

# RAM

INSIDE

Sept.-October 1999

*The End of an era:  
Francis Whitaker dies*



NEWSLETTER of the BLACKSMITHS ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

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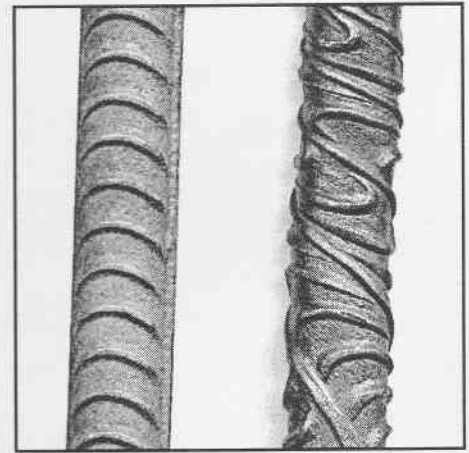
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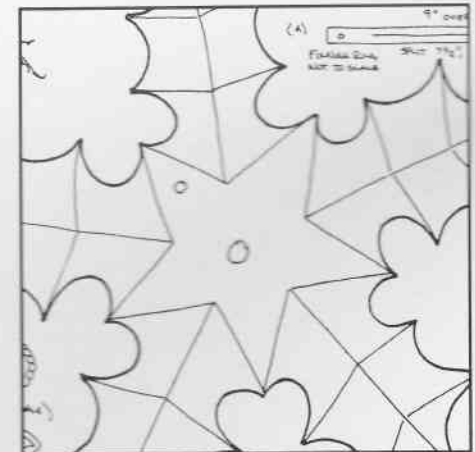
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# Newsletter of the Blacksmiths Association of Missouri

September — October 1999  
Volume 16 No. 5

**Our cover:** This issue is dedicated to Francis Whitaker who died Oct. 23 after a short battle with stomach cancer. Francis' inspiration gave BAM a start in the right direction. He was an honorary life-time member. Francis is shown here giving advice at the 1998 ABANA Conference. Photo by Jim McCarty.

**Editor**  
Jim McCarty

**Contributing Editors**  
Bob Alexander  
Bob Patrick

**Mailing Labels**  
Maurice Ellis

The Newsletter of the Blacksmiths Association of Missouri is published six times a year and is mailed to members of BAM. The annual fee for regular membership is \$20/year; a portion of this amount is for a subscription to this newsletter for one year. Editorial inquiries should be addressed to: Jim McCarty, 5821 Helias Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65101; (573) 395-3304. BAM membership inquiries should be addressed to: Maurice Ellis, Rt.1 Box 1442, Belgrade, MO 63622, (573) 766-5346. Occasionally some material will be copyrighted and may not be reproduced without written consent by the author. BAM welcomes the use of any other material printed in this newsletter provided the author and this organization be given credit.

## BAM Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member     Renewal

How did you learn about BAM? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you need any tools? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Memberships are for one year from receipt of dues. Dues are \$20, which includes a subscription to the bimonthly BAM newsletter. Please make checks payable to Blacksmith Association of Missouri.

## ABANA Membership Application

Primary ABANA Chapter Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

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New Member     Renewing Member

*Includes a Subscription to the Anvil's Ring and The Hammers' Blow magazines*

- Regular Member .....\$45 yr.
- Senior Citizen (Age 65+) .....\$40 yr.
- Fulltime student .....\$35 yr.
- Overseas airmail .....\$80 yr.
- Overseas surface mail .....\$60 yr.
- Contributory .....\$100 yr.
- Full time student .....\$35 yr.
- Public library.....\$35 yr.

*See reverse*



## Editor's Anvil

This issue of the BAM newsletter is dedicated to Francis Whitaker, the Dean of American blacksmiths and a legend in his own time. Mr. Whitaker died October 23 and his passing ends an era. He got his start working in the shop of Samuel Yellin. Later he apprenticed in Germany with Julius Schramm, returned to the U.S. and carried on a successful career in Carmel, California and in Carbondale, Colorado.

At age 92 he was still working, had classes and speaking engagements scheduled and was in the process of writing his fourth book on blacksmithing. What a man!

Mr. Whitaker was an honorary lifetime member of BAM. His influence was strongly felt on this group. Many years ago he led a workshop for BAM that produced a set of gates at Lost Valley Lake Resort near Gerald. A number of BAM's finest owe their skills to his often stern guidance.

You will read more about Francis in this issue. Many others knew him better than I did, and I will let them tell his tale. I was honored to spend some time with him at the Caniron Conference this summer. He seemed remarkably fit to me then though he tired easily and was having trouble walking. In the end stomach cancer got him. He died with his favorite hammer in his hand and a large group of his friends at his side. I think short of going down for the count at the anvil, that's the way to complete your time on earth. Francis, we will miss you and your guidance.

Despite my many deadlines, I have managed a bit of forge time this fall. First opportunity came in September when I demonstrated at California, Missouri's Ham and Turkey Festival. This was a new one for me. The head of their very active historical society recruited me for the job and I worked outside their building downtown. California was once the home of a large carriage works and they had a couple of old carriages made there on display.

Sometimes you get into the dangeriest things at demonstrations. While I was working an old man came up to

me and wanted to know if I could draw out the end of his crowbar. I had the BAM sidedraft forge there and knew I could do it so I said bring it on. He came back an hour later with his crowbar, which measured a good 7 feet long and was made from 1-1/2 inch tool steel! I had to politely pass on this one.

Next up was the Oktoberfaust the first weekend in October at St. Louis' Faust Park. Lou Mueller again had a nice event lined up that included bringing George Dixon out as the lead demonstrator. Pat and I had a demo site, Bob Alexander had his gas forge next to us and Tim Underwood took the BAM forge across the way. Tom Clark set up and Maurice Ellis brought his spinning lathe again to round out the field.

One thing Lou forgot about was to consult with the weatherman. The day looked gray from the beginning but we all thought we would get lucky. The crowds showed up and business was brisk for Bob and Pat. Then just about noon the skies parted and rained poured down. For the rest of the day we demonstrated without a crowd.

We packed up in the rain and I didn't go back for the second day, which was wetter than the first. It was not a total loss — I know we signed up several new members and had a great time. Best of all we educated more members of the public that blacksmithing is back.

A week later I was back at Hartsburg, Mo. for their Pumpkin Festival. Bill Irvin set up alongside me this year with tons of steel silhouettes he cut with his CNC machine. I worked my tail end off but every time I looked up Bill was taking another piece off his wall and pocketing some more change. You guys need to stop by his shop in Columbia and see what he is cranking out. I picked up a few sun cutouts that looked promising, planning to forge brackets to hang them from. Seeing what he can do has given me lots of ideas.

In case you are wondering what is selling, I had about a dozen requests for branding irons. Some people want

these to burn their initials into steaks. Others wanted something to hang on the wall. One man asked me to make a giant one for his ranch gate.

In September I got a chance to go to the Missouri Mines State Historic Site at Park Hills (I still call it Flat River.) While looking through the museum at some Stickin' Tommies on display I mentioned to the site administrator that I was a blacksmith. Turns out he is one of our members and I got an unusual tour. He showed me where the blacksmith shop once was. This would make a great place for us to hold a meeting sometime. Got to work on the DNR folks to let us do this.

It will be a miracle if I get this newsletter out on time. It's Friday night, I leave for Phoenix Saturday a.m. so this has to be done in a couple of hours and I am just getting started. Help me out next time by sending tons of good stuff.

Later,

— Jim McCarty

**Back into the Swing of Things**  
*[Lorelei's Motorcycle Crash]*

I just want to send huge rounds of thanks to all my family, friends, clients and business associates. I dearly appreciate the support, concern, and love expressed these last couple of months.

Because I am not fully back into form myself, I wanted to use this forum to share my gratitude and use the opportunity to fill you in on my motorcycle accident which occurred back in July.

I do not have any recollection of the wreck itself. I was riding my motorcycle while visiting my friend Dan who lives in Nashville. As I was approaching a curve, a driver following behind stated that he noticed my left leg kick out away from the motorcycle. The motorcycle and I proceeded to go boom as we went down into a 15 foot culvert on the side of the road.

I spent a week at Vanderbilt Medical University in Nashville. The extent of my injuries: 11 fractured bones (ribs, pelvis, and wrist), punctured lung, and a concussion. Contrary to prevelant rumors, I have not suffered any further brain damage.

Upon my release from the hospital, Dan lugged me to his home and took care of my heart, body, and mind. We had one of those storybook 40-day dates where we got to know each other really, really well. The amazing thing is that he still likes me.

My bike was damaged more severe-

ly than my body. Although the frame was not bent, it was totalled and is currently in storage.

Will I ride again? After we repair the bike, I will ride it at least once before deciding if I want to continue down that road or if I want to sell it. Will I remain a Harley Bitch? You already know the answer to that one.

Alas, the forges are glowing for I have returned to the shop. I have a hammer and I will be hammering in the morning, hammering in the evening, hammering just because I can.

Take Care Everyone.

Love,

— Lorelei Sims

**Jim Sorber's tale of woe**

*Just so you know you aren't the only one who has disasters, this is from Jim Sorber, whose collection of Colonial Ironwork is the basis for the new book "Colonial Wrought Iron."*

Just when I thought I had most of the museum under control at my new location, but still had many boxes of iron on the floor waiting to be mounted and displayed, Hurricane Floyd came along and disrupted my plans.

