



Blacksmiths of Central Texas

President's Corner

September 2010

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Taking a Broader View

By now, you probably know that the trade item for September is a scythe anvil (denglestock), and yes, it is a most unusual choice for a trade item. You can thank Balcones director Jerry Achterberg for the historical perspective on that one!

This week, my friends at work (non-blacksmiths) were wondering why I would put out the effort to build such a thing. Basically, they questioned why, in the age of smart phones and cloud computing, I would want to forge a tool designed six hundred years ago. I admit, I had to think that one over for a bit.

I realized that the reason we treasure the historical aspects of blacksmithing is because there are historical aspects. It is not comparable to my friends' "modern" hobbies of Frisbee golf and video gaming. Blacksmithing is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of who we are. Today's America exists because two centuries ago, blacksmiths built the tools and weapons that made it possible to settle this land, defend it, and expand across it. Forging plows and axes and rifle barrels and railroad spikes, our predecessors forged the very future of our country and left their mark on everything from our language to our landmarks. Along the way, they forged scythe anvils to sharpen the scythes that harvested grain to feed the pioneers who did all that work.

When we stop to study and forge a historical tool such as a scythe anvil, we are paying tribute to the great blacksmithing tradition that we are the living part of. And, yeah, it's all a bit heavier than Frisbee golf and video games.

Continued on page 2.

THE MEETING DATE IS EARLY:

SEPTEMBER 18



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*President's Corner
continued from page 1*

I hope you will join us on Saturday, September 18th for the Williamson Museum's "Up the Chisholm Trail" longhorn cattle drive and ranch rodeo along the beautiful San Gabriel River in Georgetown. Balcones Forge will be providing the historically important blacksmiths for this exciting event. Bring the kids! How often do you get the chance to see a genuine longhorn cattle drive? Take a few pictures to email to your city slicker friends! Cowboy chuckwagon breakfast starts at 7:00 am. We will set up coal forges and anvils around 9:00 and be blacksmithing all day. **Instruction for beginners will be available.** Tricks and tips for experienced blacksmiths may be a bit harder to come by!

John Crouchet
President

ON MY HONOR...

2010 is the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts and we have been invited to be part of the celebration. Come to the Travis County Expo Center on Saturday, October 9 and show the scouting world how blacksmiths do their thing. We'll need forges, anvils, and many blacksmiths to put on a good show throughout the day. We will also be able to sell our wares, so with as many as 10,000 attendees, you might want to take the scout motto to heart. You remember -- "Be Prepared." This will be an interesting and fun event. Check it out -- www.scoutjam2010.org. Contact Rudy if you would like to participate (Rudy@BalconesForge.org or 512-461-7375).



**CHECK THE BALCONES FORGE
WEBSITE FOR MAPS TO THE
SEPTEMBER MEETING.**

HOWDY!

We have a new email address and no longer have a home phone. Please update your contact information for us. New information below.

Thanks!

Harvey & Helen Wise
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wisefamilyfarm@gmail.com
Harvey cell 979-229-5503
Helen cell 979-229-4650



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SECRETARY'S REPORT

The August 28 meeting was held at Conservation Plaza in the Diedrich Stahl Blacksmith Shop which was originally

located in downtown New Braunfels at 309 East San Antonio Street from 1902 to 1966. Hollis Wooldrige has been the demonstrator at this shop.

Funny how Texans view "inclement weather" as when it's very cold and/or very rainy, but when it is hot enough to forge steel pulled straight from the grass....it is alright. It was a great day for a meeting! The meeting started with a discussion of upcoming events.

September regular meeting (early date):

Sept 18, 2010 at 9AM. Georgetown City Park on the San Gabriel River. 445 E. Morrow St., Georgetown, TX. Members are asked to be there early to be set up and ready to go at 9AM. Bring your forges, anvils, fuel and tools and, oh yeah, you can display your wares and sell them as well. Come out and enjoy the events of this annual event. We will be demonstrating so dress in your best cowboy regalia. This is an all day event with a cattle drive going by (real close) and a beautiful setting.

Sept 11 & 12, 2010. Texas Metal Arts festival in Gruene, Texas. 10AM to 5PM.

Oct 9, 2010. Volunteers are needed to assist John Crouchet at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg. We understand that our benefactor and friend Liz Brookshire is retiring and hope her replacement will be as good to Balcones Forge as she has been.

