



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

July 2022

Greetings,

Thanks to all those who came out to the June Meeting and braved the heat. We had a great time seeing new and old members get into the forge. Thank you to Jerry A for discussing the nature and properties of flint and flint strikers. He even had a realistic demo on how sharp the flint gets (OUCH!!).

We had a young new member Caleb get into the forge with Jerry W and made a S hook. We love teaching and passing on our knowledge but it makes it easier when the student is so enthusiastic.

Balcones Forge will be hosting our next meeting scheduled for July 30th at Caylor forge 109 W. Grayson St. San Antonio Tx 78212 at 930 am. Location is near the Pearl Brewery It will be a tour of their new space that sells hand made knives and other items. There are a few sets of tongs for sale there also. Possibly a few knife making demonstrations. Caylor Forge also hosts the Reforged who offer free blacksmithing/knife making classes to veterans.

Look forward to seeing ya'll at the next meeting. Keep forging.

John Meyer, President

Meeting is on July 30

Meeting starts at 9:30am



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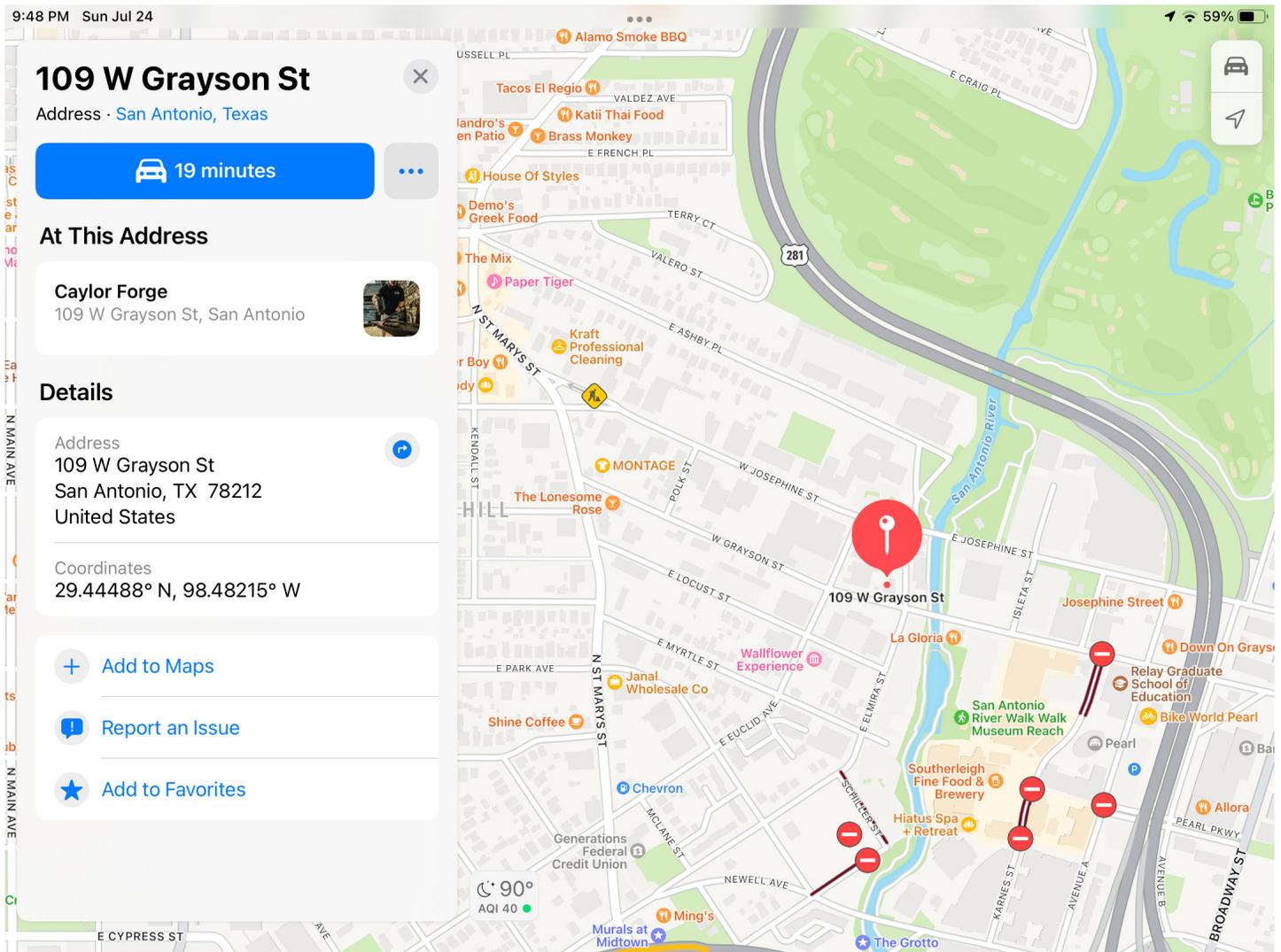
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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings,

