

The Acton Free Press

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Second section

Canada's largest gun show draws 5,000 visitors to arena



Canada's largest gun show, staged in the Acton community centre by the Halton Antique Arms Collectors' Association on the weekend attracted close to 5,000 visitors and displays from far away as Calgary and Trois-Rivieres, P.Q.

Arm's collectors from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan also displayed prize possessions at the two day show which opened early Saturday morning and closed about mid-afternoon Sunday.

"The whole weekend was beyond all our expectations," H.A.A.C.A. secretary Hank Ruppert told the Free Press. He worked hard with president Lee Magloughlin and the committee to prepare for the show.

"It's the biggest show we've ever had and the first time we've used the upstairs auditorium for display tables," Ruppert said. The tables were among 500 set up in the community centre to display rifles, shotguns, revolvers, pistols, medals, coins, books, military memorabilia etc.

Special attractions included a display of Indian arrowheads and tools belonging to John Michie, who unearthed most of them near his home in the southern part of Esqueving township, and a pottery-making exhibition by Bill Lisk of Erin.

Halton M.P. Terry O'Connor and Minister of Government Services for Ontario, the Hon. Jim Snow, M.P.P. for Halton East brought greetings of their governments, then strolled around the floor to view the displays and answer questions for exhibitors and guests.

Most valuable piece of arms at the show, a German wheellock rifle with an ivory carved stock and barrel was displayed by Bob Smith and Morley Alexander of Hazeldean near Ottawa. The rifle is valued at \$4,000.

Pepperbox pistols, the fastest and most popular firearm of their time (1840-60) were displayed by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pangallo who journeyed from Buffalo to attend the show.

A dress uniform of the Lifeguard Household Cavalry and a collection of yesteryear's military helmets caught the eye of many vets, including 72-year-old Lawrence Nelson of Cobourg who claims to have the largest collection of guns in Canada.

Les Johnson of Stoney Creek displayed what he described as "the greatest selection of militaria books in Canada".

Free passes
Women, children and card-holding members of any gun, revolver, antique arms collectors or hunting club in Canada were

admitted to the show free. Free roses were handed out to all women.

Because of leniency with admission charges, Ruppert expects the show will do no better than break even financially. Nevertheless, he is pleased so many members of clubs took advantage of the opportunity to attend.

"We weren't really out to make money," he explained. "Our objective was to bring members of different clubs together so that we could discover each other's problems and discuss way to resolve them."

The show was successful in this respect. At a Saturday morning meeting of representatives of clubs from Halton, Quebec, Brant County, Niagara, Ottawa and RARO (Firearms and Responsible Ownership) it was decided to form a united body to counter unfavorable publicity and potentially dangerous legislation against firearm owners.

"We decided we want to serve the interests of everyone, even if it's someone who was just given his grandfather's .22," said Hank.

Fear bill
Some firearm owners are concerned about a private member's bill now before the House of Commons which would ban all handguns and automatic guns from the hands of collectors and make it mandatory for all rifles and shotguns to be registered.

Ruppert explains that collectors are in favor of legislation that will control the criminal element of firearm owners, but not honest collectors. "Perhaps they should make it law that anyone using a handgun during a holdup automatically gets 10 years with no chance for parole," he suggests.

The group expects to meet again to further discuss plans for their campaign.

A Georgetown Revolver Club display at the show offered information for those wishing to take up target pistol shooting. Franz Kochen of Baden brought along enough cartridges he has collected to take up 50 feet of display space.

As a special precaution Acton OPP patrolled the community centre area every 15 minutes. Armed security guards protected the displays from 5 p.m. Saturday afternoon until the show opened again Sunday morning.

The H.A.A.C.A. will hold a smaller show here again in early November and plans call for the second annual two day show to go ahead on Labor Day weekend in 1974.

MOST VALUABLE firearm on display at the gun show was a German wheellock rifle which has ivory carvings on the stock and barrel. The rifle valued at \$4000 and displayed by Bob Smith and Morley Alexander of Hazeldean, near Ottawa caught the eye of Halton M.P.

Terry O'Connor and his daughters, Kelly and Dawn. O'Connor was home in his riding following a late night in the House of Commons Friday when the bill was passed ordering non-operating railway workers back to their jobs.

(D. Gibbons photo)



GEORGETOWN Revolver Club displayed revolvers and handed out information on what is involved in becoming a member or competitor of a target pistol shooting club at the gun show

on the weekend. Three members of the club which has a range on 22 Sideroad near Limehouse are l. to r., Ron Challenger, Ron Warnock and Gord McBean.

(D. Gibbons photo)

Police offended by county crest

Halton County Police officers don't want the Halton County crest on their shoulder flashes or their cars as long as a pig is pictured in the corner of the crest.

At a recent meeting of county council the matter was discussed. Some County councillors admitted not noticing the crest until the police objected but some agreed the crest should be up-

dated because it leans too heavily towards agriculture and isn't truly representative of the county as it is now.

Regional Chairman Allan Masson said he had talked with police on the matter and they agreed a simple shoulder flash indicating they are representatives of the regional police force would be enough and a fancy crest wasn't necessary.



MINISTER of Government Services, Hon. James Snow and son Jeff were impressed with the selection of rifles on display at the gun show. (D. Gibbons photo)

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THE FASTEST and most popular firearm of its time, the American Pepperbox was featured in this collection belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pangallo of Buffalo. It took Mr. Pangallo four years and many miles of travelling across the U.S. to collect the pistols which date back to 1840.

(D. Gibbons photo)

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Dave and Hannah Cleland, former owners of Acton Auto Body, wish to thank everyone from Acton and vicinity for their patronage during the past 13 years in Acton.

Acton Auto Body customers can look forward to the same faithful service they have enjoyed in the past. Dan Kociuk remains as manager along with the same competent staff. The new owner Bill Preston of Georgetown looks forward to serving the district.