

They Work For
GIs And They'll
Work For You

Ek Commando Knives

It's a knife that's worked for GIs in every major U.S. military conflict since World War II, and it's a knife that's in demand by certain military knife aficionados. "It" is the Ek Commando knife, and the folks at Ek would love to have you join their team concept in selling battle blades whose history practically sells the knives themselves.

From the first knife made by John Ek to the company's currently hottest selling item—the Ek Bowie—Ek knives are among the more used military knives in the world. And, with combat knives making a comeback as collectibles, now may be the time for you to stock a knife that has been handed down from generation to generation.

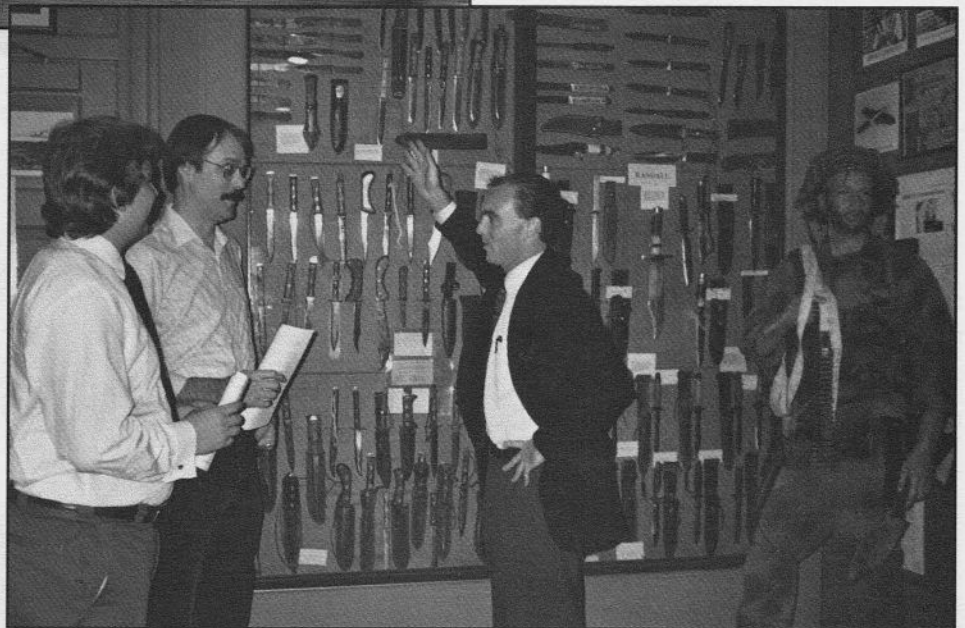
Why are Ek knives collectible? One reason is that it's so hard to get people to part with their original Eks. It's partly such people's reluctance to sell their old Eks that has resulted in a collectible aura that has been passed on to modern-day Ek knives—not to mention contemporary Eks' fine workmanship and styling.



(Above) The Gunner Model sports Ek's classic styling, right down to the blade and ergonomically shaped handle, and includes a recent company design addition—checkered grips. The knife comes in a limited edition of 500. (Ek photo)



(Above) Ek Commando has a little bit of everything for the retailer's sales needs. From top: The Army edition from the American Elite Fighting Forces Collection; the Ek Bowie; a vintage Ek combat knife; and an Ek throwing knife. In addition to these models, Ek has some big-game hunting knives and other pieces planned.



(Above) Ek's Vincent Signorelli (right) gives two combat knife enthusiasts a tour of Ek's facilities, including a wall full of vintage Ek Commando knives. (Ek photo)

Ardent Ek collector and Army vet Bill McAllister may put it best: "I haven't found any original Eks. It's not that collectors are hoarding them," he explains, "it's just that the knives belonged to a person's daddy, granddaddy or uncle and they don't want to get rid of it." McAllister, who's been collecting Eks for four years now, has only one vintage World War II model, and it had to be rehandled.

It's the story behind the rehandling of McAllister's knife that tells the most about the kind of people who work at Ek. Gary Ek, son of John, the company founder, personally saw to it that the rivets in the handle of Bill's knife were hot-poured, just like in the original. Granted, McAllister is a devoted Ek collector and Gary can't give such special treatment to everybody, but the episode reflects the cooperative nature of the people at Ek

Commando Knives.

Teamwork is emphasized at Ek, and company officials encourage knife retailers to become part of the Ek team. That spirit of cooperation begins in the knife shop, where Ek craftsmen work together in pairs, building lots of 20 knives, each from start to finish.

"Generally, one of the craftsmen might be more experienced than the other, so he

learns to build a knife from the more experienced guy," notes Vincent Signorelli, Ek general manager. "We take pride in the fact that we are building a select group of "renaissance men" in our workrooms. This means that we believe that an Ek craftsman should know how to do anything and everything in our workrooms. We don't buy into the

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specialist concept."

As for Ek's knives, they just keep on coming. In addition to the best-selling Ek Bowie, the company offers a complete line of using and commemorative knives. Originally in cooperation with the

"As for future projects, the company isn't treading water"

American Historical Foundation but now on an exclusive basis, Ek presents the custom-made American Elite Forces Fighting Knife Collection honoring the finest combat units in the U.S. military. The knives sport blades engraved in 24k-gold, the Ek contoured handles and skull crusher butts.

Included in Ek's commemorative line is the Gunner Model—a limited edition of 500 with checkered handle, etched blade and olive drab web sheath, and the Murphy SOG Bowie knife. Another Ek commemorative is the H.G. Long V-42 replica that is differentiated from the original just enough to keep the unscrupulous from passing it off as an original.

As for future projects, the company isn't treading water. Ek Commando using knives of the same quality as the top-of-the-line models but not as expensive due to less labor-intensive finishing will soon be marketed on a massive scale, and the company will break what for it is new ground with hunting knives for big game hunters.

This year marks the one-year anniversary of Ek Commando knives being offered to knife retailers and distributors nationwide (previously the knives were available during wartime only), and details of the company's aggressive retail sales program are available during the SHOT Show at the company's booth, No. 754. For more information contact: Ek Commando Knife Co., attn: Vincent Signorelli, Dept. BT, 601 N. Lombardy St., Richmond, VA 23220 or call 1-800-468-5575 or (804) 257-7272.—By Tommy Dunston

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