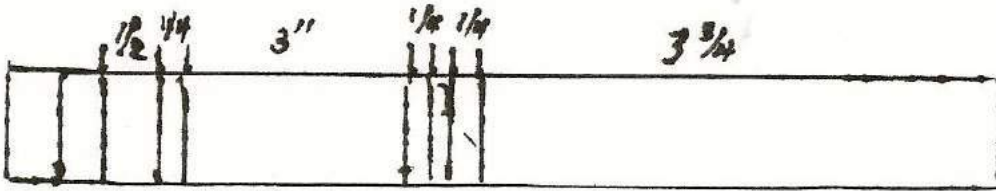


**MARCH 2014 DEMONSTRATION**  
**LETTER OPENER BY RICHARD PARKER**

The March 2014 meeting demonstration was done by *Richard Parker* as he showed those assembled how to make letter openers. Dick started with a piece of 1" by 1" by 10" hardwood. He prefers maple but ash, cherry, or any hardwood will work. He mounted the hardwood piece with a chuck and a live center however noted that it is easy to do between a drive and live center as well. Dick used a roughing gouge to turn the piece round.

Dick marked the rounded piece as follows (see diagram):

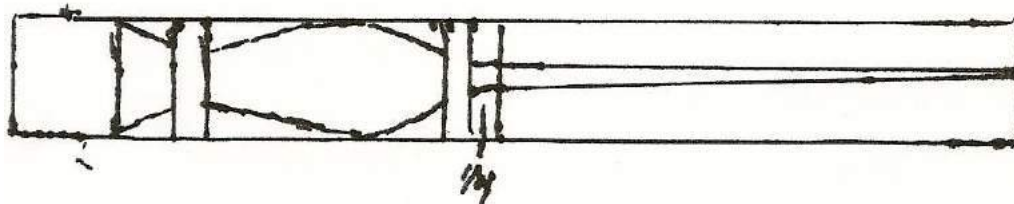
- The blade is marked as 3 3/4" long.
- The handle consists of a 1/2" end cap (pommel); 1/4" hand guard; 3" handle; and a 1/4" hand guard.
- The hand guard and blade are separated by 1/4".



He shaped the handle up to each hand guard so it was comfortable to hold. Dick sanded the handle and then added small "V" cuts every 1/4" which were made to guide a wire that he used to burn black lines down the handle for decoration. Then he shaped the pommel (butt

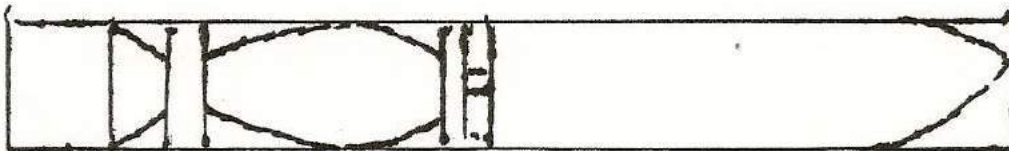


or end cap) end with a taper back to the hand guard.



Dick used a parting tool to cut between the front guard and blade so that only 1/4" remained. Finally he sanded all the parts except the blade that was left round and rough. He then parted off any unused end parts.

The blade was then marked down the centerline and showing a 1/4" wide blade to match up with the 1/4" connection between the handle and the blade. The top and bottom of the blade were oriented with the grain of the wood (up and down) for maximum blade strength. The sides of the blade are carefully cut off with a band saw leaving a 1/4" thick rough blade. The rough blade is then shaped using a disk sander according to your design. The blade is then hand sanded with fine sandpaper to dress and final shape the blade.





The only finish that Dick uses is a Beall Buffing system with carnauba wax to buff up the final letter opener. Several people joined Dick Saturday for a morning workshop to make letter openers.



Submitted by **Chad Dawson**  
 Photos by **Barbara Raymond-LaPrease**  
 Graphics by **Richard Parker**

**MARCH 2014 WORKSHOP**

Just **Chad Dawson** and **Greg Potter** joined **Dick** at the 8 Acres Event Center for the Saturday workshop on making letter openers.



*Chad Dawson turning one of the four letter openers he created at the workshop.*



*Greg Potter showing his completed letter opener*