October 30, 2010. Regular meeting at Bob Phiel's shop in Llano. This is the meeting where Board Member elections will take place.

November 27, 2010. Regular meeting at Rockdale Train Station.

December 2010. Regular meeting will probably be in Boerne, TX. More later.

Wayne Bird is recovering from a successful surgery and is now contemplating a singing career; we wish him all the best.

The trade item for August was a corkscrew, but not just any corkscrew, they were all a duplicate made from the same set of instructions. There were several good works and Jerry Achterberg gave a very good dissertation on the steps necessary to complete this project. He also took home the prize.....a bottle of wine, of course.

The trade item for September is a Dangelstock. Jerry Achterberg was kind enough to explain and also to pass out photos (see pages 4 & 5). Another name for the item is a "scythe anvil". There are several examples to examine on the internet, including at our own www.balconesforge.org.

Do not forget, if you have any books or videos from the library, return them promptly so others can enjoy! Thanks.

Jim Elliot
Secretary

The photos of the Officers are by Dave Koenig.

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

October is the month for annual elections for Balcones Forge. Our By-laws state that the membership elects the members of the Board and the Board comes to a consensus regarding Officers.

What do you want from the organization? What are you willing to contribute to make those goals happen? Is it time to step up to the plate? These are questions every member should ask themselves.

Come to the October meeting and make your voice a part of the discussion. Bob Phiel always has a GREAT demonstration and the food in Llano ain't bad either!

Danglestock



Hand Forged Danglestock. Measuring 7 1/2" long, the head is 1 5/16" wide, and it weighs 1 lb. Now what's a danglestock (also spelled dangelstock and a bunch of other ways as well), you ask? Well them old PA Dutch (German) farmers, being of a thrifty (also know as cheap) bunch, instead of grinding down their scythe blades, would stick the danglestock into a stump or the top of a fence post and using a small cross peen hammer (called the dingle of all things) would draw out the edge of the blade till it was sharp and then dress it with a stone.





CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Registration forms are available at www.saltforkcraftsmen.org or by contacting Dan Cowart at (918)440.0653 and leave a message with mailing address.

Please submit form with payment made payable to Saltfork Craftsmen. (Pre-registration is required to allow for an accurate meal count). **On-site registration available only without meals.**

Cost Each

Registration (Per Family)

Saturday & Sunday	\$55.00
Saturday Only	\$35.00
Sunday Only	\$35.00
Saturday Lunch (Per Person)	\$6.50
Saturday Supper (Per Person)	\$11.00
Sunday Lunch (Per Person)	\$7.50

Family classes will be an additional cost (please check registration form for details).

Saltfork Craftsmen
Artist-Blacksmith Association

MOTELS

Lodging in the Perry Area:

American Inn & Suites
(formerly Best Western)

I-35 & Hwy. 77

Exit #185 off I-35 -- East Side
580-336-2218

Sooners Corner Motel & RV Park

I-35 & Hwy. 77

Exit #185 off I-35 -- West Side
580-336-2323

Dan-D Motel

515 Fir Avenue

580-336-4463

Regency Inn (formerly Days Inn)

West Fir Ave. & I-35

Exit #186 off I-35 -- West Side
580-336-2277

Super 8 Motel

2608 West Fir Avenue

Exit #186 off I-35 -- East Side 1/2 mile
580-336-1600

Holiday Inn Express & Suites

West Fir Ave. & I-35

Exit #186 off I-35
580-336-5050

Other Rooming Notes:

There is ample room at the Noble County Fair Grounds for RV parking, there are no hook ups for water, electricity, sewer, etc. However, there is plenty of room on the Fair Grounds for dry camping if you want to set up a camp, and we can arrange to have the Arena Building open so the restrooms are available.

The 14th Annual

Saltfork Craftsmen Artist Blacksmith Association Conference

SALTFORK
CRAFTSMEN

**October 16th & 17th
2010**

Noble County
Fairgrounds
Perry, Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA

Arts
COUNCIL

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Darryl Nelson

Gordon Williams

- **Friday, October 15th**

Conference setup starting at 8:00 a.m.

- **Saturday, October 16th**

Registration opens at 8:00 a.m.

Demonstrations 8:00 - Noon

Lunch break Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Demonstrations 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Dinner 6:00 p.m.

Drawing for toolbox 7:00 p.m.

Auction 7:00 p.m.

