

L. C. Smith Speaks for Itself

Volume 2, Issue 3

September 2004

Special points of interest:

- Let's keep the momentum rolling...
- Early L.C. Smith History uncovered.
- 2004 Election for two seats on the Board
- National Side-by-Side and Ohio Gun Collectors Show

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Wishes Do Come True By Frank Finch, Jr.

We hear you. . .

One of the pillars of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association's Mission Statement is to "Stimulate and educate members and the public in their knowledge of the history and production of the L.C. Smith shotgun".

Through the very generous and professional work of Dr. Jim Stubbendieck, one of our directors, the L.C. Smith Website was created. It delivers to L.C. Smith enthusiasts, in addition to informational items, "L.C. Smith Forum" providing the L.C. Smith devotee the ability to ask questions and receive answers on Smith related topics. Two of the most utilized areas of the informational items include descriptive shotgun grade information with pictures of the gun and the most recently added "Year of Manufacture" based upon gun serial number records.

However, Jim highlighted that serial number information from the

company's start in 1887 through 1890 is not available. According to Col. Brophy, in his book, *L.C. Smith Shotguns*, the early manufacture gun missing serial numbers are estimated as 9,491 for Baker guns (both 2 & 3 barrel) and 6,223 for Syracuse guns. Almost 16,000 early guns are without factory records!



With anticipated collaboration and input from shooters, collectors, gunsmiths and the very generous offer of two of our members, a data base will be created that will provide knowledge about these great early guns to all fans of the early Bakers and Syracuse shotguns.

Daryl Hallquist and Russ Ruppel have volunteered to gather data on the early guns from all willing to share the information. Daryl and Russ will have contact addresses on our Website and interested parties are encouraged to provide basic information on their guns, such as, serial

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(Looking Ahead from Our Executive Director Continued from page 1)

number, barrel type and length, hammer/hammerless, grade/quality, engraving and any special features. The information will be consolidated and entered into a data base available for reference to Baker/L.C. Smith enthusiasts. A column in our quarterly newsletter will be dedicated to reporting the project status and findings of special interest on these guns.

More specifically, Daryl will capture information beginning with the W.H. Baker guns and continue with the Syracuse hammer guns. Russ will concentrate on the Syracuse hammerless guns. Both members have been collecting information on guns in their respective areas for years.

Through the efforts of our enthusiastic mem-

bers with their passion for our great Baker and early Syracuse L.C. Smith Guns, our organization will be able to provide the missing knowledge on our early guns which prior to this time has been unavailable.

I wish everyone a happy, safe, bountiful hunting season. I hope to meet you at one of our upcoming events. The next event will be our exhibition at the Vintage Cup at the Orvis Sandanona facility in Millbrook, NY September 16-19, 2004.

“Can you hear me now?” This is YOUR organization. Please give us your wish list of projects you’d enjoy as a member of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association. All constructive suggestions are encouraged and welcomed.

L. C. Smith Maker, Syracuse, New York-Part III, The Ben Teipel Gun By John N. Davis

In Part II of this series, I discussed the L. C. Smith Trophy as a form of product promotion engaged in by Mr. Smith and his original Syracuse factory. I mentioned in that article that one of the methods used by the companies to promote their guns was the placement of their particular make in the hands of the professional shooter. Victory at the trap line equaled invaluable public relations for the company. To own the bragging rights that your gun won at certain tournaments was a goal of each of the major manufacturers. The following is an example of this form of advertising, and as previously promised, with a twist.

The Second International Clay Pigeon Tournament was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, from February 11th through the 16th of 1885. It attracted the biggest names in trap shooting and was considered a major sporting event at the time. Ben Teipel, of Cincinnati, Ohio, won or divided first in eight events, won or divided second in eight more events and won or divided third in yet three more events. He was declared the winner of the tournament. Curiously, it seemed that not a single contestant in this tournament shot an L. C. Smith shotgun. Or did they? And the big winner in this tournament, Ben Teipel, was shooting a 10-gauge Parker. Or was he?

In response to these questions, I submit for your consideration the following article which appeared in *The American Field* on March 27, 1886:

Ben Teipel’s Gun - Kingston, Pa. -Editor *American Field*: - No doubt the Parker gun owned by Mr. Teipel will yet become a weapon of historical value, owing to its wonderful performance on different occasions before the traps. It will occupy an enviable place among the phenomenal few, and be mentioned by the oldest sportsman as the terror of the tournaments. It is

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(L. C. Smith Maker, Syracuse, N.Y Part III Continued from page 2)

always a pleasant task to praise the gun that wins the prize, no matter whether such success was due to the gun chiefly, or to the man behind it. But in this instance it might be pardonable in Mr. Teipel should he undertake to convince the world that his Parker has no equal, more particularly so in view of the brilliant work it has done in his hands, making records which it will be difficult to break.

