

RAM

INSIDE

March — April 2000

March meeting8
Pine cones.....12
Public demos.....15
Back scratcher.....18
Next meeting.....23



NEWSLETTER of the BLACKSMITHS ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

Contents

Editor's anvil

5 Editor retains his sense of humor during a difficult time (latest excuse for a late news.)

Roster update

6 Fresh off a brand new roster, here's a list of changes that have taken place.

Bob's business

7 Bob ponders what profits a blacksmith to gain a commission and lose a soul in the process.

March meeting

8 A report on BAM's March madness at Tom Clark's Ozark School of Blacksmithing.

ABANA report

10 A new website, copyright info and details about the coming conference from ABANA.

Bulletin board

11 Whatever you need — books, anvils, power hammers — we've got it here.

Pine cones

12 Kirk Sullens gives the details of his wind-delayed pine cone demo.

Public demos

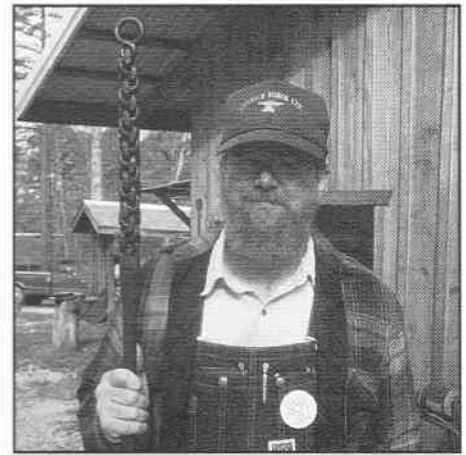
15 Jim Vandike takes a tongue in cheek look at how to give a demo in public.

Back scratcher

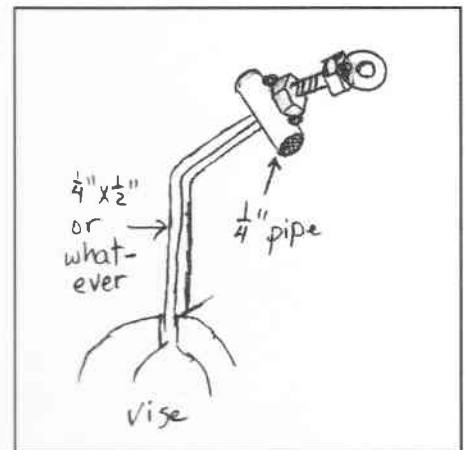
18 The key to this back scratcher is waiting until it cools to try it out.

Next meeting

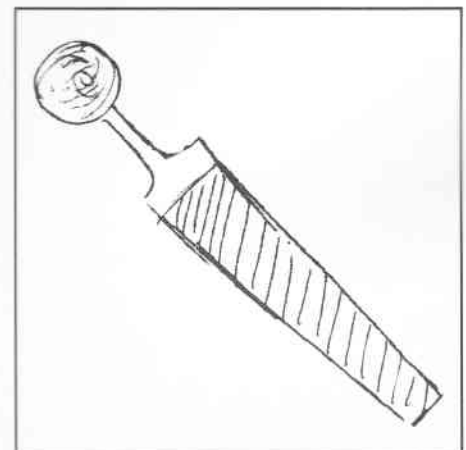
23 We head to Bass Pro's metal shop in Nixa, Mo. for our July meeting.



Page 8



Page 12



Page 21

**Newsletter of the
Blacksmiths
Association
of Missouri**

*March—April
2000*

Volume 17 No. 2

Our cover: Tom Clark does it all himself enroute to a nail header during his demo at the March BAM meeting. Tom hosted the meeting at his Ozark School of Blacksmithing. Photo by Jim McCarty.

Editor

Jim McCarty

Contributing Editors

Bob Alexander
Kirk Sullens
Jim Vandike

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 or you can send e-mail to jimmac@socket.net. BAM membership inquiries should be addressed to: Maurice Ellis, Rt.1 Box 1442, Belgrade, MO 63622, (573) 766-5346 or send e-mail to mbellis@therural.net. 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: _____
E-mail: _____

New Member Renewal

How did you learn about BAM? _____

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: _____
Phone: () _____ Zip: _____

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 mai\$60 yr.
- Contributory\$100 yr.
- Full time student\$35 yr.
- Public library.....\$35 yr.

See reverse

BAM

Send this form in an envelope with your payment to:

BAM,
c/o Maurice Ellis
Rt.1 Box 1442
Belgrade, MO 63622

Officers:

President
Bob Alexander

1st Vice President
Mike Williamson

2nd Vice President
Joe Wilkinson

Secretary
John Murray

Treasurer
Maurice Ellis

Website

www.bamsite.advertisnet.com/home.htm

The Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri is a chapter of the Artist Blacksmiths' Association of North America, and is devoted to the preservation and advancement of blacksmithing and to communication among blacksmiths in Missouri and surrounding areas. BAM's newsletter's goal is to support these aims. Letters to the editor, tech tips, tools for sale or anything else which furthers these ends will be considered for publication.

The Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri and its members do not manufacture, distribute, sell, test, warrant, guarantee, or endorse any of the tools, materials, instructions or products contained in articles or features in the Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri. The Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri disclaims any responsibility or liability for damages or injuries as a result of any construction, design, use, manufacture or other activity undertaken as a result of the use or application of information contained in any articles or features in the Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri. The Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri assumes no responsibility or liability for the accuracy, fitness, proper design, safety or safe use of any information contained in the Newsletter of the Blacksmiths' Association of Missouri.

I _____ hereby apply for membership in the Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America and enclose \$_____ as my annual membership dues for one year.

MasterCard VISA Check/Money Order

Card Number

Exp. Date (Required)

Checks must be in U.S. currency

SEND RENEWAL TO:

ABANA

P.O. Box 816 Farmington, Georgia 30638

Dues Distribution:

1 year subscription Anvil's Ring: 68.5 % \$24

Adm. offices & other ABANA projects (Conferences, etc.): 31.5% \$11



ABANA

Editor's Anvil

Greetings and long time no see. I think this sets the record for most time in between BAM newsletters. According to the schedule I am on the Ozark conference should be coming up in a few weeks. Can't wait for that to happen.

I guess I should tell you right up front what has caused the delay and get that out of the way once and for all. On May 20, the same day as Joe Wilkinson's BAM meeting, my brother Brian moved into a new house. It's a tradition in our family that when someone calls for help we answer. That's why I missed the meeting. We worked all day moving him.

I came home around 9 pm and found my wife had left me, taking all three kids and leaving me alone for the first time in 15 years. She was kind enough to leave me my tools and the trusty iMac or this newsletter would be more than just late.

Nothing happens without a purpose, or so I believe. So some good will come of this. I am reminded of the child whose father gave him a room full of horse manure for his birthday. The boy shouted with glee and began digging through the pile. "With all of this in here there just has to be a pony in here somewhere," he said. I'm still looking for my pony but I know it's in there somewhere...

Many of you saw the article in the Rural Missouri about Tom Clark's school. I got to spend two wonderful days watching Uri Hofi teach both a group of beginners and the advanced class. I was able to tape Uri's intro talk, have the tape transcribed and as soon as I get all the typos out of it I will publish it so you can all see where this man is coming from. It is an amazing story and I think it will help everyone understand him better.

Tom forged a pint sized Hofi hammer for my son James' 10th birthday. It is a thing of beauty and

he is real proud of it. It's exactly like the big Hofi hammers but weighs around a pound. He's going to have to grow into it but I don't think that will take long.

I helped brother Pat install a railing he made for my brother Brian's new house. It really makes a statement, something like "don't fall down the steps." We learned a lot about installations doing this job. Lesson one was don't do the installation. Lesson two was measure more than once – good thing there is a blacksmith shop in Taos, Mo. Lesson three is gas torches and finished hardwood floors don't mix. Lesson four is don't let the wife watch you use a gas torch on her hardwood floors. Lesson five is the same as lesson one.

I had an opportunity to go to Nashville this month and while I was there I saw the new Bass Pro Shops. It's not as good as the one we have here in Missouri (our Wal-Mart is better than theirs too) but there is some amazing ironwork including a massive chandelier and fire screen just inside the front door. Our good friends at the Bass Pro Fab Shop in Nixa played a major role in decorating the store and similar ones in Orlando and elsewhere.

In July we will get a chance to see how they work when they host the BAM meeting. Kirk Sullens tells me Johnny Morris is springing for buses to take us to their Big Cedar Lodge near Branson. We will eat here and get a chance to see some impressive ironwork. This is the first time we've had a meeting in southwest Missouri I believe and I hope we get to see some new faces this time around.

