

# *BLOWLAMP NEWS*

No. 38

OCTOBER

2001

Another "showing and buying" blowlamp season comes to a close but I doubt that any in the past have been as momentous as this year. First the interruption of so many shows resulting from the Foot and Mouth restrictions then the aftermath of the terrible events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

I happened to be in the U S A at that time, though fortunately as far West as we are East of New York. The effect on daily life was dramatic all across the States. Internal air travel was suspended, all Government buildings and other possible prominent targets were closed as were many tourist attractions. Large gatherings such as sports events were cancelled, and though daily routine largely continued, there was only one topic of conversation and one subject in newspapers and on the T V.

Most shops ran out of the National Flag which flew at half mast (or "half-staff" U S A style) for the first few days. It then appeared in truly enormous numbers on cars, trucks and wherever a space could be found for it to be flown in a massive upsurge of Nationalism. They were all so impressed and some in tears when the Guards played "the Stars and Stripes" in front of Buckingham Palace. It was certainly an experience to be there at that time.

## **Reports from the Shows**

Sheila Hawkins writes of their experiences during the Summer.

"The season went from Enfield Pageant of Motoring, May 25-36 to Power of the Past at Wantisden, September 28-30 with 8 others between. Milton Keynes' first Steam Rally was well supported by exhibitors but sadly not spectators so it will not be repeated. Keith then visited Wings, Wheels and Steam at Rougham Airfield where six of our collectors met. August saw us at Lingfield then Keith plus Tom Bartlett had a fantastic week-end at the Croydon Country Show in Selsdon Woods. There were thousands of visitors and some of our collectors. August Bank Holiday was spent at Earls Barton where the scarcity of visitors could have been blamed on the plague of flies from a neighbouring abandoned egg production plant. September took off with the rearranged Woodcote Rally in a stubble field. The exhibitors were reduced in number possibly because of the clash with the Great Dorset Steam Fair. But spectators appeared to be happy to have a local steam fair to visit. The following weekend we were at the superbly organised Barleylands Rally. Here there is always plenty of action, the site is immaculate and the organisers visit every stand to thank exhibitors for supporting the show. Following this was Old Warden for the Bedford Club's excellent event with the abbreviated season ending two weeks later.

This year the featured display was Plumbers Furnaces together with lamps from 25 countries. Our new exhibits were from Tunisia and Brazil. Now the hunt is on for next season to find lamps from Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Argentina, Korea or Japan or the Phillipines. We both look forward to the start of the 2002 season in June".

Thanks for that summary Sheila.

Steam Rallies and shows, such as Sheila has mentioned, are a good way for members to meet. This is why I appeal for exhibitors to let me know their programmes as early in the year as possible so I can include them in B/N. I usually divide the entries into two sessions so people don't forget them!

## **The Great Dorset Steam Fair**

I did not exhibit there this year but merely administered the Collections Area so I missed seeing a number of friends who usually meet up there. However our three representatives Taff, Toon and Sheila Cleaver saw pretty well all of them. I recall John Wheeler, Tom Morris, Ray and Val Gubb John Tingle and Peter Gold, Ken Longden ( driving his Formula 1 electric buggy) Dave and Jenny Nichols and I must have seen others whose names escape me at the moment. Keith did not get there as Honiton Hill was cancelled and I also missed out on (though they were probably there at some time) our Canadian friend Alf Clark, Dave Thomas, Hilton Shackley and Jerry, and ace photographer Tom Bartlett. Tom's absence probably saved my meagre supply of pork pies!

The collections area was restricted to 34 exhibitors this year and whereas I asked for two lanes of 500 yards I was allocated four lanes of 200 yards, so it was fortunate that several regulars did not turn up.

It seems to be a feature of a number of shows that the collectors are regarded as of second class. We were starved of official sign posts and all our own were lost in a road accident involving one of my helpers on his way to the show. As there was no time to replace them many visitors did not find the Vintage Collections, and I know Taff was understandably displeased with the number of the public seeing his display. Especially as he was last year's cup winner and featured in a colour photograph in the Show Programme ! ( A first for blowlamps at the G D S F)

So was it only coincidence that the organisers put up the price of the programmes this year?

