

HABA HABA HABA HABA HABA

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

Number 61: September, 2003 Edition

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**SEPTEMBER 20: MEETING AT C&M SALES IN CONROE
BUILDING AND USING GAS FORGES**

**OCTOBER 3-5: HAMMERFEST AT OLDENBURG, TEXAS
MEETING, DEMONSTRATIONS, SALE**

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Notice to 2002/2003 HABA Members

It is time to renew your HABA membership. HABA is changing its present membership year from June through May to January through December. So, you have a renewal option. Choice one is to renew your HABA membership for \$10 to cover June 2003 through December 2003.

Choice two is to renew your HABA membership for \$25 to cover June 2003 through December 2004. That is a year and a half of membership for just \$25...a savings of \$5.

Please renew your membership by completing the attached HABA Membership Renewal Form and send it to James Porter, 1925 Anchor Way, Dickenson, TX 77539.

WORDS FROM THE PREZ

Hopefully this will be a short letter. Let's start by welcoming our new editor David Bailey who is taking over the job from Dave Koenig. We extend our gratitude to Dave K. for a huge job well done.

Many thanks to Frank Walters for his work in making the Rusty Anvil Rendezvous (RAR) possible in June. We had a good location and it was good to see all who turned out.

In July, HABA went to Houston for the Meeting of the Guilds at HCCC (Houston Center for Contemporary Crafts). Dave Koenig led the way and handled the event for HABA.

Many thanks to Dave for his efforts during the time when his commitments to ABANA leave him very little extra time. During July, I was away in Maine and attended a seminar led by Brian Gilbert of Hammer's Blow fame. Again, many thanks to all who kept the forges going and the anvils ringing for HABA.

August saw HABA's second annual brainstorming meeting. We had fifteen folks that signed in, which included some that were new members and some that were going to join. There is plenty of fodder for the board to chew on but in a nutshell it seems that we need to look at getting back to more basic and simple meetings.

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The September 20th meeting will be at C & M in Conroe, and will include a gas forge building workshop. Richard Boswell is chairing this meeting. He has now set it up for Jay Hayes, burner guru, to be here for the workshop. If you are willing to help, please contact Richard. Even if you are not building a forge, come to the meeting and ask questions or just see what is going on.

Here is the serious stuff: HABA has many members and we on the board are concerned about how few of you all we have been seeing at the meetings. All meetings are open to all members, whether or not you are directly involved in the workshop.

In October we will be in Oldenburg for our Fall Edition of Hammerfest. Kirsten Skiles and Bill

Fiorini will be demonstrating on Saturday, October 4. James Porter is chairing this event. If you can help, please contact him.

November is going to be HABA's First Annual Dinner/Feast Meeting. It is still in the planning stages. We need your input.

HABA is here for you. The board tries to figure out what most everyone wants but we need your input, ideas, and participation.

A smith can move a lot of metal given enough time, heats, and stamina. With a couple of strikers, that same smith can move the same amount of metal with fewer heats, in less time, and no one breaks a sweat.

Les Cook, President

from the editor

I'm David Bailey, the new editor. Dave Koenig called me in early June and asked me to do this. In a weak and guilty moment, I accepted. I then drove straight to Deer Isle, Maine, where I first attended a two-week class in Blacksmithing taught by Peter Ross at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and then built a little (12 x 16) cabin on the shore of Penobscot Bay. I avoided coming back to the real world as long as

possible, but here I am, trying to fill Dave's shoes.

Well, I'm not really trying to fill Dave's shoes. I know better. He's done a really outstanding job not only as Newsletter Editor, but as writer, reporter, President, gofer, cheerleader, and a variety of other tasks. There is some talk of running him as an independent in the 2004 National Election. I won't be everywhere he's been or know nearly

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everything he knows. I'm just going to try to put out a simple little newsletter on or about the first of every month. This is my first attempt, and even with help from Dave, Les, and Richard, I've encountered more glitches in the first day than I care for: lost files, unmodifiable pdf files, viruses, clogged ink jets, and mysterious cantankerousness on the part of Microsoft Word. Go figure. Anyway, please be tolerant.

