



Southern Ohio Forge and Anvil (SOFA), an affiliate of ABANA, is a nonprofit organization that was formed in 1977. Its founders, Emmert Studebaker, Larry Wood, and Bob Zeller, were inspired by ABANA and former Ohio Artists Blacksmith Association to create an organization to preserve and promote the art of blacksmithing.

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Upcoming Events

Jan 03, Tuesday 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M or 6:00 - 10:00 P.M.
Basic Blacksmithing runs for 10 weeks with 6 seats in each section

Jan 07, Saturday 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. - Monthly Meeting
Demo: TBA

Jan 21-22, Saturday and Sunday 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Folding Knife Workshop with Mike Todd

QuadState through the eyes of Raymond Devine

The weather at QuadState 2016 was post card beautiful. The annual blacksmith show was held on several summer-like days at the end of September, comfortable and relaxing for everyone who was there. And there were a lot of them — 1,283 in fact. This number of attendees set another record, pulling ahead of last year's record number.



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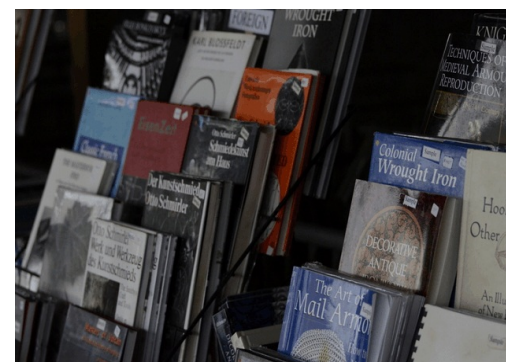
Contact Information

SHOP LOCATION:
Miami County Fairgrounds
650 N County Road 25A
Troy, OH 45373-1397, USA

MAILING ADDRESS:
Southern Ohio Forge and Anvil
P.O. Box 727
Troy, Ohio 45373

HOURS:
10am-3pm 1st Saturday of each month unless it falls on a holiday, then it is rescheduled the following Saturday.

6pm - 10pm every Wednesday (except holidays) from October through May



Normally I attend Friday and Saturday, sometimes finishing up on Sunday morning. This year I went to Troy on Thursday because a friend asked me to clear out her deceased husband's shop. It appeared a daunting request, but when Gary Ward heard about it he quickly lined up two generous members who loaded much of the shop into a van and delivered it to the Miami County fairground for me. Thank you, Steve Reedy and Joe Turner.

I set up a table and spread out the myriad tools and accessories and rigs, including an anvil, and opened for business. All this on Thursday morning. I was surprised by the amount of business that was taking place all over the grounds. I thought Friday was the big shopping day for this event, but lots of stuff changed hands on Thursday. I was soon joined by Frank Woolley, long time SOFA member, and who was also helping the family of an infirm blacksmith by disposing of his shop.



Over the three days that we sold tools and supplies, Frank and I had many hours of enjoyable conversation; and I had many more conversations with blacksmiths, both men and women, from all over the US and Canada who stopped by to look.



I was committed to selling this collection of tools but I carefully made time to watch Peter Brunner present. Peter is 28 years old and from Franconia, a city in Germany. For being just 28 years of age, he is remarkably accomplished in his metal work and equally as modest. I was able to catch chunks of his presentation when I wasn't manning my table of tools.

I started at 8am on Saturday as Peter was setting up. There was a definite feel of anticipation and curiosity about this young German presenter. Peter greeted us and then started explaining the steps involved in making his project, a bench, sharing that he wanted it to be a piece with lasting usefulness to the club at the Miami County Fairground. At one point in his remarks he said, "45 degrees is at the heart of this project." I eyed the pile of steel on the floor, dominated by many long pieces of $\frac{3}{4}$ " by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", plus other pieces of flat stock. Suddenly it was apparent that this accomplished and modest young man spoke like an artist with leanings toward architecture.



Peter introduced his team of assistants, Roy Adams, Ben Beckett and Andrew Michalek. And no surprise, Steve Reedy and Joe Turner were in the background, helping too. Peter was obviously confident of his crew and now, at this juncture and throughout the project, he carefully

walked his helpers through the operation. The roar of two gas forges made hearing a little difficult, on the other hand, I was able to focus on the measured, sure steps of each member of the team as they all worked in harmony.

