



**SSAA (MILDURA) ARMS & MILITARIA  
COLLECTORS GUILD**

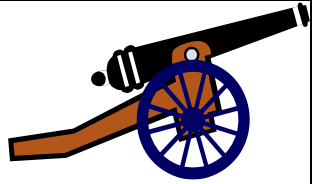
Established 1994.

Address: P/O Box 1883, Mildura, Vic, 3502,

1. Website address [SSAA Mildura Collectors Guild](http://SSAA Mildura Collectors Guild)

**LICENCE AUTHORITY 435-SS2-10Y**

Registered Entity 435332 (Victoria Police Licensing Services Division)



2012 - January Issue

**THE ROLLING VOLLEY**  
**THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE ARMS AND MILITARIA  
COLLECTORS OF SUNRAYSIA & OTHER PARTS OF  
AUSTRALIA**

**PRESIDENT: TREVOR JOHNS**

0350236123

[trevorwjohns@bigpond.com](mailto:trevorwjohns@bigpond.com)

**VICE-PRESIDENT: David BAIRD**

0350232917

[davidjbaird@yahoo.com](mailto:davidjbaird@yahoo.com)

**SECRETARY: GARY PEARSE**

0350215199

[gary.pearse@police.vic.gov.au](mailto:gary.pearse@police.vic.gov.au)

**TREASURER: NICK MASTRIIPPOLITO**

0350252610

[nmastrippolito@bigpond.com.au](mailto:nmastrippolito@bigpond.com.au)

**MEMBERSHIP: TIM MILLS**

0350245950

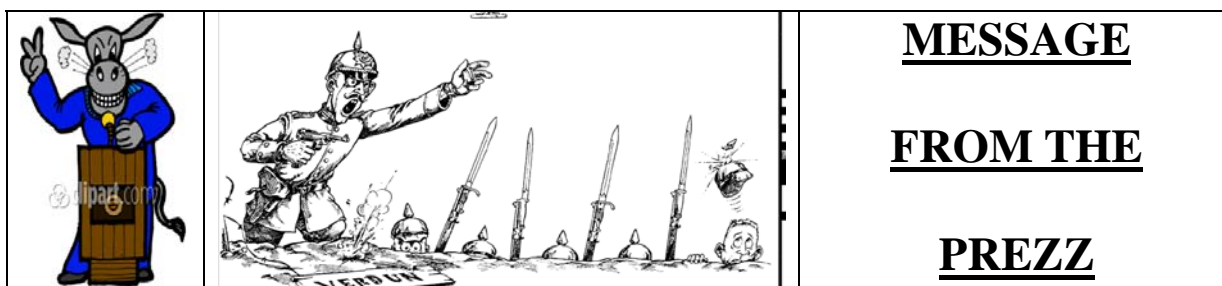
[tim@cashtyreservice.com.au](mailto:tim@cashtyreservice.com.au)

**EDITOR: TREVOR JOHNS**

0350236123

[trevorwjohns@bigpond.com](mailto:trevorwjohns@bigpond.com)

**Meeting: First Wednesday of the month except January at  
Tyrepower, Corner 9<sup>th</sup> Street & Madden Ave, Mildura at 7.00 pm.**



Happy Collecting El Presidento. (TJ)

### **THE EDITER'S COMMENT.**

**Bloody Hell, He wants me to do another one!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

### **Gun Feature – 1**

#### **THE PEABODY AND PEABODY- MARTINI-HENRY VARIATIONS:**



**Photo:** The rifle pictured above is an example of the [M1866 Canadian Peabody](#)

Generally: The Peabody rifle was the development of Henry O. Peabody of Boston, Massachusetts and initially patented in 1862, but fully developed too late to play any major role in the US Civil War. The basic patent relates to a heavy pivoting breech block, the front of which pivots down around a transverse fixed pin fixed through both the upper rear of the breech block and through the upper rear of the solidly built box receiver. Lowering the front of the breech block allows access to the chamber from above but, when elevated closed, transfers the force of firing to the rear of the

receiver housing. In early models, the breech block was lowered via a handle above the wrist, e.g., the Roberts conversions of the US Springfield rifles and some British Enfield rifles. Later, this operation was moved to a lever under the action. The rights to manufacture the Peabody design were obtained by the Providence Tool Company of Providence, Rhode Island, a hardware and machinery manufacturing company which got into the arms business at the beginning of the Civil War. Military Peabodys were manufactured in four varieties which very closely resemble each other in both design and operation, differing only slightly in details: the [M1866 Canadian](#), [M1867 Swiss](#), the [M1868 Roumanian](#), and the [M1868 Spanish](#) in .56-50 Spencer rimfire and [M1868/70 Spanish](#) in .43 Spanish centerfire. The Peabody was also adopted by several US State Militias, notably Massachusetts and Connecticut.



An example of a Massachusetts Militia Peabody.

These rifles, and those adopted by Connecticut (which are about identical) were the Peabody "Spanish Model" and originally chambered the .43 Spanish cartridge. The rifles purchased by the Connecticut Militia, were later retrofitted by the maker, Providence Tool Company, with barrels rifled with **Henry** rifling and rechambered to the US Govt. .45-70 cartridge. The Militia rifles are also interesting and a bit unusual for the time in that they were not fitted with any sling swivels at all. Most are readily identifiable by virtue of Militia ID tags located along the bottom edge of the butt stock, near the heel, reading CONN xxx (serial number) or MASS xxx respectively.

