



# FORGE

Dedicated to the revival of the "King of Crafts"

Vancouver Island Blacksmiths

www.vibblacksmiths.com



## COMING EVENTS

- May 16, 17 18.....Luxton Rodeo
- May 31 2009..... Meeting/Demo at Luxton
- Aug 7,8,9 .....CanIRON V11 Ness Creek Sask

## Index

Executive Reports.....	2,3
Show and tell .....	4,5
Gardener's Hoe.....	6
Tong Clips.....	7
CanIRON VII.....	8,9
Membership.....	10

## Spring Demo May 31

The founding member (yes...the very first one) of our club ...Adrian Mullholland will provide the expertise at our spring demo this month. It was Adrian who phoned the people who became the original VIBA members, asking if they would be interested in forming a blacksmith group to share knowledge. He was our first president, more than twenty three years ago (if our newsletter numbering system is accurate). Adrian will demonstrate on our regular meeting day Sunday May 31 so please note we will be starting about 9:00 AM rather than the usual time. Pizza and beer will be provided for lunch. A \$20 fee will be charged to participate, so bring your wallet. Adrian is an accomplished smith, as well as a woodworker and jeweller. His home is full of handmade articles, including a forged kitchen table, multiple Haida-style ceremonial cedar boxes that he made in the traditional way and an operating room microscope that he now uses in jewellery production. You will not want to miss this meeting.

## 2008 - Executive

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Treasurer: Norm Norby 250 478-3589  
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## Submissions & Contributions

Submissions to "Forge" can be made at any monthly meeting or by snail mail to:

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## President's Report

By: Ray Orchard



We've got a busy three days of demonstrating this month, the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17 and 18<sup>th</sup> at the Luxton Pro rodeo. This is a very big event for the Metchosin Farmer's Institute, expensive to put on but potentially a very profitable affair. Let's hope for excellent weather as anything else can cause real problems. At the moment of this writing this I have heard nothing about what volunteer help might be needed in preparing the site. I hope for a good response if and when we are asked. Let's have a great turnout for the demonstrations and put on a good show. Anyone, even the least experienced can heat and hit hot iron, so come and help. Then, on the 31<sup>st</sup>; there's the Adrian Mulholand demonstration. It will be a great show and I urge everyone to attend. At \$20 for the day, including pizza and a beverage at noon, it's a real bargain. There will be a very short meeting during the lunch break. May marks the start of our demonstrating season. These shows play a big role in our operation so it is in your interest to do your bit for the benefit of the whole.

## 100th COBBLE HILL FALL FAIR

This is the year that the Cobble Hill Fall Fair celebrates its 100th anniversary and VIBA will be there too!

The fair date is Aug 29, 2009. I'm hoping to have some extra goodies for display. If you have any ideas please contact me! Space is limited, so larger is not always better. Some people may not know this, but the fair has a Blacksmiths section in the fair's Arts and Crafts Contest.

The Categories are:

- 1) Pair of Blacksmith Tongs
- 2) Item made from a single horseshoe
- 3) Hand forged Knife
- 4) Item made from a single railway spike
- 5) Any forged Item

Entry forms HAVE to be filled in Before August. If you are interested in entering the contest, or want to submit goodies for display, please let me know! You can phone me 250-884-4913 or email me [rdp.metalhead@gmail.com](mailto:rdp.metalhead@gmail.com)

Thanx!  
Raynier

## Secretary's Report

By: Charlie Low



Viba Apr26 09

President Ray called the meeting to order, and we went to show and tell.

Dr Dave told us of taking a course with Daryl Nelson on forge welding in a propane forge. Daryl charges \$100.00 US per day, cheap, for a good teacher who is also an expert smith. Dr Dave showed us a cable knife, with both the blade and the end of the handle welded well. There was a piece with a T weld and a corner weld, and a branch with leaves, with the petioles of the leaves faggot welded to the stem. Daryl's forges have an opening on one side only, so when a long piece is to be welded, the opening is bricked up except for a small opening, and the piece to be welded is contained by another brick, so the forge is effectively turned into a torch. He uses unprotected kao wool to line the forge, on the theory that it is so cheap it is easier to replace it than to line it with an expensive refractory. Dr Dave also brought in a fire-place poker which had been banging up his wall, so he made, and showed us, a bronze bird head plate to put behind it to protect the wall.

Ray brought in an adz and a wire stretcher that he picked up at garage sales this weekend.