Apart from those problems and one or two heavy downpours the Show as always was very enjoyable.

### **Enfield Pageant of Motoring**

A reminder from Seymour Moss that the 2002 Enfield Pageant of Motoring is on June 1-2-3 and entries may be obtained from The EDVVS Whitewebbs Museum of Transport, Whitewebbs Road Enfield EN2 9HW. Phone 020 8357 1890 or FAX 8363 1904 Seymour will also be able to give you more information. His post and telephone details are in our list and he also has an email address:- seymour@moss40.freemove.co.uk

### **Aldham Olde Tyme Rallye & Fayre**

Rob Starling, who each year organises the Aldham Rallye near Colchester, says that as blowlamps have not been represented there in the past, he would be willing to set aside a site for a group to exhibit. This offer might be the means of arranging a regional meeting in that area, where a good number of our members live within a short drive. The show is well established in its 26<sup>th</sup> year and is held early in June, last year being on June 9-10. Anyone willing to rise to the challenge of organising such a meeting? Rob Starling will give all the details about the show when the final plans are confirmed. His address and phone number are on our list.

### **The ABTCA Fourth Annual Convention**

Held this year at Brooks in Oregon State and hosted by Mark Pedersen and Maurice Jernstedt we met in an aura of Industrial Archaeology. A large museum with a big collection of steam traction engines and tractors among many other interesting items made an excellent venue for this most popular event

As usual the company was great - they are all good hosts- and very many interesting torches were on display. I recall in one of the earliest Newsletters someone asking how many different lamps there were and I enthusiastically filled one A 4 sheet with my contribution. The result of visiting both the Belgium meeting and the U S A Conventions convinces me that we shall probably never know the full total world-wide. Anyone contemplating writing a comprehensive book in the future must be prepared either to use a loose-leaf binding or accept many later amendments. Though the American lamps may lack the size and form of some of the German and French lamps with their impressive serpentine preheat tubing the numbers, variety, ingenious designs and applications there are certainly notable. I made a number of exchanges and my only fear was that the luggage searches and restrictions might have meant leaving them behind but apart from raised eyebrows at the X-ray machines there was no problem. They were more concerned about a novelty corkscrew I was bringing back

Unfortunately there were some absentees due to the internal flight cancellations following Sept 11<sup>th</sup> but Larry Fields somehow made his way from North Carolina nearly on the East coast. Not many of *our* members travel a couple of thousand or more miles to a blowlamp meeting!

### **Mouscron 2002**

The date of this reunion I am told will be Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup> 2002. More details later but make a note now.

### **Bletchingley 2002**

Regretfully Gina and I, living as we do 250 miles away, feel we must stop at some time so 2002 will be that time. Andy Feast, who is almost a resident, is planning to take over the arrangements and will let me have further information in time for the next B/N. But we shall be there.

### **Decals**

Or transfer copies of logos. On show at the A B T C A Convention this year was a selection of transfers of a number of American blowtorch manufacturers. These are identical with the originals and complete the restoration of display lamps. They are available from Bill Bennett of 1122 Center Street Fayetteville NC 28306 phone 910-323-4385 and are reasonably priced at a few dollars. I am expecting an up-to-date list of what is available and will publish this in the next B/N

## Techniques at Brocantes

Sheila Hawkins, happily recovering from her illness and subsequent unpleasant after-treatment, gives some advice on buying blowlamps in France.

"The bible for hunters is "La Vie Du Collectionner". It is published late on Thursday so can be found on the newsagents shelves on Friday morning. This newspaper as well as having excellent articles on different collections has a calendar of Flea markets in every Department in France. Usually the listings are for two weeks in advance. If you like a more glossy magazine the "Antiquities et Brocante" which has ten editions per year also has a calendar of events in France and Belgium but costs Ffr 30 compared with Ffr 12 for "La Vie". When buying I will usually make an offer 25% below the asking price and expect to receive a 20% reduction. I always give myself a mental kick if my offer is accepted with alacrity. Some traders will not budge on price then it is up to you the collector to decide whether you want the item enough to pay the asking price."

