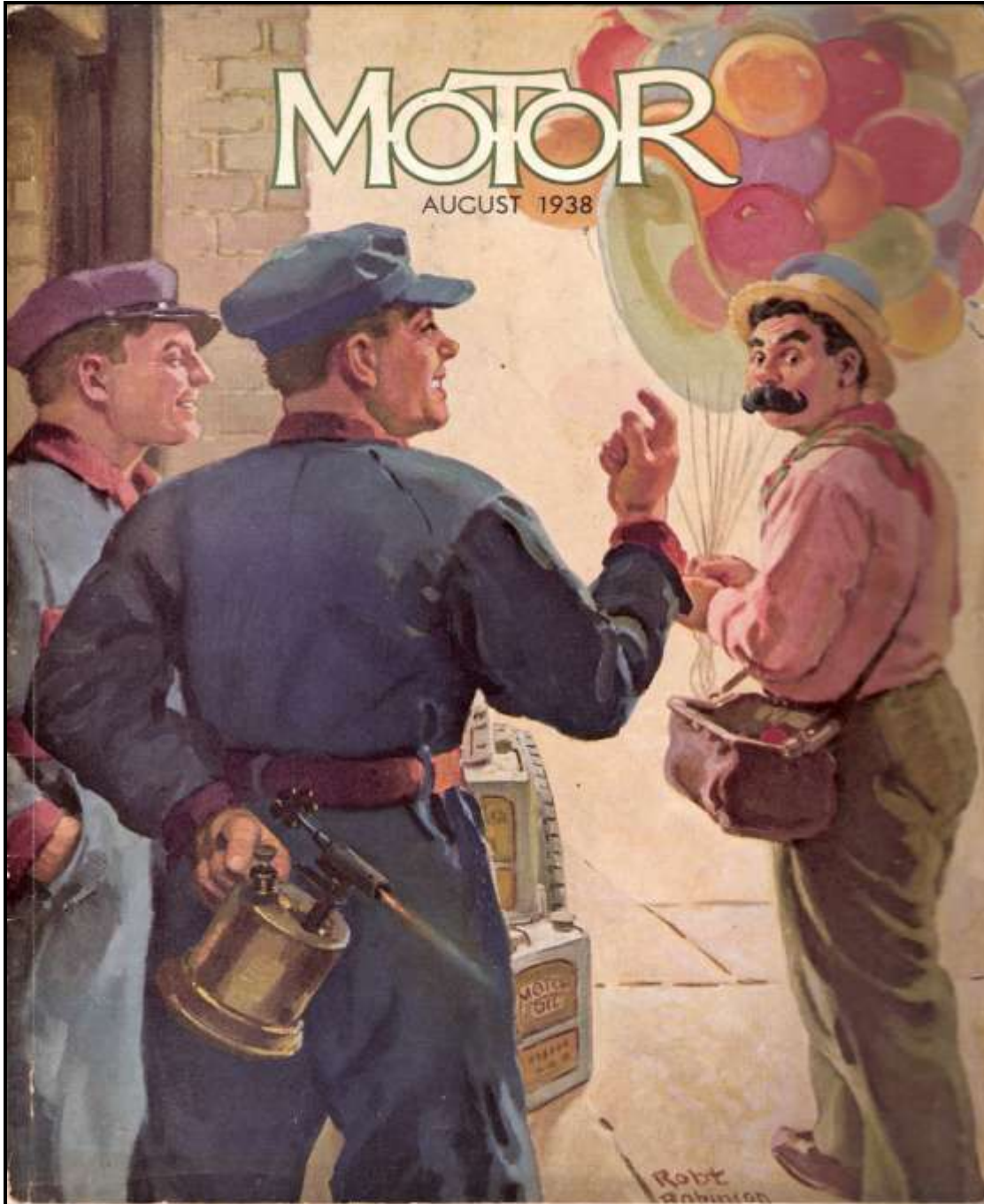


THE TORCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
Issue #42 December 2008



The August 1938 issue of Motor magazine offered a
twenty dollar prize for the best suggested title for this cover illustration!
Submitted by Graham Stubbs

NEW MEMBERS

William Kerns of Winchester, Virginia has been collecting blow torches for over 25 years and has amassed just under 200 torches and over 300 soldering irons. There was an article written about William in The Winchester Star newspaper on September 22, 2007 regarding his torch collection. See the follow-up story.

WELCOME ABOARD!



NOTES FROM ALL OVER

Do You Want To Be A Millionaire? One of our members said yes and participated in the popular TV game show this past September. **Lloyd Weber** was fortunate enough to be chosen for the game show, and while he did not become a millionaire, he did walk away with \$16,000! According to Lloyd; *“I was so happy to be done with the “Millionaire” after four months of being almost totally absorbed by it. I kind of went into a relaxation mode after I got home and just did what I felt like doing. The show went fairly well. I earned enough to pay for four trips to New York City...two for my wife Patti and two for my daughter. I bought a nice white baseball cap and Patti sewed on the patch.”* (BTCA donated a BTCA patch that was to be sewn onto a baseball cap and presented to Meredith Vieira, the show’s host. There was also an honorary certificate of BTCA membership for Meredith that was to be presented.) *“The presentation to Meredith was a “go” right up until I was to go on...however; it was cancelled at the last minute. The show’s producer must have thought that it was not something that America wanted to see. I’ve sent a thank you note to Meredith along with the baseball cap and membership certificate. Overall, it was a great experience, something that I had on my “bucket list” for a long time.”*

