

August 2014

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Phillips '18 President:

14800 N SR 167 N
Albany, IN 47320
(765) 789-8316
behere@netdirect.net

Steve King '18

1155 S. Paoli Unionville Rd
Paoli, IN 47454
(812) 797-0059
kingknives@live.com

Bill Conyers '15 Vice Pres

50964 Lilac Rd,
South Bend, IN
(574) 277-8729
billconyerssr@yahoo.com

Bill Newman '15

4655 Williams Rd
Martinsville, IN 46151
(317) 690-2455
ruralsmiths1@yahoo.com

Dominick Andrisani '16

3608 Capilano Drive
West Lafayette, IN 47906-8869
(765) 463-4975
andrisan@purdue.edu

Ted Stout '16

8525 W 700 S
West Point, IN 47992-9258
(765) 572-2467
stout8525@tds.net

James Johnston '17

Education Chairman:
806 Twyckingham Lane
Kokomo, IN 46901-1885
(765) 452-8165
kokomoblacksmith@comcast.net

Keith Hicks '17 Secretary:

5184 State Road 252
Brookville, IN 47012
(765) 914-6584
keithhicks2011@gmail.com

Librarian:

Larry Rosentrader
8715 E. 375 N
Churubusco, IN 46723-9501
260-693-3267
rosentrad@cs.com

Editor:

Bill Kendrick
1280 N 900 W
Seymour, IN 47274
(812) 445-3009
bill.d.kendrick@cummins.com

Treasurer and membership secretary:

Farrel Wells
8235 E 499 S
Dunkirk, IN 47336-8807
(765) 768-6235
flwells@frontier.com

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)

9:30 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.

The Indiana Blacksmithing Association, Inc., its staff, officers, directors, members, and hosts and the *Forge Fire*, specifically disclaim any responsibility or liability for damages or injuries as a result of any construction, design, use, manufacture or other activity undertaken as a result of the use, or application of, information contained in any articles in the *Forge Fire*. The Indiana Blacksmithing Association, Inc. And the *Forge Fire* assumes no responsibility or liability for the accuracy, fitness, proper design, safety, or safe use of any information contained in the *Forge Fire*.

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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 Ron Gill
317-374-8323 for details

IBA MEETING SCHEDULE

Check the latest *Forge Fire* for monthly IBA revisions.

Aug
2014

NO HAMMER IN THIS MONTH

Sept 20
2014

**TENTATIVELY: WHITEWATER
VALLEY**



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Aug 1-17 State
Fair

Sept 20-21 Trail of
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Sept 26-28
Quad State (SOFA)

Sept 27
Medieval Faire

Editors Message

We have a full issue this month, so I will be brief. The Indiana State Fair is in full swing. I expect to have some photos for next month.

Gary Phillips was trying to get a hammer in scheduled for August but the date did not work for the satellite group. He is looking to see if Whitewater Valley can host in September. Check next months Forge Fire.

As fall comes on we have many fairs and festivals around the area. If you have a festival of interest to blacksmiths, please let me know.

**Some upcoming classes at Conner Prairie (for details and registration:
www.connerprairie.org)**

**Fun in the Forge Saturday, September 27: 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
\$95 (\$90 Conner Prairie member)**

Be a blacksmith for a day. Learn to heat metal in a coal forge and shape it on an anvil. You will have the opportunity to complete several simple projects such as barbeque skewers, a flint and steel firestarter (with instructions on how to use it) and a dinner bell. All tools and materials will be provided. Ages 14+

**Hammer & Tongs Saturday, November 1: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
\$130 (\$120 Conner Prairie member)**

Forge your own set of essential blacksmith tools, a cross-pein hammer and tongs. In this class we'll cover basic forging processes for making tongs. We'll also discover the secrets of properly selecting good tool steel for forging hammers, punches and drifts. Finally, students will finish the hammer and develop basic heat-treating skills through hardening and tempering. Ages 16+.

**Axe Forging October 8-10
\$295/(\$285 Conner Prairie member) (Tools required)**

Learn traditional forging techniques from blacksmith Nathan Allen. Students will examine stylistic and construction techniques used on historic axes, and will then forge and finish an axe of their own.

**Knifsmithing October 6-8
\$280/(\$270 Conner Prairie member) (Tools required)**

Under the tutelage of Dwight Gaillian, students will learn about the history and manufacture of a traditional hand-forged knife. Class will include materials selection, forging and finishing a functional knife.

