



NEWSLETTER

August 2009 Volume 2 Issue 8

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Presidents Message August 2009

July was a great meeting. Mike did a great demo, with Joe and several of the newer guys assisting. Iron in the Hat was good as usual. Participation in the open forge is pretty good. I want to congratulate Mike Lambiase on completing his Beginner. Now we only have one board member left unqualified, I won't call a name. This is an important step for anyone in the guild. It shows you have the knowledge to work at the forge safely and have the basic skills to take advantage of the skills demonstrated in the demos. I have heard a few complaints about not having a forge at home to complete the projects. The forge is open at 10:00 AM on meeting days and open for a couple of hours after the meeting. **There is no excuse for not being able to do your projects!**

We have some great classes coming up. Rusty will be teaching a sheath making class at ODU in Dianne's lab on Sat. Aug. 22. Mike Lambiase with Tim Edney's assistance will be teaching a basic knife class very soon. Tim Edney will be teaching a Novice classes in the early fall. We will have Intro and Beginner classes as we have enough interest. We are also working on other specialty classes. **Beginner is a requirement to take any other class!** As always anyone out my way is welcome anytime to come by and work on your skills or just hang out.

August 29 & 30 will be a large Demonstration in Elizabeth City. We need good quality items for the sale table. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Contact Vince Parrish for more info.

September 19 & 20 will be Heritage Days in Chesapeake also our Sept. meeting will be there on Sunday. Contact Emory Ewell for info.

Always remember if I can help give me a shout. This is your guild and your ideas and participation are very important.

Travis

Travis calls July's meeting to order



Blacksmith Interview: By Vince Nakovics

This month's interview is with a Blacksmith whose past experience and devotion to the examination of old methods of joinery make his artistic expressions very interesting. While some struggle with my favorite question of "Traditional vs. Modern" Steve Howell's works make the question seem inconsequential as the methods blend seamlessly. It is for that very reason that I am glad to present this month:

Steve Howell

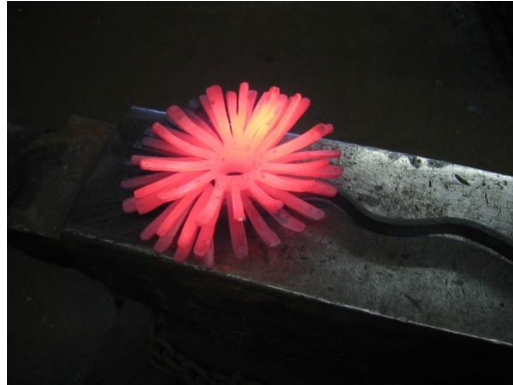
Ballard Forge

www.ballardforge.com

Seattle, WA.



Steve at work



Art Deco taking form



Gate with Organic Forms

The Beginning to the Present:

During my teen years my uncle was an assistant instructor at the local vocational school in Rochester, NY where I was training as a welder. The irony here is that in the early 80's Mr. Paley was across town laying the groundwork for the blacksmithing revolution and I was completely clueless! I had heard rumors of 'something' happening but never really knew what the fuss was about. After I moved out west my uncle abruptly passed away. At this point my Aunt told me if I wanted any of my uncle's stuff, I had to come get it. I spent every last penny I had moving 2400 lbs of welding gear, books and magazines from Rochester to Seattle. When I finally got around to looking at some of his books there was one featuring Samuel Yellin. From that moment on, I was hooked.

I toiled in obscurity for years, making the odd-ball saw blade headboard (we get BIG old saw blades out here) or (gasp) re-bar candleholder for the left-of center crowd. I had a friend who was and is an excellent hand with a cutting torch. His hot selling item was cut-out 'flaming' skull candleholders. He said to me 'Let's do the street fair' and at first I didn't take him seriously but finally bought in and that was my first taste of success.

The truth is, for years I've been told "What are you waiting for - you should go full-time". I've been on the fence for years but have seemingly kept a balance that has kept everyone happy. Smithing is literally my second full-time job after being 'The welder' at a very small bridge building firm that does some really neat projects (www.sahale.com) One of my 'problems' is that I really like building things that are on much more of a grand scale than I could ever handle by myself. I do think so many of us want to create the gates of Versailles by ourselves but the truth is, you need help! I do consider bridge-building to be somewhat of my graduate work before I strike out on my own.

It does seem the better you get at moving hot metal, the less you need to reach for the glue-gun. Obviously, the highest classes of work I try to sell are completely traditional; 100% forged, mortise and tenon, riveted, etc. If I do have to weld at all, I will carefully debate which process is best suited for the results intended. i.e.; gas welding vs. Tig, Mig vs. stick, etc. I do think the traditional methods are best suited for traditional work. What took me ten years to figure out and accept however, is that I'm a modernist. How does one get from curvy organic to angular contemporary, comfortably? I believe the artist that can bridge both realms will find success.

