

Fusillade

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Approval No. 421-607-80Y

Newsletter of the Ballarat Arms &
Militaria Collectors Society Inc.
Issue 170 - April –May 2020



Committee

President - Andrew Day - H 5334 4124
VP - Graeme Standen - text 0419 566 490
Secretary - Nick Smith - H 5342 4433
Treasurer - John Nadge - H 5330 3699

John Doodt - H 5331 1950
Graeme Davenport - H -5334 1360
Russell Kinnersly - H 5344 8237
Dave Wright - B 5338 4377
David Morrison - H 5348 4124
Leigh McCann Text 0412 895 919

The Society has formal meetings on the last Wednesday of the month, except December, January and February . Special meets are held in November and February
VENUE-**Scout Hall, Humffray St South, south of Grant St.** Almost opposite Gladstone St. Doors open at **7.15pm**. Meeting starts at **8.00pm**.
Visitors and potential new members are always welcome. Mind where you park!
Membership inquiries (03) 5342 4433 or Email (below)

Our collecting interests include: - Military & Sporting Long-arms; Black powder Firearms; Collectable Handguns; All Edged Weapons & Knives; Ammunition and Ordnance; Badges; Medals; Uniforms; Maps; Books and Documents, General history. We are also an **Approved Shooting Organization** (Hunting and Target) under the 1996 Victorian Firearms Act

"Fusillade" is the bimonthly newsletter of the Society
Editor - Nick Smith

PO Box 1210 BAKERY HILL 3354.

Ph (03) 5342 4433 (Message machine—Please speak clearly)

E-mail - baamcs@activ8.net.au

Website – www.ballaratarms.com.au

Next newsletter closing date is **5th June 2020**

*Opinions within these pages are not necessarily also those of the Editor,
...unless written by the Editor (and even then...)*

Society Meeting Details

No meetings until further notice

Members are reminded if they change ANY of their address details, storage address contact home number, they **MUST** advise LRD in writing, or Fax, within **7** days.
Not to do so is an offence. Be warned.

Please keep your Postal, Residential and email addresses, and Phone numbers up to date, with the Society. Thank you.

***LRD - Call 1300 651 645 - GPO Box 2807AA, Melbourne 3001
They don't take phone calls on a Wednesday. Call at 8.30am***

PRESIDENT'S DESPATCH

Welcome Members,

Well... what a difference a month can make. Back on the Feb 29th-Mar 1st we saw the 2 and possibly only Victorian gun shows for the year. Firstly, the NVACG held their annual Militaria & Collectables Expo in Shepparton and by all accounts was a stand-out. Congratulations to the NVACG for their efforts. On the same weekend the Wild Deer and Duck Hunting Expo was held in Bendigo with large crowds in attendance on both days. Skip forward to today and there is a shadow over any further shows being held this year. Sadly, the decision has been made to cancel our own show that was to be held in July. With current restrictions and the possibility of further restrictions, cancelling early rather than later was deemed to be the best option. Rest assured we will be back better than ever next year.

With our best attendance to date we held our annual shoot at the Ballarat Pistol Club Mt Rowan back in February. Thanks to all who attended, those who brought in a variety of rifles, the BPC members who assisted and Dave, who once again manned the barby. A fun and enjoyable time was had by all. This leads me to a disappointing announcement. Until further notice all Society meetings have been cancelled due to the restrictions placed on gatherings. Keep an eye on the Society website and our Facebook page as this will be our only means of keeping in touch with you, our members. Hopefully we will recommence meetings in time for elections however a contingency plan is in place in case we are not back in operation by then.

Our Facebook page has a great following and we appreciate the posts members share. The amount of historical information and pictures never ceases to amaze me and there is always something new to learn, even about our own Society in its early days. Memories. I urge members to also think about contributing to the newsletter. Most if not all of us has a specialty if not a story, let's share it with the rest of the Society.

With the current restrictions around social gatherings handgun owners are having difficulty meeting the requirements to maintain their licences. Shooter representative bodies such as SSAA, Shooters Fishers & Farmers Party, NSC, FOU and Shooters Union have opened dialogue with state Licensing & Regulation departments in an attempt to reach a reasonable solution. To date a number of states have been receptive and, in some cases have wavered these requirements. Others however have given a poor response indicating shooters must apply for an exemption complete with justification as to why this is required. Seriously? At this point in time Victoria has not made a decision and is "assessing their options." Way to be decisive guys.

