



THE HABA LETTER

The Newsletter of the Houston Area Blacksmith's Association Inc (HABA)

HABA Web Site: www.habairon.org

February 7, 2000

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The Houston Area Blacksmith's Association applied to the State of Texas to become a Texas nonprofit corporation. The thought was that HABA would know it was incorporated by the time this letter went to press. That did not happen and may not happen now until the end of February. This *HABA Letter* sports a new look for the occasion that did not happen yet. The editor hopes you find it easier to read too.

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BUSINESS ISSUES

(Almost) Incorporated!

HABA'

As soon as HABA's incorporation is approved, the Initial Board of Directors will meet to elect officers and pass some resolutions to get HABA functioning as a corporation.

HABA will be a nonmember nonprofit corporation. The nonmember part means that members will not be voting members. The running of the corporation will be in the hands of the board of directors. The main reason for this type of corporation is ease of running the company properly.

The nonprofit part means no director, officer or member of HABA can make any money from it. HABA expects to run on a volunteer basis. HABA can hire employees and can pay director fees. (It would be nice to be so big that HABA would need employees and director fees.)

Some expected changes you might keep an eye out for are the following:

- To be called upon to take a more active part in planning activities.

- To be involved in more diverse activities related to blacksmithing and promoting smithing.

- To be covered by a corporate liability insurance policy.

- To provide more of your thoughts about HABA and how it can achieve its objectives of learning and teaching others about the art and craft of blacksmithing.

- To pay some kind of membership fee for your family.

- To have a lot more fun learning.

The next step we need to take is to become tax exempt. This requires providing the IRS lots of filled out forms, budgets, bylaws and getting the IRS to like what we have to say. TALA, (The Texas Accountants and Lawyers for the Arts) is nonmember nonprofit corporation that started in 1979. TALA "provides free accounting and legal services to arts nonprofits and artists from all creative disciplines. Over 750 attorneys and accountants donate their time to artists and arts organizations who are unable to afford professional services".

HABA will join TALA and take advantage of their services. The first TALA service HABA will take advantage of is completing the IRS form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption. HABA may have this tax exemption around mid year. Then you will be able to include HABA donations as a tax return deduction. Now that's a thought!

All of this incorporation stuff is intended to keep you informed about what is going on. For those of you who want more information about incorporation, please call your favorite HABA director. More on incorporation in the next HABA Letter.

Treasury Report

On December 31, 1999 the HABA treasury contained \$830.17.

At the January meeting HABA received a total of \$528.80. It came from these sources: Raffle \$320.80; Donations \$133.00 and the sale of coal coke \$75.00.

Total expenses for January are \$123.17. The total expenses include: \$25.00 to Bill Bastas for the door prize at the January HABA meeting; \$28.17 reproduction costs; and \$70.00 for the two year right to the web domain www habairon.org.

The closing balance at the end of January is \$1235.80.

The treasury is expected to be hit pretty hard during the months of February and March with incorporation related expenses. They are: Liability insurance for the corporation \$630. TALA Membership \$150. Incorporation fee \$25. IRS application fee \$250. The total extraordinary expenditures are: \$1055.

HABA Web Site

Access to the HABA web page is now: www.habairon.org. Had we been a couple of weeks early, the domain haba.org could belong to HABA. As it turns out haba.org is now a New York banking site.

HELP WANTED

HABA needs some help keeping its web page updated. Doug Block bent over backwards acting as HABA's Internet Service Provider and creating the web page it is now. He would like to turn the maintenance of the HABA web site over to someone with more experience than he. Doug will keep us on-line but needs someone else to keep it fresh and good looking.

I bet there are some wizards out there who could keep the site looking pretty sharp for a few hours per month. Those of you who have an interest in helping HABA with its web page, please get in touch with Doug Block at 281-455-7712 or drblock@swbell.net.

February HABA Meeting - Location Change

The February 19 HABA Meeting will be at C&S forge in Dobbin, TX. Check the NEXT HABA MEETING section below for more details.

SMITHING ACTIVITIES

The

January HABA Meeting

The January 15 HABA meeting was by far the best to date. Fifty-one people attended and almost half were new to HABA. Twenty-two people forged a knife out of a railroad spike and about 20 more completed a leather sheath for their knife.

Lee Oates, did a stellar job of demonstrating and then coaching people through the steps to forge the knives and cutout and rivet the sheaths. We hope to see a number of these knives back on the Show-N-Tell table at the February 19 HABA meeting. I bet they look pretty sharp all cleaned-up, and ready to go.

The energy at this meeting is hard to describe. Most people forged right through lunch. In addition to the great work Lee did to lead this meeting and all the work that got done, there were a couple of other special happenings.

There were four young men, ages nine to twelve, who completed a knife and sheath. They received help from Lee and others but got the job done. On the other side of the age range, Mr. Raymond Kovar, an agricultural smith with about 60 years experience picked up a hammer and made a knife too. It was his first railroad spike knife!

