

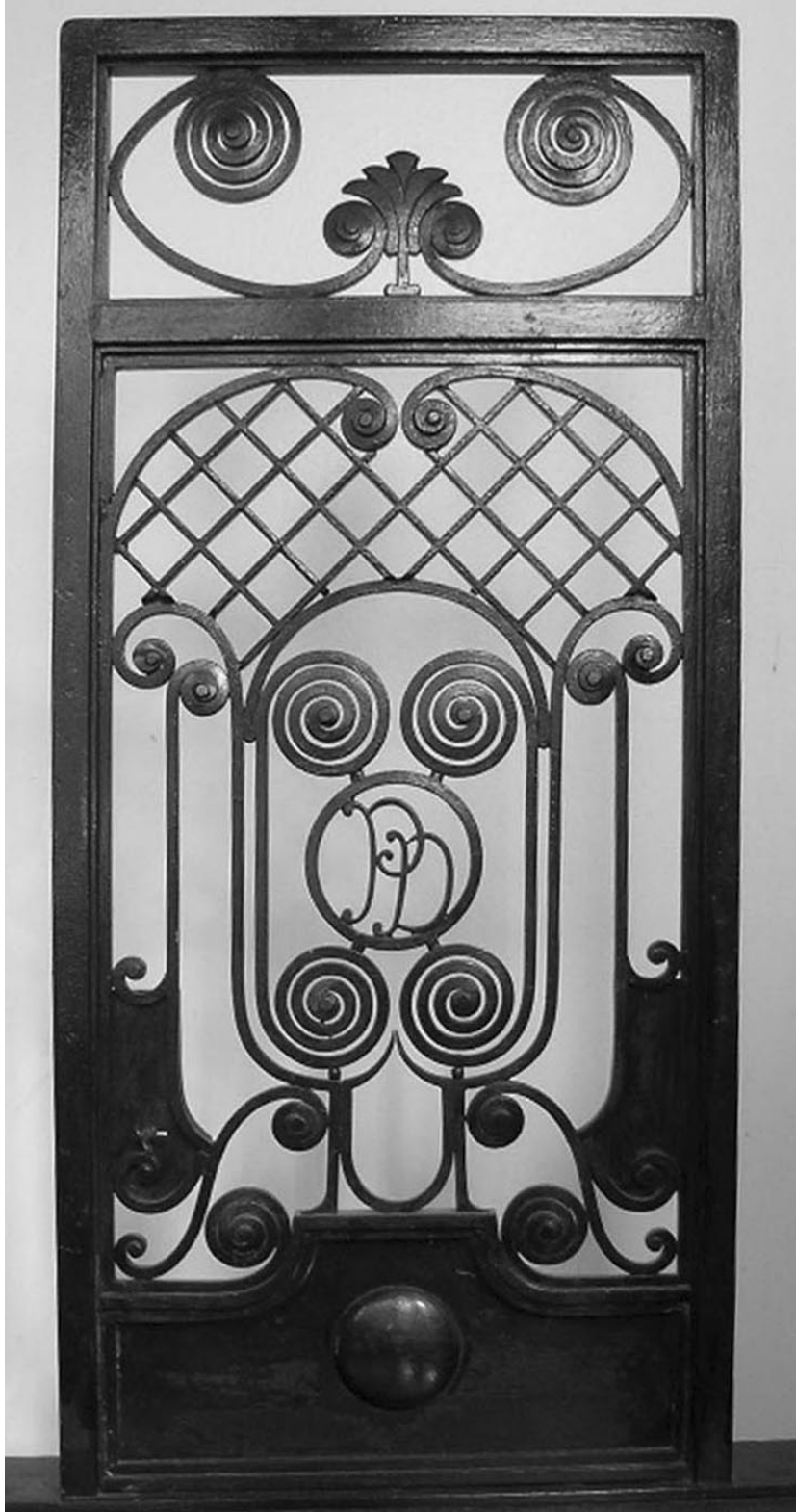
the Newsletter

of the Blacksmiths' Guild of the Potomac



January/February 2007 **Vol. XXIX No. 1**

An affiliate of ABANA: Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America



Presentation model for door, courtesy of L. Johanningsmeier, Philadelphia

The Blacksmiths' Guild of the Potomac, Inc.

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- Corporation**.....Fay LeCompte, **Chair**...540-743-1812
- Scholarships**.....Fay LeCompte, **Chair**...540-743-1812
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- Newsletter/Guest Editor**.Connie Badowski....703-960-3450

Shop Rules And Etiquette

The Guild shop is available for use by members in good standing whenever the Nature Center park is open. The shop is locked, so call the shopmaster or a board member for access. Follow all safety rules. Record the number of visitors on the log sheet near door.

Please observe the following rules and etiquette:

- ◆ Bring safety glasses and wear them. Work in a safe manner at all times.
- ◆ Clean the shop **before and after** you work.
- ◆ Empty firepots and dump ash gate after each use to minimize corrosion.
- ◆ Dump cold ashes in the ash dump outside, at the side of the shop.
- ◆ Place tools back in their proper places.
- ◆ Dress bar ends which you have cut, to be ready for the next user.
- ◆ Clean the shop before you leave, and carry out trash which you create.
- ◆ Always turn out the lights and lock up when leaving.
- ◆ Bring your own material for personal projects. Shop stock is for learning and practice.
- ◆ No alcoholic beverages on park property.

BGOP Meetings

Guild meetings are held on the first and third Fridays of each month at 7:30 P.M. at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 North Military Road, Arlington VA 22207. Meetings are usually held in the Guild's shop which is located about 50 yards past the Nature Center building on the wooded path. Occasional Friday meetings with a speaker or video are held in the Nature Center auditorium. Call the HOTLINE 703-527-0409 for updates on meetings and event.

Scholarship Applications

Scholarship applications are available on the web at www.bgop.org. Completed forms should be sent to Fay LeCompte III, 1016A East Main Street, Luray, Va.

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SUMMER CLASSES

Touchstone Center for Crafts
southwestern PA
www.touchstonecrafts.com
(please see their site for corrections to the schedule
previously listed here)

Penland School of Crafts
northwestern NC
www.penland.org

John C. Campbell Folk School
southwestern NC
www.folkschool.com

Peters Valley
northwestern NJ
www.pvcrafts.org

Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts
eastern Tennessee
www.arrowmont.org

Haystack Mountain School of Crafts
Maine
www.haystack-mtn.org

New England School of Metalwork
Maine
www.newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com

Bill Pieh Resource for Metalwork
Arizona
<http://www.horseshoes.com/supplies/alphabet/piehtoolco/linksandresources/workshops/billpiehworkshop.htm>

TIPS FROM THE SHOP MASTER

To stop your slack tub from freezing over at this time of year, leave a piece of wood in the water.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 17, 2007—BROOM MAKING WORKSHOP
10am Colvin Run Mill, Great Falls, VA
Current BGOP members and their families are invited to attend a broom making workshop with J. Alexander.

