



July, 2015

Mountain Man Monthly

The Authorized Publication of the
Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders Inc.

The Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders, Inc. was chartered in 1969 by a group of men and women interested in their heritage and dedicated to preserving and promoting the sport of muzzle loading and buckskinning. CSML is a family oriented club that holds a broad range of functions such as camp outs, potluck dinners, and black powder shoots. CSML is affiliated with the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association and the National Rifle Association.

Views and opinions contained within articles submitted to the Mountain Man Monthly are not necessarily those of the editor or CSML. The editor reserves the right not to publish any article submitted but encourages articles on any subject regarding shooting sports and subjects related to the fur trade era.

Regular Monthly Meeting
August 6 - 7:00 p.m.

Grainger Paper Camp Out
August 15-16th

Next Meeting - Sept. 3
Potluck & Election of Officers

No paper shoot Sept. 6 - Labor
Day Weekend

Muzzle Loader Hunting Season
September 12-20

President
Joy Hicks
Vice President
Roy Crouse
Treasurer
Gwen Blanchard
Secretary
Lois Schainost
Membership Chairman
Ted Beaupre

Range Officer
Todd Schainost
Assistant Range Officer
Ted Beaupre & Marlin Johnson

Primitive Exec.
Doug Davis
Assistant Primitive Exec.
Tony Hecker
Womens' Primitive Exec.
Dee Beaupre

Cannon Master
Richard Stites

Mountain Man Monthly Editor
Doreen Webb

UPCOMING EVENTS: CSML & Statewide

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN	INFORMATION
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	August 2	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	August 6	who knows what?????
Paper Grainger Campout	near Victor, CO	August 15-16	potluck on Saturday night
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	September 3	potluck & election of officers
No paper shoot	September 6th due to	Labor Day	
Muzzle Loading Hunting Season/deer-elk-moose	draw only	September 12-20	specific game management units (GMU's) per the draw
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	September 20	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	October 1	plan for bird & buffalo shoot
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	October 4	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Annual Bird & Buffalo Fall Shoot	Ft. Melchert	October 17-18	long distance shooting, potluck, auction, and more.....
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS	TIME ENDS.....	NOV. 1 SET YOUR	CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	November 1	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	November 5	annual craft fair; free tables
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	November 15	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	December 3	annual ornament exchange and finger foods
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	December 6	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	December 20	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	January 3, 2016	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	January 7	wild game potluck; tall tales told
CSML Board Meeting	Joy's House	January 12	plan the year's events; set schedules; make decisions
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	January 17	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	February 4	who knows what????
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	February 7	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm

For CSML scheduled shoots; CALL SHOOT HOT LINE (719) 632-7690 after 9:00 a.m. on shoot day to be sure shoot is on!!!
 Schedule is subject to change at any time and is based on information available at time of publication. On-line check csmlinc.org

NEW PHONE NUMBER

Grab your latest CSML phone book and make note of a change in phone number:

Jane Lewis is now (719) 836-3317

STATUS UPDATE.....

Just in case you had not heard, our benevolent benefactor and Ft. Melchert proprietor, Ron Melchert, is finally on the mend. He is one tough cookie and drove himself to the emergency room in Canon City only to find out that he had to have gallbladder surgery!

His saga began on July 6 when he drove himself into the medical facilities. Tests were done and it was determined that his gallbladder was not good and would need to come out. He had his surgery on July 9 and went home on Friday, July 10th. Daughters Tracy and Cindy took turns caring for their father as long as their schedules allowed.

I know that when I went to visit with him prior to the surgery, the nurses were all astounded that he had driven himself to the hospital. His doctors were all amazed at how well he came through the surgery and his recovery has been good.

On my visits to the hospital, Ron shared stories with me and amazed me at his experiences and the things that he has been through. I feel very blessed to have crossed paths with an individual like Ron!!!!

Ron asked me to extend his thanks to Charlie Pohl that ran the shop for him and helped with his errands. He also wants to thank all of his friends that called and visited during his illness. He seemed so surprised that he had so many friends, but like I told him, he is a good friend and that makes good friends. We all care about Ron and wish him all the best as he continues to progress.

**Beads, Buckskin, and
Blackpowder in the Bayou Salade**

by: terry c. johnston

(Continued from June, 2015).....

By 1846, Tom Fitzpatrick, veteran mountain man called "Broken Hand" by the Indians from a rifle breech explosion, had become the first Indian Agent for the upper Arkansas and Platte Rivers. This put the center of his activity with the Bayou Salade Park. His first mission was to leave his base of Bents' Fort, traveling along the Arkansas, then up over the Divide onto the South Platte into the valley. It was here he wished to visit his adopted son's native tribe, the Arapaho, living there.

