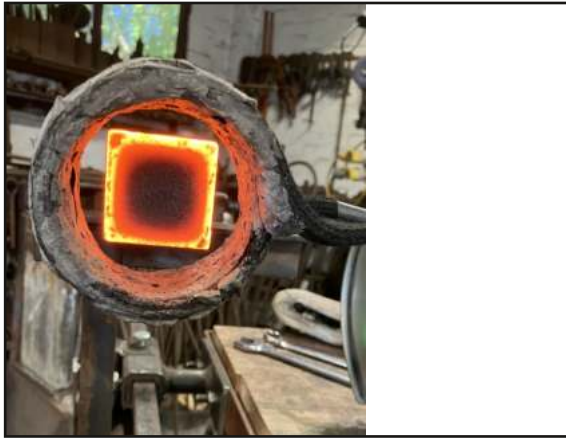




**NEWSLETTER**



**January 2025**



Cover Picture by Steve Rook



## Editor's notes

Welcome to the January newsletter for the British Artist Blacksmith Association.

I'm composing this newsletter in the weird period between Christmas and Hogmanay, where barely anyone knows what day it is but time still flies. Thinking "let's spend a couple of hours on creating this newsletter", only to get slightly panicking two days later because I'm still only half-way through and social commitments keep interrupting.

It will be 2025 soon (already when you read this). A year which promises many interesting blacksmithing events (check that part of the newsletter!) starting with the "Christmas Ball" New Years event at Ratho Byres Forge on the 4th of January. More information in the "Blacksmithing Events" section of this newsletter. Get your diary out, the section is getting quite full. But there is still room for your event to be mentioned. Let us know at [newsletter@baba.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@baba.org.uk). The page after "Blacksmithing events" is reserved (and filled) with college taster days. Let's motivate the next generation!

For those interested how I'm getting on with my "back-to-forging" project: it's going slow, very slow. I got a bunch of horseshoes from a colleague at school and I'm hammering out my frustration on them. Straighten, twist, scroll, (occasionally burn) all the basic exercises and then into the scrap bin. I have to be in shape for the "Christmas Ball" event in a week, so as soon as this newsletter is finished I will spend as much time as possible in the forge.

What deserves your attention in this newsletter? Everything of course. But pay special attention to the Blacksmithing Events page, as I said before there is already a lot to write down in your diary. But also the "Jobs, training and opportunities" is worth a closer look. Yes, I know you are plenty sufficient in your craft, but there might still be something a college course can teach you. Or maybe you realise you love sewing and want to learn more about that? There are also several options for funding, from Heritage Crafts and for the "Inspired" exhibition and BABA conference. From the BABA archive an article by Maria Cristalli. The whole BABA archive is available to BABA members.

As always: if you have something you think might be interesting for the newsletter, let us know!

**[newsletter@baba.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@baba.org.uk)**



## Chairman's New Year's Message to the British Artist Blacksmiths Association

Dear Members and Friends,

As we step into the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the journey we have shared and to look forward to the exciting possibilities that lie ahead for BABA and our community of artist blacksmiths.

The past year has been one of resilience for many but also creativity and growth. Despite the challenges, we have continued to push the boundaries of our craft, to strengthen our ties and share our passion for the art of blacksmithing with the world. It is through your dedication, skill, and the spirit of collaboration that we continue to inspire others and uphold the rich tradition of our craft. We have lost dedicated and inspirational pillars of our community; much loved friends and colleagues who helped to instill the vision and the principles of BABA. They will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with their families.

Looking ahead, the New Year presents us with fresh opportunities to expand our horizons but also to support and inspire others. We are all too aware of the impact of recent global events on the younger generation. BABA as an organization, because of the generosity of its members has always encouraged and supported young smiths and the current BABA events team are keen to build on this. "INSPIRED", BABA's 2025 AGM and Conference offers great opportunities not only for young and less experienced smiths but also for established smiths to put themselves forward and engage with the exciting opportunities this event has to offer.

Through the "INSPIRED" event, other BABA workshops, and collaborative projects around the world, we will have the chance to further strengthen our ties within the blacksmithing community and beyond. As we embrace the future, let us continue to support each other, share our knowledge, and champion the value of craftsmanship in an ever-evolving world.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for your hard work, passion and commitment to our organization. Together, we will strengthen our bond and continue to create beautiful and meaningful works of art that will stand the test of time.

May this New Year bring you inspiration, creativity, and fulfillment in all your endeavors. Let's forge ahead, united in our craft, and make 2025 a year to remember.

Wishing you and your loved ones health, happiness, and a prosperous year ahead.



Warm regards,  
Andy Rowe FWCB, Chairman,  
British Artist Blacksmiths Association



## What is BABA and why join?

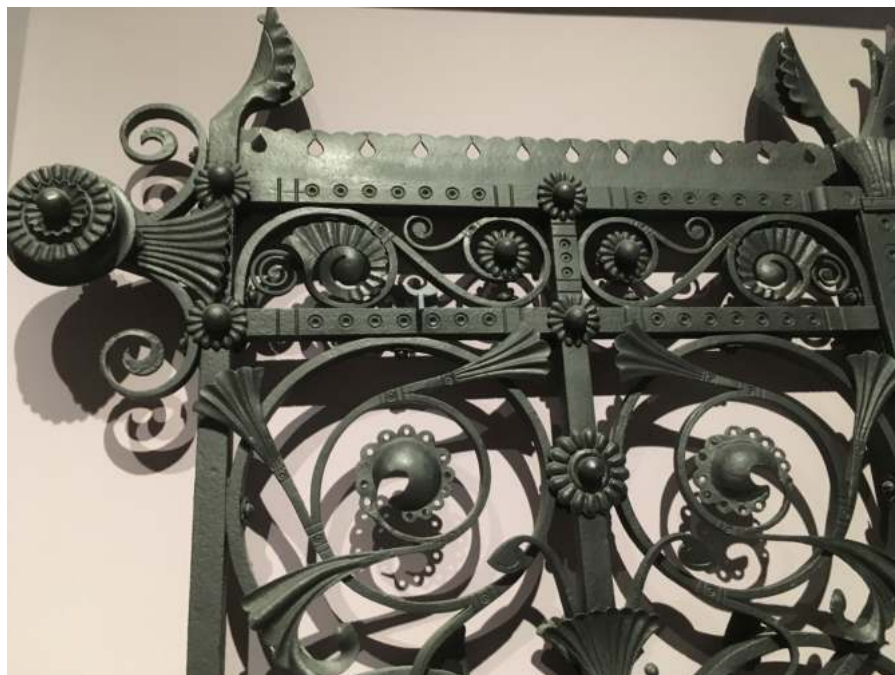
For 46 years, BABA has developed and promoted the work of the modern artist blacksmith. BABA has united thousands of professional and amateur smiths (and interested many others) across Britain and the rest of the world in a spirit of friendship and collaboration, to learn about, enjoy and advance the extraordinary craft of creative blacksmithing.