Tooling:

One of my favorite tools has to be any one of several veining tools I've made up. I seem to use them constantly for edging and marking-out for splits. They work really well for sheet metal but I haven't been doing as much with that lately. Favorite hammers? One of my old shopmates turned me onto the French pattern years ago. I don't know what it is about them but they seem to do everything I could ask. I started out with a 1500g. But have now switched to a 1250g. I'm also a huge fan of the old champion rounding/turning hammer pattern at roughly 2 lbs. Cliff Carroll makes a real nice one these days. My main anvil is a 450lb Trenton that came out of a Great Northern rail shop east of Seattle. Unbelievably it was sitting in a flea market for 700\$ in 2005. I also own a 140lb one-piece Hay-Budden and a 175lb Euroanvil. In the early-mid nineties I caught wind of Clay Spencer's tales of reworking old ballpiens into top tools. I don't recommend it for the novice but I've reformed some of those old heads into my favorite stamping tools; diamonds, squares, teardrops of left, right or straight for leaf work.

The Advice:

If you find out, let me know! Nah, seriously I think you do have to make the conscious decision that **YOU** are a blacksmith *not* a part-time tinkerer or wannabe and that maybe you're going to have to go hungry for it once in awhile.

The Satisfaction and The Influences:

What I try to tell potential clients is that we're creating ART here. When you can elevate a medium not typically associated with fine art to 'that level' then you have reached your goal. I feel that I'm getting closer to it all the time.

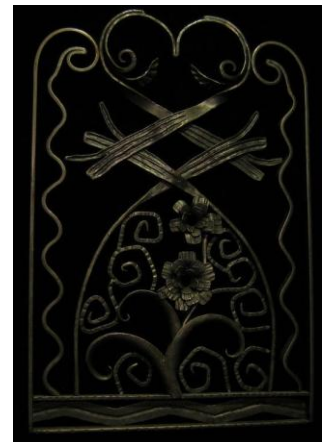
I really have to thank all the authors of every blacksmithing book I ever picked up. I devoured every piece of literature I could on the subject before I could even make the most basic object. If there were anyone that I would hope to aspire to it would probably have to be Mazzucotelli, the Italian art nouveau master. There are some things he did that spanned the modern and the ancient. Somewhere I'd like to find myself!



Railing



Roof Truss (Rivets!)



Art Deco Work

July Meeting: By Vince Nakovics

Called to order by President Travis Covington at about 1PM. 1st item Mike Lambiase will be holding a Basic Knife Forging class. This will be 2 day class and you needed to be present to sign up due to the number of people interested in taking it. So if you weren't there you missed your opportunity until next time. A reminder that in order to take any class given by TBG you must be at least Beginner qualified. Next item; Rusty is ready to hold his leather class, this class is limited to 10 members and you need to contact Rusty for the details and cost, if there is space as there was a lot of interest in this class. Beginner Certificates were handed out to Mike Lambiase, Lemuel Brown, McGregor Joyner and Annie Roche (Annie accepted with grace and charm as last month her name was spelled wrong on her certificate). Three Cheers for All!

Next Demo is in Elizabeth City August 29th & 30th. Contact Vince Parrish for details. Contact Larry Ange or Emory Ewell for details about the Heritage Arts & Civil War Days demo scheduled for September. This is always one of our biggest events, so plan on attending. We will conduct our meeting on site there and will have Franks and Burgers for those attending like we did last year. This year will be even better than last year! There will be more Re-enactors and more people in general!

Dianne has completed obtaining all of the Blacksmith Journals plus 6 more new books for the library. It only costs \$2 a month to check them out with a \$20 deposit.

Steve LaPaugh gave the Treasury Report and we are solvent, for complete details contact him directly. Steve has let it be known that he will be stepping down as the Treasurer at the beginning of January. We will need someone to pick up the open position, so anyone with any experience or who likes numbers please submit your name for election by November for the election in December 09.

All 5 of our Officers are up for election so now is your opportunity to be a part of the team that steers the way for TBG.

Tim Edney reminds us all to keep enough coal in our fires to prevent hotspots. These hotspots will cause a burnout in our firepots.

Well with 22 members present and the delicious pot luck lunch calling the meeting was adjourned!

Mike Lambiase & Joe Gentile gave a striking demo; Jesse Dalton & Evan Mack seem to be giving them lessons!



Jesse & Mike

Mike & Joe



Mike & Evan



How thick is a GAUGE?

