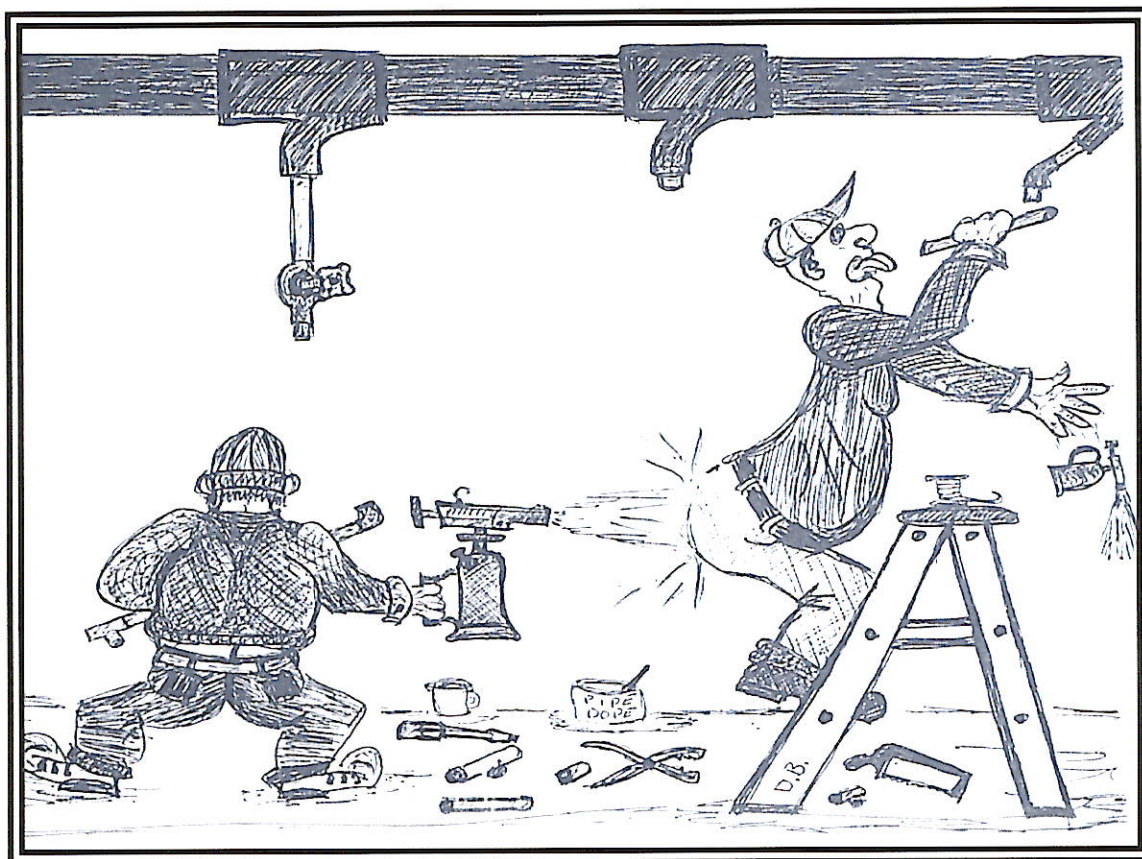


# THE TORCH

Newsletter of The Blow Torch Collectors Association

- Issue #24 -

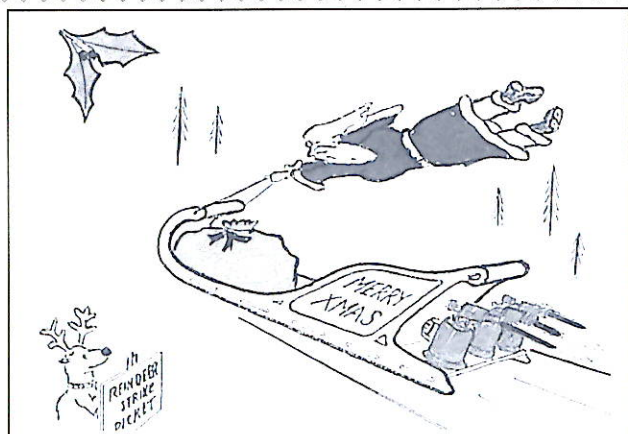
- December 2002 -



THE APPRENTICE, PAGE 3

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. — *The World's Largest Store*

BLOW TORCHES BY SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO., PAGE 13



5<sup>th</sup> Annual BTCA Convention, page 11

Rockets and Blow Torches, page 14

The 1867 Wakeman Torch, page 15

Baumgarth revisited, page 6

← Christmas cartoon... thanks to Les Adams.



# NEW MEMBERS

**Garland Berger**, Vancouver, Washington, is very new to torch collecting.... thanks to BTCA member **Mel Olson**. While attending a Pioneer Threshermen's Association show in Dalton, Minnesota, Garland met Mel and viewed his torch display. Because of the terrific torch display and Mel's enthusiasm, Garland was hooked on blow torches! (Now we need to find out what the Pioneer Threshermen's Association is all about!)

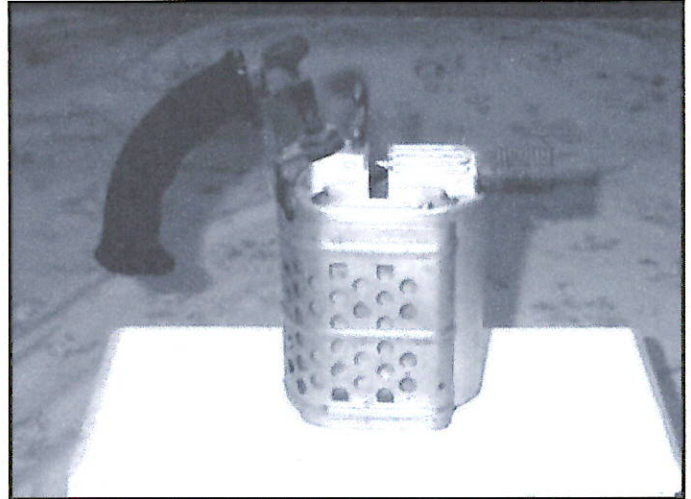
**John Denison**, Bakersfield, California, is a 12-year collector with over 300 torches. While visiting his brother in Kansas during the summer of 1990, they discussed their dad's old blow torch, and the fact that neither brother had a hobby. They both decided to start collecting blow torches and spent the next few weeks buying up every torch in central Kansas. John's brother, Scott, has their dad's torch, polished and prominently displayed on his desk.

**Chuck Gilbert**, Natchez, Mississippi, is another new collector this year. Chuck attended the Canton, Texas First Monday Antiques & Flea Market in May, and couldn't resist purchasing a highly polished torch...his very first. During the course of the day he purchased 3 more and was certifiably hooked! He admits being introduced to blow torches after purchasing Dick Sarpolus' *Collectable Blow Torches* book. Chuck also collects cigarette lighters and calcium carbide lamps.

**Tom Lukomski**, Missoula, Montana, started collecting blow torches after his father taught him how to use one in 1960. Tom is a BTCA member thanks to another new member, **Quentin Schwartz**.