Dennis brought in his "Blood Blade"- the knife for which he sacrificed his thumb as outlined in last month's newsletter. It was a lovely thing of L6 and 1075 Damascus, with a handle and sheath and stand of Santos rosewood or mahogany. He described a method of heat treating using molten salt. The blade is heated, then soaked in the molten salt at 1500o F for 20 minutes, which heats it evenly and produces no scale, then it is edge quenched, producing what Japanese sword makers call a hammon, where the edge is a different colour from the back of the blade, as well as a different hardness. Keith brought in his big tomahawk with the traditional peace pipe on the top, and a large knife made from a chain saw bar, with a broom wood handle

Charlie L brought in a chain hold-down

The minutes were adopted as published with no errors or omissions.

Business arising: Neil had a letter from the Saskatchewan people who will be hosting the next CanIRON, requesting the seed money. As its transmission has already been approved, there was no discussion, other than to decide who would actually send the cheque.

The event should have 2 demo sites and a knife maker, as well as a hands-on venue.

Skip spoke about our demo at next month's meeting, May 31, where Adrian Mulholland, one of the founders of VIBA, and an expert smith, will be teaching. The cost will be \$20.00, which will about cover the cost of the pizza and beer for lunch.

Charlie D told us more about Tina the trailer which we purchased from a lady on Saltspring Island. It will need some work to make it secure for hauling around our art to the various places where it will be displayed, and after that work is done, it will need a paint job. Don mentioned that he might know someone who will do the painting in return for advertising exposure.

We need art to go in the trailer, and as it is just a little trailer, we need just little art, so everyone should plan on making something beautiful and/or useful, and not too big.

Norm gave us the treasurer's report- all is well, and we are still operating in the black.

Skip has the newsletters and Hammer's blow and Anvil's ring all organized and in the library. He has also re-done the book on making cable knives. He has a supply of The New Edge of the Anvil for sale, marked down from \$40.00 to \$30.00. Although they are useful to any smith, they are especially useful to new smiths.

President Ray brought up the question of our agreement with the Metchosin Farmers Institute. They have a complaint that we have not been contributing the 200 man-hours of work a year that our agreement specifies, and they are requesting a financial contribution. We are in agreement that our time contribution should be improved, but they will have to be a bit more organized about scheduling work and communicating that schedule to us. It was suggested that we tell them that work should be planned at least a month in advance, and that plan should be sent to Dennis for publication in the Forge.

We agreed that we could contribute financially, and it was suggested that the voluntary contribution we have been making for the past few years should be formalized. This is nowhere near the amount of money they would like to have, but it is what we can afford. There was some discussion of possible alternative sites where we could move to, with at least 4 or 5 obvious alternatives mentioned, but it was also pointed out that moving our operation would be a huge amount of work.

President Ray will write a letter outlining these suggestions, and the matter will be revisited at the June meeting, as next month we will all be paying attention to the demonstration.

C



# Show and Tell

Photos by D Gillett



Dennis's blood knife...see Opposable Thumbs article The Forge April 2009



Adz and wire puller Ray found at a garage sale



Charlie L made this foot powered anvil hold-down from a chain



Various welds Dave made with Daryl Nelson at the propane forge welding workshop last Oct. A brass bird head made as a wall protector for his fireplace tools



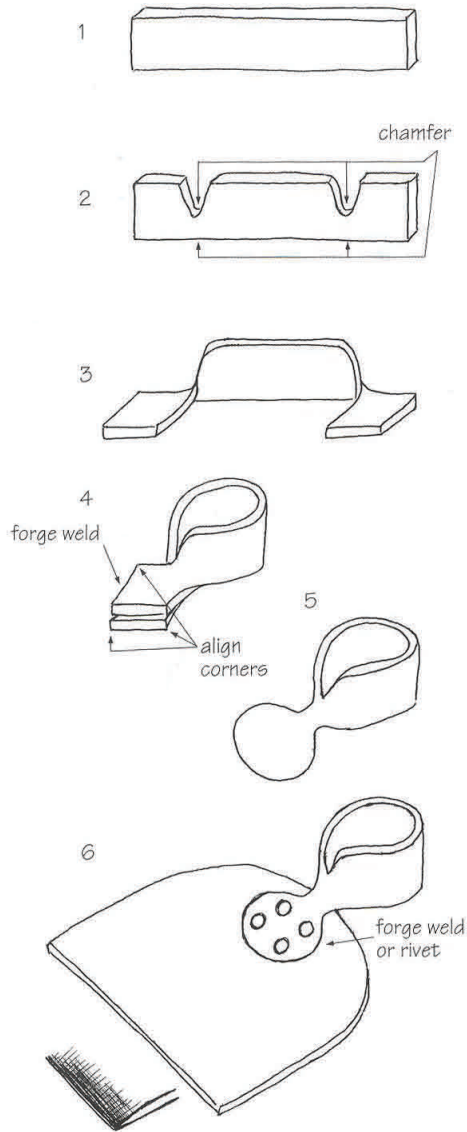
Fully functional peace pipe hatchet made by Keith. The pipe bowl is made from black pipe. The hatchet chops wood and smokes well





