



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

August 2011



Presidential declaration.

No Meeting in August.

It is too damn hot!

The next meeting of Balcones Forge will be September 17.



Officers

President

Jerry Achterberg
treefarm@swbell.net
210/710-2919

Vice-President

Jerry Whitley
jerry.whitley@ymail.com
830/665-2285

Treasurer

Rudy Billings
rudy@balconesforge.org
512/461-7375

Secretary

John Crouchet
john@texaswroughtiron.com
830/798-3710



Editor

Vince Herod
spotteddogforge@yahoo.com
512/253-6045

SECRETARY'S REPORT



New Ideas at July Meeting

Some new ideas were discussed at the July Balcones Forge meeting. In a wide-ranging discussion that started even before the beginning of the meeting, President Jerry Achterberg and several members threw out a number of ideas to enhance our meetings and get us through the annual problem of "hot summer doldrums". The discussion continued through the official start of the 9:30 meeting at Zilker Botanical Gardens and continued, on and off, all the way through lunch at Artz Ribs, the notorious South Austin blacksmiths hangout!

August Meeting Cancelled!

The biggest immediate change to emerge from all the brainstorming was the decision to cancel the regular August meeting. Scorching hot temperatures at the end of August always make this a poorly attended meeting. In addition, this year, school will be starting the last two weeks of August, so many members, both teachers and parents, will be neck deep in back-to-school activities. The final consensus was that we would be better off to just put our energies into a better meeting in September.

In addition, Balcones Forge officers are asking for your ideas for interesting, eventful meetings. What would you like? What would you enjoy seeing demonstrated? Would you be interested in more outside demonstrators? New venues? Think it over. Jerry wants your suggestions in the discus-

sion at our September meeting.

The location for our September meeting is changing. The new location will be American Youth Works and our host will be Jim Schmidt.

The October meeting will be in Georgetown at San Gabriel Park. Balcones Forge will be providing the old-time blacksmiths for the annual longhorn cattle drive up the banks of the San Gabriel River as part of the "Up the Chisholm Trail" celebration. We will be back in our very nice location under the huge, shady oak trees. This was a fascinating and successful event last year. We are very glad to be invited back again!

The November meeting will travel to beautiful Hunt, Texas. Long time member Gary Hilton will be our host and demonstrator. A metal sculptor as well as an accomplished blacksmith, anvil collector, and geophysicist, Gary has some mighty interesting things to share with us! Plan to learn some new fabrication techniques.

Following the announcement of our future meeting plans, Secretary John Crouchet announced that Elizabeth Brim has accepted our invitation to come to Texas and serve as our demonstrator for the 2012 Bluebonnet Demo! As most of you know, Elizabeth is a renowned teacher who really puts the "artist" in "artist-blacksmith". Unfortunately, she is in big demand around the country and it has taken us quite a while to find a workable date. We look forward to welcoming her to the Texas Hill Country next Spring! Details will be announced as we work them out!

The trade item for the July meeting was a forged bodkin. A bodkin is a sleeved arrowhead, originally produced for the purpose of penetrating armor in battles of the Middle Ages. Several fine bodkins were produced. Aaron Tilton and his son, Shane, both forged fine pieces. Jerry Achterberg, Jim Schmidt, Bill Miller, George Graham, and James

The Balcones Forge Newsletter is written by the editor except as noted. Balcones Forge, its officers, members, contributors, editors and writers specifically disclaim any responsibility, or liability for any damage, or injury as a result of the use of any information published in the newsletter or demonstrated at a meeting or conference. Every effort is made to insure the accuracy and safety of information provided but the use by our members and readers of any information published herein or provided at meetings is solely at the user's own risk.

Brock also brought interesting work.

In honor of long-time member Sue Murray, the September trade item will be JEWELRY! Earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, or whatever your creativity leads you to. We all know the bar will be high with Sue participating!

President Jerry Achterberg announced that November's item will be a competition, with prizes, for "best friction folder knife". Participants will keep their own knife, following the judging by our team of experts. Jerry referred members to the friction folder article in Hammer's Blow magazine.

In other business, Treasurer Rudy Billings officially thanked member Matt Czosnek for all the time and effort Matt has put onto running the blacksmith shop at Zilker Gardens this year. Time after time, Matt has come down and opened up the shop for the use of Balcones members. We really appreciate Matt's work and his efforts to help other blacksmiths!

