

# A FEW THOUGHTS ON REPAIRS

By Roger Barnes

One small tip I have used successfully is to warm a piece for repair with my old electric paint remover which acts like a “hair dryer” and has attachments to direct the concentrated heat in a stream to where the need is greatest. This is more convenient than “dousing” a piece in boiling water, which I have also tried, and the heat source so provided is readily available in the workshop, which hot water isn’t in my case. I haven’t got round to mounting the paint remover in a suitable mount to keep it directed at the work in hand continually yet, though.

I recently eased open a badly distorted hammerhead flagon found by a diver on a site off the Cornish coast which is an officially registered 1687 wreck site. It had been flattened by the wreck, presumably, and rattled on arrival and, as it was from a Dutch prize ship taken by pirates on its way back from Tangier I had visions of golden doubloons inside. It turned out to be 17<sup>th</sup> Century pebbles!

But the very considerable hammering to recover its original shape was definitely helped by the heating with the “paint remover” and the use of various iron bars with rounded ends gripped in the vice and hammered at their centre point to hammer the flagon from inside. The whole tale is a romantic one of piracy and derring do about the time that Samuel Pepys was closing the Navy’s port at Tangier.

I have been brushing up my soldering techniques over the months as a colleague and I restore a delightful box shaped inkstand with a pounce drawer. We have been aided by the use of a fine solder suggested to me by an Engineering firm manager.

It is called Magna solder (and flux) and “spreads” much more smoothly than normal solder, without “bubbles”. Its formula seems to be a safely guarded secret but I suspect that it has a smattering of aluminium in its mix and it comes from Australia. It is sold in boxes of one hundred x eighteen inch sticks at £2 a stick, the flux is pricy too. Not for the purist restorers who would carefully match their metals for the finest pieces - but possibly better than Araldite and pewter filings, which I admit to having used in the past. An experienced specialist has been giving demonstrations of turning, casting and repair work etc., at the Pewterer’s Company “open to the public” Summer Fair “Pewtering Live” for a few years now.

Pewter Live is usually held in early June at

## Pewterers' Hall Oat Lane London EC2V 7DE

<b>Description:</b>	<p>The aim of Pewter Live is to create contemporary design in pewter; to raise public awareness of the beauty and versatility of pewter; to promote the use of pewter by professional designers, and to encourage design students to work in pewter.</p> <p>There are two competitions each year – the student and the open – with all entries and winning pieces on display.</p> <p>Pewter Shop - the Company, with the support of the Association of British Pewter Craftsmen, is launching its own Pewter Shop selling some of the finest British pewterware. Guests will also have the opportunity to purchase pewter direct from the manufacturers and makers at the usual Trade Show.</p> <p>Marquee Guests will also be able to visit the marquee where practising pewterers will demonstrate the craft of pewtering using the traditional methods of spinning, casting and turning.</p>
<b>Organiser Details</b>	
<b>Organiser:</b>	clerk@pewterers.org.uk

Extracts above shown from the publicity details for 2006