February 24, 2007 - Dan Boone Pasture Party
7381 Parrish Road, Louisa, VA
RSVP to Judy Boone by Feb 15 at
540-967-3267
Don't forget to bring items & buy tickets for Iron in the Hat

March 10, 2007— Patina Antique Tool Sale
Volunteer Fire Association Activity Center
Damascus, MD
Tool sales in the am, auction in the pm
www.patinatools.org

March 24-25, 2007— Joint meeting at Furnace Town, near Snow Hill, Maryland.
Demonstrator is Mike Linn from Alabama.
Mike's demo is aimed at the beginning and intermediate smith. Saturday will be many short projects, while Sunday will have fewer but longer projects. We don't have a cost as yet, however, we will have lunch both days and dinner on Saturday night. Tailgating is encouraged. Contact Mark Williams at 410-632-0914 or williamsiron@comcast.net for details.

April 7, 2007— Open Forge at
Gulf Branch Nature Center, noon-4pm

April 21-22, 2007 - BGOP Spring Fling
Ruritan Fairgrounds, Berryville VA
www.bgop.org for registration information.

BROOM MAKING WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 17, 2007

Current BGOP members and their families are invited to attend a broom making workshop with J. Alexander.

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 17, 2007 at 10 am.

WHERE: Colvin Run Mill, Great Falls, VA

DIRECTIONS: 10017 Colvin Run Rd., Great Falls, VA 22066. Beltway Exit 47A (Leesburg Pike, Route 7) west 5 miles past Tysons Corner to right turn on Colvin Run Road. Left turn into paved parking lot 500 feet beyond gravel drive to mill.

COST & SUPPLIES: a broom handle for yourself, an extra broom handle to give the instructor, and \$20.00 for supplies and class expenses. Additional broom corn will be on sale the day of the workshop.

SPECS: Handles must have an 1/8" hole one inch from the bottom. The broom straw will cover 5-6" of the bottom of the handle.

SEND CHECK for \$20 payable to BGOP Broom to:
G. ANDERTON
5325 RINGOLD PLACE
SPRINGFIELD VA, 22151-2421



**Making brooms for the Army and Navy at the Lighthouse, an institution for the blind, at 111 East Fifty-ninth Street, NY, NY.
Library of Congress LC-USW3- 041487-C**

Broom corn is a variety of sorghum, with stiff, branched seed panicles. The sorghum family contains more than 200 varieties and produces sugar (sugar cane), molasses, grain (millet and milo) and fodder for livestock.

Originally from Africa, the plant is first documented in Europe in the 1500's and appeared on this continent in the 1700's. Ben Franklin is credited with introducing it to America by plucking seeds from a whisk broom bought in Europe. Grown initially as an ornamental, in 1797 a Massachusetts farmer began making and peddling brooms using broom corn fiber rather than traditional sticks and other natural fibers. The Shakers changed the broom's shape from round to flat, and the invention of a foot-treadle broom machine allowed families and small workshops to produce brooms for sale. By 1860 Illinois was the leading producer of broom corn. That crop has moved farther west and south into Mexico but Illinois remains a large producer of broom corn seed. The state hosts an annual Broom Corn Festival (September 7-9, 2007) in Arcola, Illinois, also home to a large Old Order Amish settlement.

The standard plant is 10-12 feet high, although dwarf varieties may be half that size. It's tolerant of heat, drought and poor soil but does best with warm summers and moist fertile soil. It's harvested and dried when the panicles turn from yellow to green (any earlier and the fibers will be weak, later and they'll be less flexible). Traditionally the plant is "tabled" in the field to allow initial drying. The table walker walks backwards between rows, breaking the stalks and laying them diagonally across each other to form a shelf two or three feet off the ground. The brush is then cut and placed on the shelf to dry for a day before being moved to a curing shed. Threshing before curing rather than after will leave more of the fine branches on the stalk and result in a better broom.

For more on history, agriculture, seed and broom making supplies, see these sites:

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/afcm/broomcorn.html>
www.broomshop.com
<http://www.recaddy.com/ec/index.php?cPath=21>
www.heirloomseeds.com
www.seedsavers.com
www.victoryseeds.com

THE BLACKSMITHS' GUILD OF THE POTOMAC

ANNOUNCES

SPRING FLING APRIL 20-22, 2007

We again invite you to join us in a return to the traditional SPRING FLING, two and a half day event with demonstrations, tailgating and story telling. The **Ruritan Fairgrounds** gives us ample tailgating and camping space. The motels are but 8 miles west.

Demonstrators scheduled (subject to change)

LUCIAN AVERY

HARDWICK VT

GEORGE DIXON

SWANNANOVA NC

JJ ROBERTS

MANASSAS VA

CLAY SMITH

WILLIAMSBURG VA

TWO ANDERSON FORGE SMITHS

**A GREAT PLACE TO SEE AND VISIT WITH OLD
FRIENDS AND MAKE NEW ONES WHILE ENJOYING
A GREAT WEEKEND OF BLACKSMITHING**

This year we have an internet link to download your own SPRING FLING PDF PACKAGE. Go to our web page www.bgop.org on that page click on the Spring Fling Link that will take you to the page with the spring fling PDF package. This is for those that do not receive an invite by regular mail. This will be a non-response item you just download and print, then mail in. Look forward to seeing you at the Spring Fling.

Gates open Friday at 3pm

Feb 1 2007 a letter was mailed to everyone who attended spring fling #13 2005, it will appear in your mail box soon.

**Furnace Town Blacksmith's Guild — Joint Meeting & Workshop
 March 24th-25th , 2007 Demonstrator: Mike Linn**

Mike is a proficient blacksmith from Alabama. His demo is aimed at the beginning and intermediate smith. Saturday will be many short projects, while Sunday will have fewer but longer projects. Saturday includes coffee and doughnuts in the morning, all-day demo, lunch (both days), **Iron in the Hat** (please bring something), auction and the flashy wit of Ray Noble and David Hutchison. The demonstration continues into the afternoon. The Saturday evening dinner will be at the Eby's house which is on Rt 12 near Millville Road in Snow Hill. (maps will be available) We will have a table of Norm Larson's books for sale. Tailgate sales are encouraged.

