

BLOWLAMP NEWS

No 73

SEPTEMBER

2010

The Newsletter of the Blowlamp Society - Founded by Les Adams, August 1992

I was recently looking through some back issues of Blowlamp News to confirm a date for Keith Hawkins and realised that issue number 73 would be the 30th issue I have produced since taking over the job as editor. I must admit when I first took over I had no idea whether I would be up to the job, but I will say I have enjoyed my time as editor and from the kind comments I receive from members, I must be getting something right. Along with the comments I have made a number of friends and correspond with several members on a regular basis.

Some time before taking over from Les Adams, we had been talking about introducing photographs to the newsletter, to complement Les's hand drawn sketches, but he felt the process would prove too expensive and he was not set up to do it. I would say that adding photographs has been the biggest change I have made and I hope you will agree that it is a benefit to the overall presentation of the newsletter.

Over the years I have had several members help with producing articles and I would like to thank everyone who has done so. Please continue to provide information you would like to share with other members, otherwise you will only be seeing articles relating to blowlamps in my collection, a great many of which have featured in the pages over the seven and a half years.

About three weeks before the issue date I start to think of items of interest for the newsletter and I am never sure how each issue will turn out. It is never planned; it just seems to evolve once I get the spark of an idea for the first article. It may be something I see when looking through archive material or it may be a comment in an Email from a fellow collector.

This month I was struggling for an idea; that was until I received an Email from Charles Smith about an Enterprise Optical torch he had recently purchased, which is quite different from anything I have previously seen. The Email included a photograph and a copy of the Patent document, so there I had my first item. Charles quickly followed up with an Email about an Eolipyle blowlamp and after further correspondence I found out that he has an extensive collection of these lamps, so now I have the basis for BN73 which will grow, hopefully to the 16 pages I try to achieve with each issue.

So thank you to everyone who over the years has helped to maintain the standard of Blowlamp News.

ENTERPRISE OPTICAL

Rather than being a "usual" torch and directly producing a flame, this torch is a hydrocarbon vapour generator. The pressurized and delicately-mixed, heated air and vapour produced by the torch was injected into an incandescent mantle-type burner, the resulting "flame" producing light required for the operation of early slide projectors.

In terms of its general characteristics, the tank is copper and fairly large, measuring 5 inches (12.7cm) in diameter and about 5 ¼ inches (13.3cm) in height. The tank holds about 88 cubic inches or 3 pints (1.42 litres) of liquid.



To operate the generator, a liquid hydrocarbon was added to the tank through the top filler opening. The tank has no built in pump and was pressurized through the hole in the filler cap by an accessory lantern-type pump (which is missing)



A small amount of fuel was placed in the drip cup beneath the upper vaporizer and ignited. When the control valve was opened, the fuel was vaporized and discharged through the outlet jet in the front of the vaporizing tube. The semicircular confining hood surrounding the outlet jet prevented ignition of the emitted vapour. A portion of the discharged vapour was captured in the "commingling" tube and forced

to the rear of the tube where the vapour was ignited as it was discharged through a series of slits beneath the upper vaporizing tube. The lower, or auxiliary, burner provided the heat necessary for the vaporisation in the upper generator. The remaining heated vapour was discharged through the front of the "commingling" tube through a hose or other connecting device to the mantle-type burner, providing light for the projection equipment. Throughout the operation of the vapour generator, open flame was restricted to the area immediately above the tank and beneath the upper generating tube.

No. 656,750.