To this end, we:

- Organise forge-Ins and hold an annual conference
- Hold masterclasses, where members can get involved and ask the tricky questions
- Publish a for members magazine (usually 4 issues per annum) and a monthly newsletter
- The members website, with member galleries and useful resources
- Offer a competitive discounted forge insurance scheme through Eastlake & Beachell
- Organise the production of large public sculptures to display the talents of the members
- Organise talks from leading experts from around the globe
- Organise gallery exhibitions, competitions, meetups, digital events and much much more

For full details and to become a member click on the button below

[WWW.BABA.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BABA.ORG.UK)



Detail of a gate designed by Scottish-born Bruce James Talbert  
Made by Skidmore's Art Manufacturers and Constructive Iron Co.,  
Coventry, England 1862 - 1865  
On display at the National Museum of Scotland

# My daddy is a blacksmith!

**What is your name?**

Ioan

**How old are you?**

I am 16

**Who is your daddy?**

Andrew Rowe - DAR Design

**Where do you live?**

Carmarthen

**Do you help in the workshop?**

I do help in the workshop and with installing work on location.

In the workshop I don't have my own tools, I use dad's.

I used to make own things, small works like bottle openers

Things I made were not made to sell, just "messaging about"

Dad taught me the basics and I was always allowed to walk into the forge to experiment.

I like blacksmithing, but at the moment I'm preparing for my exams, so blacksmithing has to wait. But I will pick it up again!

**What do your friends think of your daddy being a blacksmith?**

My friends think it's cool, medieval.

He is the only blacksmith in town.

**Do you want to be a blacksmith?**

I want to travel first.





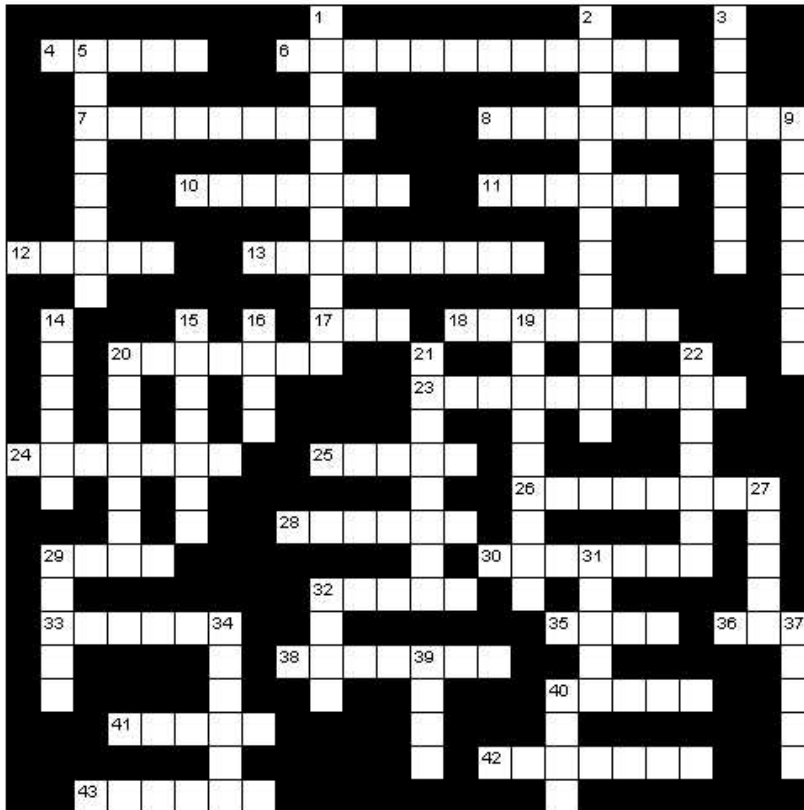
# And now for something completely different

by John von Peij

You might want to print this page.

Disclaimer: BABA nor the editor are responsible for the consequences if you decide to write on your screen.

## Basic Blacksmithing Crossword



### Down

1. Tools meant to be hit by other tools.
2. Blacksmith coal is sometimes called this.
3. The small round hole in the top of many anvils is called the \_\_\_\_\_ hole.
5. Three solid fuels used by blacksmiths are coke, coal and \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Work is often cooled by placing it in one of these.
14. Used to form the head of nails, bolts, etc.
15. A blacksmith forge fuel that is stored as a liquid as burned as a gas is \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Rings and other circular articles are often trued up on a \_\_\_\_\_ mandrel.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ means "from the back".
20. A \_\_\_\_\_ is used to remove hammer marks.
21. \_\_\_\_\_ is a process used to push metal down from the front.
22. A \_\_\_\_\_ fork is often used to shape scrolls.
27. Most blacksmiths don't wear one on their hammer hand.
29. Anvil tools are often attached to the anvil at the \_\_\_\_\_ hole.
31. You \_\_\_\_\_ a hole to the correct size and shape.
32. Steel shavings are often used as an ingredient in welding \_\_\_\_\_.
34. To change the diameter of round rod, you must first \_\_\_\_\_ it.
37. Always adjust your \_\_\_\_\_ to fit the work at hand.
39. Collects the forge's smoke and sends it to the chimney.
40. Some blacksmiths \_\_\_\_\_ horses.

### Across

4. Before forge welding two pieces together, we \_\_\_\_\_ them.
6. A hammer with its pein parallel to the handle.
7. A form of Borax with the water removed.
8. A trade name for blacksmith coal.
10. This material chokes the forge air flow.
11. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a tool used to stretch metal in one direction.
12. In medieval times, iron was called the \_\_\_\_\_ metal.
13. A hammer with its pein at right angles to the handle.
17. A post vise is often called a \_\_\_\_\_ vise.
18. One joinery technique is called \_\_\_\_\_ and tenon.
20. Iron is a \_\_\_\_\_ metal.
23. \_\_\_\_\_ is the name given to a class of powered hammering machines.
24. The \_\_\_\_\_ zone of the forge fire is where you want to place your work.
25. Anvils are often secured to one of these.
26. Use a \_\_\_\_\_ chisel to cut metal if no hack saw is available.
28. A famous American Blacksmith of the early 20th Century from the eastern USA.
29. The cone shaped part of the anvil is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
30. A white heat is often referred to as a \_\_\_\_\_ heat.
32. \_\_\_\_\_ welding requires a clean fire.
33. A ball pein hammer is often used to set these.
35. Most decorative work is made with \_\_\_\_\_ steel these days.
36. A small, flat faced struck tool is called a \_\_\_\_\_ hammer.
38. A \_\_\_\_\_ is used to create an abrupt shoulder.
40. Chisels are often tempered to this oxide color.
41. A major constituent of most welding fluxes.
42. \_\_\_\_\_ iron is a form of very low carbon steel containing silica fibers.
43. Tenons are often trued up with a \_\_\_\_\_ tool.

