

Rocky Forge News

Volume 4, issue 3 – March, 2005

This Month's Meeting

From Ted:

The March meeting will be at 9:00 AM, March 12th, at Ted's shop. We will have a business meeting, followed by an open forge time. If the weather does not permit open forge then we will have a demonstration by Ted showing what can be done with various metal shapes.

Lunch will be spaghetti and bread, so bring a covered dish of whatever sounds good with that meal.

Some of the meeting topics for discussion will include:

- Plans for a new building
- Restoration of the West Point Cemetery entry gate
- An order for metal in quantity to get a good price
- Nominating committee
- Illiana Steam Show plans
- Independence Heritage Festival
- May 2 Benton and Warren county schools at the show grounds
- More stuff

Please try to attend so that we may make our group most successful at teaching and learning the art of blacksmithing.

Ted is trying to arrange a joint meeting with the Wabash Valley Blacksmith Club from Terre Haute. I was at their Feb. meeting when the idea was discussed. The main sentiment was that the distance and time is too great. I even told them that I could provide transport in the Cool Bus to no avail. They decided that we would be invited there when their new shop at Fowler Park is complete. Incidentally they are have volunteered to host the October IBA meeting and hope to hold it at Fowler Park.

Last Month's Meeting

The meeting was February 5th. The date was changed to accommodate a joint meeting with the Rural Smiths of Mid-America. 62 people signed in and our share of Iron-In-the-Hat was about \$80. The Rural Smiths split the money which is more than the IBA would do. Shane Stegmier demonstrated making medieval hinges. His demo was a treat. Shane makes some very nice decorative hinges. As always just watching Shane work was impressive. Work held in his tongs is steadier than my work held in a vise. His slitting chisel goes through with a single blow and his control is amazing. I tried making such a hinge for a demonstration and mostly made smoke and noise. The steps were correct but the skill just was not there.

I was very impressed with the Rural Smiths and several of their meeting activities such as their trade items. Overall the level of skill was high and unlike many of us, the Rural Smiths membership seems to get the chance to keep in practice.

IBA

I have a submission toward the IBA request of a description of our satellite group for their newsletter for publication before the next IBA meeting (requirement) we host. This is only a start, but we have to start somewhere.

Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild

We are trying to maintain blacksmithing as a living Art in our small corner of the world. We demonstrate for the public. We encourage the interested newcomer. We provide instruction and guidance for the novice. Give the knowledgeable a chance to spread their knowledge. Give the impressive a venue to impress. Most importantly, we enjoy ourselves and practice our art trying to do all of the above.

Our newsletter is received by about fifty people. Our meetings are usually attended by

about 10-20 members and sometimes 40-50 guests. Members span the spectrum of skill and knowledge from the rank beginner who has never lit a forge to those few who can earn a living as a blacksmith or that smiths will come from far and wide to watch and learn from.

We regularly meet at Ted Stout's shop outside West Point IN. We will meet for special events when asked. Festivals, historic demonstrations, tractor shows, joint meetings with other groups, members proudly showing their shops, and educational events have all been meetings in the past.

Announcements

There is a blacksmiths post vice and a unique wood carpenters vice for sale at Ted's shop. They are very low priced and if you need a vice this is a good opportunity. See Darrel Schlutze or Ted.

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