#### The Varieties of Peabody Based Rifles Generally:

- The Providence Tool Co **Peabody** Rifles: (See below for information on distinguishing the models)
  - [M1866 Canadian](#)
  - [M1867 Swiss](#)
  - [M1868 Roumanian](#)
  - [M1868 Spanish](#)
  - [M1870 Spanish](#)
  - [British Martini-Henry](#), Mark I thru Mark IV
  - [Roumanian Peabody-Martini](#) (Manufactured by Styer)
  - [Turkish Peabody-Martini](#) (about an exact copy of the British Mark I Martini-Henry)
    - manufactured by providence Tool Company for the Ottoman Turk Empire.
  - The varieties of [Westley-Richards](#) internal hammer Peabodys, and W-R varieties of Martinis
  - [Peabody-Wessley-Henry / Westley Richards](#) (my designation of the Nepalese variety)
  - [Greek Mylonas](#) (I believe it is a Peabody variant, however I've seen only one photo)

- [Bavarian Werder](#)
- [Krag-Petersson](#)

Distinguishing Characteristics: The hammer of the **Peabody** rifle was a conventional outside hammer, back-action lock design requiring the operator to pull the hammer back as a distinct step. It was the genius of the Swiss born designer, **Friedrich Martini**, to utilize the space within the breech block/receiver to house a coil spring driven striker and to integrate the cocking mechanism for it with the breech block operating handle so that opening the breech also cocked the hammer, all in one fast and efficient step. For the **Martini-Henry** and later varieties of Peabody design based rifles, please check the individual pages relating to those rifles. They are not difficult to identify or distinguish.

The four Peabody military varieties, however, are very similar. Each is slightly different in interior design such as firing pin layout, extractor operation, etc., but this is not evident without disassembly. If disassembled, the serial number ranges are also very helpful in identifying the rifles. Serial numbers appear on the bottom of the barrel and on the front lower edge of the receiver, against the forestock. (With thanks to Edward A. Hull for his work regarding serial number ranges). Without disassembly, however, the rifles are nevertheless identifiable through exterior examination, most readily by the rear sight fitted to the rifle, but they also differ in the following exterior respects:

**M1866 Canadian:** This is the longest Peabody, measuring approx 54 3/4 inches overall with a barrel length of 36 inches. It is fitted with THREE barrel bands while all other Peabody rifles are fitted with only 2 barrel bands. The Canadian is chambered for the .50-60 Peabody rimfire cartridge, and its rear sight consists of a very simple one-leaf folding sight. The lower sling swivel is located ahead of the operating lever. The Providence Tool Company markings are found on BOTH sides of the receiver, Providence Tool Company on the right side and Peabody's patent on the left. The Canadian models are often found with Canadian cartouches ( the "<DC>" Dominion of Canada or the "CM" Canadian Militia marks) in the butt stock. (Serial number range approximately: 1 to 5,500).

**M1867 Swiss:** The Swiss rifles were chambered in .41 Swiss rimfire and fitted with a distinctly Swiss quadrant back sight. The original rifles were fitted with fully round barrels, but later rebarreled by the Swiss with barrels having an octagonal knoxform. Barrel bands on these and all subsequent models were fitted on the center band and at the lower end of the buttstock. (Serial number range approximately: 5,500 to 21,000).

**M1867 Roumanian:** The back sight of the Roumanian model looks like an elongated Swiss back sight, being a somewhat larger quadrant type sight. The rifle is chambered for the .45 Roumanian Peabody centerfire cartridge, although one would need to remove the breech block to see this. **Hull** suggests that the .45 Roumanian cartridge may have been based on the .43 Egyptian necked up to .45 caliber. The author's chamber casts of a Roumanian model Peabody also suggests that this is likely. One thing that is certain is that the speculation that the .45 Roumanian is interchangeable with the .45 Turkish Peabody is incorrect. They are quite different enough that they are not interchangeable. (Serial number range approximately: 21,000 to 52,000).

**M1868 Spanish (1st Model):\*** The first model Spanish Peabody was chambered for the US .56-50 Spencer rimfire cartridge. The back sight is a very close copy of the Remington pattern of the period,

the most sophisticated back sight of any of the Peabody military models. Like all earlier Peabodys, the nose of the hammer is noticeably thicker than the later .43 centerfire Spanish models. (Serial number range approximately: 50,000 to 110,000).

**M1870 Spanish (2nd Model):**\* This Peabody variety, like the US Militia varieties, was chambered for the .43 Remington Spanish cartridge. A company promotional brochure(1) refers to it a ".433-inch calibre (*sic*), central fire, chambered for the Spanish Berdan cartridge." (2) Other than caliber, it is almost identical to the 1st Model Spanish, with the same outside dimensions (the barrel walls are thicker owing to the smaller (.43 caliber) bore diameter, the same placement of the bands and same back-sight. However the most noticeable exterior difference is the much larger spoon cut-out in the top of the breech block to allow the longer .43 Spanish cartridge to enter the chamber and, less noticeable but also evident, is the thinner cross-section of the hammer nose, both differences being seen in the side-by-side photos below and at the [M1868 Spanish Peabody](#) page and the [M1870 Spanish Peabody page](#). (Serial number range approximately: 50,000 to 110,000). (3)

\* It is my theory (well, ok, my *speculation*) that the relative frequency with which .50 cal Peabody rifles are found in the "Spanish Model" configuration (that is, approx 33 in barrel and Spanish model rear sight), coupled with the, as best I can tell, total absence of 36 inch barreled Peabodys with Canadian model rear sights that are NOT Canadian rifles (e.g., that are NOT <DC> or CM marked), strongly suggests that the "perhaps 25,000" Colonial Model Peabodys (*Fusil Peabody do Ejercito de Ultramar*) which Walter ([Rifles of the World, 1st & 2nd eds.](#)) suggests were purchased by Spain for its Colonial Army based in Cuba, were not, as he describes, Canadian models, but perhaps earlier Spanish models. The problems with this theory are with the serial number ranges (and that it's not supported by any documentation :). I would appreciate any suggestions and input if anyone has any ideas or information.

