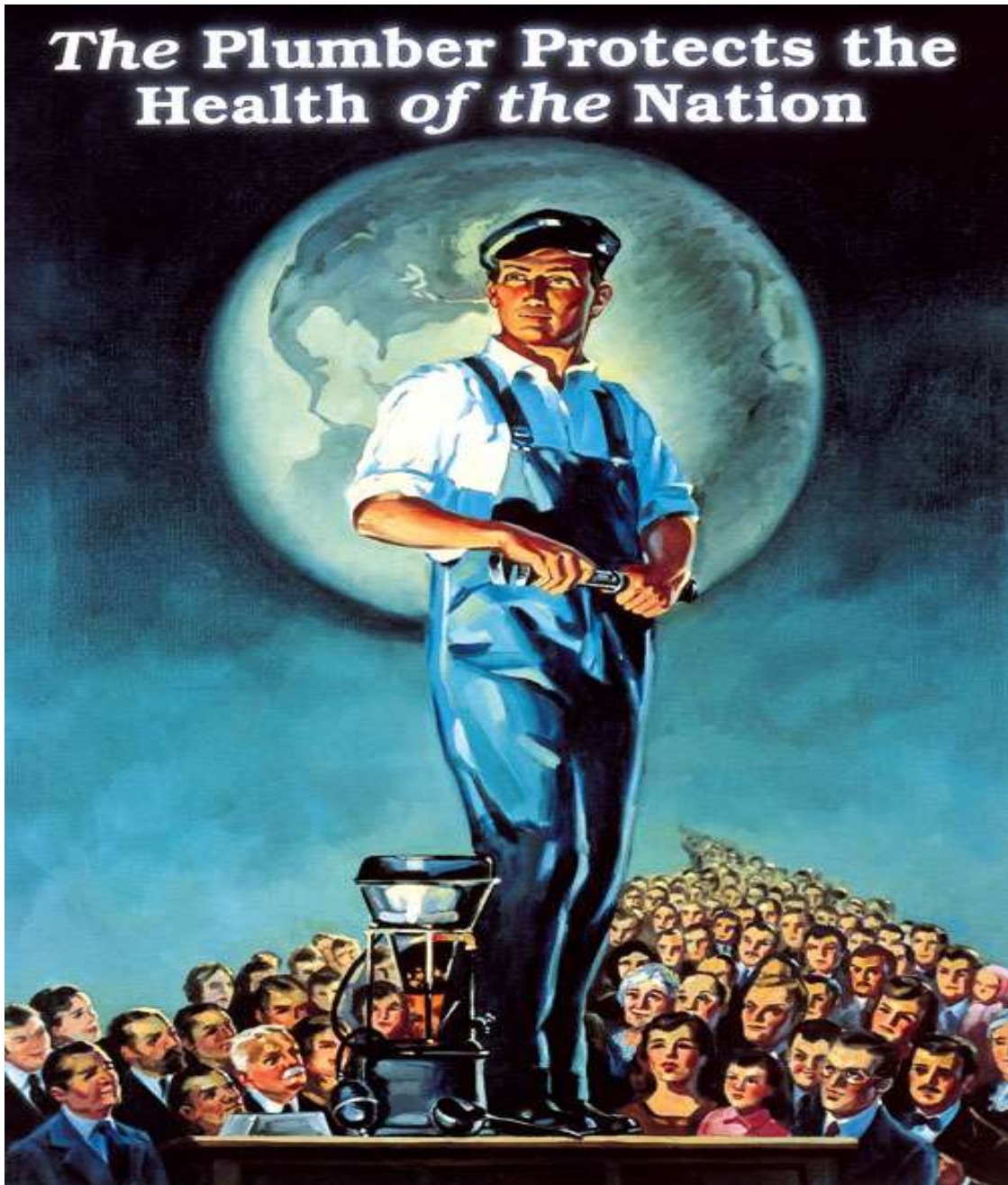


THE TORCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLOW TORCH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

Issue #60

December 2014



A 1926 National Association of Master Plumbers poster, see page 14 for the complete story.

NEW MEMBERS

William Craft of Slidell, Louisiana

John Fauke of Carlyle, Illinois has been collecting torches for thirty years. His collection started when he inherited some tools, including one blow torch, from his wife's grandfather. The torch would end up in various locations in the house for years. *"I finally polished it and was amazed at how bright the copper and brass could be! I would come across a torch now and then at flea markets and garage sales, but my collection really took off when I discovered eBay! I used to polish or paint all that I acquired, but now I just leave them as found."* John also has a sizable soldering iron collection.

Paul Harris of Newborough, Victoria, Australia is relatively new to blow torch collecting. *"As a young boy I used a blow torch for making sinkers for fishing. I have always admired the effective simplicity of the torch and now I am in the position to collect them. I also have a love for restoring things and I hope to research each torch so I can understand them better."* Paul also collects ancient Roman coins and restores them for research purposes.

Bud Lowrie of Stockton, Missouri

Allan Meadows of Fredericktown, Ohio

Domonic Radmer of Waukesha, Wisconsin

David Wilmoth of Claremore, Oklahoma started his torch collection early last year when he purchased a torch at a flea market. *"After I returned home with my torch, I did some research and learned how to fire it up. I've been hooked ever since! Half of my collection is polished; if they are really dirty and grimy, I polish them. If they are somewhat clean with a nice patina, then I leave them as is. I have not publically displayed any torches yet, but there is an antique engine and tractor show in town every year, and I may take a few torches to display at the next meet."* David also collects carbide lamps.

WELCOME ABOARD!



TED'S CORNER

BTCA member **Ted Maire** is an avid torch collector, but also an experienced restoration expert. Ted's restoration tips provide helpful suggestions to those many members that do restoration work on blow torches and other similar items. We always welcome feedback and would like to hear from members regarding these restoration tips...please let us know what you think. Have a restoration problem, contact us and let Ted provide a solution.

RESHAPING TORCH PARTS

There have been many instances where I purchased a torch and the muzzle end of the burner was either bent in or somehow pressed into an oval shape. I have also purchased many Bernz torches with a brass wind shield (guard) that was very misshapen. These Shields are very thin and soft and tend to get beat up.



