

Rocky Forge News

Volume 6, issue 12 – December, 2007

Meetings

By Ted Stout

A note from Ted: Carol and I would like to wish all of you a happy and safe Holiday Season. We have enjoyed having you over during the past years. We are truly blessed with all the good friends we have made over the years in the blacksmithing community.

Rocky Forge will not meet in December; the IBA will be having their meeting on the second Saturday, December 8th, at Chas Kizer's. That meeting, at Batesville, will feature a very good blacksmith from the SOFA group and I would encourage you to attend. Chas Kizer's place is a very interesting visit. The house has been featured on HGTV, an underground house, and he too has been featured for his artistic blacksmithing work. His shop is loaded with neat ideas for projects and tools. Chas is willing to pass any of his ideas on to others, a true fellow blacksmith.

If you go, be sure to take iron in the hat items and if possible something to add to the lunch. The meeting starts at 10:00 and the travel time from my house is about 2.5 hours, it is 142 miles.

Have a nice Holiday.

Ted

Rocky Forge Building and Open House

At the October meeting Ted brought up the idea of Rocky Forge having an advertised open house in the spring and having items produced by the membership for sale. The proceeds would go toward the fund for finishing our building at the Illiana Showgrounds.

The idea as outlined by Ted is have the open house advertised in the newspaper and on the radio for some Saturday in the spring. Blacksmith work made by members of Rocky Forge will be available for sale with profits going into the building fund. While the date has not been determined, people need to determine what they will make and get

started on production. Anything from hand wrought nails to railroad spike knives to Damascus work to architectural items can be offered.

This is a chance for the club and individual members to come to the attention of the community. This is an outreach that can result in interested new members and profit for both Rocky Forge and individual members. This kind of event is what I consider an important opportunity to further the craft organizationally and individually.

What do you as members of Rocky Forge think of such of an event? When can it be offered? How would you like to see it organized? Would you like to help? Yes, this is another request for feedback.

Smoke and Noise

Articles from e-mail and the Internet

Compiled by David Childress

The following string of emails is a neat idea and an expansion that I had never thought of. Maybe some of us could even figure out the methods of pattern Damascus -DEC

From: Albin Drzewianowski
To: <theforge@mailman.qth.net>
Date: Nov 21, 2007 4:07 PM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] Bored. Indoor clay-"forging"

BGCM has wooden anvils, hammers, and punches/chisels along with a supply of plasticine clay that we use at public demonstrations. It lets the kids duplicate what the "big boys" are doing with fire and steel.

This year I learned that we need to keep an ice chest with some ice handy. On a hot/warm day, the plasticine clay gets to warm and squishy. We would put the warm clay in a zip loc bag and lay it on top of the ice. This way the clay did not get wet, but it cooled down to a better consistency. We had 6-8 "billets" that we would cycle through the ice chest.

D-ski

Westminster, MD

"The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne"

From: Jerry Frost
To: <theforge@mailman.qth.net>
Date: Nov 25, 2007 6:14 PM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] Bored. Indoor
clay-"forging"

Something else that's fun and informative to do with modeling clay along these lines is model damascus / pattern welds.

Lay up your billet from different colors of modeling clay, do your manipulations and see how it works out.

If you want to turn things around some; use real clay, say a good quality porcelain. Dust different layers, or wedge clay for different layers, with different color glaze pigments. Lay up the billets, manipulate it and fire the results. Sometimes they will just self-destruct, sometimes it comes out really cool though.

All kinds of games you can play with clay and a kiln.

Gotta love what a really hot fire can do, you know.

<grin>

Frosty

If it ain't forged
it ain't real.

Wrought iron is.

The FrostWorks

Meadow Lakes, AK.

The following little bit of fluff is just something amusing that is material for thought. Maybe others would be interested in anvil cushions. – DEC

From: Jerry Smith
To: The Forge <theforge@mailman.qth.net>
Date: Nov 30, 2007 3:06 PM
Subject: [TheForge] Sad Day in my Shop.

Folks,

After years of having photos taken with me wearing my sandals, those sandals finally broke and can't be fixed I tried all morning.

They were just plastic, but comfortable to wear, easy to get on, but not to wear when forging.

I haven't decided if there will be private funeral for them, or just a simple disposal.

From: Mike Spencer
To: theforge@mailman.qth.net
Date: Nov 30, 2007 6:23 PM
Subject: [TheForge] Re: Sad Day in my
Shop.

...sandals finally broke and can't be fixed....I haven't decided if there will be private funeral for them, or just a simple disposal.

Nail them to a post in your shop. Every blacksmith should have something inexplicable -- preferably numerous such things things --propped, hung, welded, nailed or otherwise exhibited about the shop. Watch people be afraid to ask why there is a sandal nailed to the wall. Have a good yarn ready for those few who can work up the courage to ask. As you age and the sandal(s) get even more ancient and grimy with forge dust, the yarn will expand and grow and adapt.

Gee, do I have to tell you young guys *everything*?

:-) - Mike

Michael Spencer

Nova Scotia, Canada

From: Jerry Frost
To: Mike Spencer
Date: Dec 1, 2007 6:54 PM
Subject: Re: [TheForge] Re: Sad Day in my
Shop.

I bow to your age and sagacity Mike. While I love spinning a "good" yarn, (I know that comes as a REAL surprise to you guys but it's true.) I hadn't thought of deliberately baiting the audience. <head hung in shame>

I'll start rooting through my collection of oddness and thinking of "interesting" attachment methods. I'm still looking for a stuffed Wile E. Coyote doll to cushion my anvil with.

Frosty

Things of Interest to this editor

English Wheels

My mailing, both over the internet and US Mail, have included several offers from Harbor Freight of English Wheels for about \$250. I have never used an English Wheel and certainly do not know what one is worth or what makes a worthwhile one. I would like to receive information about English Wheels in general and these Harbor Freight ones specifically.

Anvil Repair

Another project that I would like to generate interest in is anvil repair. I have several anvils that need repair. This is heavy duty blacksmithing and I have not attempted it. I am not even as far as method development. I would like to hear from anyone who shares my interest and would like to make an attempt at anvil repair. As a related subject I have heard of repairing broken hard steel forms by brazing the interiors and welding the surface. The Die shop where I used to work had an outside welder that seemed to use this method and nothing he repaired ever broke again, but he would not tell his method.

ABANA Contact Information

For those of you who would like to make their voices heard in ABANA here is a list of email addresses for the ABANA Board of Directors:

Will Hightower:

iceanvil@alaska.net

Jim Masterson:

jim@abana.org

James Viste:

jviste@abana.org

Chris Winterstein:

cwinterstein@bana.org

Don Kemper:

dkemper@abana.org

Elizabeth Brim:

ebrim@abana.org

Jill Turman:

jill@abana.org

Maegan Crowley:

mcrowley@abana.org

Dorothy Stiegler:

dstiegler@abana.org

Erik Ryser:

eryser@abana.org

Wayne Coe:

waynecoe@highland.net

Rome Hutchings:

rome.hutchings@theprairieismygarden.com

As I have reported here before ABANA is attempting to reinvent itself and become more useful to the membership and attract new member. If you are a member they would like to hear how they can fulfill your needs and if you are a blacksmith and not a member why not?

The IBA is going through the same process and I should, as a member of the IBA Board of directors, be your route to helping the IBA to become more of use to you.

David Childress, Vice President IBA

765/492-4904

trollkeep@gmail.com

Announcements

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