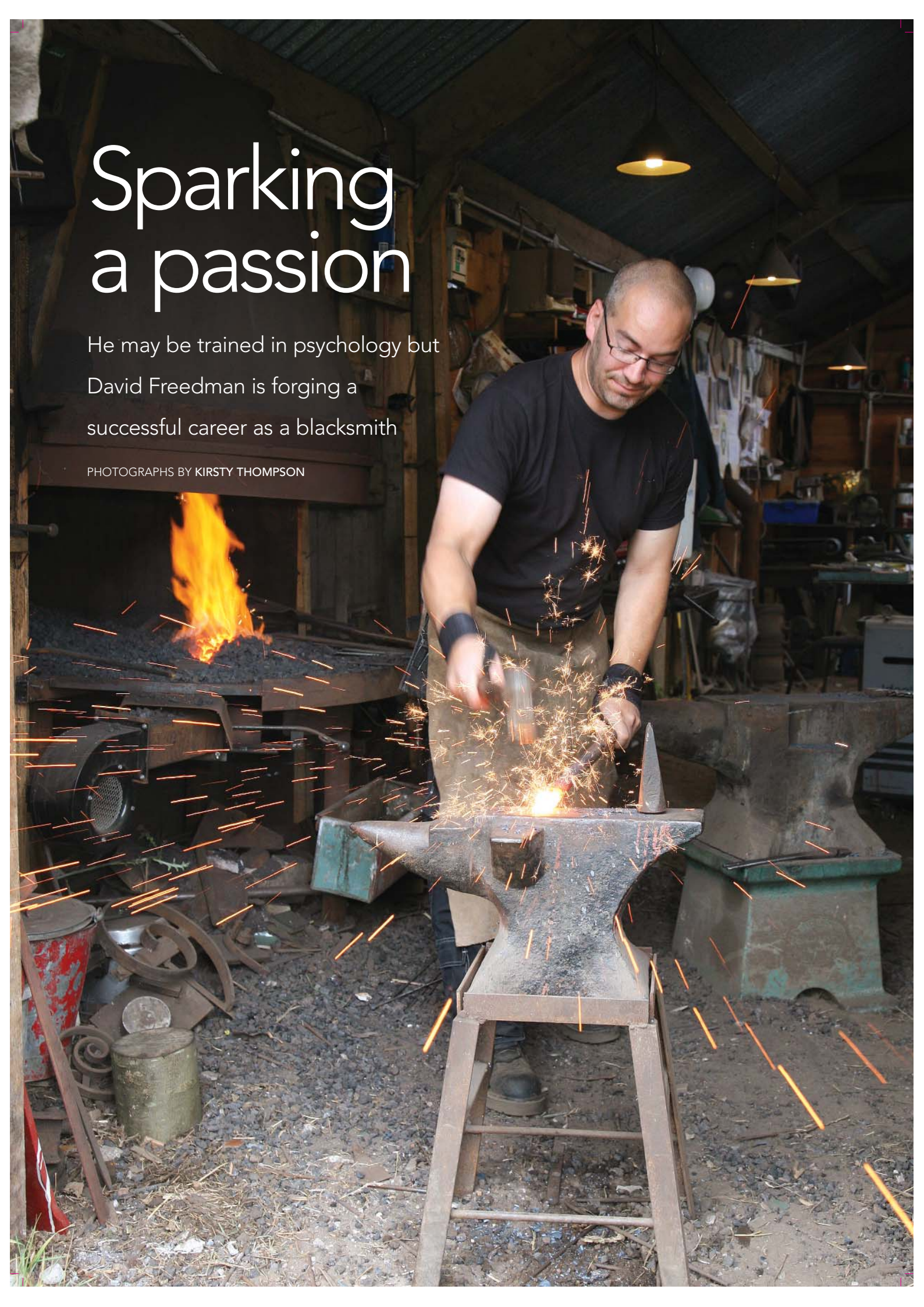




# Sparking a passion

He may be trained in psychology but  
David Freedman is forging a  
successful career as a blacksmith

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIRSTY THOMPSON





A degree in psychology isn't the obvious qualification for a career as a blacksmith, but then delicate and intricate sculptures aren't the usual things to be made in a forge.

David Freedman does produce traditional ironworks for homes, gardens and town centres but sculpture is his first love.

After completing his studies he worked in metal workshops in London and Kent before returning in the late 1990s to Church Minshull, the village between Crewe and Winsford where he grew up.

And, speaking between hammer blows on red hot metal which will become a piece of garden furniture, he said: 'I made small pieces as a hobby when I was down in London and I picked up a lot of skills while I was working down there. Then I was lucky enough to come across a sale of equipment and managed to get a full workshop's worth.'

He built his workshop in the grounds of the family home, an old mill which David's father bought 30 years and which the family have been working to restore ever since.

'I made a lot of my own tools as well,' he added. 'Blacksmithing is an ancient thing, nothing has changed much over the centuries but I don't find I make



many horseshoes these days. I like to keep the traditional skills alive but I don't stick slavishly to the old ways, I do use modern technology as well.

'Psychology seemed interesting at the time but I have always done art works and have always made things with my hands. My family are all academics, although my grandparents were quite artistic and my dad rebuilt half the mill.

'I am more of an artist than an engineer and sculpture is my main passion, although it was kept in the

The skills he learned during his A-level art course and on life drawing classes at London's Slade School are evident in David's work

background for years it is my main work now and I also do some wood carving and am starting to do some work in bronze.

'Although this is all traditional and ancient, the internet has been the biggest help to me, almost all my business comes through the websites.'



To see more of David's work, go to [www.millforge.org.uk](http://www.millforge.org.uk) or [www.ironsculpture.co.uk](http://www.ironsculpture.co.uk)