To reshape some of these parts, I use sockets from a mechanics socket wrench set. Tapered sockets or sockets with shoulders work the best for reshaping the hole at the end of the burner. Find a socket where the small end fits into the hole and the shoulder is wider than the diameter that the hole should be. Tap the socket in using a rubber faced hammer. The socket will usually push the burner back into shape. Eventually, the tapered portion of the socket will come into contact with every part of the inner surface of the end of the burner. At this point the muzzle end of the burner is perfectly round. I use a rubber hammer because it is a bit gentler and makes it easier to control the process. This is not about muscling it back into shape; it is about easing it back into shape. Brass and bronze can be brittle at times and a sudden smash could easily split it. If the burner is really smashed in, you may have to use two different size sockets. Start with a smaller one and work up to one that is the correct size.



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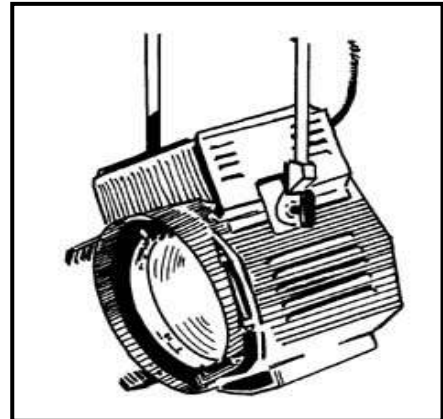


Sockets that have straight sides work well for reshaping wind shields. Find a socket that has the same diameter as the inside of the desired finished wind shield. Push the socket inside the shield and use it as an anvil. Use a rubber hammer to gently hammer it back into shape. Do not use a metal hammer since it will make little flat spots on the surface that are not very attractive. The wider the surface of the hammer head, the better the results. Keep hammering (gently) until you are happy with the shape of the shield. I have also used smaller sockets to remove dents in pump cylinders. Just find a socket that fits perfectly inside the cylinder and tap it down to the desired shape.



IN THE ~~SPOT~~ TORCH LIGHT

This is the eighth in a series of personal interviews with various BTCA members. This interview was conducted via phone calls and emails between **Graham Stubbs** and **Ron Carr**.



Graham and his lovely wife **Stephanie** reside in Poway, California. Poway lies just north of San Diego; originally an unincorporated community in San Diego County, Poway officially became a city on December 1, 1980 with a current population of approximately 50,000.

Graham was born in the town of Hitchin, thirty miles north of London, England, and came to US in 1967. He was recruited by the Jerrold Corp, then the biggest supplier of equipment for the CATV industry, to work in Hatboro, PA, thirty miles north of Philadelphia. Joining Graham in 1967 was Stephanie and their two daughters, ages 18 months and 3 years. One more daughter was born in Doylestown, PA in 1973.

Rachael, the oldest is a physician in Salt Lake City; Lindsay is a stay at home mother in Poway; Joanne, the youngest is a PhD researcher at the University of Chicago.

In 1976 Graham was recruited by a competitor, Oak Industries near Chicago as Vice President of Engineering. In 1979 Oak Industries moved their operations to San Diego and the Stubbs family moved, again. During Graham's working career, he was awarded ten US patents for various microwave technologies. Graham became an independent patent consultant in 1986 and retired in 2010.

TT: How did you get started collecting blow torches?

GS: The collecting thing for me must have started with philately. There are two postage stamp albums that I collected as a child, and they are still in my bookcase. I inherited some of my grandfather's tools, and when we lived in Pennsylvania, I was inspired to display several of them in our living room. Comments from visitors led to the realization that others were interested in things like old wood planes; the consequence was that I started to collect old wood working tools.



Discovering the existence of books on this hobby only accelerated my collecting. During trips to various flea markets and antique shops, while looking for wood working tools, I noticed brass blow torches.

TT: Is that where you purchased your first blow torch?

GS: It was during the 1940s that as a young boy I would watch, fascinated, as my dad worked the air pump to keep his blow lamp going with that unmistakable whooshing sound. That was my earliest memory of a blow lamp. Years later, I inherited some of my late father-in-law's old tools and included was a blackened old brass blow lamp just like the one my dad used many years earlier. That was my first blow lamp. (Editor's note: remember, British blow torches are referred to as blow lamps.)



TT: Did you restore the blow torch?

GS: On the desk of a co-worker there appeared one day a polished blow torch, adapted to form the base of an electric lamp. Impressed with how shiny and beautiful it looked, I went home and restored my old blow lamp. That was the beginning of this facet of my tool collection.

TT: How many torches and torch related items to you have in your collection?

GS: My collection now exceeds five hundred pieces ranging in size from tiny jewelers' lamps to industrial-sized torches that are capable of holding a gallon or more of fuel. The earliest example in the collection carries a patent date of 1867, and one of the most unusual ones came from a factory in Slovakia where torches are still manufactured. My most treasured one is a Wellington patent model, an example submitted by an inventor in 1886 that was stored at the US Patent Office shortly after submittal. It is the only such blow torch model known to exist.

TT: Is the Wellington patent model a functioning blow torch?

GS: No, it is not a functioning torch, but it is nearly complete, as seen on the right. The inventor, Henry Wellington, submitted a full size fuel tank, but did not include the fuel line, drip cup, and burner assembly.

TT: Were there no other blow torch models submitted to the US Patent Office?

GS: When a patent model was submitted with a patent and if the patent was issued to the inventor, then, in the upper left corner of the front page of the patent in parentheses was stamped the word (model) indicating that a model was submitted with the patent. After reviewing all of the blow torch patents we have accumulated, we found no other patent that was issued with a model submitted.



TT: Do you have any other unusual items that you collect?

GS: Yes, I have some specialty tools, or sub-collections of hand tools. One collection is of buck saws, or bow saws that were made from wood with a metal saw blade and an adjustment device on the top. I actually wrote a lengthy article on buck saws for the CRONICLE, a publication for the Early American Industries Association.

I also collect sumitsubo, literally an ink-pot. It is a traditional, very ornamental Japanese layout tool. It works much like a standard chalk line except that it uses ink in place of the chalk and the line is made of silk. You can see the silk line in front of the sumitsubo shown on the right. There is a wire-shaped hand crank on the side that reels in the silk line.



In East Asia, an ink line is used in preference to a chalk line. Alongside the line reel is a cavity filled with ink-soaked cotton fibers, which the line is drawn through as it is unreeled. These sumitsubo are highly decorated and much-prized by their owners. As with many such tools, they are often made by their users while apprentices. On the completion of a major building, such as a temple, a large celebration is held. As part of this event, a set of symbolic carpenter's tools are freshly made and presented to the new building. A sumitsubo is a traditional tool included with them.



