

# RAM

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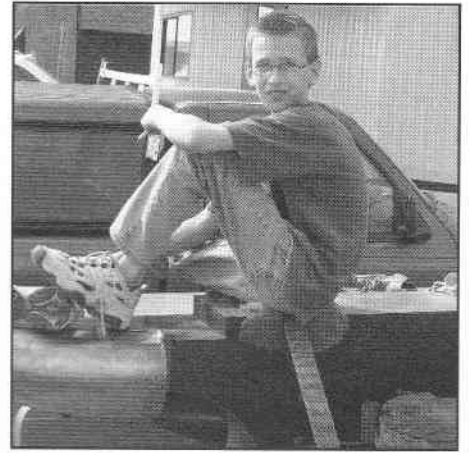
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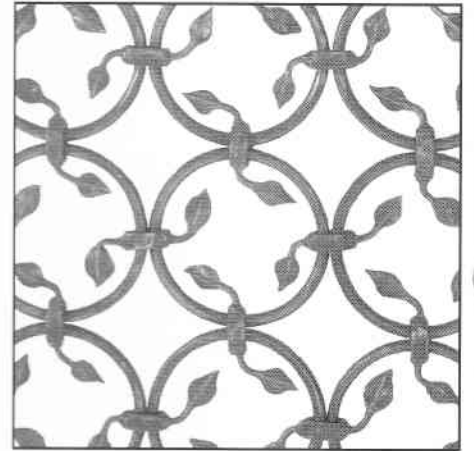
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# Newsletter of the Blacksmiths Association of Missouri

*Volume 18 No. 3*

**May—June 2001**

*Our cover: Susan Hutchison dresses one very large forge weld she made during her music stand demo at the 2001 Conference. Photo by Jim McCarty.*

## Editor

Jim McCarty

## Contributing Editors

Bess Ellis  
Joe Wilkinson  
Jeff Joiner  
Mike Nave

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Bruce Herzog

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 65110; (573) 395-3304 or you can send e-mail to jimmac@socket.net. BAM membership inquiries should be addressed to: Bruce Herzog, 2212 Aileswick Dr., St. Louis, MO 63129; (314) 892-4690 or send e-mail to bherzog@sunnen.com. 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 mail .....\$60 yr.

Contributory .....\$100 yr.

Full time student .....\$35 yr.

Public library.....\$35 yr.

*See reverse*



## Editor's anvil

**M**an, it's hot. I almost figured that out the hard way today. I was arc welding, had a long-sleeved flannel shirt on, T-shirt underneath, leather apron and welding gloves to my elbows and the sweat was just rolling off me.

All of a sudden I felt kind of weak, my head was pounding and my throat was dry. It was all I could do to walk inside and hold a glass under the faucet. Bet I was close to heat stroke so I share this warning — keep the water going before you get the warning signs. If you feel thirsty you are already dehydrated.

I am back home now, have the old address and phone number back (5821 Helias Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65101; (573) 395-3304). And I'm managing a little forge time despite the heat and the need to do more pressing things like fix the broken window, mow the grass and tend to the garden.

On Fourth of July I did a patriotic thing and started working on the flag pole I've been wanting to do for years. This was to be the kind that mounts on the wall. I started forging an eagle, turning to Otto Schmirler's book for inspiration. His eagles are too fascist looking, I needed a kinder and gentler eagle which I found in one of the Hephaistos books in my collection.

My eagle didn't turn out too good so I gave up on him and started making a dragon. He looked pretty good but didn't seem right for a flag pole topper so I'm back to where I started from. I do have the wall mount bracket done and the pole itself is ready as soon as I get the pretty end done.

I also had the forge fired up last spring to make a cross for my son Daniel's first communion. This may be the world's only crucified rail road spike, but he thinks it looks good.

My boys have sure been enjoying the BAM meetings, especially now that they have some buddies their age. Both of them took turns turning the hand crank blower at Don Nichol's May meeting, proving they are good for something after all.

The demos were good, as was lunch, and it is always a pleasure to see someone else's shop. Don has a

bunch of good ideas laying around.

At the meeting I volunteered to be the workshop coordinator. I've already been talking to Lou Mueller about doing a beginner's workshop and we will also do another one for the ladies.

If you've got any ideas for workshops we should do or demonstrators we should bring in let me know. For the first time in a long time BAM has some money in its treasury. There's only one reason we make money and that is to spend it!

By the time you get this it will be time for Doug's July meeting. This is our semi-annual Pound and Float. On Saturday we pound, on Sunday we float in the Black River. Check the meeting page for more details and let Doug know if you need a canoe.

Coming up is the State Fair in August. Peggy Williamson is coordinating our efforts there. Plan on working a day in our tent, the more, the merrier.

This was the first time I have missed the Caniron Conference, but I did get a call from Saskatchewan where the event was held. It seems Tom Clark was there with some tools and a big hammer, also a special Caniron anvil. Rob Sadowski, who put me up for a few days when it was held in Calgary, borrowed Tom's phone to let me know what was going on up north. It was real good to hear from him.

Haven't heard much out of anyone lately but I'm sure that has been because I was so hard to get ahold of last winter. I hope you guys are all getting some forge time in — how about sending some photos of your latest project?

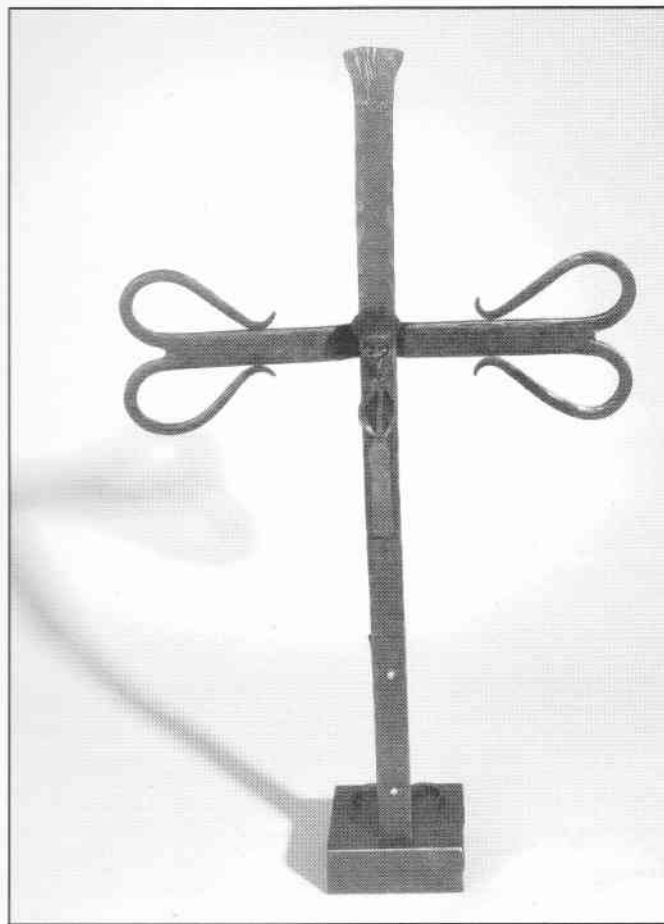
Sometimes I wonder if anyone is doing any work out there.

This issue has a real nice feature on Guy McConnell that ran in Rural Missouri. The editor was kind enough to let me use it here. Now there is a member I know is making some stuff.

I was sorry to learn Rainbo Clary died in June. The Ozark Conference won't be the same without him there along with a trailer full of junk. I once accused him of having a speed bump in front of his house where that stuff fell of trucks. He was one of the best.

Sorry not much in the way of projects this time, I'll try to make it up next month. Keep that material coming and we'll see you at Doug's.

— Jim McCarty



*I made this cross for my son's First Communion. It is made from two pieces of 1/4" x 1". The cross piece is offset by clamping it with three spacers in the vise.*

# In memory of Steve "Rainbo" Clary

My forge and anvil lie declined,  
My bellows too have lost their wind;  
My fire's extinct, my forge decay'd,  
And in the dust my body's laid:  
My coal is out, my iron's gone,  
My nails are drove my work is done.



## Joe's jive

What a day for a meeting! 70 degrees with a beautiful clear sky in Sedalia, at the home of our Second Vice President Don Nichols. Don was well prepared and things got started right on time with Kate Dinneen showing us many forging techniques she learned in a Uri Hofi class. Kate did a fine job and deserves our thanks for her effort.

Don has a portable blacksmith shop built on a trailer and this was used for the demos at the meeting, a much better breeze outdoors than in the indoor forge.