**David Magerko**, Brownsville, Pennsylvania, is a welder and metalworker, and has a natural attraction to blow torches because of his profession. He was hooked on them years ago and currently has approximately 200 torches in his collection, including 20 auto torches. Dave actually acquired his first torch at age 10, when he found one in the farmhouse where he grew up. He cleaned and polished it, and it has been on a bookshelf ever since.

**Carl Oxley**, Ashtabula, Ohio, is a 5-year collector with 29 torches all polished and on display in his home. One of his torches is a much later version of a Z&W Machine Products Co., Cleveland, Ohio aluminum torch. Carl's is the third known Z&W torch within our collecting group.



Z&W Machine Products Inc, Cleveland, Ohio  
Submitted by Carl Oxley

**Jeffrey St. Germain**, Chepachet, Rhode Island, has been a torch collector for approximately 1½ years and has accumulated 65 pieces during that time. He renovated his kitchen and made a display area for torches and other antiques.... his friends call it "The Museum". Jeffrey also collects fire extinguishers and old tools, and found BTCA through the *Collectable Blow Torches* book.

**John Schimpf**, Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania, is a one-year torch collector with a modest collection displayed in his dining room. He discovered torches on the ebay website, and since he is in the plumbing and heating business, it was a natural antique for him to collect. His father and grandfather were also in the plumbing and heating business, and owned several torches that they used in their trade.

**Quentin Schwartz**, Eugene, Oregon, also found BTCA through the *Collectable Blow Torches* book, and is a six-year torch collector. His reason for starting a blow torch collection..."a collecting challenge." Quentin collects other antique tools and is a member of PNTC, MWTCA, & EAIA.



#### NEW MEMBERS CONT.

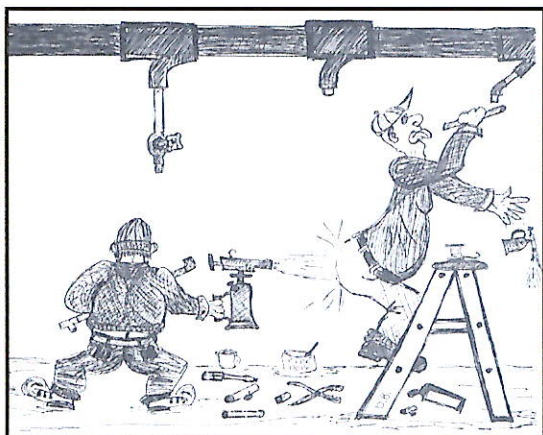
**Barbara Small**, is a new member from Oakland, and is the 18<sup>th</sup> BTCA member from the Great State of California. At this rate, California members will soon pass Washington in BTCA membership. (Washington currently has 23 members.)

**Don Weber**, Portland, Oregon, is a 1 ½-year torch collector, and became acquainted with BTCA through members **Mark Pedersen** and **Ron Burns**.

**WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS!**



## THE APPRENTICE



**Dick Bernard** is the artist of this issue's front-page cartoon. During a phone interview, he indicated that many years ago, while in the electrical contracting business, he encountered many such apprentices.

His experience with young apprentices, and some of the situations he encountered, prompted him to create the cartoon. He modified his electrical experiences to accommodate the blow torch world, and indicated that he will provide future examples of his experiences.

Dick has been a member since 1996, a strong supporter of BTCA, and has sent in numerous photos of his growing collection. Among his collection are a few rare pieces, and one of them is a street lamp lighter torch. We're not sure of the origin, but from its design and ornate shape, it could easily have originated from Europe. If any member can identify Dick's street lamp torch, please contact him directly.



Street Lamp Lighter Torch, Submitted by Dick Bernard



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

The following members are celebrating their 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary as members of BTCA. Congratulations on your first five years and your continued support of BTCA!

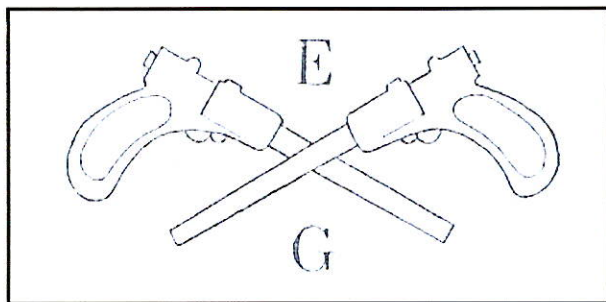
**Al Austin**  
**Richard Brazil**  
**Michel Duval**  
**Larry Fields**  
**Bob Fitchhorn**  
**Dennis Galaway**  
**Richard Gjersee**  
**Bill Holland**  
**Maurice Jernstedt**  
**Norman A. Larson**  
**Jim MacLean**  
**Samuel G. Scroggs**  
**Dr. Charles Smith**  
**Rheal Theriault**  
**R.L. Wildenradt**





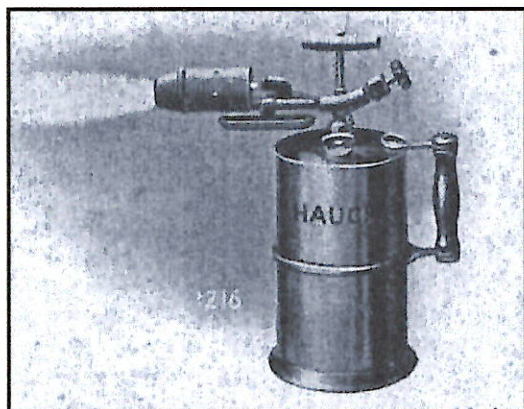
## NOTES FROM ALL OVER

We recently heard from **Les Adams**, the publisher/editor of *BLOWLAMP NEWS* in England. One of his members, **Willy Mouton** has a blow lamp with most unusual markings stamped into the fuel tank, a crossed revolvers logo with an E at the top and a G at the bottom. Anyone with information about the logo, please contact Les Adams.



CROSSED REVOLVERS LOGO

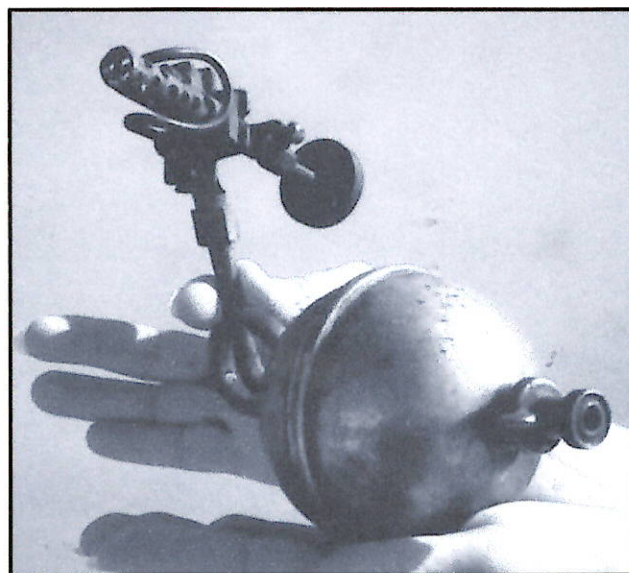
We have a BTCA member that has concentrated on collecting the largest number of torches/lamps from different manufacturers. **Michel Duval** recently acquired his 309<sup>th</sup> label when he added PREWAY to his growing list. You have to appreciate the level of effort that Michel has put into his unique collection because of the variety of names, and the countries that they represent. While he may not have the largest number of torches/lamps, I suspect he wins the award for the largest number of manufacturers. Michel also sent in operating instructions for P. Wall and Coleman torches. Also included were numerous blow lamp instructions from other countries.



