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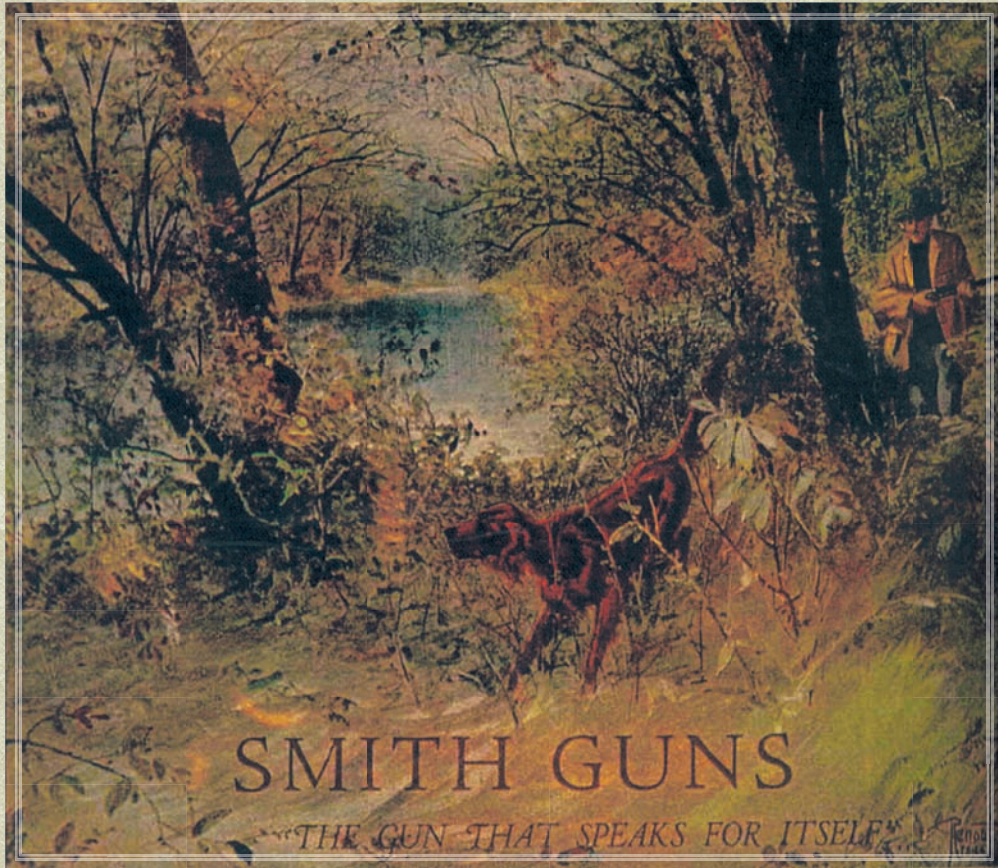


The Journal of the Volume 7 • Issue 1 • Spring 2009

L.C. SMITH

Collectors Association

L.C. SMITH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF





The Journal of the
L.C. SMITH
Collectors Association

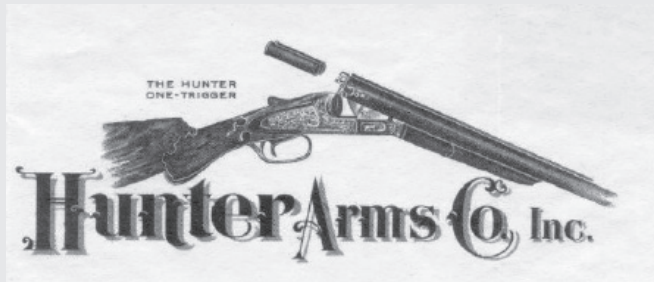
Spring 2009

Publication of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association
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 and December

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Special Points of Interest:

- Executive Director article.
- Current Events
- Things to consider when thinking of buying a L.C. Smith
- Future Events

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Executive Director's Page

A Call to Action

by Frank J. Finch, Jr.

This is the first message to all of you in the year 2009. Do you sometimes ask yourself, "Where have the months and years gone?" Each year seems to pass more rapidly than the year before! Our club is almost six years old! Perhaps time only seems to flow more quickly with each passing year because we are all so deeply involved in activities that engage us completely, bringing us much personal pleasure and satisfaction. If this is true, and I believe it is, then we are all most highly blessed.

We all greet each year New Year with excitement and anticipation because it represents a new beginning. It brings us the promise of new opportunities for achievement and for making positive changes in our lives. Let's all resolve to prioritize our time during this year and to make wise use of it. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year." We must all make the very best of every day because one thing is sure: Once time is gone, it can never be retrieved, revised or relived.

Life is meant to be enjoyed, not just endured or carelessly spent. We are all given just one life, so we must make the most of it. The philosopher William James said, "The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it." As L.C. Smith Collectors Association members, we are doing exactly that. We are actively involved in preserving our American heritage by collecting and preserving our fine L.C. Smith shotguns and the history of the company that made them.


Spring is a time of new beginnings, of changes in our club's communication

media and within our club's officers and committee chairmen. Beginning with this issue, we have moved to a "journal format" printed by Village Press. This new format will enhance our ability to communicate with you, our members. Jason G. Harrison is our newly appointed Editor and promises to create an informative and artistically pleasing club journal for your enjoyment. Please remember, the journal will only be as good as the articles you submit to Jason for publication. We all have had great experiences collecting, shooting, hunting, researching and maintaining our L.C. Smith shotguns. Let's write down a few of those experiences/memories and send them to Jason for the Journal. Collectively, all will benefit from your effort. Remember, we want our experiences to outlast our lives. What better way than to have them published in our club journal?

