

# THE TORCH

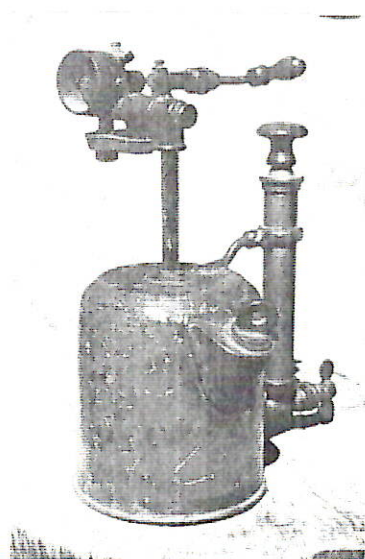
## NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

- Issue #17 -

- July 2000 -

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The flowers are in bloom, birds are singing, and summer has finally arrived! It's time for swap meets, steam rallies, flea markets, antique shows...all the great places to look for those "rare \$5 torches". Have a great summer and a successful torch hunt.



**Schneider &  
Trenkamp**  
Blow Torch

Cleveland, OH

With offset  
burner assembly  
and fuel  
entry.

Submitted by  
Graham Stubbs

## - NEW MEMBERS -

**Wilbur Bergerson**, Alexandria, Minnesota, is a 15-year collector that discovered our group, through his daughter, on the Internet. Wilbur has 62 torches, all polished, and displayed throughout his home...including the kitchen. He also collects toy tractors with many that date back to the early 1930's.

**S. B. Brilla**, owns the Peerless Ranch in Mason, Wisconsin, and has over 300 torches in his ever-growing collection.

**Joe Burns**, Wichita, Kansas, started collecting torches 5 years ago when he realized that he "liked the way they look". He has 19 of his 25 torches polished and displayed along with some of his Coleman gas lamps and fire extinguishers. Joe also discovered BTCA via the Internet, and contacted **Dennis Galaway**, a BTCA member.

**Philip Eng**, Woodhaven, New York is a 5-year collector with a growing number of turn-of-the-century torches. His torch collection pales in comparison to his circa 1900-1930's antique woodworking tool collection.

**Alexander Haley** began collecting in 1998 and has a growing assortment of blow torches.

**Keith Hawkins**, Woburn, Bedfordshire, Great Britain is a long-time collector with approximately 600 torches (lamps) from over 18 countries. Keith enjoys displaying 160 of the more unusual ones at steam and country fairs. He is also a member in the British Blow Lamp Association, and looks forward to trading with the "Yank" collectors.

**Lloyd Weber**, Fridley, Minnesota, is a soon-to-be-retired-dentist that was looking for something else to polish rather than silver fillings. Lloyd started his collection in November 1999 and with the help of friends, family and patients, has accumulated 70 torches to date.

**Tom Wilfong**, is a new member from Bridgewater, Virginia thanks to his thoughtful wife.

**Richard Woodruff**, Kent, Washington is a relatively new collector that got started through his association with BTCA member, **Richard Gjersee**. He was shopping for torches for Richard Gjersee for over two years, and decided he should start collecting them. Richard also has an extensive license plate collection.



## IN MEMORY

Our European counterparts have advised that **Philippe Touillet** recently passed away as the result of a long illness. He was a leading authority on blowlamps and blow torches, and had an extensive collection that he was quite proud of. I knew Philippe well, and actually met him three years ago during a trip to Southern France. I spent most of a day with him at his home talking about lamps and torches, and viewed his wonderful collection. He undoubtedly epitomized the true meaning of a lamp collector as he lived and breathed lamps. He often commented to me that he wished he did not have to work so he could devote all his time to lamps. He was quite knowledgeable and knew as much about US torches as most US collectors. I have yet to meet anyone quite like Philippe and doubt seriously if I ever will...a person so devoted to the passion of "pieces of brass and steel".

Many members benefited from his knowledge and the numerous exchanges of torches and lamps. He will be missed by many.

