



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

November 2015



Greetings!

Waiting for Fall this year was kinda like a bad kid waiting for Santa. It's supposed to be here, is it coming or not. What's the holdup? Well it's finally here with cooler weather and some much needed rain. Some got more than they needed, but least all

the (forest) fires are under control. Vince lives not too far from the piney woods and the fires and was blessed with 13" of rain. "We're not out of the woods yet" has had a different meaning of late in East Texas.

We are ready to get back to forging with a venue much like San Marcos, with big crowds, music and entertainment. November's meeting will be hosted by Dennis Moore of Blanco, the owner of the Blanco Buggy Museum who will also host the Blanco Western Showcase. This is another open forge event, so we will be looking for a few forges and anvils, as well as some smiths to show off for the public. Be sure to bring your show-n-tell items too. Please let me know if you plan to bring some equipment. We will need at least 3 or 4 forging stations. We would also like to have 3 or 4 smiths there on Friday for the school kids.

Dennis has lots of entertainment lined up including several western swing bands, a trick roper and a few gunfighters and plenty of food. There are many wagons, buckboards, covered wagons and all sorts of buggies on display and out front is a WW II museum. Be sure to bring your camera!

President's message continued on page 2.

Meeting Date is November 7



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President's message continued.

<http://www.blancowesternshowcase.com/>

Trade item is: a pair of hooks. That's all you need to know. Use your imagination.

Don't forget to work on your December competition trade item for December: a branding iron.

Hope to see ya'll in Blanco.

Jerry Achterberg
President Balcones Forge

BALCONES FORGE FUTURE

November 7 - Denis Moore, Blanco, TX

November 21th- auction
at the shop of Donald Morgan

December 19th - Whitley's, Devine, TX

THE BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jerry Whitley, Vice President
Rudy Billings, Treasurer
Tim Tellander, Secretary

John Crouchet
Daniel Harrington, Librarian & Co-Treasurer
Jim Elliot
Vince Herod, Editor
Jeff Lee

THE QUESTION WAS RAISED AS TO WHAT EXACTLY IS THERE AT THE MORGAN SMITHY. THIS LIST IS BY NO MEANS COMPREHENSIVE, BUT IT DOES PROVIDE A SOLID IDEA OF WHAT TO EXPECT COME AUCTION DAY.

Hooded coal forge featuring champion fire pot(cracked but works very well) and champion 400 attached blower and wall crane
Brand new replacement champion fire pot, tuyere, champion electric blower and new rheostat
Two large bellows
portable demonstrator's forge
4 1/2" leg vise
large very nice swage block
hand cranked wall mount drill press
5' cone mandrel with tong slot, mounting lugs, exceptional, very heavy
arm and hammer anvil, 100lb, fair condition
several railroad rail anvils
10 lots of 5pr tongs, fair to poor condition
10 lots of 4 sets, fair to poor condition
several lots of hardies, fair to poor
several lots hammers, fair to poor
several lots of felling and broad axes, good condition
10 lots dutch ovens, all excellent
wheel traveler
large wood work bench with woodworkers vise
hand crank grinder
several cast iron cauldrons, good condition,
bicycle style grinder
tire shrinker
pot bellied stove, exceptional
portable oxy-fuel set condition fair to poor
wide variety of gas lanterns condition good
several bags of coal
numerous modern hand tools
several lots of misc metal (stock, parts, broken tools, etc.)

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EDITOR'S SOAPBOX

by Vince Herod

It is that time of year once again. **NOVEMBER 7 (make up date)** is the meeting where Balcones Forge will hold election for Board members. One member of the Board has resigned and two others want to stand down as well so there are opportunities for anyone who wants to help with the heavy lifting. The current group of old hands has worked together for many years and I like to think we have done a pretty good job of things but it is time for others to step up.

Do you like how the group is run? Are the demonstrators providing the education you seek? Are there programs you want to see developed? Lots of questions and plenty of ways to help. Being on the Board has been very rewarding for me and since the "dreaded real job" keeps me away from meeting more than I would like, being on the Board keeps me in touch with the group.

Don't be scared.....it can be alot of fun!

Donald Morgan Blacksmith Shop

9:00am

This is a special meeting at the shop of a fellow blacksmith we, unfortunately, never met. Will Bastas will be demonstrating forging a passion flower, leaf and tendril.

After, we will have an auction of the items in the shop. There will be many great tools to add to your own shop, so bring your cash, check or CC.

Once the first auction is done, we will have a benefit auction for folks in California who have lost so much because of the wildfires. Our friend, Dorothy Stiegler, has opened her home to so many neighbors and friends and their animals and pets. Please bring items to donate and also bid generously.

6107 Cary Drive, Austin, TX 78757

RESCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 21



Chad holds his chandelier that utilizes the joint.

Daniel Miller-style Slip Joint

Demonstration by Chad Gagnon, Crescent City

Oktoberfest 2012

Daniel Miller, whose work inspires many, has a chandelier in his open beam dining room, suspended by a slip joint that allows him to lift and remove the chandelier for candle changes and cleaning. Chad was struck with the elegance, simplicity and utility of this joint, and demonstrated it at Oktoberfest 2012.

