

"Tales of the Western Reserve"



WRABA

Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association

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Bill Hahn Memorial Scholarship Fund

The first scholarships of WRABA's Bill Hahn Memorial Scholarship Fund were given to Jack Kothera, Mark Millhoff Jr. and Walt Mullett for attendance at SOFA's Quadstate Conference 2010. Congratulations smiths.

Our Past Events

July Picnic: It was a joint Hammer-In/Picnic with NOB. We had Ky Green's portable forge to try and watched an octopus being made for a submarine by Barry Wheeler.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- October 17 **WRABA** Hammer-In
- October 23 Blacksmith Design Workshop
- November 6 **WRABA** Hammer-In
- December 5 **WRABA** Holiday Party

August WRABA Family Picnic: We had plenty of food at our annual picnic at the home of Art and Judy Wolfe. Hotdogs and hamburgers were made fresh on grills. We had brief rain, but survived through it, pulling the food under the tarp canopies.

WRABA Gas Welding Workshop

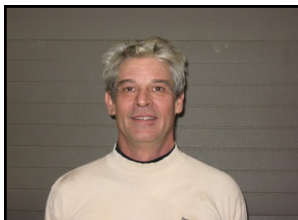
Bob Gardner held a gas welding workshop at the WRABA blacksmith shop in Burton on Sept 11. Bob also had arranged for Lincoln Electric Company to make a very generous donation to WRABA of a complete Harris oxyacetylene cutting and welding set. The torch worked great and Bob's instruction was outstanding. Along with Bob were Ryan Eubank and one of his students at Lakeland Community College. Ryan put on an excellent demo and instruction for electric stick welding. In addition Ryan donated a large variety of welding tip nozzles for the Harris Torch. Weather was good (no rain, no snow) and Roy cooked up some tasty hot dogs. Doc and Roy organized a great informative workshop and all had a good time.

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The Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association (WRABA) is a non-profit, educational organization, an affiliate of the Artist Blacksmith Association Of North America (ABANA).

We are dedicated to preserving and promoting the art and craft of hand forging iron. WRABA, our group of blacksmiths meet monthly to share information and techniques at the smithy of one of its' members or at Century Village in Burton, Ohio.

A Membership application is on the back cover of this newsletter.

www.wraba.com

Get information on our organization. Find out what is going on and take a look at some great pictures of what we've been doing.

The WRABA Newsletter is composed and written by the editor except as indicated. Material may be reprinted except as noted, with proper credit given.

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Deadline for articles to be put in the newsletter: Sept. 15th, Dec. 15th, (these dates are in the month prior to the issue coming out on the 1st)

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 Ralph Neumeister

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Bob Temple
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 Roy Troutman

Hammer-in

Roy Troutman

Tips Editor

Ralph Neumeister

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 Roy Troutman
 Lou Molvin

Workshops:

Ken Tucker
 Roy Troutman
 Rocky Whitfield
 Bob Temple
 Marty Reisig
 Bob Brown
 John Kravin

Website:

Ralph Neumeister

Sunshine:

Art Wolfe

Library:

Bob Brown

Stores:

Jack Kothera

Presidents Message to WRABA Members:

Fall is just around the corner, seems like time flies the older you get. Were did summer go. Well it won't be so hot, so I may get to the forge a little more.

We have had some exciting events in the past few months. First was the conference, with hands on time to do what was demonstrated. A grand time was had by all who attended. A lot of positive comments were made by the members who attended. We just had a gas welding workshop, and a lot of good information was presented. I think we all learned something or other. We will be doing another class at Lakeland Community College in the fall or winter, what do you want to see stick, mig, and tig. They have all the equipment and great instructors. Let the officers or board know your thoughts. This weekend we are having a basic class at Century Village for any member interested. We are going to do more in the way of instructional, hands on class, so let us know what you want to learn about. We need instructors and helpers as well. Quad State is just around the corner and several members have applied for their scholarship. We will be waiting to see what they learned.