Charles Smith submitted a photo of a sterling lapel pin from the Scovill Mfg. Co., a US torch manufacturer. We’ve seen many other similar promotional type items from **Graham Stubbs’** collection, but this is the first time we’ve seen a promotional item from a company other than the “Big Three”, Bernz, Turner, and Clayton & Lambert. The pin measures 9/16” or 14mm in height and was most probably given as a service award to a eligible Scovill employee. Charles contacted Scovill, now Scovill Fasteners Inc., located in Clarksville, Georgia, however, the company representative indicated that there were no records available from their torch manufacturing period. Scovill manufactured small alcohol and gasoline blow torches during the 1940s under the trade name “BLUE BLAST”. → → →



←←←**Suezy Proctor**, as an annual holiday tradition, uses blow torches for her Christmas tree! They are hung on a sturdy coat rack with wire and lights and intermingled with various colorful Christmas decorations. We counted 61 assorted torches plus two blow torch books.

According to **Graham Stubbs**, new blow torches are still being manufactured and sold out of China. Check out this website if you’re in the market for a torch one; <http://www.alibaba.com/showroom/Blowlamps.html>

Chris Mello sent in some great photos of a few of his favorite torches. One included a Simplex Self Blowing Alcohol Torch and original box that was manufactured by the Peerblow Mfg. Co. →→→



←←← **Dick Bernard** has one of the larger Hauck Mfg. Co. torches in his collection...an 18-20 gallon behemoth! It's marked a no. 215, burns kerosene and measures 25 inches high, 16 inches in diameter, and 52 inches in circumference. As a size comparison, Dick placed a one-quart torch just in front of the Hauck behemoth. Among the numerous photos that Dick also submitted included a Turner Brass Works RF Self-Heated Solder Iron...a somewhat rare torch/iron and listed in *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* as a five-star rated piece.

Another record was recently broken...a very rare blow torch was listed on eBay for \$7500! One of our members, **Ron Johnson Jr.**, decided to liquidate his 1887 Martin L. Hull torch and had a friend list it on eBay. The bidding ended at \$4050, however, because of a reserve price, the deal was not consummated. We understand from a reliable source that an unnamed retired dentist from the UK made a substantial offer, but it was refused. I'm sure that if you have \$7500 lying around and are interested in buying a one-of-a-kind torch...it is still available.

How would you like to pick up a very rare 5 star rated blow torch for a mere \$19? **Janus Nooijen** did just that! He purchased a Clayton & Lambert no.100 Painter's Combination on eBay for \$19. He did have to pay \$72 for shipping from the US to the Netherlands, but considering what he purchased...it was an incredible deal! He did not know it was a rare torch until he purchased the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book and found it listed as five-star rating. → → →

George Murray brought to our attention an interesting blow torch website, groups.msn.com/sopletes. After visiting the website, we realized that it belongs to BTCA member **Gregorio Lopez Benito**. If you enjoy searching the web, you might want to visit...Gregorio has posted lots of photos.



EDITOR'S NOTE: We really appreciate all of the emails, letters, and photos that members continually send in to BTCA. We try our best to print the information submitted and include accompanying photos; however, due to photo quality or limited space, we sometimes cannot print everything that is submitted. Remember, WHITE or VERY LIGHT SOLID COLORED backgrounds for the photos, and get as close as possible. Also, please include dimensions and any identifying information. Thanks.

My Love Affair with Blow Torches, By Martin French

I have a confession to make, I love kerosene. In fact I love old tools that are fuelled by kerosene and Shellite (Shellite is a brand name fuel similar to Coleman fuel, and is a highly refined volatile fuel.). Tools that were made from 100 years ago have a quality and character in them that is not found in today's modern tools. My wife and I have been collecting blow torches, Tilley lamps, Tilley heaters, Primus stoves, oil cans and Shellite fuelled soldering irons for about seven years. Notice how I included my wife, she can take some of the blame, therefore I cannot be entirely blamed for being obsessed.

I remember when I was a child my father, who was a tool maker, had a Primus blow torch in his shed. He was always fiddling around and often used a blow torch to heat up stubborn bolts or seized up drum brakes, so I was initiated early on in my life to the benefits of a blower. Now that I have my own shed, well I just had to get a blow torch to use, didn't I? My collection started after buying four at a garage clearing sale in the country. When I got them home, I pulled them apart to see how they operated, and after reassembly and discovering that they actually pumped fuel, I was on the phone to my dad to find out how to fire one up.

My wife and I have collected 275 blow torches, and with great pride I can say all of them except one are fully operational. To myself, they have to work, I have to see them fired up once again, to see how they were manufactured, and to hear the roar of their flame. The one that could not be fixed is a steel-based Britinol which has rust holes in the base. When I disassemble a blow torch, I always use new seals, because if you're going to fire one up, it will be that one seal that you don't replace that will leak fumes and flash up in your face when you least expect it.

