



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

October 2013



It is October and we have great reports from the Iron Smelt. It sounds like it was a great experience for those that attended and even better for those that got to participate. I am really looking forward to the Balcones Iron Smelt.

Plans are being made for our meeting scheduled for October 26th. I will demonstrate the "Frederick's Cross". Alan and Jeff Lee will be here and I hear that Jeff will be working on an animal head and, we have again this year, Kainon Baumer who is one of the 2012 International Youth Smiths. He will be showing us some forging techniques, his method of tong making as well as a ring. It looks like we will have a full day at the forge. If you have an anvil and tools, bring them, there will be plenty of time to get in the fire.

We are working on the menu for the day. I am sure that it will include barbeque of some kind and I have had requests for peach cobbler. This will be an all-day event so you probably want to bring a lawn chair and if you prefer to have an adult beverage, you are welcome to bring them.

We will have a little memorial and mention some of those that have gone before us. We will ring the anvil for Ellis Burges of Castroville who passed away recently. He was a member and board member of TABA. Mirra Calhoun, wife of Willie, for many years they have been very instrumental in our participation at the FolkLife Festival. Don Stroud who passed away a couple of weeks ago. He was the owner of the Devine, Blacksmith Shop and was working very hard to make its history available to the public.

Meeting Date is October 26

President's message continued on page 2



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Show and Tell – This will be a great event to bring something that you have made and show it off. If you like, there may be time for you to demo a little also. Let's spread the wealth.

Iron in the Hat – We are still working to get ten forging stations up and running and fully equipped. When you consider the forge itself, the anvil, blower and a leg vise, the expenses jump up there very quickly. This is a good way for us to build funds for our continued growth. Bring something if you can.

This is your reminder that we will have board elections at this meeting. There will be a changing of the guard. I have really enjoyed the position and will be happy to help whenever my schedule will allow. We have board members that have been slaving away up there for years. Consider stepping up and giving them a hand. Balcones Forge is a great organization and together, we can make it even better.

The address for the meeting is:

295 CR 663
Devine, Texas 78016

And for those that cannot find it, my telephone number is:

210-288-3961

Happy Forging,
Jerry Whitley
President, Balcones Forge

P.S. Don't forget to like Balcones Forge on Facebook. We use it to help keep you informed.

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UPCOMING BALCONES EVENTS

October 26- Whitley's in Devine, Texas
I know it is far for many. We have room for those that may want to bring an RV or tent. It is okay to show up on Friday (might get some extra forge time in) and if the after party goes too long and strong, stay until Sunday. We are planning to barbeque again and maybe even take a field trip to Stroud's Blacksmith Shop in Devine.

November 23 will find Balcones Forge meeting in Hunt, Texas at Gary Hilton's.

December is still in the works.



BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerry Achterberg
Rudy Billings, Treasurer
Matt Czosnek, Vice President
John Crouchet
Jim Elliot
Vince Herod, Editor
Tom Lupton
Jerry Whitley, President
Laurie Wicker, Secretary



Balcones Forge lost one of it's most colorful and supportive members when George Craig recently passed away.

We will ring the anvil in his honor at the October meeting.

He will be missed.

Attention Centaur Forge LLC Customers

OUR TEXAS STORE IS MOVING TO
SERVE YOU BETTER!!

THE CENTAUR FORGE
NEW BRAUNFELS BRANCH IS
RELOCATING TO
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Our last business day at the New Braunfels location will be October 28th.
We will be open for business at the Austin location on November 4th.

New address:
632 Ralph Ablanedo Drive
Suite 200
Austin, TX 78748
888-229-8877

How to find us:
Traveling North on I-35, take Exit 227
toward Slaughter Ln.
Stay straight to go onto S I-35.
Turn left onto W Slaughter Ln.
Turn right onto S 1st St.
Take the first right onto Ralph Ablanedo.
Centaur Forge is on the left.

All New and Existing Customers will receive 10% Off all purchases during their first visit at the new Austin location.
Good through December 31st

Help to make our move easier!!
10% off for walk-in customers at the New Braunfels Store Only
from October 21st - 25th



Directions to October
meeting:

Look at map on page
15!

JERRY DARNELL'S BOOK

My new book Forging Colonial Ironwork is finally here. It is a compilation of over 22 years of teaching notes at the folk school and various conferences thru out the US. It has about 120 pages both sides, divided into 4 chapters Colonial Lighting, 18th Century Hearth Equipment, Early American Hardware and Hooks and Hangers. There is a mix of projects from simple to advanced. If it is well received I'll have the next two volumes of notes printed. The cost is \$20.00 plus 6.75% tax and \$10.00 for shipping and handling. Send a check to me or visa/master by phone.