(1) Peabody Breech-Loading firearms for Infantry and Cavalry Service, Prepared for the St. Louis Board of Army and Navy Officers, Manufactured by Providence Tool Co. Armory, Providence, Rhode Island, USA. Providence, 1870.

(2) (The reference to the Berdan cartridge is not a reference to the rifles designed by US BG Hiram Berdan, varieties of which were indeed adopted by Spain, as well as by Russia and extensively tested elsewhere, but rather a reference to the form of central primer developed by Berdan, still used universally outside of the US).

(3) I am unable to satisfactorily explain, if the .50 cal versions were built and delivered to the Spanish before the .43 cal models were, which I assume, why it is that the serial number ranges for both of these Spanish models overlap? Hull indicates that some 10,000 were delivered to Spain, some 8,500 to Mexico (although I have not yet seen a Mexican marked Peabody), and that at least approximately 33,000 of the Spanish Models in .433 caliber were delivered to France (see below).





**Peabody Rifle Rear Sights - Military Models, Top to Bottom:** M1866 Canadian, M1867 Swiss (but with later Swiss-made and installed replacement barrel. Note that it has an octagonal knoxform. The original Swiss model Peabody has a round barrel; same sights), M1868 Roumanian (similar to the Swiss, leaf extends to the receiver), M1868 Spanish and M1870 Spanish (the Spanish sights are identical, but the calibre of the rifles (.50 and .43) are quite different. Also, the breech blocks are very different, see below).



**Peabody Rifle Top of Breech Blocks - Military Models, Top to Bottom:** M1866 Canadian, M1867 Swiss, M1868 Roumanian, M1868 Spanish(?) and M1870 Spanish (the M1870 Spanish model is the significantly different one, with much longer and deeper breech block cartridge loading cut-out and thinner hammer. The others differ internally (see below), but are identical externally).



**Peabody Rifle - Military Models - Breech Blocks Interior Construction, Left to Right:** M1866 Canadian, M1867 Swiss, M1868 Roumanian, M1868 Spanish(?) and M1870 Spanish (the Spanish model is the significantly different one, with a spring loaded firing pin retraction system. Though difficult to see, the firing pin is also noticeably thinner at the hammer end than the other models. (See close-ups below)



M1866 Canadian (above) M1868(?) Spanish 1st Model (?) (above)

M1867 Swiss (below) M1868 Roumanian Centerfire (below)



M1870 Spanish Centerfire (below)



**The Peabody in Service to France (sort of):** During the time immediately leading up to, and especially during, the hostilities known as the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, France's state armories were wholly unable to keep up with the demand (stemming not only from mobilization, but from dramatically huge losses of material in the field) for arms of all kinds, especially infantry rifles. France's agents scoured the world for arms and purchased a bewildering variety of small arms in markets around the world. Remington diverted a large contract of [M1868 Egyptian Rolling Block](#) rifles to France, and the French also contracted with Peabody for 39,000 rifles, although only about 33,000 were delivered, these being the "Spanish Model" chambered in .43 Spanish. The rifles are not specifically marked, however, interestingly enough, many of these French Contract Peabody rifles can be identified as such because they were later proofed by the Germans, and it is known that large numbers of weapons were both captured by the Germans during the war and seized as reparations after France's capitulation. The Spanish model in the photos above is one such rifle. The German proof, which appears on the top of the receiver ring and top of the barrel is illustrated below:



I don't know what the "S" proof mark means. the Crown over V is a German proof mark showing a weapon in storage at the time of the German adoption of its Proof Act, in 1891.



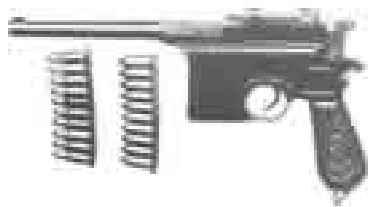
## GUN ARTICLE TWO



Also known under a variety of other names including, C96, M96, Bolo, Broomhandle, Large Mauser pistol, Pistole 7.63 and Model 1930, in the context of this website, 'C96' should be taken as referring to a full size model with a 5.5 inch barrel, standard sized grips, 10-round fixed magazine fed by stripper clips and a tangent rearsight, usually marked 50-1000 yards, firing an 85 grain bullet at 1400 feet per second through a 1 in 8 inch barrel twist.

The C96 was designed by Fidel, Friedrich and Josef Feederle. At the time Fidel Feederle was employed as Superintendent of the Mauser Experimental Workshop<sup>1</sup>. Originally known as the P-7.63 or 'Feederle Pistol', it was renamed by Paul Mauser as the 'Mauser Military Pistol'.

In the absence of factory records which show when which pistol was made (or even the number of pistols made in any given year), C96 owners have attempted to determine the year that their specific pistol was produced based on serial number. Such attempts are fraught with peril. In the early years of production the big Mauser pistol was not especially popular, and sales were poor. In order to make it appear that more pistols had been sold than was actually the case, Mauser skipped blocks of serial numbers. In the later years it appears that some attempt was made to fill in these missing blocks of numbers. To add to the confusion pistols made under contract were usually (but not always) serial numbered in their own series, beginning with number "1". All of which means that pistols which appear, based on their serial number, to have been made early may actually have been made much later. The converse is also true.