I just talked to the State Fair folks this week and they definitely want us back to demonstrate in August. The weather for the fair will again be cool and breezy, they assured me. I hope we can line up some more quality demonstrators for the fair. I think it would be fun

to work on a group project that stays behind and can be added to every day. If anyone wants to design something let me know.

That's about all I have for this one. Keep the material coming and we'll get it back on schedule soon.

Some of you remember Al Stephens who left Missouri for greener pastures in Pennsylvania. Al's daughter Julie is all grown up now and is doing a summer internship at Rural Missouri. She's full of life and is fitting in just great with our somewhat strange staff...not sure that is a compliment Julie. Speaking of Al, he is working on buying out Doug Hendrickson's Peola Valley business. Not sure if he gets the valley too but if I were him I would insist.

I'll leave you with a funny — you can change the lines to fit the group you happen to be in:

A woman goes to her local paper and tells them her husband died and she wants to run an obituary. The editor tells her they charge 50 cents a word for obituaries. So she says, "Print Bill Jones died."

"Fine," says the editor. "That will be \$3."

"But you said 50 cents a word. That should be \$1.50," the woman replied.

So the editor explains that they have a 6 word minimum. "Then print this," says the woman. "Bill Jones died. Anvil for sale."

— Jim McCarty

Bob's Business

As I write this letter, conference time is but only a few weeks away. I have been trying to decide on a suitable project for the Auction. I thought it should be something a little different this year and I think I have come up with an idea. Hope that I can complete it in time.

Work is going very well in the shop for myself as it is for everyone else that I know, due partly to the economy and partly because of the renewed interest in hand-forged ironwork. This new-found interest gives way for promoting honest quality hand-forged work. For example, occasionally a typical cut and weld job comes through the shop and it would be easy to just "cut and weld" and most customers would be satisfied with this, but I choose to go one step better and take what time is necessary to grind or file so as to blend the necessary welds.

To me it is more of a matter of pride rather than profit, if it becomes a choice. Recently I read a story in the "Hammer's Blow" written by Brian Gilbert about advice given to him by

Francis Whitaker. Brian had a typical problem of clients wanting work that is always cheaper while he was wanting to do quality work using traditional techniques. Finding the market for that kind of work was a problem for Brian, as well as many of us. Francis advised Brian that he must do quality work first, even if at a loss, and then through the work you will find the clients who will value it.

This is exactly how I see it, and I'm grateful that my family tolerates my dreams. I hope that you will also strive to do your best and reclaim the art of Blacksmithing.

On a sad note I have been informed as some already have heard, that Bill Peih of Centaur Forge has passed away. Anyone who has ever dealt with Centaur has probably had the pleasure of his acquaintance. Bill was truly a blacksmith's friend and will surely be missed by all. May our prayers be with his family.

If this issue gets out around conference time and we get another one before the end of May we will then be

caught up with the newsletters. GOOD LUCK JIM!!!! Don't forget to do your part and send Jim McCarty all you can to help fill those issues. Don't be afraid of your writing skills because Jim can help you if needed.

Beginning this year we will be asking for your help and advice in electing new officers for BAM with the aid of either a ballot in the newsletter or a postcard ballot so that more than just a handful of members that happen to be at a particular meeting can elect the new officers. Also, beginning next year the election month will be changed from July to May so that votes can be tallied at the conference and results announced.

Keep in mind that at the conference we usually allot a sum of money to the library fund for new books and videos. If you have any suggestions pass them on to Bruce Herzog.

Keep on hammering

— Bob Alexander

Dear BAM

Just wanted to say the newsletter was great. Especially enjoyed the picture on the back page. We raised our two boys, (now 24 and 19) around Blacksmith shops, hammer-ins and workshops. The blacksmith family became our family and our family is the better for this. They grow up fast, but we enjoy them now as adults, the relationship changes, just gets better. Keep in touch.

— John Lovin

Thought I would send a note and say that I enjoyed the conference this last weekend. It is always a very humbling opportunity to see the talent of our Missouri blacksmiths. My wife and I were both pleased with the sessions that we were able to sit in on. I have a supply of coal and am looking forward to upgrading from my novice ability.

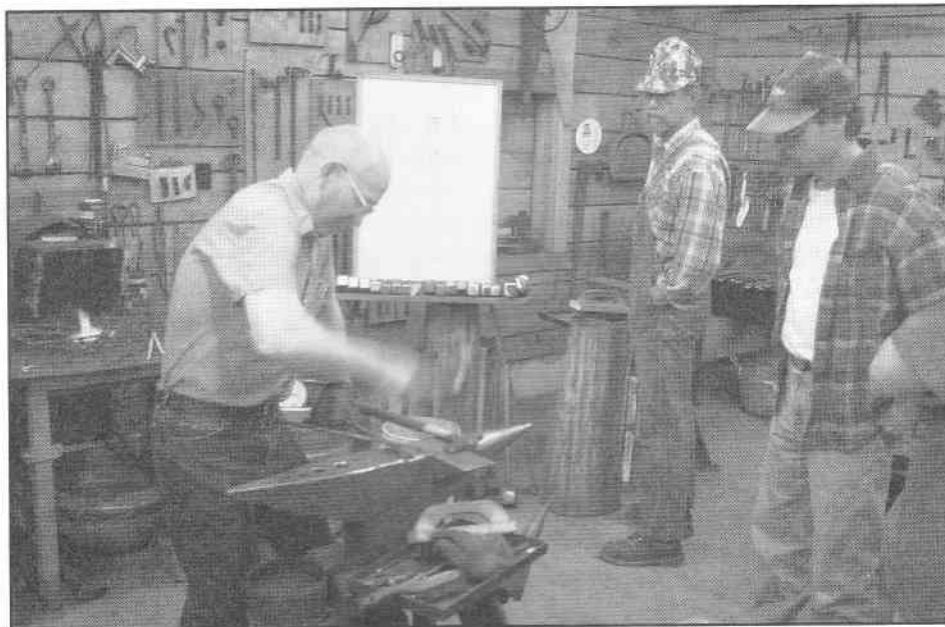
Hope you have a great week end and I am looking forward to trying to attend some "hammer-ins (?)" this year.

— Bart Tibbs



BAM

MARCH MEETING



by Jim McCarty

tools you need to get you inspired and educated.

Minutes

Big thanks to Tom and Thelma Clark for hosting and feeding us.

Minutes approved as previously published.

Bob Alexander spoke on the "Ferro Insight" World Congress and the St. Louis Renaissance Festival.

Bob mentioned "Art & Metal Co." which is again selling wrought iron.

Bob showed a one-week scholarship for classes at the JC Campbell Folk School.

Bob also has Iron in the Hat tickets for the big items at the ABANA 2000 Conference.

Joe Wilkinson spoke on BAM officer elections and suggested a change in bylaws to change elections to conference time, starting in 2001. Motion made, seconded and approved.

Doug Hendrickson spoke on the BAM 2000 conference and said everything is going great.

Maurice Ellis spoke on BAM's dues, treasury, etc. as well as conference

BAM's March 25 meeting gave us all a fresh look at what Tom Clark has been up to in the woods near Potosi. Tom has built one of the finest schools of blacksmithing at his house and he was proud to show it off at our March meeting. The school featured a fresh addition soon to house his new line of air hammers, gas forges, sheers and punches.

Tom had a big hammer set up and it got some use as he started the demos by making a nail header. Tom makes nail headers almost as fast as he makes nails and he knows the tricks that make nail making a breeze when you put the tool to work.

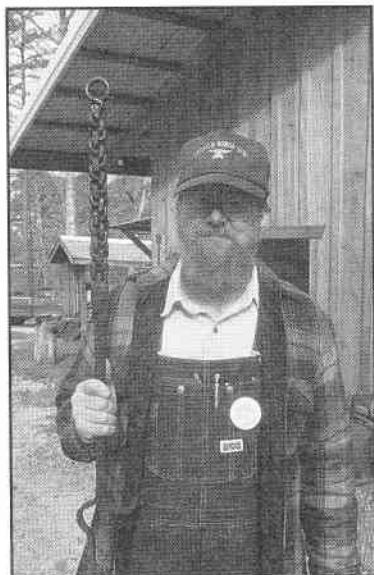
For a change we had a beautiful spring day for a March meeting and I don't think anyone got stuck. The tailgators were out in force, the dogwoods were blooming and a big crowd made the trip to Potosi. The trade item, a poker, was one of the best we've had in terms of participation and quality.

We had a short and sweet business meeting (the way I like them!), then adjourned to some excellent fixins provided by Thelma. I left before the afternoon session started so can't report on that.

