

Chapter II The Formative Years

March 1999 - March 2000

President

Clay Smith

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**Vice President**

James Leach

**Secretary**

Russ Young

**Treasurer**

Russ Young

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2000 Horn Fair:
Conner Prairie, Indiana

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**Introduction**

The Guild entered its fourth year and although amazing progress was being made, key organization features such as bylaws, certain state/federal financial matters and essential committees had yet to be addressed, especially in light of the Guild's potential growth.

Both membership and finances were stable and Russ noted that the Guild was "in excellent position for next year's conference and allows a fair amount of flexibility for the officers to make decisions" and "probably indicates that the dues will remain stable at \$15 per year."<sup>1</sup>

**Key Highlights**

~Horn Exhibit at the Johnson-Humrick House Museum in Coshocton, Ohio: Russ Young, with the help of Bruce Horne, had video taped the exhibit at the Johnson-Humrick House Museum which ran from September 12 through November 22, 1998. It was 116 minutes and showed about 190 of the 220 horn objects on display. It was made primarily for horn workers as close-ups and objects were rotated to show key details of interest to horn workers. The notice was in the May 1999 *Horn Book* to let members know that copies were still available.

~Financial/Membership Status - It is always interesting to track the financial status of the Guild and note its current year's balance. Over the first four years of its existence, the balance of funds had increased with each passing year. Near the close of GY 1999-2000 the HCH had a balance of \$3,601.60, a good indicator for an all volunteer organization that has been in existence for only four years.<sup>2</sup>

From GY 1996-1997 through GY 1999-2000 the average annual membership has stood at 110 members; the current membership enrollment was reported at 118 - another good indicator.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Russ Young. The Horn Book, May 1999: pg 3.

<sup>2</sup> Russ Young. The Horn Book, July 2000: pg 5.

<sup>3</sup> History Project Committee. HCH History Project, Appendices, Section IX.

~Members in the News:

-Ken Scott & Roland Cadle presented two sessions of instruction at Conner Prairie on making hunting bags and powder horns. Several Guild members attended.<sup>4</sup>

-John & Carole Proud were recognized in the September/October issue of *Muzzleloader* magazine in an article by Beth Gilguin concerning the knotted game bags they have been making - all excellent in quality and reasonably priced.<sup>5</sup>

-Mrs. Adele Schaverien archivist to the Worshipful Company of Horners (WCH), London, England sent the HCH some information regarding the history of the WCH and various other English guilds along with their precedence rankings.<sup>6</sup>

~ Horn Book: A couple of new format changes occurred with the May 1999 issue of *The Horn Book*. Two columns were implemented, as in 'theory' it is more easily readable than one long line and adds a more professional look. Plus, an index was added making it easier to find articles.<sup>7</sup> Although these changes may seem minor, it clearly showed that key members were always trying to contribute in any way to further enhance the Guild.

Another interesting *Horn Book* fact was the mention of the January issue costing \$109.42 to assemble, print and mail!<sup>8</sup>

Russ' pleas for articles was starting to pay off as in the SEPTEMBER 1999 issue two articles appeared: *The Question of Imported Horns* by Byron Smith and "*It is very hard to get fine horns anymore...*" by John Proud. Both are excellent and it was coincidental that both were 'charter members' from the '1996 Hornsmithing Seminar.' Byron had attended the seminar with fellow Williamsburg artisans because he felt it was "a good opportunity" and John had been invited by Irv Tschanz and later said that he felt "More like a kid at the candy store without any money..... Erv's invitation to attend certainly changed the course of my life in a very positive way!" This is mentioned solely because both continued to support the Guild and eventually become key leaders.<sup>9</sup>

~Movie: 'The Patriot': Not only did the Guild have several members in the movie *The Patriot*, but Roland Cadle along with Frank House made the southern style powder horn used by Mel Gibson. Russ wrote that: "With luck, the success of this movie might spur a general re-awakening of interest in early American history and with it an increased demand for powder horns." Both proved true!<sup>10</sup>

~1999 Gunmakers' Fair at Dixon's: Perhaps the main attraction at Dixon's is the gunmakers and accouterments judging programs and again the HCH supported the latter with judges. It was

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<sup>4</sup> Russ Young. *The Horn Book*, Sept 1999: pg 4.