Jerry Achterberg reminded members that Balcones Forge Board of Directors elections are coming up. Officers are selected from the Board of Directors. If you want to contribute to the work of operating our organization, please consider running for election. Even if you just want to be a helper, please raise your hand and volunteer. Step up and take some responsibility for where we are going and what we are doing!

Jim Schmidt alerted members to an interesting opportunity in Northwest Arkansas, near Fayetteville. A 1200's medieval fortress is being constructed from stone, using techniques from the Middle Ages. Of course, this includes some serious blacksmithing! Jim spent a day working in the blacksmith shop there and wanted to inform everyone that construction goes on each year from May through October. If you should find yourself in Northwest Arkansas next summer.....

The meeting concluded with a fire in the forge, the ringing of hammers and anvils, and a small stamper toward the barbecue!

See you in September..... (isn't that a song???)

Respectfully submitted,

John Crouchet, Secretary

LEG VISE

Balcones Forge is on the look out for a leg vise to donate to the Waldorf School. Does anyone out there have an extra that could go to a good cause?

Please let one of the officers know if you do.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Bluebonnet Demo for 2012 will feature Elizabeth Brim. Check out the ABANA website for a gallery entry showing off her award winning talent. Once the date is set, you all will be the first to know.

TRADE ITEM

The trade item for September is a piece of jewelry. Now this is certainly a chance for all of us to shine as the possibilities are limitless. What do you see in your mind's eye? Once you see it, go out and make it.

Remember, you gotta make one to take one!

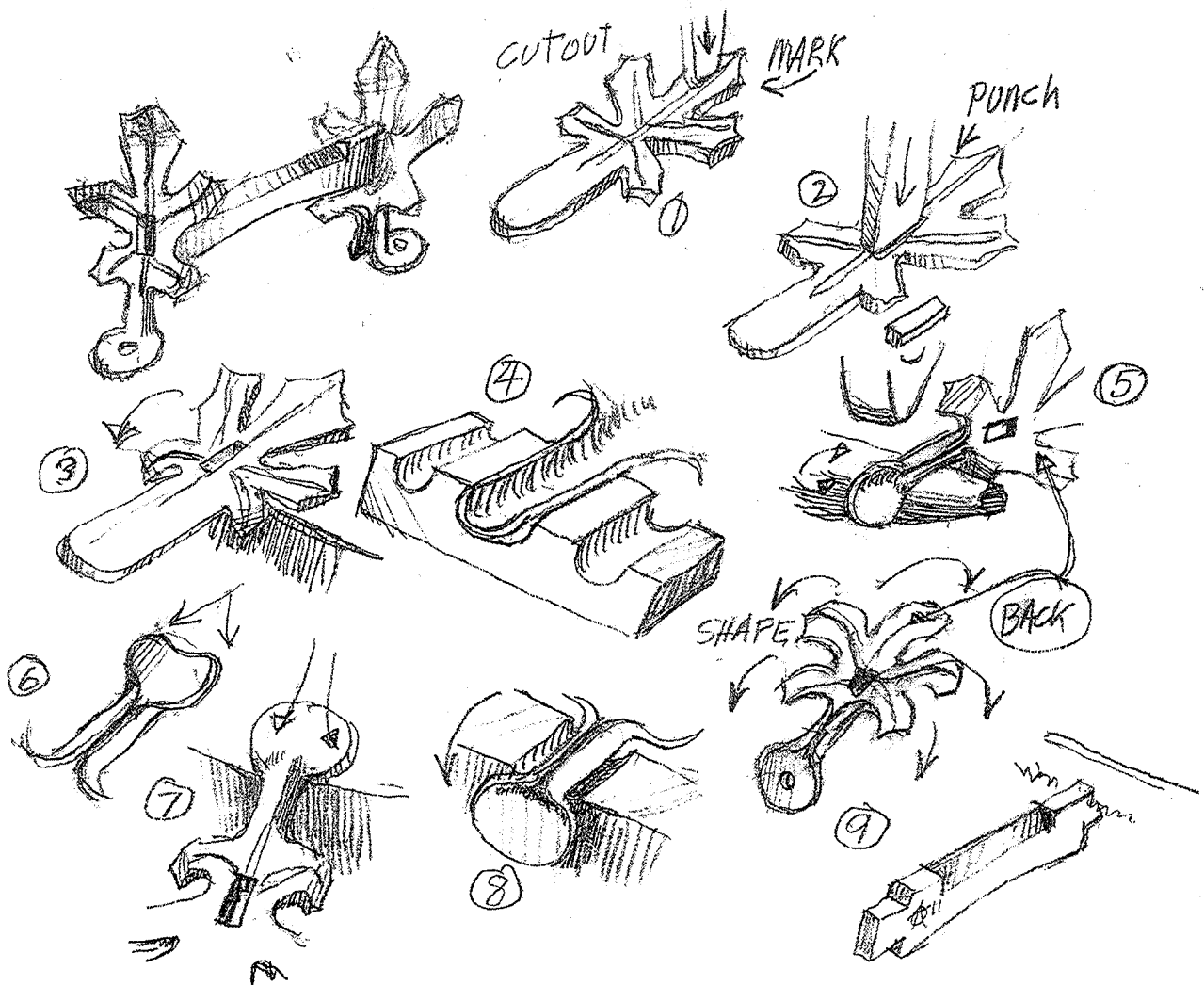
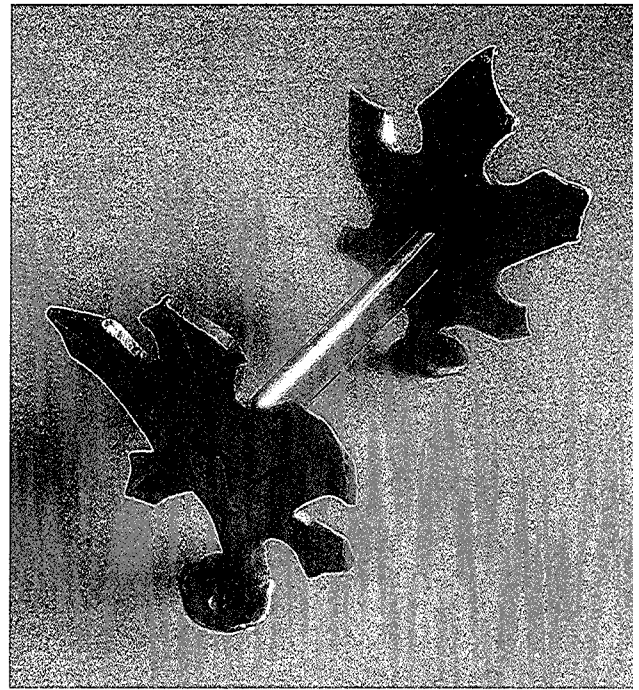