Many thanks Sheila.

Personally if I have a difficult haggle I usually walk away and ask Gina to go back and try her luck. It usually works! So perhaps there is a moral there somewhere about cultivating the "blowlamp widows" - (Mavis et al) - if only to make use of their prowess at negotiating!!

## Toon's purchases at GDSF

Toon found two unusual lamps at Stourpaine

1. An ordinary looking 1 pint paraffin with the Trademark "SWISSCO" stamped on the side of the tank. All who saw it agreed that they had not come across it before. The filler cap had a rectangular blade on the top with "Original" on one side and "Oil Cap" on the other together with the letters N F enclosed within a flattened diamond surround. The air release was also embossed with "Original" on one side and "Airmail" on the other. I've drawn all these items to see if anyone has any comments or can identify the lamp. My guess is that it is Australian but that the air release is from an Airmail and is not an original fitting to this lamp. Can anyone help? I remember that John Clarke lost his Airmail at one of our Bletchingly meetings so John can you remember if yours had a similarly marked air release? Or alternatively Andy do you among your vast Aussie collection have anything like this? Needless to say there were a few green eyes among the viewers.

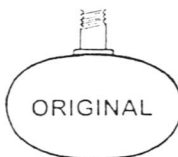
2. A "Gem" brazing lamp the logo and filler cap of which I have also drawn. It is huge. The tank measures 42cm high and 31cm across. The overall height is 56cm and the flexible tube 135cm long with a hand set of 80cm. Taff assured us it was used for brazing ships' propellers and expressed disappointment that he had not seen it first. I indeed helped the previous owner unload it from his truck so I know it's weight. It was not to my taste so I left it there.

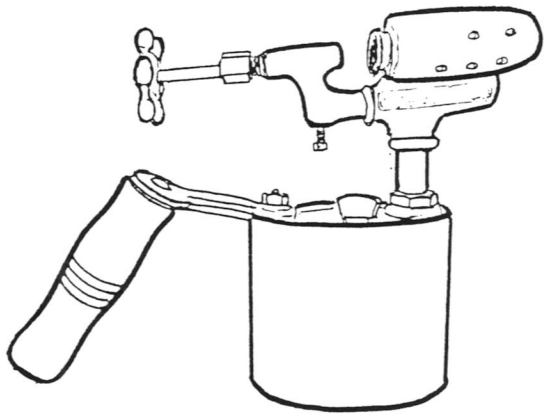
Again anyone have any further information about it?

ORIGINAL

SWISSCO

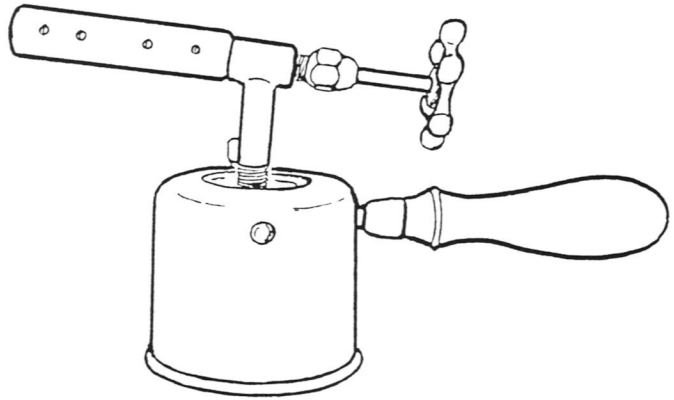
TRADE MARK



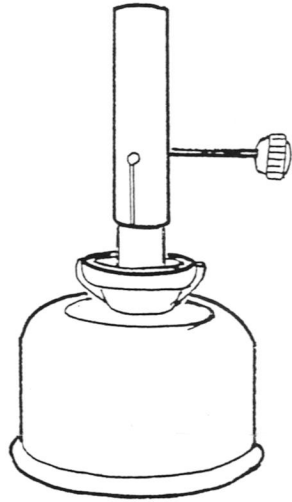


(a)

