

THE HABA LETTER

The Newsletter of the Houston Area Blacksmith's Association Inc.

To Preserve and Promote the Art and Craft of Blacksmithing
Through Education.

HABA Web Site: www.habairon.org

January 2003 Edition

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FEBRUARY MEETING - HINGES

MARCH MEETING - WELDING

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THE FEBRUARY 15 HABA MEETING

The February HABA Meeting will be held at Tudor Forge in Magnolia, TX. The start time for the meeting will be 9:00.

Dave Koenig recently completed four sets of gate hardware. There were a total of 12 angle hinges, two bolts, two Suffolk latches and two "U shaped flip latches". The February meeting demonstration will focus on making a one piece pintle and an angle hinge that requires a "T" weld.

The stock size for the angle hinges was three sixteenths by one inch flat bar. The pintle stock size was seven sixteenths round bar.

If time permits, he will also demonstrate the Suffolk latch handle from one quarter inch by one inch flat bar.

What to Bring:

- Safety Glasses with side shields. They are required.



- A forge and related tools if you have them.
- Gloves and hearing protection suggested.
- A sack lunch unless you go to town for lunch.

Directions to Tudor Forge

Take 249 NW from Houston. Travel through the towns of Tomball, Decker Prairie and Pinehurst. At Pinehurst 249 changes to 1774. Stay on 1774. About three miles ahead on 1774 look for a Texaco station on the west side of the road. One half mile past the Shell station, turn left or west on Tudor Way. There is a small white realtor office on the corner. You will find the forge about a mile down the road.

From the intersection of 1488 and 1774 in Magnolia, go south on 1774 about 4 miles. Look for Tudor Way just after the Country Jamboree building. If you see the Shell station you went too far.

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THE MARCH 22 HABA MEETING

NOTE: THE MARCH HABA MEETING WILL BE ON THE FOURTH SATURDAY OF THE MONTH AND NOT THE THIRD!

The March HABA meeting will be a welding workshop for those who never had a chance to weld and an opportunity for experienced welders to learn about the latest welding technology.

This workshop started out with Robert Killbuck and Bobby Tedder and Les Cook talking up the welding workshop idea. The workshop was added to HABA's meeting agenda where Ed Malmgren read about it. Ed is on the board of the American Welding Society and contacted Lincoln Electric to see if they had any interest in hosting a HABA meeting.

Lincoln's manager Tom Angelino was very interested so the March welding workshop got expanded from a workshop for just beginners to a workshop for the beginners and an opportunity for the experienced welders to learn all about the latest welding technology.

This is a very good example of how a simple meeting idea can turn into a remarkable opportunity. Members are stepping forward to contribute their time and ideas more and more within HABA and it shows the strength of this growing organization

Lincoln Electric is located in Suite 585, 770 Bradfield, Houston, 77060. This located in the NW quadrant of intersection of Beltway 8 and Hardy. Lincoln's phone number is 281-847-9444 and our hosts are Tom Angelino, Manager and Dan Hernandez Assistant Manager.

The schedule looks like this:

- 08:00: Sign in, donuts and coffee provided by Ed Malmgren
- 08:30: The first classroom session starts with up to thirty people.
- Part of the agenda will be a plasma cutter demo and hands on with the cutter.
- Welding and forging begin after the first class if there are less than thirty people.
- Begin a second classroom session if needed.
- 12:00: Break for lunch. Bring your own lunch or visit a local eating establishment.
- Continue welding and forging after lunch.
- 4:30: Wrap up

What to Bring

Bring your own welder as long as it is self powered. (No John. Your welder

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does not need to be a Lincoln. Your Bobcat will be welcome.)

Bring your hood and gloves if you have them. There will some hoods and gloves available for folks who do not have them.

Bring your safety glasses with side shields and wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants and work shoes. Please Note: NO SNEAKERS, SANDALS OR ANY TYPE OF OPEN SHOES WILL BE ALLOWED

Bring your forge if you have one. Our hosts would like to see some forge

welding and to try their hand at it. This is also an opportunity to do general forging like at any other HABA meeting.

This is going to be a great meeting, an opportunity to learn all about the latest in welding technology, do some plasma cutting and practice welding with a stick.

JANUARY MEETING SUMMARY

Lee and Judy Oates hosted the Fourth Annual HABA Knife Making Workshop

and Lee's new shop in La Porte, TX. This was a very organized meeting and things ran like clockwork. This year all but of few of the blades were forged from pattern welded steel.



