

## BLACKSMITH GUILD OF VIRGINIA



"Dedicated to the Preservation of the Blacksmithing Tradition"

Blacksmith Guild of Virginia, 309 Second Avenue, Farmville, Virginia 23901

<http://www.blacksmithguildofva.com>

*Sarah L. Tanner-Anderson, Editor*

### March Meeting with Dan Boone by Peyton Anderson, President

With over sixty people in attendance, members and guests enjoyed a rare demonstration by the legendary Dan Boone. Dan started out the day with forging his widely renowned dragon head by hand. He usually does his work under a power hammer but did it all with hammer and hand to show that this is a do-able project for anyone. This was also a great opportunity to hear a lot about Dan's



philosophy of what to use and how to use it. Dan pointed out the material he uses for his chisels (Atlantic 33...which Blacksmith Supply had on hand to purchase!), and he continued to show us how to form this material into beautiful pieces.



After an exhilarating morning, we broke for lunch and Iron in the Hat. The Iron in the Hat was a big hit! The table was almost full (and you guys all know the size of that table...that was an amazing sight) of all types of things

including some Daniel Boone vintage comics donated by the Magnotti's. Talk about a cool item! Dan signed the comics for those that won them. Being a direct family link to the famous Dan Boone added yet another great part to the meeting. Everyone's enthusiastic participation in the March Iron in the Hat helped us out a lot with the increased



cost of travel and compensation for our demonstrators. Your support enables us to continue to bring in the top smiths in the country!



With an excellent array of tailgating items, including John Elliott's Blacksmith Supply truck full of goodies, members were able to purchase tooling and/or material for future projects. With full bellies, newly won

Iron in the Hat goodies, and newly purchased tailgating items, we gathered back around to enjoy Dan's afternoon demonstration.

After demonstrating his dragon, Dan showed us several of his items that sell well at craft shows. He went through the basics on his style of a leaf that was used on the ends of his letter opener, toilet paper holder, and towel holder. He also demonstrated how to make a couple of his popular small hall hooks that generally sell out at shows. Dan made a point to say that people will always buy a smaller



(cheaper) item so to make sure when we set up to have several options available. Dan also showed us his "2 heat S Hook" using his jig which was impressive. I have a special place in my heart for S hooks! He also made a cork screw with the famous "Boone knot" on the end.

Continued next page →

## March Meeting with Dan Boone (continued from page 1)

The Boone Knot is a cool, loosely designed knot where the round bar moves in and out of itself in such a way to trick the eye into believing it is an impossible task. It is a beautiful representation of imagination and unique design coming together for a great finished piece. Dan also made a few quick "belt balancers" ...had to be there....it was cool!

At the end of the day Dan had made several items that he donated to the Guild for our next Iron in the Hat. Over sixty people left with smiles on their faces, including a VERY humbled president for all of the enthusiastic support for the Iron in the Hat and the Guild in general!



### March Meeting Reflection by Vince Nakovics

Dan was kind enough to share with us some of his talents and secrets for making his famous Dragon Heads. Dan mentioned that 2 in a day was a good days work, but he has made as many as 5! This article isn't meant to provide you with step by step instructions of how to make one of Dan's Dragons. My hope is that it will refresh those memories of the day for those who attended and act as mental stimulant to find out some more about Dan Boone and his amazing process and talents. So, we're off:

- Dan likes to start with a 1"x1"x 10" bar stock. It makes a nice size dragon head and because of its size it is actually easier to make. The smaller the stock the more difficult they are to make! Some one in the front asked about 1/2" stock and Dan replied that he has made them using 3/8", but they tend to bend and distort with each blow and of course you have smaller stock so the chances of breaking off an ear or tooth are much greater.
- Dan starts by indenting the ears on the anvil and finishes them in the vise with soft jaws and a rest to keep at an angle. Your chisels need to be sharp to cut them nice and straight and smooth.
- Dan's chisels are made from Flutagon (Atlantic 33) steel, which is a specialty steel similar to H13
- Dan uses a Plumb 32 oz. straight peen and a larger Swedish style hammer for most of his work. If you are a Blacksmith and want to make money you have to have a Power Hammer and a Gas Forge.
- "I used to make mouse heads and horses, but with Dragon Heads they can be anything you want, because no one knows what one looks like really"
- When you cut and chisel the ears try to keep everything even, but they don't have to be perfect. You can correct them when you finish them up.
- "Making mistakes is what makes a good Blacksmith" When you look around a shop you will probably see a few test pieces and a few more in the scrap pile.
- About an inch down from the ears notch the edges on the anvil and this area will become the eye sockets. Dan uses two punches to make his eyes. He uses the larger one to stretch out the eye socket and to make it nice and round. When starting the eyes make sure that you curve down the nose and mouth stock to allow you to hit nice and straight, not down into the stock, you want to lift your eyes so they stand out. It's pretty much the same with the nose, two punches, etc.
- "I use Vise Grip pliers to hold the stock" Dan doesn't like to use tongs because of the time you have to hold the stock the heat will travel up the reins. Additionally they add weight, and he has been using the same pair of Vise Grips for 30 years! That's what he said, several times as a matter of fact.
- While waiting for the Dragon to cool down to cut the mouth, Dan showed us how he makes his Leaf Hooks and Towel Racks.
- Now some of you might be wondering how the mouth and tongue are cut out and here is the secret, cut the mouth with a band saw after initial shaping. Open the mouth and punch a recess large enough to hold your tongue. Sort of like making a blind pocket rivet.
- Dan showed off his hook making jig and how he modified a pair of tongs for making hooks easier.
- Dan showed us several other little tidbits and finished up his demonstration with making a belt holder that balances on the edge of the anvil or a shelf.

During Iron in the Hat, there were 3 lucky winners of Daniel Boone comic books from back in the 50's. Dan was kind enough to sign each of the copies. If you weren't there you missed a really terrific demonstration. Dan Boone made his Dragon Head and Hooks and others look so effortless that he made you feel like you could do one! I for one learned a lot and had a lot of fun learning it. How did that happen? A **Big Thanks** to Dan for sharing his knowledge, talents and time with us.

## April Meeting with Greg Price

by Peyton Anderson, President



The prettiest day of the year ended up being the third Saturday of April...the same day as our monthly meeting. Turn out was light for this month's demonstration by Greg Price. I think a lot of us stayed home to cut grass, or spend some time outside in this BEAUTIFUL weather! Those that were there enjoyed a good demonstration on making a rush lamp. Greg went through all the basics in the tong making process, forge welding the "T" for the base, and even faggot welding the end of the reins to have enough mass to fuller out a candle cup. He was also using what looked to be a 6 pound sledge with a short handle when making the tongs! How cool is that?!?!

The Iron in the Hat had some good items in it that went to the lucky individuals in attendance. I am really learning a lot from what is showing up in the Iron in the Hat! The forged work is awesome. I have been inspired several times by things lying out there. Thanks to everyone for sharing material, books, tools, forged pieces, and whatever else they can in our monthly fundraiser. Your support is invaluable to our Guild!



---

### Guild Goal:

It costs us sometimes close to \$800.00 for a monthly meeting. The continued support in the Iron in the Hat is helping cover this cost along with the selling of our T-shirts and hats. Some months, we show up a little short. Our yearly Hammer In helps pick up the slack that sometimes occurs from meeting turnout or lower Iron in the Hat funds. I am setting my sights on trying to get any extra funds from these sources together to begin purchasing a wireless headset microphone to help us hear the demonstrators better, and maybe also a video camera down the road so we can begin to tape the demonstrations and sell them to help the Guild. Your continued support will help us to attain these goals, and we will all be able to benefit!

