



CAPE SAAACA

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APRIL 2008 NEWSLETTER



UPCOMING APRIL TALKS:

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, the 24th of April 2008, at 19:00 at the CTH Officers Mess inside the Cape Castle. (Parking inside the grounds behind the Castle off Strand Street). We suggest you come earlier to allow you to register your attendance and to buy some refreshments before the talks start at 19H00.

Members are invited to bring artefacts on which they wish to deliver a short talk. Reminded that you must please prepare a short summary of your talk which you can e-mail to the Chairman to be included in the next newsletter.

Members are reminded that strict safety protocol on the handling of any firearm will apply; ALL MOVING PARTS MUST BE REMOVED and displayed separately, unless prior cleared with the Chairman. NO live ammunition will be handled.



ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL MATTERS:

We are busy setting up a bulk sms system to stay in contact with our members on vital reminders and critical breaking news. This will soon be up and running.

As matters evolve we find that our newsletters are getting larger and larger as far as the Kb size goes. That will prove to be somewhat exasperating to those members with ordinary dial up e-mail accounts, when large e-mails take "for ever" to down load.

We tested this at our last meeting and two members present requested that we mail the newsletters without photographs to ease the "on line" time somewhat.

This proved to be unpractical given our limited available human resources as we would have to create a duplicated mailing list which in itself had all other kinds of ramifications. Pending us finding alternative solutions the only advice we can offer those so inconvenienced is to make sure that they only down load after 7 at night when it is cheaper or to arrange a "Call More" capability which will ease it somewhat.

Will all members who feel that they prefer to be removed from our current e-mailing lists, please advise us accordingly?

Members are also invited to submit comments and suggestions towards our current newsletter format, layout and content to help us develop it into an ever improving communicating tool and product.



31st OF MARCH 2008 RE-LICENSES CYCLE applications for those born in the months Jul/Aug/Sept.

31st of MARCH 2009 RE-LICENSES CYCLE applications for those born in the months Oct/Nov/Dec.

This year has been easier than last year and bar single pending applications, we managed to attend to all that had to apply.

For those who has not yet submitted their docs before the dead line, but had to relicence this year, contact the Membership Convenor Robert Nothhaft at robert@westernshooters.co.za

Regardless of above, the licences of those who neglected to relicence will remain valid until the 31st of June 2009. That will allow them time to sell or swap their firearms. Based on Classic Arms Auction prices, the market has firmed on the better quality firearms.



SECRETARIATS NEWS:

This is where we keep you up to date with what happened at our various secretariats. Come on chaps, let us have your monthly news reports!

FORT KNOCKE MILITIA:

Interested parties can contact John Lamont at glentyne@yebo.co.za.

CAPE SAAACA WESTERN SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION:



THE WILD BUNCH

THE COWBOYS

The original 'Wild Bunch'.

Cape SAAACA's Western Shooter's Association get's together every third Saturday of each month for a shoot at the False Bay Shooting Club. We do what is known today as Cowboy Action Shooting, the fastest growing gun sport in the world. We shoot a 3-Gun Shoot that comprises of being timed for shooting at targets with two revolvers, a Lever Action Rifle and a side-by-side Shotgun or a pump-action Shotgun. All guns either have to be pre-1900 or replicas of those pre-1900 weapons.

The handgun of choice for Cowboy Action Shooting, has to be the 1873 Colt SAA .45 Revolver (or any copy of it) and it is easily the most famous and instantly recognized design in firearms history. Called the "Peacemaker", "Plough Handle" and "The Equalizer", the list of pet names goes on and reads like a grocery list. This gun was not just a "tool" that a man carried and used, it was a part of him and his life depended on it. Worn at all times and for all occasions to defend life and property at a moment's notice, the 1873 Single action, more than any other gun, says "Old West".

The Lever guns of choice are handgun-calibre firing rifles only and range from Henry, Winchester 1866, 1873, 1892 models to Marlin and even Colt's Pump Action models and all the replicas of them. The most popular probably being the Winchester 1873 and the 1892 models. The relatively light weight and elegantly handy size of all these rifles make them popular with Cowboy Action Shooters and others still today. The Winchester 1892 was used in many of the Western movies & TV shows, even though many of them were set in an era before the 92 had been introduced.

Shotguns of choice would be the 1887 Winchester Lever Action (very rare to find) and the 1897 Pump Action as well as any type of Side by Side Shotgun, with external or internal hammers as long as it has no auto eject feature. In Cowboy Action Shooting today, the Winchester 1897 Pump Action is just as popular as the side by side models.