♦ ♦ ♦



**Ridgely Trimmer**  
Blow torch

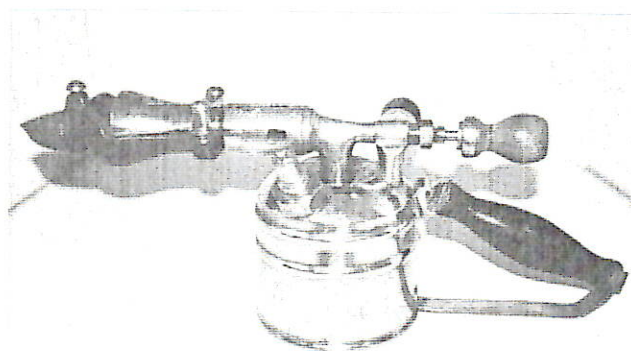
Pint size

(Note offset valve knob & distinct pump handle)

Submitted by  
**Dick Sarpolus**

## NOTES FROM ALL OVER

One of our long-time members, **Mark Pedersen** has submitted another unknown torch manufacturer, the *Hull-Grippen & Co., New York, NY*. The Hull-Grippen torch has one of the most unusual burner heads that includes a preheat chamber that wraps around the burner head. The drip cup is also much larger than the average and extends well back of the burner assembly. The fuel tank and handle assembly look similar to an older version of what Clayton & Lambert produced.



**English "Burridge" Blowlamp**  
With attachment for soldering coffins.

Photo submitted by **Les Adams**  
Blowlamp owned by **Tom Bartlett**

If you are planning a trip to England, **Les Adams**, Editor of the British newsletter, *BLOWLAMP NEWS*, announced the date for their next blowlamp meeting, October 15<sup>th</sup>. Interested individuals should contact Les directly. Les also sent in a photo of an English "Burridge" blowlamp (**see inset**), with an attachment designed for soldering lead coffins. The system was probably a precursor to our burial vault system, and brings a new meaning to the term "sealed in" your tomb.

Another new manufacturer has surfaced, the *Murray-Black Co., Springfield, Ohio*, and now resides in **Ron Carr's** collection. It is a most unusual torch with a short, stubby cast iron drip cup, a wire wound steel handle similar to a Detroit Torch, and a burner head with a small internal fuel line that is directly in the flame path, inside the burner. Input from **Graham Stubbs** suggests that it is a kerosene torch with the feature that allows the fuel to vaporize quickly and efficiently.



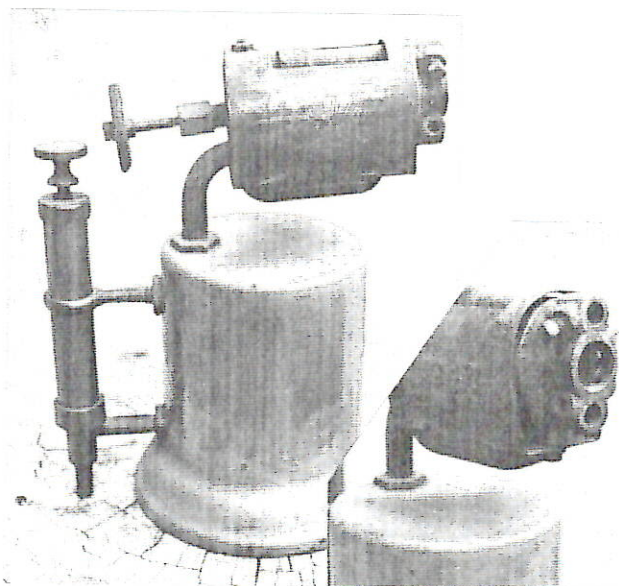
**Otto Bernz Oiler**

(Often mistaken as a blow torch)

Submitted by  
**Graham Stubbs**



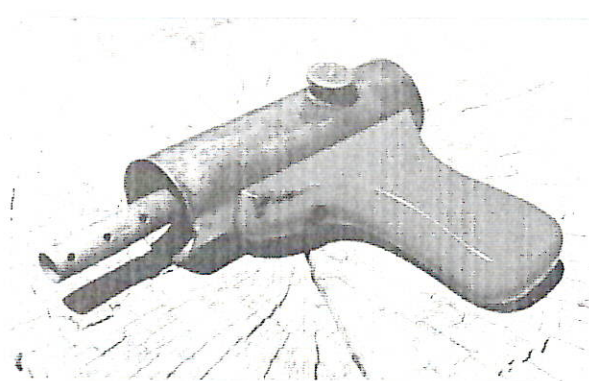
Our newest member, **Keith Hawkins**, just sent in some interesting information about blow torches that were manufactured just after the conclusion of WWII. According to Keith, numerous types of equipment were supplied and shipped into Europe, after the Big War, under the Marshall Plan to re-equip European countries. All types of tools, machinery, and materials were provided, including blow torches, and they were marked with TL130. Keith located a Clayton & Lambert auto torch, as well as a Turner Brass Works torch...both marked with TL130. We're not sure what the TL130 stands for or signifies, or if the Marshall Plan story is in fact, true. It would be an incredible coincidence for both of the US torch manufacturers to adopt the same catalog or identification number, so I suspect there could be some truth to the story. So, if anyone has any supportive data or can verify the above information, please contact Ron Carr.



