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THE FORGE FIRE

The Newsletter of the Indiana Blacksmithing Association, Inc.

An Affiliate Of The Artists-Blacksmiths' Association of North America, Inc.

IBA is a Not For Profit Indiana Corporation recognized by the IRS under section 501(c)(3)

10:00 AM is the regular meeting time for IBA Hammer-Ins with beginner training available at 9:00 AM.
PLEASE MAKE SURE TO ASK FOR HELP!

If you would like an IBA membership application form, please contact Farrel Wells, Membership Secretary (765) 768-6235.

BULK LOTS ARE AVAILABLE TO DEMONSTRATORS, SHOPS, SHOWS AND OTHERS WILLING TO MAKE THEM AVAILABLE. WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP.

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More nearby resources and organizations for blacksmiths:

Rural Smiths of Mid-America:
Meetings are on the first Saturday of each month
Call Moe Handy
(317) 862-5647 for details.

IBA MEETING SCHEDULE

Check the latest *Forge Fire* for monthly **IBA** revisions. Contact **John Wendel** (812) 343-1969 if you are willing to host or demonstrate for IBA

Jan 16 2010	FALL CREEK BLACKSMITH SHOP
Feb 20 2010	KEN DETTMER'S SHOP COLUMBUS
Mar 20 2010	IBA BUSINESS MEETING LOCATION TBD
Apr 17 2010	TBD



Editors Message

The December hammer in at Chaz Kaisers was as good as always. We had lots of good people and lots of good food. Aubrey Williams gave a good demonstration showing how frontier blacksmiths “refreshed” the wrought iron rifle barrels and created custom sized bullet moulds to match. The board of directors held a lengthy meeting, while several guys worked at the forge to create a 3 dimensional snowflake, like the one featured in last months Forge Fire.

2010 marks the 30th anniversary for the IBA as an organization. Our Conference will feature outstanding demonstrators from within the IBA ranks (Clifton Ralph, Steve Parker, Kurt Fehernbach, Jack Brubaker, Charlie Helton and John Zile). Our contest theme is “tables”. Last years utensil contest was a huge success and this years contest should be even better. Start planning your projects.

The annual business meeting is coming up in March. John Wendel and Gary Phillips board of directors terms are expiring. John Wendel has decided to step down from the board. John has worked hard during his tenure, including time as the IBA president. We thank John for the work has done for the IBA. Gary Phillips has agreed to run for another term. Michael Wollowski, our IBA web master, has also agreed to run for the board. Our election will be straight forward with only two candidates running for two positions. Gary and Michael will be tremendous assets as directors.

This edition of the Forge Fire has some items that I hope will become standard features. Page 6 features safety tips supplied by John Zile and Ted Stout. John discusses the impact of inhaling iron dust when grinding in the shop. Ted discusses the hazards of improperly handling acetylene cylinders. I am hopeful that we will continue to get these kinds of articles that can be helpful, if not life saving, to all of us. On page 11, I have created a section that I am calling Odds & Ends. This section is intended to be similar to classified ads. I have heard from several people that they would like to get information about tools and equipment for sale or trade. If you have items to sell or trade, just let me know.

As always your articles and feedback are appreciated.

INDEX

PEOPLE PLACES
&
THINGS
PG 3

SATELITE GROUP
NEWS PGS 4-5

SAFETY TIPS
PG 6

IBA BOARD CAN-
DIDATE
PG 7

JIM CLaar
PGS 8-10

ODDS & ENDS
PG 11

**Dates to
Remember**

**IBA
BUSINESS
MEETING
MAR 20**

**IBA
CONFERENCE
JUNE 25-27**

Visit the IBA website at: www.indianablacksmithing.org

PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS

The meeting at **Chaz Kaiser's** was attended by about thirty folks who watched a demonstration of how to make the tools for casting lead bullets. A round ball was forged on the end of a rod and the ball was filed to fit the intended gun barrel and then teeth were filed into it to form what today might be called a milling cutter. This was then used to form a hole between two soapstone plates which were kept in alignment by two pins through them both. A small channel was filed to form a sprue through which the hot liquid lead could enter the cavity. When the lead casting had cooled it was knocked out of the mold, the sprue was cut off and the ball filed round.