If you didn't get a chance to go to the meeting try to take one of Tom's classes or a one-on-one session with him. You'll find the school has all the

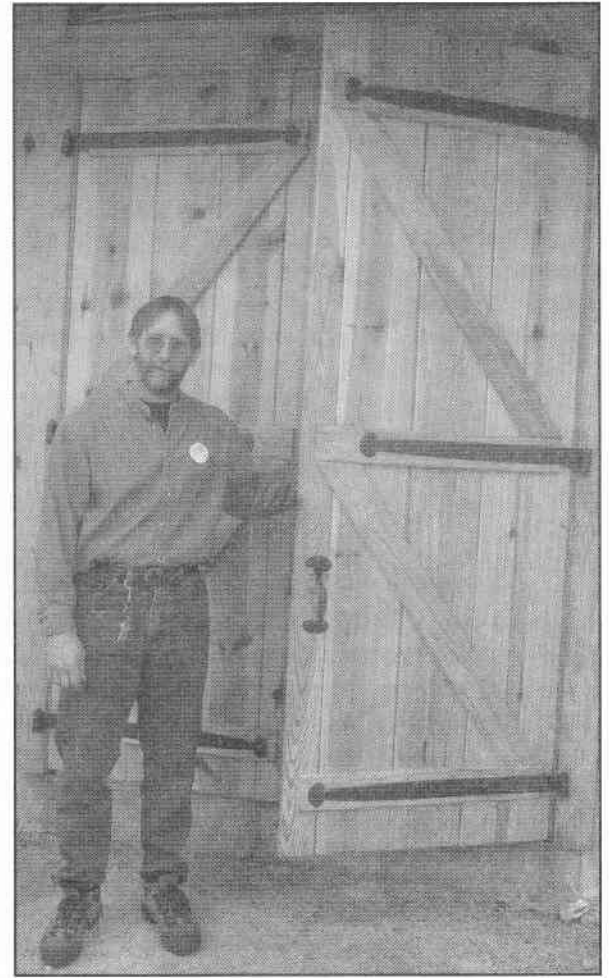


Above: Don Asbee critiques the trade item made by Pat McCarty using the "hand grenade" twist Don demonstrated many years ago. Below: Jim Vandike forged this linked trade item in Biblical proportions.





Left: Tom Clark makes nail headers almost as fast as he makes nails. Tom hosted the March meeting at his school in Potosi. Above: Joe Wilkinson, Bob Alexander and Don Nichols try to decide who gets the last bag of coal.



Pat McCarty made these doors and hinges for Tom's Ozark School of Blacksmithing. Amazingly they hadn't yet fallen down prior to the meeting.

registrations.

The JC Campbell Scholarship was won by Ray Carpenter. Congratulations Ray.

Bob Alexander and Maurice Ellis spoke on BAM scholarships.

Bruce Herzog spoke on the gas forge workshop — more info to come.

Motion to adjourn approved.

Respectfully submitted,

John Murray, secretary



Tom's school was designed for 12 students and the instructor, each with their own forge, anvil and all of the tools the instructor uses.



ABANA

Chapter Liaison Letter

April, 2000

The liaison letter is another long one and earlier than usual because the Board felt it important to get this information to the Chapters and members as quickly as possible. On a separate sheet is an explanation of the copyright process for reproducing information in *The Anvil's Ring* and *Hammers' Blow*. We hope that this will answer many of the questions that Dorothy and the publications committee have heard over the past three months. Listed below are the dates for the 2000 Board elections. And also included is information concerning proposed changes in commercial and residential building codes that have potential to negatively affect each and every smith in the US.

On April 1 the member's site on the ABANA web page was opened. Go to <http://www.abana.org/> and see in the bottom part of the home page the announcement about the members site; click on "more" and go from there. Or you can go directly to <http://members.abana.org/home> and register. Once you receive your password you may go in freely. Jack Andrews and the Internet committee have been making steady progress on the Website since the beginning of the year. While the progress is obvious, there are still many things in the site we need to get working, many other aspects to add and we need your help. ABANA is an organization of volunteers, so if you have suggestions or can help in any way please let Jack know, skipjack@shore.intercom.net

The registrations for the Conference continue to roll in. If you are planning to attend, please register as soon as your plans are made. The Conference organizers need the registration numbers as soon as possible to be able to effectively plan the lodging, food and all the other logistics that go into such an event. We all have planned conferences and know the anxiety that creeps in as the date approaches and how there are a million things that need to be done at the last minute; both planned and unplanned. Having firm attendance figures as early as possible will make the home stretch a little less nerve-wracking. Thanks for the help.

Speaking of the Conference, have you sold all the 'Iron In The Hat' tickets? If they have been sold, please send the \$200.00 to Bill Callaway, 2816 E. Sherran Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85016. Please make the checks payable to ABANA Conference 2000. Bill will then send a scholarship certificate good for the amount of \$250.00 towards registration for the recipient of your choice. The certificate has a line to be filled in with the name of the person receiving the scholarship. Please send the certificate to the address on the form along with the balance of their registration.

BAM

Bulletin Board

For sale: Hossfeld No.2 bender with manual, dies and pins, great shape. \$600. Jim McCarty, (573) 395-3304 after 5:30 pm or e-mail to jimmac@socket.net for more info.

Heavy duty frying pan blanks: Steel, approximately 9 inch in diameter with 2 inch sides. 12 gauge thickness. Available with or without two 3/16 inch holes for handles. Now tumbled clean. 1-4 \$9 each; 5-9 \$8 each; 10 or more \$7 each. Shipping \$2.50 plus \$.50 for each pan. Contact: Bob Tuftee, 3855 Aspen Hills Dr., Bettendorf, IA 52722.

For sale: 50-pound Little Giant, new style, totally rebuilt, \$3,000. 260-pound anvil, \$520. 30-pound armor anvil, \$800, brand new from the Kenneth Lynch collection. Call Lance Coutier at (903) 581-4774.

Bob Bergman always has hammers, ironworkers, shears and the like for sale. Call him at (608) 527-2494 and tell him what you are looking for. Ask for his video on the Kickass air hammer.

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.

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: Custom built air hammers — 70-pound, \$2,800; 40-pound, \$2,500; 20-pound, \$1,800. Also custom metal spinning in copper, brass, aluminum, pewter and steel. Maurice Ellis, (573) 766-5346 or send an e-mail to mbellis@therural.net for more information.

250# Beaudry Champion Hammer for sale. This hammer is being offered complete in very good condition, ready for work and set up on your foundation. Asking price is \$5,500, loaded, FOB Kempton, PA. Inquiries welcome on other hammers, tools and equipment we have for sale. Call Wallace Metalwork at (610) 756-3377 or e-mail at Walmetalwork@aol.com.

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, 100 Daniel Ridge Road, Candler, NC 28715. (828) 667-8868 fax (828) 665-8303, email: kaynehdwe@ioa.com, website: www.kayneandson.com. Offering Big Blue 100 ram air hammers, Peddinghaus 2 horn anvils, Offcenter 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.kayneandson.com.

Tom Clark has expanded his line of hand forged Hofi style hammers to include a nice rounding hammer and punches, drifts, tongs etc. He's also importing a new line of air hammer, the Sayha from Turkey and just got a shipment of punches, shears and gas forges. For more info 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 (hardbound, 317 pages, profusely illustrated) is available for \$32.50 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling through Mingo 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.

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" which has just been mailed. For \$28 you will get four issues of how-to information. George is the past editor of *The Hammers' Blow*.

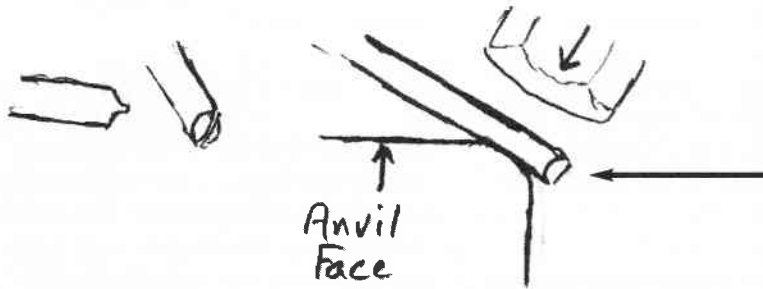
Need something or got something for sale? Send it to the editor and he will get it in the newsletter. BAM classifieds are free to members and anyone with something to sell to a member.

Steve Joslyn's Pine cones a la Raoul

by Kirk (Raoul) Sullens

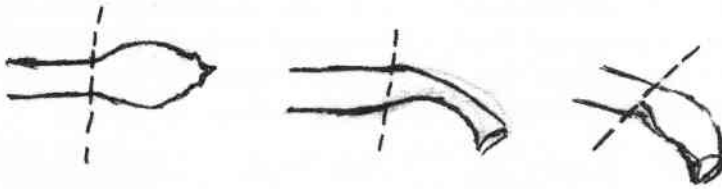
Cut stock with bolt cutters, heat approximately 1/2" and place over a large radius of the anvil at about 45

degrees. You can do this over the horn, but I got better results on a corner.

