

# THE TORCH

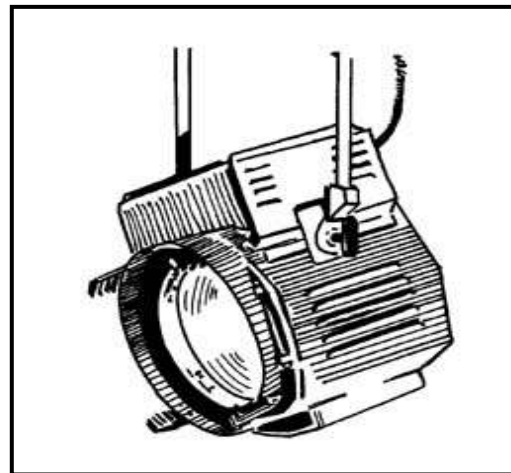
NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION  
Issue #41 June 2008



The above poster is from the collection of Michel Duval.



This lamp recently sold on eBay.  
See page 3 for the record-breaking price.



IN THE ~~SPOT~~ TORCH LIGHT, see page 5.



# NOTES FROM ALL OVER



**Chris Mello** sent in various photos, including one of his Kemode Mfg. Co. cartridge-fueled soldering iron. There are a few BTCA members that own Kemode torches; however, not many own a complete box of fuel cartridges! **See photo on the right. >>>>**



Chris also gave us some interesting information on a website that has some interesting torch-related items, including great color photographs of gasoline and kerosene fueled clothing irons. Here's the website: <http://terrence.marsh.faculty.noctrl.edu/lantern/iron.html>. There is a lot of good information regarding lamps and links to lamp and blow torch/lamp sites.



**George Murray** sent in a great photo of a DECKER & GRIES cast aluminum pumpless blow torch. It appears to be in near mint condition. Stamped into the knob is: PAT. PHOENIX JULY 19.10, DECKER & GRIES NEWARK, NJ. **See photo on the left. <<<<**

We are acting on a suggestion submitted by **Keith Hawkins** last year regarding dues payments. Because of rising postage, he suggested that we send out the dues notices in one of the newsletters. So, please find enclosed your dues notice for 2009.

Another version of a Justrite blow torch has surfaced in the collection of **David Stennett**. David submitted a photo of a Good Mfg. Co. torch made by Justrite. The torch is stamped with: Good Mfg. Co., Justrite, Trade Mark, Reg. US Pat Office, PAT no. 1,518,404, Made in USA. Many torch manufacturers, including Justrite, produced torches under various other brand names and they continue to surface as new and undiscovered. We will be adding the Good Mfg. Co. to the upcoming supplement to the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book.

There is a correction to the photo that **Lloyd Weber** sent in for the December 2007 newsletter on page 6. The photo caption reads "Schaefer & Beyer", but it should read "Otto Bernz" as stated in the text above the photo. Lloyd also sent in a photo of a Clayton & Lambert no. 61 vertical burner blow torch. **See the photo on the right. >>>>**



**Maurice Jernstedt** submitted some comments regarding the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book: *"What a wonderful book you guys put together. I have spent many hours thumbing through the book and it has helped me to identify some torches I have been confused about. I think many of us may need to review the torches we have on hand and maybe find a treasure among the unknowns like I have. In many cases, I had no idea what I had until the book was available."*

We heard from **Mark Pedersen** in between his world travels. He was on his way to Egypt and wanted to let us know that he also owned a Litter torch. We featured the Litter illumination torch in the last issue of *THE TORCH*, page 5.



**Dave Schulte** saw the information on the David Bradley weed burner in the last newsletter, and sent in photos of his version. He found it in a \$2 pile at a flea market last summer...what a deal! The configuration is quite different from the photos that **Tim Szabo** sent in, although it probably has a similar application. **See photo on the left.**

**Jim Jaress** sent in a series of blow torch photos, but one in particular caught our eye. At first look, you would certainly guess that it was a Turner Brass Works torch, however, the markings on the burner tell a different story. Cast into one side of the burner head reads "SOMMERS", and cast into the opposite side is "ST. PAUL". One can only guess that Turner brand-labeled that particular model for Sommers in St. Paul, MN. This may be another name that we'll be adding to the upcoming supplement to *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*. **See photo on the right. >>>>**



## **RECORD SALE**

The lamp **pictured on the left** recently sold on eBay for 2,050 Euros or \$3,224 to an individual in Germany. It was listed as "Lampe a souder Eolipyle du Docteur Paquelin, 1888." We monitor the various auction websites from time to time, and we have never seen a lamp/torch sold for such a high price. This one holds the current record!