This question always bugs me. Apparently there are several scales for the same materials, i.e. galvanized vs. uncoated, etc. two are listed below I can't say that they will be the same as the shop down the street is using, but it's a starting point. Sheet copper for roofing is measured in US ounces per square foot. I forget where I got this info, probably from my Machinery's Handbook. They are expensive new, but used ones can usually be found for \$10. The older ones have a lot of useful info in them and lots of the information is the same as in the new ones. Most times too much information for me to use. If anyone else can shed some light on this please do so.

Vince Nakovics - July30th, 2009

STEEL

10 gage	= 0.1345
11 gage	= 0.1196
12 gage	= 0.1046
13 gage	= 0.0897
14 gage	= 0.0747
16 gage	= 0.0598
18 gage	= 0.0478
20 gage	= 0.0359
22 gage	= 0.0299
24 gage	= 0.0239

Stainless

10 gage	= 0.140625
11 gage	= 0.125000
12 gage	= 0.109375
13 gage	= 0.093750
14 gage	= 0.078125
16 gage	= 0.062500
18 gage	= 0.056250
20 gage	= 0.037500
22 gage	= 0.031250
24 gage	= 0.025000

COPPER

3/16 plate	= 0.187500
1/8 plate	= 0.12500
3/32 sheet	= 0.093750
64 oz	= .08620
48 oz	= 0.0647
32 oz	= 0.0431
24 oz	= 0.0323
20 oz	= 0.0270
16 oz	= 0.0216
12 oz	= 0.0162

ABANA Conference Support Program

The 2010 ABANA Conference comes at a perilous time for the national organization and for blacksmithing as a whole. The professionals in our midst who produce high-end architectural work are barely getting by. The amateurs are also feeling the pinch as national unemployment figures hit levels not seen in 50 years. Those who are employed are cutting back on spending both just in case and to try to patch up their tattered retirement plans. But blacksmiths are resilient and inventive. They make what they can't buy and can turn their skills to many things. We adapt to circumstances and go on. So it must be with our events.

The 2010 ABANA Conference has been reshaped in order to fit with the times so that it can be a success in spite of the dark clouds overhead. First, the destination is at the geographic center of ABANA membership – this increases the probability of good attendance. Second, we are holding it at a site that permits car/tent camping and RV hook ups. Third we are not going to “bundle” the food and housing services that were a big part of previous ABANA conferences. These factors and more will hold the cost down for the majority of our members and this will support a lower ticket price. Although a price schedule hasn't been announced we are trying to keep the registration cost down, way down. Affiliates can help us keep the cost, and more importantly the risk, down so that we can create a great event at low cost to blacksmiths.

Many types of support are possible for an affiliate to provide:

- Fund the scholarship program directly by sponsoring “Iron in the Hat” expenses.
- Participate in the Ring Project or donate other auction items.
- Directly sponsor one or more of the Conference venues, demonstrators or anything else that we can acknowledge the affiliate for.
- Provide set-up, tear-down, demo site support crews. We need lots of willing hands to take on the work of putting on this conference.

All these programs allow an affiliate group to be acknowledged as supporting the conference and thereby supporting the continuation of blacksmithing in America. We are giving Affiliate groups “first dibs” at sponsoring before rolling this out to vendors so get your sponsorship in soon.

Now for additional detail on each of these programs. The opportunities and parameters vary but all contributions are welcome and will be acknowledged.

“Iron in the Hat”

Thanks to several generous donors we have secured the “big ticket” items for the raffle. However, there are still the smaller daily prizes as yet TBD and there will be miscellaneous expenses to be covered. The net proceeds of this event will fund ABANA's scholarships and grants program. Sponsorship will help defray expenses.

Note from Rome Hutchings, ABANA President:

This is a courtesy announcement requesting your help to support the John C. Campbell Folk School's New Forge Building. This building will greatly augment and strengthen the School's blacksmithing program and the legendary Francis Whitaker Blacksmith Shop. As you may know, The Whitaker Shop is one of the premiere teaching blacksmith facilities in the country. The Folk School 2009 blacksmith educational program hosts 56 classes. This is a fantastic opportunity to help and I hope that you will join in with many other ABANA members and our Affiliate Organizations and give generously!

Thanks in advance for your generosity!

John C. Campbell Folk School Fund Raiser for the New Forge Building & Francis Whitaker Blacksmith Shop Renovation

Originally designed as part of the school's farming and dairy program, today the Blacksmith Shop is well equipped with 12 forging stations. The studio sports a generous supply of hand tools, power hammers, saws, shears, grinders, drills, welders, and other equipment and supplies. A new roof and improved lighting are

recent enhancements that keep this shop one of the premiere teaching blacksmith shops in the country.

Francis Whitaker, known as the "Dean of American Blacksmiths," devoted his life to keeping the art of blacksmithing alive in this country, and the existing studio stands as his symbolic legacy. But, while blacksmithing has long been the most popular of some 50 programs the Folk School offers, the shop has suffered decades of wear and its space is no longer adequate for the size and diversity of classes such a premier program should offer.

