



OAKCLAN FORGE

Teaching - Iron Age/Celtic Forge work, Metal forming & Repoussé Works

By Simon Summers, Heritage Blacksmith.

Specialist in La Tène Culture Repoussé works & forge Works.

Consultant & Experimental Archaeologist

Volunteer Opportunities

Assist teaching of Iron Age and Celtic metal forming and Repoussé work during the summer months around England.

This is a Work Experience placement for Archaeology students and practical, creative and artistic people. No experience is necessary as training will be given.

The Applicant

Must be committed, physically fit and able with a patient, calm, helpful and friendly nature. The Archaeology student must have a strong interest in Iron Age / Celtic culture and crafts, be practical and have some artistic or creative ability. It is helpful to be able to cook a meal (on an open fire).

Volunteering with OakClan Forge

Simon Summers began teaching the ancient crafts of the Iron Age Smith 14 years ago and then went on to form OakClan Forge. The forge is a portable period repoussé workshop that travels around the country and is set up within the craft field areas of events and festivals. Our workshops teach the ancient skills of the La Tène culture using Celtic artwork fashioned in copper, bronze, silver, gold and iron metals.

As a volunteer you will be part of a crew of between 4-7 depending on the size of the event. You will be trained in basic techniques by Simon to then go on and assist in workshops.

Your Role as a Volunteer

You will assist in building and disassembly of a portable structure that reflects the culture and period. You will help set-up and pack-down the forge workshop and make camp ready for the event. All volunteers will come together and create a shift rota working a 4-6 hour day. In exchange you are given a ticket into the main event. The shifts are split over the day from 10am – 5 or 6pm so you get plenty of time out in the festival to enjoy it, or when off shift you can work on your own project in Celtic metal work. Simon will help and guide you when he has time once the festival is up and running. You will no doubt make new friends with the other crew members as we are all earthy craft makers!



Once OakClan is set up and ready you will take part in an induction into how we operate, followed by training in basic Iron Age metal forming, chasing and repoussé works in copper. During this time you will make your own items to take home with you. Thereafter during the event you will go on to teach basic skills of a Celtic Smith, in cold metal works, to the public, supported by Simon.

When on shift you will be expected to make ready the workshop space and assist in engaging with the public about what we do, and teach the basic skills you have learnt. When off shift you are free to do as you please at your own leisure out in the event however if you prefer to work on your own project within the forge, you are most welcome. There is therefore the potential to learn more advanced skills during the event if time permits.



Meals

Three Meals are provided each day during the event and during set up and pack down. Please note that if you need any special foods it is advisable to bring them with you as it is difficult for us to cater for some special diets while traveling on the road. We also work out a rota for cooking and share cooking chores, so its helpful if you are willing to muck in with domestic duties. There will also be a selection of teas etc always available.



Kit you Need to Bring

1. High visibility waistcoat - Needed to get on-site.
2. Photo ID - Needed to get on-site.
3. You will need a small tent, bed roll and sleeping bag.
4. Casual working clothes.
5. Boots and/or wellington boots
6. Warm/summer clothes (you may wish to bring nice clothes for your evenings)
7. Personal hygiene supplies* (wash gear & towel)
8. Any extra needs (special food diets)
9. Phone charger USB cable**

* There normally are shower facilities for crew at most events.

** We have our own solar energy for charging your phones, cameras etc...

Costs & Expenses

We would be most grateful if you finance your own travelling expenses to and from the events that you are able to attend, however for any volunteers that are able to commit to more than one event the OakClan Forge would be able to contribute to your travel expenses. It is advisable for volunteers to bring some spending money for their own leisure when not on shift as there will be much entertainment and performing arts on offer.

How to Apply

For interested applicants please send an email with a brief description about yourself and why this work experience would be beneficial to you, along with details of subjects you're currently studying or have studied along with any experiences you have had that may be of interest to us, but experience is not essential.

Please list the events you are able to attend. Please note placements are limited, so its advisable to "strike while the iron is hot"!