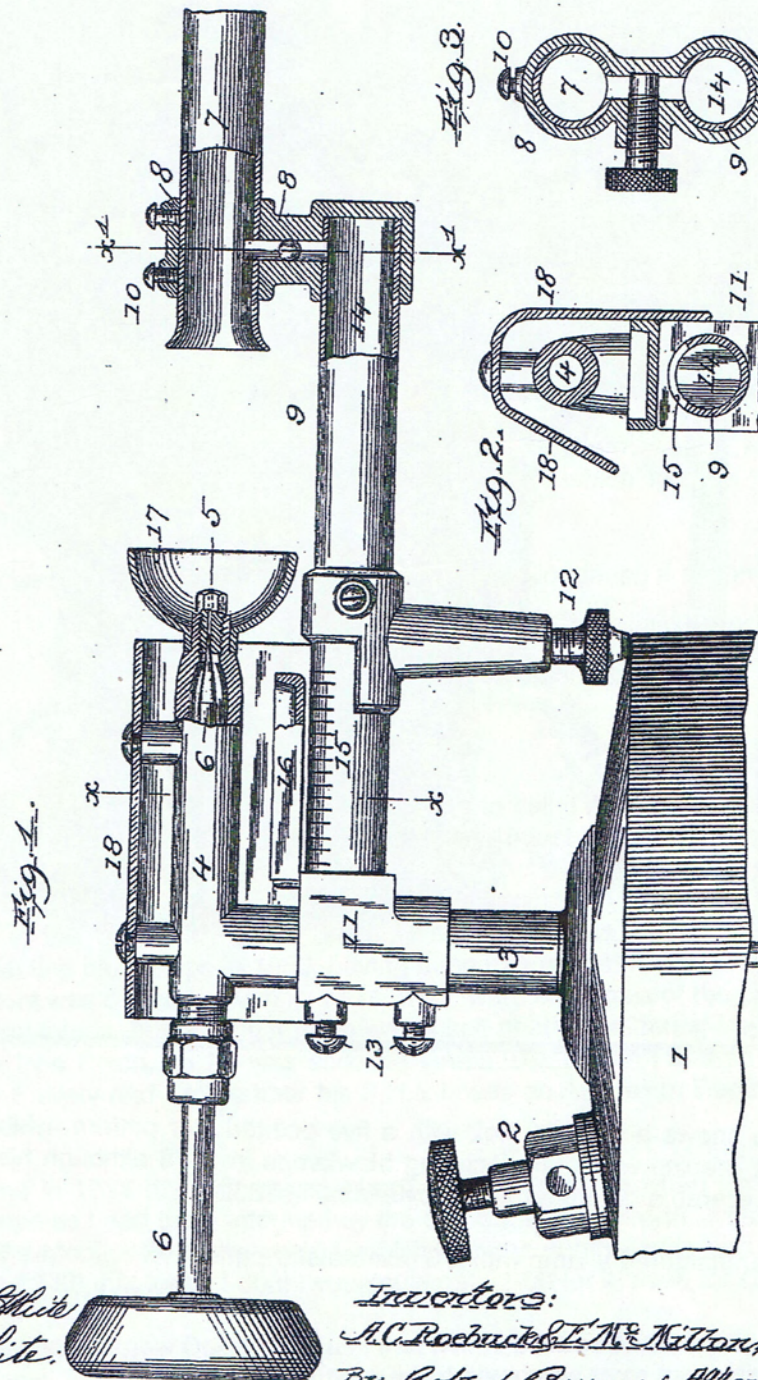
Patented Aug. 28, 1900.

A. C. ROEBUCK & F. McMILLAN.

GENERATING APPARATUS FOR HYDROCARBON VAPOR LAMPS.

(No Model.)

(Application filed Sept. 2, 1899.)



