

THE TORCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

- SECOND QUARTER 1997 -

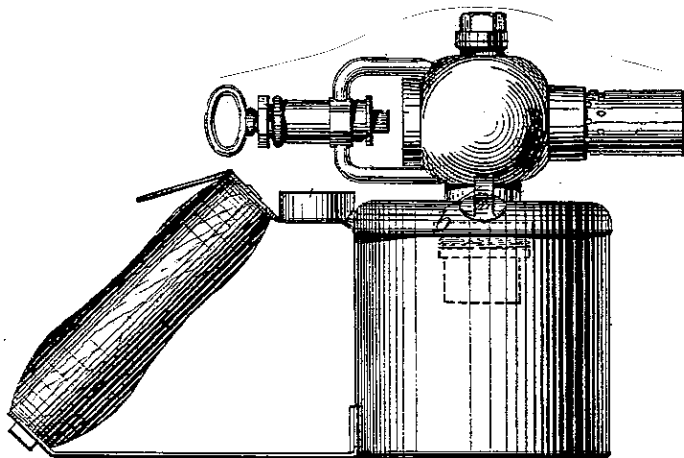
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- THIS NEWSLETTER MAY BE REPRODUCED WITH CREDIT GIVEN TO THE SOURCE -

While the United States and other parts of the world above the equator are experiencing summer, the Pacific Northwest resists Mother Nature's cycles and continues on with cool rainy spring-like weather. Perhaps we Washingtonians should consider changing our state flower to *MOSS* and the state bird to a *DUCK*!



interest, **Dennis Galaway**, a relatively new torch collector, and a fellow Aerospace employee with future plans for a Seattle visit to exchange torch information, (see e-mail listing at end for his e-mail address), and **Rheal Theriault** with a 300+ torch collection, started collecting at 16 years old when he began his plumbing apprenticeship. **WELCOME ABOARD ALL NEW MEMBERS!!!**



BLOWPIPE LAMP FOR PLUMBERS OR PAINTERS
PATENTED OCTOBER 11, 1898

NEW MEMBERS:

Six new members have joined our group since the last newsletter, they are:

LARRY FIELDS, Greensboro, NC with an impressive 586 torches, **DENNIS GALAWAY**, Wichita, KS **RICHARD GJERSEE**, Kent, WA, **HARRY SPECK**, Canandaigua, NY during the summer & Fort Lauderdale, FL during the winter, **WILLIAM S. NIMTZ**, Seaside, OR, and **RHEAL THERIAULT**, Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. Of particular



NOTES FROM ALL OVER



Jim MacLean sent in a photo of another unknown torch manufacturer, the **SUN VAPOR STREET LIGHT CO.** of Canton, OH. The torch looks suspiciously like a torch manufactured by the Turner Brass Works Co. and has the same general construction, including the exterior air supply pipe that runs from the bottom of the pump to the top of the fuel tank. Patent #415,613 (see attached), dated November 19, 1889 that was submitted by **GARY FYE**, reflects the same general construction, however, the patent does not reference any manufacturer. It may be a coincidence, but the inventor, William P. Butler, of patent #415,613 resided in Chicago, IL, the same general area as the Turner Brass Works Co. of Sycamore, IL. I have in my collection, the Turner Brass Works Co. torch version of this patent. The construction is identical, except that the valve handle is the typical steel shaft bent at 90° with a small wooden handle on the end, and the top of the pump has a flat plate with the name **TURNER**, embossed within. I purchased the torch a few years ago at a flea market just north of Cincinnati, OH. It is in perfect condition and I would rate it as somewhat rare. I would be very interested in hearing from any other collector that has a similar **TURNER BRASS WORKS** torch, or the **SUN VAPOR STREET LIGHT CO.** torch.

