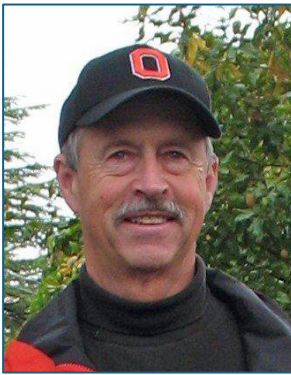


An Unlikely Artisan – by Alan Amoth



I never considered myself as having any artistic talent so didn't pursue hobbies in that arena. A couple years after joining CH2M HILL (1973), my wife (Diane) and I began looking for a better house, but the Corvallis market was very bear thanks to Hewlett-Packard's arrival in town. After returning from a house-hunting trip, Diane was impressed that one of OSU's coaches had made all the light fixtures in the house out of metal. She suggested that I should consider learning how to do that.

Eventually, I noticed that LBCC offered a "beginning welding" class and decided to sign up for it. I actually enjoyed learning a new skill and eventually bought a simple welder/cutting torch and the necessary tanks. My first project was constructing a wheeled cart to carry the oxygen and acetylene tanks and the various nozzles, tips, and tools that go with it. I still have that cart.

Through the years, we have acquired a house or two, and each provided opportunities for metal art creations, and for general repairs that involved steel. My father-in-law requested that I make some cat and dog profiles to include on an archway leading to a new pet cemetery. I convinced Diane that, for a project this visible, I would need to buy a plasma cutter and a few more items including various grinders, a Dremel tool, and some chemicals. The animal profiles were the first of many projects completed since that time.



Over the past 40+ years, I've improved my skills in cutting, grinding, visualizing (drawing) projects to make, and coloring steel with various chemical patinas. However, since I only have inspirations seemingly every few years, I normally need to re-learn these skills before getting started.

My projects typically have included: yard art, animal profiles, stairway/railing panels, light fixtures, fireplace components/decorations, and a bed headboard. The hanging dining table light that is included contains, secretly hidden, the names of our 10 grandkids. I admit that I've done way more than

I thought I was capable of and enjoy looking at the metal art I designed and created over the decades “with my own hands.” A few pictures are attached.



Stairway panel



Hanging light



Columbia River Gorge headboard



Salmon headboard/wall panel

I'd be very happy to answer questions or share experiences with anyone who may be interested in trying some metal art projects. Just send an email to amothfam@proaxis.com.

Alan Amoth/Corvallis