

November 2014 Northwest Chapter BOA Meeting

The Northwest Area BOA November meeting was hosted by Sonny and Judi Sartwell. We enjoyed a fine day of forging in the Sartwells' nicely accoutered shop. The day started out brisk, but was warm and sunny for most of the late morning and early afternoon. Judi and Sonny served up a fabulous lunch of beans, rice and cornbread, with gooey, yummy gluten-free brownies for dessert.

BOA members in attendance at this November 8 meeting included Dale Custer, Bob Lock, Jimmy Owen, Tom Bates, Steve Low, Samuel Bollman, Ken Sartwell, Judi Sartwell, Cheryl Miskell, Ervin Potter, Harold Enlow, Clyde Foster, and Hardy Todd.

Dale Custer called the meeting to order after lunch, first welcoming our newest member, Samuel Bollman.

Dale announced the date for processing the iron ore, December 27, the Saturday after Christmas at his shop. The smelt will take place on January 21st though the 24th at the Eureka Springs School of the Arts (ESSA). The Director of ESSA is checking on lodging options.

Our printer is up and in operation. Robert Fox should be able to get hard copies to the post office on the Monday following the deadline. (Please submit items for the newsletter!)

Central Chapter did a demonstration in Conway last Saturday, November 1st. Central Chapter "sold" some pieces to the museum director, and signed on two new members.

New Business:

T-shirts are back on track. We now have 3X, 4X and talls. Hats are available, too. If you want a blue collared shirt with our logo, you will need to provide the shirt.

Sam Hibbs has said we can get signs on the trailer for \$80. Bob Lock made a motion to get the signs, and Tom Bates seconded. All present voted aye, so we'll be getting the signs.

New sandwich board signs were discussed next. All present voted aye for getting additional sandwich board signs.

Since we have almost ran out of business cards, Dale suggested that we get new ones to hand out. He recommended that the names of officers be replaced with the permanent email address of the president and the web site. This netted unanimous ayes.

Bob made a motion to purchase two trailer-rated tires (since there was a blow-out on the trailer on its way to this meeting). New tires should be ten-ply, at least. Sonny and Judi volunteered to get the tires and bring the trailer to the December meeting.

Tragically, Ron Wells' son has passed. Bob made a motion to send a spray of flowers to the Memorial Service in Little Rock. Dale agreed to make sure this happens.

Bob is doing a raffle on an 80# anvil, for \$10 per ticket. Any profit from the raffle goes to BOA. Hardy moved that the meeting be adjourned.

November 2014 Northeast Chapter BOA Meeting

November was a busy month for most of the NEA Chapter and we only had 2 members able to attend the meeting, myself and Dusty Elliot. Although Jim was unable to attend he still graciously allowed the use of his shop. I would like to thank Jim for allowing the club to use his shop for the last several months.

He has a great set up that is just getting better. The December meeting will be held on the 13th, from 8 AM to 3 PM, and will be at Jim's shop again. I would also like to thank Jim for the great job he has been doing photographing and submitting the minutes from our monthly meetings..

Dusty and I made the most of the situation and spent quite a bit of time at the forge. I have a forge at home and since several of the other members do not, I normally do not forge at the meetings giving them the time at the anvil. Since there was not much competition at the meeting this month I took the opportunity to forge a pair of box jaw tongs. I have been in the bladesmithing mode of late and needed a new pair. I made these by upsetting ½ inch square stock, a technique I hadn't used for this application before. Dusty also got to spend quite a bit of time forging making leaves. She is improving each month, and I am sure will do so even more once she gets her forge set up at home.

With Glen Owen's recent move, the club is definitely left with big shoes to fill. Glen was the teacher in the club and now I am trying to help in that role as best I can. Dusty fell victim to this at the November meeting since she had no alternatives LOL. I did show her a new technique for making leaves that she picked up on quickly, so perhaps I didn't do too badly as an instructor.