About half of my collection is polished up and displayed throughout the house while the rest are left in their original condition. When a blow torch comes into my life, some of them have a character about them that shows they should not be polished, where some are so filthy there is no choice but to clean them. We have found a home based solution to remove grime and filth and it is as simple as submerging the brass pieces in a bucket of brown vinegar. The only problem is that after an hours dip or however long you need to dip them, once you take the tank out it needs to be washed in water and dried and then polished straight away. If you don't immediately polish...then the brass will start to discolor. I have used an automotive clear lacquer sprayed over the finished torch and it does stop any tarnishing but I only spray the very best shiny ones.

Yes, I have had a few close calls firing up some of the torches, especially the petrol fuelled ones. I remember one of the first petrol torches I fired up was an Eriksson's. It is one of the oldest I have and I was so excited in finding it and the pump worked as well. As soon as I got home I headed straight to the shed, put in some petrol and in my excitement neglected to replace any seals. Well, it fired up no worries and as I was lying on the ground giving it a decent pump and I noticed a few fumes were escaping out of the needle adjustment screw. KA BOOM, the fumes ignited and singed what hair I do have, an eyebrow, and the hair on the back of my hand. The kids thought it was hilarious and asked if I could do it again so they could video tape it, send it to "Funny Home Videos" and make some money from it.

My most treasured and loved blow torches would have to be the vertical stationary engine torches since they are very hard to find and usually expensive. I have only seven consisting of a Primus, an Imbert (a French make), a Companion and a Sievert. The Sievert is a most unusual upright torch since it is heated up by another attached blow torch that runs off the fuel in the tank. After you pressurize the fuel tank, you open the tiny butterfly valve which releases the atomized fuel, and when lit it heats up the main burner head. The Sievert is a model no. 5162, →→→→ and has a 1¼ capacity..... when it's fired up it ROARS! I bought the Sievert at a market for \$85.00 and it is the only one of two that I have ever seen, the other sold on the Internet for \$650.00. The other upright torch, the Imbert, was designed and used for the pre-heating of kerosene or diesel fuelled tractors. The Imbert runs on Shellite or petrol, but if you use Shellite it generates terrific heat and a clear blue flame. And like the Sievert, it roars and would be the loudest torch I have.



I would like to also mention our other passion and that would be our four historic cars we own, naturally enjoying old tools would lead onto other related old items. Well you have to have a matching car to put in the Primus camping stoves, don't you? We bought a 1958 Morris Minor about three years ago as we have always loved old cars. This one is a four door, is pale blue, and did not take a lot of work to get on the road. We joined the Morris Minor Car Club of Victoria and soon realized the benefits of being involved in a car club. You are the first to learn of other Minors for sale, and as a result we now have restored a 1949 two door Morris Minor (copper red), a 1960 Ute (metallic dark green) and have a 1956 panel van under restoration.



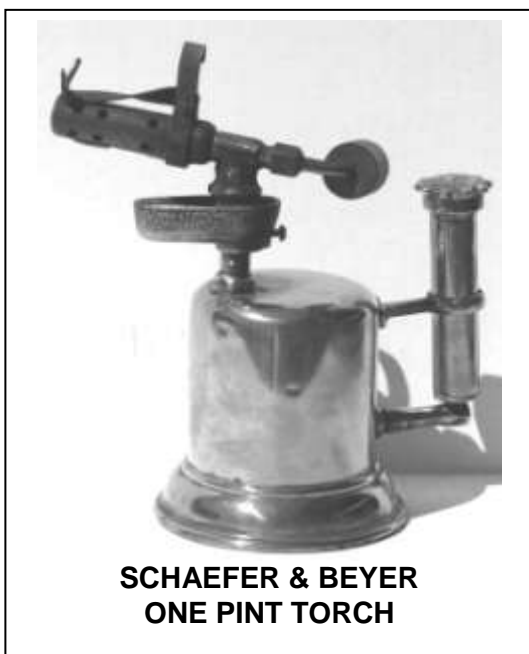
Schaefer & Beyer

By Graham Stubbs

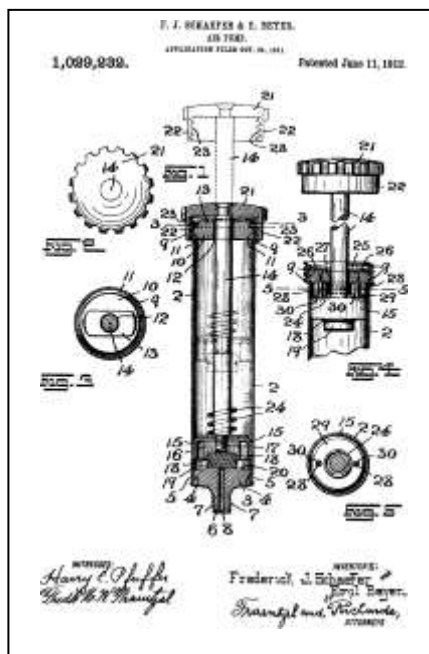
The distinctive convex pump knob with its ten lobes is the feature most often used to recognize blowtorches made by the Schaefer & Beyer Mfg Co. The torch shown here is the first reported with the company name marked on the pump knob, and the patent date abbreviated to JUNE 11, '12. Usually just the company name appears on a Schaefer & Beyer torch, stamped on the fuel tank between the handle supports, or it will have been on a paper label (frequently long gone). The wooden control valve knob, shown in the photograph, is not original to the torch.