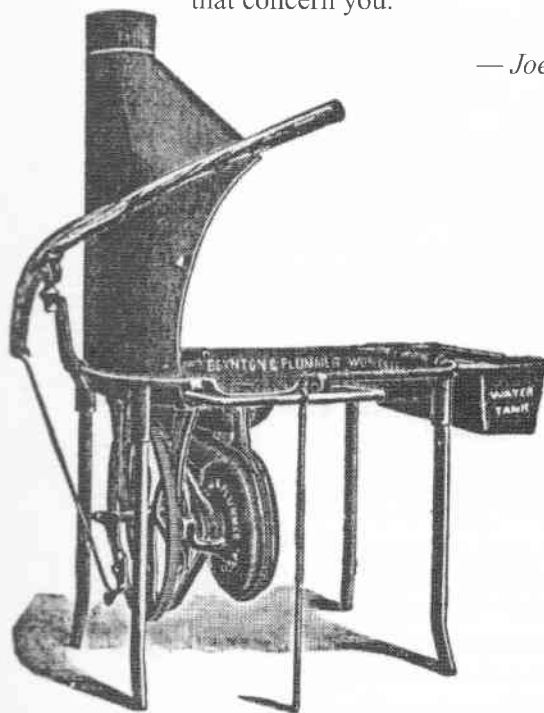
Next Don gave us an impressive forge welding demo at his portable shop. This was a payback from a Bob Patrick welding course, and I was thoroughly impressed. Kinda makes me want to go back to school with Bob Patrick. Thanks to both Don and Kate did some excellent demos and thanks also to Don and Joyce for a good meeting and a delicious and unusual lunch of baked potatoes with every topping I have ever seen.

Next meeting will be at Doug Hendrickson's at Lesterville. Trade item, dipper. I'm told there will be opportunities to play in the Black River if you like. Hope to see you there.

In closing I would like to say, in this my first letter as president, that I am honored to be chosen to be your president and I pledge my very best effort to the task.

My phone number is posted in the roster and I will be delighted to discuss with anyone issues that concern you.

— Joe Wilkinson



## Institute for Historic and Educational Arts

We are a relatively new not-for-profit charitable educational organization (501c3).

We are working toward setting up a folk school to teach some of the "Almost Lost and Dying Arts." We plan to offer classes on blacksmithing, Indian arts, pottery, fiber arts, and a host of other educational endeavors.

For the past few years we have done a living history demo at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival under the name "Steel Dreams" and we expect to continue this demo this year, exposing more people to not only blacksmithing but as many of the historic arts as we can arrange demonstrators for.

One of the things that we would like to do is to have a display of forged items that show the variety of things blacksmiths are capable of producing. Everything from very delicate scrolls and roses to massive cathedral hinges, locks, chains and other utility and art times. We would like to see if any of

you are interested in having some of your work displayed at the festival. We will make a list of artists with addresses, phone numbers and or e-mail addresses available to the public. Your display piece could either be on loan to us or donated as part of our traveling demo display. We have facility to lock everything up when not on display. The display will be manned at all times when not locked. Your work will be exposed to an expected attendance of more than 200,000 people over the full run of the fair.

The other thing IHEA is looking for are people who would be willing to be guest blacksmiths and craftspeople. We have a three-forge shop, with anvils and basic tools, with a connected demonstration area for other crafts. Guests can bring their favorite tools and demo for the day (or more).

The era portrayed is the late 1500s, so we ask that our guests dress in garb appropriate for that era. Loaner garb is

available for our guests on a limited basis.

We run the demo like a big family, we work together and have people who cook lunch for us as a cooking demonstration. Time will be allowed for everyone to see the rest of the festival as well.

The Renaissance Festival runs seven weekdays from Labor Day weekend until the middle of October. The dates are September 1-3, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30, Oct. 6-8 (Columbus Day), and 13-14.

If there is something you would be interested in please contact: Mike (Cedric) Nave, 105 N. 32nd St., Kansas City, KS 66102; (913) 621-4940 or e-mail to [cedric@crn.org](mailto:cedric@crn.org).

Help us to have a good display of blacksmithing and crafts and/or plan to demo. It's not all work, it's not all play, but it sure is fun. Thanks.

Mike (Cedric) Nave  
IHEA President

# BAM MAY MEETING

by Jim McCarty

BAM's May meeting held at Don Nichol's Rusty Hammer Forge in Sedalia was payback time for two members. Both host Don Nichols and Kate Dinneen owed us demos for their scholarships. Kate's was to Tom Clark's Ozark School of Blacksmithing where she took the Hofi class.

Her demo was a mixed bag of tips and techniques she learned at the class, and included nice renditions of the stern Hofi admonishments we all know and love.

She did some end treatments and a real interesting joint that would prove useful in a bunch of projects.

Don also used his scholarship at Tom Clark's school but his was in the Bob Patrick Forge Welding class. It was obvious Don paid attention because he was able to nail all of his welds with ease. He made a nice garden sculpture.

It is obvious Bob's pointers inspire a lot of confidence, for Don was working under some extreme conditions, with wind blowing part of the time and of course a lot of hecklers.

The meeting got underway slowly so that everyone could take in the many interesting sculptures in Don's garden. We also checked out his adequate



Kate Dinneen paid back her Hofi class scholarship by demonstrating at the May meeting.

supply of anvils, including a new European style. Don also had a nice homebrewed air hammer.

Don made us real comfortable with an outdoor forge set up on a trailer. This one featured a hand cranked blower and the editor's sons were quickly pressed into service cranking it. Our host had straw bale seats and an awning to keep out the sun, which graced our presence that day.

At noon we had an impressive feed and there was an equally impressive group of ladies putting it out. Following lunch, our new president, Joe Wilkinson, was sworn in and conducted his first meeting which was mercifully short.

Then we dimmed the lights and Kate brought out her slides from the trip to Israel and Hofi's forge on the kibbutz. It was fascinating stuff and I heard more than one person comment that they would like to make the next trip.

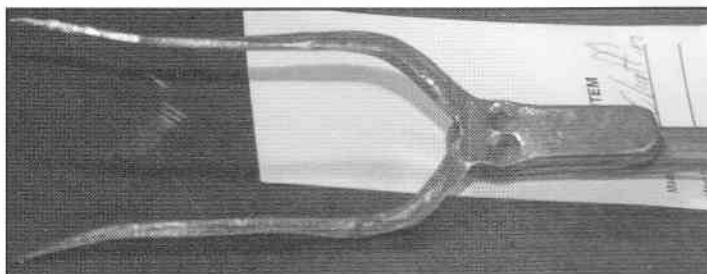
We had a real impressive turnout for the iron in the hat, which was a long fork. Highlights of that one included Ray Chaffin's steer head fork and Pat McCarty's adjusto-fork. We also got to see some nice work by Bess Ellis, who studied frog making under the notorious Raoul.

Thanks to Don and his wife for being such gracious hosts.

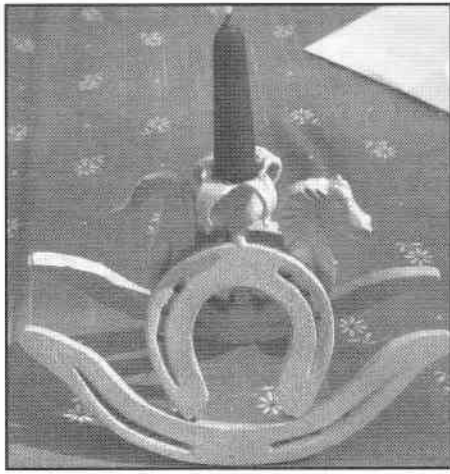
## Minutes

- New President Joe Wilkinson called the meeting to order.
- Thanks Don & Joyce
- Thanks to Bob Alexander for 3 years of service as president.

That's the pretty end of Ray Chaffin's trade item.

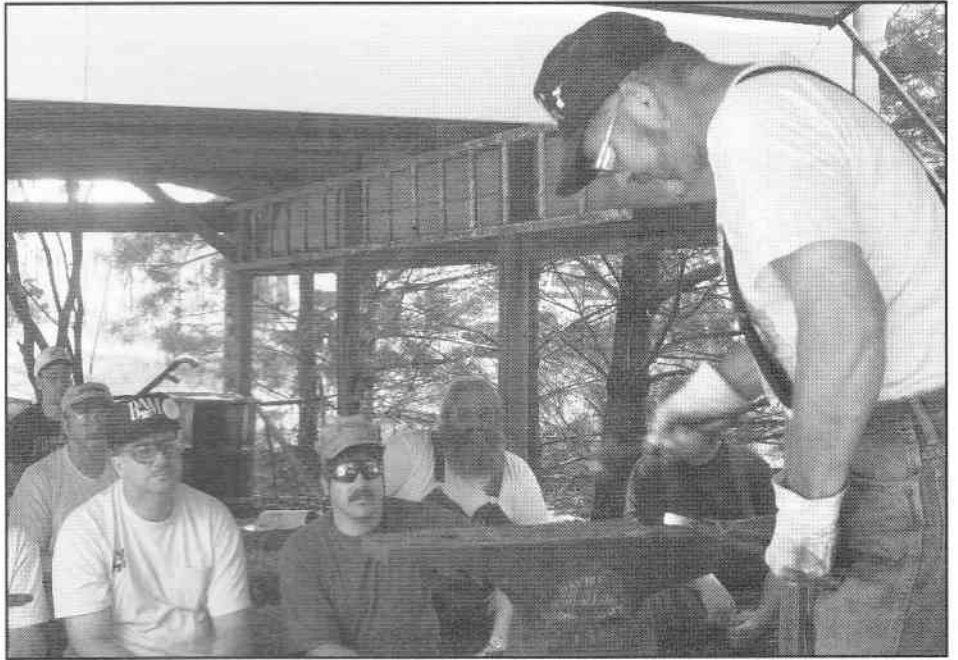






Neal Poort brought this little horsey to the meeting and yes, those are his shoes on it.