At our March shoot we had a slightly smaller group of shooters than normal, but I actually enjoy it this way, because we are all like-minded shooters who do not always get the opportunity to share like-minded information. These monthly shoots give us that opportunity, but not always the time to do so. This particular Saturday was one of those rare opportunities where we had more time to share such information and just chat about Cowboy Stuff in general, while we leisurely 'competed' in between. Everyone had a good time and the shoot was great as well.

Graeme Smith

Aka: Slip Shootin Smith

www.westernshooters.co.za



MONTHLY TALK AT THE CTH OFFICERS MESS CAPE CASTLE.

Thursday the 28th of February the faithful met in the hallowed chambers of the CTH Officers Club at the Cape Castle for our monthly talk.

At February months meeting (the nicest month of the year for Cape Townians) we had perfect weather and a beautiful setting sun, while the NSADF band played in front of De Kat in all their finery and the proverbial red carpet laid out with candles in the wind... Great was our surprise when none other than the French President and an entourage of tuxedo gentry accompanied by their ladies dressed to the nines arrived. It was with some reluctance that we withdrew for our own proceedings.

Cyril Lautenbach gave a brief overview on reloading for old calibres for collectors, while Steven Darvel displayed an 1888 Martini Henry .303 along with its bayonet. Pieter Van Wyk stole the evening with his talk on the intimidating .454 Casull revolver.

RELOADING OBSOLETE HANDGUN CARTRIDGES.

As far as I am aware it is illegal to reload for somebody else, this should be kept in mind. The cartridge case represents some 60% of the cartridge cost so if you shoot a lot it is worthwhile reloading. If you have not reloaded before it pays to get the reloading manual of a reputable company like Speer. There are of course other good books like "the ABC's of reloading" by Dean Grennell. These books refer to USA propellants so Somchem's booklet on its reloading powders is a great help but it refers only to popular current calibers. Although Focchi from time to time makes small lots of obsolete calibers they are very difficult to come by. It pays handsomely to get a copy of "Cartridges of the World" by Frank Barnes. This contains a mine of information on current and obsolete calibers. This book refers to USA powders mostly but it is common knowledge that our local powder MP200 is approximately 10% faster burning than the ubiquitous USA powder "Unique".

Loading given for "Unique" powder must be reduced for using MP200. To be on the safe side reduce by too much rather than too little. If there is any doubt about a pistol's condition it should rather be placed in honourable retirement. It is good practice to start with small loads of propellant and work upwards until the pistol auto loads properly. There is no point in damaging a valuable pistol or yourself by being macho with your loads, make haste

slowly is
the name
of the
game.



The major problem with obsolete calibers is the cartridge case. The Glisenti cartridge is very close dimensionally to the 9mm Para but is down loaded by approx. 20%. The Glisenti pistol is not a robust pistol, keep this in mind and rather load down more. Always inspect the primer for flattening indicating overpressure. This is a good rule for all reloads. The .38 Super is a higher pressure version of the .38 ACP. Refer to "Cartridges of the World" for the necessary data, it is all there. This is a semi rimmed case, the rim can be reduced to case diameter and the extraction groove made deeper if necessary and it can be used for reloading 9mm Steyr. The 9mm Browning Long is a semi rimmed case and reducing the .38 Super case by .1 inch is usually all that is needed. The .38 Special is a gift to reloaders. The rim can be turned off and an extraction groove turned in the base. It can then be trimmed to the required length for 9mm / .38 cartridges. If it is passed through a 7.63mm Mauser Broomhandle sizing die and then trimmed it can be used to reload for the Broomhandle and the TT 30/33 Tokarev. Again data can be found in Cartridges of the World. There is no shortage of 9mm and .357 calibre bullets. Hornady make a full range of jacketed bullets. The .32 calibre 85 grain revolver bullets are sized .312 inch and can be passed through a Lee .308 bullet sizing die with no apparent damage for using in the Broomhandle and the Tokarev. There is a 90 grain bullet in .309 calibres but I have not yet found any locally.

The Webley Mk5 and 6 revolver although designed for smokeless propellant has peculiarities. The bullets have to be soft lead and be hollow based. The chamber mouths are .005 of an inch smaller diameter than the bullet and the bullet is therefore sized down when it enters the barrel. Hard lead alloy would not size down easily and cause

increased chamber pressure. Gas pressure in the hollow base causes the soft lead to expand into the rifling. The Mk2 Webley cartridge case is short and the hollow base bullet provides additional propellant space. Webley bullets are not easily obtained locally.