# From the BABA archive

## Extra texture

All previous issues of Artist Blacksmith are available to BABA members!

### Maria Cristalli

I started blacksmithing about 27 years ago and quickly realized that I had a lifetime of exploring ahead of me. Needing to further my skills, I was able to apprentice with Japheth Howard and Darryl Nelson. Meanwhile, I shared shop space in a cooperative forge with many other smiths. It was a fun time indeed! Seattle was a boom town then and we all had a lot of work to do for fancy houses. I built up a clientele and was able to do many exciting projects. Most of these were in the more "traditional" style of blacksmithing.

My thoughts on design and forging steel changed to a more modern approach when I was able to assist in a class with E.A. Chase at Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina. He said something to the effect that the job of blacksmiths was to make unique works. That stuck with me. This was at a time when many scrolls and leaves were being produced by factories.

Another turning point in my expression of forged ironwork was directly inspired by the work of Paul Evans, an American metal sculptor and artist, who blurred the boundary between art and furniture. I'd say that started my journey on texturing steel. His cabinets often had fronts with a "patchwork" of many steel sculptural elements in them.

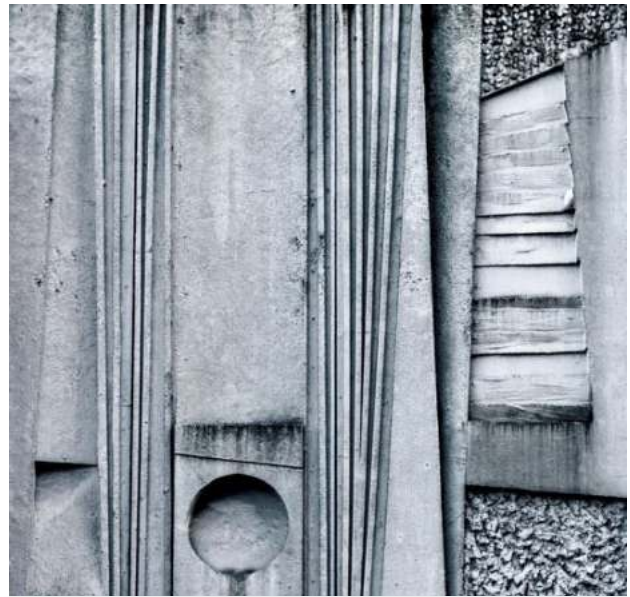


Paul Evans, doors to "Sculpture Fronted" furniture

In response, I made a backsplash for our stove using different textured plates. I also started looking at a lot of mid-century and brutalist era work. To me this era definitely combined art and function into buildings, furniture, home décor, etc. I also looked at William Mitchell's art. An English sculptor who did a lot of concrete murals with heavy texture and form.



Splashback



William Mitchell, Quayside Tower, Birmingham, 1965

Photo: Bs0u10e01, CC BY-SA 4.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=66231856>

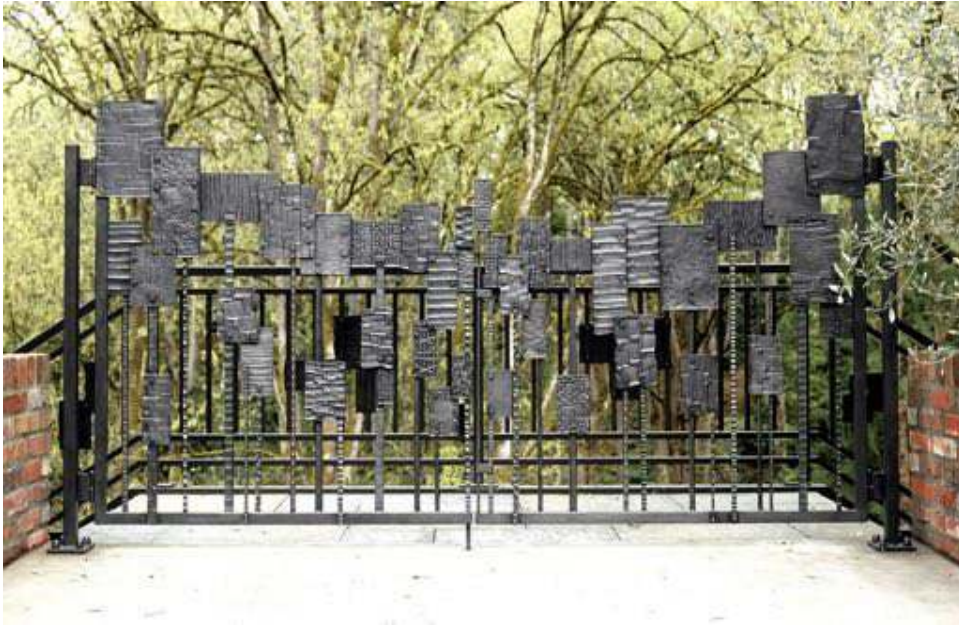
I then made a couple of fireplace screens where I explored more texture. It was certainly a turning point in my expression, and I was able to get some commissions exploring this work further. I've made a couple of gates using textured plates with vertical bars holding the plates together. Some of these bars are textured, and some have unique forgings. I like to use traditional joinery techniques in assembling the parts. Headed rivets and tenons add to the design. Each new project is a further exploration and expansion of the last.

Along the way, my husband and I moved out of the city to central Washington State. I have a studio on our property in the woods, which houses two air hammers; a 165lb Wolf and a 300lb Nazel. I have made numerous top tools and recently was able to "afford" some insert dies for the Nazel. I use squares, rectangles, fullers, etc of different sizes, among other shapes that I've come up with. Texturing is all about forging shapes into the metal and also moving the metal around underneath the dies in a seemingly random way. What I'm doing actually is composing the textures as I go. I look to keep highs and lows in the steel in a pleasing manner and also allow the steel to express its own movement under the force of the blows. Assembly is also an opportunity to add to the piece. I compose this also as I go along, seeing what shapes look good next to each other. It all manifests in how light plays along the surface. It makes your eye dance along the piece.