**Hauck Hand Kerosene Torch**  
Literature submitted by Dr. Charles Smith

And the blow torch operating instructions keep pouring in! **Dr. Charles Smith** sent in operating instructions for the LaPine Scientific Co. laboratory torch, the same as produced or labeled by Humboldt, Sargent, and Precision Scientific. Charles also submitted a large amount of Hauck torch literature. With the growing amount of Hauck literature, we will be able to produce a Hauck torch index in the near future.

We reported on the MAGIC FLUID, a brass-cleaning recipe, in issue #22. **Dave Schulte** reports "I finally got all of the ingredients for the Magic Fluid. I took the blackest, baddest, ugliest torch I had, and after a 2 hour soak, about 75% of the crud came right off! A few more hours in the solution and it was clean, and with a light scrubbing with OOOO steel wool, it shined like new." Dave also sent in a photo of an unusual looking torch, see photo below. There is no manufacturer associated with the odd looking piece that has a spherical fuel tank and no air pump.



**Unknown Torch**  
Sent in by Dave Schulte

The burner head is petite with very large vent holes. Surrounding the burner assembly is a fuel line we assume is for fuel vaporization. There is a two-piece filler plug with a check valve, and the end has a threaded hole. If you have any information on this unusual torch, please contact Dave or the Editor.

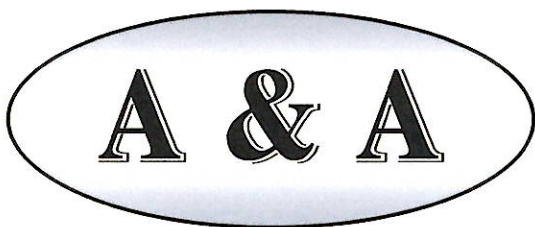


**Robert Kendall** would like to hear from anyone interested in brass steam whistles.

**Al Austin** was offered an opportunity to display his blow torch collection at the annual Puyallup Fair in Puyallup, Washington. This was the first ever blow torch display at the fair and it proved to be a very popular attraction. His display was housed in the Hobby Hall and consisted of his entire collection compiled into a 3 ft. by 8 ft. area. The timing for the Puyallup Fair display was bad for Al since he had very few remaining torches to bring to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BTCA Convention in Oregon.

**Mark Pedersen** was reviewing one of his torches and came across a Montgomery Wards blow torch manufactured by Otto Bernz. What was unusual was the information on the label: *To burn kerosene; change to "K" burner block and needle pin found in the filler plug. Be sure all the excess fuel is wiped off the torch before lighting.* So Mark looked at the filler plug, and sure enough.... there was a "K" orifice block screwed in to the plug. It had a larger orifice than the installed one, and must be the correct orifice block for kerosene.

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We believe that **Hilton Shackley** has discovered a new US torch manufacturer, the A & A Manufacturing Co., Chicago, Illinois.

While visiting the US in October, he purchased the torch in an antique shop in St. Augustine, Florida. There is a diamond shaped brass tag soldered to each upper side of the brass fuel tank, with the words: A & A Manufacturing Company, Chicago embossed in to the tag. Stamped on the lower portion of the air pump are the words: Pat App for.

The entire torch is made from brass, except for the steel propeller-style fuel knob.



A&A Manufacturing Co., Chicago, IL  
Submitted by Hilton Shackley

From first appearances, the torch appears to reflect typical US design features, such as the traditional fuel tank, bottom fuel feed, and air pump assembly. Another feature found on some US torches is the air pump bottom extension piece that allows the user to operate the air pump with one hand without the torch tipping over. Also note that the fuel pipe exiting the fuel tank is from the center of the tank, a feature found in many US torches at the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When looking at the burner assembly, one can make other assumptions as to its origin.

The outer burner part is made from rolled brass and can be easily removed and replaced on to the burner assembly by pushing on and twisting in to place. The inner burner assembly consists of two curved fuel tubes positioned for fuel vaporization as is typical with most European burner assemblies.

Congratulations to Hilton for his A & A torch find and for the new addition to our ever-growing manufacturers list.

(Note: the A & A Mfg. Co. does not show up in the Manufacturer Listing for this issue since the list went to press before Hilton sent in his article.)

◆ ◆ ◆

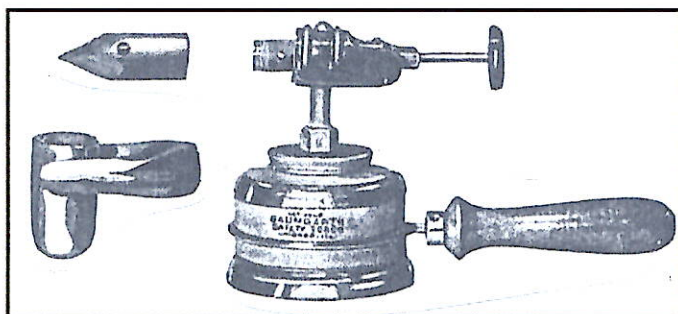


# BAUMGARTH REVISITED

More information on the Baumgarth Mfg. Co. has been brought to light thanks to **Dr. Charles Smith** and ebay. Charles was the successful bidder on a Model #100 Baumgarth blow torch. Not only is the Model #100 torch in pristine condition, but the package also included complete operating instructions along with a listing of other Baumgarth Safety Blow Torches.

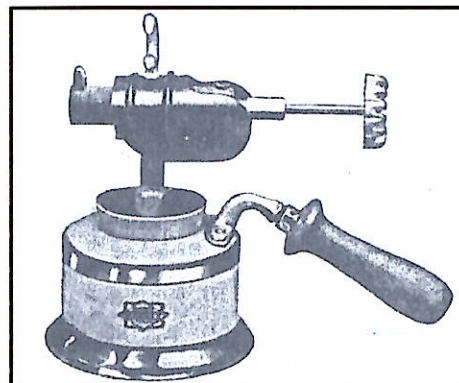
From the literature provided, it appears that the Baumgarth Mfg. Co. produced at least 3 "Pumpless" Safety Blow Torches, model nos. 100, 200, and 300. Their Pumpless torches were advertised as a "no pumping hazard" device. Baumgarth believed that *"a blow torch becomes something of a bother when operation of the torch is started by pumping air into the fuel tank"*. We believe that we have contributed something to the ease in handling and using a blow torch as well as increasing its safety factor by doing away with the blow torch pump entirely."