=====

REGISTRATION INFO

NAME/s _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE/EMAIL _____

Pre-registration _____ x \$35 (\$45 late) = _____

Sat. night dinner _____ x \$15 = Total = _____

Send money and registration info to:
 Mark Williams
 114 W. Federal St.reet

Cost: \$35.00 by 14th March, \$45.00 thereafter
 Saturday night dinner is \$15.00 extra
 Make checks to: Furnace Town Blacksmiths Guild.

**Tintinkers.org Presents
 Tinsmith-Coppersmith Convergence
 June 21-24, 2007**

A gathering of Tinsmiths invites all other sheetmetal workers, blacksmiths, Pipe fitters and Historians, and students interested in an exchange of ideas, learning historically accurate methods of manufacture, seeing newly discovered techniques, trading tools and improving productivity. A highlight of the program is Hot dipping of tin sheet and many other Hands-on demonstrations scheduled.

Participant Donation: \$20/family till May 15.
 Walk-on registration: Souder 1 day pass and \$30
 Registered participants have hands on experiences.
 Public Attendance is invited for weekend Activities.

Meals not included Saturday evening \$15 buffet
 Lodging: rooms and campsites on hold till 5/15/07
 Souder Modern Camping \$18/nite
 Souder Hotel Reservations \$70/nite

For more details:
 Mike Runyon at Souder Village
 1-800-590-9755 x 2018
 www.saudervillage.com
 c/oTinshop/Mike Runyon
 22611 St. Rt. 2
 Archbold, Ohio 43502
 (Northwest Ohio)

National News

Dona Meilach, author of six books on contemporary blacksmithing as well as numerous other art, craft and food publications, passed away on Dec. 28 in California. Her most recent work, [Ironwork: Dynamic Details](#), was published on January 30th. Previous titles include:

[Decorative and Sculptural Ironwork: Tools, Techniques, Inspiration](#)

[Direct Metal Sculpture](#)

[The Contemporary Blacksmith](#)

[Fireplace Accessories](#)

[Ironwork Today: Inside & Out](#)

A complete obituary may be found at the www.abana.org

Albert Paley has been commissioned to create a steel gate for the national cathedral's Chapel of the Good Shepherd. The piece has been in progress for three years, and installation is scheduled for the spring.

2007 Glenn Horr Shop tips and tools

*Vice jig: use to support work in vice quickly. The arm is in a tube that is welded to the vice stand and has a set screw/knob to set the height and lock it. I just swing it out of the way when not needed.

*Use Industrial pallet racking to store heavy stuff, use the mesh decking. Some racks are rated for 3000 lbs. +

*Digital Three phase converter.

"Phase Perfect" solid state converter's is based on AMP load, not matched HP. The best part is has no moving parts only a cooling fan. You can operate all types of three-phase equipment.

www.phaseperfect.com



*Use unistrut to make jigs, frames etc.

*Install an hour timer on equipment to keep track of hours of use for maintenance.

*Mark your stands for anvil, saw, vice, etc so you can set the right height quickly.

*Use a hammer that you don't care about getting dented for hitting punches, chisels, stamps. I annealed one for that purpose. Paint the handle a bright color so it is visible.

Ringling In the New Year



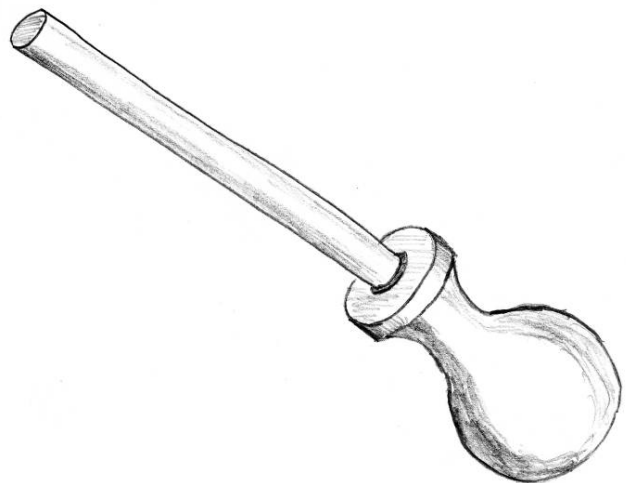
Two Bells made by Bill Clemens – large bell is approximately 2 1/2 “ and smaller one is approximately 1 3/4”

Article by Bill Clemens

I began experimenting with making these bells over a year ago when a how to article appeared in an affiliate newsletter.¹ I quickly discovered that cutting out the bell blank was a stumbling block in making them. I first tried making them from thinner material than called for and found out that they don't form well from thin material. I then cut, **ground**, and **filed** one from the right material and was able to complete a bell but wasn't happy with the top half which seemed to be flat bent petals on a round hemispherical base. I next got a dozen blanks plasma cut at a local metal supply shop that only required some grinding on one side to remove the flash. I subsequently have had blanks laser cut and now after having made several dozen bells think I have the “how to” down well enough to offer this article to all.

Tools

Top Swedge –Tailer hitch ball or ball bearing(2” for large bell 1 1/2 “ for small bell) with 10-12 inch 1/2 -3/4 stem welded on.

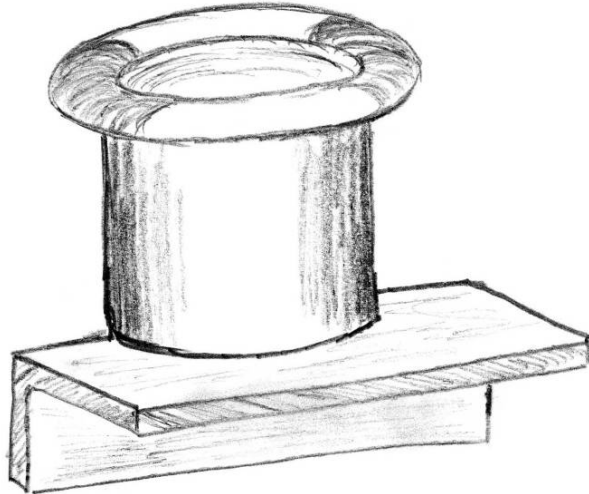


Bottom Swedge – Pipe with top end flared using horn of anvil

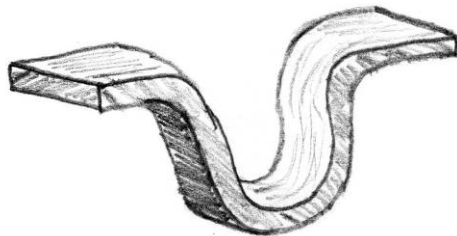
Large – ID ~ 2 3/8 “ (3 inch thick walled pipe)

Small – ID ~ 1 3/4” (2 inch pipe)

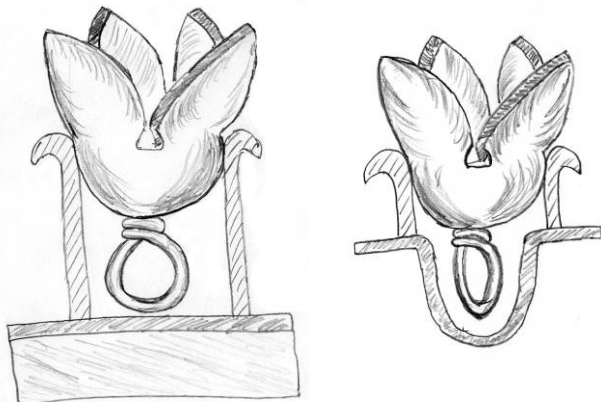
Add angle iron for use in vise or hardy stem for use on anvil.



