Tour in the Washington Cathedral

There was a big storm in May the day before I was in the Cathedral and they had no electricity. So my 35 minute tour was only about 8 minutes and we were asked to leave, not seeing one piece of iron at all. I got the name of a nice young lady in the Public Information Office, telling her what I wanted to see and why. To make a long story short, I didn't see anything --but I do have a bit of news for any of you that are planning to visit Washington DC and want to see the iron work in the Cathedral.

Call the Cathedral in advance. The Office of Visitor Services is (202) 537-6207. You will get a recording that asks you to press a number on your touch tone phone if you want to speak to someone. Then ask that person about having a "docent" (tour guide) that is familiar with the iron work. They have one that specializes in telling about the iron. You can find out if it's possible to take a tour with that docent or what other arrangements can be made. If you can, arrange for a group of 15 or more so a good tour can be set up. The important thing is to call ahead and see what can be arranged. You might get to see more iron than I did!

- Jim Ryan

Statistics

There are two kinds of statistics: those you look up and those you make up.
"Name That Rag Contest" . . . Winner Announcement

There have been a bunch of names submitted for this newsletter. One confident submitter said to send his prize to the Blacksmith Relief Fund. And we even got one admonition to not be cute with the name. We decided that not being cute was right and picked *The Hammer's Blow* over all the rest. It was submitted with a poem attached by Colonel Tim Ryan from Gordonsville, Tennessee. You may know him -- the intrepid auctioneer that talks "south mouth". And he assures me that the poem is original from his own writing. Here it is for one and all to see why that name was chosen as our winner.

*Coalesce*

The door swings on remembered hinges.

Clinkers roll roughly crushed, under blackened boot.

A great anvil rests, cold and silent.

Long rows of tongs hang open, like so many uplifted hands and hammers in their ranks await direction.

The smith, fired with a new day's vision strikes a match and ideas unborn come to be ringing.

- Steve White
Monroe, IA

*The Hammer's Blow*

The hammer's blow,
The anvil's ring,
Through all the years inspire.
Remembrances of the magic,
Worked in the blacksmith's fire.

From ancient times
The blacksmith toiled,
His craft remained the same.
Dependent on the heat contained
Within the magic flame.

The flame subsides,
The coke grows cold,
Almost the spark is gone.
No blacksmith left to tend the fire
That marked the glow of dawn.

For mankind's morn
Was surely lit
By sparks that flew away.
From the blacksmith's first adventure
With the fire in the clay.

The night again
Descends on earth
The flame almost expires.
Unless a thousand bellows blow
Upon a thousand fires.

So stoke the fire
With coke and coal
And pledge your faith and fame.
Preserve your blacksmith heritage
And always tend the flame.

- Tim Ryan
Gordonsville, TN

**Editorial**

Here is the second issue of the new ABANA newsletter, now named *The Hammer's Blow*. Thanks to all who sent in nice notes, name suggestions, buy and sell ads, notices, and articles. That's what this is all about, your stuff. So keep it coming. Let us know what you want to have printed and we will try to get it in for you. Send photos, drawings, sketches, and tips. We need it all.

**Now something very important.** If you like receiving this newsletter, we need to hear from you. Funding for next year will come before the ABANA Board of Directors at their November meeting. **Call or write a board member, now!** Tell him/her what you think about *The Hammer's Blow*, good or bad. Let them hear from you about this, otherwise it might die from lack of interest. A list of all the current board members and their phone numbers is in this issue.

- Jim Ryan, *The Hammer's Blow* Editor
The second choice for the name of our newsletter was "The Touch Mark", submitted by Roger Lewis from Flat River, Missouri. Thanks to one and all that submitted names. Here they are in no particular order:

