

OUTDOORS

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A surprising, happy BB gun Christmas



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

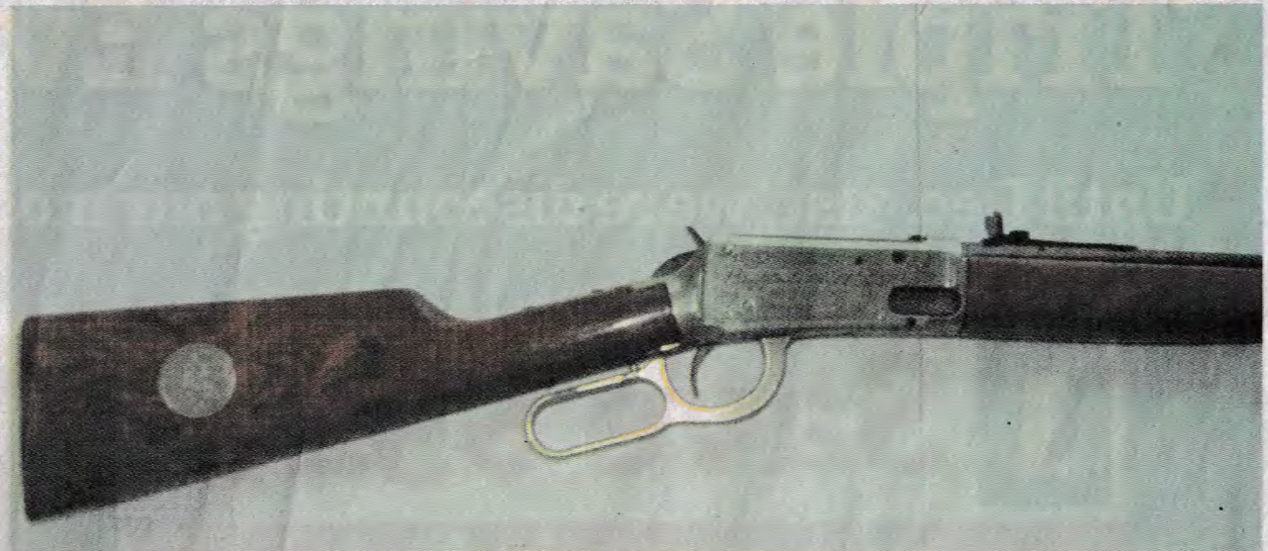
"What do you want to be when you grow up, assuming you ever actually grow up?" my wife of many years asked in a rather tired and very sarcastic tone.

Perhaps the reason for her sarcastic tone might have been because she was on her hands and knees on the tile floor, sweeping up the better

part of a full bottle of Crosman Copperhead precision ground copper coated steel BBs.

The 1,500 count bottle pours bbs at the rate of 100 bbs per second. The problem arose, rather quickly I might add, when they were being poured into a 10 bb per second reservoir, with the excess bbs being strewn about the kitchen tile. The 1,500 count BB container was nearly empty in a matter of seconds.

I explained to my wife that my ambition was to be one of the "Rover Boys of Africa," better known as professional hunters or PH for short. She obviously was in one of her moods, so there was no telling her the reason for the BBs in the first place. In the inter-



A Daisy Buffalo Bill model BB Gun. (Mark Rackay/Special to the Montrose Daily Press)

est of marital bliss, I exited the scene.

You see, this story starts with me going through a long forgotten back corner of a closet... actually, this story starts much farther

back than that. It starts in 1969, right at Christmas to be exact.

Over the summer of '69, I had decided that a BB gun was an absolute necessity. Most of my friends had one and since we lived in the country, I felt it was a parent's responsibility to get one for their son.

Problem was, my grandparents were raising me, and they were not moved by my pleas for a BB gun. These people survived the

arrangement for both of us; he got to save a few bucks on presents and I got to be bad.

Then the old man reached under the sofa and pulled out a long box containing a BB gun. My grandmother hit the roof and was quite vocal about my grandfather "losing his mind, giving this kid such a weapon."