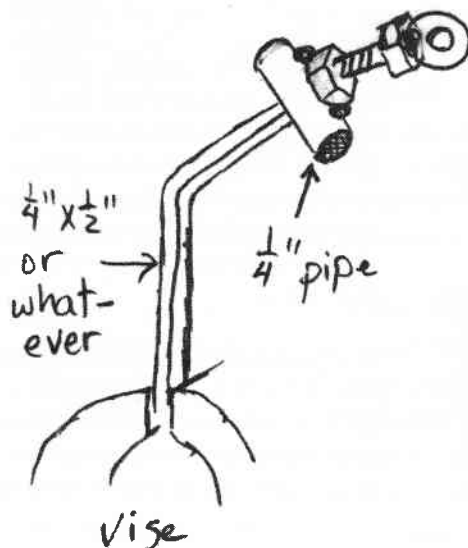


Keep the bolt cutter burr vertical, and strike at 45 degrees over the edge of the anvil.

The finished product should look something like this:



Clip off with the bolt cutters at the dotted line, making one scale, and starting the tip of the next. Practice will help you figure just how long to cut them. When you have enough (I usually use about 70 or 80), you can begin assembling your pine cones.



Make a vise tool with small bar stock, a 1/4" nut, 1/4" bolt, a washer and a 1" piece of 1/4" pipe (a pipe nipple works fine). Drill a hole and tack the nut over it, weld the washer on the bolt so you can tighten by hand.

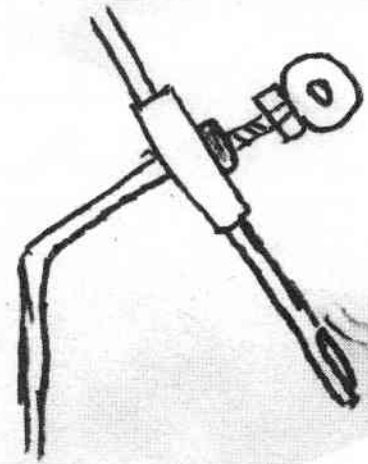
For the core of the pine cone, flatten about 3/8" of 3/16" round and roll it longitudinally into a tight tube.



Put this in your vise tool with 3" or 4" out the bottom, with your rolled end down. Start welding scales at the tip, and work toward the base.

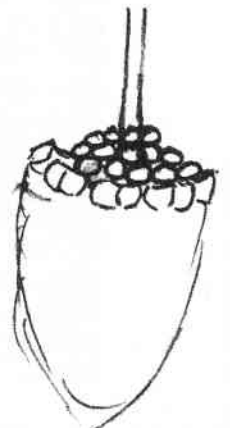
I suppose stick welding would work, but I mig it, holding the scales with needle-nose pliers. (Steve Joslyn demonstrated this at Alfred using a gas torch — Ed.) The first two pairs go on alternately, then you cover the gaps between scales in a spiral pattern with each successive row.

Imagine how each scale would look if it were laid down with the cone closed. Scales that stick out too far, or not far enough, detract from the appearance.

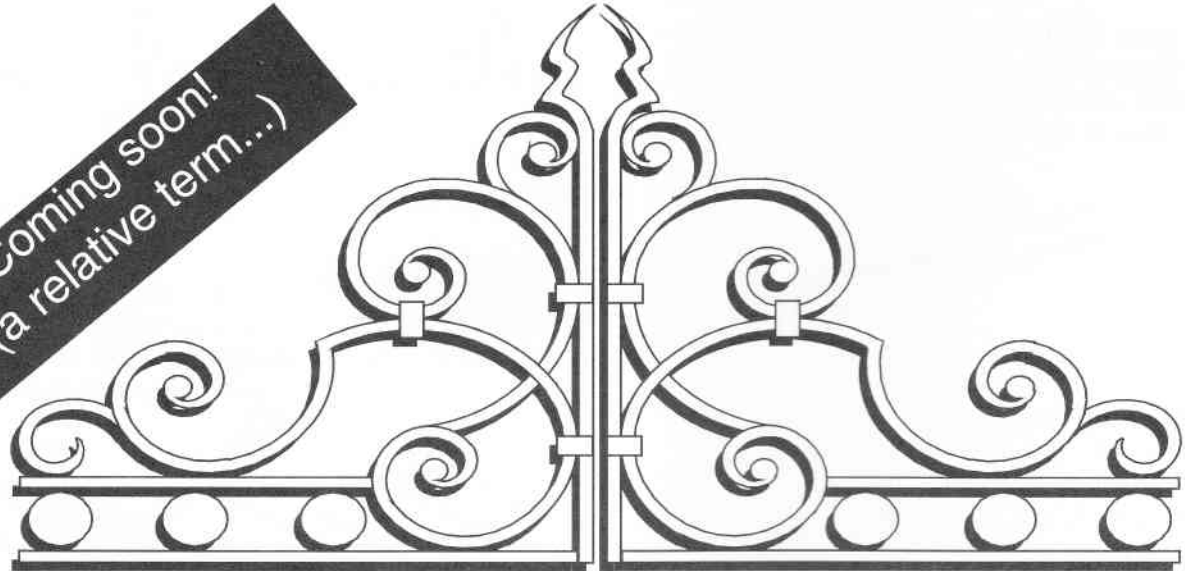


At the bottom, I cut special scales that fill the gaps without adding another row (I just grind the back end to fit). Then I fill the base with weld to cover the joints and give the rounded appearance of the pine cone base.

I do this with little round weld beads, that I try to put down in a spiral pattern to mimic the unopened scales at the base of the cone.



Coming soon!
(a relative term...)



BAM's

Greatest

Hits

MOST OF THE BEST STUFF
FROM THE BAM NEWSLETTER

edited by jim mcCarty

by Jim Vandike

The Perils of Public Demos

At the last BAM get-together, I somehow volunteered to place a few disconnected thoughts on paper and try to fill up some space in the newsletter.

I'm not quite sure how this happened. I was just minding my own business, listening to Jim McCarty sing the blues about trying to find enough material to keep the newsletter fat and sassy. I've always thought he does a great job on the newsletter, and I look as forward to seeing it every two months as I did the Christmas wish books when I was a kid. The newsletters even have an honored place on my bookshelf, neatly bound in three-ring binders. I won't talk about the fate of the old Christmas catalogs.

Feeling sorry for the poor fellow, I commented that maybe I could come up with an article of some sort to try to help him out; thinking, of course, that Jim would graciously decline. Well, within 30 seconds I was on the hook for an article. He baited the hook, set it, and landed me like a fat, dumb fish. I've worked for the state for 21 years. You would think I would remember the cardinal rule: Never volunteer!

Well, no matter, I've been had before and I've written lots of stories. Some were even pretty good. However, I've not tried my hand at writing about blacksmithing and I feel a little intimidated. How about a how-to article on foolproof forge welding? No way, not with my track record. Even if I remember to bow three times toward Arkansas, scatter ceremonial borax around the anvil, and remove every last molecule of free oxygen and clinker from the fire my welds fail about as often as they hold. Thank God for Mr. Lincoln hiding over in the corner of the shop.

Perhaps I could introduce a new trick, technique, or snazzy twist? Strike two. I learned most of the ones I know by reading the newsletter or from one of the BAM demonstrations I have attended. Wait, that's it! The one thing I have done is throw my rusty treasures in the back of the truck, set up under a shade tree at

some old courthouse, and expose myself to public ridicule by trying to demonstrate blacksmithing. There are bound to be some BAM members out there who are toying with the idea of doing the same. It is my duty to see that they are as well prepared as possible, certainly better prepared than I was. I would guess that this article will either give them the psychological courage they need to make the plunge, or scare them so badly that they will build a fence around their shop and use guard dogs to keep the public away.

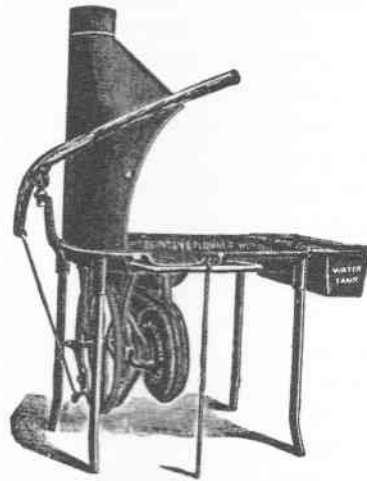
I have Lee Merek to thank (or blame) for getting me started doing demonstrations. Lee had been smithing at Old Iron Works Days at Maramec Spring in the Agricultural Museum and needed someone to help share the load. The first year I worked with Lee was two days of sheer fun or hell, depending on what part of my memory I choose to use. I certainly enjoyed talking to people who are interested in blacksmithing, and even made a few bucks making everything from triangle dinner bell gongs to

horseshoe-nail rings. What bothered me most was the nagging feeling that everyone was standing too darned close and that I was going to have a hammer, punch, or hotcut leap from my hands and put someone's eye out. It didn't happen, of course, but I was still a little apprehensive. The next year I put a simple Plexiglas shield on the anvil stand to keep flying stuff from hitting the audience.