We had a very large pitch-in lunch and if you went away hungry it was your own fault. An iron in the hat drawing preceded lunch and the IBA board met in **Chaz's** home after lunch. Our thanks to **Chaz** for his hospitality and to all who brought such good things to eat.

As we begin a new year here are some things to add to your 2010 calendar. The IBA June conference has moved to June 25,26,&27 to allow us to attend the 2010 Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America (ABANA) conference outside Memphis on Wednesday June 2 through Saturday June 5 at the AgriCenter International. In the meantime the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association will hold their annual conference June 11-13 with specific emphasis on "Color and Finish in Metals" It will feature Ron Young and John Mededeff. It will be at Pontiac, IL.

A number of earlier instructional references called for Swedish Iron as the desired metal to be used. You might wonder why. Iron ores are not equal as you are probably aware. Some very high grade ore originated from the Dannemora

mine in eastern Sweden near the small community of Dannemora. Iron made from this mine was very well regarded wherever it was exported. The mine operated as late as 1992 and may operate again. Some twenty finery forges turned the iron from the bloomery or cast iron from the blast furnaces into bar iron which was widely exported. These forges exported their output through the nearby town of Oregrund and the iron they produced by the Waloon method became known as Oregrund iron, considered the best which was available. The iron was particularly good at being converted to blister steel by being re-carburized by the cementation process. It was so good that an English cartel of merchants controlled its sale for more than a century and bought nearly the entire output for years in advance. Sheffield steel and its reputation for excellence was made of this material.

The bloomery produced a porous sponge iron called a bloom while the later blast furnace produced pig iron. The pig iron was remelted in the finery to produce a bloom (the Waloon Method). The blooms after heating were then turned over to a hammer man who hammered the material into a usable shape. In the process he might need to reheat the material and this was done in a chafery hearth. The bloomery and finery both used charcoal made from wood as fuel to prevent the introduction of other undesired elements. Iron produced by this process was called wrought iron. It was later replaced for a time by the puddling process.

To learn more see Wikipedia on the net and a number of histories of early furnaces in England and America.

Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop Southeast Region Jennings County

Meetings of the Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop are held on the second Saturday of the month starting at 9 am in downtown Vernon. For more information contact Ray Sease at (812) 522-7722.

January 9 at Paul Bray's shop in Seymour. Lunch provided
 February 13 at John Cummins shop in Moores Hill. Lunch provided
 March 13 at Jerry Williams shop in Holton. Lunch will be a pitch in. Demonstrations of metal spinning and wood turning.

Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop West Central Region Vigo County

Meetings of the Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop are held on the second Saturday of the month starting at 9 a.m. Meetings are held at the blacksmith shop in Fowler Park, approximately 7 miles south of Terre Haute. For detailed information contact Max Hoopengartner at (812) 249-8303 or Rick Helton at (812) 894-3172

Fall Creek Blacksmith Shop East Central Region Henry County

Meetings of the Fall Creek Blacksmith Shop are held on the fourth Saturday of the month starting at 10 a.m., with open forge at 9 a.m. at the residence of John Zile in Middletown. For more information contact John at (765) 533-4153 or Larry Singer at (765) 643-5953. Or Farrel Wells at 765-768-6235, flwells@verizon.net

Maumee Valley Blacksmiths Northeast Region Allen County

The Maumee Valley Blacksmiths and Blue River Blacksmith Guild are a merger of two of our satellite groups. They Meet on the first Saturday of the month at the Maumee Valley Steam Association Grounds in New Haven, Indiana. Call Clint Casey at 1-260-627-6270 for more information.

St. Joe Valley Forgers North Central Region St. Joseph County

Meetings of the St. Joe Valley Forgers are held on the 4th Saturday of the month starting at 9 a.m. at the residence of Bill Conyers in South Bend. For more information contact John Latowski at (574) 255-6209 or Bill Conyers at (574) 277-8729.

Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild Northwest Region Tippecanoe County

Meetings of the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild are held on the second Saturday of the month starting at 9 a.m. Meetings are held at the home of Ted and Carol Stout, approximately 8 miles south of Lafayette. For more information contact Ted Stout at (765) 572-2467.

One Armed Blacksmith's Shop Johnson County

Meetings of the One Armed Blacksmith's Shop are held on the 1st Saturday of the month starting at 9am. For more information contact Tim Metz at (812)447-2606 or tim.metz@cummins.com.

IBA Conference Reminder:

The IBA is celebrating our 30th anniversary.

Now is the time to plan your show and tell projects and auction items for the June Conference.

The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers Southern Region Orange County

Forgemaster Billy Merritt (812)338-2876, Treasurer Steve King (812)797-0059, Secretary Shawn Gilley(812)-486-9113

[Editors Note: the following minutes are from the November hammer in.](#)

Good turn out for the meeting on Sat. over a dozen came to work, heckle and enjoy the great day. Few new faces showed up and we wish them back. Many projects done thru the day. Raised \$42 in Iron in the Hat. Jerry R. won the auction for the blower. We will not be having our meeting at Steve's shop in Dec. since it is right after X-mas will be going to Shawn Gilley's shop in Washington, IN. Informal just if you are out and about after the holiday. Please feel free to contact Shawn with any questions. Address is: 635 S. 300W. Washington, IN 47501. ph. 812-486-9113. Thanks again to all who came and see all back at Steve's on Jan 30. Happy Holidays.

Sutton-Terock Memorial Blacksmith Shop North Central Region Fulton County

Meetings of the Sutton-Terock Memorial Blacksmith Shop are held on the second Saturday of the month starting at 9 a.m. at the Fulton County Historical Society Museum. The museum is located four miles north of Rochester on US 31. For information, call Fred Oden, Forgemaster & Treasurer, at (574) 223-3508, or Dennis Todd Secretary/Reporter at (574) 542-4886.

December 12, 2009

Shop opened at 9am

had 10 people at the shop today

Fred Oden demonstrated on the forging of tongs

Paul Jeff Chasity and Rick all started on forging tongs with Fred Oden instructing

Rick Gordon also forged a heart hook with Fred Oden instructing

Dan and Keith forged fire rakes with Fred Oden instructing

Dan Davidson made a belt buckle Fred demonstrated brazing with the forge using his belt buckle

Tim Pearson Forged two wall hooks

Fred Oden signed Casity Musselman paper for her Senior class project at Casston High School great job Chasity

Dan Niedig Paid \$10.00 for his membership in Sutton-Terock Blacksmith Shop

We had \$78.00 in donations for the shop

Fred Oden bought a drill set for the shop \$32.00 at bought donuts and rolls for the shop \$7.50 we all thank Fred

Shop was closed at 2:30pm

Respectfully Submitted by

Dennis (Bear) Todd Secretary/Reporter

Whitewater Valley Blacksmiths

Meetings of the Whitewater Valley Blacksmiths are held on the second Saturday of the month starting at 4:00 p.m. They meet at Big Cedar Forge, the residence of Joyce Roell & Bobby Hoff, east of Brookville on SR 252. For more info call Keith Hicks at 765-647-0019.

Shop Safety Tips

Hazards of Iron Dust by John Zile

When we do something not knowing any better, it's a mistake. When we do it again, it's stupid. I was stupid again last week, so you listen up, and don't be stupid. heed my warning.