Mentioning Glen reminded me that I would like to extend a big thanks to him for his efforts with the club, and more specifically with me. If not for his time spent helping me, I would not be at the point I am today. Hopefully I can do the same for others new to the craft. Since this is my first submission, I thought I would provide a quick introduction. I started forging in March of 2013, so am still pretty new and still learning at each session at the anvil, something I hope never stops. My first attempt forging was done with assistance of a hair dryer in a backyard campfire and that was all it took - I was hooked. I bought a welder, built a forge and have not looked back. I had the good fortune to meet Glen within the first couple weeks and he gave my skill level a big jump start, and even helped me find my anvil. I only wish I didn't wait until I was forty to get started. My forging projects range from jewelry to knives, from tongs to camping gear and all points between. Traditional joinery and forge welding are a particular current interest. Since I failed to take any pictures at the meeting, I have include a few pictures of my recent projects, don't be too harsh on them :) . Pictured are a hatchet and spoon knife along with my first carved spoon, a pair of strikers used for flint and steel fires (thanks to Dan Davis for my primitive fire introduction), my first attempt at a small fry pan, which still needs to have a handle added

on a grill I designed for my squirrel cooker and a couple of in process knives.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving, and wish you all a Merry Christmas!

November 2014 Central Chapter BOA Meeting

The November meeting of Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) was held on unseasonably cold 11/15/2014 at the forge of Dale Custer in Little Rock.

The morning demonstration was making a top set tool from a ball-peen hammer: preparing the tool, a discussion of appropriate tongs and hammers, forging the desired shape with the assistance of a striker, finishing and tempering. CACBOA members had the opportunity to make their own top set tools after the demo. Tim Huddleston made a nice heavy punch.

The demonstration gave me several ideas for more top set tools I “need.” I had told my wife that I had enough garage-sale ball peen hammers, but I think I may need to retract that statement.

As is often the case when discussing top set tools, there were passionate words exchanged on both sides of the argument regarding whether the handles should be set in with a wedge to keep them secure, or left un-wedged to facilitate the inevitable re-tempering. No blood was lost, but no opinions were changed, either.

In the business meeting, Dale gave us an update on the plans for the ore smelt. It looks like all the details are finally crystalizing. A lot of us are really looking forward to participating.

We also spent sometime talking about an interesting request we had from Lynita Langley-Ware, the director of the Faulkner County Museum where we demonstrated November 1st (see article, next page), and Dr. Kimberly Little, professor of History at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) in Conway. Dr. Little asked if we would be interested in putting together a blacksmithing internship program for a history student next year. The program would need to involve the student in 6-9 hours a week of work throughout the fall semester. Just attending one of our meetings a month would be six hours, and I have a whole list of topics I would love to have a history student researching and writing up for me that could easily fill another 12 hours a month.

But the most interesting turn of events happened when Lynita started talking with BOA members Scooter and Larry Lane. All three of them participate in the same historical re-enactment group that recreate the lifestyle and events of Americans living 200 years ago. Their time period is moving forward all the time, keeping a steady 200 years behind our own.

Through that organization Lynita knows that Larry is the demonstrating blacksmith at the Grant County Museum in Sheridan. I overheard Lynita asking Larry when he was going to build her a blacksmith shop for her Faulkner County Museum. When I asked about this, Lynita showed me the

location she is hoping to build the shop, and talked about how it would fit into her charter of preserving local history for public education. Lynita is hoping to convince her board of directors to fund the project.

Having just finished talking to Dr. Little, it occurred to me that we could ask some energetic young college students, in addition to the tasks above, to go take measurements of the Grant County Museum blacksmith shop, interview Larry Lane about his recommendations for construction, safety guidelines, etc., and talk to a professional construction contractor about the cost of building a shop in Conway. This could be put together in a grant proposal which Lynita could take to her board.

The student would get blacksmithing experience, would get to say they were a published author, and would have the creation of a grant proposal on their resume—and course credit to boot. Lynita would get the draft of a grant proposal she could use for her board. BOA would get the goodwill of the community and a great place to have meetings and demonstrations. Win, win, win.

After hearing my passionate appeal, Dale suggested that, if this were to be done under the BOA name, the next step would be to write up the proposal to present to the BOA board. I plan to do just that!