Gate detail

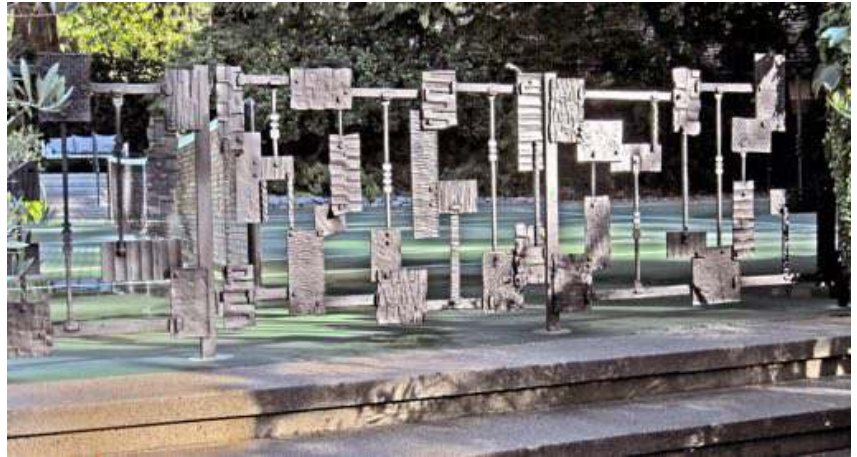




*'Abide'*



*'Burst'*



*'Perfect External Disorder'*



CONTINUED



# Extra texture

CONTINUED

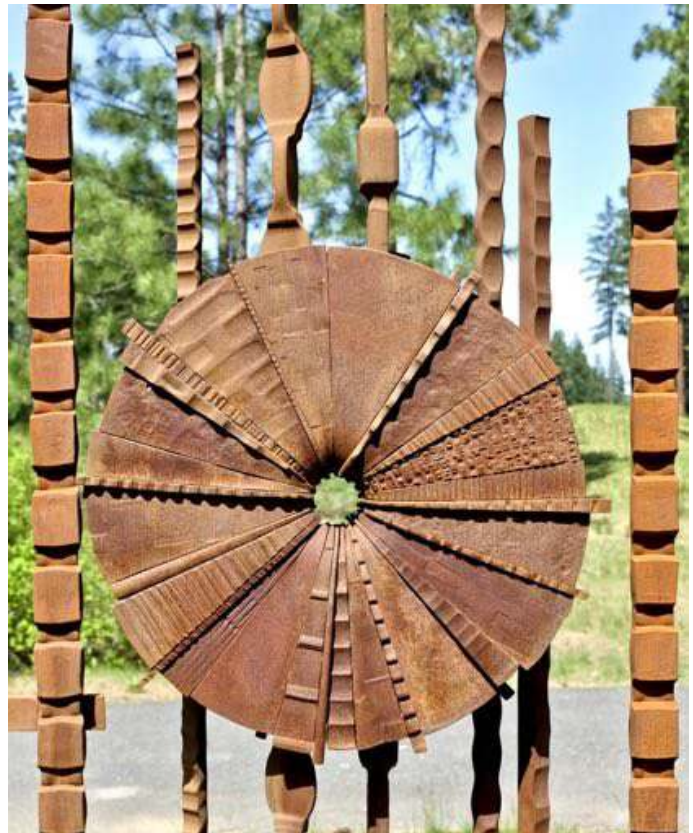
Texture is not the only way I express forged ironwork. I also forge sculpture that may be explained as exaggerated plant forms. I explore fluid and bold forms that to me look modern as well as tactile and graceful.

My last big public art piece is called "Elidi, gift of the sun". It is at a resort community near where I live. My thoughts on the design were that I wanted to see something that would pop out at you and have some mass. Something that wouldn't get lost in the trees and grass but would compliment them. A circle came to mind right away. A circle suggests energy and power, along with harmony, protection and community. They feel unified and symbolize the cycle of time. Time is another reference I thought about for this sculpture. The timeless sun and moon, allowing life and the cycle of the seasons. I thought about time with the history of the site; a coal mining town. Coal is often called buried sunshine as it stores the energy of the sun from plant life millions of years ago. I've seen the tools that the miners used. Wheels on the mining carts that allowed the coal to come out of the earth, and forged steel tools, made by the blacksmiths that used to live here. The tools are all rusty now but remind us of the passage of time and our local history.

This was an immensely fun project to work on. I had a fellow smith, Jorgen Harle, here helping me out for two months, along with Jim Garrett who came out for a week while we were forging the heavy vertical bars. Jorgen got my equipment up to par for such large forgings. He built a large forge and made the insert dies. We worked very hard, but it certainly was a highlight of the year. It is so enjoyable to work with peers in your field.

Two artist grants that I was awarded last year afforded me some time after my big project to make some sculpture. I would like to

be able to focus my time now to just making sculpture. I hope to be rewarded with some more public art projects in the future and keep exploring what I can make in forged steel.



*'Elidi, Gift of the Sun'*





House sign



'Assembly'



Maria with one of nine waymarker booths, Bellevue, Washington State

Photo: Helga Cristalli Osborn



'Symbiotic relationship'



Artwork for the Windrow Hotel, Ellensburg.



A video of the installation can be seen on YouTube: "Blacksmith Maria Cristalli Installs Sculpture at Hotel Windrow"



# BLACKSMITHING EVENTS

19th October 2024 - 15th March 2025:

Rachel Reckitt Retrospective Chance Encounters - Somerset, UK  
Click here for the website of the museum

4th January: "Christmas Ball", Ratho Byres Forge - Ratho, UK  
More information below

18th - 19th January: Blacksmithing Taster Course SRUC Oatridge Campus - Oatridge, UK  
More information in the "Jobs, training and opportunities" section

4th May - 9th October: MetAlles - Der Hande Arbeit - Stolbert, Germany  
Click here for more information

25th and 26th May: Waterworks Museum Forge-In and Steam day - Hereford, UK  
More information will follow

21st and 22nd June: Forge -In with Brian Russell, Little Newsham Forge - Darlington, UK  
More information will follow

9th September - 2nd November: "Inspired": Earth, Fire, Iron: Alan Evans and the New Iron Age, an exhibition at the Museum in the Park - Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK

12th 14th September: BABA Conference and AGM, Museum in the park - Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK  
More information will follow

## BLACKSMITHING TASTER COURSE **FORGE AHEAD** WITH SCOTLAND'S RURAL COLLEGE

Whether it's a new hobby or a burning ambition our Blacksmithing course will give you an excellent foundation in metalwork and Blacksmithing, bring your own ideas or follow step by step instructions to complete a project with on hand advice and guidance.

Come and have some fun around the fire!

Duration: 2-day course, 9am - 4.30pm  
Cost: £260pp, materials provided.

