

## Ted's Tips: Introduction

I became interested in cleaning and repairing things when I was very young. It didn't really matter what it was. What was important to me was taking something that looked like trash and making it either functional or attractive. I began with restoring old single barrel shotguns. The combination of blued steel, walnut stocks and fore ends, and polished receivers was very attractive to me. I liked working on cars and keeping everything polished and shiny. Those were the days when cars actually had chrome plated parts. Later on, my interests turned to furniture, antique steamer trunks, and brass and copper items.

I discovered my first blowtorch about 45 years ago. I was at an antique car swap meet looking for parts for my 1940 Ford Coupe. The torch was a Schaefer & Beyer auto torch. I was hooked. For me, it has always been making a significant difference between the "Before" and the "After". When I see something, I can visualize what it will look like after having been restored. From that point on, it's just a matter of getting it from here to there.

My experience in all types of restorations has helped me immeasurably in the restoration of blowtorches. Concepts and techniques that apply to restoring cars, furniture, antique trunks, etc. also apply to torches.

I consider myself a "Back Yard Mechanic" in every sense. I have no official training, only experience. I have no workshop and not even a basement. I do all my work either outside or on my porch. The only tools I have are portable, the largest being a drill press. I relate these things to point out that I do not have a major investment in tools to accomplish what I do. In many cases, it would be much easier if I did but I have neither the space nor the money to invest in a complete workshop.

I have been able to accomplish the results I desire with limited resources and minimal costs. Over the years I have come up with many techniques that have saved me time. They have also aided me in not doing any

damage to the piece I am working on. These torches are now around one hundred years old and some have seen hard times. We don't need to add additional tool marks to these artifacts.

Hopefully, the information within my "Tips" will help you get better results in your restorations. Even if only one hits home, I have done my job. The results demonstrated in the "Before" and "After" pictures that follow are why I do what I do. The torch is a C&L Model 48D auto torch.

First tip: It helps to have a spare parts inventory.



