

THE TORCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
Issue #39 December 2007



The above poster is from the collection of Michel Duval.



A most unusual SHSI from the Frank J. Mann Tool & Appliance Co., see page 6.

NEW MEMBERS

Larry Badgley of Kinde, Michigan is a 2-year collector with approximately 25 torches in his collection. About half are refinished and prominently displayed around his home. He enjoys collecting anything from the past...but specifically collects vintage tractors, tools, and small farm equipment.

Ann Clark of Tacoma, Washington is a good friend of BTCA member **Suezy Proctor**, and has decided to join our group. Ann recently participated in the 10th annual BTCA convention in Mt. Vernon, WA in September.

Peter Doyle of Brooklyn, New York is relatively new to torch collecting and has 25 torches to date. He elects to not polish...but merely removes the grime and dirt so they are easily handled. Since Peter has always liked "playing with fire"...collecting blow torches was a natural. He acquired a Turner torch years ago, but did nothing with it until the Internet arrived and torch information became more accessible. He found BTCA through the ZangoBob website. Peter also collects camping stoves...especially the kerosene fueled models.

Robert Gordon of Iowa City, Iowa is a 4-year torch collector and has amassed over 100 pieces in his collection. He prides himself in cleaning and polishing every one of his torches! Shortly after retirement, Robert decided that he needed something to occupy his time...and torch collecting was the answer.

Curtis Hicks of Denton, Texas is very new to torch collecting...he just started in November 2007! He has purchased a few torches and proudly displays them in the family room near his desk. He recently saw several torches that were refinished and was impressed with the outstanding colors of brass, copper, and lead. To quote Curtis; "*Truly wonderful pieces of history to collect.*" He also collects old locks with working keys or combinations, old copper and brass powder flasks, and old fountain pens. Curtis also enjoys looking for treasure with his metal detector.

David Stennett of Warrnambol, Victoria, Australia is a 20-year collector with over 120 torches (lamps). Not only are all of his torches

refinished, but all of them are displayed in a series of glass cases in his garage! Twenty years ago David was at a clearing sale (where farmers that are leaving the land have auctions of all the farm equipment that they no longer require)...and he purchased a blow torch. That one torch hooked him on torch collecting. The Internet arrived along with eBay and it opened up an entire blow torch world to him. David also has a fairly large collection of soldering irons.

David Sunsdahl of Stephen, Minnesota recently purchased the 115+ piece torch collection from BTCA member Kelly Weaver, also from Stephen, MN. David is now a BTCA member thanks to Kelly Weaver's membership application. David also collects tractors and stationary engines.

WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS!



☰ *NOTES FROM ALL OVER* ☰

Alan Black sent in a number of photos of great looking torches. One in particular is an Otto Bernz torch stamped model no. 500A that looks nearly identical to the model no. 502 as seen on page 67 of the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book. We'll ask Alan to measure the fuel tank dimensions and send the information to us so we can compare it to the model no. 502.



Otto Bernz model no. 500A
Photo by Alan Black

Mark Pedersen watches the TV program *This Old House* and noticed that there is a vintage blow torch sitting on a counter or shelf in the background. It has not been refinished and would be difficult to determine the manufacturer. If you watch the program...see if you can spot the torch....better yet....see if you can identify it. Mark also sent in a photo of an interesting way to utilize a torch fuel tank for kitchen utensils.



Photo by Mark Pedersen

To paraphrase Clement Clark Moore...."Now Decker! Now Dangler! Now Peerblow and Victor! On Carleton! On Climax! On Downey and Brookings!" **Graham Stubbs** came up with his version of a portion of Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas"...or the more commonly known "T'was The Night Before Christmas."