I also have a large collection of a farrier's tool called a butteris. It has a sharp blade on the right side and a wooden handle on the other end that allowed the farrier to use shoulder pressure to trim a horse's hoof before adding the horseshoe. You can see a very small horseshoe that the craftsman placed on the left side just under the wood handle. Almost all were made by blacksmiths.

TT: We know that you also collect autograph books, how did that collection get started?

GS: While browsing in an antique shop in San Diego, I could not find any wood working tools or blow torches, but I came across a little autograph book. I noticed that there were names, dates, and places listed in the book...the type of data one can use to research a person's history. Since I had been interested in my family history and had done some genealogy work, I thought I would go check out someone else's history. I discovered some interesting stories of the individuals and decided to continue with more autograph books. It is amazing the information that you can uncover about individuals that lived many years ago and have long passed. I also found that you can purchase autograph books on eBay which is a lot faster than perusing through antique shops. The autograph book shown below has signatures dating back to 1878. The book belonged to Lydia Gardiner, a young girl in Washington, D-C. Professor Gardiner, Lydia's father, was a prolific inventor whose invention lit the inside of the Capitol dome with gaslight. Professor Gardiner was present in the front row of Ford's theater when Lincoln was assassinated in 1865.

TT: We are also aware that you are writing a book about autograph books. What got you into writing?

GS: About ten years ago, while talking to my neighbor, he mentioned that he participated in a local writer's club. I have always been interested in writing and thought that I needed a bit of motivation, so I attended one of their meetings. I started by writing about my own family history, like my grandmother who was actually born in a jail...so stories like that. As I did further research on the "autograph people", I started writing articles about them. I realized that after accumulating a large number of these stories I had enough information to write a book about them.

TT: When will we see the final version of your book?

GS: It has been a work in progress for quite some time, but I am hopeful that I will complete it sometime next year and self-publish it. I actually have a sufficient number of autograph stories to publish two books, so the first book will cover individuals from the US Civil War time period.



TT: You have been very active with BTCA for many years, how did your association with the organization start?

GS: I read an article in SHAVINGS, a newsletter of the Early American Industries Association in June 1995. The article was written by **Ron Carr** and he was looking for other blow torch collectors to exchange information. I wrote a letter to Ron expressing an interest in collaborating with him, and I also sent him some torch literature that I had collected along with a few names of torch collectors that I knew. That was the start of a long relationship with BTCA.

TT: You were part of the team that produced the blow torch reference books. What kick-started the process?

GS: One of Ron's primary goals was the accumulation and dissemination of information about torches and related tools, and about the companies that made them. **Mark Pederson** was a generous source of old catalog material and lists of patents. Like Mark, Ron had a particular interest in torch related patents, and spent many hours in libraries accumulating patent copies. Looking back now, it seems that a comprehensive book was inevitable since the files on the manufacturers grew exponentially.



Union Heater Paint Burner, Circa 1895

TT: We know that **Dr. Charles Smith** was the researcher that provided much of the historical information. Where was his source of data?

GS: Using the same university library resources that he consulted professionally, Charles, a research paleontologist, using these same library resources, was able to obtain very early trade journals from the late 1800s. The trade journals printed numerous advertisements for blowtorches and plumbers' firepots. Starting in 2003, Charles systematically reviewed every issue of the periodicals, and surfaced a large quantity of advertising material related to torches.

TT: What was the timing for the first book?

GS: In 2005 the three would-be authors agreed that it was time to get serious about creating an authoritative book on American blow torches. Listings of torches from several large manufacturers had now appeared in the newsletter, the files were bursting with information not yet disseminated to BTCA members, and Charles had the results of two years of diligent research on hand. We dusted off Ron's preliminary outline, and an agreement was reached on the approach to the book and an outline.

TT: How did you three decide who was going to do what?

A list of manufacturers was assembled, combining the list, which had been published from time to time in "The Torch", together with a list of makers that had been separately identified by Charles. Assignments for the writing of introductions for the various manufacturers were agreed on by the three authors. Assignments were also made to obtain photographs from BTCA members, of torches for which no illustrations were present in the files. The composite list of manufacturers was broadened to identify which of the three authors had agreed to do what, and the current status.



From left to right: Globe Gas Light Co., Boston, Quick Meal, circa 1906, Everhot, 1930s, Elaborate Handmade torch

TT: How did it all come together for the final book?

GS: At the beginning of January 2006 I prepared a draft of the listing of makers beginning with the letter “A”, and submitted it to Ron and Charles for review. In addition to validating the content and checking the grammar, the purpose of this first batch of twenty pages was to get agreement on issues such as layout, font selection and size, and grammatical style.

With agreement on the approach, I continued almost full time to compile the listing, working letter by letter. In mid September 2006, the first draft of the entire listing A through Z was completed, covering 457 pages. Additions, including the index made during early 2007 brought the total page count to 506. At the end of February 2007, the book was turned over to the printer for production of four hundred copies.

TT: How did all of the four hundred books get autographed by each of the authors?

GS: In order to promote advanced sales of the book, an incentive was offered that each copy would be signed by all three authors. The Las Vegas printer delivered separately all the book covers, which were circulated and signed by Charles in Alabama, Graham in California, and Ron in Las Vegas.

TT: How successful was the book?

GS: Very successful. We sold the first printing of four hundred books and are on our second printing. We also have since authored the second reference book, MORE VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES that was also self-published in 2010.

TT: Any final comments or observations?

GS: I am pleased that so many blow torch collectors were able to make contact twenty years ago. Ultimately hundreds of torch collectors were assembled to create BTCA. I really enjoyed the collaboration with Ron Carr and Charles Smith to produce the two blow torch reference books. I believe that the two reference books will provide continued value to people for many years. It has been a great ride!



EARLY AUTO TORCHES, PART 3

By Ted Maire

This is the last, in a three-part series, of a compilation of information and photos of this unique style of American blow torches, the Auto Torch.

VARIATIONS

In my search to find the various models of early auto torches I collect, I would discover a torch that was not exactly like the one pictured in the BTCA publications. A good example would be the C&L 48S mentioned earlier. It has the feed tube placed all the way forward just like its mate, the 48D. All the components are the same on this 48S as they are on the 48D except for the burner. The catalog pictures of 48S torches have the burner set back from the front of the torch and they look exactly like the earlier 48 models. It makes more sense to me that the 48S and 48D should be the same except for the burner and the stamped model number on the upper support. It seems that whenever I find a model I am looking for, it very often will differ from the previously documented version. These differences could be minor or extreme.