A few years ago I was using a die grinder to enlarge a hole in a cast iron forge to accept a new fire pot. I was inside my shop with all the doors shut grinding away, not feeling the affects of the fine partials of cast iron dust building up in my lungs. I finished up and started for the house and about didn't make it. I couldn't breath. I got worse by the next day because the iron partials were rusting in my lungs. When they rust the partials get larger, making it worse. First you think your going to die, then you get worse and hope you can die. I am not kidding about this either, it's that bad. Take my word for it. DON'T BE Stupid. Last week I was helping a man, in my shop, to build a rebar cage for a concrete base for a sign. Rebar is to hard to cut with a saw, and you can burn yourself up cutting it with a torch. We used a chop saw with an abrasive blade, with vacuumed on the blade, and an overhead air filter running, but with all the doors and windows shut. After about 4 cuts I could taste the iron and told him to stop. I got the torch and finished the job. The next day I had a sharp ,continual pain in my back below my shoulder blade on the right side. I went to the doctor and I have an infection in my right lung. I am having to take steroids, antibiotics and a pill to counter the steroids .I have reactions to steroids that almost killed me the last time I took them, hence the counter pill. If you have to use a chop saw, use it outside, preferably in a tornado, but always look for a better way. I thought I learned the hard way, but I didn't learn because I did it again. I WAS STUPID. Please heed my warning and don't be stupid. This is suppose to be fun. It is not fun when you are in a continual state of healing, and know that you have damage that will likely be permanent. Forge hard ,but forge smart. Don't be stupid like me. JOHN ZILE.

Acetylene Safety Tip from Ted Stout

Please pass this on to anyone you know who use oxy-acetylene. Also, add to this that we should never use an acetylene tank that has been transported on its side for at least two hours after it has been set up vertical. Never open it more than 1/2 turn and never set the pressure over 15 psi. All these rules can help save a live. Free acetylene is a white goey liquid that when exposed to air is highly explosive.

Ted Stout

Editors note: the photo at right is the remnant of a plumbers van that contained a leaking acetylene tank.



Michael Wollowski: Candidate for IBA Board of Directors

I am standing for election to the board of the IBA and I ask for your vote. The IBA has been good to me and I have been supporting it in several ways. I am the secretary of the Wabash Valley Blacksmith Club and the web-master of the IBA. I regularly write articles for the Forge Fire and donate items to the IBA conference auction.

If elected, I would use my communication skills to facilitate communication between the members and the board. I would use my organizational skills to continue to streamline operations. Furthermore, I would advocate that we find additional audiences with whom to share our craft.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call at 812-223-3000 or email me at: wollowski@rose-hulman.edu

T-SHIRTS ARE STILL NEEDED

Carol Stout is still in need of T-shirts with anything blacksmithing printed on the front or back. She will make a comfort from the shirts and raffle tickets will be sold at the Conference and the 30 year party in October. The drawing will be at the party.

T-shirts from blacksmithing organizations of other states or affiliates will be welcome. Talk to your friends in other areas and ask for T-shirt donations. In some cases the front and the back may be used. This is for a good cause and trust that you will come thru. She is willing to donate a lot of time, effort and expense to make this happen, so please help.

Carol Stout
8525 West 700 South
West Point, IN. 47992

FIELD TRIP COMING UP IN FEBRUARY

For those of you who have been to the Indiana State Fair and visited the Wheelwright shop in the Pioneer Village you probably saw an unassuming gentleman who really knows his business. I am referring to Harley Chandler a master carriage maker and wheelwright. Harley has made some pretty impressive and expensive carriages over the years. In his shops they do all the work including the wood, wheels, iron parts, painting and decorating. Each carriage requires blacksmith made parts. He is known nationally, if not internationally, for his work.

We have a rare opportunity to visit his shop near Petersburg, Kentucky on Saturday, February 13th. The actual address is 4766 Woolper Road, Petersburg, Kentucky 41080.

The plan is to arrive at his shop around 9:30 A.M. and have coffee and doughnuts until 10:00 at which time Harley will begin his tour or demonstrations. At noon we will break for lunch and return to his shop at about 12:45 for more demonstrations. You are on your own for lunch and there are several nearby restaurants. Some of you may chose to brown bag it for lunch. (We won't miss much that way.)

I realize this is the second Saturday and many of you have your Satellite meetings at this time. The Rocky Forge has chosen to make this visit as our meeting time.

So that I may have some idea of response for this field trip please call me on 765-491-2194 or send an email stout8525@tds.net regarding your intentions. I hope to see a lot of you and be careful on the road.