In closing I will touch briefly on the current pandemic. Stay safe, keep hydrated and stay healthy. Stay at home if you can, practice social distancing if you do have to go out and practice good hygiene. This is not going to guarantee you won't get sick, it will however lower the chances of this happening. We appreciate the work done by our nurses, doctors and first

responders, we also need to be appreciative of the supermarket staff, farmers, factory workers and truckies to name but a few. These people are essential workers and they keep the country going. Hopefully my next report in a couple of months will paint a better picture. Take care.

Andrew Day.

Editorial

I have little to add to Andrew's comments. The newsletter will continue, but that's it. No other Society activities will proceed. Interestingly, we pulled the pin some 3 weeks before Scott's Morrison's pronouncements.

The 2020-2021 membership cards will be available as of late April, but must of course be paid for BEFORE June 30.

As there are no meetings, those who normally pay there, will have work something else out.

Unless a vaccine is available before very soon, we will have to work around the AGM, but of course many orgs are in the same boat, hopefully keeping 2m distance.

I hope some of the humour on later pages, lightens everybody's mood. Please stay safe.

Ed

After some days without TV sport, I realised there was a lady on my couch. She tells me she is my wife. Seems a nice lady.

A male patient is lying in bed in the hospital, wearing an oxygen mask over his mouth and nose. A pretty, young, student nurse appears to give him a partial sponge bath. 'Nurse', he mumbles, from behind the mask. 'Are my testicles black?'

Embarrassed, the young nurse replies, 'I don't know, Sir. I'm only here to wash your upper body and feet.' He struggles to ask again, 'Nurse, please check. Are my testicles black?' Concerned that he may elevate his blood pressure and heart rate from worry about his testicles, she overcomes her embarrassment and pulls back the covers.

She raises his gown, holds his manhood in one hand and his testicles in the other. Then, she takes a close look and says, 'There's nothing wrong with them, Sir!'

The man pulls off his oxygen mask, smiles at her and says very slowly: 'Thank you very much but, listen very, very closely..... 'A r e - m y - t e s t - r e s u l t s - b a c k ??'

With all this Corona Virus, I bet the people who make sanitising gel are rubbing their hands together.

To those who are complaining about the quarantine period and curfews, just remember that your grandparents were called to war, you are being called to sit on the couch and watch Netflix. You can do this.

I don't know why my fishing buddy is worried about Coronavirus, he never catches anything.

I sneezed in the bank today. It was the most attention I have received from the staff in the last 10 years.

I went into the pharmacy today and asked the assistant, "what kills this virus?"

She replied, "Ammonia Cleaner"

I said, "Oh sorry. I thought you worked here."



Prediction: There will be a minor baby boom in 9 months, and then one day in 2033, we shall witness the rise of THE QUARANTEENS.



SHOOT THOSE OLD RIMFIRES AGAIN!



A Stevens "Favorite" in .32 RF. This high-quality boy's rifle" was manufactured between 1893 and 1939; the best estimate is that one million or more "Favorites" were made, in .22, .25, and .32 calibers. Remington used the .25 and .32 Rimfires in their No. 4 Rolling Block boy's rifle, a pepperbox, a pocket pistol, and some small revolvers.

The oldest self-contained cartridge still in production—in continuous production since 1857, when S&W chambered it in their #1 revolver—is the rimfire .22 Short. Rimfire ignition, as a developmental stage in the evolution of fixed ammunition, was a logical technical progression from metal-cased ammunition ignited by an external percussion cap (such as the Maynard and Sharps rounds). Rimfire cartridges are a true self-contained type: all the components are contained in one compact, weatherproof, and reliable package.

Before the United States entered World War Two, rimfire cartridges were made in several calibers that had become popular in the previous century. In the significant year of 1939 the Stoeger Arms catalog listed rimfire percussion cap (such as the Maynard and Sharps rounds). Rimfire cartridges are a true self-contained type: all the components are contained

