Volume 25 Issue 01 January 2011

FORGE

Dedicated to the revival of the "King of Crafts"

Vancouver Island Blacksmiths

www.vibladsmiths.com

COMING EVENTS

January 30 2011…..Annual General Meeting Luxton
Feb 27 2011……..Meeting at Luxton 11:00 AM

Index

Executive Reports……..…...2,3
Show and tell ……..….4,5
Timberline lodge…….….6-9
Membership……..……10
Willy and Evelyn Tobler……..……...10

Once again, by order of Her Royal Majesty, all members of the Vancouver Island Blacksmith Association are hereby required to present themselves, in Good Order and Sober, to the Sargent-At-Arms prior to the start of the upcoming Annual General Meeting to be held at the Luxton Forge, 11:00 AM Sunday, January 30th, in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Eleven. Each member will present an account of him/ herself, listing strengths of character and behaviour, personal skills and club-related accomplishments over the past year. Elections for VIBA Executive Officers will then take place, with the winners gaining the power, prestige and significant financial rewards attendant to those positions.

G S the Q

2010 - Executive

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Submissions & Contributions

Submissions to "Forge" can be made at any monthly meeting or by snail mail to:

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President's Report

By: Ray Orchard

And here's wishing you and yours a very happy and prosperous New Year.
Finally I'm here…penning the last of my bits as Pres. of VIBA. I'd better start by clearing up some questions phoned in in recent weeks
Joey Dimz, long-time tailor, has a rather sad problem. His favourite long shears (blades about 18" long) have worn away to almost nothing due to years of use and sharpening. He can no longer find new ones of similar size and quality and wonders if someone in our group would try to restore them. The handles are fine, but the blades (stainless) need work. He's at 778-928-3469. I didn't hold out much hope but said I would ask. Kelly Backs at threeblacksmith.com is desperately trying to find a power hammer, anyone know of one available? Richard Lucier-Larson, abmichif@gmail.com called about a North Saanich eco group planning a May Day event on the revival of skills. We could sell items produced. There could be a few hundred at the event, likely most interested in farming and gardening items. At our last meeting I mentioned "Ron" who had left a "copper tomahawk" and wondered if we were ready to return it. Willy found it in no time, brought it home and phoned the number he gave me. It was "not in service"… then tried again and got an answer… but no Ron there. Any ideas where we go from here?
I was happy to have a call from Don Startin who hopes to be at the A.G.M. He had seen a Lee Valley Ad for an old fashioned fireplace shovel he thought VIBA might have a use for. I checked with Charlie who said yes, we could use a few. We could, perhaps should, have made them; but Lee Valley has been good to VIBA so I made an executive decision and bought the last two they had in stock.
I have served as President, Past-president and Vice-president a number of times. Now my two years is up and it's high time someone took over. We will also need a new Vice-president, but possibly not a Secretary or Treasurer if Charlie and Neil agree to serve their second years. Come to the A.G.M. on January 30 ready to help if called upon.
It's been fun. Thanks to all, particularly the executive and the ever present and hardworking Willy Tobler.

(Ed note….please see pg 10)

John Ganton
On behalf of the VIBA, I would like to thank John Ganton for his very generous donation of 10 Blacksmithing books to our Library.
John Ganton is a founding member of VIBA and keeps "in the know" with our association through the newsletter.
Skip Kennedy.

I am a bladesmith, located in Delta. I'm looking for a decent anvil, something in the 125 to 150 pound range. Single round bick, pritchel and hardy holes, hardened surface. Doesn't have to be pretty, just in good shape
Christopher A. Kluftinger, ccc
General Manager, District 78 and Regional Executive Chef, Western Canada
ARAMARK Business & Industry Group
Phone: 604.521.5727 ext. 293
Fax: 604.540.0511
Cell: 604.506.4763

Secretary's Report
By: Charlie Low

Viba Nov 28 '10

New member: Keith Gardner

Show and Tell: Dave made a pair of tongs after a model made by Howard Japeth, with a narrow jaw grooved to take 5/16th rod. He found them very difficult to get right. He also made a fitting to enable a C-clamp to hold round stock, such as a piece of pipe. This was a cylinder, of just the right size to fit over the end of the screw in the clamp, with a pair of short pieces of round stock welded to the edges of the cylinder. The cylinder holds the unit in place on the C clamp, and the two round bits hold the work with no fiddling about trying to get the clamp exactly centered.