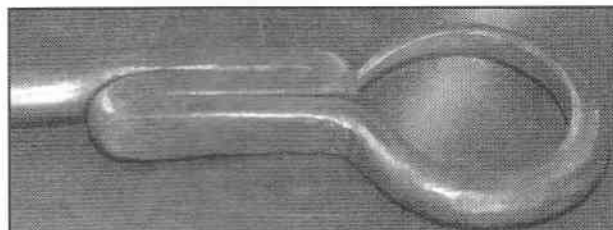
- Pat McCarty to run conference next year with Andy Macdonald and Walt Hull.
- Bruce Herzog spoke on gas forge workshop. Bob is testing at Branson. Blocks are being cast, workshop will be this fall. If your name is on the list Bruce will contact you.
- Pat McCarty presented Maurice and Bess with a clock for their service as treasurer.
- Treasurer's report by Maurice: Conference made \$7,200 profit. Treasury has \$24,350 with one outstanding bill.
- Joe asked for a volunteer to schedule meetings for 2002 — Raoul Sulens volunteered.
- Jim McCarty reported on the July meeting at Doug's — Pound and Float.
- Discussion on doing more workshops, Jim McCarty volunteered to chair workshop committee. Committee members sought.
- Maurice talked about our insurance — coverage will double to \$2 million.
- Don Nichols talked about rosette project. Tom Clark volunteered his shop for this. Walt Hull will design, all are welcome.
- Peggy talked about State Fair demo. Jim suggested making a sculpture to leave behind.
- Mike Williamson spoke on library. He needs books returned. List to be published.



**Above:** Host Don Nichols also owed us a demo for his Bob Patrick forge welding class. Don was amazing, nailing numerous welds while working under the outdoor forge. **Left:** Daniel McCarty took turns with his brother James powering Don's hand cranker. **Below:** That's the handle end of Ray's trade item. Nice job Ray.



— Respectfully submitted, Jim McCarty (for John Murray)





# ABANA

## ABANA Chapter Liaison Letter

May 2001

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of  
North America, Inc.  
PO Box 816  
Farmington, GA 30638 USA  
706-310-1030 tel 706-769-7147 fax  
abana@abana.org  
[www.abana.org](http://www.abana.org)

### My Belief

I still remember the smell of smoke drifting across the grassy plain overlooking the Fox River in De Pere Wisconsin-my first ABANA conference. Everything was so new. So exciting. A new world of skills and friendships was opening up to me.

I sometimes wonder how many of us today would be enjoying the fruits of blacksmithing if it were not for ABANA's role in rejuvenating interest in ironwork and spreading the almost lost skills of blacksmithing.

When I think of what ABANA has done for me, I think not so much of the obvious and concrete, (publications and the like) but the intangible. If it had not been for this renewed interest in blacksmithing and the relearning of the skills, the blacksmithing networks that I enjoy may have never been born. My home chapter, The Guild of Metalsmiths, grew out of an ABANA conference in Carbondale, Illinois.

ABANA is part of the thrust in creating continent wide blacksmithing relationships for you and me.

Does all this sound a bit mushy and sentimental, probably. Does it apply to most all of us, I believe so. This is my response to "what does ABANA do for me."

### Now For The Concrete

By about the first of June 2001 two events will take place.

The results of the survey of chapter editors will be distributed to the editors.

Chapter presidents will receive a preliminary write-up of a new program that we believe can be useful to all chapters. It will be a way for chapters to exchange information on those activities that they believe are working especially well. We want to check out with the chapter presidents if we are on the right track.

Here is what you can do. Ask your president about this preliminary write-up.

Give your input to the proposal. Ask your president to forward your ideas along with his/hers response to the Member Services Committee.

And remember, *always think safety.* Looking for your feed back,

Bob Fredell, Chairman  
Member Services Committee  
3500-45 Ave. So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55406-2297  
(612) 721-2289  
[fredell@frostbit.com](mailto:fredell@frostbit.com)



# BAM

## Bulletin Board

For sale: Niagara sheet metal shear. Will cut up to 38 inches wide. Perfect shape, \$150. I also have two anvils I would part with, both Peter Wrights. 150 pounds, \$250, 130 pounds, \$200. Jim McCarty, (573) 395-3304 or e-mail to jimmac@socket.net.

Anyone needing Ceramic Fiber Insulation for forges, fire places, etc., I have come into a large quantity. For BAM members, it's free for the asking. It's 1-1/2 and 2 inches thick, 12 to 24 inches wide and in 25 foot rolls. Contact Jim Thomas at (573) 782-3433 or e-mail AustinT42@aol.com.

For sale: Buffalo sander, 10-inch disk, 6-inch belt; excellent condition. Asking \$100. Contact Tim or Bert at (618) 893-2216.

Smithin' Magicians — as featured in the Blacksmith's Journal. Includes mild steel tool blank, \$275. Call Bob Woodard at (618) 692-6508.

Ray Chaffin has a new computer operated plasma cutting system that can cut anything out of metal. Mail, call or e-mail your design for a price quote. Also hardwood blocks 2-2 1/2" x 12-14" are \$5 each in curly maple, straight maple, English walnut, birch laminated in brown and white and blue and white. Ray Chaffin, (660) 438-6720 or Ray's Welding, RR 3, Box 279, Warsaw, MO 65355.

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.

Custom-built air hammers. 6-pound table top model \$1,300; 20-pound table top model \$1,900; 20-pound floor model \$2,200; 40-pound floor model \$2,600. Some modifications to the basic hammers can be made to your specifications. Also custom metal spinning in copper, brass, pewter, and steel. Contact Maurice L. Ellis, Route 1. Box 1442, Belgrade, MO 63622-9709. Phone: (573) 766-5346. E-mail: mbellis@misn.com.

BAM members, 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. From art to parts I do it all. Call (573) 474-8749 and ask for William Irvin.

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.kayneand-son.com. Offering Big Blue 100 ram air hammers, Peddinghaus 2 horn anvils, Offcenter tongs and swages, etc, hammers, tongs, the Blu Crusher rolling mill and Forgemaster gas forges. We ship and accept Visa and Mastercard.

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.

Power hammer history! *Pounding out the Profits — A Century of American Invention* by Douglas Freund (hard-bound, 317 pages, profusely illustrat-

ed) is available for \$32.50 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling through Minus Mountain Machine Works, PO Box 532, Jerome, AZ 86331.

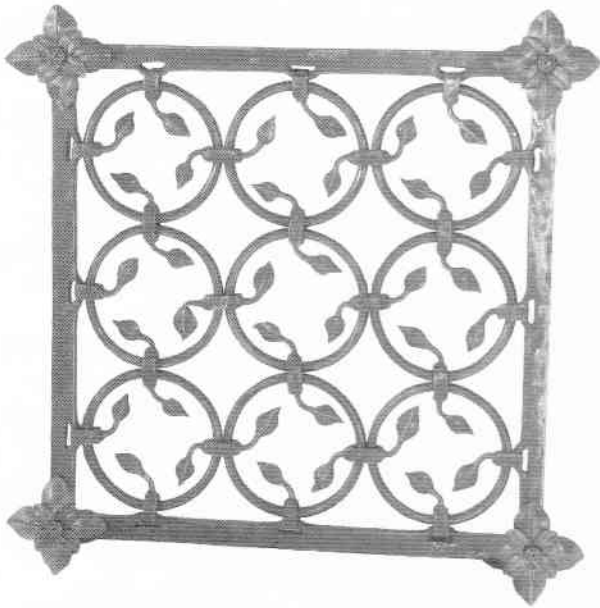
For blacksmithing books contact Norm Larson, 5426 E. Hwy. 246, Lompoc, CA 93436 or call (805) 735-2095. Ask for his catalog.

George Dixon is starting a new blacksmithing publication called "The Traditional Metalsmith". For \$28 you will get four issues of how-to information. Contact him at 1229 Bee Tree Lake Road, Swannanoa, NC 28778.

