

NMLRA Gun Building Seminar at Western Kentucky 2008



NMLRA Gunsmithing Workshop and Seminar: Class Descriptions and Registration Information

by Gary Brumfield

2009 Classes at a glance:

3-Day Classes:

- **Stock Finishing and Preparation** – Mark Silver
- **Wire and Sheet Metal Inlay for Longrifles** – Gary Brumfield

6-Day Classes:

- **Engraving – Beginning and Intermediate** – Mark Silver
- **Lock Assembly, Tuning and Polishing Class** – Jim Chambers
- **Relief Carving for Longrifles** – Gary Brumfield

9-Day Classes:

- **Making a Germanic Style Hunting Sword** – Bob Elka & Joe Valentin
- **Period Architecture and Stock Shaping** – Wallace Gusler
- **Stocking an 18th-century Continental Sporting Arm** – Ronald Scott
- **Stocking an 18th-century Lancaster Rifle** – Jack Brooks

Thanks to the support of Dr. Terry Leeper, the NMLRA Gunsmithing Workshop and Seminar for 2009 will again be held at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. This will be the 28th year of this seminar!

These classes will be three, six, or nine days. The three-day class will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 3rd, and wrap up at noon on Saturday, June 6th. The six-day classes will begin at 7:00 a.m. Sunday, June 7th and end after lunch on Friday, June 12th. The nine-day classes will span from 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 3rd to the afternoon of Friday, June 12th (The spring shoot at Friendship starts on Saturday the 13th.)

Pre-registration will determine which of the proposed classes will be taught. For a session to be held it must have a minimum number of participants registered and with their deposits paid by the **March 20th deadline**. This early deadline is essential in allowing time to order materials and parts. (See registration information.)

2009 Classes

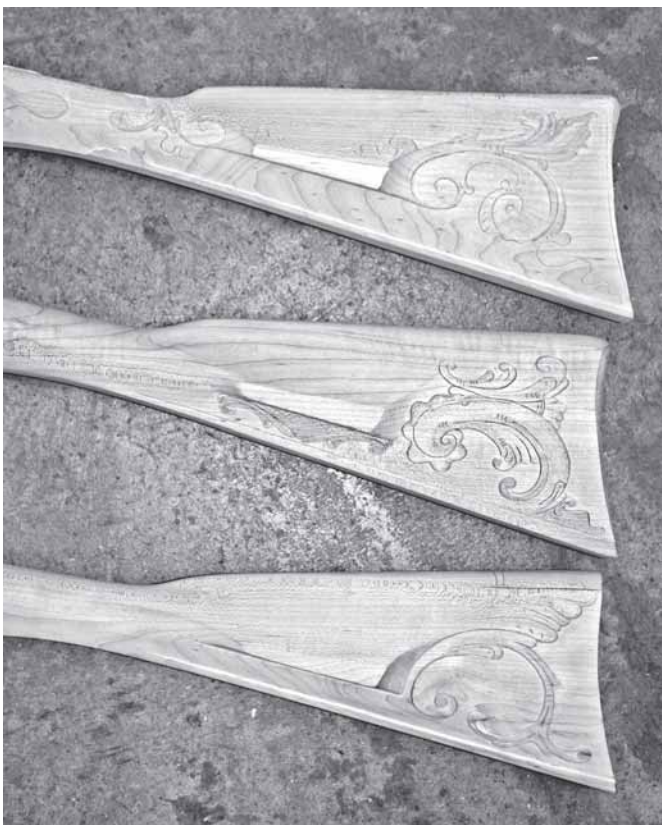
3-Day Classes (\$330 plus materials)

Stock Finishing and Preparation – Mark Silver

Using practice pieces of maple and walnut, learn the fine points of creating an authentic 18th century finish. We'll start by preparing the wood with planes and scrapers, cutting a bit of simple relief carving, and then experiment with various types of traditional stains and finishes. We'll also discuss how to deal successfully with common problems and what types of finishes are period correct for a particular project. Class limited to ten. Materials fee: \$30

Wire and Sheet Metal Inlay for Longrifles – Gary Brumfield

Learn and practice the types of decorative wire inlay found on longrifles. You will also learn the techniques for making and installing cheek piece inlays, thumb pieces, escutcheons, etc. Former students may bring a "Quaker gun" practice stock from an earlier class. (Do not expect to work on an actual rifle.) Class limited to ten. Materials fee: Approximately \$15. An additional \$75 if you need a pre-turned practice stock to work on.



This is a picture of three of the carving projects from the 2008 seminar. By the time I got back to the class room everyone else had packed up. This might help people understand what a "Quaker Gun" is.

6-Day Classes (\$660 plus materials)

Engraving – Beginning and Intermediate – Mark Silver

This course is meant for students with little or no engraving experience who want to improve their understanding of and ability to execute the styles of engraving used on American longrifles and fowlers. It is also for those who have already had at least one course in engraving and wish to work with British or continental styles.