Willy and Charlie L both made shoehorns, with Willy's being the long fancy one and Charlie L's being the short simple one.

Ray brought in a strange pair of tongs, with an open cylinder about 3 inches long and about an inch in inside diameter on one jaw, and a leather covered disk on the other jaw to close off one end of the cylinder. The tongs were strong and heavy, suggesting they were made for serious work, but the leather gasket on the disk indicated they were not meant for hot work. We did not get any plausible suggestions as to what they were meant for.

Dennis brought in a couple of knives, with etchings on the handles, one on a horse theme, one on a dog theme. He ran photos of the relevant horse and dog through photoshop to turn them into line drawings and used those in the etching process. It was suggested that he should give a workshop on the etching process. Dennis suggested he do a powerpoint presentation on the process.

Dan brought in the mask he demo'ed recently. He will do another demo, probably in early spring to finish it. Right now he is making tools he needs to tune up the details.

Jacques had photos of Benoit's work in France

The minutes were approved with the proviso that Willy's wife, Evelyn, was wrongly called Elaine in the last newsletter.

Business arising: Ray spoke to the RCMP about the juvenile with weapons problem. Our rules are that people under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult, no juveniles are allowed to make weapons, and the program that Neil brought in will be pointed out to them with a suggestion that they consider following it. This was satisfactory to the RCMP.

New business: Neil told us about the recent NWBA meeting. It was very busy, with 2 demonstrators and several classes all going on at once

Ray collected our gear from the Wax Museum, and has looked into having it in place in the Maritime Museum. He has not had a lot of success looking up details about blacksmithing in a marine setting. A couple of thoughts that occurred to me on the way home were about a British naval blacksmith (John Jenkins?) who was kept alive by Maquinna when the rest of the ships crew was killed, and the Mastermyr Find, apparently a Viking blacksmith's tool chest from about 1000 AD- both indicating that blacksmiths did have a place on ships. If anyone has detail to add, it would be appreciated.

Neil mentioned that CanIRON VIII registration is open. Go to the website for the forms. It will occur July 28 to Aug 1 in Fergus Ont.

The NWBA is planning to have a "Western States Conference" in Government Camp in Oregon, Aug 18 to 21. This should be a really big deal, with at least 9 groups invited to attend, about 15 demonstrators, and Blacksmith Wars, where each group is invited to produce a 6 person team, who will make something, to a theme selected by the organizers, in a limited time. There will be cash prizes for the top 3. However, there is a problem. That is the weekend of the VIX fair in Nanaimo, and we will need at least 4 people to man it, so consider your options.

The next meeting, January 30, will be the AGM. We will need to elect a new president and vice president, and we will need one or more volunteers to edit, or at least help edit the newsletter. We will also need one or more volunteers to arrange demonstrations.

The gate is still under construction. We will need a team to come for at least for a day, and possibly two days to finish it. The place will be Neil's shop, Ellice Automotive, on John St, the time still to be determined.

Reports: Treasurer: We are well in the black.

And with that we adjourned.