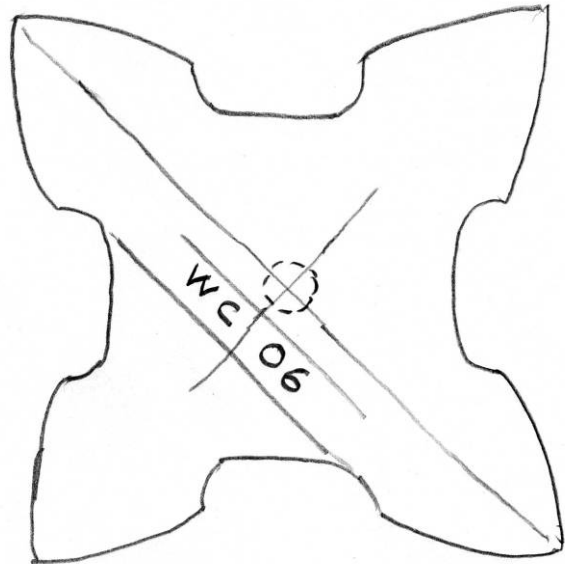
Shown below is a quick hardy stem made from flat stock 1/8-1/4” thick and the width of the hardy hole.



The space from the top of the flared pipe to the bottom of the tool needs to allow the bottom of the bell and ring to be inserted. This is a minimum of 2 3/4 “ for the large bell and 2 1/4” for the small bell.



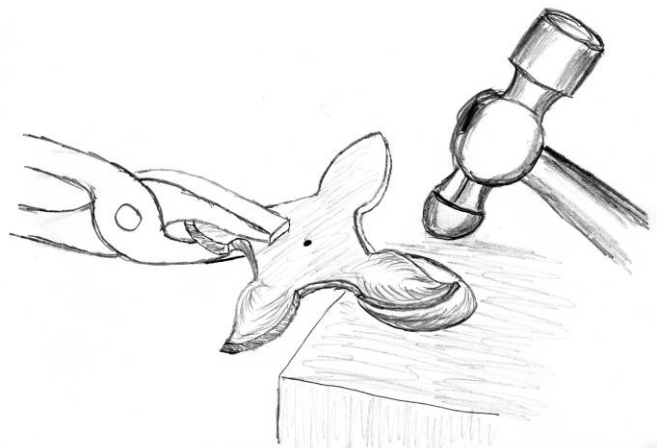
Bell Blanks – Cut (or have cut) bell blanks using the templates at the end of this article. Use 3/16” (or 7 Gage) for the large bell and 1/8” (or 11 Gage) for the small bell. Make a center punch hole on the inside of the blank for drilling the stem hole and touch mark the blank on the outside.



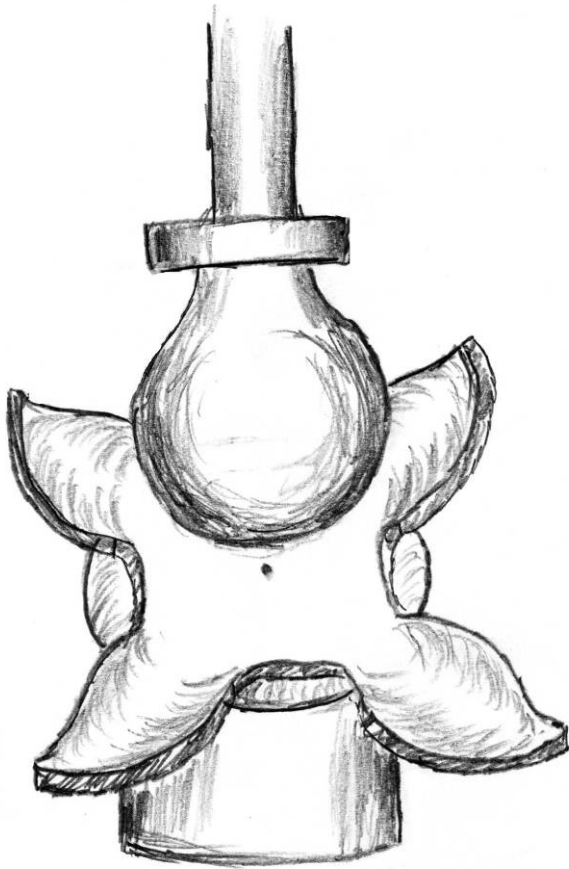
You may also decorate the outside of the bell at this point, such as adding leaf veining to each of the 4 petals of the bell as shown here:



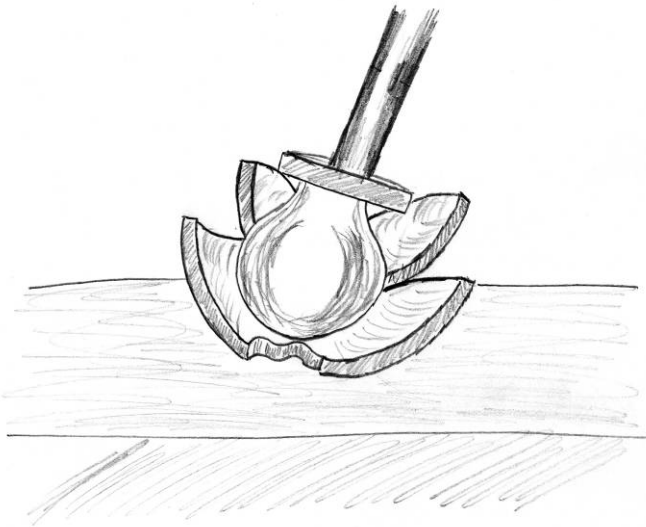
Dish each of the petals of the bell blank using a spoon swedge and ball peen hammer.



Form Bell – Heat the blank uniformly to a yellow heat and begin sinking it into bottom pipe swedge with the top ball swedge. This will take several heats as you are upsetting the material between the bell's petals.