At the February Board of Directors reorganization meeting, several responsibility changes were implemented to facilitate new opportunities. Len Applegate was again appointed Membership Chairman to interact with Chris Baumohl, who remains as our Treasurer, Jason Harrison, our Editor, and with the Village Press to ensure proper distribution of our Journal. J. David Williamson was appointed Technical Advisor to assist members. I will act as Event Chairman until a replacement is appointed. Bryndon Steele was appointed Data Coordinator of early Syracuse gun data. Please contact Bryndon with your input to help overcome that "missing" part of our gun heritage. In addition to his duties as Web Master, Dr. Jim Stubben-dieck was appointed Research Chairman and will research and create L.C. Smith

"Research Letters" for members and non members. Other Officers and Chairmen were reelected or reappointed and remain as before. Please refer to the "LCSCA Organization" page of our website for a complete list of current Officers and Committee Chairmen.

By now, you are all well into the new year and making plans to attend many of our scheduled events. Our 2009 Event Schedule offers ten event opportunities for your enjoyment and participation. The slowing economy may present some L.C. Smith "finds" for your collection at one of our upcoming gun shows. Plan to attend our Annual Spring Shoot at Carlisle Fish and Game Club in Carlisle, PA on March 23, 2009. This fun and popular event is a great "warm-up" for the Southern Side by Side Classic held April 23 through 27, 2009 in Sanford, NC. Plan on having your voice heard at our club's Annual Meeting on April 24, 2009 at 5 PM in the Deep River Club House in Sanford, NC. In addition to the Annual Meeting, the schedule contains four gun shows and five shooting events located around the country for your participation. Additional club events may be added as we receive suggestions and offers of volunteers from our membership. Members' willingness to participate at events is crucial to the success of continuing club events.

We live active and creative lives, assuring that they are satisfying and productive ones – lives well-spent on things that will last. May you attain all your goals with great success, and may 2009 be a happy and rewarding year for each of you as a member of LCSCA. Remember, time is for investing – before it flies away 





We Need Your Correct Address and Contact Information

by Len Applegate

I have been the editor and publisher of “L.C. Smith Speaks For Itself” for six years and as you know have relinquished my duties to Jason Harrison and Village Press.

For two weeks after I hauled the latest issue to my local Post Office I could expect to find, in my mailbox by return mail, two or three with a yellow sticker proclaiming “Return to Sender”. Often times the sticker would also include the recipient’s new address with the terse message that the forwarding time had expired. Those were the easy ones to resolve. I simply changed the organizations records to reflect the new address, put the contents in a new envelope with the new address and postage, and sent it off again. Others, however arrived with no forwarding address. Then the search began with a search of the National White Pages and calls and e-mails to the contact information provided. Sometimes I was lucky and found the member other times the orphan journal ended up in the LCSCA dead letter office (my desk drawer). All of these gyrations are expensive for the organization; two envelopes and twice the postage.

The point of all this is to remind the membership to please make sure we have your current address and contact information. Without it, you won’t be getting your Journal. Village press will be producing the mailing labels based on the membership

list as of the beginning of the month prior to sending the current issue, that is, the beginning of February for the March Issue and so forth.

This brings up another important item. When you receive your annual renewal notice you need to get your annual dues to Chris Baumohl, or Treasurer, prior to the time I generate the membership list for Village press. If we don’t have your dues by then you won’t be getting your Journal. If you realize that you have forgotten call or e-mail Chris and we will trust you for it so that you don’t miss the mailing.

If you need to update your contact information contact me, Len Applegate, at:

7572 Overglen DR
West Chester, OH 45069-9382
apple102050@gmail.com
(513) 942 7572

Mail your annual dues to Chris Baumohl at:

1208 Chesser DR
Huntsville, AL 35803-36212
cbaumohl@gsqmap.com
(256)883-4307 

Membership Renewals


by Chris Baumohl

I hope everyone enjoys the new look of the Journal. We have a new process in place on how we handle membership renewals. With the new Journal we have come up against a hurdle or two but are working through them the best we can.

The time line involved for the publication of the Journal mandated a change in the deadline for membership renewals. This is one of the hurdles we are working through. To explain that further, we have to maintain a current membership list in order to be able to mail out the Journals to all current members. Therefore, we have to have this “final” membership list to the printer earlier than what we had done in the past. For example, the due date for the mailing list for this issue was due to the printer by the first of

the last week of January. In the past, we had much more time to prepare the mailing list and could take renewals almost up to mailing date. That has now changed.

For those of you receiving a renewal notice with this issue of the journal, the cut off for the **NEXT** mailing list (and your renewal to stay current) will be April 24th. I will need to have RECEIVED your renewal by that time so we can prepare the list and submit it to the printer. Failure to do so will result in that fact that you will not be on our latest membership list and therefore will not receive the next Journal.

We apologize for the change. I process the renewals almost daily so if you get it to me in time, I will get it processed! 

The Only 28 Gauge L.C. Smith

by Jim Stubbendieck

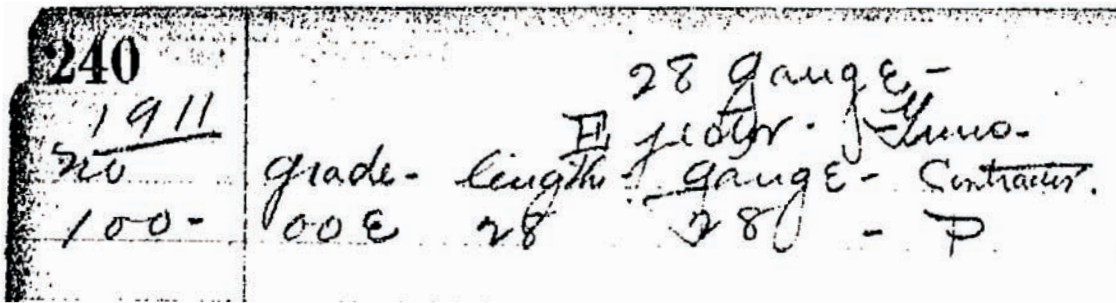
The 1970 edition of Gun Digest contained an article titled "The L.C. Smith Resurrected!" by Gerald R. Hunter. The article contained a brief the history of the L.C. Smith shotgun and outlined a few of its design features, but the primary focus was the reintroduction of L.C. Smith shotguns by the Marlin Firearms Company. Today, we refer to these shotguns as the 1968-71 models. More interesting than the article was the caption under a photograph of three people: "Verna Hunter Wadsworth, Clair Wadsworth (center) holding the only 28-gauge L.C. Smith shotgun ever made, and the author." Later in that decade (1977), Col. William S. Brophy included two sentences about the 28 gauge in his book L.C. Smith Shotguns: "The records indicate that only one 28 gauge gun was made. It