**BOOK NOW** e: [oatridgetraining@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:oatridgetraining@sruc.ac.uk)



  
SRUC

OATRIDGE CAMPUS,  
UPHALL (WEST LOTHIAN)

WEEKEND  
JAN  
18TH & 19TH

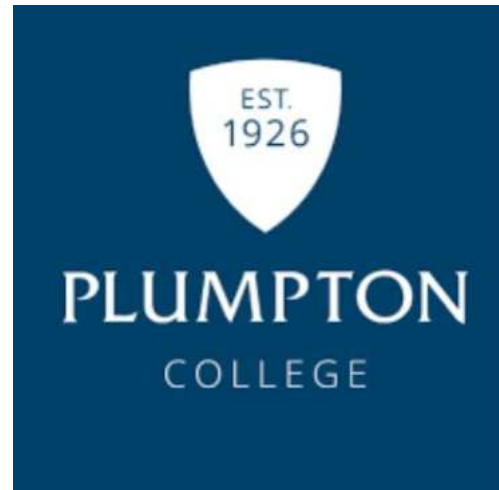
[www.sruc.ac.uk/training](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/training)

## College Taster Days

Click on the logo to find out more about their open day / taster day



18th February 2025



18th January 2025  
14th June 2025



7th February 2025



5th April 2025



26th January 2025  
8th March 2025  
27th April 2025  
18th May 2025



**WARWICKSHIRE  
COLLEGE  
GROUP**

11th January 2025  
15th March 2025



**Myerscough  
College**

8th June 2025



# “A Christmas Ball”

New Year Forge-In at Ratho Byres Forge  
4th January 2025!

We are going to host a New Year Forge-In, this has been an on and off sort of irregular thing, interrupted by Covid and life, but it is back this New Year!

The theme this time will be “A Christmas Ball”. So get your thinking caps on, come and forge something humorous, comic, pretty or silly, drink some tea and perhaps a beer or two and recharge your inspiration battery before heading back to work proper.

This is a one day affair on Saturday the 4th January from 9am till whenever we run out of puff or enthusiasm, in the barren, wild, far, far north, well, just a few miles from Edinburgh Airport actually. There is plenty of budget and posh accommodation options nearby and plenty room for camper vans in the yard at the forge.

We will put on hot, hearty, veggie soup for lunch and would ask folk to bring something tasty for the lunch table.

Given the time of year and potential for weather related travel disruption we will be totally fine if you decide to attend on the spur of the moment and fully understand if folk change their minds last minute, but please drop us an email or message to let us know if you are planning to attend just so we have an idea of numbers.

As always we look forward to welcoming you to the Forge and having a bit of craic!

Shona and Pete  
Ratho Byres Forge  
Freelands Road  
Ratho EH28 8NW



# Rachel Reckitt Retrospective *Chance Encounters*

Opens at the Museum of Somerset  
19th October 2024 - 15th March 2025

The life and works of a remarkable Somerset artist, with a daringly independent spirit, are being celebrated in a new exhibition opening at the Museum of Somerset on 19 October.

Rachel Reckitt (1908-1995) was a 20th-century modernist artist who lived and worked in West Somerset for over 60 years. She was a unique-artistic talent who worked entirely on her own terms, even training as a blacksmith when she was in her 60s. Reckitt is amongst previously overlooked female artists to feature in a new film, *War Paint – Women at War*. This feature documentary, by BAFTA awardwinning director Margy Kinmonth, champions the powerful female perspective of conflict through art.

Sarah Cox, Exhibitions Manager at the South West Heritage Trust, said: “Reckitt was a woman who, in many ways, rejected the conventions of her time, gender and class. Her lifelong artistic endeavor, inspired by her astute observations of people and places, spans avant garde painting, sculpture, wood engraving and blacksmithing. We are delighted that this new exhibition and documentary film will shine a light on the achievements of this inimitable Somerset artist.”

In preparation for the exhibition the South West Heritage Trust has acquired 13 new works by Reckitt, adding to its growing collection of works by local female artists. Amongst them is *Ruins* which was painted by Reckitt whilst travelling in Sweden, shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War.

*Ruins* will be displayed alongside paintings, sculpture and wood engravings on loan from public and private collections. Highlights include the RAF Museum’s *Spanish Refugee Family*, which further shines a light on her wartime experiences. In 1939 Reckitt moved from Somerset to London to support the war effort, helping to evacuate families from the city and sending children to Golsoncott, her family home in Somerset, which became a nursery.

*War Paint* Director Margy Kinmonth said: “I am delighted to have discovered the work of Reckitt, an exceptionally talented artist who has not had popular recognition, until now. I am proud to showcase her conflict work in the film, looking in detail at her wood engravings and oils of bombdamaged London and the refugee crisis during the Blitz. Reckitt’s talent at capturing the detail of domesticity and homelessness in her art is exceptionally moving and she stands out as another great, but previously overlooked, female British artist.”

The exhibition is supported by the Golsoncott Foundation, a charitable Trust established to support the arts as part of Reckitt’s legacy.

Penelope Lively, Rachel Reckitt’s niece and Trustee of the Foundation said: “We are delighted that this comprehensive exhibition will bring my aunt’s work to a larger audience. She was a central figure in my life, and I watched and marvelled at her versatility, up to and beyond her recreation of herself in later years as one of the few women artist blacksmiths.”



The exhibition, *Chance Encounters: The Art of Rachel Reckitt*, opens at the Museum of Somerset, 19 October 2024 - 15 March 2025. It will be supported by a programme of events including gallery tours, family activities and an engagement programme for schools.

[Click here for the Museum of Somerset website](#)

For further information please contact  
Beth Jerrett, PR & Communications Lead Officer,  
[beth.jerrett@swheritage.org.uk](mailto:beth.jerrett@swheritage.org.uk)  
01823 347418.



# JOBS, TRAINING AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Work experience and new opportunities

If you are looking for a new job, or for some vital work experience, why not send in a few words about yourself and your experience and the part of the UK that you are looking to work in and we'll include it here for you.

I know a few of the more established players will be looking for some extra help in the new year for those upcoming projects in the pipeline so feel free to send us an email.

You can also check out the BABA directory for a full list of Blacksmiths offering "work experience".

Looking for help in the forge? Why not send in the details? The newsletter is now reaching a much wider audience of talented smiths who might be just the person you were looking for to join the team.

[newsletter@baba.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@baba.org.uk)



# "INSPIRED"

Earth, Fire, Iron: Alan Evans and the New Iron Age

Museum in the Park, Stroud. September 9th – November 2nd, 2025

[Click here for the website of Museum in the Park](#)

BABA AGM 12-14 September 2025

**BRIEF: INVITATION TO MAKE PROPOSALS**

**OPPORTUNITY 1: Open to Blacksmiths under the age of 30 (at any stage in their career)**

**PRIZE of £2,000.00**

To design an original work to be included in the "Earth, Fire, Iron" Exhibition.

