

February 2014

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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.

**Feb 15  
2014**

**KEN DETTMER SHOP  
COLUMBUS**

**Mar 15  
2014**

**IBA BUSINESS MEETING  
"DOC" RAMSEYER SHOP**

**Apr 19  
2014**

**TBD**

**May 17  
2014**

**TBD**



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## **Dates to Remember**

March 15  
IBA Business  
Meeting

March 21-23  
Little Giant Re-  
building Class  
(see last months  
Forge Fire for de-  
tails)

## **Editors Message**

I want to open by congratulating Michael Wollowski and his wife on the birth of their son Tristan Michael Wollowski. Tristan was born on Sunday, January 19, 2014 at 2:30 pm. He weighed 8lbs 11oz and was 20 ½" long. Mom and baby are doing fine, even though he decided to explore his new surroundings 2 weeks earlier than average and nine days earlier than scheduled.

I missed the January hammer in at Fall Creek. Sad to say but the chronic waves of winter storms and another one forecasted deterred me from the long drive. Gary Phillips did attend, and he reports they has a strong turn out with over 20 people present. Mark Thomas provided a good demonstration with assistance from his daughter. A number newer smiths received expert hands-on training.

This months hammer in will be at Ken Dettmer's shop in Columbus. I have not heard if there will be a special demonstrator or open forge. Either way I am sure will see some expert blacksmithing. This hammer in is always well attended with some very skilled blacksmiths on hand. Ken has a very spacious shop with some very fine tools. Be sure to come early and bring a chair.

In March we will have our annual business meeting. The meeting will be held at the Kelly Farm Museum, home of the "Doc" Ramseyer blacksmith Shop, south of Kokomo. One of the primary activities at the business meeting is to fill our board of directors positions. This year we have three announced candidates to fill two spots. Be sure to cast your ballot. My rough estimate is that only about 10% of our members vote, so every vote means a lot.

On page 9 you find an announcement from Jim Johnston that a large collection early American style ironwork created by Dellon Blanton has been donated to the Kelly Farm Museum. I am hopeful that some of that collection may be available for viewing at the business meeting.

The article on pages 10 and 11 came from a training manual for farm blacksmiths. The manual was published by the War Department in 1939.

**Visit the IBA website at: [www.indianablacksmithing.org](http://www.indianablacksmithing.org)**

**Ballot**  
**IBA Board of Directors**  
**Vote for 2 Only**

☐

Steve King

☐

Gary Phillips

☐

Bill Newman

☐

Write in. \_\_\_\_\_

(Must be willing to serve)

Send ballot to:

Ken Dettmer  
15721 S 250W  
Columbus, IN 47201

Mark the word 'Ballot' on envelope so it will not be opened until the business meeting in March.

Ballots may be cast at the business meeting.

**Mailed ballots must be received by March 12<sup>th</sup>.**

Ballot  
Ken Dettmer  
15721 S 250W  
Columbus, IN 47201

Ken Dettmer  
15721 S 250W  
Columbus, IN 47201

## IBA Satellite Groups and News

### **Sutton-Terock Memorial Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Fred Oden (574) 223-3508  
 Dennis Todd (574) 542-4886

### **Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Doug Moreland (217) 284-3457  
 Max Hoopengartner (812) 249-8303

### **Maumee Valley Blacksmiths**

Meet: 2nd and 4th Saturday  
 Contact: Clint Casey (260) 627-6270  
 John Schamber (260) 579-7303

### **Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Ted Stout (765) 572-2467

### **Whitewater Valley Blacksmiths**

Meet: 2nd Saturday  
 Contact: Keith Hicks (765) 914-6584

### **Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths**

Meet: 1st Saturday  
 Contacts: Doug Neukam (812) 259-4430  
 Steve Stoll (812) 486-9668  
 Kathy Malone (812) 725-3310

### **Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contact: Ray Sease (812) 522-7722

### **Fall Creek Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 4th Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: John Zile: (765) 533-4153  
 Larry Singer (765) 643-5953  
 Farrel Wells (765) 768-6235

### **St. Joe Valley Forgers**

Meet: 4th Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Bill Conyers (574) 277-8729  
 John Latowski (574) 344-1730

### **The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers**

Contacts: Billy Merritt (812) 338-2876  
 Steve King (812) 797-0059  
 Jeff Reinhardt 812-949-7163

