

Jenkins, James W.



Blacksmith

Mr. James Jenkins is a life-long resident of Tickfaw, Louisiana where he lives with wife Maxine and their five children. Born in 1937, Mr. Jenkins was reared as a devout Baptist.

James taught himself blacksmith work, which is his present occupation. He has passed many of these skills down to one of his sons. In the tradition of blacksmiths, James surrounds himself with the tools of his time-honored trade and those of blacksmiths before him. James is able to make most anything he desires. He uses iron, steel, and wood to create gates, fireplace tools, door hinges, latches, and s-hooks for potholders, cooking utensils, lantern holders, wagon wheels, and knives. The tools he uses to make these items are a forge, anvil, hammer, and punch tongs.

Mr. Jenkins is not only a blacksmith, but he is also a broom, a cane syrup, a pitchfork and an ox-yoke maker. At the family home outside of Tickfaw, James works in the fields with draft horses and holds an annual sugar cane grinding and syrup making day. James Jenkins has performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival, and has had displays at various festivals across the state of Louisiana.

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