was a Hunter Arms Co. 00 Grade with Automatic Ejectors, 28-inch barrels and was serial numbered 100."

After a considerable amount of searching, I was able to find Serial Number 100 on page 240 of Book 17 between Serial Numbers 219143 and 219144. You can see why it took some searching.

The reason that no other 28 gauge shotguns were made is unknown, but it appears that more were planned. Serial number 100 is at the top of page 240 under the heading of "28 gauge - Ejector Guns." Note that the word "Guns" is plural. The remaining part of page 240 and is blank, as is page 241. Each page could have held about 70 entries. The contractor is the inspector. In this case, "P" stands for M.W. Mack.

We are left to lament the fact that no more were made and only imagine how well a 28 gauge Smith would point and handle in the field. 🍷



The record for the only 28 gauge L.C. Smith shotgun, page 240 of Book 17.

Letter from the Editor

by Jason G. Harrison

Greetings fellow members, I hope you are enjoying the new L.C. Smith Journal. As you can see there are a lot of changes going on and we want you to be a part of that. This Journal's content is based solely upon submissions from within our membership. If you find it lacking...please contribute what you think "it" needs.

I want to publish what our membership wants published and as such, I request that you who want to submit an article or picture for publication to contact me. Lets make this first Journal be just the be-

ginning of something even greater. With your help and contributions we can create and will create a Journal that will provide entertaining, educational, and historical articles that can be used as future reference material.

So please let me know your thoughts. Easiest way to reply would be to go to our website at www.lcsmith.org, go to the Discussion board, and post some thoughts about this Journal. There all members can voice their opinion and others can see what their fellow members

think. I look forward to seeing some feedback. I am here to publish what the membership wants and I will do so to my utmost ability.

As your new Editor, I want to first thank Len Applegate for his many years of service in this position. He provided our Association with a wonderful newsletter and was instrumental in helping me get this new Journal up and running. Our Association owes Len a debt of gratitude as we were so lucky to have him as our Editor. 🍷



Introduction of J. David Williamson

(David W) Technical Advisor

I was approached by Jason Harrison early on when he was first going to take on the new "Journal" for the L.C.S.C.A.. Later I received an email and subsequently a telephone call from Frank Finch asking if I would be interested in writing some technical information about the L.C. Smith. I told both I would be glad to help on what I know.

First to tell you a little about myself, I am 62 years old and retired in 2001 from working in the mechanical field of a large electric supplier in New Jersey for 28 years. This included work in their Nuclear station in Southern N.J. The work included removing and rebuilding some of the generators and related equipment. My field before that was an apprentice machinist, and in the interim included a stint in the United States Army from Dec. 1965 to Nov. 1967 where I served 18 months in Germany as a Military Policeman. While in Germany I had the privilege to meet a German who was a fireman on our post, and in talking with him I came to find out that he liked hunting as well. I showed him a Remington 11-48 .410 that I had in the arms room. He asked me what could I kill with that little thing, I told him I could kill as much as he could with his Franchi 20 ga. Well that led to a challenge and I was invited to hunt on his father's property for pheasants, Hungarian Partridge, hares, mallards and teal. All of these were shot with it, and of which I still have.

I have been happily married since 1970 to a wonderful woman who understands my passion for hunting and trout fishing (but not so much fishing now). Have two grown children, Christian married and a daughter Jennifer married with 3 lovely granddaughters.

After retirement we moved to be closer to both children but wound up closer to my daughter and now we live in the country about 4 1/2 miles from Cabela's in Pa. This area up until the 80's was the pheasant capitol of Pa., and also of the east coast. Now the only way you will see any is if I buy some and let them go.

I also have a 29 month old English Setter, Max. (if you follow the site I have put his picture there with some birds and the "Elsie's" that I used.)

When I was growing up in New Jersey I became interested in hunting and started hunting at age 14 with three friends and of the three, I am still very close to one. He was my best man and I was his. Hunted pheasants, woodcock, quail (not too far from where Frank Finch lives) in the 60's 70's with an English setter and later with Brittany's. Moved to Pa. in 1973 when I transferred with my company to a new generating station., but still bought a non resident license to hunt N.J. as well as Pa.

I became interested in L.C. Smiths in 1976 when I answered an add in the local newspaper about one.

Didn't have much if any information about them. Someone I knew said he never saw one that didn't have any markings on the barrel. This gun FW S1825 turned out to be an early Marlin gun of which I found out much later. (still have it but have never shot it.)

Some of the others that I was able to purchase that were reasonably priced, but some had repair issues. Since there was nobody that I knew that fixed them I decided to try it myself, my reasoning was if I could tear equipment apart that was worth millions, what could there possibly be in a gun that I couldn't fix myself. (knock on wood, nothing yet)

My first attempt was not having the right screwdrivers, and so I "buggered" a few screws taking it apart, but really no big deal. The FW S had a broken coupler (still broken, I have new part) and in looking at some periodicals noticed Numrich's add and was able to get a parts list from them.