### **One Armed Blacksmith's Shop**

Meet: 1st Saturday  
 Contact: Tim Metz (812) 447-2606

### **"Doc" Ramseyer Blacksmith Shop**

Location: 6032W 550N, Sharpsville, IN 46060  
 Meet: 3rd Sunday at 2 PM  
 Contacts: Mike Kelley  
 Charles Gruell (765) 513-5390

### **Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop**

The January 11th meeting of The Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmiths was held at Paul and Judy Bray's home. The meeting lasted from 6:00am to 5:30pm. A fantastic breakfast and lunch was served by Paul and Judy as usual. Charlie Helton started the fire in the forge, then showed the proper way to make 2 different pairs of tongs which he later donated to the "Iron-in-the-Hat". Then Charlie instructed Tim Thompson on how to make chain links. Jack Newkam brought a "magic chain" that his grandfather had made for his wife when Jack was a little boy. No one in the group had ever seen anything close to what this chain looked like, (resembling chain mail). Harry Husby examined it very closely, and knowing Harry the way he is, had a working model made by dark! This was the first meeting of the year and the start of our 15th year as the Vernon Group. Many a great time has been had and a great future will be had by all. As usual, attendance was fantastic and a great "Iron-in the-Hat" was held. By Ray Sease

P.S. By Paul Bray Proper credit also needs to go to my two daughters, Natalie and Nicole, who were invaluable help with the meals. Thanks to all who came for making it a great success. Don't forget the State meeting at Kenny Dettmer's .

The February hammer in will be held at Bill Kendrick's shop at 1280N CR 900W (Jennings County). Bring a chair. Call 812-344-1021 if you need directions. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.



## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

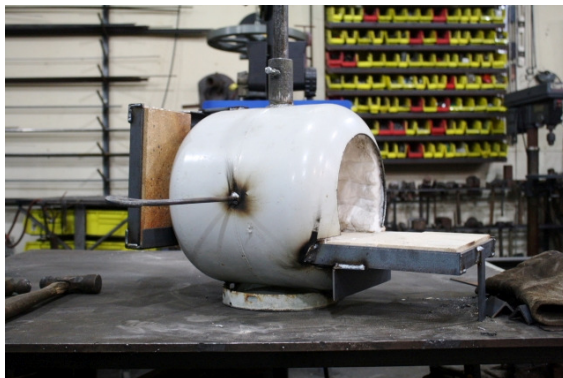
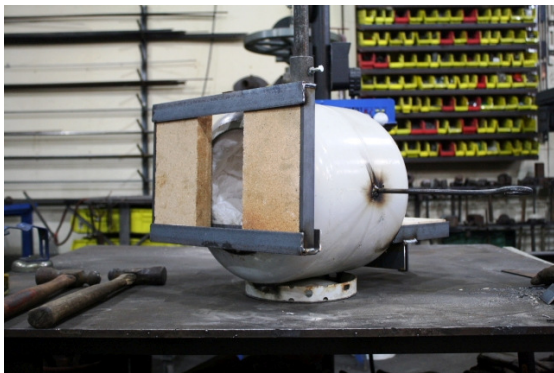
### Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop

The Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop held a gas forge work shop Saturday Jan. 25th at John Bennett's shop southeast of Rosedale In. The goal for the day was to build 6 single burner gas forges for club members. 11 members attended the workshop. Work stations were set up ahead of time and everyone had plenty of work to do.

As the day progressed John explained the hows and whys of each step involved in building the forges. Safety, design and troubleshooting were covered with discussions as well as hands on demonstrations. At the end of the day 6 fully functioning propane forges were completed, test fired and sent home with their new owners.

The day was one of the best group efforts I have had the pleasure of being a part of. I would like to thank all the participants for their hard work. I look forward to the next one in late Feb.

John Bennett  
Forge Master





## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths

The Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths held their monthly meeting on January 4. We didn't have a meeting in December due to the weather, so it was like seeing long lost friends. We had several people at the meeting and some did a little blacksmithing. Seems like we did a lot of jawing at this one. I don't know why, but I didn't even get out to the forge to take any pics. I do know that Aaron, Vicky and Chris Baker were working on making some rams heads. I think that was mainly Vicky's project. Jerry Robinette and Steve Stoll hammered some on a sword Jerry is



making. We enjoyed lunch of Beaver stew, cooked soybeans, cornbread and a lot of other goodies brought in by everyone. I am sending a couple pictures of us doing what we do best, talk and eat. I would like to mention that one of our group has been missing, that is Carol Baker. She broke an arm and is in a rehab facility and we would appreciate thoughts and prayers for her. Until next time

