

# SOFA Sounds

Vol.III Issue2

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Southern Ohio Forge & Anvil

Jan.-Feb., 2004

SOFA

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*Late February  
found the club-  
house hot with ac-  
tivity as many  
members partici-  
pated in the annu-  
al treadle hammer  
workshop*

*Our February demon-  
strator was Brian  
Thompson who made  
a distinctive doorstep  
and a bottle opener  
that was easily made*



*Charles Collins visit-  
ed the Country of  
Bahrain and found  
the ancient art alive  
and well and still a  
major part of the  
community*

## Editor's Corner

*Jeff Morrison, Contributing Editor, SOFA Sounds*

This issue I would like to pay homage to my assistant Editor. He is my black Lab and we call him T. It used to be Tia because when we got him we thought he was a girl. He came from a large litter and we got him mixed up with one of his sisters. By the time we discovered his true gender, he had won our hearts and we couldn't part with him. Anyway, I wanted to thank T for all his help with this newsletter as well as all my other endeavors. He is the perfect critic. I ask him, "what do you think T?" and he will sit up and wag his tail. He supervises my forge work and was invaluable when I painted my house 2 years ago. He is always around to watch me do the yard work. He is



an excellent supervisor because he never says anything, he just wags his tail in agreement. He only wants to please me. He gets my paper every morning no matter how cold, rainy, or snowy it is. He keeps the grandkids away from the road and cleans up all their left over food (even that which is still stuck to their faces) and all he ever expects in return is an occasional bacon treat and my friendship.

Like a lot of us, T is getting older and doesn't get around as well as he used to but he still does the things he enjoys as we all should. We should always

make time for the people, places and things we love be it the forge, garden, workshop or wherever.

## *The Sofa Organization*

Southern Ohio Forge & Anvil (SOFA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, enhancing and protecting the art of Blacksmithing. We are a chapter of the Artists Blacksmiths Association of North America.

SOFA is governed by a seven member Board of Directors that meets once a month in conjunction with the monthly club meeting.

Unless otherwise noted, the monthly club meetings are held on the first Saturday of every month starting at 1:00 pm. The clubhouse is located near the North entrance of the Miami Co. Fairgrounds in Troy, Ohio.

Dues are \$10.00 per year and includes 6 issues of the SOFA Sounds newsletter and access to club forging facilities.

Members are encouraged to bring guests and anyone with an interest in the forging of metal and the tooling to make items out of steel will find our meetings most interesting. It must be understood by all that blacksmithing and the tools and methodologies involved with its practice can be dangerous and basic safety rules apply at all SOFA functions. Eye and ear protection must be worn when viewing or participating in blacksmithing.

***Any articles relating to metalworking past and present will be welcomed by the editor for publication in SOFA Sounds. Old clippings and pictures will be handled with utmost care and personally returned to the owner. Contact Jeff Morrison, Editor, SOFA Sounds, 17483 St. Rt. 161 W, Plain City, Oh 43064, (614) 873-1888, Jjmorrison5@cs.com.***

# February Demonstrator

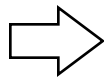
## Brian Thompson

*Photos and Story by jeff morrison*



← *Brian makes a lot of small, easily-made items that he gives away as gifts to family and friends. Here is a bottle opener made from a piece of 1/4" square stock. The curl can open a bottle and the flat end can pop a can tab.*

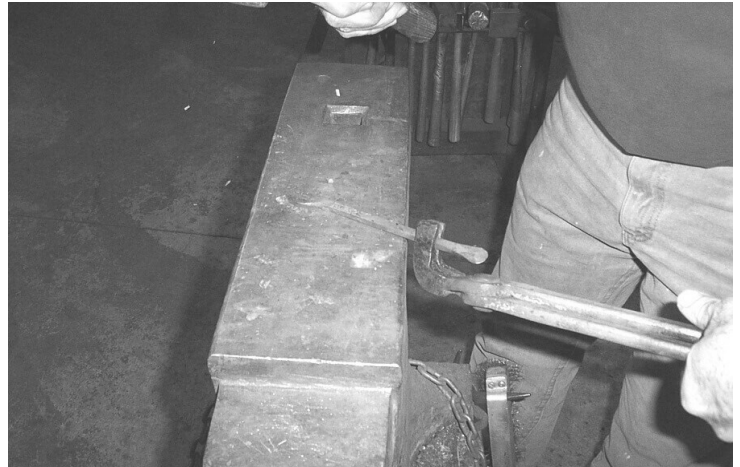
*Brian also made a nice, decorative door stop out of 3/8 round stock. Brian turned the scroll on this one free-hand but has a jig for production work. I made one like it when I got home for my office door at work.*