- **Sunday, October 17th**

Registration opens 8:00 a.m.

Demonstrations 8:00 - 11:30

Lunch Break 11:30 - 12:30 p.m.

Demonstrations 12:45 - 4:00

Cleanup and teardown 4:00 p.m.



I live in the Pacific Northwest, in the western foothills of the Cascade Mountains at the base of Mount Rainier. I am an hour and a half from the shores of the Pacific Ocean. These two areas are where most of my work goes. We have a regional style here called "Cascadian," which was created in the Work Progress Administration era during the New Deal in the late 1930s. The flagship of this style is a beautiful old lodge called Timberline Lodge, located at the 6,000-foot level on the southern slope of Oregon's Mount Hood. This style is a hybrid, made up of art deco and craftsman on steroids. The main guideline for this style is local flora and fauna, Native American, pioneer, and mountain sports motifs.

I became involved with Timberline Lodge in 1984, through my friend and mentor Russell Maugans, who was the lodge's restoration smith. Russ was mentored by Orion Dawson, head smith of the original project. He oversaw 50 blacksmiths/metalworkers hired by the U.S. government to build the ironwork for Timberline Lodge and several other W.P.A. projects in the Northwest. After working with Russell for five years, I became the lodge's blacksmith in 1989. Since my connection with Timberline, I can now track 90% of my non-Timberline work back to the lodge through word of mouth. To that end, most of my work is in the Cascadian style.

In my demonstration, I will be showing and explaining tools and techniques used to produce animal heads in the Cascadian style.

I've been blacksmithing full time since 1990. I basically run a production type shop in which I produce interior, exterior hardware, lamps, fireplace sets, pot racks, etc. etc. I also do quite a bit of custom work.

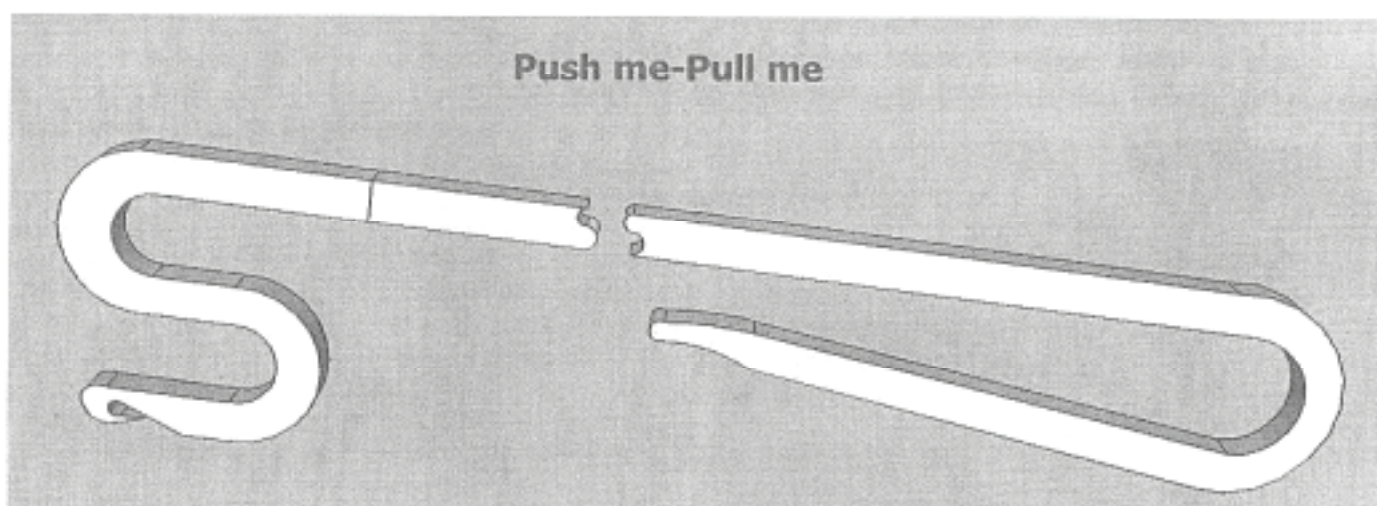
I must say though that my enjoyment is teaching. I have a blacksmith school located at Pieh Tool Co. It's one of the largest retail suppliers purveying to the blacksmith. The school has six complete forging stations along with air and treadle hammers. I do classes twice a month for beginner, intermediate and advanced students.

