

World-Class Hawken at the 2023 H

By Andrew Scott Wills

The second annual 2023 Hawken Classic is set to take place August 25th-27th as muzzleloading and history enthusiasts continue the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the first J&S Hawken rifle built in 1825. The event takes place at the Historic Daniel Boone home in Defiance, Missouri. The Classic has a little extra buzz in the air on the heels of the Hawken rifle recently being named the “Missouri Official State Rifle” after the diligent efforts of Art Ressel, Paul Fennewald, Brian Flowers, Kyle Carroll, Bob Browner, and Missouri State Representatives Mazzie Boyd and Doug Clemmens.

In some ways it is quite fitting to celebrate the history of the Hawken rifle at the Daniel Boone homestead. In 1822 Samuel Hawken moved to St. Louis, and later partnered with his brother Jacob to design the famous rifle of the new frontier: the J&S Hawken. The rifle would go on to be synonymous with the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade and names such as William Henry Ashley, Kit Carson, James Beckwourth, Jim Bridger, and yes, the Hollywood blockbuster Jeremiah Johnson starring Robert Redford.



Samuel Hawken



Exhibit to be featured Hawken Classic

This year there is a special “one of a kind” exhibit of original Hawken and Missouri firearms. Curated by Greg Grimes, Bob Browner, and Dean McKibben, the world-class exhibit features more than 60 original firearms by J&S Hawken, S. Hawken, H.E. Dimick, J.P. Gemmer as well as museum-quality contemporary reproductions.

The exhibit's show-stopper is undoubtedly the famous Atchinson “Steamboat Hawken” which is the most documented Hawken in history and was built in 1836. The rifle belonged to George W. Atchinson, who was a Black Hawk War hero turned successful steamboat owner and pilot. The walnut stock is ornamented with elaborate coin silver and pearl inlays along with intricate cheekpiece and patchbox engravings. It was either given to Atchinson as a presentation piece, or Atchinson himself was providing a visual display of his success along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The rifle was featured in the April 1981 issue of *Muzzle Blasts* as well as in *America: The Men and Their Guns that Made Her Great*. In 2017 the rifle was on loan to the Cody Firearms Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center where the museum display board headlined; “THE FINEST HAWKEN RIFLE.”

In comparison, the collection also presents another beautiful early J&S Hawken “Plains Rifle” (likely 1839-1840). It has a more traditional

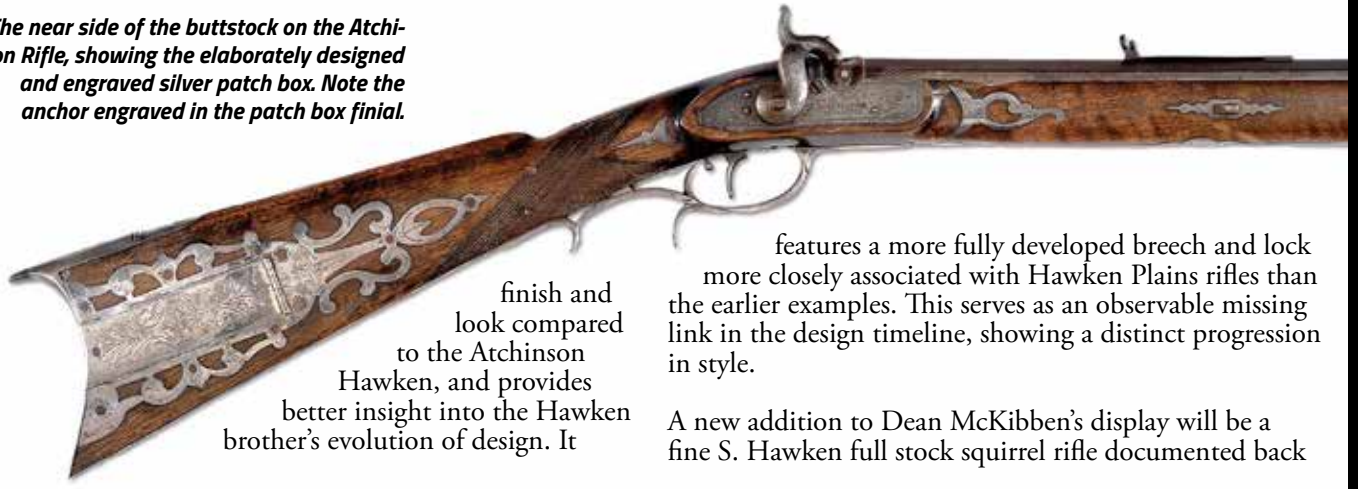
(Continued on page 28)





An early J&S Hawken, stamped on the lock plate, .47 caliber, 41 3/8" tapered and flared barrel and maple stock.

The near side of the buttstock on the Atchinson Rifle, showing the elaborately designed and engraved silver patch box. Note the anchor engraved in the patch box finial.