---

### President's Corner: "A few of my favorite things"

I am really lucky to be the President of this Guild. I say it a lot, but really do mean it when I say I think we have the best group of members anywhere in any guild. This time around for my article I want to share with everyone two of my favorite things in doing this:

1. Anticipation - the Friday before the meeting when the anticipation of the next day hits me and I get wondering how the day will go. I am excited to meet the demonstrator and talk a bit about all sorts of things. With our "Friday Night Lights" opportunity later this year, members will be able to experience the same feeling of excitement at Yesteryear School of Blacksmithing.
2. Iron in the Hat - I swear to you that I have learned as much, if not more, from Iron in the Hat than the demonstrations. Being able to see hand made pieces and search out the makers to ask them questions makes me go back to the shop and try to make one, too. This is leading by example too which is a huge thing for me. Thanks to everyone for all their "lessons" they are putting into the Iron in the Hat. Your participation not only helps the Guild to raise needed funds but also serves as examples and templates for fellow smiths to learn from each other.

### Glen Bryant's Hammer In by Peyton Anderson, President

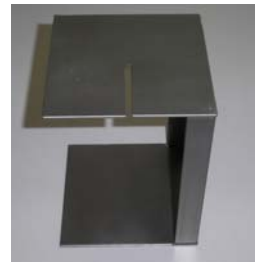
Have you ever wondered where the most beautiful part of Virginia may be? I found it in Iron Gate where Glen Bryant's farm rests on top of a beautiful plateau nestled in the Shenandoah. The weather was pretty much perfect, and those in attendance had a real treat in the demonstration put on by Alex O'Dell. Gun Barrel welding and pitch forks were covered along with making a few other things. Glen's shop was perfect for everyone to see and enjoy the demonstration. There were also a few forges set up outside that attendees could use.

I got to see some faces that I've not seen in a while. John Riddle was there demonstrating some of his artistic pieces out of horseshoes. He has a real good idea of what people want to buy and he suits their needs well in his products! I also got to touch base with Wendell Wyland who also brought his forge set up. I haven't seen Wendell in a few years and got to catch up and hang out some. Lee Sauder was also there. He is pretty well known for smelting iron and has demonstrated this at the Frontier Culture Museum, ABANA conferences, and has been featured in the Anvil's Ring. I actually got a piece of his latest bloom in the Iron in the Hat. We talked a while and he mentioned maybe teaching a class on blooms. Might be something cool to experience...making your own steel.

I want to thank Glen for inviting us to his hammer in this year! It is a rare opportunity for me to be able to get away to an event and just enjoy the day as a spectator. I had a blast and really appreciate all of Glen's hard work into making this such a special event. Hopefully, next year we can do it all over again!

### Porta-Band Saw Stand by Ken Kohut

I made this portable band saw stand so that it can be used as a vertical band saw. I made the stand from 2 pieces of 6x6x1/8" plate and 2 pieces of 1x1x1/8" angle iron.



### Reflections from the Forge

We read in Acts 2, 3, & 4 how Peter and John really created a stir in their bold service to God. They were preaching Jesus, and people were being saved in great numbers. Well, this wasn't pleasing to the priest and the established religious leaders who were very much opposed to Jesus. In Acts 4:13 these leaders took note that Peter and John had been with Jesus.

I think us blacksmith's are a little bit like Peter and John, in that we have been influenced greatly by other smith's. We may not be exactly like any one smith but I myself have picked up tips and techniques that I have used in some fashion from just about everyone I have seen do a demonstration. There is very little originality in my smithing and I feel that is the case with most everyone. It would be great also to be touched and accept Jesus as Peter and John did.



Happy forging, L.T. Skinnell

ABANA Affiliate Liaison Letter March 2009

4/14/2009

To ABANA Affiliates and Affiliate Members,

#### New Conference Logo

The new ABANA Conference logo has a musical theme. "ABANA's Greatest Hits" pays homage to the rich musical heritage of our host city Memphis and to the sweet ring of the anvil when played by a smith. Check out the ABANA web site and come and see us June 2-5, 2010 in Memphis. We will make beautiful music together.

