

SOFA

Sounds



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.



Quadstate 2014

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Larry Wood
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Director Emeritus
Frank Woolley
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Upcoming Events

Mar. 7, Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting

March 21 or 22, Sat or Sun 9:00 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Hammer Making Workshop with Nathan Robertson

Cost is \$100.00 with room for 12 students each day.

Apr. 11, Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting

May 2, Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting

Sept. 25-27, Friday - Sunday

QUADSTATE CONFERENCE

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Contact Information

SHOP LOCATION:

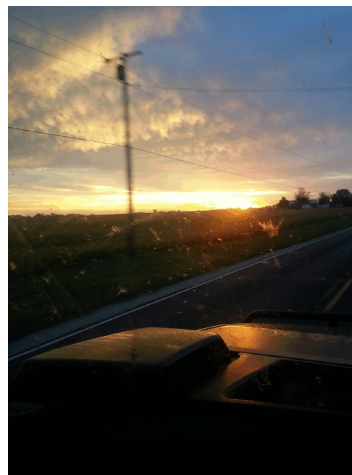
Miami County Fairgrounds
650 N County Road 25A
Troy, OH 45373-1397, USA

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



Mike Roberts and Brian Thompson have been working so hard on the early preparations, and I understand they have quite a grand event planned for you!

Gary Ward, *President*

President's Corner

This picture was taken as I was driving to the opening day of Quadstate 2014. It was a beautiful sunrise and an indication of the beginning of another great Quadstate.

The event was perfect in every way including the presence of all the people who came to visit with us and share the past year's experiences.

It's always good to spend time with each one of you and see your work that you have brought to the gallery to show everyone.

Thank you to everyone for taking time out of your busy schedules to come and spend a few days with us. We look forward to visiting with you at QS 2015.

A Moment with Roy the Editor

Hello Fellow Blacksmiths,

It's that time of year again after QuadState, where pocketbooks are empty and anticipation for the tools that were bought are held high. Hope all who attended had a great time, and all you slackers who couldn't make it — better luck next year.

I imagine most of you spent a lot of time this past fall out in your shops, forging on presents for your families. 2014 was a good year to me, and I hope it was for all of you out there as well. December was my busiest yet as a blacksmith, and I found myself forging everything from a copper hearth plate to lots and lots and lots of hooks!

I hope you had a very Merry Christmas and your new year is off to a good start!

I welcome input from members. Feel free to write an article and email it to me at christcenteredforge@yahoo.com. Also, you can let me know if you find any other interesting tidbits related to blacksmithing, or if you have something for sale to put in the classifieds.

Keep those forge fires going!

Roy Adams, *Editor in Chief*



QuadState through the eyes of Raymond Devine

I had to choose carefully this year for one day to spend at Quad State, the foremost blacksmith show in the US. It is put on by Southern Ohio Forge & Anvil in Troy, Ohio. Normally I indulge myself when going to Quad State, treating it as a three or four day mini-vacation. Some years I start with the enthusiastic Thursday set up, followed by the grand Friday night kick off and then a day-and-a-half of hard-to-choose presenters of the arcane and ancient trade of metal work.

So, I chose my single day (thus ensuring familial peace). My friend and I arrived at the Miami County Fairgrounds in Troy on a late September Friday morning. I carefully drove through topography jam packed with tailgaters and vendors of endless variety. It's true what they say; this event grows in size each year. And things were really humming on this beautiful Fall day. Plenty of foot traffic moved along both sides of fairground roads, inquiring eyes checking out the good goods.



Everywhere I looked I could see the relaxed posture of buyers and sellers. Prices were asked and answered, sometimes followed with a quiet counteroffer, possibly a wee bit more palaver, and then, maybe happily for both, that mutual nod of agreement. It was 9:00 in the morning by my watch. Bustle and enterprise all around and the conference didn't formally start for another 11 hours!

We parked the car, got registered, got name badges, and then joined the crowds looking to buy. Prior to this meet and after hours of considering and reconsidering I had finally set a budget for purchases I could make. Well, I blew through that figure in the first three stops. But who's counting? This assembly of products and sellers and buyers is unique in the country.



The attendance hovers around 975, plus or minus, every year. Hard to say if there's one ultimate draw for its continued success. I suspect it is the whole bundle; nearly a thousand people gathered and sharing an interest in metal work; the knowledge to be gained from watching experts working hot metal with their individual style; and finally, those same experts so willing to share what they've learned through their years with hammer, heat and anvil.

As the evening wore on I headed to the barn where the kickoff would start. As 8 o'clock drew near, the Rambling Rovers, an easy sounding trio, entertained the gathering crowd waiting for the start of the show.