**Everhot Blow torch**  
Quart size with copper fuel tank  
Note burner will accept branding irons

Submitted by **Graham Stubbs**

**Graham Stubbs** provided some great photographs of an *Everhot Mfg. Co.* blow torch (**see inset above**). Many of you recognize that Everhot produced a line of gasoline branding torches that we refer to as self heating soldering irons. The photos sent in by Graham are of an Everhot torch in the more conventional blow torch configuration. One unique feature is that the fuel tank is made of copper. You'll note that the burner head is still configured for a branding iron that was also produced by Everhot.



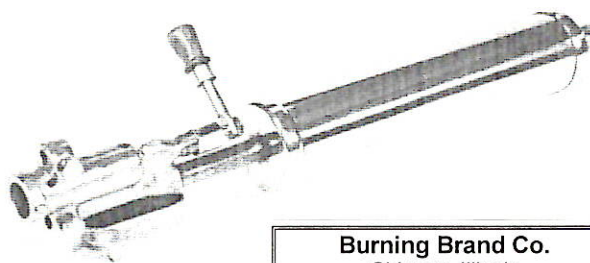
**Saf-Jet ROCKET TORCH**

Model Number 1

Winchester, Massachusetts

Submitted by **Graham Stubbs**

**Dick Sarpolus** lays claim to another new torch manufacturer, the *Welch Co., Chicago, Illinois*. The torch is described as a pint size, brass fuel tank, pump in the handle, fuel filler in the bottom of the tank, and a steel fuel tube with a 90-degree bend in it. The cast bronze typical burner is positioned vertically and a cast bronze circular drip-cup is threaded onto the rear/bottom of the burner assembly. What is so unusual about this torch is that there is a soldering iron hook and a forward notch on the burner, and because of that, the burner head assembly was probably used for standard horizontal applications, as well as a vertical burner. I also have a laboratory torch, manufactured by the *Otto Bernz Co.*, that is almost identical to Dick's laboratory torch, but without the soldering iron hook. I suspect that the Welch Company provided tools and devices for laboratory use, and since the name *Welch* is cast into the burner head I will lean more toward treating the company as a manufacturer rather than a brand label company. Dick also submitted a photo of a *Burning Brand Co.* soldering iron torch similar to what Everhot & Geo. Diener produced (**see inset**).



**Burning Brand Co.**

Chicago, Illinois

Branding iron/soldering iron

Submitted by **Dick Sarpolus**



**Al Austin** came forth with another unheard of torch manufacturer, the *Alton Iron Works, Windsor, Connecticut*, and it is described as a gasoline heating torch (**see inset below**). It appears to have been manufactured for the US Military since it carries a MIL spec number, and its intended use was to heat up cold engines in severe cold climates. The torch is described as a green anodized oval welded steel fuel tank, aluminum fuel feed tube, and includes a pressure gauge. Al called the company and talked to one of the older employees that remembered manufacturing the torch in the early 1980's. The torch was part of a kit, with over 1000 manufactured, and all sent to the arctic under several government contracts. **The price tag per torch was \$500!**

