



President's Corner



Charles T. Buck
President
Buck Knives, Inc.

Collector Knives Are in Store for Buck

On Friday, August 30th, Lori and I jumped into our Seville and headed off to visit Buck retailers throughout the northeast. I had planned this trip for six

months, involving Buck sales representatives as well as the introduction and presentation of our new "BuckTool" to the dealers. The car was crammed with a couple hundred tools as well as our own luggage for what was scheduled to be a seven week road trip. I was to conduct in-store promotions at a number of key retailers. I also packed nearly fifty dealer awards to be presented to full-line dealers showing our appreciation and support for their continued success.

Freeport, Maine, was our first scheduled appearance. I spent two days in the memorable L.L. Bean store meeting some great people, signing Buck blades, giving sharpening demonstrations and urging the very personable sales clerks the fact that Buck is the knife to sell. Lori was delighted when I took "BuckTools" out of the trunk for hand carrying into the dealers. This gave her more space to acquire more grand-kid stuff.

I continued this trek, accompanied by the Buck sales representatives, from Maine through Boston, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Harrisburg and into Indianapolis, Indiana.

As we made these calls and the rep inventoried the dealers stock, I ran across a number of Buck Knives in brand new mint condition, complete with packing materials and original box. We found "Treasury" series from the '80s, Buck axes, "BuckSkins," "BuckLock I, II, III's," as well as a Buck "Caper" Model 116 from the late '60s.

(The dealer names and phone numbers are listed in this newsletter for those of you interested in acquiring these oldies.)

(Please turn to page 6)

What Really Happened to the 186 Titanium?

by Vern Taylor

One of the most coveted awards in the cutlery industry is the "Knife of the Year" awarded at the BLADE Show each year. The main reason that this is an important award is that the winner is selected by the other manufacturers; in other words, the competition, a judgment by peers. Each year, every company represented (almost everyone in the industry) votes for the knives they like most in each category.

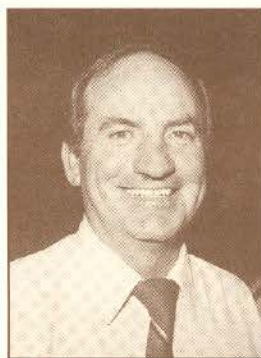
The main categories are Best American Design, Best Imported Design, Excellence in Manufacturing, Investors and Collectors Award and the one everyone wants; Knife of the Year. The Knife of the Year award is not only an indication of the probable success of the new knife, and a pat on the back from your competitors, it is a great advertising vehicle.

Buck won this prestigious award this year for the BUCK-TOOL (see Summer '96 edition) but the very first time they

(Please turn to page 3)

I N T H I S I S S U E

"From the Club Administrator"	2
New/Special Projects	2
Ernie Logan Wins	4
National Knife Museum	4
Keeping Track of Our Bucks	4



*Fred Wilson
Club Administrator*

From the Club Administrator's Office...

The regional show in Cincinnati, October 17-20, was a tremendous success. Many thanks to Murray & Judy Andrews for making the arrangements — it went really well.

Thanks also to Ernie & Arlene Logan, Elgin & Ruth Thomas, John Lancaster, Paul Lentz, Gordon McCoy, Larry Oden, Murray & Judy Andrews, and Eugene Shoemaker for their excellent exhibits of Buck knife collections. It was a very "friendly" show with lots of enthusiasm shown by all of the Buck Collectors Club members who attended. Again, thanks to all of you for your contribution to an excellent show.

Enclosed with this newsletter is an order form for a "one of a kind" Buck knife. These knives are a model #119 Special with a special molded handle guard and butt. Buck had researched for a new method of manufacture which resulted in these "one of a kind" knives. The process was not adopted but the Collectors Club does get the benefit of these units. They will come with a sheath, standard box, and a letter of authenticity from Chuck Buck. At \$45.00 these are great buys for a collectible one of a kind!

