



# A Day in the Life of Freddy Furnace

An Apprentice at Sheffield Forgemasters

by Wildago

Freddy Furnace is experiencing his first day of work at Sheffield Forgemasters International Limited. Interacting with a cast of colourful colleagues, the young apprentice features in six commissioned paintings. All characters are fictitious but Freddy is the only one who is *not* based on a real person...





*Some people have said  
that George La Forge looks  
a bit like Dr. Honeyman.*

## Introduction

Not long after meeting Sheffield Forgemasters CEO, Dr. Graham Honeyman, I became keenly aware of his passion and respect for the people who work for him. I believe this to be a key factor in the Company's success story. And what a story it is!

So when he asked me to create a piece of boardroom artwork that would tell a tale about Sheffield Forgemasters, I knew it should be about the people who work there. And the more I got to know about the Company and its staff, the more enthusiastic I became.

Many of the skills required to work at Forgemasters are so specialised they can only be learned on the job. For this reason Dr. Honeyman takes a particular interest in the Company's apprenticeship scheme.

Feeling rather like an apprentice myself, I had a lot to learn about the steel industry in general and Sheffield Forgemasters in particular. I expected darkness and industrial dirt and gloom and wondered how I could create the artwork in my colourful style. There were countless meetings, site visits and photographs of people and places at the Brightside Lane operations. Always I sensed when talking to staff that Dr. Honeyman's passion and pride had infected them too. They all seemed to work hard, loved being part of a special company and were happy to share all sorts of colourful ideas for me to paint (often without realising it).

But it's not just team spirit that is huge at Forgemasters. The buildings are intimidatingly massive, filled with scary machinery and great balls of fire! There are workers dressed in heat-resistant suits who remind me of the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*. I saw steel scrap become liquid fire and I learned about the processes that transformed it into enormous finished components destined for places all over the world. Hurrah Sheffield!

Thus Freddy Furnace was created, a young apprentice on his first day of work at Sheffield Forgemasters. (He's the one wearing a learner sign!) There are six chronological scenes, beginning with Freddy's early rise from bed and ending with a staff picnic at the Forgemasters nature reserve. With a light-hearted approach, I surrounded the apprentice with a supporting cast of characters who bear an uncanny resemblance to actual directors and other staff. To protect the innocent, all characters have been given pseudonyms. For example, Don Julio Jominy in his sombrero looks a bit like Jesus the R&D Director, and Ingrid Ingot reminds some people of Nurse Paula.

I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Dr. Honeyman for the privilege of spending most of 2012 working on this commission, and to Siobhan Newton, my dear friend and patron, for the introduction and encouragement. This has by far been my most enjoyable project to date.

Wildago

*Keep an eye out for a little blackbird in some of the paintings. He represents the CEO when he can't be there himself.*





## Painting No. 1 Rise and Shine

Freddy Furnace's submarine alarm clock has gone off at 5:00 AM. He doesn't want to be late so he has slept in his hard hat and safety goggles, perhaps handed down from his grandfather who is pictured on the wall. Freddy's heavy metal guitar features the Forgemasters 'flower' logo and we can see the reading material that influences this keen young man.









## Painting No. 2 Freddy Arrives

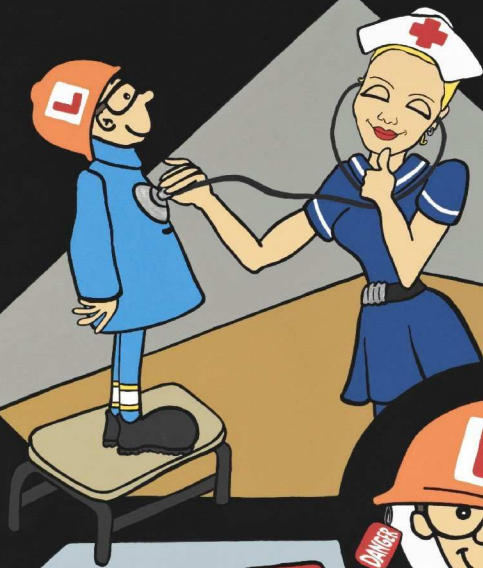
Inside the four 'petals' of the Forgemasters logo, clockwise from top left:

(1) A thumbs-up from Ingrid Ingot means Freddy is fit for duties.

(2) Freddy meets the big boss, George La Forge, outside Reception beside a quirky sculpture of Pan.

(3) Kазzy Cast welcomes Freddy with a hot cuppa and invites him to the after-work party.

(4) Freddy undergoes health and safety training and gets some light reading for homework.





### Painting No. 3 Scorpio Rising

Three wise monkeys - Rusty Scrap, Stevie Steel and Freddy himself - are in the melt shop where a new scorpion sculpture is being made. Martin Site and Don Julio Jominy are doing their technical analysis while Health and Safety Director, Mister Happy, is on standby.







#### Painting No. 4 Lunch al Forno

Directors of Vulcan (Harris Ferrous, Mister Spockford and Vinnie Volcano) have been lured from the foundry by smells of very hot pizzas coming from the forge. Sparker the Forge MD is on his coffee break, while Freddy's baking skills are being assessed by Quality Assurance Director Wentzell Tensile.







## Painting No. 5 The Da Vinci Crew

Freddy's special pizzas are good enough even for a last supper! He proudly presents them to board members who are being painted by an artist with a 'habit' of poking fun at her subjects. At the table from left to right: Plutonium clutching a 'man purse' and wearing his favourite Oakley sun glasses. Rusty Scrap is photographing a flying visitor on the coffee cup in front of Meltdown Millie. Heart throb Al Luring is reaching behind Stevie Steel to rouse the sleeping Harris Ferrous. Don Julio Jominy is not impressed with Stevie Steel's Sunderland coffee cup. Behind iPhone-happy CEO George La Forge, Billy Budget is waving his abacus near Sparker's head. Standing behind Sparker and guitarist Vinnie Volcano is Rockwell Hardness. And last but not never least, Martin Site works on his technical drawings.







## Painting No. 6 The Picnic

Elegant Kazzy Cast welcomes colleagues who have left the stresses of work behind in favour of fun and adventure in the award-winning Forgemasters garden. And there are more than a few James Bond wannabes in the crowd! Rusty Scrap and Wentzel Tensile have taken to the skies. Plutonium's trying out his new bicycle and Don Julio Jominy has a stunt of his own. Sparker's bad hair days disappear when he sees his likeness is Daniel Craig. And speaking of Bond, is that Al Luring in the blue swimming trunks?

## The Picnic (continued)

Stevie Steel is in charge of the cooking and it looks like Harris Ferrous has caught something for the grill. Hammer Smith is teeing off from the playground node while Vulcans Mister Spockford and Vinnie Volcano pop out to see if the giant hotdog has arrived. And hold the phone Irma Thermal! Pan wants to play some jazz before taking his next call. On a more serious note, Lady Dye has brought her dead bonsai to Meltdown Millie for composting while Rockwell Hardness and Billy Budget try to outsmart each other with hopes of winning Martin Site's pot of gold. Of course the health and safety people, Mister Happy and Ingrid Ingot are ready for any eventuality.

*(The Picnic painting is on the next two pages.)*











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