

Rocky Forge News

Volume 6, issue 11 – November, 2007

Meetings

By Ted Stout

Time sure flies by when we are having fun!! Our next meeting time is coming up fast, it will be on November 10th at 9:00 in Ted's shop. I am hoping the good weather will persist so we can do an open forge time again this month. Some of you seem to really enjoy forging last month and some were on the sidelines. I will have the forges and anvils ready to go and a very short meeting (or maybe none) so we can really get into blacksmithing. Bring your favorite hand tools and lets make some neat stuff. I have plenty of metal for use. You can even do some sheet metal work if you want. Gene is a good teacher.

Lunch will be served by Jim Bolin who is planning to make his famous beef stew on an outside fire. This all hinges on whether Harrison Steel needs him that day worse than we do. Also, it is weather dependent. If Jim cannot Carol said she would feed us. If anyone wants to bring a covered dish to pass around it might be appreciated.

Be sure to bring something for the iron-in-the-hat, something useful to the metalsmith and better than what the junk dealer deserves.

Free up your schedules and try to make this meeting, we need to do some serious blacksmithing.

Any volunteer for bringing doughnuts??? Call Ted at 765-491-2194

See you on November 10th.

Ted

Be Safe, Be Aware?

By Ted Stout

At one of our meetings a few months ago I gave a member a piece of steel to use. It looked like any other piece of rusty steel 3/4" by 1/8" with a bend to it. He placed the metal in the forge, inside the building, and when it was hot we noticed a white fume stuff coming off and it almost appeared to have a self-sustaining fire. I knew immediately what it was and had everyone leave the building.

The piece, even though it had a rust coating, was galvanized. The older galvanized has a much heavier layer of zinc and under the right conditions will get a rust coat over it. When the zinc is heated it forms zinc oxide. The oxide is used to manufacture a lot of different ointments, paints and nontoxic items; however, when inhaled as fumes zinc oxide it is extremely toxic. There have been many deaths attributed to it over past several years. One famous blacksmith PaPa Wilson, who oversaw an internet chat room and gave advice to thousands of blacksmiths, died from exposure just two years ago.

The point is we must be very sure not to heat a piece of galvanized in the forge or with a torch. By simply cleaning the piece we should be able to tell if it is coated or not. A few seconds to confirm one way or another could save a lot of grief later.

Ted

Smoke and Noise

Articles from e-mail and the Internet

Compiled by David Childress

From: Dan Crowther

Date: Oct 28, 2007 2:42 PM

Subject: [TheForge] Conference Suggestion

After going to a couple of Conferences I was surprised that ABANA seems to generally ignore the public where the Conferences were held. My wife and I were stopped no less than 10 times in Richmond by members of the public asking what was going on, and how they could see it. Unfortunately we had to tell them ABANA limited Conference entry to members only. How many of those people would have become ABANA members and future blacksmiths if they could have participated in some capacity? Remember the Conference is really ABANA's only shot at public exposure; the mags aren't sold in bookstores/newsstands, and I'm not aware that they do "community outreach".

I suggest opening various sections of the Conference to the public (for a reasonable admission fee).

- Have people there specifically to demonstrate to the public the basics of what a blacksmith is and what they do.
- Give the public access to all the galleries to see the end results of people who are blacksmiths. Especially the "Walk-In" gallery where "Average Joe" blacksmith displays their work.
- Open a special Green Coal area for them to make a "J" hook, and get them "hooked".
- Have ABANA and Affiliate tables easily accessible to the public so they can JOIN and/or spend their cash the ABANA 'gizingas'. I'm sure there are other ideas for involving the public at Conferences but those were the ones I came up with.

Dan Crowther

<http://www.oakandacorn.com>

<http://www.celticclans.org>

From: Chris Winterstein
Date: Oct 29, 2007 5:50 PM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] Conference Suggestion

Hi Dan,

Thanks for your suggestions about ABANA conferences. The ABANA Board has been thinking a lot about how future conferences might serve the organization and membership better, so your comments are well timed. (Dave Mudge forwarded your post from theforge to all of the ABANA Board members.) I wanted to let you know that conference galleries and auctions have been open to the public for the last several conferences at least, and Elizabeth Brim (with help from her friends) has headed up efforts and worked very hard with local galleries near conference sites to install longer running shows of ironwork coincidental with our conferences. We also have had ABANA membership information available at those shows of ironwork (and anywhere else we can put it.)

Many of us share your opinion that ABANA's educational mission can, and should extend to educating the public about blacksmithing, both from a sense of reaching out to potential new members, and helping cultivate informed clients for our members. To that end, many of us give public demonstrations, teach classes and participate in non-ABANA shows and events. I think the idea of a green coal area for public interaction at conferences is a good idea. I think that some regional conferences do this, and I know some affiliates regularly demonstrate at local museums and art events. All of these are great for blacksmithing, and great for ABANA. With the big conferences, I hate to say it, and I am as sick of hearing it as anyone, but there are significant liabilities. That and the chance of some dishonest members sneaking in as "visitors" has kept the idea of public demonstrations and work areas out of the last few conferences. Several times, similar programs have been in the plans at the beginning, but haven't made it to the finish line. The obvious solution is to have that area outside the conference entrance, perhaps equipped and staffed by volunteers from local affiliates. At some sites, this is more possible than others. Usually, your average fire marshal wants all the fires in a central location. But I don't want to make excuses, we will keep trying, and we are thinking about the same things. Thanks again for your input. Keep thinking and send more, it is the best way to help shape ABANA into the organization we all want. Ever consider running for the board?