The headliner for Friday night this year was Patrick Nowak. He is obviously filled to the brim with knowledge about metal and alloys. His knowledge base includes a very practical understanding of the way to make metals transform through applying heat and hammer. He agreeably talked as he was getting ready for his demonstration; positioning the forge and power hammer, conferring with helpers, placing anvil and laying out tools. He put me in mind of a surgeon getting ready.

Patrick brought an anvil that may have been the largest I have ever seen. It weighed over 1,000 pounds. He built it himself and reckoned that he spent about 200 hours doing it. That led to describing his shop at home. His attitude was that it's nothing special.

Well, his shop has this thousand pound anvil plus a Bradley 300 pound power hammer. Not really like everyone's shop out behind their house, but kind of similar, in a distant sort of way. I told him I thought it remarkable that he had a real big Bradley hammer all to himself. He doesn't think it is so remarkable. He said with a laugh that he knows four other blacksmiths with the identical hammer.



It turns out Patrick does a fair amount of exploring and problem solving related to his daytime work at this home shop in the evening. For the past eleven years Patrick has worked in Wisconsin for Scott Forging.

Patrick's job title is metallurgical engineer and he's a proud believer in the quality steel products his company makes. His daily effort reads like a grocery list; responsibilities touch on forging, employee training, and heat treating plus he regularly audits steel suppliers to see that their products correctly match Scott's specifications. And he spends hours in his home shop so he will also understand the material the same way as his fellow employees on the forging line. Bottom line, Patrick cares about getting it right.

Patrick pulled the very hot, almost yellow, cylinder from the forge placing it in a jig of his design and then invited SOFA Board Directors, one by one, to swing a heavy sledge and so begin the forging process.

Blow by blow, each member of the board tried their hand at striking the hot metal. Slowly, the chunk of metal transformed into the coveted 14 lb. sledge hammer head. Although I was not able to stay for the entire demo, the portion I did attend was another awesome opening ceremony demonstration.

You should have been there --- It was awesome 😊

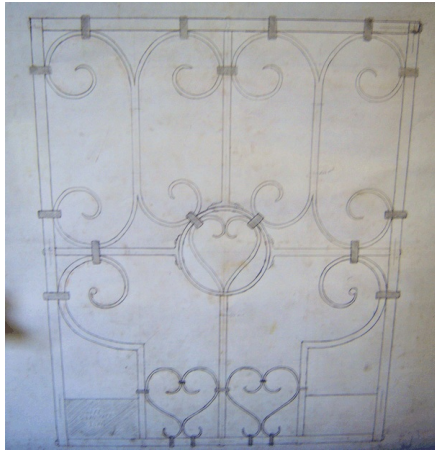
Raymond Devine
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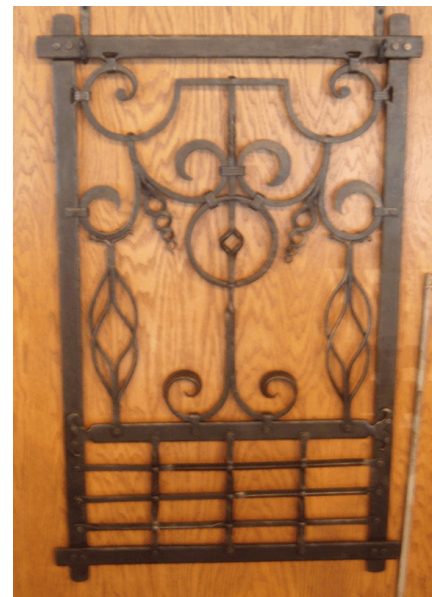
Heather McLarty and Jan Aijian



Clay Spencer and Dave Custer



Dan Nickels and Derrick Bliss



Mace Vitale and Sam Salvati



Quadstate

2014 Demonstrators

Patrick Nowak

Patrick was first exposed to blacksmithing during an elementary school field trip to Sauder Village where Michael Bendele was the resident blacksmith. That experience stuck with him and in 1997 with a group of blacksmiths around Columbus, Ohio, he began building his own equipment and began forging both carbon steel and damascus blades. He credits that time as "building great friendships, learning a ton and creating fantastic memories." After graduating from Ohio State University in 2001 with a degree in Metallurgical Engineering, and working at Timken and then Scott Forge, he was able to apply his experiences and metallurgical skills to large industrial forgings. In 2006 he took a power hammer class taught by Steve Parker and found new ways to think about metal --- "not just creating the desired shape, but also doing it in a way that will produce the performance characteristics required by the application."

Patrick's current work in his home shop is focused largely on mokume gane for the cutlery and luxury goods industries, and he feels this has brought him back to an early original interest in forging laminated metals. The challenges of forging this particular material, controlling patterns and achieving very close dimensional tolerances, gives Patrick the opportunity to combine his passion for understanding the materials and precise control of the forging process. He feels all these work experiences have allowed him to become a more effective teacher when training people in metallurgical concepts. Patrick has found the teaching/mentoring role to be very satisfying and always looks forward to sharing his knowledge and skills with others.