NOTES FROM ALL OVER, CONT. :

I received a note from **MARK PEDERSEN**, shortly after I mailed out the first quarter 1997 newsletter, regarding the fuel pellet burning **SUPERJET BLOW TORCH** that was featured on the front page. He has a **SUPERJET** torch in his collection along with the original container and a tube of pellets. Mark has never tried to light any of the pellets, and considering the age, I also doubt that they would light. Mark also shared the fact that he purchased a **VULCAN** torch on a recent trip. Another proud owner of an unusual, rare, and somewhat unknown torch!

I also heard from **DAVE KOLB**, another avid torch collector, and he has made arrangements with a company to produce replacement torch decals. Dave sent me a sample of a Turner decal, (see inset), that is available to anyone for \$5 USD each. You can contact Dave at:

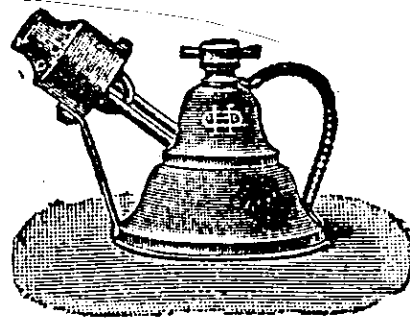
709 8th Ave. NW
Austin, MN 55912
507-437-3839 evenings.

I have asked Dave to look into providing other decals, especially some of the older styles. Dave is also investigating a source for the "forever missing" soldering iron hooks that are located in the top of the burner head. Please let Dave or me know if you have any interest in purchasing decals or soldering iron hooks.



TURNER BRASS WORKS DECAL
BLACK LETTERING
GOLD BACKGROUND
RED SHIELD

Also heard from is **Dave "The Lamp" Rees**, Gwent, England, who, during a recent trip to Holland, successfully secured 11 long sought after torches. One was a very rare torch known as the "Tiny Lamp" and was manufactured by the Herberg Co. of Germany, (see inset). Happy anniversary to Dave and his wife Joan for celebrating their 41st during their Holland trip!



THE "TINY" SOLDERING LAMP
MFG'D. BY HERBERG - GERMANY
USED FOR LIGHT WORK
FUEL CAPACITY FOR ONE HOUR

Graham Stubbs mentioned an interesting bit of trivia regarding US patents in his last letter. It seems that all patents were and are issued only on Tuesday of each week. That would certainly help when trying to decipher a patent date that is somewhat unreadable. With a perpetual calendar, and knowing the month and year, your choices would be limited to Tuesday dates.

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\$\$ FOR SALE \$\$

Apparently, the first quarter 1997 newsletter's \$\$FOR SALE\$\$ column was a great success considering that the two featured torch collections were sold! I have no idea who purchased Brian Reynolds 8 torches, however, **JIM DRENT** advised that he had purchased the entire torch collection from Vernon Rasmussen of Camas, WA. Shipping costs presented somewhat of a problem, however, Jim prevailed and is now the proud owner of the 200+ collection.

\$\$ FOR SALE CONT. \$\$

► For sale, this month, is a collection offered by Dr. Richard V. Reiswig that totals 11 torches. Dr. Reiswig can be reached at:

1073 Broadmoor Drive
Napa, CA, 94558

phone at 707-226-2336 evenings

The collection includes 7 Otto Bernz (one is an auto torch), 2 Clayton & Lambert, 1 Turner, and 1 unknown.

► Also for sale is a larger torch collection, from Robert Simmons, amounting to approximately 26 torches. Robert can be contacted at:

4962 Willow Drive

Pittsburgh, PA 15236-1841

phone: 412-885-3345

I have seen his collection from photos and he does have quite a few nice pieces, so don't delay.

