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Why Muzzle Loaders?

Variety

Since the first firearms appeared in the 12th Century, the black powder muzzle loader has been the dominant type. Over this very long period, muzzle loaders were adapted to fill many roles and took on all manner of mechanical and artistic forms. The sheer variety of arms available means that both shooters and collectors can always find something new to interest them.

Challenge

Target shooting with muzzle loaders is an exciting challenge for sportsmen—properly managed, a startling degree of accuracy is possible. Both original and replica arms are used, but strict rules control technical specification. The emphasis is therefore always on the skill of the shooter rather than the search for a technical “edge”.

Heritage

The use of historical technology provides a direct link with the past, an appreciation for the skill and ingenuity of the makers. Arms collectors play a vital role in protecting our national heritage.

Affordability

Fine original muzzle loaders can be expensive, but excellent replicas are available at very reasonable prices. Running costs are low and muzzle loading offers an inexpensive way to enjoy the shooting sports.

Fun

The standard required to win in MLAGB competition is very high and every discipline is closely-contested, but the atmosphere is always friendly and relaxed, so come and try your hand! Advice and support for newcomers is always available.

Come And Shoot With Us!

Bisley Club House

The Association has its own club house at the National Shooting Centre, Bisley close to junction 3, M3. It is known as the *Exhibition Hut* because it was originally used to display the National Rifle Association’s collection of silver trophies. It was restored by the MLAGB and is one of the most distinctive buildings on the camp. The *Exhibition Hut* offers a focal point for members visiting the famous ranges, with a bar, a kitchen and overnight accommodation.

Wedgnock Ranges

The Association also boasts its own range complex at Wedgnock, on the outskirts of Warwick. The facility has 130 covered firing points for rifle and pistol on three separate ranges with shooting at up to 100 metres. It serves primarily as the MLAGB’s home range, however it is open to all other shooters, clubs and associations. Wedgnock is easily accessible from junction 15, M40.

Sywell Ranges

Regular shotgun training and competition takes place at Sywell Ranges, off the A43 near Northampton, where we are hosted by our friends Northampton Shooting Grounds.

In addition, 32 local MLAGB branches hold their own competitions and help to support the pastime of collecting and shooting muzzle loaders right across the country.

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Muzzle Loaders’ Association of Great Britain



Formed in 1952, the MLAGB is the governing body for muzzle loading shooting in the UK. Its objectives are to encourage an interest in muzzle loading firearms; to promote, regulate and safeguard their use; and to preserve their freedom of collection.



A fine original flintlock target rifle by Fenton

A near-perfect score, fired from the standing position with this replica percussion rifle

Medal winners from the British team at the 2008 World Muzzle Loading Championships in Australia — the team achieved stunning success, taking 27 medals between them and coming third overall

www.mlagb.com

Our Background

In the declining post-war days of our once world-dominant gunmaking industry, when original arms could still be found in the racks of gunsmiths' shops, a few enthusiasts, mostly from the Coventry Arms Collectors' Club, formed the Muzzle Loaders' Association of Great Britain.

Their object was to promote a common interest in the diverse and often superb products of a fast-disappearing age which was centred in the 18th and 19th Centuries but which had its roots in the earliest forms of firearm.

Unlike other arms collectors, these individuals were as interested in the use of the firearm as in its historical study. Nowadays, with our developed appreciation of the past, it is not difficult to understand the fascination that our founders had for their subject.

Many Association members are primarily collectors of antique arms and accessories and the MLAGB is proud of the part it plays in encouraging the preservation, study and research of our colourful past.

The shooting of muzzle loaders as a sport has today increased out of all proportion to its humble beginnings, to one of enormous participation worldwide. Both original and reproduction arms are catered for and encouraged by the MLAGB—in many competition events no distinction is made between the two.

The Association's quarterly newsletter keeps members up to date with news, forthcoming events, and competition reports; it also includes articles on topical and specialised subjects. Enlarged editions are published in Summer and Winter, the former being a special Collectors issue, and the latter a Shooting number.

The MLAGB is registered as a Full Bore Rifle and Muzzle Loading Pistol Club and is an active member of the British Shooting Sports Council.



Communications

The Association publishes a quarterly newsletter entitled *Black Powder*, which is distributed to all members. Alongside news and competition reports will be found authoritative articles of historical interest and wider ranging information for today's muzzle loading arms enthusiast. A web site at www.mlagb.com provides the opportunity to swap news and to discuss all aspects of muzzle loading.



Collecting

The large number of collectors in the Association have a great pool of knowledge, and hold many fine pieces of the nation's heritage in trust for future generations. Information is shared via the newsletter whilst Association arms fairs and auctions enable collectors to meet, and perhaps find a bargain or that elusive item needed for one's collection!



Musket and Rifle Shooting

Matchlock, flintlock and percussion muskets of many nations feature in smooth-bore musket competition shooting. Muskets in the hands of an experienced shot are capable of surprising accuracy.

In the *Patched Ball* class, fine British, European and American sporting rifles compete at ranges of 50 and 100 metres, standing and prone. Enfield type rifles are used at medium range.

The sophisticated percussion target rifles of the 1860-1880 period, accurate out to 1,200 yards, also feature in their own class of competition and offer the ultimate in precision target shooting.

Pistol Shooting

Shooting with muzzle loading pistols has become immensely popular and is supported by a wide selection of well-made reproduction firearms. Flintlocks, percussion target pistols and revolvers are shot at 25 metres and, on occasion, at longer distances, whilst percussion revolvers are also used for fast-firing turning target disciplines such as *Historic Revolver*.



Why Join The MLAGB?

Shotgun Shooting



England is the home of the best quality breech loading sporting gun and the muzzle loading shotgun heralded its arrival. National clay championships are held for flintlock and percussion guns, whilst various sporting shoots around the country attract an enthusiastic following. Local and regional clay shoots and inter-branch challenges flourish and many members enjoy game shooting when in season.

Postal Shooting



Annual postal competitions for individuals and teams are held throughout the year. The wide range of rifle, musket and pistol disciplines are open to all full members, Association branches and affiliated clubs, with the winners being decided at the end of December. Postal leagues, again open to all, are held and are extremely popular.

International Competition



World Championships for muzzle loading firearms have been held since the early 1970's and the MLAGB selects and supports a strong GB Team.

Held every two years, the World Championships are supplemented by interim meetings, the MLAGB attending the European Championships in the intervening years.

Events are shot at 25m, 50m and 100m, with shotguns used for down-the-line trap shooting.

Interest in long range shooting, at ranges up to 1,000 yards, has grown so much that separate Long Range World Championships have been held since 1999.

Association Resources



The legal complexity of owning and using muzzle loaders makes the MLAGB the only authority capable of pursuing the rights of the muzzle loading enthusiast. Members benefit from the MLAGB's insurance scheme which covers all pursuits with firearms and shotguns.