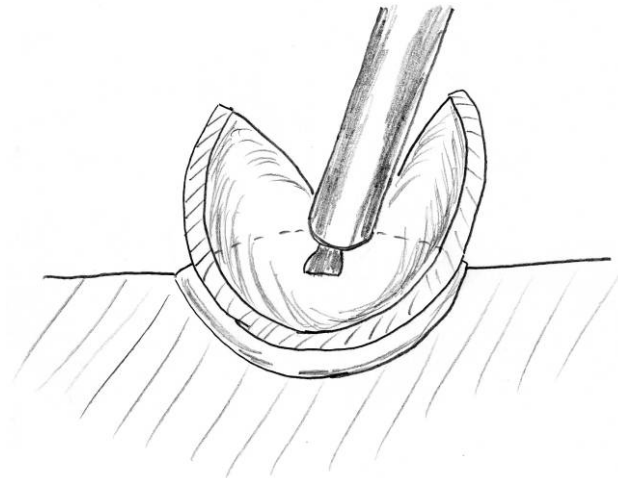
To help shape the bell use the top ball swedge on the anvil to smooth out and round the portion of the bell being upset between the petals.



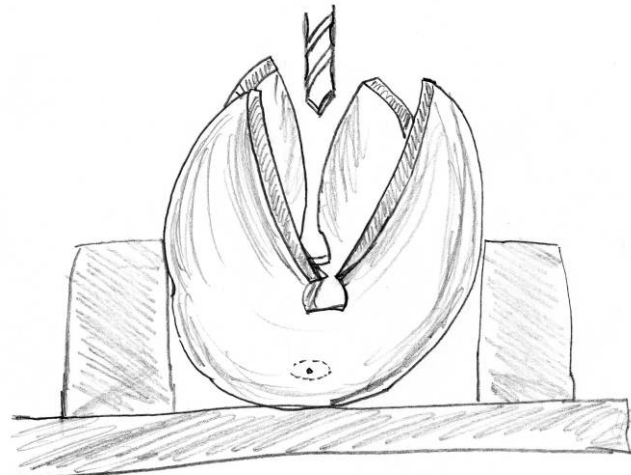
Continue sinking the bell until the ball swedge can just be removed from the bell.



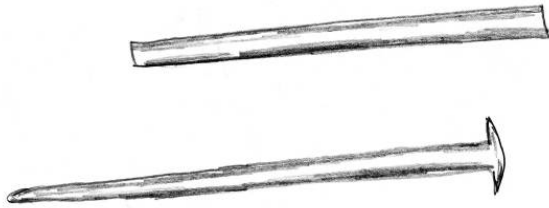
Use the smaller ball swedge on the large bell or a 3/4 inch rounded end rod on the small bell to round out the area between the petals into a ladle swedge block.



Stem – Drill 1/4" hole in bottom of bell to accept stem



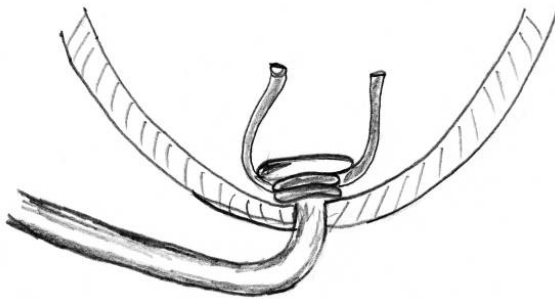
Forge stem from 6 inches of 1/4 inch round. Head one end and taper 1 1/2 inches of other end to a blunt taper.



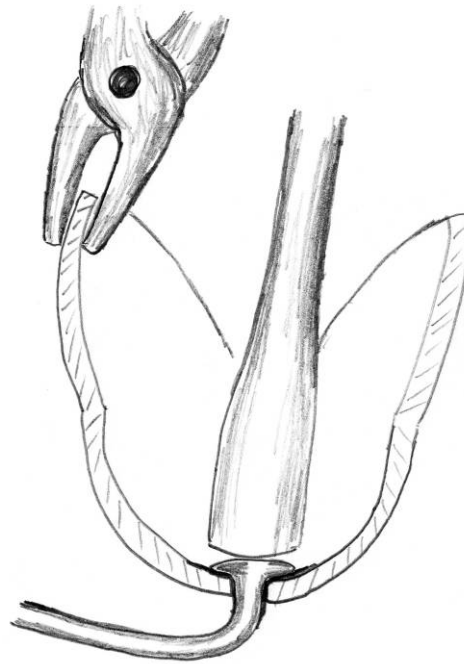
Heat the headed end of the stem and insert in the bell bending the stem at approx 90 degrees close to the bell.



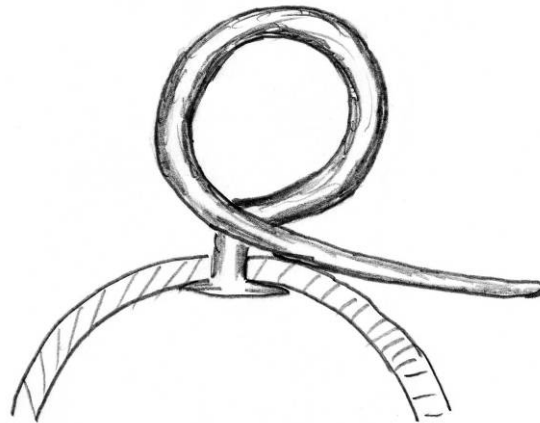
Heat and flux the stem head and then wrap with copper wire. Preheat the bell and then reinsert the stem. Heat slowly to near welding heat watching until the copper wire melts.



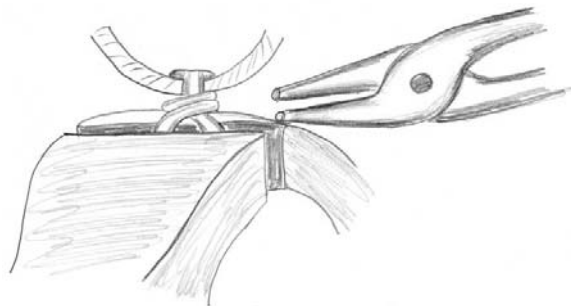
Remove from forge and hold head in place until bell cools and copper hardens.