After lunch, we helped Ron bag coal. If you have empty coal bags, bring them back to your next meeting, we sure could use them.

October 2014 Northeast Chapter BOA Meeting

NEA chapter had its meeting on Oct 11, as planned. Those in attendance were:

- Glenn Owen (this was Glenn's last meeting, he's off to South Carolina on Tuesday the 14th. We'll miss him)
- Eddie Mullen
- Dusty Elliot
- Mark Brown
- Jimmy Barnes
- Cody Barnes (Jimmy's son)
- Jim Soehlman
- Richard Slayton (Jim's father-in-law)

We had a good time and mounted 3 post drills in the shop, made some hooks to hang aprons, etc. We have spare aprons, gloves and eye protection available now when guest attend.

October 2014 Central Chapter BOA Meeting

The October meeting of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) met on Saturday, October 18th at the forge of Thurston Fox in Mayflower, Arkansas.

It was a beautiful day for a meeting. We spent the morning forging pumpkin-carving tools. Some were more ornate, with twists and such, while others, shall we say, favored function over form. After lunch we had a pumpkin carving contest that was quite entertaining! The results were very serviceable jack-o-lanterns. Herman Ginger finished first by about two seconds, but was penalized for insufficient removal of innards. The contest was then awarded to Tim Huddleston, who had the cleanest, most classic-designed pumpkin, perfectly executed.

The trade item this month, in keeping with the season, was "your preferred weapon for the zombie apocalypse." I think it's fair to say that Larry Layne had, by far, the best entry with a four-foot long wicked-looking weapon resembling a pole-axe out of "Mad Max." Very dystopian!

The culmination of the event was the testing of the zombie weapons on the carved pumpkins. Larry's beast destroyed his pumpkin. I think Larry could start a new career catering to the home-defense market. Even the chickens enjoyed the festivities, feasting on pumpkin rind. Thurston's eggs are going to taste like pumpkin for weeks!

At the business meeting, Dale gave us an update on the iron smelt preparations, and on the ordering of a printer for the newsletter.

At the business meeting, Dale gave us an update on the iron smelt preparations, and on the ordering of a printer for the newsletter.

Scooter Layne suggested we look into liability insurance. The reenactment group she and Larry participate in have some, and she says it is very reasonable. Larry is the demonstrating blacksmith at the Grant County Museum in Sheridan, and has taken several classes on public demonstrations. He says that ALL of his instructors and his personal experience suggest that insurance is necessary.

Finally, Dale presented me (Robert) with a wonderful gift from the BOA members. See the Letter From the Editor in this month's newsletter for details on the gift and my response. (Letter is shown below)

October 2014 Letter from the editor:

When Mike Williamson handed me the reins for editing the newsletter, I struggled to meet the first few print deadlines. Because I was running late, I used the only print shop which was open on the weekend, which resulted in a particularly large cost.

Because this cost was my own fault, I felt it was not right to ask Ron to reimburse me from the BOA

treasury—a decision Ron did not agree with at all. We have since solved the problem by ordering a BOA printer, but Ron still felt that I needed recompense.

So when Ron brought it up a business meeting a motion was made and passed for BOA to give me a gift—a beautiful set of six assorted Bob-Patrick original tongs! I was stunned. The gift is perfect, and sorely needed in my forge. But the value of the gift goes far beyond any expenses I incurred.

They are so nice that I put pictures on the last page of the newsletter in the Member's Showcase. Coming from Bob Patrick, it should come as no surprise that the tongs are such works of art! I was torn between wanting to use them and wanting to mount them on the wall. The decision was made in about ten minutes—I abandoned the members to their own devices and made a present for my daughter, who is away at school in England.

Thank you all so very, very much. If we hadn't already ordered the printer, I would gladly continue to make this kind of a deal every year! And I'm buying a big lock for my tool locker!

September 2014 Northwest Chapter BOA Meeting

Thanks to Bryan Parsons for hosting the meeting at the Tired Iron tractor show at Gentry. The rain wasn't too bad for folks to be out and about. The blacksmith building is a nice dry place, so those working and those watching were all comfortable.