I have two sump pumps in the basement where the museum is housed and they were working fine all day long while we were getting a total of 9 1/2

inches of rain, but at 7:30 p.m. the electricity went off — and so the sump pumps stopped working. When we checked the basement at 9:30 p.m., everything looked fine — it was completely dry, no sign of water. The electricity didn't come back on all night long or even the next morning by the time we got up. So when I went down the cellar in the dark to see how everything was, my foot got wet and I said, "Uh oh. We've got a problem!" I got the flashlight and the whole floor was covered with two inches of water. Luckily I had five inches of crushed rock under the concrete floor, or otherwise it would have been five inches deeper. So I put on my boots and started to pick up soggy wet boxes that don't hold together too long when they have a ton of iron in them! Everything that had been on the floor now has to be cleaned of the rust and coated with Penetrol.

When Don Plummer found out what happened to me he came right over to help me. By that time the electricity had come back on, so he brought his two Wet-Dry Vacs and got up all the water and moved all of the iron up off the floor. I couldn't have done it all without him; it was just too overwhelming for this 82-year-old man!

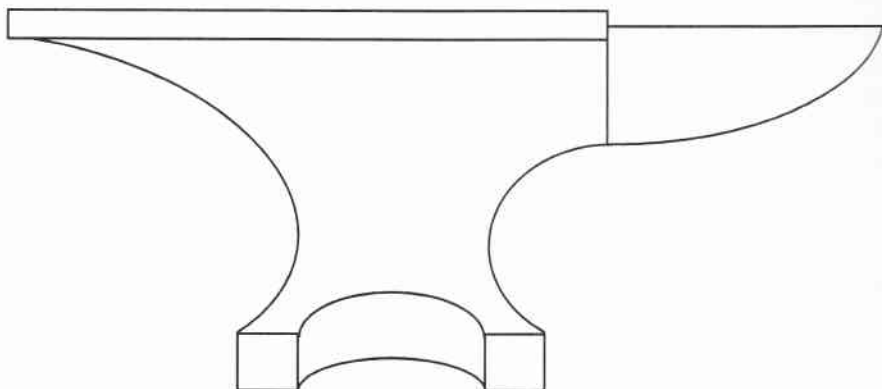
I can see that my job for the next months will be cleaning rust off and recoating everything that needs it — and then re-arranging it AGAIN! I just had it where it was really looking nice and then this had to happen, so I'm almost at square one again.

Thankfully, the books were not in the basement so you can still buy them from me!!!! (Hint! Hint!) Just send for an autographed book of "Colonial Wrought Iron: The Sorber Collection" by Don Plummer. The cost is \$44 for the book plus \$4 for shipping (a total of \$48). Send it to me at:

James C. Sorber  
1105 Wilson Street  
Pottstown, PA 19464

Thanks for listening to my tale of woe.

— Jim Sorber





## Bob's Business

Here it is the end of October, just two months away from the end of the century and are we ready for the new millennium to begin? Well, ready or not it's going on with or without us. When I began my teenage years, I couldn't imagine what I might be doing at the end of the century. At the time, John Glenn was only orbiting the earth, and must look at the progress since then. Blacksmithing wasn't even heard of where I grew up and who would have thought that someday I would be earning a living doing that.

I often wish that I would have become interested in smithing in the early '70s and become part of the renaissance. But even though I wasn't, I can still appreciate how easy we have it today as opposed to back then.

In the '70s there were very few smiths left to pass on their knowledge, no books, and practically no schools to attend. Just look at us now, with all of our books, videos, schools, colleges, clubs and public demonstrations. Anyone interested in learning about blacksmithing should have no trouble at all in obtaining information. So let's not keep the secrets of smithing to ourselves, as in the past, but show them to all who desire to see.

The day I was writing this, I was informed of the tragic loss of Francis Whitaker. Here was a person who totally dedicated his life to blacksmithing. He not only learned, and practiced the profession, but taught, wrote books and did everything possible to make sure anyone who wanted to had the opportunity to learn the trade. Francis Whitaker will be greatly missed by all.

the next meeting is to be at Andrew MacDonald's in DeSoto, Ill. (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH DESOTO, MISSOURI.) I have never had the opportunity to darken Andrew's doorway, so I haven't a clue on how to get there, but Jim is supposed to have a map in this issue. It is my understanding that the afternoon session of the meeting is going to

shift to John Medwedeff's shop. This should be quite a treat to visit two shops in one day. We are hoping to have our business meeting taken care of before we scatter for lunch (a note here for Andrew.)

The trade item has just been announced to me, which is a measuring device of some sort (dividers, rules, traveler, calipers, etc.) I should be bringing coal, but it will be in limited quantity, so let's share with others. Share with others all of your old iron and tools by bringing them to the tailgate sales. Let them go home with your old iron and you go home with their old money.

See you at the next meeting and don't forget to help our editor by sending in articles and info for our newsletter. Next time you see Jim McCarty instead of complaining about the late newsletter, give him some thanks for doing it, after all he doesn't get paid (much) for all of his effort.

Keep on hammering,  
—Bob Alexander

The illustration below is from an old issue of *The American Blacksmith*



With Apologies to Power

YOUR SON? GIVE HIM A MAN'S JOB!

# BAM

## September MEETING

by Jim McCarty

Ray Chaffin was the host for our September meeting at his shop in Warsaw, Mo. This was Ray's second turn hosting us and it is always a pleasure seeing his big building full of neat toys. Ray has lots of things to see and play with, including some stuff we are still trying to figure out how he moved.

There was a big crowd already gathered when Pat and I showed up (Pat got us lost). Ray had a fire going but it seemed most of us wanted to chat, check out the trade items and pick Ray's brain on his different welding techniques and machines.

Finally Randy Barringhaus could stand it no longer and he asked me to show off the rebar twist that Doug Hendrickson brought to the July meeting. I had made a fork at the state fair using this technique and put it in the iron in the hat. I was game so the two of us scrounged a piece of rebar (Ray has lots of stuff to scrounge) and I proceeded to get it hot.

This technique is real easy — just square the ends, get it hot in the middle and twist. Looks like you really tried hard to make that pattern.

I could have stopped here but someone asked me to do a backscratcher. This one involved more effort, and required Walt Hull to swing the sledge hammer. One of these days Walt and I will get in synch but I think our efforts were comic relief for those gathered.

I finished up just before lunch which gave Ruben Funk just enough time to show some slides of his trip to Central America where he saw local blacksmiths selling their wares on the street. He had several examples of hand made tools with him for us to see. They make some nice things in really primitive conditions.

We had a great feed, a short business meeting and a nice exchange of trade items highlighted by Kate Dineen's mouse trap door knocker. Thanks to Ray and Beth for doing the honors.

Minutes

New Business

- Maurice Ellis mentioned Oktoberfaust in St. Louis County the first weekend in October. Lou Mueller is ramrodding this event. Call him if you would like to demo.

- Jim McCarty spoke on the "River Rendezvous" in Jefferson City Oct. 9th. They need a demonstrator.

- Mark Williams needs to get a forge to Maryland — anyone going to SOFA with an empty truck?

- Maurice Ellis spoke on the BAM Conference in 2000 (First weekend in May, 2000). It will be moved to the Warren County Fairgrounds on Highway 47 near Warrenton, Mo. Lots more to come on this one.

- More BAM members are needed for BAM's demo station at the State Fair.

- Jim McCarty spoke on BAM's demo at the State Fair. He said thanks especially to hard-working Peggy Williamson.

- There will be a steam engine show in Lathrop, Mo. Oct. 8, 9, and 10. This will be a living history and farmers reunion. A demonstration station manned by BAM members would be welcome. Call Jim Plowman (816) 528-3511 if you would like to demo.

No more business, so motion to adjourn was made and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

John Murray, secretary

Trade items were made by: Walt Hull, Don Nichols, Kate Dineen, Pat McCarty, Joe Wilkinson, Maurice Ellis, Randy Barringhaus. Iron in the hat items were donated by Jeff Brule, Maurice Ellis, Ray Chaffin, Pat McCarty, Jim McCarty, Ruben Funk, Randy Barringhaus, Don Nichols, William Griggs, Kent Harbit, Ray Carpenter, Joe Wilkinson, Harold Webber, Don Birdsall and John Murray.



## Be in this book

*BAM received this from Dona Meilach. She is working on another book and needs more photos. I hope a bunch of BAM members can help out and be represented. Her other books are well done.*

I am pleased to announce that I am now gathering materials for a new book tentatively titled:

### ARCHITECTURAL IRONWORK

I am looking for examples of exterior and interior fences, gates, banisters, balustrades, fountains, grilles, doors, and door hardware.

I will lean heavily toward contemporary designs but will include some traditional examples, also.

They may be in office buildings, banks, churches, synagogues, homes, swimming pools, and restored buildings. Or if there is something I haven't covered, tell me what you think of as "architectural."

Of course, it need not be iron . . . any kind of metal is fair game so long as it in an architectural context.

The book is slated for about 400 photos with perhaps 50-60 in color, others in black and white. But send color photos if that's what you have.

### DEADLINE MAY 1/2000

I see this as an art book that will appeal to artists, craftspeople, architects, builders, designers, interior decorators, educators, and anyone interested in the arts.

### ABOUT THE PHOTOS

Photos can be black and white and/or color, prints or slides, or high resolution printouts (digital images from the computer can't be used). We can convert color black and white but not vice-versa. Naturally, the quality of the photos, the quality and uniqueness of the work, and how it relates to other work in a chapter will determine its use in the book.

Please sign the enclosed photo release when you send photos. Any questions? Just ask. Call, write, fax, or email. Unused photos will be returned after the project is complet.

I look forward to seeing what you are doing and including your work in this exciting project. If you know other artists whose work should be considered, please pass this letter along, or send their names and addresses to me.