Schaefer & Beyer was located in Newark, NJ, the same city as the Otto Bernz Co., and manufactured blowtorches that have features very similar to those seen in Bernz torches of the same vintage. The fuel tank of this one-pint torch is virtually identical to that on a Bernz No. 2. The method of securing the handle supports to the fuel tank, and the threaded connection of the bottom-end of the pump into the lower support are also very similar to the practice in early Bernz torches. One very small, but noticeable difference is that the Schaefer & Beyer torches have the pump/handle slanted slightly towards the burner, whereas with the Bernz torches the handle is parallel to the axis of the tank. Schaefer & Beyer also provided a sheet metal soldering iron support, distinctly different than that patented by Bernz (See *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*, page 47). The exact relationship between the two companies is still unknown. I'm indebted to **Dr. Charles Smith** for comparing this model with those in his own collection.



**SCHAEFER & BEYER
ONE PINT TORCH**



Do any BTCA members have Schaefer & Beyer torches marked with a patent number? If you do own one, please contact the editor or the author.



HOT TOPIC

William Kerns is all fired up about his blow torch collection. Excerpts from the Winchester Star newspaper article regarding William Kerns.

William Kerns was about nine years old when his father, the late John H. Kerns, showed him how to use a gasoline-fired blow torch and asked William to help him in his work. His father worked as a plumber, painter, and tinner, someone who installed tin roofs or galvanized gutters and spouts around the roof's edge. According to William, *"that was my first experience with a blow torch. My dad would take me to work with him in the summer, and I would do what I could to help him. I don't remember him ever putting a hot soldering iron in my hand, but he would keep me busy keeping his soldering irons hot while he soldered. Dad used to let me fill the torches and light them until they generated a hot blue flame."* William started his torch collection approximately 25 years ago while visiting a flea market in Harrisonburg where he found his first blow torch. *"It brought back memories of years ago when my father was in business and I was a child. Dad had a couple of torches, so I decided that I had to have one of them."* William has all of his blow torches and soldering irons displayed throughout his home in Winchester where he has lived for the past 56 years. He devotes a lot of hours disassembling, cleaning, repairing, and buffing just about every torch and iron. William would like to hear from other torch collectors...please give him a call at 540-662-2794.



GEORGE WORTHINGTON CO.

Another supplier/distributor of torches, previously unknown to the authors of *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*, has surfaced.

The George Worthington Co. of Cleveland, Ohio, at one time, was one of the nation's leading hardware wholesalers and industrial distributors. It began in 1829 when the then 16-year-old George Worthington moved from New York to Cleveland. Noting the lack of proper tools being used in building the Ohio and Erie Canal, Worthington returned to New York, purchased picks, shovels, and other implements, and shipped them to Cleveland. When the supply quickly sold, Worthington doubled his money and opened his first hardware store. The advent of the railroad and the Civil War stimulated the company's growth, and by 1868 Worthington built a new store and warehouse. By 1870 the firm began issuing yearly catalogs, and it incorporated in 1887. With a sales territory extending through 10 Northeastern and Midwestern states by 1920, Worthington discontinued its retail business and devoted the firm's resources to the wholesale trade.

This brass one-quart torch, stamped atop the fuel tank "THE GEO. WORTHINGTON CO. CLEVELAND" resembles the Montgomery Ward Lakeside Model no. 5228, with its distinctive cast iron valve knob, which appeared in a 1928 M-W catalog. Presumably the same original manufacturer supplied the same model to both M-W and Worthington. The actual maker is as yet unidentified; however both Diener and Wall used a similar pump knob.



After World War II, the introduction of discount department stores throughout the country adversely affected the small hardware stores that Worthington serviced, and in 1960 the company became a charter member of the Sentry Hardware Corp., a national affiliation of hardware wholesalers. In 1979 Worthington had 35,000 items in its catalog. In 1991 the company ceased to exist, after 162 years in business.



MY TORCH TRAILER

By Al Austin

Ever since I started collecting blow torches, I've wanted to have some means of leaving my torches set up, rather than continually unpacking and packing them into boxes every time I attended a show or convention. And, I could never remember what torch was in each box. I had the opportunity a few years ago to attend a fair in Ohio and saw the torch display trailer that **Leroy & Nancy Goodwin** had brought to the fair for display. Seeing their torch trailer put the thought in my mind that one day I would have a similar setup.

Early this spring a good friend decided to sell his covered 20 ft trailer. The price was right, and it was a good fit for what I needed....so I decided to purchase the trailer. The trailer has tandem axles with all electric brakes, a full canvas cover with roll-up sides, interior lights, a 750 watt generator for the interior lights, and an aluminum tool box.

My first showing of the "TORCH TRAILER" was at a tractor show in Elma, Washington in August 2008, and I had only one week to prepare for the show. I constructed a wooden 8 foot long rack or table that looks similar to a picnic table, a high center display area, and two lower side display areas. I use the area under the rack for storage trays where I can safely store the smaller torches, books, soldering irons, and other assorted items. For my first show in Elma, I was able to display approximately 100 torches on the display rack. Since then, I have already started a second phase for additional display areas since there's at least another 8 feet available for a second display rack. Until I construct the second torch display rack, I'll use the area to continue to transport my small antique Oliver tractor that I display inside the trailer, and I occasionally ride it in parades.