The June meeting was an open forge meeting and we had several members get in the forge. They were able to get some one on one instruction and completed some nice looking projects. It was great to see such a good turn out. The July meeting will be July 30th at Reforged in downtown San Antonio. This is a really neat place. You should look them up. The September meeting will be in Serbin on the 25th, yes that is a **Sunday**. This event is always a lot of fun. October's meeting will be our annual memorial meeting at Jerry Whitley's in Devine - it's worth coming just for the food!. We currently don't have an August meeting scheduled yet. I'm open for suggestions so let me know if you want to host.

Arron Tilton, Vice President



Secretary's notes June Meeting

The June meeting was held on June 18th at Blackhawk Millworks in Zorn .

John Meyer opened the meeting at 9 am.

John discussed a hammer-in being held in Tuscola at Jim Poor's shop and that the plan for the July members meeting was still being formulated.

John introduced Mike Turner, from Texas Knife Supply, who brought steel to the meeting for sale.

Mike, located in Dripping Springs, has a good selection of knife steels.

John announced that today's demonstration was how to make and use flint strikers. Jerry Achterberg demonstrated a flint striker igniting some 4-0000 steel wool and lit some char cloth with his fire piston.

Jerry Whitley started a coal fire with a flint striker. Aaron and Caleb proceeded to make a wall hook. Caleb was brought to the meeting by his grandfather Barry. Caleb is 10 years old and new to blacksmithing.

Joe Sisson helped two new smiths in making their own flint strikers.

The iron in the hat auction raised 210 dollars. Omar, one of our newer members, received his first anvil due to the generosity of one of our long-time members.



Caleb



Aaron and Caleb making a hook



Shane and Rudy



Omar making a flint striker under Joe Sisson's direction

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The Blacksmiths' Commandments

- 1** Thou shall not smite thine iron when it has lost its glow.
- 2** Thou shall not smite thy hammer upon thine anvil,
lest the shrapnel gods invade thy crotch.
- 3** Thou shall keep thy slack tub clean,
lest the vermin of illness and stench of hell invade thy body.
- 4** Thou shall remove the hardie when its task is complete,
lest thee and thy digits part company.
- 5** Thou shall not cool thy work on the floor where upon thou treadest,
lest thou ignite thy boots.
- 6** Thou shall put away thy store-bought tongs,
lest the other smiths covet them and make merry at thy expense.
- 7** Thou shall not run thy gasses over pressure,
lest thou reach out and touch the face of god.
- 8** Secure thy anvil well to the stump,
lest in thy latter days thou shalt be unable to hear thy loved ones.
- 9** Refrain from placing thy digits between the dies of thy power hammer,
that thou mayest keep them even until the end of thy days.
- 10** Keep thy bellows and thy blower in working condition,
for thou knowest that power doeth upon occasion fail.
- 11** Thou shall not baptize thy S7 in Super Quench,
lest the fruits of thy labor be lost.
- 12** Thy safety glasses may appear humorous to other smiths,
but thee will keep thine eyes and they may not.

More info in the two Balcones Forge Facebook pages. (You can check out the posts without having a Facebook account.)

<https://www.facebook.com/BFCTB/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/688735415468063>

Little Giant

COMBINED

Punch and Shear.

**The Most Powerful Lever
Punch and Shear Made.**

**5 Punches and Dies with
Each Machine.**

MADE IN THREE SIZES.