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



**Alton Iron Works**  
Windsor, Connecticut

Arctic Heating Torch

Submitted by  
**Al Austin**

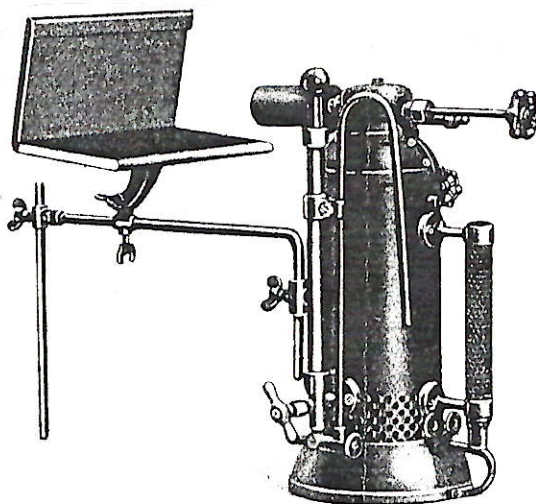
## VOLCANO

Torch literature for the *Volcano Torch and Mfg. Co., Erie, Pennsylvania* was recently submitted by **Graham Stubbs**, and helped to solve another of the many blow torch mysteries. During my blow torch patent research, I noticed that the inventor, Christian G. Filzer (also from Erie, Pennsylvania) held numerous patents, 8 known to date, but there was no mention of an affiliated company. Usually, with detailed construction features as was provided in each of Christian Filzer's patents, there is a company reference but none were ever listed. Graham's Volcano torch literature lists a patent date of January 6, 1903, the exact date of Christian Filzer's first patent. After reviewing the Volcano literature and Christian's patents, it's clear that Christian worked for the Volcano Torch Company. Christian continued with his inventive process up to 1932 and his latest known patent is dated February 23, 1932.

The Volcano Torch and Mfg. Co. was established in 1903, incorporated in 1906, and produced a line of gasoline blow torches or heating machines. They produced torches that did not require an air pump and they also eliminated the traditional drip cup or what they referred to as a starting cup. Another Volcano feature was that their torches could be refueled without suspending operations. The torch featured a lamp burner in the base of the torch that heated a generator to maintain the pressure inside the fuel tank. The fuel tank was constructed of heavy gauge steel, brazed and bolted, and capable of sustaining a pressure of 2000 pounds per square inch. Normal operation was at pressures of 100 – 140 pounds compared to conventional blow torches with manual air pumps that produced pressures up to approximately 60 pounds.

Volcano manufactured torches in various sizes to accomplish numerous tasks in the machine shop, and for boiler operations, railroads, foundries, and shipyards. The larger torches were capable of heating an 11½ inch diameter steel shaft to a red hot condition in 30 minutes, and demonstrated an incredible amount of heat generation. One can imagine the size and complexity of a size #4 Volcano torch that retailed for \$148, an impressive amount during the early 1900's for a blow torch!

Volcano torches were advertised as lasting a lifetime due to the rugged construction and saves 30% in fuel consumption from ordinary torches. The higher air pressure provided by Volcano torches puts more heat into the process and the higher heat shortens the heating process, thus saving fuel.



**Volcano Torch Co.**

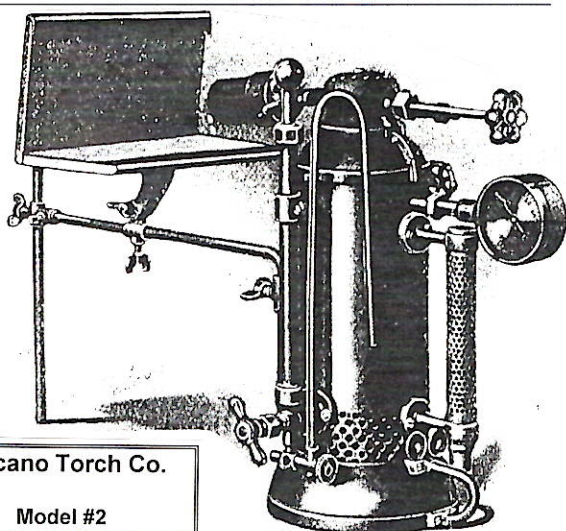
Model #1



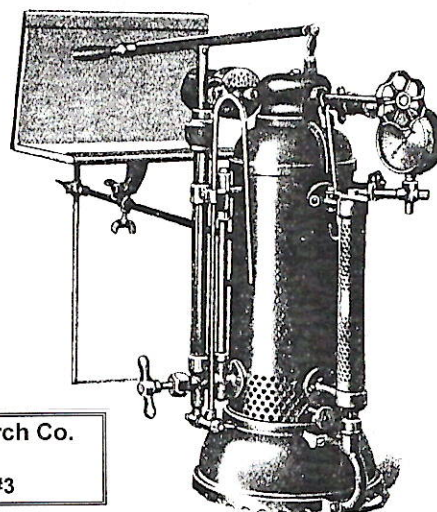
The Volcano #1 torch (see inset page 4) was approximately 15 inches tall with a fuel capacity estimated at one gallon and an empty weight of 19 pounds. It was designed as a bench torch and was used for light brazing, forging, and tempering. The torch was not provided with a pressure gauge, and the burner nozzle was not adjustable as is on other models.