The Hardy Hole News  Sparks  Side Bar
The Anvil's Clilnk  Punch & Drift  Iron Talk
ECHoES of the Anvil's Ring  The Pocket Anvil  Hammerings
Hammer Marks  Drawing Out  Coalesce
Smoke & Fire  The Sketchsmith  Coalescence
Hot Iron  Imagining Iron  The ABANA Newsletter
The Arm & Hammer  Drawn to Iron  Forging Through
The Touch Mark  Metal Filings  The Scale Burn
The Blacksmith's Eye  Striker  Smoke Rise
Smithey Notes  Forge Focus  The Blacksmith's Cauldron
From the Fire  Chisel  Blacksmith's Cornucopia
The Smashed Thumb  The Layout Table  Designing Iron
The Soapstone  Beyond the Forge Hood  In the Mind's Iron

Textures & Finishes

In an alumni magazine put out by Bryn Mawr College, there is an investigative report about the ironwork on campus made by Samuel Yellin. They mentioned that several of the grills and railings were rusting because the college didn't follow Yellin's instructions. He originally coated the iron with a mixture of varnish and linseed oil, with instructions to redo it every 2 years. They didn't.

In the quarterly magazine put out by the Washington National Cathedral, Samuel Yellin is quoted as telling them to coat the stair railings once a month for 6 months with boiled linseed oil, using a light brush to put it on and a soft cloth to wipe off the excess. They said that with that process, the railings are still beautiful.

Another historic type of ironwork is done at Colonial Williamsburg. They are still using wrought iron, not mild steel. When asked about finishes, they said painting was the most common way to finish the iron in 1770, and not usually black. Most outside iron such as hinges and the like were just painted the color of the door. And if there were two colors on the door, the hinges might be painted with the trim color rather than the color of the body of the door.

Editor's Note: We had a request for some information on finishing mild steel in different colors, not just painting it. Could somebody send the editor some input on this for the next newsletter? Thanks.

Travel Notes  Lock Museum of America
             Terryville, Connecticut

The Lock Museum of America is of interest to smiths doing household iron or reproductions of antique hardware. They have set up an antique lock room and sent us a list of the displays:

20 Colonial Wood Plate Locks
30 Colonial Wrought Iron Rim Locks
6 Wrought Iron Mortise Locks
10 Panels of European Ornate
    Rim Locks, Hinges, Pulls, Door Knockers
    from 1500-1800
20 Wrought Iron European Ornate
    Rim Locks with Keys from 1520-1800
45 Antique Keys

Sounds like something that might be included in future travel plans. See their October 1993 Symposium on antique hardware listed under Events & Announcements in this issue. Incidentally, they are closed on Mondays, open afternoons. If you go, send us a report!

The Hammer's Blow

Editor
Jim Ryan, Dubuque IA
Illustrations
Jerry Hoffman, Lonedell MO
Desktop Publishing
Janelle Franklin, Nashville IN
Printing
PIP Printing, Bloomington IN
SHOP TIPS

This is a twisting bar for twisting round stock in bundles of three. A bar for twisting four or more can be made the same way.

First - Start with a bar 1/4" x 1-1/2" about 20" long. Drill holes as shown one size larger than the material size to be twisted.

Second - Bundle stock together and tack weld the ends. Heat the area to be twisted and hold one end of the bundle in a clamp or a vise.

Third - Slide the tool over the end to the area to be twisted and do it!

Descending Height Tong & Rod Holder

I've got one of these living on my forge table. I first saw something similar to it made by Albert Haberman at Uri Hofi's shop in Israel.

First - Cut a triangular piece of 3/8" or 1/2" plate 2' to 2-1/2' long and 7" or 8" at one end.

Second - Make the indentations by hammering a 1/2 round rod into the top and bottom edges.

Third - Give the piece about 16" curve and place on your forge table to hold tong handles or rods.

Michael Yinhar
Burnsville, NC
**Book Reviews**

Many beginning smiths have asked, "What book should I read to get started?" And there are several answers that usually come from experienced smiths. At a recent conference there were two books mentioned as good for beginners. So let's take a look at them both. They should be available through your favorite book dealer or one of our book-dealing advertisers, *Centaur Forge*, Ltd. or Norm Larson Bookseller. (See their ads in the Anvil's Ring magazine.)