#### New Board Member

Andrew Blair was appointed to fill the board position that Kate Dinneen vacated. Andy practiced business law in Denver until his retirement in 2007 and was active with the Rocky Mountain Smiths. He now lives in Stevensville, Montana and is active with the Northern Rockies Blacksmith Association. No matter how many bad jokes there are about lawyers, it is always nice to have one at hand when needed.

#### The Australian Affiliate's Tree Project

Early February of this year Victoria, Australia suffered the worst national disaster to ever occur in Australia's recorded history. To honor those that have been lost to the devastating fires and the brave people who battled the elements, Australian Blacksmiths Association (Victoria) Inc., ABANA's newest affiliate is inviting blacksmiths from around the world to contribute to the tree project. Make a leaf and join smiths from around the world forming a memorial and for the spirit of renewal. Visit the ABANA web site and click on The Tree Project under Latest News.

#### Tom Clark Memorial Gate Project

BAM is also asking smiths from around the world to contribute a leaf for a memorial gate project to Blacksmith Extraordinaire Tom Clark. The gate is to be completed at the BAM Conference in Sedalia, MO on May 1-3, 2009. Tom was very dedicated to blacksmithing and made friends with smiths and enriched their lives where ever he traveled.

#### Iron 2010 Exhibit deadline extension

The call for entries deadline for the international contemporary blacksmith exhibition "Iron 2010" has been extended to May 29, 2009. The exhibit will begin at the National Ornamental Metal Museum during the ABANA Conference 2010 and travel to different locations during the next two years. See ABANA's web site for details.

#### Fellowships with Coubertin in France

The American Friends of Coubertin have announced the availability of training fellowships for Sept 2009 to July 2010 in metalwork (not jewelry) and stonework at the Coubertin Foundation outside Paris, France. This is a great opportunity for some in their early 20's. All expenses are covered at one of the leading traditional craft institutions in Europe. See the ABANA web site for details.

Please keep in touch.

Bruce Woodward, ABANA Affiliate Liaison Representative

[woodwardiron@roadrunner.com](mailto:woodwardiron@roadrunner.com)

---

*Calling all members! We are still requesting submissions for the Member Gallery. The Member Gallery is a place where you can send in photos, and they will be listed by your name, forge name, or business. This is an opportunity for you to have photos of your shop, tools, demonstrations, and products on the World Wide Web. This can help you by directing any of your customers to view your work. It is also a great tool for all of us to see other people's forges and works. One of the greatest ways of learning is by showing, so show us your stuff! Submit photos by email to: [president@blacksmithguildofva.com](mailto:president@blacksmithguildofva.com) or snail mail to: 309 Second Ave. Farmville Va. 23901. Thank you in advance for your participation!*



## The Slacktub: Upcoming Guild Events

**May Meeting: Gun Barrels, Butt Plates, and More with Clay Smith**

**Date:** May 16, 2009  
**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** **Yesteryear School of Blacksmithing**  
 1918 West Virginia Avenue  
 Crewe, Virginia 23930  
**Demonstrator:** **Clay Smith**  
**Lunch:** **Brown bag it / enjoy a local eatery**



*Demonstrator Bio:*

*“I was born in North Carolina at Fort Bragg Army Base in 1956 but spent most of my years growing up in Richmond, Virginia. I became interested in muzzle loading guns in 1972 while still in high school. I made my first rifle in the school shop class. This was when you could still take guns to school and not be expelled! I would sometimes skip school or on weekends, drive to Colonial Williamsburg. I would bribe the master in the Gunshop, Wallace Gusler, with Moon Pies and Dr. Peppers to let me sit and watch them make guns and critic my work. Then in 1988 the master then, Gary Brumfield, asked if I would like a summer job interpreting in the shop. I of course jumped on it. That fall a position opened at the Anderson Forge in Colonial Williamsburg and I transferred there for 2 1/2 years working under Peter Ross and Ken Schwarz. I am grateful for my time with Peter and Ken as I was able to learn more about blacksmithing there than I could have ever learned at the Gunshop. Those skills carried over to the Gunshop where I ended up doing most of the hammer work which further increased my skills. An apprenticeship then came open at the Gunshop so I transferred back in 1991. I received my Journeyman's papers from the Gunshop in December 1995. In 2006 I made my 300th gun which was an engagement present (2 years late) for my wife Debbie.”* Website: [www.claysmithguns.com](http://www.claysmithguns.com)