May be ordered by phone or e-mail or you may visit the salesroom weekly from 10 to 5 and on Sat. 9:30-5:00

Mill Creek Forge

4512 Busbee Road Seagrove, NC 27341

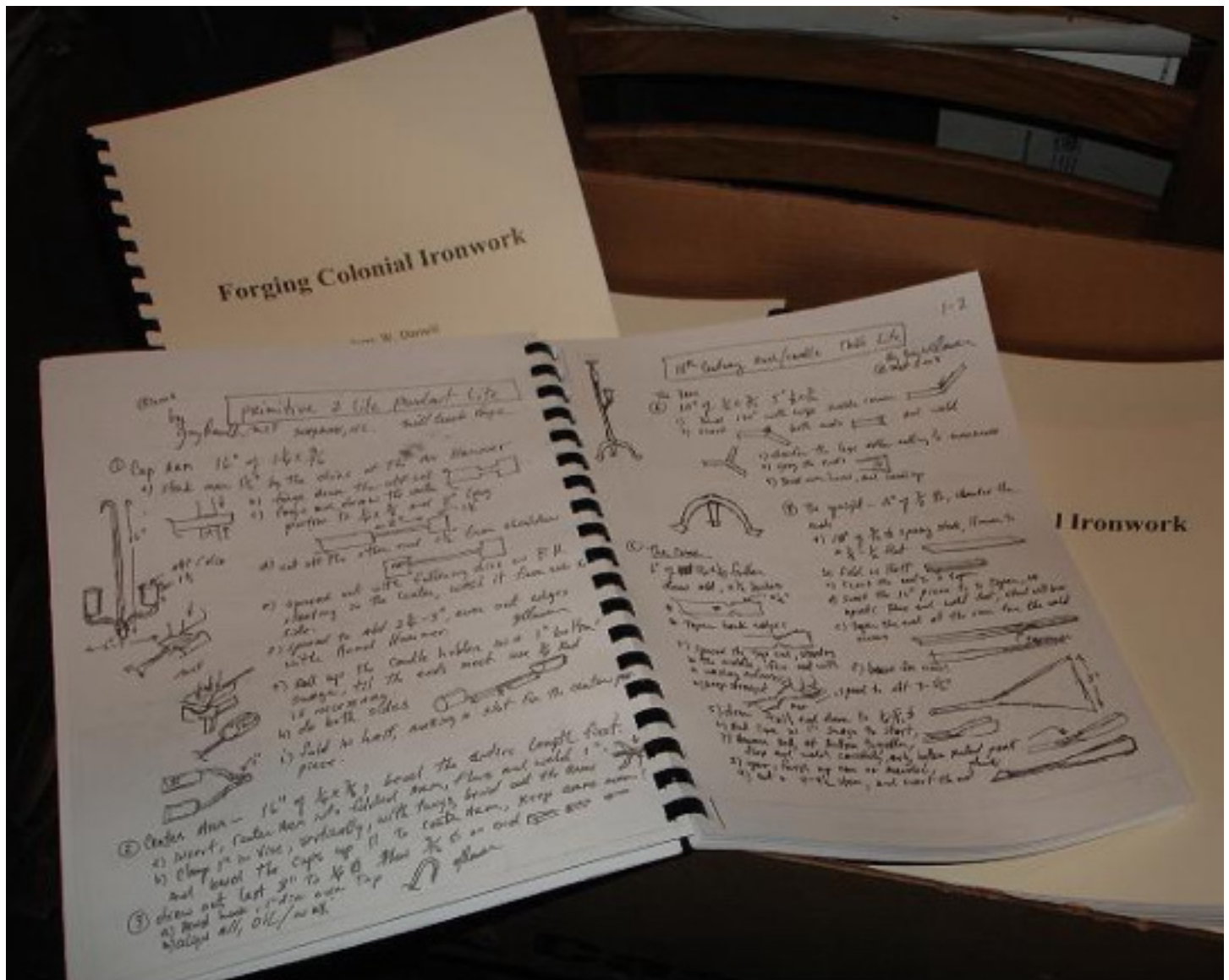
E-mail forge_on@rtmc.net

Phone:

(910) 464-3888 (Shop)

(910) 464-2636 (House)

www.millcreekforge.com





FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Wow, a year has passed all ready. It seems like only yesterday that I was starting, as Vice President and now I'll be moving into the President's role.

I'll admit that it's a scary jump, but I do have some ideas for the next year.

The event at Oldenburg was a great demonstration thanks to Aaron Tilton, Joe Trevieso, and special thanks to Jeff Shockley who showed up and was willingly drafted to be the third member of our team. While I didn't get to stay for the bloom, the video on the Facebook page was almost as exciting.

It was great to see old friends and make some new ones, these combined events are excellent ways to meet smiths from other areas and exchange ideas. Another great way to get ideas is to participate in the numerous events that we have coming up, like the Lee brothers demo, the Bluebonnet demo, Spring Break in Fredericksburg, and any of our regular meetings. November should prove to be interesting, Gary Hilton has volunteered to host and will be demonstrating Viking axe making. We are working on the details, so check next month's newsletter for all the info.

I'm looking forward to an exciting year and can't wait to begin.

Matt Czosnek
Vice President
Balcones Forge

The following notes and pictures were provided by long-time Balcones Forge member James Honig.

Pictures and articles are greatly appreciated by your Editor.

THE FRIEDRICH CROSS

The Cross was demonstrated by Christopher Friedrich at the 1988 ABANA conference in Birmingham, AL. It is an old German design.

Christopher Friedtich is from Sennwald, Switzerland. His workshop is in an old water power hammer shop. There are four hammers with different weights and dies. Some are for forging, some for fullering. Christopher is a very talented smith, designer and demonstrator. He is known throughout Europe and the USA for his style of fine traditional work.

I am very fortunate to have been at his shop in Switzerland and to have worked with Christopher. I have forged with the large water powered hammers. One item I forged was a large leaf from 1" square stock. I was a great experience.