I'll demo using a teaching format. I'll have at least two projects in the fire at once, and have many of the projects pre-drawn so the steps and the tooling can be copied throughout the demo. I like to keep things lively and even more than the created project, the creation and the information sharing is what I hope to bring the greatest satisfaction.



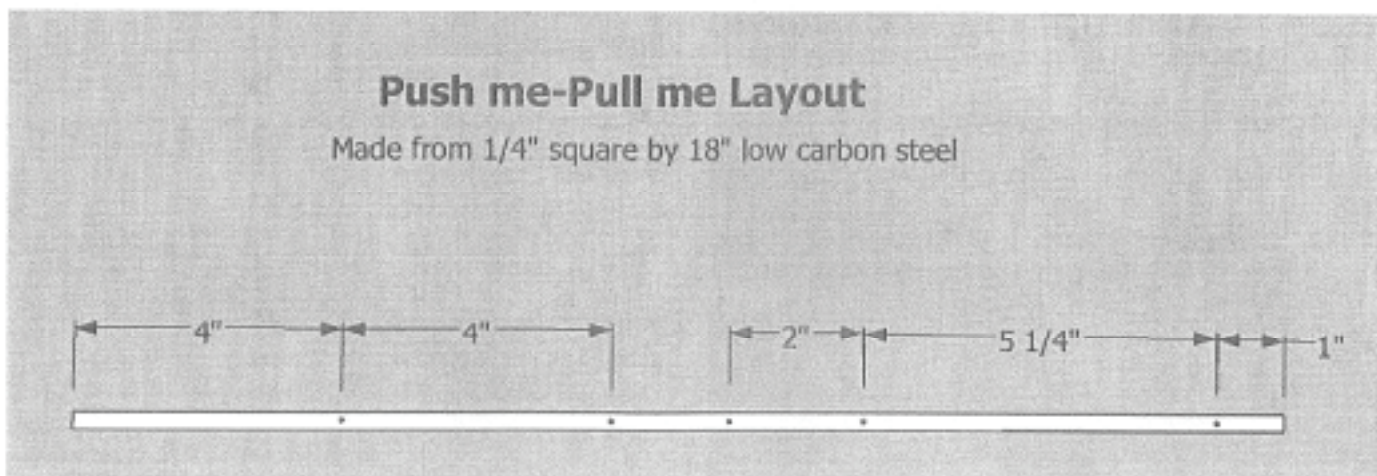
PUSH ME PULL ME

By Guy Paton



Push me-Pull me

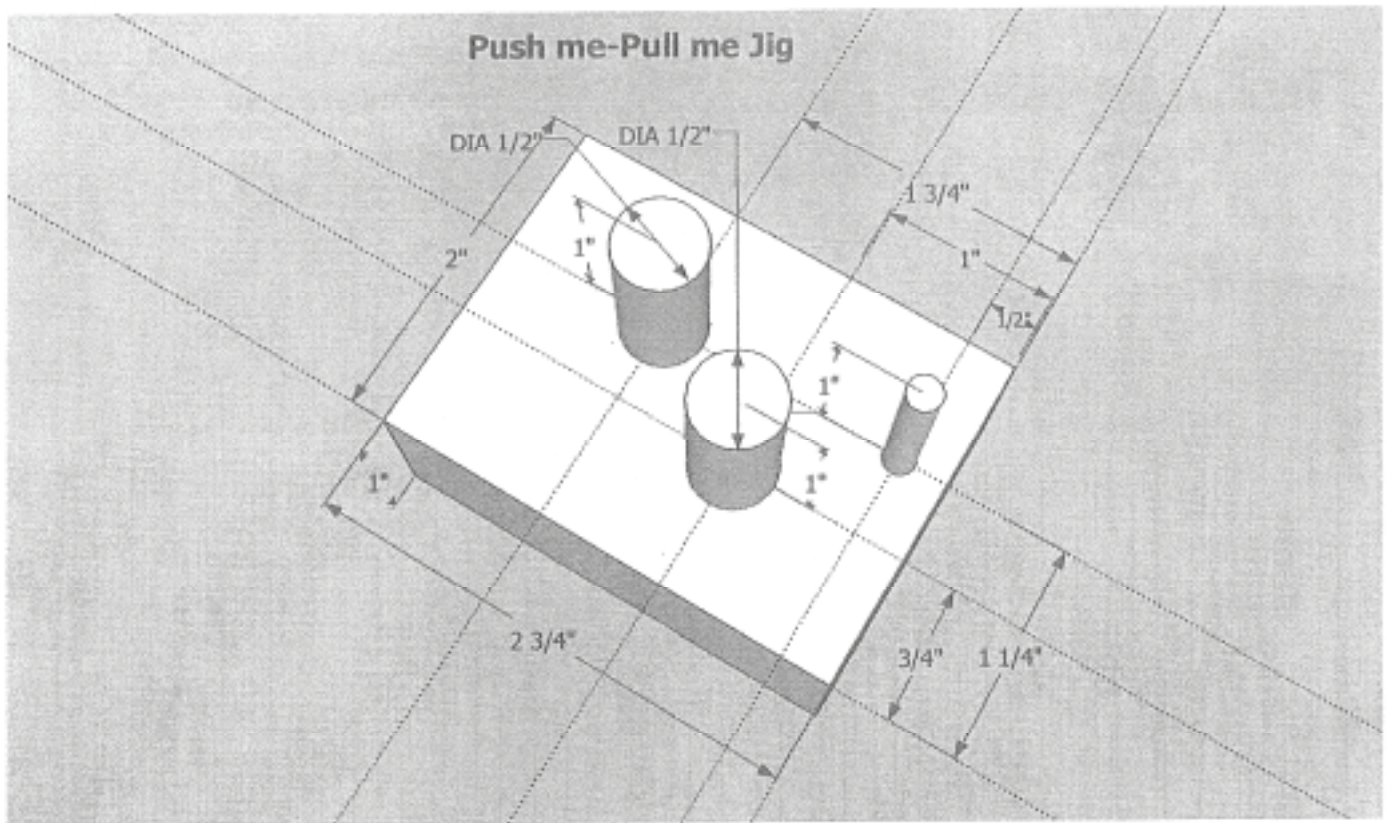
