



Capital District Blacksmiths' Newsletter

March, 2004
Volume 3 Number 1

Upcoming Event - Mabee Farm Gathering

The Mabee Farm and Capital District Blacksmiths' Association are hosting a historical blacksmithing presentation Sunday April, 25th from 11am to 5pm. This event will see an encore Sunday opening of the smithy and other buildings on the property. A tour of the Mabee Farm house is \$3, but attendance at the blacksmithing demonstrations are free.

The Mabee Farm is generally regarded as the oldest original homestead in the entire Mohawk Valley. Complete with an inn, smithy, barn and slaves quarters this historic site brings to life the way a household was run, the farming methods, and rural life of the early Colonial era.

The Capital District Blacksmiths' Association was founded in 2001 with the desire to educate anyone interested in the art of blacksmithing. Prior to the industrial revolution the village blacksmith was the "Home Depot" of the era; all the ironwork needs of a community were filled by the village smithy.

In addition to historical demonstrators working at the Mabee Farm smithy, the "Clans of the Dragon" Celtic re-enactment group will have a 5th Century AD Irish forge set up and the "Wolves of Wodan"

"Mabee" continued on page 3

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CDBA's Eighth Gathering - Steel Roses

On January 18th, over 15 blacksmiths showed up in the small village smithy of Sarah Ritchie and Daniel Crowther. For nearly 4 hours blacksmiths of all levels and ages gathered, hammered out roses, gave suggestions, helped each other out, and kibitzed about blacksmithing in general.

Sarah started off the demonstration by showing a couple of completed samples of work and how the rose pattern could be used in a variety mediums and applications.



Sarah textures the rose petals.



Sarah shows a "memorial cross" she made in brass using the same rose pattern as the steel roses

She then described the general pattern that would be used, and how it could be cut from various materials including the day's choice, 18 gauge mild plate.

Texturing the rose was next. This was accomplished with a 2# cross pein with a very rounded face. After that technique had been fully explained, Dan started showing how to forge the rose stem, and left Sarah to finish texturing the other 4 rose petal blanks.

The stem was made from a 8" long piece of 3/8" round stock. First, a 1/4" round tenon was drawn out and shouldered with a monkey tool. Long time rose maker, John Earl, mentioned that he leaves his tenons square so the petal blank bites into the corners of the tenon, locking the petals more securely in place. Dan also, described how to make a monkey tool, and it's purpose. (See **Tools & Tips** page 2). Then he textured the rose stem for a more natural look over the horn of the anvil.

Once the stem was complete Sarah once again headed the demonstration by

giving tips for over all petal shape, alignment and showed assembly. The assembly involved stacking the petals into a desired configuration and punching the stack, cold, with a punch. The punch dimple was then drilled a 1/64th to a 1/32nd of an inch smaller than the tenon diameter and the tenon was pined into a head, locking the petals in place. Lastly, Sarah "tweaked" the rose into life like form with scrolling pliers and a little extra heat from a propane torch.

Also, part of the gathering was a blacksmithing book display assembled from members' personal collections. Since most blacksmithing books are purchased mail ordered, the goal was to allow CDBA members a chance to preview books that they may have been eyeing, before they order something sight-unseen. It is hoped that this will be a common offering at CDBA meetings where practical. (More photos of this gathering on Page 5).



Caroline, age 6, textures rose petals.

Tools & Tips



Monkey Tools - These tools are some of the simplest in the blacksmith's shop, and they can save a lot of time. Their job is quite simple: make a 90 degree shoulder from the round tenon to the main stock.

The first step is to find some suitable stock. These are struck tools that form hot metal at the other end. But, they usually have enough mass of their own that they won't readily over heat except with extended use. So, picking a steel that won't work harden at the hammer end is about the only real restriction. Mine are all made from mild A36 structural steel and have held up well under the light to moderate use they've seen in the past 10 years.