We are trying to get the members what they want, we can't please everyone. Have a suggestion let us know, but be prepared to have a way to get what you want accomplished. Hope to see all at the Holiday Party, so start working on those gifts. We will have a workshop at Century Village on October 2nd to build an additional railing for one of there buildings, come give a hand, we will also be closing up shop for the winter.

Bring a friend to the meetings, or if you haven't been there in a while attend the next one. We have Bruce Woodward's hammer in on October 17th (Sunday), the a design class at Ken Tuckers shop on the 23RD. Then Marty Reisig's on November 6th.

If anyone is willing to receive their copy of this newsletter online, please email the editor at jeffrey@naufamily.net. You will receive it in color and as soon as it is completed. This will save the club money on printing and postage. Newsletters can be found at wraba.com.

October Hammer-In**Sunday 17th 9:00 AM (New Date)**Iron-in-the-hat
Pot-luck lunchBruce Woodward
6374 Lake Road West
Madison, Ohio 44057
440-428-0822

Remember to bring something for the Iron-in-the-Hat and our great Pot-Luck-Lunch

WRABA Business: Nominations of new officer candidates

Demo: Flowers and other rosettes

Directions:

From the South: Take I-271 north to I-90. Go east on I-90 to Rt.528. Go north or left on Rt.528 through Madison. Continue north on Rt.528 which becomes Hubbard Rd after you cross Rt.20. Continue north to Lake Erie and turn left (west) at the stop sign at Lake Road. Continue .6 mile to 6374 Lake Road on the left (south).

From the Southeast: Take Rt.11 north to I-90 and east on I-90 to Rt.528. Turn north to the lake. See above directions.

Workshop on Blacksmith Design with Chris Holt from PAABA (Pittsburgh Blacksmiths)

Saturday, October 23rd 9:00 AM

Ken Tucker's shop

4594 Lanterman Rd.

Youngstown, OH 44515

330-792-9722 Or Roy Troutman 330-678-2013

Presenters: John Steel, Chris Holt from Steel Welding

Ken Tucker's Shop

October 23, 2010

"Be the Man with the Plan"

Part I

Basic design concepts such as static and dynamic principles will be explained and a "hands on exercise" will help participants recognize the difference using black and white paper. (There will be NO drawing, just a little gluing of small pre-cut paper!) There are no wrong "answers" and the number of solutions is endless. This will help blacksmiths strengthen design capabilities at all levels. Sometimes the simplest solution is the most dramatic. If you have questions about your own abilities to design or would like to widen those abilities, this workshop will be constructive and useful. We promise you, this will be a non-threatening and comfortable workshop to participate.

Part II

John Steel and Chris Holt will show how they make botanical elements and build a three dimensional sculpture. Many of the plants are easy to make; tips will be shown on how to assemble pieces. Using "static" and "dynamic" principles from the first session, a sculpture will be put together. Height, placement of elements, variety, and relationships of materials will be stressed and explained. Attendees just have to watch and ask questions about the creative process!

November Hammer-In
Saturday 6th 9:00 AM

Iron-in-the-hat
Pot-luck lunch

Marty Reisig
54 E Overdale Dr.
Tallmadge, OH 44278
330-633-3747

Change of Location

Due to circumstances beyond my control, the hammer-in at Hale Farm & Village is cancelled. Linda & I would like to invite you to our house Saturday, November 6th for the hammer-in. I do not have a blacksmith shop there, but I will put up my portable forge & have a small demo. We will still have the delicious roast, lots of food & plenty of good company!

From the Tallmadge Circle, go North on Route 91 to the first light, turn right & we are the 4th house up on the right. Feel free to call us at 330-633-3747 if you need further directions.

Thanks,
Marty

December WRABA Holiday Party
Saturday 5th 1:00-5:00 PM

Burton Century Village
At the Village Church

Pot-luck lunch
Gift Exchange

Bring a dish to pass, a gift for each person participating in the gift exchange. Try to keep all gifts to a homemade (yourself or family member) and a dish to pass. Wine and soft drinks will be served. Volunteers needed to help set up call Ralph at 440-552-9560 if you can assist.