► I was recently contacted by an antique dealer in England that has a few European torches for sale and often has torches available. Anyone interested can contact:

Mr. T. Bannister
C/O Kingfisher Antiques
24 Bedehouse Bank
Bourne, Lincolnshire
ENGLAND PE10 9JX

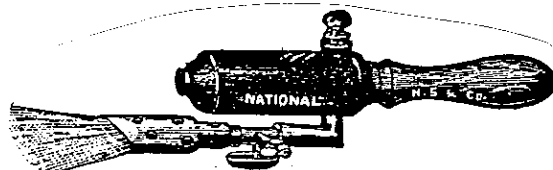
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➔ NATIONAL SAFETY DEVICE CO. ➔

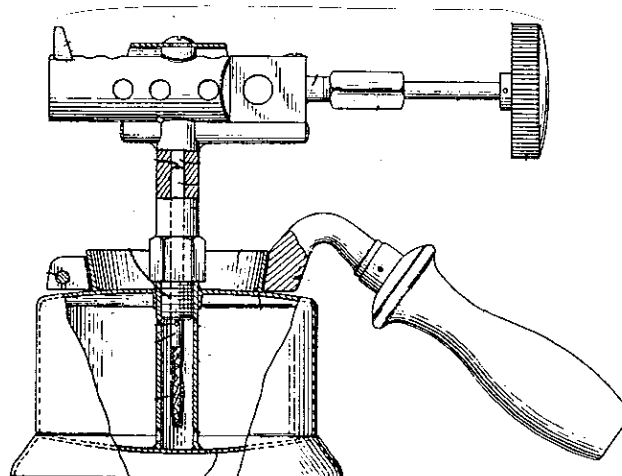
Among all of the torch patents that were sent in by **GARY FYE**, included was a patent for a pumpless gasoline torch that is very similar to a torch manufactured by the **NATIONAL SAFETY DEVICE CO.** of Chicago, IL. Many of you have asked about the origin of this unusual torch, and up until recently, I could not identify it. Since then, I have acquired a few references to the **NATIONAL SAFETY DEVICE CO.** and its torches in a Thomas Guide listing dated 1941, a circa 1930's tool catalog sheet, and an 1891 catalog sheet. The first two references are for the identical torch, a No. 200 Pumpless Safety Blow Torch, 1 pint capacity, gasoline, producing a 2400° flame, and includes a number of attachments that produce various style flames for numerous applications. While the No. 200 Pumpless torch is not all that old, relatively speaking, its unusual design and style makes it somewhat

collectable. See the inset picture of the patent torch which is identical to the No. 200 Pumpless torch, since all of the reference pictures would not legibly reproduce. See the other inset picture of the circa 1891 **NATIONAL TORCH** as listed in a Hammacher & Schlemmer tool catalog from New York City.

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NATIONAL PAINT BURNER CIRCA 1891
CAST BRASS WITH SCREW JOINTS



BLOW TORCH, PATENTED SEPTEMBER 22, 1939
VERY SIMILAR TO THE
NATIONAL SAFETY DEVICE CO. TORCH, CIRCA 1940'S

INTERNET ADDRESSES

Drop me a note if you have an e-mail address and wish to add it to the list. I may consider a torch home page sometime in the near future.
Current e-mail addresses:

Les Adams, England
les_gina@msn.com

Richard Brazil, Ferndale, CA
rbrazil@humboldt1.com

Ron Carr, Issaquah, WA
swcv70e@prodigy.com

Dennis Galaway, Wichita, KS
dgalaway@gte.net

Harry Goff, Australia
colyton@iinet.com.au

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? TORCH IDENTIFICATION ?

A number of collectors have suggested developing an easier means of identifying and describing torches. This may sound somewhat basic and unnecessary, however, I also find it difficult when discussing or describing a torch with a fellow collector when there are no universal standards or part nomenclatures available. I have accumulated quite a bit of literature over the past few years describing blow torch components and have decided to attempt some sort of standard for part nomenclatures, and include something on types of torches. I am always looking for input and would appreciate any suggestions or comments to the following:

TORCH CATEGORIES:

As I sit in my den typing this issue of THE TORCH at my computer terminal, I can look to my left and view 130 torches of all shapes, sizes, capacities, and functions. In trying to simplify their description, I can visualize 7 basic torch categories and they are as follows:

PINT Any torch with a cylindrical fuel tank and a capacity of approximately one pint of fuel.