This is a tool to use to push in and pull out kitchen oven racks. Use instead of a hot glove.



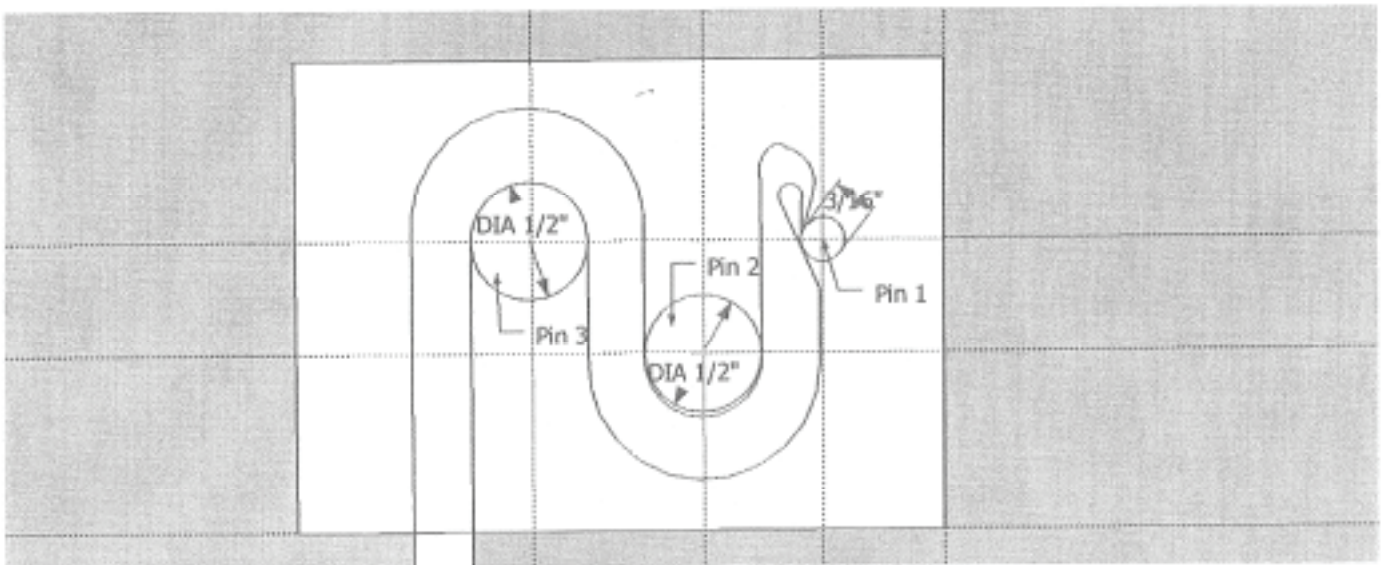
Push me-Pull me Layout

Made from 1/4" square by 18" low carbon steel

It is made out of 18" of 1/4" square stock. I mark it with a punch at the locations shown. The left 8 inches is for the handle of your choice. The 2 inches is for a twist or other decoration. The 5 1/4 inches is for the bends and the last inch is for the taper for the end (use more or less as you desire).