James Honig

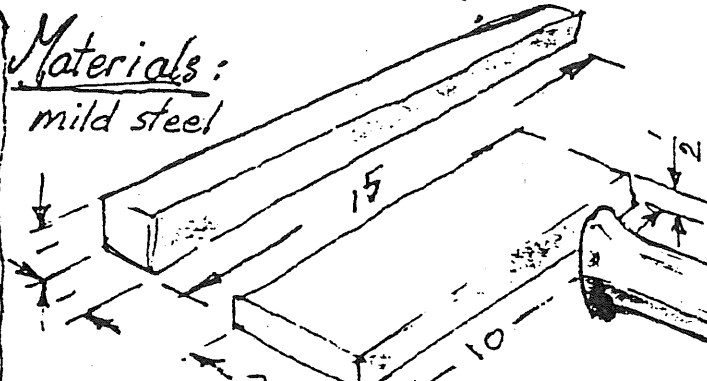
from James Honig

the making of Christoph Friedrich's CROSS by Francis Whitaker

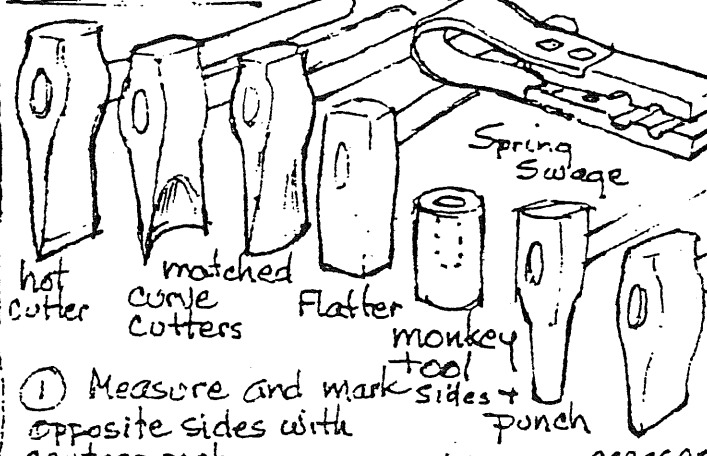
Drawings and notes by Tom Reinertsen.

Francis demonstrated this cleverly unfolding cross at the ABANA International Blacksmiths Conference, on June 30/1990 in Alfred College, Alfred, New York. The credit was given to a Swiss demonstrator Christoph Friedrich who showed it in 1988.

Materials:
mild steel



Special Tools:



① Measure and mark opposite sides with center punch. Note: maintain ratio if stock differs in size.

② Get a deep soaking heat and with the hot cutter, cut 1/2 way through end. remember to keep cut down the middle and cool cutter after each 4 or 5 hits.

Flip piece over and complete the cut over a cutting plate. Hammer the split closed and even up.

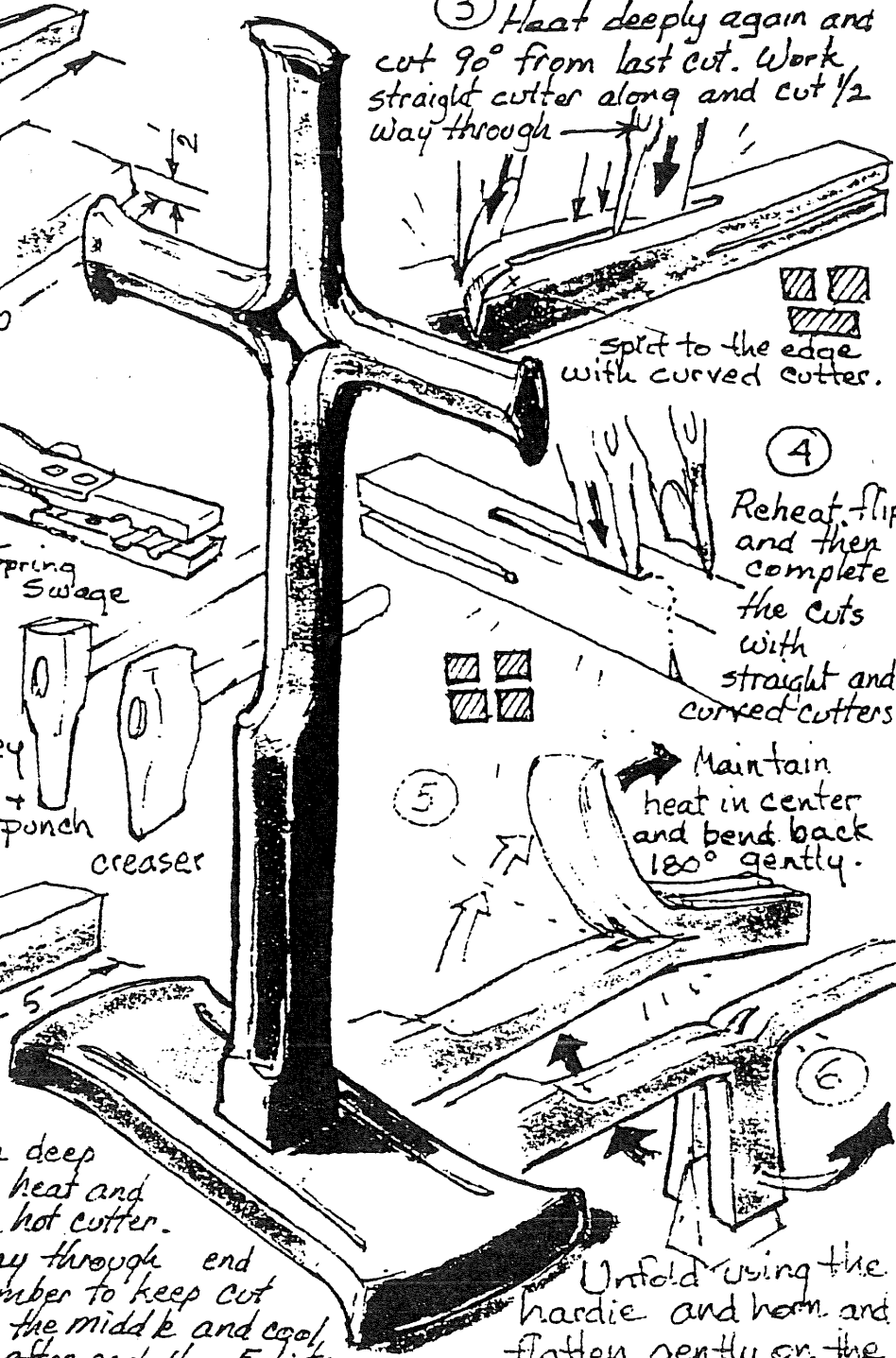
③ Heat deeply again and cut 90° from last cut. Work straight cutter along and cut 1/2 way through.