The first successful prototype was dated 15th March 1895 and on 11th December 1895, its German patent was issued<sup>3</sup>. During 1896 some 110 pre-production pistols were built. Full scale production started in April 1897.

A US patent (#584479) was granted on 15th June 1897.<sup>4</sup> Previously patents had been granted during 1896 in Great Britain (#959), Switzerland (#11943), Belgium (#119462) and several other countries, including Brazil (#2088).<sup>5</sup> With only a slight interruption after 1918, production of the Broomhandle Mauser continued until the late 1930's.

The C96 was the first efficient and reliable design for a self-loading pistol. An outstanding feature of the design was the absence of pins or screws in its construction. The design is based upon the frame being milled out from a solid forging, rather than a separate pieces. The receiver and barrel are formed from a single forging. This means that unfortunately a lot of present day C96's have 'shot-out' barrels, and as they cannot be changed out, they have to be bored out to the larger 9mm calibre.<sup>7</sup> Loading of the C96 is by single round, or through the use of 10-round stripper clips. The C96 was designed to use 7.63mm ammunition, however, due to military requirements, a number were converted to shoot 9mm ammunition, the same as the later available Luger pistol. These are known as the 'Red 9' C96 models.

The Imperial Russians fell in love with both the 7.63 Mauser cartridge (aka .30 Mauser) and the Mauser Military Pistol, and were to become one of Mauser's best customers. The October Revolution did not change this fondness for the C96 and the 7.63 Mauser cartridge (it is said a C96 was one of the firearms used in the murder of the Czar and the Royal Family), and both pistol and cartridge remained in general use in the early years of Communist rule.

## **GREAT GUN STORY - 3**

I couldn't let the Editor get away with showing off all his Kraut stuff without countering with some good old American big bore issues.



**Colt Model 1903 U.S. Army**  
**"U.S. Army Model 1903"**  
**Date: 1903**

This Model 1903 was actually manufactured in 1903 and the total delivered to the Army was reported by Springfield Armory at 12,500. This model was the last variation in the New Army/Navy Model

family (Model 1892 series) and serial numbers for the Model 1903 ran from 200,000 to 212,500.

The Model 1901 and 1903 were the only New Model Army and & Navy revolvers shipped from Colts with the lanyard loop, earlier models found with the lanyard loop probably received upgrades at Colts or Springfield to bring them up to the Model 1901 specifications.

**The Model 1903 had two major changes from its predecessors:**

- 1) Bore diameter was decreased from .363 inch to .357 inch to increase accuracy. This was to accommodate the new more powerful S&W .38 Special cartridge, though it could still shoot the .38 Long Colt cartridge.
- 2) Grips were narrowed to provide for a better grip

The example shown here is the Army marked model, there are also Navy and Marine Corp marked variations but these are much rarer and demand a premium price. This revolver is in roughly 70% condition and has not only survived with original parts and finish but the original serial numbered grips as well. This is a neat example of the last primary issue revolver in .38 calibre as it was replaced by the .45 calibre bullet which was re-introduced in the Model of 1909 (45 Long Colt). The cartouche information that appeared on the left side of the grip panels on previous military models was moved to the frame in 1902 by the Army and first began appearing on the Model 1901 Army model. You will find the Model 1903 revolvers with "1902", "1903" or "1904" on the frame depending on when they were received by the Army.

The Philippines Insurrection was a huge failure of performance for the .38 calibre revolvers and was the last conflict they participated in as the U.S. government's primary sidearm. In 1909 the Colt M1909 in .45 Long Colt was adopted as the primary sidearm of the U.S. Army and was subsequently replaced by the Colt M1911 semi automatic pistol in late 1911. The M1917 came to be as a interim revolver due to the needs of World War I not being met by M1911 manufacturers. The M1911 was updated in 1924 and became the M1911-A1 which was then produced through 1945.

The Replacement was; - **Colt's Double-Action Revolver CALIBER 45, MODEL OF 1909**



## **BULLS EYE RUN - 2012.**

After last year's failure in trying to travel. We have looked at getting away to Adelaide in the middle of 2012 as if we leave it towards the end of the year, there will be only one sober person to drive the bus. So we are looking at possibly Queens Birthday Week-End or there to travel.

## **GIGGLE NO 1. PILOTING ALONG**

**An F-111 was flying escort with a B-52 and generally making a nuisance of himself by flying rolls around the lumbering old bomber.**


**The message for the B-52 crew was, "Anything you can do, I can do better."  
Not to be outdone, the bomber pilot announced that he would rise to the challenge.**

**The B-52 continued its flight, straight and level, however.**

**Perplexed, the fighter pilot asked, "So? What did you do?"**

**"We just shut down two engines."**

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

	<p>Membership renewals are due. By the 31<sup>st</sup> of December each year. You are required to be a current member of the SSAA and we certainly would like to see a current photocopy of that membership along with your renewal.</p> <p>Application forms can be obtained from our website. <a href="http://www.ssaamildura.org/cg/index.htm">SSAA Mildura Collectors Guild</a> (Google) or <a href="http://www.ssaamildura.org/cg/index.htm">http://www.ssaamildura.org/cg/index.htm</a></p> <p>Tim (Membership Secretary.)</p>
---	--

## **JOKE, 2. In Canberra an old priest lay dying in the hospital.**

For years he had faithfully served the people of the nation's capital.  
He motioned for his nurse to come near.

"Yes, Father?" said the nurse.

"I would really like to see Prime Minister and the Treasurer before I die",  
whispered the priest.



"I'll see what I can do, Father", replied the nurse.