The class will explore the elements used on patchboxes, side plates, and mounts, including types of borders, scrolls, volutes, and leafage. Most of the class time will be spent in intensive practice repeating the basic elements of these types of engraving. Intermediate students will be introduced to and practice lettering of various styles, and the engraving forms found on sporting arms from Britain and Europe, including, if they wish, relief chiseling of sculpted foliage and borders. Class limited to ten.

Lock Assembly, Tuning, and Polishing – Jim Chambers

New project for 2009! Using castings taken directly from a lock made in the late 1600's or early 1700's in Bavaria, Germany, we will assemble a working lock. During the assembly process we will study and use techniques to produce a precision assembled and tuned lock. After the lock is assembled and functional we will properly polish it and either keep the cast-on relief art work or remove the relief elements for a smooth finish that can be engraved later or used as is. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: \$85 will cover the cost of the castings. A drill and reamer set will be available as an option, or students may use the instructor's set.

Relief Carving for Longrifles – Gary Brumfield

Learn to carve by working on a machine shaped longrifle butt stock that will go home with you as a study piece and

reference. (Because the students will be experimenting with various tools and methods, they will not work on an actual rifle.) Pick any style of relief carving. Topics covered will include selecting and sharpening tools, various methods of out-lining, removing background and sculpting, etc. Although beginners are welcome, this class in traditional carving techniques best serves those who have some experience in stock making. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: Approximately \$75 for a pre-turned practice stock.

9-Day Classes (\$990 plus materials)

Making a Germanic Style Hunting Sword – Bob Elka and Joe Valentin

New for 2009! This is a hands-on class in the construction of an 18th-century German hunting sword and sheath. Students will begin with a 21" ground, heat-treated but unpolished blade and brass castings for the hilt and pommel. Howard L. Blackmore's *Hunting Weapons From the Middle Ages To the Twentieth Century* (DoverPublications.com) will be used as a reference. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: \$400-450.

Period Architecture and Stock Shaping – Wallace Gusler

New project for 2009! One of the most difficult features of an early longrifle to capture is the architecture. This year's course will focus on stock architecture of a ca. 1765 wood box longrifle attributed to Shenandoah County, Virginia. Pictures of this rifle were published in the January 2003 *Muzzle Blasts* on pages 4 and 5. Starting with a stock blank and pre-inlet barrel, students will learn both the techniques of stock shaping and the subtle characteristics of early rifle architecture that are so hard to see in photographs.

Students will pre-purchase the barrel, custom made by Ed Rayl to the dimensions of the original, a maple blank, and a Chambers "Virginia" convex face lock. Students are responsible for having the barrel inlet and the ramrod hole drilled before class. Patterns for the stock profile, side plate, and thimble dimensions will be mailed to those registered. A hand cast butt piece and guard, based on the originals, will be delivered at the class for \$50. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: Approximately \$500-\$600 depending on wood selected.

NOTE: Students from the 2008 class may return to complete the Schreyer rifle project.

Stocking an 18th-century Continental Sporting Arm (Rifle or Fowler) – Ronald Scott

New for 2009! Building on the enthusiasm of the 2008 class, stocking the Paul Poser Jaeger rifle, Ron will offer the opportunity to stock a Johann Jacob Kuchenreuter sporting gun, which will be available for study during the class session. Since rifles and fowlers of this style are similar in mounts and architecture, Ron is offering the opportunity to build either. Differences would be an octagon to round smooth bore for the fowler, with a swamped octagon barrel for the rifle.

The class will start with a barrel pre-inlet into a stock of European walnut. Class members will make and fit a horn muzzle cap and create a custom side plate from sheet brass. Materials will include a custom made barrel by Ed Rayl, a European walnut stock, Chambers new Jaeger Lock, castings (butt plate, trigger guard and pipes) made from moulds taken directly from the original rifle, horn muzzle block, side plate blank and trigger. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: Approximately \$750 based on a standard grade stock blank

NOTE: Students from the 2008 Jaeger class are also encouraged to consider this class and bring their rifles for continuing work.

Stocking an 18th-century Lancaster Rifle – Jack Brooks

New for 2009! Using an early Abraham Schweitzer rifle as a prototype, Jack will teach the stocking of a Lancaster rifle from a curly maple stock blank. Students will learn traditional methods of hand inletting a swamped barrel, lock, and butt plate. Stock layout, cast off, and drilling the ramrod hole will also be covered. Jack will teach his geometric method of stock shaping to reproduce the architecture of this antique rifle. Students will benefit by being able to handle and study a carved, antique long rifle. Class limited to eight. Materials fee: approximately \$700.