Kathy Malone

### The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers

This month's meeting was at Steve King's snug and warm shop in Paoli. Despite several inches of fresh snow, the shop was well filled. Dave Kunkler demonstrated a dragons head, and Jeff Reinhardt a wizard head bottle cap opener. Vicky Baker, Arron's wife came with the request to see animal heads and wizards demonstrated. She left having seen both, and having made her first wizard head on her own. The lunch of Steve's chili and soup beans from Jerry Robinette was well received. A lively Iron in the hat was held. Considering the weather it was an all around awesome way to spend a Saturday.

Next Meeting at Jason Hardin's shop on Mill creek road near Salem.

## Medieval Faire Blacksmith

Doug and Mary Jo Smock own a medieval castle style Bed and Breakfast just West of Spencer Indiana (south of Poland) called Clayshire Castle ([clayshirecastle.com](http://clayshirecastle.com)). They are planning on having their first Medieval Faire this September 27th. They are looking for blacksmiths who would be interested in having a booth, doing a demonstration, etc. They will have entertainment and vendors with a Middle Ages theme.

They estimate between 1,000 and 2,000 attendees, based on prior open houses and similar new Renaissance Faires in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio.

Anyone interested can contact Doug and Mary Jo at [innkeeper@clayshirecastle.com](mailto:innkeeper@clayshirecastle.com), or call 317-797-3822.

## Wabash Valley Blacksmiths Raffle Forge for 4-H

I am the forge master for the Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop and I do a lot of work with the Parke County 4H blacksmith program. The program is starting it's 8th year this year. Last year we had 35 young smiths and 32 completed their projects. Through generous donations from local businesses and individuals we were able to erect a 32' x 48' blacksmith shop last spring. The shop has 4 single burner gas forges and 4 coal forges. The building is a work in progress and we are still finishing the lights and wiring.



The Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop is raffling off a portable coal forge with all the proceeds going to the Parke County 4H blacksmith program.

John Vanada and I built the forge for the raffle. The table is 10 gauge mild steel and the firepot is fabricated from 1/4" plate. There is a tong rack on one end. The legs are 1" sch 40 black pipe and the forge breaks down for portability. I have attached several pictures of the Raffle forge and the new shop.

Tickets for the raffle are one dollar each or six for five dollars. Tickets are available through the Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop and the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild.

The drawing will be held on 12 April 2014. You need not be present to win. The winner will be notified and arrangements made to deliver the forge.

Thank you in advance,

John Bennett







## Dellon Blanton Collection to be Displayed at Kelly Farm Museum

Submitted by Jim Johnston

On the 16th of November last year Charlie Gruell, Mike Kelly and myself met Dellon Blanton and Max Hoopengartner at the Kelly Farm Museum. In the past several years Dellon had reproduced the items in the Sauder collection of early American iron. In the interest of creating more space Dellon decided to donate the items to a museum where they could be seen and stay together. Dellon called me, I called Charlie, Charlie called Mike Kelly. Mike looked over the collection and was overwhelmed by it. He accepted the collection on behalf of the Museum. Hopefully It will be displayed soon. I saw the collection and was very impressed. Of course Dellon has impressed me many times over the years. Anyway the display will be well worth seeing, in fact you could see it at one of our satellite meetings. All would be welcome. The people in the photo are Mike Kelly, Charlie Gruell, myself and Max Hoopengartner. Of course the man of the hour, Dellon, took the photo so he is not included.

(Editors note the following is an excerpt from a 1939 government published manual)

## **BLACKSMITH PRACTICE**

### **EM 862**

### **War Department Education Manual**

#### **WELDING**

309. The Welding Fire.-A good fire is the first requirement for welding. It is important for any blacksmithing work, but for welding it is indispensable.

The fire must be clean, that is, free from clinkers, brass, babbitt, etc., as such impurities tend to make the irons slippery instead of sticky at the welding temperature.

Lots of good coke is needed, as fresh coal not only makes a smoky fire but may also introduce some sulphur, which will make welding difficult, if not impossible.

The fire should be deep, with at least 4 in. of burning coke below the irons. There should also be burning coke on both sides and above the irons. Thus enough heat can be provided for thorough heating of the irons before the fire burns down.