Show and Tell

Photos by D Gillett

Dave's pipe clamp and tongs

Willy's shoe horn

Dan's cat mask

Charlie’s shoe horn

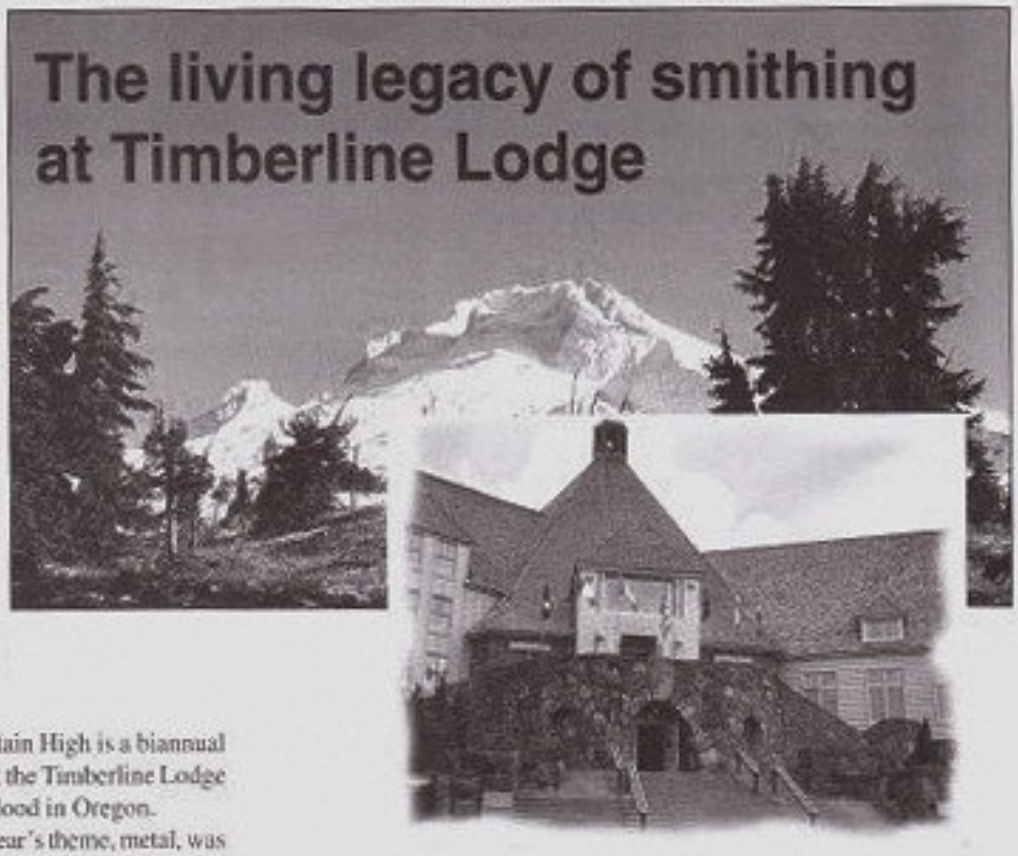
Ray’s unknown tongs

Dennis’s Damascus lockback folders

Mountain High XV, Metal 2

A gathering which honored northwest blacksmiths for their decades of craftsmanship. A history of the ironworking relationship between the NWBA and one of the grand old ladies of the Cascades, Timberline Lodge at Mount Hood in Oregon.

The living legacy of smithing at Timberline Lodge



story by Lauren Ostrolski

photos by Ina Culberson

Mountain High is a biannual exhibit held at the Timberline Lodge atop Mount Hood in Oregon.

This year's theme, metal, was the single, highlighted craft out of the many that have been instrumental in the building of the lodge.

The last time a Mountain High exhibit featured metal was in 1985.

The show this year was organized by Timberline Curator Linny Adamson and coordinated by Darryl Nelson, the third generation Timberline Blacksmith. It was invitational, open to the contemporary smiths who have participated in the building of commissioned ironwork for the lodge.

An impressive list of participants reflected a cross generational slice of the Northwest Blacksmith Association. Each was invited to present an example or two of their current work. Those pieces included sculpture, furniture, and other beautifully designed functional items such as lamps and clocks.

All were on display in the main room of the lodge, a huge space with vast, soaring ceilings and a massive, two story fireplace and chimney, all enclosing comfortable, simply designed furniture. As large as the scale of the building, it feels quite cozy inside, probably due to the fact that everything in the surroundings was made by the hands of highly skilled artisans and craftspeople.