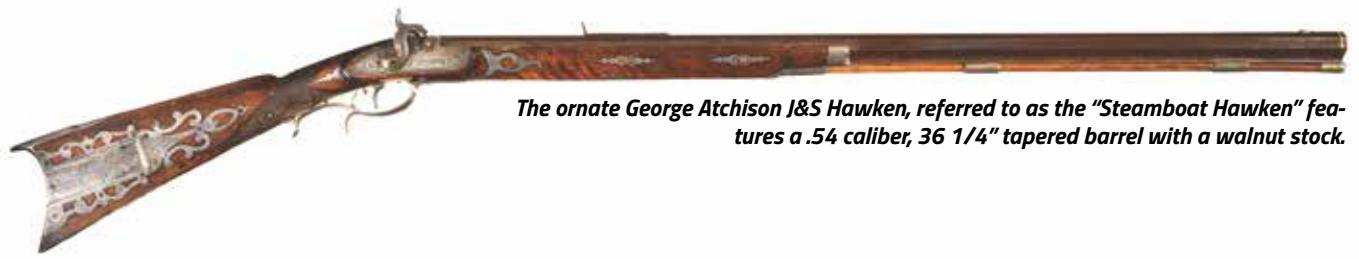
finish and look compared to the Atchinson Hawken, and provides better insight into the Hawken brother's evolution of design. It

features a more fully developed breech and lock more closely associated with Hawken Plains rifles than the earlier examples. This serves as an observable missing link in the design timeline, showing a distinct progression in style.

A new addition to Dean McKibben's display will be a fine S. Hawken full stock squirrel rifle documented back



Seven Central and Western Missouri Rifles presented by Dean McKibben.



The ornate George Atchison J&S Hawken, referred to as the "Steamboat Hawken" features a .54 caliber, 36 1/4" tapered barrel with a walnut stock.



The Atchison Rifle, offside detail. Note the silver inlay of twin hearts pierced by arrow on lock panel. Was it a wedding gift?

to the original owner who bought it from the Hawken Shop. Dean is the 5th owner of this rifle.

Complimenting the long gun display will be a number of St. Louis pistols, some of which are extremely rare. One of the rarest being a H.M. Brown belt pistol, one of about four or five known to exist.

Besides the George Atchison Hawken, there will be two other rifles that have provenance linking them to the original owners. One is a Gemmer hunting rifle made for a soldier/marksman from Franklin County, Missouri. The other one is a small Dimick rifle made for H. E. Dimick's niece.

Other highlights from the exhibit include the fanciest J.P. Gemmer known to exist, Fur Trade era flintlock to percussion conversions and other Missouri-built 19th Century rifles and shotguns. In addition to the arms, the exhibit is supplemented with original powder horns,

hunting pouches, gun parts, knives, and other artifacts. The display is further enhanced with descriptions and images.

The exhibitors are also on hand to answer questions and to clarify information for the guests.

The exhibit will be housed in the handsome Sappington House which sits on the grounds just a short walk south of the Boone home. It was built between 1804 and 1810 and is well worth seeing. The Sappington families were some of the earliest pioneers to settle and develop the area now known as south St. Louis County. Once standing near Gravois Road in South St. Louis, the house was saved and brought to the Boone property in 1987.

(Continued on page 30.)

Greg Grimes has been involved with muzzle loading firearms since the mid 1970's. He worked closely with Art Ressel and Keith Neubauer at the Hawken Shop. Access, associations, and the influences acquired during his years at The Hawken Shop in St. Louis have allowed Greg to view and handle many St. Louis-made guns including dozens of Hawkens. He continues to be a student of and occasional consultant on Hawken rifles and pistols. Greg operates a small gun shop in suburban St. Louis, and is still buying and selling antique guns, especially Hawkens, Gemmers and Dimicks.

Bob Browner of St. Louis has spent most of his adult life shooting, collecting, restoring, and building muzzle loading firearms. Bob is one of the few of us who were fortunate enough to work alongside and learn from Keith Neubauer. His interest in and knowledge of historic firearms is by no means limited to Hawken rifles. However, Hawken rifles are his specialty and a primary focus. Bob graciously made a fine copy of his original S. Hawken Plains Rifle for the Official Missouri State Rifle recently passed by the Missouri State Legislature. This rifle will be featured in the Sappington House display.

Dean McKibben owns a farming operation in southwestern Missouri. He has been collecting St. Louis and other Missouri-made rifles for about fifteen years. Dean displayed a room full of rifles last year at the Sappington House and will be adding a few more this year.



The Sappington House was built between 1804 and 1810. The Sappington families were some of the earliest pioneers to settle and develop the area now known as south St. Louis County. The house was moved to the Boone Homestead in 1988.