Typically, variations are due to changes made to a model over time. These early torches were around for a long time and it is understandable that models such as the Bernz models 5 & 6 underwent significant changes over their lifetime. These Bernz models were manufactured prior to 1910 and up until the mid to late 1930's. The variations in these torches give us a clear picture of the evolution of the early auto torch. The Bernz torches can be used as an example to measure the timeframe and length of time other manufacturers produced this style of auto torch.



The pictures above represent Bernz model 6 torches from three different periods of manufacture. The torch on the left is from around 1913, the one in the middle is from approximately 1920, and the torch on the far right is from the mid to late 1930s. There are two major indicators of when these torches were manufactured. The first is the control knob which progresses from wood, to coiled wire wrapped iron, and then to Bakelite. The second is the soldering iron hooks. The first torch has a clamp style steel detachable soldering iron accessory. The second has a soldering iron hook cast into the burner. The latest version to the extreme right has a detachable bronze hook screwed into the rear of the burner. Along with these differences, there are many others; all the burners are different, there are two different styles of tanks, two different lower pump supports, two different pump cylinders, two different style drip cups, and the list goes on.

It would seem that you could use all this information and come up with some conclusion or rule. I once thought that all the earliest Bernz auto torches had wood control knobs and I felt quite comfortable with that. I then purchased the BTCA publications *Vintage Blowtorches* and *More Vintage Blowtorches*. On page 18 of *More Vintage Blowtorches* I saw a catalog ad from 1907 for two Bernz auto torches. They were early versions of the models 5 and 6. These torches had a 6 lobed control knob just like Ashton and C&L torches. A few years later I found the torch shown on the right which is an excellent example of these pre-1910 auto torches. Had I not seen it in the book, I would have thought it was a torch made up of some Bernz and some C&L parts.



Smaller manufacturers such as the Schaefer & Beyer Co. have significantly

fewer variations. Their production life was much shorter and there was less time and opportunity for change. An indicator of this is that I have only seen Schaefer & Beyer torches with the wood control knobs and "L" shaped control arms. I have also only seen variations in two of their components. As mentioned earlier, the pump knob was either a standard ten lobed type or the Bernz type screw down version. There were two types of tanks, the plain sided and the one with the embossed diamond pattern. It would seem that there are possibly four different versions out there. Each of the tank types could have either a standard or Bernz style pump knob. For me, I'm not interested in finding one of each. I am happy just having torches that demonstrate each unique part.

Every once in a while a very unusual auto torch will pop up. The picture above left is a very early Ashton model 18. I purchased this torch on the Internet and could only tell that it was painted white and looked like a typical Ashton model 18. After I received it, I began to strip the paint off and discovered the control knob, which I thought was wood, was actually brass. Other features were dramatically different from my other models 17 and 18. The tank is taller, the pump assembly is significantly more ornate and taller, the burner is longer, and the soldering iron hook is placed much further back. At first I thought the brass control knob may have been a replacement but both parts are threaded. The control arm is threaded for a larger distance than I have ever seen before to accommodate this specific knob. There are no markings on this torch yet it is obvious from the style and components that it is an Ashton model 18. There is also no patent information on the pump cap which leads me to the conclusion that this is either a very early Ashton or a prototype.

It was a common practice for major torch manufacturers to produce a product line for large retailers such as Sears, Montgomery Ward, Shapleigh, Hibbard Spencer Bartlett, etc. In most cases, these torches resembled the manufacturer's torches but there were significant differences. Almost always, the retailers label was added and there were no references on the torch to the original manufacturer. These torches can sometimes be confused as variations of the original manufacturer's product line.



In earlier torches, the distinction between the original manufacturer and the retailer is not so clear. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether a torch should be categorized by the original manufacturer or the retailer. I recently purchased a very rusted and corroded Turner-White model 16 (pictured on the left after some cleanup). It appeared to me that the pump cap and knob were not correct. I purchased it anyway thinking it could be just a minor variation. When I removed the rust from the coiled steel and iron control knob, I saw lettering. The letters were on each spoke of the iron hub and spelled out "PROUTY" (see picture on the right).

I had never heard of Prouty and thought they may have supplied control knobs to Turner-White. After doing some research I discovered that Prouty was a hardware manufacturer



and retailer in the early 1900s. They were located in Illinois in close proximity to White and Turner. They specialized in farm hardware such as barn door locks, hinges, and rollers. All their items were constructed of cast iron. The Prouty Hardware Company was in business from 1901 until 1912 when it was bought out and became Allith-Prouty. Since Prouty may not have sold blowtorches as part of their product line, I'm not sure why this model 16 has "Prouty" embossed on the control knob. My best guess is that Prouty special ordered these torches for their own manufacturing use and actually provided the control knobs to Turner-White for assembly. The knobs are lettered exactly like other Prouty items and the knob itself is distinctly different from other White and Turner-White knobs. In the picture below, the Prouty knob is on the left and a standard type model 16 knob is on the right.



The label photo on the right is on a “Turner-White HOT BLAST auto torch that retains the original soldered on brass label. What is so unusual about this label is that there is a letter “S” clearly stamped on the extreme right hand section of the label, just after the word “BLAST”. I can only guess that the “S” signifies a special order. The history of this particular torch is unclear to me. It would take a lot of research and I’m sure there will be many dead ends. I find it interesting, however, that what appeared to be insignificant differences at first, turned out to be quite a mystery.



SUMMARY

I started out looking for less than 25 early auto torches to fill my collection. I soon found out that there were many unlisted models and many significant variations. I rarely found the exact example I was looking for. Instead, I found a more interesting variety of torches that told a story. The early auto torch is a microcosm of the larger universe of torches. The same models were produced by the same manufacturers for decades. As the country changed so did the torch industry, and so did the auto torch. The variations in a specific model tell us approximately when production began and when it ended. It also tells us approximately how long a specific model was manufactured. This becomes obvious when you look at the broad amount of variations in the Bernz models 5 & 6 and compare it with the Schaefer & Beyer model with variations in only two components. Bernz used four different control knob styles over the years whereas Schaefer & Beyer used only the wood version. There are reasons for all variations. It is up to us to attempt to discover the rationale and history behind the change.

In this article I have given many opinions and made many assumptions. There is no doubt in my mind that probably most, if not all, may be proven untrue. I find my opinions changing all the time. My conclusions are at best, temporary. With each new torch, there is new information that either validates what I previously thought or disputes it.