Baumgarth Pumpless torches are lit off as any typical torch by lighting off fuel in the "drip cup", then opening the fuel valve and lighting the fuel vapor. If fuel were not readily available to pour into the "drip cup" area, then the operator would hold three or four lighted matches just under the bottom of the fuel tank. After the matches have burned away, open the fuel valve and let a small amount of fuel to dribble into the "drip cup" area.



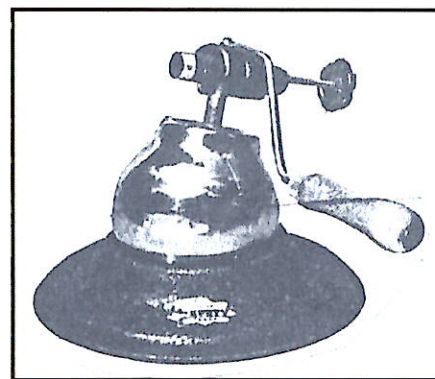
Baumgarth Safety Blow Torch  
Model #100  
Submitted by Dr. Charles Smith

**Model #100** has a fuel capacity of 2 ounces, uses naphtha as fuel, and a full tank burns 1 hour. The torch boasts a 2400-degree flame in spite of its small size. Accessories available include a removable soldering iron tip and a solder dip pot. The handle is also adjustable and can be moved in numerous positions.



Baumgarth Safety Torch, Model #200  
Submitted by Dr. Charles Smith

**Model #200** also burns naphtha and has a fuel capacity of 6 ounces for a 4-hour burn time. With the unique base design, the model #200 can be positioned into almost any position in the steel base that is fitted with rubber friction plugs.



Baumgarth Safety Torch, Model #300  
Submitted by Dr. Charles Smith

**Model #300** burns white or regular gasoline with a 2400-degree flame, has a capacity of one pint, and includes a wind guard for outdoor use. The flame can be adjusted for a large long flame, or a short pointed flame for small work. A soldering iron hook is included.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦





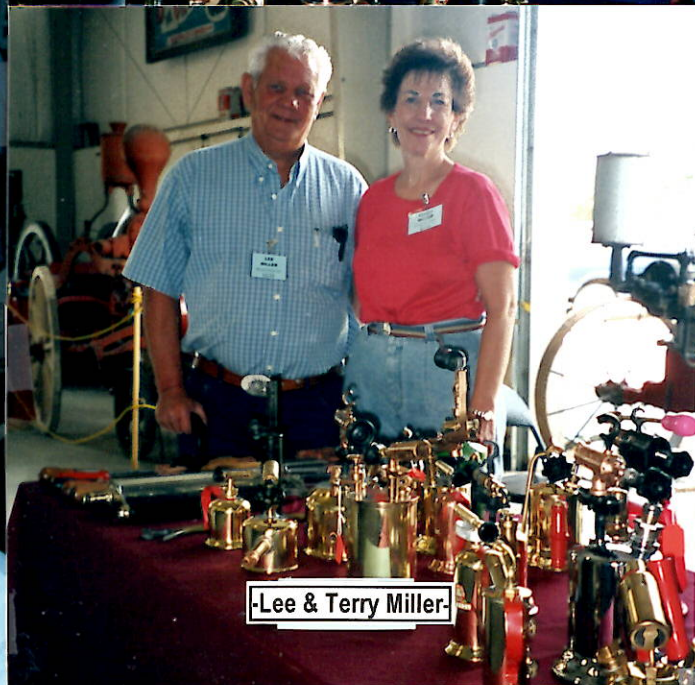
-Mark & Shirley Hahn-



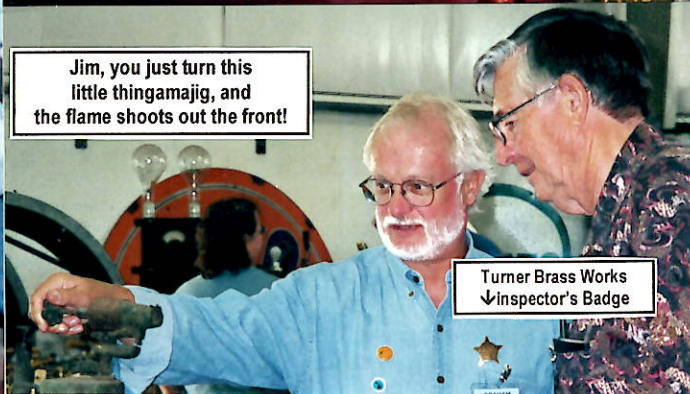
L to R, Maurice & Noma Jernstedt, Ron Carr, Arlene & Mark Pedersen



-Chef Graham Stubbs-



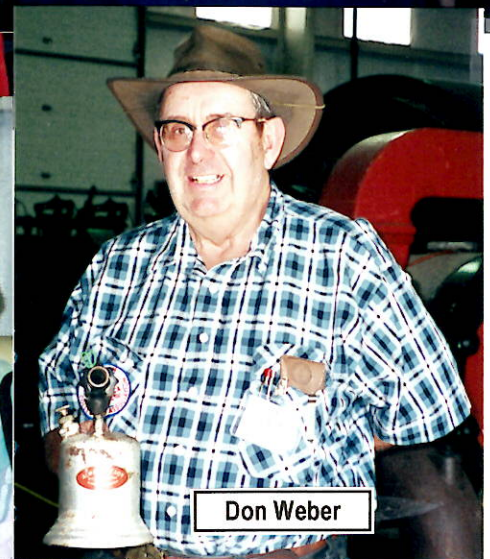
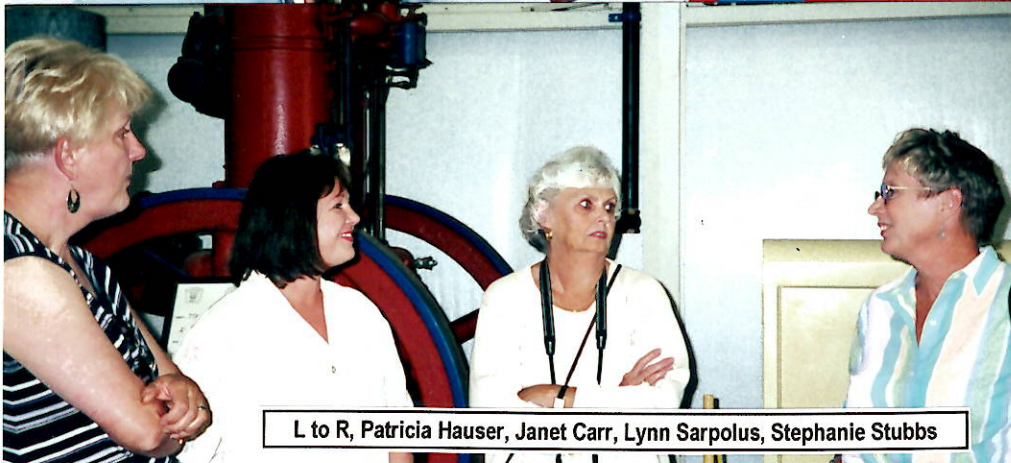
-Lee & Terry Miller-



