

Chain Bridge Forge

Executive Summary

Chain Bridge Forge offers a unique experience to the local community in Spalding and South Holland. Through its historic setting on the riverside, the Forge offers a range of activities covering Spalding's heritage through a variety of means, including:

- **Blacksmithing**

Regular demonstrations of blacksmithing skills with the chance to have-a-go both for children and adults. Since operating this scheme approximately 300 young people have made and taken home a coat hook

- **History**

Local history through displays at the Forge and social media delivered through www.southhollandlife.com and the sister Facebook and Twitter pages. This includes Oral history project to capture Spalding's past

- **Innovation**

Heritage Craft Virtual Simulation project and 3D printing hub through project collaboration with the University of Lincoln. The aim of this is to use gaming technology to reintroduce craft teaching to schools.

- **Outreach**

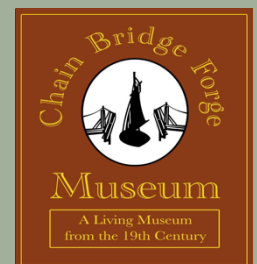
The Forge offers an outreach programme that provides demonstration, talks and online resources.

- **Awards**

The Forge has been successful in achieving Accreditation by the Arts Council. The Forge has also been awarded numerous Heritage and local business awards.



**High Street
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE11 1TX**



Website: <http://chainbridgeforge.sholland.org/> and <http://www.southhollandlife.com>

Facebook - facebook.com/SouthHollandLife and facebook.com/pages/chain-bridge-forge/175846955789834

Twitter: @chainbridgeforg & @shollandlife

You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/chainbridgeforge>

EHive: <https://ehive.com/account/4094>

Wikipedia.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chain_Bridge_Forge,_Spalding

Background

The Friends of Chain Bridge Forge is a not-for-profit organisation established in 2011.

At Chain Bridge Forge we have revived the blacksmith's craft within its original setting, and created a living Museum. Both on site and online, we demonstrate the blacksmithing skills and techniques that would have been used by the Chain Bridge Forge Blacksmiths for centuries.

The Blacksmiths were at the centre of every community, providing the essential services of shoeing horses, making and mending metal tools and wheels. The Forge is a fascinating example with many original features and closely tied to Spalding's history as a port and market town.

The Forge has its origins in the mid 1700's but the building as seen today was constructed in the early nineteenth century, the forge has a number of Blacksmiths starting with Rose, South and Fisher before it came into the possession of George Robert Dodd in 1899. The family worked from these premises for three generations, during a period that saw a steady decline in the blacksmith's role in the community. Adapting to this change, Mr Geoff Dodd, George's grandson, spent much of his career designing and building the frames for floats in Spalding's Flower Parade.

In the 1980s, nearing retirement and with the building in a poor state of repair, Mr Dodd approached the South Holland District Council (SHDC) to take on the forge. The site was purchased from him by SHDC for the nominal fee of £1, on September 20th 1988. Over the next 20 years the Forge remained untouched, open to the occasional visitor.

In 2011 The Friends of Chain Bridge Forge was formed and took the Forge on a 25 year lease. The Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £50,000 to restore the Forge and make it accessible for both able and disabled people. Today it is a living museum, **free to enter**.

Followed by this a further £10,000 was awarded to the Forge to record the history of the community. This is an added dimension to the way in which we capture and tell the story of Spalding's past, using demonstrations of blacksmithing in its original setting in the Forge with displays telling the story and online through www.southhollandlife.com.

The Forge is run as a business and its sustainability is dependent on its ability to create income to cover its costs. Activities are covered by Public Liability insurance details of which can be supplied upon request.

The Forge also offers disabled access and toilets, a coffee machine and retail space to purchase gifts.

Blacksmithing



One of the key features of the Forge is the demonstration of Blacksmithing at the historic forge.

The Forge offers free admission and for a small charge young people can actively participate under close supervision of the Blacksmith making a coat hook to take home. Children taking part in this activity are dressed in leather apron, gloves, safety glasses and cap. Full risk assessments have been done and the Blacksmith is careful to ensure they are not taken beyond their capability.

The Blacksmithing experience is now also available for adults providing a longer session at a reasonable cost, making it an ideal gift. This is a major attraction during school holidays. Parties such as Cubs, Scout, Rotary and Round Table can also book the Forge for an evening or weekend event. Often these groups will select a couple of people to have a go at Blacksmithing.

Forge Offering

- Blacksmith Demonstrations
- Blacksmithing Taster events for all ages
- Guided Tours of the Forge explaining Blacksmithing and both wheel and horse Shoeing
- The Forge will take on commissions to make bespoke items
- Offers a range of products some of which are Blacksmith made
- Talks in the Community
- Portable Forge at events
- Education Pack, leaflets and video

History

Broadening the scope of the museum, Friends of The Forge offer the social/history of Spalding and the local area. The original focus has been on the Forge and its place in the history of the port of Spalding that thrived until the late 19th century and the expansion of the railways.