## **Magic Fluid....**

**By Dr. Charles Smith**

The arrival of the latest issue of *THE TORCH*, and the note about "Magic Fluid", gave me new incentive to give the mixture a test. I had to get the commercial strength ammonium hydroxide and the oleic acid from Fisher Scientific in Atlanta.

With all the fuss, I decided to purchase an excess amount of each so now I'm set for the next several years. The chemicals arrived about a week ago and I soon set out to mix the formula. After allowing the mixture to "age" for several days I decided to give it a try.

I selected one of my most corroded and excessively dirty Bridgeport Brass "Vulcan" torches for the experiment. I can't fully realize how simple this process would be. After removing the wood handle from the torch, I actually spent more time trying to get a thin wire attached to the "Vulcan" torch tank. The attached wire was so I wouldn't have to reach down into the fluid to retrieve the torch tank. And it worked! I just lowered the fuel tank in, walked off, and returned later. After four hours I retrieved the fuel tank. There was some black "soot" covering much of the torch, however, this washed away with nothing but running water. A small Scotch-Brite scouring pad and soapy water removed all vestige of the initial "crud" and also removed the ammonia smell. Once dry (I used a hair dryer), the copper and brass were both somewhat dull, but the slightest buffing with "0000" steel wool and voila, what a difference! I'm really impressed with the results of "Magic Fluid".

On a side note, before I mixed the solution, I called Dr. Schumann, since he has been cleaning his torches for some eight years using this process. I specifically asked about removing the "Magic Fluid" from the torch tank prior to drying. I never saw that step addressed in any of the previous information listed in *THE TORCH*. He explained the wash process, and at that point we turned our attention to collecting and other "pleasantries". Nice man! I'm looking forward to a personal meeting one day. Thanks to Dr. George Schumann for sharing this simple cleaning process with us.

## **THE MAGIC FLUID FORMULA**

Submitted by Dr. George Schumann

(The formula was originally printed in *THE TORCH*, on page 4 of issue no. 22.)

### INGREDIENTS

8 ounces 28% commercial-strength ammonia (sold by blueprint supply stores)  
4 ounces oleic acid (sold by most pharmacies)  
4 ounces liquid detergent  
2 ounces acetone (available in hardware stores)  
¾ gallons water

### DIRECTIONS

1. Add the oleic acid to the water and mix well.
  2. Then add the detergent and acetone and mix.
  3. Then slowly add the ammonia while mixing. Some "clumping" may result as the ammonia is added.
- Allow the mixture to "age" for three to four days before using.
  - Shake or stir well before using.
  - To pep up aging solutions, add new ammonia.
  - When using the solution indoors, keep it in a tightly closed container.
  - Store the solution in a brown bottle or keep away from light.

## **CAUTION**

- **Always work in a well-ventilated area**
- **Always protect your eyes**
- **Use gloves**
- **Do not leave parts in the solution too long, twenty minutes is usually sufficient, but highly corroded parts may take longer**

## HELPFUL HINTS

Try blowing warm air from a portable hair dryer to drive moisture out of tiny crevices in the parts. Use 0000 fine steel wool to burnish the cleaned brass parts. Commercial-strength ammonia fumes are undeniably obnoxious, but the results of this cleaning solution are worth enduring the temporary unpleasantness. The telltale smell evaporates shortly.

### COMMENTS FROM DR. GEORGE

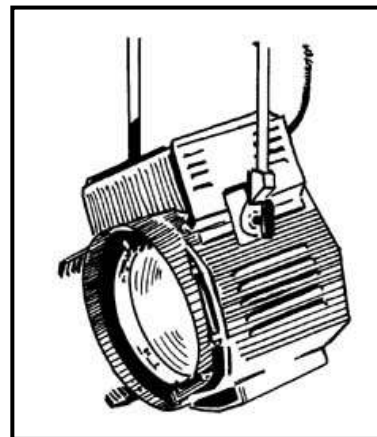
The most corroded brass, bronze, or copper part will come out of a one-two hour soak looking like “newly minted gold” with only a gentle rubdown with 0000 steel wool, and perhaps some urging with a brass brush on the tough-to-reach places. Ordinary crud is removed within a few minutes, and a wipe with steel wool. This stuff is really potent and one should wear rubber gloves, but I have not experienced any problems in handling parts coated with the solution. It’s best to do the cleaning work outdoors...the ammonia fumes are...WOW! Also, the solution eats up leather pump washers and cotton wicks, so it’s best to leave them out of any long soaks. The mixture seems to have little affect on clean metal, and dissolves only the oxidized layer. Any engravings, and die stamped letters come out sharp and clear. It’s best to give the deeply imbedded burner parts an overnight soak.