Sincerely,

Chris Winterstein

I thought you might enjoy a close to "How to". I also thought that Kirsten should be introduced to you. She is a fulltime artist blacksmith.

DEC

From: Fiorini & Skiles <bkmetal@mwt.net>
Date: Jul 14, 2007 7:30 AM
Subject: [TheForge] forging steel bamboo

I finally got some bamboo samples made up that I really like. You can see pictures in my latest blog entry at <http://knitsteel.blogspot.com>

All of the bamboo related progress posting, in order from earliest to latest, are:

<http://tinyurl.com/3627ua>, shows bronze bamboo:



<http://tinyurl.com/3x6uro>, steel bamboo most recent version:



Cut and paste the links into your browser to see them. The bronze version and the first steel version are made with forging and then welding. The third

is all forging. I like the forged version best for the steel. For the bronze, I still like the other method.

-Kirsten

<http://knitsteel.etsy.com> - my blacksmith shop online

From: Fiorini & Skiles
Date: Oct 26, 2007 5:52 AM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] forging steel bamboo

Thanks Michael and Ron,

(I almost missed those messages coming through on the digest version.) The steel bamboo is all forged now, not welded. I have to give a lot of credit to John Adams of Minnesota who explained it to me a few times. I'm doing the standard method of fullering and upsetting. I use a smithin' magician' for the fullering part, with dies tapered to a rather narrow, maybe 3 to 4 mm peen. We use propane, so for the upsetting, I use oxy-propane to heat each joint. I got to the point where I could manage a 5 ft long length of 7/8 pipe on my own, but anything heavier is too much for me to maneuver.

Here's a bunch that I finished:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/knitsteel/1641512424/> and [blogged here:](http://knitsteel.blogspot.com/2007/10/more-nature-inspired-art-in-progress.html)
<http://knitsteel.blogspot.com/2007/10/more-nature-inspired-art-in-progress.html>.

Those are 5 ft lengths of pipe with outer diameters close to 7/8, 1/2 and 3/8. (I don't have the exact measurements written down nearby.) I need some for a commission, but the rest will turn into tables, mirrors, or just wallpieces in a few months.

The bronze bamboo is staying as it is. I think it would be much trickier to upset bronze tubing and haven't been motivated to buy more. I am making the pieces that I have into the mirrors. I'll post pictures when they are done. I only have the decorative fronts done. I still have to make and add leaves and then the mirror holders to the back.

Thanks for bringing this topic back and for the input on the mirror hardware.

-Kirsten

Here is a little of the method and something on tools. I misread the first time and got an idea on a different type of fullering tool. I will try to make one and tell you if it works.

DEC

From: Ben Barrett
Date: Oct 26, 2007 9:41 PM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] forging steel bamboo

At the last NWBA conference, up in the Columbia River Gorge, there was a great pipe candleholder demo (by Dave Lisch I think), and they used a chop-style tool set into the hardie. It used two pieces of leaf spring, both bolted onto the hardie shaft... the bottom was along the anvil, and the upper one pivoted (and could be raised or lowered for different sizes of pipe). I'm sure there is a more common name for this, but I've also seen guillotine tools more or less like the smithin magician used for this. I think the main advantages of the chops-style are that it is an easier tool to build (although the dies must be kept in-line since they're not guided on both sides), and it might be a little easier to remove the working piece from the tool. I just built my first guillotine, it was more forgiving than I thought, and I like that different dies can be dropped in rather than switching out the whole tool, for varying work. I should also note that the dies I saw were ground/shaped (off the edges of the leaf spring) a bit, roughly for the size of the material being worked.

If you've never worked with a guillotine tool before, watch out for the gremlins, the dies can get jammed in there diagonally if the tolerances are too great, although you need a bit of leeway to get things loosened sometimes. I took the get're-dunn approach and just clamped some folder paper scraps around the dies between the rails when I was setting up to weld, and found that was an easy way to shim to usable tolerance (was about 3-5 layers, a folder envelope scrap). My buddy Jim motivated me on this tool and suggested just using square stock, even the same material as the rails, just inside the rails, and welding the dies to that, so that we don't get screwed up with varying die sizes and trying to forge them to a precise size to fit in the rails (most larger leaf spring is much thicker in the middle than

at the ends, along its length). That gave me some fun ideas about mounting other tools & odd dies into the guillotine, since I work along it is a super 3rd and even 4th hand to have around :)

Mark, the gist of it is pinch-and-upset. Pinch the pipe in an even ring, and then when you upset that area, it folds itself in on the ring and tends to bulge just a bit. If the rings are not even, you will get really neat organic lumpies that don't look much like bamboo, so experiment :) I did some pinching with a straight pein and the edge of the anvil, and it worked but I was not making even rings.

This generally works best on thick-walled pipe, but I'm sure it could be finessed into thinner material.

I found a video with a quick google search, of a guy making metal bamboo -- he uses some sort of fuller-tongs thingy instead of a chop-style or guillotine (no hammer blows to pinch), then upsets the piece after quenching all but the pinched area.

cheers, folks! Oh and I concur, nice work Kirsten!

Ben

Announcements

The Rocky Forge News is available by E-mail and on our website (<http://www.rockyforge.org/>). If you wish to receive the newsletter via E-mail sent Dave Childress a note at trollkeep@gmail.com, or e-mail directly to rocky@rockyforge.org.