A Brief History of Viking Spear Design and Use

Contributed by Dick Smith

From the Blacksmith Guild of the Potomac

When people think about Viking age weapons, typically they think of the battle axe. However, the second choice, for someone who could not afford a sword, was not an axe, but rather, a spear. During the Viking age, spear heads took many forms. The photo to the right (1) shows a modern reproduction, typical of the late Viking age. Photo two shows an 11th century spearhead, while photo three shows a 10th century spearhead. Earlier spearheads were about 20cm (8in) long, while later ones were as long as 60cm (24in). Photo four shows an assortment of Viking era spear heads, illustrating the variations in size and shape.

Some spear heads, including all those in the photo above, had "wings" on the head, useful for a variety of tricks. These are called krókspjót (barbed spear) in the stories.

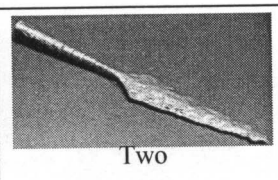
The spearheads were made of iron, and, like sword blades, were made using pattern welding techniques during the early part of the Viking era (five). They were frequently decorated with inlays of precious metals or with scribed geometric patterns (six). The heads were fixed to wooden spear shafts using a rivet. The shaft and head had a combined length of 2-3m (7- 10ft) long, although longer shafts may have been used. A passage in chapter 6 of Gísla saga suggests the spear shaft was long enough that a man's outstretched arm could touch the rivet (seven). The diameter of the shaft was typically 3cm (about an inch). A strong, straight-grained wood such as ash was used. Rivets on surviving spear heads are surprisingly small. There are examples in the sagas of spear shafts reinforced with iron. In chapter 40 of Vatnsdæla saga, it is said that Ingólf's spear had a broad blade and a shaft reinforced with iron.

Many people think of the spear as a throwing weapon. One of the Norse myths tells the story of the first battle in the world, in which Óðin, the highest of the gods, threw a spear over the heads of the opposing fighters as a prelude to the fight. While spears were certainly used that way during the Viking age, there's a disadvantage to throwing one's weapon away in a fight. Not only do you lose your weapon, but you risk having your opponent pick it up and use it against you if you miss. Worse, your weapon may be caught in flight and flung back at you, a trick used on several occasions by Gunnar (e.g., Njáls saga chapter 54). Despite these risks, the sagas are filled with examples where spears were thrown, such as chapter 145 of Njáls saga. Spears were also used with "throwing strings" (snærisspjót) for longer reach, such as in chapter 24 of Reykdæla saga og Víga-Skútu where Skúta shot a spear across a river ford, killing Þrandur.

A passage from chapter 48 of Grettis saga suggests that the rivet could easily be removed. Grettir arrived at Þorbjörn's farm, Þoroddsstaðir, to take revenge on Þorbjörn for his killing of Grettir's brother, Atli. After Grettir arrived at the farm, he sat down and removed the rivet to prevent Þorbjörn from throwing the spear back at him. The head flew off when Grettir threw the spear. After killing Þorbjörn, Grettir searched for the head, but couldn't find it. According to the saga, the spearhead was found in the marshland behind the farm centuries later.



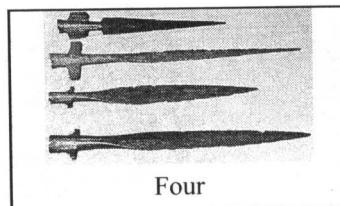
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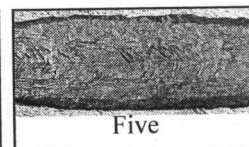
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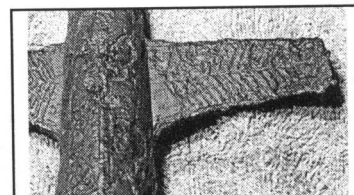
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Editor's Note:

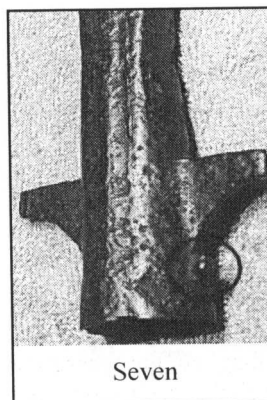
ð as in Óðin represents a hard 'th' sound.