Attest:

Carry & White
R. White

Inventors:

A.C. Roebuck & F. McMillan
By Robert Burns Attorney

EOLIPYLE

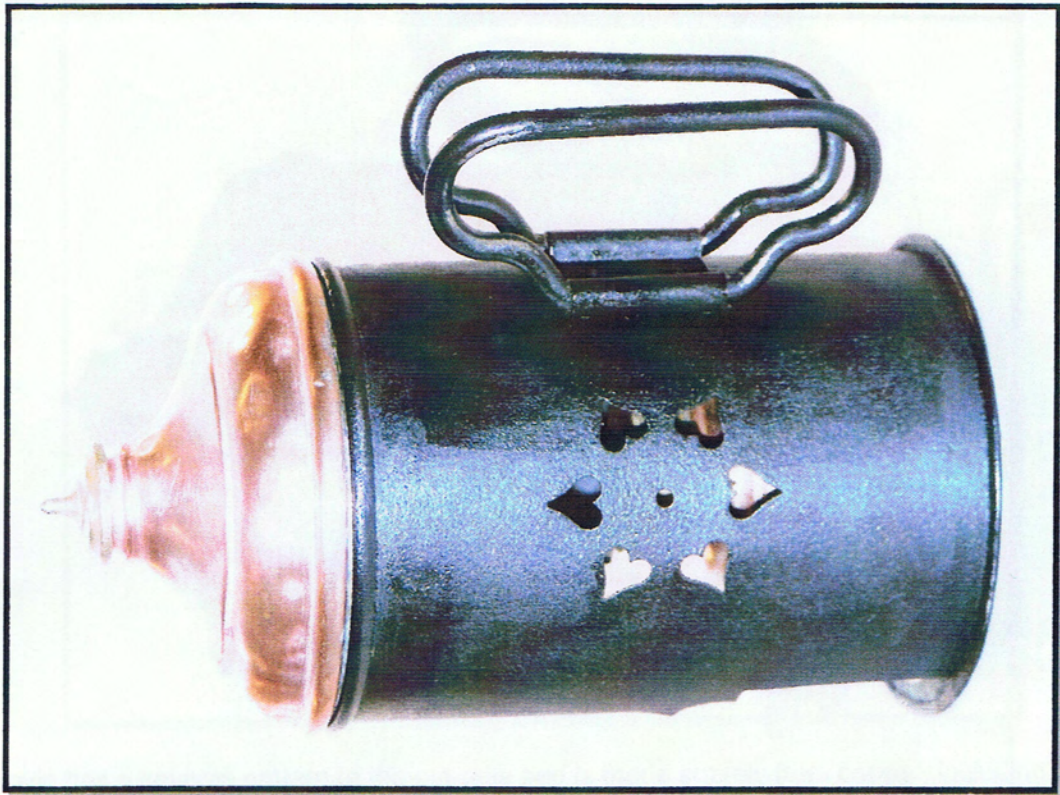
I have long admired this style of blowlamp, although I have difficulty pronouncing the name and I only have two examples in my collection. I had always assumed these were only made by Alfred Breuzin and that they all looked basically the same and came in four different sizes.

My eyes have been opened as to the variety there is in this style of lamp as Charles Smith has sent me photographs of his collection of 20 or so different looking lamps.



The first picture shows a Breuzin No2 with a five pointed star pattern, which was identified by Michel Duval. Alfred Breuzin was manufacturing blowlamps in 1888 although his father Sulpice Christophe Breuzin had registered a patent for an eolipyle lamp in 1832.

Breuzin also manufactured a lamp with a 6 pointed star pattern.



Manufactured by Carl Bauer of Germany in the early 1900's



Another very intricate pattern on a Breuzin lamp, which Michel thinks is earlier than the one with the star pattern.