Now going to re-assemble, and line up the top lever shaft to the trigger housing, I was lost. Went into a forum on the internet and asked a question on how to do so and Russ Ruppel (RIP) answered and told me what he used and what to do. Ever since then I have not had any problems re-assembling "Elsies". When I purchase one I usually take them apart to check them out, but there are a few that I have not done so. One is a 1887 Grade 2 10 guage Syracuse that looks like it was never taken apart and I will leave it that way, very nice condition.

The main thing is to have the right tools and I have tried grinding my own screwdrivers but lately I have been using Wheeler Engineering 72 pc set, they are just great.

In the last 6 years I have researched and read every article I could find on L.C. Smiths and read some more than once, and have questioned some on what was written.

I have also be very fortunate to have gotten information from Russ, Tom Archer, Dr. Bill Hambidge, Bill Winter, Skip Dunlap and others on the site and would like to thank them for their advice.


Well, that is who I am, and in my opinion the L.C. Smith is the greatest gun around in workmanship and beauty. I don't care about what some say about Foxes or what others say about Parkers, they can't compare to the L.C. Smith.





In the poll taken about which years “Elsies” do you find the best, I said the Syracuse line, but now I have to agree with Mr. Archer (SGT) on the early Fultons, very nice indeed, from really great craftsman that took pride in their work.

If there are any technical questions or problems that you might have with your gun or any type project you would like to do your self, re-freshen checkering, touch up or refinish wood to include steaming dents out, (suggest starting with a Field Grade clunker) or more

labor intensive projects like preparing your barrels for re-bluing/blacking, etching Damascus barrels, taking dents out of barrels, measuring bores, measuring wall thickness of barrels from honing, etc., feel free to email me at jdavidw1@comcast.net 

On December 26, 2008 the 5th Annual LC Smith Post Christmas Shoot was held at Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays in Coplay, Pennsylvania. Nearly two dozen Smith aficionados gathered on what the British call Boxing Day in order to enjoy their fine smoothbores. There was no competition. The ultimate reward was the joy of shooting America’s finest side-by-side shotgun.

After the smoke cleared many of the shooters recessed to a local eatery for refreshment and conviviality. (photos by Marina Pushkareva to be submitted separately)

– John K.B.

The L.C. Smith Post-Christmas Song*

by J.K Bleimaier



*Chestnuts were roasting, but now its time to open fire;
Sure, Jack Frost is nipping at your nose;
To break those rising targets aim just a little higher;
LC Smith shooters all dressed up like Eskimos.*

*Our post Christmas shoot’s a tradition like the mistletoe;
It truly helps to make the season bright;
Smoothbore enthusiasts with their eyes all aglow;
Could shoot all day and well into the night..*

*The day before Santa showed his sporting way
Having brought shotgunners special goodies on his sleigh;
Now every fan of Hunter Arms is really going to try
To break every clay target that from the trap will fly.*

*And so I’m offering you th is simple phrase,
To Elsie lovers from twelve to ninety-two:
Remember to come to Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays
Next year’s post Christmas shoot we’ll be counting on you!*

John Kuhn Bleimaier

December 26, 2008

*To be sung to the melody of “Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire” (apologies to Mel Tormey)



A Georgia Gun

by Chick Chandler

I was sitting around the other day, not really doing much of anything, when I suddenly realized I would be 90 years old this year. That realization got me to thinking I ought to write down my life's story for the generations to come. My current owner has three daughters who will undoubtedly have more sons and daughters, and they may very well want to know from whence I came. So, without further ado, here's my story as best as I remember.

I was born on December 9th 1919, and delivered to H & D Folsom on December 18th of that year. I am a 20 gauge with 26 inch barrels and, happily for me, a Specialty Grade! That usually means someone ordered me just the way they wanted. Further evidence of that would be that I have very open chokes - virtually cylinder/cylinder, and a Hunter One Trigger. Looked like I was headed south to Quail country.

My supposition was right! My proud owner, Mr. Charles, picked me up and immediately bought a nice, leather, hard case from Abercrombie and Fitch. Nestled safely inside my case we traveled to Georgia where my owner's large family lived. I can't be sure since there was a lot going on in Mr. Charles' family that year, but I may have been a part of Christmas 1919.

The next few years are filled with memories of many Quail hunts on various "plantations" around the state. At this early stage of the 20th century, horse drawn wagons were used to take the hunters out to the fields in the early morning where they would walk for hours sometimes, in search of wild birds. I did my best to swing nimbly, balance perfectly, come to hand easily, and bring down the birds. In this, I can modestly say, I was fairly successful.

Then it happened. One day while riding with Mr. Charles in the wagon, I slipped out of my rest and fell to the ground. Unfortunately, I fell between the front and rear wheels and, you guessed it, SNAP! My stock was broken and my hunting was over for the season. This must have been in the late twenties or early thirties. Fortunately, a wonderful young man who was a wizard with wood was able to repair the damage. I could never bring myself to really look at how bad the injury was, but I did see the results of the young man's work. Why, one could not even tell I had been broken!

Time passed slowly for a few years, what with the War and all, but finally it came time to go afield again. Mr. Charles had slowed down a bit by now, so he passed me on to his son, Mr. Howard. With Mr. Howard I had some competition for his attention. He was an avid outdoorsman and hunted often. He hunted Quail for sure, but also larger game for which he had a cabinet full of rifles.