**PLAIN AND ORNAMENTAL FORGING**

by Ernst Schwarzkopf

This text book was published in 1913 and reprinted in 1930. It is a good basic book that gives you step by step instruction on how to make lots of items from simple hammer wedges to acanthus leaves and roses. It covers fire, tools, equipment, hardening and tempering, as well as all other blacksmithing techniques. There are charts for weight of iron in every size imaginable. The book is now available in photo copy form.

Reviewed by Jim Ryan

**EDGE OF THE ANVIL**

by Jack Andrews

published by SkipJack Press

Published in 1977 as a book for beginners, *Edge of the Anvil* was again published as a revised edition in 1991. Now more up to date, this blacksmithing book expands the interest to intermediate and more experienced smiths covering everything from lighting the fire through cutting, drawing out, twisting, upsetting, and welding. There are good step by step drawings on simple tool making as well as more complicated projects. There are lots of reference charts on temperatures, sizes, weights, etc. As a bonus, there is a bibliography and many good photos of work by Samuel Yellin -- photos that are an inspiration to blacksmiths of all caliber and levels of experience.

Reviewed by Jim Ryan

---

**ABANA CONFERENCE PROJECT**

One of the goals of the 1994 ABANA conference is to strengthen the link between ABANA and its chapters. This link is reinforced both symbolically and by chapter participation by the '94 "rings project". Each chapter is asked to encourage their members to participate by designing and making a ring. From these rings, the chapters should select one to be submitted to the conference Rings Committee. Six of those submitted will be chosen for inclusion in grillwork made during the conference by a team led by Francis Whitaker. The finished grill and the remaining rings will be sold at the '94 ABANA Conference auction.

**Specifications:**

The rings for this project serve as the outer border of a design created to occupy the negative space within the ring. The interior ironwork can be anchored to the ring in a fashion deemed suitable (rivets, collars, welds, etc). The only criteria is that the outer edge of the ring and the area around the mounting holes remain unobstructed (see framework illustration at right).

Edge bend 1/4" x 1" hot rolled flat, it should be perfectly round and exactly 10" in diameter. The mounting holes should not be drilled; they will be drilled just prior to assembly at the conference. See page 15, winter 1991 issue of the Anvil's ring for examples of work done for the 1990 ABANA Conference ring project.
One of the most common decorations on iron work is leaves. They are easy to make and are almost unlimited in their design. Here is a basic leaf that seems to be adaptable to everybody's capability. Roger Quaintance of Amana, Ohio impresses his classes by showing how to do a leaf in three heats. The following steps let you decide how many heats it takes in your forge. Note that leaves can be made from any size and shape of scrap iron you have lying around, but here we will start with 3/8" round.

**Step 1** - Make a tapered point at the end.

**Step 2** - Place the bar over the edge of the anvil about 2" from the tip and neck down the stem part of the leaf.

**Step 3** - Work the stem down to about 1/8" to 3/16" as round and as long as you will want it later on.

**Step 4** - Flatten the leaf body leaving the tip pointed.

That is the basic leaf, flat and pretty uninteresting. With practice you can make them come out about the same size and shape every time, but you can also grind off the lumpy sides or file away unwanted parts until they begin to all look somewhat alike. Remember, no two leaves are exactly alike. (F. Wolf's book, *Kunstschmiedepraxis*, shows great photos of this process.) What you do with the leaf from here is what makes the difference. You need to give it some texture and some shape —in that order.

**Step 5** - Texture the leaf. Some specific designs need thicker leaves in which case you would need to start with larger size stock.

**Step 6** - Shape the leaf to give it interest. Heat and dish in over the hardy hole and bring down the tip over the horn.
Some leaves such as oak, maple, or grape leaves are usually cut instead of forged to shape. However, play it safe and make sure that you do not have any dangerously sharp tips on your finished piece. Here is a design for a grape leaf cut from 16 gauge sheet steel which came from a library book on growing fruit. Take it to a copy machine and reduce or enlarge the pattern to any size you want. Every grape arbor has at least three sizes.

The stem is rolled up hollow with the seam behind the leaf face, leaving a small flat area at the base for fastening to the vine.