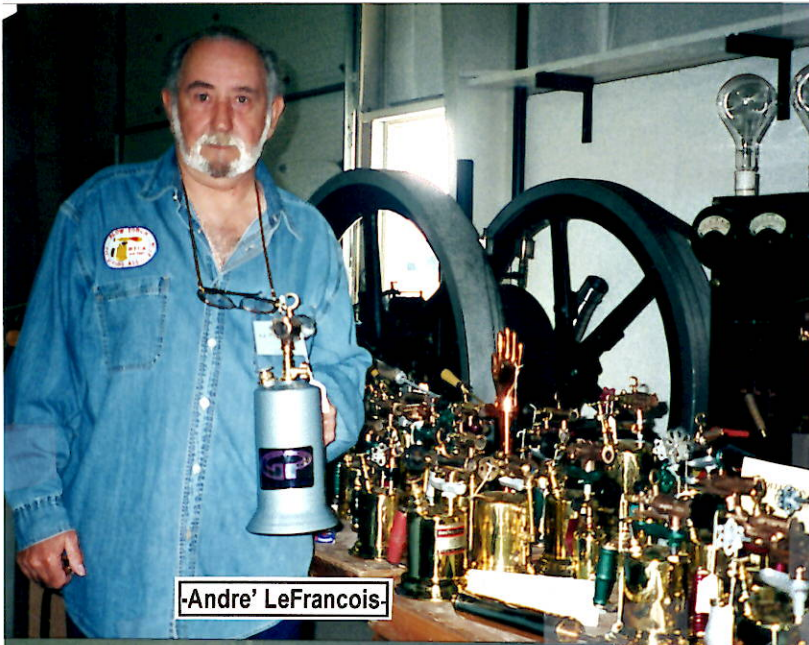
Jim, you just turn this little thingamajig, and the flame shoots out the front!

Turner Brass Works  
↓Inspector's Badge









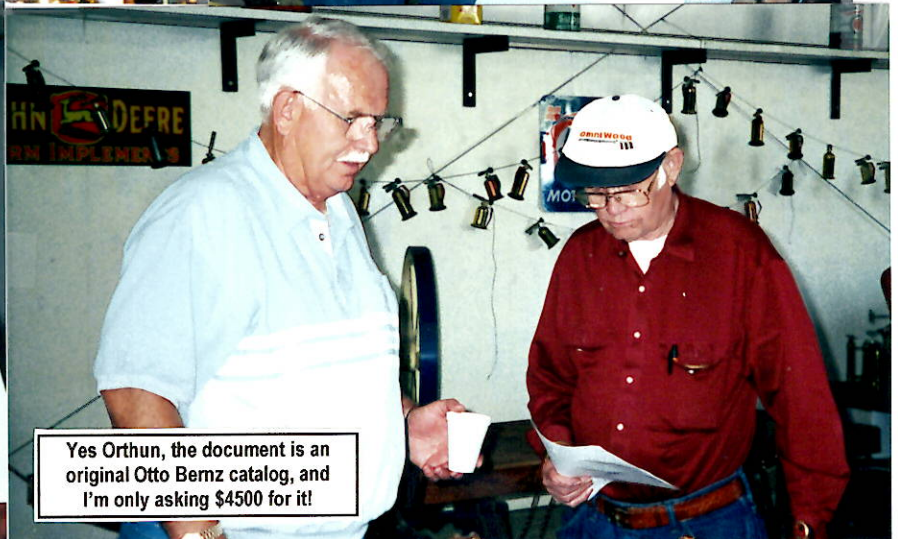
-Andre' LeFrancois-



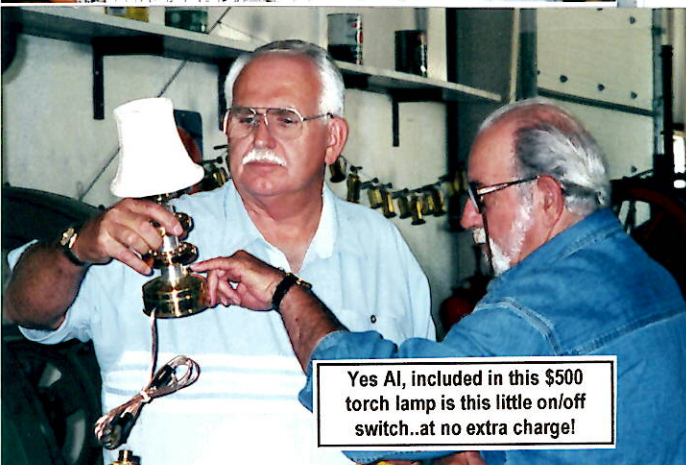
-Orthun Hereim-



-Gina & Les Adams-



Yes Orthun, the document is an original Otto Bernz catalog, and I'm only asking \$4500 for it!



Yes Al, included in this \$500 torch lamp is this little on/off switch..at no extra charge!