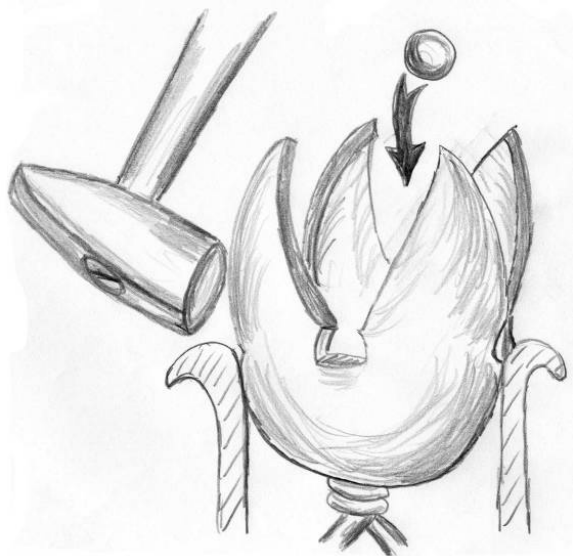
Heat stem and form ring with scrolling tongs. Take care not to overheat the bell and break the copper braze.



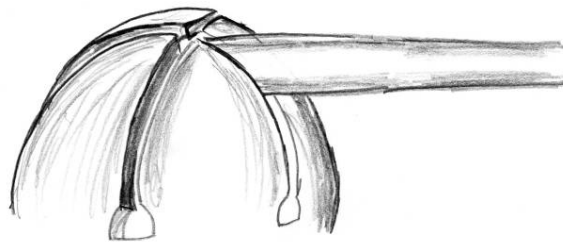
Heat tapered end and wrap around stem with scrolling tongs to finish ring.



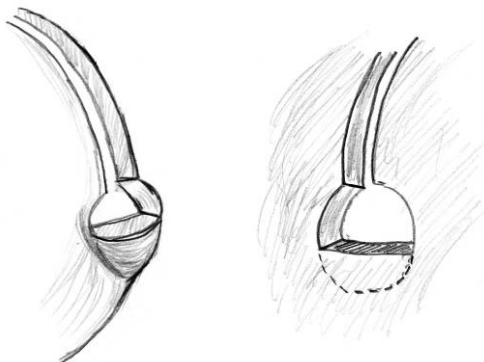
Place bell in forge with petals down and heat to bright orange. Set bell in pipe swedge, insert ball bearing (3/8 to 7/16" for small bell 1/2 to 5/8" for large bell) Hammer petals closed with gentle blows near their base.



Space petals with thin tapered chisel/fuller while using a hammer to close them.



Completed bell has a bulge where the metal has been upset between the petals and the hole at the end of the slots is not round but flat on the bottom. You may choose to leave the bell like this or remove it. It does not seem to have much affect on the sound of the bell. First file or grind the bulge flush following the contours of the bell. Next, with a round file or die grinder, round the bottom of the hole.



The bell should be heated again to critical temperature(non-magnetic) and quenched to improve its ring.

Options for the bells include using a nut and bolt in place of the ring to fasten the bell(s) to a leather strap. You could also drill and tap the base of the bell to accept a bolt for this same purpose.

Materials List for Bells

Tools

Top Swedge

Trailer Ball or Ball Bearing
 Large Bell – 2"
 Small Bell – 1 1/2"
 10-12" 3/4 round for stem

Bottom Swedge

Pipe with top edge rolled
 Large Bell - 2 3/8" ID
 Small Bell - 1 3/4" ID
 Angle Iron for base in vise
 Hardy Stem for use on Anvil

3/4" round end Fuller

1/2 -3/4" wide thin tapered Fuller

Bells

Blanks cut using template on following page

6" 1/4 inch round for stem/ring

Ball bearing for Ringer

3/8 to 7/16" for small bell
 1/2 to 5/8 " for large bell

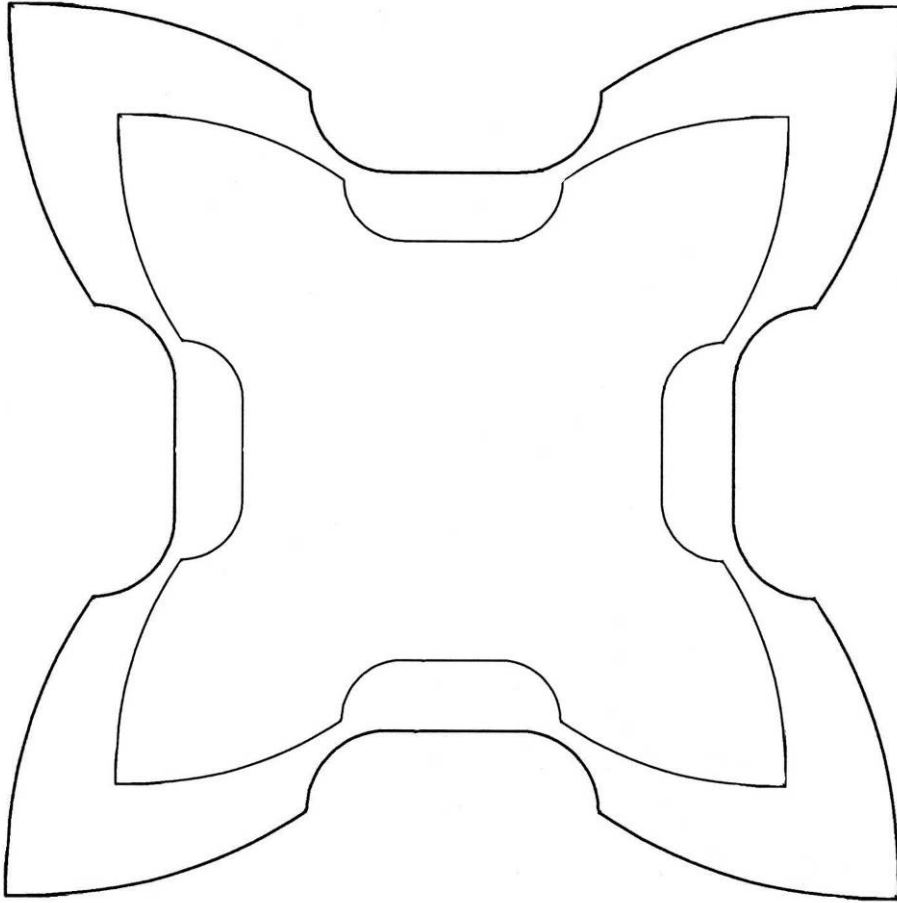
Copper Wire to forge braze Stem to bell

This article is based on a article by Steve Alling that appeared in the Nov-Dec 2005 issue of The Upsetter, the newsletter of the Michigan Artist Blacksmith's Association.

Scale Drawings for Bell Blanks

Large –measures 6 1/2 “diagonally corner to corner – use 3/16” (7 Ga) Stock

Small –measures 4 7/8 “ diagonally corner to corner – use 1/8” (11 Ga) Stock



Show and Tell & Pipe Demo

January 19

Jan Kochansky brought a pair of pickup tongs he forged from two pieces of 3/4" round 1050 at his power hammer class.