Reloading for the Colt New Service and the S&W revolvers in .455 calibre supplied by the USA to Britain in World War 1 are a lot easier. Their cylinders are reamed to the bullet size as normal and the chambers will accept the longer Webley Mk1 cartridge cases. Cases can be made from .45 Long Colt cases. The rim may need reducing in thickness and the case can be trimmed to maximum length the cylinder will take. With these longer cases flat base bullets of lead alloy can be used. Commercial .452 diameters Colt .45 bullets function satisfactorily. The picture shows from left a factory .455 Webley cartridge, a reloaded Long Colt .45 case loaded for a New Service Colt, a Russian made Tokarev 7.62mm, a modified .38 Special case reformed for 7.62mm Tokarev and a modified .38 Special case for a 9mm Steyr. When you reload you do so at your own risk and can never be too careful. The previous information is given in good faith but again you use it at your own risk. The usual caveat applies; neither Cape SAAACA nor the writer can be held responsible if things go wrong.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE .454 CASULL CARTRIDGE AND THE TAURUS RAGING BULL DOUBLE ACTION REVOLVER

1. Forerunners in the quest for power

Before focussing on the development of the .454 Casull cartridge, I will just briefly touch on what was previously available in terms of "powerful" revolver cartridges to the shooting public.

It should be remembered that anything that is available at any given point in time will naturally be assessed quite differently in the absence of superior products as would have been the case if such products co-existed. Today we would scoff at a train travelling at 12 mph, but when George Stephenson achieved this speed with his steam engine, the Locomotion, when hauling a 28-truck train during the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway on 27 September 1825, many people regarded such a high speed as inherently evil. Surely many people thought the same when Sir Nigel Gresley's locomotive, the Mallard, set the all time world speed record for steam in 1938 at 126 mph!

In the same way cartridges are sometimes assessed in comparison with others. In 1935 the famous .357 Magnum cartridge was introduced by Smith & Wesson. Developed by Winchester, the ammunition was based on a slightly extended .38 Special case, but roughly two and a half times as powerful. With an energy level of 535 ft/lb and firing a 158 grain bullet it was regarded as awesome. When I bought my first revolver in this calibre in 1977 I was highly impressed with its performance and definitely shared these sentiments.

As with the development of other inventions such as motor vehicles and locomotives there will always be some people that will have a requirement for bigger, better, faster and more powerful equipment.

Mr Elmer Keith was exactly such a person as far as handguns and specifically revolvers were concerned. He wanted the ultimate in handgun accuracy, range and power and, having been experimenting with heavy .45 Colt loads and regularly pestering Smith & Wesson to produce a powerful .44 calibre cartridge, the .44 Magnum cartridge was eventually developed by Remington and Smith & Wesson and introduced in 1955.

This cartridge was much more powerful than the hitherto champion, the .357 Magnum. With muzzle energy of 860 to 1010 ft/lb, depending on load, barrel length and bullet weight, which generally ranges from 240 to

250 grain, the .44 Magnum was regarded as a real “hell-bender” gun. It was highly popularised by the fictional Inspector Harry Callaghan in the “Dirty Harry” range of Clint Eastwood movies of the seventies and eighties which probably did much more to market the gun than any official promotion efforts by the company. Actually a .41 Magnum posing as a Smith & Wesson Model 29 was used in some of the movies. This cartridge was developed to fill the gap between the .357 and .44 Magnums and was introduced in 1967.

2. Development of the .454 Casull

Originally a wildcat cartridge and initially known as the .454 Magnum Revolver, this cartridge was announced by P.O. Ackley in the November 1959 edition of Guns & Ammo Magazine.

As long ago as 1957 Messrs Jack Fullmer & Dick Casull of Salt Lake City began experimenting with loads with the view to exceed the ballistics of the .44 Magnum. Specially made 5 shot cylinders were used which were fitted to beefed up Colt and Ruger single action revolvers.

Ammunition was manufactured using solid head .45 Colt cases fitted with large rifle primers. At the time no readily available smokeless propellant could develop the very high pressures required for the high velocities Mr Casull wanted to generate in the relative short 7” to 10” revolver barrels.