Designs can be sculptural or functional and may be wall hung, displayed on a plinth or floor standing. Only works not exceeding 1meter square can be considered for display in the main gallery. Larger works would need to be displayed in the walled garden (i.e., wallwork, bowl, sculpture bird feeder/bath, boot scraper etc).

Submission Criteria

- 1.The proposer must be 30yrs old or younger on September 1st 2025
- 2.Design proposals / drawings must be submitted digitally by 28th February 2025
- 3.Photographs of student work and experimental samples may be used as examples of work to date & portfolio images to support your design submission.
- 4.All submissions must be your own designs and original.
- 5.All submissions must be sent to secretary@baba.org.uk
- 6.You must be able to complete the work and deliver to Museum in the Park Stroud by September 1st 2025.
- 7.Being a BABA member is not a requirement for applying.

**This opportunity has been made possible through the generous patronage of Andy Basnett's family; Andy worked with Alan Evans.**

**OPPORTUNITY 2: Open to younger or less experienced smith, under the age of 35 and a Master Smith.**

**MENTORED PROJECT- Award 2 X £1,000.00**

- Master Smiths are offering their time, experience, and generosity to work with and support a young artist-blacksmith through the process of designing, detailed design and making a unique work.
- The objective is to inspire confidence and help develop the abilities to achieve an outstanding outcome from an original design.
- Mentor and 'apprentice' will receive £1000 each for design, the collaboration, all materials, the forging and completing the work.
- This opportunity will be one of the main demonstrations at the BABA AGM so preparatory work should be in place so the work can be completed over the AGM weekend.

## Images from the terraced gardens at the Museum



### Brief:

- The young artist blacksmiths must make the application with their own design concept. A master Smith/mentor may be chosen or appointed to support the development of the concept, demonstration preparation and the making of the proposed design during the two-day event.
- A proposed, larger exterior work will need to be displayed in the museum gardens. It must be robust, integrating a stand (if necessary) to enable it to be stable when installed in the garden terraces.
- A smaller interior work where possible may be displayed within the main gallery or the museum entrance area if necessary.
- Consideration of function (if that is the proposal) is crucial.
- Consideration of the environment – the garden, including the arboretum and sensory garden, nature, recycling, re-using – are important aspects.



### Submission Criteria

1. The proposer must be 35yrs old or younger on September 1st 2025
2. Design proposals / drawings must be submitted digitally by 28th February 2025
3. Photographs of student work and experimental samples may also be used as examples of work to date & portfolio images to support your design submission.
4. All submissions must be your own designs and original.
5. All submissions must be sent to secretary@baba.org.uk
6. You must be available along with your mentor to demonstrate the making of your proposal during the BABA event 12-14 September 2025
7. Being a BABA member is not a requirement for applying.

**This opportunity has also been made possible through the generous patronage of Andy Basnett's family.**

### **OPPORTUNITY 3: DESIGN AND MAKE A SMALL LEARNING TABLE**

**Award 2 X £250.00**

A collaboration between a younger/less experienced smith, a Master Smith and others at the AGM!

- Master Smiths are offering their time, experience, and generosity to work with and support a young artist-blacksmith through the process of designing, developing and making a small "learning table" for the Museum (approx. 1m sq.) The intention is to inspire confidence and help develop abilities to achieve an outstanding outcome from an original design.
- Mentor and 'apprentice' will receive an honorarium of £250 each for design, and the collaboration. All materials (including tabletop) to be supplied by BABA.
- The making of the table will be a collaborative demonstration during the BABA AGM and may involve other smiths in the making but is to be led by the designer and mentor.
- The forging of items to go the table, simple 'tools & materials of the trade' and examples of small, forged works will be forged by other smiths during the event. This will give children the opportunity to see and hold examples of small works, their shapes, smells, weights, textures/finishes, and make their own simple drawings and designs.

### Submission Criteria

1. The proposer must be 35yrs old or younger on September 1st 2025
2. Design proposals / drawings must be submitted digitally by 28th February 2025
3. Photographs of student work and experimental samples may also be used as examples of work to date & portfolio images to support your design submission.
4. All submissions must be your own designs and original.
5. Your submission must specify requirements for all materials including the tabletop.
6. All submissions must be sent to secretary@baba.org.uk
7. You must be available along with your mentor to demonstrate the making of your proposal during the BABA event 12-14 September 2025
8. Being a BABA member is not a requirement for applying.

## OPPORTUNITY 4: OPEN COMPETITION

Budget £3,000.00

To design and make a small pedestrian gate for the Bisley Community Composting Scheme. Alan Evans volunteered on this scheme and as it celebrates its 20th year in 2025 this commission is in part to remember Alan's work. Open to all blacksmiths (mentoring support available in the making process only if required).

Funded by <https://bisleycommunitycompostscheme.org.uk>.

The gate dimensions are 120cm x 120cm. The fixings elements of the current gate extend the width to 140cm

- The gate must be functional, and simple, reflecting the circular recycling system of the composting process.
- The gate must integrate fixings to the adjacent wooden posts.
- The latch must be integral to the design.
- The gate must be designed to lock, ideally coded for members, and the lock must be integral to the design.
- Appropriate corrosion protection is required.
- The fee is for all design work, site visit(s), labour, transport, all materials, fixings and installation.
- The commission will be exhibited in the "Inspired" part of the exhibition and installed on site after the show.

### Submission Criteria

1. No age restriction
2. Design proposals / drawings must be submitted digitally by 28th February 2025
3. Photographs of student work and experimental samples may also be used as examples of work to date and portfolio images to support your design submission.
4. All submissions must be your own designs and original.
5. Design submissions by clear design/ drawing proposals with (either a link to website or 6 jpgs not exceeding 12 mgb); evidence of previous work is required in this instance
6. All submissions must be sent to [secretary@baba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@baba.org.uk)
7. The work must be completed and delivered for display in the "Earth Fire Iron" exhibition by 6th September 2025.
- 8 Less experienced smiths and students may also apply however there is no additional funding for mentoring with this project. Any arrangement for support and mentoring will need to be negotiated within the available budget.
9. Being a BABA member is not a requirement for applying.



## **OPPORTUNITY 5: OPEN TO ALL ARTIST BLACKSMITHS**

**Honorarium of £500.00**

To realise an original idea you have not had an opportunity to make yet. The work will be exhibited in the "Earth, Fire, Iron" Exhibition and must be completed to be in the show by 1st September 2025

### Submission Criteria

1. No age restriction
2. Design submissions by clear design/drawing proposals
3. Design proposals / drawings must be submitted digitally by 28th February 2025
4. Some evidence of being able to make the work to a high standard.
5. All submissions must be your own designs and original.
6. All submissions must be sent to [secretary@baba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@baba.org.uk)
7. The work must be completed and delivered for display in the "Earth, Fire, Iron" exhibition by 1st September 2025.
8. Less experienced smiths and students may apply.
9. Being a BABA member is not a requirement for applying.