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LEAD, SHOT, AND BLANK RIM AND CENTER FIRE CARTRIDGES

RIM FIRE CARTRIDGES

CENTER FIRE SHOT CARTRIDGES

RIM FIRE SHOT CARTRIDGES

CENTER FIRE BLANK CARTRIDGES

RIM FIRE BLANK CARTRIDGES

CALIBER & DESCRIPTION	REMINGTON			WINCHESTER			WESTERN			PETERS			U. S.
	TYPE	WEIGHT	PRICE	TYPE	WEIGHT	PRICE	TYPE	WEIGHT	PRICE	TYPE	WEIGHT	PRICE	
RIM FIRE LEAD CARTRIDGES													
.22 Short	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	...
.22 Long Rifle	Lead	55	...	Lead	55	...	Lead	55	...	Lead	55	...	...
.22 Wadsworth	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	Lead	40	...	...
CENTER FIRE SHOT CARTRIDGES													
4 x L Shot	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	...
4 Long Shot	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	...
4 Short	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	...
RIM FIRE SHOT CARTRIDGES													
4 Long Shot	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	...
4 Short	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	Shot	40	...	...
CENTER FIRE BLANK CARTRIDGES													
4 Long Shot	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	...
4 Short	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	...
RIM FIRE BLANK CARTRIDGES													
4 Long Shot	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	...
4 Short	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	Blank	40	...	...

BOLD FACE LINES INDICATE BLACK POWDER. * BLACK POWDER. ▲ CHILLED SHOT. ◆ PRICE PER BOX OF 25.

DISCONTINUED

This page from the 1939 Stoeger catalog shows the rimfire rounds available before WW Two. In addition to bulletted cartridges, blanks and shot shells were also made by major ammunition companies. (The US Cartridge Company was out of business at this time.)

ammunition in .22, .25, .32, .38, and .41 calibers. There was a real market for these: many late 19th and early 20th Century small game rifles were chambered for .22, .25, and .32 Rimfire by, among other makers, Stevens, Remington, and Savage. In the 19th Century Remington used the .32 RF in a pepperbox, a pocket pistol, and some of their small revolvers. The famous Remington Double Derringer was chambered exclusively for the .41 Rimfire. Colt used the .41 Rimfire in its Third Model derringer and New Line revolver. In 1939, substantial numbers of these and many other guns using large caliber rimfire ammunition were still in widespread use.

Today all rimfire calibers larger than .22 have vanished. By 1946 almost all of the guns that fired them had been discontinued. Moreover, the transition to smokeless powder and non-corrosive priming in the post-World War One period had vastly improved the .22 Long Rifle's performance. The older guns had of course been designed for use with black powder: by 1946 a lot of them were worn to the point where using smokeless powder might have been unsafe. The period immediately following World War Two saw a wholesale re-evaluation of the market by all the major ammunition makers, and many calibers were eliminated from their product lines, including virtually all the rimfire rounds larger than .22 caliber. Owners of the old guns would have to

make do with existing stocks of ammunition, and when those ran out...well, they'd have to buy new guns, wouldn't they?

While discontinuing the large caliber rimfires was economically a sound decision it had consequences, especially for small game hunters. The .25 and especially the .32 Rimfire were accurate, quiet, and entirely suited to hunting. Both were about as perfect small-game calibers as could be imagined. The rifles chambered for them were generally of very high quality, showing levels of craftsmanship that couldn't be duplicated at reasonable prices today. Many are still in shooting condition, but today they languish in closets for want of something to put in them. The immensely popular Stevens "Favorite" and Remington No. 4 rifles routinely show up on auction sites at attractive prices, but ammunition for them—especially in the .25 caliber—is scarcer than frog hair. Another caliber no longer made is the .41 Swiss military round. Around the turn of the 20th Century hundreds of thousands of beautiful old Vetterli rifles firing it were sold in the USA, but the ammunition was dropped along with the other rimfires in 1946. The Vetterli is suited to hunting deer and other medium sized game, and so many of these guns are coming out of closets that it's a shame there's no way to put them back into the field.



A box of Navy Arms' ammunition made about 20 years ago by CBC in Brazil. The existing stocks of this have pretty much been exhausted and none is scheduled to be made again. The revolver depicted on the box is a S&W #1-1/2, in .32 Rimfire a popular "hideout" gun.

Recognizing that a small (and diminishing) market still existed, about 20 years ago the CBC plant in Brazil made a run of .32 Long and .41 Short Rimfire (for the Remington Derringer) which was sold through Navy Arms. But production ended and no more seems to be forthcoming, despite repeated requests to Navy Arms to bring back at least some of the old calibers. Prices for this "new" ammunition are steadily climbing as the supply dries up completely. Five years ago if you could find a box of the Navy Arms/CBC .32 RF ammunition it would set you back \$40-50; today it appears to have vanished from the market almost completely, and what little is still out there goes for three to five times that. Some very, very old copper-cased ammunition is found on collectors' sites, at prices that are hard to believe. Even if they will go off (a lot of this

stuff is more than a century old and it won't) at anywhere from \$5 to \$15 per round, sometimes more, it's far too expensive to shoot.

