

# FIRE & IRON

Northeast Blacksmiths Association

Fall-2023

**Next Ashokan Hammer-Sept. 15th,16th,17th**

**Demonstrator:**

**Matthew Garton**



**Spring Forging  
Contest-**

The project for the  
Fall is a forged  
Tomahawk.

**Register Online**

[https://  
northeastblack-  
smiths.weebly.co  
m/events.html](https://northeastblacksmiths.weebly.com/events.html)

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## **President's Message**

### Fall 2023 Northeast Blacksmiths President Message

Greetings and I hope this message finds you and your families all well and happy. As the summer comes to it's end and the evenings get cooler, we all look forward to the upcoming fall hammer-in. This one promises to be a good one as we are once again sharing the weekend with the New England Bladesmiths Guild and we have an excellent demonstrator lined up for our event. Mathew Garton will be our demonstrator for the weekend. Matt's 17-year career began in England where he attended The National School of Blacksmithing at Hereford College of Arts where he studied and worked under many European Mastersmiths. After he moved to the United States, he traveled extensively through our country and worked at many of the best shops. Eventually, he settled down in Charleston, South Carolina where he is head instructor of blacksmithing at the American College of the Building Arts and also works at Robert Thomas Iron Designs on his own personal commissions. Matt's demonstration for us will focus on producing high quality decorative ironwork using simple tools and traditional techniques. Promises to be a demo that everyone can learn from while getting a taste of blacksmithing through the eyes of a smith that has worked in both Europe and the United States. As always, we will have our beginner's workshop, iron in the hat raffle, tailgating and forging contest. The forging contest this hammer-in will be a forged tomahawk. We are working on plans to making improvements and upgrades to our beginner's workshop work stations. If you have some ideas or contributions you would like to make, please contact our Vice-President Kelly Anson or beginner's workshop instructor Michael McCarthy.

Frank Shaw

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## **2023 Northeast Blacksmiths Fall Demo**

Demonstrator: Matthew Garton

**Our demonstrator for the weekend is Matthew Garton. He is a blacksmith originally from England currently living and working in Charleston South Carolina. Matthew currently heads up the blacksmithing program at the American College of the Building Arts and is still very much involved in the blacksmithing work at Robert Thomas Iron Design and his own personal commissions. Matthew's 17 year carer has seen him graduate form the the National School of Blacksmithing Hereford at the top of his class and has been fortunate enough to study under a great many European master smiths. He has also traveled extensively in North America, working for some of the best shops in the country.**

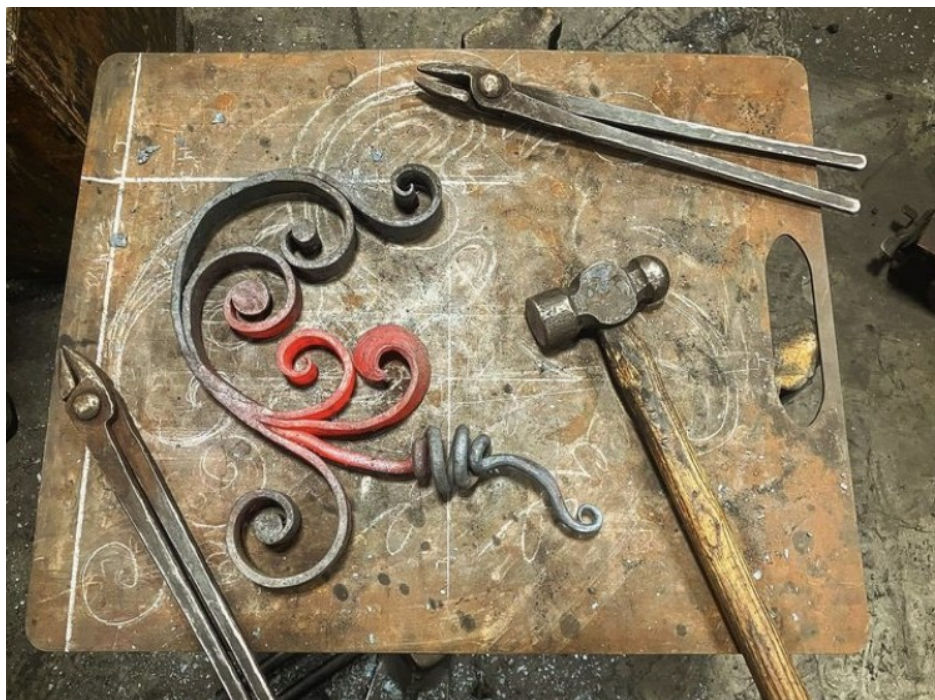
**Competing in blacksmithing competitions all over the world his most notable successes were a second place in the world forging championship singles competition in Stia, Italy and a first place medal with the English national team at the same competition.**