## February Demo cont.

*Brian starts with a piece of 1/4" square about 6" long and flattens both ends.*

*One end will serve as the can tab lifter and the other will be curled for the bottle opener*



*Brian then twists the piece up pretty tight. Brian always wire brushes the piece after each operation to keep from pounding scale into his work.*

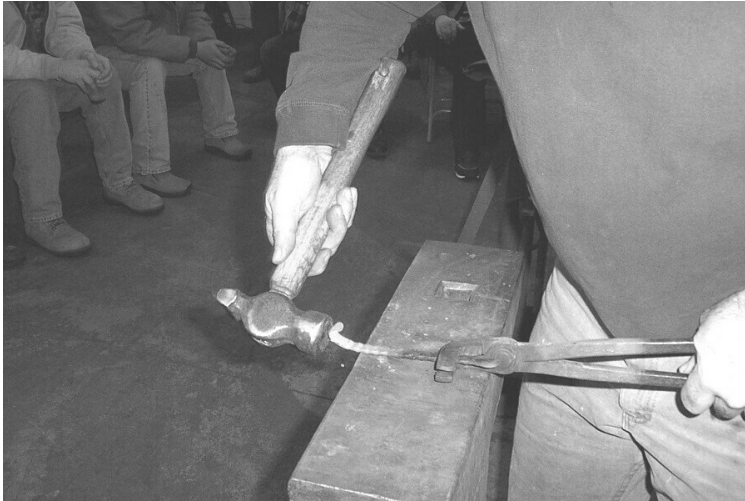


*After twisting the piece and cleaning it up a bit, Brian then flattens the whole twist until the thickness is about an eighth inch. This gives the piece the appearance of having ridges at the sides which will make the recipient wonder how it was done!*





## February Demo cont.



On one end of the piece, Brian rolls up a nice little curl for the bottle opener. Someone asked if the curl would bend when used since it is mild steel and Brian replied that it was plenty strong enough

Brian then folds over the piece so that the bottle opener end is about 2/3 of the way up to the other end. A spacer of 3/16" flat stock is placed in the center so the piece can be put on a belt loop as well as carried in the pocket



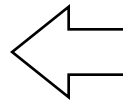
For the doorstop project Brian Starts by tapering a piece of 3/8" x 14" mild steel round stock. A small, tight curl is put on the end of the taper

## February Demo cont.

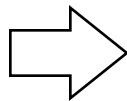


*Using a pair of home-made scroll tongs, Brian rolls up a nice scroll on the end after the curl.*

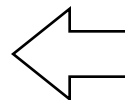
*Brian did this one by hand but he uses a scroll form for production work.*



*Brian's scroll jig for faster production of the doorstops. It is in the shape of a spiral to facilitate the bending and the scroll is flattened on the anvil.*

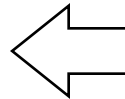
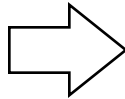


*After the scroll is formed, the other end is flattened and then the flattened end is curled up.*



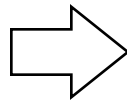
## February Demo cont.

*The piece is then folded over .*



*The fold is hammered flat and the curled end is raised to form the “tang” that holds the door with the scroll flat on the floor.*

*A nice little piece everyone can make. This would make a nice gift as well as being a good seller at craft shows.*



# *Blacksmiths of Bahrain*

## *Pictures & Story by Charles Collins*

### **Blacksmiths of Bahrain**

During June of 2003 I was very fortunate to have an opportunity to visit with a group of working blacksmiths in the country of Bahrain. I traveled to Bahrain as an instructor on a mobile education team from the organization I work for at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. Although my work has taken me to many countries over the years, I did not have the appreciation of blacksmithing that I now have, thanks to SOFA's excellent programs. Thus, upon arriving in Bahrain I was determined to see if I could locate a local Bahrain blacksmith shop.

### **The "Haddad"**

When I am teaching, in order to build rapport with my students, I often discuss hobbies with them. Thus, the subject of blacksmithing was introduced. I was somewhat surprised when they did not seem to understand the English term, *blacksmith*. They seemed to understand goldsmith, or silversmith, but not *blacksmith*. After some discussion and explanation of the working of *black iron*, they told me the Arabic word for blacksmith was pronounced *haddad*.