The brass-cleaning recipe originated from *How To Restore Your Collector Car, 1984, pages 148-149. Brownell-Motorbooks International, Osceola, WI 54020.*



## IN THE ~~SPOT~~ TORCH LIGHT

Back by popular demand, this is the second in a series of personal interviews with selected BTCA members. **Dick Sarpolus** and his lovely wife **Lynn** live in Shrewsbury, NJ, a city of approximately 5,000 that is near the New Jersey shore. Dick is a native of New Jersey and has lived in Shrewsbury for over 40 years. He attended Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. Dick’s entire career of 41 years was with the Bendix Corp., a manufacturer of aircraft electrical generating equipment located in Eaton Town, NJ. Bendix changed its name over the years....Bendix became Allied Signal, then finally Honeywell. Dick traveled extensively over the years to numerous military facilities and aircraft manufacturing plants. He’s been fully retired for about five years.



Dick’s life long hobby has been model airplanes. He got into the building and flying of them....mostly radio-controlled. After he grew out of the competition phase of model airplane flying, he got into the design of and writing about them. He authored over five hundred model airplane related articles and nearly 150 design related articles that were printed in numerous model airplane magazines. Dick also authored two model airplane books, one on ducted fan airplanes that simulate jet aircraft, and the second book dedicated to control line airplanes. The sale of both books totaled about 45,000 copies!

Dick is also the author of the first blow torch book, *COLLECTIBLE BLOWTORCHES* that was published in early 2001 through Schiffer Publishing Ltd. The 144 page book is a how to collect blow torches, with detailed information on what to look for, refinishing techniques, lots of color torch photos, and a suggested price guide for all listed torches.

**TT:** How did you get started collecting blow torches which are so far removed from model airplanes?

**DS:** Well, I’ve never collected anything in my life. I’ve had several different hobby activities, and I’ve always had the equipment for those hobbies and kept them up to date as the technologies changed. So, I never really

kept any old equipment to collect or to keep as souvenirs. However, my wife Lynn collects various items including anything related to Pepsi Cola, Depression glass, and vintage kitchen utensils. Lynn's sister and her husband are also big collectors with a variety of interests. So, for many years we attended all kinds of flea markets, auctions, and antique stores all over the country. During one of those trips, as they all were searching for their collectables at a flea market, I saw a blow torch. It was only two dollars, and on a whim I bought it thinking that if I'm going to collect something....it may as well be these crazy things! At that time I never imagined that anyone else would be collecting blow torches.

**TT:** What year was that?

**DS:** That was about 20 years ago.

**TT:** Do you restore any of your torches?

**DS:** About two thirds of my collection is restored, not to working condition, but to good looking condition. The steel ones I repaint, the brass ones get polished.

**TT:** What is the size of your collection?

**DS:** I have about 200 restored torches, and just over 150 un-restored but clean torches. Maybe one day I'll get around to cleaning them all up.

**TT:** Do you have any foreign torches or lamps in your collection?

**DS:** I have a few and would buy them if they were interesting and the price was right, but I don't concentrate on them.

**TT:** Are you still adding to your collection?

**DS:** I keep looking, but I buy much less today because it's harder to find ones that I don't have that are reasonably priced.

**TT:** Do you have a preference for a particular type or size of torch?

**DS:** Not really, I like them all.

**TT:** If you had to pick just one torch, which one would be your favorite?

**DS:** It's a strange one to be a favorite. It's not a very valuable or rare one; it is one of the small alcohol torches with an air pump in the handle...a Lenk no. 600 Super Heat.