The Forge has constructed a library that is a collection of oral histories, transcripts, documents and photographs. The library is accessible through the website <http://www.southhollandlife.com> and regular updates are provided on Facebook and Twitter.

Highlights of the collection are as follows:

- On-line is a searchable database
- Timeline of major events on Spalding's history
- History of the Forge, the Port and local community
- Photographic archives from Ayscoughfee museum
- Archive material from Welland & Deeping Internal Drainage Board
- Oral history transcripts and recordings of trade and social history memories
- A booklet that offers walks around the town. These walks highlight the historic content of Spalding based on 3 walks: The Town, Port of Spalding and Church/Ayscoughfee.
- Walks Videos
- Library of over 500 books relating to Blacksmithing, Farrier and Local History

This is a continuous project with local people encouraged to contribute their memories and documents. The South Holland Facebook is used to stimulate those memories by uploading daily a photograph from the collection. By arrangements presentations are given to local groups



Forge Offering

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- Facebook - facebook.com/SouthHollandLife and facebook.com/pages/chain-bridge-forge/175846955789834
- Twitter: @chainbridgeforg & @shollandlife
- You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/chainbridgeforge>
- Historic Walks booklet
- Videos
- Talks
- Library for research

Innovation - HCVS and 3D Printing

The Heritage Craft Virtual Simulator is a project led by Dr John Murray of the University of Lincoln in partnership with Chain Bridge Forge. The project aims to revive the Blacksmith craft, making it accessible to young people, by using 21st century technology.

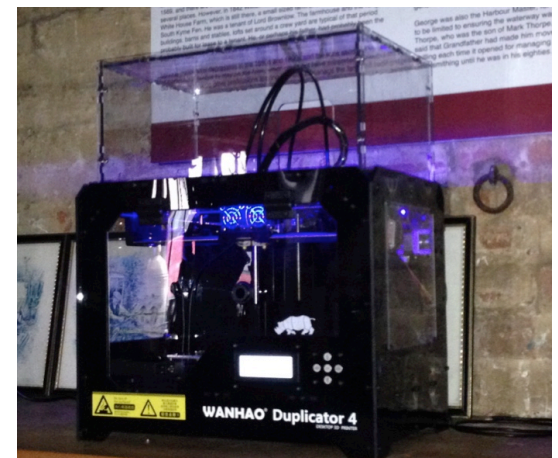
The project uses an Oculus headset to create the environment of the Forge and a Xconnect to translate the hand movements used in Blacksmithing. This is processed by bespoke software to create a virtual image. This image is sent to a 3D printer where it replicates the 3D image and produces the item for the user to keep as a memento of their experience. This project will allow schools to bring back these crafts in a new and safe way.

3D Printing is offering the potential to change how we design and manufacture. At the Forge we believe it offers a new way of working which compliments the tradition of Blacksmithing.

The notion to innovate and excite the classroom, to transform learning processes and to introduce the ability to simplify complex design processes can all be achieved quite simply with a 3D Printer. The Forge believes that 3D printing offers new ways of educating young people from Primary School through to University and beyond. Teaching traditional subjects fits nicely with the new National Curriculum in subjects such as Design & Technology and Art.

Giving students another dimension to learning and give rise to the next generation of Engineers, Designers, Entrepreneurs, Artists and Industry Innovators.

The process of capturing Customer need, then design, manufacture, delivery and feedback can be realised. The manufacturing process is seamless allowing the user to modify, change to the design, tailor sizing, add additional features using a variety of materials ranging from traditional plastics in solid or transparent colours.



Forge Offering

The Forge will offer the following services:

- Demonstrate HCVS simulator and 3D printing at the Forge and outreach to local venues and schools.
- 3D printing HUB to schools and local businesses offering an in-house 3D printing capability
- Where the requirement exceeds the Forge capability then the Forge will offer the services of trusted partners.
- Training at a rudimentary level will be offered and again supported by partners who will be capable of designing in depth educational packages.

Outreach

The Forge offers a number of service where we can come to you. These can be summarized as follows:

- Talks
- Visit by our portable Forge including Blacksmithing demonstration and tasters
- Visit with our HCVS and 3D Printer
- Online resources through our website.

For these services we either charge or ask for a donation. Therefore we suggest you contact us and discuss your requirements.

Contact: Geoff Taylor – 07960 587724 or the preferred method of email on chainbridgeforge@gmail.com

Students and Volunteers

The Forge also welcomes students and volunteers. We believe we can offer an enriching experience in all strands of the Forge activities.

Future Projects

- Grow our Blacksmithing capacity
- Working with schools and young people
- Increase our volunteering maybe start “Men’s Shed”
- Continue to grow our digital offering 3D printing and scanning and offering services to the Community and other Museums. Plus incorporating “Digital Storytelling”

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