And, in case you did not know....legend has it that Moore composed "A Visit from St. Nicholas" for his family on Christmas Eve of 1822, during a sleigh-ride home from Greenwich Village. He supposedly drew inspiration for the elfin, pot-bellied St. Nick in his poem from the roly-poly Dutchman who drove his sleigh that day. Moore, stodgy creature of academe that he was, refused to have the poem published despite its enthusiastic reception by everyone who read it. His argument that it was beneath his dignity evidently fell on deaf ears, because the following Christmas "A Visit from St. Nicholas" found its way after all into the mass media when a family member submitted it to an out-of-town newspaper.

The poem was an "overnight sensation," as we would say today, but Moore would not acknowledge authorship of it until fifteen years later, when he reluctantly included it in a volume of collected works. He referred to the poem as "a mere trifle."

Keith Hawkins submitted a photo of a Schaefer & Beyer auto torch. The Newark, NJ torch manufacturer produced many different types of blow torches...all with the distinctive patented ten-lobed pump knob. This is the first Schaefer & Beyer auto torch we've seen and we will add it to the growing list of items that were not included in the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book.



Schaefer & Beyer Auto Torch
Photo by Keith Hawkins

Keith also receives "honorable mention" for a great suggestion! Starting in 2008 we will send out the dues notice with the June newsletter to save on postage and envelopes.

Suezy Proctor sent in an interesting article from *Army Times*, a military publication...titled "Bug Hunt of The Week". It seems that Belgium soldiers were armed with supersized blowtorches to kill hairy caterpillars in the forests of Belgium.

Since the fuzzy multi-legged insects survived the onslaught of pesticides, it was necessary to take it to the next level....burn the little creatures from the trees! There was no mention in the article on what type of blowtorch was used for the task.

John Jaress has been a busy collector and sent in a few great photos. The first is a photo of a Turner Brass Works model #43 that was nicely refinished (see page 403 of the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book).



Turner Brass Works model #43
Photo by John Jaress

This version of the model #43 is unusual since it is one of the few models that Turner manufactured with a solid cast brass handle. The handle was cast as an integral part of the fuel feed tube and pressure relief valve. Other similar model #43 torches had wooden handles. This series of Turner torches also had the fuel fill on the top of the fuel tank making it near impossible to overfill the torch. This series also boasted a safety valve that made it impossible to over pressurize the fuel tank.

John also sent in a photo of a refinished A. E. Lovett Co. torch. It is nearly identical to the photo sent in by **Lloyd Weber** and is featured on page 285 of the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* reference book...with the exception that Lloyd's torch has a vertical burner assembly.



A. E. Lovett Co. Torch
Photo by John Jaress

Not to be outdone....John's photo of a third torch is a real prize to him, and according to the index in the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* reference book, it is a **five-star rated torch**. The photo is of a Burning Brand Co. no. 202 Self-Heated Soldering Iron. This example may be the first we've seen of an actual Burning Brand SHSI.



Burning Brand Co. no. 202 Self-Heated Soldering Iron
Photo by John Jaress

NOTES CONT.

Al Austin sent in a photo of two Otto Bernz torches that he refinished. You can see some of the subtle differences in the two torches...the location of the fuel feed tube, valve handle, soldering iron hook, and lower air pump configuration. In many cases, the manufacturer carried the same model number while continuing to make design changes or upgrading materials.



Otto Bernz Co. Blow Torches
Photo by Al Austin

Al also made a great discover of a very effective buffing compound. We're sure that there are many buffing compounds on the market, but Al is convinced this one is the best. It's called Brown Tripoli buffing compound, and he purchased it from Tacoma Screw Products, Inc in Tacoma, WA. If you're looking for an effective buffing compound....you might want to check this one out. You may find the Brown Tripoli compound locally; however, you can also purchase it from Tacoma Screw Products, 2001 Center Street, Tacoma, WA 98409. You can also reach them at TACOMASCREW.COM, or 1-800-562-8192.

Ever heard of a David Bradley? No, it is not a BTCA member but a weed burner distributed by Sears. **Tim Szabo** sent in photos of his David Bradley Multi Purpose Blow Torch and Weed Burner, Sears catalog # 774-25040. The fuel tank is made from galvanized steel and has a capacity of approximately 3 gallons. A six-foot hose connects to a burner assembly that includes a pressure gauge. Does anyone else own a David Bradley?