Collecting torches is very different from other collections. Production statistics for stamps, coins, automobiles, etc. are readily available. If I owned a 1958 Corvette that had its original silver paint and heavy duty racing suspension, I would be able to find out that 9,168 model year 1958 Corvettes were produced. Of the 9,168, only 193 were painted silver and of that same 9,168, only 144 had a heavy duty racing suspension. I would indeed know that I had a very rare and valuable car. The same is not true of blowtorches. If there were statistics maintained by the manufacturers, they are long gone. We must depend on catalogs, trade journals, and information provided by other collectors. We can only make educated guesses about scarcity and some of the reasoning behind the manufacturing of specific torches.

I encourage all members to participate in an exchange of information. My universe has gotten significantly larger since the publication of the two BTCA reference books and meeting other BTCA members. I was always working from my experience alone. I knew what I had seen before and if something popped up that I had never seen before, I assumed it was rare. This was sometimes true, but not always the case. Collectors are our best resource. I will never be able to collect an example of every different type of early auto torch manufactured. I do, however, know that there are many that I have never seen in the hands of other collectors. I encourage you all to share your collection with others.

I would like to thank **Rose**, my best friend and wife of 45 years, for her encouragement and support. Even though she thinks all auto torches look the same, I still love her. I would also like to thank **Charles Smith** for his assistance with the creation of this article and his ongoing sharing of information.



THE PLUMBER PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF THE NATION

By Graham Stubbs

In 1918, as World War One drew to a close, the ranks of the heroic returning doughboys included hundreds of thousands of young men from rural America who had never enjoyed indoor plumbing until beckoned by Uncle Sam. They were not going to be content with outhouses anymore!

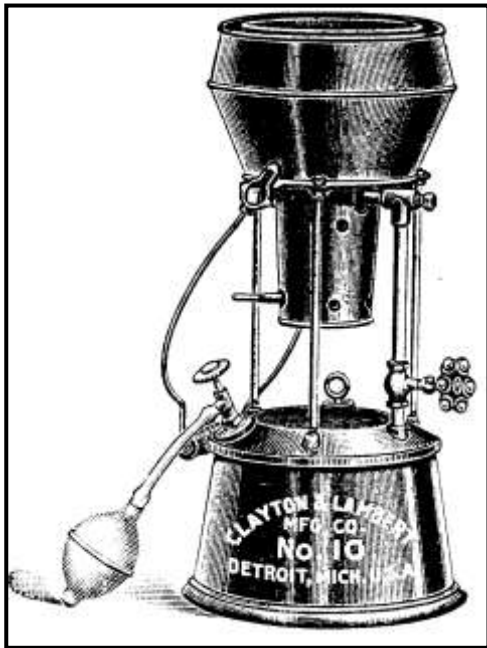
The Plumbing Industry responded with a series of clever trade advertisements exhorting contractors toward renovation work, promising:

“When peace prevails, America will be the most sanitary nation in the world.”

One of the most famous advertising posters was “The Plumber Protects the Health of the Nation”, introduced by the Standard Sanitary Manufacturing Company (later America Standard Plumbing). The poster shown below depicts a young plumber standing in front of a globe, holding a wrench, and with his firepot and the hot-lead-ladle by his side.



For the Convention of the National Association of Master Plumbers (NAMP), held in St. Louis in 1926, the company issued promotional bronze reproductions of the figure in the poster as shown above right. The statuettes, with the figure standing atop the world, stand seven inches high and weigh about three pounds.



The plumber's firepot closely resembles the Clayton & Lambert No. 10, shown in catalogs from the early 1900s, down to the details of the rubber bulb pump, and the shut-off valve where the pipe from the pump attaches to the fuel tank. The illustration above on the left is from a Clayton & Lambert 1909 catalog and is also in VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, page 116. The photo shown above right is a close up of the base of the statuette showing the details of the firepot. The statuette was purchased on the Internet a few years ago for around thirty dollars.



10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

A special thank you goes out to the following six members that joined BTCA ten years ago! Many thanks for your long term support of our organization!

**Jack Crooks T. Malcolm Foster Martin French
Leslie Lee Jimmie Mays Gerald Watson**

15 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

We congratulate the following eighteen members that joined BTCA in its fourth year. Many thanks for your long term dedication to our organization!

**Phillip Bartlett Howard DeRosa John Dorffeld Clarence Goldberg
Leroy Goodwin Clyde Halsey Tom Holder Allan Houghton
Donald Huntington Jim Janke Lee Miller Bob Scheiderman
Hilton Shackley Tom Smith Mel Stoddard Andy Stratton
Vicky Wood-Teeters Dave Weaver**

BLOW TORCH COLLECTOR'S GET-TOGETHER

By Dick Sarpolus

Wendel Fritz, his wife **Katie**, and their children **Bob**, **Connie**, and **Susan** hosted a torch collector's get-together on September 20th at the Fritz Farm and Nursery, in Joppa, Maryland. The Wendel's clan provided and served all of the food and refreshments. Wendel also provided ample space for all of the torch displays in one of his greenhouses. Those attending the event included:

Larry and Pat Fields Jerry and Maddie Godin Leroy and Nancy Goodwin
Mike Gratz Ted Maire George Murray
Dick and Lynn Sarpolus Charles Smith Bob and Margaret Thompson

Wendel had requested that attendees bring any Hauck torches since Wendel has a sizable collection of Haucks. In addition to Wendel's Hauck display, he also showcased all kinds of farm implements throughout the facility, including his restored tractor. **Jerry Godin's** display stands were made by modifying stands meant to display and sell music CDs. The Goodwin's traveled from Ohio with their blow torch display trailer. All of their torches are displayed in the trailer on outside facing shelves and protected from the elements with clear plastic. **Leroy Goodwin** brought one of his hand made black powder cannons, shown in the photo at right. He makes the patterns, pours the castings, machines the parts, makes the wooden mounts, and other assorted parts. He honored the group by firing his cannon twice....it was very very loud! **Dick** and **Lynn Sarpolus** drove down from New Jersey in their Corvette, it replaced the '57 Chevy hot rod that they had for many years. **Ted Maire** displayed his early style of auto torches. His process of cleaning, repairing, and polishing his blowtorches is first class! **Mike Gratz** brought several of his custom made patent torches that have been featured in past newsletter articles. He does amazing work with brass and bronze, and his machining capabilities are very professional.



RON'S VACATION FIND

While in Arizona on a recent vacation, I can across an incredible blow torch lamp. Janet & I traveled from Sedona to Prescott for a day of shopping and found the lamp for sale in the Ian Russell art gallery in Prescott. It was on sale for \$1,950! The artist, Larry Trainer, creates unusual lamps from vintage tools and other assorted implements. Most all of his creations are in the \$1,500 - \$2,000 range and seem to sell according to the gallery owner. You can view more of Larry Trainer's lamp creations on the Internet at IANRUSSELLART.COM, and then look for Larry Trainer under "browse by artist name".

