

# Rocky Forge News

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## No June Meeting

The June meeting of the Rocky Forge group has been cancelled. There were about 15 Rocky Forge members in attendance at the IBA Conference last weekend and a meeting of our group this month seemed superfluous.

Ted Stout

## Last Meeting (5/11/13)

Rocky Forge smiths met at the Illiana Show Grounds and did a spring-cleaning in preparation for History Day on May 13<sup>th</sup>. As usual, History Day was a lot of fun. The following smiths were at History Day: Rob Durrett, Brad McCormick, Dominick Andrisani, Matt Marziale, Zach Gaither, Ted Stout, Jim Bolin, and Peter Cooper.

## IBA Conference (5/31-6/2)

The Indiana Blacksmithing Association held its annual conference at the Tipton County Fairgrounds on May 31-June 2. Demonstrators included Bob Patrick, John Bennett, Michael Wollowski, Dick Fisher, and the Brotherhood of the Friendly Hammermen.

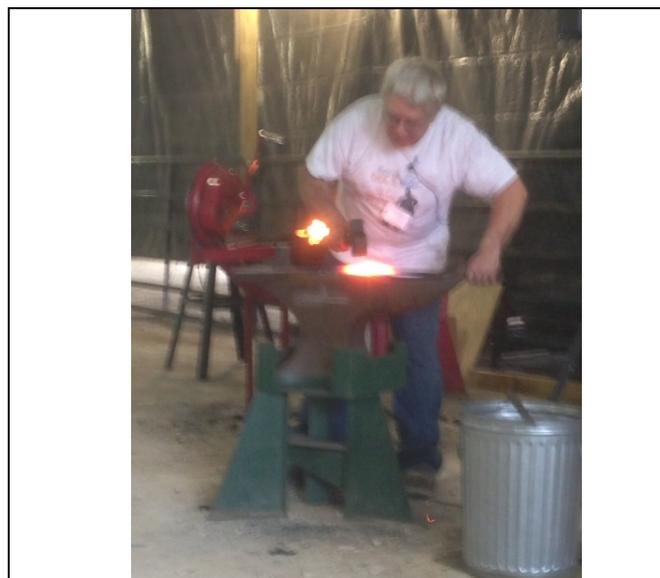
Bob Patrick demonstrated all day Saturday and Sunday morning. He went over traditional techniques for making a compound scroll, a fleur-de-lis, and a doorknocker.

The most interesting part of his demo was on forge welding. Bob maintains that most problems in forge welding are in the fire. The fire should have about 3 inches of coke surrounding the work piece. Care should be taken to make sure there is no clinker in the fire. The work pieces should be buried in the fire to the point where you cannot see the metal. This lowers the oxygen in the fire and reduces scale buildup on the surface of the metal. You have to guess the temperature by timing and instinct.

The metal should NOT be sparkling. He welded when the color of the metal was bright yellow but NOT white. (In my welding I may have been getting the metal too hot.) As a flux Bob uses silica

flower or EZ Flux and applies it to a larger area than you might think.

The shape of the metal ends to be welded is quite important. That shape is called a scarp. Bob showed the traditional scarps for square stock, the



Bob Patrick demonstrates at IBA Conference.

more pointed scarp for round stock and a diamond pointed scarp for round stock.

While he often completes a forge weld in two heats, his demonstrations used several heats. The first heat to bright red allows him to put the flux on the hot metal. The second heat gets to bright orange welding temperature. The first few hammer hits on the metal are gentle and designed to get the tips of the scarp to stick. Hit on one side to close one scarp. Turn the metal over and hit gently to close the other scarp. Put the metal back in the fire and return to welding heat. Hit harder on the top and bottom of the metal. Do not hit on the sides until you are sure you have a good weld. The horn of the anvil is a good place to thin out the thicker overlapped portion of the scarp. Finally, forge the metal to its finished shape. With the metal still hot, wire brush the metal to remove any flux still on the metal.

Bob gave a very convincing demonstration of welding A-36 mild steel. When completed, you could not see any evidence of a weld!

## IBA Conference



Items by David Kunkler in IBA Gallery



Winning fireplace set by Vernon Group



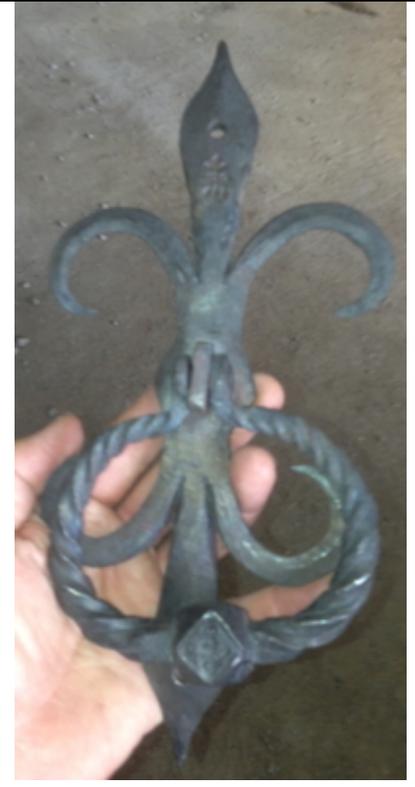
Compound scroll by Bob Patrick



Fleur-de-lis by Bob Patrick



Dominick's Iron Figure sold in Auction



Door knocker by Bob Patrick

## Dates to Remember

**June 14-16, 2013:** Rural Smiths of Mid-America (RSMA) Meeting and Demo, Johnson County Park

**September 20 – 22, 2013:** SOFA QUADSTATE Conference, Troy, Ohio.

**September 20 – 22, 2013:** Potawatomi Festival, Attica, IN.

**October 5 - 6, 2013:** Feast of the Hunters' Moon, Fort Ouiatenon, West Lafayette, IN.

**October 11-20, 2013:** Parke County Covered Bridge Festival, Parke County, IN.

**August 13-16, 2014:** ABANA 2014 Conference, Harrington, Delaware.

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**Web Site:** <http://www.rockyforge.org/> (previous newsletters can be found here).