## A Gift for a Gardener

Adapted from an article by Mike Meyer in the OKI Forgers April 2009 newsletter, Ohio



This traditional hoe design was inspired by Mike's visit to the Colonial Williamsburg blacksmith shop a couple of years ago. The method shown here was used to make various hoe styles – broad, garden, furrowing. Mike's instructions and drawings are for a garden hoe with an approximate blade dimension of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 6" x 8". The strength of the hoe will depend on Steps 2 and 6. Mike's drawings show a round connecting tab that can be either welded or riveted. A triangular shape was also used.

1. Forge square or round stock to approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{3}{16}$ " by about 7" long (or start with flat stock).
2. Fuller two notches on the same edge of the bar  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " from each end. Do not fuller any deeper than two-thirds of the width, in this case 1". Smooth out, but do not remove, the upset that occurs from the fullering. The upset gives the hoe more strength.
3. Twist the resulting tabs so that they both lie 90° to and on the same side of the bar. (To reduce the opportunity for stress cracks, chamfer the back edge of the bar at the fullering points and the inside edges of the deepest part of the fullers before twisting).
4. Curl the stock to create the eye while also overlapping the tabs. The meeting surfaces of the tabs need to be clean and free of scale. Align all the tab corners.
5. Forge weld the tabs together – a faggot weld – maintaining as much thickness as possible if the handle eye is going to be forge welded to the blade. Shape the tab to your preference – square, round, oval, triangular, heart or your own design.
6. Cut the blade to shape and file all sides to remove sharp edges before welding or riveting the handle eye to it. Two rivets should be at the back of the tab and parallel to the blade, where most of the stress occurs, and additional rivet(s) should be placed at the front of the tab.

**Optional:** Put a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " chamfered edge on the top side of the working edge of the blade and straighten the edge again with a file. A hoe's edge should not cut you as a knife would.

You may think your favorite gardener does not need another hoe. But, when you go out in the garden with your handmade hoe to help, a trade will be at the back of her or his mind, especially if your touch mark or initials are on it. ♣

*You snooze, you lose! Renew your CBA membership today.*

# TONG CLIPS

By Doug Merkel

Reprinted from *The Hot Iron Sparkle*  
Volume 27, No. 1, 1st Quarter 2009

Francis Whitaker once told me that he wished that he had started using clips to hold his tongs together sooner than he did. He said that it would have kept his left arm, wrist and hand from developing such bad arthritis. Sounded like good advice, so I have been using tong clips for the past 15 years.

Why should you use some type of clip to hold the tong handles together and not just your handgrip???? For the same reason that you use a light grip on your forging hammer, to reduce the transfer of vibrations from the tool to your body. Holding, swinging and striking with the hand hammer is an article in itself, but all the different techniques have one thing in common. They all try to reduce the amount of vibration transferred to your body. The less vibration transferred to your body through either/both arms then the longer you can work that day and for years to come.

One way to reduce vibration transfer is to use a very light grip. If you do not use a death grip to keep the tongs closed then you can use a very light grip just to control the piece on the anvil or under the power hammer. Let the tong clip hold the item to forge, that way you only have to concentrate on the forging part of the operation.

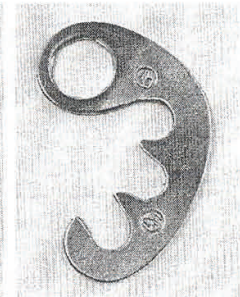
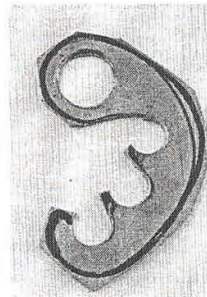
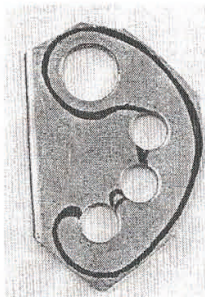
Enough talk, tong clips are made in many shapes and sizes. Just like shoes, tongs and hammers, you can never have enough.