The nurse sent the request to Parliament and waited for a response. Soon the word arrived; Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Treasurer Wayne Swan would be delighted to visit the priest. As they went to the hospital, Julia commented to Wayne, "I don't know why the old priest wants to see us, but it will certainly will help our images and might even get me re-elected Prime Minister.

After all, I'm **IN IT TO WIN IT**".

Wayne agreed that it was a good thing.

When they arrived at the priest's room, the priest took Julia's hand in his right hand and Wayne's hand in his left.

There was silence and a look of serenity on the old priest's face.

Finally Julia Gillard spoke. "Father, of all the people you could have chosen, why did you choose us to be with you as you near the end?"

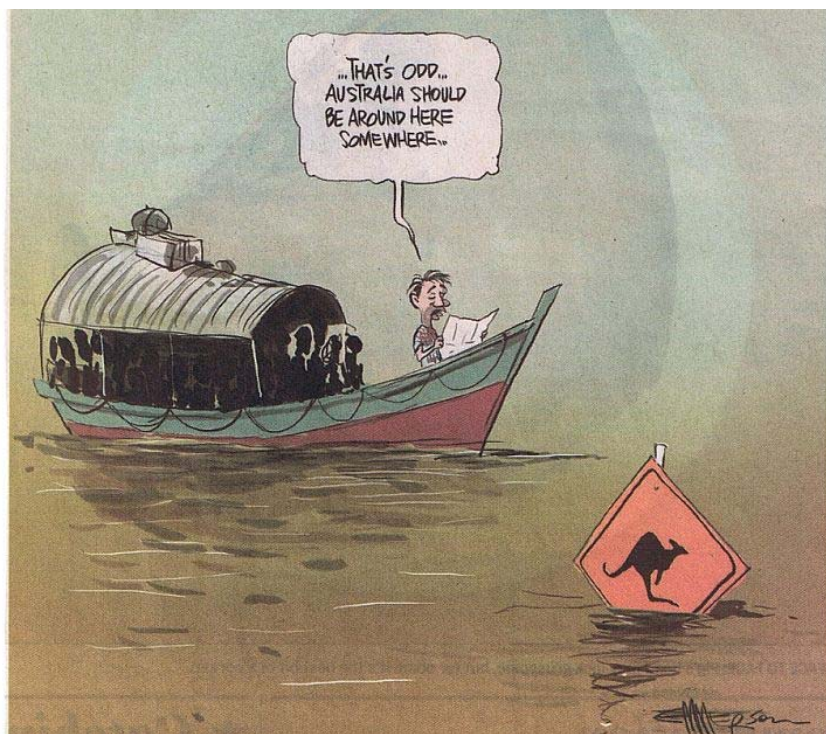
The old priest slowly replied, "I have always tried to pattern my life after our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Amen", said Julia . "Amen", said Wayne.

The old priest continued, "Jesus died between two lying thieves; I would like to do the same."

### LAUGH, 3.

**What Queenslanders did to avoid the Boat People issue.**





## Collectors Love The FN49 Rifle

FN 1949 rifle 7x57mm Venezuelan contract with the correct 15-inch bayonet.  
(Photo credit RIA auctions)



WWII Saw the first widespread use of semi-automatic battle rifles. The U.S. M-1 Garand, Soviet SVT 38 & 40, and the German G-43 all saw action. There were other designs in use as well but they were not mass-produced or issued for general military use. Added to this history is another design that could have ended up on either side of the conflict but instead spent the war on the design table. I am referring to the Fabrique National model 1949 rifle.

It is also known as an SAFN (semi-automatic Fabrique National) model of 1949. It was actually designed just before the outbreak of WWII. Dieudonne Saive, chief design engineer at FN in the 1930s came up with the design for a self-loading rifle that used a fixed magazine. Unfortunately for Saive and FN, Germany occupied Belgium in May, 1940. Mr. Saive vowed he would never work for the Nazis or allow his design to fall into their hands. He fled Belgium, taking the plans for the design and several other FN engineers with him.



He ended up in England and went to work in the Royal Ordnance Corp Small Arms Design Unit. During this time the SAFN-49 design was perfected. A few prototypes were made but wartime production demands did not allow for diversion of resources to an un-tested project. In late 1944 the Allied forces liberated Belgium.

Saive wasted little time before packing up his expatriate design team and moving back. The FN factories had been looted and stripped by the Germans and the next few years were spent getting FN back up and running. After the war FN was actually in better shape than much of the arms industry in other nations. Most arms production facilities had been bombed repeatedly and were nothing more than piles of rubble. With a perfected SAFN design, they began marketing it to the post-war world. Of course, there were tons of surplus military weaponry in Europe at the time and it was difficult to find buyers for the new rifle.

The Belgian Army was the first to buy the new rifle, adopting it in 1951 chambered for the .30-06 cartridge. There were 125,072 FN-49 rifles made in .30-06. The Belgians used a majority of the .30-06 guns. Luxemborg and Columbia acquired them as well. In all, there were more than 176,000 FN-49s built. Venezuela purchased 8,003 in 7x57mm; Argentina bought 5,541 in 7.65mm; Egypt received 37,641 in 8x57mm. The Columbian, Argentine, Egyptian and Venezuelan rifles all bear their respective national crests on the top of the receiver. The Belgian FN-49s are marked "ABL" and the Luxemborg guns are marked "AL."

There were small quantities of the rifle purchased by other nations as well. These were mostly samples and prototypes and were not adopted for military use. There was even a handful of the rifles imported to the U.S. by Browning Arms Co. for commercial sales.