The Volcano #2 torch weighed in at 21 pounds (see inset below) and was identical to the #1 model, except the #2 was somewhat more powerful, had a pressure gauge, and an adjustable burner nozzle that could swing in any position. (No information was listed to explain why the #2 was more powerful than the #1, but I suspect that the #2 operated at much higher pressures as indicated by the addition of a pressure gauge.) Additional applications included shrink fittings, straightening crankshafts, and heavy brazing. The #2 also had an optional 6-foot extension tube and burner assembly to provide heat into tight areas. Of interest was the application for "traveling automobiles" and was advertised as follows:

*"Volcano #2 is a matter of safety. The Volcano can be carried in some convenient place about the automobile. It tends to make you feel safe under any condition of the route, in fact, no chauffeur can afford to be helpless in case of a breakdown, when for a trifling expense he can get a Volcano that will furnish the required heat to make necessary repairs, when there is no repair shop within a radius of 10 or 20 miles."* (I cannot imagine that it would have been convenient to carry a Volcano torch in a automobile, nor would one require such heat for simple repairs.)



Volcano Torch Co.  
Model #2



Volcano Torch Co.  
Model #3

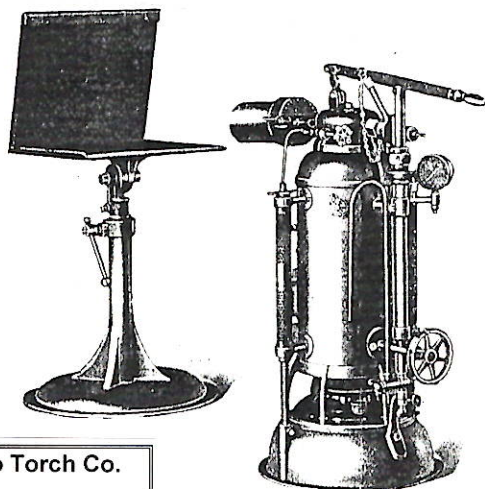
The Volcano #3 torch (see inset above) was larger, with double the heating capacity of the #2 torch. The #3, at 38 pounds empty weight, could be furnished with a single burner or double burner, and a 12-foot extension tube and burner assembly for remote operation. Interestingly enough, the torch could be carried along or taken on a train for outside repair work as a hand torch in spite of its size and weight.

The Volcano #4 torch (see inset page 6) was the granddaddy of them all and weighed in at an impressive 105 pounds. The #4 was approximately 36 inches tall and was the most powerful torch of its kind in the market. The model #4B was offered with a 12-foot flexible seamless copper extension tube and burner assembly that afforded the ultimate in safety for remote operation. The safety benefit of a remote operated Volcano torch was the fuel configuration as it was delivered to the remote burner head. In conventional torches, liquid gasoline was delivered through the extension tube and was vaporized at the burner head. The Volcano torch vaporized the fuel before entering the extension tube, and only burned gasoline vapor. Imagine for a moment operating a conventional torch as a remote device with an extension tube and burner assembly in a confined area, and have the extension tube rupture with gasoline spewing out at high pressure...then igniting within seconds. A great selling point for Volcano torches!

No known Volcano torch has surfaced...yet. One can speculate that many did not survive because of their size, and that many rusted away or were scrapped due to poor condition.

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Volcano Torch Co.

Model #4

## FOR EVERHOT

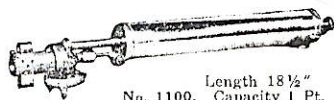
Information recently sent in by **Graham Stubbs** provides model identification for Everhot branding torches, also referred to as soldering iron torches (see inset below). The branding torches all appear similar except for the varying lengths that provided additional fuel capacity. Model 750 is 14 inches long with  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint capacity, model 900 is 16 inches long with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  pint capacity, model 1100 is 18  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long with a 1 pint capacity, and model 1200 is 31 inches long with a 1 quart capacity. I recently measured my Everhot soldering iron torch (16 inches), and I can assume that the lengths referred to are from the tip of the burner head to the end of the fuel tank, and excludes the pump handle & fuel filler plug and any branding device.



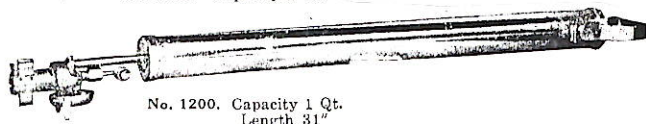
Length 14"  
No. 750. Capacity  $\frac{1}{2}$  Pt.



Length 16"  
No. 900. Capacity  $\frac{3}{4}$  Pt.



Length 18  $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
No. 1100. Capacity 1 Pt.



