The Horn Book

The Honourable Company of Horners,
The American Guild of Horn Workers

Roland Cadle, Pres. Clay Smith, Vice Pres. Russ Young, Secty-Treas.

Volume 2, Number 3 October, 1997

Report from Dixon's Gunfair
by John Proud

I suspect that most of our members have heard of Dixon's Gun Fair but that many have not attended the event. Living in central New York, I have taken advantage of the proximity and been a participant there for the last three years.

It was a busy event for Erv Tschanz, his wife, Julie and myself, travelling there on Friday, arriving late in the evening for an early morning set up Saturday. Tent space and a table were provided for the guild in the "horn & bag tent" by the Dixons. Brothers Bob Chattin, Bruce Horne, Lee Larkin, and Mark Odle also had tables in it. Other brothers in attendance included Tom Ames, Willie Frankfort, Jim Lynch, Orville Mumma and Mike Slease.

Although hot and humid was the only way to describe the weather, it didn't seem to adversely affect attendance or enthusiasm. Hot also desribed the seminar schedule which began on Friday afternoon and continued through Sunday. One of the major features of the Fair is the aggressive and impressive schedule of seminars on a wide variety of topics focused on 18th century life. A total of twenty-six hour long seminars were offered!

Brother Chattin presented a seminar on "Basic Horn Making." One of the basic techniques her covered was drilling the spout hole- you should ask him about his method or better yet, maybe he will demonstrate it at the annual guild meeting.

A large array of tents filled the area surrounding the Dixon's home and shop to provide exhibition space for artisans and sutlers. The Dixon Gun Shop anchors the central area and is well worth a visit any time. Chuck & Greg Dixon's collection of antiques constitutes a worthy museum.

Probably the central focus of the Fair for most guild members is the juried contests for firearms and accessories. Numerous opportunities exist for entering your creation in friendly competition with other artisans. Chuck Dixon's large garage, midway between the house and shop, is the focus for the judging activities. It is a busy spot throughout the weekend, culminating with bestowing the awards on Sunday afternoon.

There are two major categories: firearms or accouterments. Each entry is scored by the respective judges on a list of attributes and a written critique with helpful suggestions is included with the score sheet that is given to the entrant. I have found these critiques extremely useful in improving my horn work. Quite a number of prizes in the "accessories" category were won by guild brothers (see the following list).

Topping off the Fair was a sumptuous Saturday evening dinner open to all. Held in the seminar tent, this provided a relaxing conclusion to a hectic day and a fine opportunity to meet and chat with a host of interesting people.

The Honourable Company of Horners wishes to thank Chuck & Greg Dixon once again for sponsoring this incredible event that has done so much to revitalize our art. Their hours of selfless work and devotion to our needs have not gone without notice. We deeply appreciate their efforts.

Prize Winners at Dixon's Gunfair

Brother Chuck Hamilton, one of the three accouterments judges, compiled the list of official winners from the July event. Winners in relevant categories included:

CONTEMPORARY ACCOUTERMENTS
decorated horn by Walter Mabry, Jackson, MS

HUNTING BAGS
1st Frank Willis, Hampton, NJ
2nd Carole Proud (better half of Bro. John Proud), Homer, NJ
3rd Mark Worthington, Upper Montclair, NJ

HUNTING BAG/HORN COMBINATIONS
1st Roland Cadle, Green County, PA

2nd Willie Frankfort, Washington County, PA
3rd Herb Knerr, Duncannon, PA

UNDECORATED HORN
1st Dan Vashlishaa, Henryville, PA
2nd Lee Larkin, St. Louis, MO
3rd Richard Frankland, Hamilton, MA

DECORATED HORN
1st John Proud, Homer, NY
2nd Willie Frankfort, Washington County, PA
3rd Steven Rheam, McEwensville, PA

MASTER ACCOUTERMENT
2nd Horn by Bruce Horne, Leroy, IL
3rd Horn by Lee Larkin, St. Louis, MO

JUDGES' CHOICE
Walter Mabry (engraved horn)
Carole Proud (knotted game bag front) (Bro. John Proud's partner!)

Congratulations to Andrea Ames (age 11), daughter of Bro. Tom Ames, and Elizabeth Hamilton (age 9), daughter of Bro. Chuck Hamilton, who competed for the first time in the Junior's Category. There lies our future. We are proud of them!

The Gunmakers' Fair at Dixon's
by Thomas E. Ames, accouterment judge

Who would have ever thought that what began fifteen years ago as a one-time show and forum would have grown into this? It cannot be disputed that it has had a substantial impact on contemporary horn work through the program of demonstrations, teaching and critiques.
This year saw the introduction of a new category, "Juniors," for awards and critiques. It was well received and will be continued in the future. I must mention the entry by Ryan Nicholson, Hopkinton, NH: a fine trio composed of a pouch, engraved horn and engraved tomahawk. This garnered second place as well as a judge's cjoice ribbon. It was incredible that a young man of only twelve years could execute such work. A fine job, Ryan, and congratulations!

We intend to further the goal of developing and assisting our juniors by designing demonstrations and seminars for artisans up to age 18. Any brothers willing to help are asked to contact me.

The "Junior" category did seem to confuse things a bit. We had some entries placed in the "Master" classification because of confusion about the entry procedures. I take full responsibility for this and the result that several entries were not judged and critiqued as they should have been. These problems will be corrected for next year.