These were chambered in .30-06 and had a flash hider similar to that found on the Venezuelan 7mm model.

The only way to distinguish them from military contract pieces is by the lack of any national crest on the receiver. It is assumed these Browning rifles were assembled from left over SAFN parts since they were listed in the Browning catalogue in 1961, at least five years after production stopped. The FN 1949

was in production from 1949 to 1956. There were some minor production variations in the rifle, including a sniper version. These have a dovetail rail on the left side of the receiver and the FN factory markings are on the right. The mounting system usually used was purchased in the U.S. from Echo Co. of Boise, Idaho. The scopes used were a variety of European-made models.

There were many FN-49s made with the scope dovetail that were never issued as sniper rifles. In my own experience I would guess that about half of the FN-49s I see have the dovetail. The Belgian-issue .30-06 rifles marked ABL actually had the option for select-fire operation. With the fixed 10-round magazine, I can't see where that was worth the effort. You might get two short bursts. The receiver is slightly different to accept the select fire components.

Because of this fact, there will never be any Belgian issue FN-49s on the U.S. market as the BATF would consider it a machine gun. Some might have been imported into Canada and carried into the states before they tightened border crossings.

Some of the trigger groups have been sold in the U.S. but a semi-auto receiver requires modification to install them. Of course possession of an FN-49 with such a modified receiver would be totally illegal unless it was registered as a machine gun prior to 1986.

The Venezuelan version is the only one that was issued with a flash hider. The other contracts use a simple threaded steel cap to cover the threads on the muzzle. There is even a bit of difference in these. The Egyptian 8mm rifles have a cap that covers the end of the barrel. The various .30-06 rifles have a cap that covers the threads but leaves about 1/8 inch of the barrel protruding out the front.

The Argentine FN-49s were originally made in 7.65mm. The Argentine Navy received many of these. The navy rifles are marked "ARA" (Armada Republica Argentina) next to the Argentine crest on the receiver. In the early 1960s the Argentine Navy converted their FN-49s to 7.62mm Nato.

This was done by installing a new barrel. At the same time they were modified to use a detachable magazine. This was a 20-round magazine that resembles a FN-FAL magazine but it is not interchangeable. This was the only official conversion of the SAFN to use a detachable magazine.

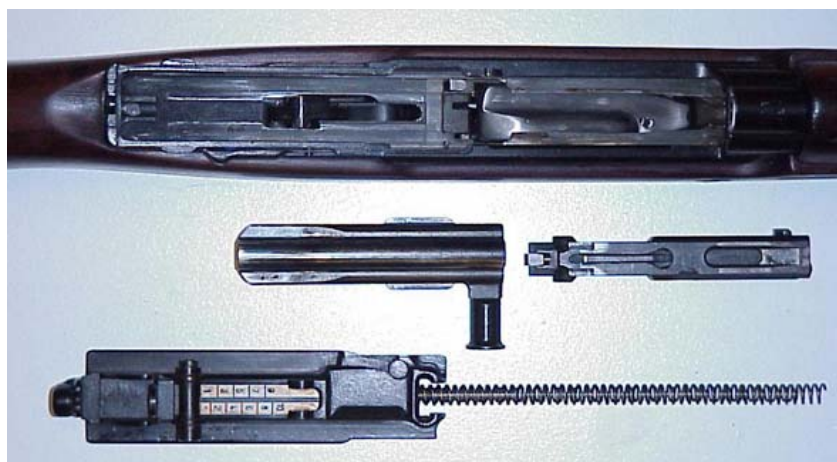
Some Argentine Navy FN-49s were imported to the U.S. in the 1990s.

The 20-round magazines were shortened to hold 10 rounds to make them compliant with the Clinton-era high capacity magazine ban. These guns also had the muzzle cap welded in place so an evil flash hider could not be installed. A few years after the magazines were shortened, the government changed the interpretation of the import rules to allow standard-capacity magazines to come in if they were made before 1994. There are now some 20-round magazines available. I do not think the 7.65mm rifles have yet been sold by Argentina. I have never seen one nor heard of any in the U.S.

There were two patterns of bayonet made for the FN-49. The more common version has a 9 ¼-inch double-edge blade. These are marked by the nations that used them. For example the Belgian-issued piece is marked "SA 30", the Argentine is marked "ARA", and the Egyptian version has Arabic numbers. The 9 ¼-inch bayonet was issued with all versions of the FN-49 except for the Venezuelan contract. The Venezuelans used a bayonet with a 15-inch single edge blade. This was actually a FN-produced M-1924 Mauser bayonet that had the barrel opening in the muzzle ring enlarged to fit the flash hider on the FN-49. These bayonets have no markings except for a serial number on the back of the handle. Both types of bayonet will fit any SAFN.

The FN-49 could be considered a "grandfather" of FN's biggest success in post WWII military rifles, the FAL. Some of the FN 1949's features were used in the FN FAL, including the bolt and gas system.

The FN-49 field stripped.



The FN 1949 uses a piston-type operating system in which a small amount of the breech pressure is bled off through an opening in the top of the barrel. That pressure drives back a steel piston that operates the action to eject the spent cartridge, re-cock and re-load the weapon. There is a collar (gas regulator) on the piston housing that allows the rifle to be tuned for best function. Turning the collar opens or closes a small hole that vents gas pressure from the piston tube.

