THE BEGINNING OF WELDING EDUCATION

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For many decades, welding education seemed to be a skill which can be learned from those who know the job. There was no formal training for learning this skill. It has been handed in many different ways. The ways could be good, could be bad, or could be dirty, at times. There was even the connotation that learning welding can be brutal because of some who taught it and tend to be harsh to those who wanted to learn. But of course, that could just be a barber’s story.

At the time of World War II, welder training organizations started to offer trainings. Some of these training organizations were government-owned and some were owned by individuals. This began the welding course in a more ordered manner.

In the United States of America, only some secondary education offered welding as part of their curriculum during the 1950s. Some states do not offer the training. For those areas where welding training was available, students go to welding shops in the area where they were trained. Usually, the welders in these shops were those who were trained to learn welding during the war. They are mostly war veterans. These veterans’ rehabilitation centers were the sole programs supported by the government during that time. The welding processes were very inadequate particularly that there were no modern equipment yet especially in rural economy that suffered because of the recent war.

In the Philippines, welding training was also available in welding shops. Most of the time, a family who owns a welding shop will train the sons or the male members of the family to learn the skill. Sometimes, those who are interested to learn can just stand
by at the shop and be given a chance. In exchange for the training, they will work at the shop for free. Eventually, when they have learned how to weld, they got hired by the same shop or they apply to another shop.

During the early years of welding training programs, only Shielded metal arc welding (SMAW) and oxyfuel welding (OFW) were generally the only two processes taught that era. Some private schools taught the gas tungsten arc welding (GTAW) process. Only few private schools can afford to offer this process because of equipment costs. Schools eliminated High-frequency GTAW machines because of its costs also. Even some industries cannot afford such process at first. They offer SMAW instead but consequently; product was not that good in quality. This is because using SMAW to weld aluminum needed a three-phase DC power source. Limited supplies were available except in industrial and defense plants. Not so many small private schools can also offer the engine-driven machines which were capable of producing DC.

In such scenario during the beginning times, welding training was not really organized and systematic yet. But despite the lack especially in equipment, welders were good at the craft. Soon, formal training programs were designed and taught in formal welding training schools. And as they say, the rest is history.

References:

How To Weld By Todd Bridigum - Motorbook 2008.