

**Arctic Iron Pour
Wiseman Village, AK
Summer Solstice
21 June, 2008**

"Iron Trail to the Arctic"

Arctic Circle Iron Pour: Summer Solstice 2008

The Project

What do you do with 24 hours of daylight? For the participants of the ***"Iron Trail to the Arctic"***, we pour cast iron sculptures north of the Arctic Circle; something that hasn't been attempted on the North American continent, as far as we have been able to ascertain. The team of sculptors and commercial foundrymen will pour sculptures in cast iron using a small version of a traditional coke fueled cupola furnace. The pieces will become a permanent installation at the **Wiseman Village, Alaska** site. Taking advantage of the extended daylight period, the sculptures can be cast, cooled, surface finished, and installed in a single "day".

Sculptors **Wendy Croskrey**, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, **Patrick Garley** of Arctic Fires Bronze Sculpture Works in Palmer, Alaska, and **Meredith Jack**, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX will be under the direction of **Donnie Keen** of Keen Foundry, Houston, TX to produce the commemorative cast iron sculptures. Students from the participating universities and other participants may be added as the project continues.

The Beginnings

As is usual in unusual events, the project germinated following a chance meeting. Pat Garley and Donnie Keen were both participating in an academic iron pour event at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM. The Alaskan sculptor and Texas commercial foundry owner found that they had a mutual fascination with both iron casting and the arctic. Subsequent conversations and general planning sessions brought Wendy Croskrey and Meredith Jack, who have been casting iron in academic venues for a number of years, into the group. It was decided that the only truly appropriate day of the year for such an event would be the summer solstice.

One of the primary impediments to such a project has been the prohibitively high freight charges for bulk materials such as coke fuel when shipped to Alaska. Our solution is to bring it with us from Texas in sufficient quantity to supply both the project and a number of academic and sculpture studios in Alaska. Final costs to these venues will depend on the prevailing price of coke fuel at the time and transportation expenses for the coke fuel and the project participants.

Objectives

Obviously, the primary objective is to successfully cast and install cast iron sculptures north of the Arctic Circle. However there are several other facets to the program. One is to spread the use of cast iron as a sculptural material and to train participants in the workshops to make their own sculptures in iron. The inclusion of students from various institutions into the project furthers their educational experience. The availability of the coke fuel that we will transport and the trained participants we leave behind will spread the use of cast iron as a sculptural material

Another major facet of this project is to demonstrate that casting iron really isn't rocket science and that any reasonably competent person can build and operate an iron casting facility, anywhere.

The cast iron that will be used to create the art pieces will be cast iron scrap from local sources. This iron will be melted and recast into objects of art both functional and conceptual.

Outcomes

The project will be presented at academic and industrial conferences. Both Meredith Jack and Donnie Keen have been involved with past International Conferences on Contemporary Cast Iron Art and biennial Southern Iron Conferences, where the project will be presented. *Modern Casting*, the journal of the American Foundry Society, has indicated an interest in printing an article about the project. Other media outlets are being explored and we expect extensive local coverage around the workshops. There will be exhaustive documentation from beginning to end.

Scope of the Project

The operational plan is to drive a truck and trailer from Texas to Alaska with the coke fuel and any necessary materials and equipment. The trail will begin in Houston, TX on Saturday May 30, 2008. We estimate that it will take twelve days to drive to Fairbanks, AK. Along the way we are seeking venues to pour and install small commemorative plaques to mark the trail. It is expected that participants will join and leave the trail as their schedules allow.

Once we arrive in Alaska, we will demonstrate "set sand" molding and spend a couple of days in Palmer AK to make molds for the pour in Wiseman. On June 19th we travel by vehicle to Wiseman, a small village fifty miles north of the Arctic Circle. This is a journey of 300 miles from Fairbanks up the Dalton Highway. Participants who have chosen to fly to Fairbanks will join the trail at this point.

Upon arrival, we set up the equipment and materials. On Saturday June 21st.we pour iron. On Sunday, we clean up the site and Monday begin the long trek back down the Dalton Highway, through Fairbanks where those participants who are flying out of Fairbanks will leave the trail.

Further travel gets us to Wasilla, AK, northeast of Anchorage, to do a second iron pour and workshop. The iron pour will be on Saturday June 28th at the Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry in Wasilla. This pour will be part of the Art on Fire Festival which will also feature artists demonstrating other art forms that use fire as part of the process such as blacksmiths and raku fired ceramics. Arctic Fires Bronze Sculpture Works and the Valley Arts Alliance are the contacts for this event. Prior to the Wasilla Pour. There will be mold making workshops held at Arctic Fires Bronze sculpture works in Palmer, AK. Those participants who are flying out of Anchorage will leave the trail after the Wasilla workshop.