I like to use 1" square stock for tenon sizes 3/16" to 3/8" (the most common). So, chop off a chunk of 1" square about 6"-8". Prick punch the center, which can easily be found by drawing diagonals from corner to corner and punching where they intersect. Then simply drill out the hole to the desired size. Keep in mind that large holes may need to be piloted out with a smaller diameter first, and you should keep applying oil or some other "tool coolant" to the bit. That's pretty much it. Rough shoulder the tenon on the anvil then pop the monkey tool on and give it a couple of whacks.

"Monkey" continued on page 5



- ◆ Computer controlled plasma cutting
- ◆ Hand forging
- ◆ Light fabrication
- ◆ Welding
- ◆ Railing and gate repair
- ◆ Custom design services

Andrew VanSchoick
Serving VT, NY & MA
802-375-9031 Voice
518-466-0040 Voice
andrewv@evolutionironworks.com

Letter from the President

Greetings to all. As always I hope this finds all well and happy and forging along despite the cold. I am sorry to have to apologise again in this issue, but due to a miscommunication the hard copies of the news letter from November is being mailed with the February issue. I am sorry this has happened and I will work to insure it does not happen again.

As you read this issue you will see the offices have been very busy getting events planned for this year. April 25th sees us at the Mabee farm, June 26th & 27th is Age of Iron and the complete calendar is on page 3.

I really do not have much to add this issue except to once again invite all to attend the Core Group planning meetings on the 1st Monday of the even months at 7pm @ Professor Java's in Colonie. I would also like to thank everyone who attended the last gathering and participated in making a rose. You all did fantastic and I hope you bring your projects to future events to brag. You are a great group of smiths. Thank you for letting me be a part of what you can do.

Age of Iron

The 2004 Age of Iron will be held at the Hancock Shaker Village June 26 & 27. This annual event is once again fully under the purview of the Berkshire Blacksmiths.

In cooperation with Berkshire Blacksmiths, CDBA will once again be hosting a "Green Coal" area that is open to the public. This year the Green Coal area will be taking "center stage" in the large field between the "Brethren's Shop" and "Sister's Shop".

With such a prominent location being afforded to us we are looking for CDBA volunteers to help us ensure that this area is consistently staffed. As the date for Age of Iron approaches we will be circulating a sign up sheet for the Green Coal area and for any other duties that Berkshire Blacksmiths may need assistance with. Another benefit of the Green Coal sign up is that signing up for a specific time allows you plenty of "free time" to take in the other demonstrators without having to find yourself a replacement or someone to watch your gear.

Of course CDBA members are welcome to attend Age of Iron as a demonstrator outside of the Green Coal area or as spectators. If you wish to demo, all that we ask is that you contact CDBA President Sarah Ritchie (contact info on page 6) as she is the CDBA liaison for AoI.

ABANA Conference

The 2004 ABANA Conference will be held in Richmond, Kentucky on July 7-11, 2004.

From the ABANA Conference

Website: The 2004 ABANA "Design and Build" Conference plans are coming along nicely, thanks to our hard-working volunteers and board committee chairpersons! Conference Chairperson Dave Koenig is continuously working hard to produce an informative and exciting conference filled with plenty of activities for the whole family!

The conference is being held on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), in Richmond, Kentucky. The Opening Ceremony, featuring our keynote speaker Melvin Rose of Melvin Rose Industries, will launch the five day event on Wednesday evening, July 7, 2004. Albert Paley will present a slide lecture at 8 p.m. that same evening in the brand-new 400 seat Student Center Auditorium. He will also present a second lecture Thursday evening, July 8, at 6:30 p.m. Also on that Thursday evening will be the formal opening of the Members' Galleries which will begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at 10 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday will be jam-packed with presentations by our demonstrators, shows in our members' galleries, vendor and tailgating sales, auctions, Iron-in-the-Hat, and a general membership meeting. There will also be craft classes including metalwork, jewelry, applique, and stained glass, self defense and martial arts classes, computer-aided design classes, and charter tours of the Bluegrass Region. Sunday morning after breakfast will be open for everyone to leisurely round up the troops and make their way back home.