”At the second International Clay Pigeon tournament, held in New Orleans, La., February 11 to 16, 1885, the first prize and diamond badge in the international individual championship match, open to all the world, was won by B. Teipel with a Parker gun. Among the contestants using other guns were such champions as Bogardus, Carver, Cody, Stubbs, Erb and others.” The foregoing constitutes the major part of Parker Bros’ advertisement printed in the *American Field* after the New Orleans tournament, and occupying a prominent place there during the greater part of 1885.

It was an excellent card, and believed by them doubtless to be better than anything they could invent in the interest of their gun. It is even reasonable to suppose that many sales of Parker guns were directly traceable to the apparently truthful statement contained in their advertisement. To be the makers of a gun that could out shoot the magnificent foreign ones of Carver, Bogardus, etc., was an accomplishment worthy of the finest steel, and it was but natural and business like for the Parker Bros to use the fact for all it was worth to them and to their factory. But all is not gold that glitters. There’s many a slip twixt the cup and the lip, and the application of these old-time adages will be better appreciated when we disclose a bit of the unwritten history connected with the shooting of Mr. Teipel’s Parker gun. Here it is: Previous to the tournament at New Orleans, where Mr. Teipel went to win, feeling that the shooting qualities of his Parker must be improved to enable him to take the prize from the champions, he sent his Parker gun to the factory of L. C. Smith at Syracuse, N. Y., to be rebored according to the Smith system of multiplied choke. Mr. Smith had his choking principle executed in the Parker gun and then returned it to Mr. Teipel.

The next report we get from Mr. Teipel and his L. C. Smith-bored-Parker (for they are grown inseparable now) is a ringing and victorious one from the hard-contested grounds of the New Orleans tournament. The shooting qualities of the new combination proved to be paralyzing and invincible. Hence we see that Parker Bros made the gun and L. C. Smith furnished its shooting qualities. It was a sort of unconscious partnership of the two makers, one of those rare occurrences where the junior partner with a small investment comes honestly by the lion’s share of the returns.

I believe the Parker people are honorable men, and feel convinced that their advertisement was owing to a total ignorance of the facts. I have no unfriendly feeling for them, but, being an advocate of equal and exact justice to all men, and knowing that Mr. Teipel’s Parker was rebored for him by L. C. Smith previous to the shooting he did with it at New Orleans, where he scored such a complete triumph, I insist that Smith, and not the Parker Bros, is entitled to all credit and glory arising from the gun’s splendid work. This should not be construed against the Parker gun, but it has a great deal in favor of the Smith method of boring it. I have known the above facts for many months and the idea of publishing them was inspired by J. C. N.’s recent reference to the shooting power of Mr. Teipel’s Parker in the *American Field* of February 6.

In conclusion I warn sportsmen all over the land to beware of the Smith-bore-Parker guns, as in this instance one cannot tell where or when he may run against them. One of them might any time prove to be the dangerous dark horse.

W. T. D.

(Continued on page 4)

(L. C. Smith Maker, Syracuse, N.Y Part III, Continued from page 3)

You may recall in Part I of this series, during the tour of the Syracuse factory the writer of *The American Field* article recounted a description of the barrel boring department. He wrote as follows:

At the extreme end of the room, where the light is best and brightest, we observe the barrel borer at his work, the chambering and inside polishing also being done here. Twelve machines of peculiar design and construction are employed on this work alone. The system of multiplied choke-boring is the original and patented idea of these works, and its advantages cannot be secured in any except the new L. C. Smith gun.

The superintendent of this department is a man of quick and correct perceptions, better than ordinary intellect, and almost “grewed” inside a gun, his life so far having been spent in the interest and development of what now seems to be conceded as the best and most satisfactory system of choke-boring guns. He will throw a pair of barrels up to the light and a single glance tells him what must be done to produce a desired change. It is difficult to understand how a pair of polished inside surfaces can present anything but a uniform appearance, but they do, and do so by shadows which reveal nothing except to trained and practiced eyes.

Mr. Smith was very proud of his factory’s choke-boring capabilities and the L. C. Smith catalog, circa 1887-1888, evidenced this. The catalog made the following claims concerning the Syracuse company’s expertise in choke-boring:

“No extra charge for our Multiplied Choke Boring, it produces better results than any other method. No other manufacturer can use our system of Choke Boring.”