This is a jig to make the Push me-Pull me. It is made from a 2"x2 3/4"x1" steel base, Two 1/2" dia. x 1 1/2" long and one 3/16" dia. x 1 1/2" long pins. Drill 5/8" deep holes where indicated. Modify the pins as necessary to create a good fit that allows easy removal of the pins.



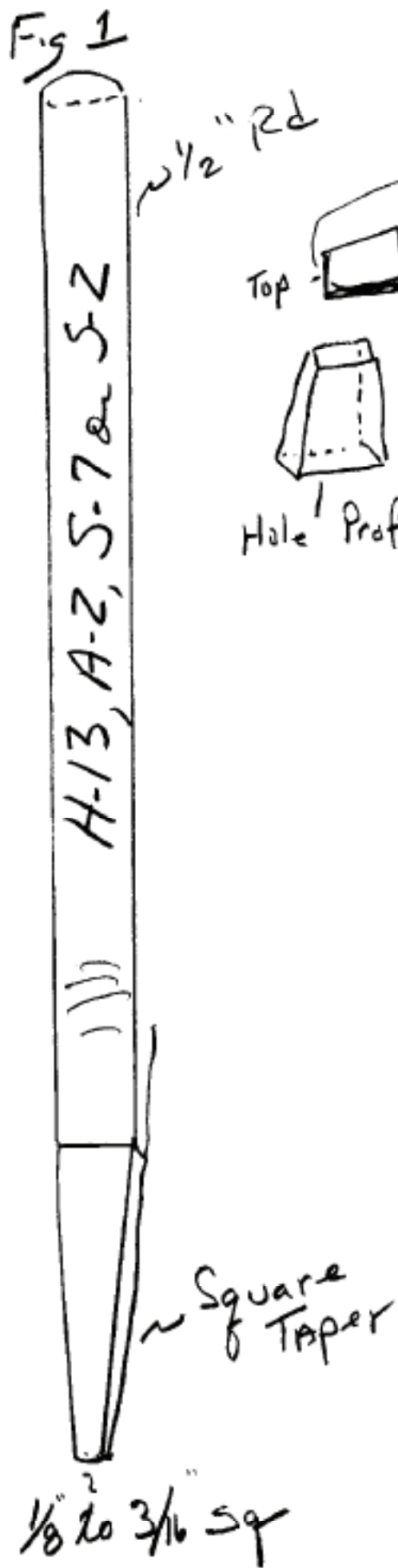
1. Punch mark stock.
2. Make twist/decoration.
3. Make handle.
4. Make taper and bend as shown in drawings.
5. Remove pin 3 and make first 180 degree bend.
6. Insert pin 3 and make last bend.

Here is a great article from long time Balcones Forge member **Gary Hilton**. This should have been in a much earlier edition but your editor got over-organized and forgot where he put it on the computer.