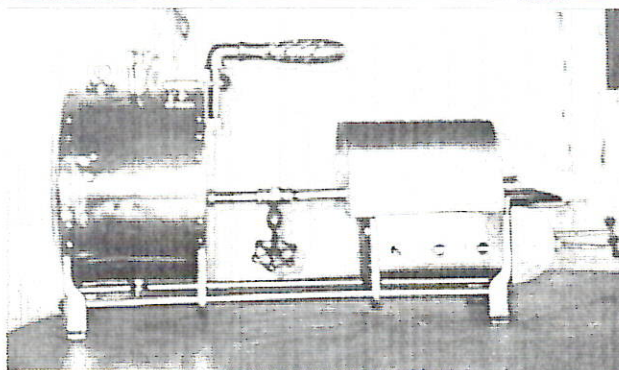
No. 1200. Capacity 1 Qt.  
Length 31"

Everhot  
Branding irons

Submitted by  
Graham Stubbs

## NO WAY PREWAY

According to information received from **Dick Sarpolus** and **Graham Stubbs**, PREWAY was not a brand labeled torch, but was a torch manufacturer in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin back in the 1930's & 1940's. PREWAY was manufactured by Prentiss-Wabers Products Company, and not only produced a line of blow torches, but also manufactured hot plates, stoves, heaters, water heaters, camp stoves, camping equipment, lanterns and accessories. Dick has 3 different PREWAY torches, models 45, 45A, and S45, and all have unique features that set them apart from other torch manufacturers that did produce torches under brand labels. PREWAY and Prentiss-Wabers will show up in the manufacturer listing when the next list is issued in December 2000.



Quick Meal Stove Co.  
St. Louis, Missouri

Soldering iron furnace  
Submitted by Mel Olson

## CALL FOR PAPERS

I am appealing, again, for any Otto Bernz literature, catalog pictures, or magazine articles, no matter how insignificant. Our Contributing Editor, **Graham Stubbs**, is authoring the Otto Bernz Torch Index, scheduled for the December issue of *THE TORCH*, and anxiously awaits additional Bernz data to complete a meaningful index. Please help by sending Graham any and all Otto Bernz literature. Information can be sent to Graham Stubbs, 17715 St. Andrews Drive, Poway, California 92064. To those of you that have sent in Bernz literature, Graham and I thank you very much. The information accumulated to date has added greatly to our knowledge of the Otto Bernz Company and will be shared by all.





## OTTO BERNZ NOZZLE CLEANER

The Otto Bernz Company was considered one of the three largest blow torch manufacturers in the US, along with Clayton & Lambert and Turner Brass Works. Clayton & Lambert was, without a doubt, the largest, and Bernz & Turner slugged it out for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The ranking is also evident when one looks at the patents issued to each company. My patent research is now concentrating on the early 1920's and to date I have uncovered 21 C&L patents, 8 Bernz patents, and 7 Turner patents. Otto Bernz was issued 4 torch related patents, and one recently discovered patent, also invented by Otto, is for a nozzle cleaner (see pages 8-10).

The handy-dandy tool is the type many of us have found in the hollow handles of Otto Bernz torches. The cleaner tool features the ability to replace the wire cleaner when broken, and the protective cover that prevents the wire from penetrating the clothing or person of the carrier and causing damage or injury.

The patent date, June 15, 1920, coincides with the transition of relocating the air pump from the handle to the fuel tank. Removing the air pump left a hollow handle, so Otto took advantage of the situation by merely adding a screw top and created storage for his newly invented cleaning tool. Those of you that own an Otto Bernz torch, circa 1920's with the hollow handle with screw cap, will also notice that Otto retained the same bottom handle support used with the original air pump. One has to assume that using the same lower handle support helped to deplete stock on hand, and was less expensive than developing a new design. The hollow storage handle did not last long in Otto's production, and with less costly materials being utilized by other torch manufacturers, he was forced to adopt the less costly wooden handle.