The door prize by Bill Bastas turned out to be one of his beautiful hammers and two pairs of tongs. Obviously Bill made a significant donation to HABA and we sincerely appreciate the support he continues to lavish on HABA.

The winner of the door prize was our very demonstrator, Lee Oates. A more deserving winner could not be found.

The Dorothy Stiegler Demonstration

Twelve people from the Houston area traveled to Marble Falls at the end of January to see Dorothy Stiegler demonstrate. Larry Crawford hosted the group at his Hammerfest Forge. Seventy one people were on hand to see Dorothy demonstrate forge welding, the Claydon Knot, the Stiegler Globe, several different twists and her beautiful flowers.

Dorothy not only showed us how to work with iron at the forge, she demonstrated how to demonstrate in a very professional manner.

It seems to me Dorothy lives her life like she forges iron...If she sees a problem, she deals with it right away...If something looks like a mistake, she makes something new...She repeated to us on several occasions: Don't get in a rush. Take as many heats as you need to do it right.

She demonstrated how to demonstrate when there was a blower problem on the forge. At the beginning of her demonstration the fire was lost until after lunch. As the blower was being repaired she continued to talk about forge welding and twists and her famous flowers. She dealt with the fire problem in a way that forced you to remember she even had one. I bet Dorothy learned she could teach forge welding rather well without a fire. (She already knew she could do it with a fire). She never got in a rush and she took as many heats, literal and figurative, as it took to do it right. What a job she did for us!

Dorothy and Francis Whitaker were mentor and teacher. She shared some of what she learned from Francis and how she applies that knowledge to her work and to her life.

Dorothy's demonstration was one in a million!

HABA MEETING SCHEDULE

February

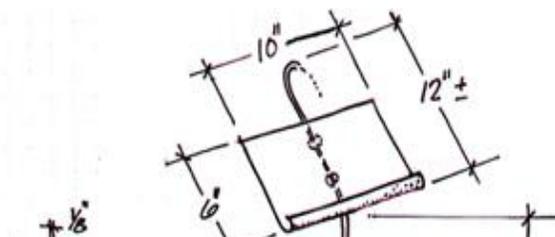
HABA Meeting

The February HABA meeting will be held at C&S Forge in Dobbin, TX. Charles and Sharon will host this meeting. Directions to C&S Forge are given below.

The purpose of the February meeting is to make about six 'Information Sign Stands' for the Tomball Museum. These stands will be used to guide people through the museum complex.

Suggested specifications for the stand are:

- Base, one piece of ½ inch square or round rod.
- Sign Holder , one piece of sheet steel about 6"x 10".
- Fasteners, rivets and washers.
- Overall Height, about 41"



Base, roughly 12" circle, rectangle or square.

These dimensions are intended as relative size constraints not design constraints.

Each stand should hold a sign that will stay in place and at the same time can be changed easily. Let your imagination run wild. Let's compare notes at C&S forge then go to work.

HABA will provide the following: Steel and rivets for the stands, and water and soda to drink.

Start Time: 9:30 AM

Lunch Arrangements: A camp stew will be prepared by Charles and Sharon. The cost will be about \$3.00 per person. You also have the option of packing a lunch or driving into town. (I can highly recommend the camp stew.)

What To Bring: A forge if you have one and hand tools; A pair of safety glasses with side shields; A pair of gloves if you use them; Your finished knife from the January meeting; Something else for Show-N-Tell and a Raffle.

Directions to C&S Forge.

From the North side of Houston, go North on interstate 45 to Conroe. At Conroe go West on state highway 105 about 20 miles. You will go by beautiful Lake Conroe and the town of Montgomery. (Montgomery is loaded with small shops.) About five miles West of Montgomery you will come to the town of Dobbin. There is not much to see in Dobbin while passing through on 105 so you need to pay attention about now.

There will be a caution light. Slow down and continue through the caution light on 105 because you will be making a left hand turn. Continue up the hill past the caution light to Mount Miriah Road. Turn left on Mount Miriah and go south. The C&S Forge will be at the second drive on your left. You will not be able to miss it. Sharon will have signs out, the dogs will be barking and there will be a lot of other cars trying to get into the driveway!

From the West Side of Houston, go Northwest on state highway 249 through Tomball, Decker Prairie and Pinehurst. This should all sound familiar because it is the way to Tudor Forge. When 249 ends at Pinehurst, continue Northwest past the turn to Tudor forge on FM 1774 all the way to Magnolia. FM 1774 will "T" into FM 1488 in downtown Magnolia. Go right at the 'T' across the tracks and turn immediately to the left and continue Northwest on 1774.

Continue Northwest on 1774 two miles or so to the first road on the right, FM1486. Turn right on FM 1486 and go North about twelve miles to 105. Turn left on 105 and go towards the top of the hill. Make a left turn on Mount Miriah Road. The

C&S Forge will be at the second drive on your left

March HABA Meeting

The March HABA Meeting will take place at Washington on the Brazos State Park, Sunday March 5. Yes, Sunday! Come and participate in the Barrington Living History Farm Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 11:00 AM. There will be a short business meeting after the ceremony.