He brought along with him John Simpson Smith, nicknamed "Uncle John" by the fur traders at the adobe fort on the Arkansas River, as a Cheyenne interpreter. Smith was married by this time to a Cheyenne woman, and had already been living with the tribe for many years.

Fitzpatrick was given deep and sensitive expressions of friendship and promised peace for the white man by the Arapaho tribe. But, he found a white trader among them upon his arrival in the Indian camp, a trader who bought the robes and furs from the tribe by selling the liquid fire the Indians had come to call their "fire water." In a heated rage, angered at what the trader could do to his son's people, Fitzpatrick pushed the white man aside from his wagon and drove it down to the South Platte. There he took keg after keg from the wagon to pitch them into the rocky stream with all the strength his anger could muster. The trader was now without whiskey, and Tom was without much faith in his own people, but with a deeper resolve to be the kind of Indian Agent that was needed in the Central Rockies.

Fitzpatrick's interpreter, John Smith, had little faith too in the white traders, and several years later returned to his wife's people, the Cheyenne. "Uncle John" was with the tribe when they camped where white leaders said the tribe would be safe from harm "as long as the rivers run and the grass is green." Smith was with the Cheyenne when Chivington rode into the Indian camp one cold, grey dawn at the head of the cavalry and U.S. Army. Smith's life was spared in the unauthorized raid on the Sand Creek encampment, but he was forced to watch the brutal butchering of his wife and half-breed son by the soldiers' sabers.

In the spring of 1846, William Tharp had traveled back east to secure a license to trade with the Indians in the Bayou Salade region, capital employed in his venture to be about \$2,000. That summer, he returned from Missouri to his adopted home of Taos to visit his wife, Antonia Luna, and two children before heading north to the Bayou valley. He entered the home he had made for his family, to be told by Antonia (whom some historians have judged to have been dull-witted) that she was leaving him for Jim Beckwith (Beckwourth), preferring the ex-Crow chief as a better lover and husband. Tharp sadly left the children in the care of a friend in Taos, then struck out north. He spent the fall pulling beaver from the streams of the mountain valley, trading some with the Indians, but was always alone. After wintering in the Bayou, Tharp was killed and scalped on the morning of May 27, 1847 while out hunting buffalo in the southern end of the park.

With the commencement of the Mexican War, the U.S. Government was highly interested in what land was claimed by what tribe in the mountain west. The Utes came forward to lay claim to the entire mountain district, as far south as the San Luis Valley south of the Bayou Salade, while the Comanche had claimed the "Greenhorn Country", named after one of the great chiefs, in addition to a similar claim on the Bayou. Likewise, claims to the Park were made by the Arapahoes who roamed the South Platte regions, and one band of the Southern Cheyenne who had come from the north to establish themselves between the South Platte and the Arkansas.

George F. Ruxton had traveled briefly in the mountain west with the trappers of the Rockies, but had been immersed totally in their then-dying way of life and living. He came home to write the classic, **Life in the Far West**, centered around two characters he named Killbuck and La Bonte. It was in the winter of 1847 when Ruxton met the man who would be his La Bonte character, Lewis B. Meyers, along with his companion who would be Killbuck in the author's story. The three traveled for many days together through the hillsides of the Bayou Salade, and each night Ruxton's hosts spilled their story of the Rocky Mountain trappers' life in the far west.

Riding north along the eastern side of the Front Range, Killbuck and La Bonte had been by a

band of Arapaho warriors. The pair climbed the mountains to escape, crossing the Divide with Pike's Peak on their left, dropping into the southeast corner of the Bayou valley. Here they found a band of "Yutas" (Utes) to whom they told the story of their ambush. The tribe's council inquired as to the direction of travel taken by the "Arapahoes," then set out after their enemies, in some way to avenge the attack on their two white friends.

Late in the winter of 1847-48, Ruxton visited the trading post called "El Pueblo," the present site of Pueblo, Colorado, before his trip north into the valley of the Bayou. It was there that he learned that two days after his departure from Taos for the Colorado mountains, Governor Charles Bent had been murdered in the uprising of Mexicans and Indians. From Pueblo he had traveled north and west into the Bayou Salade to meet up with his literary characters, Killbuck and La Bonte.