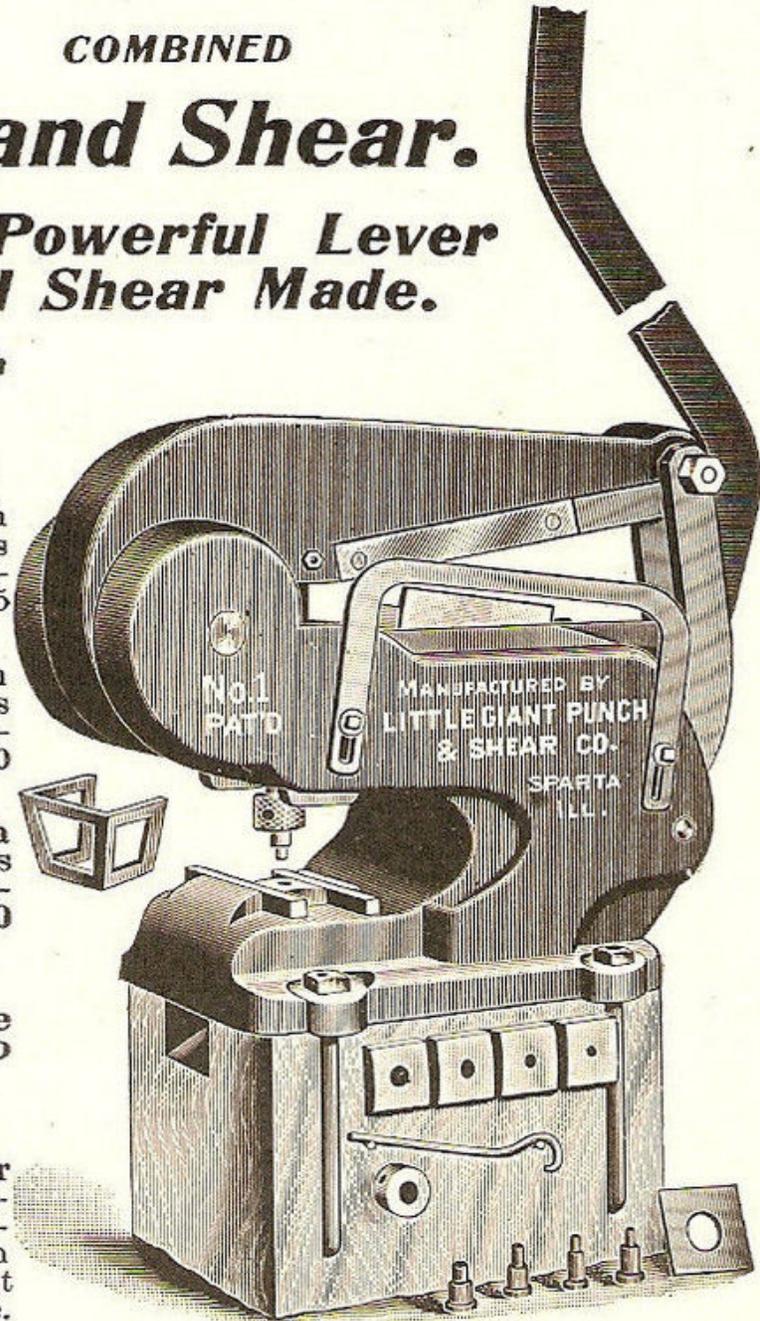
No. 1—Will punch $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch hole in $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch iron. Cuts iron $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch thick and 1-inch round. Weight, 515 lbs.

No. 2—Will punch $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch hole in $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch iron. Cuts iron $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick and $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch round. Weight, 350 lbs.

No. 3—Will punch $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch hole in $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch iron. Cuts iron $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch thick and $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch round. Weight, 280 lbs.

Only ONE operation of the Lever does the work. No changing required.

Note the improved Stripper and Hold-down. This machine is made for the blacksmith shop, and we DO claim that it is decidedly the best on the market for that place.



For Sale by your Jobber. If not, Write Us. Send for Circular.

Little Giant Punch & Shear Co., Sparta, Ill.