Stamp from Turkey

Boot Scraper

By Steve Alling
a MABA Member

1. Cut out your design from 11 gauge material leaving the stem wide enough to curl completely around. Clean up and make any veining designs.
2. Punch hole for tennon.
3. Bend any part of your design that will restrict you getting at the stem.
4. Pre form stem in swage.
5. With the peen of your hammer complete rounding up stem being careful not to close end.
6. With a small hammer work the bottom out flat.
7. Draw out bottom to shape.
8. In swage bend bottom to 90 degrees.
9. Shape design and rivet it to scraper.



For the November trade item we will change things up a bit. Once again this will be a “you keep yours” contest. The item to be made is a friction lock folding knife. Below is an example made by Jerry Achterberg and shown at the July meeting. Check out the Fall 2010 edition of Hammer’s Blow for an informative article on this project. You say you don’t get the Hammer’s Blow...well then you need to join ABANA.....an application is on page 12 of this edition.



Post Anvil

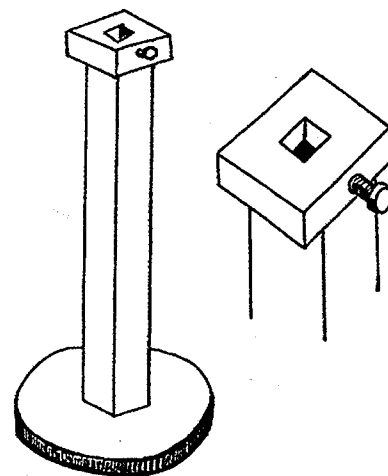
by Richard Shepard, Pittsburgh Area Artist-Blacksmiths

Top plate: 2" thick mild steel.

Post: 4" square tubing filled with scrap metal and sand.

Base: 1" thick plate.

Not only for when you don't want to be putting stakes and cut-offs in and out of your anvil's Hardy hole, but if you make it the same height as your anvil, it can serve double duty as a stock support. It has been a helpful addition to my shop.





WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



Scenes from the July meeting.