split to the edge with curved cutter.

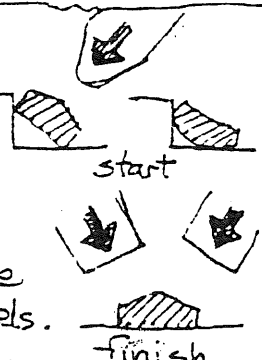
④ Reheat, flip and then complete the cuts with straight and curved cutters.

⑤ Maintain heat in center and bend back 180° gently.

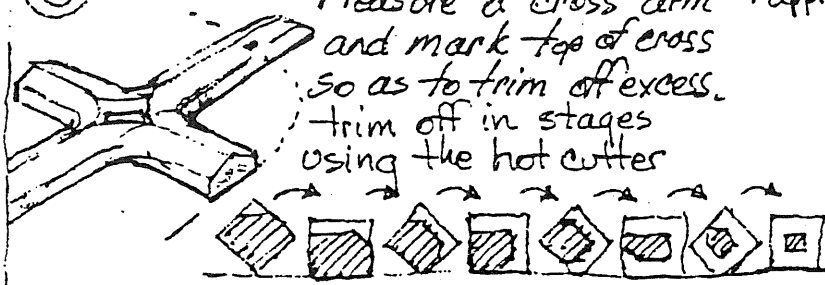
⑥ Unfold using the hardie and horn and flatten gently on the anvil. Now you can see if you cut the intersection cleanly or not.



7 Create bevels on cross arms on the opposite side by using the anvil step and cross peen first. Proceed then to anvil face - flip piece over and complete bevels using the hammer face.

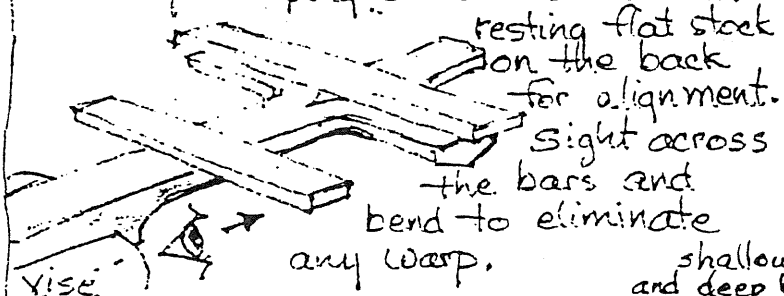


8 Measure a cross arm and mark top of cross so as to trim off excess. trim off in stages using the hot cutter



finish shearing off over the anvil edge.

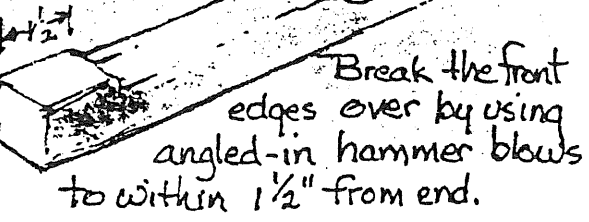
9 Check and correct for trueness by clamping cross in a vise and resting flat stock on the back for alignment. Sight across the bars and bend to eliminate any warp.



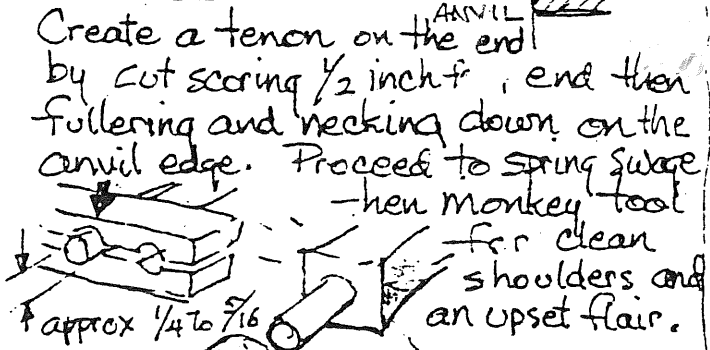
10 Heat and upset the cross ends by cooling towards the face side.