Patrick's challenge this time will be directing the SOFA Board of Directors in hand forging a large striking hammer for the Friday evening demonstration.

John King

John has been blacksmithing for over 30 years. He first learned his craft as a volunteer at Ohio Village Historic Site working in traditional 1860 methods. He works in his own hobby blacksmith shop and does demonstrations at various sites and venues including county fairs and heritage functions and still continues his work at the Ohio Village site from time to time.

John has always enjoyed teaching new blacksmiths using traditional methods and creating functional and ornamental pieces. He has been a member of SOFA for 20 plus years and will be conducting beginning, hands-on instruction in the U-forge area.

Heather McLarty and Jan Aijian

Heather's joy and passion lies in transforming industrial materials into soulful sculptures using fire, anvil and hammers as well as mind, body and heart. Hot forging, chasing and repousse, and welding and fabrication allows her to transform steel, copper, bronze and aluminum into tactile, organic sculptures. Her studio is actually located in a large Sioux-style tipi at her home in the Highland Park area of Los Angeles, California.

Heather's early training was as a theatre technician - working in prop shops she often found herself being the only one who knew how to weld. Over the last 20 plus years she has established herself as a well-known artist and craftsman and her work has been selected for public parks and national art exhibitions. In addition, her gates, railings and other architectural pieces adorn many fine homes around the country. Heather found a special affinity for sheet work, particularly repousse and high relief chasing. After winning a Bedayn grant in 2005 she spent several transformational weeks in the Czech Republic and studied Louis XVI ornament and tooling with the master blacksmith, Alfred Habermann. As she has improved her own skills she feels it is very important to pass them on to others. At QuadState this year she will be directing Jan Aijian demonstrating high relief and chasing in copper.

Fine art was Jan's focus in the late 80's while in college, but as a young mother of three, art had to take a back seat until she was in her late 40's. After enrolling in a sculptural welding class she found metal was her medium of choice and was encouraged by Mark Aspery to attend a blacksmith conference, and, as Jan puts it, "she found her tribe."

Jan became interested in repousse and chasing after taking several workshops with Heather. Then after watching Alfred Habermann work on a large sheet of copper she was 'awe struck' and had to try her hand on a small piece of copper. She describes herself as "a race horse let out of the gates!" Currently she draws her inspiration from Ugo Serrano and is intent on continuing to raise her own level of craftsmanship and artistry in this medium.

Clay Spencer and Dave Custer

Clay has been a long time and frequent guest and contributor to SOFA events. We welcome Clay again to help us in sharing his teaching expertise, general knowledge of metalworking and the art of blacksmithing. Clay attended Auburn University and worked for Marshall Space Flight Center, NASA on the Space Shuttle Program. Since 1987 when he first began to blacksmith, Clay has built an illustrious reputation for his many contributions to his craft.

Some of his many accomplishments include: Redesigning the ABANA treadle hammer, leading numerous workshops and demonstrations regarding the use of tire hammers and tooling and for many years has taught at the John C. Campbell Folk School. Francis Whitaker personally requested him to take over his class at John C. Campbell upon his retirement. Clay has also served on the Folk School and ABANA boards and was awarded the first Joe Humble Newsletter Editor Award, the Bealer Award, Life Membership in ABANA and two affiliates. Clay and Dave will be forging a 24" x 30" grill section that will include half-troughs, rivets and collars.

Dave began blacksmithing when he was 13 and what started out only 9 years ago as a 'goofy looking fab-shop version of a brake drum forge, an old champion #40 hand-crank blower, a small 4-nch post vise and a little 89 pound Trenton' has now developed into the Fiery Furnace Forge Blacksmith LLC - a bustling and crowded 720 square foot shop located in Columbia, Kentucky.

At the age of 18 he started taking classes at the John C. Campbell Folk School where his instructors included Jerry Darnell, Greg Price, Mark & Mindy Gardner, Steve Williamson and, of course, Clay Spencer. Spending time with Brian Brazeal in Mississippi also had a great influence on his forging style.

Dave was a member of the Young Smiths 2012 forging team, spending 30 days traveling the mid west demonstrating at the ABANA conference and teaching at different blacksmith venues. 2013 was the first year Dave had attended QuadState and he won the forging competition, and over the past year he has assisted Clay Spencer with teaching several classes.

Dan Nickels and Derrick Bliss

Dan owns and operates Black Rock Forge "Where the Impossible is Common-place". For over 30 years he has designed and forged custom railings, tables, gates, arbors, garden benches and fireplace screens and tools for both commercial and private clients. Dan honed his skills under such Master Smiths as the late Francis Whitaker and the internationally renowned Bert Johansson of Sweden. He travels extensively to Europe and studies construction and design of Old World ironwork. In that style he concentrates on making sure his forgings are sure and true and is resolved to hammer and temper functional pieces into timeless works of art.