QUART Any torch with a cylindrical fuel tank and a capacity of approximately one quart of fuel.

GALLON Any torch with a cylindrical fuel tank and a capacity of approximately one quart of fuel.

AUTO An AUTO or AUTOMOBILE torch that has a narrow oval shaped fuel tank. While this category identifies a very small class of torches, I believe that it warrants an individual category based on its unique style and application.

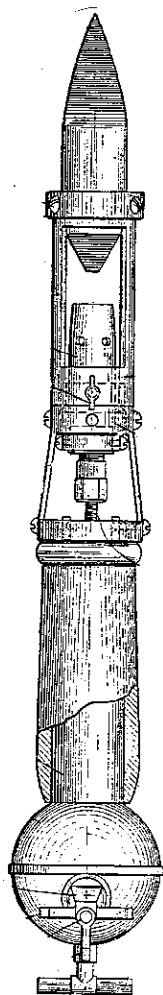
SELF HEATING SOLDERING IRON Any torch with a long tube shaped fuel tank, and the fuel tank also used as the handle. The **SELF HEATING SOLDERING IRON** typically has an interchangeable soldering iron built into the burner head, or some type of branding device.

ALCOHOL This is somewhat of a difficult category to generalize, however, the intent is to identify the standard small cylindrical fuel tank as produced by LENK and a few other manufacturers. In some cases, this class of torch would also burn gasoline, or perhaps kerosene, but would still be classified as an alcohol style torch.

OTHER This is the easiest category and identifies everything else not covered in the above 6 categories. Torches such as the Vulcan torch, the Unique red oval torch, the Lenk "pistol shaped" torch, the "IMP", the "Little Wonder", all of the ½ pints, the European spherical torches, and the list goes on and on.

The **OTHER** category covers a lot of territory, but is necessary rather than have too many individual categories with perhaps, one entry per category. The **PINT, QUART, and GALLON** categories cover a great majority of all torches, and as a good example, using a portion of my torch collection that is displayed in my den, 88 of the 130 torches, or 68%, fall into the first 3 categories. The balance of my den collection consists of 7 auto torches, 6 self heating soldering irons, 4 alcohol, and the remaining are all in the **OTHER** category, torches such as ½ pints, a Vulcan, unusual alcohol's, a red oval Unique, etc. In total, 105 torches, or 81%, fall into the 6 main categories, with the remaining 25 torches represented in the **OTHER** category. Based on the numbers of my den displayed collection, I believe that the 7 categories will keep it somewhat simple, yet provide some basis for identification. I also believe that non-US manufactured torches can easily be identified with the same method, except I don't believe that any non-US manufacturer produced an **AUTO** style torch. Also, the non-US manufactured torches would utilize a different capacity measurement, liters Vs pints, quarts, gallons. Comments??

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**SELF-HEATING
SOLDERING TOOL
PATENTED
MAY 22, 1900**

**NO MODEL
SUBMITTED**

**INVENTOR:
EDWIN L. BARBER**

**PRODUCTION
STATUS UNKNOWN**



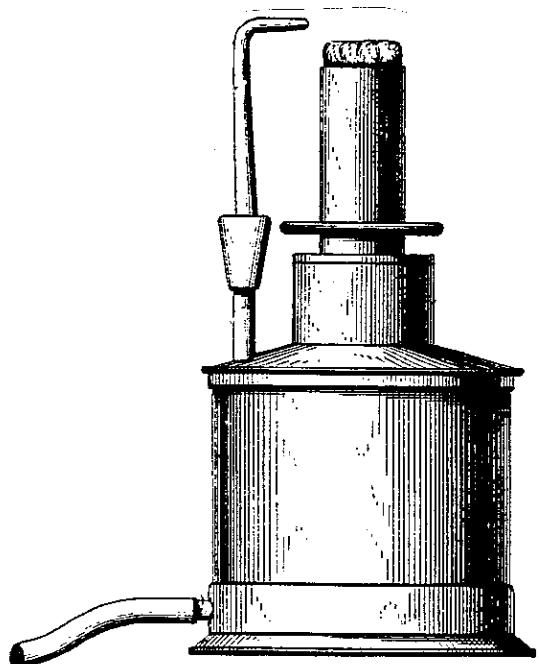
**CLAYTON & LAMBERT #96
KEROSENE TORCH
CIRCA 1920**