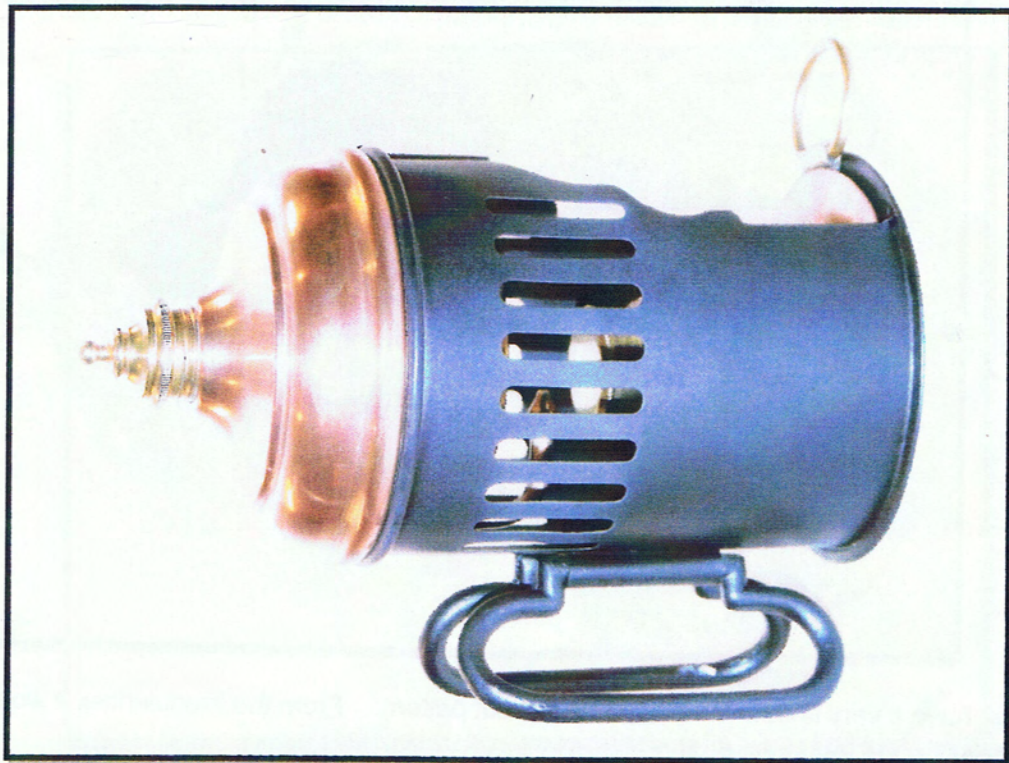


Here we have an as yet unidentified oil lamp which has no cut-out in the body and has a fixed copper handle, rather than the more usual folding loop handles. The bottom picture shows the three component parts, the body of the lamp, the small burner which fits into the base and the fuel reservoir which fits into the top.

For anyone who is unsure as to how these lamps worked, the fuel in the top reservoir was vaporised by the flame from the bottom burner and would in turn pass through the curved tube and on meeting the flame would produce a concentrated jet of flame to apply to the work.



This eolipyle has a circle and ellipse pattern and was manufactured by A. Magnet, who was a small manufacturer who also produced potato mashers and lemon squeezers.



Another interesting pattern as yet unidentified.



This eolipyle was manufactured by Doria and was sold by J.M. & Cie, a tool retailer based in Paris.



Here we have a very unusual and intricate cut-out pattern. From the irregularities it would appear to have been cut out by hand, but nevertheless a very nice lamp.



Usually the eolipyle lamps are made of all copper or they have a steel body with copper burner and fuel tank. This one however has a brass body, burner and straps to hold the wooden handle and a copper fuel tank. What is even more unusual is the way in which the burner and tank are fixed to the body by small hooks which fit through small slots in the rim at the top and bottom of the body. The tank and burner are then twisted through 90 degrees to lock them in place.



On the majority of these lamps the bottom burner fits into a slide and the fuel tank is a push fit into the top.



Another unusual lamp, again with a brass body. What is most unusual is the position of the feed tube from the top of the tank, which then disappears through a slot in the body of the lamp, to end up in the required position.



The screw in the top of the tank is hollow and there is a small spring inserted into the opening. As the screw is tightened, the spring exerts pressure onto a tiny flat valve, increasing pressure in the tank and increasing the blast of vapour across the wick.



This eolipyle has a keyhole pattern to the cut-outs and is made entirely from copper, including the handles, which is quite unusual.



The final photograph from Charles' collection shows an eolipyle with wind shields. These shields are curved and normally fold back against the body of the lamp and can be folded forward when the lamp is in operation.