“Our system of Multiplied Choke Boring gives better pattern and penetration than any other system of boring.”

“Our guns kill game at unheard of distances.”

“Every gun is thoroughly tested in our Testing Gallery in point of pattern and penetration and if found wanting by our inspector the gun is sent back to the Choke-Boring Department.”

“Please investigate my reputation for producing far-killing guns.”

It would seem that Mr. Teipel perceived that the Smith method of choke-boring was superior to that of the other gun makers of the day and it appears that he took advantage of it.



From “The American Field” July 17, 1886

L. C. Smith Collector Association Current Events

National Side-by-Side and Ohio Gun Collectors Association

By Len Applegate

Members are what make the organization, and the way we increase the membership is to display the L.C. Smith gun at shows in a way that educates the gun collecting public about our favorite American double. If we can get people talking to us about our display guns, maybe we can answer questions they might have about their Smith guns. Occasionally we are really fortunate to have visitors bring their gun to show us.

In May we attended the National Side-by-Side at Quail Ridge in Sunman Indiana. This was new Vintager event with *King Ray Poudrier* presiding. It was raining quite hard on Thursday, May 13 when Andy Anderson and I began setting up the display but we were lucky; our spot in the tent remained dry even in a steady downpour. Andy has honed our display to the point that setup goes so smoothly that he and I were able to get it set up ready for the guns in an hour. Ray guaranteed that the rain would be over by Friday morning, and it was, only to begin again in the afternoon. Frank and Mary Anne Finch came to enjoy the inclement weather with Andy and I. Frank and I humiliated ourselves on the Five Stand course and on the American Classics small bore Sporting Clays. This was another event that I didn't have to worry about going to the awards ceremony.

On Friday evening Frank, Mary Anne, and I attended the cocktail hour for the display partici-

pants. It was great fun. There was a Blue Grass band and a shooting demonstration by Quail Ridge's pro, Jon Kruger. He used a specially prepared Bennelli with a large magazine capacity. He used that magazine capacity to hit a variety of multiple targets thrown in the air by an assistant. The targets ranged from clay pigeons to charcoal briquettes to pineapples. I finally figured out why I am having so much trouble hitting those clay pigeons....I'm not shooting from the hip like Jon does.

Our display was "Rare and Unusual Smiths". They included:

1. Three A2 guns: the rare 20 gauge, a very early 12 gauge engraved and signed by Jacob Glahn, and the only 10 gauge A2 ever produced
2. An A3 and it's successor the Premier.
3. The only three barrel set Monogram produced.
4. The only two barrel set Crown 410 produced
5. An early 8 gauge.

A lot of Midwest members came by to talk to us. A few, including Bill Carrithers and Bryndon Steele, brought their unusual Smiths for us to see. We got several new members and sold several hats and shirts.

July was our second time at the Ohio Gun Collec-

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Andy Anderson's Display at the National Side-by-Side

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tors Show in Wilmington. The hospitality shown us by everyone there was impeccable as before. Laura Knotts the business manager made sure we had four tables that were conspicuous to all visitors

to the show. Many people stopped by to examine the same display that we had at the National. We even got two new life members. Frank and Mary Anne traveled from New Jersey, as they always do, to represent the organization.



Len Applegate, Mary Anne and Frank Finch at the Ohio Gun Collectors display

Board of Directors Election

By Len Applegate

In the fall of the year two members of the Board of Directors terms expire. Members of the Association then have to elect two new Members of the Board to three year terms that begin at the Annual meeting in March of the year following the election. Board Members must be life members but the electorate are all members in good standing. The nominating committee survey the life members to see who is willing to serve the organization and suggest that they submit a short biography to the members as an indication that they want

to be considered for the election.

This year incumbents Tom Archer and Bill Winter are running for reelection and Bob Devlin as well. Their bio's, in alphabetical order, are included here. A ballot has been included in this mailing including postage. Please vote for two and return the ballot by November first. The two candidates receiving the most votes will be considered the winners and will be announced in the December newsletter.