It was around this time, late forties or early fifties, that another misadventure befell me. We had gone out Marsh Hen hunting in a tidal area called Christmas Creek. This is in southeast Georgia along the coast where we regularly get seven to eight foot tides. Throw in a Nor'easter for good measure and we really get some tall tides! On this day the tide was way up and the shooting was great! The sixteen foot "bateau" (known locally as a Willie Harris, after the man who built them) we were in somehow lurched, and you guessed it - over the side I went. Well, Mr. Howard figured that was the end of that, and after dragging a hook over the bottom for a while trying to snag me, he headed on in to the dock. My savior this time was a man who worked for Mr. Howard's family, by the name of Jesse Bailey. He was born on Sapelo Island, just up the coast, and had spent most of his life in marshes and tidal creeks. He spoke in a deep voice with a heavy Gullah accent, that many people say was a holdover from his ancestors' African heritage. A man of few words, he asked Mr. Howard where I had gone over the side. Since the tide had been so high it was difficult to pinpoint exactly where I was, but he gave Jesse a general direction and





hoped for the best. Sure enough, when the tide went out Jesse went out in his “Willie Harris” and started to look for me. He got real quiet and slowly looked over “his” creek, then slowly rowed over to a spot that looked like any other in Christmas Creek. Reaching over the side and feeling around in the mud, his fingers tightened on my stock. With a gentle pull I was out into the light of day again! But, Lord, what a mess. I was off to the gunsmith as soon as possible, and after a thorough disassembly, cleaning, oiling, and reassembly I was as good as new. In fact, at this point I was already almost forty, so I had gotten a well deserved overhaul.

We continued hunting for a while longer, but the trips got fewer and fewer. About this time Mr. Howard’s son, Mr. Buddy, got married. His wife enjoyed hunting and fishing as much as anyone, and especially liked shooting Skeet, so off with Mr. Buddy and Ms. Claire I went. Now Ms. Claire was not a tall person, so as much as she enjoyed shooting with me, we just never really “fit”. The answer to that was a little bit of surgery. Sometime around the early sixties a couple of inches were cut off my butt stock. Now I fit Ms. Claire perfectly! We went shoot-



ing at Riverbend Gun Club near Atlanta whenever we could, and went Quail hunting again. I was in my element!

Oft times we would drive down to Greenville, Georgia to pick up a fellow named Bradley, who knew some of the best hunting in the state.

We’d arrive early in the morning, just in time for one of his wife ChayChay’s delicious country breakfasts. Then we would drive on further south until we found a promising field. Without fail, Bradley would know the owner somehow, and we would be welcome to spend the day shooting.

By the mid to late sixties Mr. Buddy’s and Ms. Claire’s son, Mr. Chick, started shooting with me as well. For a few years I fit both of them very well, and we had many trips to Callaway Gardens for Thanksgiving and bird hunting. We also spent a bit of time at Riverbend Gun Club teaching Mr. Chick how to shoot Skeet. It was during this time that an amazing meeting took place. Ms. Claire had been shooting Skeet at Riverbend and had set me down in the gun rack by the Skeet field, when an elderly gentleman began eyeing me. He kept walking by me and just looking at me strangely. Finally Ms. Claire asked him if she could help him and he responded that ‘no’ he was fine but he wanted her to know he was the man who had fixed my stock all those years ago. She was shocked to say the least and wasn’t sure she had heard him right. He repeated himself and said, “I know that gun-I fixed the stock once, when a wagon ran over it”. Well, they stood and talked for a few minutes about the old days, and then he was gone. I wish I knew who he was, but I never got his name.

Shortly after this Mr. Chick started shooting me a good bit, but I was a little short since I had two inches of my stock missing. There was some discussion about how to lengthen my stock and at first they talked about re-stocking me with a new piece of wood. I wasn’t too keen on that and before it got that far, Mr. Buddy found the original piece that had been removed! With a bit of care, the piece was re-attached and I was back to my original dimensions. But wouldn’t you know it, after shooting with me for a short while, Mr. Chick went off to college, spent some time traveling, got married, and started a family while I went into my case for most of the next thirty years.

Three or four years ago Mr. Chick cleaned me up and began shooting with me again. He got involved with some group called the “LC Smith Collectors Association”, where many of his questions about me were answered, and he found a great many people who shared his new found passion for all things “Elsie”. Mr. Chick also had me freshened up a bit when he sent me to a Dr. Bill. My stock was glass-bedded for strength, the “ridge” that ran around my stock where the piece was re-attached was sanded smooth, and the entire stock and fore end was refinished and re-checked. Now we shoot every chance we get, and I’m ready for the next ninety years



Things to consider when thinking of buying a L.C. Smith

by Drew Hause and Tom Archer

Evaluation at a gun shop or gun show should be undertaken only with the permission of the seller. If the seller refuses disassembly, walk away! Consider carrying a small tape measure, magnifying glass, chamber length rule, choke gauge, short wooden dowel (to tap the barrels), and snap caps in a zip pouch.