David Bradley Multi Purpose Blow Torch
Photo by Tim Szabo

Leon Hall asked a question that many of us ponder about from time to time..."does refinishing a torch change the value?" We actually addressed that question in *THE TORCH*, issue #19, page 11. Since three factors appear to determine value; age, rarity, and condition...then refinished vs. not refinished would have very little affect on value.

"If only I knew" says **George Stevens**. When he was a child in the late 1940's, he remembers an old welder man who lived behind his families' home, and what an incredible assortment of old torches the welder had..."if only George knew!"

Jerry Godin submitted a photo of his torch display this past summer at a local fair. He constructed an elaborate rack system that holds over eighty torches!



Jerry Godin's Torch Display

Metro Roark brought up a good point regarding the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* reference book. He, and we're sure others, have many torches that do not show up in the reference book, and therefore cannot be identified. In many situations it is where a manufacturer slightly changed a part or parts for manufacturing convenience, or changed the type of material for economic reasons. You will see many duplicate model numbers with different looking torches throughout the book; however, we did not feature more due to lack of information. If you have a torch not listed in the book, please photograph and send it in with a description to us.

A good example of what we're referring to can be seen in the photo sent in by **Lloyd Weber**. The photo is of an Otto Bernz vertical burner torch. Lloyd's Bernz torch does not show up in the book, however, we suspect that it is most likely an earlier version of model no. 33 as seen on page 56 in the reference book.



Schaefer & Beyer Vertical Burner Blow Torch
Photo by Lloyd Weber

Paul Whiddett from England recently purchased a Decker & Gries aluminum blow torch on the US eBay that dates to the early 1900's. Ebay has certainly made it possible for anyone in the world to buy and collect just about anything...including blow torches.

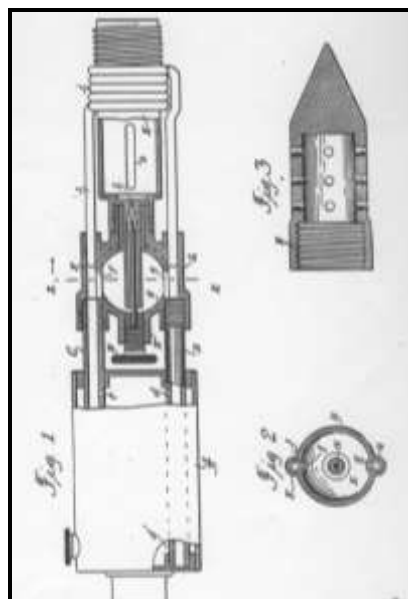
We heard from **Ron Johnson** regarding three great torches he recently acquired; a Hauck #10 kerosene, an American Stove Co. #34 Vesuvius, and a Quick Meal. Ron, along with **Leroy Goodwin** and other members have suggested an east coast BTCA meeting...similar to the ten meetings that we've already had on the west coast. We would love to accommodate the east coast members, however, we need someone to volunteer to host the event by arranging a meeting place, arrange for food/drink, and other logistic requirements. Are there any east coast BTCA members up for the job?

We could not help chuckle over a comment that **Mike Flora** made regarding his blow torch collecting.... *"A few of my neighbors question my sanity!"* Most of us can relate to that comment since most people find torch collecting a bit unique.



Frank J. Mann Tool and Appliance Co.

We have accumulated over 800 US patents for blow torches and related items, and have seen some of the most bizarre designs submitted by the inventors. A vast majority of the patents never made it to the manufacturing stage...and one look at the unusual design or complex structure, as seen below in the Frank Mann patent, tells the story of why some patents were never put into production.



Frank J. Mann patent illustration

MANN CONT.

