

FIRE & IRON

Northeast Blacksmiths Association

Spring -2024

Next Ashokan Hammer-In: April. 26th, 27th, 28th

Demonstrator:

Andy Dohner



Spring Forging Contest-

The project for the Spring is a traditionally forged "Trivet"

Register Online

lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/9j8pqs2

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President's Message

Greetings fellow Smiths,

I hope everyone has had a productive fall and winter and it wasn't too severe for anybody. As some of you know, I live in the Adirondacks. We've had our share of winter here. We have had approximately 8 plowable snowstorms so far. Those of you in the warmer climate, be thankful, but I chose this lifestyle. We went through a cold snap but February is coming around to be somewhat milder than normal. I did skip out for a month. I'm composing this letter from New Zealand.

As many of you probably know, we lost one of our dear friends and long-time members, Bob Cerny. For many years, Bob shared his knowledge and expertise with us. He taught our beginner's workshop and was a very accomplished and talented Smith. Bob was an extremely important member of our group and will be greatly missed.

Our demonstrator for the spring is Andy Dohner, who currently lives in North Carolina. He comes with many years of experience as a demonstrator and accomplished Smith. It will be a very informative and enjoyable weekend. Be sure to bring your notebooks. Please remember to bring any donations you have for the iron-in-the-hat as they are appreciated and help to cover the group's expenses and support our beginner's workshop. As always, we will have great food and an enjoyable time. The forging contest this year will be a trivet using traditional joinery or forge welding only (please no electric or gas welding). The winner will receive a \$50 discount off your next registration. Hopefully we will see a lot of entries. Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Spring Hammer-In.

Thank you again,

Frank Shaw

***In memory of Robert Stephen Cerny,
affectionately known as “Bob”.***

In the fiery crucible of life, some souls are forged with an extraordinary strength and brilliance, shaping the world around them with resilience, wisdom, and boundless compassion. Robert Stephen Cerny, “Bob” as he was fondly called by those who knew him, was undeniably one of these masterful smiths.

Bob’s journey through life was by a remarkable dedication to service and a steadfast commitment to excellence. After proudly serving his country in the Army during the Korean War, he honed his skills as an electrical engineer at Bendix, where his ingenuity and expertise tempered the very foundations of his field.

But Bob’s craftsmanship extended far beyond the confines of his profession. For decades, he wielded his passion for blacksmithing as a beloved teacher at Ashokan, molding minds and igniting flames of creativity in the hearts of countless students. With each hammer blow and careful twist of metal, he crafted not only works of art but also lasting legacies of inspiration and ingenuity.

As a friend, Bob was the sturdy anvil upon which many leaned. His empathy knew no bounds, offering strength and support without hesitation. He possessed an innate ability to understand, truly understand, and in doing so, he forged bonds of trust and camaraderie with all who crossed his path.

In his professional endeavors, Bob’s commitment to excellence blazed like the hottest furnace. Whether in the workshop, the classroom, or the boardroom, he approached his work with diligence and a desire to make a meaningful impact. His expertise was matched only by his humility, as he generously shared his knowledge and guided countless individuals along their paths to success.

Written by Mike McCarthy-

Bob Cerny



2024 Northeast Blacksmiths Spring Demo

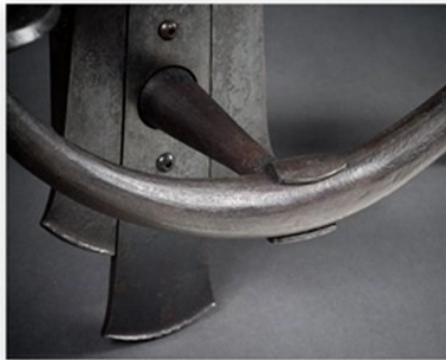
Demonstrator: Andy Dohner

Andy Dohner grew up in central Pennsylvania and studied metalworking at Lebanon County Career and Technical Center. After ten years of working as an industrial welder and fabricator he began to develop an interest in making objects of his own design. In 2002 Andy made a career change to learn more about creative making by studying with artist blacksmiths across the United States.

Inspired by what he learned about the artistic forging process, Andy eventually started his own studio practice, combining his interest in industrial processes with conceptual designs. Andy currently operates a studio practice in Western North Carolina with a focus on functional and sculptural objects. You can find his work in and outside the home and public space. Andy has participated in exhibits and teaching opportunities across the country.



Here is some of Andy's work...



Our Past Hammer-In:

Fall-2023

Our presenter for the Fall Hammer-in was Matthew Garton.



Here, Matthew is working on one of his big weekend projects, a decorative bracket. .



Pictured here, Matthew is holding the finished bracket.

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.

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 and I can update it for the next newsletter. Some of these schools offer internships and scholarships!

- Guilford Art Center, <https://guilfordartcenter.org>
- Brookfield Craft Center– 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
- John C. Campell Folk School - [www,folkschool.org](http://www.folkschool.org)
- Arc and Flame Center– www.rocafc.com
- Center for Metal Arts– <https://centerformetalarts.org>
- New England School of Metalworkwork
<https://newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com>

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Upcoming Events:

-ABANA 50th Anniversary Celebration and Conference

June 6-9, 2024 in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

[50th Anniversary Celebration & Conference – ABANA](#)



-Northeast Blacksmiths Fall Hammer-In

October 4-6, 2024 at Ashokan

-New England Bladesmith Guild– Knife Seminar

October 4-6, 2024 at Ashokan

Try it Yourself

Think Outside the Fox! By Don Pfaff

One of our favorite contributors, Don Pfaff, has come up with yet another ingenious idea that can be an embellishment for another project or special on its own. A few simple tools, symmetry, and a little patience can look sly to your eye! You can adjust these features to create other woodland animals with a change in tooling and placement. Give it a try!

