

AGARITA GAZETTE



A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society



Agarita Ranch

September 2013

Lockhart, Texas



Long Juan here. Life is good for my wife, **Powderkeg Patty**, and me. We were in Colorado for two weeks in August and will be in Switzerland the last two weeks of September. That means again no photos and no story about the September match in this issue. Scores are posted on the website and photos will be posted when we return. See you October 5th

for our next match. In the meantime, consider shooting Shindig with the *Texican Rangers* next weekend, September 14th, and don't forget Whoopin' with the *Tejas Caballeros* in October - Saturday, 10/19, for Cowboy Acton Shooting and Sunday, 10/20, for Wild Bunch.



The "Big 50"

by Long Juan

Commercial hunting of the American buffalo was widespread from the early 1870's to the early 1880's. The slaughter reached its peak in 1875 and 1876 and declined after 1880. The last great buffalo herd was annihilated in 1884, marking the end of an era. American buffalo are very large, considerably larger, for example, than the average African Cape buffalo. An average female bison weighs around 930 pounds, an average male around 1600 pounds. A very large male bison can weigh 2000 or even 3,000 pounds. During the days of the great buffalo hunts on the American Plains, powerful, accurate, single-shot rifles shooting big-bore cartridges were preferred by the serious hunter.

The Sharps Model 1874 Rifle, nicknamed "Old Reliable" was a favorite with buffalo hunters. By far the best known of the buffalo cartridges used on the western frontier was the illustrious .45-70 Government, but the .50-90 Sharps, with a 2 ½ inch case and .50 caliber bullets, was ultimately the buffalo cartridge of choice. It was a black powder cartridge introduced specifically as a buffalo hunting round. It soon became known as the "Big 50." Like other large black powder rounds, the Big 50 incorporated a heavy bullet and a large volume of powder. The Big-50, the .50-100 Sharps and the .50-110 Sharps all used the same 2 ½" case, but the .50-100 and .50-110 used lighter bullets weighing from 335 grains to 400 grains, while the .50-90 used a 600 grain bullet.

As was the custom of the time, the big-bore black-powder cartridges were named by their nominal bullet diameter and typical maximum powder charge, sometimes including the bullet weight in grains. Thus the ".50-90" was a black powder cartridge with a .50 caliber bullet diameter in front of 90 grains of powder. The designation .50-90-600 would indicate the .50-90 cartridge was loaded with a 600 grain bullet.

What's Inside:

Adobe Walls	2
Colorado Summer	6
Find Delta Raider	4
Stories from Jake	4

Plum Creek Shooting Society Officers

President - Dragon Hill Dave

David Donaldson
Austin, TX 512-626-8189
dhdonald@mindspring.com

Vice President - Joe Darter

Tom Morris
Seguin, TX 210-464-3969
darterjoe@yahoo.com

Secretary &

Editor, Agarita Gazette -

Long Juan

John Soule
Austin, TX 512-750-3923
jsoule@scottdoug.com

Treasurer - True Blue Cachoo

Nancy Forage
Austin, TX 512-775-0699

Territorial Governor - Jake

Paladin

J.P. Forage
Austin, TX 512-970-4990
jforage@austin.rr.com

Range Marshal - Delta Raider

Chuck Leshikar
Lockhart, TX 512-227-1389
chuck@agaritaranch.com

Range Deputy - Lightning McQueen

Safety Marshal - Elroy Rogers

Stage Marshal - Phantom

Flag Marshal - Artiman

www.pccss.org

1871 to 1874, the once vast buffalo herds of the Great Plains were being wiped out. The last great herds were in the Texas Panhandle. Filthy, hard-drinking, foul-mouthed buffalo hunters arrived to finish the job they started in the upper plains of Kansas and Nebraska. For the Comanche, Adobe Walls was a threat to their very existence.