The nice thing about working at Old Iron Works was that most of the equipment was already in place in the Agriculture Museum. The first time I was asked to demonstrate at a multiple day event where I had to supply everything I needed was a little different. I couldn't believe how much stuff it took. Of course, I never met a blacksmith that travels too light. I already had an old portable forge that looked like it was air dropped during the Normandy invasion from about 20,000 feet...without benefit of a parachute. Seriously, this forge had been broken in so many places and brazed back together that the bottom of it looks like a railroad map of the eastern United States. Several of the brazed joints looked much more solid than they actually were. Some of them broke the first day I used it.

No problem, I had an ample supply of bailing wire and made it through. But I found that when you load a forge, anvil, anvil stand, vice, a couple of tool boxes, a bucket full of tongs, another bucket full of hammers, punches, hotcuts, fire tools, everything you want to sell, more steel to make more stuff to sell, a sack or two of coal, a bucket of coke to get started in the morning, lunch, a slack tub, ice chest, a stool to sit on, a couple of benches for the visitors to sit on, a cold six-pack of medicinal grain-derived beverage and another dozen things into a short-bed S-10 pickup, you quickly run out of room.

If I had Granny sitting in the back it would have looked like the Beverly Hillbillies headed for California. The hardest part was getting through town. People would gather around the truck at stoplights like I was a rolling flea market or something. Lesson number



one is, no matter how much stuff you take with you, it is never enough. Even using a checklist does not guarantee that you won't forget some critical item.....like matches. The statistics people tell us that 50 percent of Americans still smoke. If you need a match I guarantee not a one of them will pass within 100 feet of your forge.

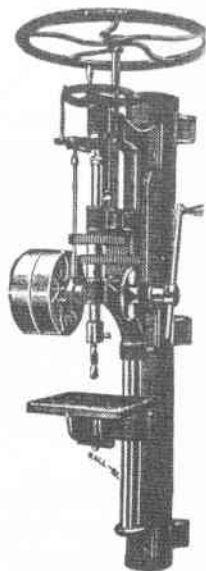
Well, now that you have all your stuff at the site it is time to assemble it into a functioning shop. If you are extremely lucky you will be provided a cool, breezy building to set up in or beside. If you are less lucky, you will at least have a shade tree and flat ground. But sometimes you are stuck on a slope in an open area beneath the blazing sun, generally next to some old hag who hasn't developed a true appreciation of coal smoke, if you can imagine that. The nearest porta-potty will be at least 100 yards away in one direction and the beer garden an equal distance away in the opposite direction. If you are demonstrating with a number of other people you can rest assured that you will be placed as far as possible from the road, street, or parking lot. And when you ask if you can drive across the lawn to get to your site the organizer will look at you like you're from Mars. They will generally allow it if you promise not to leave ruts or back over the shrubs. Look on the bright side, you get to drive your truck around the courthouse on the grass, in broad daylight, with cops around and not get arrested. A redneck teenager's dream...What a deal!

Getting everything set up and working is another challenge. Rusty iron attracts kids like fresh meadow muffins attract flies. The little goomers will flock toward anything sharp, hot, or dirty, or anything that even remotely looks dangerous. While you are trying to unload and set up, they will be underfoot asking questions a mile a minute and doing their best to hurt themselves before you've even started a fire. Years ago (ever notice that when you get to a certain age that all of your stories start with "years ago"?) you could probably have bribed them with a nickel, but these

days you better bring a roll of quarters. Either bribe them or chase them off. You don't stand a chance getting anything done until you do. Now is about the time you discover what you forgot to remember to bring. If it is important you likely left it at home.

If you can do without it you remembered to bring three of them. Go figure. Learn to be flexible.

It has been my experience that the attention span of a typical spectator is



roughly equivalent to that of an elected official. You will find that they would rather see a simple item made quickly than a complex project that takes considerable time.

You will also discover that it is much easier to melt items in the forge when you are talking to people and working in broad daylight.

Hopefully by now you have a fire going in the forge, a piece of iron heating, and your favorite hammer close at hand. Now is the time to steel yourself for the one thousand and one questions. A few of them are actually well reasoned, insightful, and fun to answer. BAM members who are masquerading as tourists will probably ask them. Most of the questions, however, are not. My top 10 list of questions, and possible answers, are shown below. Whether you answer with the politically correct, sensitive answer is up to you and your frame of mind. I'll

bet you can even come up with a few alternates of your own.

1. Is that hot?

Referring, of course, to a brightly glowing piece of iron you have just removed from the forge.

Politically correct (PC) answer: Yes, it is very hot, about 1,700 degrees Fahrenheit.

Alternative answer: No, I just put in new batteries so it glows good. Want to hold it?

2. Are you a real blacksmith?

The politically correct answer will vary depending on, of course, if you do it as a hobby, for a living, or whatever.

Alternative answer: No, I'm just a figment of your alcohol warped imagination, you moron. Of course I'm real. Don't you see me standing here?

(Note: It may feel real good to use this answer, but it might not get you invited back next year or help you to sell anything to the idiot who asked the question. The idiot's wife might appreciate the answer more.)

3. Is that anvil heavy?

Politically correct answer: Yes, it weighs (insert correct number or inflated value here) pounds.

Alternative answer: Nope, I hollowed it out so it would be easier to carry around. (Don't be surprised if they believe you. People will believe some really amazing things if you can keep a straight face when you tell them.)

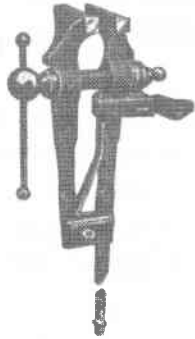
4. You been doing this long?

Politically correct answer: Well, I've been at it for (insert impressive number) years.

Alternative answer: Since about 8:00 this morning. (This is a really tough one to avoid using the alternative answer. If you use it, then quickly follow up with the politically correct answer, you probably won't hurt your chance for a sale as bad.)

5. Do you shoe horses?

Politically correct answer: You can answer this one either way, depending



on if you do shoe horses, or if you don't. It is also a good time to increase their vocabulary by teaching them the word "farrier". You might have to explain that the word has nothing to do with the word "fairy". Use caution. Alternative answer: No, but I shoo flies. If that doesn't make them groan then you didn't tell it right, or, If God had intended horses to wear shoes he would have given them two pairs of Nike's each and fingers to tie them with.

6. Wow, where did you buy all this stuff (referring, of course, to your iron treasures?)

PC answer: I went to auctions, antique stores, and flea markets for 20 years to find all of these wonderful things. Alternative answers: Wal-Mart, Anvils-Are-Us.

7. Where do you get your coal (or where do you get your coke)? I guarantee you will hear this question at least once every 15 minutes. I have been tempted to record the answer and just play it back to them.

PC: It is mined in West Virginia from a coal seam called Pocahontas #2. Now is also a good time to tout the many virtues of BAM membership, including a reliable place to obtain coal, the newsletter, meetings, demos, Spring Conference, etc. (I typed up a BAM information sheet and take plenty of copies with me to give away at

demonstrations. Anyone who wants to use it is welcome to.)

Alternative answer: Out of the ground, or from the coke machine, depending on which word applies.

You will note that my top 10 list of questions only contains seven. I could easily come up with a few more, but would rather have the readers send Jim some they have experienced. Along with the dumb questions you will also have to listen to the "no, it just don't take me long to look at a horseshoe" joke at least twice an hour. You will sell more stuff if you politely chuckle and say something like "that's a good one". Get real good at acting sincere when you say it and someone might nominate you for an Academy Award.

If you are lucky, the event you are working will have a Civil War reenactment associated with it. With a little more luck, you can get invited to participate. Having been a participant, I have some advice to offer. First, even if you are a rebel at heart, try to be attached to the Union side. You will have to die less often. Second, if you have to die, be choosy where and how you do so. Don't die too early in the battle. Try to die in the shade, and preferably die facedown.

If cavalry troops are involved in this particular reenactment, take note of where the horses have been before you fall to the ground.

You will also discover that at least every other person who stops to watch will have at least one grandfather who was a blacksmith. Now, assuming that everyone has only four grandparents and half of them are male, then approximately 25 percent of the male population three generations ago must have been blacksmiths. The population of the country was about 80 million, so across the country there must have been 20 million blacksmiths.