<sup>5</sup> Young, pg 6.

<sup>6</sup> Russ Young. *The Horn Book*, Jan 2000: pg 4.

<sup>7</sup> Russ Young. *The Horn Book*, May 1999: pg 4.

<sup>8</sup> Russ Young. *The Horn Book*, Mar 2000: pg 3.

<sup>9</sup> History Project Committee. HCH History Project, Chapter 1: pg 4 & 5.

<sup>10</sup> Russ Young. *The Horn Book*, Dec 1999: pg 3.

reported that “one had to be there to appreciate the beauty and craftsmanship” and that “words and even photographs fail in describing their unique qualities.”

One criticism of the horn entries in general pertained to proportions explained as “the proportion of the throat to the body were clumsy in many, or on the throat, the positioning of the rings to hold the strap.. When in doubt about proportions, it is hard to go wrong if you apply the golden mean.” An insightful observation and am sure it was annotated on applicable critique sheets.

As in the past, Guild members did well in all categories.<sup>11</sup>

#### Decorated Horn

1st-Art DeCamp  
2nd-Josh Salisbury  
3rd-John Proud

#### Miscellaneous

1st-George Suiter  
2nd-Willy Frankfort  
3rd-James Correll

#### Undecorated Horn

1st-Art DeCamp  
2nd-Dan Vashlishan  
3rd-John Brevik  
Judges' Choices: Ryan Pomante  
Frank Willis

#### Hunting Pouch

1st-Shawn Brevik  
2nd-Josh Brevik  
3rd-Craig Fisher  
Judges' Choices: Randy Wolfe  
Pete Hutton  
Josh Brevik

#### Annual Theme (Southern Highland)

1st-Lee Larkin  
2nd-John Proud  
3rd-Walter Mabry

#### Cutlery

1st-Dick Bingham  
2nd-Randy Wolfe  
3rd-Jim Pease  
Judges' Choice: Jim Pease

#### Master Category Cutlery

1st-Ron Ehlert  
2nd-Gary Birch  
3rd-Randy Wolfe

#### Best Overall Accouterment

Ron Ehlert

#### Best Creative

Bill Keeler with Larry Parker

#### Contemporary

1st-None Awarded  
2nd-Terry Snyder  
3rd-Grey Forrest

#### Best Historical Representative

Art DeCamp

#### Junior Division

1st-Shane Emig (Knife)  
2nd-Ryan Pomante (Powder Horn)  
3rd-David Bennett (Powder Horn)

~Recommended Reading: Russ mentioned in the March 2000 issue an article titled ‘Horn Conservation’ which briefly summarized two articles in Muzzle Blasts magazine on the care and preservation of horns. One was by Jim Dresslar (collector) and the other by M.J. Davis (museum

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<sup>11</sup> Russ Young. The Horn Book, Sept 1999: pg 4.



conservator). If a copy of the 2000 Muzzle Blasts magazine is not available, the synopsis provides an excellent overview.<sup>12</sup>

~Past Video Tapes: The Horn Book issue, March 2000, reiterated the sale of two previously mentioned videos:

-1996 Hornsmithing Seminar (\$87.50) - Four two hour tapes which included speakers and demonstrations on Indian horn, early horns, horn turning, cup making, etc.

-1998 Horn Exhibit at the Johnson-Humrick House Museum in Coshocton, Ohio (\$17.50): Held from September 12th through November 22nd, 1998 and shows 190 of the 220 horn objects in the display.<sup>13</sup>

### **2000 Horn Fair**

The Guild's 2000 Horn Fair did not take place until April 7-12, 2000 due to a conflict at Conner Prairie. It was noted that "Conner Prairie is a fabulous living history museum, a treat for all ages - bring your family." All events took place at the Featherstone Barn except for the Saturday evening banquet at Persimmons Restaurant.