That is the case of patent number 937,622 issued to inventor Frank J. Mann on October 19, 1909 for a Blow Torch and Soldering Iron. The patent was assigned to Mann's company, the Frank J. Mann Tool and Appliance Co. of New York, NY.

Surprisingly enough, Mann's design was put into production and **Charles Smith** recently acquired and now owns the only known Frank J. Mann Blow Torch and Soldering Iron...or Self-Heated Soldering Iron (SHSI).



Frank J. Mann Self-Heated Soldering Iron
Photo by Charles Smith

As you can see from the photo that the device can operate as a blow torch, but also as a soldering iron when the hollow perforated soldering iron tip is screwed into the burner end. It's interesting to note that the patent illustration shows the soldering iron tip being screwed onto the burner end that extends beyond the coiled area. That would have been a bad feature since the outside threads would have been excessively damaged over time. Instead, the manufacturer shortened the burner length and designed the soldering iron tip to be screwed into...not onto the burner end. They simply reversed the threading.

Charles describes the torch as.....*"being constructed entirely from brass, including the coiled evaporation tubes. Its overall length, from soldering-iron tip to the base of the handle, is 21 inches. The length of the fuel tank is 5 1/4 inches and its diameter 3 1/8 inches. The base of the fuel tank, where the wooden handle is attached (threaded), is very slightly concave, undoubtedly to prevent spillage of fuel when added to the tank.*

The tank seems to have been constructed from three pieces of brass: the main "tube" and with top and bottom "plates" 1/8-inch thick attached (brazed?) to the ends of the tube."



Frank J. Mann SHSI
Details of burner head less soldering iron tip
Photo by Charles Smith

"The needle valve, which allows the fuel to escape from the lower pressurized chamber, appears to rest in the base of the upper, or most forward, chamber (perforated). As noted in the patent description, its initial operation is begun by applying heat to the coiled tube, opening the needle valve, and igniting the vaporized fuel (evidently with a lighted match at or near one of the several holes in the upper "burner" chamber).

Once ignited, heat in the burner tube, or chamber, would continue to build additional pressure with the unit functioning until the fuel in the tank was exhausted, or the needle valve closed."



Frank J. Mann nameplate stamping
Photo by Charles Smith

"I'm really pleased not only to own such a rare torch, but to be able to confirm its existence in print, to comment on its construction, and describe its operation to other torch collectors. All we knew about F. J. Mann previously was from the patent information. We all know that the patent information is important in understanding our torches, but the torch itself is absolutely critical in documentation."



10th Annual BTCA Gathering

The third time is a charm! The 10th Annual BTCA meeting was held, for the third time, at **Jon & Judy Suta's** home in Mt. Vernon, Washington. The first two BTCA meetings were in Mt. Vernon in 1998 & 1999.

Thanks to Jon & Judy and their daughters **Jodi & Tina**, their hospitality was great, the food was awesome, the weather cooperated, and Jon even moved more "stuff" out from his large workshop. We could not believe how much room Jon had been hiding in his workshop during past meetings! The extra space allowed plenty of room for all of the displays.

Judy and daughters put together a fantastic meal...complete with dessert cookies shaped like blow torches. Jon actually made the cookie presses formed from sheet aluminum and shaped into two different blow torch designs. We were uncertain as to which models he was duplicating and he wasn't sharing the information.

Attendees included:

- Al & Elaine Austin
- Robert & Darlene Calhoun
- Ron Carr
- Ann Clark
- Larry Fields & Pat Hauser
- Richard & Judy Gjersee
- Maurice & Noma Jernstedt
- Charles & Shirley Monthy
- Suezy Proctor
- Quentin & Sally Schwartz
- Dr. Charles Smith
- Graham & Stephanie Stubbs
- Jon & Judy Suta

Larry Fields displayed a series of small alcohol and gasoline torches lined up on a table resembling the number 10. Since Larry traveled from North Carolina by airplane, he was limited on what he could bring...but he more than made up by his unusual display.