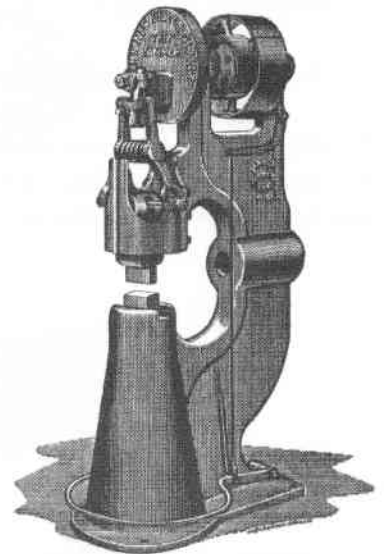
No wonder the profession darned near died out. They couldn't make any money selling each other horseshoes. Instead of just rolling your eyes and saying, "that's nice", which is much more polite than some things that immedi-

ately come to mind, delve a little deeper into their family heritage. For example, ask if the grandfather in question actually made a living as a blacksmith.

The answer will likely be "no". He was probably a farmer, or happened to have a forge or anvil he picked up at an auction. (Editor's note: Either way, ask how much they want for the old boy's anvil.)

Once in a great while, though, you will hit paydirt. The grandfather was an actual, dyed in the wool, coal dust up the snout, scarred-up, stooped-back, knuckle dragging, card carrying blacksmith. I invested a couple of hours one slow afternoon talking to an elderly lady about her grandfather who had smithed for a living.

Her memory was crystal clear. She was able to speak in fluent blacksmithese, and even knew what all the holes in the anvil are called and what they are for. It is people like her that make public demonstrations most enjoyable.



THE NEW LITTLE GIANT

What it all boils down to is enjoying what you're doing. If you don't like talking with people and answering questions then you might think twice before demonstrating. If you can't have fun blacksmithing then you probably shouldn't be doing it. There are lots of easier ways to make a living and plenty of cleaner hobbies.

So, load up your anvil, hit the road and give it a try. Who knows, you might even learn to enjoy the dumb questions.

Back scratcher

by Jim McCarty
illustrations by David Wilson
reprinted from the Hammers' Blow

I owe this idea to Don Witzler, a member of the Northwest Ohio Blacksmiths Association, who taught it to me in a class at the John C. Campbell Folk School. It's an easy project that lends itself to variations and makes a quick — and useful — demo piece, as long as you wait until it is cool to use it! Start with a piece of 1/2" square stock long enough to hold without tongs. Hammer one end until it starts to flatten out, then switch to your cross pein and spread it out. Try to keep the end as square as possible. When you have it flared to about 1" wide forge out the marks left by your pein.

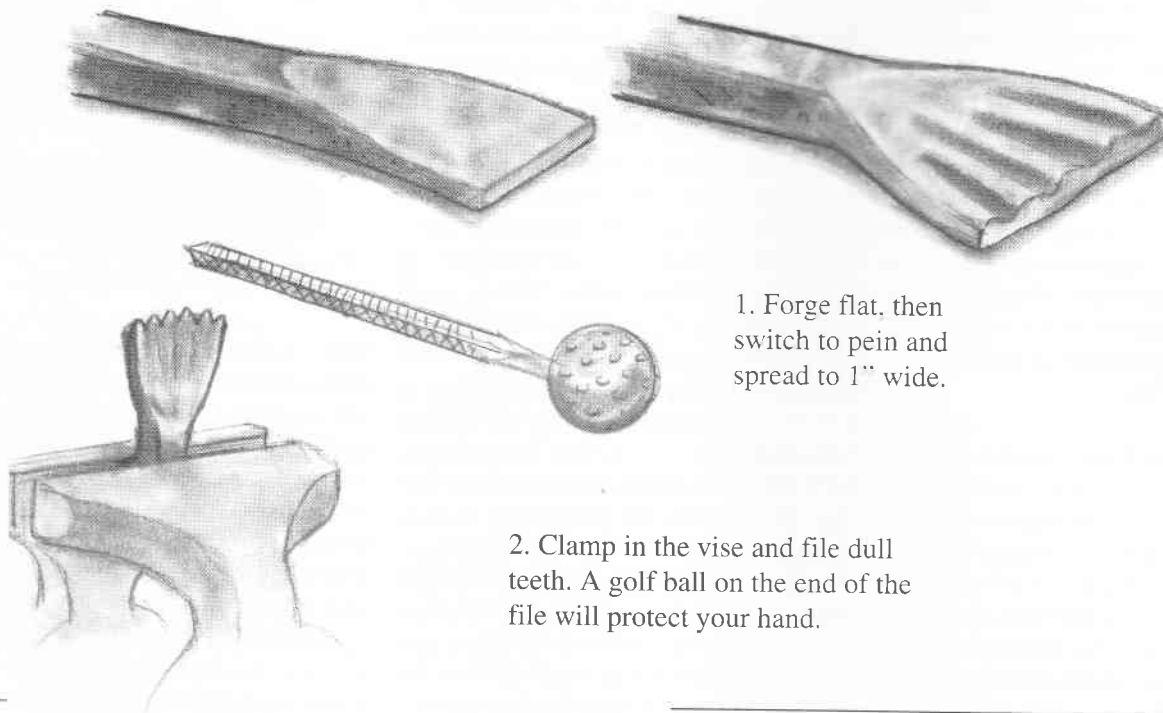
Now clamp the stock in the vise with the flat spot above the vise jaws an inch or so. File dull teeth in the flat section with a triangular file. It might help to make chisel cuts to serve as a guide.

When you have the teeth cut heat the stock again being careful not to burn off the flat part which will heat fast. Quench it if it starts to burn. When the stock is hot draw the center out to 3/8" square and about 18" long.

Under Don's direction we drew the opposite end out to about 1/4 inch round, bent a loop and twisted whatever was left around the parent stock. Elsewhere in this issue are a number of end treatments that will work on this project or others like it.

The last step is to curve the business end over the anvil horn.

To add decoration you can twist a couple of inches of the stock after it has been drawn out. To add variety try chiseling a groove down the length of the twist section. Do it on two opposite sides or on all four sides and see which one you like best. Now twist, ending up with the flat section square to the handle stock.

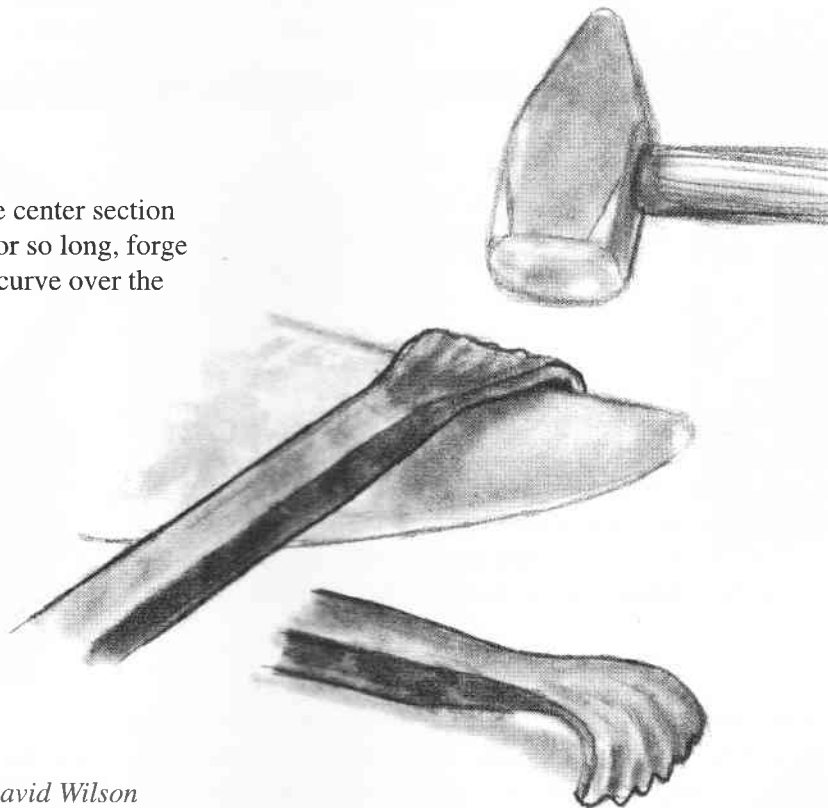


1. Forge flat, then switch to pein and spread to 1" wide.

2. Clamp in the vise and file dull teeth. A golf ball on the end of the file will protect your hand.

Politically correct answer: You can answer this one

3. After drawing out the center section to 3/8" square and 18" or so long, forge the business end into a curve over the horn.