**When asked about his philosophy Garton said**

**"Hard work and the desire to learn is what allowed me to propel myself into the world of blacksmithing at a young age. The will to do something you love will always overshadow natural ability in the end. Keeping plugging away especially when it's not fun is the hallmark of all the great blacksmiths."**

**In the demo Mathew will show that it is possible to create high quality decorative items with basic tools and using traditional techniques. The project will involve fire welding, hot bending, punching and splitting in very iterations to produce a hanging basket bracket.**

Here is some of Matthew's work...





## Spring Hammer-In :

2023

Our presenter for the Spring Hammer-in was Terry Sheridan





Here, Terry is working on one of his big weekend projects, a tomahawk. We had a full house in the shop and standing in the wings.



Pictured here is a finished version of the Tomahawk that Terry made for us. During his presentation he demonstrated not only his professional craft but his in-depth knowledge of history and experience.

Our Iron-in-Hat is always a great way to contribute to the association and pick up some great stuff!



Our open forge is a great opportunity to practice and learn new skills in a safe a friendly environment.



Congratulations to James Nelson for winning the Spring Hammer-in forging contest which was a “forged candleholder.  
-Thank you to all the participants-



Nelson's candleholder is far-left.



Here is a list of craft schools that offer a range of blacksmithing courses. If you know of any others that should be on this list, please contact me [lucas.patsch@gmail.com](mailto:lucas.patsch@gmail.com) and I can update it for the next newsletter. Some of these schools offer internships and scholarships!

- Brookfield Craft Center– [www.brookfieldcraft.org](http://www.brookfieldcraft.org)
- Adirondack Folk School- <https://adirondackfolkschool.org>
- Penland School of Craft– <https://penland.org>
- Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts– [www.arrowmont.org](http://www.arrowmont.org)
- John C. Campell Folk School - [www,folkschool.org](http://www.folkschool.org)
- Arc and Flame Center– [www.rocafc.com](http://www.rocafc.com)
- Center for Metal Arts– <https://centerformetalarts.org>

## NBA Safety and Shop Needs...

Please consider bringing items on this list for use in the Teaching Program and in the blacksmith shop. We need to have a good selection of tools for repair and maintenance. The tools don't have to be new, clean and usable is good.

Fire Extinguishers, Types A, B & C, good to have 2 of each.  
10# size would be good,  
5# would be OK

Wire Brushes – wood block handles: wire brushes and wire strip Butcher Block brushes. Need at least 2 of each.

Oil – 2 quarts, minimum, light machine oil - 30W Non-Detergent

Wrenches – large box end wrenches, adjustable crescents, socket sets. Could use some larger combination wrenches (open and box end) as well as socket sets in 1/2' & 3/8" drive. Several adjustable crescent wrenches and Allen Wrench set, would also be good to have in our tool kit.

We also need basic materials for the Teaching Program:

Mild steel, square and round – 1/4", 3/8", 1/2" & 1/4"x 3/4"  
1084 Tool Steel – 3/16"x 1" x 24'  
These can be in random lengths, 12" or longer.



## Tradition and Lore

### THE SONG OF THE ANVIL

*“ for thou shalt learn  
The wisdom early to discern  
True beauty in utility;  
As great Pythagoras of yore,  
Standing beside the blacksmith's door,  
And hearing the hammers, as they smote  
The anvils with a different note,  
Stole from the varying tones, that hung  
Vibrant on every iron tongue,  
The secret of the sounding wire.  
And formed the seven-chorded lyre. “*

-Longfellow: *To a Child.*

“ there is no orchestral instrument, the origin of which can definitely be attributed to the sound of the hammer on the anvil. The nearest approaches are the triangle, the xylophone and the bells; the triangle, however, is descended from the systum of the Egyptian priests, which has no apparent connection with the smithy, and the xylophone is too modern to be attributed to such a source by descent. The music of the bells, though, has a distinct connection with the forge. The earliest bells were made of wrought-iron plates laid over on another and riveted together—the work of the blacksmith—and there can be little doubt that the whole idea of bell music was suggested by the sound of hammer upon anvil: early bells were, indeed, rung with a hammer. The bellows of the organ, too, introduced into Western Europe music about the eighth century A.D., seems obviously to have been taken from the bellows of the forge.”