**Folding Knife October 6-8
\$285/(\$275 Conner Prairie member) (Tools required)**

Instructor Nathan Allen will teach how to build an 18th century-style folding knife. Traditional filing, bench work and heat treating skills will be used to construct an attractive steel and brass folding knife.

Visit the IBA website at: www.indianablacksmithing.org

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

The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers

The southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers met this month at the English Indiana Senior Citizens building in English Indiana. The meeting was in conjunction with the retirement party for our Forgemaster, "The King of junkyard damascus". Billy Merritt retired July 1st and is now totally focused on bladesmithing. Since his recent health issues, lately he has been finishing and handling the lifetime accumulation of already forged blades he is discovering in his shop! He brought a strikingly beautiful knife to the party and had everyone sign a free raffle ticket for the knife. Jason Hardin won the gorgeous knife. Billy's wife Arlene had prepared a wonderful layout of food and many of Billy's friends and family were present. Jeff Reinhardt brought his forge trailer, and the Mashers forged off and on all day. So we got to celebrate our good friend and Forgemaster, eat well, show off for the public and tell many many stories about Billy.

Simply does not get better than that for a hammer-in.

Next meeting will be at Dave Kunkler's shop in Perry county.

Interesting on line video of Industrial forge complex in England...

<http://www.derelictplaces.co.uk/main/showthread.php?t=15895>

IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop

The Vernon Historical Society Blacksmiths opened at 7:40am. We had several discussion groups going at the same time. Meanwhile, one of our newcomers asked for a refresher class on the basics. Brad Weaver volunteered to lead the class, starting with drawing out. Tim Thompson went to the "Bill Newman" side of the forge and worked with Brad. They both ended with nice leaves which they turned into "off the wall" hooks. Mike Bevers worked on a Dutch oven lid lifter which he took home to "tweek". We ended by discussion of the State Fair. There were 19 people present.

Hope you can support us at the fair as we always need help. Many thanks to Bill Newman for his hard work making this event a success and to the Rural Smiths for all their work.

Paul Bray

Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths

The Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths met on July 5. We had another good day of smithing and visiting. Our numbers were down this meeting and I suppose that is due to it being a holiday weekend. We still had a great day. We had some new folks and old folks with us and all enjoyed the day. I failed to find out what everyone was working on. I am going to have to do better at this job. Is it too late to make a new year's resolution



tion since more than half of the year is gone? :) I do know that Doug Neukam was working on accoutrements to go with a cowboy grill. Aaron Baker was working on something but I am not sure what. I do know he was showing some young folks how it is done. I know that Ron Tinch, Steve Stoll and Jim Malone were jawing on the liars bench. We had some new young men working on some projects under the tutelage of Tim McNelis and Lonnie Salmon. Chuck Kryder was working on a garden trowel. All in all it was a great day, great weather and great fun. A shared meal is always one of the highlights although I fixed way too much chicken and noodles since the crowd was down and some had to leave early. Thanks to all of our members for pitching in with the food. I will say it again, we have a great group of people and we are thankful for each and every one.



Until next time....Kathy Malone secretary.



Apple tongs - I made a couple different kinds and found that the ones that have the curved flat stock hold the apple the best.



Forging an Apple from Pipe

By Darla Selander, a MABA member

Photos by Steven Spoerre

Hatchet Fuller - The large depression should roughly follow the radius of the size of pipe you want to use. I found it important to have this depression roundish so there is pressure on the pipe in more than 2 spots. (Initially, I made the depression more elliptical and my apples were tearing.) The smaller depression doesn't seem to be as critical. It is roughly 3/4" to 1" wide and more elliptical. It is very important to have the edges of this tool very smooth and to have no sharp shoulders where it transitions from the round depressions to flat.



Bullet Nose Monkey Tool - 5/8" round stock with 1/4" hole drilled about 1-1/2" up into it. After drilling, grind to make a "bullet" shape on the end.



Curved Fuller - A person could use a regular fuller or even a dull chisel but I liked how using this curved tool made the depressions between the bumps smoother. I used 1/2" round stock and made a little hook on the end. I then ground a taper on the bottom side of the working end so the depressions between the bumps would have a "V" shape.



Choose whatever size pipe you want. I liked the size of apple that I got from 2" sch. 40 pipe. (the

measurement on this is 2-3/8" od and 2-1/8" id) What is important is to use pipe with 1/8" wall, thinner than that and it will be difficult to forge without tearing. I started out with a 6" length which is way more than enough. (One thing I forgot to mention at the meeting is that if you wanted 2 apples you could start out with a 10" piece and begin forging in the center of it which will produce 2 apple bottoms).