The March 4 and 5 weekend is the Independence Day Celebration and the Grand Opening of Barrington Farm. Anyone who made hardware for the farm will not want to miss this event. Come and enjoy some history

All Texans are invited!

April HABA Meeting

HABA will host about 20 Boy Scouts at Tudor Forge on April 15 It will be important to have enough forges available to keep everyone busy.

The objective of this meeting is to demonstrate blacksmithing to the scouts, give them some forge experience and make sure they can take a finished piece home at the end of the day. We have some project ideas that include: a squirrel cooker, a railroad spike hatchet, a key clip for the belt and a striker. If you have any other ideas let Dave Koenig know.

May HABA Meeting

The May HABA meeting will take place at the Tomball Museum on May 6, 2000. There will be no HABA meeting on the usual third Saturday of May. The guest speaker and author will be Kurt House. Kurt will also have his latest **book***JOE BIANCHI: VILLAGE BLACKSMITH OF VICTORIA, TEXAS* available for signing.

Mr. House will talk about the life and times of Mr. Bianchi and his work as a bit and spur maker. Since the book is not off the press yet, May 6 was confirmed as the next HABA meeting with the Tomball Museum.

There will be more about the Tomball Museum meeting in future HABA Letters.

THE OLDENBURG BLACKSMITHS – A SPECIAL EVENT & AUCTION - APRIL 7, 8, 9, 2000

The Houston Area Blacksmith's Association will host blacksmiths from Texas at Oldenburg, TX on April 7,8,9. Oldenburg Blacksmiths III is a selling and demonstrating opportunity on a five-acre plot of ground in Oldenburg. This event will take place in conjunction with the Round Top Antique Show. The Antique Show brings about 200,000 buyers and as many as 1,000 sellers to the Round Top area two times per year.

Kenny and Susan Hall offer the use of their property to HABA at not cost. Water and electricity are available. Those participating in this event will be asked to chip in a few bucks or a piece of iron to say thanks for the hospitality.

The public's response last October to was surprising. People came to talk blacksmithing more than ever before. About 20 people wanted specific information about smithing organizations and equipment availability. From a contact point of view Oldenburg, was a real 'glory hole' of interested people.

Sales were good last October and even more blacksmiths are expected back in April.

OLDENBURG BLACKSMITH'S AUCTION

HABA is also using the Oldenburg event to raise money for a special fund. The special fund is to sponsor a demonstrator at IronFest, a regional smithing conference being planned for 2001 in Grapevine, TX.

The fund raising event will be an auction of donated ironwork and related tools and resources. Anyone donating something to the auction will have the option of reserving up to 50% of the selling price for themselves. The auction is planned for Saturday evening, April 8. The auction starts about 5:00 PM. The public and area vendors are all invited. This could be quite an event for everyone!

For more information and to reserve a spot, call Frank Walters, 713-896-7566 or Larry Hoff, 281-890-8822.

COMING EVENTS 1999

Brad**Silberberg Demonstration - February 26 and 27, Forney, TX**

Brad Silberberg makes beautiful works of art with big hammers and big presses. One of his demo pieces will probably be a lidded vessel He makes all his own tooling from old jackhammer bits. This is a demo you probably don not want to miss.

Where: Brad will make this rare appearance in Texas at Bill Epps' shop in Forney, TX.

How Much: The registration fee is \$25 for both days.

Send Check: Send your registration fee to: NTBA Registrar, Verl Underwood, 613 N. Bailey, Fort Worth, TX 76107. Verl's phone and e-mail numbers are: 817-626-5909 and <vauder@aol.com>

The BAM's Annual Conference – May 5-6-7, 2000, Warrenton, MO

The Blacksmiths Association of Missouri (BAM) Annual Conference will be held at the Warrenton, MO Fairgrounds off Interstate 70, 60 miles west of St. Louis, May 5-6-7, 2000.

The featured demonstrators will be:

Kirsten Skiles – High Relief Chasing and Respusse.

Bill Fiorini – Damascus Steel

Tom Latane - Decorative Detailing, Modeling, Chasing, Swaging and Filing

Along with these fine demonstrators there will also be lectures on the making of iron and steel and how to photograph your iron work with professional results. A number of BAM's own beaters will also be demonstrating new and unusual approaches to forging iron.

For Registration information contact:

Maurice Ellis

RR1, Box 1442

Belgrade, MO 63622

573-766-5346

Please bring something for our auction – books –tools or your own fine ironwork.

FOR SALECoal Coke

About eleven bags of L® Brand forging coke is still for sale at Tudor Forge. The cost is \$15 per 50 pound bag. Fifty % of the coke proceeds are donated to HABA. This is an opportunity to try this kind of fuel. Contact Dave Koenig for more information: 281-855-2869.

THE FINE PRINT

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