The blow torch lamp on display has a light under the base that is controlled by the pump plunger, and the light under the dome is controlled by the fuel knob. Very first class! No, I did not purchase it!



MORE PATENTED SOLDERING IRONS

By Dave Pangrac

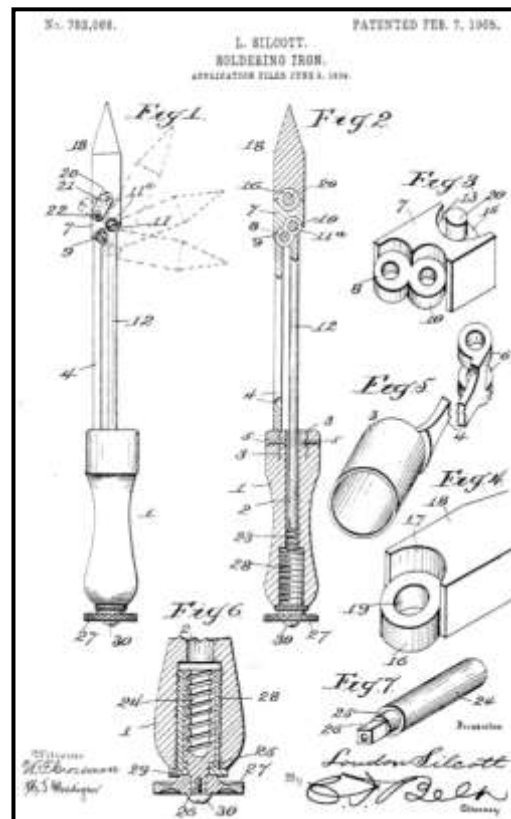
I am a relatively new member of BTCA, having joined sometime around March, 2014. I am a collector of early soldering equipment and tools, with a focus on all types of soldering irons. I recently discovered some articles written in THE TORCH, issues No. 50, 51, & 52, dealing with soldering irons. I really enjoyed them and thank the BTCA staff for writing them. I thought that I was the only person who collected irons. I estimate that have in the neighborhood of 350+ assorted irons. The irons I like the best are the ones that have adjustable or pivoting heads.

I am really appreciative of the listing of soldering iron patents that were posted in issue No. 51. That list enabled me to find the patents for a number of the irons I have.

The following are photos and descriptions of two of my patented soldering irons.

The first soldering iron is based on a US Patent No. 782,068, dated Feb. 7, 1905, and filed by Loudon Silcott. According to the patent listing; "this invention relates to soldering irons and particularly to the class of such irons having pivoted or adjustable soldering points controlled by a handle mechanism".

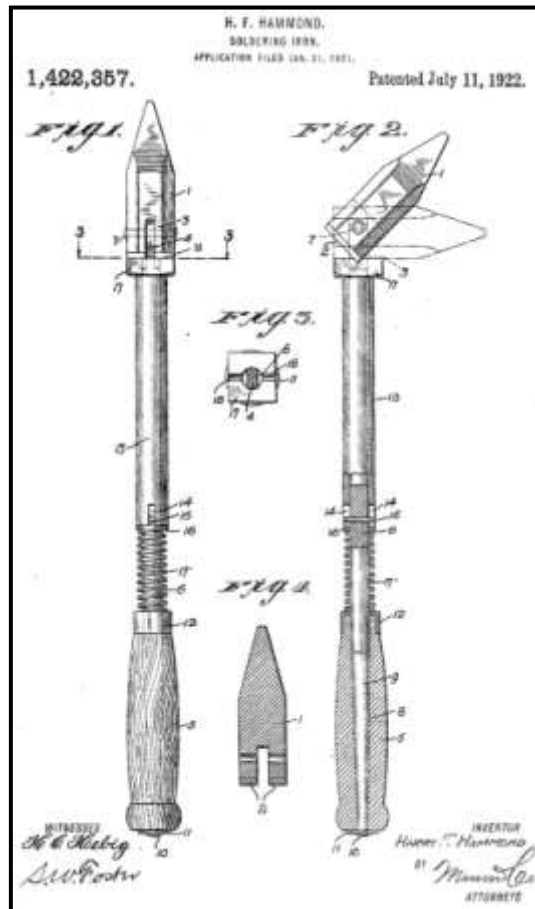
My soldering iron has a copper head that is attached to a head block that has two lugs. One lug is attached to the fixed shank and the second lug is attached to an adjusting rod. That rod is threaded at the bottom and is moved up and down by an adjusting nut located at the bottom of the handle, which pivots the copper head from 0 to 90 degrees.



The second soldering iron is based on the US Patent No. 1,422,357, dated July 11, 1922, and filed by Harry Hammond. According to the patent listing; "this invention provides a soldering iron in which the iron is elastically secured in its different positions of adjustment so that it may be manually shifted from one position to the other and automatically held in any position of adjustment".

The soldering iron, with its head straight "in-line" with the shank, measures 15.25 inches in length. I would classify the copper head as a 1.75 lb size, that is, two heads would weigh 1.75 lbs.

The shank is composed of a circular rod that runs from the base of the handle, through the handle, and into the slot in the copper head... The top end of the rod is flattened into a rectangular shape. A hole is drilled in the center of the flattened area to allow for a pin to be located that holds on to the copper head,



A washer was placed at the base of the wood handle and over the protruding end

of the rod as shown in the photo at left. The end of the rod was then flattened to trap the washer so as to provide a greater surface bearing area to prevent the rod from being pulled through the handle.

At the ferrule end of the handle, a compression spring and then a flat washer were slipped over the rod. A small hole was drilled in the rod, about 5/8" above the top of the flat washer, and a pin was press fitted through the rod so that it extends about 1/8" on each side of the rod.

A tubular sleeve, 5 1/4" long, with a 3/4" square nut attached to the top, was constructed. (There is a "V" groove cut into the top of the square nut that provides a seat to hold the copper head at a 45 degree angle.) At the base of the sleeve, two - 3/4" long X 1/8" wide slots were cut 180 degrees apart. The slots in the sleeve allow the sleeve to seat on the flat washer that is on top of the spring. The function of the protruding pins extending thru the slots is to keep the sleeve from rotating on the shank rod.