Cordially,

Dona

P.S. I will be giving 2 presentations at ABANA 2000. Be sure to find me and say hello!

Have you seen DECORATIVE & SCULPTURAL IRONWORK (2nd edition)? It's now available from your bookseller.

### PERMISSION TO USE PHOTOS for ARCHITECTURAL IRON- WORK

Thank you for agreeing to have your objects illustrated in an upcoming book. This agreement is between you and the author.

To verify your agreement, the author has been asked to obtain this release for the publishers, Schiffer Publishing, 4880 Lower Valley Road, Atglen, PA 19310. (610) 593-1777. Please sign at the bottom and return this to the author:

Dona Z. Meilach Phone 760 436-4395 2018 Saliente Way Fax 760 436-1402 Carlsbad, CA 92009 USA  
Email: DMeilach@msn.com

I hereby give permission for photographs of objects that I have created to be used in the publication, named below, of Schiffer Publishing, and in related promotional materials, i.e. excerpts, magazine articles, advertisements, slide presentations, etc.

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Author: Dona Z. Meilach of 2018 Saliente Way, Carlsbad, CA 92009 USA

Each book differs in design. Some-

times credit is given to the contributor of an item in the photo caption, and sometimes credits are listed as a group at the beginning (or elsewhere) in the book. It is too early to tell which will be used in this book.

If another person must be credited for the photography, please include that person's name and any required permission to use these photos. If necessary, the photographer must also sign one of these forms.

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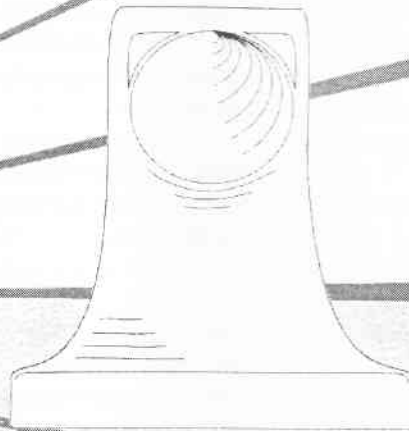
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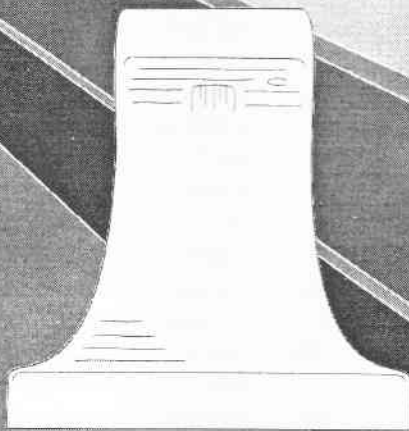
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Make plans now for ABANA's big Year 2000 Event

# ABANA CONFERENCE 2000



**A DIFFERENT  
PERSPECTIVE**



**JULY 12-16, 2000  
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY  
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA**

# CHAPTER LIAISON NEWSLETTER

October 1999

## ABANA Board Member Election

A special thank you goes to the nine candidates who took the time and effort to submit their packets as potential ABANA Board Members. Four incumbents were re-elected with Doug Learn of Doylestown, PA coming on as a new Board member. Congratulations Doug!

## Anvil's Ring And Hammer's Blow Copy Policy

There is no written policy of ABANA on who may copy and republish items within the two publications of ABANA. To date only verbal OKs or No's have been used when seeking permission to copy. A draft policy letter addressing this lack of written guidance is being staffed within the board. A final policy letter should come out of the November board meeting that will state what can and cannot be copied and how to go about receiving permission. The ABANA policy letter will in no way limit what each chapter wishes to do with their own publications.

## ABANA 2000 Conference (Iron In The Hat)

In case that you missed it last month, each chapter has Iron-In-The-Hat tickets for sale now. Each ticket costs one dollar (\$1.00) and you do not have to be present at the 2000 conference to win! Consider supporting this worthwhile cause. Prizes include an anvil, air hammer and the BAM box.

## ABANA scholarships

There are still scholarship funds available to members of ABANA which can be used for:

Attending blacksmithing classes or schools

Matching chapter scholarship funds for training/schooling

Conducting demonstrations in your local community

Continued educational studies

Contact your chapter scholarship officer for an application. It is not hard to be approved for a scholarship: Most who apply receive some if not all the assistance they request. You can also contact LeeAnn Mitchell at the ABANA Central Office for an application. [abana@abana.org](mailto:abana@abana.org)

## Forging Safety

Most of us take safety for granted or at best gloss over it only when needed. Blacksmithing can be a dangerous endeavor as most of us know if you let your guard down. To assist in promoting safe forging ABANA is currently staffing a "SAFETY GUIDELINES" document. These guidelines can be utilized by chapters, local forges and individuals to check/remind them of how to pursue our craft/art safely. The document is currently in draft format for comments by all board members. Once these changes are completed the revised draft will be submitted to each chapter for their review/comment. The final document will be made available to each chapter for their use after all comments have been incorporated.

## Newsletter Archive (Attention Editors)

The newsletters published by the chapters are being archived at the Metal Museum in Memphis, TN. The staff there have been spending the time and effort to organize and put in order the many boxes of old newsletters. Some of the letters date back to the beginnings of ABANA in the 1970's. The newsletters that each chapter has been sending to the CHAPTER LIAISON will be forwarded to the museum to be added to the files. Editors, please remove the chapter liaison from your mailing list and replace it with the metal museum's address. Thank you for your support over the past year and I know you will continue to support the archive with the museum.

National Ornamental Metal Museum  
ATTN: ABANA Newsletter Archive 374  
Metal Museum Drive Memphis, TN 38106

GET IT HOT, HIT IT HARD, QUIT WHEN IT'S DONE!  
GET IT HOT, HIT IT HARD, QUIT WHEN IT'S DONE!  
-The content of this newsletter was submitted by Doug Merkel, ABANA

Chapter Liaison

## Good Bye Merk!

*This is the last Chapter Liaison Letter from Doug Merkel who served his three years on the ABANA Board of Directors with great zeal and proved to be an excellent Chapter Liaison! He will be missed on the Board and to all the chapters! Thanks Doug!*

# BAM

## Bulletin Board

New 3-phase rotary converter, 5 h.p. Has panel box with three breakers, \$550. 10 h.p. \$650. Also new style 25-pound Little Giant, \$1,800 and 50-pound high speed hammer good for sheet metal, \$2,500. Also woodworking tools including large jointers and a bandsaw. Contact Bob Bergman, Postville Blacksmith, (608) 527-2494.

Surplus copper sheet for sale -- new stock, leftovers from a sculptural job. 110 alloy, dead soft, .125 thick, forges easily hot or cold, welds good. \$1 a pound. Pieces range from hand size to 100 pounds or so. Contact John Murray at (636) 398-4640.

The editor has a huge machinest vise mounted to a 4 foot square heavy steel table, \$300 for both. Also a 7-1/2" post vise, \$250, 4" post vise for \$60. Call Jim McCarty, (573) 395-3304 or e-mail to jimmac@socket.net for details.

Wanted to buy: 8-inch leg vise. Contact Rick Scarlet at (660) 263-8982 or Rt.1 Box 220C, Moberly, MO 65270 or e-mail to rscarlet@missvalley.com

Video tapes of the 1998 ABANA Conference, and others, are now available. Full length videotapes from \$24 give you the opportunity to learn from the best artist/blacksmiths in America. Free catalog. Phone orders welcome. Rocky Comfort Forge & Video Production, Rt.3 Box 3678, Quincy, FL 32351; (850) 627-7949.

If you don't already subscribe to Jerry Hoffmann's Blacksmith's Journal consider doing so. The Journal is published monthly and a one-year subscription totals about 190 pages. There are over 1,200 pages already published and back issues are also available. If you haven't seen it, call or write for a free sample. Cost is \$32 per year. Call 1-800-944-6134 for credit card orders or write to: Blacksmith's Journal, PO Box 193, Washington, MO 63090.

For sale: 70-pound air hammer, \$2,800. 40-pound air hammer, \$2,300. Also custom spinning in copper, brass, aluminum, steel and pewter. Maurice Ellis, (573) 766-5346.

BAM members, time is money. I have a CNC plasma cutting system in my shop in Columbia and will offer my services to BAM members at a 10 percent discount. I will cut anything you desire. Flowers, leaves, custom designs. CNC plasma cuts parts fast. From art to parts I do it all. Call (573) 474-8749 and ask for William Irvin for more details.

Kayne and Son Custom Hardware, offering Big Blue 100 ram air hammers, Peddinghaus 2 horn anvils, Off-center tongs and swages, etc, hammers, tongs and more. We ship and accept Visa and Mastercard. Steve Kayne, 100 Daniel Ridge Road, Candler, NC 28715. (704) 667-8868 or 665-1988 or fax (704) 665-8303 or e-mail: kaynehdwe@ioa.com. Check out the web site at www.kayneand-son.com.

Tom Clark has expanded his line of hand forged Hofi style hammers to include a nice rounding hammer and punches, drifts, tongs etc. For more info contact on the tools and his Ozark School of Blacksmithing contact him at (573) 438-4725. His 2000 schedule includes classes taught by Uri Hofi, Bill Bastos, Bob Patrick and Jerry Darnell.

Power hammer history! *Pounding out the Profits — A Century of American*

*Invention* by Douglas Freund (hard-bound, 317 pages, profusely illustrated) is available for \$32.50 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling through Minus Mountain Machine Works, PO Box 532, Jerome, AZ 86331.