þ as in þrandur or þorkell represents a light 'th' sound.

J's are 'y' as they are in Ger-



Six



Seven

Text and photos reprinted from:

the Viking Historic Organization.

<http://www.hurstwic.org>



More commonly, the spear was used as a thrusting weapon. It provided a means to inflict injuries from a distance. This capability was used to advantage in mass battles. Norsemen, as a rule, tended to avoid mass battles, primarily because they weren't as good at them as other Europeans of the time. But, if a mass battle were necessary, men lined up, shoulder to shoulder, with shields overlapping. After all the preliminaries, which included rock throwing, name calling, the trading of insults, and shouting a war cry (*æpa heróp*), the two lines advanced towards each other. When the lines met, the battle was begun. Behind the wall of shields, each line was well protected. But once a line was broken, and one side could pass through the line of the other side, the battle was essentially over. Terrible damage could be done from behind, and the battle usually broke down into armed melees between small groups of men. But before a line broke, while the two lines were going at each other hammer and tongs, the spear offered some real advantages. A fighter in the second rank could use his spear to reach over the heads of his comrades in the first rank and attack the opposing line. *Konungs skuggsjá* (King's Mirror), a 13th century Norwegian manual for men of the king, says that in the battle line, a spear is more effective than two swords.

When the line broke, stories say that people would sling their shields over their shoulders and use the spear two-handed. In this mode, the spear has even more reach, since the fighter can bring his hands way back towards the butt end of the spear. In a thrust, the spear shaft can slide so that both hands are at the butt end of the shaft, allowing the spear to reach the full extent of the shaft in a lunge (left). Also, two handed, the spear provides the combatant with enough leverage to lift his opponent up off his feet, impaled on the tip of spear. Þórólfur did just that with Earl Hring in chapter 53 of *Egils saga*. In chapter 45 of *Grettis saga*, Þorbjörn knocked loudly on the door at Atli's farm, then hid. When Atli went to the door, Þorbjörn rushed up holding his spear in two hands and ran Atli through. When he took the blow, Atli said, "Broad spears are in fashion these days," and fell dead.

I used to think that the spear, despite its advantage of reach, was slow, compared to a weapon like the sword. I have been shown otherwise. A spearman can keep a swordsman very busy, flicking the point from face to belly and back again, while staying out of range of the sword. However, a spearman would need to be wary that anyone armed with a sword didn't find his way past the point of the spear. Once past the point, the swordsman would have every advantage. The stories say that fighters armed with swords had the ability to cut a spear shaft in two with their sword, rendering the spear useless. For instance, in chapter 31 of *Finnboga saga ramma*, as Jökull thrust at Þorkell with a spear, Finnbogi cut the spear shaft in two with his sword. One approach that seems to work well when a swordsman faces a spearman is for the swordsman to adopt the inside ward with his shield, inviting an attack.

When the spearman thrusts, the swordsman can move to outside ward, deflecting the thrust. The swordsman steps in behind the shield, and places himself in a perfect position to lop off the head of the spear. From here, the swordsman is well situated to control the shaft of the spear with his shield as he closes the distance to attack the spearman. This approach fails, however, if the spearman does the kind of lunge thrust illustrated above on this page. The spear is fast enough that the spearman can recover and set the point on the other side of the swordsman's shield, ready to impale him if he moves forward to cut at the shaft. A spearman might also respond the swordsman's attack by shortening his grip, bringing his spear under the shield, and attacking the other side. One response to a spear thrust is to jump over it. In chapter 146 of *Brennu-Njáls saga*, Kári jumped up as Lambi lunged at him with a spear. Kári landed on the spear shaft, breaking it. Spears were occasionally used for other purposes as well. In chapter 16 of *Reykðæla saga og Víga-Skútu*, Steingrímur and his men were battling Áskell and his men, who were on a bank above the frozen river. Helgi used his spear shaft to vault over the ice and up onto the bank where Áskell and his men were fighting. It didn't do him much good, since Háls killed him immediately. We know little of the details of how spears were used in the Viking age. Some of the later medieval fight manuals teach techniques for staff weapons that can be adopted to Viking age spears, but we don't know if those techniques were used in the Viking age.