1. Are there cracks or chips in the wood? Look carefully at the apex of the locks and at each of the four 'fingers' of the head of the stock. See www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/17090409
2. Is there evidence of previous repair to the wood (visible glue joints, dowels, pins, screws, added wood pieces, etc)?
3. Is the level of the wood lower than that of the metal? This would suggest over-standing and a previous, and unprofessional attempt at wood refinishing.
4. Does the metal or wood appear refinished? The amount of wear on the barrel blue, case colors, checkering, engraving, and the stock should match. There should be more 'carry wear' at the bottom of the receiver.
5. Has the checkering been re-finished? This may have been done to hide evidence of a previous crack repair; and does the checking on the grip match that of the fore end wood? Checkering on both stock and fore end normally wear at the same rate; but, sometimes in a wood repair to the grip area, only the grip panel checkering will be re-cut.
6. What is the length of pull from the front trigger (or Hunter One-Trigger) to the middle of the butt plate? LCs could be special ordered; but, if the length of pull (LOP) is less than 14" (including the butt plate) on a double trigger gun, the stock may have been cut. On a Smith gun with a single trigger in the rear position, this LOP measurement will be less than 14", and is typically 13 1/2" to 13 3/4". A 14" LOP to the end of a replacement pad could suggest a cut stock (a customer could order his gun fitted with a rubber pad at the factory; and, as these early pads often deteriorated), a previous owner may have replaced the original with a non-period pad). If the gun under consideration is a good example except for a poor, or non-period pad installation; don't rule the gun out, as that is a problem easily corrected provided the stock itself has not be shortened below 13". Measure existing stock wood to the base of the existing pad; as long as the remaining wood portion of that stock is at least 13" long, a replacement period pad can be added to bring the LOP out to 14"-14 1/4" and give the gun a period correct appearance.
7. Is the butt plate or pad original? See www.lcsmith.org/faq/recoilpad.html and www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/15656750
8. Is the forearm loose?
9. What is the % of case color? See www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/12588446 Is the engraving on the receiver and lockplates sharp? If not, or if the case colors are much stronger than what would be expected in light of the over-all condition of the the gun, the gun may have been re-cased. A re-cased gun is not necessarily a bad thing, assuming the gun is priced as a restoration; but compare the new colors to an original to see if they have the right "look", or appearance. Most importantly check the gun carefully to see that the barrel flats and breeches fit tightly at the water table and breech balls; if not there is a good possibility that the frame may have undergone some degree of warping when re-cased.
11. What is the % of bluing? Is the lettering sharp? If not, the barrels have likely been reblued. Re-blued barrels are not necessarily a bad thing if given a proper slow rust blue; but many barrels sets have been hot blued and the bluing salts improperly neutralized. When buying any double gun always remove the fore iron to check for evidence of any white or yellowish powder residue around the fore iron hanger lug and the bottom ribs; this is a sure sign of an improper blue job and potential loose rib/hanger problem that will be expensive to repair. Barrels given this treatment will often exude a peculiar odor that is difficult to describe; maybe a "copper metallic" smell? At any rate avoid those guns.
13. Are the screws damaged? Damaged screws mean previous disassembly by someone without the skills to do so.
14. Is the top lever right of center? Left of center suggests a worn rotating bolt, or possibly a worn hinge pin, or



perhaps both. Does the top lever stay in the open position when the gun is open? Does it snap to the closed position forcefully? These latter two problems involve spring repairs and are a relatively easy fix for a professional; so don't walk from an otherwise good gun if priced right.

15. Is there movement between the barrel and receiver with the gun closed and the forearm removed?
16. Is there sideways movement between the barrel and receiver with the gun open (indicates heavy use)?
17. Does the gun operate properly? Do the ejectors work with equal force? Does the safety work? Does the safety reset after opening the gun (although this may not be a problem as some double trigger Smith guns were ordered with manually operated safety slides, and all Hunter One-triggers have manually operated safety slides)? If a 3-position safety, it should remain off safe when in the rear position.
18. Are the trigger pulls light, crisp, and equal? (ONLY pull the triggers with permission, on snap caps, and be sure to open the gun to recock the hammers before disassembly.)
19. Does the serial number on the receiver, barrels, and forend iron match?
20. What is the length of the barrels? Although a few examples were factory produced with odd length barrel tubes, anything but exactly 26, 28, 30, or 32" would be a cause for concern; or perhaps verification via a LCSCA research letter.
21. What are the chokes? The length of 16 and 20g chokes should be 1 1/2 to 2 inches with a very short parallel section at the muzzle. 12g choke should have a 1 9/16" taper segment with a 1" parallel segment.
22. Is there pitting in the barrels? Are there any dents or bulges? Ask the seller the bore size (for evidence of previous honing) and barrel wall thickness (this is an especially important concern with barrels that show evidence of having been re-blued!). Have the forcing cones been lengthened? Measure the chamber length. Unless special ordered, a 12g chamber should be 2 3/4". Hunter Arms Company lengthened the 20 gauge chambers from 2 1/2" to 2 3/4" in 1936. L.C. Smith and Fulton 16 gauge guns manufactured as late as 1940 may still have 2 9/16" chambers.
23. Hold the barrels by the lumps and lightly strike them over the entire length with your wooden dowel (or pencil.) They should give off a bell-like tone. If they clank, or if you hear a rattle or feel a vibration, the ribs may be coming loose. Proper repair is a several hundred dollar job. Look up and down the length of the top and bottom ribs

with your magnifying glass for separation or a local area of rust.

24. Is there any pitting or corrosion of the exterior metal surfaces? If so, it may well look worse on the inside!
25. Has the gun been aftermarket personalized with numbers, initials, etc. using a punch or electric engraving pencil? Original factory engraved, or inlaid names and initials on a trigger guard or stock escutcheon will not detract from the value of a gun; and could actually enhance its value if the "right" provenance can be established.
26. There should be slightly more case color on the water table and breech face than the locks. Are there pits around the firing pin holes? Shell rim indentations? Are firing pin bushings present (on a gun made prior to about 1906) and are they cracked? Are the bushing slots damaged? Are the bushing set screws in place?

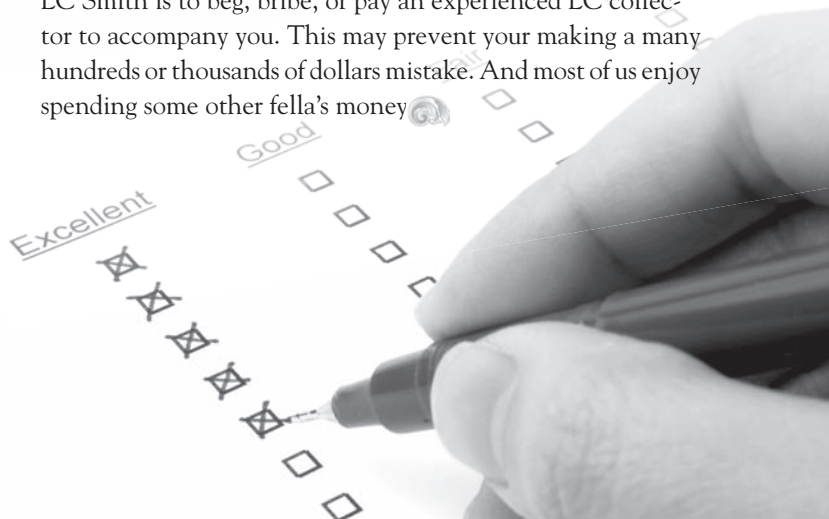
If you have questions about the possibility of a cut barrel or an upgraded gun, a LCSCA Research Letter can confirm the original configuration www.lcsmith.org/shotguns/research/division.html

If possible, ask the seller to meet you at a gun club so you may shoot the gun. Do NOT fire a gun received from an internet seller without the seller's permission.