To bolster his attack, Quanah was joined by a popular medicine man named Isa-tai who promised victory and immunity from bullets for the warriors who took the fight to the

Adobe Walls: A "Big-50" Story

While loading his wagon, Army scout and buffalo hunter Billy Dixon could hear the low rumble of hoof beats in the distant prairie. His friend Bat Masterson grew nervous, "What the hell is that?" "I don't know," responded Dixon, "but I don't like it." Suddenly the hoof beats gave way to Indian war whoops. Masterson, Dodge City's famed marshal, fled to the nearby saloon with Dixon right behind him. Ike and Shorty Shadler weren't as lucky. Cut off from the nearby trading post, they tried to hide beneath a canvas tarp in the back of their wagon. When one of the Indians pulled back the tarp, he was met by a rifle blast to the upper body. Both brothers were quickly overwhelmed with bullets, arrows and scalping knives. The brothers' Labrador retriever tried to defend them but met the same fate. Impressed with the dog's courage, the Indians scalped the Labrador.



At dawn on June 27, 1874, a band of more than two hundred Comanche, Cheyenne, Kiowa and Arapaho descended on the trading post of Adobe Walls in the Texas Panhandle. They were led by the last of the great Comanche war chiefs, Quanah Parker. The son of an Anglo mother, Cynthia Parker, and a Comanche father, Peta Nocona, Quanah had a long-standing score to settle with the white Texans who killed his father, held his mother captive and were slaughtering all the buffalo, an integral part of Plains Indian culture.

Adobe Walls existed for one purpose, the hunting, skinning and shipping of buffalo hides. From

Continued next page

white man. Before the end of the day, many of Quanah's warriors would come to regret their faith in Isa-Tai's big medicine.

Fortunately for the buffalo hunters who resided at the sod-built settlement, they were up and about when the dawn attack came, repairing the saloon's ridgepole that had broken during the night. They had plenty of ammo and the hunters each possessed the most powerful firearm of the Old West, the Sharp's 50-caliber buffalo rifle, shooting the .50-90 Sharps cartridge, better known as the "Big 50."

Popular on both sides during the Civil War, Sharps rifles were noted for their accuracy, as well as their reliability. The word "sharpshooter" was used to identify someone who possessed and was proficient with a Sharp's rifle. The thick hides and massive size made buffalo difficult to bring down. Hunters needed more fire power for a quicker kill. In response, Sharps developed a rifle with a 34 inch octagonal barrel and a huge 50 caliber cartridge to fill it. The awesome firepower of a "Big 50" could take out a 2,000 pound buffalo at 1,000 yards. Against humans and in the hands of experienced marksmen, the results were devastating.

The Indians' initial attack almost carried the day. They were close enough to pound on the doors and windows of the buildings in which the defenders had taken refuge. Because of the close range, the defenders were forced to fight with pistols and Henry and Winchester lever-action rifles, all firing 44 rimfire cartridges. After the initial attack was repulsed, the hunters were able to keep the Indians at bay with their Big 50's, shooting at long range.

Twenty eight men and one woman barricaded themselves within two stores and a saloon. The two-foot sod walls offered excellent protection. In addition, sod doesn't burn, which took

away that mode of attack from the Indians. The Indians could only surround the post and attempt to pick off the inhabitants, something that was difficult to do against the buffalo hunters. The "Big 50's" began dropping Quanah's band just like they dropped the buffaloes for which they were designed. The Indians moved back to what they considered a safe distance. Still they fell victim to the hunters' long-range shooting.

By four o'clock in the afternoon on the fourth day, the attack was winding down. Isa-tai, covered with yellow war paint to project his magic, was whipped in the face with a leather quirt by one of the Comanche warriors. The warrior shouted, "What's the matter with your medicine? You have polecat medicine." As if to put an exclamation point on the buffalo hunters' dominance, using his Big 50, Billy Dixon killed an attacker with his now legendary shot from a distance of 1538 yards (almost a mile), the most famous single shot in the history of the Old West.

Indian losses totaled 15, plus all the dead warriors they were able to carry away with them. The hunters lost only four, one by accident when his wife discharged his rifle after she reloaded and was handing it to him. The result of Second Battle of Adobe Walls was a crushing spiritual defeat for the Indians and prompted