The lodge also was showing a concurrent exhibit on the first blacksmiths who worked on Timberline. Original blueprints, sample pieces and photos give visitors a window into worlds both old and new.

Timberline Lodge was built in the 1930s as a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project. All the furniture, the hardware, and even the curtains were created by hand. It truly is a wonderful place to visit. The scale of the scenery is breathtaking and the immense lodge, built of stone and enormous timbers, is inspiring.

Ironwork abounds throughout the building and is all handcrafted. Massive fireplaces, grilles, door hardware, light fixtures, and even the drawer pulls on the dressers in the guest rooms were individually made.

What a visitor might not be aware of is the vintage of all of this metal work, and that is intentional.

Much of what is to be seen at Timberline Lodge is the original work created and installed at the time of its construction by the first Timberline blacksmith, Orion Dawson. Establishing a tradition of many different smiths working on the same project, Dawson and his crew of smiths, young and old, set the bar high.

Every building is a living thing. Time passes and requirements change, additions are added, repairs are made and opportunities for new ironwork that will blend with the original present themselves regularly.

That is where this story begins.

Orion Dawson was the initial Timberline blacksmith in the thirties, but what is the connection between Timberline and the NWBA?

(continued on page 14)

Donee Deschler, Lisa Geertsen, Andy Blakeney, Marc Brown, Maria Cristalli, Lauren Osmolski, Vincent Gorjance.

Terry & Louise Carson, Jerry & Debbie Zygmuntowicz, Kathy & Ike Bay, Linda & Joe Elliott, Susan & Darryl Nelson

Mr. & Mrs. "Friends of Timberline", Patrick Maher, Stephanie, Ethan , Erica Gordon, Don Kemper, Jr.

Daniel Stevens, Mike Neely, Dave Neely, Don Cowlits, Bob Race, Jim Garrett

Jeff & Nadine Sawyer, Jeff Holtby, Rebeca, Ellie and Dave Thompson, Jerry & Ina Culberson, Andrea & Dave Lisch

The NWBA gathers for lunch in the lodge

Orion "OB" Dawson at about age 19. The date of the photo is unknown, but he was as likely to have riden a horse to the forge as a car.

In the late seventies Russ Maugans was a commercial pilot for Eastern Airlines who flew the route between Atlanta, Georgia, and Portland, Oregon. Maguens was also a hobbyist blacksmith.

Flying over the mountains he would spot Timberline Lodge from the air. Curious, he drove up the mountain one day to see what the place was all about.

As anyone who has been there knows, the lodge is a mind blowing experience for someone who loves ironwork.

Inspired to know more, Maugans met with Adamson, the lodge curator then and to this day. She filled him in on the history of the inn and told him about Orion Dawson, who was still alive and living in Florida.

Maugans tracked Dawson down and scheduled a meeting with him at an airport during a layover. The two hit it off. Eventually Maugans flew Dawson out west. The neophyte smith got a real education on Timberline ironwork.

What an opportunity for Maugans, a hobbyist, to end up meeting this incredible smith.

Maugans kept in touch with both the lodge and Dawson in hopes of getting some work. The first project offered him was to refinish a fire poker that had been found outside the lodge buried in the dirt. Maugans put a new finish on it and also prepared a replica of the poker to show that he had some skills.

His persistence led to some repair and restoration jobs at the lodge.

About the same time, 1980, Darryl Nelson was making the transition from being a full time farrier to becoming a blacksmith. He hosted the first open forge at Fire Mountain Forge in Eatonville, Washington. Maugans attended and met Nelson for the first time.

Their friendship brought opportunities for Nelson to help Maugans with the work he had cultivated at Timberline and would eventually open doors to opportunities for many other smiths.

In 1983 a tour of the lodge was organized to show other NWBA blacksmiths the Timberline ironwork. Two years later a now defunct blacksmithing conference called the

Third Generation Timberline Blacksmith Darryl Nelson holds a replica of the menu as presented to President Franklyn Roosevelt when he dedicated the inn (before it was completed) in the 1930's.