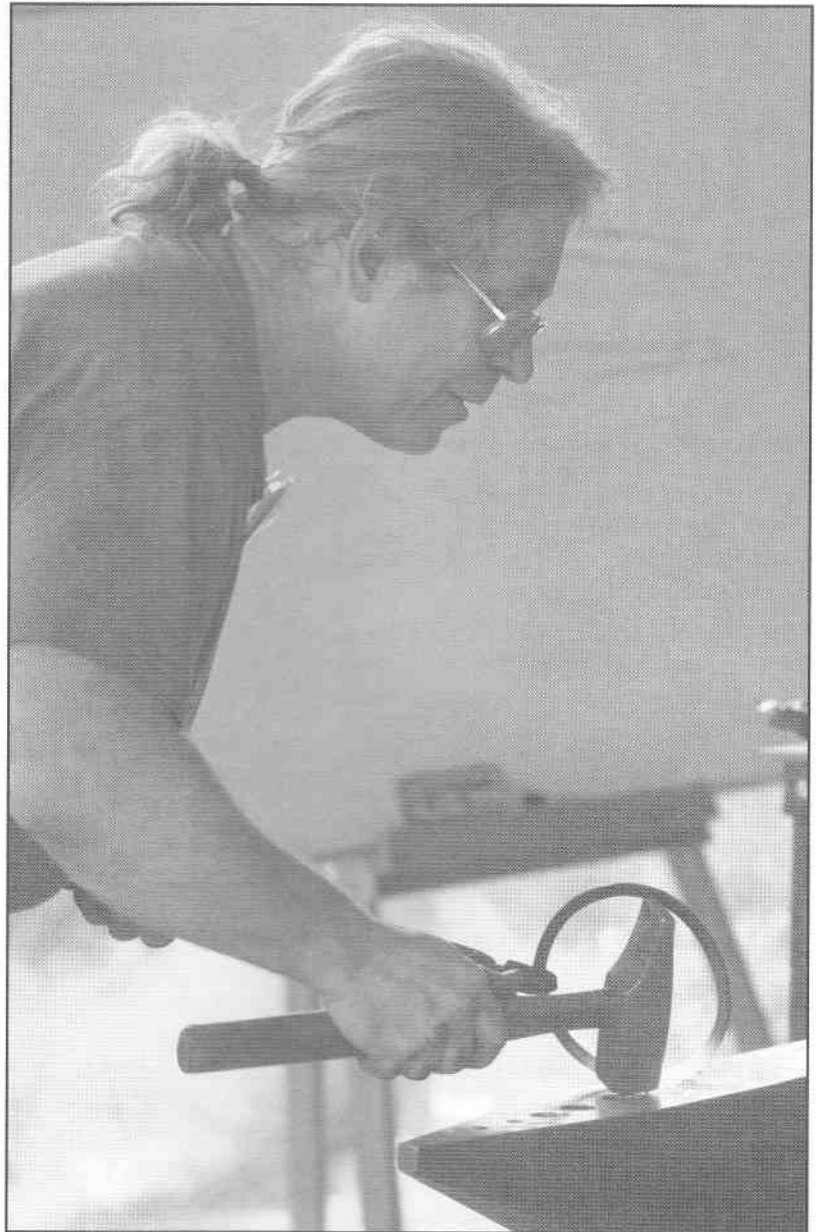
Wanted: the down feed lever (handle) off a Champion post or floor drill press, this is the hand lever that feeds the drill bit into the work, it has a ratchet device where it connects to the drill press. Steve Combs, 636 797-9093, or e-Mail at : bigsmoke@jcn1.com.

Wanted: 25-pound Little Giant, any condition; 3-foot cone mandrel; hand-crank post drill. Allen Ray Cromwell, Arc Forge, PO Box 179, Grand Chain, IL 62941.

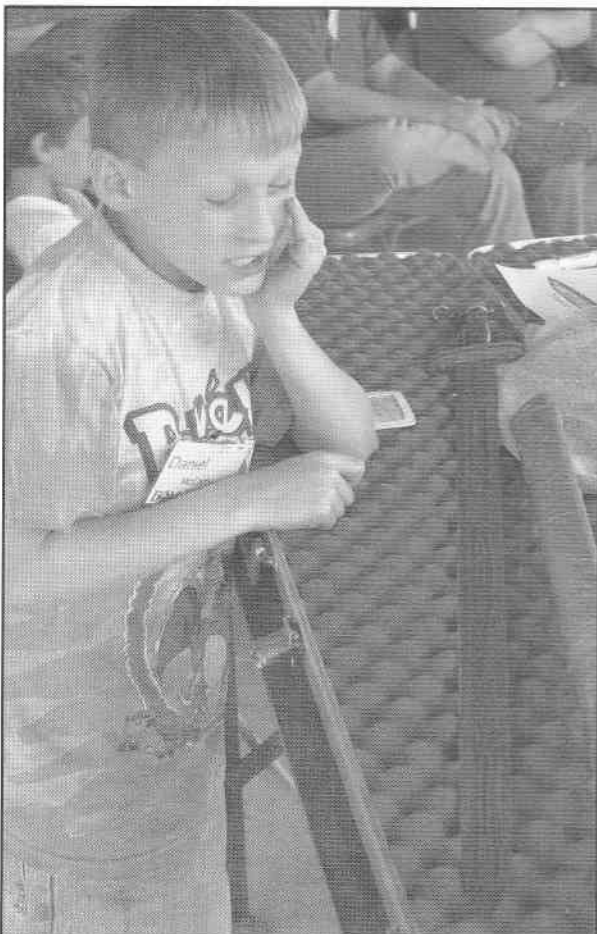
# CONFERENCE 2001 Highlights



Bob Patrick's grill.



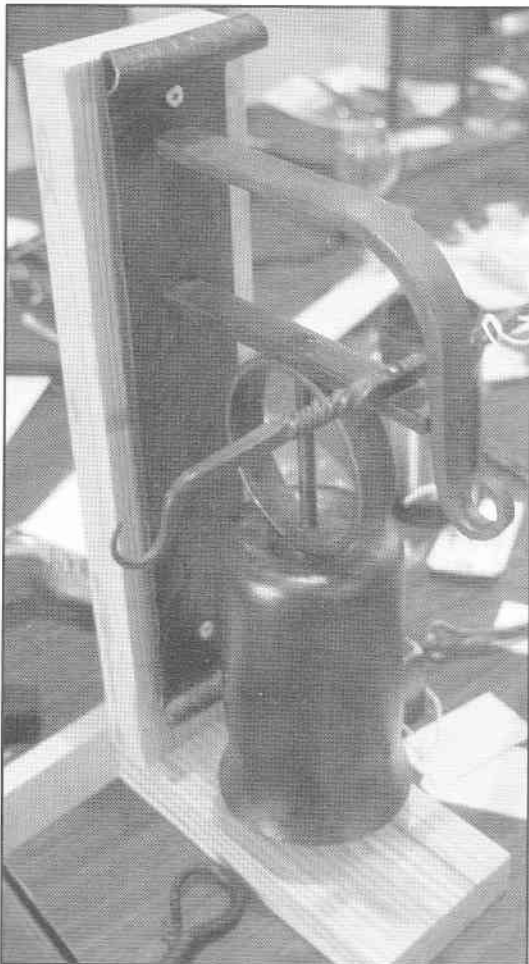
**Above:** Bob Patrick turns a ring for his grill demo. He even did this cold to show how easy it is. **Left:** Daniel McCarty was cautioned to look but not touch this Kevin Cashen sword.