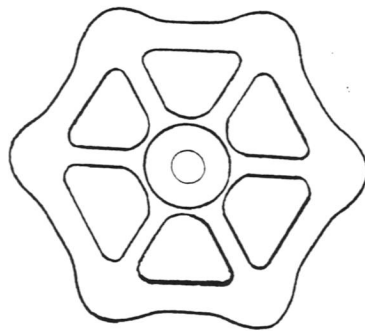
American  
torches



(c)



(b)



Hercules Control

## Hercules

The third logo shown in B/N37 is also used in a larger version on a 1pint gasoline torch which I have recently acquired Its control knob I have included on P 4 The missing word above the name from the logo from B/N 4 is "GASOLINE" The Hercules brand name was used by Sears, as was Fulton, though as stated, the manufacturers as indicated by certain features were probably both Clayton and Lambert and Otto Bernz. I am indebted to Graham Stubbs for a photocopy of a 1931 Sears catalogue showing a gasoline Hercules with a black plastic control knob. This gives some indication of the dating of earlier lamps which used the cast iron control. John Tingle sent me a photograph of his Hercules. It is of copper and has twin folding handles. The filler is in the side of the tank at the front, as in a number of French lamps, and its name is deeply imprinted into the inclined solid burner the fuel tube to which is surrounded by a copper spirit tray. In no way does it resemble any of the American Hercules it looks distinctly Continental so I will leave its drawing until next B/N

## Burridge

The best response ever to one of my queries

Several people kindly sent me photographs of the usual 2/3 pint petrol Burridge lamp with the twin rings around the tank. Keith Hawkins has an assortment with one having the filler cap on the opposite side to the starter control knob, though the position of the fillers seems to vary on all Burridges. Two of his have the earlier safety wires with a plain butterfly filler cap- the newer lamps having a spring loaded cylindrical valve in the filler which is closed by a hexagon base. One of his burners is fitted with a soldering iron attachment base which appears to be inclined whereas the others have horizontal burners and there is an unexplained rounded projection in the top of the tank behind the safety wire. The only other one I have seen like this is, I believe, owned by Tom Bartlett and has the full fitting but is horizontal. This is the famous one used for closing lead coffins. If this is owned by you Tom, can you tell us if Keith's mysterious "swelling"(!) also appears on your lamp? His fifth lamp is a "Snake" which has a plain sided tank, a steel strip handle which was probably cane wound, and only the main control knob with the burner inclined. Andrew Johnson's photograph shows the butterfly filler on the right with an inclined burner and presumably the safety wire projecting on the left side of the tank. John Tingle's contribution was three Burridge pictures with one of a "John Bull" which exhibits several Burridge characteristics except for the tank shape and burner tube. He suggests this is a "clone"(- but it doesn't in any way look like a sheep to me!). His Burridge "Snake" shows a cane wound handle but this could be John's own restoration - looks too new. The traditional 2/3 pint picture has an unusual control knob apparently made of fibre which he states is the original. Because of the angle of the photograph I cannot see if this lamp has the starter control on the side. It looks as if the filler should be a butterfly since there is the tip of the safety wire, which appears to have been pretty heavily re-soldered, showing on the left side of the burner His third lamp has the name deeply imprinted in the front of the plain tank and has an external sloping pump. The filler is on the left side of the tank but is not the normal shape expected on a Burridge, having a butterfly top on an extended body containing a spring valve. It is reminiscent of some Optimus fillers. I cannot see the control clearly but its size is greater than the usual wooden knobs and John states that it is original and of fibre similar to the controls on Surmelin lamps. There is no side starter control John also enclosed a copy of a builders merchant's catalogue of 1920 which clearly shows the spring valve filler. So this type of safety device was in operation quite a bit earlier than had been previously thought. The price stated was 28/- ( a good day's pay for many at that time)so if you consider that 16 years later when I know that petrol was 1/- a gallon what would your Burridge have cost in present day values? Certainly much more than the one Ray Gubb tells me that he recently paid £5-00 for at a car-boot sale, - he's too near to me! No one mentioned the 1 pint petrol Burridge with the cord wound sloping pump in the handle and both controls of fibre shaped like a four petalled flower. I presume no paraffin models were ever produced.