Connie Badowski demonstrates pipe forging while Bill Wojcik bites his tongue.

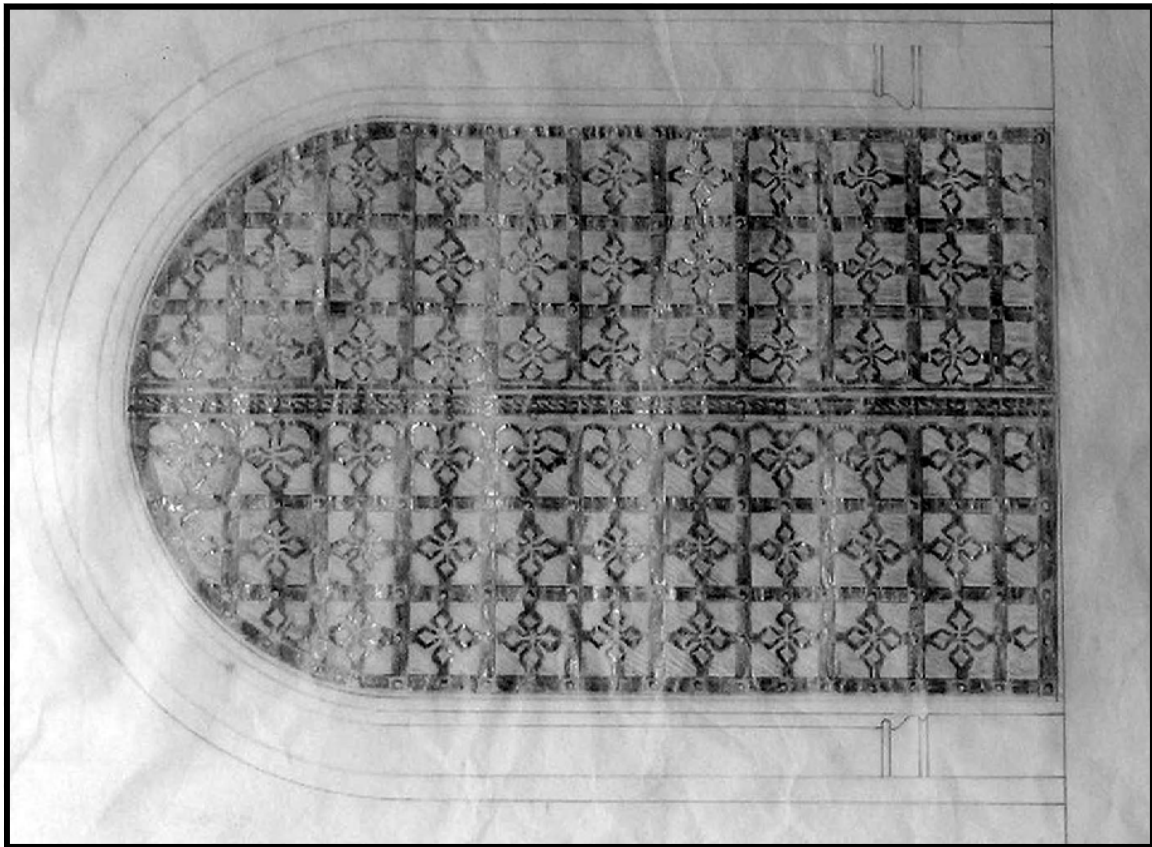
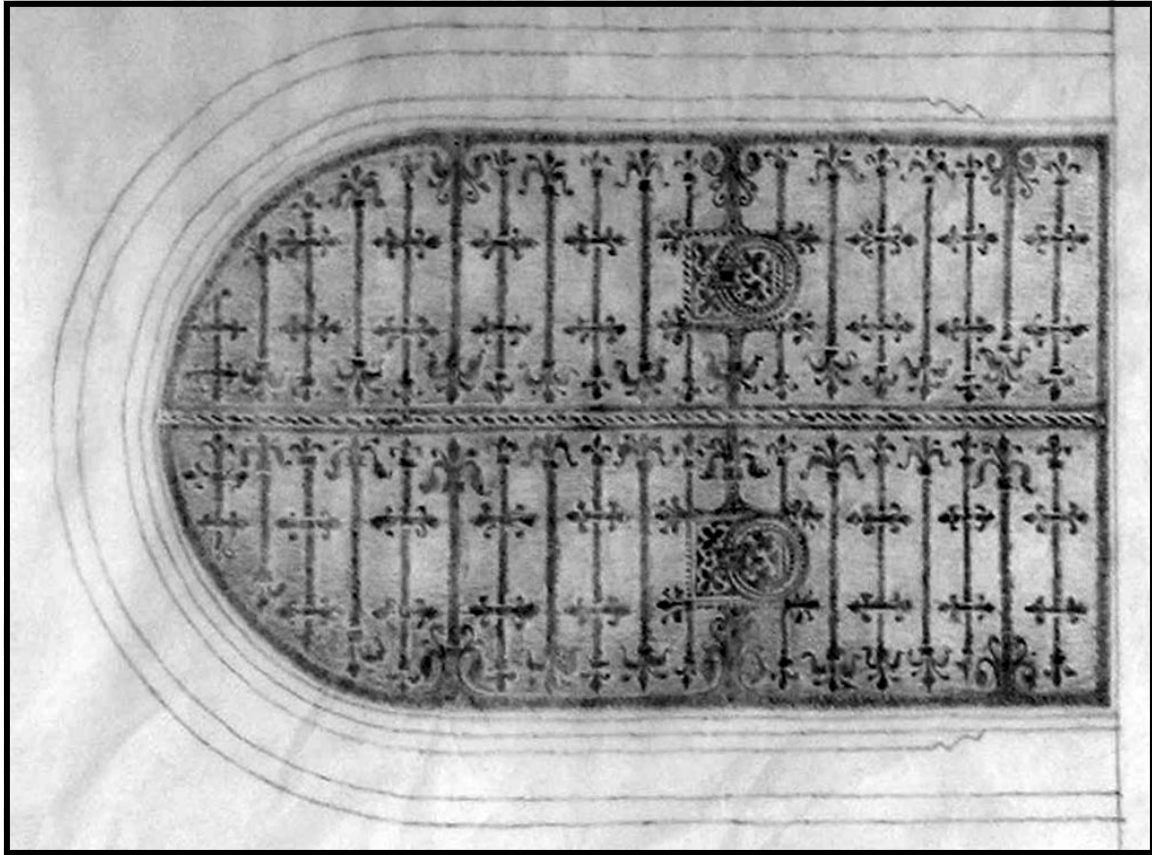
Phil Heath brought a scrolling tool he forged from a railroad spike. He also polished the head of the spike so it could be used as a stake. He also brought two hammers. One had each face ground on a long radius, configured like straight and cross peens. The second was a forging hammer with narrow faces. Finally, Phil brought a scrolled piece made from light steel as a “sketch.”