What will be in the newsletter from now on is up to all of us. I'll plan on doing the mechanics of the publishing, gathering what news I can, and writing some little piece on a blacksmithing topic. Much of the information will be shared with the HABA

website, www.habairon.org, which is now produced/edited/mastered by Richard Boswell. He also has done an outstanding job. If at all possible, check this site from time to time. It has much more information, both in coverage and detail, than we can include in the newsletter. If you don't have or use a computer, take the address to any public library and one of the reference librarians can find it, and probably print it out, for you.

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SUMMARY OF UPCOMING EVENTS

September 20

On September 20 HABA is having Gas Forge Making Workshop. We will build forges from kits, and demonstrate how to use these and other commercial forges safely at their maximum capacities! The workshop will be hosted by C&M Sales, 3565 S. Loop 336 East Conroe, TX. Contact Richard Boswell at rsboswell@mindspring.com or at 281-356-5205 in the evenings.

October 3-5

This fall's Hammerfest at Oldenburg, TX will really be special! Kirsten Skiles and

Bill Fiorini of LaCrosse, WI will be in Houston visiting family during Hammerfest and offered to demonstrate for us. Bill is known for his damascus work and knives and Kirsten is known for her beautiful high relief chasing. Together they also collaborate on more traditional ironwork. Examples of their work can be seen on their web site: http://home.centurytel.net/Fiorini_and_Skiles.

As soon as we have an agenda and receive biographies on Bill and Kirsten we will get it all on the HABA web site, www.habairon.org, and in *The HABA Letter*.

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SEPTEMBER MEETING **GENERAL MEETING, GAS FORGE WORKSHOP**

Our September meeting will be on Saturday, the 20th, at C&M Sales in Conroe. The topic will be "Building and Using Gas Forging for Blacksmithing."

WHEN AND WHERE:

Saturday, September 20, 8 a.m.
C&M Sales, 3565 S. Loop 336 East,
Conroe. (800)392-7002

ORGANIZER:

Richard Boswell
(281)356-5205
rsboswell@mindspring.com

WHAT TO BRING:

Chairs
Safety Glasses with Side Shields

AGENDA:

8 am Check in
9 am Meeting

The main activity for the day will be a workshop for building gas forges from kits and instruction and demonstrations on using gas forges safely and efficiently.

HABA selected C.J. Products as the kit provider for the workshop. Jay Hayes of C.J. Products will attend and lead the workshop.

Several sizes and number of burners are available and this allows the blacksmith to choose on to fit budget and need. The single burner is a good starter kit to learn the basics and makes a good traveling size forge. All parts and supplies can be ordered separately.

The kits run from \$185 for a single burner to \$385 for a larger 3-burner.

ORDERING:

If you want to build a furnace, notify Richard Boswell and he will send you a manual.

To order the kit, contact Jay Haynes: C.J. Products
(304) 269-6111
xmas4lites@earthlink.com

Since the workshop is fast approaching, you need to order right away to insure the best price on shipping. If you have any questions, contact Richard.

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FALL HAMMERFEST AT OLDENBURG

Our next biannual sales and show event at Oldenburg will be October 3-5. James Porter is organizing the show this year and needs volunteers to help out. For further information go to the HABA website and click on Hammerfest.

On Saturday, Bill Fiorini will demonstrate Damascus steel knife making and Kirsten Skiles will demonstrate high relief chasing. Both of these artists are well-known and well-respected. We are very lucky to have them come to us for this demonstration. This is the kind of demonstration that you'd normally only see at a national or international conference. For more information, see their website http://home.centurytel.net/Fiorini_and_Skiles.



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President's Letter

August, 2003

Dear ABANA Members,

The election is over by now. Congratulations to all of you who sent in the ballots and voted. As I write this, half way through the election, over 1,200 ballots have come in. That is way up. I wonder if that free anvil has anything to do with it? naw. (Let me see, blacksmiths, free anvils coincidence? I think not.) Voting is a good thing in any case, so thanks! I am sure you have elected a good group.