Thomas (Tom) D. Archer
Watkinsville, Georgia

Tom Archer is a life member of the L. C. Smith Collectors Association and one of the original members of that organization's Board of Directors. Tom is a life-long resident of northeast Georgia, and a graduate of the University of Georgia, Terry College of Business. As a youth, Tom was fascinated with hunting and double guns; and roamed the hills and country side around his home in search of new outdoor adventures. Tom acquired his first Smith in 1970 and was so intrigued with this Field Grade that he resolved to learn all he possibly could about Smith guns, the gun works, and the craftsmen who made this unique ex-

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ample of the gun maker's art. In that regard, Tom, in conjunction with his research efforts, has cultivated relationships with a number of collectors and researchers across this nation having similar interests. Realizing that knowledge is indeed power, and wishing to share this data and personal observations and experiences with other collectors; Tom is never too busy to take a phone call or respond to an email, and has published some of his research in the Double Gun Journal. Tom is excited to have been a member of the L. C. Smith Collectors Association and have a small part in the rapid growth this organization has experienced during its first two years of existence. Tom's personal thoughts for the continued success of this organization is that those charged with leadership responsibilities must maintain a high degree of member interest combined with a spirit of fellowship and fun. In such event that the membership of the L. C. Smith Collectors Association desires his continued service, Tom submits himself for consideration.

Mr. Robert T. (Bob) Devlin
San Francisco, California

Mr. Devlin presently serves as the Senior Vice President for Stein Roe Investment Counsel. Mr. Devlin earned degrees from the University of Arizona and from the University of California Berkley. Mr. Devlin has attained much success in his chosen field and offers vast business knowledge to the Association. Mr. Devlin is a veteran of the United States Air Force and his associations and memberships are too numerous to note in this brief paragraph. Mr. Devlin is a life member of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association and could be the most passionate Smith devotee' extant, owning only one Smith gun purchased new by his grandfather in 1919 and presented to him as a gift. Mr. Devlin continues to hunt regularly with this Smith and enjoys entertaining guests with game dishes provided by this special gun. In addition to hunting, Mr. Devlin is involved in conservation, sailing, fly fishing, and is an automotive historian as well as a concours judge. As an automotive historian, Mr. Devlin has published more than 80 articles and two books; gaining a full understanding of nuances and challenges of underwriting and publishing. Mr. Devlin is excited about the future of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association and is willing to promote the organization wherever his abilities can best be utilized.

Mr. Bill Winter
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

I am 47 years old, married, with two daughters, life long resident of Prince Georges Co., Maryland, and I am past chairman of the police chief's citizen's advisory council for P.G. County. I am Proud to say that I am one of the original group of L.C. Smith enthusiasts that met in Syracuse New York to hammer out the plans to start this club. I have been collecting Elsie's for the past 17 years or so and have a modest collection of about 20 guns and assorted memorabilia. My goal is to see our organization grow in the most positive of ways through shooting activities, educational activities (gun show displays and lectures for interested parties and gun clubs), and gatherings where our membership will be able to expand on the collected knowledge we all possess. I want to participate with our membership in showing the general public that collecting and shooting firearms is a safe and productive pastime that honors our heritage. In my opinion we are in the process of creating something great for the collectors and enthusiasts of this fine side by side. With teamwork, such as what we have enjoyed over the past two years, I feel we will see unparalleled growth of our club.



Call this section “Eye Candy for the Hunter Memorabilia Crowd”. I met Dave Bacyk and his father at the Baltimore show this year. They had the most interesting Hunter and other Sporting memorabilia on their table. Dave says he has been collecting sporting collectibles since his early teens and has created a website for collectors to buy, sell, and trade these items. He said he would be glad to share some of his most treasured items with us in our newsletter and above the first he has to share. It is a Hunter Arms pocket mirror the back of which is, of course, adorned with advertising. This extremely rare celluloid pocket mirror measures 2" and shows no makers name. If you would like to visit his website you can find it at www.bacyksportingcollectibles.com

Member's Forum

Below is a description of an L.C. Smith that is now living with me.

L.C. Smith Trap Gun, purchased April 12, 2002, from Jim Thrash. The February 12, 2002 letter to Mr. James Thrash from Waddy Colvert, Firearms Records, Cody Firearms Museum Records Department, advises that "The statistical data for L. C. Smith shotgun Serial # R77118T, as extracted from the original L.C. Smith Company records housed in this museum, are as follows: Trap Grade, Regular Frame, 12 gauge, 30 inch barrel, Made For: J.M. Waterson, Started inspection on Sept.18, 1924; Shipped from the company on December 19,1925, order # 15163". According to Mr. Colvert, in a telephone conversation with him on April 12, it is his understanding based on his personal acquaintance with Mr. Waterson, that the gun remained in a horizontal rack in a closet away from direct sunlight from sometime early in January 1926 until Waterson's recent death. I don't remember the details, but after Waterson's death the gun made its way to the Cody Museum upon which it was purchased by Jim Thrash who knew I was looking for one.