As the heating time was lengthy for each long piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " X $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", Peter shared a number of ideas and tips with us. At one point he discussed a facet of hammering, why the smith should bring the hammer back up himself instead of letting it rebound on its own: it results in greater hammer control, more accuracy, and fewer wasted blows. At another pause in the project he informed the audience how critical it is to start hammering as soon as the work piece comes out of the fire. He added that every second of delay means the formability of the piece diminishes. "Strike while the iron is hot" is an old saying we've all grown up with.



I felt fortunate that during Peter's Thursday preparations he took the time to talk with me. He spoke of his hometown in Germany and of the schooling he went through. He mentioned with some pride the very first tool he made as a class project. It finished up so well that his teacher exclaimed, "It looks as if it came out of a catalog".

I looked over the table full of tools that he had made for this project, and I was impressed. He had made all of these tools since he arrived in the U.S. just days before. He laughingly said "the airline would not permit me to carry all this steel in my luggage". There were tools to index from for accurate bending and drilling, tools made up of several pieces of steel with very precise welds, and finally a real gem, a long handled bending tool. It was simply beautiful. Made of three pieces of thick steel, with a textured handle, each piece was identically upset in two locations down the length and then the upsets were drilled for bolts. It was square and true and perfect. That's Peter's style, his method, to be precise and take care in all things.

I didn't get to watch any of Sunday's presentation; I wish I had. You can learn so much by watching how another person approaches the job. Here was a blacksmith that never learned to rush. It's true he could hurry on occasion; but Peter was never slapdash, never tried to "beat the clock" on a job. At one point, he summed up his whole attitude for me by saying, "sometimes it's better to give it another heat than to force the metal".

For days following QuadState I began to wonder why, after so many years of delightful annual meetings, typically when other conferences/meetings begin to flatten in appeal, or shrink in numbers, why does QuadState thrive so? I think it is because it is so sustaining. It's well planned, there's no doubt; and the offerings and presenters are professional, interesting and execute well. But more, more than the tool searches and opportunity to learn, the existence of this club and its annual show provides sustenance for our blacksmith spirit. We all share the focus of metal work; and maybe because of that shared focus, conversation comes easy to each of us. Moreover, the vein of generosity in each of us surfaces easily at the same time. Through our conversation, our experience and passion for this work are sometimes shared with people we never met before, problems are discussed, and solutions are suggested. It seems pretty near ideal, pretty harmonious. That's why you'll see me next year.

Raymond Levine



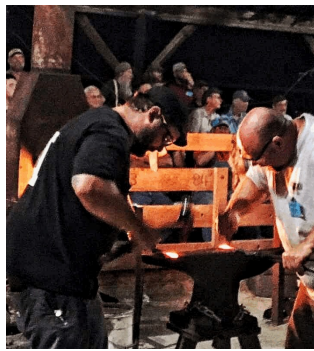
FORGING COMPETITION

As always, this QuadState featured a forging competition. Each pair of blacksmiths were allotted 20 minutes to complete a trivet.





"QuadState finds. Top to bottom, a 20 lb unmarked English anvil, a 44 lb late Mouse Hole, and a 120 lb Trenton from the first year of production in America."
--Joel Worley



"Two of my good friends got volunteered to participate in the Blacksmithing Competition Saturday night at the SOFA Blacksmithing event."
"Pictured are Colin Fung and Jeff McCrady working as a team, forging a trivet in only 20 minutes! It was really fun."
--Theodore Banning



DEMONSTRATOR FININ LIAM CHRISTIE



What a really AMAZING QuadState --- so much fun, so many great people and art."
--Macabee Metals



"Just landed at Charlotte Airport in North Carolina, nearly home. Here are a few photos that were taken of my blacksmith demonstration at Ohio USA."
--Finin Liam Christie

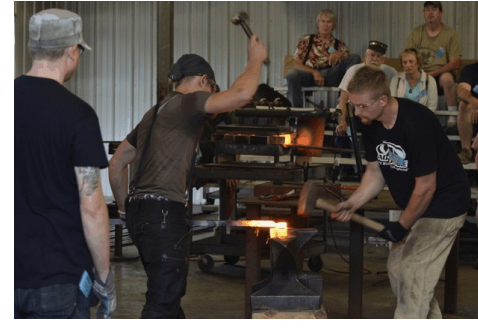


"Excellent demonstrators today at SOFA. Finin Liam Christie (Ireland); Peter Brunner (Bavaria); and Heather and Kevin (South Africa)."
--Mark Yoder