Meet the Instructors:

Jack Brooks has been a full-time gun maker since 1976, dividing his time between new custom work and the restoration of antique American longrifles. A resident of Englewood, Colorado, this will be Jack's fifteenth year as an instructor at the seminar, where he has taught a variety of stocking classes from longrifles to pistols and trade guns.

Gary Brumfield started in the Colonial Williamsburg Gunsmith shop as a summer helper in 1965 and was master gunsmith for the Foundation from 1974 to 1990. He continues at the Foundation in a management position and works part time as a rifle maker in his home shop. He has been either an instructor or the seminar coordinator since 1983.

Jim Chambers, Jr. has been involved with custom arms for forty years and has become a very important contributor to the trade by supplying a variety of high quality locks. A resident of Candler, North Carolina, Jim has taught at the seminar for several years in either carving, stocking, or lock assembly.

Bob Elka and Joe Valentin have many years of diverse gun building experience and outstanding dedication to the NMLRA Seminar. Their class in 2007 on horns and flasks and in 2008 on finishing earlier seminar projects were highly praised by those attending. Bob and Joe have agreed to expand the scope of the seminar curriculum by offering a sword making class in 2009.

Wallace Gusler produced his first muzzleloader at age fourteen. He established the Colonial Williamsburg gunsmith shop in 1963 and was master until 1972. Retired from the gun shop, Wallace is currently completing a book on Virginia gunsmiths and building rifles part-time. He has taught at this seminar many times since helping start it in 1981.

Ronald Scott built his first flintlock in 1975 and has pursued the art and craft professionally since 1978. In 1991, he founded the Oregon Gunmaker's Fair, an annual event dedicated to promulgating flintlock building skills through demonstration and exhibition. From a modest beginning, the Fair has grown to 50 participants and the quality and sophistication of the firearms has increased steadily to a high level of excellence.

Mark Silver started as a hobbyist in 1972, became a full-time gunmaker in 1976, and trained with John Bivins in 1978-9. Mark is a resident of Chassell, Michigan and has taught at this seminar since 1983 on subjects ranging from engraving and carving to lock assembly.

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Information

Registration

You may begin to register immediately upon receipt of this notice. Do not delay! We ask for a first, second, and third choice, but we have, in past years, been able to place over half the students in their first choice. Telephone, fax or mail your registration to Brenda Hooton in the NMLRA offices in Friendship. Call at 800-745-1493 Ext 223. Fax at 812-667-5136. Mail to P.O. Box 67 Friendship, IN 47021.

Registration for classes will be on a first-come first-served basis. Registration for all the classes closes on **Friday, March 20** and final class rosters will be mailed to the instructors and students *about* March 27th.

Class Fees

One-half of the registration fee is due as a deposit by March 20, 2009. Remember, your registration is not official until your deposit is received (credit cards may be used by telephone). Your deposit will be quickly refunded if the classes you picked are not taught or are already full. The remainder of the registration fee is due by Friday, May 1st. Students who cancel after May 1st will forfeit their registration fee.

Most materials fees will be billed separately or collected by the instructor at the seminar. In some classes, where there are choices to be made, such as wood grade or caliber of the barrel, the instructor may require that students order the materials for themselves. In those cases the instructors will provide the information needed for ordering.

Class Schedule

Except for the first Wednesday, we usually start classes at 7:00 a.m. so we can get parked before most of the summer school students arrive. We often work a ten-hour day – taking a break for lunch and ending class around 6:00 p.m. Those who want more shop time can work through the lunch break or stay late. **Your instructor may decide to alter this schedule.**

Lodging and Dining

The Red Roof Inn on Scottsville Road, at I-65 exit 22, will be our primary motel, and they will be holding a block of rooms. Call for a reservation and mention that you are part of this group (270-781-6550). There are also some campgrounds in the area.

On-campus dining is limited in the summer, but Bowling Green has restaurants for every taste and budget. Inquire about a microwave and refrigerator when you make your room reservation as well.

Picnic and Shoot

Weather permitting, there will be a picnic, and very informal shoot, at Dr. Leeper's farm late in the afternoon of Saturday, June 6th. Targets will be metal gongs at unknown ranges in a field. Traditional muzzleloading rifles and pistols only. Strict safety rules are enforced. Directions to the farm will be available from the instructors or at the front desk of the hotel. The cost of the barbeque is included in student registration. Spouses or guests will be \$15 each.

Questions

Some of the instructors have sent longer course descriptions to Brenda Hooton in Friendship, but in other cases you will need to contact the instructor directly. Questions about tools and materials will be answered by the individual instructor for each class.

My address is gbrumfield@verizon.net and I check it regularly. If that works best for you, email me your questions. For information, photographs, and descriptions of past seminars, visit my web site at <http://www.flintriflesmith.com/>. **MB**