Since most blow torches utilize a bottom fill hole with a filler plug that has a hole cast into it...I utilize the hole in the plug to securely fasten each torch to the rack adapting a bent ¼ inch bolt. Now all the larger torches are permanently secured onto the rack with no unpacking or packing! When I arrive at the show, all I have to do is park the trailer, roll up the side canvas curtains...and it's SHOWTIME! I do unpack some of the smaller items, but overall, it's now a lot easier and less time consuming.

I hope one day to display my torch trailer at one of the BTCA conventions so all can see my handiwork.



11TH ANNUAL BTCA CONVENTION

Thanks to the wonderful hospitality and generosity of **Wendel Fritz** and **his family**, we enjoyed the 11th Annual on September 13th in Joppa, Maryland. Wendel closed his operation to the public for the day and hosted the event at his Fritz Farm & Nursery facility nestled in the beautiful rolling hills just north of Baltimore. The 60+ acre facility was an awesome setting for the event, and Wendel "ordered" the perfect weather. Because of the time of the year for his nursery operation, Wendel had an empty hot house filled with eight foot-long tables that were just right for torch displays. (In the photo from left to right) **Connie Soja**, **Wendel**, **Susan Davis**, and **Bob Fritz** spent the early morning getting everything ready for the members and their torch displays by covering all of the display tables with white paper. They also arranged the front room of the hot house with refreshments and snacks for the morning arrivals. By 9AM, most everyone had arrived and set up their displays.



We were most pleased to have **Leroy and Nancy Goodwin** in attendance since they brought along their torch ←← display trailer. It must be quite a sight to be passing their trailer on the road and seeing their torches displayed behind Plexiglas on each side of the trailer! Included in Leroy's torch display was a never seen before Star Welding & Eng. Co. five gallon two nozzle paint burner. We'll be adding the new manufacturer and photo to the upcoming *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* supplement.

Ron, Tracey, and their young daughter **Marissa** drove down from the Syracuse, New York area and brought numerous rare and one-of-a-kind torches. We believe that Ron is grooming Marissa to be the youngest blow torch collector in the world! Included in Ron's display was an 1888 Dangler Paint Burner, an 1888 ML Hull torch, and a Wellington torch patented in 1883. Ron also displayed an Everhot flame spreader, a never seen before Hauck Co. no. 10 brass one-quart torch, and the first sighting of a Turner Brass Works RF soldering iron torch.

Graham Stubbs purchased a Jim Dandy torch display rack...the type that you would expect to find on the counter of a hardware or supply store. The rack was in very poor condition and it only included one Jim Dandy torch. After a bit of restoration work on the rack, he was able to put it back into a reasonable display condition. He next started acquiring all of the needed Jim Dandy torches to fill up the rack and was successful in filling in each of the empty spaces. The photo shows the fruits of his labor.



Bob Thompson included in his display a Scovill "IMP" torch that had an original soldering iron holder attachment stamped with SCOVILL...an item that has never been seen →→ before.

Bob also displayed a torch made by the PERFECT TORCH CO. of New York...a never seen before manufacturer and another new name to add to a future book supplement. The Perfect torch has a Geo. Diener style knob, a six-sided pump handle support piece, and a cast brass drip cup. One can assume that the torch was manufactured by the Geo. Diener Co. and brand labeled for the Perfect Torch Co.



George Murray displayed a somewhat rare Brand-It Corp self-heated soldering iron with ←← the RED HOT brand. He also had a Wall torch with a most unusual cast iron burner head.

Larry Fields and **Pat Hauser** also attended, and it is interesting to note that they have attended every one of the 11 Annual BTCA events! Thank you both for your great attendance to our functions!

Wendel Fritz displayed a rare Clayton & Lambert No. 5 one-quart torch with two burners. This is the first sighting of this torch and will also be added to the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* supplement.

The group took a break around noon and adjourned to a large patio adjacent to Wendel's home for lunch. His residence was a short walk from the display building. His family had prepared an incredible large array of food, and it was a feast fit for a KING!

Because Wendel has such a large family of children and grand children, he had the patio sized to fit them all for various family events....so there was plenty of room for all of the attendees.



After we all stuffed ourselves on delicious food and desert, **Ron Carr** got up and thanked everyone for attending the event. He presented a plaque to Wendel that was signed by all of the attendees as a thank you to him for hosting and funding the entire event. There was room in the center of the plaque for a group photo of the BTCA members in attendance that was later sent to Wendel. Also, as a parting memento all BTCA members received a photo frame that would hold their attendance photo and would be sent to them at a later date. Ron introduced Contributing Editor **Graham Stubbs** who gave a short presentation on the occasionally ignored small alcohol torches. We all collect them but not much interest is given to that class of torches. Ron then introduced Contributing Editor **Charles Smith**. Charles talked about his recent experience with MAGIC FLUID, and then distributed print outs of his list of less expensive and more readily available materials for a modified recipe. Also included were suggestions and helpful hints for the cleaning process. (See related article on Charles' modified recipe and comments.)

As a finale, Charles passed out boxes of JIGGERS, an antique soldering kit that requires no blow torch or soldering iron to make a simple soldered joint with two wires. (See related article on JIGGERS.)

Ron thanked everyone for attending, and after many attendees made one more pass at the desert table, all returned to the torch display building. Things started to break up by late afternoon, and after saying our many goodbyes...we all departed for home.



