

# Rocky Forge News

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## Next Meeting: September 10

Thanks to all those who volunteered at the Illiana Antique Power Show, we had a tremendous turnout with some guest blacksmiths. Good ole' John Bennett spent the whole weekend and was a real hit with the audience.

Jim Bolen's encampment was also a popular attraction and of course the "Bicentennial Bench" made by Jim was raffled at the show. Unfortunately, we did not get the name of the winner, but they were still at the show and were able to take it with them. They were very happy with it.

Rob Durrett does a great job of explaining the history of the Lewis and Clark exploration. For those who do not know, he went on the re-creation of that adventure so he "is" the expert. Thanks Rob.

Gene Hollingsworth with his copper and aluminum ware that he pounds out from sheet stock draws a lot of interest. Dominick Andrisani has been making some beautiful silicon bronze crosses that attracted groups of people around his workstation.

Peter Cooper is always a good attraction with his cooperage work. There were others who also drew crowds at their work areas. Our group always draws large crowds during the show and this year was no exception. People like seeing the artisans at work. Unfortunately, my friends would not allow me to do much. Probably a good thing, especially when one of the bearded blacksmiths said he was prepared to give me mouth to mouth if I needed to be resuscitated.

Gene, Dominick and Marty Mears demonstrated at the State Fair August 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The Indiana Blacksmith Shop is at the northeast corner from the Pioneer Building. Pete Cooper has a building along that street for doing his work. It is a new building made from lumber sawed from large poplar beams removed from a Wabash and Erie Canal lock near New Haven, Indiana.

Because of our involvement with the State Fair and the weather looks to be very warm over the next few weeks we have decided to cancel our regular

August meeting. We are looking forward to the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ted Stout

## Rocky Forge Address Book

Rocky Forge is trying to put together an address book of our members for our members. There is a web site for you to provide your contact information and it is at the following URL.

<http://www.rockyforge.org/members.shtml>

Please click on this link and give us your contact information.

## Contacts

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## Dates to Remember

**Sept. 10, 2016:** Rocky Forge Meeting @TBD.

**Sept. 23-25, 2016:** SOFA Meeting, Troy Ohio.

**Sept. 25, 2016:** Art on the Wabash, 10AM-4PM, Tapawingo Park, West Lafayette.

**October 1-2, 2016:** Feast of the Hunters' Moon.

**Oct. 8, 2016:** Rocky Forge Meeting @TBD.

**October 12, 2016:** History Day at the show grounds.

## Cool Web Sites

**Art on the Wabash:**

<https://artonthewabash.wordpress.com/>

**SOFA Quadstate Meeting:**

<http://www.sofablacksmiths.org/>



Side draft hoods in the shop at the State Fair.

## “Because You Bought American, We Have Jobs”

By Dominick Andrisani

Two years ago I purchased some fairly expensive kitchen cookware (pots) that were made in West Bend, Wisconsin by the Americraft (AmericraftCookware.com). The sales person I dealt with was at the Indiana State Fair, and earlier this week I met up with her again at this year’s Fair. She gave me a CD about how the cookware was made (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL6rM3Wv09XSQjs7ZmPpRgz556l1CgIuOs&v=SbPZgjught4>). Since I am interested in manufacturing processes involving metal, I was fascinated to watch the CD.

The manufacturing story involved steel making, steel layering to create a 7-ply steel sheet, plastic knob and handle making, and the shaping of the pots themselves. One key vendor in the supply chain is a small company in **Logansport, Indiana**, called **Ameri-Tek Manufacturing, Inc.** They make the metal fittings used to connect the plastic handles to the pots. All the vendors in the supply chain were American companies.

Shaping of the pots themselves is actually a fairly small part of the manufacturing story. They use DRAW PRESSES to do most of the work. The particular presses they use were converted from presses used during World War II to make shell casings for artillery shells. In a matter of seconds the DRAW PRESS forges a pot from a disk and in a second step forges the lip that creates a precise watertight seal for the waterless cookware. Another machine trims the lip of the pot to precision size. That’s about it for the gross shaping of the cookware, processes that take less than a minute.

I was expecting the CD to be about manufacturing processes, and it was. But I was surprised to learn that the entire supply chain involved American companies and **“Made in USA”** products. Again and again in the CD there were workers from the various companies saying, **“Because you bought American, I have a job!”**

This got me to thinking. I bought the cookware because I knew they were of superior quality. But I gave little thought to the many American jobs involved in their manufacture. I am now asking myself questions like the following. Should I actively seek out products that are **“Made in USA”**? Does **“Made in USA”** mean that the quality of the product is superior, like it used to be when I was a boy? Is it important that I support American jobs when I buy **“Made in USA”**? If an American made product costs more than an imported product of equal quality, should I still buy **“Made in USA”**?



The haunting parts of this CD were the faces of the American workers. They looked like you and me. They have good jobs, could support their families, and have good benefits and their self-respect. They have jobs because people like me bought American.