### **Full Time, Working Blacksmiths**

So, finally, on the first day that I was not teaching or getting ready to teach, I managed to get off by my self and go look for the *haddad*. I pulled into an area of tin walled and roofed work shops that were definitely isolated from other businesses. Got out of the car and could immediately smell a very familiar aroma. Not quite like the smell of burning coal and coke at SOFA, but similar. As it turned out, they don't use coal but use charcoal instead.

There were about a dozen shops, all connected in a long row. I started walking past the shops, not knowing if I would be allowed to visit or not. And, that is when I started to see the differences in how they work compared to blacksmithing in the U.S.

### **Fascinating Differences**

So what were the differences between blacksmithing in Bahrain and the U.S? As you can see in the following pictures, the differences were quite profound. First of all, the anvil is not mounted on top of a piece of stump or other platform. The anvil is simply down at ground level. And, the forge is also at ground level. So where then is the blacksmith standing? Simple, down in a pit. In fact there may be a second pit on the other side of the anvil. Thus the blacksmith standing in the pit has his work at proper height.

I tried to find out how this setup evolved but to no avail. I was explaining to the Bahrain smiths



## *Blacksmiths of Bahrain, cont.*

how we put our anvil up on a piece of tree stump, when it occurred to me that there simply aren't any extra tree stumps laying around in Bahrain. In fact, there are absolutely no trees in Bahrain except those that have been planted, either as landscaping or for the harvesting of date palms.

Most of the forges were simple setups of metal drums used as the hood to evacuate the smoke and the fire pot just earth or stone. All of the forges seemed to have forced air coming from piping leading from an electric blower.

There was a wide variety of anvils being used. Some of the more interesting ones were simple square, flat anvils.

### **So what were they making?**

Items that were being made in the shops ranged from boat anchors to bits for air drills, grills for windows, doors, air conditioners, etc. Probably the greatest volume of items being made were simple metal fixtures that would be embedded in the typical masonry wall construction. All building construction is masonry in Bahrain. There is no wood framing at all – remember, no trees. So, wood is only used for interior finishing trim. Thus, mounting brackets for shelving winds up being a custom made metal fixture done by your friendly Bahrain blacksmith shop.



A window grill

*Editor's note,*

*This is a small part of an excellent article written and photographed by Mr. Collins. For a full version of this fascinating story, go to our web site at [sofasounds.com](http://sofasounds.com) or see me to view the discs of the article and pictures. Many thanks to Charles for this article*



Boat Anchors

*Treadle Hammers, Treadle Hammers and more Treadle Hammers. Photos by Jeff Koonz*



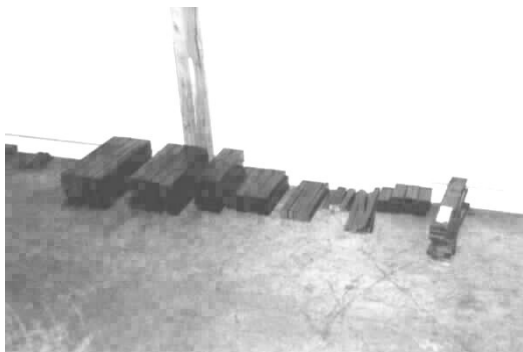
The steely gaze of workshop coordinator Bob Cruikshank.



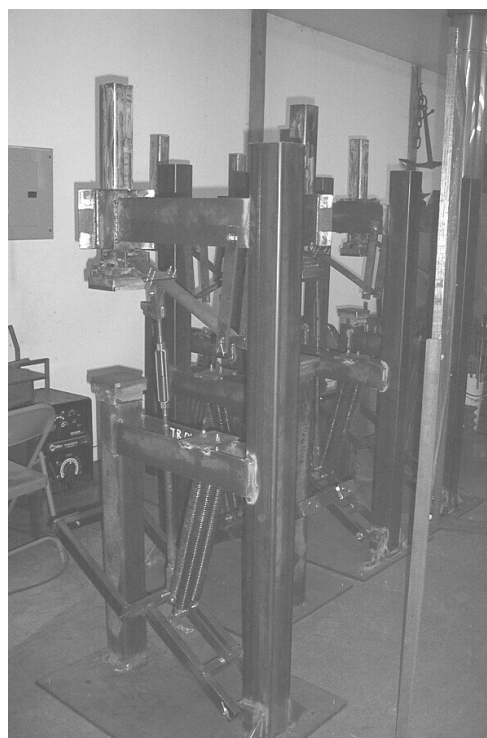
Frank Woolley asks: "Is this where it goes?"