Larry Field's display resembling the number 10 in honor of the 10th Annual BTCA Gathering.

Maurice Jernstedt presented a pistol grip torch that was manufactured by a company just uncovered this year by **Charles Smith**, the Aetna Products Co. of Brocton, MA (see Aetna story).



Aetna Products Co. Pistol Grip Torch
Photo by Ron Carr

Maurice also brought along a circa 1920's SOLDERALL self-acting blow torch. It is approximately five inches tall, is made entirely from heavy solid brass and can also be seen on page 374 of the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book.



SODERALL Self-Acting Blow Torch
Photo by Ron Carr



Inset photo with burner details
Photo by Charles Smith

Bob Calhoun displayed a miniature Clayton & Lambert gasoline firepot. It stands nine inches tall, has a galvanized fuel tank, and the top portion is removable to allow the burner assembly to be used as a blow torch. The burner assembly has a swivel arrangement to allow for different angles.

The firepot is fairly old with patent dates on the burner assembly of January 15, 1889 and February 20, 1900. The fuel tank has an air pump in lieu of a squeeze bulb that would sometimes be present on such a vintage design.



Miniature Clayton & Lambert Fire Pot
Photo by Ron Carr

Graham Stubbs had a most unusual display of Turner Brass Works items not relating to blow torches. Turner Brass Works produced many items that were either promotional items; giveaways, or they actually sold the various items. Included in the photo are letter openers, an ashtray, a bottle opener, and two types of paper weights. You'll note on the end of the letter openers the trade marked Turner trapeze artist.



Graham Stubbs' Turner Brass Works Display
Photo by Ron Carr

Al Austin included a COBRA blow torch that was made in Japan. It is a quart-size gasoline torch and has a decal that is nearly identical to an Otto Bernz style label...including the Bernz statement "ALWAYS RELIABLE". We suspect that the Bernz Co. may have sourced blow torches from Japan and sold them under the COBRA label.



COBRA Labeled Blow Torch
Photo by Ron Carr

Suezy Proctor displayed a pint-size Otto Bernz brass blow torch marked #188 on the top of the air pump plunger. We've seen similar pint-sized torches with the larger air pump in the fuel tank and marked with #88, so we're at a loss on why the torch was marked #188. Does anyone else own a Bernz torch marked with #188?



Otto Bernz #188 Blow Torch
Photo by Ron Carr

A buffet lunch was served during the noon hour and everyone took a break to enjoy the food. Just after lunch, **Ron Carr** opened the meeting, welcomed the attendees, and had **Jon, Judy, Jodi, and Tina Suta** take a bow for their wonderful arrangements and the great food.

The podium was then turned over to **Suezy Proctor** and she gave us some details about a book that she is in the process of writing. It deals with why people collect odd collectible items...like blow torches. She has a publisher, an editor, and in the near future will most likely contact many BTCA members for input.

Charles Smith was up next with a few words on the camaraderie of the group and then he gave to each BTCA member a new small alcohol torch and a small packet of prehistoric sharks teeth. Why the sharks teeth? Charles is a retired micro paleontologist and is an authority on prehistoric material.

Graham Stubbs followed up with a visual quiz for all of the attendees. He had four lovely female assistants each hold up a different version of a Unique Mfg. Co. torch. The group was then to have the assistants arrange the Unique torches in chronological order...oldest to the newest. There were many torch experts in the audience and most everyone solved the quiz correctly. The photo shows the four torches in chronological order.



Unique Blow Torches in Chronological Order
Photo by Ron Carr

The meeting was adjourned and shortly after lunch the torch displays were dismantled, and by late afternoon most everyone had said their goodbyes and headed for home. Any volunteers willing to host the west coast 11th Annual BTCA meeting? Please contact Ron at 702-395-3114. I look forward to hearing from you. Thanks for making 2007 another exciting blow torch year!