Of course it's possible to modify a rimfire rifle to shoot centerfire ammunition, but there are reasons not to do that. First, it requires skilled gunsmithing; second, it vastly reduces the collector value. And third, aside from the technical aspects of such a conversion, what happens when someone slips a "hot" reloaded round into a soft-iron action designed for black powder?

It's an inexorable law of economics that when a strong demand for something exists, a supply of it eventually surfaces. The existence of so many old large-caliber rimfire guns in good condition has created exactly this situation. And at least one company has come up with a clever way to produce shootable ammunition in several old rimfire calibers relatively economically.

The H&C Company, located in the commune of Saint Genis-Laval, not far from Lyons, France, uses modern machinery to produce re-usable cartridge cases in .32, .38, and .41 Rimfire. (Unfortunately, .25 RF isn't available, probably because the case head is too small.)



The kit contains the sizing/seating die, the base, a powder dipper, and decapping rods, all in a neat wooden box.



Two of the heeled bullets supplied by H&C are at left: the reduced diameter base is obvious. The bullets at right are .32 caliber, but for use in ammunition with "inside lubrication" and a case whose external diameter is greater than the bullet's.

I own a Stevens Favorite in .32 RF, so I ordered one of their kits in that caliber. It included a sizing/seating die, a base, a couple of decapping tools, and a small powder dipper; also 12 cases and 100 cast bullets. More cases and bullets can be ordered separately. H&C's cases are precision turned from brass bar stock. They're of what used to be called the "Everlasting" type: the walls are very thick and the cases very sturdy.

The external dimensions are identical to those of the rimfire case but internally two main differences exist. This first is a "step" machined in the case mouth to accept the reduced diameter base of the bullet.

The second is a notch cut in the rim, and a "flash hole" bored through. The flash hole is dimensioned to accept a 6mm "acorn" blank of the type used in starter pistols, which acts as the replaceable primer.

H&C also sells the special bullets required, which are produced in a custom mold by Hensley & Gibbs. The external bullet diameter in rimfires is the same as the case's, hence the bullet has a step, or "heel," sized properly to fit the mouth of the case.

Most of the old large-caliber rimfires were externally lubricated, with a waxy coating on the bullet, such as that seen in modern .22 LR cartridges. H&C's



bullets aren't lubricated but this is easily done by the user. They can be coated after loading with a small amount of lubricant, such as SPG, by hand. Alternatively, before loading the bullet can be coated with Lee Precision "Tumble-Lube" which dries to a waxy outer coating overnight. The process of loading one of these cases is straightforward, although things are done "in reverse order" to the normal sequence. The first step is to insert the heel of the bullet into the case mouth using the short base of the tool as a holder. The long sizer/seater die is then placed over the round and the bullet pushed home to its shoulder using the seating stem.



Step 1: The empty, unprimed case is placed on the base and the heeled bullet started in the case mouth. One end of the long die is placed over it to ensure alignment.



Step 2: With the long die in place the seating rod is used to push the bullet in as far as its shoulder.

The second step is to fill the inverted case with powder. H&C is emphatic that **ONLY** black powder may be used safely in their cases. The acorn blank used as a primer has a lot of surface area and minimal seating friction to resist gas pressures. The little scoop provided with the kit measures almost exactly 5 grains of FFFg, an amount that leaves just enough room to insert the acorn blank.



Step 3: The charge of black powder is poured in before seating the priming blank. The case holds about five grains of FFFg. ONLY black powder can be used in the H&C cases.

The last step is to GENTLY push the acorn blank into its recess. It's obviously unwise to be too rough at this point! The blank will fit snugly and seats flush with the rim of the case. A plastic or leather faced tool, something sturdy but soft, is best suited to the job. I found that the brand of blanks mattered in priming and de-priming: minute dimensional differences between brands can make some of them difficult to seat or to remove, so it's best to find one that works and stick with it.



Step 4: The acorn blank is *very gently* pressed into place. A leather or plastic faced tool is best for this job.

After shooting the cases must be de-primed and dropped into a container of cleaning material such as hot soapy water. After cleaning the fired cases they should be lubricated and re-sized for the next reload. This is done with the same tool used for seating the bullet: one end is machined small enough to act as a sizing die and a rod is provided to knock the sized case loose.