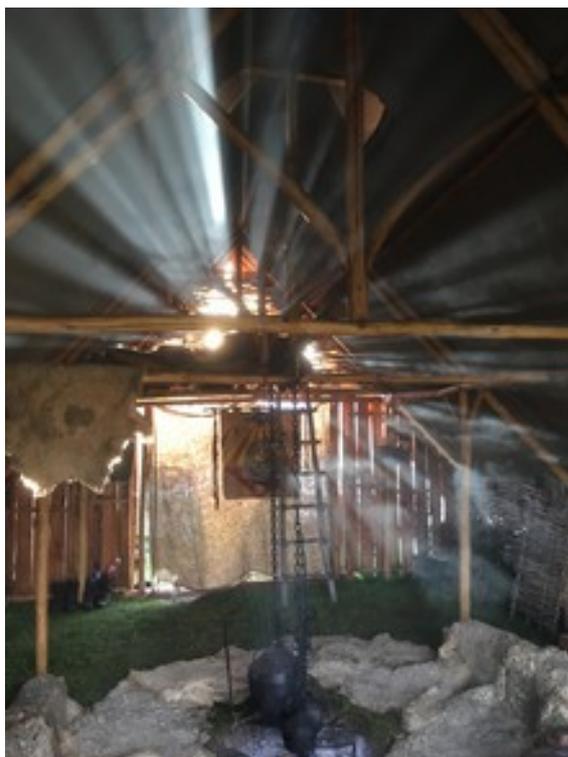
Feel free to contact Simon for any further questions.

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T/A Simon Summers Heritage Blacksmith



Events and Festival Dates & Locations 2018

1. TEWKESBURY MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL.

Dates: 11th/12th July - evening of the 15th July.

Location: Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

2. BUDDHAFIELD FESTIVAL.

Dates: 16th July - 23rd July.

Location: Nr Wellington, Taunton, Somerset,

3. CAMP BESTIVAL FESTIVAL.

Dates: 24th July - 30th July.

Location: Lulworth Castle, Dorset.

4. WILDERNESS FESTIVAL.

Dates: 31st July - 6th August.

Location: Cornbury Park, Charlbury, Oxfordshire, OX7 3DG.

5. WILDERNESS GATHERING.

Dates: 13th August - 20th August.

Location: West Knoyle, Wiltshire, BA12 6AE.

6. INTO THE WILD FESTIVAL.

Dates: 21st August - 28th August.

Location: East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4QS.

7. GREEN EARTH AWAKENING.

Dates: 8th/9th September - 17th September.

Location: Nr Wellington, Taunton, Somerset.

Ethos and Benefits

The OakClan Forge project thrives by forging Links with our ancestors and our Celtic heritage

The purpose of the workshops Simon has designed have many benefit to all concerned.

1. Educating the public using the ancient Iron Age Forge works will give both students and the public insight into how practical Iron Age skills (Cold metal forming, Chasing and Repoussé) are also entwined with shamanic ceremonial practice and the making of sacred artefacts. Sharing the mythology and psychology behind the ancient technologies strengthens a wider practice of these complex skills.

2. Volunteer Placements will provide students hands-on practical understanding of;

- the methods used to smith objects of treasurable importance,
- the tools needed to accomplish such detailed work,
- the efforts of refining the iron ore used to forging the tools themselves.

3. A period environment immerses students in the journey from learning practical skills, and understanding to mastery of crafting the treasured artefacts in their hands.

4. The relics kept safe by vigilant and dedicated curators are part of a culture formed by our ancient tribal peoples. Heritage is embedded deep within the landscapes, as much as Iron ore is hidden under our hills. Both need to be brought to the surface of our modern times through living practice and community.

Notes

1. Funding generated from these teachings will go back into the OakClan Forge project, which enables us to continue teaching and sharing a craft which carries immense historical value. OakClan Forge propagates a living heritage by breathing air into the smith's hearth were alchemy lingers.

2. Any funds which remain are forwarded to fund Simon Summers Heritage Blacksmith research and experimental archaeology in Iron Age La Tène culture Repoussé works and related smelting/forged workings. This research benefits archaeology by forming a deeper understanding of our ancestral Celtic craft Smiths of the Iron Age period. It is Simon's hope that we will continue to keep discovering treasures of immense beauty beneath our feet. Through understanding these finds interpretations entwine with the Smiths' knowledge of hidden secrets within nature and the earth around us.

3. OakClan Forge carries public liability insurance for £5 million and this covers crew as well as the public.

4. First aid staff are available at all festivals and the Forge carries it's own kit.

5. A fully comprehensive risk assessment for crew and public has been carried out and safety equipment is provided.