-Jim Janke-





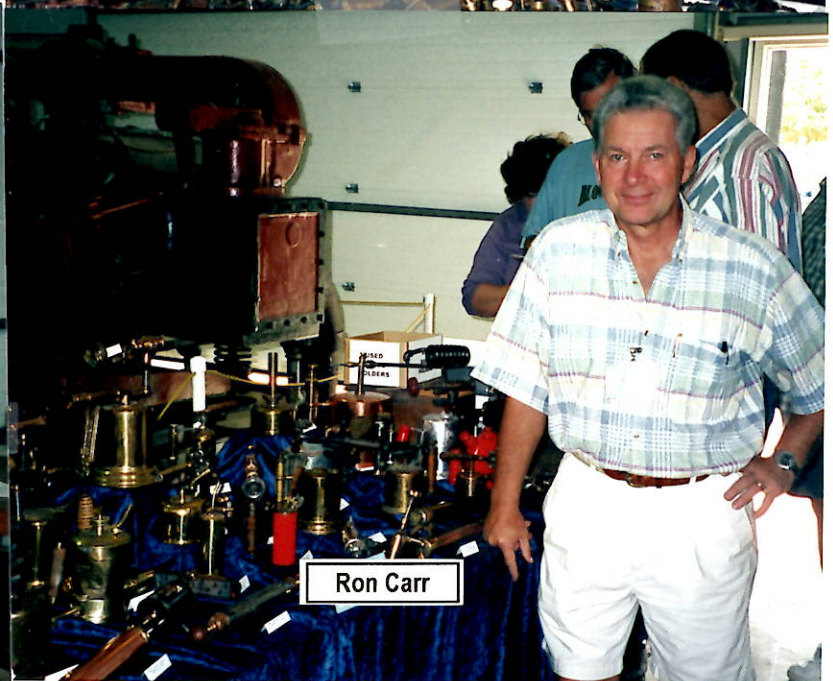
Beau Sinkler & Ron Bunting



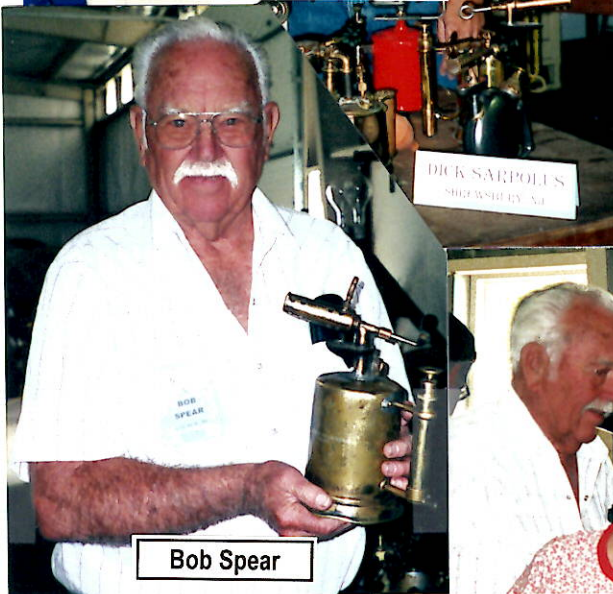
-Judy & Jon Suta-



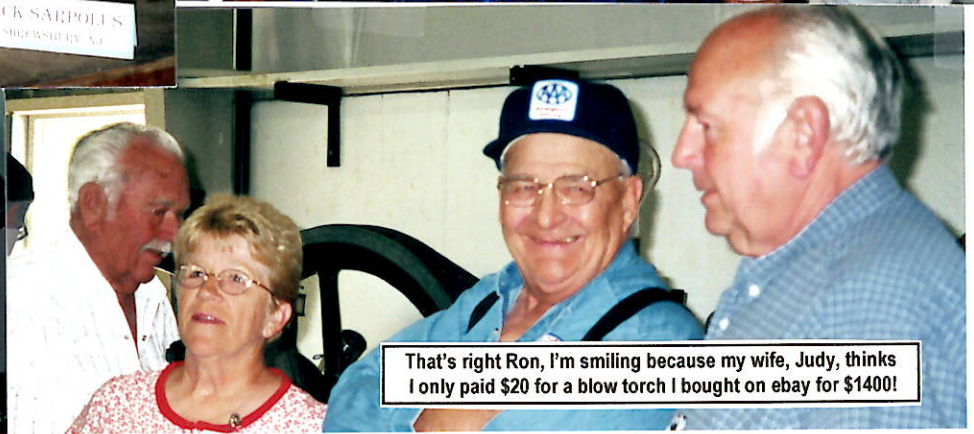
-Lynn & Dick Sarpolus-



Ron Carr



Bob Spear



That's right Ron, I'm smiling because my wife, Judy, thinks I only paid \$20 for a blow torch I bought on ebay for \$1400!



# 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BTCA WEST COAST CONVENTION

The annual BTCA event was held on September 14th at the Powerland Museum in Brooks, Oregon. Due to the larger attendance and the greater number of torch displays, our group was accommodated in the Hilands Building, the same facility that houses a large number of antique "one-lungers"...or large one-cylinder engines. **Mark & Arlene Pedersen** assisted by **Maurice and Noma Jernstedt** selected the same location that was utilized last year and arranged the entire event. They also arranged perfect weather!

There were 45 attendees, traveling from as far away as England, and representing Arizona, California, Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, and Washington. As a special feature, **Dick & Lynn Sarpolus** were in attendance for this year's event. As you'll recall, Dick is the author of the 2000 edition of *COLLECTABLE BLOWTORCHES*, and he was on hand to autograph member's books.

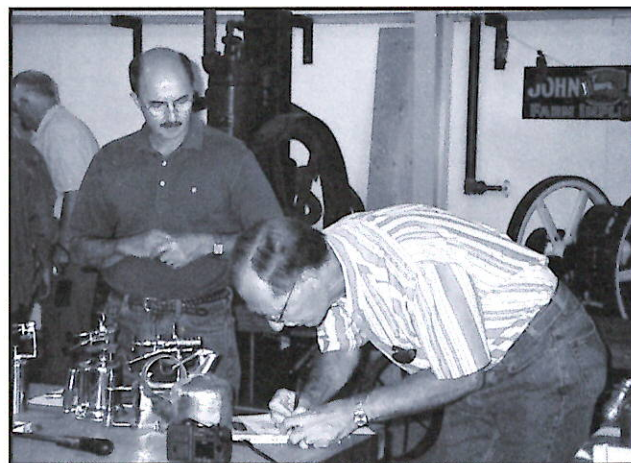


BTCA MEMBERS & GUESTS

Nineteen members displayed torches, and according to the official count of **Lee Miller**, there were 626 torches on display in addition to numerous other torch related items, and plenty of literature.

The Hilands Building is somewhat narrow, and because the "one-lungers" were positioned on both sides as well as up the middle; we arranged our torch displays in spaces between engines. The layout worked fine, and the displays looked great mingled among the engines.

The activities were kicked off at 8:30AM as members laid claim to a display table, and the building was then a blur of people unpacking boxes and suitcases. There appeared to be quite a bit of trading and we observed cash being transferred, which indicates that sales were also going on. The group broke for lunch and a much-needed break at about noon. After lunch, **Ron Carr** started out the meeting by welcoming the group, and introduced the guest speakers.



Dick Sarpolus signing Lloyd Weber's book

Next on board was **Dick Sarpolus**. He explained how he authored the *COLLECTABLE BLOWTORCHES* book, and discussed the details of his research and the process for photographing all of the torches displayed in the publication. He worked very closely with his publisher, Schiffer Publishing Ltd., and actually visited their headquarters in Atglen, Pennsylvania with some of his prize torches for the front and back cover photos.

**Graham Stubbs** was up next and gave a presentation on the differences between blow torches and oilers. Many experienced collectors and sellers mistake oilers for blow torches, and Graham described some of the obvious differences.



## CONVENTION CONT.

Those of us that frequent ebay have seen sellers putting up oilers for auction as blow torches, or vice versa. All of the Big Three US torch manufacturers, Otto Bernz, Turner Brass Works, and Clayton & Lambert, produced at least one type of oiler. Most oilers look like blow torches, but do not have a burner assembly or a drip cup. Know what you are buying.... before you buy it!



Mark Hahn with a Sears Craftsman blow torch.

Next on the agenda was **Lloyd Weber** with a brief presentation on blow torch buffing and cleaning techniques. Lloyd is a dentist, and likes to clean and polish things...including teeth. (We do hope that he uses different equipment for teeth than he uses on blow torches!) Lloyd discussed the different types of tools utilized, and details on his process to completely disassemble the torch for a more thorough polishing. Lloyd also put together information on buffing materials and tools sources that he uses. Interested individuals can contact Lloyd directly or mail a SASE to BTCA requesting Lloyd's source listing.

**Mark Pedersen** demonstrated the advantages of using a strap wrench in disassembling a torch for cleaning and polishing. Strap wrenches come in different styles and sizes, and can be most helpful in the disassembly of difficult parts. One such difficult area is the cylinder part of any pump-in-the-handle assembly. In most cases, the cylinder was manufactured with very

thin-walled brass, and any type of force severely damages or dents the metal. Proper use of a strap wrench can easily remove the cylinder from the handle support without any damage to the part.