Fifty two people singed in and there were more who did not. Lee's estimate is that twenty-five to thirty blades were made that day. They came in all different shapes. All that remained to be done to complete most knives was to attach the handle.

The day started with a short business meeting around 9:30.



There were several gas forges going in the shop and outside. Lee's demo



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was expertly done. When he finished he passed out a sheet of paper describing the steps he demonstrated and people went to work.

Just about noon Judy Oates and Sharon Heathcock served a lunch of taco stew for those who wanted to dine-in. The stew could not have been better!

As some people were still eating, Tom Lundquist called the HABA Auction. The



results were not as good as past years because not as many auction items were donated. Everyone had a good time while it lasted and Tom got about every dime the group was willing to part with that day.

Blade forging continued right up to about 5:30. There were a lot of smiles on people's faces who walked away with a forged blade. This was specially the case for those people who made a knife for the first time and forged for the first time.

CLOSING THE

BLACKSMITH SHOP

by Violet Edwards-Jones
(for Hanford)

Gentleness, Hey, Gentlemen!
Step right up this way!
Gather close around the shop
For we're selling out today.

Come, now! Who will buy the forge
Where iron and challenger meet?
Think about it seriously.
Can you withstand the heat?

If the forge you choose to take,
Then take the bellows too.
For either taken by itself
Will be of no use to you.

They're companions like my wife and I
Who have labored side by side
To keep the farmer in his field
And our family's needs supplied.

Who will have the anvil?

You say it's old? That's true.
But it's served me well for thirty
years
And it'll do the same for you.

With it goes the hammer, too,
For each would useless be
And each would be retired too soon
If taken separately.

How much for the torch and goggles?
More modern symbols they,
Than the anvil and the hammer.
Speak up, what will you pay?

How much for the nails and metal?
For a little coal and oil?
Whoever buys these things today
Must have a will to toil.

For toil is partner to them all,
An essential of the trade.

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By strength of will and body
All lasting things are made.

How much for all these smaller
tools?
Who needs chisels, pliers, and files?
Search through these other odds and
ends.
They're laying here in piles.

No beauty in these things I sell?
All useless junk you say?
That's because to you they're only
things.

This was written for/about my grandfather when he sold the blacksmith shop he had toiled in for more than 30 years. His work kept many farmers in the fields of Semo and he is much missed by many. I am forever grateful for what he and my grandmother taught me about the world and the ethics they demonstrated.

Phlembol

But to me, of life, a way.

With them I part reluctantly
It's like mourning for the dead.
I thought perhaps I could wear them
out,
But, they have worn me out instead.

Each one finds his earthly path
With many a blow fraught.
Upon the anvil of our lives
Our fate or hope is wrought.

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO ANDY WALTERS

Most HABA members have yet to meet Andy Walters. Andy is not a HABA member. Andy does not even have an interest in blacksmithing yet he made a significant contribution to our organization.

About two years ago Doug Block who was hosting HABA's web site, was having trouble finding the time to keep it going while starting a business. One of our board



members, Frank Walters, suggested that his son Andy would like the job of HABA Web Master. It was not long before the web site was transitioned from Doug to Andy.

Andy found a new home for the web site and soon redesigned the site building on the foundation Doug created. Over the last couple of years Andy made sure the site was up and running, updated the site with the latest

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edition of *The HABA Letter* and never failed to change whatever the board suggested and offered ideas of his own.

Then in early December, Richard Boswell, Les Cook, Dave Koenig and Andy got together to brainstorm ways to increase the content of the site. The ideas were going all over the place. Richard and Andy were the only two people there who knew anything about the technical implications of our collective ideas.

After that meeting Andy suggested that HABA really needed to have a Web Master who understood the smithing resources on the web and someone who could maintain the HABA web site. That made a lot of sense but did HABA have a person who could do that. That is when Richard Boswell put up his hand and offered to become the new HABA Web Master. He and Andy worked together and in a short period of time Richard took over the responsibilities. It was not long until

Richard added a 'cover page' to the site that included a number of links to other blacksmithing resources.

Andy was right. The HABA web site could best be moved along with someone who knew the smithing resources and could maintain the site too.

HABA extends a Very Very Special thanks to Andy Walters for:

- Accepting the job of HABA Web Master in a time of need.
- Revitalizing the site to make it more useful to HABA members and all the people who visit the site.
- Listening to the ideas of board members and recommending it is time for HABA to get a Web Master who knows the smithing business.