The EKU conference site offers options for "cold-tent camping" or RV parking, if you prefer it to the campus' dormitory-style lodging, and the area provides nearby campgrounds with RV dump stations. And yes, your pets are welcome as per our simple guidelines! Please also see our list of hotel accommodations in Richmond and note that any persons with special needs in terms of ADA compliant accommodations can contact Michele Devine for assistance. The EKU food service schedule provides breakfast from 7:00-9:00a.m., lunch from 11:00-1:30p.m., and dinner from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

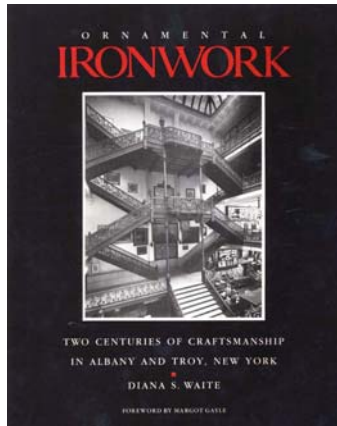
Kentucky is filled with a great variety of local attractions including Civil War sites, the hugely popular Shaker Village of

"Conference" continued on page 3

Book Review

Ornamental Ironwork:

Two Centuries of Craftsmanship in Albany and Troy, New York
by Diana S. Waite



Written by Diana Waite, a local architect, "Ornamental Ironwork" is a very thorough examination of the wealth of architectural ironwork in the Capital District. She also gives the businesses and owners who were responsible for the local ironwork equally thorough coverage.

The book is well documented and even contains a driving map if one wishes to see the extant ironwork mentioned in the book (unfortunately, many examples are no longer in existence). I was impressed with her clear and accurate summation of blacksmithing processes and terms. This is an area where many authors who are not from the blacksmithing community slip up.

If there is a down side to this book, it is owed only to Ms. Waite's heavy focus on the architect's role in the restoration of wrought ironwork. While there is a whole chapter dedicated to wrought ironwork restoration, there is less information about how to choose the appropriate blacksmith for such a restoration than how to choose the appropriate architect.

CDBA Events Calendar

Upcoming Events

April 25th - Mabee Farm

Demonstration, Open to the Public, 1080 Main Street, Route 5S Rotterdam Junction, NY, 518-887-5073

June 25&26th - Age of Iron,

Demonstration, Open to the Public, Jct. Routes 20 & 41, Pittsfield, MA

Pending Events

Late July - Public Demonstration, Merli Mfg, Duanesburg, NY

Late September - Anniversary CDBA Meeting & Demo, Burden Iron Works, Troy, NY

Fall 2004 - CDBA Family Picnic

Classes

Hancock Shaker Village-

Blacksmithing Workshops are offered year-round. For complete descriptions or to register, contact Brian Emery at (413)354-9656.

Instructors: William Senseney, Brian Emery, Bob Rodriguez

March 6 - 7, Blacksmithing I
March 13 - 14, Open Forge Weekend
March 20 - 21, Young People's Blacksmithing

April 3 - 4, Blacksmithing II
April 10 - 11, Open Forge Weekend
April 17 - 18, Fanciful Faces and Whimsical Figures

May 1 - 2, Colonial Ironwork
May 8 - 9, Open Forge Weekend
May 15 - 16, Rose and Floral Design Workshop

Oak & Acorn Ancient Metalcrafts

Blacksmithing classes are offered in a tutored format, allowing the student to progress over a variety of projects set to their own pace and schedule. Similar classes in silver wire jewelry, and chain mail are also available. Rate: \$30/hr



Water Street Books

26 Water St

Williamstown, MA 01267-2846

Phone: (413)458-8072

Fax: (413)-458-0249

Ask for: Richard Simpson

Richard.D.Simpson@williams.edu

Your Blacksmith Reference Source

"Mabee" from Cover

Viking re-enactors will be working an 11th Century AD Norse forge.