Ron Wells always counts those present and e-mails me. He said there were 19 present with one being our newest member, John Gee. Ron also told me that we'll be setting up at both Rusty wheels, just south of Harrison, and Harvest Homecoming, which is on the square in Harrison. Ron will see that things go right since Dale won't be in Harrison until the day of the events.

Dale Custer is now interim president and conducted the meeting. He may be conducting more meetings since I nominated him for that office once more. The nomination got a second and a bunch of ayes. Cheryl Miskell will be on the ballot for secretary for our northern bunch. Everyone thought that would be fine and there were more ayes. There were several names mentioned for vice president. They were Hardy Todd, Tom Bates and Luke Roberts. Be sure to use the ballots which will be in the newsletter, otherwise we may have a bunch of troglodytes running things for the next year.

We talked more about the iron smelt which sounds very interesting to me.

I think James Brantley has agreed to build a toolbox for us to fill with tools for another raffle like we had last year. It should be a handsome box since James is a fine woodworker.

I hope to see you at the next meetings!

September 2014 Northeast Chapter BOA Meeting

The meeting was held as scheduled on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2014, from 8 am to noon. Those in attendance were Glenn Owen, Dusty Elliot, Eddie Mullins, Adrian Hancock and Jim Soehlman.

Eddie Mullins was elected as our new chapter steward and Jim Soehlman was elected as secretary. Adrian brought a collection of knives that he has made and forged some on a knife that had been started at a previous meeting.

Eddie brought his very nice looking trade "S" hook. Dusty and Glenn made hooks at the meeting for trade.

We discussed twists and how to duplicate the same twist and reversing twist using a "jig". I think we were all looking forward to seeing this "jig" become a reality. Glenn and Adrian working together made a nice looking reversing twist that lead us into this discussion.

September 2014 Central Chapter BOA Meeting

The September meeting of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) met in Bryant at the brand new forge of Tim Huddleston. In the proud tradition of CACBOA, Tim had saved up a few "Tom Sawyer" projects for the group to practice on. I had to leave early while Tim and Shane were cutting out sheet metal for a forge hood. I'm sure it was a great "demo." I have to admit that I left with shop-envy in my heart.

The first thing everyone noticed when they turned the corner into Tim's shop was his latest acquisition, a 500+ pound anvil. Apparently, it had been in a railroad machine shop when a crane fell out of the ceiling breaking the anvil at the waist. It's hard to imagine anything breaking that huge chunk of metal, even harder to imaging it breaking at the waist and not the horn or tail. Those railroad blacksmiths welded and bolted the halves of the anvil back together, and it now rings solid and true. Now that's blacksmithing!

The trade item was a pair of scrolling tongs. One member, who shall not be named, came with raw stock and made his trade item before lunch, with lots of advice and assistance from the rest of us. It

actually turned into a very practical demonstration of adjusting tongs to hold work, forming tong bosses and reins, and punching and riveting—an end-to-end project.

August 2014 Northwest Chapter BOA Meeting

Our August meeting was held at the Ozark Folk Center at Mountain View, AR .We had a good turnout and quite a few visitors, including some new/prospective members. The center has a nice rustic blacksmith shop that is open to the public and the staff at the State Park were very pleasant and helpful. . We met several potential members and passed out several application forms. Two of the visitors, Pat Thompson and Tom Weir, joined BOA and bought coal. The members and families enjoyed seeing the many crafts and activities of the center.

One of our members, Cheryl Miskell has only been a member for about 3 months. As I recall she joined at Rusty Wheels and this was only her second meeting. She's the lady in the white blouse. She has few tools to work with and brought a set of horseshoe clippers with her to see if someone could help her make them into a set of usable tongs.

In his usual fashion, Bob Patrick came to the rescue and he guided her through the process, resulting in a nice pair of flat jaw tongs to further her blacksmithing endeavors.

After lunch at the food vendors on the grounds, Ron Wells held a business meeting attended by eighteen members.