ATTENDEES:

**Larry Fields & Pat Hauser
Leroy & Nancy Goodwin
Ron, Tracey, & Marissa Johnson
George W. Murray III
Dick & Lynn Sarpolus
Bob & Margie Thompson
Gerald & Annette Watson**

**Ron & Janet Carr
Wendel Fritz
Bob Fritz
Susan Davis
Connie Soja
Charles Smith
Graham Stubbs**



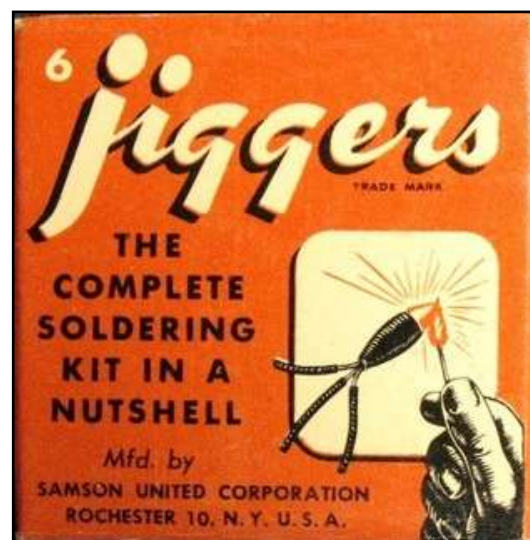
JIGGERS

JIGGERS was a 1950's product, made by the Samson United Corp. of Rochester, New York, and was associated with the US automotive industry and sold in automotive stores. Using one of the JIGGERS has to be one of the fastest ways to make a small solder joint! Each box contained six JIGGERS, and all you had to do was pinch off the top of one of the small torpedo-shaped JIGGERS, insert the two wires and light the top.

We suspect that the combustible material on the surface of the JIGGER is similar to the same material used in sparklers. Each JIGGER consists of a hollow torpedo-shaped tube made from solder with a small amount of rosin inside. The outside is coated with the combustible material.

We actually tried one from the package that Charles passed out at the BTCA convention. After the two wires were inserted, it took less than 5 seconds to solder the joint after it was ignited.

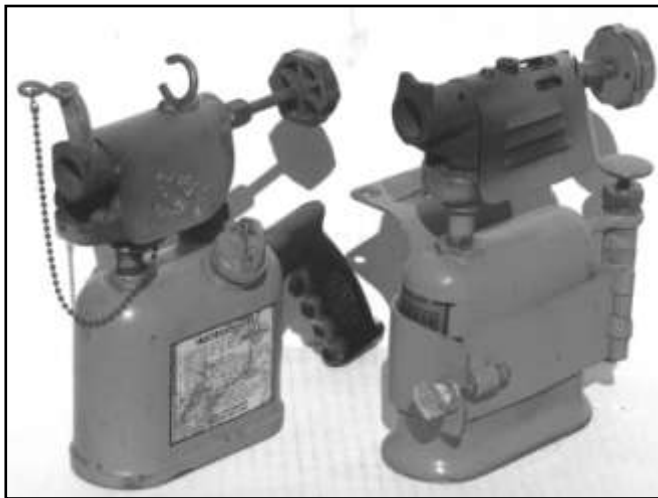
What's really interesting is that boxes of JIGGERS are still readily available on many websites on the Internet. Prices vary, but some are sold for as low as one dollar...considering the original price was 35 cents in the 1950's, that's a real bargain.



Yellow Blowtorches

It's not uncommon to come across blowtorches with factory-applied paint, most commonly red. The two auto-style torches shown here were both painted bright yellow from day one, as evidenced by the paint showing through scratches in the applied labels. Auto torches, with their compact flat shape, were often sold for use with vehicle tool kits.

What kind of application would merit the bright yellow color of these two torches, one from Wall Mfg. Co. and the other from Turner Brass Works? Considering vehicles and/or machinery that sometimes were painted yellow, two possibilities in particular come to mind, fire trucks and heavy industrial machinery such as earth-movers.



The Turner torch has a wind-shield ↑ similar to that on the T-18B ↑ shown on page 427 of *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*, which would date it to the 1950s or 1960s. It also has what appears to be a factory-supplied mounting bracket with a quick-release, a feature that would facilitate mounting to a vehicle or machinery.

The Wall torch has the "Pistogrip" handle seen on the Wall Model 331 from c1956 (*"Vintage Blowtorches"* page 473). Its design appears to be the same as the Model T608 torch shown on page 474, including a transverse slot near the end of the burner nozzle. Stamped on the side of the burner is the number 608/U. With the obvious exception of the position of the attachment of the fuel tube to the tank, this torch also closely resembles the Forestry Service torch shown on page 475, →→ which, attached by a chain, has a thin "blade" which fits into the transverse slot.



After air was pumped into the fuel tank, the "blade" was inserted into the slot closing off the end of the nozzle, and then the needle valve was opened a little, forcing fuel to drip into the drip cup.

BTCA Contributing Editor Charles Smith says that on the East Texas farm where he grew up, he remembers using the palm of his hand to close off the nozzle when filling the drip cup.



Also in common with the Forestry Service torch are instructions for use, applied to the side of the fuel tank. Close examination reveals that there are in fact two labels, one superimposed on the other, with each having enough loss of material to reveal part of what was underneath. The label underneath, with a yellow background, includes the words "WALL" and "GROVE", presumably from Wall Mfg. Co., Grove City, PA. The wording appears to be identical to that on the Forestry Service torch. Covering the Wall label is another set of

instructions with a white background but with not quite enough letters intact to identify the company or location.