From the ABANA Affiliate Newsletter: THE QUENCH TANK

This month we're focusing on Facebook as a marketing tool for your affiliate. Facebook offers two options for organizations: Page or Group. Some entities will utilize both, so let's go over the differences and how to use them to your best advantage.

A Facebook page is very similar to your own personal Facebook profile and is specifically intended as the primary presence for a business or non-profit organization. A Facebook page is your public face to the world and posts can only be made by an Admin. Ideal posting topics would include:

Activity Recaps - Show the world what your group is doing including showing member work, group projects, event recaps, volunteer works, etc.

Event announcements - Make sure you clarify who the event is geared towards. Is this an event for the general public to come view blacksmithing in action or is this an event for people to come swing a hammer?

How to Become a Member - Make it as easy as possible to convert interested lurkers into new members by reminding them of the benefits and keeping the sign up process at their fingertips.

A Facebook group is more akin to a group email or in-person conversation as anyone in the group can post. A Facebook group is best for sharing information between group members. Posting topics are more likely to include items of internal importance to the group, such as discussing the working details of an upcoming event, carpool requests, reminders to pay dues, election notifications, etc. In addition, a group can be either Public, which means that anyone can read the posts and comments, or a group can be Private, which means that posts and comments can only be seen by members of the group.

Should Your Group Have a Facebook Page or a Facebook Group?

Research shows that the public expects businesses and organizations to have a Facebook page and views those with a page as more legitimate than those who don't. Utilizing a page also confirms that your group is currently active in a way that a website may not. Since viewers can see when your last post was made, keep your page current by posting at least once a week. (For posting ideas, see June's email of The Quench Tank.) While a Facebook page is considered the norm these days, maintaining a Facebook group is a great way to keep information flowing to and from your members.

Pro Tip: The ABANA Facebook page cannot join your Facebook Group unless the permissions are set to allow "Profiles and Pages" to join. You can also alert us to your key events by tagging us in your page posts. Alternatively, you can send your pictures, write ups, conference flyers, etc. to socialmedia@abana.org.

BLOWING YOUR FORGE

Author: Geoff Barnes. Illustrated by Rob Kenning. Reprinted with permission from the Winter 2010 newsletter of the Artist Blacksmith Association of South Australia.

There are two basic methods of shifting air from one place to another with the object of creating a blast of air.

An air compressor, depending on its size, will deliver a relatively low volume of air at high pressure. The average small workshop compressor will deliver 6 to 8 cubic feet per minute. Not enough to fire up a forge. The advantage of the compressor is that the air can be moved over fairly long distances, through small diameter pipe, around fairly sharp bends, without much loss of pressure.

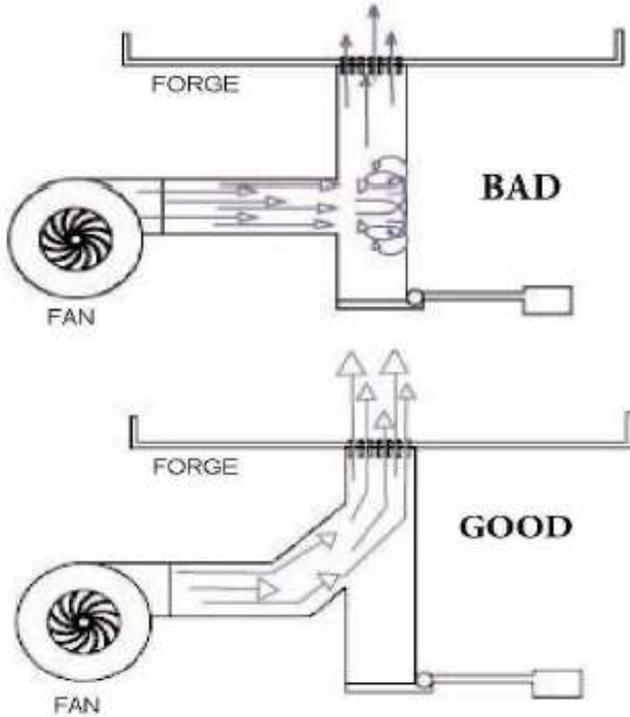
A centrifugal blower, on the other hand, can shift large volumes of air at low pressure. This type of blower is used in vacuum cleaners, ducted air conditioning and dust extraction. This is the type blower usually chosen to run a forge.