“The Smith; The traditions and lore of an ancient craft”

By Frederick W. Robins

\*Re-post from Fall 2022 Newsletter



For Registration information for our  
Spring Fall Hammer-In on September  
15th, 16th, and 17th visit

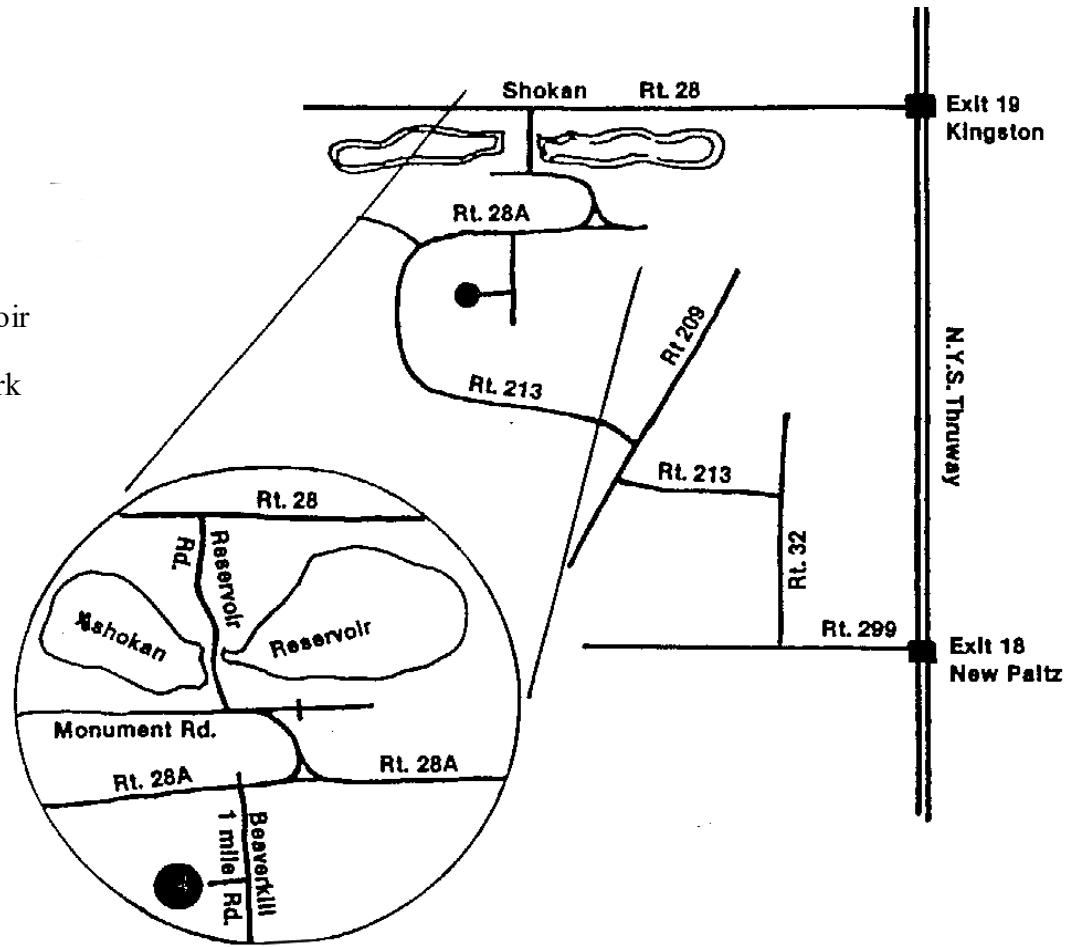
<https://northeastblacksmiths.weebly.com/events.html>



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