Presentations and displays were key highlights mentioned in the event's reporting. The main presentation given by Lee Larkin centered on the misattribution of horns to John Bush and was lauded by Russ as "an amazing piece of detective work and a new high watermark for horn research." This was followed by Roland Cadle demonstrating the turning of pewter bands on horns. All this was followed up Sunday by a panel discussion on scrimshaw with Art DeCamp, Frank House, Lee Larkin, and George Suitor. Quite a program!

Displays were the second highlight, described as "awesome" as several 'collectors extraordinaire' such as Jim Dresslar, Tom Grenslade, Bert Hamrick and Shelby Gallien shared their horn treasures with all those in attendance.

President Clay Smith called the business meeting order on Sunday morning at 9:00 am. Several key items of note surfaced during the brief meeting: (1) A committee was appointed to study the possibility of holding two Guild events per year. (2) Vice President Jim Leach presented plans of the 2001 Horn Fair scheduled for March 9-11, 2001, at Colonial Williamsburg, VA. (3) The membership voted to have a Website designed and constructed by Clay Smith. It was projected that it should be active by late summer or early autumn. (4) Roland Cadle made a proposal, seconded by Charles Thayer for Russ Young (Secretary/Treasurer) to receive \$100 in appreciation for his work over the last five years. The motion was carried unanimously. (5) Elections were held and all current officers will remain for an additional year: President-Clay Smith / Vice President-Jim Leach / Secretary & Treasurer-Russ Young.

The meeting was short lasting only 40 minutes, but a lot was accomplished and clearly demonstrated that the Guild was stable and moving forward due to its strong leadership and many key members of the Longrifle Culture.

The program for the Horn Fair was as follows:<sup>14</sup>

April 7 (Fri) 3:00 - 8:00 Registration & Set-up

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<sup>12</sup> Russ Young. The Horn Book, Mar 2000: pg 4.

<sup>13</sup> Young, pg 6.

<sup>14</sup> Young, pg 5.

|               |              |                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 8 (Sat) | 8:30         | Coffee & Breads Available                                                                                                                               |
|               | 9:00 - 9:15  | Welcome                                                                                                                                                 |
|               | 9:15 - 10:30 | Lee Larkin-A Case for Mistaken Attribution: Findings of a study of the engraving on Powder horn attributed to John Bush                                 |
|               | 10:30-12:00  | Roland Cadle- Making horn and pewter bands on a lathe                                                                                                   |
|               | 12:00-1:00   | Lunch Break                                                                                                                                             |
|               | 1:00-4:00    | Public Admission                                                                                                                                        |
|               | 5:00-6:00    | Informal                                                                                                                                                |
|               | 6:00         | Banquet at Persimmon's                                                                                                                                  |
|               | 7:30         | Ezra Higby, 1836 Fiddler, in the barn                                                                                                                   |
| April 9 (Sun) | 8:30         | Coffee Available                                                                                                                                        |
|               | 9:00-9:20    | Business Meeting                                                                                                                                        |
|               | 9:30-10:30   | Scrimshaw Panel Discussion with Art DeCamp, Bruce Horne, Frank House, Lee Larkin & George Suiter. Come learn how to decorate your horn from the experts |
|               | 10:30-12:00  | Informal                                                                                                                                                |
|               | 12:00        | Clean-up & Departure                                                                                                                                    |
|               | 12:00        | Informal gathering for a departure at the restaurant                                                                                                    |

### Summary

GY 1999-2000 concluded with some very positive signs for its future. Interest in horn work was growing and although membership had a slight decline from 132 members in 1999 to the current level of 118, it was still above the 111 average membership level since its formation four years earlier. Plus, the Guild's financial status had increase by 25% to \$3,601. Both positive signs.

Perhaps the greatest boom to the Guild's future success was the current officers President Clay Smith, Vice President Jim Leach and Secretary & Treasurer-Russ Young would remain in office for the coming GY 2000-2001. This would be the second time that elected officers served two consecutive terms. This continuity would greatly assist a growing organization.

In addition, plans for a Website which would supplement *The Horn Book* would greatly improve the Guild's ability to keep members informed and up to date on all Guild activities.

### Chapter II: The Formative Years / March 1999 - March 2000

Approved By: Clay Smith Date: 6/16/26  
 Clay Smith  
 President