ABANA MEMBER JUD NELSON OF SUGAR VALLEY, GA, LAYING A MATTOCK BLADE.

(Photograph by Tom Jackson)
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear ABANA Members:

Four months, almost to the day since our last conference, have passed and even at this early date, we are looking towards the next conference. There are certain aspects of our conference that we should alter; others should be broadened and still others should be dropped completely from the conference. If there are any suggestions or ideas, please pass them on to us so that we can utilize this information in our planning stages.

There are other goals which we hope to achieve during the next year and I would like to pass this list on to you. Again, if there are any suggestions or comments on this list, please pass them on to me.

1. Writing and formulating a Constitution and Bylaws. These will be written and presented to the membership.

2. Broadening of The Anvil's Ring (which you must agree is taking place at this time).

3. A good, sound book acquisition program. (This is also in its planning stages and work is progressing in this area.)

4. Apprenticeship programs should be encouraged and standards for an apprenticeship should be defined.

5. Designation of qualified demonstrators or a working definition as to what a "qualified demonstrator" should be. A roster should be made of these men.

6. A listing or roster of tool suppliers.

This list is only partial, but it will give you an idea of some of the things your officers are thinking of.

We hope to be able to release the dates and sites of the 1976 conference by the next issue of The Anvil's Ring. I wish to congratulate the editors of The Anvil's Ring on their new format. They certainly need your support by constructive criticism and by sending information and articles to them. These articles which have bits of information may not get into the next issue, but could become a needed backlog to be used later.

I hope this has been a joyful summer for all of you. I also hope the winter will not be too harsh and your overboards will be full.

Yours truly,

Calvin T. Smith, M.D.

INTEREST IN RICHARDSON BOOKS QUERIED

In 1974 ABANA made 100 sets of the M. T. Richardson book, PRACTICAL BLACKSMITHING (4 volumes) available to members. There has been evidence since that demand for these volumes far exceeded supply.

THE ANVIL'S RING has been asked to suggest that other members who wish copies of this book write to THE ANVIL'S RING. No books are available at present; we merely want to determine if demand is heavy enough for another printing.
LETTERS

EDITOR:

I am gathering material for a new book to be titled:

CONTEMPORARY IRON & METAL WORK - ART AND DECORATION
Using Wrought, Forging and Blacksmithing Techniques

I am eager to show the many statements being made by today’s ironworkers and blacksmiths including traditional designs and contemporary twists. The objects may be useful or completely sculptural; they may be as small as jewelry and as large as architectural ironwork.

I will require good, sharp black-and-white glossy photos and some color transparencies. If you have only color slides, send them and we can work from there. Small items may be shipped to me for photography. All photos used will appear with the artist’s name and all necessary credits. Submitting photos or art work carries your permission to use them in this book.

Please mark all photos with the applicable information:

1. Your name.
2. The size of the piece.
3. The materials used including size of stock or if made from scrap.
4. Methods and/or techniques, e.g., cold bending, heat forging and type of heat source.
5. Any design or technical problems you had to overcome and your solution.

In-process photos, preliminary drawings, design approaches, and philosophy will be welcomed. I would also like to include a complete supply source in the appendix, so I would appreciate any suppliers you would like to share ...

for tools, forges, coal, etc.

If you are aware of excitingly designed historical examples in your area or your collections that would be of interest, tell me about them or send a photo or drawing.

If you know of anyone else whose work should be considered for this book, please send me their names and addresses or have them contact me. Thanks, in advance, for your cooperation.

Dona Z. Meilach
3991 Crown Point Drive
San Diego, CA 92109
(714) 270-5784

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

ABANA member Anders P. Anderson of Pittsburgh, PA, has sent in the following sketch of a foot operated power hammer.

(Ed. note: This is similar to the same type hammer made of wood, with wooden springs, which is found in the blacksmith shop at Sturbridge Village, MA.)

Page Three (continued next page)
LETTERS (CONTINUED...)

Calvin T. Smith, M.D.
President, ABANA

Dear Cal,

I am writing to you as Chairman of ABANA, to say what a great honour and pleasure it has been to be invited to your annual Conference this year. While I am no substitute for Fritz Ulrich, I hope that my contributions were interesting and useful to your members. For my part I enjoyed myself tremendously, made many new friends, and was impressed and stimulated by the exhibition and photographs of the very diverse and original work being produced by the members of ABANA.