ALWAYS expect a 3 day 'for any reason' return privilege. If returned, you will be expected to pay for the return shipping and insurance cost.

If a gun is reported to be of historical significance and arrives without the claimed provenance, send it back immediately.

The best preparation prior to the purchase of a vintage LC Smith is to beg, bribe, or pay an experienced LC collector to accompany you. This may prevent your making a many hundreds or thousands of dollars mistake. And most of us enjoy spending some other fella's money.



Southern Side-by-Side Fall Classic

by James Fincannon

On October 13, 2008, Thursday afternoon, Bob Fleming and I arrived at Backwoods Quail Club in Georgetown, South Carolina for the Fall Classic Side-by-Side championship. This event was a joint shoot put together by Rick Hemingway and Bill Kempfner to further enhance the enjoyment of shooting our side-by-sides in a friendly competitive atmosphere. We arrived early to check out the facility and get in some five-stand practice before the events started on Friday. Entering the drive, we stopped to view the two five-stand fields and a make-or-break field which were very spacious. We drove down to the office and Rick Hemingway was there to greet us in his usual mild Southern manner. After a little socializing he offered us a golf cart so we could check out the rest of the facility and sporting clays course. Each station was fifty to seventy-five yards apart with sixteen stations that we could be shooting from. Don't get me wrong this is a large course the Rick could easily put twenty-two to twenty-six stations on, but he only had sixteen stations marked for our use, primarily because this was the first fall classic and there was probably only going to be fifty to seventy shooters plus vendors under the tent. We arrived at the tents and Bill Kempfner was there graciously welcoming us to the event and offering us a space under the tents for next year for a L.C. Smith display.

Friday morning with guns in hand we found out the targets were very challenging and tricky. We had a great time missing the slow rabbit on the small bore station. Also, a few stations down, there was a clay bird that was shot at a trampoline then ricocheted in a different direction. I didn't hit a single one which might have been because I was laughing too hard after the first bird to hit any others. I liked the gravel covered drive on the course trail with the golf cart. It made going easy. It was a very clean course the way it was set up. If you plan on walking, it will be $\frac{3}{4}$ to one mile walk from the parking area, so good boots or shoes are a must.

Rick's staff prepared great lunches every day. We had barbeque, green beans, chicken, cole slaw, baked beans, banana pudding, etc. By the end of the day I got five rounds in with no lines or backups on the course. You could shoot straight through. L.C. Smith and other shooters will really enjoy shooting here next year. It's a good thing we got most of our shooting in on Friday because Saturday it rained until noon. While waiting to shoot the Team Challenge, I had time to go through the tent and talk

to everyone at the event. There was plenty of joking, laughing, exchanging of information, and general conversation. All of which is a big part of these events. Show time! The rain stopped and the American Classic Team Challenge started and we did round up five shooters to form a team.

Saturday night was the award banquet and rib eye dinner, which was excellent. Team L. C. Smith won an award in every American Classic hammer gun event. James Fincannon won first place - 10 gauge, Bob Flemming won second place - 12 gauge, first place - 16 gauge, second place - 20 gauge, first place - 28 gauge, and first place - 410, and second place - 10 gauge. Trophies were given for first and second place in all categories. The Fall Classic Team Challenge was well represented by five teams; L.C. Smith, Fox, Parker, Winchester, and Connecticut Shotguns. All put on a good showing but on the whole L.C. Smith took the win of the First Annual American Team Challenge. Team shooters were Grant Rosser, Adam Picket, Bob Fleming, and James Fincannon. Grant took top shooter with a score of twenty-three. Adam, Bob and James won by only two targets. The trophy will be displayed at Backwoods Quail Club in Georgetown. Team L.C. Smith will be the first name on the plaque which is an honor in itself. The plaque will be at the spring shoot in April at Deep River for all to see. This is an event that will grow in time just like the Southern at Deep River. Backwoods Quail club is a great shooting facility with lots of potential and next year I will definitely be back. Make plans to put this event on your 2009 shooting schedule, you won't be disappointed.

A special thanks to Rick Hemingway and Bill Kempfner for putting on this most enjoyable event and the hard work they put forth. I also look forward to seeing everyone at the spring shoot hosted by Bill Kempfner.





How I Met Elsie

by Dennis Abbott, Chairman, Fish, Game and Marine Resources Committee, New Hampshire House of Representatives

Approximately 25 years ago my neighbor, an elderly gentleman, invited my family to join him and his wife at his camp on lovely Mooselookmeguntic Lake in the Rangely Lake area of north-western Maine. I remember that it was a beautiful setting what with foliage at its peak and the lake shining like it was covered with diamonds. The trip was intended to be a leisurely visit with good food and company and a time for my daughters to explore the outdoors. I didn't realize that it would be the beginning of a courtship with Elsie that lasted more than a year before I brought her home with me.