All lined up and ready to go!



Pieces and parts before welding and assembly



A classic in-line hammer!

# *ABANA President's Letter*

## *March, 2004*

President's Letter

March, 2004

Dear ABANA Affiliates,

There are only four more months until ABANA's big biennial event starts in Richmond, Kentucky. In fact, as I write this, Board Member/Conference Chair Dave Koenig is on the conference site at Eastern Kentucky University with key conference members going over final details/locations and eliminating all possible snafus! Yes, there will be LOTS of last minute items to cover, but Dave's crew is mightily trying to eliminate all possible problems!

I ask your help in handling the rest of any problems that might occur. ABANA is an organization of volunteers. Board members, of whom I am VERY PROUD, volunteer a tremendous amount of time to your organization, but the conference is every member's opportunity to help the artist- blacksmithing community!

How, you say? GLAD YOU ASKED! Well, first let us review some of what it takes to make the conference happen. Dave's last progress report lists:

- 1- Individuals with specific area responsibilities: 20+
- 2- Honored guests: 6
- 3- Demonstrators: 18 / 19
- 4- Teaching stations / programs: 11
- 5- Station setup/ oversight: 27+
- 6- Gallery/ auction/ tailgate: 13

And this is just a start! Because YOU are needed too! First, register to attend now. If you are not there, you will not have the opportunity to come away with the new ideas every conference offers! This is reason enough for anybody! You will also miss the networking that comes when artists from around the world gather in one place. A new idea /technique sparked by other's work in demonstrations, galleries, etc. will not find its way into your future works. And maybe, most importantly, you'll miss the fun of participating with so many other blacksmith volunteers.

Secondly, the aforementioned list of approximately 80 volunteers and is just a small part of the membership that it takes to do all the tasks at the conference. So I am asking you to not only attend, but also look for a way to make the conference better because of your efforts. If you are willing to roll up your sleeves, contact Bob Fredell, Volunteer Coordinator, and become an "official volunteer". Bob can be reached at (763) 389-5119 C.S.T. or via email [fredell@sherbtel.net](mailto:fredell@sherbtel.net)

Hope to see you there! And I am looking forward to meeting you and saying "Hello"!

Don Kemper  
ABANA President

# *ABANA President's Message*

## **President's Letter**

January, 2004

Dear ABANA Members,

It's promising to be an exciting year for our members. Your Board met in Memphis at the Metal Museum in November. Former board member Elizabeth Brim joined the board as Bob Fredell left us for a well-deserved rest. Thanks Bob for all your work in improving ABANA's Affiliate programs and overseeing the new Affiliates Resource Manual, along with all your other insights contributed to board actions!

After three long days, the business and budgets of ABANA were hammered into shape. Click the links to view the Minutes of the 2003 ABANA Board Meeting and the 2004 Budget. New officer selections are listed on the ABANA Board List and committee assignments are listed in our Divisions List.

THIS IS YOUR ORGANIZATION!! Its success depends on the interest of volunteers. I am astonished at the unselfish amount of work put into the organization by your board. I would appreciate your giving them a "Thanks, well done!" when you meet a board member in your travels. BUT it is YOU who makes the difference! Volunteer to work on an area of interest. A quick look at the ABANA Division Chart will show which committee chair to contact. ABANA is just like your shop: "Effort in---- Results out!"

I am hoping everyone is a volunteer at the 2004 ABANA Conference in Richmond, Kentucky, July 7- 11. Chairman Dave Koenig has put a tremendous effort into organizing and documenting this conference and would be the first to tell you that it is the volunteers who make it a success! Contact Dave Koenig if you have an area of expertise or time to share. As we get closer, additional ways to help will be apparent. It may be just lending a hand when asked, introducing someone new to the organization or, like me, just being a "fetch it". But opportunities abound.

All ABANA members should have received a 2004 Conference Information/ Registration brochure with their copy of *Hammer's Blow*, Volume 11, #4, Fall, 2003. If you somehow missed yours or are new to the membership/ attending your first conference, please contact the ABANA Conference office for your copy. Just email conference coordinator/ registrar Michele Devine and request a copy or call (706) 310-0323. You can also download a PDF version by clicking [here](#).

More on opportunities to volunteer to make this a banner year for ABANA as the year progresses, until then.....