Last on the agenda was **Andre' Le Francois** with a short presentation on refinishing torches. One only has to look at Andre's torch display to understand that he knows how to produce highly polished torches. Each of his torches has a highly polished mirror-like finish, and the steel torches also have perfect paint coverings. Andre shared some of his secrets and described his process for a high shine.

**Mark Pedersen** then came forward and presented commemorative plaques to **Ron Carr** and **Graham Stubbs** for their dedication and efforts toward BTCA. The meeting was adjourned after group photos, and everyone returned to the display tables for more trading, selling, and story telling.

## ATTENDEES

Les & Gina Adams  
Al & Elaine Austin  
Ron Bunting & Beau Sinkler  
Ron & Janet Carr  
John Denison  
John & Dolores Dorffeld  
Larry Fields & Patricia Hauser  
Richard & Judy Gjersee  
Mark & Shirley Hahn  
Orthun Hereim  
Jim & Marlys Janke  
Maurice & Noma Jernstedt  
Andre' LeFrancois  
Lee & Terry Miller  
Mark & Arlene Pedersen  
Suezy Proctor & Carol Wissmann  
Dick & Lynn Sarpolus  
Quentin Schwartz  
Bob & Marge Spear  
Graham & Stephanie Stubbs  
Jon & Judy Suta  
Vicky Teeters & Aretha Teeters  
Don Weber  
Lloyd Weber & Tim Weber

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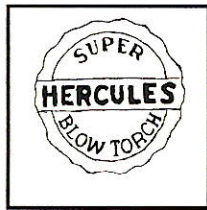


# Sears, Roebuck and Co. Blow Torches

By Dr. Charles C. Smith

*"By now, most of you have at least glanced through the enclosed study of Sears Roebuck and Company Blow Torches. Why Sears torches, and how was this study conducted?"*

*"Several years ago, on the occasion of my mom's birthday, I was pondering a gift for a lady who has everything. Many of you know what I mean. I decided it would be fun, and unusual, to present her with an old Sears Roebuck catalog from the year she was born, 1910. Ebay provided the solution. It was an amazing record of life in the early 1900's . . . the clothing, home furnishings, jewelry, old rifles and pistols, mail order medicines, horse-drawn buggies of all sorts, even gun powder and dynamite and yes, blow torches. Not the familiar Craftsman, but torches marketed by The Turner Brass Works, Otto Bernz, and others. Mom got the old catalog, and I got a big hug, and we both enjoyed hours of stories about life in the early 1900's."*



Sears blow torch labels

*"Soon after that Christmas, I visited the University of Alabama Library in Tuscaloosa and began searching for torches in their meager collection of original Sears catalogs. I saw torches called Hercules, Merit, Fulton, Dunlap, Craftsman, and Sears, several of these known to some collectors but either believed to be a manufacturer or of unknown history. At that point, I believed further documentation would be beneficial to our members. Since the University had only spotty coverage, I decided to borrow the microfilm copies from other libraries. Thus began the study of torches marketed by Sears Roebuck and Company from the late 1800's to their being no longer listed in their 1972 catalog."*

*"Sears published two catalogs each year, a spring and summer catalog followed by a fall and winter version. These catalogs were published in several regional centers for distribution in different areas of the United States. Thus, there are several different versions of the same issue. Although most of these different catalogs advertised the same torches, some listed no torches at all, while others continued to list a model or models"*



Sears blow torch labels

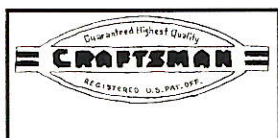
*"With 90 years of history to examine, and more than 180 catalogs, I began on the first five reels of microfilm representing some 4 to 5 years of Sears torch history. After copying the pertinent pages, back those reels went followed by a request for more. At times, the microfilm was scratched or the desired area showing torches out-of-focus. So, those issues had to be requested from a different library source. Also, I should mention that the illustrations shown in the enclosed study represent a printed image from a scanned photocopy of the microfilm. Although some of the images may be poor, they are the best that could be assembled in a timely fashion. All in all, I guess it took about two years to accumulate a complete record of Sears torches. And what a record it represents!"*

*We can see the introduction of one model or type in a specific six-month period and its replacement with another type in a rather specific time frame. Although Sears stores may have had an inventory and continued to sell a particular model after it was removed from the catalog, the catalog record gives us a good history of torch activity through Sears Roebuck and Company.*

*The listing being distributed with this newsletter represents the history of brand-labeled torches marketed by Sears during the years from 1929-1972. Prior to 1929, Sears sold a variety of both large and small torches manufactured by several companies: The Turner Brass Works,*



*Decker Manufacturing Company, McGill Manufacturing Company, Otto Bernz, and others. To the writer's knowledge, none of these early or pre-1929 torches were brand-labeled by Sears prior to their sale. Rather, they were marketed by Sears and unchanged from the original manufactured torch. At this time, it is uncertain whether any of these early torches can be identified as being marketed by Sears Roebuck and Company. Their history of sale through Sears, however, should help in our better understanding of the marketing history and sale price of several "early" torch models. The preparation of this early Sears listing of torches is currently underway and should be distributed to BTCA members in 2003.*



Sears most recognizable brand name

The author, Dr. Charles Smith, a native of Paris, Texas, obtained his Bachelor of Science in Geology from the University of Texas at Austin (1963), the Master of Science in Geology from the University of Houston (1967), and his Ph.D. degree in Geology from the University of Texas at Dallas in 1973. During his professional career, he has worked for several major oil and gas exploration and production companies as a micro paleontologist; conducted micro-paleontological research (nannofossils, or tiny fossil calcareous algae) with the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington, D.C.; and is currently a geologist with the Geological Survey of Alabama in Tuscaloosa conducting subsurface hydro-geological studies (water resource investigations) throughout the state. He has taught both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in geology at both George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. He has published more than 180 professional papers, has presented many professional talks and seminars, and has served as president or vice-president and has been honored by a number of professional organizations.

His interest in blow torches began at early age while observing his father solder copper pipe on their farm in northeastern Texas. Charles has been seriously collecting blow torches for about 10 years, and although he continues to marvel at the beauty and intricateness of many of his torches, his greatest satisfaction is derived from research and sharing his knowledge with others. He admits that the similarity between his professional research and his torch hobby are shockingly similar: detailed research in order to identify and correlate (use) an object and documentation of the data, and their value in science (or personal satisfaction), through publication. He strongly believes that awareness, whether of science or torches, can only be achieved through the sharing with others of our individual expertise and knowledge . . . precisely the goal of the Blow Torch Collectors Association.



## THE ROCKET TORCH

**John Jaress** discovered what Richard Goddard, the father of liquid fuel rockets, and blow torches have in common after John's sister sent him a newspaper article from the Indianapolis Star newspaper. The article describes the blow torch that was used by Richard Goddard in 1926 to ignite the launch of the first liquid fuel rocket in Auburn, Massachusetts. As a professor of physics for 29 years, Goddard did rocket research that made him the father of a field that eventually put men on the moon. In 1926, Goddard designed a liquid fuel rocket with enough thrust to lift itself off the ground. He tested it in March of that year ---the first liquid fuel rocket ever successfully fired ---on his wife's farm in nearby Auburn.



