

Teaching
with Small
Boats Alliance
Conference
2017

April 26-29, 2017

Chesapeake Bay
Maritime Museum
St. Michaels, Md.



Blacksmithing for Boatshops

Bruce Edward Blackistone

April 27, 2017

(www.longshipco.org)

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Demonstration and Discussion

- Depending on the format, there will be an active demonstration for much of the session. This outline covers a few additional points that should be addressed if you plan to set up a forge, and to help jog our memories when looking at the material from the conference in the future.

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A Matter of Scale

- Demonstration, or practical, or both?
- Continuous construction projects?
- Boats or ships? (Shop vs. Industrial)
- Onboard or ashore?
- Fabricate or repair?
- Historic or modern? (Both forge and product.)
- Fish hooks
- Boat hooks
- Knives
- Harpoons
- Oyster nippers and tongs
- Oyster dredges
- Chain plates
- Attachment points
- Anchors

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“Viking” style forge (Y-1-K)



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A Matter of Means

- Full time, part time, weekend, volunteer?
- Seasonal program?
- Whose tools?
- “Apprentices and hammermen?”
- Insurance?
- Fuel choices?
- Pollution and fireproofing?
- Local fire regulations?
- Working “on and off the clock?”
- Creative impulses?

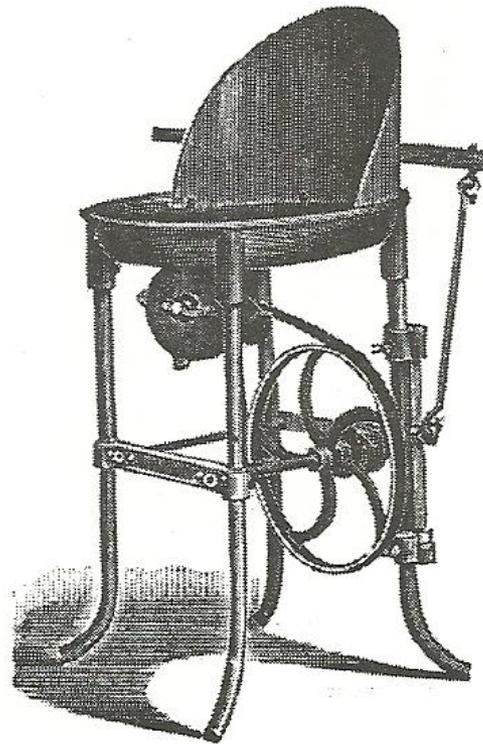
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19th – 20th century pan forge and modern (small) gas forge:



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A Matter of Time

- Nothing happens fast (except burning steel, and accidents).
- Attention spans and teaching tools.
- Fire, smoke, smell, noise, surfaces, a treat for the senses!
- A short learning curve for simple thing, but infinitely long for everything.
- Dealing with turnover.
- Upkeep- cleaning and picking and wiping and oiling.

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Antler and Iron Boathooks



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A Matter of Skill

- Historic materials work differently.
- Modern steel is not that bad...
- Stainless steel is tricky, but has its virtues.
- Educate the public, the smith, the staff- a continuous learning process.
- How often can the forge be used; and when can't it be used? Practice...
“We strive for competence.”

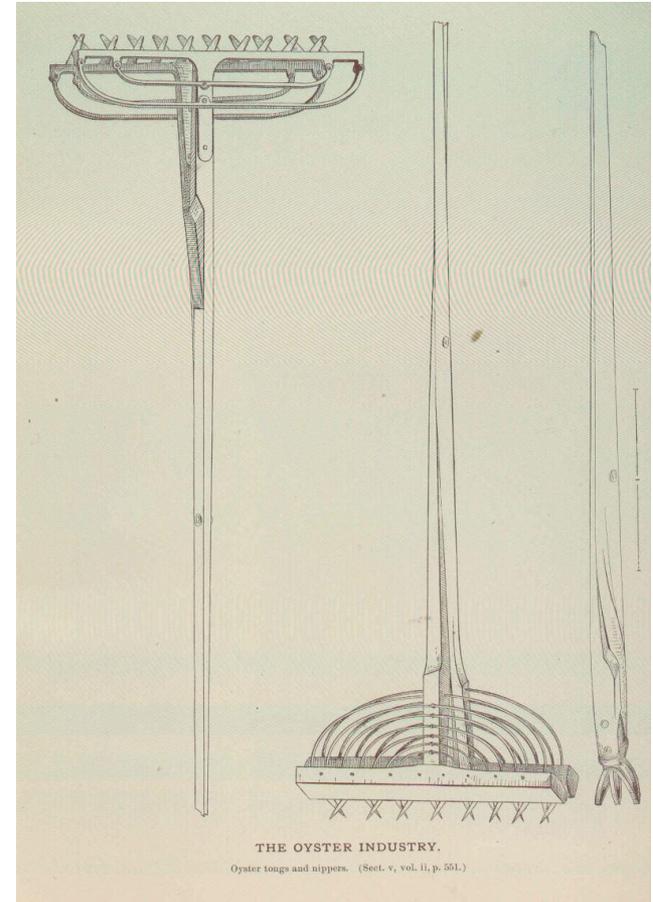
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Oyster Nippers



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A Matter of Resources

- Numerous blacksmithing organizations around, excellent books, a fair degree of interest and knowledge. (Ye gods, it was pretty bad in the '70s!)
- Artists Blacksmith Association of North America (ABANA)
- Anvilfire.com
- Local blacksmiths guilds
- Historic ironworking sites (www.nps.gov)



The “infamous” Oseberg anchor, and one for our ship’s boat:



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Thank you!

