

= Randall Made Knives =

Randall Made Knives , usually referred to as Randall , is an American custom handcrafted knife manufacturer founded by Walter Doane " Bo " Randall , Jr. in the U.S. The factory and showroom is located in Orlando , Florida . Randall began making knives as a hobby in 1937 . His son and grandson continue the family trade along with 20 craftsmen producing about 8 @, @ 000 knives per year out of a shop on the South Orange Blossom Trail .

Randall offers 28 models of knives for different applications , each customizable at the factory based on customer specification . Randall hand forges nearly all models of knives instead of factory stamping , one of few manufacturers to do so . Randall uses a 17 @-@ step process for making knives , which usually takes over 8 hours to complete . The waiting list for obtaining a Randall from the factory is typically five years .

Two examples of Randall 's Model 17 " Astro " , designed for the use of astronauts , are on display in the Smithsonian Institution . The company operates its own museum containing more than 7 @, @ 000 knives and other edged weapons , including one of the world 's largest collections of pocket knives .

= = History = =

Bo Randall first became interested in making knives after he purchased a Bill Scagel knife that was being used to scrape paint off of a boat without showing any signs of wear or damage . He made his first knife in his garage at Lake Ivanhoe , Florida using an auto spring .

He founded the company in 1938 . Although Randall originally designed his knives for outdoorsmen and sold them at sporting goods stores , demand from military customers initially provided his biggest boost in business , and launched his company nationally .

In the early 1940s , Randall knives significantly increased in popularity after receiving good publicity during World War II . Several noted war heroes and GIs on all fronts carried Randall knives with them into major battles , including Lieutenant General James M. Gavin , commander of the 82nd Airborne Division during the Normandy invasion . Army Air Force Captain Ronald Reagan , future U.S. President , owned a Randall knife in WWII . Randalls were so popular that GIs from overseas ordered through the mail by simply addressing letters to the " Knife Man , Orlando " .

Shortly after the war , the popularity of Randall knives increased among non @-@ military users , and Randall developed additional models specifically for expanding markets . In 1956 , Randall received a United States design patent for models 14 and 15 . In 1957 , bestselling author James Jones mentioned Randall knives in his book *Some Came Running* , and subsequently helped Randall to design a diver ? s knife . In the Vietnam War , General William Westmoreland , Commander of American military operations in Vietnam , was often photographed with a Randall . Pilot Gary Powers of the 1960 U @-@ 2 incident , and herpetologist Ross Allen , carried Randalls . In 1982 , Randall was inducted into the Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall of Fame at the Blade Show in Atlanta , Georgia .

Bo Randall died in 1989 in Orlando , Florida , at 80 years of age . His son , Gary Randall , currently oversees production at Randall made Knives .

Bo Randall was inducted into the Blade magazine Cutlery Hall of Fame at the 1983 Blade Show as an inauguree . In 1997 , Randall was inducted into the American Bladesmith Society Hall of Fame . In 2001 , Randall 's knives were listed as " Best Sheath Knife " as part of Forbes " 50 Best List " .

= = = Randall in space = = =

As the U.S. initiated its space program , NASA needed a survival knife for its astronauts , and Major Gordon Cooper worked with Randall on the design of the Model 17 " Astro " . These first astronauts carried their Randalls into space . After recovering the Liberty Bell 7 Mercury space capsule from the ocean in 1999 , astronaut Gus Grissom ? s Randall knife was found inside . Despite having spent 40 years at a depth of 15 @, @ 000 feet (4 @, @ 600 m) underwater , the knife was still serviceable

after a good cleaning . Due to the historical significance of the " Astro " , the Smithsonian Institution displays two at their museum .

= = = Randall in music = = =

Texas musician Guy Clark wrote and sang the original song " The Randall Knife " as an elegy for his father ; the song first appeared on Clark 's 1983 album Better Days . Vince Gill , who sang and played guitar on Clark 's original recording , mentions a Randall knife in an elegy for his own father , " The Key to Life , " from the 1998 album The Key . Steve Earle , a friend and contemporary of Guy Clark , mentions a Randall knife in his song " Taneytown " , from the 1997 album " El Corazon " .

= = Randall Made Knives Museum = =

The Randall Made Knives Museum is located at the shop facility in Orlando , and contains more than 7 @, @ 000 knives and other edged weapons . It has one of the largest collection of pocket knives in the world and home to the world 's largest collection of Bill Scagel 's knives . The museum contains many historical pictures and documents related to Randall knives . Randall plans to move the museum to a larger facility .

= = Models = =

= = = Websites = = =

Randall Made Knives (official Website)

= = = Web Articles = = =

? The Randall Story ? , Knife World , April 1999 by Jim Williamson