For blacksmithing books contact Norm Larson, 5426 E. Hwy. 246, Lompoc, CA 93436 or call (805) 735-2095. Ask for his catalog — he offers hundreds of books on blacksmithing and related topics and is a real nice guy too.

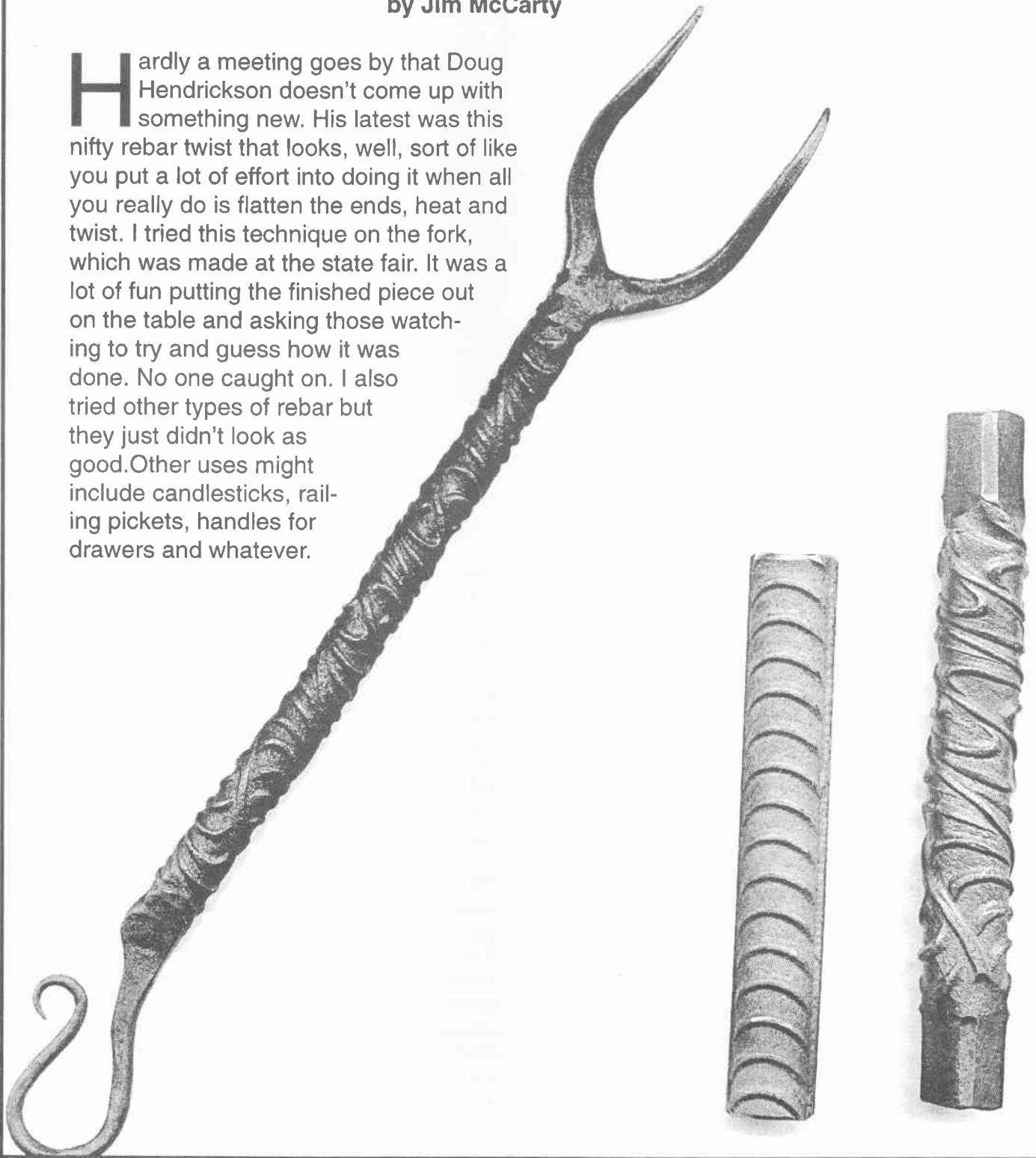
Colonial Wrought Iron is a photographic record (506 pictures) and descriptive text of the wrought iron items that have been forged by blacksmiths during the colonial period in America. The book was inspired by the collection of James Sorber and was written by Don Plummer. To get your autographed copy, send check or money order for \$44 plus \$4 shipping for each book to: James C. Sorber, 1105 Wilson St., Pottstown, PA 19464.

George Dixon is offering a new line of tools called "The Old Philadelphia Tool Co." These tools are patterned off of old European designs and will include directions for using them effectively. He offers a brochure if you send him a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Old Philadelphia Tool Co., 1229 Bee Tree Lake Road, Swannanoa, NC 28778. He is also starting a new blacksmithing publication called "The Traditional Metalsmith" set to debut in January. For \$28 you will get four issues of How to information. George is the past editor of The Hammers' Blow.

# Do the Rebar twist

by Jim McCarty

**H**ardly a meeting goes by that Doug Hendrickson doesn't come up with something new. His latest was this nifty rebar twist that looks, well, sort of like you put a lot of effort into doing it when all you really do is flatten the ends, heat and twist. I tried this technique on the fork, which was made at the state fair. It was a lot of fun putting the finished piece out on the table and asking those watching to try and guess how it was done. No one caught on. I also tried other types of rebar but they just didn't look as good. Other uses might include candlesticks, railing pickets, handles for drawers and whatever.





## He never shod horses

Francis Whitaker, a blacksmith who never shod a horse, died Oct. 23 at age 92. When he died his favorite hammer was in his hand and he was surrounded by family and friends who held vigil over him and recalled his life when it was all over.

He studied as an apprentice with the great smiths of Europe and America. Over his long career, he hammered thousands upon thousands of iron bars into works of art. But he will be forever known for his tireless effort to revive the craft of blacksmithing.

Francis was in his 70s when he began a mission to pass his old world techniques on to younger smiths.

"Iron has a strength no other material has," was one of Francis quotes, "and yet it has a capacity for being light, graceful and beautiful. It has this capacity — but no desire. It will do nothing by itself except resist you.

"All the desire, and all the knowledge of how to impart this desire to the iron, must come from the smith."

In 1997 Francis was named a National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts.

As a teenager Francis went to work for Samuel Yellin as an apprentice. When that apprenticeship ended he went to Berlin to work with Julius Schramm.

He then opened his own shop in Carmel, California where he found a ready market for his wares. He taught welding in World War II shipyards, an irony considering his later disdain for the arc welder. Francis called the arc welder the worst thing to happen to blacksmithing.

He opened two schools for blacksmiths, one at Carbondale, Colorado and the other at the Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina.

In his later years he led a crusade to promote purity in iron design, tirelessly encouraging blacksmiths to be honest in their work and to practice the old methods which in his opinion produced better ironwork and often saved time.

Francis is gone but his legacy will live on in the hundreds of promising young smiths he trained.

# Farewell to Francis



by Bob Patrick

Francis Whitaker died Saturday, October 23, 1999. He had perhaps a bigger influence on modern American blacksmithing than any other smith.

I first saw Francis in 1976 in Carbondale, Illinois at the ABANA Conference. Though he was doing an impressive demonstration, forging ironwork for a forged security door, I had no idea of the vast range of experience Francis had.

When I helped start the Blacksmith Association of Missouri I took Francis's advice. I got the best demonstrator we could find to demonstrate, and that, of course, was Francis. Later we did a workshop with Francis, in which Francis organized us and spearheaded making two ornamental screens that Jerry Hoffmann had designed.

Having tried and not done well to have a group project before this, Francis's masterful ability to organize and delegate work in a group project forever changed BAM and all of those who participated in the workshop.

Francis directly and indirectly educated and inspired thousands of metalworkers. His insistence on quality helped make the great work done in ABANA today what it is. He would honestly offer solutions for virtually any blacksmithing situation. The amazing thing to me was that Francis had already encountered most of these situations. If not he always went for the most practical approach he could think of, and found an answer in a very short time.

Francis was an avid learner. He constantly learned new techniques and gave credit to those he learned from. Francis helped smiths from the beginning level to the master level. His primary requirement was that a person planned their work thoroughly, paid attention and did top quality work when he was teaching.

I will always remember when Francis told me, "I'll be looking over your shoulder when you work".

Thank you Francis.



αβχδεζηηθκλμνοπρστυωζψωξψαβχδεζηηθκλμνοπρστυωζψωξψαβχδεζηηθκλμνοπρστυωζψω

♣ A Demonstration by Master Blacksmith Peter Ross ♣

from the note and sketch books of Frank Turley and James Baniecki

NAIL HEADER TOOL

Over all Length = 10 11/16"

□ This tool was/is used to make square nails contemporary to those made in the pre-Revolutionary English colonies. Peter said his shop made 20,000 such nails one particular year!

□ See nail in process fig. G (below)

□ This detail of the bottom of the Header shows the Pritchel Hole Lug.