I have lost count of the number of times I have typed eolipyle, but I still find it difficult to spell and also to pronounce. *(I have other photographs which I will include in future issues.)*

ADLER

Following my feature on Adler blowlamps in BN72 I was offered a Korpus, which is one model I had not previously heard of.



One further thing I noticed when I was cleaning the Korpus was on the rim of the control knob were the manufacturers name, Vogtmann & Wabak of Vienna. If you look at the centre of the logo above, you will note a monogram of the letters V and W.



This final photograph of an Adler Bella was sent to me by Graham Stubbs and has the additional wording "NUR DIESE MARKE BÜRGT FÜR DIE ECHTHEIT", which loosely translated means "the genuine article is guaranteed only by the presence of this mark".

This is the first time I have seen this on an Adler lamp and was wondering if anyone else knows about it.

25 YEARS OF COLLECTING (Part 1)

by

Keith Hawkins

In June I reached the magic age of 80 and I feel it is time to call it a day. My name has appeared in nearly every Blowlamp News since it was first published in August 1992 and I am sure that by now the membership will be glad to see the back of me.

I joined the society in the very early days, probably soon after Les Adams founded it in 1992. I originally started collecting blowlamps in 1985, having been to a rally at Knebworth Park in Hertfordshire, where in the model tent was a stand of lamps, all of which were examples of the era; ½ pint, 1 pint and 2 pint paraffin and petrol lamps; but amongst them was a self heating soldering iron. These could have belonged to the late Don Rixon, as he was showing lamps well before I started to collect. He later joined the Blowlamp Society and I remember his S.H.S.I. was an Australian Darlton, which, some years later, I bought from him.

So anyway, sometime in 1985 my wife asked what I was going to do when I retired and suggested I might collect blowlamps as I had been intrigued by the S.H.S.I. at Knebworth. I agreed that was a good idea as I already had a Monitor 26 in the garage, which became number one, and I still have it today. I think it originally cost £3-50, but today I doubt you could get £1-00 for it, even for scrap.

Over a period of time I got to know Don Rixon, as I met him at boot sales, antiques fairs and the odd rally when I was a spectator. He used to get quite a lot of his lamps from the antiques market at Hemel

Hempstead on a Wednesday morning. When I asked him what time he got there he said about 8 am, so I did not have the heart to tell him that by then, I had already been and gone.

However, by this time, I was well bitten by the bug and went to every boot fair and antique market, as well as shops to see what was available. I had to wait until the early 1990's before I found my first S.H.S.I., a Sievert 294, which I found in an antique tool shop in Essex Road, London. This was followed soon after by a 293 of similar make. By now the collection had risen to about 35 lamps from ½ pint up to 6 pint and there was nothing which I considered special.

So it was not until I went to the Great Dorset Steam Fair, which I think must have been in 1991 that I realised there were many other lamps which one could obtain, provided one had a bottomless pocket.

I also soon decided that there was little point in spending money fast to buy lamps and put them on shelves at home and just look at them. So I started to look around to see if there were any public exhibitions where I could show them to other people. I soon found a small museum in Hatfield which used to have open days at weekends in the summer where people could take their tractors, stationary engines and the like; so along went my blowlamps, which on the whole were well received. I remember one young lady coming by and saying that she had not seen a blowlamp since her grandfather had set light to the garden shed with one.

In those early days I went everywhere I could think of to look for blowlamps. Apart from the places already mentioned, Bermondsey market, Petty Coat Lane and Milton Keynes antique market all yielded interesting lamps. The first Reliance came from Milton Keynes and a little shop in Berkhamstead produced a Primus Nautilus 6 for £8-00 and later a Primus 611 for a similar price.