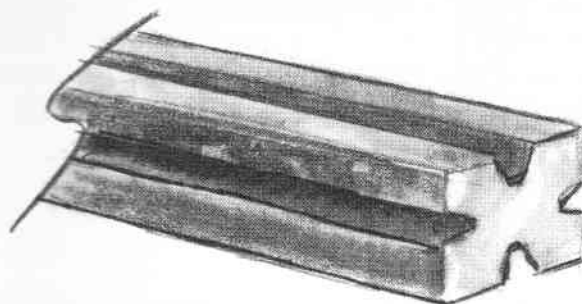


Illustrations by David Wilson



4. A twist for a couple of inches adds decoration.

5. For variety try fullering a groove down 2 or 4 sides of the stock before twisting.

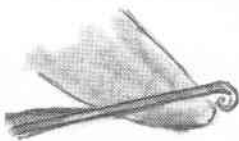


End treatments

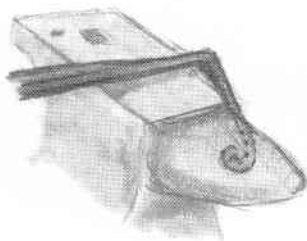


Illustrations by David Wilson

To complete the backscratcher or for other projects of this type you need some way to finish the end in a way that distinguishes your work as hand forged iron. I have included a number of end treatments in this issue that should serve as a starting point for other ideas you might come up with. This first is how Don Witzler had us finish our back scratchers.



1.



2.



3.



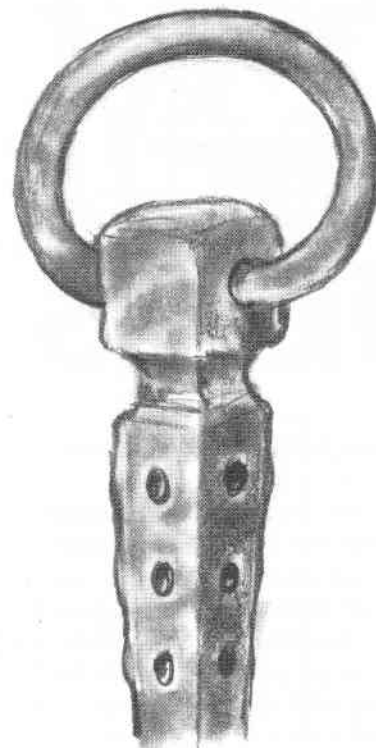
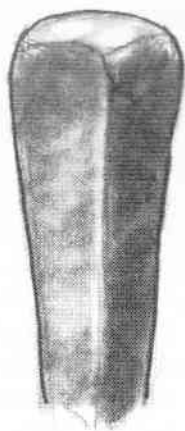
4.



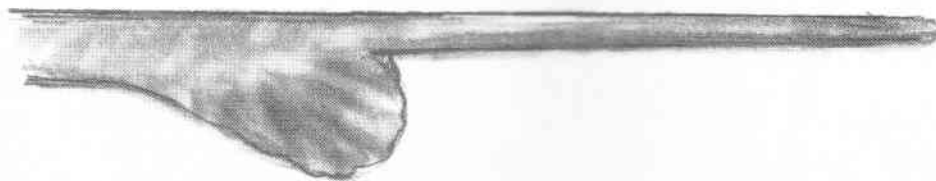
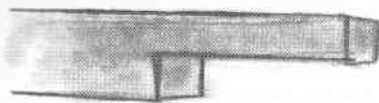
5.

The shepherd's crook is a traditional end treatment seen on a lot of old work. To make it start by drawing a taper (think 3 times the finished diameter for length) and start a small scroll over the anvil horn (1). Heat and bend a right angle as shown (2). Heat again and quench just the tip so that you can hammer on it without distortion (3). Now point the scroll verticle against the horn and bend around the horn until it looks like 5.

To make this one upset a section of 1/2 inch square keeping the stock straight. Punch a hole for 1/4 inch stock all the way through as shown. Fuller a 1/4 inch groove on all four sides. Now form a ring from 1/4 inch round, insert one end into the handle and close to fit in the other side. You can use a center punch or other tooling to add decoration.



Uri Hofi has demonstrated this technique many times. Start by forging an offset in your stock by hammering it half on and half off the anvil. Draw this section out, again keeping in mind 3 times the diameter of the desired loop for the length. Keep it straight for now. When you have it forged round, take a heat on the area before the offset. Thin and spread this area using the peen end of your hammer. Keep it flat and gradually taper back into the original section. When you have it formed to your satisfaction, heat the drawn out section and form into a loop that ends as shown below.



BAM NEWS

Free ABANA registration

Yep, that's right folks, you could attend the ABANA conference without paying any registration fee. Any BAM member who is interested needs to drop Maurice Ellis a note and tell him to put your name in the hat for a drawing of BAM's free scholarship to the ABANA Conference. You still have to pay room and board and get yourself there but this will help. If you've already registered we'll get your money back. BAM was given a number of ABANA Iron in the Hat tickets to sell and with time running out we still had 90 left to sell. With our treasury temporarily flush from the conference BAM bought the last tickets. So it's possible we might win the Hofi anvil, BAM box or any of the

other big prizes. Plus we get one free registration to the conference and the money goes to a good cause. If you are interested you need to let Maurice know before the last day in June. His address is on the back of the newsletter or you can e-mail to mbellis@therural.net. Good luck.

Vote at the July meeting

With BAM's July meeting comes the official railroading, er, election of officers for the coming year. We want to try something different this time around. Below is a ballot that you can use to vote if you can't make the meeting or use it to write in candidates for the various offices. Feel free to copy this so you don't mess up your newsletter but we'll leave it up to you not to vote too many times or to sell your vote for a drink.

New website for Ozark School

Tom Clark's Ozark School of Blacksmithing has a new website: www.therural.net/~ozarksch/index.html

You can also send e-mail to him at ozarksch@therural.net. If you have a personal site why not make a link to his site?

Got coal?

If you would like to buy coal from IBAM, please contact Bob Alexander. He can sometimes bring it to the meetings, saving you a trip or can arrange to be on hand when you come calling. Bob may be contacted by writing to him at 14009 Hardin Road, DeSoto, MO 63020-5586, or by phoning him at his shop at (636) 586-5350. Coal is \$7 per 50# bag to BAM members. Bob says there is plenty left.

State Fair Dates

This year's Missouri State Fair will be held Aug. 10-20. For the past several years BAM has had a presence at the fair. The fair provides us with a large tent to work under. We usually start on the first Monday of the fair which would be August 14 and can work every day until the fair's end. We need to have at least two people to work each day but more would be nice. You can sell whatever you want. While sales aren't always great we usually sign up several new members and get to hear about lots of tools for sale. If you can work the fair this year please drop Jim McCarty a line at 5821 Helias Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65101 or e-mail to jimmac@socket.net.

Pitch pot supplier

Kirsten Skiles told the audience in Warrenton that she would send her pitch pot supplier address to us for the newsletter. He is Keith Johnson, a blacksmith in Bemidji, MN. Phone is (218) 751-9433.

Blacksmithing Demonstration

October 14th & 15th, Southwest Iron Works, Guthrie, Oklahoma, sponsored by the Salt Fork Craftsmen. Demonstrators are BAM's own Doug Hendrickson of Missouri and Uri Hofi of Israel.

Cost is \$50 for members of the Saltfork Craftmen Association and \$70 for non-members. For more information contact Bill and Diana Davis at (580) 549-6824.

BAM Ballot

President:

Bob Alexander

Joe Wilkinson

1st Vice President

Mike Williamson

2nd Vice President

Don Nichols

Secretary

John Murray

Treasurer

Maurice & Bess Ellis

Feel free to write in another candidate if you want. Circle your choice and mail to Kirk Sullens, 2300 North East Avenue, Springfield, MO 65803 or bring with you to the July 29 meeting. Copies are OK.