The following week on the 4th of July a pour will be held 200 miles south of Anchorage in the city of Kenai, Alaska. Mold workshops will be held prior to the pour in Kenai at Metal Magic Custom Metal fabricators. The pour will be held at a city owned ball field and will be part of the city of Kenai's 4th of July festivities. After the pour, the vehicles will begin the long trail back to Houston.

Meredith Jack and Donnie Keen will be available for lectures and/or workshops while in transit to the arctic and back. Everything from a complete iron casting foundry to plans and specifications for a cupola furnace and ancillary equipment are available.

Meredith Jack and Donnie Keen have over half a century of iron casting experience between them. Keen Foundry was founded in 1959 by Donnie Keen's father. Donnie has operated the foundry since 1987 and has iron and aluminum capacities to 5000 pounds.

Meredith Jack has been casting in academic venues since the 1970's and has worked with Keen Foundry since 1994. He has built and demonstrated furnaces with capacities from eight to 450 pounds. He and Lamar University have the unique distinction of having built and/or operated cupola furnaces at all five of the International Conferences on Contemporary Cast Iron Art, beginning in 1988 through the Ironbridge, England conference in 2006.

Contact Information:

Donnie Keen
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Patrick Garley
Arctic Fires Bronze Sculpture Works
15615 Outer Springer Loop
Palmer, AK 99645
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Scott Hamann
Metal Magic custom metal fabrication
P.O. box 934
Kenai, AK 99611
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Metalmagicalaska.com

Donnie Earl Keen
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Houston, TX 77093
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Employment:

1987-Present **Keen Foundry, Houston, TX – Owner/Operator**
Iron & Aluminum Castings to 5000Lb
2000 -1994 **Sofie Outfitters, Sofie, NM**
Custom Antelope Hunting Expeditions
1987-71 **Refrigeration/Air Conditioning Specialist**
Various Companies in Northeast Texas
1971-70 **US Army**
MOS 11B20, RVN one extended tour

Academic Affiliations:

2007-1994 **Ferrous Casting Consultant**
Lamar University, Beaumont, TX
2005 **Cupola Consultant**
University of Southern Mississippi,
Hattisburg, MS

Conferences, Symposia, & Workshops:

2007 **Panelist – “Cupola Metallurgy”,**
Southern Iron Conference, Sloss Furnaces
Historic Site, Birmingham, AL
“Iron Tribe”, New Mexico Highlands University
Las Vegas, NM
Iron Pour Demonstrator, Spiraling Orchard Park,
Los Angeles, CA
2006 5th International Conference on Contemporary Cast
Iron Art, Ironbridge, UK
4th Keen foundry Symposium, Houston, TX
16 Sculptors from 6 States
2005 3rd Keen Foundry Symposium, Houston, TX
12 Sculptors from 10 States
Keynote Speaker
Southern Iron Conference, Sloss Furnaces
Historic Site, Birmingham, AL
2004 2nd Keen Foundry Symposium, Houston, TX
11 Sculptors from 7 States
2003 Keen Foundry Symposium, Houston, TX
12 Sculptors from 7 States
2002 4th International Conference on Contemporary Cast
Iron Art, Johnson Atilier, Mercerville, NJ
Demonstrator & Panelist
2000 Iron Casting Workshop for the 22nd International
Sculpture Conference, Houston, TX
1998 3rd International Conference on Contemporary Cast
Iron Art, Johnson Atilier, Mercerville, NJ
Demonstrator & Panelist



Spiral Orchard Park
 ArtcorpsLA
 Los Angeles, CA
 July 2006

Workshop and Iron Pour for community based "art park".

- 1) Planning with staff interns & community.
 - 2) Set-up of 100 pound Cupolette
 - 3) Cupolette "tap-out"
 - 4) Pouring community "scratch block" molds
- Below: Community Event Poster



Meredith Jack
5219 Cochran
Houston, TX 77009

713-695-3299
713-695-5928 fax
jackmm@hal-pc.org

EDUCATION:

1972 Master of Fine Arts: Sculpture
Tyler School of Art/ Temple University Philadelphia, PA
1969 U.S. Army Signal School
Ft. Monmouth, NJ
1967 Bachelor of Fine Arts: Drawing & Printmaking University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS

EMPLOYMENT:

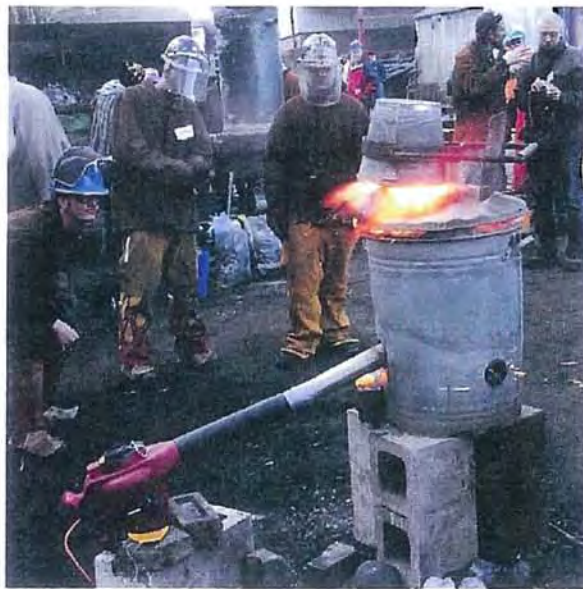
1977 to
Present: Professor Lamar University, Beaumont, TX

