

Rocky Forge News

Volume 4, issue 6 – June, 2005

Maybe it only *seems* like the world is trying to prevent me from getting this done on time. You know what they say “just because you are paranoid does not mean that they are not out to get you.”

Next Meeting:

The June meeting will be at the Independence Blacksmith Shop on June 18 at about 9 AM. Whether or not we have a meeting depends on how many festival attendees have shown up at that point. Last year there was no real chance for a meeting. Lunch will be available at the cafe up the street.



Members of the Guild at the Independence, IN shop for the April, 2005 meeting,

Last Month's Meeting

The Rocky Forge Blacksmiths met at 9:00 A. M. on Saturday May 14th at Ted Stout's shop. The agenda included a short meeting, which turned into a long meeting with much discussion. Work was done on the West Point Cemetery arch, and continued work on the bellows for the Independence shop. Lunch was sandwiches and pitch-in dishes from the members and was excellent as always. Several pieces of iron ore were brought in. Darrel Schultz heated several samples to process them into magnetic hematite, the first step to making wrought iron in a bloomery. We are going to try and set-up a bloomery and

make wrought iron, if only to have something that we can say we made ourselves from rocks to finished product. We will need as much ore as we can get, because we will probably require several runs to get high enough quality to be useful. Any help in locating ore will be appreciated.

Future Activities

- Illiana Steam Show plans, July 15, 16, & 17 with work to set up on the 14th. Volunteers needed.
- Skinner Farm Museum Steam and Gas Show August 20 & 21, Perrysville, IN.
- Shane's MedievalFest - October meeting.

In Memoriam:

Ray Evans died Sunday June 5 in his home. Ray had been battling cancer for several years. He will be missed by all and his family will be in our prayers.

Projects with continuing reports:

Forge and anvil from salvaged parts.

Ted has a couple of portable forges that always struck me as inferior. After using charcoal in a couple of forges, I think that these forges may well have been designed for charcoal and so are ill suited for coal. I have decided to try to change the plan for my homemade forge to accommodate both coal and charcoal. I also would like to find some use for as many of the odd features of the materials as is possible.

Use of charcoal for the forge.

I am going to make charcoal. I have an acquaintance that trims trees as his second job and is an excellent source for timber for this project. If I can review my tree species identification skills enough to tell what is what I should be able to determine what is easiest to work with and produces the best fuel. I am going to need some barrels with lids,

preferably also with bung holes. The apparatus is fairly simple but I can not imagine the barrels holding up for very long and they do need to be fair close to airtight. I have some that I think that I can make work, but they are far from ideal. If you have a source or maybe such barrels, I am sure something can be worked out.

While looking for information on blacksmithing with charcoal I stumbled across the ABANA iforge website. This is a wonderful source for plans and info from some very impressive smiths. Once a week there is a live demonstration, then a discussion. Transcripts of demonstrations and the following discussions are posted. I printed out several for my use. I have "A \$20 anvil", "Steel Roses" and several on various methods for making tongs. Permission is also given for these to be included in the newsletters of any ABANA affiliated groups, like us. I am trying to make a \$20 anvil for a necklace pendant for Lorene. My first attempt was better than I expected, and maybe my tenth or twelfth will be good enough.

I will bring printout to assess interest and see what application we might have for this information I would be willing to learn by teaching some of these projects. I might even learn what I am doing wrong and get enough practice to gain skill and become a better smith. I have knowledge but very little skill.

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.