Materials: 1 1/2" X 3/16" flat bar

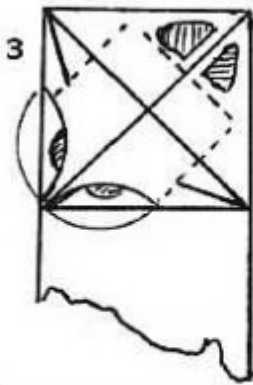
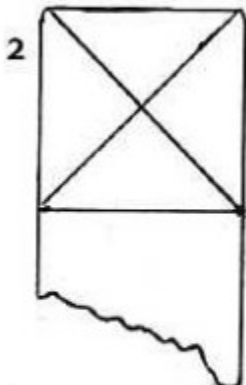
Tooling: Fuller, chisels including a sheeting chisel, football eye punch, special fuller for cheeks. (1 1/8" bar with handle for cheek areas).

Tip: Don't cut off the square of material immediately, work with it on the bar for a few steps before cutting off.



How to:

1. Pencil mark bar 1 1/2" down to form a square on the end of the bar.
2. Mark corner to corner and side cuts.
3. Cold chisel in ear split and side cuts
4. Hot cut ears and side tufts to dotted line, now cut free form from bar.
5. Spread ears. For direction of tufts, move one up and two down.
6. Fuller inside and between ears. (Separate the ears with a large space using a fuller).
7. For face, use a 1 1/8" round bar partially on flat bar to form face and allow for nose.
8. Punch eyes using a "football" shape punch.
9. To make face more streamline, grind a slight curve for jaw.



1. Finished Fox! 2. Marking material. 3. Layout of face. 4. Eye punch is shaped like a football. Note: Cheeks are ground slightly to give personality to fox. 5. Layout cuts on bar. Easier to work with bar attached, then cut off when necessary. 6. Tool made for creating cheek depressions.

Re-Post from Anvil's Horn Newsletter - March 2023

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



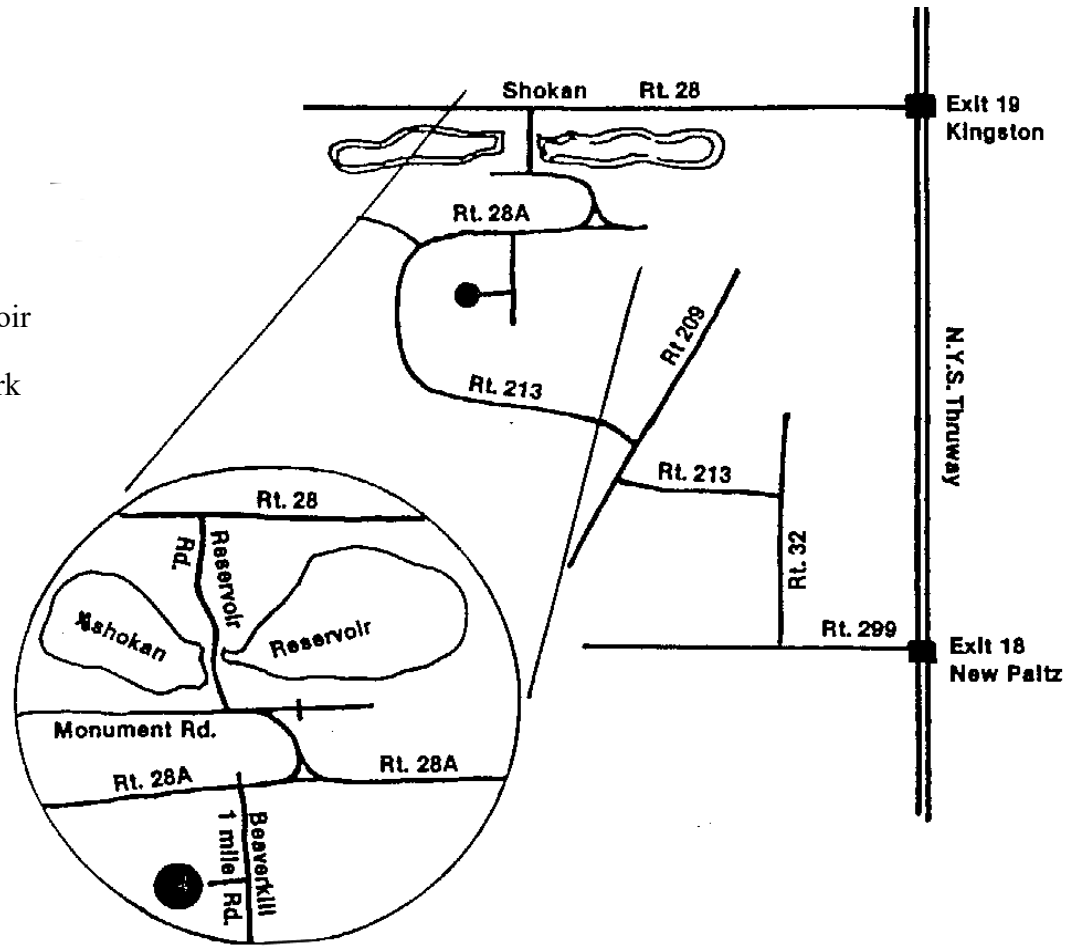
For Registration information for our
Spring Fall Hammer-In on April 26th,27th,
and 28th visit

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