

Rocky Forge News

Volume 4, issue 4 – April, 2005

Next Meeting:

Its time for the next newsletter to go out, here are some things for it. If you have any of that hard steel rod to share I would sure like some.

Next meeting of the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild will be at 9:00 A.M., April 9th, at Ted Stouts.

The agenda will be open forge and work on the cemetery arch project. If you plan to smith bring your forge and tools, I will have 3 set ups. If you want to work on the cemetery arch bring your angle grinder with a wire brush attachment. We will make new letters and remove the old paint. Some redesign of the arch may be on the horizon. Bring your ideas.

For lunch Carol will prepare barbecue sandwiches so bring a dish to share and we will have a good meal. Lunch is always a fun time for this group so lets keep it going.

Bring iron in the hat to keep this fun event high quality. As I have stated before we have one of the best iron-in-the-hat drawings of any blacksmith group. Lets keep up the quality.

If you have not been to a meeting recently we ask that you attend to keep the newsletter coming. Your absence indicates a lack of interest and sending newsletters is expensive. Hope to see all of you on the 9th.

Last Month's Meeting

The March meeting was March 12th, at Ted's shop. We had a business meeting that threatened to delay demonstration time. (An open forge time was bad weathered out.) We had a demonstration by Ted showing what can be done with various metal shapes and Ted made pipe ax which will be a part of Rob Durrett's Lewis & Clarke gear.

The meeting topics for discussion included:

-plans for a new building, may get built soon, open shelter form.

-restoration of the West Point Cemetery entry gate.

-an order for metal in quantity to get a good price, names shapes and amounts taken.

-nominating committee, all old officers held over.

-Illiana Steam Show plans, two July meetings, Second Saturday work to set up and third Saturday for the Show.

-Independence Heritage Festival

-May 2 we will demonstrate for Benton and Warren county school's students at the show grounds

-My suggestion for a Forge Fire entry for our group was read and suggested changes taken.

-The Wabash Valley Blacksmithing Club invited us to meet with them once their new shop is done, but had very little interest in coming to West Point to have a joint meeting.

Projects with future reports:

Forge and anvil from salvaged parts.

I am building a forge with a deep firepot, 8" deep and 8" diameter made out of two truck brake rotors stacked. I am still making stands. This should be a very hot forge and will easily come apart to help in make it portable.

I also have some pieces of tool steel I plan to use as an anvil. They should work very well if I can make a proper hardy hole and some hardy tools. This should be interesting. One of the blocks weights about 200 lbs. and is hardened D2. D2 sells for about \$6/lbs.

Use of charcoal for the forge.

I have never seen charcoal used for forging. I found a source for hardwood charcoal in small enough amounts for experimenting. I also have a book on the efficient production of charcoal. If it is not very difficult to use I will make a setup to make charcoal. On the frontier and everywhere far from the railroad and near trees this is the traditional fuel. I have

30 acres of Oak trees and even several that are down that I need to do something with.

The only person I have spoken with that had used charcoal in a forge claimed that the fine ash was a problem whenever the blast was on. Maybe the form of forges is different for coal and charcoal. In videos and on TV when charcoal is used the forge has a back or side blast. I do not know if this is just accurate history or necessary method. Anyone having any ideas or desire to learn about using charcoal as fuel I would appreciate any help given.

Announcements

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.