**TT:** So your favorite torch is not your rarest torch. What is your rarest torch?

**DS:** That would have to be my Union Heater blow torch that dates to 1890. **See photos below.**

**TT:** Do you display your torches at home?

**DS:** Yes, I have about 150 pieces displayed in the living room, and only the cleaned and polished ones are displayed. I have them in different corners of the room along with Lynn's stuff, including her cabinet full of Depression glass. I have the torches arranged by type; all auto torches in one location, the small alcohol torches in another place, and so on. In spite of the mixture of items; Lynn's and mine, it all comes together and looks great.



**TT:** That's only home for 150 pieces, where are the rest?

**DS:** I keep the balance in the basement where I also store my airplane model construction benches, drafting tables, photo equipment, airplane models, and other assorted airplane parts.

**TT:** Have you ever publically displayed your torches?

**DS:** Not really. The opportunity has never come up. I did display some of my collection at the first east coast BTCA convention in Toms River, NJ in September, 2000. We also don't hesitate to give tours of our collections to any visitors to our home.

**TT:** Where do you do your torch refinishing?

**DS:** In my basement. I have an assortment of refinishing equipment, various tools, and a buffer and wire wheel.

**TT:** Do you have a dedicated buffing room or enclosure?

**DS:** Not really. When I'm refinishing a torch and am in the buffing process, I erect sort of a portable small room using plastic or polyethylene sheets. I constructed a small wood barrier just behind the buffing machine to catch a majority of the buffing debris. Because of the mess that the buffing process creates, I try to isolate that process. Clean up is relatively simple using a shop vacuum.

**TT:** Do you still refinish torches?

**DS:** I guess it's been a few years since I've refinished a torch. I'm still collecting them, and in the future I still intend to refinish more.

**TT:** Have you ever coated your refinished torches with any type of lacquer or clear finish?

**DS:** No, I've never tried any of that material. Some of my earlier torches that were refinished twenty years ago are certainly showing signs of oxidation; they are very dull looking and not nearly as shiny as they were earlier....but I kind of like that look.

**TT:** You authored a blow torch book in 2001. How did you get the idea for the book?

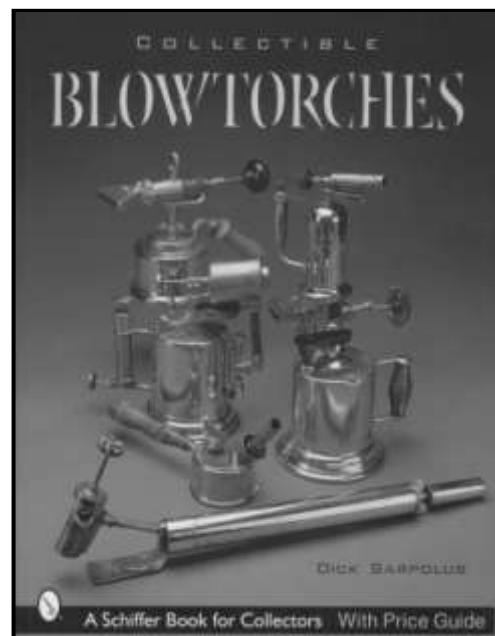
**DS:** Whatever hobby I got into, I found that the best way to learn about it would be to read about it. I did a lot of searching to find a book on blow torches, and it did not take long to discover that no one had ever written such a book. During that period I was also in contact with a few other collectors, mainly **Ron Carr** who had accumulated a sizable amount of torch literature including many US patents on blow torches. I also had amassed a large quantity of torch related literature. I finally decided that since I had written a lot of articles and two books on model airplanes, I would be able to write a book about blow torches.

(Editors note: *COLLECTIBLE BLOWTORCHES* by Dick Sarpolus is still available in book stores or on-line. It retails for \$29.95 and if not readily available in your local book store, it can be ordered. The ISBN number is 0-7643-1298-7.)

**TT:** How long did it take you from start to finish to complete the book?

**DS:** From the time I started, it took just under one year. Before that time I had been accumulating information, articles, and contacting publishers. Once I got rolling on the book, the time just flew, and before I knew it, the book was completed.

**TT:** Was it difficult to find a publisher to print the book?



**DS:** I thought that I was going to have a difficult time finding a publisher that would be willing to do a book on blow torches. You have to admit that torch collecting was and is not main stream stuff. But as luck would have it, I only had to approach one publisher; Schiffer Publishing Ltd. I knew that Schiffer had hundreds of published books on all kinds of collectibles, and I felt reasonably sure that if I made a solid case to them about the interest in blow torches, they would agree to publish the book.