The other mystery is not finding Otto's patented cleaning tool listed or advertised anywhere in the known Otto Bernz literature. There is an earlier version of his cleaning tool in a 1916 Bernz catalog, but known catalogs from the 1930's list no cleaning tools. Another torch mystery yet to be solved.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

### ADDRESS CHANGE

**Please note that I have a new mailing address as the result of city-hood for the**

**unincorporated area in my community. My new city address is Sammamish, WA 98075. Our new city adopted its name from an adjacent lake, Lake Sammamish, (a mouthful of m's).**

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

### EAST COAST WEST COAST CONVENTIONS

Thanks to our hosts on the East & West Coast, (**Bob & Darlene Scheiderman**, Toms River, New Jersey and **Al & Elaine Austin**, Puyallup, Washington), we are on schedule for our fall BTCA conventions. Note the enclosed information detailing the two events, the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual East Coast Convention on September 2<sup>nd</sup> in New Jersey and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual West Coast Convention on September 16<sup>th</sup> in Washington. If you plan to attend, please respond as soon as possible to our hosts as listed in the information. We are anticipating a good turnout and Graham & I look forward to meeting many of you at both events.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## THE TORCH

Official publication of Blow Torch Collectors Association  
and is published 3 times per year.

*Editor*  
*Contributing Editor*

**Ronald M. Carr**  
**Graham Stubbs**

THE PURPOSE of BTCA is to preserve the history of blow torches and related equipment, to encourage the identification, classification, and exhibiting of such equipment. Also to promote the study and better understanding of operation, purpose, and application of blow torches.

MEMBERSHIP in BTCA is open to any person sharing its interests and purposes. For membership information, write to: Ron Carr, 3328 258<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075, email at: [roncarr@prodigy.net](mailto:roncarr@prodigy.net), or by phone: (425) 557-0634

THE TORCH welcomes contributions from anyone interested in our purpose. Articles can be submitted in any format and should include supportive literature whenever possible. All submittals should be sent to the Contributing Editor, Graham Stubbs, 17715 St. Andrews Drive, Poway, CA 92064, email at: [gstubbs222@aol.com](mailto:gstubbs222@aol.com), or by phone at: (858) 487-3025



## CLASSIFIED ADS

**For Sale:** Merit alcohol torch, 5 ½ inches tall, red handle with fill plug in bottom. Good condition with almost complete Merit decal. Contact Patricia Konzman, 723 Delaware Street, Forest City, Pennsylvania 18421, (570) 785-5086, or email at: [heart@nep.net](mailto:heart@nep.net)

**For Sale:** Otto Bernz quart size blow torch, pump in brass fuel tank. Partial Otto Bernz label with "Always Reliable", Made in Newark, New Jersey. In good condition, dates to mid 1930's. Contact Mrs. Marion Herrmann, 554 Pheasant Hill Road, Mountainside, New Jersey 07092.

**For Sale:** Otto Bernz pint size blow torch, pump in fuel tank, wood machine turned handle, all complete, no missing parts, no damage, and appears to be in excellent condition. Label in very good condition and torch very clean and not used much. Contact Louis Reiss, 1617 Hendersonville Road, Apt. 1113, Asheville, NC 28803.

**For Sale: A must item for all torch collectors!** One of our members, **Mark Pedersen**, is selling replacement wooden handles with a brass collar for the older Turner, O. Bernz, and Clayton & Lambert torches. It is the small wooden handle with a small brass collar that slips onto the steel shaft for the fuel control valve. A majority of the original wooden handles are usually broken or missing which detracts from the beauty and value of the torch. You'll need to specify either a ¼ or 3/16<sup>th</sup>-hole size, and either black or natural finish. Price is \$2.50 each plus postage. Contact Mark Pedersen, 6112 SW High, Mill City, Oregon 97360, or call (503) 897-3101.

**For Sale:** Member **Clayton George** had a sand mold made for the hard-to-find early decorative style soldering iron hook that screws into the top of the burner head. Clayton worked with a foundry that makes molds for boat parts, and the company made the mold and cast the part for him. Clayton has available two machined thread sizes, small and large...the two sizes most commonly used by many of the torch manufacturers. They are \$9.00 each and include postage, (\$8.00 each for 10 or more). Be sure you specify small or large thread. Contact Clayton George at 1003 E. Toledo St., Bellingham, WA 98226-2109, (360)734-7776, or email at: [Cge3182016@aol.com](mailto:Cge3182016@aol.com)

**For Sale:** Mr. Decal, **Dave Kolb**, has produced a perfect reproduction of an Otto Bernz decal, complete with accurate coloring, shading, and font type that was widely used by the O. Bernz Company. For those that refinish torches, this is a must for a complete job. Price is \$5.00 each and includes postage to most locations. Contact Dave Kolb, 709 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW, Austin, Minnesota 55912, (507)437-3839. Remember that Dave also has a Turner Brass Works Co. decal available, same price.