For some curious reason there were at least two completely different versions of the Primus 611; one was of one pint capacity with a valve behind the burner, whilst the other had a "Y" shaped burner particularly for use as a starting lamp for a hot bulb tractor – a Swedish twin cylinder Munktells Bolinder and was of one litre capacity. Both used paraffin and I believe the latter also came with a single burner (although I have never seen one).

The first German lamp I found, at Bermondsey market about 7-00am, was a 1 litre petrol lamp with only G Barthel on it and no number, and priced at £42-00. I offered the seller £25-00 but he turned it down as he said he would easily get the price from an American visitor. Three months later it was still there so I offered £20-00 and got it.

The first really exciting lamp I bought was an Optimus American auto torch, No 48. This I spotted on a stand in the auto jumble at the Great Dorset in 1991. The asking price was £18-00 but I managed to get it for £16-00. Later that day my wife told me she had seen a stand with a whole display of lamps, so I went to look at it. It belonged to Les Adams and when I arrived he was in conversation with another man and they were discussing where the Optimus American had gone. It so happened that the other man was Ken Longden and when I told them I had it, they both offered to buy it as they had not realised there were other people interested in collecting blowlamps. I think it was at this stage the idea of a collector's society began to formulate in Les Adams mind and he accordingly issued his first 2 page newsletter on 1st August 1992. I have still got the Optimus lamp, one of my favourites, and I think quite rare in the UK.

So it was the Blowlamp Society was born and of the first 50 members, 16 still seem to be active. Over the years there have been a total of 243 members, of whom 103 are still receiving Blowlamp News. All these members are getting older and apart from one very young enthusiast, not yet in his teens, we are not getting any new collectors joining up. Over the years lamp collectors have started up all over the world and the Society has members from the U.S.A., France, Australia, Belgium, Holland, The Channel Islands and four from Wales.

To get back to my personal participation in all this activity, when I first started to collect I only did it for a bit of fun and something to give another interest apart from work and at that time I had no idea what would happen in the future and what I was getting myself into.

I think my first proper rally was organised by the Hertfordshire Steam Club at Little Wymondley, near Stevenage, in 1992, where I also took a just restored Ferguson TEA20 tractor, which was driven by a friend who had helped with the restoration. Some friend he turned out to be as after the rally he departed with my wife, so I sold the tractor and then had to restart my life all over again. Maybe 27 years of me, multitudes of blowlamps and the fact she had a crush on steam caused the breakup, but within four years I had met another lady who jumped into blowlamps and it was really why, my up until then modest collection, took off and rose from about 250, up to well over 1000 in about 5 years. She had a house in Normandy so we would spend one week each month over there, four or five days restoring the house and one day looking for blowlamps, helped no end by the fact she could speak French, better than me anyway.

I should at this juncture explain that when I bought a lamp, I never bought a duplicate, not even to update the collection, so my 1000 plus lamps were all different makes, models, numbers etc. with no repeats. Some collectors I know bought anything in sight and therefore ended up with many duplicates. Some lamps were modified at different times, but I only ever bought one of anything. I did not want to know about updates and anyway I did not have room for them. I think even the Monitor 26 got upgraded about ten times, but one was enough for me. I soon learned that the Monitor 26, the Primus 632 and the Optimus 411 were the most used paraffin lamps by plumbers and painters and were always reckoned to be the nastiest and cheapest lamps one could buy.