## **APPLICATION DETAILS:**

**For all opportunities, please apply by sending a digital application to Steve Rook at [secretary@baba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@baba.org.uk) by February 28th 2025.**

Be sure to include the following -

1. State clearly which opportunity you are applying for.
2. A drawing/design or series of preparatory drawings or preliminary sketches representing the ideas for your project.
3. A short text describing the concept and an outline of materials to be used/required.
4. Your concept/design submission can also include images of a maquette if you choose to make one.
5. Confirmation of age (Opportunities 2 and 3).
6. Confirmation of your chosen mentor or request a mentor (Opportunities 2 and 3).
7. Confirmation of your availability and your mentor, to attend the BABA AGM 12-14 September 2025. (Opportunities 2 and 3).
8. Confirmation that you can deliver the completed works to Museum in the Park, Stroud by 1st September 2025 (Opportunities 1, 4 and 5).

Digital submissions should not exceed 12mb. On request more details can be provided for each project from Steve Rook at [secretary@baba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@baba.org.uk)

Submissions for Opportunities 2 and 3 will need to consider that the works are to be made at the event with limited equipment. There will be the usual 'temporary' BABA event workshop setup. There will be a 15kg power hammer and a fly press available. Any special tooling will need to be prepared in advance and checked for compatibility.

**SELECTION CRITERIA will be based on**

- the originality and vivacity of the idea/proposal
- the practicality of the proposal especially if it is functional.
- how the theme of environmental awareness might be reflected in the concept, development and/or making.

**The Selection Committee will be made up of representatives of:**

BABA Events Team

Stroud "EARTH, FIRE, IRON" Exhibition organising group.

For the BCCS gate the BCCS Directors will be represented

The Basnett Family

**Selected Submissions will be announced by the end of March 2025.**

For more detailed briefs, or if you would be interest in being a mentor for one of our younger smiths applying for the design and make opportunities, please contact Steve Rook  
secretary@baba.org.uk

**Joining BABA**

As stated, all opportunities are open to BABA members and non-members however, in the spirit of the association it is anticipated that non-members will come to appreciate the value of what BABA has to offer and hopefully may feel inclined to join our wonderful association. Joining BABA is a simple process, just follow the link

[\*\*Click here for BABA membership information\*\*](#)







Herefordshire,  
Ludlow & North  
Shropshire College

## Short Courses

The College offers many low-cost short courses for adults.

These courses are perfect for sampling a new subject or continuing with a subject that you enjoy. Courses are frequently added throughout the year with varying start dates, making them really flexible.

With the majority of courses being low-cost they are perfect for dipping into and a great way to meet new people. There are also some courses which are in similar subject areas that are usually a little bit longer and sometimes have a qualification attached.

Our short courses are open to people aged 19 years or above at the start of the course.

Short course enquiries:

For courses advertised at Herefordshire College please contact [adultshortcourses@hlnc.ac.uk](mailto:adultshortcourses@hlnc.ac.uk) or call 01432 365550

For courses in Shropshire please contact The Gateway at [gatewayenquiries@hlnc.ac.uk](mailto:gatewayenquiries@hlnc.ac.uk)

The short blacksmithing courses have been collected here by the editor of the newsletter. Click on the green boxes for more information and registration, but please check the website for more interesting courses.

### All short courses

### Blacksmithing - Intermediate

About the course

This practical course is designed for candidates who have completed the Introduction to Blacksmithing course and would like to progress and improve their blacksmithing skills further in a supportive environment. Candidates will learn a range of different construction techniques to produce a small decorative bracket.

The course will cover: forging, forming, cutting and joining; riveting; collaring; tenon joint. Toolmaking will also be included in this course

## **Blacksmithing introduction - Daytime**

About the course:

During this practical course you are encouraged to learn at your own pace to produce small decorative pieces and tools. You will learn the skills of:

Fire management; forging; forming and cutting & joining.

As experience is gained, learners are encouraged to develop their own projects.

## **Blacksmithing introduction - Evening**

About the course:

During this practical course you are encouraged to learn at your own pace to produce small decorative pieces and tools.

You will learn the skills of: Fire management; forging; forming and cutting & joining.

As experience is gained, learners are encouraged to develop their own projects.

## **Blacksmithing - One day workshop**

About the course

Learn the fundamental principles of the art of blacksmithing, including the techniques and skills necessary to make your own blacksmithing pieces.

## **Blacksmithing - Tool making**

About the course

Learn the fundamental principles of the art of blacksmithing, including the techniques and skills necessary to make your own blacksmithing tools, in this 3-day course

*Looking through the short courses on offering, I personally found this one sounding interesting as well:*

## **Fabrication - Introduction**

About the course

This three-day short course is intended for beginners who have a keen interest in any form of fabrication.

During the course, you will learn:

- \* How to measure, mark out and cut materials and use the required equipment.
- \* Gain experience on all hand tools and machinery in the workshop, including: an up-to-date plasma table and hand plasma; guillotine; pillar drills; bandsaws; box pan folders; rollers; grinders; sanders and cutting disks.
- \* Fixing and joining methods such as bolts, rivets, pilot holes, tap and dies and spot welding.
- \* Safe working practices and health and safety procedures.

At the end of the course, you will get to take home two small projects you have fabricated and then, if you wish, progress onto other short courses such as welding.



## Maker Relief Fund

Support for Craftspeople who need it most

Many craftspeople are facing significant challenges in sustaining their practice, due to a combination of financial pressures and systemic marginalising factors. Heritage Crafts' Maker Relief Fund is targeted at people facing financial hardship while striving to make their living as a professional craftspeople.

It is based on the principles that:

- \* the best way to safeguard the UK's intangible craft heritage is to support the individuals within whom that knowledge and skill resides; and
- \* such individuals are the best arbiters of their own need, deserve to be treated with dignity, and rarely benefit from being subjected to undue bureaucratic demands or the judgement of strangers.

The fund will award 50 grants of £1,000 over a 12 month period to practising professional craftspeople who are based in the UK, are over the age of 18, and who consider themselves to be in one or more of the following categories:

- \* people on low incomes;
- \* working class people;
- \* Black and ethnically diverse people, including Gypsy, Roma and Travellers;
- \* people with disabilities, who identify as neuro-divergent, and/or have chronic physical or mental health issues;
- \* members of the LGBTQIA+ community; or
- \* people with caring responsibilities.

Grant details:

Recipients will be identified from all the eligible entries received by midnight on the 15th day of each month, between November 2024 and October 2025 inclusive.