To assemble the head to the shank, the sleeve is placed over the shank and pressed down, compressing the spring and allowing the flat part of the shank to be inserted into the head slot. A pin is then inserted thru one side of the slotted head, thru the hole on shank and then thru the hole in the head on the opposite side connecting the head to the shank. When the sleeve is released, the spring presses the square nut against the bottom of the head keeping it under pressure.



By pulling down on the sleeve and compressing the spring the head is freed up which allows it to be pivoted and locked in at a 45 degree angle or 90 degree angle. The angle can also be changed by holding the handle and pressing the head against a fixed surface overcoming the forces of the spring.



STANLEY EARLE PETERS BLOWTORCH PATENTS

By Graham Stubbs

What do these four blowtorches have in common?

1. They are all related to the two patents of inventor Stanley Earle Peters.
2. They all provide for rotating the position of the handle in relation to the burner.



Clockwise, starting at top left:

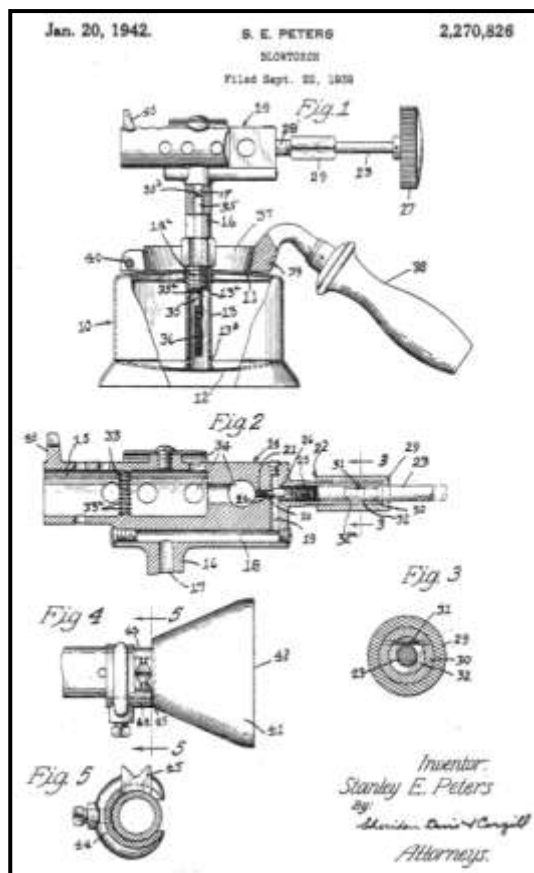
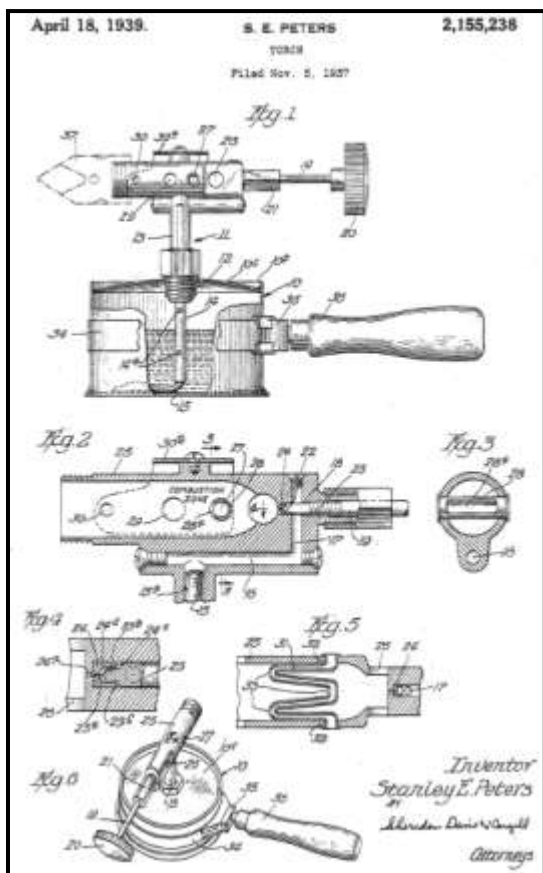
- A NATIONAL SAFETY No. 200 National Pumpless Blowtorch Co. of Cleveland, OH
(See VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 314. Also marketed as BAUMGARTH "PUMPLESS" No. 200, see VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 41)
- B. PETERS FOWLER "HI-HEET". Peters-Fowler Co. of Delevan, WI
(Middle size of three: see VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 326)
- C. SECURITY METAL PRODUCTS "FIRECRAFT". Security Metal Products, of Delevan, WI
(See VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 366. The clamp around the fuel tank is a patented item from the Wittek, Co. of Chicago).
- D. NATIONAL SAFETY No. 100. National Pumpless Blowtorch Co. of Cleveland, OH.
(See VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 314. Also marketed as BAUMGARTH "PUMPLESS" No. 100. See VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, p. 41. Shown with the No. 100A soldering copper attached, which also fits the FIRECRAFT torch.)

The inventor, Stanley Earle Peters, was born in Union, Wisconsin in 1888. In 1917, his WW1 draft registration lists him working as a machinist for the C.E. Barrett & Co. of Chicago (a fountain pen maker); also interesting...he had only one glass eye. In 1942, his WW2 draft registration states his employer as the Quality Hardware & Machinery Corp. of Chicago; this company made parts for M-1 rifles in WW2.

Two blow torch patents are recorded for Stanley Earle Peters.

US patent No. 2,155,238 is for a self-pressurized gasoline torch. The focus is primarily on transferring heat to the fuel chamber to maintain pressure, and for efficient burning of fuel in the nozzle. The drawings closely resemble the HI-HEET and FIRECRAFT torches.

US patent No. 2,270,826 is described as an improvement over the earlier Peters patent. The focus is on safety features, including a convex base to the fuel tank, and a stop to prevent the control valve from inadvertently being backed out of the burner and releasing fuel. The drawings show details of the National Safety Pumpless torches. The patent is assigned to Henry Baumgarth.



A third thing that all four torches have in common....

Claim number six of the US patent No. 2,155,238 states:

"A torch comprising a tank for liquid fuel, a head comprising a flame tube carried by the tank, ducts for conveying fuel from the tank to said tube, a valve for regulating the flow of fuel to said tube comprising a stem projecting beyond the lateral limits of the tank, and a handle for the tank adjustable circumferentially about the same and co-operable with the projecting portion of said valve stem and a marginal portion of the base of the tank to provide a three-point support for retaining the torch in a tilted position."

In the photograph at right, the handle is turned sideways in relation to the burner, and the torch is sitting with the burner pointing almost vertical.