The Farm is located at 1080 Main Street, Route 5S, Rotterdam Junction, NY 2.8 miles from NYS Thruway Exit 26 OR Exit 1A of I-890.

"Conference" from page 2

Pleasant Hill; a National Historic Landmark, local bluegrass music jamborees, museums, national parks, antiquing, tours of some of the world's most renowned bourbon distilleries, and much more! Dave Koenig has arranged fun charter tours for the whole family. You may choose to learn about Thoroughbred race horses at the Kentucky Horse Park, or to see over 40 artisans at work in their studios at the Berea Country Arts Community, or you may wish to spend the afternoon learning about Shaker life and browse its thirty restored 19th century buildings at Shaker Village.

Maegan Crowley and Chris

Winterstein are responsible for assembling the impressive array of national and international demonstrators. They will show you hot and cold forging, ferrous-and nonferrous metalwork, knifemaking techniques, repoussé, and highlight the processes that are involved in the realization of actual product from the design phase. Our demonstration schedule will begin each day at 8:30a.m. and go until 11:30 a.m. when we break for lunch. Demonstrations then continue from 2:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. each evening.

We are also happy to have Tim Ryan coordinating a team to run the on-going silent auction as well as the ever-popular live ABANA auction, both fueled by members' donations. Dave Mudge is manning the effort to activate a conference web-cam to provide the ABANA Conference experience to viewers around the world. Elizabeth Brim will serve as the

"Conference" continued on page 5

Blacksmithing Book Discount

At the January CDBA Gathering it was announced that as often as was practical members would be encouraged to show off their blacksmithing libraries. It is hoped that by previewing the various and sundry reference materials accumulated no CDBA member would ever have to buy a blacksmithing book sight unseen.

In this same spirit of cooperation and assistance, fellow CDBA member Richard Simpson has made a most generous offer. As manager of Water Street Books in Williamstown, MA, Richard is willing to give any CDBA a 20% discount on blacksmithing books, **and** ship them for free to your residence!

Many thanks, Richard!

Please see the Water Street Books advertisement on this page for contact info.

iForge Demo

Originally appeared on www.anvilfire.com December 17, 2000. Reprinted with the permission of [anvilfire.com](http://www.anvilfire.com).

Because [anvilfire.com](http://www.anvilfire.com) demos are done in a "chat" format this version has been modified to fit the format of a newsletter.



Traditional Ice Creepers

by Glenn Conner

In the past, ice creepers were held to the instep by a leather strap. These were made and worn in the 1760-1777 era and Revolutionary War time. They were used because of the rough country in America, and frozen waterways were often used as a means of travel.

Start with a piece of metal (mild steel) 1-1/2" x 6" x 3/8" or 1/4" thick. This fits my 3" wide instep. The formula I used for measuring was width of the shoe instep, plus 3". Slight adjustment may be needed to fit your shoe.

Mark 2 lines, one 3/8" parallel to the length and the other 1-1/4" from the end. Mark this intersection point with a center punch. (Figures 1&2)

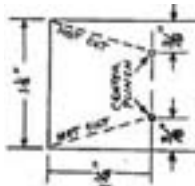


Figure 1



Figure 2

This will be the end point of the hot cut line from the intersection to the corner of the metal.

Hot cut this line on each side and spread the kerf a little. (Figures 3 & 4)



Figure 3



Figure 4

Bend the points down and straighten on the side of the anvil. (Figures 5 & 6)



Figure 5



Figure 6

Punch a hole that will fit the size of the leather strap used. (Figure 7) I used 1/2" for a leather lace. Repeat the process on the other end of the metal.