I intend to keep in touch with ABANA members by occasional contributions to The Anvil's Ring, but if any member would like to write to me direct I will do my best to be a good correspondent, and any member is naturally most welcome to visit our workshops when in England - we are close to London.

Once again, many thanks to all - and keep those anvils ringing!

Yours sincerely,

Dick Quinnell
RICHARD QUINNELL LTD
Rowhurst Forge, Oxshott Road,
Leatherhead, Surrey, ENGLAND

Mr. Calvin T. Smith, M.D.
President, ABANA

Dear Mr. Smith:

Our primary business is Contract Builders Hardware. In the past several years, we have increased the number of custom residential homes done by our staff. We feel products made by your members in ABANA could give our customers a wider selection in Early American Hardware. Firms which make the following products would be of interest to us:

- H, HL, and Strap Hinges
- Locks and Latches
- Shutter Hinges and Dogs
- Door Knockers
- Cabinet Pulls and Hinges

Please have the firms send us descriptive literature and prices or send us the locations and we will contact them.

For credit reference, we are listed in Dun & Bradstreet.

We shall appreciate any information which can be supplied.

J. P. Murray II, A.H.C.
HARDWARE DISTRIBUTORS
P. O. Box 20132
Greensboro, NC 27420
(919) 299-7341

Gentlemen:

Our firm is involved in preservation through restoration of historic buildings, and as such, has need of reproduction hardware items from time to time. I would like to obtain a catalogue of hardware available through your firm, or if such is not available, a brief description of types available with appropriate date periods and prices.

Thank you.

PRESERVATION/URBAN DESIGN/INCORPORATED
410 South Main Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
(313) 994-0313
MORE TRICKS . . .

I came across a trick the other day that might be worthy of the ANVIL'S RING. It is to be found on Pages 151 and 152 (figures 117 and 118) of Volume II, Practical Blacksmithing by M. T. Richardson and shows "A Stand for a Swage Block".

It is a good rig, and since some 100 members of ABANA have copies of the above, it seems reasonable to make reference to it.

Another little trick I am sure you know about: When hot punching a hole or slit, after starting the cut, a little coal dust sprinkled as the opening is drifted larger will make the job easier by lubricating the surface of the work and that of the tool by the gas developed by the ignition of the dust.

Another, perhaps not worthy of mentioning: Make sure to keep your hot chisel or hot punch cool, by wetting during use so that the heat of the work will not draw the temper from the tool.

Mack Beal
Jackson, NH

The Samuel Yellin Square Knot effect, published in the last "ANVIL'S RING", proved to be interesting as a puzzle - to figure out how it was done. In addition to this it was successful in application as the shaft of a candlestick. I used four rods 1/2" by 20" and wound up with a finished piece about 16" long.

The shaft was made as follows:

1)

Bend the rod to a "U" shape with the parallel sides about 1" apart.

2) TOP

Using a 1" rod or pipe in the bend of the "U" squeeze the sides of the "U" together (while hot) around the pipe using a vise.

3) SIDE

Bend the loop to the desired angle. Note: the sharper the angle and the smaller the hole in the loop - the tighter the finished knot will be.

4)

Assemble the knots as illustrated and forge them to the desired tightness and width.

5) SIDE

Straighten each of the two completed sections as it will make the trueing up of the finished product much easier.

6) Place the knots together and tack weld the rods together at the ends. Note: An alternative to welding is to clamp or wire the knots together for the next operation and eliminate the weld. Another approach is of course forge welding. The weld made no difference in my work as the piece was collared at the end.

7) Heat the straight sections and twist tightly by putting the knots in the vise and twisting with pipe wrenches. Note: It is desirable to protect the work by using copper in the jaws of the pipe wrenches.

In addition to railing posts this might be good for table legs or pedestals, finetool stands, or plant stands.

Larry Miller
Fletcher, NC

(continued next page)
MORE TRICKS ...

1) Manufactured hot chisels, as they come from the factory, are fine enough for cutting stock in two, but if you want to do any intricate splitting, they just don't make the grade as they have a tendency to leave tear marks near the corner of the split:

I found it advantageous to draw the hot chisel out thinner (to a taper similar to that of a double bit ax); furthermore, before retempering, I rounded off the square edges so in cross-section it looks something like this:

with such a tool, you can make a nice clean cut.