**TT:** Was working with Schiffer an easy process?

**DS:** It was interesting how it worked. I actually had to make an appointment to talk to the president of Schiffer, Peter Schiffer, about my book project. And if he liked what he heard, he would give the go ahead on the book. Apparently I had a convincing conversation on the growing interest in blow torch collecting since they agreed to do it.

**TT:** Any problems or concerns during the publishing process?

**DS:** One of the problems I did encounter was that the publisher insisted that I include prices for all of the torches I was going to list in the book. I had to have a section with lots of torch photos along with an estimated sale price for each. They would not even consider publishing the book without a price guide. Even though I was totally against any type of price guide, they convinced me that since I had been collecting torches for a number of years, I would be in a position to estimate their values. Their position was that, with their experience in the collectible book business, all collectible books needed a price guide to sell in book stores.

**TT:** It sounds like you had no choice, even though just a few years later all of the prices listed are now very much out-of-date.

**DS:** You're correct; I had no choice since I did want to get the book published.

**TT:** Do you have information on how many books have sold to date?

**DS:** Yes, the last information I received from the publisher was 1500 copies.

**TT:** Did Lynn help you in any way with the torch book?

**DS:** Not really, only that she did help me by encouraging me to go ahead with the project.

**TT:** Speaking of Lynn, what does she think of your torch collection?

**DS:** She's pleased that I have a collectible interest because it's something we share when we go to the flea markets and antique shops....she looks for her stuff and I'm looking for blow torches. It's something fun that we do together.

**TT:** You mentioned earlier that you did not collect anything prior to blow torches; however, we are aware that you've owned a 1957 Chevrolet for a long time. Isn't that a collectible?

**DS:** Well, yes... there is a 51 year old car in our driveway, however I don't consider that a collectible. While it is 51 years old, it has been updated with modern technology in steering, suspension, a new engine, air conditioning, and many other upgrades. So, it's a work in progress. It has been repainted, re-chromed, looks great, and gets driven frequently. It doesn't sit around being admired like a collection.

**TT:** You emailed us and said that you discovered a new item to collect. What is it?

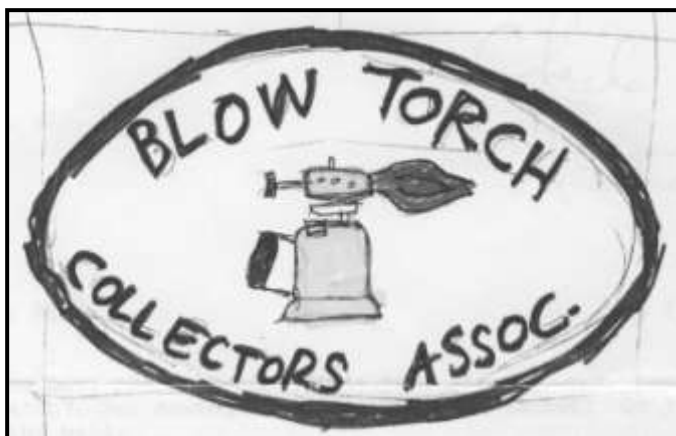
**DS:** Blow torch fuel cans. My neighbor gave me this fuel can a few days ago and said it would go with my torch collection. It's a whole new collectible and it certainly compliments torch collecting! **See photos. >**

**TT:** You may not remember, but you were the designer of the BTCA logo and patch back in 1998. Do you remember how you came upon the idea?





**DS:** I've belonged to a few model airplane clubs, and the club members make up logo patches all the time. They don't cost that much and people seem to like them. I wanted to have some sort of BTCA logo patch on my cap to wear at flea markets in the summer...it does pay to advertise.



Dick's original artwork for the BTCA patch



Final BTCA patch (multi-colored)

**TT:** Any final comments:

**DS:** There is one more thing that I would like to mention. It's how I found out how other people were interested in blow torch collecting. I had been collecting them for a few years, and while perusing through the back section of an east coast antique newspaper...I noticed an ad that read: "Blow torches wanted". I was so surprised to see that anyone else was interested in torches that I quickly sent off a letter to the address listed. When the person received my letter, he was interested enough to pick up the phone and call me....and that person was Ron Carr. It increased my interest in torches just to know that there were others with the same interest.