To overcome this problem, duplex and triplex loads were used. One such triplex load consisted of a 250 grain gas check bullet propelled by a load of 2 grains Unique followed by 25 grains 2400 followed by another 2 grains Unique. Reportedly the different types of propellant ignited at different times and burned at different rates resulting in the unprecedented energy level of 1 990 ft/lb at the muzzle.

WARNING: THESE LOADS ARE DANGEROUS AND MUST NEVER BE DUPLICATED TODAY.

Some loads developed extremely high pressures with some approaching pressure levels as high as 90 000 pound / square inch.

The .454 Magnum Revolver also had a little brother namely the .38 Casull High Speed. This was also a very powerful cartridge able to punch holes in steel plate which the .44 Magnum could only dent. However, for some unknown reasons it never developed to the point where it became commercially available.

The first .454 Magnum revolvers were all custom made on special order.

Around 1978 / 1979 Freedom Arms announced that the .454 Casull, as it was now officially known, was about to be commercially produced. In this regard the company released the pamphlet below in which they commented on the new revolver as follow:

“For decades the mere mention of the legendary .454 Casull has conjured up visions of mystique, power and prestige. Freedom Arms is pleased to announce that the .454 Casull now stands ready to take its place in the annals of history as the World’s Most Powerful Handgun. This awesome revolver, constructed from the finest heat treated stainless steel, breathes firepower. It represents Dick Casull’s finest work. The .454 Casull is capable of propelling a projectile out the muzzle at velocities exceeding 2000 f.p.s., generating over a ton of energy – nearly twice that of its nearest competitor. It holds five rounds of powerful .454 Casull ammunition (specially developed for this and only this revolver) and features a massive cylinder with locking notches placed to give the best safety possible. Its 7.5 inch barrel (10 and 12 inch available) is rifled with a special twist for superior performance under the heavy pressures and hyper-velocities generated by the .454

Casull cartridge. The revolver features a newly patented sliding bar safety system. This new feature is separate from the trigger, allowing a crisp clean trigger pull to match the .454's inherent long range accuracy! This finely crafted revolver is sure to become the prize possession of every gun enthusiast and will emerge as the ultimate weapon for handgun hunting.”

However, it was not until 1985 that these guns actually became available and only in limited quantities. The early models had machined rear sights and high front sight blades. The purpose of the latter was to enable shooters to carefully file them down to their specific requirements. The later models are fitted with adjustable sights and replaceable forcing cones.

Duplex and triplex loads were no longer used as suitable propellants has since become available, namely H-110 and W-296. Today factory ammunition is produced by Cor-Bon, Winchester and Freedom Arms and small rifle magnum primers are used to ignite the compressed loads.

3. A bull was born

Many experts on the subject of handguns were of the opinion that the ultra-powerful .454 Casull cartridge cannot be safely chambered in a double action revolver. However, those that made such statements were in for a surprise.

In 1998 Forjas Taurus from Brazil introduced to the world a massive double action revolver chambered for this cartridge. Called the “Raging Bull” this double action revolver features a five shot cylinder with the bolt cuts placed between the chambers. The barrels are fitted with a compensator that substantial reduces the muzzle jump associated with the .454 Casull cartridge. The rubber grip, which is ergonomically designed, contains a special insert in the back strap to help absorb recoil.

The hammer is fitted with a hammer lock which, when activated, prevent it from being cocked. Two hammer lock keys are provided with the revolver. The most interesting feature is probably the two independent locking mechanisms which secure the cylinder in place. The one is similar to the traditional cylinder lock found on most other modern double action revolvers whilst the second one is situated in front of the cylinder on the cradle. Both have to be activated in order to swing out the cylinder.

In unloaded condition the revolver weighs 1.8 kilogram.

The Raging Bull is very comfortable to shoot, but shooters are advised to consider wearing a wrist brace if a lot of shooting is done on a regular basis especially if a medical condition such as arthritis is present.

I have found the revolver to be very accurate with both factory and hand loaded ammunition. Mr Juan de Greeff flattened three steel plates with only one shot each at the distances of 100, 150 and 200 metres with my revolver at the Eskom shooting range late one afternoon.

As far as hunting is concerned Mr Casper Badenhorst, a seasoned handgun hunter, reportedly killed three Cape buffalo and an antelope on one day with his five inch barrelled Raging Bull.



My load for the .454 Casull consists of 28 grain S265 behind a 300 grain gas check linotype bullet (Please note that this data is for general information only and that I cannot be held responsible for any injury or damage caused by using of the same).