A female receiver is formed at the lower end of a slender bar attached to the ceiling, somewhat like a clasping hand, while the upper male end of the chandelier is shaped to fit snugly into this receiver and uses the chandelier's weight to keep it securely hanging in place. (*see below*)

The male end is made first and then is used as a template for shaping and fitting of the female part.

The finished joint



photos by Mike Mumford

Slip Joint

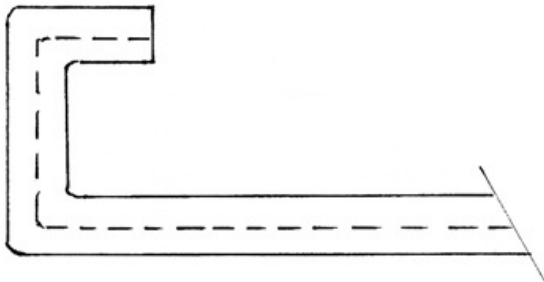
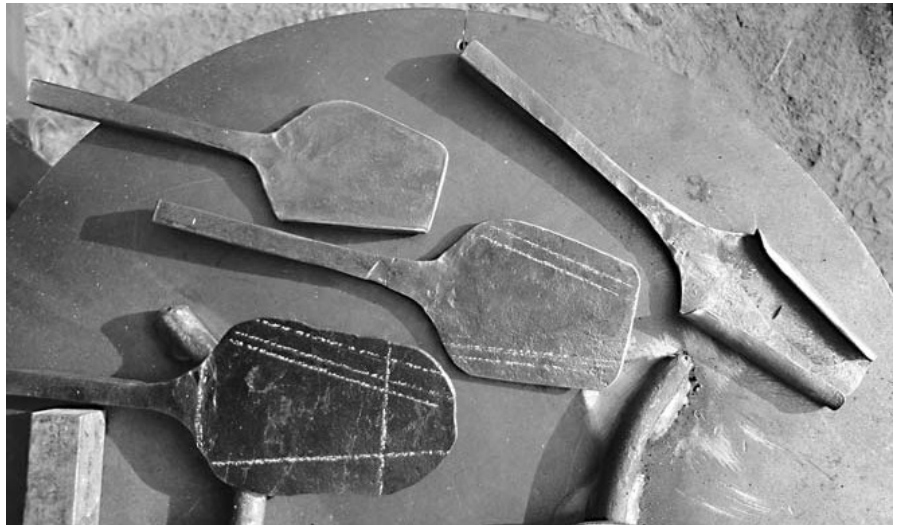
Construction Steps

1. Start with $\frac{3}{8}$ " square stock. Make the male part first.
2. You need extra material to spread to make the ends. Nick the stock, fold over and forge weld the Z-shaped mass together. (*see progressive steps*) Other ways to get the same increased mass would be to upset the end, or to just start with heavier stock and draw out the remainder of the bar to the desired dimensions. Forge welding is more fun.
3. Spread using the peen of the hammer and then smooth with the flat face. Spread to about $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick.
4. Adjust the shape to make a nice taper on the male part.
5. To start the female part, repeat steps 2 and 3, ending up with a slightly larger thinned section. You want enough to make the holding ears to wrap around the male part.



Slip Joint

6. Lay the male section on the to-be-formed female section, and mark the edges. Then mark about $\frac{1}{8}$ " outside the edge of the male section. You want to leave about $\frac{1}{4}$ " more to make the holding ears which will be bent over to grasp the male section.



Since we must measure from the center of the thickness of the stock, keep in mind that the two 90° bends on each tab require extra material. Add half the thickness of the material to the tabs for each of the two 90° bends, or a total of $\frac{1}{16}$ " to $\frac{1}{8}$ " more than it looks like you'll need, depending on the thickness.

7. Trim the excess from the tabs. Clamp the female part in the post vise and then use a butcher shaped cold chisel to shear off the excess clean. This can be done cold or hot. Trim both sides and the end in this fashion. File edges smooth.
8. At the remaining marks, bend the tabs up 90° . Bend the first tab in the vise, holding the remainder between the vise jaws.



Slip Joint

Support the piece with blocking wedged beneath it to prevent downward creep. With a fine-tipped torch, apply localized heat right at the bend before hammering over the tab.

- For the second tab, clamp the piece in the vise with a 1" square bar as a spacer to prevent damaging the first bent-over tab. The tab will be bent over this bar instead of over the vise jaw. Again, support the workpiece with blocking wedged in from beneath. This trick, as Daniel Miller puts it, *is worth the price of admission*. What we try to do as blacksmiths is move metal *where we want it to go*. To do this, it's critical to prevent it from going *where we don't want it to go*. Working in a vise prevents the workpiece from slipping downward as we strike it from above. By inserting an assortment of blocking between the vise screw housing and the workpiece and by jamming in a couple thin wedges to lock all these in place, we can minimize any chance of downward creep as we work.



- Holding the male part firmly in place as a forming template, apply a small amount of heat to the tabs – go easy, you don't want to burn them at this point – and then bend them over. Use a stop block in the anvil's hardie hole.

- Fine tune the fit and finish by prying the tabs back open a bit if necessary to allow free release of the male part. There you have it. ^L

Editors Note:

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The California Blacksmith Association
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See more at: <http://www.buggybarnmuseum.com>