5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY



The following members are celebrating their 5th anniversary as members of BTCA. Congratulations on your first five years and thank you for your continued support of our organization!

Garland Berger
Don Boyce
David Clarke
Charles Denison
John Denison
Robert Foshee
Ken Graham
Ray Hyland
Ashley Kennedy
Gil Kelcan
Carl Oxley
Kirk Randall
John Schimpf
Dr. George Schumann
Quentin Schwartz
Jeffrey St. Germain
Tim Szabo
Don Weber

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY



A special thank you goes out to the following eleven members that joined BTCA in its third year of inception. Many thanks for your ten years as members of BTCA!

Al Austin
Michel Duval
Larry Fields
Bob Fitchhorn
Dennis Galaway
Richard Gjersee
Maurice Jernstedt
Samuel Scroggs
Dr. Charles Smith
Rheal Theriault
R.L. Wildenradt

AETNA

Here is another previously unknown torch manufacturer that **Charles Smith** uncovered, the Aetna Products Co. of Brockton, MA. They manufactured a pistol grip style torch in the mid-1950's...a Model No. 1. It is very similar in design to the SAF-JET Rocket Torch as seen on page 353, and the Lenk #99 HIGH HEET alcohol blowtorch on page 274 of the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* reference book.



Aetna Products Co. Pistol Grip Torch
Photo by Charles Smith

The Aetna torch has a wood handle, the fuel tank is chromed brass, and there is a brass knurled cap on the end that seals the fuel tank. The burner end of the fuel tank has a recessed drip cup, and the burner has a screw-in cleaning pin that seals the burner orifice when not in use. Apparently Aetna also sold torch fuel since the starting instructions refer to "AETNA FUEL". Are there any other AETNA torches out there?



FRASSE

Graham Stubbs recently purchased a torch not seen before, nor have we ever heard of the manufacturer...FRASSE CO. Here is Graham's account of his FRASSE torch.

"The torch is made entirely of brass and is six inches tall and two inches in diameter at the base."

FRASSE CONT.

The applied brass plate says "MADE BY THE FRASSE CO. 38 CORTLAND ST. NEW YORK." I located a web site with an 1875 catalog from Frasse & Company of 62 Chatham Street, New York, NY. Evidently Frasse & Company was a supplier of tools to machinists, watchmakers, etc. The catalog doesn't show this torch, but it does list a line of the brass blowpipes used by jewelers. Although the company name is stated differently and the address is not the same, I am inclined to think that Frasse and Company is the same as Frasse Co., maker of the torch."



Frasse Co. Torch
Photo by Graham Stubbs

"The design of the torch is early; the fine knurling on the top collar is one indicator. I did not find any patent in our files with a comparable illustration. The method of holding and adjusting the blowpipe tube is most interesting. Attached to the outside of the fuel tank is a 5/16 inch diameter tube, formed from sheet brass and soldered in place. Attached to the blowpipe is a piece of brass tubing, not fully closed, with an inside diameter roughly the same size as the outside dimension of the

tubing attached to the fuel tank tubing, but squeezed down just a little.

The tube on the blowpipe fits snugly over the tube on the fuel tank and allows for vertical adjustment so the nozzle end can be directed at a flame from the wick."



Frasse Co. Torch Label
Photo by Graham Stubbs

We would like to hear if any member has a similar looking torch with FRASSE on the nameplate...or any torch marked FRASSE.



BOOK DONATIONS



We mentioned in newsletter #37 that **Suezy Proctor** purchased four copies of the recently published blow torch book, and had BTCA donate three of them to appropriate libraries. She has recently purchased two additional books for donation, and the Smithsonian Institution Libraries accepted one of the copies.

The Smithsonian Library is affiliated with the National Museum of American History and the book will be located at their facility in Washington, DC. According to the director at the library; "Part of our mission as a library is to collect books on tools and industry. Your book will fit perfectly within our collection needs and be of interest to the museum staff members that work in collecting and researching hand and industrial tools."