Examples of .32 Rimfire from various productions. Left to right, a .32 Short Rimfire, and a .32 Long Rimfire, both produced by Winchester nearly a century ago (these have copper cases, not brass!); one Navy Arms cartridge; and two loaded H&C rounds. It is highly doubtful that the old ammunition would go off and in any case, the high prices for such examples make them far too expensive to shoot.

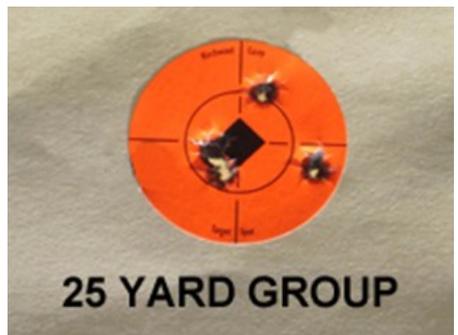


The copper-case antique ammunition at left is stamped "H," a mark of the Winchester Ammunition Company; the "V" headstamp is that of Navy Arms/CBC's product; the triangular stamp is seen on the blanks acting as "primers" in reloaded H&C cases.



How do they shoot? Pretty well. I took my .32 RF Stevens Model 1894 to the range and once sighted in fired several 5-shot groups at 25 yards that were well under 1-1/2", comparable to the CBC

The case has to be positioned so that the firing pin strikes the off-center primer. These kits work best with single shot guns or revolvers.



The H&C kits can be ordered on line at the company's web site; they accept credit cards and Paypal. In addition to the .32 Rimfire, kits are made in .38 and .41 Rimfire Short. The kits aren't cheap, but given the cost of a box of sure-fire ammunition—currently well over \$80 for 50 rounds in most markets, often much more—they pay for themselves quickly. Hunting or even just plinking with an old large-caliber rimfire is a fun and economical way to bring an old treasure out of the closet and back into the field again. [I use my little Stevens for squirrel hunting](#) and while I have a supply of the Navy ammunition for it, I also use the H&C product with equally good results.



The company can be contacted via

www.hc-collection.com

E-MAIL: contact@hc-collection.com

Also please note the link to the site from which this piece came

www.nrvoutdoors.com



All these ads are free, but the owners might like to upgrade sometime? Ballarat Arms.com.au /Contact Us

Research service for medal collectors. Very reasonable rates.
David Thewliss, PO Box 1440, SALE 3850 Ph/Fax (03) 5144 6845.

R.F.Scott & Co. 910 Howitt St, Wendouree. Sporting Guns, Rifles, Ammo, Gun Cases, Black powder & accessories. phone /fax (03) 5331 7111 bh.

H. REHFISCH & Co P/L Guns, Fishing, Archery, Gun safes, clothing, etc.
903 La Trobe St, Ballarat. 53313677

ANTIK, Purveyors of the old and unusual. Militaria and Old Wares shop.
At the roundabout and opposite the "Grape Hotel" 202 Grant St, cnr Humffray St South
(03) 53318268

Dave Wright Militaria and Collectables. Buying and selling Militaria. Sheppard St, Ballarat, Vic 3350. (*rear of Dan Murphy's bottle shop, between Mair and Curtis Sts*).
Ph 0353384377. Open Tues to Friday 9am to 5pm. Sat 9am to 1pm.
Email djwright@ncable.net.au. Web www.davewrightmilitaria.com.au

Rutherford Fine Leather Binding Hand bookbinding and repairs; Leatherwork;
Magazine collections hand sewn in hardcover volumes Peter Lewis 0402982500
www.rflb.com.au Email- booky@rflb.com.au

For all your Private gun and parts ads, try "Universal Used Guns.com.au"
www.universalsusedguns.com.au

Ozgunsales for all your online gun purchases and sales— www.ozgunsales.com

Fire Pumps TOHATSU (Japanese) Very high performance.
Contact Clive Keays Engineering, Beaufort **0418 309 550** for details

Any transfer of ownership of licensable firearms advertised in this newsletter, must be completed through a Licensed Gun Dealer. The 28 day cooling off period applies for a first purchase.

Front Cover Illustration

What are you doing to stop going stir crazy?

ALWAYS send documents to LRD via **REGISTERED or PRIORITY MAIL**
And **ALWAYS** make copies of those Documents for your files

Some members are still sending their details via "normal" mail and could be giving a thief a "shopping list." Just saying....

Registered Mail takes a week to get to Melbourne. Use Express Mail if unsure if your docs will arrive in time.
Yes I know this sucks, but I can't do anything about it.