MAKE A NAIL HEADER OUT OF GRADER BLADE

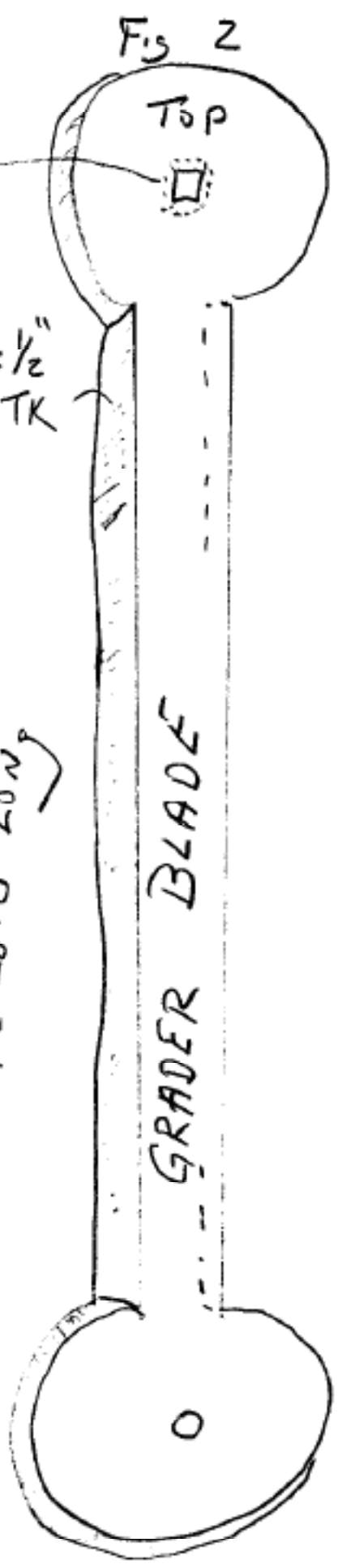
- Torch cut a blank as in figure 2. Knock the slag off here and grind some of the rough cutting but do a smoother finish when you're happy with the tool.
- One end can be a nail header and the other end a rivet header or two different nail sizes.
- Your hole through the grader blade needs to be punched with a square tapered punch. This will allow you to get the nail out as less area is in contact at the sides. A round tapered punch would be used for the rivet hole if you decide to make your own rivets.
- I suggest making two punches 8 to 10" long by ½" round from H-13, S-7, S-2, or A-2. These are good tool steels and will take a beating but not outright abuse such as cooling off fast. Figure 1 shows the shape.
- I don't temper these punches as I make two and try to keep from distorting them by frequently changing the punch but I don't cool them in water unless I want to break them. Air cooling even from the start seems good enough as this is good steel and a bit ornery to forge which means it will retain its shape under adverse conditions. If you do distort them it's a simple matter to reshape it but you don't have to spend time tempering and re-tempering as you would carbon steel punches.
- Draw about a two inch taper down to a 1/8" or 3/16" square.
- Heat the grader blade and punch on the face of the anvil from the back side of your header almost all the way through. Reheat and continue punching from the back over the hardy, or pritchel, hole until you get a small nipple showing on the front side.
- Reheat and punch with finesse from the front side right through the nipple as this should center the hole. All you want to do here is establish your nail size as you made the main part when you back punched. Once you get a hole you can refine it from either side as you like as long as that means larger. It seems hard to upset a hole that's too large easily.
- I don't think the grader blade needs tempering. I have broken one and have another with spider web cracks all through it by trying to harden them in water. I don't know what's in grader blade but it won't take fast hardening abuse much like these other tool steels.
- I have one that was made by Frank Turley in 1988 and still use it so these are fairly good tools if made right. He didn't trust me to make it I guess.
- ¼" mild steel round stock is good stuff to make nails for demos out of as it's fast to heat and easy to pound and doesn't always fly in your face if you hammer it too cold. It takes practice to make a nail in one heat. Demos for kids may be safer taking more heats as their eyes are sometimes at anvil level. Safety is always at the front end of these things although they seem to get out of hand with so many kids around.
- Corrections, or suggestions, are most likely welcome.

Making Nail Header or Rivet Header



$\approx 1/2$ " TK

$9\frac{1}{2}$ " to 10 " Long





Up the Chisholm Trail September 17 & 18

Photo by Eileen Davis

The Williamson Museum presents its annual Up the Chisholm Trail event at San Gabriel Park on September 17 and 18. The event features the chuckwagon cook-off, cattle drive, and ranch rodeo. New to 2010 are a kids' chuckwagon cook-off, a western art show, live western music, and an expanded ranch rodeo.

The event starts on Friday at 5:30 p.m. with a kids' chuckwagon cook-off and live music. The fun and entertainment starts again on Saturday at 9 a.m. with a cowboy breakfast and continues throughout the day with an art show, live music, cowboy poets, the chuckwagon cook-off competition, and lots of family-friendly activities. Don't miss the authentic long-

horn cattle drive along the banks of the scenic San Gabriel River on Saturday afternoon.

Entrance to the event is free and authentic chuckwagon meals and other concessions can be purchased for a fee. For details, go to UpTheChisholmTrail.org, or call the Williamson Museum at (512) 943-1670.

Return Service Requested

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