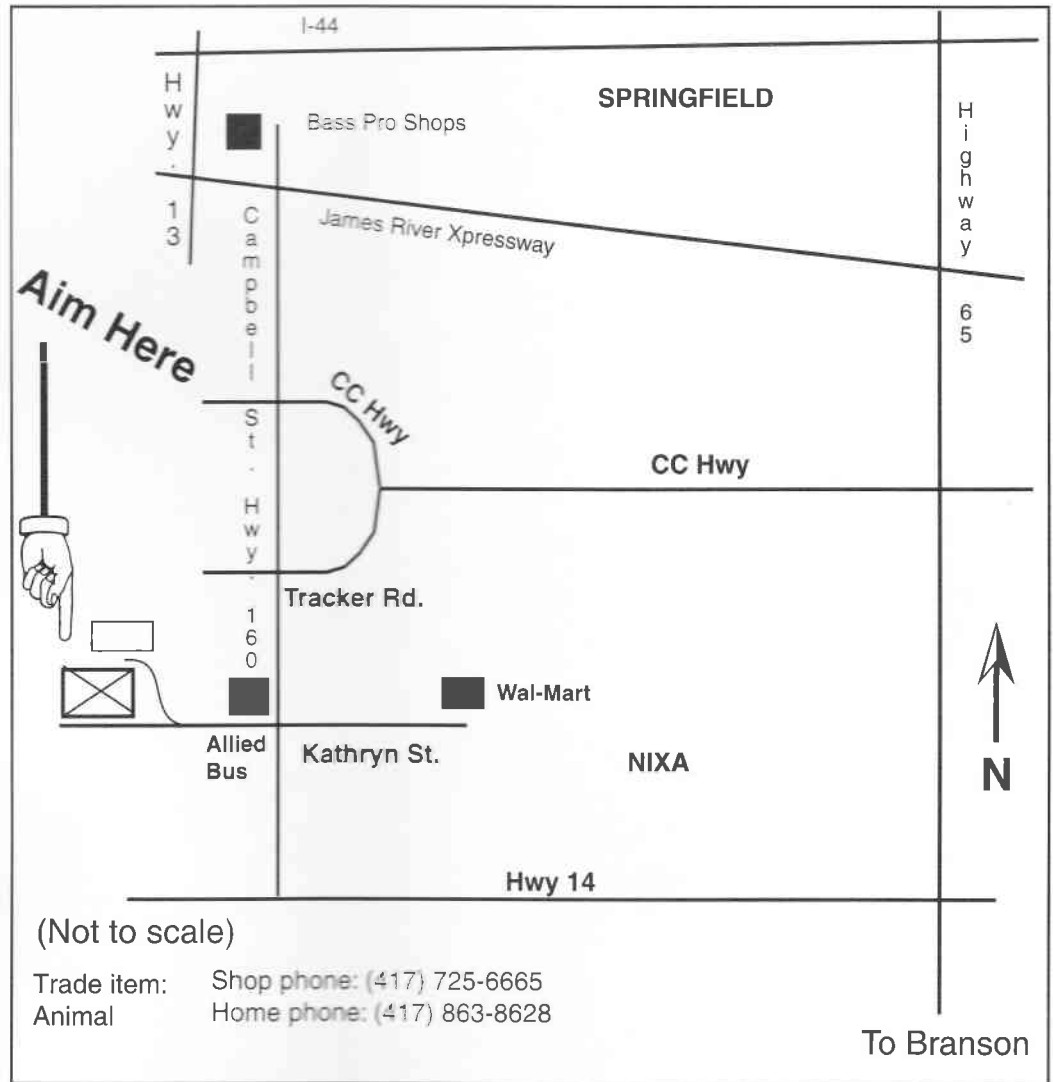
Next meeting July 29, BASS Pro Shops Metal Studio, Nixa, Missouri

BAM's July gathering is looking like a major event. This year the host is Kirk (Raoul) Sullens and Bass Pro Shops. Believe it or not, Johnny Morris employs a whole crew of genuine blacksmiths (OK, they use a lot of mig welders). When they aren't out test driving pontoon boats they make some fine ironwork to decorate the growing number of Bass Pro stores.

You might want to start your trip in Springfield at the mother of all outdoor stores. The meeting, however, will be held at the Fabrication Shop in Nixa just south of Springfield.

Raoul has a bunch of demos lined up, including John Murray and Todd Kinnikin on the shop's big hammer (a 5i Nazel). Todd wants to try to forge something little on the big hammer, should be interesting.

In addition, it is pay-back time for Raoul and Stephen McGehee who will show us what they learned on a BAM scholarship. Raoul is going to do his pine cone demo that was wind-delayed at the Ozark Conference.



In the afternoon Bass Pro has rented a bunch of vans to haul us to their Big Cedar Lodge to see the ironwork there. They are providing a grill so we

can cook burgers for lunch. Lunch might be a little late so you might want to bring a snack. See you there July 29.



2000 Schedule

July Meeting

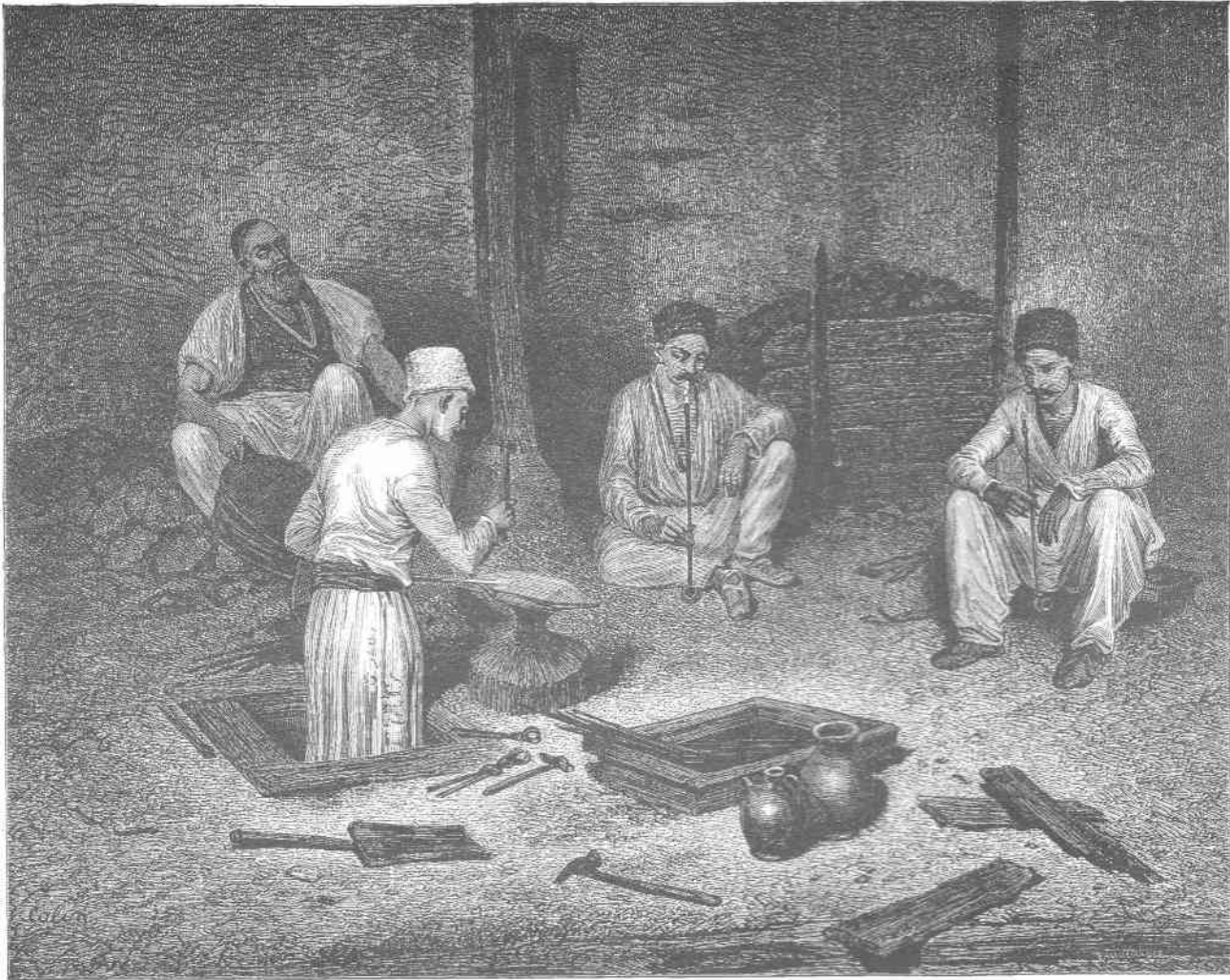
BASS Pro Shop
Nixa, MO
July 29
Trade item: Animal

September Meeting

Ed Harper
Browning, MO
Sept. 23
Trade item: To be announced

November Meeting

Pat McCarty
Washington, MO
Nov. 11
Trade item: TBA



*This image showing blacksmiths from the Crimean was sent to me by Jack Andrews, author of *The Edge of the Anvil*. The book was in French and Jack could not read the text. It was titled "La Russie, Historique, Monumentale et Pittoresque", Paris, 1862-1865. The caption read "Crimée Fogerons Tsiganes", which means "last BAM meeting held at Colin Campbell's shop." Note the regular-sized blacksmith working in a hole.*

BAM
Rt.1 Box 1442
Belgrade, MO 63622

First Class
US Postage
PAID
Washington, MO
Permit No. 343

Address Service Requested

Please send changes to Maurice Ellis, Rt. 1, Box 1442, Belgrade, MO 63622; mbellis@therural.net