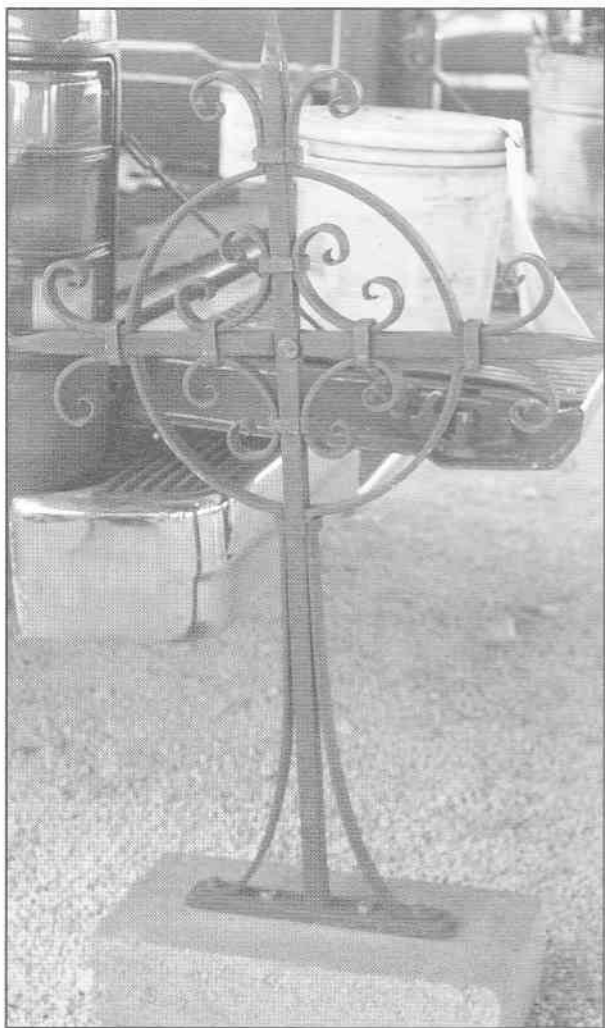
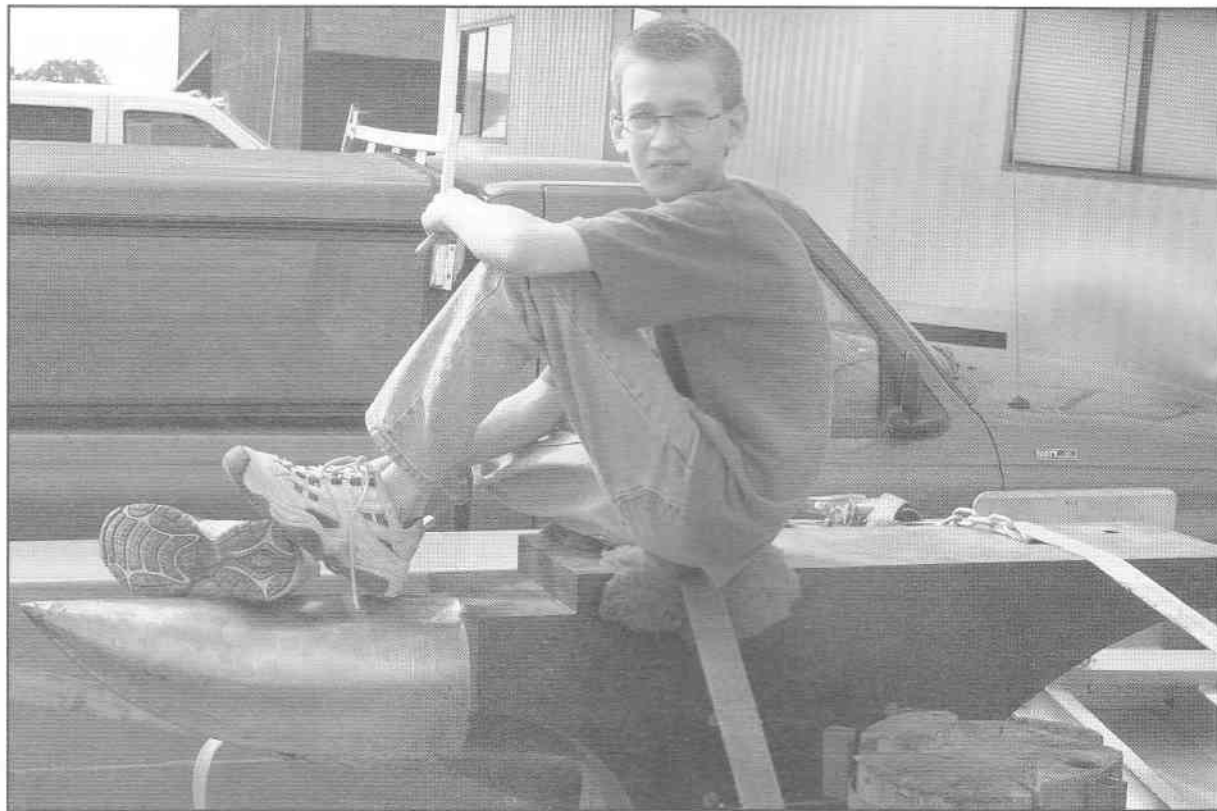


BAM events are getting to be family affairs and these future tailgaters did good business selling bent nails.

**Right:** Ray Chaffin gets some expert advice from big hammer guy Fred Caylor. **Below:** That's Fabian Schilly's bell which found its way to the conference auction.



We were fortunate to have the world's largest anvil at the conference brought in by Lee Liles. James McCarty thought it would make a nice coffee table.

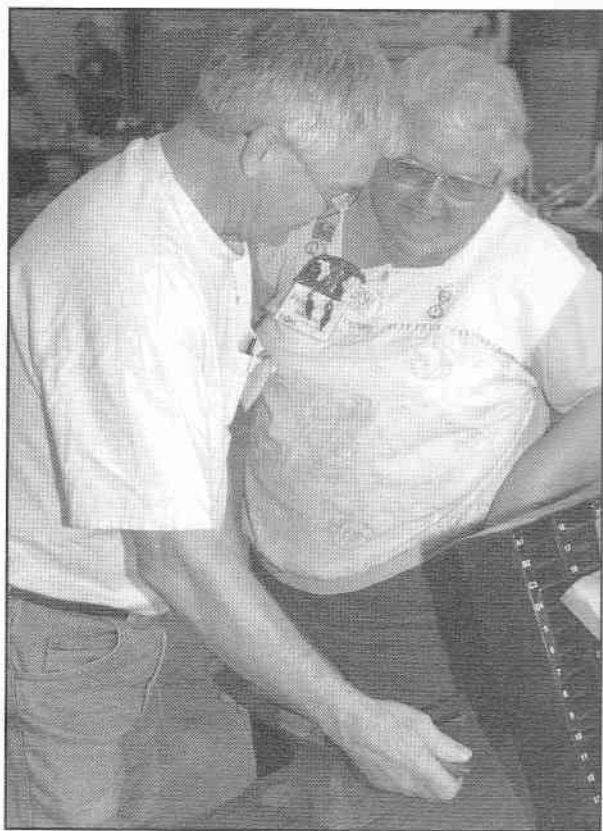


**Left:** A nice cross from Tennessee. **Below:** Pat McCarty with the 2001 BAM box.

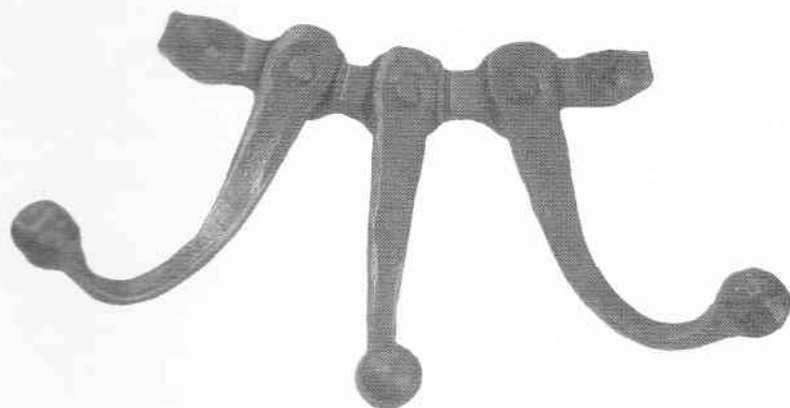




Above: Kevin Cashen drew a big crowd for his sword demo.



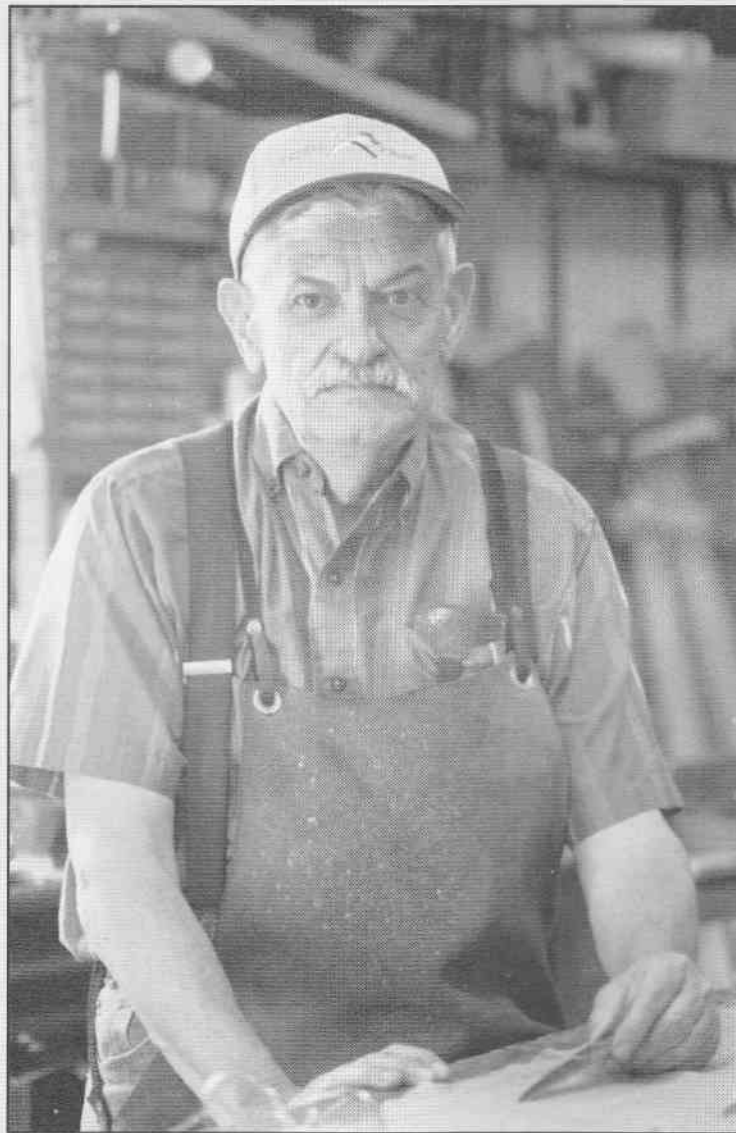
Left: A tearful Peggy Williamson accepts the Bob Patrick Founder's Award from Maurice Ellis.