Ted Stout



Jim Claar, Toolmaker

Michael Wollowski

Give a blacksmith good tools and they will make nice things. Give a blacksmith a block of 4" 4140 steel and access to a CNC guided oxy-acetylene cutter and they will make nice tools. This can be rightfully said of Jim Claar, retired blacksmith from Chrysler, former sheet metal man, and successful prize-fighter. Jim's shop is located in New Lisbon, Ind. in the gymnasium of his former school. He happens to have access to tons of metal in various shapes, he knows people who do not mind testing the limits of their CNC cutter and above all, his mind never stops working on new ideas.

In this article, we present two of the many tools Jim developed: a rotating swage block and a post-vice anvil combination. Both are very useful tools in many ways and both seem to be the next step in their evolution.

Rotating Swage

Jim built the rotating swage because he was tired of having to turn his swage blocks over and over to locate an appropriate groove. An immediate benefit of a rotating swage is that it is easy and kind of fun to turn the wheel to find the right groove. Furthermore, depending on the shape of your swage and your back, it might just be easier to rotate a piece of steel.

This project started at a salvage yard, where Jim found a 5" thick steel disk that was about 21" in diameter. For some reason it already had a sizeable hole burned into it. Jim used his industrial size lathe to increase the hole to 8" in diameter as he happened to have a 8" shaft available. On this swage,



he cut the grooves with a torch and worked them with a drill press and lathe and finished by polishing them. Once this was done, Jim heat treated the swage and fabricated the mounting brackets and welded them on a stand. This particular swage does not have a break, yet in 15 years of forging, he never had a problem with it turning on him. He attributes this to the 400 pound weight of the swage as well as the fact that he hits straight down on it.



Jim made several kinds of rotating swages. We now present one that is an improvement over the first. Jim obtained some 4" 4140 steel to produce several anvils and another rotating swage. This swage is 19 1/2" in diameter and was cut with a CNC guided oxy-acetylene torch. A shop owner he knows did not mind experimenting with thick steel like this and was kind enough to do all the programming of the CNC machine per Jim's instructions. Among others, they cut all the grooves as well as the center hole that receives the mounting shaft.

Once the blank was back in Jim's shop, he again used his drill press and milling machine to clean up the blank. He polished the critical surfaces and drilled an oil hole. Jim did not heat treat this swage as he felt that 4140 is already excellent steel. Furthermore, some hardening will have taken place as a result of the torch cutting. As this swage is not as heavy as the first one he built, Jim added a break to it. The break is simply a wrench welded to a 1 1/4" inch bolt that is used to compress the mounting brackets to the swage. The bolt runs through the shaft into the opposite bracket.

Post Vise Anvil

Jim developed this tool when he was asked to make 20 hooks for a pot rack. Being a sheet metal man, he wanted to be able to form the hooks under closer scrutiny than allowed by the low height of an anvil. A post vise provides the right height but not enough surface to work the hooks. To solve this problem, Jim modified a post vise by cutting off the rear jaw and welding in its stead a stake anvil properly modified so that its top lines up with the top of the front jaw.





While the so modified vise is a good idea, Jim was not happy with the shape of the stake anvil, as it was not sufficiently wide and simply too long. After thinking about this, Jim built a second post-vice anvil. This time, he made an anvil on his 400# Chambersburg. The anvil is 3 ½" wide and 19" long and as you can see, has more mass where it counts. This is the post-vice that Jim uses in his shop.

He eventually took this idea a step further and built what could be

called a vise anvil. It is an anvil with a vise attached to its front. There are many contraptions that enable us to hold a piece of hot steel to the anvil so as to free up a hand. Surely, Jim's vise anvil provides the ultimate in holding power.

Jim does not develop written plans for the tools he makes. He said that his work is driven by the materials he has available. He pointed out that no two tools he made are alike. Certainly the people who run the CNC cutters develop what might be called plans. In general, Jim just seems to get out his torch, power up his industrial machinery and make what he planned in his head. Asked whether he minds if people build some of the tools shown in this article, Jim replied that it would make him proud.



Jim recently auctioned off most all of his shop equipment, including all of the tools shown in this article. He did this so he can outfit his shop with tools he has made. When prompted about his plans for the near future, he said that he wants to continue making tools but that he has this idea for another powerhammer. He has been thinking for a while about using truck suspension air bags. So stay tuned for the next evolution in power hammers.