The group expressed sincere appreciation to Linda and Keith Heffelfinger for making the arrangements with the Ozark Folk Center for the meeting.

Bob Patrick gave a report on the smelting project that he and Dale Custer are setting up for this fall. More information will be coming soon as more details are worked out.

We had a general discussion about the newsletter and praised Robert Fox for the job he is doing as editor and appreciation was shown for the job that Mike and Peggy Williamson did in the past.

Finally, we discussed future meeting locations, demonstrations, and the upcoming election of BOA officers in the October meeting.

August 2014 Northeast Chapter BOA Meeting

We had an awesome day for forging. The temperatures was in the 80's and we had a nice breeze through the shop most of the day.

We had 8 members in attendance. Dusty Elliot, Jon Kriebel, Eddie Mullins, Dan Davis, Rebecca Soehlman, Jim Soehlman, Glenn Owen AND JUDY OWEN, Glenn's new wife! Congrats to the newlyweds!!! They make a great couple. And this is the good news.

We do have some news in the chapter that we're all saddened by... Glenn and Judy will be moving to South Carolina in the near future. We are all going to miss them more than mere words can express. We had a very good business meeting led by Glenn as to how to move forward in his absence. We are planning to get some signs for directions to our meetings and we identified 4 different public locations that we felt would be good to demonstrate in. We are also going to print some flyers and leave in different locations to announce meetings. We discussed when guests attend to help them make something that they can take home with them. I remember Bob Patrick helping make my first "S" hook that "HOOKED" me. Thanks, Bob.

Dan is involved in helping a small Catholic church / cemetery somewhere in Missouri put metal crosses back on graves that vandals stole. We're proud of you, Dan. Community involvement opportunities would be a good way to promote our organization. We'll watch for those opportunities.

OK, let's go to the forge. We are doing a trade item next meeting. An "S" hook, imagine that... The meeting for September 13th is at Jim's shop. We are looking at others hosting also.

Eddie finished reworking some tongs that were started last meeting. Dan and Eddie teamed up on a knife, nice job. It also serves as a striker for flint. Jon was doing some copper-smithing and making some nice looking copper bracelets. Dusty was showing off her new forge that she acquired in Illinois.

The shop is really taking shape... Hooks were added to the forge to hang the shovel, rake, and sprinkle can. The forge now has a nice material support. Still only have one forge in operation but the next one now has a functioning duck's nest. The exhaust hood is in operation (does good after initial fire up).

Did I mention that Dusty made the buy of the century (a small forge with a lever-action blower and a hood!) ... and I was drooling for it. We can't find any name or numbers on it, so if any readers out there have some thoughts as to manufacture, how old it is, etc, please let us know.

Our pot luck meal (always good) was exceptional, lasagna, salad and melon pie. We welcome visits from other chapters.

August 2014 Central Chapter BOA Meeting

The August meeting of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) met in Pine Bluff at the well-equipped forge of Herman Ginger (who is not a dentist).

Herman had a variety of individual and group activities for us.

Shane Driskel used Herman's industrial mill to put a factory-flat surface on his recently acquired Peter Wright anvil. The anvil had a lot of shallow pitting and wear, which Shane was able to remove without taking away a great deal of metal from the surface.

Tim Huddleston gave me some lessons on the use of a MIG welder and acetylene torch, and helped me put together a new stand for my gas forge. I'm thinking that setting a 2000 degree furnace on top of a dried out block of wood might not be the wisest course.

Garrett Sheeks led a demonstration of forge welding for those who missed it last month or desired more practice, and Robert Carroll produced a very nice rubik's twist.

There were even people on Herman's power hammer. I tell you, no one was standing idle at Herman's. We even had a visitor drop by, a friend of Herman's, and we put him to work cranking the blower on the forge!

Dale Custer, our chapter steward, was lucky enough to be attending the ABANA conference on the day we met, so we tried to manage a business meeting without him. We discussed the election of officers in October, and discussed the ore smelt BOA is trying to pull together for later this year. Dale had been sending our group various texts and emails from the national conference, especially in regard to his participation in Lee Sauder's ore smelt. We are hoping to hear more details about that in the VOICE next month.