Above: That's Susan Hutchison's hook.

# A Master of Metal

by Jeff Joiner  
Rural Missouri Magazine



Guy McConnell uses ancient techniques and some modern tools to make mysterious Damascus steel





*One of many Damascus blades forged by Guy McConnell. Below: This Damascus plane was one of Guy's most difficult tasks.*

**G**uy McConnell is not your stereotypical burly blacksmith. He's a small, unassuming man, but his reputation in Missouri for producing beautiful pattern-welded Damascus knives and tools is large and spreading.

McConnell likes a challenge and after retiring from a career as an air traffic controller he needed a hobby. He refinished furniture for a while, but he came across a new pastime that allowed him to combine his love of history with a craft. That was nearly 20 years ago and in that time McConnell has fine-tuned his skill as a blacksmith until today his work forging Damascus steel approaches fine art.

"I like to do things that not very many other people can do," says McConnell, who works daily in his small shop a few yards from his home near La Plata, in north-central Missouri. "I basically do this the same way they did it 2,000

years ago, only I use some power tools."

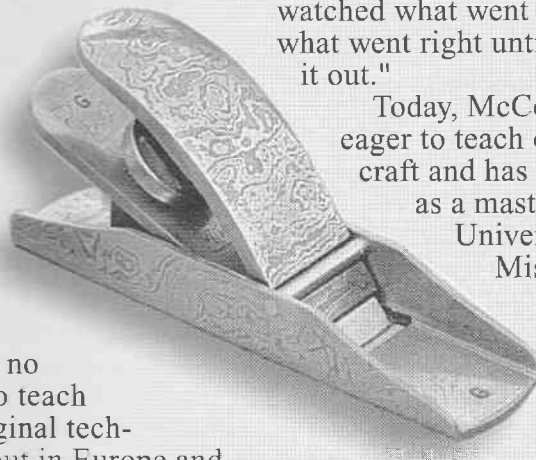
Damascus is an ancient technique for making steel for swords. European, Japanese and Middle Eastern bladesmiths all developed the technique to make a stronger yet flexible blade by combining metals with different properties. The process also created beautiful blades with a distinctive pattern embedded within the steel.

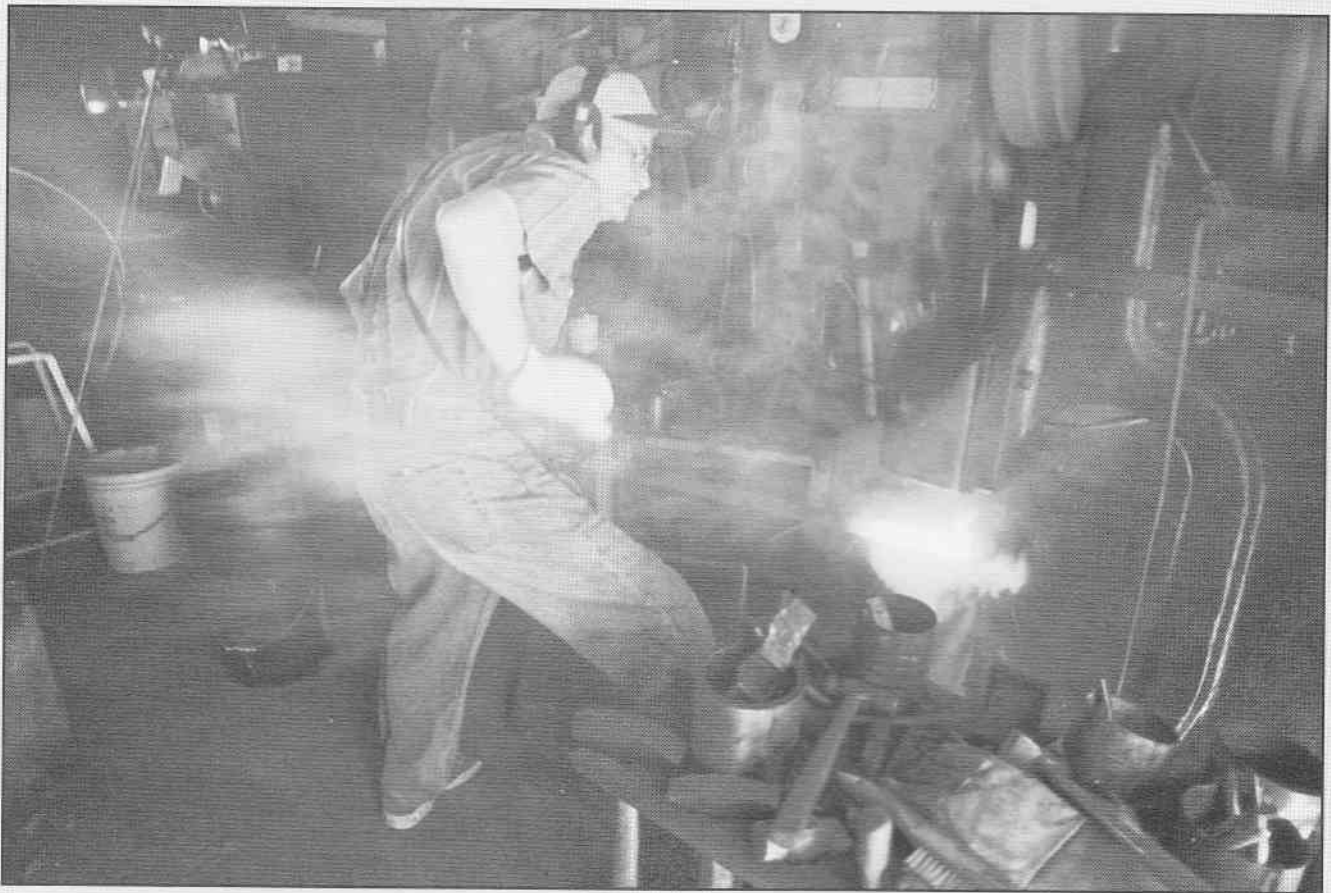
When McConnell decided to learn Damascus knife-making nearly two decades ago there was virtually no one around to teach him. The original techniques died out in Europe and the Middle East in the 13th century and were not rediscov-

ered until the 1960s and '70s when American artist-blacksmiths again learned the techniques of the old bladesmiths and began forging replicas of historic knives and swords from Damascus steel.

"Unfortunately, when I wanted to learn, there was no place to learn. I simply had to go to the shop and work at it," McConnell says. "I read what little there was to read about it and then just started doing it. I watched what went wrong and what went right until I worked it out."

Today, McConnell is eager to teach others his craft and has participated as a master in the University of Missouri Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program where he was paired with an apprentice. He's also taught others who





*Guy works at his 50-pound Little Giant. He prefers coal to gas for his Damascus work.*

have sought him out because of his reputation. One student is a Louisville, Ky., surgeon who spent a week with him pounding metal.

"It was something to completely get away from what he was doing. I've had several people come and do it as a break from whatever they were doing," says McConnell. "I had an attorney come down and he has no intention of doing this, maybe ever again. It was something of a vacation."

Whatever the motivation, McConnell is happy to share his skills. Making Damascus is a time-consuming, physically

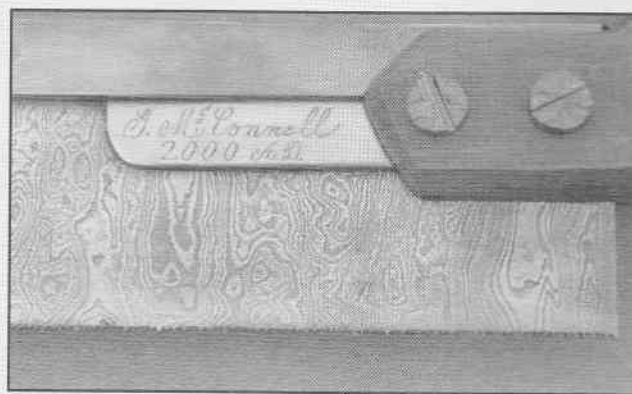
demanding skill that tolerates few mistakes.

The Damascus pattern results from welding together

with seven alternating layers of two types of steel, McConnell begins welding them together in a coal forge.

"I prefer coal over gas," he says, though he also uses a propane-fired gas forge. "It's probably nostalgia. It's dirtier and smells bad and I can control the heat of my metal better in a coal forge than in the gas."

He begins by heating the stacked layers of metal and hammers them into one piece, thus welding them together. Then he begins a process of reheating and folding the steel over and over until the seven original layers become 14, then 28, 56 and so on. He must constantly cut, forge and draw the piece out by hammering it to



*A fine saw from Guy's collection of Damascus tools.*

different types of steel of different hardness or combining steel with another metal like nickel and then etching the surface with an acid. Beginning

maintain the size and rough shape of the item being made.