The following number of grants will be allocated in each month:

November 2024: 5	December 2024: 6	January 2025: 6
February 2025: 5	March 2025: 4	April 2025: 3
May 2025: 3	June 2025: 3	July 2025: 3
August 2025: 3	September 2025: 4	October 2025: 5

\* Grants do not have to be used for business costs; they can be used for general living costs or other purposes according to the needs of the recipient. Heritage Crafts will not require evidence of expenditure.



- \* All eligible submissions received by midnight on the 15th day of each month (between November 2024 and October 2025 inclusive) will be in with a chance of being awarded a grant by the end of that month.
- \* All applicants will be informed if they have been successful or unsuccessful.
- \* Successful candidates will not be named or publicised, but be encouraged to keep in touch with Heritage Crafts in case it can offer further support and to hear whether the grant made a difference.
- \* Unsuccessful candidates will automatically remain available for selection in all subsequent months in which the grants are offered, unless they request to be removed from consideration.
- \* The selection will be made each month by a panel of staff/Trustees and an independent observer, and recorded for compliance purposes, though the recording will not be made public or shared, other than by request to the Charity Commission or relevant law-enforcement agencies, as required by law.

[\*\*Click here to apply\*\*](#)

This submission form has been set up to be as light-touch as possible, to reduce administrative burden and to preserve the dignity of makers. If you would like to see the questions in advance or to submit your form via email, please download a Word version of the submission form [here](#). If you would like to submit in another way, such as by telephone, please let us know at [info@heritagecrafts.org.uk](mailto:info@heritagecrafts.org.uk).

Before completing this submission form please think seriously about your level of need. Please consider that there are a limited number of grants available, and if your need is not so severe at the moment there will be other opportunities to apply, up until October 2025.

It is your responsibility to consider how this might affect any benefits or welfare payments you might be in receipt of, and your tax liability, and get independent financial advice as required. Heritage Crafts cannot be held responsible for any resulting loss of income or unforeseen costs.

This fund is financed by an anonymous donor specifically for this purpose. We thank them for their incredible generosity.

[\*\*Click here for the website of  
Heritage Crafts\*\*](#)

# Classifieds: Toys for the toy shop...



Toby Forbes Gower:

The widest range of Blacksmithing tools at sensible prices:

[Click here for Toby's webshop](#)



# clever tools for blacksmiths

...not missed until today?

There are a number of little helpers that make forging easier and more efficient. Even a traditional craft can be optimised...



## Holdfast

This tool is perfect for fast clamping different workpieces directly onto the anvil. Only a simple hammer is needed to attach or detach the clamp. The size of the tool is suitable for different anvils and the shaft clamps securely in the square or round holes.



## Guillotine

This helper allows various jobs if you are working alone. Finishing, settling, punching and much more.

Flexibel handling due to the bevelled C-Frame design. With fast and easy tool change, suitable for different tool dimensions. Fixation on the square hole of the anvil or for mounting on the workbench.



## Adjustable spanner

The adjustable spanner is a perfect universal bending bar. The handle can be extended with a piece of pipe. This enables more power transmission. Hint: You can clamp a raw material with the same cross-section as the twisted material on one mouth-side. This allows working with a larger lever without damaging the adjustable spanner.

Due to import regulations, we can only deliver from a minimum order value of 150€.

[Click here for the Angele website](#)







## Victory Tools Power Hammer Sales and Hire

Power Hammer prices from £4295 plus vat.

Being a blacksmith for many years and having to weld a mile to buy my first Massey, I fully understand the hardships of buying your first power hammer. With this in mind, I have decided to hire out our new Anyang ST power hammers to help you complete your job with the option to deduct the hire charge from the full price if purchased.

For more information about our new Anyang ST power hammers, any of our second hand power hammers or forge force induction heaters, please contact us on 01362687116 or email us at [nigelbarnett@artist-blacksmith.co.uk](mailto:nigelbarnett@artist-blacksmith.co.uk)

[Click here for the website](#)



## Double forge for sale

Alldays double forge for sale, good working order but does require repairs to the canopy. Would consider all reasonable offers. Further information please email or phone Situated in Cumbria

Steve.hopps2@gmail.com  
07870785322



## Cast iron forge for sale

Cast Iron single forge in full working order, originally from school workshop in very good condition and has no done no real work. The forge is located in the Wirral Merseyside. The forge will break down in to components plus loading assistance is available. See attached photo's.

Looking for offers around £1500-

If you are interested please contact Wolfgang on 07719 146829.







## Cast iron forge for sale

£950 or offers

Cast iron double forge with stainless steel hood.

Watertray and coke tray included

No tools included

Any questions? Please contact

Terry Clark 01483 235244

Sally Clark 07768 830933

Email [sally@artsmith.co.uk](mailto:sally@artsmith.co.uk)

## Anvil for sale £230

Collection only - Near Guildford, Surrey

Buyer collects, cash on collection

You are welcome to view

Any questions? Please contact

Terry Clark 01483 235244

Sally Clark 07768 830933

Email [sally@artsmith.co.uk](mailto:sally@artsmith.co.uk)





## Retirement Sale

David Stephenson, Pickering, North Yorkshire.

davidblacksmith61@gmail.com

01751 460252

075999 48219

Please contact David for prices and availability.

Including: Anyang 15kg power hammer (2 sets of dies)

Johnson and Jepson 'Goliath' power hammer (dated 1910)

Forge hearth and blower

Mobile forge with foot bellows

2 x fly presses

3x anvils (41/2 cwt, 64kg, 26kg - all excellent faces)

3x leg vices

Engineers vices

Mig Welder

Drill press and bits

Many anvil stakes and tinman's tools

Tongs, hammers and hand tools.

Grinders etc.



# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## BABA Development Fund

The BABA development fund is specifically for seed-funding events and projects such as masterclasses, in the form of an interest-free loan administered by the Council.

Candidates should submit a written application outlining why funding is required, and how much is needed, together with a proposal as to how and when the loan will be repaid.

Applications will be considered by the administrators of the fund.

For enquiries and applications regarding the Development Fund please contact the BABA Secretary:

**Steve Rook, [secretary@baba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@baba.org.uk)**

## BABA Event Fund

If you are planning on hosting an in-person forging event, big or small, there are funds available to help with the costs of hosting an event. For further information get in touch with the BABA Treasurer:

**Tony Ingarfield , [treasurer@baba.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@baba.org.uk)**



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Give up a little of your free time to help BABA grow, raise awareness and help organise events.

### How long will it take?

How long is a piece of string? As much or as little as you can spare to help push the organisation forwards.

### What benefits are there?

You get an orange t-shirt at the AGM, bragging rights and a seat on the Council!

**[Newsletter@baba.org.uk](mailto:Newsletter@baba.org.uk)**