## REVISED INDEX for *THE TORCH*

**Graham Stubbs** has updated the INDEX for all past issues of *THE TORCH*. This is the third version and covers every article in all newsletters up to March 2008. The INDEX is a very helpful research tool in referencing past articles, and is set up in an easy-to-read format. Since many members have little or no use with the INDEX and because of its size (16 pages) and postage costs, we've decided to only make it available via email.

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## Other Blowtorch Related Collectibles

By **Graham Stubbs**

Besides torches and firepots, there are other items for the collector to look for. Perhaps the most obvious are catalogs and references to torches in old periodicals. These form the basis for much of the book "*Vintage Blowtorches*".

Other articles of interest include promotional items, pins, functional accessories and even the blocks used by printers for illustrations.

### TURNER BRASS WORKS

The Turner Brass Works started off in the brass foundry business, and made a variety of cast brass or bronze pieces to promote its business.

In the photo on the right, the top piece is a bronze paperweight, depicting a 1930s torch with a horizontal pump. At center is another paperweight, advertising Turner's nameplate business. On the left is a brass letter opener, pre 1907 marked Turner Brass works, Chicago. On the right is a similar letter opener, post 1907, marked Sycamore. In the center bottom are three cast bronze or brass lizards, all pre 1907 marked Chicago.



Below is a cast bronze cigarette ashtray, marked THE TURNER BRASS WORKS SYCAMORE, IL.



Paper ink blotters were a popular and inexpensive method of advertising. The blotter shown below dates from circa 1916, and depicts Turner's Model nos. 12 and 215 torches, and the nos. 34 and 38 firepots.



Turner also sold a product for quick starting engines. This bottle opener shown below was given away to promote their engines.



### PRINTERS' BLOCKS

This type of printer's block, copper faced on wood, was used to print advertising material for Clayton & Lambert's no. 34 firepot.



### PINS

Pins were used for promoting torch products and their makers, to identify workers, and even to advertise things like hot dogs. And, they came in a variety of shapes and sizes to suit the needs of the user.

In the photo on the right starting from the upper left are the following items: An inspector's badge from Turner's Sycamore, IL factory. In the center is one of my favorites... the large BernzOmatic pin. On the far right is a KORN PLUMBING & HEATING COMPANY plumbers' ID brass badge. There's a small round pin advertising Armour Star brand "Open Fire" flavor franks. The membership badge of the UK Blowlamp Society, a World War II Army-Navy "E" pin that was awarded to employees at factories with exceptional War effort performance (in this case Clayton & Lambert Ordnance division,) and another Armour pin advertising "Star" franks.



ACCESSORY TOOLS

One of the uses for this wrench, shown in the left photo, that was manufactured by The Otto Bernz Co. of Newark, NJ, was to remove the jet block from within the burner nozzle of some of the larger torches.

Other collectibles related to blowtorches include letterheads, envelope covers, trade cards, and packing boxes.



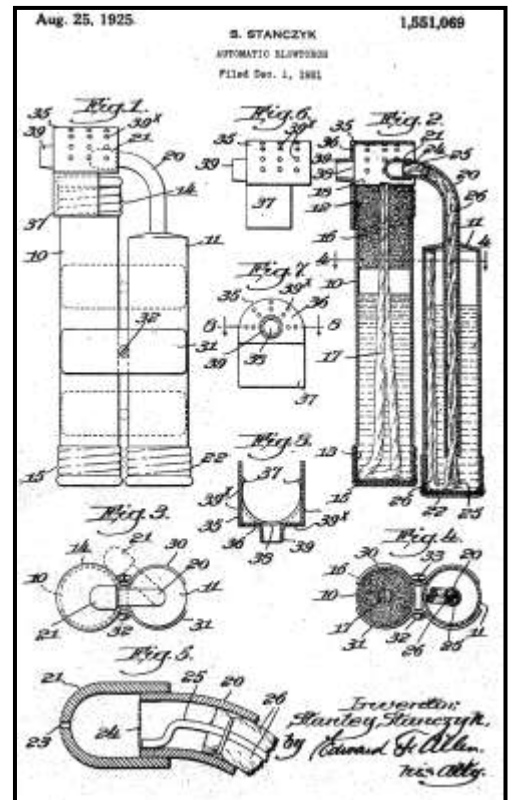
# The Lenk Model 108 Alcohol Torch Variations

By **Graham Stubbs**

The Lenk No. 108 alcohol blowtorch originated with a patent awarded in 1925 to Stanley Stacy of West Lynn, Massachusetts, and assigned to D. Allen Lenk of Boston. US patent no. 1,551,069, as shown on the right, describes an alcohol torch with two cylinders, held together by two wing-shaped clips. The windshield shown in the patent illustration has not been reported in any surviving example of a no. 108 torch.