So in view of the two similar controls the two debates are :- who had the patent Yates with Easilit or Joseph Adams with Burridge and what is the relationship between Burridge and the "Strength Brand"? At least one "Strength Brand" I have seen has the same tank as the 2/3 pint Burridge and though marked "Strength Brand" the burner tubes are identical as are the spring filler caps. These questions have yet to be answered.

Thanks to all who responded and if anyone has any further thoughts please let me know. This could yet turn out to be a very comprehensive article.

## B/N 37 drawings

### Tangye/Bladon

The numbers appear to coincide with the numbers on similar Sievert lamps which were known to be used on some Tangye engines. Sylvia Black reports two vertical Sieverts numbered 3047 one of which has a sloping pump but both have the "drawer pull" pump knob. Keith Hawkins confirms that but also adds that the Sievert 3048 is quite unlike my drawing. I have a Sievert 3046 which is also vertical but has the traditional external pump and turned wooden "bobbin" shaped knob. My Bladon vertical has a steel tank and sloping cord-wound pump with the "drawer pull" handle but nothing to relate it to Tangye

No one reports seeing the 3048 as shown. So we have the same numbering on Sievert and Bladon, yet Bladon lamps appear to have a soldered plaque including the Tangye name whereas the Sievert's number is deeply imprinted into the shoulder of the tank with no mention of Tangye. Is it that the numbering is the same or is it significant? Who knows?

Norman Penny describes a Governor "Engine" lamp which is vertical and has a similar sloping cord wound pump in the handle. The logo contains the word ENGINE within the lower part of the twin circles as in the PETROL, PARAFFIN and PLUMBERS models. My vertical Governor has an external pump which is parallel to the side of the tank, which would make it difficult to operate under an engine. Its logo bears the name Governor PARAFFIN

Sylvia Black's unknown lamp - only two replies referring to it, both of which suggested that it is a Butler.

I found this difficult to believe as the tank didn't seem right until the photograph kindly e-mailed to me by Brian Smith from way up in Cumbria This confirmed the tank shape but the handle in Brian's picture appeared to be much later than the rather crude one on Sylvia's lamp Sylvia does, however, state that at one time there was a transfer on the front, roughly of the shape of that of a Coleman pressure lamp, so it is possible Don't say this is another "one-off" lamp that nobody else has ever seen.

### Snippets

"Hades" - the lamp logo featured in B/N29 was made appropriately by the Red Devil Company but I have no further details of them

Norman Penny has a 1 pint paraffin Bladon which has an external vertical pump with the spring loaded cut-off valve at its base, as is more usually seen on their petrol blowlamps. Paul Whiddett reports a similar unnumbered Bladon paraffin with the external pump and cut-off valve. Any additions to these comments?

"Toga" the logo in B/N 36 is thought to be associated with Buck and Hickman and I have recently seen some wood-turning tools with the same logo transfer attached

### Welcome to new members

Hans THORNBLAD Munkhagsgatan 2 SE-647 MARIEFRED SWEDEN 46 0 159 21559

Jon SUTA Box 73 Mt VERNON WA 98273 U S A 360 424 0292

Sonia WATERS Auriol Cottage Queens Street Farthinghoe Northants NN13 5NY

Les KELLY 41 Hythe Hill COLCHESTER Essex CO1 2NQ 01206- 792928

### Change of address

A C C "Toon" van Ool Nieuwstraat 10 EKSEL Belgium Phone:-06-53-54-37-00

### E-mail addresses

To save B/N space I'll send a group list of e-mail addresses to each member who gives me his own address to add to the "address book". If you do not do it beforehand include it on your 2002 subscription forms in December Mine as you may know is:-

LES\_GINA@MSN.COM

Many thanks to all the contributors and those who wrote in with information. It makes it all so much easier when I have enough to write about, but my apologies if I fail to include something. There is probably a better opportunity to use it in a later article so don't stop sending.

Best wishes,