Book number two was sent to the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware.

The Hagley Museum and Library collects, preserves, and interprets the unfolding history of American enterprise.

DONATIONS CONT.

Located on 235 acres along the banks of the Brandywine River in Wilmington, Delaware, Hagley is the site of the gunpowder works founded by E. I. du Pont in 1802. Their facility is an example of early American industry that includes restored mills, a worker's community, and the ancestral home and gardens of the du Pont family.

Hagley's library furthers the study of business and technology in America. Their collections include individuals' papers and companies' records ranging from eighteenth-century merchants to modern telecommunications and illustrate the impact of the business system on society.

Thank you Suezy for your generous contributions!



? UNKNOWN ?
TORCHES

Graham Stubbs has an unknown torch that we hope one of our members can identify. The fuel tank is very similar to a Lasher Weeber model 200 (see page 262 in the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book); the important dimensions are virtually identical.



Unknown Torch
Photo by Graham Stubbs

It seems that it came from the same tool. The blowpipe is the outermost of the two tubes; the inner one is only a support and it does not connect to the interior of the fuel tank. If anyone has any information...please contact us.

Guy Gerard purchased a superb looking blowtorch from Argentina on an eBay website. The massive solid copper tank is spherical and the brass burner is conical. During the pre-heating phase, a flame guard, placed at the back of the burner, protects the Bakelite wheel flame adjustment valve.



Unknown Torch
Photo by Guy Gerard

There are no markings or other identification on the lamp. If anyone has any information about this beautiful lamp, please contact Guy at guygerard24@orange.fr, or see the enclosed membership list for his address and phone number.

Frits Ordelman sent in photos of a most unusual blow torch. It is a torch that he acquired a long time ago and has never been able to identify it. It appears to be made entirely of brass and the fuel tank rests in the small brass cup that **Graham Stubbs** identified as a measure for filling the fuel tank. You can barely see the little spout on one side of the cup. When the tank has been filled with fuel, the filler cup is turned over, and a depression in the bottom of the cup becomes a receptacle for a small amount of preheating fluid.

The filler cup is then placed, upside down, under the burner tube to preheat it. Graham remembers seeing this fuel measuring cup feature on Barthel alcohol torches, of which there is an illustration on page 36 of the reference book. Additionally, the handle of Fritz's torch looks similar to that on the Barthel torch.



Unknown Torch
Photo by Frits Ordelman

The only markings are P. KNY & CO. NEW. If anyone has any information, please contact Frits...see the membership list for his information.



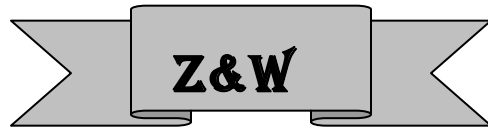
PHOTO TIPS



Many members submit photos to us for review and identification. Often we want to print the photo in the newsletter to share with our membership, but the quality is not sufficient for reproduction.

Here are just a few tips on what will reproduce well for the newsletter. Use a solid white background or any light color. A sheet, towel, wall...anything will work that is a solid light color. Focus is important, and get as close as you can to reveal as much detail as possible. Profile photos are best...but just turn the torch another few degrees so that we can see the front part of the burner.

So...get your cameras out, focus, shoot, and send in those photos of your favorite or unknown torch.



The Z&W torch has to be one of the most unusual blow torches manufactured in the US. The entire fuel tank was made from extruded aluminum with cast top and stamped bottom sections welded in place. The torch is the self-generating type with no air pump, and it has dual drip cups machined into the top cast piece. The curved handle is Bakelite with a large threaded rod running the length of the handle that attaches to a metal support.



Z&W Co. Aluminum Blow Torch w/ Heat Shield
Photo by Charles Smith

We've seen a few Z&W torches from members' photos; however, the Z&W that **Charles Smith** recently purchased explains why there's a small hole in the corner of the handle bracket.