The most effective seem to be the type that have a finned or bladed impeller, usually turning at 3,000 RPM. But even smaller squirrel cage impellers rotating at half that speed will deliver enough air for small jobs.

Unlike the airflow from a compressor, however, the flow of air from a centrifugal blower is easily impeded by friction, turbulence, and sharp bends in the delivery system. The cross sectional area of the pipes or ducts leading from the blower should be at least as large as the exit dimensions of the blower. Changes of direction should be avoided as much as possible and, if necessary, use slow curves rather than right angle bends.

If using ready made pipe fittings such as sewer pipe, choose two 45 degree elbows instead of one 90 degree bend. A common point of turbulence and back pressure is where the pipe enters the ash box just below the tuyere. Try to sweep the pipe upwards at this point, if possible. If you get the chance, have a look at the dust extraction ducting in an old joinery. It is usually a work of art in sheet metal. Large diameter pipes are used and come together at a very acute angle. Expensive 'Lobster Back' bends are used to make slow curves at changes in direction.

We come now to the point of greatest resistance to getting air into the fire—the tuyere ('tue-iron') itself. This is the area of the forge likely to be subjected to the most intense heat. We know that steel subjected to intense heat will, at the very least, oxidize away in time, and at the worst, overheat and burn. Most of the old books on the subject suggest putting the thickest available piece of steel on the top of the ash box to counter the heat of the fire. One author advocated drilling a hole through a cannon ball to make the most fire resistant tuyere. Most people opt for a thick piece of plate (12mm or more) through which a number of holes (10 to 12 mm) are drilled. If you add up the cross sectional area of the total number of holes and compare that to the cross sectional area of your delivery pipe, you will understand the degree of restriction you have introduced into the air flow.

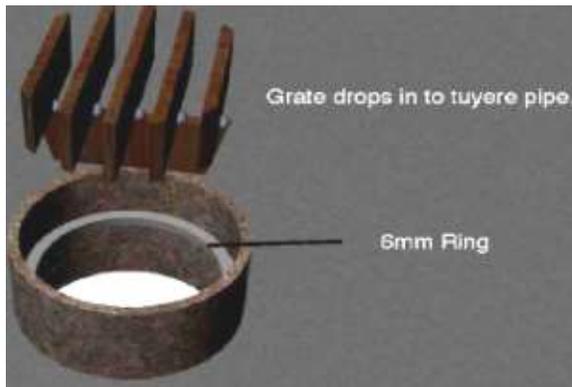
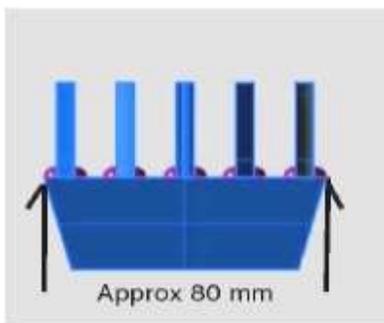
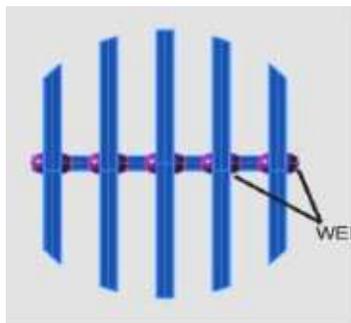