**Goddard blow torch**  
Submitted by **John Jaress**

While Goddard never shot a rocket higher than two miles, a far cry from outer space, scientists still recognize his work as the building blocks of the space field. His rocket was also the first to ever break the sound barrier.

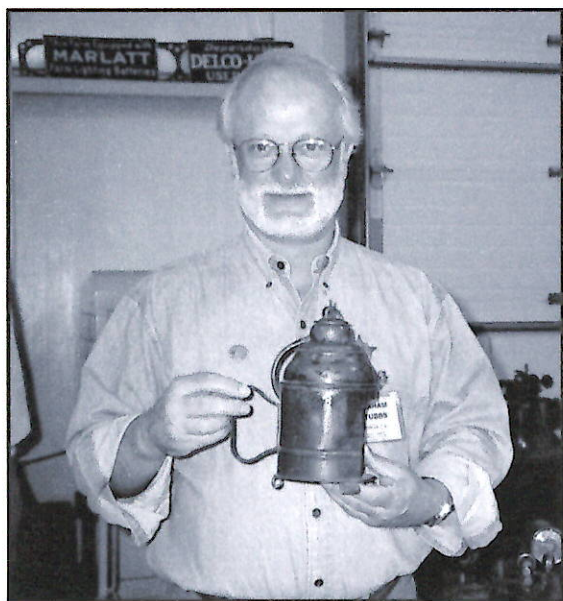
The Goddard launch blow torch can be viewed at the Robert H. Goddard Library, on Downing Street, in the center of the Clark University campus in Worcester, Massachusetts.





# WW WAKEMAN TORCH

During the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BTCA convention, **Graham Stubbs** displayed one of the oldest known US manufactured blow torches to exist, a WW Wakeman Jr. Vapor Burner. The torch refers to a June 11, 1867 patent, # 65,621 that describes the device as an improved lamp for burning off paint. It's interesting to note that Wakeman, the inventor, refers to his invention as a lamp; a term more commonly used in Europe.



Graham Stubbs with a WW Wakeman Vapor Burner  
Circa 1867

Graham's vapor burner closely resembles the device described and depicted in the inventor's patent, right down to the detail of the exterior fuel line. There can be little doubt that William Wakeman "borrowed" most, if not all, of his vapor burner features from European designs that were popular for that period.

♦ ♦ ♦

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

We thank everyone that responded back to us with his or her comments and suggestions. One comment that was offered by quite a few members suggested that we solicit stories from our BTCA members. The suggestions were for short articles on how they found a favorite torch, how they started

collecting torches, for the tradesmen.... the experiences of using a blow torch, or any torch related story. We've included such stories in past issues and always encourage our members to contribute information whenever possible.

Here is a recent story sent in by **Lloyd Weber**:

*"Not long ago, a friend told me that he saw a torch at an antique mall in St. Paul, and since Patti and I were in the area, we stopped in to the mall. My friend said that the torch he saw had a wire regulator knob, and while I didn't think much about it, I figured that it was probably an Otto Bernz or Detroit torch. He also said it was flat, so that piqued my interest as well."*

*"The mall was quite large, and when asked, the staff did not know about any blow torches. After about 10 minutes of looking around, I spotted the wire knob barely sticking up in a bunch of junk. I lifted it out and discovered that it was a Geo. Diener auto torch in great condition. I've been looking for this particular torch for over a year.... ever since John Tingle outbid me on ebay for the same identical torch for \$230. So, today was a great day.... I only paid \$30 for my treasure!"*

♦ ♦ ♦

## THE TORCH

Official publication of the Blow Torch  
Collectors Association is published  
three 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.

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> Avenue SE, Sammamish, WA 98075-9173, email to: [roncarr@prodigy.net](mailto:roncarr@prodigy.net), or by phone: (425) 557-0634.

THE TORCH encourages 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 Ron Carr at the above address.

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

**For Sale:** A quart-size P. Wall torch, model number 331S. This is a steel tank in good condition, however the decal is mostly worn off. Contact Bob Simpson, 815 Clearview Drive, Verona, Pennsylvania 15147, or call 412-793-4093

**Wanted:** A BTCA member is looking for blow torches/lamps that are for sale. Anyone wishing to sell torches/lamps should contact John Weaver, 15 Bushythorn Road, Chew Stoke, Bristol BS40 8XP, ENGLAND

**For Sale:** A quart-size Clayton & Lambert steel fuel tank blow torch with red wooden handle. The torch is in very good condition with a partial C&L decal. Contact Clayton Woodruff, PO Box 883, Decatur, Texas 76234-0883

**For Sale:** Approximately 105 blow torches, all highly polished and in excellent condition. Contact Andre' LeFrancois for details, 466 Evelyn Lane, Hayward, California 94544, or call 510-886-1478.

**For Sale:** A Lenk #108 automatic blow torch, patented August 1923. There are two brass cylinders, six inches long, and was used very little so it is in excellent condition. Included is the original orange and black cardboard box, in very good condition with a few oil stains. Contact Jack Schneider, 177 Delaware Street, Tonawanda, New York 14150, or call 716-692-1176 after 6PM.

**For Sale** A Turner Brass Works blow torch, model # 206A, quart size, brass, air pump in fuel tank, red wooden handle, and includes windshield and soldering iron hook. Decal is in very good condition. Contact Robert Rhien, 5711 Rinconada Street, Farmington, New Mexico 87402.

**For Sale** I have about 50 blow torches for sale. I will sell individually or the entire collection. Included are names such as Detroit Torch, P. Wall, Clayton & Lambert, Turner Brass Works, Craftsman, Montgomery Ward, Dunlap, American Stove/Vesuvius and Otto Bernz. Most are quart size, but there are numerous pint size, a P. Wall auto torch, and small alcohol torches. Specifically, there are two ½ pintsize Turner alcohol torches, model no. 60 in pristine condition with a complete decal. The Craftsman torch is in near new condition with an almost perfect decal. There is also a pint size P. Wall steel tank torch with angled handle and air pump at an angle in the fuel tank. Contact Helen Feight, 4231 SE Harvey Street, Portland, Oregon 97222, or call 503-659-3371.

**Trades Wanted:** **John Tingle** is interested in trading for US manufactured blow torches. He has an abundance of blow lamps and can provide many different models from numerous countries. John is located at Prospect House, 47 Wrington Road, Congresbury, North Somerset, England BS49 5AS, or call 01934 832267, or email to [emily@alice13.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:emily@alice13.fsnet.co.uk).

**Wanted:** **Charlie Smith** would like to purchase Hercules, Fulton, Merit, Dunlap, or Craftsman torches. They must have readable decals in good condition. Please send or email photographs and asking price to Dr. Charles C. Smith, Geological Survey of Alabama, 420 Hackberry Lane, PO Box 869999, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35485, or phone 205-349-2852, or email to [ccsmith@gsa.state.al.us](mailto:ccsmith@gsa.state.al.us).

**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.

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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 98075-9173, (425) 557-0634, or email at: [roncarr@prodiqy.net](mailto:roncarr@prodiqy.net)