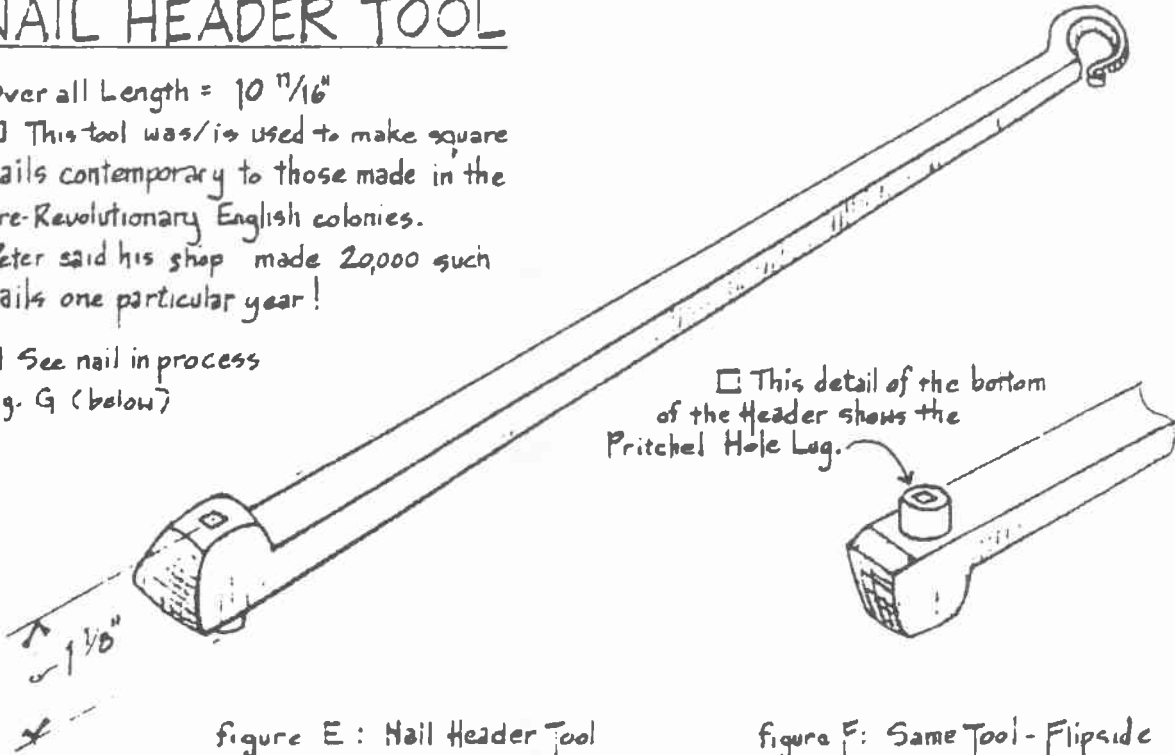


figure E: Nail Header Tool

figure F: Same Tool - Flipside

MAKING THE NAIL

- Peter began with a 1/4" Ø steel rod, and first tapered the rod to a point at the far Anvil edge.
- Now drop back a known distance from the point and shoulder on two sides at the near Anvil edge with half face blows.
- Peter makes two hardie cuts and inserts the nail in the header tool, with the "Lump" away from him (breaking the nail off of the rod as he does so.)
- The nail head is then made with angle blows in order to center and flatten the head - as well as to give the head facets.

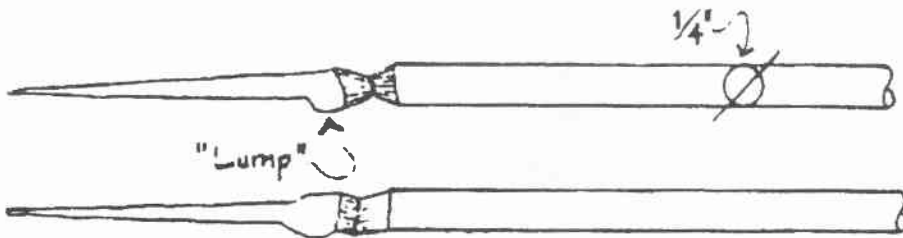
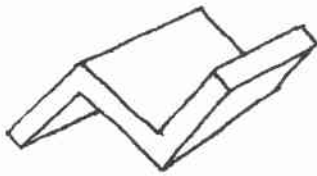


Figure G: Nail in Process ~ Two Views

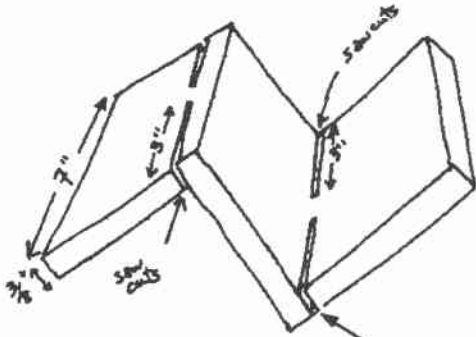
PR-5

**FRED CRIST DEMOS at Gichner Hammer-In, February 1999**

*by Tina Chisena*

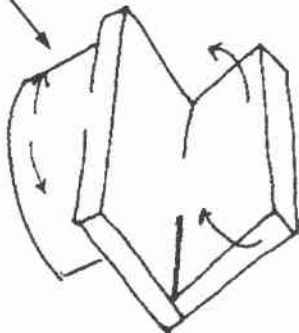


Start with a 7 inch length of 3/8 X 3 "Z" bar.

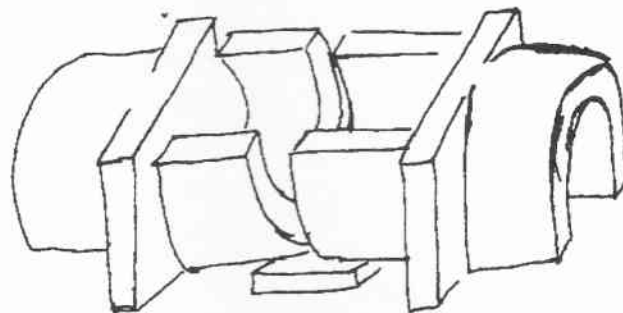
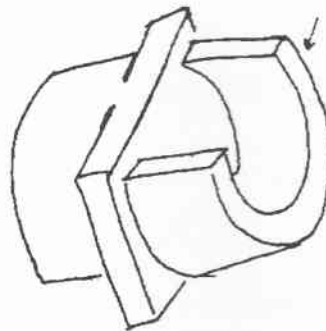


3" saw cuts made with bandsaw.

Bend this part using swage block - requires a lot of heat.

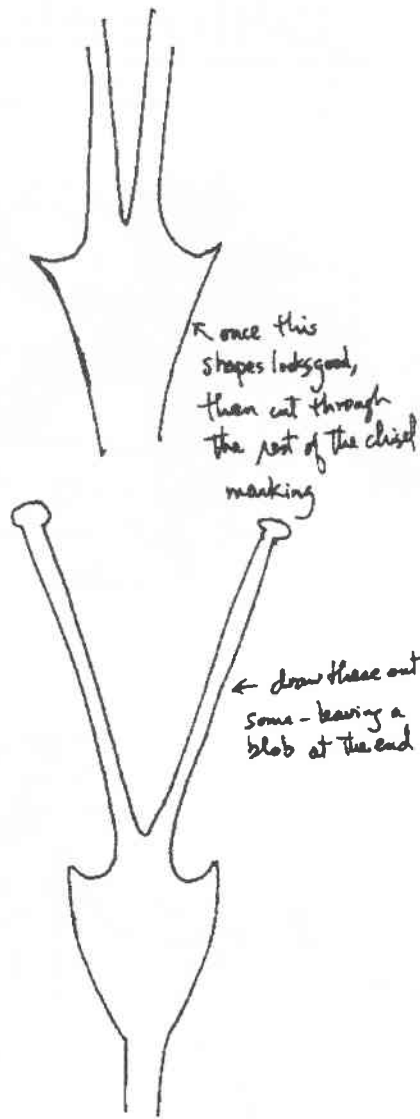
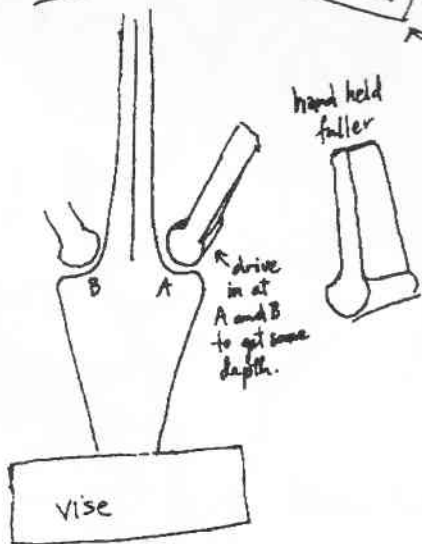
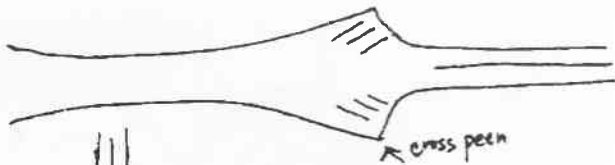
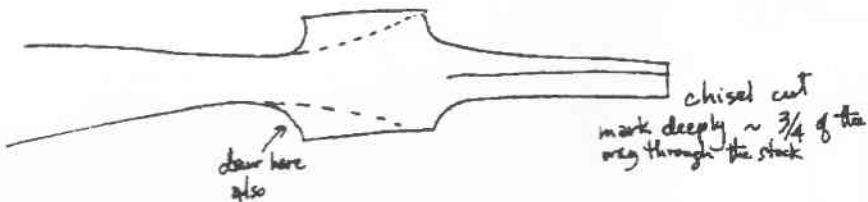
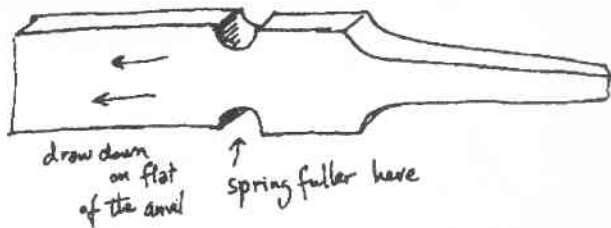
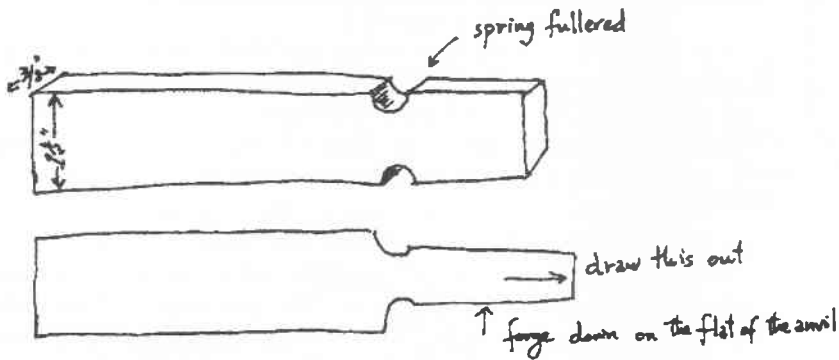


Bend other side in swage block.