Some are an open design to be slipped on the tongs from the side and others are closed ended to be put on from the handle end.

This clip is made from



11-gauge 1/8" x 2 1/2" x 3 1/2"



Finished Tong Clip

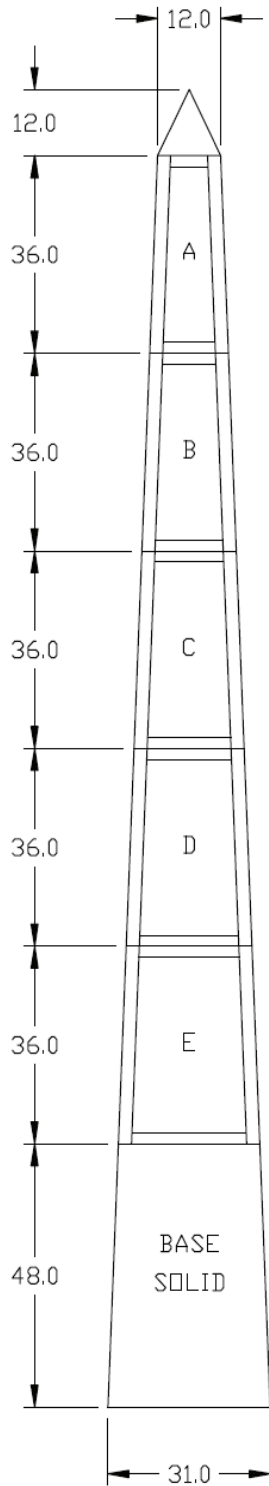
stainless steel, because I had some in the scrap pile, but can be made from what ever you have around the shop. This started with some 11-gauge steel (1/8 inch, .125 inch) that was 2 1/2 inches by 3 1/2 inches. Any thinner and you end up with too massive a clip. If the clip gets too large it just ends up vibrating off of the tong handles during use.

Sketch out your design right on the steel. This one has one large hole and three smaller holes, each at a different distance from the once large hole. That way you get three clips in one. Center punch each of the four holes, drill them out, hack saw, band saw or cold cut most of the excess metal away. File/grind/belt sand the edges to shape. Stamp with your touch mark and use. The large hole on this one is 3/4 inch with 7/16-inch small holes. Make them to fit you

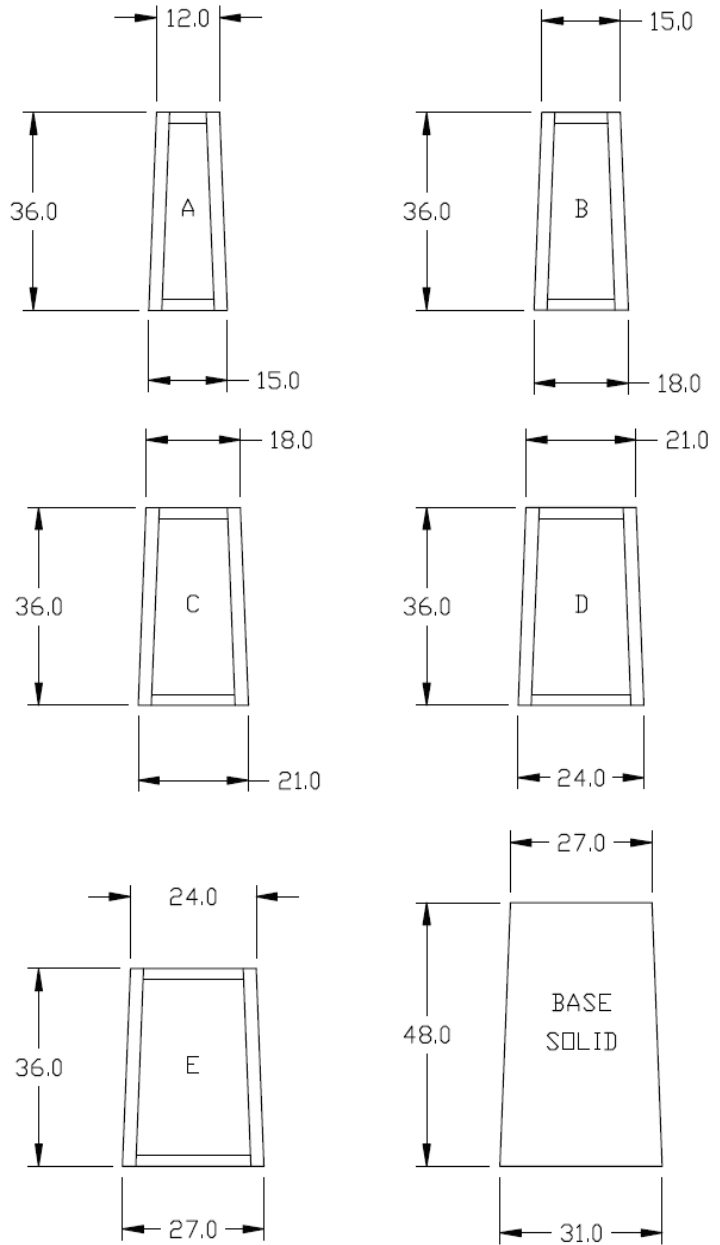
You are blacksmithing, so you can hot punch the holes if you want, or hot cut the excess material. Use your skills and design your own clips. You will find as you use clips that it is much easier to concentrate on what you are doing with the hammer and not worry about holding onto the material. Your tongs and clip are doing that for you. As Francis told me, "If you cannot hold it, then you cannot hit it!"