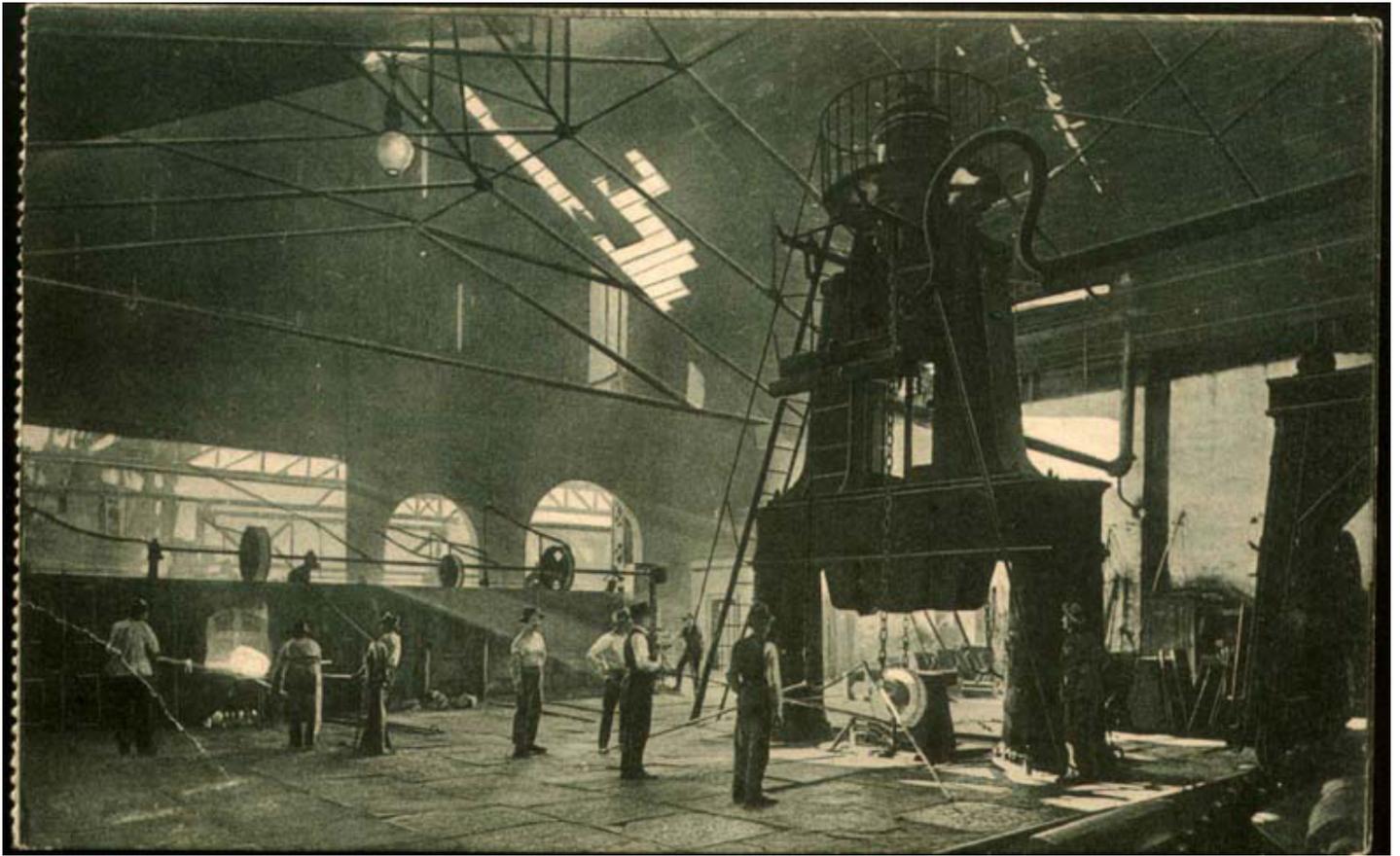
The situation can be improved by grinding a groove between the drilled holes to form slots. But, quite by accident, I found a much better design. Many years ago I was impatient to put a newly built forge into service, but had no steel heavy enough to make the tuyere. I had already brought the ash box pipe (100mm round) in about 50

mm above the floor of the forge. My intention was to cover the floor of the forge with sand to protect the steel tray. About 30mm down under the pipe, I welded a neatly fitted ring of 6mm square. I then cut a series of short lengths of 32mm x 5mm flat mild steel and welded them on edge to a single piece of flat, just long enough to drop down inside onto the 6mm bar edge.

The little grill was dropped down into the top of the 100mm pipe where it rested loosely on the 6mm ledge. Each bar was welded only at one point so that they could all expand and contract independently and no distortion was likely to occur. The bars were welded with approximately 12mm between them.

I hoped that this simple tuyere would last me perhaps a few weeks until I could replace it with a "solid" plate. Fifteen years later, I spent 20 minutes making a replacement one.





Now that's a big hammer!