Factory Tour Date Change

The factory tour scheduled for February 28, 1997 and March 1, 1997 has been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. The following dates are new recommended choices by the factory tour committee: June 27 – July 18 – August 1, 1997 – or your own recommended date: _____

Please forward your response back by January 15, 1997.



*Charles T. Buck, President
Fred Wilson, Club Administrator
Vern Taylor, Club Founder*

BUCK KNIVES, INC. • P.O. BOX 1267
EL CAJON, CA 92020 • (619) 449-1100

New/Special Products

ZIPPER TIN – Produced for Drummond American Corp, Vernon Hills, IL. A model #191 Zipper with a black pad printed, gold Titanium Nitrate finished blade, standard laminated hardwood handle with standard brass guard and butt; packaged in a standard box with a standard tan leather sheath. 101 units produced.

110 TIN – Produced for Sportsman's Guide, phone (612) 451-3030. A model #110 Folding Hunter with a serrated gold Titanium Nitrate finished blade, standard laminated hardwood inlays with standard brass sides; packaged in a standard box with a standard black leather sheath. Serialized 002/750.

119 TIN BRASS – Produced for Sportsman's Guide, phone (612) 451-3030. A model #119 Special with a serrated gold Titanium Nitrate finished blade, standard black phenolic handle with brass guard and butt; packaged in a standard box with a standard black leather sheath. Serialized 002/750.

425 TIN – Produced for Sportsman's Guide, phone (612) 451-3030. A model #425 MiniBuck with a serrated gold Titanium Nitrate finished blade, standard black thermoplastic handle; packaged in a standard box. 752 units produced.

SHOVEL HEAD – Produced for Harley Davidson Inc., Milwaukee, WI. A model #293 with a black etched mirror polished blade, multi 3 fibron laminated wood handle; packaged in a glass top display case provided by Harley Davidson Co. 3005 units produced.

CAPING BLADE/RED HEAD – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, ph. (417) 887-1915. A custom model #294 with a satin finished blade and a brown laminated hardwood handle; packaged in a standard box with a tan leather sheath. 101 units produced.

525 RED HEAD OVERLAY – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, ph. (417) 887-1915. A model #525 Gent with a standard blade and standard stainless steel sides with an aluminum overlay; packaged in a standard box. 252 units produced.

BASS PRO 105BR – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #105 Pathfinder with a standard satin finished blade, Cocobola colored laminated hardwood handle with brass guard and butt; packaged in a standard black leather sheath. 101 units produced.

(Please turn to page 5)

What *Really* Happened to the 186 Titanium?

(Continued from front page)

won "Knife of the Year" was for the Model #186, the "Titanium", in 1987. So, what do you do when you win this coveted award? Drop it from the line. That's what Buck did! Actually, they changed it so dramatically it became a different knife; the #560. Why would you change a knife that had just won such a big award? Well, the answer to that comes with the actual history of the design as well as some very practical reasons.

The #186 came to Buck from the same outfit that "designed" the bayonet, Phrobis III. I say designed, with quotations around it, because it was a process of supplying what the U.S. Army wanted rather than conceiving a design and then producing it. Now it is true, without the Phrobis team, Buck would probably never have gotten the bayonet at all. But, everyone should have gotten the original clue of what we were in for when the lead guy for Phrobis introduced himself as "Mickey" Finn. Of course, if you're under forty, even that would not have been a clue. Then there was that "III" after the name, i.e. "the third". Somebody should have asked what happened to the first two.

Granted, the people at Phrobis did understand how to sell to the military and they did have some good ideas, but their business philosophy was just not in the mainstream. If Buck wasn't so easy to work with, the projects probably would not have come off at all. Phrobis became the contractor to the government on the bayonet and Buck was just a sub contractor, even though they actually made the bayonet, but that is a different story.

The concept of the #186 was not too hard to understand, after all it is based on the #110. In fact it is a #110 with different handles, all titanium instead of brass and wood. Knowing the history of Buck in the last ten years, it is safe to say that they would have come up with this knife, or something similar, all by themselves. But, things were different in 1986. The new BuckLocks (Sawby lock) were in development, the M-9 Bayonet was really hot (and behind in production), Kraton™ handles were new, and Buck had a hot new property called Yellowhorse knives. They were already very busy.