## June Meeting: Colonial Lighting and Cookware with Doug Merkel



**Date:** June 20, 2009  
**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** **Yesteryear School of Blacksmithing**  
 1918 West Virginia Avenue  
 Crewe, Virginia 23930  
**Demonstrator:** Doug Merkel  
**Lunch:** **Brown bag it / enjoy a local eatery**

*Demonstrator Bio:*

*Doug is a full-time blacksmith, and maintains a studio in the mountains of North Carolina. His specialty is in forging rendezvous, reenactment and 18th-century items. He also does commissions, artwork, and ironwork for the home builder and private collector. Doug is very active in several affiliate groups of the Artist Blacksmith's Association of North America (including The Blacksmith Guild of Virginia). Doug is also a former member of the ABANA board of directors. He conducts demonstrations and classes for groups all over the United States.*

### Directions to Yesteryear School of Blacksmithing

**From Richmond Area:** Hwy 360 East past Amelia. Turn Left on 49 at Crewe Tractor. Go to the end of the road and turn Right onto Hwy 460. The School will be immediately on your right at Tanner Tool and Machine. The school is the building on the right.

**From Lynchburg Area:** Hwy 460 West to Crewe Virginia. The school will be on the left just as you get into Crewe. Look for Tanner Tool and Machine. The school is the building on the right.

**From South Boston Area:** Hwy 360 to Crewe Virginia. The school will be on the left just as you get into Crewe. Look for Tanner Tool and Machine. The school is the building on the right.

**From Petersburg Area:** Hwy 460 East to Crewe Virginia. You will go almost all the way through Crewe. The school will be on the right. Look for Tanner Tool and Machine. The school is the building on the right.

**Don't forget to bring a chair and something for Iron in the Hat!  
Remember that pets must be on a leash!**

**IRON IN THE HAT INCENTIVE!!!**

\$10.00 = 10 Tickets

\$20.00 = 30 Tickets

\$30.00 = 40 Tickets

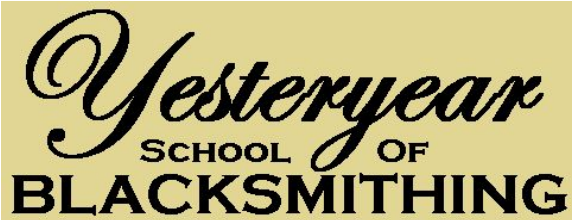
\$40.00 = 50 Tickets

\$50.00 = 75 Tickets

...if you look closely you can find an even better deal within what is listed...

RSVP To: Peyton Anderson [president@blacksmithguildofva.com](mailto:president@blacksmithguildofva.com) or 434-390-6203

## Other Events and Offerings



The Yesteryear School is dedicated to offering unique and quality learning programs with the best blacksmithing instructors in the world. The school facilities are professionally prepared and designed to compliment any level of blacksmith while providing a variety of learning opportunities in the craft.

Click on the class offerings below for class and registration information:

[June 6-7 => Pot Racks and Hooks with Mike Tanner](#)

[June 22-25 => Colonial Cookware and Lighting with Doug Merkel](#)

[July 20-23 => Colonial Hardware with Jerry Darnell -](#)

[August 1-2 => Intro to Forge Welding with David Tucciarone](#)

[August 7-9 => Bear Heads, Wizard Heads and More! with Alwin Wagener](#)

[August 17-20 => Repousse: Tool Making and Techniques with Mark and Mindy Gardner](#)

[August 21-23 => Repousse: Tool Making and Techniques with Mark and Mindy Gardner](#)

[September 7-10 => Small Joinery with Mark Aspery](#)