Derrick discovered blacksmithing at the age of 9 and has been hooked ever since. He gives great credit to his grandfather Ron Loveland, his stepfather, the Michigan Artists Blacksmith Association and the Northwest Ohio Blacksmiths for helping him foster his interest and talents. He has also attended classes at John C. Campbell Folk School numerous times and in 2013 travelled with Dan to Stia, Italy to attend the European Biennial of the Blacksmith and compete in the

2013 World Forging Championships. Derrick finds inspiration in the work of Samuel Yellin, Otto Schmirler, Fridolin Wolf and all European architectural ironwork.

Derrick currently works at north Actron Steel and at Black Rock Forge in Traverse City, Michigan as well as creating items at his own shop in Ida, Michigan. His personal projects range from candle holders and coat racks to railings and benches. His largest project to date was assisting Dan at Black Rock Forge where they created and installed 400 feet of decorative railing and other accents for a chateau-style home in West Bay in Traverse City.

Their demonstration will exhibit the European influence and approach to architectural applications today.

Mace Vitale and Sam Salvati

Mace worked in his family's concrete business specializing in architectural reproduction until its closure in the mid 90's at which time he stumbled upon a position with a coppersmith making garden sculptures. As he says, "the effect on me was less than subtle - I was hooked!" After taking a blacksmithing class at a local craft center, he drove 1600 miles to attend the ABS "Introduction to Blade Smithing" class in 2001 and has been studying and making knives ever since. In 2006 Mace tested, and succeeded in passing the ABS Journeyman Smith qualifications.

He prides himself on attention to detail and feels the only way to truly garner a customer's satisfaction is through his own satisfaction. He fashions every knife he makes as if it will be his own and is always reminded of his Pop's words to him - "ain't nothin' more useless than a dull knife or a short piece of rope."

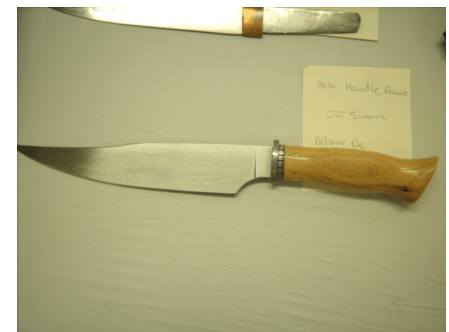
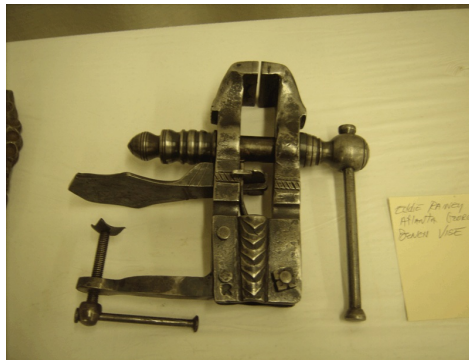


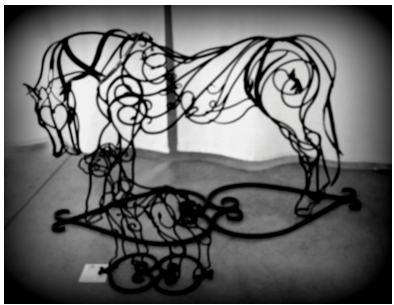
Sam Salvati has been a student of blacksmithing since he was a teenager and is currently the Head Blacksmith at the Baltimore Knife and Sword Co. He studied as an apprentice under Blacksmith Payne Junker.

And, unlike Mace, Sam is a man of few words! We expect their demonstration on knives and the cutting edge to be both entertaining and educational.

This year's Gallery









Intern Wanted

Roy Adams is looking for an intern in the Dayton, Ohio area. Looking for someone who is dedicated. In exchange intern will receive blacksmith tutoring. No pay involved, just exchange of knowledge for help. Hours are flexible. Basic blacksmithing skills required.

Call Roy Adams at (937) 397-7392.

Bob Cruikshank's Tool Emporium

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Blacksmithing Courses

Touchstone Center for Crafts located in Farmington, PA. Offers weekly blacksmithing courses from knife-making to ornamental iron-work classes from spring to fall.

www.touchstonecrafts.org



With Doug Lockhart

SOSB (Southern Ohio School of Blacksmithing) is located in Logan, Ohio. Tuition cost for an eight hour class is \$150 per person, discounts available for more than one person per household and veterans. Tuition covers materials and lunch as well. Classes offered in beginning and intermediate blacksmithing. Call (740) 380-6816 or email berta33603@gmail.com to find out class schedule and to register.


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