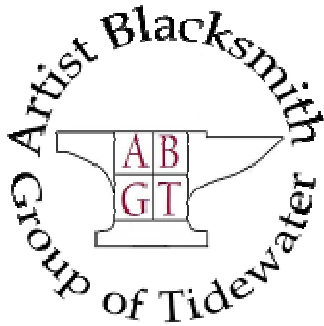


April/May 2011



# Hampton Roads Hammer

**In this Issue:** \* April's Meeting \* May's Meeting \* Coal Trip \*

**Director's Holler:** Two months have come and gone. We have done some interesting stuff from what I hear. Matt has been busy making himself a treadle hammer, picture to follow later. There has been some small progress on the easel as I have a problem with the way the work turned out, I don't like it and am starting over. I will use what I have made for some other future project for my garden or something that requires less detailing. I spoke with Joe and he is doing much better, just in time for his son's graduation. Congratulations Nick! Matt and Joe will announce final design for the Ring Frame will be and may be ready to assign tasks by our June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Eric has made ruminations about doing a demo on making the copper Can that was demonstrated at BGV's April meeting. He tells me he is practicing and will let us know. Remember to bring any show and tell items that you might have and to let Joe know of any techniques that you want to demo. Joe G. is the demo coordinator as well as our Training Coordinator, they sort of go hand in hand.

Blacksmithing once again is apparently going out of favor due to the high price of materials and labor. I have heard that high end houses that usually support Blacksmithing projects are on the upswing. There is no real evidence of that in this area unfortunately. Someone asked me about demonstrations and to tell you the truth the days of being paid to demonstrate, as a group, may be over. Most of the places that used to pay now want us to pay a fee or do so via bartering; demo for free space. Either way that is still okay with us as we want to promote the Artistic Blacksmith and his abilities.

I am combining April and May's edition of HRH to shift the date of issue to the following week after our meetings. This makes it more timely and easier for me to keep up with it. Contrary to what many believe it is harder to do a bi-monthly edition than a monthly, but that could just be me. So expect a monthly issue in June the week after that meeting.

Hope to see everyone at the June meeting. Remember that June 18<sup>th</sup> is BGV's annual Iron Fest. It is sure to be a great event and like Peyton likes to say; IT'S FREE!!!! Make a candle holder for the auction, bring IHT items and buy tickets.

See ya at the Forge!

*Vince*

**April's Meeting!**



Easel plans laid and our Ring Frame designs



Any other ideas?



Rob it's hard work watching others shovel



Stick Rose Demo



Are those plans really fire proof



NOW THIS IS IMPORTANT STUFF!



### MAY'S MEETING:

This month's meeting had all the important people attending, Matt and Me. ☺ Seemed everyone was somewhere else, but that didn't stop us from holding a productive meeting.

We discussed the proposal to support the Portsmouth Sidewalk Art Fair ( I am not sure if that's the correct name) in November. Since Joe proposed it and Matt and I are in favor of it the motion passed. That makes up 60% of the Director Board so Joe can go ahead and make sure that we are all set to participate.

We finished the Adam's Thoroughgood door handle split pins. I will drop them off to Mark Reed sometime this week so he can install them.

Matt missed the Architectural Rose demo last month so I showed him how to make one.

They turned out pretty nice and so did the demo rose. Nice job finishing it off Matt.



Bob Orcutt's new portable forge.

**AGBT Coal Road Trip Article:** By: Steve LaPaugh

The Group had been talking about making a coal run to buy loose coal for the members and for the Group to use at public demonstrations. Well, it finally came to pass. Matt Seiber and I volunteered to



make the run on Saturday March 2. Matt has a big truck and a small trailer and I have a lot of time. Matt picked me up at 0700 sharp and after a hearty breakfast at my neighborhood restaurant, we started off. We were driving up I-64 about 70 miles an hour (Um, err AGBT does not condone exceeding the speed limit at any time, except to make speedy coal deliveries, oh that's what they are doing, never mind) and all was well. About 30 miles up the road, a small truck passed us and frantically waived and pointed behind Matt's truck. Matt got the message in a flash, safely pulled off the road, and bounded out of the truck to find the trailer tailgate dragging in the dirt with the spare tire and the Jack ready to fall out of the trailer.

We were both so intent on the damaged tailgate that was bent and burred from grinding on the road that it could not be put back onto the trailer, that I forgot to get a photo to use in this article. We loaded the tailgate, spare tire and jack into the bed of the truck and proceeded on.



The arrangement was for us to call L.W. when we were 20 minutes out so he could come in and load us up, as they are closed on weekends. So, when I phoned L.W. I told him of our damaged tailgate and asked if he could bring a big hammer with him when he comes to load us up. He said there were some on site at Monger Coal and Oil (now Dixie Gas) located in Elkton, VA. When we got there L.W. was waiting for us with a sledge hammer and wood-splitting maul. Matt did some cold blacksmithing on site in order to reattach the tailgate. L.W. (who turned out to be L.W. Monger) loaded us up with 1140# of stocker pee coal and the three-hour trip back to Newport News was uneventful.