Z&W Handle Bracket w/ Hole for Heat Shield
Photo by Ron Carr

Charles' torch has a heat shield clamped onto the fuel tank and secured with a nut and bolt to the handle bracket. This is the first we have seen of the heat shield and now know why the hole is in the bracket. If any members have a Z&W with a heat shield...or a Z&W without the hole in the handle bracket...we would like to hear from you.



Suezy Proctor showing off two of Al Austin's torches. The photo does not do justice to the two very red torches!
Photo by Ron Carr

THE BOOK

We thank all of you that have already purchased the book, *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, An Identification And Rarity guide*. We've sold or donated just over 265 copies of the first printing of 350 books. We continue to sell copies on eBay with a good success rate. If you have not yet purchased the book...there's still time to receive your copy of the initial printing that includes original autographs of the three authors Charles, Graham, and Ron.

Please be aware that a few books were bound improperly and are defective. If you experience pages falling out....simply return the front and back cover of your book to BTCA and we will gladly replace it free of charge.



TORCH LOVE

Pat Smith composed this torch poem for her husband, **Charles Smith**, during the 2007 Holiday Season:

TORCH LOVE

*To Charles, From Pat
Christmas 2007*

The love began on the farm
When he was merely a lad,
The enigma grew with time
From hours watching his dad.

With its mystery and its power
He was enchanted as a boy,
And as he would soon discover
This was, for certain, not a toy.

Yes, I am referring to "the torch"
With memories deeply engrained,
For he undeniably lusted them
And it has indisputably remained.

He was desperate for the power
And could not shake the passion,
He tried so hard to forget them
But he became sick and ashen.

With the farm days behind him
Memories remained very clear,
And every fiber of his existence
Was throbbing and very severe.

He had collected two or three
That sat on the shelf for years,
And when I asked about them
He stated they were souvenirs.

Suddenly things would change
A computer came into our life,
And never would I have imagined
I would become a blowtorch wife!

His dreams would all come true
As he searched daily on the Web,
Our lives were drastically altered
But his desire would never ebb.

The attic was immediately filled
With torches he thought so fine,
And once I heard him exclaim
"Oh, yes - ALL of them are mine!"

He eventually collected hundreds
And even built himself a shrine,
Where he spends hour upon hour
Polishing and making them shine

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale....Terry Fouch has 560 blow torches, 308 soldering irons, 14 fire pots, and 15 lead cups & ladles available for sale. We're not sure if he'll break up the package...so if you're interested, contact him at 2656 SE Tucci Place, Port Orchard, WA 98367 or call at 360-710-4848.

Wanted....A number of members continue to ask for miscellaneous torch parts. Older fuel caps, soldering iron hooks, burner assemblies, and air pump plungers are just a few of the items being requested. Consider selling some of your parts....you might be surprised how valuable they are! You may have partial torches that can be broken down for numerous parts....sometimes the parts are valued more than the torch. Remember, all BTCA members are eligible to post free advertisements in the CLASSIFIED ADS.

For Sale....Anyone looking for a Brent Mfg. Co. torch? If you're not sure what a Brent torch is....check out page 77 in the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book. **Dave Schulte** has a spare Brent torch that he will sell to the first comer. You can reach Dave at schulte3@mepotelco.net or see the enclosed membership list for address and phone number.

For Sale....Close to 200 torches, all but approximately 50 are refinished. Here's your chance to find a polished torch at bargain prices. **Dave Kolb** is only asking \$5 each, or he's also willing to trade! Many are common torches, however, if you're just starting out with your collection, now is the time to add polished ones. You can reach Dave at dekolb@charter.net or see the membership list for contact information.



John Suta's Other Love...Tractors!
Photo by Ron Carr



Young Boy with Blow Torch
Illustration from Michel Duval's Holiday Card

THE TORCH

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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: Blow Torch Collectors Association, 6908 April Wind Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89131-0119, email to: BTCA@cox.net, or by phone: (702) 395-3114.

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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