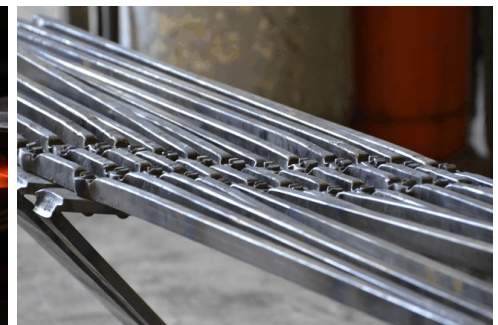
"Another Great QuadState."
--Charles Hughes





DEMONSTRATORS
KEVIN & HEATHER

DEMONSTRATOR
PETER BRUNNER



THIS YEAR'S GALLERY

Article and Photos by Kristi Kloss



Without a doubt, the Gallery is one of the top attractions at QuadState and to think I missed it my first time; I was already overwhelmed by the demonstrations and vendors...you mean there's more?! Seven years in, it's become my domain as curatorial puzzle mistress. Like everyone else, I look forward to it too. Not only do I get to see what you have brought to share,

I also have the task of putting the pieces together into a cohesive presentation. While I get compliments, they really belong to you, so keep up the good work.

And the winner is... Amongst this year's crop of good work, awards went to: Youths Marigold Nowak, Benjamin Lockhart, and Alex Connor; Cutting Edge artisans Scott Lankton, David Dela Gardelle, and Joel Worley; and Pete Braspenninx,



Pat Livengood, and Darla Selander in the Open category. Due to the positive response we've gotten about The Peoples' Choice Award, we had an official SOFA ribbon created for it. This year marked the first dual win where the same work took both a place award and the Peoples' Choice Award.

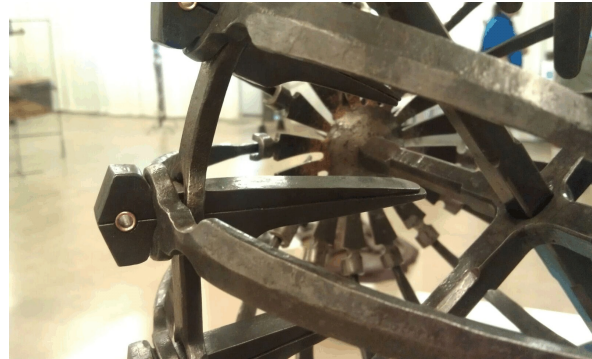
Congrats to Pete whose sculpture *There Is Nothing New Under the Sun* earned him both the juried and popular votes plus two snazzy blue ribbons!



Oh, Feature, where art thou? Whether you're planning to make a custom item or you're dying to see what everyone entered, from the release of the next Round-Up's theme to 5pm on that Friday in late September, many QuadState attendees look forward to this special section of the annual exhibit. Trying to figure out how to apply the "International" motif to the

Gallery posed enough of a challenge that we decided to omit it this year. Since

I've been volunteering in the Gallery, this was the first time we did not have a Feature and man, was it missed. Not only were there significantly fewer works entered than usual, I received a number of inquiries about it for next year. To be sure we endure only one feature-fallow year, Gary and the Board decided to plant the seed early.... the overall theme for 2017 is "Roots."



The upshot of the sans-feature void was that we had plenty of floor space to accommodate some rather large pieces. Among them were Brad Weber's Indian motorcycle, Darla Selander's *Apple Tree*, a couple of sizable screens/grilles, and Broadus Thompson's giant bellows, for which he won award as

Novice. Paying homage to our South African demonstrators, Director Emeritus Larry Wood dazzled visitors with his varied and extensive collection of traditional African pieces.



We were also able to grant a fair amount of real estate to honor 2016 Ohio Heritage Fellow Barry Wheeler with his own special area in the front of the Gallery. Accompanying the display of many of Barry's inspiring and award-winning pieces was the commemorative plaque he received during a Friday night presentation by Kathy Signorino of the Ohio Arts Council. Congratulations, Mr. Wheeler!

This article would not be complete without thanking my gallery crew: Terry Brower, Harlan Hansson, Dalton Worley, Toby, Franco Ruffini, and all those who make it happen before we get there. Special thanks to Steve Roth for cards, signage, and local liaising.