GET IT HOT, HIT IT HARD, QUIT WHEN IT'S DONE

# CanIRON VII OBELISK PROJECT



*Section A, CanIRON Committee*  
*Section E, CanIRON Demonstrators*  
*Section B, C & D by Blacksmiths at large (please confirm desired panel)*  
*and Hands on at the conference.*  
*Dimensions are in inches*  
*There are four panels of each size*







The Saskatchewan Chapter of the Western Canadian Blacksmiths' Guild will host CanIRON VII at the Ness Creek Festival site in the beautiful Boreal Forest of North-Central Saskatchewan. This event is set for August 7-9 this summer and, although we've taken the task with short notice, it will be a spectacular event for Canadian blacksmiths. Six demonstrators have so far been confirmed. Each one will contribute to the obelisk that will be created and installed during the conference as a permanent legacy to Canadian blacksmithing.

CanIRON VII will have three demonstration areas plus a significant hands-on area. Hands-on participation will figure prominently in this conference and we encourage the demonstrators to invite the audience to join when appropriate.

The organizing committee envisions this conference to be a large hammer-in with demonstrators as the teachers and leaders. Demos will be scheduled morning and afternoon but the hands-on area could run around the clock or until those trying to sleep shut us down.

We will all contribute something to be attached to the obelisk form that will be a permanent installation piece at the Ness Creek Festival site, and will be seen by thousands of visitors each year. Before the conference we will build and install the 20 foot tall angle iron framework. It will have 20 panels and we are asking the demonstrators to each contribute to one panel. There are twelve panels available to be made on site or if a group of blacksmiths wishes to make one to send. The theme is ***Journeys*** and may be interpreted however you like. It may be your life journey, a road trip you once took, a historical journey of blacksmithing through the ages, etcetera. You decide!

On-site accommodation includes lots of camping. In more limited supply are shared rustic cabins and shack tents (or canvas cottages as they like to call them); clean, comfortable and very basic. Washrooms and showers are in a separate modern building. The Catering is exceptional, but do book early due to the location it is hard to make last minute additions. There are additional hotels, cabins and camping nearby at Big River and nearby lakes see the business section of <http://www.bigriver.ca/>

We are presently working on our web site at <http://caniron.ca/> and hope to have all the information there shortly, in the mean time we are sending out the information to date.

**Vancouver Island Blacksmith Association  
Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Post/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a: New Member  Renewal

Regular Membership \$30.00 Annually

Contributory Member \$100.00 Annually

Members are required to sign a Liability Waiver  
Make cheques or money orders payable to:

**Vancouver Island Blacksmith Assoc. (VIBA)  
1040 Marwood Avenue  
Victoria, BC CANADA  
V9C 3C4**

**Artist Blacksmiths Assoc. of North America  
Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Time Student.....\$35./year

Regular Membership.....\$45./year

Senior Citizen (age 65+).....\$40./year

Overseas Surface Mail.....\$60./year

Oversea Air Mail.....\$80./year

Contributory Membership.....\$100./year

Public Library Subscription.....\$35./year

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