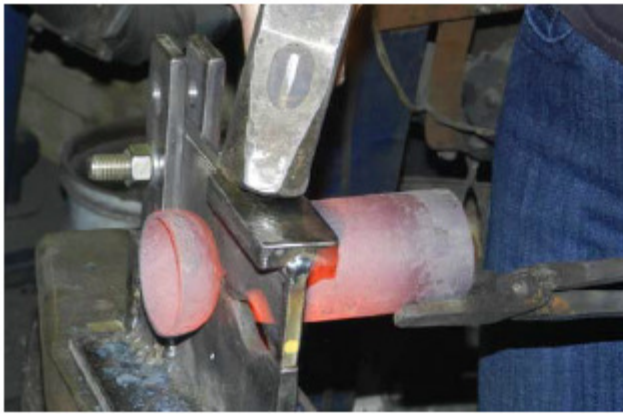
Bottom of apple - Begin forging pipe with the fuller in the highest position. Allow about 1" sticking out beyond the fuller (that will be waste). Forge at a yellow heat and return it to the fire when it starts to dull to a red heat. (If it is worked not hot enough you run the risk of tearing it). Rotate pipe while striking the fuller.



When the fuller arm gets below level, move the arm to the bottom position and work the pipe until the fuller bottoms out



. Then move the pipe to the small fuller opening and forge until it bottoms out.



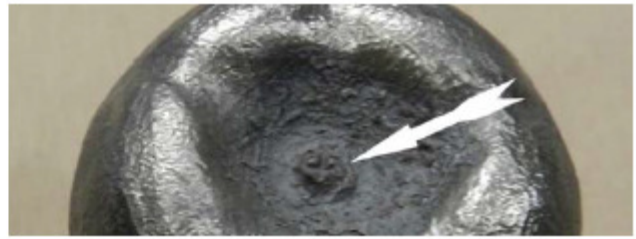
Move fullered pipe to the flat area on your fuller and rotate 90 deg. to pinch it off.



Flatten pinched off nub enough to put a few crisscross chisel marks in it. This creates the blossom end on the apple bottom.



Use the bullet tool to start a depression in the apple bottom.



Hold the apple at an angle on the anvil and hammer a taper around the bottom (gives it the look of a Delicious apple).



Then use bullet tool to depress the bottom to the depth that you find appealing. Use curved fuller to create 5 knobs in the bottom of the apple.



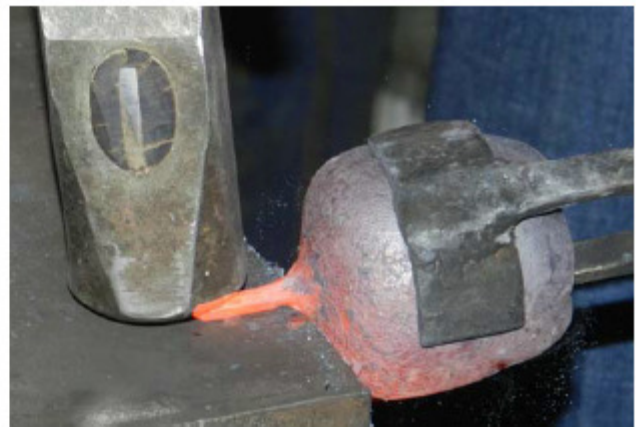
Top of apple- Use the apple tongs to hold the apple, start with your fuller in the highest position and move the pipe into it until you like the looks of the length of the apple. I allow about 3" for mine. Forge in the same manner as you did for the bottom except when you advance to the smallest fuller opening.



While necking it down put a little back pressure on the apple to gain some length in the fullered area so you have material to create the stem. Fuller this area down until it is fairly close to the size of the stem that you want.



Cut off the waste from the stem and forge the stem out round on the edge of the anvil.



Use bullet tool to push the stem down.



Put a little curve in the stem to make it look natural. If the stem splits a little while forging it doesn't bother me, I think it makes it look more realistic, like it was torn off the tree.



Finish as desired- color with gilders paste, add leaves, wax or clear coat

Article reprinted from the July-August 2014 edition of the Newsletter of the Michigan Artist Blacksmith's Association

Wanted: Medieval Faire Blacksmith

My wife and I own a medieval castle style Bed and Breakfast just West of Spencer Indiana (south of Poland) called Clayshire Castle (clayshirecastle.com). We are planning on having our first Medieval Faire this **September 27th**, and wondered if any of your members would be interested in having a booth, doing a demonstration, etc. We are going to have entertainment and vendors with a Middle Ages theme, and after looking at your website, thought some of you may want to come.