As usual, the only thing that could tear us away from Suzanne's table was more fun back in Herman's shop.

Our trade item this month was a tomahawk made from a railroad spike, one of the most ambitious projects yet for our chapter. I was very pleased to see four beautiful examples. It is clear that our capabilities and confidence are growing steadily.

Dale may have had a lot of fun at ABANA , but Herman's shop was the next best thing!

July 2014 Northwest Chapter BOA Meeting

Thanks to Rob and Jean Meuser for hosting this meeting. We were under the shade trees in the yard

with two forges going. Rob cooked hotdogs over a wood fire which we enjoyed.

Ron said there were 15 members present plus a friend of Rob's who was one of the many Bobs that were there. Richard and Carol Ross had their granddaughter, Corie, with them. A couple of guys had their wives along. With our family plan membership I guess the wives and Corie were members as well.

Dale Custer did a good job holding the meeting after lunch. Most interesting to me was talk about making our own metal from rocks which contain iron. Dale had some pieces of the rock with him which were found at the location of an abandoned mine near Hot Springs. The rock is called magnetite.

Bob Partee was present and demonstrated making a hoof pick from part of an old horse shoe. The handle has a horse's head on it. Bob is a former member from back in 1639 AD. He has renewed his membership. Whoops, I actually put my birth year in there, sorry, Bob.

The August 9th meeting is planned for the Ozark Folk Center at Mountain View. The trade item is a dinner bell. I'm guessing that would be one of those old triangular jobbies. Linda and Keith Heffelfinger live at Timbo, which is near Mountain View, and they promised to pay the Folk Center a visit to talk over the details.

Ron Wells said that The Wonders of Wildlife camp for kids needs a couple of volunteers to teach blacksmithing. He and Bob Lock have been doing this for 3 years and need a break. Call Ron for the details, if interested.

Richard and Carol Ross said they will host the February meeting. Clyde Foster said he would host the December meeting.

I hope you all will enjoy the August meeting. I have to work so can't be there in August.

July 2014 Northeast Chapter BOA Meeting

There were 5 members present at the July meeting, including Dusty, Eddie, Jimmie, Jim and another member that helps shuttle Dusty's mother, and we all had a very good day forging. It wasn't a big turn out but we all had an enjoyable time.

Jim is getting his shop set up more and more every meeting.

We started meeting by finding out who had never started a fire in a forge. Dusty Elliot stepped forward and did a good job as Eddie instructed her on fire building.

We reworked some tongs and burnt the end off a chisel. Reworked the chisel and tempered it.

July 2014 Central Chapter BOA Meeting

The July meeting of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) was held on July 19th at the Applied Arts studio of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR). This is a FANTASTIC facility! They have four or five gas forges, a coal forge, at least six huge anvils, racks of tongs, hammers, top sets, hardy tools, a power hammer, fly press, and everything else necessary for the blacksmith, all in a well-lit, air conditioned studio.

Dale took a course through the university and developed a relationship with the leadership there. They let us have our meetings there about twice a year during periods where there are no students working on class projects. We try to save it for July and February, when the weather is most harsh for our members' outdoor forges.

We had nine in attendance, including a prospective new member and Kerry Hartman, the studio foreman (if you can call someone with a PhD a foreman) and his wife. Dale Custer gave us a demonstration on riveting, which I, for one, have long been anticipating. Riveting looks and sounds so simple, but I mangle them more often than not. Herman Ginger had suggested earlier this year that we have a series of demonstrations in our meetings based on the skills necessary to make the ABANA journeyman grill project. I don't think any of us are ready to tackle the grill, but it is after all, a project which deliberately includes all of the basic techniques of blacksmithing. We could do worse than to base our demonstrations around that same list of techniques.

Dale had also asked me to give a demonstration of a "pineapple twist." If you haven't made one before, it's a really complicated-looking forged twist that is actually quite straightforward to make, within the skill level of even beginning smiths like me.