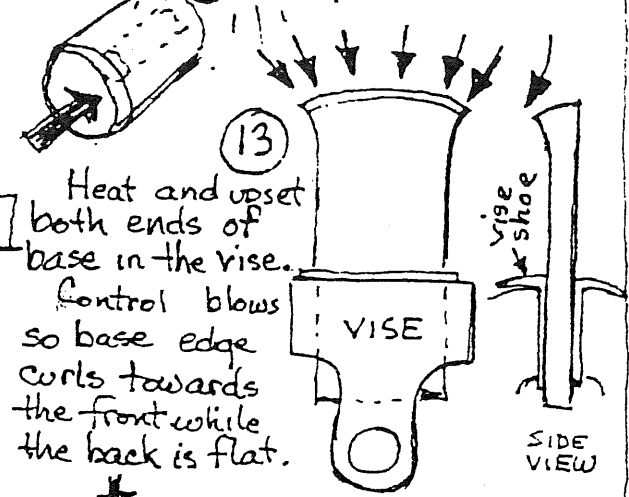
11 Break the front edges over by using angled-in hammer blows to within 1/2" from end.



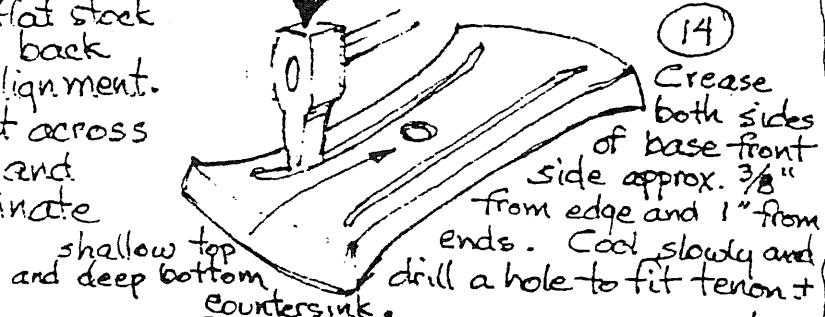
12 Create a tenon on the end by cut scoring 1/2 inch f, end then fullering and necking down on the anvil edge. Proceed to spring swage - then monkey tool for clean shoulders and an upset flair.



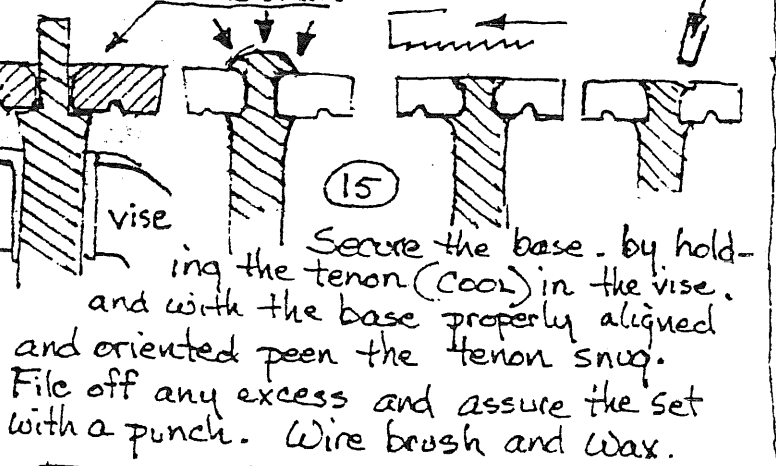
13 Heat and upset both ends of base in the vise. Control blows so base edge curls towards the front while the back is flat.



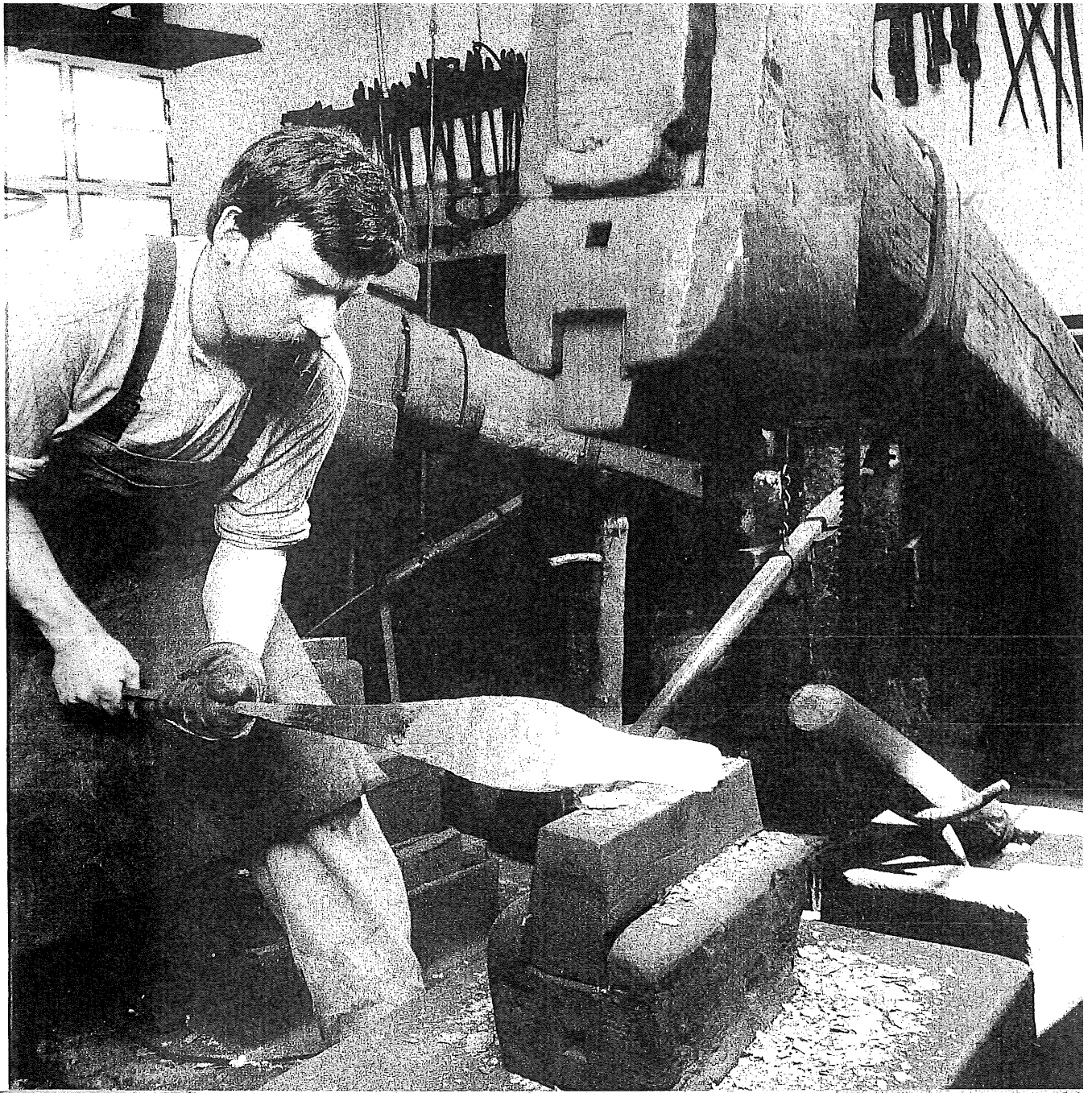
14 Crease both sides of base front side approx. 3/8" from edge and 1" from ends. Cool slowly and drill a hole to fit tenon + countersink.