Military ammunition can be found with significant variations in chamber pressure. Some might have been loaded "hot" for use in machine guns, while other arsenals might load it to a lower pressure to be safe in older weapons that remained in use. The front hand guard must be removed to adjust the regulator. The FN-49 is fairly easy to field strip for cleaning. Make sure the rifle is not loaded. Start with the bolt in the forward, closed position. On the back of the receiver cover is a latch that needs to be turned a half turn so the flat piece is to the top. Now, push the cover forward until it stops, then lift up from the rear. The receiver cover along with the recoil springs can now be removed to the rear. Pull the operating handle back to the rear. Lift the bolt/carrier assembly out of the receiver when it reaches the cuts in the rail that permit removal. After cleaning and oiling, the rifle can be re-assembled in reverse order. Watch the sliding dust cover that can move forward and block re-insertion of the bolt/carrier. When replacing the receiver cover and recoil springs be careful not to kink the springs. They can fold downward and the cover will still fit on, but the carrier cannot be retracted. Once this has happened the springs are bent and will be harder to get in line for proper assembly.

## **Shooting Impressions**

I have fired a lot of rounds through several FN 1949s over the years. As long as consistently loaded ammunition is used there have been few failures to feed or misfires.

I've only actually needed to adjust the gas regulator a couple of times. If one was to reload for the FN-49 it might be necessary to tune the regulator to a specific load. Ejection is quite violent and the brass is usually dented where it hits the top cover. The gun is fairly accurate, for a military rifle. The rear sight can be adjusted right or left by loosening or tightening the screws on both sides



of the aperture One word of advice. Try to find charger clips that fit the loading slot in the top cover. Each caliber of SAFN uses a unique size clip and it is sometimes hard to find the right size. Stripper clips are almost never marked beyond a manufacturer's letter or number code. Just try different types until one fits. Loading single rounds into the magazine is fine but be careful not to bump the bolt handle or hold open the piece while loading. If you think M-1 thumb hurts, FN-49 thumb is worse.

## **Big Demand**

All versions of the FN 1949 are popular with American collectors. Many 7mm and .30-06 rifles were imported before 1968. The Egyptian 8mm rifles were imported in the late 1980s. These Egyptian-contract rifles are the most commonly seen SAFN in the U.S. today. Many of the Egyptian rifles came in with broken stocks and Century Arms sold them with a new stock. These stocks are made of a light colored wood that is stained dark walnut. They frequently have a black plastic butt plate. The metal parts of these rifles were usually re-blued. The re-stocked 8mm rifles run \$400 to \$550 on the U.S. market. Original 8mm rifles will usually be in well-used condition and can run \$350 to \$800 depending on condition. The 7mm and .30-06 versions will currently bring \$800 to \$1200. Many of the 7mm guns are in un-issued condition. The Argentine Navy rifles in 7.62mm will run \$800 to \$1200.

## **CHUCKLE – 4 The Outdoorsman**

When my doctor asked me about what I did yesterday, I told him about my day: "Well, yesterday afternoon, I waded across the edge of a lake, escaped from a mountain lion in the heavy brush, marched up and down a mountain, stood in a patch of poison ivy, crawled out of quicksand, and jumped away from an aggressive rattlesnake."

Inspired by my story, the doctor said, "You must be an awesome outdoorsman!"

**"No," I replied, "I'm just a rotten, bloody golfer."**

## **THE GREAT ESCAPE TUNNELS FOUND (fwd by J. Gibson)**

Untouched for almost seven decades, the tunnel used in the Great Escape has finally been unearthed. The 111-yard passage nicknamed 'Harry' by Allied prisoners was sealed by the Germans after the audacious break-out from the POW camp Stalag Luft III in western Poland.

Despite huge interest in the subject, encouraged by the film starring Steve McQueen, the tunnel remained undisturbed over the decades because it was behind the Iron Curtain and the Soviet authorities had no interest in its significance. But at last British archaeologists have excavated it, and discovered its remarkable secrets.



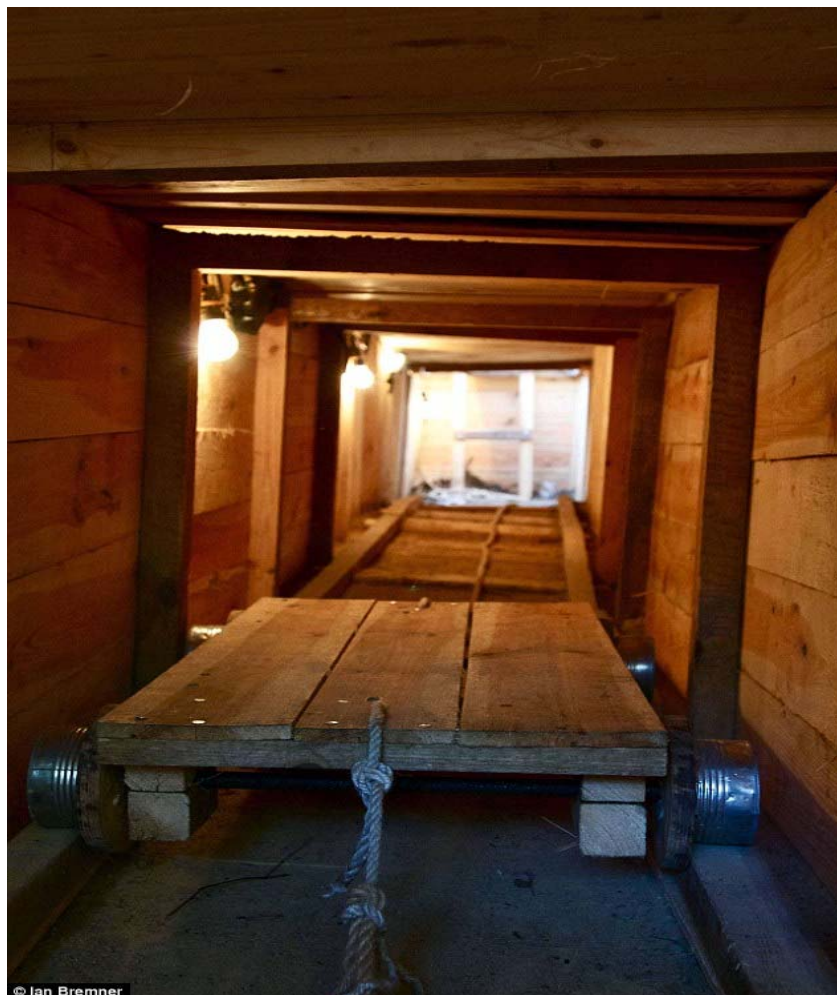
Unearthed: The entrance to the tunnel, which lay untouched for almost seven decades