And, more importantly for guiding the HABA web site to a much higher level.

FORGING A HEIFER HEAD

by Richard Boswell

A heifer head can be forged using notes published by Bill Epps on the IForge web site at <http://www.anvilfire.com/iForge/>, and I studied his video tape for animal heads several



times. But this application has a twist to it.

Here at the farm my family raises Santa Gertrudis and Brahmousin show heifers, and yours truly is the designated feeder on weekends when the show string is on the road. These

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cows have a lot of personality and big ears in tribute to their Brahma heritage, so I naturally want to replicate these features on the forge.

Below are photos of two heads I made with this procedure. The first was made using bar stock which became a fireplace poker, and the second with common re-bar. The third head became a coat hook. With these figures the main feature is the ears, followed by the forehead. To do this I modified the Epps procedure by folding the ears under the face.

Start with a flat bar and hot slit the end down the middle as far the width of the bar.

Bend these out to form a tee shape. I filed the inner edge of



the slit to make it smooth. The head should be twice as long as it is wide. Fold the ears under the face and

forge weld these together. A ball pein works well to force the contour of the tapered nose between the nostrils and the eyes. Use an eye punch to place the eyes, and shape the face with a file.

Bend the neck over the back side of the ears which are now between the neck and the forehead. After bending around the ears, reverse bend the neck so it is perpendicular to the head. Continue to file the edges.

When the head is formed, the last procedure is to use a ball pein on the ears to thin them and create a contour. Clean up edges with a file.

Lastly, use a brush to clean the mill scale and polish the surface. Warm and coat with linseed oil to protect



the metal with a carbonized finish.

FLY PRESS TOOLING

An E-mail From John Crouchet

I am sending you several separate emails with tool pictures just because it is easier that way.

This first picture is my most used tools. All are ground on a belt sander

from H-13 tool steel because I occasionally use them on hot iron and there is no way to effectively quench a tool that is chucked up in the press.

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H-13, being an air-hardening steel, stands up to this much better than ordinary tool steels. (Never quench H-13, just let it air cool.) The chisel is ground to the traditional blacksmith shape (like a canoe on the end) and is used for both decorative chiseled edges and for starting the slits for slit and drift work (especially great if you are attempting to slit and drift on the diagonal which is good looking, but hard to do freehand.

Starting the slit (top and bottom) with the fly press will take care of half the control problem. For the other half... well, just hold your mouth right and practice a lot. (To slit on the diagonal, you will need a V block to set the bar in. You may already have one in your treadle hammer tooling, or it is quickly made from any angle iron scrap.)

To start a slit on the flat, just line the chisel up in what looks like the middle of the bar and take a light stroke. If it looks good where it leaves a slight mark,

then smack it a good one! If you want to be more accurate or if you are doing two dozen mortise and tenon joints, you can set up a long piece of angle iron and a couple of welding clamps for a fence so the chisel comes down in exactly the same place each time.



The butcher will make a clean separation between what is to be drawn out and what is not, without a lot of errant hammer marks screwing up the transition. I use it on set downs, like the light switch plate I did at the meeting.

The little set hammer (which is just plain square stock, slightly rounded at the edges) is more useful than it looks. It will make a great little decorative edge or corner, just by bringing it down, half on and half off, of an edge or corner. It will also do a quick job of cleaning up edges that looked a little rough when you finished hammering them.

All of these tools are ground on the end of a bar of tool steel and then cut off about an inch or inch and a quarter long. They are then welded to a piece of one inch mild steel bar to chuck up in the fly press. Your arbor hole may not be one inch. If I recall, the arbor hole measurement on Dan's presses was 5/8 inch.

I never bother to put a pressure plate on my tooling because with a one inch arbor hole, there is just not much need. The smaller the arbor hole gets, the more I would vote for a pressure plate, especially for a tool that will get a lot of use. This will take the pressure off of the hole itself and put it on the end of the ram where it can't screw anything up.

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To keep from making the pressure plate over and over again, I think Dan Morris advocates using a permanent little tooling holder. I think there is a picture of it on his website. With one of those, all you would need to build each time is whatever little one or one and a quarter inch tool you need. (Remember when ordering material to go in the arbor hole that regular

hot rolled bar stock is not exactly made to size. A 5/8 inch hot rolled bar will not fit in a 5/8 inch hole. For a good fit, you will need to order cold rolled bar stock. It is not expensive, since it is still just mild steel, and a twenty foot bar will last you forever, using it at the rate of a couple of inches per tool.