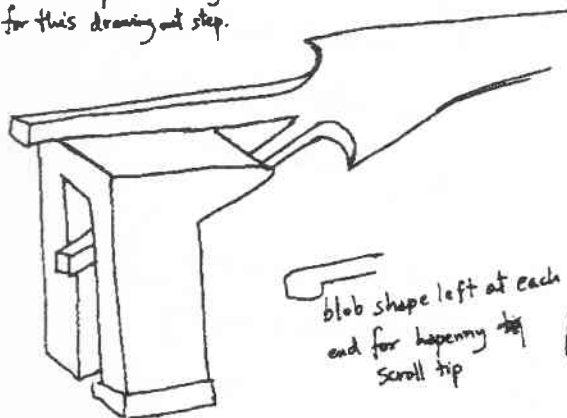


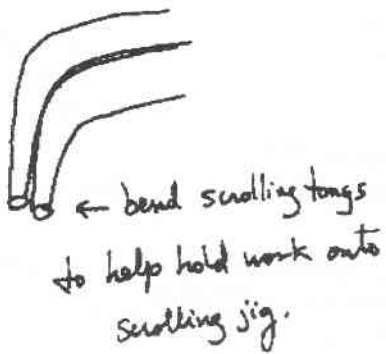
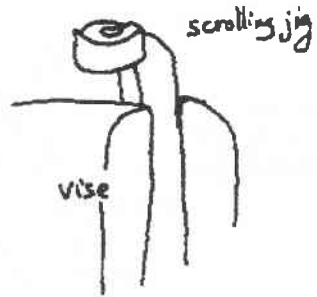
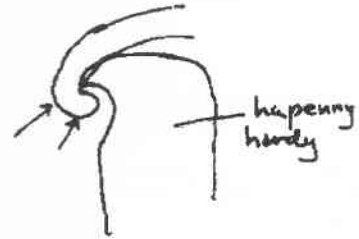
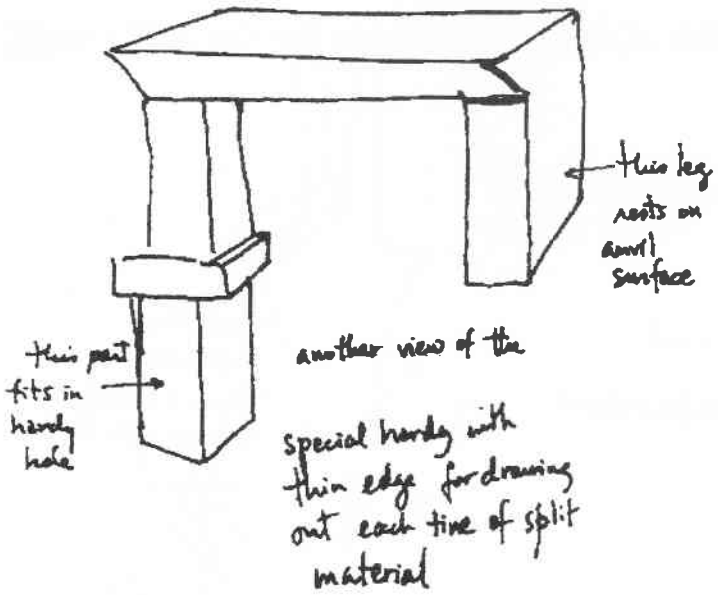
Fred then riveted two pieces to a base bar to make a vessel form.

FRED CRIST - DEMO #2



he uses a special handy for this drawing out step.



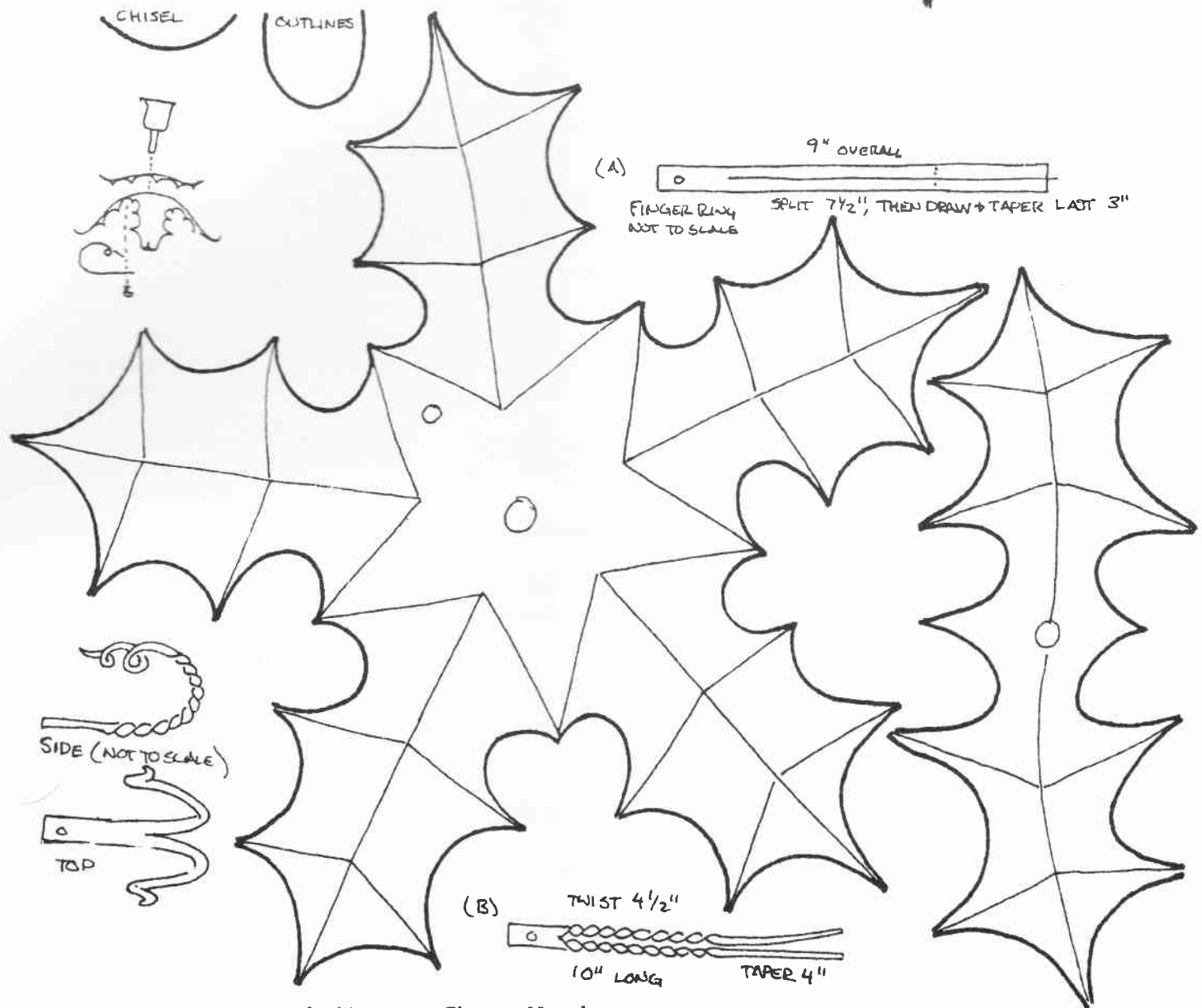
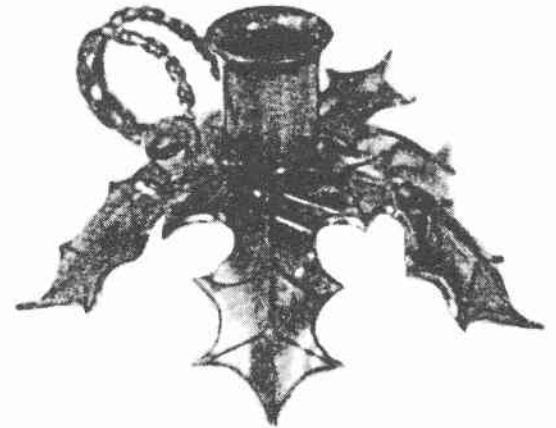


tweak scroll proportions with torch and scrolling pliers.