Many of the bed boards which had been joined together to stop it collapsing were still in position. And the ventilation shaft, ingeniously crafted from used powdered milk containers known as Klim Tins, remained in working order. Scattered throughout the tunnel, which is 30ft below ground, were bits of old

metal buckets, hammers and crowbars which were used to hollow out the route.

A total of 600 prisoners worked on three tunnels at the same time. They were nicknamed Tom, Dick and Harry and were just 2ft square for most of their length.

It was on the night of March 24 and 25, 1944, that 76 Allied airmen escaped through Harry. Barely a third of the 200 prisoners – many in fake German uniforms and civilian outfits and carrying false identity papers – who were meant to slip away managed to leave before the alarm was raised when escapee number 77 was spotted.



Tunnel vision: A tunnel reconstruction showing the trolley system, tried out, below, by Frank, 89

Only three made it back to Britain. Another 50 were executed by firing squad on the orders of Adolf Hitler, who was furious after learning of the breach of



security.

In all, 90 boards from bunk beds, 62 tables, 34 chairs and 76 benches, as well as thousands of items including knives, spoons, forks, towels and blankets, were squirrelled away by the Allied prisoners to aid the escape plan under the noses of their captors.



Discoveries: The site of the tunnel, recently excavated by British archaeologists

Although the movie might suggest otherwise, no Americans were involved in the actual operation. Most were British and the others were from countries including Canada, Poland and Australia.



War classic: Steve McQueen (plays an American Fighter Pilot POW) on the set of the classic movie, *The Great Escape*


The latest dig, over three weeks in August, located the entrance to Harry, which was originally concealed under a stove in Hut 104. The team also found another tunnel, called George, whose exact position had not been charted. It was never used as the 2,000 prisoners were forced to march to other camps as the Red Army approached in January 1945.

Watching the excavation was Gordie King, 91, an RAF radio operator, who was 140th in line to use Harry and therefore missed out. 'This brings back such bitter-sweet memories,' he said as he wiped away tears. 'I'm amazed by what they've found.'



Bitter-sweet memories: Gordie King, 91, made an emotional return to Stalag Luft III



	<u>SSAA ARMS (MILDURA) MILITARIA COLLECTORS GUILD</u> Established 1994. Address: P/O Box 1883, Mildura, Vic, 3502,  <u>Licence AUTHORITY 435-332-10Y</u> Registered Entity 435332 (Victoria Police Licensing Services Division)	
	RENEWAL FOR MEMBERSHIP	GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Members **MUST** be a current financial member of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia National Body. **(MUST attach photocopy of membership card or letter from SSAA stating they are a current member)**

Family Name of Applicant			
Given Names of Applicant			
Residential Address of Applicant.			
Postal Address of Applicant			
Date of Birth		Place of Birth	
Nationality		Occupation	
Private Telephone		Business Telephone	
Mobile Telephone		E-Mail address.	
SSAA Member No. Must attach copy.		Expiry Date of Membership	
Primary Collectors Club	SSAA (Mildura) Arms & Militaria Collectors Guild	Member of other Collector Organisations	
Collecting Interests tick)			
Handguns	Edged Weapons	Militaria	Pro hibited Weapons
Longarms	Ammunition	ParaMilitaria	Other related interests

Renewal Applicants for membership are not to fall under the definition of "Prohibited Person" for the purposes of the Firearms Act 1996 or the Control of Weapons Act 2000.

Renewal Applicants for Firearm /Ammunition Collectors Licence are required to have their Licence renewals endorsed by the Nominated Members of the club. This requirement is laid out in the Firearms Act.

Collectors applying for Permit to Acquire firearm for Handgun regardless of category are required to have their Application endorsed by the nominated persons of the club before they are sent to Licensing Services Branch for processing.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

This application when completed MUST be returned to the Club Membership Secretary together with Membership fees.  
**(Cheque or Money Order please)      SEE OVERLEAF.**

**FEES**

**Annual fee \$10.00 Due by 31/12 each year.**

Un-financial members will be reported to Licensing Services Branch as required by legislation.

**Late Fees \$20.00 if processed after 31/01 of following year. (Treated as new applicant)**

**New Member Joining Fee \$20.00 - Do Not Use this form for New Member Applications.**

**Member Secretary /Nominated Member Notes:**

**Receipt number\_\_\_\_\_Date renewed\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature.....**  
(Member Secretary/Nominated person)

Please return to           **The Membership Secretary**  
                                     **SSAA (Mildura)A & M C G**  
                                     **PO BOX 1883**  
                                     **Mildura, VIC, 3502.**

**Membership List of other Collecting Organisations.**

- 1. ....**
- 2.....**
- 3.....**
- 4.....**
- 5.....**