2) If you apply pork fat, lard, paraffin, etc., to the edge of any tools to cut steel cold such as cold chisels, engraving tools and the like, the tool will cut with unexpected ease and will keep its edge longer.

3) Smear pork fat or lard on the top of a drill bit before you start to drill a hole. As the bit begins to get hot, the fat will melt and run down the bit to lubricate the job saving the expense and energy of reaching for the cutting oil.

Dimitri Gerakaris
Enfield, NH

Here is a reproduction of some formulae from a turn-of-the-century book entitled MACHINERY'S SHOP RECEIPTS. More of these receipts will be presented in future issues. This material appears with the compliments of associate editor Dimitri Gerakaris.

(continued next column)

MISCELLANEOUS RECEIPTS

Iron or Steel?
To find out whether a piece is steel or iron, touch it with nitric acid, using a stick of wood, and then wash it with water. If iron, a light or azure stain will appear; if steel, the stain will be black.

J. M. Meneh

HEAT-TREATMENT OF STEEL

Hardening Solution—2
To make an excellent hardening solution, mix pure rain water and salt strong enough to float a raw potato, and to twenty gallons of the brine add three pints of oil of vitriol. Tool steel may be hardened at a surprisingly low heat in this solution, a very great advantage, of course, when hardening difficult shapes. The solution, however, has one slight disadvantage in that it causes the steel to rust quickly unless the steel is thoroughly scrubbed in strong hot soda water immediately after hardening. Tools hardened in this solution should come out of the bath a beautiful silver-gray color, and if there are any black spots they are likely to be soft.

I. W. Antano.

An example of 18th century type engraving on a flintlock, by ABANA member Gary Brumfield.

(Photo by Tom Jackson)
ADDITIONAL REPORT ON CONFERENCE PROGRAM: GARY BRUMFIELD ON TEMPERING & CHISELS

One of the most interesting sessions on the program of the 1975 ABANA Conference at Greenville, SC was given by ABANA member Gary Brumfield, Gunsmith at Colonial Williamsburg. Mr. Brumfield’s demonstrations concerned tempering gun springs by the 18th century method and making chisels for engraving iron and steel.

18th Century terminology for tempering was different from that of today. 200 Years ago "tempering" referred to modern hardening. "Drawing" referred to what modern smiths call tempering.

First, the forged and polished spring was dropped into a pot containing about two inches of molten lead. This was then put on the forge until both lead and spring were cherry red, at which time the spring was removed with a hooked wire and quenched in oil to temper. (The molten lead insures that the spring is heated evenly). After quenching the spring was cleaned of lead particles and put into a quart pot containing about two inches of cool linseed oil. (Whole oil or a motor oil may also be used. This pot was then put on the forge until the oil flashed, or burst into flames. The pot was then removed and the mouth of the pot covered with a board to smother the flames. When cool the spring was removed, the burning oil having "drawn" the "temper" to proper resiliency for a gun spring.

In demonstrating the shaping and grinding of an engraving chisel, to be used with a hammer, Mr. Brumfield forged the tip of a steel rod roughly to a triangular section about 1/4 inch on each leg. This portion was then ground (or filed), with the tip filed from one corner back 45°. Of utmost importance, Mr. Brumfield emphasized, was the grinding of the chisel in a very slight, almost imperceptible curve at the cutting point.

The chisel was tempered and drawn after the first filing. Grinding the curve at the cutting point was done after drawing.

(Advertisement)

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Located on Main Street of town. Thirty miles west of Indianapolis. $100.00 per month with equipment, or $75.00 per month without equipment.

All inquiries to be sent to:

Hoosier Horshoeing School
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Rosedale, Indiana 47874

Craig "Mac" Macdonald
Resident Blacksmith

(Advertisement)

HOME RESTORATION & REMODELING SHOW

An announcement has been received regarding the Home Restoration & Remodeling Show which will be held in San Francisco November 7-9. Exhibits will include antiques and reproductions.