Photos by Vince Herod

Rudy Billings inside the Zilker smithy.

Jerry Achterberg and John Crouchet compare notes before the meeting.



How to make an anvil and live to tell about it.

Using Square stock only 5/8 by 5/8, it is possible to make an anvil.

Start by cutting a slot in the end of the bar across the middle of the bar so you divide it in half. Make the cut approximately as deep as the bar is wide. With the 5/8 inch stock, just use a hack saw and stop when the top of the blade is even with the end of the bar.

Next, spread the cut so you end up with a "T" at the end of the bar. At this point there will be a notch at the top of the "T". Take a few heats and try to flatten out the "T" so it is as smooth as possible. Don't go too crazy about the notch. Anything that doesn't hammer out will be filed out in the end.

To form the Horn of the anvil, take a heat and draw one end of the "T" to almost a point. Round the horn out as best you can, remember there will be some filing to clean it all up at the end. At this point you may want to put a shelf on the horn. You can use a chisel or a sharp corner of your real anvil. One or two hits are all you will need. You only want to suggest the shelf, not cut the horn off.

From the top, you should have something that looks like an anvil. But from the side, you still need to add a few details. You will need a top and bottom fuller, smithin' magician or something like that to complete the anvil.

Taking a heat that gets into the body of the project, place it on the fuller and put a notch on both sides of the body on the same side as the horn and heel of the anvil.

Now get out your file. The smith I met suggested doing the filing while the piece was red hot. I'm not that familiar with the process so I'm going to follow his lead. Therefore; while the piece is red hot, file the face of the anvil, remove whatever is left over from the notch and leave a nice flat surface. Now work the horn into a classic round shape. Be sure to take off any sharp comers or points at this time as well.

Cut the anvil off the bar, knock off any remaining sharp comers and you will have made an anvil! OK, so it's only about an inch long and might be a little tough to use on a regular basis, but what really mat-

ters is that you made an anvil. By the way, since you were careful and cleaned up all the sharp comers and edges, now you can drill a "hardy hole", run a ring through it, and have yourself a very nice key ring. How many people do you know can carry an anvil around in their pockets?

All told, this project takes about a half an hour to complete. So next time you have a few minutes, pullout some square stock and before you know it, you can add "Anvil Maker" to your resume.