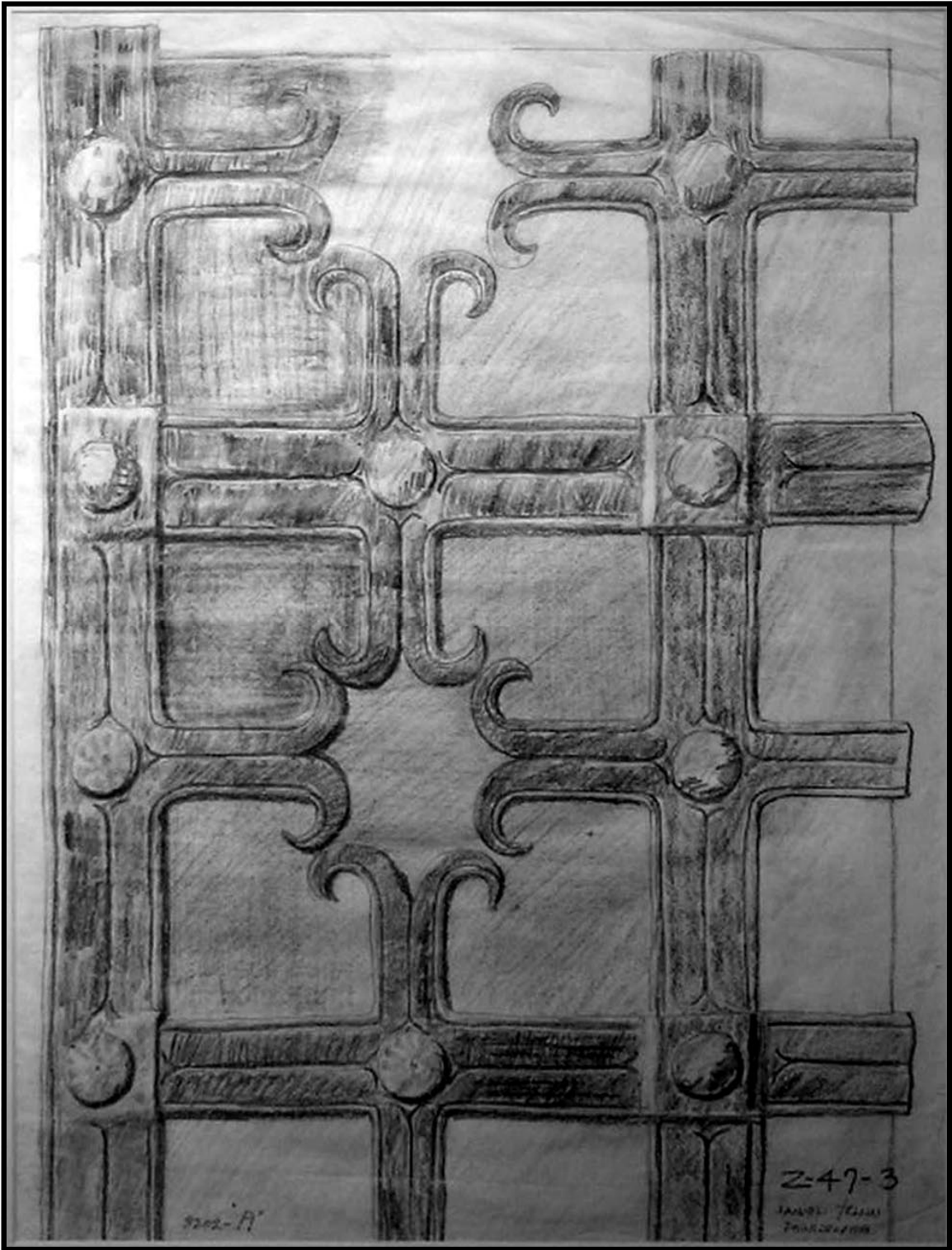


Dave Murphy brought a silhouette of the epiphany he cut from a spare dishwasher door panel (thin sheet steel). He blew up the pattern from a Christmas card, taped it to the steel, backed the piece with wood from a wine box, and cut it out with a saber saw.

Dick Smith brought a pick axe head that he modified into a bick for backing up a pipe bell on the inside when forging it. He wedged a piece of 1” square into the head, and used 1” angle welded to the sides of the 1” square as a spacer between the pick axe head and the face of the anvil around the hardy hole.







Left and above—drawings by Samuel Yellin
Courtesy L. Johanningsmeier



BGOP Membership Application and Renewal

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I am a member of ABANA, The Artist Blacksmiths Association of North America Yes No

New Member—\$35 or 3 yrs—\$75 Renewal—\$25 or 3 yrs—\$70

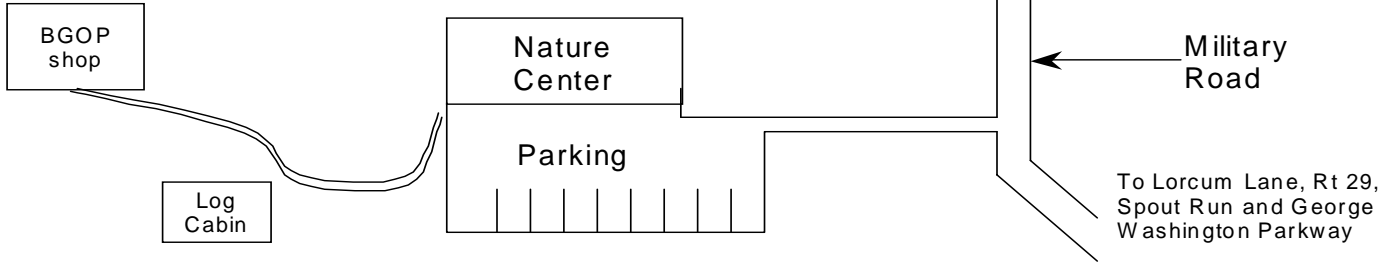
Age _____ (Minimum 16 years) Blacksmithing Experience _____ Yes No

Make check payable to: **BGOP**

Mail check and Membership application to: **Fred Long, 5309 Bangor Dr, Kensington MD 20895-1106**

Gulf Branch Nature Center

3608 N. Military Road
Arlington VA 22207
703-358-3403



ABANA

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip/PC: _____

Country: _____

Type of Membership

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