

# The Coal Bin

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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## Journal of the Southwest Virginia Blacksmith Guild



Blacksmith and his forge, The Pocahontas Corporation, Tazewell County

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## Coming Events

September 10, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

September Guild Meeting featuring Ellen Durkan

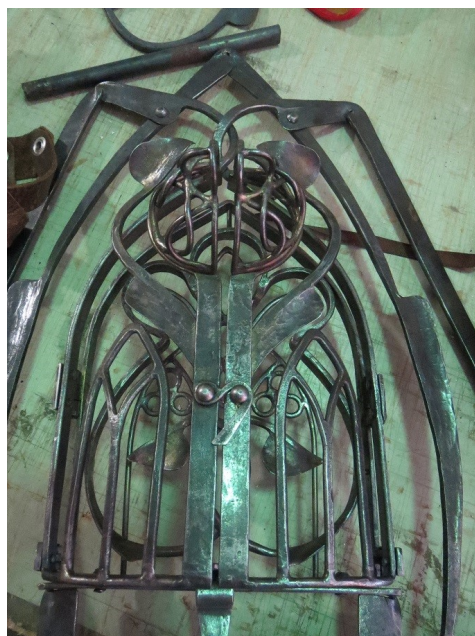
Smithfield Plantation

\$10/members, \$20/non-members

October 8

October Guild Meeting

TBD



Ellen Durkan

## Disclaimer

Blacksmithing is a lot of fun, but comes with inherent dangers. All members, demonstrators, and guests are responsible for using appropriate safety equipment and for using safe working methods. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

The Southwest Virginia Blacksmith Guild, its officers, members, demonstrators, guests, hosts, writers, and the editor disclaim responsibility for any damages, injuries, or destruction of property as a result of the use of any information published in this newsletter or demonstrated at workshops, meetings, or conferences.

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Jeremy Kilgore at the Great Road Encampment, Elliston



## On the Cover

Blacksmith and his Forge, The Pocahontas Corporation, Mines 33 - 34, Bishop, Tazewell County, Virginia  
August 27, 1946

Source: National Archives and Record Administration



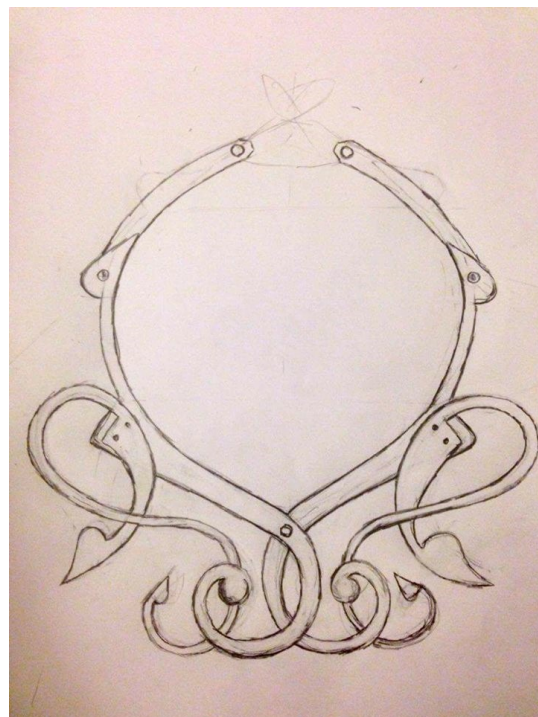
## Ellen Durkan to Headline September Meeting

Internationally renowned metal artist Ellen Durkan will demonstrate at our September meeting at Smithfield Plantation. She'll produce a neckpiece (*right*) as her demo piece.

A highly sought-after demonstrator and teacher, Durkan is perhaps best known for her forged fashion - dresses, shoes, head pieces, etc. It has been said that she makes gates - she just puts them on the human body. Her work has been featured in galleries and museums, books, magazines and runway shows. She's also been featured in the *Man At Arms: Reforged* television series, and presented a TED talk about her work. You don't want to miss this demo!

We're asking \$10 per member (\$20 for non-guild members) to attend. This will help offset the additional costs associated.