McConnell says he likes the look of 220 folded layers, though he's created blades with as many as 12,480 layers and Japanese bladesmiths have created swords with millions.

"I don't like too many layers because they're so thin, so fine that you can't see anything. I think 220 makes a pretty nice pattern."

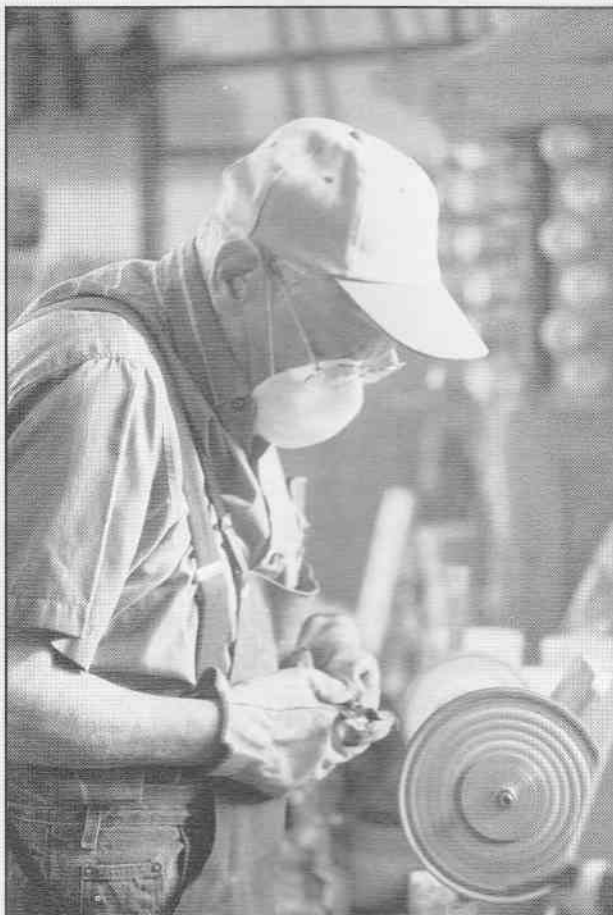
Once the desired number of layers is reached, McConnell works to cut, grind and hammer the piece into the shape of whatever he's making - knife blades, saw blades, the head of an engraver's hammer. Once the shape is roughed out the metal is hardened by heating and quenching, or dipping it in a light oil. Finally it's tempered by slowly heating the metal to 400 degrees over about two hours in an oven.

Now McConnell begins the least favorite part of the job for him, the tedious process of finishing the item by repeatedly sanding it with finer and finer sanding wheels. The cutting edge is sharpened and the piece is given a fine polish.

The final step is soaking the metal in a bath of acid. The acid eats away the softer metal revealing the many layers hidden there. Last he adds handles to knives and hilts to swords of bone, antler, metal or exotic woods. One of his favorite woods is Osage orange.

Though McConnell has made many kinds of mostly

historic knives and swords, he did not begin working as a blacksmith to only make edged weapons and hunting knives. His real passion is tools. McConnell collects 19th century hand tools and he makes Damascus replicas of those



*It takes a lot of polishing to give Damascus that finished look.*

same tools.

He's currently working on a personal collection of Damascus hand tools including a pair of calipers, a back saw, a draw knife, a small hatchet, a carpenter's square and a small hand plane, the most difficult piece he's ever made. Though he uses each tool once to make sure it works, clearly these tools are not for everyday use. When finished making the

tools, McConnell plans to build a tool chest with matching Damascus metal hardware.

McConnell says he's not aware of any Damascus blacksmiths who make collector's tools rather than the more common knives and swords.

Though there's not much of a market for his tools in Missouri (individual tools sell for hundreds of dollars and swords and some knives sell for thousands) there is a market in larger cities, mostly in the East.

"I'm constantly amazed that people want to buy what I make," says McConnell who insists he's as busy as he wants to be.

Making historic knives, swords and hand tools fits nicely with McConnell's love of history, particularly American Colonial history. Along with making Damascus, he also forges his own rifle and pistol barrels and attends historic rendezvous and reenactments to study and explore the past. It's there that he sells many of his Damascus items to collectors and fellow history buffs.

His love of history, and reliving the past, also fuels his desire to teach others his blacksmithing skills so that they'll never disappear as did the skills of ancient makers of Damascus steel.

*For information about Guy McConnell's tools and knives write to him at 22997 Fox Road, La Plata, MO, 63549; or call (660) 332-7354.*

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
WILL HOST THE 9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

## BLACKSMITHING WORKSHOP

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
OCTOBER 27 AND 28, 2001  
AT THE HISTORIC VILLAGE ON NORTH 27<sup>th</sup> STREET  
MT. VERNON, IL.

**COST - \$25 BOTH DAYS; \$15 ONE DAY  
PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE BLACKSMITH SHOP AND VILLAGE**

Bob Alexander of DeSoto, Mo., past president of the Blacksmith Association of Missouri, and a full time blacksmith the past five years will be our demonstrator.

Bob has studied under Clay Spencer, Doug Hendrickson, Jerry Darnell, Tom Clark and Uri Hofi. He is an instructor at the J.C. Campbell folk school and regularly teaches and demonstrates at living history events and schools. Bob will focus on colonial lighting and kitchen and hearth hardware, with contemporary tips and techniques for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There will be an auction Saturday evening of donated ironware, tools, and supplies. The money raised will be used to fund the monthly open forge workshops held the second Saturday of each month year around.

Coffee and donuts and a wiener roast Saturday evening free to registrants.

Lunch will be available at a small additional fee.

Tailgate sales welcome and encouraged

Please pre-register by October 1, 2001 although walk-ins welcome.

.....

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

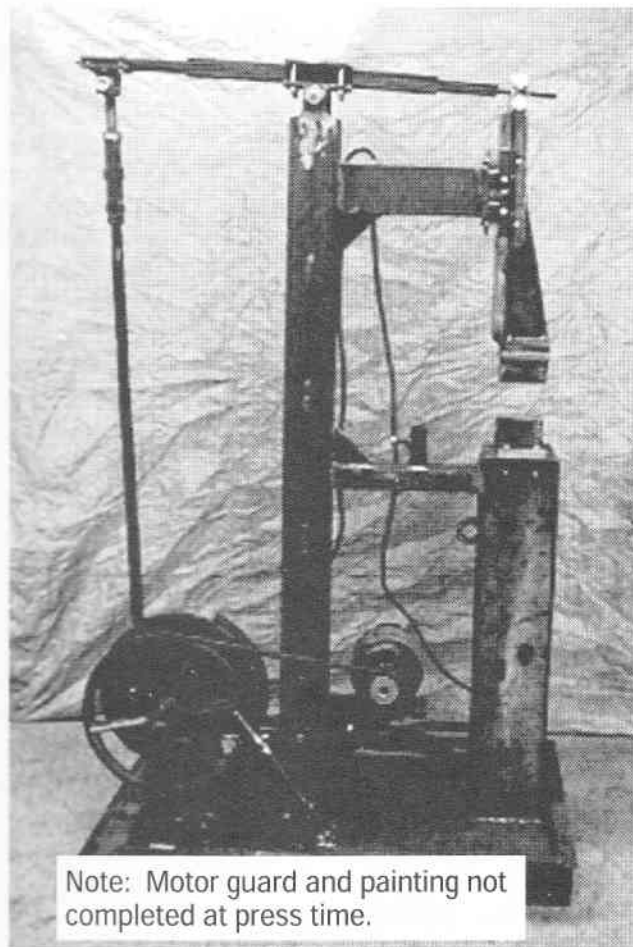
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Jefferson County Historical Society

MAIL TO: Wilbur Haley, 19 Rushton Dr., Mt. Vernon, Il. 62864

ANY QUESTIONS: Call Wilbur at (618)242-1365 or John Lovin (618)756-2331 [anvilman@hamiltoncom.net](mailto:anvilman@hamiltoncom.net)

# RAFFLE DUSTY

OCTOBER 20th, 2001



Note: Motor guard and painting not completed at press time.

**50# POWER HAMMER  
BOLT-ON FLAT DIES**  
Hands-free Fuller/Tenon Dies  
1.5 hp MOTOR, 1 ph, 115/208-230 v.  
1000# OVERALL WEIGHT (approx)  
HEIGHT: 66 inches at pivot  
BASE: 25" w. x 38" l.

DUSTY is the all-new 50# power hammer built by the Appalachian Blacksmiths Association.

In addition to the basic, bolt-on flat dies, DUSTY also comes with two sets of "Hands-free" spring dies. A fuller die and a tenon die lock into a 1" square slot to allow fullering and tenoning.

DUSTY will be raffled at Cedar Lakes Park Blacksmith Shop at 1:00 pm, Saturday, October 20th, 2001 in conjunction with the ABA Fall Conference.