Subsequent investigation reveals that this gun indeed did not see direct sunlight until it came into my hands. I have refrained from shooting it, against the advice of my so-called "friends". I thought shooting it would be a sacrilege.

Some of these " friends" ganged up on me at the Albuquerque Gun Show yesterday. Aiding and abetting them was the cute-as-a pin Congresswoman Heather Wilson (I pray she gets reelected). The Elsie saw sunlight yesterday. Ms Wilson was actually the first person to fire it, and she was most appreciative.

Lest you think otherwise of my trapshooting skills, let me advise that I have shot trap, about half a dozen times in the past 60 years, and that my 70th birthday is but a dim memory from the past.

Splinter forend, straight stock and all, Elsie broke 24 out of 25 yesterday. The various spectators, etc, all came up to see the old, obsolete, inadequate Elsie and ignored the Perazzis, etc.

Best wishes,

Dave Ward, Albuquerque

Member Rich Beyer has published a book on Hunter Arms. It is 80 pages and full of information and photos on Hunter Arms and the employees. Rich has lived in the Sterling valley of Upstate New York near Fulton for a long time and has spent a lot of that time compiling this history and interviewing the few surviving employees of Fulton's most famous employer. He will gladly send you a copy of his book if you send \$20.00 plus \$2.00 shipping to him at 1560 Co. Rt 4, Central Square, NY 13036. I'm going to get my copy signed by the author.

L. C. Smith Yellow Page

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Houston, Texas 77080
(713) 467-3016
Fax:(713) 467-2032

L. C. Smith Collectors Association Membership Application.

Make checks Payable to "The L. C. Smith Collectors Association, Inc"

Please send this application and you 2004 dues to :

Bob Trefry
5104 Salima ST
Clinton, MD 20735

Membership type:

Annual \$ 25.00

Life \$ 300.00

Check here if you would prefer your address and phone not to be included in the published list

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

L. C. Smith Classifieds

The L.C. Smith Collectors Association accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the seller's description. All negotiations are strictly between the buyer and seller. The buyer and seller are responsible for complying with all applicable state and federal laws.

FOR SALE:

Field grade feather weight 12ga pistol grip stock in very good condition no crack showing no butt pad but the pistol grip cap is there and in good condition ser # 325XX \$350.00 contact; Bill Winter at shotgunwillie@aol.com

WANTED:

L.C. Smith Grade 1 in 20 ga and Grade A-1 in 16 ga. Collectors quality. Will consider trade for other L. C. Smith guns possible. Frank 732-899-1498

L.C. Smith, GRADE 2, 16 gauge, with game scenes. Steel or damascus barrels. Collector quality. Andy 845-657-8491

OO steel or damascus barrels, collector quality. Len Applegate (513)777-1946

L.C.Smith field grade up to #2 & Trap any condition even those missing parts. Serial numbers 39000 and under. Pete (763)494-4057

Push button forend parts needed prefer complete forend however any parts for the latching mechanism desired contact; Bill Winter at shotgunwillie@aol.com

L.C.Smith field grade, 16 gauge, 28 or 30 inch barrels in good condition, original only. Mike (281)398-6508 mlewis@totalsafety.com

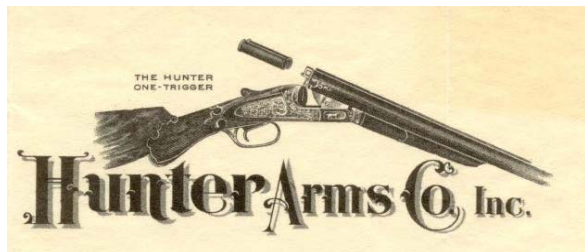
Looking for:
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Greetings L.C. Smith enthusiasts. I'm a great-great-grandson of the Hunter family who owned the Company at the turn of the century, and beginning to do research for our mutual benefit. I would be interested to hear from anyone with historical information and/or memorabilia for this study. I can be contacted at: Ken Baumgardt, 49 N. Old Baltimore Pike, Newark, DE 19702, (302) 286-6223 kendig-ger@aol.com

PUBLICATION OF THE LC SMITH COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

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www.lcsmith.org



L.C. Smith the gun that speaks for itself

The purpose of The L.C. Smith Collectors Association is:

1. To Stimulate and educate members and the public in their knowledge of the history and production of the L.C. Smith shotgun.
2. To support the Cody Museum in utilization of the surviving L.C. Smith records.
3. To encourage creation of a L.C. Smith museum.
4. To encourage the value of good sportsmanship to members and the public.
5. To promote a positive and responsible use of firearms to members and the public.

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For the Bird Hunting Enthusiast

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