Apart from going to France we also found time to go cruising, which resulted in searching for and buying lamps in all the ports of call which were included in our journeys. Thinking back I can remember buying in Rhodes, Malta, Tunis, the USA and Portugal, where I saw a 2 litre Barthel, brand new and still in its original box and the price, when converted into English was £287!! Also in Belgium, when a seller got very upset because I would not pay FF300 for a lamp, until I suddenly remembered the Belgian frank was far less than the French one, so I got a nice soldering torch for £3-00 instead of the £30-00 I thought it was. On one occasion I had a 2 litre Chinese "Iron Cat" lamp wrapped in a pillow case, as there was no room in the suitcase for it. It caused quite a furore at the airport and I nearly got chucked out and off the plane home until I convinced the investigating official that there was no fuel in it and that it was quite harmless. On another trip there I got a huge Primus 705 and a Sievert Holmia No 1. The Primus was a 12 ¼ pint and was treated with much respect by the Norwegians. What happened when it got to Heathrow? It came off with the baggage and got dented. A Prabhat was bought in Ceylon by a friend who saw it in a shop window and got the coach she was on to stop so she could get out and buy it for me. So many lamps were acquired abroad and personally, which all added to the enjoyment of our trips. Another amazing place to buy lamps was the Lille Braderie on the first weekend in September. I remember buying an Express 354 and then carried it around all day as it was a long way back to the hotel and by the evening I think it weighed about 3 cwt.

Most of my American lamps came via eBay. I always regarded this as cheating, mainly because the art of collecting is the looking for and buying on the spot and eBay was not doing this. Admittedly I did get some lamps I would never have got any other way, the Peterson-Plummer for one, which when I told BTCA about it they said it was the only one they knew of, although another has turned up since. Sometimes sellers were not too honest in their descriptions and on one occasion I paid a lot of money for a Globe Gaslight Co lamp, only to discover it was really a Barthel Neuerinit with a plate soldered on the other side with Globe on it.

In 1996 we received an invitation from the French club to visit their annual meeting at Herseau, just north of Lille. I think about 9 of us went, including one gentleman who "knew the way". However at one stage, having passed the same lorry park three times in the same direction, he finally agreed that maybe he did not, so we eventually arrived a little late. However, what greeted us was just completely amazing. Lamps that I had never seen or even dreamed about were exhibited and many were available for sale or swap. I remember being asked what I thought of the show, to which I replied that if there was a small dark corner where I could go and have a good cry, I would be most grateful as I had never seen anything like it.

In 1997 we managed to take 17 members and the highlight was a display by Robert Langlois, which included 4 Vesta D's with a Surmelin 20 in front and with other sundry lamps surrounding these. What a display!! **(More to follow in December)**

MORE VINTAGE BLOWTORCHES

The second volume on American blowtorches is due to go to press at the end of August and will hopefully be available by the end of September. There is another 334 pages of information and as with the first volume, printed in 2007, this listing of American and Canadian manufacturers and brand labelled suppliers is organised alphabetically, by manufacturer and/or brand name. In some instances the listed company may only be the distributor. This compilation contains the names of more than sixty newly identified makers and/or brand names.

For each manufacturer or branded label supplier, every newly identified model known to the authors, of blowtorches, furnaces and the like is listed, with illustrations wherever possible. Where feasible, the illustrations are arranged in numerical order by model number. For the larger manufacturers, newly discovered details of the company's history are provided. The book identifies more than 700 blowtorches, self-heating soldering irons, branders etc. Approximately 90 furnaces, firepots, soldering heaters etc. are also listed and most are illustrated.

A cross referenced index, encompassing both the 2007 first edition of Vintage Blowtorches and the present volume, lists alphabetically the manufacturers and brand labelled suppliers. Products of each supplier are listed first by trade name, if used, and then by model number. Trade names are also included in the index and cross referenced to suppliers. Integrated into the index is a guide to the rarity of individual models, with a five-point scale from the most common to the rarest.

Anyone wanting to reserve a copy, which will be on sale for \$24-95 (approx £18-00), should either contact Ron Carr at rmcarr1@cox.net or alternatively send your requirements to Ray Hyland (see below for details) and when I have details of shipping costs I can organise an order and the transfer of funds.

AND FINALLY



I could not resist including this photograph of a Talisman I found while searching through the archive.

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Blowlamp News is published in March, June, September and December. Any item for inclusion should be with the editor at least 4 weeks before the issue date.

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My thanks go to Charles Smith, Graham Stubbs, Michel Duval and Keith Hawkins for their contributions to this newsletter.