I've seen dozens of these torches, and it had never before occurred to me that the point of swiveling the handle around was to allow for this hands-free operation! You live and learn!



☰ NOTES FROM ALL OVER ☰

We heard from **Dave Pangrac** regarding his soldering iron collection: *"I am a member of the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association (M-WTCA). In early October, 2014, M-WTCA held their national meeting in Rockford, Illinois. For these meetings members are encouraged to create displays that are either based on the theme of the meeting, (which for this meeting was "Machinist Tools"), or an "out of theme" subject. The displays are then judged based on the categories. I created a display in the "out of theme" category titled "Early Soldering Tools". My display, as shown on the right, was judged "Best of Show-Out of Theme."*



John Jaress was re-reading Ted Maire's article in the June issue of THE TORCH about American Stove auto torches. On page 14 while discussing the American stove models Ted states there is no corresponding canister-style model #39 to go with the model No. 40. See the photo at right of my American Stove model No. 39."



According to **Lloyd Weber**; "I started scrapping my torches that are very common and I will never restore. So far I have completed thirty. I break them down to yellow brass and red brass (bronze), steel and cast iron and discard all the nonmetals. Using a MAPP gas torch and "man strength", I can get them all apart. I think it works out to about \$5 a torch or less. That will get me down to about three hundred restored torches."

Graham Stubbs finished revising the index to all of the newsletters that have been issued up to June 2014. Email copies of the twenty-two page index are available for the asking. The index provides an easy search for any article or topic printed in THE TORCH.

As a result of his revision, he has uncovered some amazing statistics:

"Just the pages of the fifty-nine issues of THE TORCH newsletter alone, not including attachments, amount, by my count, to 731. Attached summaries of the major makers, Turner, Bernz, C&L, Wall etc. account for an additional 180 pages. The first 10 issues alone have another 100 pages of attachments of catalogs, patents etc. Other attachments, lists of members, makers, etc. amount to at least another 200 pages. The grand total of what has been compiled and distributed is in excess of 1200 pages!!"



2014 UK BLOWLAMP MEETING

By **Graham Stubbs**

In October 2014 I had the opportunity once again to participate in a meeting organized by the UK Blowlamp Society, for which I edit the newsletter, *BLOWLAMP NEWS*. Several collectors are members of both the American and British groups, and I enjoyed seeing again BTCA members **Keith Hawkins**, **Max Rhodes**, **Dave Thomas**, **John Tingle**, and **Marnik Van Insberghe** (from Belgium). The meeting was held in the Village Hall of Toddington, about thirty-five miles north of London, with thirteen active collectors participating.

Attendees typically come to trade and/or sell, and to examine displays of some of the most prized examples of blowlamps. Once again there were many outstanding lamps to gaze at!

At right are two blowlamps considered as among the most sought after by European collectors. At left is the six-liter Sievert HSL 4, in **Max Rhodes** collection, and the five-liter French F. J. VESTA Model D, brought to the meeting by **Keith Hawkins**.





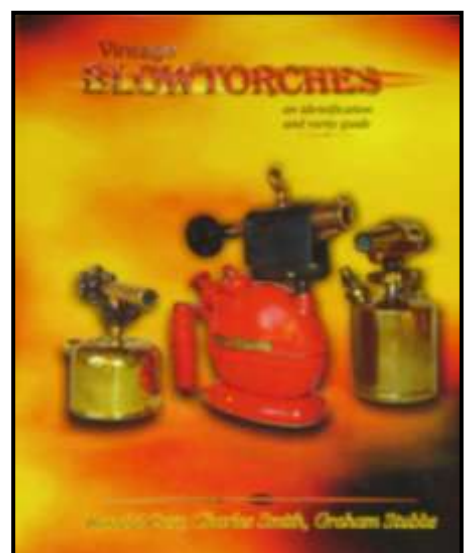
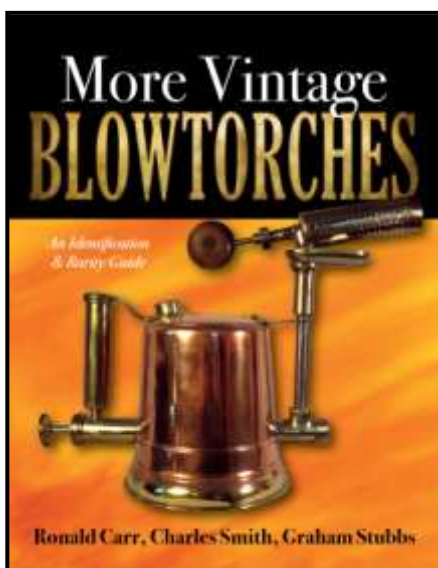
The photo above is one of the display tables, with a very fine selection from **Max Rhodes**.



2015 BTCA DUES NOTICES

You are probably wondering why you never received a BTCA dues notice for 2015. We have been working to a goal of putting future newsletters and other correspondence on an official BTCA website. The game plan was to have our website up and running sometime in early 2015, and since we were unsure of the timing, we decided that we would fund the printed newsletters until our website is live. We appreciate your past support, and as always, we welcome any contribution to help sustain our efforts.

We have noticed that many new members have purchased only one of the two reference books published by BTCA. This is a friendly reminder that there are two different reference books; the 513 page second printing of VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES, and the 334 page MORE VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES. You can order direct from BTCA, on eBay, or on Amazon.com.



CLASSIFIED ADS

Wanted: **Daniel Ormonde** is in need of replacement soldering iron hooks and small wooden handles. If any members are still making handles and hooks, please contact Daniel with your information.

For Sale: **Don Steininger** has decided to sell his entire collection. *"I'm in my late 70's and since none of my children are interested in continuing with my collection, I will liquidate it all."* Don has about four hundred torches, including firepots and soldering irons. He plans to piece out his collection next year, however, if interested you might contact him for a private sale.

Wanted: **Dave Pangrac** is interested in communicating with other BTCA members that collect soldering irons or soldering iron related items. See the attached member listing for Dave's info.

The photo at right is a restored tractor from **Wendel Fritz's** collection.



THE TORCH

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Editor
Contributing Editor

Ronald M. Carr
Graham Stubbs

THE PURPOSE of BTCA is to preserve the history of blow torches and related equipment, to encourage the identification, classification, and exhibiting of such equipment, also to promote the study and better understanding of operation, purpose, and application.

Membership in BTCA is open to any person sharing its interests and purposes. For membership information, write to: 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 BTCA at the above address.

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