15 Secure the base by holding the tenon (cool) in the vise, and with the base properly aligned and oriented peen the tenon snug. File off any excess and assure the set with a punch. Wire brush and wax.



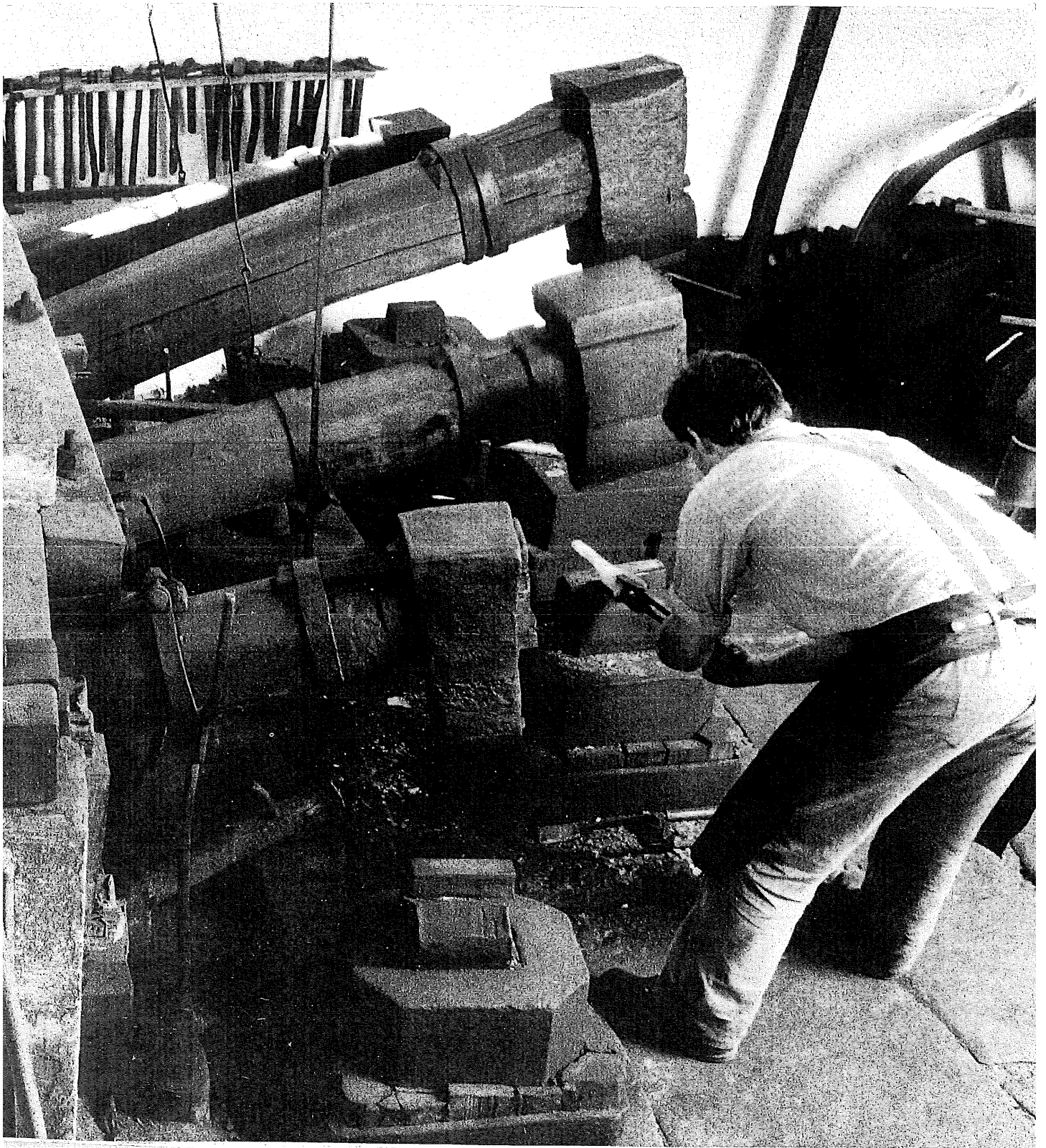
Francis Whitaker teaches blacksmithing at the Colorado Rocky Mountain School.



