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To: HABA Distribution List

Re: The February Meeting Of The Proposed Houston Area Blacksmiths' Association
(HABA)

SUMMARY

HABA met at the Tudor Forge on February 21, 1998 . Nineteen people attended. Everyone had one eye towards the sky during the meeting but all departed dry.

Gary Evensen, Vice President of the Texas Artist Blacksmiths Association (TABA) was the featured demonstrator and answer-man for HABA members who had questions about TABA. There was a two minute business meeting, an exceedingly informative demonstration by Gary, a raffle, a great camp stew, a few impromptu demonstrations, a Show-and-Tell table and much discussion about diverse subjects related to smithing.

BUSINESS MEETING

Dave Koenig opened and closed the business meeting in just a couple of minutes. The meeting began about 10:00. Additions and Corrections to the last HABA Letter included one item: Please include the start time of the meetings. Dave then reported that not much progress was made with the revisions to the HABA bylaws. They required more thought than anyone was able to give the issue. Funds as of February 21 equal \$228.75. The meeting ended and the demonstration by Gary Evensen began.

FEATURED DEMONSTRATOR

Gary Evensen was busy at the February meeting . He conducted two demonstrations, a formal one in the morning and an impromptu one in the afternoon. Between demonstrations Gary answered lots of questions about TABA for HABA members.

The morning demo was most informative. How many times have you experienced metal moving where you did not want it to move while welding or forging? The answer is probably 'more often than I want to think about'.

Gary's morning demo focused on using the same energy that deforms our work to straighten our work. That energy is heat. To demonstrate this, Gary clamped a piece of half-inch square tubing to the side of an anvil and lit up a torch. He measured how far the end of the tubing away from the anvil was off of the ground. Then he applied heat to the top of the tubing. He did this about every six inches in the form of a dot. The amount of heat was just enough to change the surface from a shiny finish to a black finish. Each dot took a matter of seconds to complete.

What happened? Which way did the end of the tubing away from the anvil move, up or down? It moved up. The heat applied to the top side of the square tubing caused the top side of the tubing to shorten. The effect was to raise the end of the tubing away from the anvil into the air.

The principle to remember is that when a local heat is applied to a piece of metal, the locally heated metal will shrink when it cools. This shrinkage will bend the entire piece of metal.

For example, if you have an I-beam commercially bent for a circular stair and it comes back way out of spec, odds are you can straighten it. All it takes are several strategically placed triangularly shaped local heats on the web and on the flanges and voila...the I-beam is just where you want it.

I am sure most of you reading this are scratching your head just like most of us were who attended the demo. While we had Gary to get answers to our questions you do not. But do not despair. It is really easy to understand. The place you locally heat metal is the place where it will shrink. When it shrinks it will bend the entire piece.

The best thing to do is get out your torch, clamp a piece of metal to something, take some measurements, apply some heat and see how the piece moves. This information is a real gem!

CAMP STEW

We broke for lunch around noon. The fare of the day was a great camp stew built and nurtured by Jim Wheeler for the better part of the morning. His care showed. It was great!

AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

In the afternoon Gary demonstrated how he makes hand rail brackets. Commercial brackets do not always fit and purpose made brackets do.

There were two other demonstrations going on in the afternoon. Larry Hoff and Larry Hickman collaborated to form a really nice *courting candleholder*.

Dave Koenig got involved in forging a connecting rod between the treadle and flywheel of an old sewing machine base.

Discussions continued until about 4:00. By this time a few drops of rain fell and everyone was pretty much packed up. The gates closed about 4:30.

SCULPTURE INSTALATION

Well, the sculpture at Tudor Forge has a name. It is *Demon Seed*. Jim Wheeler came up with the title and it stuck.

SPECIAL THANKS

To Gary Evensen for making the trip to Houston to answer our TABA questions and to conduct an excellent demonstration on moving metal with heat.

To Jim Wheeler for stirring-up a tasty camp stew and contributing a copy of Alexander Weygers book, *The Making of Tools* to the raffle.

To Tim Cowden for donating the traditionally forged wall sconce.

To Byrom Wehner for the supply of doughnuts.

NEXT MEETINGS

MARCH

The March meeting will be a daylong workshop conducted by Bill Bastas.

The meeting location is Tudor Forge. The start time is 9:00 a.m. The end time will be late afternoon.

Please bring a pair of **safety glasses with side shields**, a **chair** to sit in and some **food** for lunch.

Bill is a founder of Balcones Forge, smithing and metal working instructor at the Austin Community College and recent *Artist Blacksmith in Residence* at the National Metals Museum in Memphis.

Here is what Bill plans to cover during the workshop in his own words:

Hi Dave! ..My Balcones meeting went well. We covered basic hammering techniques.; I forged a nail, a hook, a snail, a spoon made of forged welded chain, and a decorative horse head. I intend to do these as well as forge a pair of tongs for your group. We'll cover forging wrought iron, steel, bronze, forge welding techniques for chain pattern steel, and striking.

Funds for this workshop are provided by HABA and donations from smiths like you.

The pieces produced by Bill during the workshop will be raffled at the end. So put a few extra bucks in your pocket and take a chance.

Directions to the 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 Texaco station, turn left or west on Tudor Way. 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 Texaco station you went too far.

APRIL

The April meeting is tentatively scheduled for the Brazos Forge, Larry Newbern's shop in Needville.

COMING EVENTS

March 28 -29, 1998, the National Ornamental Metal Museum of Memphis, TN and the River Bluff Forge Council present *Forging on the River V*. The demonstrators are: Alice James of Seattle, WA, Toby Hickman of Petaluma, CA and Paul Hubler of Minneapolis, MN. Contact Doug Learn for more information: 3037 East Glengarry Rd., Memphis, TN 38128; Phone 901-358-1192; or HYPERLINK <mailto:cjfdlearn@pop.mindspring.com> cjfdlearn@pop.mindspring.com

MISCELLANEOUS

PHILADELPHIA (Reuters) - A gang of discriminating thieves stole a priceless pair of 18th century wrought-iron gates from outside an Episcopal church where George Washington once worshiped, police said Friday.

The gang was believed to consist of a work crew with a truck and an architectural antiques dealer active in what police described as a brisk market for stolen ornamental wrought and cast iron.

The thieves apparently backed their truck up to St. Peter's Church in the stately Society Hill section of Philadelphia and lifted the 300-400 pound iron gates off their hinges. Church officials said the gates, which congregants rarely used, were kept padlocked.

The parish sexton noticed the gates missing when he arrived for work on Wednesday morning.

St. Peter's Church, which has a steeple designed by architect William Strickland, is a national historical landmark.

It could cost \$10,000 for a new pair of iron gates for the church. But experts said the stolen pair were irreplaceable and their value could not be estimated.

A few weeks before the theft, a pair of 19th century iron gates disappeared from in front of a nearby apartment building.

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