My host, Jessie, suggested one afternoon that we go for a ride and do a little Partridge hunting so off we went in his old woods buggy which was an old International Scout, if my memory serves me well. We went from tar roads to dirt roads and finally into what is known in our neck of the woods as a "tote" road built and used by loggers to remove timber from the northern Maine woods. During this drive I thought I would inspect his shotgun as I neither had a license, my own shotgun nor really expected to be hunting so I slid his shotgun out of its carrying





She had perfect bluing, some case coloring and nary a scratch on her butt, butt stock that is, and I knew then that I wanted to bring her home.

case and met sweet Elsie, a 20 gauge Field grade with a single trigger. She had perfect bluing, some case coloring and nary a scratch on her butt, butt stock that is, and I knew then that I wanted to bring her home.

I was not unfamiliar with double barreled shotguns because when I was 13 years old some 54 years ago I spent the first money I earned on an Ithaca double. The amount was 40 dollars and earned at a boys camp washing dishes for 20 days. Since then I've hunted with several other doubles which I no longer have like a Fox, Parker, Savage-Fox and another Ithaca. For some reason a sidelock double had never appealed to me.


Anyway I was soon introduced to Jessie's method of Partridge hunting when ahead of us strutted a bird. Jessie stopped the vehicle and told me to get behind the wheel. He, in turn, loaded the gun and sat on the hood while bracing himself on the front bumper and instructed me to drive slowly towards the bird which I dutifully did as I was his guest and didn't want to offend him by reminding him that this wasn't exactly the way to hunt Ruffed Grouse. So we bumped ahead and the bird flew, Jessie shot and the bird is still flying. Lucky for the bird he missed but he told me that he usually was more successful.

That winter he went to Florida as he did every year and asked me to keep a check on his house to ensure things didn't freeze. I performed my duty diligently as I wanted to further ensure that Elsie was surviving the winter. I'd remove her from her hidden

location and inspect her and think about how I could move her across the street. I must admit that I brought her home for a while so that I could clean and learn more about her as I had borrowed the Brophy book from a friend who was a collector of Winchester rifles and also books related to hunting and weapons. I further found that the shotgun had auto ejectors.

When Jessie returned in the spring I finally asked him if he would consider selling the shotgun and he said he'd think about it but didn't know if he wanted to sell it or what it might be worth so we left it at that for months until he finally agreed to part with Elsie. I had a stash of new silver dollars in a bag and gave him 500 of them and now own a 1943 vintage LC Smith with auto ejectors and single trigger. When I bought the gun Jessie told me that he purchased the gun for less than a hundred dollars at a combination diner and gunshop here in New Hampshire in the early 1950's. He and friends were returning from a deer hunting trip and he just couldn't resist a bargain.

Both Jessie and his wife Sally have passed as Jessie had a severe stroke soon after bypass surgery and survived only a short while following being stricken. But I have his shotgun as a constant reminder of him and a reminder of what a good friend both he and his wife were to me and my family.

More recently I found the LC Smith Collectors Association and have purchased a nice 12 gauge Field and a 16 gauge Ideal in near new condition with ejectors and is only separated by 141 numbers from Jessie's 20. Maybe this year I'll shoot them as I've owned them for nearly a year and have only cared for them as I'm sure many of you do. But lastly through the knowledge I've gained on the LCSCA website and communications with fine folks like Dr. Hause and Dick Miller I've discovered the oddities of Sweet Elsie. They are that the gun has a checkered butt as pictured in the Brophy book, an odd single trigger that is not a Hunter One, a serial number that doesn't have the letter "E", does not have the single plane rib although the gun was made in 1943 and a trigger guard screw from a higher grade Smith. So now I know more but I also know less. It is a pleasure to own not one, but several LC Smiths. 



L.C. Smith Yellow Page

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2009 Events

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ARRIVAL	POINT PERSON
3/7 - 3/8/09	Louisville Gun Show	KY Fair and Expo Center, Louisville, KY	3/6/09	Cliff White and Len Applegate
3/23/09	6th Annual Spring Shoot	Carlisle Fish and Game Club, Carlisle, PA	3/23/09	Charlie Brooks
4/23 - 4/26/09	Southern Side by Side	Deep River Sht School, 284 Cletus Hall Rd. Sanford, NC 27330	4/23/09	Steve Arnett Bob Fleming Frank Finch
4/24/09	Annual Meeting	Deep River Club House, Sanford, NC	4/24/09, at 5 pm	Frank Finch
5/14 - 5/17/09	NRA National Convention	Phoenix Convention Ctr, Phoenix, AZ	5/13/09, Set up	Frank Finch and Rev. Drew House
6/5 - 6/7/09	Great Northeast Side x Side Classic	Hausmann's Hidden Hollow, Friendsville, PA	6/5/09	Frank Finch
7/18 - 7/19/09	Ohio Gun Collectors Show	Robert's Center 123 Gano Road, Wilmington, OH 45177	7/17/09	Len Applegate and Frank Finch
9/24 - 9/27/09	Vintage Cup	Pintail Point, Queenstown, MD	9/24/09	Skip Dunlap
11/14 - 11/15/09	Tulsa Gun Show	Tulsa, OK		Jim Stubbendieck
10/31/09	6th Annual Turkey Shoot	Prince Georges Trap and Skeet, Glen Dale, MD	10/31/09	Roger Domer

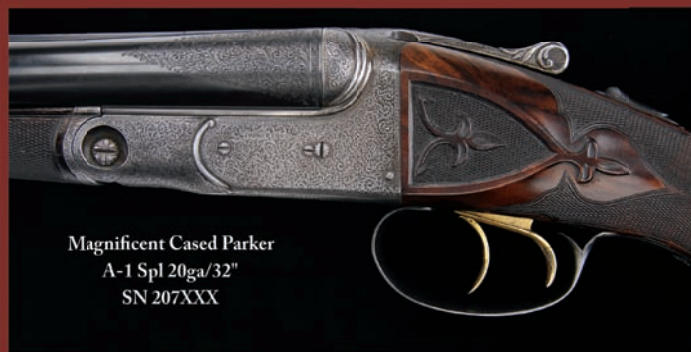


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