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THE TEXAS FORGE REVIEW

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WINTER 1987

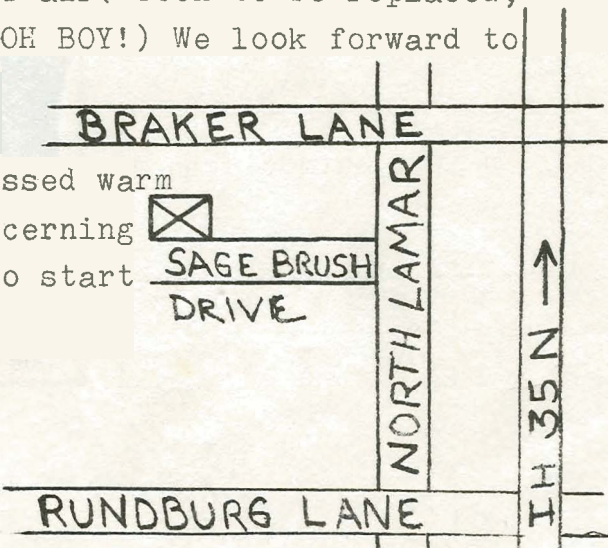
To my many friends in this small world of Blacksmiths, this coming Spring issue will be my last to publish. I have carried this responsibility since January 1982 and hope to pass this on to someone, perhaps willing to put more into it than I. My goal for the newsletter has been reached for a few years, being simply to pass on news of events and to support financially the Blacksmith Get Togethers. It has though, been a continued struggle in collecting the \$5.00 or more dues. This issue I didn't even bother to mark those who do owe, something over 50% of the members. I do believe that to keep up interest we need a committee of men to look into a yearly event other than the local fellowships, which in themselves are wonderful and a great tool for promotion for the host smith. (My gathering in November brought in both small sales and architectural commissions.) But are they that effective on the State level, perhaps a juried exhibit for Texas smiths only? What ever goals or directions we take corporately is dependant on your involvement which is time, money and transportation. Debbie and I have thoroughly enjoyed our time as editors of this small paper, it has enriched our lives, as I hope in some way yours. your fires bright and may God prosper all that you lay your hand to.

PAST NEWS

The Texas Blacksmith Jamboree, held Nov. 15th by Don & Debbie Morelock was far beyond their expectations being the first event of this kind held in Central Texas. A little over one hundred people were introduced to the sight, sounds and smells of the shop. The demonstrations went smooth even though my electric blower just about gave its last gasp of air(soon to be replaced, after the 1 H.P. motor on the power hammer is, OH BOY!) We look forward to doing this again come November.

UPCOMING

Valentines Day at Red Lion Forge, come dressed warm for a day of demonstrations and discussions concerning Blacksmithin in Texas. Host Perry Cann plans to start at 9am and have BBQ for lunch. See you there!!
910 Sagebrush Dr. Austin 512/836-3581



LOGO CONTEST CONTINUED

Once again everyone is invited to submit a drawing for use as a logo on the 1987 newsletters. The winner will be picked at the Feb. 14th get-together and will receive a beautiful German Peddinghaus hammer. Your name should be on the back, out of site of the judges. We've received two outstanding drawings to date. Just be creative..

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

You have a fine little paper, but ther is something missing. When they hear "member of the Texas Forge Review," a term you used in the last issue, people tend to get a funny expression on their faces. What we need is a group with a name; no officers, no by-laws, no regular meetings; membership strictly to subscribers of the Review. How about Texas Forge Association? Or South-Western Iron-Pounding Enthusiasts (SWIPE)? Or, God forbid, Association on Non-Violent Iron Lovers(ANVIL)?

Hang in there...Ellis Burges

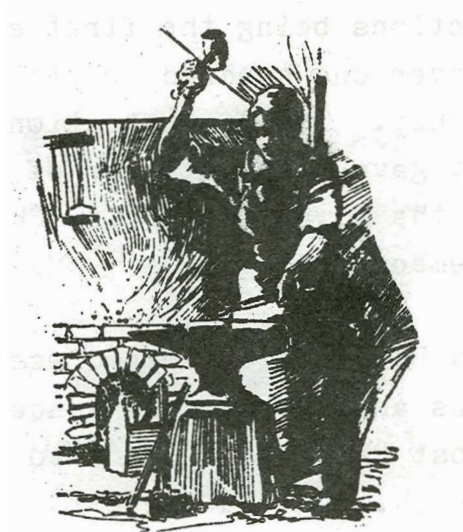
TIPS

Larry Smith of Addison, Tx. suggest rather than using 1" square stock for hardy tools, is to use pipe squared up & driven into the hardy hole & then arc weld to your tool

OPPORTUNITY

Full-time position in metalsmithing studio opening March 1st 1987. Must have intermediate knowledge of metalworking techniques and be able to make a commitment for at least one year. Call or Write:

Joseph Pehoski
P.O. Box 84
Salado, Tx. 76571
Studio 817-947-5740
947-5389



Czechoslovakian Ironworks.

Vaclav Jaros.

From the historical point of view, Czech Ironworks represent the middle-European circle.

As blacksmithing is an international craft it shows many influences here, but at the same time local and specific features are present. We may therefore truly say that throughout history Czech blacksmiths were not only receiving, but giving as well.

A temporary decrease of craftwork in the second quarter of this century brought a relative isolation from artcraft in other parts of the world. Today the ironworkers count themselves more like sculptors in iron, or an artist in general, than like the Craftsman Blacksmith of the past.

Ornamental ironwork is not considered to be a creative art and work in stylised blacksmithing is made only for restoration work.

