



Iron . . . Special steel . . . Heritage

Buderus Edelstahl actively supports the reconstruction of the medieval hammer forge in the UNESCO World Heritage Cistercian monastery in Fontenay, France.

Monks forge Europe

At the end of the 11th century, Christianity was finally established in Europe and the Cistercian order founded hundreds of new monasteries throughout Central Europe, starting from Burgundy. This rapidly disseminated knowledge and new technologies such as hydropower, constructing mills, and forging, underpinning and ensuring the progress and prosperity of people in the heart of Europe to this day. So you could well think of the monks of this order as being the patriarchs of the "European Idea".

The Johann-Philipp-Reis School in Friedberg has been working successfully since 2005 with students from Poland, France, the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania on the Comenius Project, a European project for researching common roots and perspectives for a secure future in peace, freedom and prosperity. The technical emphasis of the project is on faithful reconstructions of water driven forges from the twelfth century in Fontenay

monastery, and on the mediaeval extraction process in a blast furnace they made themselves.

"Strike while the iron is hot"

As soon as this worthwhile project was announced, the General Manager of Open Die Forging, Ralph Rech, personally committed himself to implementing it, and invited the Friedberg class of the School of Engineering to participate in implementing their designs. The forging hammer itself was then made in the Buderus Edelstahl GmbH open die forge, on the 20 MN press, and given a hammer eye. The 2000 tonne hammer is then driven by a wooden water wheel specially constructed to the students' own design, like all the components.

*Forged hammerhead
made of Buderus
special steel for
World Heritage*



Model of the monastery's forge



The hammerhead arrives at the Fontenay monastery



European youth group watch the hammer being forged in Wetzlar

France is always worth a visit, especially for the inauguration of the mediaeval forge in Fontenay on 9 May 2008. Buderus Edelstahl employees and friends are particularly welcome when another highlight of World Heritage is presented to visitors. You will find further information on this exciting project on www.comenius-fontenay.de or on www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fontenay.