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Houston, Texas
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April 29, 1997

To: Distribution

Re: April 19, 1997 Meeting Of The Proposed Houston Area Blacksmiths' Association

MEETING RESULTS

Meeting Summary

The budding Houston Area Blacksmith's Association (HABA met April 19, 1997 at the Tudor Forge near Magnolia, Texas. Twenty two people came, all energized about learning more about blacksmithing and some with equipment.

The weather was a little damp so only two forges were lit and active by 9:30. Two groups formed around each forge. Outside, forge welding and bending were demonstrated during the construction of a quatrefoil. Inside, leaf forging was demonstrated. The morning demonstrations, questions and answers continued until about noon.

Everyone broke for lunch, some going out for lunch and some having a sack-lunch at the forge. Those who remained were treated to a jewelry tool demonstration.

A short business meeting followed lunch. About this time the rain began to fall. The rain shut down the demonstration under the trees. There was a punching demonstration in the shop and more general discussion.

Everyone was packed up, the shop was back to normal and the gate was shut about 5:00. We had a very productive meeting.

Personal Injury Prevention

A requirement of the Tudor Forge and HABA is to work without anyone getting hurt. Each person attending the meeting signed a release stating they understood the risks of forging, agreed to use safety glasses with side shields and to speak-up if they observed a hazard they thought was an unacceptable risk.

Thank you all for wearing your safety glasses with side shields and more importantly for reminding each other to do so. We would have a very difficult time enjoying ourselves if anyone got hurt.

Forge Demonstrations

The two forge demonstrations were going on at the same time. Some people seemed to be riveted to one demo or the other and others floated between the demonstrations.

Rogers Collins and Charles Heathcock demonstrated the construction of the quatrefoil. Forge welding and bending were the center of attention.

Dave Koenig demonstrated the forging of two different types of leaves. After the demonstration, there was a lively discussion about all kinds of subjects related to blacksmithing. The discussion was a great example of how we can all learn from each other.

Show-and-Tell Table

A number of blacksmithing resources were made available at a Show-and-Tell table. There were some books, a binder with smithing information from the Internet, catalogs, ABANA and TABA applications and examples of *The Anvil's Ring* and *The Hammer's Blow*. Most people took some time to see what was available and take some notes.

The table was also the source of coffee, tea, soda and doughnuts.

Jewelry Demo

During the lunch break, Antonio Arrendondo showed us his jewelry making tools and some of his creations. The similarities between jewelry making and blacksmithing are easy to spot. The scale of work is just a wee bit different. Antonio grew up around a forge in Mexico and was pleased to see the craft continuing in the Houston area.

Business Meeting

After lunch there was a business meeting. A consensus was reached on the following issues:

- HABA will start to meet the third Saturday of each month.
- The start time will be 9:00 am.
- The meeting location for the next couple of meetings will be the Tudor Forge.
- The structure of the next meeting should include the following:
 - A Show-and-Tell table for items like books, tools, catalogs, examples of work, etc. Everyone will have access to this material during the meeting.

- People with portable forges and tools should bring what they have in order to practice smithing during the meeting.
- A goal for the next meeting is to have every person leave the meeting with a completed project. Dave Koenig and Rogers Collins are going to propose two projects for the next meeting...one basic and one more advanced. The idea is to demonstrate the piece and then give everyone a chance to practice it.
- Anyone having problems with an on-going project should bring the problem to the next meeting. Part of the meeting will be to learn from the things that did not turn out the way they were planned.
- Lunch will be prepared on-site for those who would like to enjoy a 'camp stew'. If 'camp stew' sounds good, bring at least a can of vegetables and \$2.

Jonathan Kruger suggested that HABA set up a web page on the Internet. Dave Koenig will explore that idea more thoroughly with Jonathan.

Financial Report

The financial report indicated a total expenditure for the year of \$ 63.78. Revenue to date includes \$26.35 from the February and April 'meeting hat' and a \$25 donation. The Balance as of April 19, 1997 is (\$12.43). The books are open for anyone to review.

The copy costs for the next mailing will be borne by HABA. Previously copy costs were donated.

For the time being the group would like to continue to address finances by passing the hat at meetings and auctioning donated items.