In the spring of 1852, the Bayou Salade was visited more out of desire for reunion, remembrance and relaxation than for trapping. Kit Carson, along with partner Lucien Maxwell, gathered a group of 20 men, most of them old mountain veterans. Having left Bents' Fort, the party traveled north along the Arkansas, then struck out over the Divide into the southern valley. Slowly they worked their way north out of the Bayou, through the Laramie Plains into New (North) Park, then turned south once more to return through Old (Middle) Park to the Bayou Salade. Lingering in the valley for some time, the group later trapped down the Arkansas to the Raton Mountains, turning north once more to return to Bents' adobe fortress by late fall. It was a farewell for Carson, Maxwell, Old Solitaire, and the others, for the mountain fur trade had been dead for many years by that summer of 1852. For Carson it was his last farewell to the free roaming, wandering bachelor life; for all it was the last, lingering an painful adios to the Rockies, to the ways of the fur trapper, to their years in the mountain west.

During the late summer of 1860, Jim Beckwith was again asked to advise the tribes camping near the little town of Denver where he was then living. Over 500 warriors of various tribes had decided to take to the war path once more in a general assault against the Utes located in the Bayou Salade. With more and

more tribal lands being wrested from them, the tribes hoped to at last be able to settle in the mountain valley for all time. Both Beckwith and Kit Carson strongly advised the Indians against their planned attack, but the white words fell upon deaf ears.

The warriors rode into the Bayou valley and plunged into the sleeping Ute camp, killing many women and children, and driving most of the Ute warriors into the surrounding hills. After such a successful battle, the victorious tribes withdrew to a safe distance and set up their own encampment. It wasn't long before the Utes had rallied themselves with reinforcements, counterattacking the allies who were totally off their guard, sweeping down on the once victorious camp to slaughter its inhabitants at will.

Bonner's Beckwourth, the Rockies' Jim Beckwith, once more moves along a thread of the Bayou's story. Following the death of his daughter in the 1860s, Beckwith's marriage began to falter and break up. Shortly, Jim left Denver and is next known to have been living with a Crow wife he had named "Sue". The two spent their days farming and trapping within the mountain valley of the Bayou Salade, often entertaining the Indians who had villages clustered about the homestead along the South Platte.

Yes, the buckskinner of the 20th Century can travel into today's South Park with ease, pull from the highway onto one of the few roads which will take him up into the surrounding hills, and turn off the ignition. Stepping from his steel horse, he will travel a short distance on foot, soon within the shade and peaceful coolness of the thick stands of trees.

There our friend can slowly sink to the ground and lean back against a tree. With South Park at his feet, the visitor will gradually breathe in the air thick with history. Drifting back across the years, he soon sees the herds of buffalo and elk grazing below him, not far from the conical lodges from which thin blue columns of smoke reach upward into the high country sky.

Suddenly the cloak of tranquility is broken as a big buck crashes through the timber past the visitor. Before our friend can catch his breath, two grizzled characters step forward silently to confront the stunned intruder. The older of the pair, draped in greasy buckskins falling loosely over his bony frame,

cradles his brass-tacked flinter across his left arm as he looks up and down the amazed visitor.

In his high-pitched, whiny voice that sounds of something smooth running over a pebbled stream, the old man stabs at the intruder with his voice, "Pilgrim, that buck we wuz stalkin' winded ye. H'aint easy ter live in this'r kentry less'n ye git rid uv them fancy settlement hangydowns. I'n ye be reddy ter live up hyars, son, yher gonna hev ter leaf behin' all that city truck yer totin' an' heavy with now. Unkle Dick and ah h'are outter git some vinnyson fer h'our h'evenin' fire."

The two trappers take a few softly-padded steps on down the hill, when Old Bill turns once more to address the still-silent visitor, "H'are ye reddy, fren'? Reddy ter leaf all the comfert fur behin'? If'n yer comin', bes' ye come now, an' step quiet-dreams travel silent 'cross tha y'ars, ye know. We h'ar goin' now - ye with h'us?"

They step on among the tick grove of trees, silently moving downhill in a peculiar half-crouch stalking posture.

Slowly, our visitor rises to follow his old friends. Careful so he does not break the spell, his moccasined feet pad quietly through the underbrush. His companions stop and turn to wait, then gather him in their arms as an old companero. Fading slowly now in the dim light, the three descend into the heart of the Bayou Salade, their forms gradually passing from our view as they move back across the years. And the valley is silent once more.