CAPE SAAACA SHOOTING DISCIPLINES:

- 2 Gun Shoots under time limitations. *Condition: No rests (bi-pods or sand bags) allowed.*
- We will also bring two bench rest tables for those who wish to range their rifles after the 2 Gun Shoots has been wrapped up between 12H00 and 14H00.

VENUE: At the NSADF Range at ATLANTIS on Range C in front of Club House. (If in doubt, enquire at Clubhouse)

DATES: 19th of April 2008
24th of May 2008 (Preliminary)
7th of June 2008-04-13

TIME: Registration from 9H30 and shooting commences at 10H00. We should be wrapped up by 12H00.

COSTS: R20,00 for members and R30,00 for non-members. All welcome.

Bring a ground sheet or carpet off cut to lie on if you are partial to the odd dreaded Cape duwweltjie! Braai packs for sale at the cash bar after shoot when we normally light the braai fires and share tales and generally network with each other.

This is both a fun event hosted at the Atlantis Shooting Range as published on our web site. It is an opportunity to develop your shooting skills under a hybrid format from various other shooting disciplines intended to give us a shoot as close to the real thing in which the various types were originally used. So load up your favourite revolver and grab that lever action Martini or bolt action Mauser and come take your position on the shooting line and start working on your ranking on the annual log. The lucky few with Ruger Mini 14's or LM4's can grab their semi auto pistols and do the "lock and roll" bit as well.

We will keep scores and compile an annual score board in each class, and at our annual year end event we will issue certificates to those in the first three places. It will also allow collectors to become familiar with the working side of their pieces and compete with their own PB (personal best) times as they improve.

Class 1 Modern Assault Weapons

Semi & full auto assault rifles and semi auto pistols.

100m	Assault rifles	Standing position	5 shots in 15 seconds
25m	Semi-auto pistols	Standing position	5 shots in 15 seconds

Class 2 Breach Loading Weapons

Lever and bolt action rifles and single and double action revolvers.

100m	Lever and bolt Assault rifles	Prone position	5 shots in 30 seconds
25m	Revolvers	Standing position	5 shots in 30 seconds

Class 3 Black powder muzzle loading and cap and ball weapons

Muzzle loading flint/percussion muskets and cap and ball revolvers or flint lock pistols.

100m	Muskets	Prone position	5 shots in 12 minutes
25m	Revolvers	Prone position	5 shots in 12 minutes

Range Officers:

Stephan Fourie

Graeme Smith

Francois du Toit

Volunteers to assist the R.O.'s are invited to contact the Chairman.

As Range Officers are a SETA rated qualification and compulsory for hosting organised shoots, we intend that all such volunteers be sent on a R.O. course at our expense to ensure our safety and remain legit.



WEBSITE:

www.capesaaaca.co.za (This site soon to be revamped)

Check our calendar for events, and if you know of any interesting forthcoming event, let our webmaster know in advance to allow him to post it. webmaster@capesaaaca.co.za

Download application forms, refer to popular links, keep abreast of affairs as it unfolds, etc.

TRADERS CORNER:

All and anybody who wishes to sell or trade anything (related to our mutual interest) may post ads here for FREE. Contact our webmaster with the necessary information, price and contact details. webmaster@capesaaaca.co.za

We suggest you refer anyone who decided to get rid of their firearms to place a free add on our web site and or to contact Andrew to have it put on auction rather than hand it in to the SAPS for destruction.

DEALERS CORNER:

Visit our web site to support our accredited dealers.

Classic Arms Auction dates:

Auction 28; 7th of June Voortrekker Monument Pretoria
Auction 29; 2nd of August War Museum Johannesburg.
(W) 013-656 2923

andrew@classicarms.co.za
www.classicarms.co.za

Warbooks:

General militaria specialist books and special orders on request.
Johan van den Berg at warbooks@mweb.co.za



Download application forms from our web site for new members, categorisation and collectibility applications, etc. www.capesaaaca.co.za

FEES PAYABLE:

Joining fee	R150.00
Annual subs for firearm collectors	R450.00
Categorisation and Field of Interest applications/reviews.	R250.00
Subsequent Collectibility applications	R100.00
Annual subs for all other secretariat collector categories	R250.00
Student membership subs	R100.00

Greetings,

Stephan Fourie

Chairman

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"If firearms cause crime, then pencils cause illiteracy"