Odds and Ends

Conner Prairie: Knife Making with Jim Rubley

Thurs.-Sun., February 4-7, 2010; 9:00am-5:00pm

Thurs.-Sun., February 18-21, 2010; 9:00am-5:00pm

\$435.00/person (\$425.00/member) Reservations required 3 weeks in advance.

Join master blacksmith Jim Rubley for an in-depth look at knife making. Rubley has researched, studied and perfected blacksmithing processes developed from the beginning of the Iron Age to the start of the Industrial Revolution of the 1840's. His hand-forged knives, fashioned first as useful tools, then as traditional tools, are in high demand by knife collectors throughout North America.

Ages 16 and older.

Yesteryear School of Blacksmithing (Amelia, Virginia 23002)

January 9 2010=> Level 2 Intro Class with Mike Tanner

February 6-7 2010 => Beginner Blacksmithing with David Tucciarone

March 5-7 2010 => Forging Colonial Period Patch Knives with Kim Thomas

March 27 2010=> FREE Intro Class with Mike Tanner

April 30-May 2 2010 => Forging 10th Century Viking Locks with Elmer Roush

May 22-23 2010 => Bear Heads and Wizard Heads with Alwin Wagener

July 24 2010 => FREE Intro Class with Mike Tanner

August 27-29 2010 => Repousse: Tool Making and Techniques with Mark and Mindy Gardner

September 11-12 2010=> Hooks and More with Mike Tanner

October 1-3 2010 => Colonial Hearth Equipment with Jerry Darnell

October 22-24 2010 => Rasp Tomahawks and More with Doug Merkel

November 20-21 2010=> Intro to Forge Welding with David Tucciarone

Web: <http://yesteryearschool.com>

Phone: 434-390-6203

Items for Sale

Ron Gill email: ftdradirwk@sbcglobal.net or call 317-374-8323

pexto 36" sheet metal brake	\$350.00	large post vise	\$125.00
150 lb anvil	\$300.00	older style slip rollers 36"	\$225.00
floor model drill press	\$100.00	#3 arbor press	\$250.00

ABANA Conference Ride and Room Sharing.

If you are interested in sharing a room or a ride to the ABANA conference in Memphis, please get in touch with me. Several of us are sharing rooms at the Hampton Inn Memphis-Walnut Grove/Baptist Hospital East as well as rides to Memphis. Even if you plan to make different overnight accommodations, we may still be able to organize some shared rides. My phone number is: 812-223-3000 and my email address is: wollowski@rose-hulman.edu



The **FORGE FIRE**

Newsletter of the
Indiana Blacksmithing Association,
Inc.

Bill Kendrick *Newsletter Editor*

1280 N CR 900 W
Seymour, IN 47274

First Class Mail

Address Correction Requested
If Undeliverable return to sender
With original address legible

JOHN ZILE

January 16

3380 W 650 N, MIDDLETOWN, IN 47356

LUNCH WILL BE AT THE IRON KETTLE IN SULFUR SPRINGS.

SULFUR SPRINGS IS 3 MILES WEST OF IN. 3 ON US 36 AND APPROX. 12 MILES EAST OF PENDLETON ON US 36. GO NORTH AT THE FLASHING LIGHT (300W), TRAVEL NORTH FOR 1 1/2 MILES, TURN LEFT (WEST) ONTO 650 NORTH. JOHN'S HOUSE IS THE FIRST DRIVE.

CALL JOHN AT (765) 533-4153 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

Kenny Dettmer's Shop

February 20

15721 S 250W Columbus, IN

From the North: take I 65 S to Ogilville / Walesboro (exit 64) turn. right. Go to the 1st crossroads (300 W). Turn left. Approx 1 mile to the "T". Turn left (600s). Go to 250W. Approx. 4 miles to a brick house on your left.

From the South: I 65N to Jonesville exit 55 turn. right, go to road 950 (in Jonesville). Turn left. Go to 250W turn. right. Kenny's house is approx 1/2 mile on your right .

We hope to see you there.