It is most important to file ALL the metal edges of the loop section round and smooth. If not smooth, it WILL cut the leather holding strap. When fitting the creeper to the shoe, check to be sure the loop section does NOT rub against the shoe. (Figure 8)



Figure 7



Figure 8

For the non-traditionalists, a hack saw or plasma cutter will work instead of the hot cutter. A drill will work instead of the punch.

The bending is the same. Feet go down and the loops goes up. For the feet, sometimes it helps to put the creeper on end and use the hammer to get good 90 degree bends at the end of the cuts. (Figures 9 & 10)



Figure 9



Figure 10

This will give a spike that is about 1" long. It will wear some with use, and can easily be sharpened in a forge or with a file. My instep is 1/2" to 3/4" deep so that leaves about a 1/2" of spike to grip into the ice or snow. The spike length can be adjusted to your weather, a bit shorter for ice, a bit longer for snow. (Figure 11)

The leather strap ran from the front, through the inside loop, around the back, through the outside loop and tied in the front. That way it holds the creeper to the foot better. (Figure 12)

The entire project takes 45 minutes, the first time. If it prevents one fall, it is time well spent.

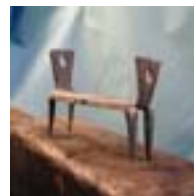


Figure 11



Figure 12

“Conference” from page 3

gallery/exhibition manager and is busy building a team to coordinate and assemble the Members' and Walk-In Galleries for members' work. Recently Pat McCarty has taken on the title of Conference Demo Site Manager. Mark Gardner and Keane Paradiso will be managing the tailgating area, and Erik Lander will be coordinating the electrical systems for the demo sites. Ralph Sproul is coordinating the work and personnel for the fabrication tent, forklift drivers, riggers and spotters. He will head the team in setting up the demo area and also make sure that things are running smoothly. Michele Devine, our new Conference Coordinator / Registrar will work hard to answer any questions you may have. Please review our registration form for conference fees and details regarding meals and lodging.

Keep checking the ABANA website for new conference developments. Things are going to start moving faster in the coming months. This will be the first place to learn the new event details and how to get involved as a volunteer, vendor and/or tailgater. See you in Richmond!

Leaf Request

If you like to make leaves, here's a gentleman who'd love to have a sample.

“I would like to ask for people to “donate” (operative technical term), a leaf of your choice and making for a vine that I plan to put on display in the college of welding knowledge. My hope is to educate people that visit Blue Ridge Community College in the fact that there are a lot of “blacksmiths” around the world and that blacksmithing is alive and active.

Guidelines for this leaf collection:

1-You must be able to send it to me. I can send a letter of donation on the college letterhead if you request one. You'll need to tell how much the leaf can be sold for at market.

2-Your name and address (city/state/country) should be stamped on it or at least attached somehow.

3-The leaf should be any size, but no bigger than your hand.

4-Send something that you have made. All you newbies, fabricators, ‘true pathers’. I'm going to need about 100 leaves. As the leaves arrive I'll attach them to the vine. When the leaves stop arriving and the vine is completed I'll post a picture. If I only get a couple I'll sing your praises on this forum.

5-Leaves should be life like, or humorous, or beginner, or plasma cut, torch

cut, chisel cut, forged; any way you see fit to make a leaf. It must be fully completed.

6-Leaves will not be used if considered unfit for public display by the college.

7-Each leaf should have a stem that can be attached to the vine. The stem can be as short as 1/2" or as long as ?

I need leaves. Send one or a whole cluster. I would really like to put blacksmithing in front of people. I want them to know it ain't dead.”

Send your creations to:

Steve Rutterbush
Blue Ridge Community College
College Drive
Flat Rock, North Carolina 28731
USA

ABANA Affiliate Status

As of January 24th, 2004 the Capital District Blacksmiths' Association was accepted as an official “Affiliate” of the Artist Blacksmith's Association of North America.

