

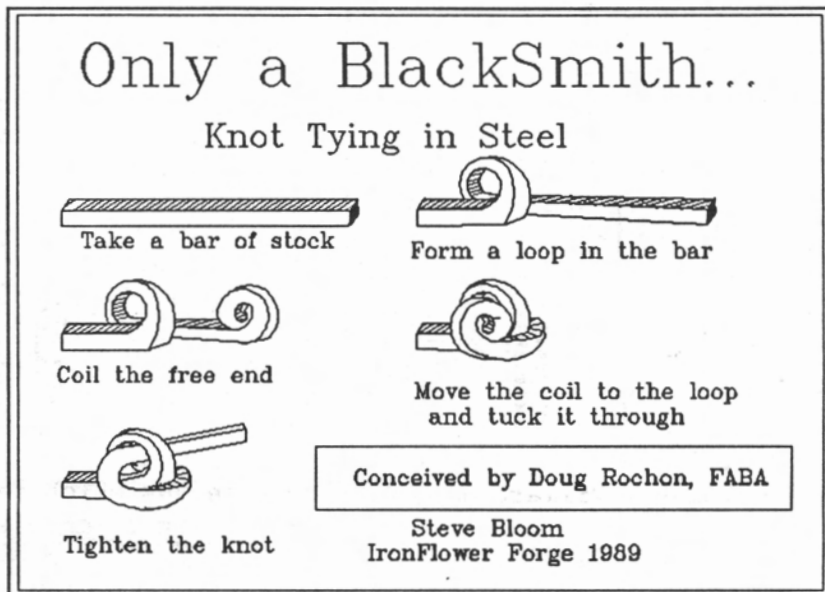
### News from the NorthEast

Steve Bloom

The meeting at John Cross's shop was well worth attending and in fact, was well attended - by approximately 23 people. Steve Schwarzer demonstrated the fine art of Damascus production (and made it look easy) and he had a number of his production items available for examination. I cannot do justice to describing the work - you'll just have to see it for yourself - then you can eat your heart out. During the demonstration, Steve also discussed various characteristics of equipment needed in the production of Damascus (by pointing out -tongue firmly in check- how John's equipment didn't quite meet those requirements...). Steve also critiqued knives which various members had made (including an impressive collection generated by John) - information which will be very helpful in training the eye in the evaluation of blades.

Other notable activities included lunch (consisting of sandwiches and a fine cake prepared by Jan Cross), admiring Jim Corbet's new puppies, and talking to Alva Hebert.

Future meetings will be at J.C.Hawkins' in April (ignore what I mentioned in the last Clinker Breaker), at Barberville in May, and at my shop in June. After that, all meetings will be at Barberville unless someone else volunteers.



### NEWS FROM THE SOUTHEAST

Mike and Jan Rush hosted a meeting at their home in Fort Lauderdale. It was a perfect Saturday for working at the forge, and we all had a great time. Ed and Linda Leopard drove up from Homestead, Pete and Mary Brandenburg came down from West Palm Beach, and Bob Ringer, his father, Floyd, and his son, Rob, came from Ft. Lauderdale. Floyd started blacksmithing in the 1920s, and opened his shop in Fort Lauderdale forty years ago. He had some good advice for the rest of us, and he shared some of the traditional jokes that old-time blacksmiths have enjoyed at the expense of their apprentices as the opportunities came up. Someday, we hope to have the chance to pass on these traditions to future generations of blacksmiths.

Mike located plans for wizard's face, and set us each to work producing one. Ed turned his into the handle for a barbeque fork that will do a nice job on a family-size steak. Rob made two wizards, one a sculptural piece, and the other a beautiful letter opener. Pete's still needs something on the other end. Bob fixed Mike's vise after we broke it, made a bending fork, showed how to use it to make uniform eyes, and gave away some of Floyd's secrets for making leaves. Mike made a watering can holder for his forge, and tinkered with it quite a bit to see if it would also work with a soft drink can. As far as we know, this has never been attempted before.

Pete Brandenburg