



Rutherford County Blacksmiths Association

March 2015

RCBA, Inc. rcbablacksmith@comcast.net

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March 7 Workday

I'm not sure how even to begin thanking everyone who was able to come out and help with all the work at the shop on Saturday. There was lots of hard work to be done, but it was just downright fun!



All done!

Getting started.



Decisions, decisions.

How many blacksmiths does it take...?

Check out the shop. It looks great! A few extra square feet can make a lot of difference.

There will be more pictures at the shop as soon as Julia has time to get them printed.



March Meeting

At our regular March meeting, Smitty spoke about his experiences at John C. Campbell from the point of view of a Green Coal student. While there, he was able to finish several of his Green Coal projects with the help and advice of Jack Wheeler and Ron Nichols. This is a blacksmith's dream come true. If you have a free weekend and you want to go on a short road trip, a drive to the John C. Campbell Folk School is well

worth your while. You can take a self-guided tour around the beautiful campus and maybe get to peek in on a class. Don't forget to visit the Craft Shop where you can purchase beautiful works of art that have been crafted by hundreds of artists. Check out the website at www.folkschool.org.

Smitty also spoke about an idea he has come up with to both offer the opportunity to get in a little more forge time and to raise some money for RCBA. He would like to open the shop one day a month for several hours so RCBA members can help make items to sell at Cannonsburgh Village event days. These items will be the popular things visitors like to buy such as hooks and hotdog forks. Smitty printed off several pictures of possible projects. It was decided that the shop would be open on the third Sunday of each month from 12 – 5. Come on down and have some fun and fellowship.

Thank you to Billy and Gabby for donating a rechargeable drill to the shop. I've never known a blacksmith to turn down more tools.

Ron Nichols described an air diverter box which can be installed on the forges so that two blowers can be attached to the same forge but operated independently. This type of thing would definitely come in handy on the nights we are doubled up on many of the forges.

Southern Blacksmith Association

The SBA Conference (AKA Madison Conference) is scheduled for May 14 – 16. Check out www.sbaconference.com for all the details. Following tradition, there is a ring project to which all SBA member groups contribute. Ron brought the ring he created, with help from Buzz, who made the miniature tools, which will be one of four representing AACB. The details are amazing! The theme of the conference centers around common, idiomatic phrases that come from blacksmithing – forge a friendship, too many irons in the fire, etc.



The idioms on this ring are: It's red hot, Get a handle on it, and Happy Hooker. Happy Hooker?? I have seen that phrase associated with a type of knife. I just love definitions and derivations. Who knows about this one?

AACB 50th Celebration April 17 - 18

RCBA's contribution to the celebration will be to set up a blacksmith shop with anvils, forges, treadle and power hammers. RCBA members are encouraged to spend an hour or two demonstrating anything you like. Bring the tools and materials you need. You will probably want to practice first. E-mail to rcbablacksmiths@yahoo.com if you want to participate and what time you think you will be able to be on the forge. Or, get in touch with Bob Gillen and let him know directly. So far, Gary Brown plans to demonstrate how to make his horsehead bottle opener. I'm always happy to make some nails. This is free forge time to work on your favorite project. Sign up.

There will also be a demonstration on how to make a pair of tongs on a power hammer. This will be done by a team of experienced blacksmiths.

Band saw

There is a new band saw in the shop. I am sure you can come up with a reason to use it. If in doubt as to whether or not you should be cutting a particular piece of metal on the saw, please ask. Some metals will dull an expensive blade quickly.

Events

March 28 – Yard sale at the Village. There are two yard sales at Cannonsburgh each year – one in the Spring and one in the Fall. The shop will be open for all who want to get some extra forge time in. This is a great time to work on Green Coal projects.

April 25 – Opening Days for Cannonsburgh Village. This is one of three big event days at Cannonsburgh. The shop will be open all day. Bring your tools down earlier in the week so you don't have to carry them from the parking lot.

Friday night music at Cannonsburgh will likely take place again this Summer. We hope to get permission to open the shop. The more open forge time, the better.

Project of the Month – Bottle Opener



Gary, Rhea, Julia, Stan, Jeremy



Jeremy, Jeremy, Buzz



Jeff Haselden, Ron, Billy



And the winner is..... Jeremy, with his snake bottle opener. Jeremy had the good sense to bring some bottles so we could make sure all the entries actually worked.

Project of the Month for April is a dinner bell. Be as creative as you like. If you are having trouble coming up with ideas, try looking on ETSY.

Tennessee Crossroads

We all had a wonderful time with the Tennessee Crossroads crew. They made us feel comfortable with that huge camera, and we did our best to turn them into blacksmiths. Here are a few pictures.



John Couch with Ken Wilshire

... with the cameraman up close and personal.



Earl with the cameraman. Cute! (Both of you.) More pictures will be at the shop.

The crew was there for about three hours, and we all got to experience what it was like to act 'natural' with a huge camera just inches away. Really, though, we got used to it and had a regular ole Green Coal class with lots of students and some nicely dressed teachers. The show will air sometime in late April or early May. We will be sure to let you know. Tennessee Crossroads airs on Thursday nights. We may have to cancel a class – or plan a party at someone's house. Any volunteers??

Below, Ken (crew), is that Gary, John, Ken W, Buzz, Buzz's dad. They look amused.



I happen to know that they are watching Earl and that cute cameraman (whose name I cannot remember) work on the forge. He and both Kens were surprised by how simple and, at the same time, how complicated forging in a coal fire can be. I also know that they enjoyed the experience. Maybe we can get them to join RCBA.

The next RCBA meeting is April 13. After flipping a coin, it was decided that Dan Broomhead would demonstrate his railroad spike cross. Gary Brown will be demonstrating his horsehead bottle opener in May.

Sad news – Our good friend and RCBA and AACB member, Ron Kennedy, passed away recently. Ron won the intermediate Project of the Year category at the AACB Christmas party with his set of tongs. He is going to be greatly missed.

Last but not least - Green Coal Graduates!!!

Congratulations to Billy McCullough and Ralph 'Smitty' Smith for completing the Green Coal Class. You have a lot to be proud of, and you are an inspiration to all the other Green Coal students following in your footsteps.



The blurry man on the left is Billy, and the blurry man on the right is Smitty. Yikes! The camera would not focus. If you don't know these two handsome men, come on down to the shop and introduce yourself. If you do know them, please remember to congratulate them.



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