Western States Conference was held at the lodge. That gathering, held in the off year of the ABANA Conference, drew smiths from all over California and the Pacific Northwest. At the same time an NWBA conference was held at the lodge in conjunction with the fifth Mountain High exhibit, the first one to feature metal.

Maugans was now in his seventies and facing declining health. He had achieved recognition as the second official lodge blacksmith of Timberline. The "Friends of Timberline", a

non-profit group formed in the seventies to raise funds and to support the preservation of the lodge, needed a new gate at the lodge. Maugans called on his friends from the NWBA to assist in the project.

The gate was built in 1987 by Terry Carson, Russell Jaqua, Jerry Culberson and Nelson at Jaqua's shop in Port Townsend. That project brought in the next generation of smiths to carry on the spirit of Timberline.

Cascadian Style is a term created by the American Institute of Architects to describe the body of work housed at Timberline Lodge. It is unique to the Pacific Northwest. Careful consideration to design is inherent to all projects destined for Timberline in order to preserve the continuity of the Cascadian Style.

What an inspiring tradition we have as a group.

The persistence of a few has led to the success of many in bringing our flourishing craft to the eyes of the public in places like Timberline Lodge, where each hand made piece of ironwork is an aspiration to excellence.

Participating smiths at Mountain High XV, Metal 2, in alphabetical order:

Phil Baldwin, Andy Blakeney, Terry Carson, Maria Cristalli, Jerry Culberson, Donee Deschler, Joe Elliot, Jim Garrett, Lisa Geertsen, Erica Gordon, Jeff Holtby, Japheth Howard, Alice James, Russell Jaqua, Don Kemper, Jr., Dave Lisch, Patrick Maher, Grayson Nance, Darryl Nelson, and Lauren Osmolski.

Lodge Curator Linny Adamson holding the poster promoting High Mountain XV, Metal 2.

Jerry Culberson and Jeff Holtby share a moment.

At right four smiths admire the drawings and work of Orion Dawson. From the left they are Daniel Stevens, Darryl Nelson, Jeff Holtby and Jerry Culberson.

Vancouver Island Blacksmith Association
Membership Application

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Post/Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Fax: (_____) _____

Are you a: New Member [ ] Renewal [ ]

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Members are required to sign a Liability Waiver
Make cheques or money orders payable to:
Vancouver Island Blacksmith Assoc. (VIBA)
1040 Marwood Avenue
Victoria, BC CANADA
V9C 3C4

Artist Blacksmiths Assoc. of North America
Membership Application

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Letters to the editor

Hi Dennis
Sitting here staring down the microscope with nothing to do with my mind I thought about Ontario- the Iron Trillium- the NWBA- hot iron news, and others- when they have a meeting, it is at someone's shop, miles to travel for most members, and only happens at most, monthly- we just go to the shop, 2ce a week - and it works, because there are a whole whack of blacksmiths in the area- some of whom have moved here at least partly because of the club- e.g., Jake- some of whom became blacksmiths because they were exposed to the technology through the club- e.g., Ben, and quite a lot of us who happened upon the club and fell in love with the whole BS thing- so we have a cause/effect thing here- because there is the club, there are a lot of blacksmiths in the area, and because there are a lot of blacksmiths in the area, the club thrives too. I wonder if other groups could learn something from us.
Chas Low

Erratum

Willy Tobler's wonderful wife, Evelyn Tobler, was incorrectly referred to (by Dan Orton) in the October newsletter as Elaina. As editor, I take full responsibility for the publication of this error...and obviously seriously fell down on the job on that one. I actually communicate with Evelyn on a monthly basis, since it is she who maintains our web site, VIblacksmiths.com. She has done so for many, many years without compensation... or even acknowledgement from us. I apologise to Evelyn and wish to express our sincerest thanks for her extremely valuable contribution to the ongoing success of our web site and club in general. On a similar family theme, Willy Tobler has been variously referred to as Willi and sometimes Willie. Please join me in thanking **Willy and Evelyn Tobler** for their ongoing contributions to our organization.

D Gillett, Editor