The house is seldom open to the public but has unlocked its doors for the true crown jewel exhibit of the Hawken Classic. Within its walls will be one of the most comprehensive collections of original and contemporary Missouri rifles since the final Green River Rendezvous in 1840.

Whether you are a student of the Rocky Mountain fur trade, muzzleloading history or just of firearm history, this exhibit needs to be on your must-see list this August. The Hawken Classic and Hawken Rifle Exhibit will be held:

Date: August 25-27, 2023

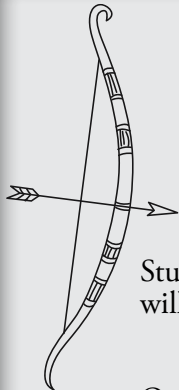
Time: Friday 10am – 4pm,

Saturday 9am-5pm,

Sunday 11:30am – 4pm

Location: The Historic Daniel Boone Home in Defiance, Missouri. 1868 Highway F, Defiance, MO 63341

Visit <https://www.gemmermuzzleloadingclub.com> and <https://www.nmlra.org> for more information. MB



BOW MAKING CLASS

Navio Occhialini (a 54 year NMLRA member) will again offer his Eastern Woodland Bow Making Course on

September 12-13

At Friendship during the national matches

Students will make a custom flat bow to their desired pound weight and draw length. Arrows will not be included - there will be an arrow making demonstration put on by instructor. No woodworking experience is needed.

Only hand tools will be used. All materials and tools are supplied by the instructor. Class size is limited so pre-registration is required. Cost is \$350 upon arrival. Course goes from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM each day and is held in the Primitive Camping Area. Contact Navio at cocch@sbcglobal.net or call (317) 872-4920 for more details or to sign up.

hunting pouch in Dumke's collection. Masarik deftly reproduced the intricate pattern on the original strap, which she christened a "fern" weave. Masarik's reproduction is woven from green and brown dyed Swedish linen with a woolen weft.

This year's CLF raffle offering is a rare and unique collection created by seven contemporary masters. Tickets for this exceptional set are available at \$10 each. Discounts are available for the purchase of additional tickets: 6 tickets for \$50 or 12 tickets for \$100. The official drawing will be held on August 12, 2023, at the CLA Annual Show in Lexington, Kentucky.

For a detailed look at the raffle set, visit: www.longrifle.com

For further information on the raffle or to purchase tickets, contact the CLA office directly:

Phone: 540-886-6189

E-Mail: cla@longrifle.com

Mail: P.O. Box 2247, Staunton, VA 24402 MB

springvalleylodges@comcast.net www.springvalleylodges.com Office 630-879-1739 Like us on Facebook'."/>

SHOOT A REAL HAWKEN RIFLE! FREE!



AT THE HAWKEN CLASSIC



Through the generosity of Greg Roberts of the Hawken Shop, you can shoot an original Hawken rifle - a rare treat indeed.



August 25 -27, 2023 ~ Daniel Boone Home, Defiance, Missouri



HAWKEN CLASSIC

TO COMMEMORATE HISTORY OF FAMED HAWKEN RIFLE

By Andrew Scott Wills

The 2nd Annual Hawken Classic is set for August 25th-27th, as muzzleloading enthusiasts, historians and the State of Missouri closes in on the 200th anniversary of the first J&S Hawken rifle. The event is the brainchild of the NMLRA's Rick Weber and is coordinated by Bob Vogt with invaluable volunteer help from the Gemmer Muzzleloading Gun Club and Trappers of Starved Rock. The event takes place at the Historic Daniel Boone Home in Defiance, Missouri and is open and free to the public, thanks to the St. Charles County Parks Department and the NMLRA.

The original purpose of the Hawken Classic was to educate the public about the history of the Hawken Rifle and the westward movement during the 1820-1850s. And so, one of the key cornerstones of the event is the extensive educational programming throughout the weekend from Hawken rifle experts. The seminars incorporate audio and a large screen TV for detailed presentations of diagrams, photographs, videos, and more. The presentations will take place in the pavilion which offers 150-200 seats. Hawken-specific topics include: "The History of the Hawken Rifle" presented by Greg Roberts of The Hawken Shop, "The Flintlock Hawken" presented by Bob Woodfill, "The Mountain Men Era and the Hawken Rifle" presented by Wilson Windham, with the Masonic Mountain Men, "Building the Hawken Rifle" presented by Bob Browner, and "Supplying the American Fur Company" presented by Benjamin Gall.

Other seminar topics include "Treachery on the Oregon Trail," "Incident at Skull Lick Creek" and "Terror on the Santa Fe Trail" presented by Pablo Baum, period correct "Brain Tanning - An Easy Guide" with Dick Walsh and "SchoolCrafts Historic Walk" with Rick Mansfield.