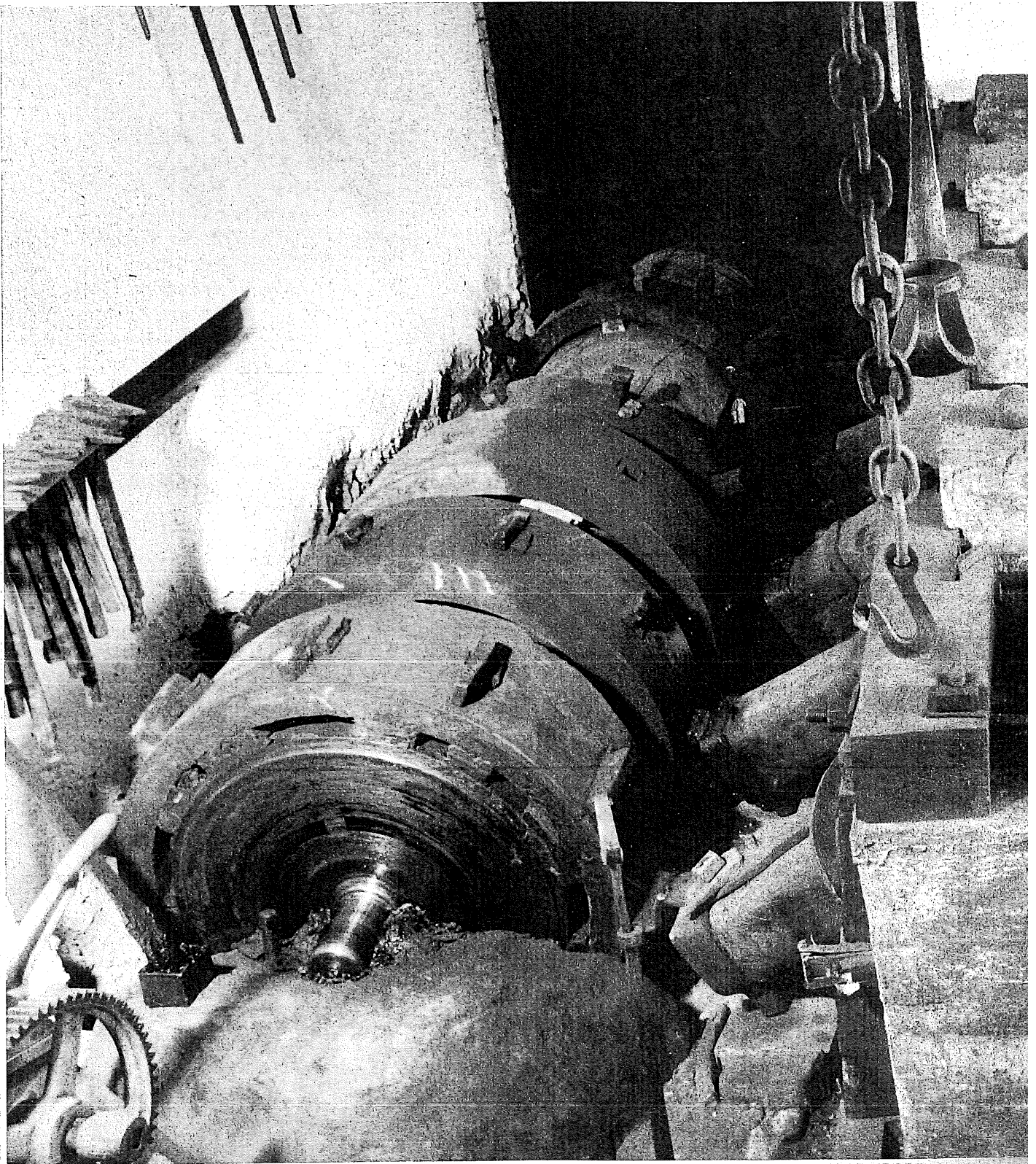
Christoph Friedrich forging with the large
Water Powered hammer. Note the size of the hammer
head and the large bottom die. This is the largest of four
hammers. I have forged with this hammer when I was
in Switzerland. It was a great experience.

James Honig

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Christopher Frederick forging on one of the four
water powered hammers. The heavy hammers have longer
beams.
James Honey



The Driveshaft of the water Powered hammer. Note steel band with lugs that Contact the lug on the hammer beam to left the hammer. Note open bearing set in rock core. Water wheel outsid of shop.

James Horig



Yes folks, that is Harvey P. Wise talking with Rudy Billings





ABOVE: slag drains from the furnace.
photos by Vince Herod

BELOW: the bloom emerges!