Booths in this show can be rented from $375.00 to $700.00. For further information write Peter C. Castas, Show Director, 33 Bartlett Street, San Francisco, California 94110.
THE ANVIL'S RING, SEPTEMBER, 1975

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An unusual andiron. Question: Which ABANA member made this piece?  
(Photograph by Tom Jackson)

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A view of part of the blacksmithing exhibit at the  
Greenville Art Museum during the 1975 ABANA Conference.  
(Photograph by Tom Jackson)
SOME DRIFTING THOUGHTS

In The ANVIL'S RING which preceded the last annual conference at Greenville, this column devoted itself to the question of training facilities for aspiring artist-blacksmiths. It suggested that training facilities was possibly one of the most important factors conceivable in continuing the rebirth of iron working as a living art, and an art which should be preserved for the future.

The need for training is still here. The ANVIL'S RING office receives several letters a month requesting information on training facilities, and there is little information that can be offered. The answer always cites one blacksmith school in the Southwest (which is usually full), one or two craft schools in the Eastern and Middle Atlantic states which offer short courses during short periods of the year, and one or two practicing smiths who can afford to take on a limited number of apprentices. There is no more to suggest at present.

A partial solution, however, may be developing in Atlanta. There is now in that city an organization of 40 members called the Tullie Smith House Blacksmiths Guild, which meets monthly at a restored ante-bellum farm complex on the grounds of the Atlanta Historical Society. This group has a constitution and by-laws which provide for four classes of membership: Member (those who like to watch and talk) and degrees for apprentice, journeyman and master smiths (for local recognition). The more experienced smiths in the membership give basic and advanced instruction at monthly meetings and use the Tullie Smith Shop on other weekends for special instruction. A full curriculum cannot be offered under such circumstances, but what is offered is much better than no instruction at all.

Perhaps groups similar to the Tullie Smith Guild might be formed in other parts of the country to help fill the vacuum created by lack of formal training programs.

BOOK REVIEW


Alex Bealer's newest book is in essence, a guided tour through the crafts. For those interested in finding out what a particular craft involves, with an eye toward later making a business of it, this book is going to be a happy find. Rarely does one see under one cover such a variety of the crafts; it offers a savings in both time and money by giving the reader a sampling of everything from macrame to glass. Written in Alex's always very readable style, the book is in short, concise sections and combines facts and information with advice from a man who is himself a craftsman and knows how to talk to craftsmen in other fields.

S. David Wall
Atlanta, GA

PHOTOGRAPHS NEEDED

This issue of THE ANVIL'S RING is a little sparse with photography. The reason is, only one contributor has sent in a photograph for this issue. All others are left over from the 1975 Conference.

All members are asked to take and send photographs of work or shops to THE ANVIL'S RING. Contributors will be given full credit.
EMPLOYMENT WANTED

ABANA Member and former museum smith with solid blacksmithing experience and scholarly and practical knowledge of the development of handtools and the steel industry desires position in industry, private business, or museum which can utilize these or following credentials:

- B.A. English and Speech
- M.A. History of Technology
- Professional training and experience in education, public speaking, museum ed. and interp.
- Wide interest and experience in parks, outdoor life, outdoor sites including extensive experience in "living history", historical crafts, and supporting museum functions, such as research and audio vis.
- A desire to be direct and practical in my approaches to problems.
- Age 29

For references and resume write:

Roger F. Moore
654 Lehigh Road, Apt H-3
Newark, DE 19711
(302) 368-0796

LATE FLASH ON 1976 CONFERENCE

Conference chairman Dimitri Gerakaris, has reported by telephone that the 1976 Conference site will be at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois. Dates will be October 14, 15 and 16, 1976.

More details in next issue.

HANDSHAKE

Atlanta, Ga., Larry Miller, young southeastern blacksmith, recently exhibited at the Handshake Invitational Arts and Crafts Festival at Snapfinger Woods Village Center in Atlanta.

Miller was one of about 40 of the top artists to show at the Handshake Festival. Shown below is a candlestick which was purchased as a gift for Hal Schenck, Executive Director of Handshake, Atlanta's new non-profit school of the Arts and Crafts.

THE ANVIL'S RING

Official Newsletter of the Artist-Blacksmiths Association of North America

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Associate Editor - Dimitri Gerakaris
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ARTIST-BLACKSMITH'S ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA
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STUDENTS.........$5.00 per year ( )
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Practicing Smith ( ) Artist ( ) Teacher ( ) Student ( ) Amateur ( )