I was surprised that my grandfather went against my grandmother's earlier

I immediately cleaned it up and headed to the store to purchase some BBs. I bought the 1,500 count pack of the Crosman BBs discussed above. It was during the attempted pouring of the BBs into the reservoir, that the Valdez type spill occurred on the tile floor of the kitchen.

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cessity. Most of my friends had one and since we lived in the country, I felt it was a parent's responsibility to get one for their son.

Problem was, my grandparents were raising me, and they were not moved by my pleas for a BB gun. These people survived the war and the Great Depression, and were certainly not about to give in to such a ridiculous idea. They were not frivolous people and felt I had all the necessities, food, water and air. A BB gun was not a necessity.

My grandmother never did use that ploy of "you'll shoot your eye out." She was convinced that I would shoot everything in sight, and many of those things she did not want shot. It was as simple as that. The plea was dead on arrival with her.

I tried to reason with my grandfather but he was a man of very few words. The man fought in Europe in the World War II and had little patience for a whiney kid. Mostly, he deferred me to my grandmother to avoid him having to get involved.

Totally convinced that I would be of draft age before I ever saw a BB gun, I resigned my self to a fruitless Christmas but I never let up on the nagging, begging and whining for one. I seriously doubted I would find one under the tree Christmas morning because my grandparents were fresh off "the first knife incident" and probably never going to allow me a chance at any more weapons. The stitches in my hand had healed up quite nicely by this time.

Christmas morning arrived and I got the usual speech from my grandfather about rotten oranges and kindling sticks in my stocking. He said it was all I deserved because I was so bad. It was an equitable

and pulled out a long box containing a BB gun. My grandmother hit the roof and was quite vocal about my grandfather "losing his mind, giving this kid such a weapon."

I was surprised that my grandfather went against my grandmother's earlier ruling because she ruled the house with dictatorial impunity, and change was only by open and hostile revolt. Later, my grandfather would plead insanity about the present, but for now, I got my BB gun.

You never saw a finer piece of blued steel than the Daisy Buffalo Bill model BB Gun of 1969. The lever action was similar to a Winchester, and mine had a commemorative coin of Buffalo Bill himself inlaid in the poly whatever stock; truly a work of art.

My first assault on the world of hunting and shooting were with that Daisy. I spent countless hours hunting the wild and dangerous grasshopper, all the way to the dreaded pollywog, and the occasional water snake. I would hit the woods after school, with my trusty shootin' iron in hand, with a satisfaction that only the dry rattle of a reservoir full of BBs can bring.

That rifle, having fired somewhere north of a million BBs, somehow got laid aside, having been replaced by finer firearms as the years have slipped past. A portion of my youth went along with it.

Recently, I was looking for something that was probably maliciously spirited away from sight by my wife. She claimed innocence but I had my suspicions. While on the search, in a dark and forgotten corner of a little used closet, stood my first BB gun, covered with dust but no worse for wear. It was a reunion with a long lost family friend.

was during the attempted pouring of the BBs into the reservoir, that the Valdez type spill occurred on the tile floor of the kitchen.

My wife is a good woman; she never beats me where it would show in public, and she sees to my nourishment with incredible detail. I offer my overweight 6-foot-1, 200 and never-you-mind pound frame as "exhibit A." Still, she is a wife and is suspicious by nature of anything I get involved with, the BB gun being no exception.

In the half century since, I have hunted big game, and dangerous game, in many countries and over three continents with rifles made by the finest craftsmen. Never have I felt the satisfaction with those fine rifles that I felt with my first Daisy.

I owe my grandfather, the man of very few words, great thanks for introducing me to the shooting sports and hunting. He instilled a love and lust for adventure in me, and I still chase it with the vigor of the little boy in the woods behind the woodlot.

If I could turn back the clock, and live a time over, I would spend a fair amount of it in that woods behind our woodlot, learning about wild animals and dangerous game with my trusty Buffalo Bill Scout Daisy BB gun, if my wife would let me.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press and avid hunter who travels across North and South America in search of adventure and serves as a Director for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. For information about the Posse call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org.

For outdoors or survival related questions or comments, feel free to contact him directly at his email elkhunter77@icloud.com.