The 2004 ABANA Conference planning

is running at full throttle to produce a well organized and fun educational experience. Dave Koenig, 2004 Conference Chairperson and ABANA Board member is working a LOT of hours to learn from the successes and failures of past events to make this one really good. I have tremendous confidence that he will succeed. He is going at it 'hammer and tongs.' It is unbelievable how much work there is, and how hard all the previous conference chairs and their staff have worked in the past. Without pay. Wow!

The CanIron IV Conference was absolutely smashing. Charlie Orlando forge welded in gas as easily as most of us

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make toast. Doug Wilson made both tongs and one 'tonk' with style. Elizabeth Brim had some great things to say and her demonstration was fun as usual. I really love the apron she donated to the Penland School auction. I think it really has what I like in a good piece of metalwork, a cool idea combined with masterful execution. I enjoyed meeting Cairn Cunnane, whose work was also featured in the last issue of *The Anvil's Ring*. Good, fresh forging! There was a lot of stuff that I missed (since they worked me like a dog) like Eddie Payne's masterful forging of these really interesting sheet metal 'monk' figures. OK, the one I bought at the auction does look like a grim reaper, could it be that scythe that he's holding!?! Anyway it was a really good show. I have heard great reports from the UMRBA meeting in Illinois and I look forward to Quad State Roundup in Troy, Ohio September 26-28. Those guys always put on a great conference! What baffles me is that I

thought 'quad' meant four, but it always seems that smiths from 25 states come? Another mystery, so gidd-e-up! (sic)

In October the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis will hold their annual Repair Days and auction. There is still time for you to donate a piece to benefit our national center and library for artistic metalwork, hint, hint. In November the board will also meet at the Museum to eat ribs, whoops, I mean hammer out the annual budget and other serious educational matters. Members are welcome and the dates of the meeting are November 13-15. Call the Central Office for details if you are considering attending. So I think I won't take up too much space this time, I wish you all good and fun forging. We really do have a cool job, most of the time!

Scott Lankton
ABANA President

**NOTE TO ABANA MEMBERS:
PLEASE VOTE! BALLOTS DUE
SEPTEMBER 15, 2003.**

FORGING OPPORTUNITY

Larry Newbern is looking for demonstrators at George Ranch the weekend of Oct 24-26. He indicated the need for 2-3 smiths. This is always a great place to demonstrate....lots of people. For more information, contact Larry Newbern at 979-793-4362 or at BrazosForge@cs.com.

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NATIONAL ORNAMENTAL METAL MUSEUM NOTICE

River Bluff Forge Council and the National Ornamental Metal Museum welcome your contributions to the success of **Repair Days Weekend and Auction** October 17, 18, & 19, 2003. This is our annual fundraiser. Check our website www.metalmuseum.org to see some of the items donated to the auction in 2002.

Items donated for the auction should arrive at the museum by October 10, 2003 at the very latest.

If you can get them here sooner, we can photograph them and put them on the website. This year we hope to have the auction items on view during Peter Ross gallery tour on Friday night as well as all day Saturday. The public and other metal artists will be bidding on your items.

Send auction items to:

Repair Days Auction
National Ornamental Metal Museum
374 Metal Museum Drive
Memphis, TN 38106

Please include your name, address, the title of the object or a description of it, and its value.

Thank you for your support.

Linda Raiteri
PR / Marketing / Library / Webmaster
National Ornamental Metal Museum
374 Metal Museum Dr
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phone: 901-774-6380
fax: 901-774-6382
www.metalmuseum.org

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Houston Area Blacksmith's Association Inc.

HABA FAMILY RENEWAL FORM 2003/4

Please fill out the renewal form below and send it with a check in the amount of \$10 for a six month Membership renewal or \$25 for an eighteen month Membership renewal.

Please make a check out to HABA and send the form and check to:

**James Porter, Treasurer, 1925 Anchor Way, Dickinson, TX
77539**

Name: _____

Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home Phone No.: _____

Work Phone No.: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ @ _____

Web pages to list on habairon.org _____

Please initial if we may list you in a HABA members directory _____

Please Check One:

_____ Yes, I would prefer to receive *The HABA Letter* through the U. S. Mail.

_____ Yes, I will retrieve *The HABA Letter* from the internet at www.habairon.org .

Your membership is appreciated and important to HABA.

THE FINE PRINT

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