Billy Dixon



Continued next page

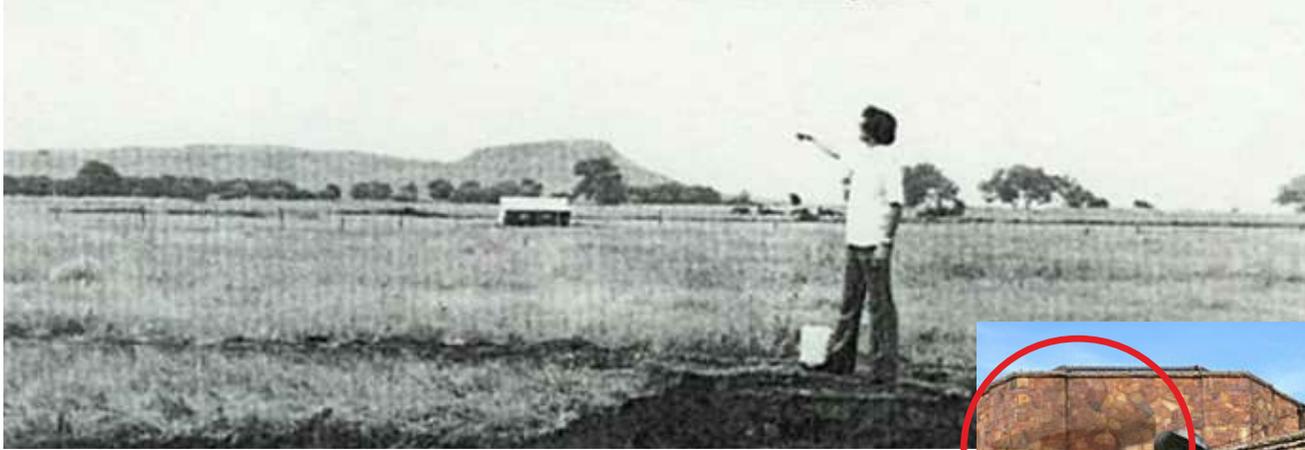
the U.S. military to take its final actions to crush the Indians once and for all. Within the year, the long war between whites and Indians in Texas reached its conclusion.

Editor's Note: The First Battle of Adobe Walls was fought ten years earlier in 1864 between the U.S. Army forces and Kiowa, Comanche and Plains Apache Indians. The battle occurred near Adobe Walls in the

vicinity of William Bent's abandoned adobe trading post and saloon located on the northern side of the Canadian River, approximately 17 miles northeast of present-day Stinnett in Hutchinson County. The Army forces led by Kit Carson were driven from the battlefield, but nevertheless claimed victory over the Indians.



In the photo below by George Turner, his son, Doug, is standing in the spot where Billy Dixon fired his famous shot. Doug is pointing to the ridge almost a mile away where the bullet hit an Indian. The excavated area is Hanrahan's saloon, the excavation having taken place in the summer of 1975 by a team of archeologists from Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. It is the first buffalo hunters' camp ever excavated in the United States and revealed much interesting data.



FIND *Delta Raider*

Lots of you found **Delta Raider** last month - both pics. Mentioned in the Dispatches are: **Miss Cubbie, Sterling Sage, El Sabre, Boon Doggle, Meadow Biscuit Slim, Artiman, Six Goin' South, Lincoln Drifter** and **Annalong Longshot**. Let's see who can find him this month.

Stories from Jake (*Paladin that is*): "Bee's Wax"

Before the 20th century, personal hygiene left much room for improvement. Many women and men developed acne scars by adulthood. The women would spread bee's wax over their facial skin to smooth out their complexions. When they were speaking to each other, if a woman began to stare at

another woman's face, she was told, "Mind your own bee's wax." Should the woman smile, the wax would crack, hence the term "crack a smile." When they sat too close to the fire, the wax would melt: Hence the expression, "losing face."

Summer Shooting at its Best

by Long Juan

I had a great time shooting with the *Four Corners Gunslingers* in Durango, Colorado, Sunday, August 18th. We quit after five stages (instead of six) because of the heat. After all, it was climbing through the mid-80's and was headed to a forecast high in the low 90's.

Appropriately for a town that features the *Durango & Silverton* narrow gauge railway, I had a real train wreck on one of the five stages – two misses and a P!! Oh well! There were two other visitors from Texas among the shooters – **Texas Banker** and **Private Pappy**. Both shoot regularly with the *Comanche Valley Vigilantes* and the *Lone Star Frontier Shooting Club* in Cleburne.