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

If any of your members are interested, please email us at innkeeper@clayshirecastle.com, or call 317-797-3822.

Thank you,

Doug and Mary Jo Smock

Skill Development The Art of Striking

(editors note: This article is from the Pieh Tool Company newsletter)
<http://www.piehtoolco.com>

Blacksmithing, in and of itself, is fascinating to watch but there is something truly captivating about watching a team of strikers rhythmically beat a piece of steel. If you have ever been a striker, you know it takes more than sheer strength to be a good one. Here are some helpful pointers on how to use a sledge hammer efficiently and safely along with a quick course on the unspoken signs.



First off, you don't need to be the biggest, burliest guy around in order to strike well. Striking is a physically demanding task but there are certain techniques that will actually have the hammer doing most of the work. Start by positioning your strongest hand toward the head. This not only enables you to add force to the blow when needed but, more importantly, it assists with accuracy. The weaker hand should be roughly 12" down the handle from the lead hand, toward the end.

There are two basic styles for striking. The European method has you cross your body with the arm of your weaker hand while your stronger arm does all the work. The method described here is a deviation from that. You should also know, the techniques of wielding a sledge hammer to move metal are completely different from those used busting concrete or demolishing walls. In this method of striking, both of your hands will remain stationary versus the lead hand sliding up and down when busting rock. The effect is more of a pumping action than a swinging action. Another difference is the sledge you'll use will have a shorter handle so as not to interfere with your body's movement.

While gripping the sledge, touch it to the anvil to determine your reach. With the foot that's opposite of your lead hand forward and your knees slightly bent, to protect your back, raise the sledge over the shoulder that corresponds with your lead hand. This spot is the source of your greatest strength. To strike, bring the hammer down in one sharp, quick movement. When you get to the two o'clock position, allow your lead hand to guide the blow, thus letting the weight of the hammer to do most of the work.

To increase the force of the blow, simply raise your arms higher. Don't put every ounce of your strength into the down stroke as this will cause your swing to be wild. The weight of the hammer head plus the momentum you provide will be enough force to move the metal. Hitting squarely and accurately is much more important than whacking it hard. Besides, too many poorly aimed strikes distort the metal so, take your time - that chunk of metal will stay hot.

Part of the beauty of a well oiled striking team is the way they work together, seemingly without communication, striking faster or harder then suddenly ceasing all motion. The truth is the strikers are receiving signals from the lead smith through an unspoken communication. A quick, light blow by the smith with his hand hammer is a signal for the striker to use the sledge or to strike quicker. The force of the blows given by the smith's hammer indicates the force of the blow the striker is to use.



Typically, the striker is supposed to strike the work in the middle of the anvil. When this needs to be varied, the smith indicates where the sledge blows are to fall by touching the required spot with his hand hammer. If the striker's sledge is required to have a lateral motion while descending, the blacksmith indicates the same to the helper by delivering hand-hammer blows that move in the direction required for the sledge to move. If the smith delivers a heavy blow on the piece of work and a light blow on the anvil, it denotes that forceful, heavy sledge blows are required.

If there are two or more strikers, the blacksmith strikes a blow between each striker's sledge hammer blow, indicating where the sledge hammer blows are to fall. When the smith wants the sledge blows to stop, he lets his hand hammer's head fall on the anvil and continue to rebound until it ceases. This form of sign language isn't as radical as the non-verbal communication in baseball, but it's effective and entertaining none the less.

To see some amazing striking by the International Young Smiths, go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=14FwhklrgTs

Trail of Courage Living History Festival

Sept. 20-21, 2014

Fulton County Historical Society grounds 4 miles north of Rochester on US 31 and Tippecanoe River.

Help teach and demonstrate at Sutton-Terock Memorial Blacksmith Shop in the Living History Village called Loyal, Indiana, at north end by round barn and Fred Oden at his Tiosa Forge in the festival area at south end.

Food cooked over wood fires

Traditional crafts and trading,

Music & dance on two stages

Indian dances 2-3 p.m.,

Muzzleloading and tomahawk contests

Canoe rides, handicapped accessible.

Earn free admission by working 4 hours.

Admission \$7 adults, \$3 ages 6-11, free 5 & under.

Hours 10-6 Sat., 10-4 Sun.

See www.fultoncountyhistory.org or www.potawatomi-tda.org for history.

Contact 574-223-4436 or fchs@rtcol.com.

Come join the fun and fellowship!

We love blacksmiths!



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Farrel Wells *Membership Secretary*
8235 E 499 S
Dunkirk, IN 47336-8807

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