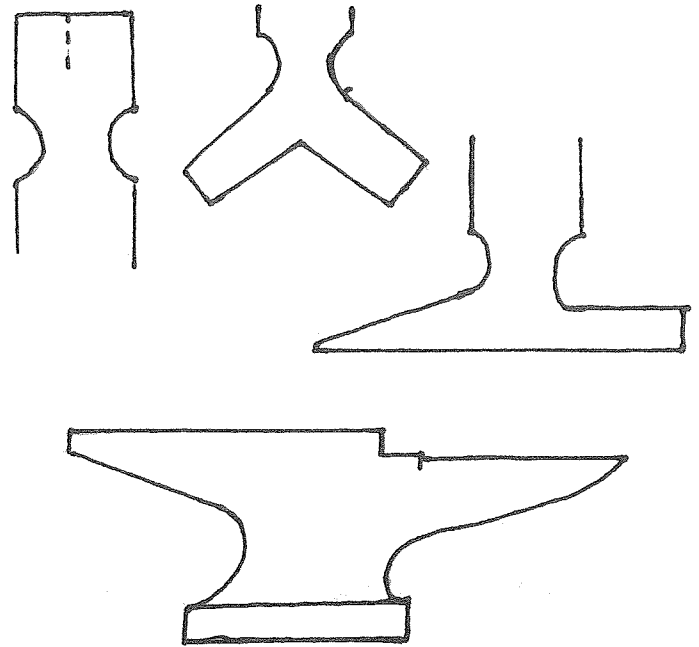


FIG # 1

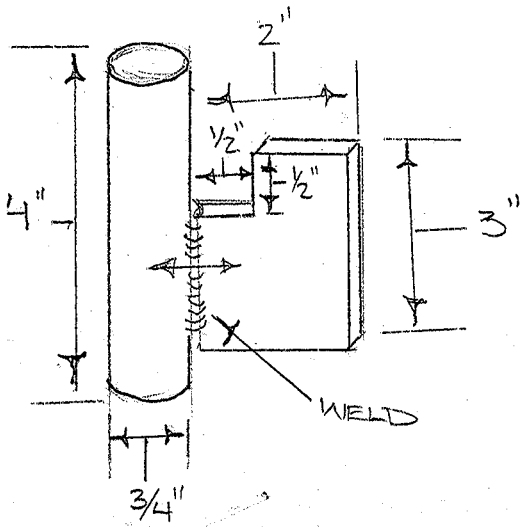


FIG # 2

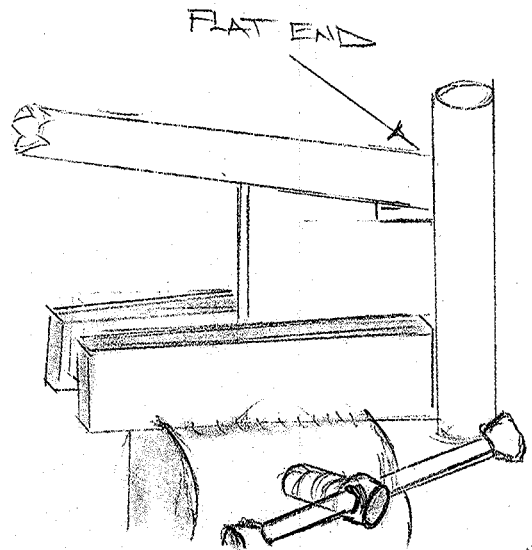


FIG # 3

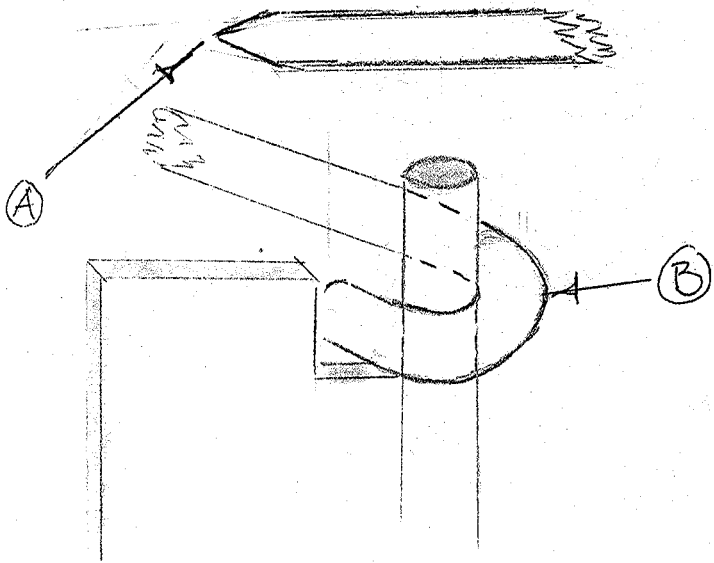


FIG # 4

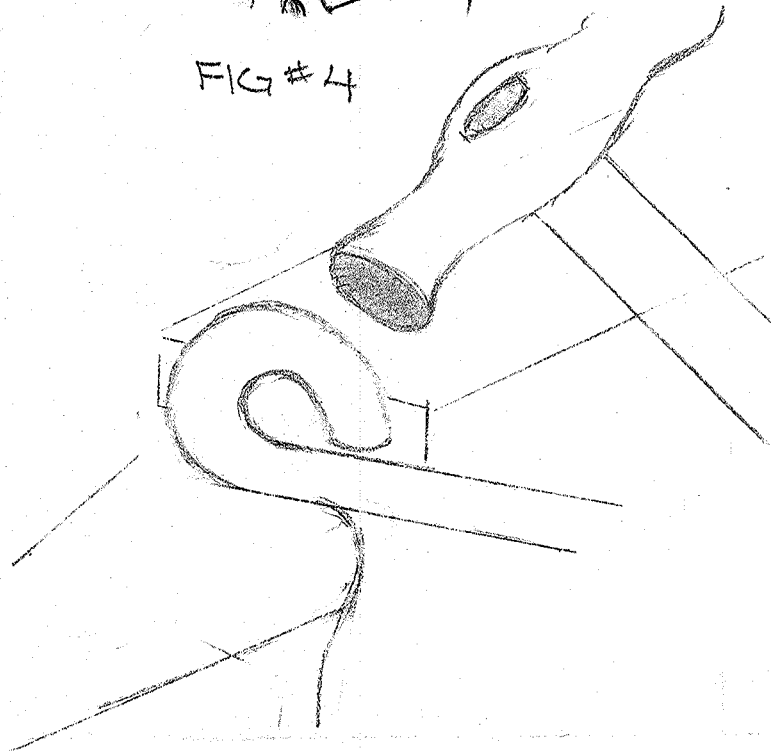


FIG # 5

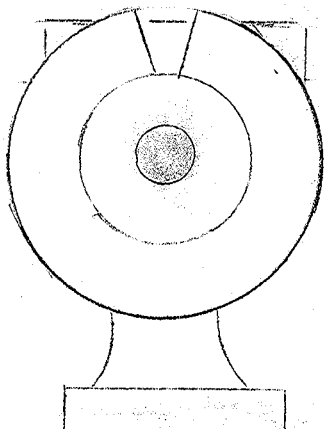
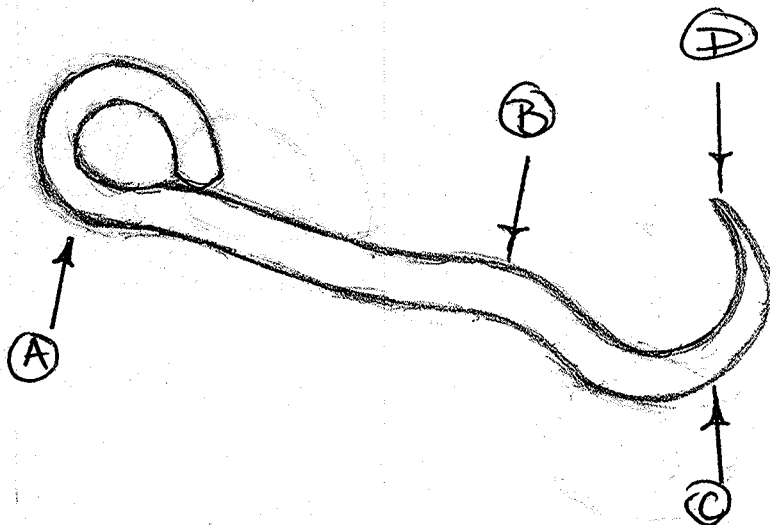


FIG # 6



Bill Epps Tripod

FIG #1. Build the bending jig. Cut a $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " notch out of one corner of the $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2" x 3" flat stock. Weld the 4" x $\frac{3}{4}$ " round to the $\frac{1}{4}$ " flat as shown.

FIG #2. Place your new bending jig in a post vise. Take a good heat on one end of a 60" piece of $\frac{1}{2}$ " round. Catch the end of the round in the notch of the bending jig.

FIG #3. Form an eye as shown in 3-B. Later (after step 4), draw a point on the opposite end as shown in 3-A.

FIG #4. While the eye is still hot, use the horn of the anvil and bring the eye back to center. Repeat steps 2 – 4 on the other two pieces of $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 60" round. Quench when done.

FIG #5. Form the ring using the 15" piece of $\frac{1}{2}$ " round. Use the horn of the anvil or a cone mandrel to get a smooth ring. Leave a slight opening to allow assembly.