In the 1987 catalog the #186 is described in these words: *The "Space Age" knife is here. Made of amazing titanium. Buck's newest knife is surprisingly light but unbelievably tough. It's as close to corrosion free as you can get. Designed to be field-stripped and reassembled easily. The Titanium can be cleaned inside and out, and the blade can be replaced. Comes complete with its own hex-wrench attached — the only tool required. May be used with the belt clip which comes with the knife, or without; it's up to the owner. The lock open blade holds an edge, of course, because it's Buck's finest high-chrome, high carbon, rust resistant steel. The Titanium's high-tech look adds to its tremendous selling power.* This high powered pep talk was accompanied by a futuristic color photo of the knife in three positions. Buck also sent out thousands of counter display cards featuring the Titanium with the same photos; a

really first class presentation that helped a good knife sell very well.

The trouble began when people read the promo material and actually took the knives apart. Well, more accurately, when they tried to put them back together! There was a design flaw which would have never affected the knife if it wasn't a take apart knife. If the knife was reassembled exactly in the correct manner it wasn't a problem either, but it was a "For want of a nail, a war was lost" situation.

The flaw was the way the spring was held in place. The spring gives the blade its action and holds the blade all the way in when the knife is closed. When the knife was reassembled with the spring in the position which was natural and easy, the knife didn't work right. The blade was loose and floppy and didn't stay closed all the way. Once you learned how to do it, or followed the instructions very carefully, it worked fine. Who read the instructions? Not many people and certainly not the people who bought the #186! The "Titanium" began to arrive back at Buck, in customer service, within a few weeks of its release. The percentage of knives coming back for repair was high enough to cause concern right away and it gave Fred Wilson and his department some trying times, to say the least.

It was simple enough to reassemble the knife correctly and return it to the customer, but then some of them started coming back a second and third time! Several fixes were tried but none of them worked really right. In addition to the main problem there were some minor ones, like the hex wrench tool provided with the knife twisting off

(Please turn to page 6)

Ernie Logan Wins! Best of Show in Cincinnati

Ernie's Buck Collectors Display won the top award during the first regional show in cooperation with the Greater Cincinnati Knife Show held Oct. 18-20. Ernest and Arlene Logan are club members from Urbana, IL.

Larry Oden, Peru, IN. was awarded the New Knife award and Judy and Murray Andrews, Enon, OH. won the Old Knife award. Exhibits came from Oklahoma, North Carolina, Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

The first regional show of the Buck Collectors Club was a tremendous success. Some people said it was larger than our annual meetings that have been held in Atlanta. There were ten Buck displays competing with other manufactured displays. One member couldn't make the show because the weather (hurricane Fran) had put his building project behind schedule. Another member had to cancel due to a death in the family. If these members had been able to display, competition would have been greater.

Fred Wilson, club administrator and customer service manager for BUCK KNIVES INC. presented each Buck exhibitor with a "one of a kind" Buck knife model #119.

It was exciting to meet club members from eastern United States who had never attended a club meeting. There were Buck representatives there from California, Kentucky, Virginia, and Ohio. Gene Draa of Kinsman, OH. won the raffle of the Buck knife display case.

The regional meetings are planned to get more club members to participate in the operation of their club.

Your advisory board met Friday evening of the show to discuss and formulate plans for your club's future. They made plans for the factory tour and appreciation day. They reported their progress regarding the youth program. The display for the National Knife Museum in Chattanooga are beginning to take a definite shape. Preliminary steps are being taken for the value guide. An amendment to our new constitution is being considered and will be voted on at our next annual meeting. There was discussion of a knife award rather than a monetary award at the annual meeting. All this information was presented to the general membership on Saturday afternoon.

W. Murray Andrews, advisory board.

Keeping Track of Our Bucks

One of the challenges in Buck knife collecting involves record keeping. Since it is not feasible to transport our collection to each knife show, flea market or other source, it is necessary to have readily available a portable record of models, handle materials, tang marks, special features and perhaps, cost or value of our knives.