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Families of WRABA members gathered for our annual picnic hosted by Art and Judy Wolfe.

Bellow are pictures from the West Woods Nature Arts Festival. Clockwise from directly below: A group of spectators watching Marc Yanko's demo. A few WRABA members submitted their metalwork into an arts competition. Marc Yanko demo'es to a group of small but intent onlookers. Jim Hovanec with his collection of nature themed items he is selling.



Classifieds

Blacksmith Conferences on DVD-R
150 titles averaging 5 1/2 hours long
\$5 each permanent rental never return them
\$2 postage per order to the US
see listing at www.umbaonline.org
then click on library for complete list and
order instructions

Anyone with a blacksmith
related item to sell please send
info, picture to
jeffrey@naufamily.net and we
would be happy to include it in
the next newsletter.



WRABA Anvils

"WRABA" brass anvils are available.
They are 4" long and 2" tall.
Their cost is \$25.00
Get one at the next WRABA event.

Roper / Whitney angle iron bender/ notcher/ shear combo does 1/4 By 2 inch angle \$250
Ring roller mounted on drum stand will do 3/8 by 2 \$200
Gas forge burners and other items needed for building gas forges
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SOFA – 2010 Walt Mullett

Thank you WRABA for the scholarship to attend SOFA this year, I really enjoyed the opportunity along with 900+ other blacksmiths including 26 or so WRABA members.

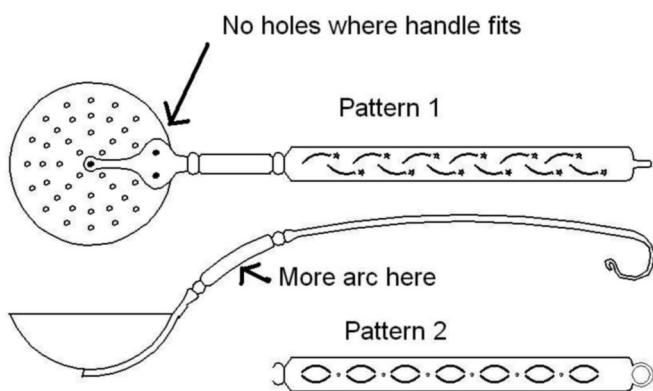
If you have never gone, you are missing out on a real opportunity. The demonstrators are usually all good with enough variety that you will find someone to watch. Each demonstrator goes for a whole day plus a little the next morning. The last time I went, there was probably a block's worth of tailgate sales but this year there had to be double that. One fellow had at least 30 anvils, there were used and new power hammers, all sorts of new and used tooling, junk and of course WRABA was well represented by Ralph and a few other members. The gallery is also worthwhile visiting with many different types of work on display.

I camped this year next to Yanko, Robi and Bieblehousen. They got out the fiddle and guitar and were having lots of fun.

I chose to watch Marsha Nelson, a blacksmith from Cold Spring, Ky., who produces traditional designs of furniture hardware and household furnishings of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. She sells her work to an antique furniture reproduction shop and in a showroom across the river in Ohio.



As you may note from the picture, Marsha is a little woman who almost had to stand on her tip-toes to work at the vice. (Robi style <GRIN>) Although small, Marsha's hammer control showed that control was more important than strength.



Marsha's first demo was a traditional steel handled brass skimmer and fork which she then decorates with brass in-lay and whitesmiths. For fork, skimmer, ladle and spatula, she uses 1/4" x 1/2" x 11" +/- stock. (Note that for a spatula she has to forge weld to flat stock. I examined one of her spatulas and could not find the weld.)