Pappy has actually relocated to nearby Cortez for most of the year. His wife, Joy, has a southwest specialty foods store. Pappy has G-Whil Liquors (Largest Beer Cave Around) next door. I need to figure out how to be part of that gig. The local members were all fun folks to shoot with. I particularly enjoyed meeting **Ruff Cobb** and his wife, **Camptown Lady**, both of whom had been mentioned to me in advance by **Wyandot Jim** and **Billy Boots**. If you are ever going to be in Durango on the third Sunday of the month, I would encourage you to give the Gunslingers a try. They even shoot in the winter. At least that's what their website says. I do not, however, see scores posted for December, January or February this past winter.

<http://www.fourcornersgunslingers.org/>



The cliff from which Butch and Sundance jumped in "Bolivia" - near Durango Colorado

Durango's best attraction, the Durango & Silverton narrow gauge railroad



Colorado is beautiful in the summer!



P
H
A
N
T
O
M



STORIED FIREARMS

ANTIQUE TO MODERN FIREARMS

BUY • SELL • TRADE • CONSIGN
10-7 MON-FRI • 10-5 SAT



WE'RE THE AUSTIN GUN STORE

WITHOUT AN ATTITUDE

CHARLIE HARRIS
CELL: 714-396-8797
HELLO@STORIEDFIREARMS.COM

512-394-0125
9300 U.S. HWY 290 W
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78736
WWW.STORIEDFIREARMS.COM



CALLAHAN'S GENERAL STORE

"Austin's real general store"

Western Wear, Hardware,
Houseware & Feed

501 Bastrop Hwy/183 S., Austin

(512) 385-3452

www.callahansgeneralstore.com



TEX-JACK

WILD WEST OUTFITTER

117 N. Adams St.

Fredericksburg, TX 78624

(800) TEX-JACK (839-5225)

(830) 997-3213

Email: sales@texasjacks.com

www.texasjacks.com

CIMARRON FIREARMS Co.



"There's no place like this place, anywhere near this place, so this must be the place." Manny Gammage

911 S. Commerce St., Lockhart

(512) 398-4287

www.texasatters.com



RUGGED GEAR



Perfect for all your cowboy action and other shooting needs!

www.ruggedgear.com



BOND ARMS
The Smallest, Most Powerful Personal Protection You Can Carry!

MADE IN TEXAS BY TEXANS

16 Barrels 22 Caliber Combinations

Granbury, Texas (817) 573-4445

www.bondarms.com



Starline
Made With Pride in the USA

Supplier of cowboy & vintage brass to meet all your reloading needs.

www.starlinebrass.com

RED'S INDOOR RANGE

When you can't shoot outdoors at the Agarita Ranch, try one of Red's indoor ranges. Red's North in Pflugerville (512) 251-1022, South in Oak Hill (512) 892-4867.

www.redsguns.com

McBride's Guns

Modern & Antique Firearms Since 1960

Guns, gunsmith service, optics, fishing gear
outdoor clothing, knives,
reloading supplies & appraisals



30th at North Lamar, Austin

(512) 472-3532

www.mcbridesguns.com

SPEEDBUMP



STOCKWORKS

903-815-6535

Get your *Old West-Buster* recoil reduction system for your shotgun from Ken Rucker (Gunstock Smith). Call Carolyn Rucker (Miss Cubbie) at (903) 209-5074 or send your order to:

SpeedbumpStockworks@gmail.com

bumpbuster.blogspot.com

Longhorn Bullets



Pricing, effective 9/1/13*

Don Herbert (Hopalong) 210-602-6994

Rick Page 210-844-9362

Caliber	Weight	Config.	Price/500	Price/1000
.38	100	RNFP	32	64
	105	FP	33	66
	125	RNFP	35	70
	125	FP	35	70
	130	RNFP	36	72
	158	RNFP	39	77
	158	FP	39	77
	158	SWC	39	77
.380	100	RNFP	33	65
.38-55	245	RNFP	59	117
.41	215	SWC	49	98
.44	180	RNFP	41	81
	240	SWC	52	104
.44-40	200	RNFP	45	90
.45 COLT	160	RNFP	46	92
	180	RNFP	41	81
	200	RNFP	45	90
	250	RNFP	53	106
9MM	124	RN	35	70
	125	CN	35	70
40 S&W	180	FP	41	81
.45ACP	200	SWC	45	90
	200	RN	45	90
	230	RN	51	101
45-70	405	FPT	111	222

*Price increase because of higher cost of lead. Sorry for any inconvenience.