Having such information at hand can allow the collector to decide if a likely knife is indeed needed in his or her collection. It can also provide a point of reference regarding what was paid for a similar knife in the past.

Veteran collectors have probably met this challenge in more creative ways than I can imagine. However, in an attempt to provide newcomers to our hobby with a simple way to catalog their growing collections, I present an index card system that works for me. Obviously, you can adjust this system to best meet your needs.

Begin by purchasing a supply of 3 x 5 inch index cards. I suggest you obtain various colors and use a different color for each series. On each card, I input the following information:

- (1) model #
- (2) model name
- (3) sequence # – I also write this number on tiny peel-off labels and affix the labels to the knife and box or sheath.
- (4) tang mark
- (5) handle material
- (6) date & where acquired
- (7) sheath info (if applicable)
- (8) box?
- (9) comments – List condition, any special features, etchings, engraving, etc. If knife is part of

(Please turn to page 5)

The Latest on the National Knife Museum

Your advisory board met with Pete Cohan, President of The National Knife Collectors Association during the Greater Cincinnati Knife Show in October and ironed out the details for placing a club display in the National Knife Museum in Chattanooga.

The museum committee within your advisory board is now looking for or seeking club members that want to "loan" museum quality Buck knives to the BUCK COLLECTORS CLUB to be

placed in the museum. Minimum time would be for two years. Hopefully that it would be for longer or at least renewed at the end of the period.

The committee to call is Elgin Thomas (918) 358-3629. Ernest Logan (217) 367-8083 or Fred Wilson at the BUCK plant. Don't send knives now – contact this committee first.

If you would rather donate your knives outright to the museum call Pete Cohan (423) 899-9456 to check on the tax breaks.

Keeping Track of Our Bucks

(Continued from page 4)

a set, record sequence numbers of other knives in the set. If you traded for the knife, list what was exchanged.

(10) cost/value – List one or both.

To standardize my records, I always write the date on the same line of every card. Some of you with computers may find it convenient to print your data on labels which can be affixed to the index cards. Most of you will probably find it just as easy to manually write the data on the cards.

(1) 110	(2) Folding Hunter	(3) 188
(4) Buck 110 U.S.A.	(5) Ebony Handles	(9) New Third Version, Type 3 Steel Spacer 1971-73
(6) 6/96	John Doe, Indiana Knife Collectors Show, Indpls.	
(7) Black Leather Sheath		
(8) No Box		(10) XX

You can use the sequence numbers to cross-reference. For example, on one card marked 110, each sequence number representing a 110 can be listed. Do the same for other models you have. You can make this as simple or as detailed as you wish. Make the system work for you. If you dispose of a knife, pull the card and delete the sequence number on your cross-reference list.

It should be readily apparent that affixing the sequence number top the knife, box and/or sheath allows you to display or store them separately while maintaining the continuity of which knife goes with which box and sheath.

Once you have finished the cards, use rubberbands or an index file box to keep them organized. It will now be a simple task to make new cards for additions to you collection. Be sure you also add the new sequence numbers to your cross-reference list.

I hope this information gives you a good starting point for record keeping. My thanks to Eugene Shoemaker for some of the good ideas he has given me. Some of the nicest people I know collect Buck knives.

Larry Oden
Member #402

New/Special Projects

(Continued from page 2)

BASS PRO 118BR – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #118 Personal with a standard satin finished blade, Cocobola colored laminated hardwood handle with brass guard and butt; packaged in a standard box with a standard black leather sheath. 101 units produced.

BASS PRO 120BR – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #120 General with a standard satin finished blade, Cocobola colored laminated hardwood handle with brass guard and butt; packaged in a standard box with a standard black leather sheath. 101 units produced.

110 IMPALA – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #110 Folding Hunter with a standard satin finished blade with Impala Horn brown bone inlays and standard brass sides; packaged in a standard box with a brown leather sheath. 202 units produced.