Veining is done with a chisel from the back of the leaf. Place a wood block under the leaf as you chisel. This raises the vein on the front with just an indication of shape and distorts the flat shape almost to the way you want it. Just a few taps with a hammer will finish the shaping. The tubular stem needs to be heated to shape properly.

For a detailed look at some more intricate grape leaves created by Eric Moebius, see the front cover of the Anvil's Ring magazine, Vol 18, Issue #3. Those grape leaves are marvelous!

The 1994 ABANA Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri at Washington University. Since the location is geographically central, the conference promises to attract a large turn out.

The hosting chapter, Blacksmiths Association of Missouri (BAM), is planning a ring project which invites all ABANA chapters to participate (see page 5 in this issue). The piece will be donated to the well-known ABANA auction taking place at the conference.

This particular design of the conference logo shown will be used for the casting of brass belt buckles. So don't forget to visit the trade show area where the ABANA booth will be set up with lots of conference goodies for sale!
Here are several items that are commonly made with leaves as a major part of the decoration. You can think of a dozen more. For inside use, finish with floor wax, boiled linseed oil, varnish, paint, or whatever you like the best.

Plant Hanger
(try 3/8" round stock)

Curtain Tiebacks
(try 5/16" square)

Curtain - Drapery - Light Cord Pulls

Railing or Room Divider
Vine Decoration
(try tapering 1/2" round at bottom to 3/8" round at top)

Key Ring
(try 1/4" round)

Leaf Hooks
(try 1/4" or 5/16" round)
Events & Announcements

Jul 20-Aug 28  JAPANESE KNIFE & TOOL MAKING SEMINARS
Yataki Miyano Tetsunosuke, a renowned Japanese smith, will be giving six 5-day seminars using a traditional Japanese forge and soft wood charcoal. Knowledge given here is rarely available outside of an apprenticeship program. Hand made saws and knives are his specialty. Contact: Duncan MacMaster, SHRI Institute, Fairfield, Iowa 52556-1178. Phone (515) 469-3369.

Sep 18-19  QUAD STATE ROUND-UP
ABANA Chapter, Southern Ohio Forge & Anvil (SOFA) is holding its annual regional event in Tipp City, Ohio. Demonstrators will be Keith Kilby, Marte Cellura, Mark Bokenkamp, George Dixon, Bill Hahn, and Paul Hubler. Special Guest is Francis Whitaker. Lecturer is Jerry Hoffman. Chain-making contest and much more! For registration packet call: (513) 427-2447.

Oct 14-15  HISTORICAL HARDWARE SYMPOSIUM
This symposium will be at the Lock Museum of America for those interested in doing historical research on hardware. Contact: Tom Hennessy, Curator, PO Box 104, Terryville, Connecticut 06786-0104. Phone (203) 589-6399.

Oct 16-17  REPAIR DAYS WEEKEND
10:00 am - 5:00 pm at the National Ornamental Metal Museum (NOMM), 374 W. Calhoun Ave, Memphis, TN 38106. This annual fund-raiser for NOMM has over 60 volunteer metal smiths repair broken metal objects brought in by the public. Visitors invited to watch and ask questions as work is being done. A good time for a good cause!

Dec 6-8  RESTORATION '93 EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE
A symposium and display of 200 to 300 companies involved in historical and heritage restoration will be held at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston, Massachusetts. ABANA will have a booth where members will have their work displayed. Contact: Steven Schuyler at (617) 933-9699 or write to Restoration '93, RAE/EGI Exhibitions Inc, 10 Tower Office Park, Woburn, MA 01801.

Dec 12, 1993-Jan 30, 1994  ABANA INVITATIONAL EXHIBIT
 Held at the National Ornamental Metal Museum (NOMM) in Memphis, Tennessee, this exhibit called "The Blacksmithing Craft Continuum" will show works by master smiths and those they have influenced. This influence can be by apprenticeship or longer periods of employment. 20-30 pairs ofsmiths will be recommended by ABANA members. If you know of such a pair, contact Kaleigh Donnelly at the Museum (901) 774-6380.