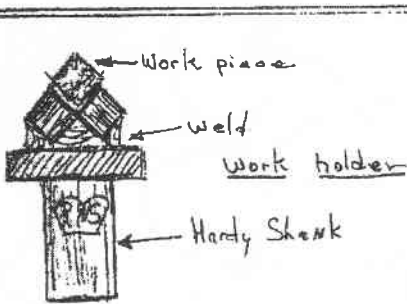
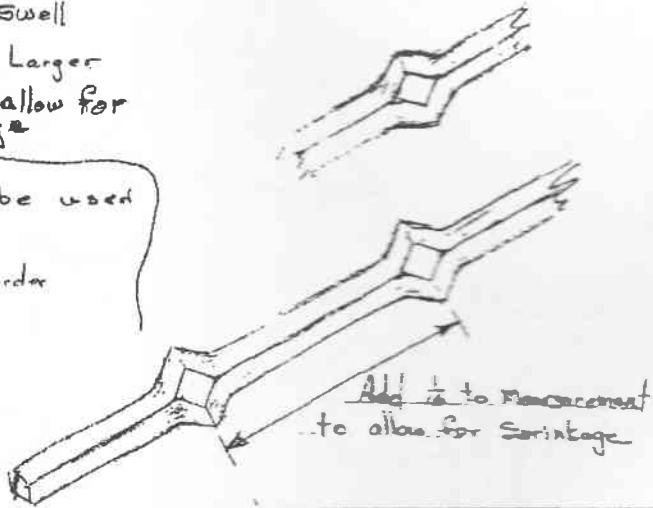
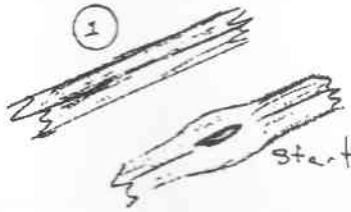
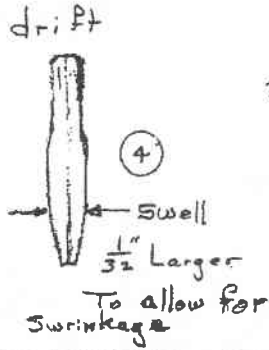
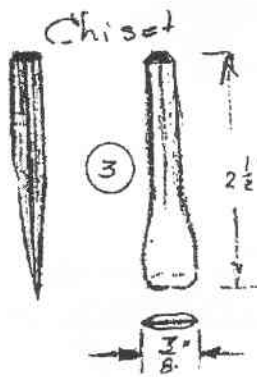
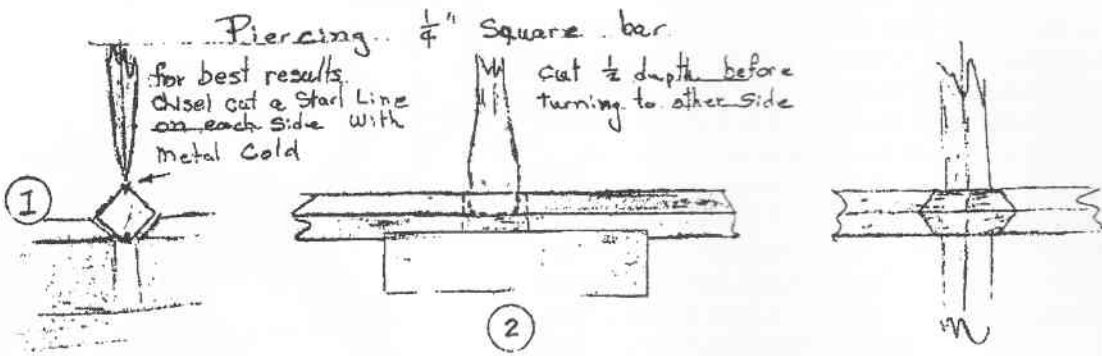
# Gary Scasbrick's Holly Candleholder

Well, it seems that Gary's been at it again . . . this time he's designed a beautiful little holly candleholder that's so nice I couldn't wait until Christmas to show it to you. The sheet metal pattern is shown below full size. You'll need to make two curved chisels to cut it out (or you could have it laser or plasma cut). Gary used jackhammer bits hardened in water to make his chisels. He cut the sheet metal cold and they are still razor sharp. The finger ring is riveted to the underside of the main leaf. The double twist of the finger ring really sets the piece off. Forge the candle cup by fullering down a piece of 3/4" pipe. Leave the stem long so it can be used as a rivet to hold the whole thing together. Dish the leaf on a swage block, then heat and brush with a brass brush to give it the golden color.

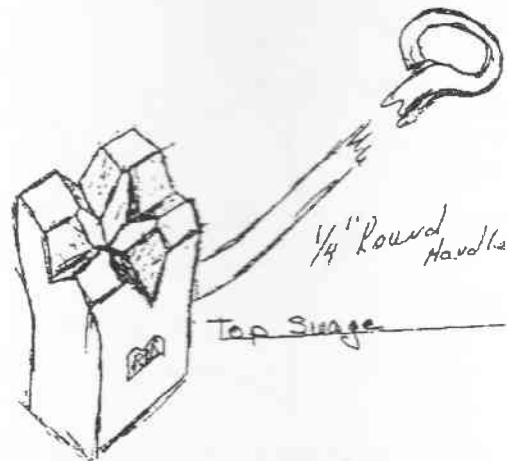
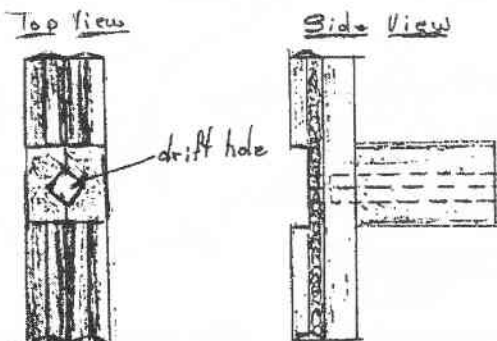


*Appalachian Area Chapter Newsletter*

# Treadle Hammer Techniques from a Richard Shepherd demo



VIEW OF Top - Swage  
Bottom Swage should match





# ABANA 2000 BRIDGE PROJECT

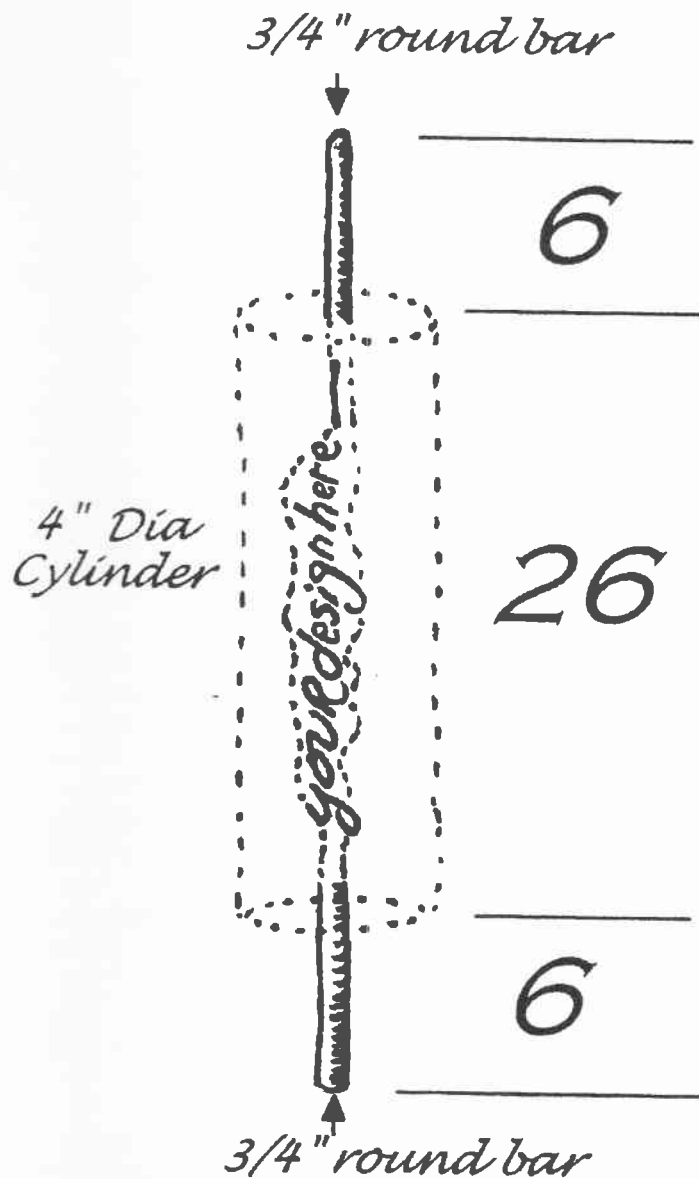
Everyone is invited to make a balluster to be used on the ABANA Conference 2000 Bridge Project. The bridge represents the other half of a bridge built in Germany. It is intended to showcase ABANA members at the turn of the millenium.

All ballusters sent to the conference in time will be used. Some will go on the bridge itself, while the rest will be used in railings around the bridge. When completed the bridge will go to the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis.

To create your piece of history follow the illustration at right, being sure to leave 6 inches top and bottom untouched. Be sure also to keep the design to fit within a 4-inch diameter cylinder.

The rest is up to you. Send the completed balluster to:  
ABANA 2000  
c/o Bill Callaway  
3515 N. 35th St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85018

In addition to the balluster project, you are encouraged to forge a chain link to go on a chain project sponsored by the Salt Fork Craftsmen blacksmith chapter in Oklahoma. The link should be forged from 7 inches of 3/8" round stock. Don't forget to put your touchmark or name on the link. Again, you can use your imagination with the center of the link but leave enough room to attach it to the next link. Bring these to the next BAM meeting so we can attach ours together.