112 IMPALA – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #112 Ranger with a standard satin finished blade with Impala Horn brown bone inlays and standard brass sides; packaged in a standard box with a brown leather sheath. 202 units produced.

500 IMPALA – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #500 Duke with a standard satin finished blade with Impala Horn brown bone inlays and standard stainless steel sides; packaged in a standard box with a black leather sheath. 202 units produced.

501 IMPALA – Produced for Bass Pro Shop, phone (417) 887-1915. A model #501 Squire with a standard tumble finished blade with Impala Horn brown bone inlays and standard stainless steel sides; packaged in a standard box with a black leather sheath. 202 units produced.

ANHEUSER BUSCH SX SOLITAIRE – Produced for Anheuser Busch, St. Louis, MO. A model #180SX CrossLock with a standard serrated electro etched blade, standard black sides with red rubber inserts; packaged in a standard box. 502 units produced.

ZEAL 16 ANNIVERSARY – Produced for Fasteners International, Ltd. – Osaka, Japan; ph. (816) 567-6501. A model #112 Ranger with a standard satin finished blade,

(Please turn to page 6)

New/Special Projects

(Continued from page 5)

standard laminated hardwood inlays with a lasered pocket containing a brass inlay; packaged in a standard box with brown leather sheath with brass snaps. 300 units produced.

525 WOLF – Produced for Buck Sales Rep, Ed Schneider, ph. (208) 765-2508. A model #525 Gent with a standard blade, standard stainless steel sides and an aluminum overlay; packaged in a standard box with a brown leather sheath. 303 units produced.

180D1 CROSSLOCK – Produced for Ozark Cutlery, phone (417) 782-4998. A model #180D1 CrossLock Hunter with a standard guthook blade and a serrated droppoint blade, standard black sides; packaged in a standard box with a black Cordura sheath. 52 units produced.

Collector Knives in Store

(Continued from front page)

We were scheduled to continue our trip through Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Louis, but we decided to cut our trip short and head home to take care of some urgent business.

Lori and I did meet some wonderful people on our trip and I did enjoy promoting goodwill for our company.

I am planning to schedule trips such as these more frequently so that I can get first hand the concerns and successes of our retailers



Charles T. Buck
President
Buck Knives, Inc.

What Really Happened to the #186 Titanium?

(Continued from page 3)

instead of the assembly screws turning. Buck made up little tool kits for dealers, provided extra parts, printed a new, expanded instruction sheet, in short, everything that they could think of to relieve the problem. They were all just band-aids on a mortal wound.

The #186 appeared in the 1988 catalog by its successor, the #560 was already being put into production; before the year was out the #186 had been quietly discontinued. The #560 is really just a #186 that doesn't come apart and doesn't have a belt clip and these were the features that required Buck pay a royalty to Phobos!

The description of the #560 in the 1989 catalog was almost a repetition of the #186's glamorous intro, except they deleted the reference to take apart and the belt clip. It's a snazzy knife in its own right but it will never have the collector appeal that the original Titanium™ did. If you don't have a real #186 you'd better keep your eyes open for one. Originals, new in the right box (a silver box), are fetching over \$100 at knife shows. Some people buy the #186, not because they are collectors, but simply because of the knife's

appeal as a using knife. With a slight modification (filing a flat on the blade bushing) it can be adapted to accept the blades made for the V52 Selector™. The #186 with a saw blade in it is an awesome looking tool!

For the really serious Buck collector, the rarest of all of the titanium knives is the #560 with a #186 blade in it, NOT a #186 with a #110 blade in it. The #110 blade, of the right vintage, can be installed in a #186 by anyone; no special skills required. It does require destroying a Folding Hunter™, but it has been done. There were a few real #186's made with damascus 110 blades in them; they were sent out as samples to possibly as many as twenty people. One of these, if you are lucky enough to find one under \$250 it is probably genuine because that's less than the value of a damascus #110 and a regular #186.

Whatever your reason for wanting an original model #186, I'd suggest that you get your hands on one soon; as it is said about investing in land: "It's a good investment, they ain't making no more".