◀ COMPONENT IDENTIFICATION ▶

This poses somewhat of a challenge since there is a large variety of torch features and components. As an example, there are:

- Torches with a fuel tank air pump that also serves as a fuel fill plug.
- Torches with priming cups that are integrally cast into the fuel tank.
- Torches that don't have a control valve to adjust fuel flow and flame size. Clayton & Lambert and Otto Bernz manufactured a kerosene torch with this feature, (see *inset*). Emmelmann Bros. Torch Co. also manufactured a **SELF HEATING SOLDERING IRON** without a fuel flow control valve.

Many names have also been given to component parts. I have seen the **DRIP CUP** also referred to as a **HEATER, DRIP TROUGH, and PRIMING CUP**, with **DRIP CUP** being the most referenced. The **SOLDERING IRON HOOK** is also referred to as the **HOOK** and the **BURNER HOOK** with **HOOK** being the most referenced. While trying to keep identification as simple as possible, I would not get into such detail that would include components like the pump leather cup, burner heater holes, generating veins, etc., but stick to the basic items.



**BLOWPIPE LAMP
PATENTED AUGUST 16, 1892**

I would view the basic components as being:

BURNER HEAD	Combustion head.
CONTROL VALVE	Controls fuel flow and flame size.
DRIP CUP	Used for priming burner head.
FILLER PLUG	Access to fuel tank for adding fuel.
FUEL FEED PIPE	Feeds fuel from fuel tank to burner head.
FUEL TANK	Contains burner fuel.
HANDLE	Hand hold.
HOOK	Soldering iron support.
PUMP	Air pump for fuel tank pressurization.
OTHER	Identifies other components not covered by the above such as wind screens, air control valves, pressure relief valves, and dual fuel/air control valves.

There is another subset to the basic components that would provide a clearer and more

precise identification. As an example, the drip cup can be further identified as a cast iron drip cup, or a cast brass, stamped steel, stamped brass, integral drip cup or no drip cup. Another example is the fuel tank with options such as brass, copper, aluminum, steel, chrome plated brass, copper plated steel....did i forget any??? I believe that the control handle has the most possibilities, and while the steel-6 ball style is the most popular, others include black Bakelite, red Bakelite, wood, steel-6 spoke, brass-6 spoke, brass spiral, wound wire, cast brass, and stamped steel....did I forget any in this category??? The process goes on for the pump, hook, handle, etc.

I have attempted to put all of this information together into a matrix in Excel, with the idea that, one day, I would have my entire torch inventory categorized within the matrix. I have developed a preliminary matrix, only to realize that the large number of options in each category such as mentioned earlier make for a very complicated matrix chart. I have, for the moment abandoned the effort and will rethink the process, after summerif it ever arrives in Seattle!

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NON U.S. MANUFACTURERS

Thanks to the efforts of **Philippe Touillet** and **Michel Duval**, both avid French collectors, I have enough information to issue a partial list of non U.S. torch manufacturers. The attached list may provide some help to the U.S. collectors that occasionally acquire an offshore torch. I would encourage any information on corrections, additions, etc. to the list and I will re-publish with the changes.

♦ ♦ ♦

As always, I enjoy hearing from many of you and appreciate all of your contributions to this effort. As with all of us, time becomes very precious and should be spent on the important things in life that include family, our professions, and on occasion, blow torches. Have a great summer and I will "see" you all in the fall. ☺

RON

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PS: We are in the midst of an area code change in the state of Washington and my new area code is **425**.