Another big draw for the weekend is the Rendezvous Shooting Match which is available to attendees in period dress (visit the registration desk). Steel target shooting, fire starting, as well as hawk and knife throwing will all be a part of the competition with an entry fee of a \$25-valued table prize. An award and prize ceremony will be held on Sunday afternoon for all the participants. The Rendezvous also offers to all, free of charge the rare opportunity to shoot an original Hawken rifle, courtesy of The Hawken Shop. The range is headed by Art Buckowitz and is oper-

ated by NMLRA certified Range Officers. The public may bring their own black powder kit and shoot at steel targets (black powder muzzleloaders only. All firearms will be tagged upon entry).

Other key attractions include displays from The Hawken Shop presented by Greg Roberts, Art Ressel, and Bob Woodfill. A recounting of Ashley's Return will be presented by Gerry Messmer, Jack Mitch, and Scott Amish Staggs who retraced the steps of General Ashley in 1825 from the Rocky Mountains to St. Louis.

This year's event also includes one of the most comprehensive displays of original Missouri firearms ever assembled. With over 60 guns, the must-see display includes some of the rarest Fur Trade firearms from private collections secured especially for this event by longtime historical-arms broker and collector Greg Grimes as well as historic collections from Bob Browner and Dean McKibben. This display is presented on the same property, inside the historic Sappington House.

To help fund the event, the Hawken Classic is selling raffle tickets with chances to win a Head-Lok Throwing Tomahawk donated by The Hawken Shop, an S. Hawken Plaque donated by Paul Fennewald and Bob Vogt, a Southern Shooting Pouch donated by Brad Dickinson, a Round Ball Mold donated by Callahan Bag Molds, and a Hunting Pouch donated by Mark Hasty. <https://rafflecreator.com/pages/58362/hawken-classic-2023-raffle> Hawken Classic posters and prints of the David Wright painting "Taking the Long Shot" are also available to help support the building of new cabins at the NMLRA range. David will be present to sign and personalize prints. The Hawken Classic and Hawken Rifle Exhibit will be held:

Date: August 25-27, 2023

Time: Friday 10am – 4pm, Saturday 9am-5pm, Sunday 11:30am – 4pm

Location: The Historic Daniel Boone Home in Defiance, Missouri. 1868 Highway F, Defiance, MO 63341
Visit <https://www.gemmermuzzleloadingclub.com> and <https://www.nmlra.org> for more information. MB

August 25-27, 2023

Friday, August 25 – 10am to 4pm
Saturday, August 26 – 9am to 5pm
Sunday, August 27 – 11am to 4pm

The Historic Daniel Boone Home
St. Charles County,
1868 Highway F
Defiance, Missouri 63341



Seminar Schedule

Dates: Friday, August 25 – Sunday, August 27, 2023

Location: The Historic Daniel Boone Home in Defiance, Missouri – The Pavilion (Unless Stated Differently)

Open and Free to the public. Plan your weekend so that you don't miss anything!

Friday: 10:00am – 4pm

10:00am **Village Opens to Public**
10:00am *Bob Woodfill* – The Flintlock Hawken
11:00am *Wilson Windham (Masonic Mountain Men)* - The Mountain Men Era and the Hawken Rifle
Noon **Lunch Break**
1:00pm *Greg Roberts, Art Ressel and Bob Woodfill* - The History of the Hawken Rifle
2:00pm *Benjamin Gall* – Supplying the American Fur Company – The Hawken Brothers in St. Louis
3:00pm *Pablo Baum* – The Incident at Skull Lick Creek
4:00pm **Village Closes to Public**

Saturday: 9:00am – 5pm

9:00am **Village Opens to Public**
9:00am *Dick Walsh* - Brain Tanning – An Easy Guide
10:00am *Bob Browner* - Building the Hawken Rifle
11:00am *Wilson Windham (Masonic Mountain Men)* - The Mountain Men Era and the Hawken Rifle
Noon **Lunch Break**
1:00pm *Greg Roberts, Art Ressel and Bob Woodfill* - The History of the Hawken Rifle
2:00pm *Jack Mitch, Gerry Messmer, Scott Amish Staggs* - William Ashley's Return From His First Rendezvous and The Super Hawken
3:00pm *Pablo Baum* – Treachery on the Oregon Trail: The Donner Party
4:00pm *open*
4:45pm NMLRA Hawken Classic Raffle Rifle Drawing and Hawken Classic Raffle Drawing
5:00pm **Village Closes to Public**

Sunday: 11:30am – 4pm

11:30am **Village Opens to Public**
Noon **Lunch Break**
1:00pm *Greg Roberts, Art Ressel and Bob Woodfill* - The History of the Hawken Rifle
2:00pm *Rick Mansfield* – SchoolCrafts Historic Walk
3:00pm *Pablo Baum* – Terror on the Santa Fe Trail
4:00pm **Village Closes to Public**