



By: Hubert Wentzel
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LAUNCH OF "FIREARMS DEVELOPED AND MANUFACTURED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1949 – 2000"

LERIBA HOTEL AND SPA, 19:00 3 MARCH 2017

"OUR BOOK" AND THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF FIREARMS IN SOUTH AFRICA –

John Welch

On behalf of the Pretoria Arms and Ammunition Association I wish to thank you for having accepted our invitation to celebrate with us one of the greatest achievements in the Association's history with the launch of FIREARMS DEVELOPED AND MANUFACTURED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1949 – 2000.

1. Brief historical overview of the PAAA.

- 1995 – 5 members
- Currently 420 members
- Purpose and objectives of PAAA: legitimate collecting and lawful utilisation of firearms
- Ensuring that only *bona fide* collectors are admitted as members
- Ensuring that the purpose of the FCA regarding the categorisation of collectors based on their interest in and knowledge of firearms within their respective fields of interest and/or themes and the certification of collectability of firearms and ammunition are promoted.
- Practical events (8 per annum)
- Knowledge of Firearms and collection events (1st such event happened exactly 12 years ago) (5 – 6 per annum)
- Regular executive committee meetings and AGMs
- Strategic planning sessions to ensure that the vision of the PAAA is still clear and the goals and objectives are met
- Special projects undertaken by PAAA – (i) coffee mug with logo, 10th anniversary (2005); wine glass with logo, 15th anniversary (2010); various hunting competitions; limited numbered and engraved collectable pocket knife project; wine project, 20th anniversary (2015); custom rifle project, 21st anniversary (2016); and publication of our book (2017).

1. Founding of NAACCSA and the role of accredited collectors' associations therein.

Legal prescript to have a national governing or umbrella body to represent accredited firearm and ammunition collectors' associations

As a founder member of NAACCSA and in conjunction with all accredited collectors' associations, and to the extent possible, the PAAA promotes the objectives of the FCA as stated in Section 2 of the FCA which provides for the purpose of Act and which includes (a) *to enhance the constitutional rights to life and bodily integrity;* (b) *to prevent the proliferation of illegally possessed firearms and, by providing for the removal of those firearms from society and by improving control over legally possessed firearms, to prevent crime involving the use of firearms;* (c) *enable the State to remove illegally possessed firearms from society, to control the supply, possession, safe storage, transfer and use of firearms and to detect and punish the negligent or criminal use of firearms;* (d) *establish a comprehensive and effective system of firearm control and management; and*

(e) *ensure the efficient monitoring and enforcement of legislation pertaining to the control of firearms.*

With regard to sub-clauses (b) and (c) we got news last night that government is contemplating an amnesty for a period of 6 months during which people who are in the illegal possession of firearms, to surrender them to the police, without fear of prosecution. According to the statement by Minister Radebe, "*The amnesty will reduce the circulation of illegally possessed firearms which will in turn result in the reduction of contact crimes. The amnesty will focus on the following holders of firearms and/or ammunition in South Africa: a) Persons in possession of illegal firearms and/or ammunition in circulation, including those involved in one or more criminal activities; and b) Persons who inherited firearms and/ or ammunition and failed to comply with the provisions of the Firearms Controls Act*". Despite government's vision that all people should be and feel safe, I doubt whether I shall feel any safer after 30 September. As law abiding people we shall do everything in our power to make our country a safer place. This does not, however, include the disarmament of law abiding citizens.

1. The promotion of the cultural and historical significance of firearms.

Section 3 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999 defines the National Estate as "*those heritage resources of SA which are of cultural significance or other special value for the present community and for future generations must be considered part of the national estate and fall within the sphere of operations of heritage resources authorities*".

Section 17 (1) (a) of the FCA provides "*that a firearm which may be possessed in a private collection is any firearm approved for collection by an accredited collectors' association, based upon such historical, technological, scientific, educational, cultural, commemorative, investment, rarity, thematic or artistic value determined by the association*". Regulation 5 of the FCA Regulations amplifies section 17 by specifying that accredited associations must have in place a dedicated procedure to evaluate members for their *bona fides* to be private collectors.

There is no doubt in my mind that accredited private collectors' associations play the most significant role in protecting firearms and ammunition as part of the National Estate. For time immemorial firearms have played such a significant role in the history of mankind all over the world that we at the PAAA have made it its main objective to promote the protection and conservation of firearms. This book goes a long way to promoting this cause.

2. More about the book and how it promotes responsible firearm ownership -

- 540 pages
- More than 1200 colour photographs
- Covers all firearms designed, developed and manufactured in Southern Africa (more closely, the former Rhodesia and South Africa)
- Many owners have indicated that the book compares favourably with, if not exceeding the quality, of international collectors' grade publications.
- All collectors of Southern African firearms will find this book indispensable as a research tool to prove their interest in and knowledge of such firearms.

1. In conclusion I consider it appropriate to publicly thank the following people:

1. I wish to congratulate Chas and the research team; the authors and proof-readers; the photographers; book designer; printers and anyone else who were intimately involved with this project.

2. I further wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the spouses and partners of the abovementioned persons who had to endure solitude for such long time but who steadfastly supported the project.
3. A special word of thanks to all who believed in the project and trusted the PAAA to deliver this monumental work, which I believe will soon be regarded as *Africana*. Almost 1100 copies were sold prior to the date of publication.
4. I also wish to thank all those people who were involved in the design, development and manufacture of the firearms that are the subject-matter of this book. Without you and many others, there would not have been such a project.
5. I wish to thank you all for your presence tonight. Please celebrate success with us.
6. Lastly, I wish to thank the owner of Leriba Hotel & Spa, Mr Peet du Preez, who supported the PAAA and made available these facilities for this august occasion and all his staff members who were involved in realising this dream. As a token of our appreciation I wish to hand over a book to Peet.
7. If I have omitted to thank any particular person, I apologise.

I hope you will enjoy the book and the evening.