NO WARRANTY, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, IS PROVIDED BY THE ABA FOR THIS POWER HAMMER. Electric Motor is new and manufacturer's warranty may apply to the eventual owner.

You need not be present at the ticket drawing to win DUSTY. However, the winner is required to pick up and transport the power hammer. ABA IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERY TO THE WINNER.

Tickets will be available at all ABA events. Tickets will be sold up until the drawing on October 20. TICKETS THAT ARE MAILED IN FOR THE DRAWING WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER OCTOBER 10, 2001.

DUSTY is a quality-built machine and will handle most of your jobs. It is your responsibility to learn to use a power hammer safely.

\*\*\*\*\*  
AVAILABLE AT ALL ABA EVENTS

\$1.00 ea.



If ordering by mail:  
Send self-addressed, stamped envelope  
with check payable to:

ABA-DUSTY  
C/o Dave Allen, Editor  
640 Davisson Run Road  
Clarksburg, WV 26301-9306  
??? 304-624-7248 ???

\*\*\*\*\*

# BAM NEWS

## New date for September meet

There's a new date for the September BAM meeting to be held at Bob Ehrenberger's shop. The date is Sept. 22. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Trade item is a gig or something sharp to go on the end of a shaft: frog gig, arrow head, spear point??

## Thanks from Bess & Maurice

As treasurer since 1996 and membership chairman since 1989, we have gotten to know many BAM

members. We wish to thank everyone for being understanding and cooperative during this time. These jobs involved many hours of work each month and lots of work before the BAM Conference. We felt that the membership appreciated the work that we did for BAM as indicated by the desk clock that we received at the May meeting. Thank you all so much. We trust that you will give the new BAM treasurer and membership chairman (Bruce and Jane Herzog) the same cooperation and appreciation that you gave us.

—Maurice and Bess Ellis

1st Vice President  
Mike Williamson  
660-428-1248  
mrw@iland.net

2nd Vice President  
Don Nichols  
660-826-9252

Secretary  
John Murray  
636-398-4640

Treasurer/Membership  
Bruce Herzog  
314-892-4690  
bjherzog@msn.com

## Hammer-in at Mt. Vernon

John Lovin invites all BAM members to the open forge workshops in Mt. Vernon, Ill. on the 2nd Saturday of every month. Three coal forges and all the extras. Potluck at noon. Tailgating welcome. Usual attendance 10 to 20 depending on time of year and weather. Best way to find the Historical Village, exit Interstate 57 at Mt. Vernon, turn left (east) on Broadway (Rt.15), go 7 stop lights to 27th street — this is the next street after you pass McDonalds — turn left, stay on 27th until you see the village on your left. (You will go through one stop sign). As they say in the south (ern Illinois), Ya'll welcome.

## Cast iron workshop

The Commercial Club of Springfield (MO) is holding a Cast Iron workshop Aug 17, and 18. We'll scratch molds, and pour 4 1/2" cast iron tiles. Many tiles will be used in a streetscape PUBLIC ART project on Historic Commercial Street, but you can also make and keep your own tile(s). The workshop is free, with a cost of \$20. for any tile you keep. It'll be a fun two-day event, with food, comraderie, and hopefully, music. For more info: Christine Schilling, 1027 S. New, Springfield, MO 65807; e-mail Mosaica2@aol.com or phone (417) 862-2272.

## BAM 2001 Conference Financial

Our 2001 Conference made a healthy profit thanks to another excellent auction conducted by our good friend Col. David Cornett. Thanks to all who helped put on the conference. Here's a breakdown of how we did:

### Income

Registrations (including meals/family programs)	\$6733.50
Auction	7024.50
Boutique	1272.75
Soda/donuts	149.93
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$15180.68</b>

### Expenses

Demonstrator expenses	\$3737.86
Caterer	1274.70
Fairground rental	850.00
All other expenses	1404.06
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$7266.62</b>

**Net profit \$7914.06**

## New officers

At this year's BAM Conference new officers were elected. Thanks to those who were willing to serve and especially a big thanks to outgoing President Bob Alexander for his many years of service.  
President  
Joe Wilkinson  
573-943-6779

*The Traditional Metalsmith*  
Blacksmithing: Illustrated & Explained  
By George Dixon, former Head Blacksmith  
Samuel Yellin Metalworkers



Leafwork  
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Swannanoa, NC 28778  
www.traditionalmetalsmith.com

# Next meeting: July 21, Lesterville

**D**oug Hendrickson is the host for the next BAM meeting to be held July 21 at Lesterville, Mo. Our July meeting is always our chance to play a little bit and Doug's out of the way location offers ample opportunity for that. Besides the meeting, he has a float trip on the nearby Black River planned for Sunday.

Doug's yard is open for camping. For those who need facilities or a hook-up Riversedge Camp-ground is just a half mile down the road.

Call Riversedge at (573) 637-2422 to reserve a camp site. Floaters should give Doug a call at (573) 637-2576 so he can reserve canoes. Canoes rent for 20 or 25 bucks.

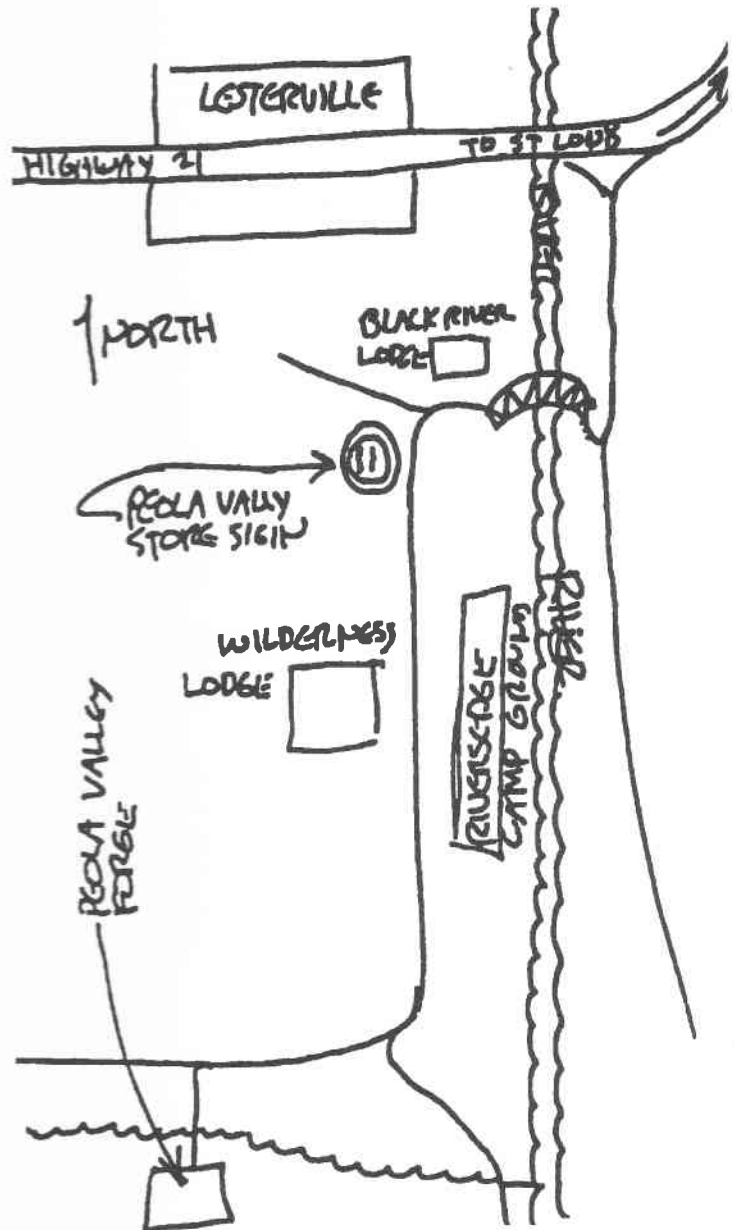
The Lesterville Lions Club will be serving lunch at 5 bucks a shot. We'll get hot and sweaty on Saturday and cool and wet on Sunday.

On the meeting agenda is planned demos by Pat McCarty and Walt Hull, plus a chance to see what Doug has been up to lately. If you've never been here I should tell you that Doug's neighbor is a potter and a visit to his studio is worthwhile too.

Lesterville is also close to Johnson's Shut-ins State Park and Elephant Rocks State Park.

Trade item for this one is a dipper, an easy project so everyone should make one this time. Don't forget something for iron in the hat or at least bring some cash to buy some raffle tickets.

See you there.



## BAM

## 2001 Meeting schedule

### July Meeting

Doug Hendrickson  
Lesterville, MO  
July 21  
Trade item: Dipper

### September Meeting

Bob Ehrenberg  
Shelbyville, MO  
Sept. 22  
Trade item: Gig

### November Meeting

John Murray  
New Melle, MO  
November 10  
Trade item: TBA



*Susan Hutchison's signature music stand was part of her conference demo.*

**BAM**  
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