Have other readers of "The Torch" come across any examples of torches factory-painted in bright yellow and/or the reason for the choice of color? Can anyone identify the corporation whose partial name is on the label of the Wall torch?



ANOTHER Unknown Torch

We need your help. **Charles Smith** acquired a very unique looking torch that has no identification. Many of the torch features are similar to other known manufacturers; however, we have no idea who manufactured this particular one. The fuel tank has a capacity of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pint, or 355ml.



The cast burner tube ↑↑↑ has four internal "ribs" or "struts" running parallel to its length, a feature that has not been seen before. The pump knob is cast with "PAT APP FOR", and after checking our patents, we could not identify the torch. Perhaps one of our members has a similar torch...especially with the "ribs" inside the burner tube. Please contact us if you have such an unusual torch in your collection.



Charles Smith saw the following article in a recent Tuscaloosa newspaper. A good example of how NOT to use a blowtorch!

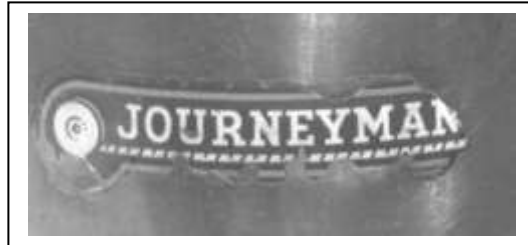
MAN SETS FIRE TO HOUSE USING TORCH ON COBWEBS

Sargent, GA Would-be-cleaners take note: A blow torch is not a good substitute for a broom. Coweta County authorities said Galen Winchell set fire to his West Georgia home Wednesday as he cleaned cobwebs from the exterior eaves with a blow torch. Winchell noticed the blaze when he saw smoke pouring from the attic. Coweta Fire Investigator James Gantt says the fire was contained to one part of the house, but the entire home had smoke and water damage. No one was hurt.

“Journeyman” Blowtorch

At first glance this brass top-filled blowtorch appears to be the Otto Bernz No. 200 model circa 1936, as illustrated in *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*, page 66. However, there are two reasons to believe that it was made by the Bernz Co. to be private labeled. The remains of a label placed across the front of the tank below the burner says “JOURNEYMAN”, which is not a brand name known to have been used by Bernz.

Additionally, the pump knob has nothing stamped in the area where Bernz customarily placed their model numbers. (See *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES*, page 49.)



Mathias Klein & Sons, a known supplier of blow torches, currently uses the brand name JOURNEYMAN on a variety of tools, but an inquiry to the company revealed that Klein has used the name only since the year 2001. So if not a Klein product, then who was the company selling blowtorches with the JOURNEYMAN brand? Does any reader of “The Torch” have a blowtorch with the same brand name and additional markings that would help reveal the answer?



MAGIC FLUID, REVISITED...AGAIN

By Dr. Charles Smith

One of my earliest decisions when I started collecting blow torches was that I would not clean or polish any torch. I therefore do not own any buffing or other mechanical equipment relating to polishing. Over time I did acquire several partly cleaned or polished torches, and after reading an article written by **Dr. George Schumann** about MAGIC FLUID in *THE TORCH* newsletter, issue no. 22, I decided to try my hand at torch restoration utilizing the fluid.

I tried to locate 28% to 30% ammonium hydroxide at blueprint companies...but no luck. I tried to find the oleic acid at pharmacies...but no luck. I was finally successful in locating the needed chemicals through Fisher Scientific. After receiving the chemicals, I followed the recipe instructions, mixed the solution, and proceeded to clean a few torches. Great results!

When I ordered the chemicals, I found that they were rather expensive. I knew that ammonium hydroxide is NH₃ gas dissolved in water, and that household ammonia is the same thing...just a reduced concentration. So...I mixed a solution of MAGIC FLUID using household ammonia and found that it worked just as well as the original recipe of MAGIC FLUID!

Here are some of my helpful tips if you decide to try MAGIC FLUID:

- Be sure to use gloves and eye protection.
- The oleic acid **MUST** be mixed into the water first.
- I see no reason for the "CURING" period. I found that it can be used immediately.
- Item(s) to be cleaned **MUST BE TOTALLY SUBMERGED**.
- I have a variety of plastic containers into which I fit the object to be cleaned. No need to use a large volume of MAGIC FLUID on a small burner. So, I first "match" the object to the container and then pour sufficient fluid to cover.
- For small pieces (burners, caps, etc) I use a small diameter wire to secure the pieces and submerge them in a plastic container with MAGIC FLUID.
- When cleaning a fuel tank, I fill the tank with alcohol to facilitate sinking, seal all openings with cork, then submerge in MAGIC FLUID. As an alternative to the alcohol, just use a brick or any other weight to keep the tank submerged.
- Do not let wood, Bakelite, or wick material contact MAGIC FLUID.
- Place fuel tanks in appropriate sized plastic containers with a tight lid.
- Check cleaning progress every 45 minutes to 1 hour. Flush item(s) with water, return to solution if needed.
- For heavily blackened burners and other heavily coated items, they may need 2-3 hours longer.
- When item(s) are clean, thoroughly flush with water...I use my outside hose.
- Use a scrub pad and liquid soap to further clean item(s).
- Be sure to drain the alcohol from the fuel tanks for later use.
- Final process is to let the item(s) dry, then burnish with 0000 steel wool.
- You will be **AMAZED AT THE RESULTS!**