The fire should be compact and well banked with dampened coal so as to confine. and concentrate the heat and to prevent too much air from going through the fire and causing the irons to oxidize or scale unduly. The fire should be thoroughly cleaned about every half hour while welding.

310. Scarfing the Irons.-Ends to be welded together should first be properly shaped or scarfed. Scarfed ends should be short, usually not over 1 1/2 times the thickness of the stock; and they should have rounded or convex surfaces, so that when they come together any slag or impurities will be squeezed out rather than trapped in the weld. Long, thin, tapering scarfs are to be avoided because they are easily burnt in the fire and because they cool and lose their welding heat very rapidly when removed from the fire, thus making welding exceedingly difficult.

In order to counteract the wasting away of the irons by scaling and the tendency to draw out from hammering when they are welded, the ends are commonly upset before scarfing. Scarfs on the ends of bars are made by working on the far edge of the anvil, striking backing-up or semi-upsetting blows with the toe of the hammer lower than the heel. (See Art. 314, page 235, for instructions on the link scarf.)

311. Welding Flux.-Borax or clean sand, or a mixture of the two, may be used as a welding flux. Commercial welding flux, however, such as may be bought from hardware stores, is usually more satisfactory; and since but a little is needed, it is probably best to buy a small package for the farm shop.

Flux is applied to the pieces to be welded after they are at a red or white heat and just before the welding heat is to be taken. It covers the irons and causes the oxide to melt at a lower temperature. The oxide must be melted before the irons can be welded.

Flux is not needed in welding wrought iron, as it may be heated above the melting temperature of the oxide without danger of burning. Although it is possible to weld mild steel without flux, it is much easier to do a good job with it. Tool steel cannot be welded without flux.

312. Heating the Irons.-The irons should be heated slowly at first, so they will heat thoroughly and uniformly throughout. The irons should be turned over once or twice during the heating to insure equal heating of all sides and parts.

After the irons reach a bright-red heat, remove them and dip the scarfed ends into flux, or sprinkle the flux on them with the fingers. Replace the irons in the fire and continue to heat, being careful not to brush the flux off the irons before it melts. Pull a few lumps of coke on top of the irons and raise the coke occasionally with the poker to see how the heating is progressing.

Care must be taken to see that both irons reach the welding heat at the same time. If one heats faster, pull it back into the edge of the fire for a few seconds. During the last part of the heating, have the scarfed sides of the irons down so they will be fully as hot as the other parts of the pieces.

313. The Welding Heat.-When the irons reach the welding temperature, they will be a brilliant, dazzling white; their surfaces will appear molten, much like a melting snowball; and a few explosive sparks will be given off. When the sparks start to come from the fire a little more violently, it is time to remove them and weld them together.

#### Points on Welding

1. Use a clean, deep, compact coke fire.
2. Clean the fire every half hour.
3. Make the scarfs short and thick, rather than long and thin. Scarfs should not be longer than 1 1/2 times the thickness of the stock.
4. Round the surfaces of scarfs so slag will be squeezed out rather than trapped in the weld.
5. Heat the irons to a good welding heat, yet do not burn them.
6. Bring both irons up to the welding heat at the same time.
7. Have the scarfed sides of the irons down in the fire just before removing them,
8. Before welding the irons together, shake off any slag or impurities by quickly rapping the tongs against the edge of the anvil.
9. Steadying the pieces over the edges of the anvil will help get them accurately and quickly placed.
10. Strike light or medium blows when irons are at the welding heat. Simply forcing the parts together is all that is necessary. Heavy blows mash the irons.
11. Work fast; keep the hammer on the anvil within easy reach.
12. In case of failure to stick, do not continue hammering. Reflux and try again, being sure the fire is in good shape, and that you heat the irons hot enough.

Note: If you are interested in learning to forge weld, Nathan Allen will be instructing a forge welding class at Conner Prairie on March 22. For registration please call Conner Prairie Guest Services dept. at 317-776-6000.



## **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

### **Kenny Dettmer's Shop**

February 15

15721 S 250W Columbus, IN

**From the North:** take I 65 S to Ogilville / Walesboro (exit 64) turn. right. Go to the 1st cross-roads (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 .

Please bring a dish to share.

### **Kelley Farms (Doc Ramseyer), Business Meeting**

March 15

6032 W 550 N Sharpsville, IN 46060

Located just west of US-31. Approximately 6 miles north of SR-28 (Tipton) or 3 miles south of SR-26 (Kokomo).

Please bring a dish to share