The Lenk Mfg. Co. made these torches with at least seven minor design variations, starting about 1925 and continuing until the company exited the liquid fueled torch business. The torches employed power and flame tubes, all having the same diameter of approximately 7/8 of an inch. Lenk also made larger models 66, 175 and 175A, using two tubes, each measuring one inch in diameter.

Production Machining Company of Kinston, NC eventually acquired the rights to the design of the no. 108 torch and continued its production.



In the operating instructions, Lenk named the tube with the curved nozzle, the "power chamber". The second tube, which was there to provide a flame below the nozzle, was described as the "flame tube". The flame would remain alight throughout the operation of the torch. A small cleaning wire, that was used to clean the tiny hole in the burner tip, was supplied threaded through the paper that was printed with the operating instructions.

The seven variations are described below in what the editor believes to have been their chronological order of manufacture. For purposes of this article only, they are numbered type 1 through 7. The data is summarized in the table that follows this description, together with photographs of each type.

**Type 1** has the pair of "wing-shaped" clips, shown in Stanczyk's patent, holding the two tubes in place by a small screw and nut. The clips are marked "NEW MODEL #108, LENK AUTOMATIC BLOW TORCH, PAT. 1925". The bottom of the power chamber tube has a flared base. The flame tube has screw caps on both ends. It has a large rounded brass burner tip, without a protective cap.

**Type 2** has an "S"-shaped clip holding the tubes together. The clip is marked "#108 LENK, AUTOMATIC TORCH, PATENTED." The power and flame tubes are similar to the type 1. A chain, with large links, secures a slip on cap to the nozzle tube.

**Type 3** employs a "UU"-shaped clip to hold the two tubes together. There is no engraving on the clip or on either tube. The power tube has a flared base. The flame tube has a wing-nut cap sealing the base of the tube. The burner tip is not threaded, so there is neither a chain nor a hole in the clip to attach a chain.

**Type 4** also has the wing-nut cap at the base of the flame tube, and differs from type 3 only by the provision of a threaded burner tip, and a cap attached by a small chain to a hole in the clip. A 1940 Lenk catalog, which illustrates this version, gives the company address as Newton Lower Falls, MA.

**Type 5** has "UU"-shaped clip holding the two tubes. There is no engraving on the clip, but an attached paper label reads "STARTS IN 10 SECONDS, NO. 108, THE LENK MFG. CO., AUTOMATIC ALCOHOL BLOTORCH, BOSTON 15, MASS." The power tube has a flared base, similar to types 1 through 4. The flame tube has screw caps on both ends, similar to types 1 and 2. The burner tip is threaded, with a cap and chain similar to type 4.

**Type 6** is similar to type 5, except that the manufacturing location shown on the box is Franklin, KY. Additionally, as compared to types 1 through 5, the construction of the nozzle tube differs in one noticeable detail; there is no solder fillet where it enters the collar at the top of the power tube.



**Type 7** The main difference between the type 7 torch and the type 6 is that, although a threaded cap is provided, there is no chain and no hole in the clip for attachment. Like type 6, this version lacks the solder fillet around the nozzle tube. This version has been reported with boxes and operating instructions from two different manufacturing locations, Franklin, KY and Kinston, NC.



LENK 108 (Type 1)



LENK 108 (Type 2)



LENK 108 (Type 2)  
"S" CLIP



LENK 108 (Type 3)



LENK 108 (Type 4)



LENK 108 (Type 5)



LENK 108 (Type 6)



LENK 108 (Type 7)



LENK 108 (Type 1)  
BOX



LENK 108 (Type 3)  
BOX



LENK 108 (Types 5, 6, 7)  
BOX

When torches have no information stamped, engraved or applied to a label, the boxes and/or instructions are the only way to determine the manufacturing location. Lenk used two different forms of box-construction for the no. 108 torches, a “bathtub” in which a cover was pressed down over a wide bathtub-shaped base, and a tubular rectangular form with end caps folded in.