John Crouchet

OFFICIAL FEBRUARY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE FOR FLAMING PEARL METALWERX

FRANCES TRAHAN PROPRIETOR

LOST WAX CASTING - FEB. 11, 13,
18, 20 (6-8pm)
LOST WAX CASTING - FEB. 15 & 16
(1-5pm)
NON-FERROUS FORGING - TBA
BASIC STONE-SETTING - TBA
RUBBER MOLD-MAKING - TBA

For those of you who have time after work, a Tuesday & Thursday class will

begin on the 11th. The weekend workshop will be held on the 15th and 16th.

The fee for each workshop is \$150 and, as always, all supplies are included.

As requested, other workshops will be offered this month on a TBA basis.

I'll be offering NON-FERROUS FORGING, BASIC STONE-SETTING,

and RUBBER MOLD-MAKING. The last one would be especially beneficial to you folks who've taken casting with me before. If any of these TBA workshops sound good to you, e-mail me and we'll make it fit your schedule.

REMEMBER - A workshop makes an EXCELLENT Valentine's Day Gift!!!! As

always, studio time is available at \$15/hr for those noisy or stinky projects you just can't finish at home! Ask about the "repeat offender" special! If you have any questions please call the studio at 713-863-7375 or e-mail me at perlwerx@yahoo.com.

Frances

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Jeffery Funk Demonstration Marble Falls - February 22 - 23,

Balcones Forge is bringing Jeffery Funk to Marble Falls for a demonstration at Hammerfest Forge February 22 -23, 2003.

Saturday is mixed metals, iron, bronze and stainless. Learn about forging, welding, joining and finishing and the problems with each.

Sunday is West African Bells and a forge welded plate which develops a pattern based on the crystalline structure of the steel.

Cost is \$45. Please make out checks to Balcones Forge and send them to Gerald Pollard, 1409 Friendswood Lane, Austin, TX 78737. For more information contact Jerry Achterberg, 210-661-3293, treefarm@swbell.net

Hammerfest Forge, 830-693-1391, is on the north side of Marble Falls just off of Hwy 281. Traveling north on Hwy 281 turn right on Commerce Street between the funeral home and the Johnson Ford car lot. You will see all the cars.....follow the crowd!

RIVER BLUFF FORGE COUNCIL PRESENTS

FORGING ON THE RIVER

MARCH 28-29-30 2003

Demonstrations start at 7:00 PM Friday and at 9:00 AM Saturday and Sunday. The location is The National Ornamental Metal Museum, 374 Metal Museum Drive, Memphis TN 38106. The Featured Demonstrators are: Chad Gunther, Corky Storer and Doug Hendrickson

For more information contact Richard Carr 901-872-4009 or Ray Tanner 901-682-9771

BOB 9 MARCH 8 LAFAYETTE, LA - **JEFF MOHR DEMONSTRATOR**

Blacksmithing Conference Louisiana Metalsmiths' Association presents the *9th Annual Banging On the*

Bayou featuring JEFF MOHR who will demonstrate the forging of fireplace tools.

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BOB is our annual fund raiser to be held Saturday, March 8, at Beaver Park in Lafayette, LA. The fee is \$25 for members and \$35 for non-members. There will be additional demonstrations by LAMA members forging copper and aluminum. Broom tying and design basics will also be taught. Forges will be set up and someone will be on hand to assist getting you started at forging.

LAMA members made a great tool box filled with handmade blacksmithing tools that will be raffled off. (Many HABA members have tickets.) An Auction of iron art and other goodies will be held and is open to the public. For more Information check the LAMA web site, <http://lametalsmiths.org/news/> or call Jerry Baker 318-232-7985.

COAL FOR SALE

Attached is an ad from Doug Johnson, a mining engineer, who is selling Sewell coal (pronounced 'sool', like "cool). Sewell is an outstanding forging/coking coal with almost no clinkers at day's end. If you do not have space for a display, please consider running the particulars as a classified.

forging coal in small quantities. 50# containers shipped via UPS. Price is \$10 plus shipping. Sewell Bituminous Coal, 1" screen size, 15,000 BTU, <2% Ash, < 0.8% sulfur.

Contact Doug Johnson, Route 2 Box 53, Summersville, WV 26651 or doujoh03@yahoo.com.

"Here' your chance to get premium

THE FINE PRINT

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WE HAVE THE
TECHNOLOGY



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