The Folk School Board of Directors has decided that it is of the foremost priority that the School build a new Forge Building and renovate the historic Whitaker Shop. This construction will allow the School to accommodate the ever-growing blacksmithing program, ensure student safety and continue the legacy of blacksmithing in America.

About The New Forge Building Project

The John C. Campbell Folk School is proud to announce that the construction of the New Forge Building is well underway. Thanks to the Timber Framers Guild of America, the massive timber frame is up and we have begun to dry-in the structure.

The new building is located directly behind the Whitaker Shop and is connected via a short vestibule. Two historic grain silos frame the beautiful timber entrance and the clerestory roofline allows natural light to pass through into the spaces below. The fully handicap accessible building includes safe, spacious work areas that can accommodate large-scale pieces. It will also provide a "clean" area with air conditioned classrooms, a library, a center for technical, safety and design information and many more reference resources. This construction also includes the relocation of a water main and the septic system, excavation and drainage work around the site and the purchase of new equipment

This project also includes the renovation of the Whitaker Shop. The aging structure will be brought up to modern standards of comfort while retaining its historic charm. It will be completely re-wired and re-plumbed, fitted with a sprinkler system, and have improved ventilation and energy efficient windows.

Buy A Beam For the New Building!

The John C. Campbell Folk School's New Forge Building is well underway. In June 2009, members of the Timber Framers Guild, community members, students and volunteers began cutting and shaping the timbers needed to construct the building's frame. After countless hours of preparation these workers will join hundreds of hand-shaped beams and pegs to form the massive shell of our new Forge Building.

To commemorate the raising the Folk School has launched a BUY-A-BEAM campaign. We are encouraging students, organizations and community members to purchase and name the 258 beams that compose this building's frame. The Timber Framers Guild has created a 3-D map of the design that will help donors locate their beam once the building has been constructed.

Beams can be purchased for \$1000 each. If you are interested in purchasing a beam or would like more information please contact our development manager, Reed Caldwell, at (800)FOLKSCH or by email at reed@folkschool.org. By supporting this endeavor you are not only helping the Folk School build a beautiful new shop, but playing a pivotal role in the future of blacksmithing in America.

Contribute to this Important Project

Kicking off the fundraising project. Instructor Lou Mueller (right below) presented a gift of \$1,000 to Resident Blacksmith Paul Garrett. The raising event is just the beginning of this massive undertaking. Thanks to generous donations from individuals, matching funds from foundations and blacksmithing groups across the country, we are well on our way to the \$650,000 necessary to complete this project. Although we have sufficient revenue to complete the engineering, site and foundation preparation and the bare frame raising, we still need your assistance to get a roof on the frame, "dry in" the structure and get it ready for classes.

There are many ways for you to assist with this project, such as buying a beam or timber, various naming opportunities of equipment, forges, or parts of the building, and even the option of buying a floor brick that can be engraved with an individual's name, a smith's touch mark or to memorialize a friend or loved one. If you are

interested in supporting this endeavor please contact our development manager, Reed Caldwell, at (800)FOLKSCH or by email at reed@folkschool.org. For more information about this project please visit our website at www.folkschool.org or our blog at blog.folkschool.org. We hope to see you at the Folk School soon!

The John C. Campbell Folk School is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild Mission Statement

“The Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the craft of Blacksmithing and to increasing the public awareness of the history of Blacksmithing while at the same time demonstrating that in this world, things hand made still exist and remain objects of art”

2007 - 2009 TBG Officers:

President: Travis Covington	(757) 617-9174	travis@covforge.com
Vice Pres: Tom Herendeen	(757) 548-8800	twoherrons@aol.com
Treasurer: Steve LaPaugh	(757) 877-5684	slapaugh@verizon.net
Secretary: Joe Gentile	(757) 965-6878	amx-ray@cox.net

2009 – 2010 Board of Directors:

Diane deBeixedon	(757) 627-9962	ddebeixedon@cox.net
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Mike Lambiase	(757) 464-3857	mhlambiase@yahoo.com

Committee Chairs:

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Vince Parrish	snoozp@aol.com

Website::

Travis Covington	travis@covforge.net
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Scholarship:

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Librarians:

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Kaitlin deBeixedon	

Newsletter:

Vince Nakovics	restoreman123@msn.com
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Building Fund:

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Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild meets every third Sunday of the month. Location of the meeting is posted on our website: <http://www.tidewaterblacksmiths.com> .

Demonstration Schedule: See website or contact Tom Herendeen or Vince Parrish for details.

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www.blacksmithsupply.com

<http://www.yesteryearschool.com>

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