**BTCA patches are still available.** Each professionally sewn patch is very attractive, colorful and eye-catching, and can be sewn on any hat, jacket, shirt pocket, bag, etc. Anyone interested in purchasing a BTCA patch, send \$4.50 USD per patch, includes first class postage, to: Ron Carr, 3328 258<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Issaquah, WA 98029-9173. Please make checks payable to **Ron Carr**.

**Services:** There is another buffing service available with reasonable prices. Quart sizes are \$10 and pint or smaller sizes are \$5 each plus postage for all. The process includes cleaning, buffing, and lacquering each item. They have been in business for 30+ years and have processed numerous blow torches over the years. The owners, Dean & Linda Elam, can be reached at Driftwood Antiques, 6600 Paris Road, Winchester, Kentucky 40391, (606) 745-1707, or email at [LTRUBLU71@aol.com](mailto:LTRUBLU71@aol.com).

**Wanted:** **John Tingle** is looking for anyone interested in trading torches, and has an abundance of European torches ready for the trade. He is specifically looking for a 1 pint Ridgely Trimmer torch, and a ½ pint LUX petrol brass lamp labeled Aktlebolaget Lux. Anyone wishing to accomplish a trade should contact John at Prospect House, Wrington Rd., Congresbury, Bristol, England BS49 5AS.

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The CLASSIFIED ADS is a supplement to *THE TORCH*, and is available for advertising to all members of the Blow Torch Collectors Association in good standing, at no charge. Advertising for all non-BTCA members is available on request. Contact Ron Carr, 3328 258<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075, (425) 557-0634, or email at: [roncarr@prodigy.net](mailto:roncarr@prodigy.net)



O. BERNZ.  
CLEANER FOR BLOW TORCH NOZZLES AND THE LIKE.  
APPLICATION FILED FEB. 19, 1919.

1,343,705.

Patented June 15, 1920.

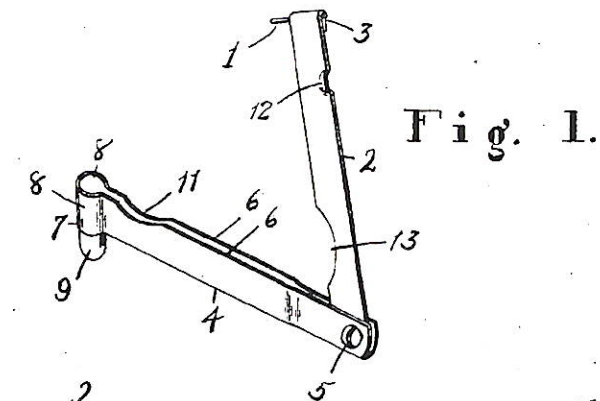


Fig. 1.

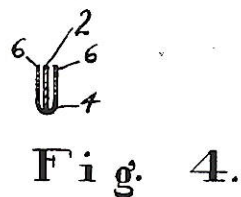


Fig. 4.

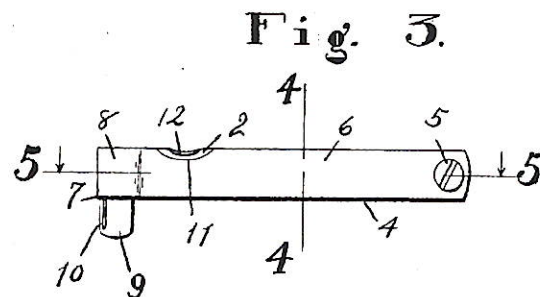


Fig. 3.

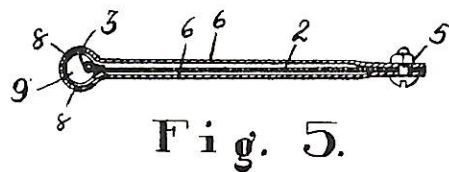


Fig. 5.

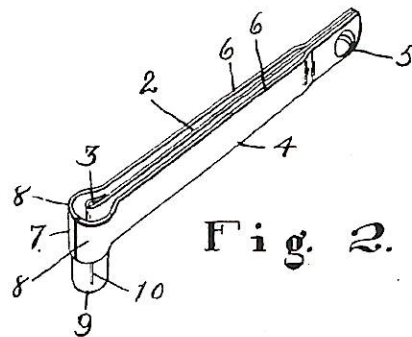


Fig. 2.



Fig. 6.

INVENTOR:  
Otto Bernz,  
BY  
Russell W. Everett,  
ATTORNEY.