on his study of European Powder Flasks. Carl said that he "was pushed to expand my skills and create an all-horn mechanical valve. This took considerable brainstorming, planning and shop effort to achieve. The other project was documenting the origins of several horns owned by multiple Guild members created by the same hand. I was amazed that they all traveled from late 17th century Germany throughout the world and ended up in a small group of collectors."

When asked about future plans regarding the research, history and collecting of horn artifacts he said that he "would like to continue working on documenting and collecting specific horn examples of European powder flasks — in particular, examples of early Ottoman horns from the Carpathian regions of Europe. Additionally, I would like to continue research into hornbooks previously unknown in the historical record or through private collections."

Being one of the first recipients in the Guild to attain Master Collector / Historian status, Carl hopes that "it will serve to inspire others to investigate and share the history, technology, and manufacture of horn items so as to preserve this art form. There is considerable information and study needed to sustain the knowledge of our craft. More and more of the technology and history may be lost unless we take an active role in investigating and replicating historical horn items. Once achieved, it is essential to document and pass the information to the Guild so as to preserve it for the future."

Carl would like his contributions to horn work and collecting "to be widely shared to preserve this specific aspect of our craft." He hopes to see more emphasis and recognition by the Guild in encouraging others to achieve Master Collector / Historian status. He feels "it is essential for the preservation of knowledge of our craft so as not to get lost. It takes active and persistent mentorship to inspire the drive within the Guild."

Congratulations — Well Done!!