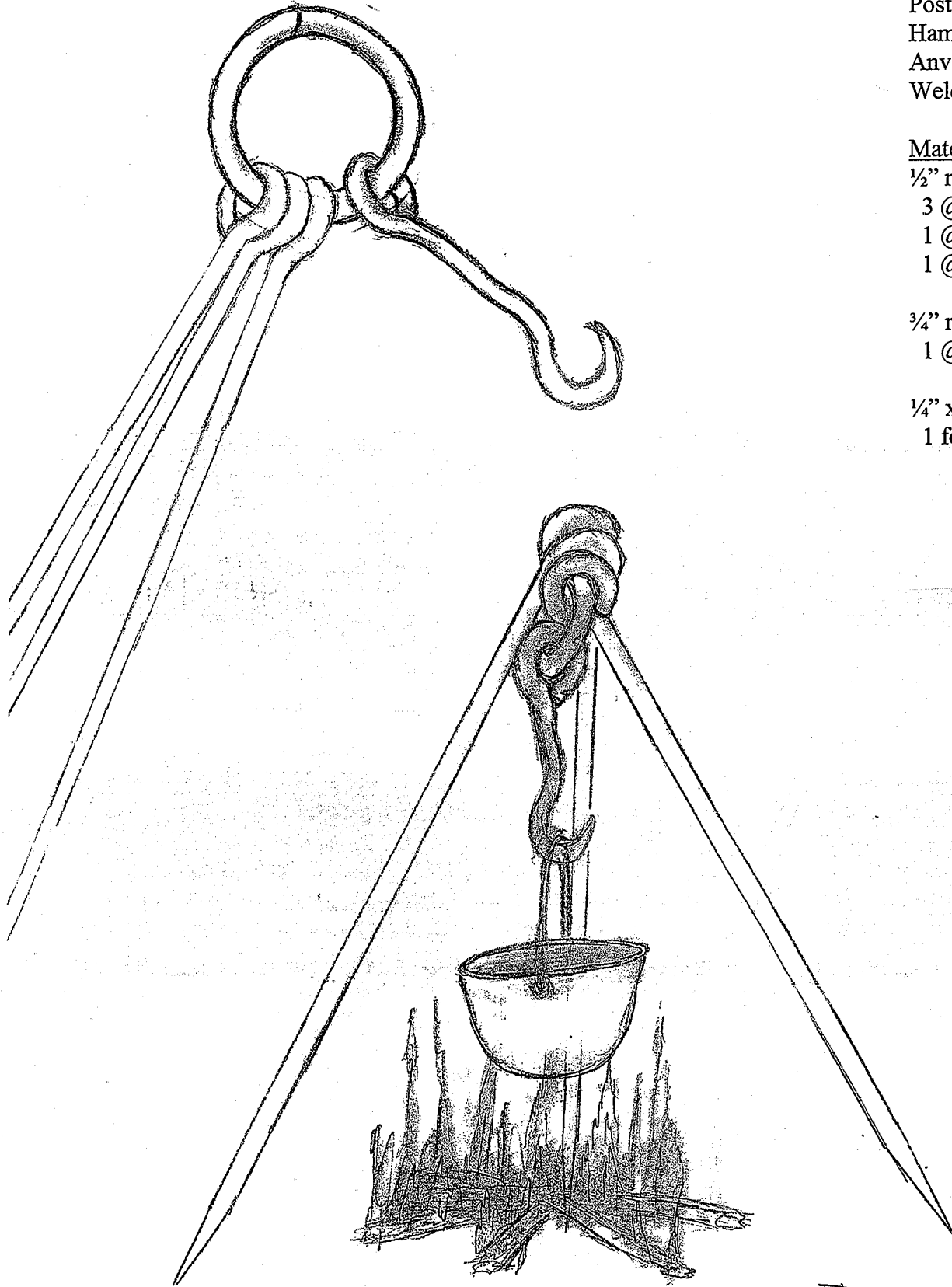
FIG #6. Form the hook. Use the 12" long piece of $\frac{1}{2}$ " round and repeat steps 2 - 4 to form an eye on one end. Quench the eye and then form a hook (to your preference) on the opposite end.

FIG #7. Assemble the tripod. Place the three legs and hook onto the ring. Heating as needed, close the gap and then quench.

To set up the tripod as shown in the drawing, take the center leg and flip it all the way over. Spread the legs equally on the ground and the tripod should hold approximately 200 lbs.



FIG # 7



Tools Needed

Post Vise
Hammer
Anvil
Welding Machine

Materials Needed

1/2" round
3 @ 60" for legs
1 @ 15" for ring
1 @ 12" for hook

3/4" round
1 @ 4" for bending jig

1/4" x 3" x 2"
1 for bending jig

DATE 7-10-11

DESIGN: BILL EPPS
DRAWN BY: MARCO
GARCIA



ABANA

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip/PC: _____

Country: _____

Type of Membership

- Regular\$55 Overseas\$65
- Student\$45 Contributing..... \$100
- Senior (65+)...\$50 Library\$45

\$5 discount for two year memberships and renewals

ABANA Chaper Affiliation: _____

Application may also be made at the ABANA web site:

www.abana.org

E-mail: _____

www url: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Credit Card Information

- Visa Mastercard

Expiration Date: _____

Card# _____

Submit check, money order (US banks only), or by credit card:

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America, Inc.
 259 Muddy Fork Road
 Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659

Phone: [423-913-1022](tel:423-913-1022), Fax: [423-913-1023](tel:423-913-1023)
centraloffice@abana.org

M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N

Return Service Requested

BALCONES FORGE
 SPINNING
 CENTRAL TEXAS BLACKSMITHS
 Vincent Herod
 Spotted Dog Forge
 166 Granite Road
 Paige, TX 78659-4922