

# The Enquirer-Journal

## Molten magic

Waxhaw welder also an artist

By Pat Kimbrough  
Staff Writer

### Waxhaw

Scott Boatright figures it's his bloodlines that led him into blacksmithing.



Boatright

A welder by trade, most of his work has involved fusing the heavy metals of tractors, bulldozers and cranes in need of repair.

Welding is a family tradition, but so is the intricate, painstaking work of blacksmithing, a trade practiced by uncles, as well as his grandfather and great-grandfather.

"I remember when I was a small boy sitting over in the shade tree talking to my Uncle Herman," he recalled. "He told me you can do anything with a piece of steel that you can do with a piece of Play-doh. And that's true. You've just got to learn how to manipulate the metal."

Boatright took his uncle's lesson to heart, and now it's paying dividends for him.

Please see Molten on 5A



At left, Scott Boatright works on an iron fence for a customer in his shop outside of Waxhaw. Below, this unique piece includes dozens of intricately crafted leaves. The welder turned artist said, given time, he can create virtually anything a customer asks for.

Staff photos by Mike Dirks



## Molten

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Although he considers himself first and foremost a welder, he now has a second career that is taking off.

His work as a blacksmith is no longer merely a hobby, as he's carved out a niche for himself forging a variety of custom-made ironworks, particularly for the owners of high-end houses in the area.

These days, in the small shop beside his house outside Waxhaw, Boatright is just as likely to be working on wrought iron gates, railings and other ornamental works, as he is fixing heavy equipment.

"He's such a unique young man, such a hard worker," said Pat Godley She and her husband, Bob, are in the process of putting the finishing touches on a sprawling south Charlotte home. Boatright has custom-built

many of the staircase railings and is working on an entrance gate for the new house.

"He's an artist and a perfectionist," said Godley, who heard about Boatright from a friend who recommended him. "He just does beautiful work. He takes great pride in his work and wants you to be happy with it. He can do anything with metal."

Boatright, 43, has been welding since he was 11. A few years ago, while working for a Monroe company, he realized he needed a hobby. Working from 7 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., each day "seemed like a part-time job," he recalled. He was used to putting in 80-hour weeks for the window company in Charlotte for whom he worked 11 years.

He decided to dabble in welding in his spare time, and built his shop. Eventually, he gave up his day job and started his welding business, CSC Welding &

Fabrication, naming it for his three sons, Charlie, Sammy and Caleb.

This allowed him to indulge his voracious appetite for work. He says it's not uncommon to get a phone call in the late afternoon or early evening requesting his services, and then to spend most of the night repairing heavy machinery, such as a bulldozer that a construction company needs fixed right away.

"When they call me, I go," he said. "You can call me at 12 o'clock at night, and I'll get up and out of bed and I'll go to you. That's just part of the business. It's not really something that I mind."

Blacksmithing — or, the

"ornamental work" side of his business, as Boatright calls it — is something he essentially learned through trial and error. He's sure that his lineage gave him a leg up, though. Over a century ago, his great-grandfather operated two blacksmith shops in western Union County.

"I can remember my grandfather telling me when he was a small boy that they would travel from one shop to the other," he recalled, "and go around sharpening plows and shoeing horses, just general blacksmith stuff."

Gradually, this side of his business expanded, primarily through word of mouth.

"There's just a huge demand for it," he says. "I've

been pushing the ornamental more and more. The ornamental work is just a real delicate, unforgiving type of work. My customers are looking for the decorative appeal, the eye appeal, whereas on your heavy equipment work, you're talking about a serious piece of metal."

Part of the reason he's seeing such demand for his services, Boatright thinks, is that he, in effect, has cornered the market.

"There's a lot of welders and there's a lot of people that will put up your traditional prefabricated fencing," he says, "but, as far as someone that will go in and put up whatever you want, I don't know of any. If you want butterflies and roses,

you put it on a piece of paper — I'll build it for you. It might take me a little while to figure out how to do it, but I will."

Boatright says he hasn't de-emphasized the welding side of his operation. He knows that, come Thanksgiving weekend, as with all holiday weekends, his yard will be littered with Bobcats, trailers and dump trucks in need of repair, which is a site he welcomes.

"I'd just as soon be down here in the welding shop," he says, "as anywhere else."

### Want to know more?

CSC Welding and Fabrication can be reached at (704) 843-1594.