*Design drawing courtesy Ellen Durkan. Additional photographs courtesy the Banton-Smith Center for Blacksmith and Metal Arts.*



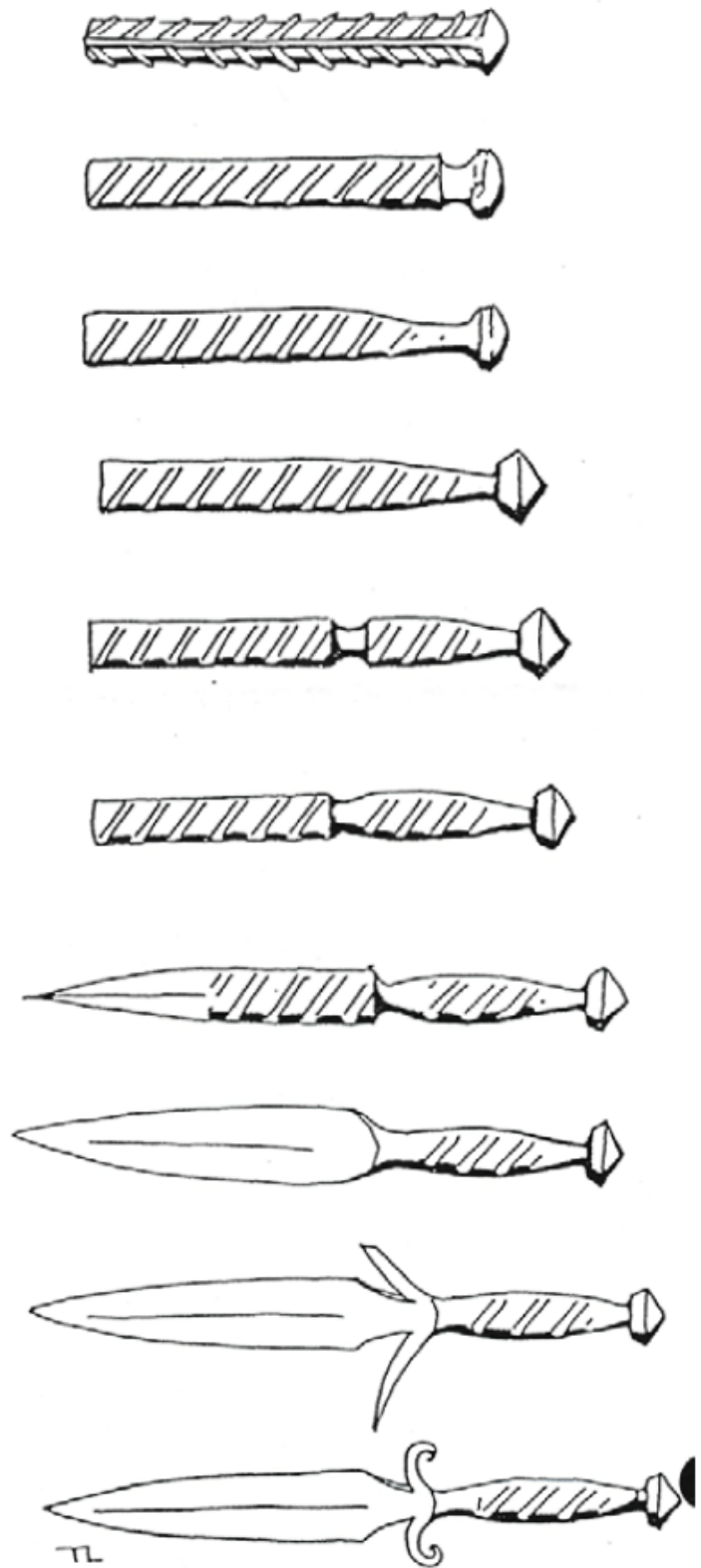
# Letter Opener

By Tom Latane

The drawing enclosed shows the steps I used making a letter opener from reinforcement rod from the Berlin Wall. Lots of smiths bought pieces at the past two Metalsmith Madnesses thanks to donations by Doug Johnson.

The project can be done from any rebar or round rod. Round rod will not have the nice decoration on the handle.

1. Upset end slightly.
2. Fuller around and below upset.
3. Draw down to fullered depth (do not reduce to less than 1/2 the original diameter).
4. Dress ball or knob on end over anvil edge.
5. Fuller to define handle allowing slightly more than 1/2 bar length for blade.
6. Draw down to fuller depth on handle side taking care to preserve a portion of ridges at center of handle.
7. Point blade drawing squarely.
8. Flatten blade in plane with continuous ridge on each side of bar. Spread with cross or straight pein for greatest width.
9. Chisel away a portion each side of blade for guards. Draw guards to points.
10. Scroll guards, dress with file.