ORIGINAL RECIPE

For ¾ Gallon of Solution

Oleic Acid: 2 – 500 ml bottles = \$40.55	4 oz. = \$4.79
Detergent: Dawn 38 oz. = \$3.99	4 oz. = \$0.42
Acetone: Home Depot 1 gal. = \$15.48	2 oz. = \$0.24
Ammonium Hydroxide: 28% 2 – 500 ml bottles = \$53.55	8 oz. = \$12.69
Water: 96 oz.	96 oz. = \$0.00
TOTAL	\$18.14

MODIFIED RECIPE

For ¾ Gallon of Solution

Oleic Acid: 2 – 1 GALLON (128 OZ.) = \$32.17	4 oz. = \$1.01
Detergent: Dawn 38 oz. = \$3.99	4 oz. = \$0.42
Acetone: Home Depot 1 gal. = \$15.48	2 oz. = \$0.24
Ammonium Hydroxide: common household ammonia	88 oz. = \$1.38
Water: 16 oz.	16 oz. = \$0.00
TOTAL	\$3.05

ORIGINAL SOLUTION

	For ¾ gallon	For 1 gallon	For 1.5 gallon
28% Ammonium Hydroxide	1 cup	1 1/3 cup	2 cups
Oleic Acid	½ cup	2/3 cup	1 cup
Detergent	½ cup	2/3 cup	1 cup
Acetone	¼ cup	1/3 cup	½ cup
Water	12 cups	16 cups	24 cups
	2.625%	2.625%	2.625%

MODIFIED SOLUTION

	For ¾ gallon	For 1 gallon	For 1.5 gallon
Household Ammonia	11 cups	15.3 cups	24 cups
Oleic Acid	½ cup	2/3 cup	1 cup
Detergent	½ cup	2/3 cup	1 cup
Acetone	¼ cup	1/3 cup	½ cup
Water	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups
	24/23%	4.42%	4.61%



12TH ANNUAL BTCA CONVENTION

Wendel Fritz and family have volunteered to host the 12th Annual BTCA event in 2009 again at the Fritz Farm & Nursery in Joppa, Maryland. We've chosen Saturday, September 12th for the gathering. You now have plenty of advanced notice, so, mark your calendars and plan on attending. Bring you favorite and rare torches, there's plenty of room for displays, and who knows...with the "experts" on hand, you may find out that you have a one-of-a-kind rare torch!

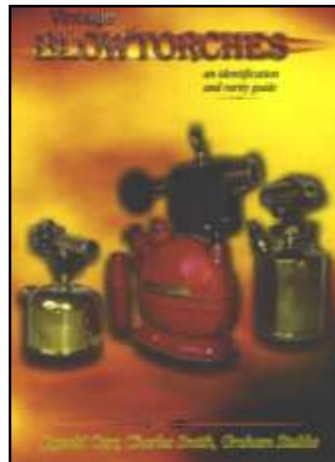


Since there are so many BTCA members within a short drive from Joppa, we hope that, with the sufficient notice, we'll see many more new faces in September, 2009.



BOOK OFFER

There are a few BTCA the *VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES* book. This is your last chance to purchase book that is serialized and has original sold out, this style book will not be on eBay for \$49.95 and \$6.95 for members can purchase direct for only \$21 shipping for Canada, \$33 shipping Australia. If interested, send a check address to 6908 April Wind Avenue, pay via PayPal for a small processing



members that have not yet purchased that was published by BTCA in 2007. the one-of-a-kind blow torch reference autographs of the three authors. Once offered again. The book is being sold shipping to any US location. BTCA \$45 and \$4 for shipping for the US, for Europe, and \$35 shipping for or money order payable to BTCA and Las Vegas, NV 89131. You can also fee.

ROSIN HOLDERS

While rosin holders are certainly not blow torches....not even close to a blow torch, however, they do relate to blow torches and were most probably a very important piece of equipment to the trades people that utilized torches.

Charles Smith has two such rosin holders in his collection, and recently found literature that described what he has...up until then he had no idea what they were or how they were used. Charles found the information in a 2001 *Encyclopedia of Antique Tools & Machinery* publication. The caption next to the rosin holder illustration reads; *grease, rosin, and flour were all necessary in the soldering process of assembling the joints of lead pipe. These combination brass boxes were made in at least three different sizes.* Each is made from brass and is six inches long and two inches in diameter. The central opening is 1¾ inches in diameter.

Only one of his rosin holders is stamped OTTO BERNZ CO. NEWARK NJ, so it is possible that other manufacturers produced the same type product. We would be interested to hear if any other members own rosin holders.



PLEASE NOTE...some BTCA members will be receiving dunning dues notices with this publication. We suspect that, since the dues notices were sent out so early and enclosed with the June 2008 newsletter, many forgot or simply misplaced the notice. We'll revert back to sending out the dues notices separately in 2009 during October as we have done in the past. Just as a reminder, we publish *THE TORCH* three times per year....March, June, and December.

THE TORCH

Official publication of the Blow Torch Collectors Association is published three times per year; March, June, & December.

Editor
Contributing Editor
Contributing Editor

Ronald M. Carr
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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