To form the bowl, cut 1/16" brass to shape with chisel, file edges and drill the 1/8" hole pattern. (Marsha had thought that she could use the brass trimmings for her inlay but that would not flow so she uses brazing rod for that.)

Anneal the brass (heat and quench hot) then sink the bowl in your swedge block starting from the center and working out in concentric circles. If it starts to get hard, re-anneal it. Unlike the ladle, the skimmer is only sunk in a shallow shape. The holes will elongate somewhat when the bowl is shaped but that is not a problem.

After sinking, plannish the bowl to remove most hammer marks, working from the outside in. The bowl will work harden during this process which will help it keep its shape during use.

Marsha starts the handle from the bowl end by half facing the stock over the edge of the anvil. This half face step will partially step over the edge of the bowl (not shown in sketch). She tries to do all hammering from the back of the handle to reduce future filing. She tapers the end and then shoulders the sides at the end of the piece to just start the neck before she finishes the connecting shape. Again, because she has such great control, she doesn't mess up this thin wide shape when she works on the neck.

To form the beads on the neck, she uses a narrow, 'v' shaped block in the vice and hammers from above. (Again, good hammer control works here but I would use a spring swedge.) This neck portion is squared, then rounded and is thicker than the flat part of the handle. Most of the curve of the handle also happens here.

The flat portion of the handle is pein, fullered from the back to widen and the hanger end is shaped. You can shape the handle now and fit it to the bowl.

Starting with an old file, file the top of the handle removing all hammer marks. The design to be inlaid is incised using curved, cold chisels and punches. Design 1 has a star punch at the ends of the arcs and 2 just uses arcs and a straight punch. Sharp sides are important here, not 'v' shaped.

For the brass flow, build a good coke nest with coke bottom, sides and top. (Marsha plans for this by pulling and saving large clumps of coke as she works.) Cut a piece of brass rod the length of your pattern, pound flat and clean with sand-paper if required. Lay the brass on the handle, add borax flux and place in the nest opening. Allow the brass to flow then remove and file flat. Sometimes you may not get full filling and may have to try again.

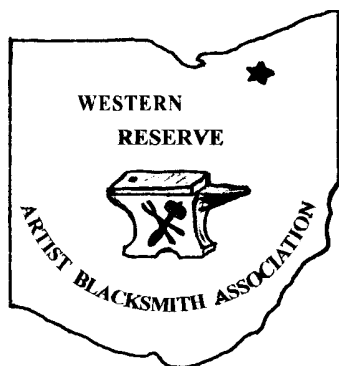
.... BTW ... This is file Fileand file some more. She says that will teach you better hammer control.

Marsha pickles the handle in vinegar to increase the contrast between the steel and brass. Rivet the handle to the bowl using hand made, 1/8" steel rivets formed and set cold.. You could use brass or copper but they will loosen over time. Finish the handle with a light coat of bees wax.

Thanks again Next month I will write about the rat tailed cabinet hinges with "snipes". - Walt

Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association

6374 Lake Rd. W.
Madison, Ohio
44057



Send To:

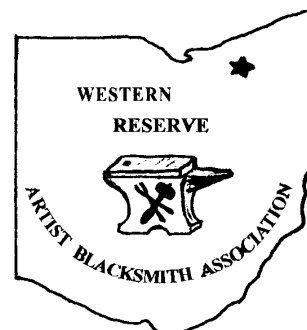
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"Tales of the Western Reserve"

WRABA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____
Spouse's Name _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____
E-mail: _____
Forge Name: _____
Occupation _____
What areas of metalworking are you interested in? _____



Smithing:

Professional___ Hobbyist___ Beginner___ Advanced___

Dues are payable by MARCH 1st. \$20. yearly single \$25. yearly family

(new members prorated quarterly: March-May, June-August, Sept.- Nov. and Dec.-Feb.)

New membership_____ Renewal_____ Date_____

Send application and dues to:

WRABA

**6374 Lake Rd. W.
Madison, Ohio 44057**

**W
R
A
B
A**