



The Shooter's Library

Some folks just love to shoot, and I fall into that category. I hunt to be able to shoot. I am fond of many disciplines and am ok at most of them, but I do not rabidly follow one of them enough to be considered world class. I thoroughly enjoy skeet, sporting clays, long range, short range, cowboy and combat shooting. I am most happy when I am at a wide-open space with a trusted .22 firearm with a large supply of .22 Long Rifle ammunition and several empty drink cans. To those who also love to shoot I offer my suggestions for some books that should be included in your shooter's library.

First, you should dig deep into the history of the association that stands firmly between us and the gun grabbers. "NRA: An American Legend" is a fascinating and most interesting history of the National Rifle Association. This big book is filled with rare photos of events, firearms, and the men and women who have been the guardians of our rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment. From the NRA's founding in 1871 with the goal of improving marksmanship training after the Civil War, setting the standards for military training, expanding safety and educational programs, to the commitment to keep America safe and free it takes us to the publication year of 2002. As author Tom Clancy says in the foreword, "The Constitution, remember, tells the government what it may not do. So, the preexisting right of the people to keep and bear arms (we are not peasants under the rule of the nearest earl) shall not be infringed."

Some believe the only thing bigger than Elmer Keith's ego was his cowboy hat. There is no argument that this man of slight stature was a giant of a gun writer whose exploits and opinions had great effect on the American firearms industry and the habits of shooters worldwide. Keith was an advocate of big bullets for both rifle and pistol and was instrumental in the development of the .357 Magnum, .44 Magnum, .41 Magnum and .338 Magnum cartridges. He was a prolific writer of ten books and a regular contributor to



The author's suggested books that should be in every shooter or hunter's library.

Guns & Ammo from 1961 till the early 1980's. Keith's "Gun Notes: Volume 1" covers his columns and features in Guns & Ammo from 1961 to 1970. Here we find his highly regarded opinions on pistols, revolvers, bolt-action and double rifles, shotguns, ammunition, loads, bullets and accessories. These opinions stand the test of time. While searching for "Gun Notes: Volume 1" look for his highly prized life story, "Hell, I Was There."

More exciting reading and valuable information comes from the writings of Jeff Cooper. Col. Cooper is hailed as the father of modern pistolcraft and devoted his life to historical study, military service and teaching his pistol and rifle technique the world over. He was founder of the still famous American Pistol Institute at Gunsite Ranch in Arizona and the International Practical Shooting Confederation. Cooper's first anthology, "Fireworks," is filled with tales of history, travel, adventure, firearms, shooting advice and war stories. You will find yourself quoting Cooper as in his open letter to legislators where he writes, "An individual man is individually responsible for his own transgressions, so let us by all means punish the transgressor, not someone whom you feel, in your total

lack of understanding, may conceivably become a transgressor. Get after the criminal, sir, but get off my back!" Cooper's second anthology, "To Ride, Shoot Straight, and Speak the Truth," focuses on shooting...technically, socially, sportively and historically "insisting that 'the Age of the Wimp' is not our proper destiny, and that knowledge of personal weapons and skill in their use are necessary attributes of any man who calls himself free. Buy this one, read it, then loan it to your kids.

No one before or after has so fully researched or clearly explained how to shoot a shotgun as the late Bob Brister did with his book, "Shotgunning: The Art and the Science." Bob clears up virtually every shooting problem you are likely to face. With photos taken over the gun barrel he teaches how to mount, point, and swing through with the proper lead. He covers selection of guns, chokes and loads for completion and hunting. During his illustrious career Bob was outdoors editor of the Houston Chronicle, shooting editor of Field and Stream and winner of championships around the world in trap, skeet, and his real love, box and thrown bird shoots. He has been called the father of sporting clays in the United States and was inducted into the National Sporting

Clays Hall of Fame in 1999. Bob was always tinkering and experimenting and we are the beneficiary. Once I was at a live bird shoot standing behind the line with Bob's wife Sandy. Over the course of the shoot Bob changed guns, stocks, loads and even shirts. Sandy turned to me and said, "He'd change his arms if he could." Brister's "Shotgunning: The Art and the Science" is a must have.

Good reference books are always "must haves" and here are two of my most used. "Firearms Encyclopedia" by Major George Nonte, Jr. explains a great deal alphabetically. This is an easy way to answer a firearms question or win a bet. What is the difference between a bullet that is "boxer" primed and one that is "berdan" primed? What is the proper definition of a "clip" and a "magazine?" Need an explanation of Minute of Angle? You'll find it here.

In greater detail on a more specific subject is "The Shotgun Encyclopedia" by John Taylor. Here you can not only find the definition of "chopper lumps" and details about "nontoxic shot," but gain in depth information about choke sizes and constrictions and how the gauge of a shotgun is determined. There is extensive coverage of guns, manufacturers and inventors. John has devoted his Army pension to shooting, hunting, duck calling, and writing for practically every shooting and hunting magazine in the nation.

As the pressure is on and the availability of ammunition is tight many are starting or returning to reloading. Your library must contain the Speer Reloading Manual for Rifle and Pistol. The information is here for hundreds of cartridges with case sizes, powder choices and amounts, bullet sizes and weights, and much more. Speer covers step by step from the reloading bench to the range and equipment needed to troubleshooting techniques. The 14th Edition Speer Reloading Manual is available from www.speer-bullets.com. Also, the internet has an amazing reloading resource covering just about every cartridge on the planet. Visit www.loaddata.com.

Search for the books above and others to add to your library at Amazon, Ebay, Safari Press or Google.

Remember: Breath, Relax, Aim, take up the Slack, then Squeeze. 🎯