

REMEMBERING DENNIS GILLETT

A note from Leslie Gillett

Dear Family and Friends,
Heartfelt thanks for everyone's support during this long and sad time.
Fond Regards,
Leslie

**The Vancouver Island Blacksmiths Association is sad to announce the passing
of
Dennis Gillett on February 16, 2013.**

By the same token, we acknowledge and will cherish all of the happy memories associated with Dennis over the many years.

A highly respected physician who was equally at home at his medical practice and in his metalworking studio, Dennis passed away at his home in Brentwood Bay after a brief but courageous battle with Lymphoma.

Born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Dennis obtained his MD from the University of Alberta in 1973. After a rotating internship at the Edmonton General Hospital, he trained in Internal Medicine at the University of Western Ontario and the University of Manitoba prior to moving to San Jose, California in 1978. Dennis had a sub-specialty in pulmonology and critical care, and was the Chairman of the Division of Pulmonology for Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Gatos from 1993 to 1995. Dennis returned to Canada in 2000 where he balanced his work as a medical consultant for WorkSafe BC with his creative pursuits as a blacksmith and artisan, undertaking every endeavor with passion and commitment.

His enduring curiosity about the way the world works led Dennis to experiment in both art and science. He taught himself to play classical guitar and to program computers. After acquiring the fundamentals of metal working and silver smithing, he went on to produce knives that were both exquisite and functional, forging Damascus steel in ancient patterns, and was close to achieving the title of "Master Bladesmith."

Dennis began his blacksmithing with Vancouver Island Blacksmiths Association about a decade ago. Very quickly, he took an interest in, and became, a Blade Smith.

For a few years several Blacksmiths went out once a week to the Saanich Historical Artifacts Society and did some casting. Dennis took a great interest and eventually did his casting at home, including some miniature aluminum anvils for CanIron VI and, among other things, he cast some bronze 'Flying Pigs'!



Quite a number of years ago Dennis took on the responsibility of editing our newsletter, 'The Forge', and did so until quite recently. With his pleasant and quiet manner, Dennis would prod and prompt others of us to submit our articles while patiently, still successfully getting each issue to press.

Dennis also enjoyed helping out at our Fall Fairs that the Vancouver Island Blacksmiths are involved in. The last few years, of course, he had an incredible display of beautiful folding knives. helping encourage our goal which is to educate the general public by promoting the practices of the traditional and the modern smith.



He will be greatly missed.

*Donations may be made to the Cancer Agency of your choosing;
Locally, to the Vancouver Island Center of the British Columbia Cancer Agency.
Submitted by Charlie Dowdeswell; Photo credits: Willy Tobler, Neil Gustafson.