Version	Clip Shape	Nozzle Tube Solder Fillet	Tip	Chain	Cap	Power tube length	Flame tube length	Marking on clip	Mfg. location	Box	Year
1	Wing	Yes	Large brass, not threaded	None	None	Flared base 104 mm	Screw caps both ends 126 mm	NEW MODEL #108/ LENK AUTOMATIC BLOW TORCH PAT 1925	Not marked	End flaps	c1925
2	S	Yes	Not threaded	Large links, attached to nozzle tube	Slip on	Flared base 103 mm	Screw caps both ends 127 mm	108 LENK AUTOMATIC TORCH PATENTED		Not available	
3	UU	Yes	Brass, not threaded	None		Flared base 105 mm	Wing nut base 122 mm	None	Newton Lower Falls, MA (Box)	Bathtub with lid	c1940
4	UU	Yes	Brass, threaded	Small links, attached to clip	Brass threaded	Flared base 105 mm	Wing nut base 122 mm	None	Newton Lower Falls, MA (Catalog)	Not available	c1940-1948
5	UU	Yes	Brass, threaded	Small links, attached to clip	Brass threaded	Flared base 105 mm	Screw caps both ends 120 mm.	None (Paper label on fuel tube)	Boston, MA (Label)	End flaps	
6	UU	No	Brass, threaded	Small links, attached to clip	Brass threaded	Flared base 104 mm	Screw caps both ends 120 mm	None	Franklin, KY (Box)	End flaps	
7	UU	No	Brass, threaded	None	Aluminum threaded	Flared base 104 mm	Screw caps both ends 120 mm	None	Franklin, KY & Kinston, NC (Box)	End flaps	

Lenk made two additional numbered torch models very closely related to the no. 108, and using the same 7/8 of an inch diameter for the two tubes. The no. 0 “Automatic” torch has the filler for the power tube located at the bottom, as shown in the illustration in the US patent no. 1,551,069, and appears to be the predecessor of the no. 108; it is marked “PATENT PENDING”. The no. 24 torch appears to have been a simplified, no frills, version of the Lenk No. 108 designed to sell at the lowest possible cost; in 1940 it was advertised at \$1.00 versus \$1.25 for the no. 108. Two versions of the box for the no. 24 torch are shown below; the one on the right is believed to be a later, cost-reduced version.



I am indebted to **Dr. Charles Smith** who researched many of the ideas disclosed here, and who provided most of the photographs.



# IN MEMORIAM

We were sad to learn that one of our members, **Robert J. Gordon**, passed away on February 1<sup>st</sup>. After Robert retired, in addition to his love for the NASCAR and PEPSI, he took up torch collecting and after four years amassed about 200 torches. One of his favorite torches was a Turner Brass Works one gallon gasoline torch, no. 139A. It was so much a favorite that after he was cremated, his ashes were placed inside the torch!



Another interesting note is that we do not have a Turner Brass Works no. 139A listed in the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book. We'll be adding the no. 139A along with many other recently discovered torches in a supplement to the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book. Thanks Robert for uncovering another unlisted torch.



## Early Alcohol Torch, Maker Unknown

The alcohol torch shown in the photo on the right is a little larger than most measuring 8 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches long and 2 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches diameter. It has a simple mount for the blowpipe, allowing for vertical adjustment in relation to the burner, and it may be earlier than the known patented models such as the Roberts torch.

It is unusual since it is made of brass thickly plated with a gray metal, possibly zinc. There is no maker's marking or identifying numbers. Does anyone recognize it? Please let us know if you have an identical torch...especially if it has any markings.



# CLASSIFIED ADS

**WANTED: Jeff Battye** has a large number of one pint Companion torches that were made in Australia that he would like to swap. See your membership listing for contact information.

**WANTED: Maurice Jernstedt** would like to find a replacement bellows for his Buffalo Dental Mfg. Co. torch. It's a long shot, but maybe he'll get lucky. See your membership listing for contact information.



Two Clayton & Lambert Blow Torches with the Patented "Cushion Band" feature.  
Photo by Dick Sarpolus

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## THE TORCH

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*Editor*  
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*Contributing Editor*

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**Graham Stubbs**  
**Dr. Charles Smith**

**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: RONLV@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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