As an ABANA affiliate shares event and newsletter information with ABANA. In return CDBA members are qualified for: liability insurance at \$3 per member, guest speaker/demonstrator cost reimbursement grants, blacksmithing scholarships, and reprint rights to articles from the “Anvil's Ring” and “Hammer's Blow”.

We, of course, encourage our members to join ABANA too, but even though we are an Affiliate, there is no requirement that they do so.

“Monkey” from page 2

A couple optional “niceties”, include stamping the diameter and hole depth onto the side of the tool. Also, some people drill a smaller hole in from the side so they can pry the monkey tool free should the tenon get stuck inside.

Event Photos



Veteran rose maker, John Earl gives Hope Konecny some tips and tricks about stem texturing.



Dale works on texturing a rose stem



Dale Wood with his completed rose.



Rhys and his father, Richard Simpson, with the rose they completed together at the gathering.

Local Resources

Coal

Garnsey Coal & Trucking
952 Route 4 South
Schuylerville, NY 12871
518-695-3346.

Greene County Horseshoe Supply
Route 32 P.O. Box 176
Greenville, NY 12083
1-866-966-5549
gchs@mail.albany.net

Morrell Metalsmiths
C. Leigh Morrell
207 Greenfield Rd
Colrain, MA 01340
1-800-371-1146
<http://www.morrellmetalsmiths.com>

Safety Products

North River Supply
John Earl
412 Cedar Lane
Greenville, NY 12083
jwkearl@cs.com

Steel

Albany Steel
566 Broadway
Menands, NY 12204
518-436-4851

Kivort Steel
380 Hudson River Rd.
Waterford, NY 12188
518-590-7233
<http://www.kivortsteel.com>

Metal Supermarket
88 Railroad Ave
Albany, NY 12205
518-435-0024
<http://www.lebanonvalley.com/03Press/metal%20supermarket.htm>

Welding & Abrasives

Northeast Gas Technologies
84 Karner Rd
Albany, NY 12205
1-800-248-1215
<http://www.newelders.com/>

Local Shaklee Distributer

Rooney Health Associates
Clifton Park, NY 12065
518-371-6453
(Source of "Basic-I" used in "Super Quench")

Other Publications

ANVIL Magazine

Rob Edwards
P.O. Box 1810
Georgetown CA 95634
<http://www.anvilmag.com>

Anvil's Ring & Hammer's Blow

ABANA CENTRAL OFFICE
PO Box 816
Farmington, GA 30638-0816
<http://www.abana.org>

Blacksmith's Gazette

P. O. Box 2168
Snohomish, WA 98291-2168
<http://www.fholder.com/blacksmithing/default.htm>

Blacksmith's Journal

PO Box 1699
Washington, MO 63090 USA
<http://www.blacksmithsjournal.com>

Irony

Stephen McGehee
PO Box 925
Corydon IN 47112
irony@epowerc.net

The Traditional Metalsmith

George Dixon
1229 Bee Tree Lake Road
Swannanoa NC 28778
<http://www.traditionalmetalsmith.com>

Scrap Bin

Capital District Blacksmiths Homepage

<http://www.cdblacksmiths.org>

Blacksmithing Clipart

<http://www.oakandacorn.com/clipart.html>

Blacksmithing Links

<http://www.anvilfire.com/links>



Like Minds - Other Organizations of Interest

**ABANA - Artist-Blacksmith's
Association of North America**
ABANA CENTRAL OFFICE
PO Box 816
Farmington, GA 30638-0816
<http://www.abana.org>

New York State Designer- Blacksmiths

Pres: Bill Banker
P.O. Box 174
Almond, NY 14804-0174
607-276-6956
<http://www.nysdb.abana-chapter.com/>

Northeast Blacksmiths Association

Pres: Jonathan Nedbor
496 Tow Path
High Falls, NY 12440
845-687-7130
jonned@earthlink.net

Berkshire Blacksmiths Association

William Senseney
30 Frenier Dr.
Williamstown, MA 01267
413-458-5641
bmre@mediaone.net

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