Next Steps

The next HABA meeting will take place on May 17, 1997. The location will be the Tudor Forge. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am.

The following activities will be ongoing at the next meeting.

1. There will be a Show-and-Tell table set up for resources like books, tools, etc.
2. Auction items will be accepted and auctioned off at the end of the meeting. Proceeds will be used to defray expenses.
3. The hat will be passed to also defray expenses.
3. Coffee, tea, soda and doughnuts will be provided.
4. A Camp Stew will be prepared for those who wish to bring a can of vegetables or other ingredients for the meal and \$2.

5. A project will be demonstrated and everyone at the meeting will have a chance to make something before the end of the day.
6. People with portable forges are encouraged to bring them. Each forge should be self sufficient.
7. See the attached flyer for the next meeting and be involved.

Special Thanks

A special thanks to:

Charles and Sharon Heathcock for the second forge and coffee supplies and doughnuts.

Byrom Wehner for more doughnuts.

Antonio Arrendondo for sharing his jewelry tools, how they work and the finished product.

Doug Block for sharing his Internet material.

SMITHING HISTORY

Here are some steel hardening recipes for the interested.

The following quotes are taken from *Metallurgy and Metalworking in Ancient Russia*, 1953. The work was translated from Russian by the Israel Program for Scientific Translations, 1967.

The hardening of files. Burn cattle horn on a fire, add one third of salt by weight to the mass, mix thoroughly, and then thrust the files into the fire. When they attain heat of incandescence, coat them on all sides with the prepared mixture. When all has been properly heated, fan the fire to a bright glow and take good care that none of the hardening mass is detached., Withdraw the files, cool them evenly with water, take them out of the water, and dry them over a light fire. All files made of steel can be hardened by this method. (p. 49)

Another method of hardening tools serving for the cutting of glass and stones is herewith presented. A three year-old ram is tied up and fed for three days. On the fourth day he is fed only with ferns. After two days of such feeding he is placed for the night in a barrel with holes in the bottom. A vessel for the collection of the ram's urine is placed underneath the bottom. Urine is thus collected for two or three nights until sufficient quantities have accumulated. The urine is use for quenching the tool. (p. 50)

RIDDLING

Riddling was a game of the Viking and Anglo-Saxon Age. Here is a riddle. What are they talking about?

I saw a creature: his stomach stuck out behind him,
enormously swollen. A stalwart servant
waited upon him. What filled his stomach
had traveled from afar, and flew through his eye.
He does not always die in giving life
to others, but new strength revives
in the pit of his stomach: he breathes again.
He fathers a son; he's his own father also.

From: *Games of the Viking & Anglo-Saxon Age* <http://www.ftech.net/%Eregia/games.htm>

NOTICES

Here is a heads-up notice. Kip Coe plans to have Bill Epps, Mesquite, TX and German smith Heinrich Zimmermann at his new shop August 23 and 24, 1997. Stay tuned for more particulars.

RESOURCES

Source for coal: C&M Horse Shoe Sales, Conroe, TX,
They are located on the SE side of loop 336.
Phone: 800-392-7002
 409-756-5477

Alvin Ferrier Supply
Route 5
Box 261
Alvin, TX 77511
Phone: 800-936-3636
 281-331-3636

Source for steel: Triple-S Steel Supply Company
6000 Jensen Drive
Houston, TX
Phone: 800-231-1034
 713-697-7105

Source for Equipment: Laurel Machine & Foundry Co.
Box 1049 / 810 Front Street
Laurel, MS 39440
Phone: 601-428-0541

Pinehurst Trade Center
34519 FM 249 /Box303

Pinehurst, TX 77362
Phone: 281-356-4500

Centaur Forge Ltd.
117 North Spring Street / Box 340
Burlington, WI 53105-0340
Phone: 800-666-9175
414-763-9175

RESOURCES

Source for coal: C&M Horse Shoe Sales, Conroe, TX,
They are located on the SE side of loop 336.
Phone: 800-392-7002
409-756-5477
The cost of coal is \$18.80 per 80 pound sack.

Source for steel: Triple-S Steel Supply Company
6000 Jensen Drive
Houston, TX
Phone: 800-231-1034
713-697-7105