Last year an invitation from the Crafts Council gave us a feeling of oneness with another great family of ironworkers, and I hope that we can continue our relationship.

Here, the same as in other European countries, in the last century industry has begun to produce almost everything for mans daily needs, and the arts and crafts separated itself from mass production, as the producer for those that were not satisfied by cheap quickly made industrial products. Even today when another social aspect of self-satisfaction for the creator is present, this fact is still valid.

Another social dimension has become true. Together with the other arts, crafts have become an important corrective for the development of forms, shapes, and other aesthetical values for industry and mass need.

In this sense our blacksmith craft lost its activity, at least for some time. Nothing lost though by our activity and by permanent confrontation with other arts such as sculpture, graphics and architecture, we may bring it to the top again.

It is a waste of time to discuss who still belongs to our circle. Work with iron is so different and specific that this is already enough for grouping people together. None will lose by brotherhood.

We all live in a period that is a culmination of iron age. Nothing e.g. chemistry, electronics, spaceflights etc. are possible without iron. In our work we must justify why the object is made from iron and worked the way it was. We must be able to create something new and not rest on that which history has given us. No one may ever do better baroque gates or grilles than the baroque blacksmiths made, for the gate made in baroque style in 1981 is not a baroque gate anymore.

The iron is used when strength, resistance and durability is needed and it would be grotesque to use it for imitation. Is it not funny to see such a solid firm material worked by hammer on bedroom doors made of plywood?

We have always carefully considered in what context our iron-made object will live. Handworked iron in todays surroundings is very prominent by its character and colour, and we must be careful not to make a hasty judgement from this fact. The way it was worked is in contrast with the industrial made objects and is a kind of decoration in itself. Surely the object is there to get attention or give a place of rest for the eyes, but in a gentle manner.

As black is a rare colour, in contrast with almost everything, we should use iron only on those places that deserve such attention. Often grey, iron grey or rusty colour, such as the Spaniards used, may give much more peaceful and warm expression of hospitality and gentle nobility. Such a well treated piece of iron may do a miracle in an impersonal space. The day will come and architects will realize this.

We should not underestimate simplicity. A simple object when made professionally with knowledge and understanding is communicating eternity, stability, trustworthiness and creating unrepeatable atmosphere of necessity in which we unconsciously feel good.

It will last for ever, it is as nature and it is that which fascinates us. Our relation towards it is true, not pretentious, no matter whether we own it or not. The proportions of the object can have a great decorative effect. The handle or other operational part when over emphasised may show the decorative effect well.

No matter how stubborn our materials are, the main property for modern creativeness seems to be plasticity, even when wrought iron is just a dream, and modulating thus should be probably ahead of other working procedures. Even if we use an old powerhammer and our hammer is as big as that of the last century blacksmith, we subconsciously feel that our ability for using strength, shaping and forming has been immensely multiplied by modern technology. And we cannot ignore this fact.

Creating things means giving life to them, in the way that the object fulfills the purpose for which it was created.

~~The latch holding the door, the grille over the windows says 'I am protecting this house and its privacy'. The gate says 'This is the line and the house was built behind me'. The candlestick must stay to hold the candle, we can't take anything away from this basic function otherwise the thing would look strange and incomplete regardless of how we decorate it. Especially in the applied arts, when the logic of function is violated, it evokes unaesthetical feelings. Annoying, repulsive effects are often felt from over decoration as with everything that is greedy and selfish. Often less is more.~~

Throughout history, behind many great ironworkers, were great designers or architects and generally the work was made according to known and practised style and design. Today we work according to our own design. Drawing and modelling is much more important. Most of the creative work or process should be done before we actually start to work on our piece. Conception should be clean.

It is misunderstanding, even with most modern work to think that the craft will limit us. Craft shows how to do easily and quickly, with respect for material that would take a great effort and a lot of time when made by a layman. It is often quite obvious from the first look that not the laws of blacksmithing, but the universal laws were missed when something is made without professional knowledge and respect. No matter whether gate or nail.

Even when we want to revolt against existing laws we first must know them.

Many thanks to Vaclav for this excellent article. ED.

The Artist Blacksmith Association of San Angelo Is seeking New Members

Are you interested in Learning
Blacksmithing or if you need
a workshop to do some of your own
work in an existing shop? Please
contact us.

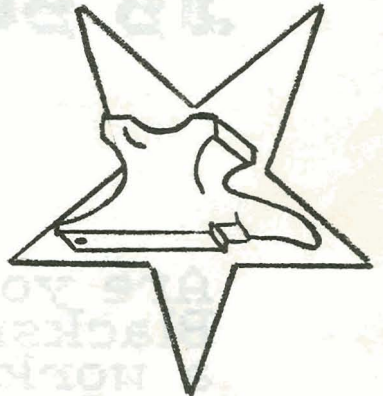
Pat Cheatham
734 Parsons
San Angelo
Texas 76903

or leave a message
@ 653-0520

We now have a blacksmith shop that
is furnished with hand tools and we
are continuing to make new ones. We
would like to find more interested
persons to join us in a learning
fellowship. If you are anyone else
would like to join us please spread
the word about us and come & join in.

The Artist Blacksmith Association
of

Wendell Broussard
Rt. 1, Box 64B
Smithville, TX 78957



TEXAS FORGE REVIEW
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Send information, subscriptions and articles to
Don and Debbie Morelock, Rt.1, Box 260 Brownwood,
Texas 76801. Regular membership \$5.00 a sustaining
membership of \$10.00 or more helps provide the
finances to support the Blacksmith fellowships.

OR leave a message
833-0530

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