

The OHIO GUN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

KEEP THE U.S.A. THE AMERICAN WAY

Next Meeting
March 13 & 14, 2010
Roberts Centre
Wilmington, Ohio



"My summers were filled with adventures in the woods and the creek, never without my trusty 22. There was even an abandoned strip mine where we could play army or cowboys and indians. Then came the fall, and hunting squirrel and rabbit became foremost in my mind. I often think of those days that were so kind to me, a time when boys could be boys and to have lived that wonderful world of 22."

"The Wonderful World of 22"

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THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF 22 - BY LIFE MEMBER, TOM CLAPPER

Since its inception in 1854 the 22 caliber cartridge has provided an unprecedented wealth of pleasure and diversity almost beyond belief. I wonder if Smith and Wesson truly realized they had provided the world with a cartridge that continues on and on to inspire manufacturers and collectors enthusiasm. The 22 stands without challenge the most popular and prolific cartridge ever devised by man.

Growing up in 1940's rural America, the owning of a 22 rifle was foremost in every boy's and perhaps girl's dreams. My first introduction to shooting arrived on a chilly Ohio Christmas morning in 1947. Under the tree was a Daisy Red Ryder air rifle which still demands a cherished spot in my collection. I loved my Red Ryder and carried it everywhere but that first 22 continued to dominate my dreams.

My opportunity finally arrived one warm summer day when a local farm was being auctioned and among the chattels was a 22 rifle. That day I became the proud owner of a Stevens Favorite at the enormous cost of 3 dollars. It also remains one of my most cherished possessions of a wonderful boyhood.

I was very blessed to have parents who believed a boy and his rifle was just a normal way of life and even the few hundred residents of my little hometown of Robertsville never blinked an eye when I proudly strolled through town with my little Stevens. It is a true shame in today's world those simple values are only a memory. I am hopeful there are a few boys and girls even today on some remote farm or ranch, living the wonderful world of 22.

Many friends ask me, how did I become



An interesting and educational May display that was featured at our November meeting (front cover). Tom Clapper has been a member four decades.

so interested in guns? That is a very good question, and I really do not have a good answer. The need to own guns seemed to always be present, continually gnawing at me, always urging me to find just one more. Perhaps a part of my love of guns came from being lucky enough to have a neighbor who also loved guns and who ran an NRA sanctioned junior rifle club. Once a week, my friends and I would walk up the street to our small hardware store and lay down 45 cents for a box of long rifle 22's and off we would go to the rifle club. We were taught safety and gun handling along with all the shooting positions and, of course, marksmanship. It was just a coincidence he provided a Stevens Favorite for our use, just like my auction rifle but in new condition and with a fine peep sight. We would shoot

until all our ammo was gone. Then we were invited into his home where his wife had prepared a feast of hamburgers and Cokes along with a Monopoly board to complete our day. What more could a young boy ask for?

My summers were filled with adventures in the woods and the creek, never without my trusty 22. There was even an abandoned strip mine where we could play army or cowboys and indians. Then came the Fall, and hunting squirrel and rabbit became foremost in my mind. Nothing like sitting under a big Beach tree as the warm sun comes up and the woods come alive. Oh, how great Fall smells. I often think of those days that were so kind to me, a time when boys could be

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A love of firearms, an eye for art, vertical arrangement and lots of hard work make for a great combination in "The Wonderful World of 22".

boys and to have lived that wonderful world of 22.

I am a collector of things, especially of times past, but always at the zenith is my gun collection. If you were to ask, you would find my collection houses weapons of the American Revolution, the Civil War and the old west, all accompanying my numerous 22's. You might say I am the guy "who loves em all". When it comes to those wonderful 22's, I especially never seem to satisfy my unshakable appetite. There always seems to be just one more 22 pistol or rifle popping up at a show or garage sale I cannot live without.

With no special direction initially in mind, my revolver collection has essentially evolved around Smith and Wesson beginning with their introduction of the first practical revolver in 1857. My revolver collection is accompanied by a cross section of the many 22 pistols and rifles, all worthy of recognition and produced by numerous manufacturers over the years. The available volume of interesting examples seems to have no end.

When it finally dawned on me that I was a Smith and Wesson 22 collector, I began a quest to put together an example of each revolver model introduced by S&W from the beginning through today. Unlike many great collections displaying

superb examples of every occurrence of a single gun or manufacturer, my display is a small memorial to the evolution of the Smith and Wesson revolver and to the many other great manufacturers throughout the inexhaustible 22 world.

I feel very privileged to have been asked to provide you with a glimpse into my never-ending quest for the 22. Yes, there are a few more in my safes, perhaps not as noteworthy but still, in my mind, wonderful 22s.

Although many current advances in manufacturing have been introduced, I believe that the 22's produced during the 1920's through the 1950's remain the best of the best, when all manufacturers, minor and major, offered quality hand-fitted rifles and/or pistols. This period of outstanding 22's provided a particular excellence in style and craftsmanship.

I continue my unending search and am having a bunch of fun along the way, always something new to learn or find, just like Christmas morning. The chase may be the most fun as they say, but having, holding and shooting those great little 22's of yesteryear is not without its rewards and awakened memories. I am still that boy in "a boy and his rifle," and I never want that feeling to leave.

So there you have it, my Wonderful World of 22, a continuing quest, an unending story. I hope the display nurtured a few forgotten childhood memories or perhaps spawned a new era in your world of collecting.

Good luck and happy 22'ing, Tom



Tom Clapper, age 14. A picture speaks a thousands words. What a classic. Thanks, Tom!

CUSTOM BUCK KNIVES S.N. 1 TOGETHER AGAIN; WILL BE RAFFLED AS A PAIR

Serial Number 1 of the first series custom Buck knife has been donated back to The OGCA Civil Rights Defense Fund (CRDF)! This beautiful knife in style 501 was one of a limited edition of twenty-five created exclusively for OGCA by Sarah Buck.



Serial Number 1 of the first CRDF Buck knife series, style 501

The donation of S.N. 1 by Veryl Keaton will allow CRDF to pair it up with S.N. 1 of the second series. The second series was limited to just 50 and is in the 110 style with oak handle, no rivets. It includes a signed maker's card of authenticity and comes with a presentation box and brown leather sheath.



Serial Number 1 of the second series CRDF Buck knife, style 110

Both series were signed by three generations of the Buck family with the OGCA and CRDF logo etched in the handle.

Raffle ticket sales for the pair will commence at the March meeting for the raffle drawing which will be held Saturday, July 17th. Don't miss out on this opportunity to have S.N. 1 of both one-of-a-kind knives.

All proceeds go the OGCA Civil Rights Defense Fund. **Thank you for your support.**

CRDF Trustees:

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