EXHIBITIONS:

2007
"Iron Tribe", New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM
"Art On the Green", Kemp Center for the Arts, Wichita Falls, TX
2006
Iron 2006, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Ironbridge, England
Two Person Exhibit, Ellen Noel Museum, Odessa TX
2005
One Person Exhibit, Art Car Museum of Houston, Houston, TX
Contemporary Cast Iron, National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, TN
2004
"Hot Topic: A Contemporary Invitational", University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kearney, NB
Outdoor Group Exhibit, Sloss National Furnaces, Birmingham, AL
2003
Gallery Artists, Galerie Luca, Zaltbommel, NL
Two Person Exhibit, 101 Gallery, Houston, TX
2002
"2300 Degrees/2002", Grounds for Sculpture, Mercerville, NJ
"Keen Idea", Dakota Lofts, Houston, TX
2001
Three Person Exhibit, Galerie Luca, Zaltbommel, NL
"Outdoor Sculpture", North Harris College, Houston, TX
2000
"Miniatures", Hooks-Epstein Gallery, Houston, TX
"Houston Sculpture 2000", First City Plaza, Houston, TX
1999
One Person Exhibit, Weekend Gallery, Houston, TX
"Sculpture Park", Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA
1998
"Cast in Iron", Grounds for Sculpture, Mercerville, NJ
TriState Exhibit, Beaumont Art League, Beaumont, TX
1997
One person Exhibit, San Antonio College, San Antonio, TX
One Person Exhibit, North Harris College, Houston, TX



"Oscar the Grouch Cupolette #4"
35 pound capacity
L-R Donnie Keen, Rick Batten, Meredith Jack
5th International Conference on Contemporary Cast Iron Art
Ironbridge, England
March 2006



"Oscar" under blast

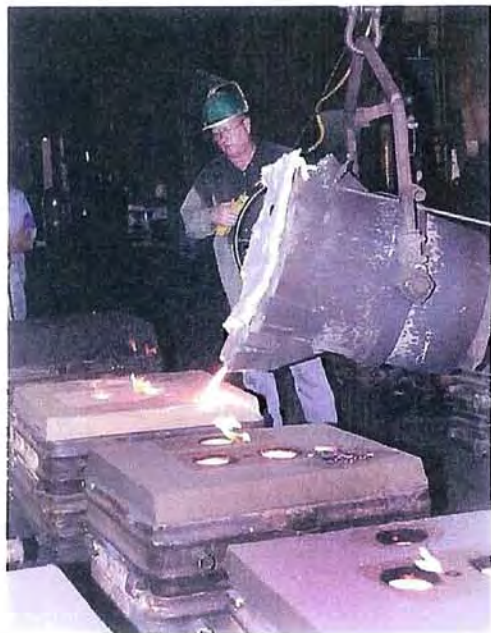
All Photographs By:
J. Forrest Goodhue
Beaumont, TX

Logo Design: **Jacob Adelman**
Beaumont, TX

IRON TRAIL TO THE ARCTIC PLANNING CALENDAR

The dates for the Mold Making Workshops are subject to change. Please check with contacts for final schedule.

MAY 2008						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 Mold making workshop Palmer, AK
25 Mold making workshop Palmer, AK	26	27	28	29	30	31
JUNE 2008						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Mold making workshop Palmer AK	18 Mold making workshop Palmer AK	19	20	21 Iron Pour Wiseman, AK
22	23	24	25	26 Mold making workshop Palmer, AK	27 Mold making workshop Palmer, AK	28 Iron Pour Wasilla, AK
29	30					
JULY 2008						
		1	2 Mold Workshop Kenai, AK	3 Mold Workshop Kenai, AK	4 Iron Pour Kenai, AK	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12



Iron Trail to the Arctic

Sponsors list

Bushes Bunches Stand	Palmer, AK
Valley Arts Alliance	Palmer, AK
Keen Foundry Inc.	Houston, TX
Metal Magic Custom Metal Fabrication	Kenai, AK
City of Kenai	Kenai, AK
Arctic Fires Bronze Sculpture works	Palmer, AK
Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry	Wasilla, AK
Ashland Chemicals	Columbus, Ohio
ABC Coke	Birmingham, AL
Forrest Goodhue Photography	Silsbee, TX