
BLACKSMITH'S SHOP STATION

General

The Post Blacksmith was of vital importance to any military or civilian community during the nineteenth century. Fort Tejon was no different. The Blacksmith was a master craftsman. The Blacksmith was not a Farrier, although he could shoe a horse, his primary duty was to make all the hardware for the Fort's building (hinges, bolts, latches, and special tools) and also make repairs to wagons and other equipment as necessary.

Students will work in the Blacksmith's Shop where they will experience a day in the heat and soot of the shop. They will be able to heat iron, form it into something and do it safely. They will learn about the history of the smith and what his day was like.

Blacksmith's Shop Policies

Fort Tejon will make every attempt possible to have a trained Fort Tejon State Historic Park Volunteer Blacksmith available for your classes visit. We do this because of the tremendous need for safety and high level of training needed to run the Blacksmith's Shop. This station requires more skill and training than is possible to teach 25 to 50 parent assistants in two hours. We realize that there may be some adult assistants who have some experience with blacksmithing. However we reserve the right to close the station if a trained Fort Tejon State Historic Park Volunteer Blacksmith is not available and if your parent assistants do not have the necessary training with coal fired forges.

It is imperative that safety be maintained in the shop at all times. The fire and iron is very hot (more than 5000 degrees Fahrenheit) and the hammers are very heavy. Adult assistants will restrict access to the forge area. No more than two students will be working inside the roped off forge area at any time. The rest of the squad may observe from outside the rope. We recommend that you bring heavy leather gloves for adults and children. You may also consider bring eye protection goggles for adults and children.

It is important to clean up after each squad has finished their project and before the next squad arrives; do not wait until the end of the day. Tools need to be cleaned and put away at the end of the day as well.

Blacksmith's Shop equipment supplied by Fort Tejon

Coal	Iron Stock in various sizes	Table
Leg Vise	Blacksmith's Tools	Quench Tank
Anvil	Forge	Bellows
Swage block		

Blacksmith's Shop Procedures

You supply the imagination for the projects you would like to make. A simple project that we have made at Fort Tejon over the years is a simple 6 to 8 inch long piece of flat stock twisted several times. This is the beginning of an auger tool drilling bit. This simple project takes the student through the entire process of making a tool. The student selects the proper size stock, cuts it to length, heats it, forms the material, cools it and cleans it. The other possibilities are limitless. You can make simple items like "S" hooks to hang kettles or pots over the fire or more detailed projects like fire irons or hinges and latches.

This station is easy to set up as it does not need a lot work to ready the station. Adult assistants are encouraged to help other assistants set up their stations. Check the quench tank to make sure there is enough water and the coal is stocked up. Please wait until the first Squad of students arrives at the blacksmith before starting the fire. A small fire is started in the firebox with sticks and small kindling. Gently rake coal into the fire until the coal ignites and the temperature rises to sustain metal working.

Blacksmith's Shop Plan