[November 13-15 => Forge Welded Bundle Projects with Brian Brazeal](#)

[November 16-19 => Forging Your Own Hammer with Brian Brazeal](#)

[December 5-6 => Fun in Forging: Creating a Fireplace set \(tools and stand\) with Mike Tanner](#)

## Other Events and Offerings (continued)



Clay Spencer - Forging Spike Novelties May 29 June 1  
Elizabeth Brim - Sculptural Inflation June 5 - 8  
Zack Noble - Hinged Outlook June 19 - 23  
Rick Smith - Iron on the Wall July 10 - 14  
James Batson - Forging Bell Dirks & Woodhead Bowies July 24 - 28  
Peter Ross - Thinking Inside the Box August 7 - 11  
Mark Asprey - Mastering the Fundamentals of Blacksmithing August 28 - September 1  
Charley Orlando - Effective Forging Techniques September 11 - 14  
Meagan Crowley - Foundations of Form September 25 - 28  
Jonathan Nedbor - From Soup to Nuts October 9 - 13  
Josh Dow & Lauren Holmgren - Cast Iron Sculpture October 23-26  
Inquiries to [dglaser@newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com](mailto:dglaser@newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com) 1-888-753-7502/[www.newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com](http://www.newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com)

---

### **Draft Horse Show in Sept, Culpeper**

I represent the Virginia Draft Horse & Mule Association and am serving as Vendor/Advertising Coordinator for our Old Dominion Show in September. As our 2 day show coincides with the 250th Anniversary of Culpeper Celebration, we're anticipating a much larger and diverse spectator group. We had a blacksmith at a small show two years ago that sold out of his products within a matter of hours - very nice household-type items as well as some intricate decorative sconces and such. He also entertained and educated many on the art of forging his crafts. He was an asset to the show.

I don't know if your members create items for sale; but just in case, I would like to invite your group as a whole or as individuals to consider advertising in our show program or setting up a vendor booth at our show. Attached is a PDF document with some information. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information or visit our website [www.vdhma.org](http://www.vdhma.org). Thank you.

Polly Welch

VDHMA

Home (703) 754-3274

*Note: If you set up and sell your wares this may be a great opportunity for you. Tell them you heard this from the Blacksmith Guild of Virginia.*

---

### **Ken Kohut is teaching at the Visual Arts Center in Richmond!**

The Visual Art Center of Richmond is offering a blacksmithing class this summer that I will be teaching. This is a new class that I created and I just wanted everyone to know in case anyone is interested in attending it. It will be held on Tuesday mornings for 6 weeks starting June 2. The website is <http://visarts.org/> for more info and to sign up. Please look under: <https://visarts.org/artclasses/summer/other-fun-stuff>.

---

### **Newsletter submissions**

If you would like to submit an article for the monthly newsletter, submissions are due no later than the 15th of each month. Newsletters will be posted in the last week of each month, so submissions received later than the 15th will be printed in the following month.

To truly express the unique and varied voices of our organization, we'd love to hear from you. Events, trade tips, or anything else related to blacksmithing is welcomed and encouraged!

Email articles to [editor@blacksmithguildofva.com](mailto:editor@blacksmithguildofva.com).

I look forward to hearing from you!

- Sarah L. Tanner-Anderson, Editor

# BLACKSMITH GUILD OF VIRGINIA

## Application for Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are your blacksmithing interests (knife making, traditional, reenacting, artist, etc.) and how long have you been blacksmithing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Disclaimer: I acknowledge that the activities involved in blacksmithing are potentially dangerous, and I voluntarily accept any risks involved. I absolve the Blacksmith Guild of Virginia, its officers, members, guests, demonstrators, and hosts of liability for any accident that may occur at any of its meetings/demonstrations. I take full responsibility for my safety and the safety of any guest that I will bring to any meeting/demonstration.*

Mail completed membership applications to our office:  
Blacksmith Guild of Virginia  
309 Second Avenue • Farmville, Virginia 23901