Don Kemper  
20100 NW 61st Avenue  
Ridgefield, WA 98642  
(360) 887-3903  
[dkemper@abana.org](mailto:dkemper@abana.org)

*Need it, Got it, Want it!*  
*Find it here!*

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
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| ★ 24" SPINNING LATHE WITH TOOLING          | ★ 2,800.00   |
| ★ 18" THROAT C-FRAME AIR RIVETER           | ★ 900.00     |
| ★ 30 TON HYDRAULIC PRESS                   | ★ 2,500.00   |
| ★ 21" DRILL PRESS WITH POWER FEED #4 MT    | ★ 850.00     |
| ★ 24" OXY-FUEL SHAPE CUTTER                | ★ 950.00     |
| ★ 24" SHAPER, HYDRAULIC WITH VICE          | ★ 750.00     |
| ★ PEDESTAL DRUM SANDER WITH 6" & 10" DRUMS | ★ 1,150.00   |
| ★ 4" BELT GRINDER, 18" WHEEL, 15 HP        | ★ 1,500.00   |
| ★ 5 T KICK PRESS                           | ★ 400.00     |

CONTACT:  
RUSS TRACY  
(517) 451-8416

★ THE 2004 ABANA CONFERENCE AT EASTERN KENTUCKY  
★ UNIVERSITY ON JULY 7-11, 2004 WILL FEATURE TWO BLACK-  
★ SMITHS WHO ARE VERY FAMILIAR TO SOFA MEMBERS,  
★ ***JOSEPH BONIFAS AND MICHAEL BENDELE'***  
★ ARE TWO OF THE MANY CELEBRATED ARTISTS DEMON-  
★ STRATING THIS YEAR.

★ INFO IS AVAILABLE AT ABANA.ORG  
★ THIS WILL BE THE CLOSEST ABANA CONFERENCE FOR  
★ AWHILE AND I'D GO IF I WERE YOU!  
★



*Need it, Got it, Want it!*  
*Find it here!*

Inline (Rollerblade) treadle hammer for sale \$1,200.00  
Loaded at my shop in Murphy  
Treadle Hammer Plans for sale Inline plans \$9.00 includes postage  
Beverly Shear blades sharpened \$35.00. Bring the blades to the  
Folk School (J.C. Campbell) or ship the blades to me.

Clay Spencer  
934 Partridge Lane  
Murphy, NC 28906 (828) 837-0708

*For Sale:*  
*Shop made tools for the beginning black-*  
*smith. Internet (ebay) sales only. Seller:*  
*scharabo. Contact scharabo@bellsouth.net*  
*If you want to see the types of tools and*  
*prices just do an ebay search on seller*  
*Scharabo. Ask for a count of 100.*  
*Ken Scharabok, Waverly, TN*

*\*See note below*

## ***SOFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION***

NAME\_\_\_\_\_

STREET\_\_\_\_\_

CITY\_\_\_\_\_ STATE\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE(\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL\_\_\_\_\_

***ANNUAL DUES ARE \$10.00 PER YEAR***

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO SOFA AND SEND TO:

HANS G. PEOT  
6425 SCARFF ROAD  
NEW CARLISLE, OH 45344

*It was decided at the July, 2003 meeting that all dues will be payable in September regardless of when your membership is normally due. This is an effort to ease the burden on the book keeping. Some people will get an extra few months of membership, some will not. Most of our memberships have been gotten at Quad State and it was the easiest month to standardize dues payment. Please see any Board Member for additional information.*

THOSE INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP IN

ABANA

MAY WRITE OR CALL:

LeAnn Mitchell, Executive Secretary  
P.O. Box 816  
Farmington, GA 30638

(706) 310-1030  
(706) 769-7147 FAX

[abana@abana.org](mailto:abana@abana.org)

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## *SOFA CLASSIFIED ADS*

For Sale:

Spoon molds, small cone mandrels, benders, old tools and other stuff. Contact Bob Cruikshank at (937) 323-1300 for details.

Bob Cruikshank is now handling the SOFA firepots . He has two sizes of oblong pots and a small round firepot perfect for a portable forge. For prices and availability, please Bob at (937) 323-1300. These are the good ones!

Bob also has a 40-ton Metal Pro iron-worker with lots of tooling and punches. Asking price is \$2,500.00

There is plenty of space in this newsletter for more articles and for sale items.

Just get me a copy of what you have and a black and white picture if you have it and we will get it in here.