THE FORGERY, SCHOOL OF BLACKSMITHING
Announces the re-opening of classes in their new facility at a new location with instructor, Robb Gunter. For Information & class schedules write: The Forgery, 13 Immaha Rd, Tijeras, New Mexico 97059 or call (505) 281-8080.

Classifieds

WANTED: Used 2" belt grinder- Baeder or Square Wheel preferred. John Pollins, RR #5 Box 154, Greensburg, PA 15601  Work 412-834-8880 Home 412-423-4973

ABANA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Clayton Carr - President  (509) 586-1476 ABANA Line
RFD #2 Box 2911
Kennewick, WA 99337

Ron Porter - 1st Vice President  (317) 689-8450 Home
RR 1 Box 64
Bunker Hill, IN 46914

Andy Quittner - 2nd Vice President  (512) 888-6660 Home
414 Clifford Street
Corpus Christi, TX 78404

Hans Peot - Secretary  (513) 845-9934 Home
6425 S. Seaff Road
New Carlisle, OH 45344

Bill Callaway - Treasurer  (602) 973-4142 Home
3646 W. Lawrence Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85011

Michael Bondi  (415) 459-7975 Home
1818 Shorey Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Elizabeth Brim  (706) 322-6932 Home
1347 Eisenhower Avenue
Columbus, GA 31906

Tom Clark  (314) 438-4725 Home
HC 87 Box 5780
Potosi, MO 63664

Joe Harris  (304) 965-6476 Home
1 Maple Lane
Elkview, WV 25971

Toby Hickman  (707) 823-1142 Home
6030 Roblar Rd
Petaluma, CA 94952

John Pollins  (707) 664-8910 Shop
RD #5 Box 154
Greensburg, PA 15601

Tim Ryan  (615) 683-8325 Home
RR 1 Box 83
Gordonville, TX 78563

Joel Schwartz  (315) 841-4477 Home/Shop
P.O. Box 205
Deansboro, NY 13328

Brad Silberberg  (301) 652-2352 Home
6640 Hillandale Rd
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Clay Spencer  (205) 837-6996 Home/Shop
208 Metaire Lane
Madison, AL 35758

FOR SALE

1 Chicago Pneumatic CP854 angle grinder 12,000 RPM 3/8 - 24 spindles (new) $140. 1 Large Cincinnati Industrial Drill Press, center to column 12", #4 Morse spindle $150. 40 dies for 2-B Nazel hammer $150 each. Various size Vise-Grips. Glenn Horr, RR2 Box 112B, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411 Ph: 304-258-4058

Wrought Iron Bridge. Leo Meier, 1845 Cannon St, Dubuque, IA 52003 Ph: 319-588-2290

Oilfield or Bridge anvils 300 lbs $300. Swage block w/ slot $325. Swedish anvils 98 to 124 lbs $150/lb. Call: 913-488-2136 Wagonmaster Antiques, Box 116, Bennington, KS 67422

SUMMER 1993
ABANA
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME __________________________ PHONE ( ) __________________________

ADDRESS (Street) __________________________ (POBox) __________________________

CITY __________________________ STATE __________________________ ZIP __________________________

Indicate type of membership applying for:

☐ NEW MEMBER?  ☐ RENEWAL MEMBER?

☐ REGULAR MEMBERSHIP $35.00  ☐ FAMILY MEMBERSHIP $40.00

☐ SENIOR CITIZEN (65+) $25.00  ☐ CONTRIBUTORY MEMBER $100.00

☐ OVERSEAS AIRMMAIL $70.00  ☐ PUBLIC LIBRARY $25.00

☐ OVERSEAS SURFACE MAIL $50.00  ☐ FULLTIME STUDENT $25.00

I __________________________ hereby apply for membership in the Artist-Blacksmiths' Association of North America and enclose $ ________ as my annual membership dues for one year (subscription included).

☐ CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ENCLOSED (WRITTEN ON U.S. BANKS ONLY)

☐ VISA  ☐ MASTERCARD

CARD NUMBER __________________________ EXP. DATE (REQUIRED) __________________________

Send to: ABANA, P.O. Box 1181, Nashville, IN 47448  ☏ Or phone with VISA/MasterCard by calling (812) 988-6919