

# Editor's Notes

Ohio is known for its feats in aviation, ranging from the Wright Brothers to the Apollo moon-landing, which just passed its 50th anniversary. Ohio has also played a central role in reviving appreciation of muzzle-loading arms, especially rifles, from the late 18th and throughout most of the 19th century. Ohio has thousands of collectors of antique firearms, and there are numerous skilled gunsmiths and craft-persons who aid collectors in restoration and repair work.

Ohio was also key in reviving interest in competitive shooting of muzzle-loading arms. A shooting match was held in April 1931 in Portsmouth, Ohio that would lead to the formation of the National Muzzle-loading Rifle Association (NMLRA). For years Ohio has topped the list of local muzzle-loader clubs associated with the NMLRA and is also home to many reenactor groups. The state has also been the home to several of the foremost muzzle-loading supply companies, including the Log Cabin Shop (Lodi, Ohio), Golden Age Arms, Inc. (formerly of Worthington, Delaware, and Ashley), Mold and Gun Shop (Jackson), R.E. Davis Company (Woodville), and a most recent arrival, Kibler's Longrifles Online Store. Ohio is also the home to countless builders – some of the best live here – of traditional style muzzle-loading firearms, including

reproductions of 19th century Ohio long rifles.

Our organization, the Association of Ohio Longrifle Collectors has for over four decades hosted exhibits, produced publications, and promoted education about Ohio arms and associated folk arts. In some cases, collectors are involved in traditional muzzle-loading shooting and reenacting, and vice-versa. Some collectors, however, place their energies on collecting only, and some shooters and reenactors literally don't buy into collecting. That said, the mutual influences between the two dimensions of the antique arms world are mutually beneficial and well-represented in Ohio.

This issue of the AOLRC Newsletter features an article on Ferdinand Benroth of Allen County, a close look at a rifle by Josiah Clutz, and a look back at the history of Golden Age Arms Co., Inc., an update from the Ladies' Auxiliary, and a self-introduction of one of the board of directors.

The "A.P. Sherman" Raffle Rifle (see last issue) is Still in Play – Please support AOLRC by buying raffle tickets at the upcoming Newark Show.

If you have an article to submit for publication, please contact me at: [mabgogo@yahoo.com](mailto:mabgogo@yahoo.com)

*Mark Bender*

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## GUIDELINES FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSION

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1. The preferred format for articles is a Word document. Please use size 12 font, single or double space, 1 inch margins.
2. Printed photographs, drawings, and typed or handwritten manuscripts can be mailed to:  
Mark Bender  
139 W. Old Powell Rd, Shawnee Hills, Ohio 43065  
USA
3. Articles in Word (or compatible system), photos (j-pegs or other formats), and correspondence can be emailed to this address: [mabgogo@yahoo.com](mailto:mabgogo@yahoo.com)
4. Please put "AOLRCfile" in the subject line of the email.
5. Please run a spelling and grammar check on your e-files and otherwise proofread them.
6. Please put the **title and author's name** at the top of the article; use the same font size for the whole article.
7. **Photographs** can be color or black and white. If you are not a professional, good results can be obtained by taking photos of objects in soft, outdoor light. Lay the object on a non-reflective black background (blanket, etc.) with no background clutter. Please keep in mind how a color image might look if presented in black and white. Photos should be clear and sharp. (Professionals will, of course, have their own protocols.)
8. Use **past issues as a guideline** to content. Ideas for articles include local or family histories of pre-1900 Ohio gunsmiths and the use of muzzle-loading arms; detailed descriptions of representative or unique rifles (in terms of features or level of craftsmanship); accoutrements; short interviews with AOLRC members relating to collecting and appreciation of the Ohio long rifle as a folk art; accounts of early shooting clubs, shoots, tales, etc.
9. The newsletter is normally published twice a year. Submissions are always welcome, however timely notices for the Spring or Fall shows need to be received **at least 6 weeks** in advance.

# Meet the Directors

BY LARRY CORDRAY

My name is Larry Cordray. My family is originally from Morgan County, in southeast Ohio, where I have lived for the past fifty years. In fact, the road I live on, Glen Cordray Rd., was named after my grandfather, who was the first person to live on it, and the house I own was built and sold to me by one of his sons, my uncle Donald Cordray.

I have studied the genealogy of my family extensively and discovered I am a descendant of Col. William Crawford who, in retaliation for the Gnadenhutten Massacre, was tortured and burned at the stake by American Indians in 1782.

I collect powder horns and have a few original muzzleloaders. I love early American history, especially as it pertains to the Ohio Valley and the surrounding regions. I am particularly fond of the works of Allan W. Eckert, due to his extensive research and historical accuracy.

I am an avid hunter. In my youth, I trapped raccoon, foxes, and minks for their pelts. I shot rattlesnakes in the deserts of Arizona. I have traveled to Canada, South Dakota, and Idaho (where I shot my first black bear), and have hunted deer in the hills of the Ohio Valley and the mountains of Virginia for over fifty years.

I grew up repairing firearms and reloading ammunition with my father in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. As a young boy, I always wanted a muzzleloader, but my father never wanted to buy one for me because of his preference for modern firearms. Back then, I never had enough money of my own to buy one, but when I got out of the Army in 1970, I did, so I bought my first muzzleloader from a man in Marietta.

In the early '70s, I joined a rifle club called the Cat's Creek Militia and began shooting with them. Shortly thereafter, I began building my own muzzleloaders. For many years, I worked in a small workshop in the basement of our house in the evenings and on weekends, repairing rifles and shotguns, and building custom Mausers and muzzleloaders.

In 2006, I built a log cabin across the road from our house and moved my gun shop into it. Two years

later, I retired from the Morgan County Highway Department, and have devoted most of my free time since then to the building of muzzleloaders. Though I often tell clients to give me a geographical area and time period for a type of gun they want built, my favorites to make are English fowlers and anything related to the Revolutionary War. When I turned fifty, I began numbering my muzzleloaders. I am currently working on number three hundred and ten.

I have displayed my works at the annual Association of Ohio Longrifle Collectors (AOLRC) banquet and the annual Gun Makers Fair at Campus Martus Museum, both in Marietta, Ohio for over twenty years, and have attended the annual Trade Fair in Ft. Frederick, Maryland for twenty years. My works have been featured in Muzzleloader magazine, and a statue of a Revolutionary War minuteman holding a rifle cast from one of my guns resides in a museum in Boston, Massachusetts.

I am a life member of the National Rifle Association and was a member of the Ohio Gun Collectors Association for many years. I have been a member of the AOLRC for over twenty years; and a member of the Board of Directors for the last twelve years. Two years ago, I was elected to the position of Vice President.

I am always available at the AOLRC banquet, and at other events, to look at guests' rifles (the older the better) and offer suggestions and whatever historical background I can provide. (see Figure 1.)