Bringing Back *Iron in the Hat*

Iron in the Hat is an old blacksmith tradition and it looks like its time has come again! At meetings of iron bangers across the country, expenses are often paid by auctioning off small tools, interesting bits of iron or tool steel, or even finished iron work, all donated by the very same blacksmiths who are bidding! Yes, it's a an odd tradition, but blacksmiths have never been known for doing things like everybody else does them!

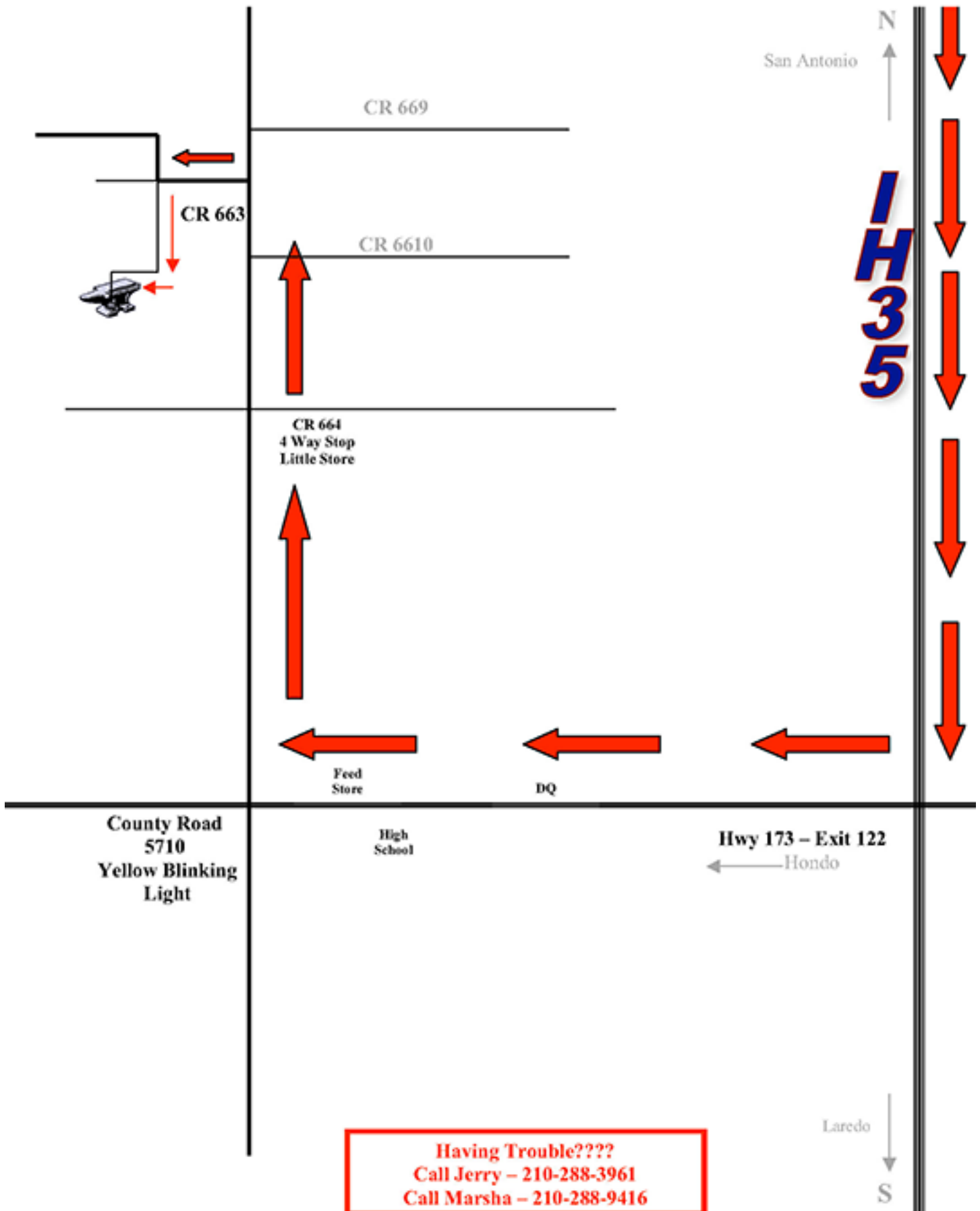
If you have been to any Balcones Forge meetings lately, then you are well aware that our major focus has been on building up a set of ten coal forges, anvils, leg vises, and hand-cranked blowers to use for our annual Bluebonnet Demo hands-on seminars and for teaching and demonstrating anywhere and everywhere throughout the year. Our immediate goal is to have ten coal forges ready to go in time for the triumphant return of Mark Aspery this coming April.

Mark has graciously agreed to conduct all-day, hands-on blacksmithing classes in the days before the big demo, teaching the fine points and techniques of joinery and coal forge operation. Of course, this is a fantastic opportunity for us all to learn from a true master!

Ten new forges is a tall order. We expect to spend some serious money in the next few months in order to get this done. We have a plan, and now we need some MONEY!

Oh, yeah, that brings us back to Iron in the Hat. Please bring something for the auction to each meeting. (Yes, we will do this every meeting.) Also, bring a little pocket money. You never know what goodies may appear! If we all get behind this, we can raise some real cash and make some of these blacksmithing dreams come true. Keep us in mind and THANKS!

John Crouchet



Having Trouble????
Call Jerry - 210-288-3961
Call Marsha - 210-288-9416



Return Service Requested

Vincent Herod
Spotted Dog Forge
166 Granite Road
Paige, TX 78659-4922