That night I got an email from Matt saying, when he pulled in his driveway, one of the trailer tires let go and blew green "Slime" from a previous tire repair all over everything. I'm glad it didn't happen on the road or in the tunnel to Norfolk. Matt brought the trailer to our April meeting at Vince's house and we divided up the coal as planned.

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together.

“Another AGBT mission accomplished!”



It's hard to watch guys work this hard. Keep shoveling, lets get this done!

Rob C. conducting quality control.

Bob worked up a sweat watching.

Vince was observing.

Oh, yeah Matt (orange shirt) and Shawn (checked shirt) were the ones working.

Thanks guys you did an excellent job. I just want to know what happened to my .58lbs? 😊



## Octopus in the Round by Vince Nakovics

At our November Artist Blacksmith Group of Tidewater's meeting it was decided on to make a Ring Project for our 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary in March 2011. No problem here, that's loads of time for me to put this together. I drew out three designs one more complicated than the next. I decided to go with my 1<sup>st</sup>. Well as we all know there's a thing called "Life" that meddles at the most inopportune times with our artistic pursuits. The adventure was a foot! The pressure was mounting as I was held back from working on my ring until the middle of February! Aghhhh! Now time is short!



Checking the alignment



Eyeing the roundness



Drilling the rivet holes

Luckily I had made the actual ring way back in December. I decided that since I make flat rings often I wanted to challenge myself a little. I happen to have several lengths of what I believe are overhead garage racks. It had an interesting look, is about  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $\frac{3}{4}$ " certainly heavier than the 1" x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " recommended ring material.

After a two month delay, I was back. The octopus still had my attention and desire to make, so it must be the right one. I had seen one made for a coat hook and looked at those plans on Florida Artist Blacksmith Association website (Thanks to Steve Bloom). I really wanted a fully round head on my octopus so I made a few adaptations.



1 st Attempt



Not quite what I wanted



Almost there!

My first attempt was in my propane forge. I had 8 long legs about 9-1/2" long and one small one, all  $\frac{3}{8}$ " Rd, inside a piece of pipe that fit perfectly. My thinking was that the pipe would help hold them and add webbing to the tentacles. Good idea, don't really know what went wrong, they looked hot enough, yet it just wouldn't weld all the way through. It wasn't working so I stopped. The next day I fired up my coal forge, now we are talking, (as Charlie Orlando would say: "Coal People").



It's starting to come to life



The Dixie Cup



Dixie seated and face cleaned

I got them all nice and hot, welded solid. Not enough mass for the head the way I wanted, but I can make it work like the coat hooks from one side only. I start to draw out the tentacles. I have 3, 4, 5 are done to perfection! Number 6 and 7 apparently were a little thin from the welding and fell from the bending to forge the others. I thought about welding them back on, but the head wasn't exactly like I wanted it anyway, so it's back to the drawing board.



Banner



Back View



Initials and date

On my third attempt, center is a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " round bar with the 8 pre-drawn tentacles and a couple of spacer pieces wrapped around it. Welded up nice and tight.

Now the head, lessons learned: Use a ball or make a ball before you weld the tentacles. It will make forging the waist and rounding the head, so much easier.

My friend Joe Gentile helped with my stainless steel banner. He has an electroplating tank so we electroplated my forge's name on to it in copper. You have to let it dry on the stainless or else it will just wipe off! Who knew!

Since I had never made an Octopus before I am happy with my results. I plan on making another using all the lessons that I have learned, but that will have to wait as I have other projects and things to try.



## **What to do with a TOW BALL?** By Joe Gentile

When I was in the Navy I served as an Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) Aircrewman. Our mission was to clear the seas of mines and provide heavy lift support. As an AMCM 1st crewman on a MH-53E I supervised the deployment and recovery of mine counter measures equipment. One of the final tasks performed during these missions is the attachment of a Tow Ball that secures the cable to the helicopter. The Tow ball is 4 inch in diameter and has a hole in the center and a slot on one side.



I came up with the idea to polish the tow ball and present it as to retiring AMCM aircrew. The tow ball is aluminum with a steel coating that's electro-plated. The coating is grinded off to revile the aluminum surface. This grinding leaves deep marks that need to be removed to get a smooth finish. It takes a variety of different grits of sand paper to achieve a smooth matt finish.



The Tow Ball is then polished and buffed on a buffing wheel to get that shiny chrome look. The Tow Ball is then mounted on a wooden plaque and a special sized clock is added. The final touch is attaching of the “Wings of Gold” to the base of the plaque.

The Finished Tow Ball is presented to the retiring Naval Aircrewman along with his shadow box by his fellow Aircrew.



I am proud to have served as an AMCM Aircrew and fine it an honor to support my fellow Aircrew that fly in the MH-53 helicopter.



### Mission Statement

*We are an Artisan group that has joined together to make the most of our diverse skills and outlooks. It is our sincere desire to promote, encourage and show the public and other interested persons the tremendous contributions and skill of the traditional Blacksmith and the relevance of their contributions in the modern world. We provide continuing skills training for our members, along with a place to develop their artistic skills with like minded persons, regardless of the modern or traditional expression.*

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