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*The following information is taken from **The Buckskin Report**, Volume 3 Number 4 - January 1976, published at Big Timber, Montana and sold for \$1.00.*

FROM THE WORK BENCH

By: **Bill Falk**

Did you ever have a frizzen go flat? It'll happen, you know. Many old gunsmith ledgers list "half-sole a frizzen." The durn things wear out today just as they did back then. It doesn't seem to make

much difference who made the lock, they all act up after a while. The high quality locks last a lot longer but eventually they too will act up. Now I'm writing this article under the assumption that your frizzen is sour. I'm not talking about dull flints or crud build-up around the breech to the point where it covers the touch hole. I'm talking about frizzens that give up the ghost. They just don't spark anymore. A frizzen will wear out but not as soon as a lot of people suspect. A lot of lock failures are caused by too much tinkering! Cheap locks need tinkering; high quality ones shouldn't in other words, if it ain't broke don't fix it!

However, if you are convinced that the darn thing ain't gonna spark no more, take the frizzen off. Clamp the frizzen spring in a vise (with pads or a smooth face) until the pressure on the frizzen is relieved. **NOW** unscrew the frizzen screw - if you don't do it this way you'll strip threads. With the frizzen in your hot little hands, examine the face. Is it severely chewed, chipped, or gouged? This may be your only problem. A rough frizzen surface will catch the flint and not allow it to have a smooth scraping action. If your hammer jerks and jumps over gouges and pits it will not have the smooth scraping action necessary for fast, hot sparks.

Touch the frizzen against a six inch grinding wheel until those gouges are cleaned up. Hold the frizzen in your fingers so you can quench it if it gets too hot to handle. If you hold it in a vise grip or pliers you could get it too hot and draw the temper. A six inch grinding wheel has about the right curvature to give the proper curve to a frizzen.

"What about grinding away the case hardening?" you ask. Normally, high quality locks use a high grade of steel that is properly tempered all the way through. A good lock should resume sparking after cleaning up the gouges on the face. If your frizzen happens to be casehardened, you will have to smooth it up anyway before you bake some more carbon onto it.

Sometimes half-soleing is the only answer. For some reason, sometimes a frizzen won't temper properly or case harden satisfactorily. Don't ask me why, it shouldn't be but it does happen. It goes against all reason and common sense. It could be attributed to large doses of amateur gun tinkering. In other words, someone attempted to heat and quench the frizzen so many times all the carbon was burned out of it, or they didn't properly case harden it. Now I ain't gonna set myself up and say this is always the case. That would make me sound like Thompson-Center saying that all their guns that blow up had smokeless powder in em at the time. So let's assume that you've tried all the foregoing procedures and the darn thing still won't spark. Half sole it! If you have a forge

you can rivet or heat weld a new piece of hard steel on. I ain't got a forge so here is how I do it.

I've got a roll of rewind spring from a chain saw. It's similar to a clock spring only bigger; 3-64ths" by 1 inch. I grind a groove across it and break off a chunk about an inch and a half long. This chunk I bend until it reasonably fits the contour of the frizzen. Next I heat it red hot and quench it in water. It is now glass hard.

Assuming that you have ground the frizzen face as previously described, clamp the frizzen, face up, in a vise so that it is reasonably level. Make sure the metal is clean and bright. Rub some Allen Solder Paste on it. Allen's Solder Paste is not a solder! It is a flux and a damn good one. There are solder pastes available so use it if you can find it. I haven't been able to find any lately so I take a hammer and flatten some solder. I then tear it off in strips and lay it crosswise on the frizzen face until I have it blanketed. Next I sand the back of that glass hard piece of spring until it is clean and bright. I smear Allen's Solder Paste on it and stick on the frizzen. I heat the frizzen from the back side until the solder **JUST** flows. I then let it cool and grind off the excess to match the shape of the frizzen. I grind so that the frizzen supports the half sole, otherwise the grinder can exert some tremendous tearing forces when compared to a hammer with a flint scraping.

I do not quench as this would crystalize the solder and give you a bad joint. The small amount of heat required to melt the solder will draw the half sole's temper just right.

"Why can't I use silver solder and heat the whole works red hot and then quench?" Because the silver solder is liquid and hasn't bonded anything until it is cool. When you quench, the thin spring material will warp and pull away from the frizzen and the still molten silver solder.

If you have half soled the darn thing like I described and it still won't spark, try putting a flint in the hammer.

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Remember that September is election of officers. Consider taking one of the positions and helping this club to survive. No position is hard and we won't leave you without support. It is good to try new things and an office on the CSMLA board may be just the thing for you.

If you currently are in a position and want to remain there, please let us know so that we can begin to coerce, drag, and otherwise draft others to fill the vacancies!!!!