*Reprinted from Guild of Metalsmiths, July 1992  
and On the Anvil, Philip Simmons Artist Blacksmith  
Guild, Jan - Feb 2017*



## Jerry V Demo - August Meeting

CVBG's Jerry Veneziano was the guest demonstrator for our August meeting at Smithfield. He forged our a fireplace set - including tying the broom. We'll hold a fundraising drawing for this set at the September meeting. We also discussed business practices for blacksmiths, and guild operations. Fun times! Thanks to everyone who turned out.

*Photo credit: Jeremy Kilgore*





## Forging a hand by Lee Sauder

I saw this on Facebook, I think, and thought that some of you might enjoy Lee Sauder's work. If you have questions, look at that thing on the end of your arm (no, your other arm). That one is holding the hammer.



For each finger- a quick loop in 5/16 square bar. Square up the loop. Open the loop.



Forge the finger. A really skinny hardy fuller under the knuckles was helpful.

Four fingers tacked together and then lightly forge-welded.



Now, the thumb from 3/8" square.

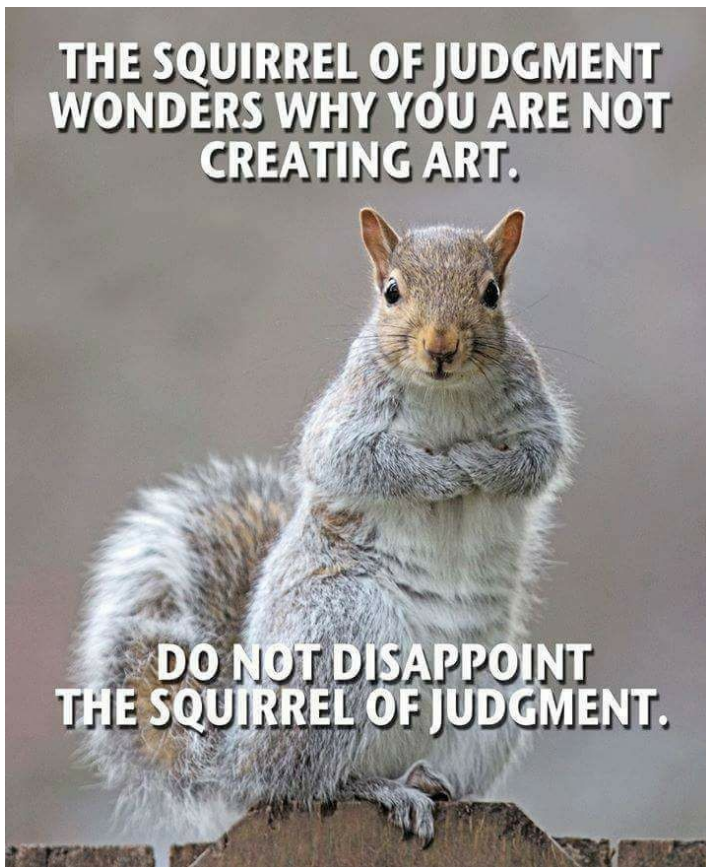


Build up the palm and heel, grind smooth.



All welded. Then I took a good welding heat to stick it all together good, and then a few heats to dress and tinker with bends. The finished hand. I actually want some smaller ones for a project, but this seemed like an easy size to figure it out with.

Let's give Lee a hand! Okay, that may have been just too much. Sorry. Barry Myers



## Video Highlight

Dave Hammer is a smith from northern Virginia. He's produced some amazing videos on making efficient and effective gas forge burners. Check them out!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxzdqcPzXj8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbvG4vVJqCw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4W-SV2GcOk>

Courtesy CVBG





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**Find us on  
Facebook!**

The Southwest Virginia Blacksmith Guild is an ABANA Affiliate serving smiths in Roanoke, Bedford, Blacksburg, Christiansburg and the rest of southwestern Virginia. We meet on the 3rd Sunday of each month, usually from 2 - 4 pm. Meetings are held at either

Great Road Craft Guild  
1812 Big Spring Dr.  
Elliston, VA 24087

Or

Historic Smithfield Plantation  
1000 Smithfield Plantation Rd.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
(completely surrounded by the Virginia Tech campus)

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are free and open to the public. Guild memberships are available; dues are \$5 per year. See a guild officer for more information.



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