Artisans are encouraged to submit their work in any class they wish, except for the "Juniors," which is reserved for those eighteen or less. A maximum of three entries from a single craftsman will be accepted but *only one per category* is allowed. The categories are: (1) **decorated powder horn, (2) plain powder horn** (screw tips allowed), **(3) hunting pouch, (4) pouch/horn combination, (5) cutlery, (6) miscellaneous accouterments, (7) contemporary accouterments, (8) Junior, (9) Master and (10) annual theme** (tentative).

In addition to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place ribbons, other awards may be given at the judges' discretion for: **best overall accouterment, best historical representation, best creative expression.** All award placements must meet a minimum of accrued points to qualify for the 1st-3rd place ribbons. The "judges' choice" is not a 4th place award but rather a special recognition of superb work and of particular merit that cannot be adequately recognized in other ways. An example was young Ryan's entry which demonstrated the various skills needed in horn, leather, wood and metal work in addition to his engraving on horn and brass.

In our efforts to not restrict the "Masters" to only one entry, consideration is being given currently to expanding the categories to include an "Annual Theme" entry, as the gun category does now. This will be open to all, from novice to master. For the next Gunfair in July, 1998, it will be **game bags and lower Delaware Valley Screw Tip horns.** One entry per person of either the bag or horn. Get busy now!

Within the "Masters" class, judgement will be stiff and quality must be high to win any ribbon. Don't hesitate to enter and especially don't back out thinking to leave room for others. As masters you are the best judges of your work, but since this was initiated as a forum for teaching others, a full critique of your work will be given by the judges. The visitors read these critiques and thereby learn from it.

I have been directed to re-establish the image of our original goals and to move in a renewed effort toward <u>detailed</u> critiques. Rest assured that this will be achieved. You can help us by your continued support and willingness to enter your artistry.

Brother Bob Chattin has made a commitment to aid me in this effort and I want to recognize the long service that Brother Mark Odle has given us over the years. It has been a long road of continual growth and success at Dixon's Gunfair. The Gunfair was the initial stepping stone that broadened the horizons of contemporary horn work. That I could contribute to this growth is an honor that has come not of me but from you and your continued support. Thank you.

Treasurer's Report
by Russ Young

We have gained a number of members thanks to the efforts of Brothers John Proud and Erv Tschanz who represented the guild at Dixon's Gunfair. I deposited dues from four new members that are included in this report (and five in August!) for $60.00. I have received dues from four more new members that have not yet been deposited. As a result, we are up to about 95 members. The number of members controls the amount we have on deposit with the bank; if we have an average balance above a certain amount, I can change our type of account and save about $50 a year in service charges.

The Bank of Santa Fe statement dated 9/30/97 shows us with a balance of $739.66. The only expense that period was the bank's monthly fee and sales tax which came to $6.38. This may look like a lot of money but remember that our annual meeting is upcoming and there will be deposits and publicity expenses involved.

Expenses to produce our last issue of The Horn Book were: printing, stapling ($56.41) and postage ($32.00). I always print about ten more copies than membership numbers to have issues to send to prospective members. The number of pages in each issue is limited by the weight so it can be sent for 32 cents rather than jumping up to the next increment. We need 400 issues per mailing to qualify for the much cheaper bulk rate...

Annual Guild Meeting- Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia

Your President, Roland Cadle, has been hard at work lining up our next annual meeting. Set for March 6-8, in scenic Elkins, West Virginia, it should be the best meeting yet. Davis & Elkins College has one of the finest public powder horn collections in existence and we will get a special viewing of it. They have a superb conference center with integral Inn for housing guests. Although not on an Interstae highway, Elkins is easily accessible; 255 miles to Columbus, Ohio, 215 miles to Roanoke, Virginia, 175 miles to Pittsburgh.

Roland has completed much of the program already--- if you want to make a presentation or demonstration, please let him know! A new feature will be the "President's Table" where you may display one item of your horn work and receive a written critique from Roland and others. Please bring a piece for it! We can all learn from those items on display. As always, members are encouraged to bring displays of both contemporary & vintage horn work; tables will be provided.

The reservation form for the Inn at the college is the next page of the newsletter. Make your plans early! Don't procrastinate. Note that they have an 800 number if you wish more information as

well as a world wide web site: wvweb.com/GRACELAND. We have a limit of 100 for the seminars--- the next issue of The Horn Book will have your registration form for the meeting.

Connor Prairie Gunmakers Workshop, Fishers, Indiana

This year horn work will be on the program for the Eighth Annual Arms Makers Workshop, to be held October 10-12. Brother Roland Cadle will teach many aspects of practical horn building. This is an excellent opportunity to learn from novice to master level techniques. For information call The Conner Prairie Museum: 317-776-6000, extension 241. This is THE premier gun making workshop, a sound investment. Your editor believes it was the best money he ever spent in the field. My apologies for not getting this information to you sooner.

Group Room Reservation

Graceland Inn and Conference Center

Please complete the following and return to:

100 Campus Drive
Elkins, WV 26241
304.637.1600 800.624.3157
FAX 304.637.1809

Attn: CONFERENCE COORDINATOR

Group Name HORNERS' GUILD MEETING
Arrival Date MARCH 6, 1998
Departure Date MARCH 8, 1998
Name(s) _____
Address _____
City _____ **ST** _____ **ZIP** _____
Phone (_____) _____
Number in Party _____
Rate $45 ONE & $60 TWO PERSONS PER NIGHT **plus 9% Tax**
Smoking _____ **Non-smoking** _____

All reservations must be guaranteed by a major credit card or one night's deposit plus applicable taxes.

Credit Card _____ **Account No.** _____
Expiration date _____
(or) One Night's Deposit $_____ **is enclosed.**

Rooms at the above rate are for reservations received by _____.
Reservations received after this date are accepted based upon availability