*Baluster must fit within  
4" dia cylinder as shown*

# BAM NEWS

## 2000 Meeting dates set

**M**aruce Ellis has meeting dates for the entire year 2000 set. Please put these on your calendar just in case the newsletter is late.

### 1999

November 20, Andrew MacDonald, Carbondale, IL

### 2000

January 8, John Lovin, Mt. Vernon, IL

March 25, Tom Clark, Potosi, MO

May 20, Joe Wilkinson, Hope, MO

July 29, Kirk Sullens, Bass Pro Shops Fab shop, Springfield, MO

September 23, Ed Harper, Browning, MO

November 11, Pat McCarty, Washington, MO

## Lou Mueller still ABANA pres

**L**ou Mueller was reelected as ABANA president at the group's annual board meeting held in Memphis, TN Nov. 4-6. There were some changes in the board spots -- Dorothy Steigler was replaced as secretary by Andy Quittner and Will Hightower replaced Pete Brandenburg as treasurer. Rounding out the officers is Bill Fiorini, first vice president and Scott Lankton, second vice president. BAM members who are not ABANA members should consider joining the national group. Besides receiving the two publications, The Anvil's Ring and The Hammers' Blow, you will be eligible for scholarships, can use the ABANA library and receive a discount on merchandise from the ABANA office. To join you can use the form in

the front of this newsletter or you can join on-line at <http://www.abana.org>.

## Workshops at Lou's

**L**ou Mueller is planning to host several workshops at his business in Fenton. The first will be in December. Details were not available when this issue was put together but should be in time for the Nov. 20 meeting.

He also wants to do two more functions in 2000. One will be a beginner's workshop. If you can't make the meeting Nov. 20 give Lou a holler at (314) 343-4223 or you can e-mail him at [loupatm@swbell.net](mailto:loupatm@swbell.net).

## Rainbo still kickin'

**O**ur good friend Rainbo (Steve Clary) who is president of the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association has had quite a year. You may remember he wasn't getting around too good at the Asheville Conference and missed this year's Ozark Conference. Earlier this year he had his knee replaced in May. Then he had a 3-inch hole cut in his head and a tumor removed. He reported in the latest issue of the Tuiere that he is on the mend and by 2000 he should be a new man. The sad part is he has to give up the physical side of blacksmithing (doctor's orders). Rainbo had an auction Nov. 13 to get rid of his excess stuff, here's hoping he had a good turnout. We'll be thinking of you buddy and if there is anything we can do just holler real loud. His address is 2642 Saddle Trek Rd., Decatur, IL 62521 if anyone wants to drop him a line.

## Ozark Conference 2000

**P**lans are under way for BAM's big 2000 event, the Ozark Conference. The dates for the event are May 6-8 and the location will be the Warren County Fairgrounds near Warrenton. We are moving away from the Washington site for a number of reasons. We weren't going to be able to leave vehicles overnight which would have limited tailgating and the price went up considerably. Members of the conference committee, which is chaired

this year by Doug Hendrickson, think the Warrenton site will be a good one. No word yet on who the demonstrators will be but we will let you know.

## Plan now for ABANA 2000

**R**ecently the editor had an opportunity to get together with Bill Callaway, the chairman of the ABANA 2000 Conference and I am excited about the coming event. The Arizona chapter is hosting this one and they are well on their way to being ready.

There are 46 demonstrators already lined up. These include a locksmith from Equador, BAM members Jerry Hoffmann and Don Asbee, Timm Bre-dohl from Germany, a copper and silver smith from Mexico to name just a few.

Special projects include the bridge that will mirror another one built in Germany, a Ron Kinyon air hammer workshop, an iron pour and billet forging, a display of junkyard and antique power hammers and a bunch of other exciting stuff.

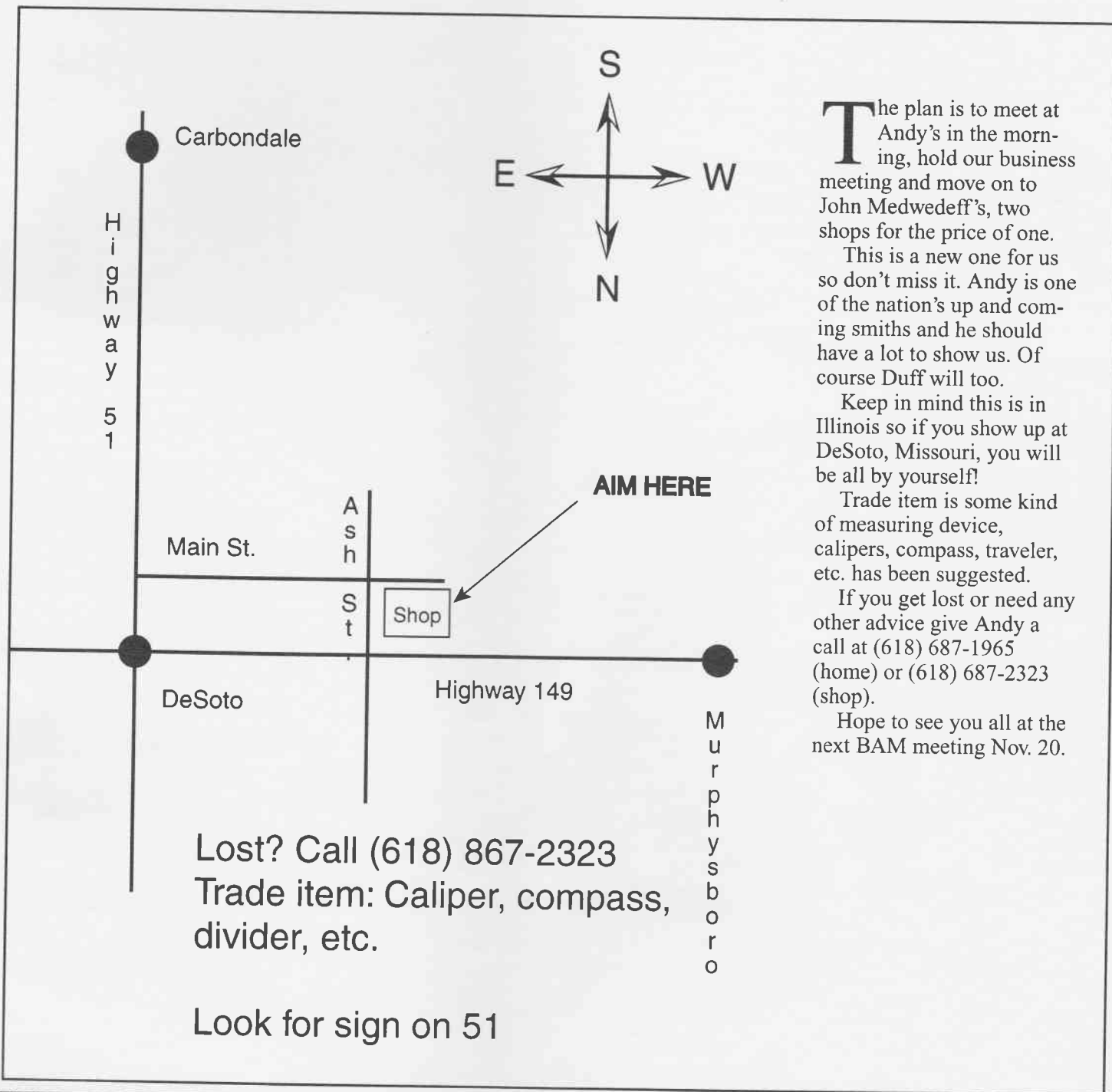
Flagstaff should be an excellent location. It is in the mountains at 5,000 feet and the climate is perfect even in the summer. The site is within striking distance of the Grand Canyon, Las Vegas and a bunch of other major attractions. Day trips are planned for family members so you can make this your vacation destination.

Registration information will be in the Winter Anvil's Ring which will come out in February. For now mark your calendars for July 12-16 and plan to be there.

## Tools needed for BAM box

**A**t the 2000 ABANA Conference one of the iron in the hat features will be another BAM Box made by Pat McCarty. We hope to fill the box with tools before it goes to the lucky winner and donations are needed. These need to be high quality hand forged tools, not something you purchased. All tools for the box can be given to Tom Clark, co-chair of the iron in the hat. You can also buy tickets from Tom and you don't need to be there to win. Other items include an air hammer and one of Tom's anvils.

*Next meeting Nov. 20, Andy MacDonald's, DeSoto, Illinois*



The plan is to meet at Andy's in the morning, hold our business meeting and move on to John Medwedeff's, two shops for the price of one.

This is a new one for us so don't miss it. Andy is one of the nation's up and coming smiths and he should have a lot to show us. Of course Duff will too.

Keep in mind this is in Illinois so if you show up at DeSoto, Missouri, you will be all by yourself!

Trade item is some kind of measuring device, calipers, compass, traveler, etc. has been suggested.

If you get lost or need any other advice give Andy a call at (618) 687-1965 (home) or (618) 687-2323 (shop).

Hope to see you all at the next BAM meeting Nov. 20.



## 1999 — 2000 Schedule

### November Meeting

Andrew MacDonald  
Carbondale, IL  
Nov. 20

Trade item: measuring device

### January 2000 Meeting

John Lovin  
Mt. Vernon, IL  
Jan. 8, 2000

Trade item: Hot cut

### March 2000 Meeting

Tom Clark  
Potosi, MO  
March 25, 2000  
Trade item: TBA



# Follow the Army to Victory



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Jefferson City, MO 65101

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### Address Correction Requested

Please send changes to Maurice Ellis, Rt. 1, Box 1442, Belgrade, MO 63622