

# MuzzleBlasts



Official Publication of the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association - Since 1939

## Writer's Guidelines

*Thank you for your interest in contributing to our magazine. These writers' guidelines will help you prepare your manuscript. Please read them carefully; your adherence to these requirements will improve your article's chances of being accepted. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call (812-667-5131) or e-mail [lbrown@nmlra.org](mailto:lbrown@nmlra.org).*

### Muzzle Blasts Submissions Guidelines

Muzzle Blasts magazine supports most everything pertaining to the study, history, use of, and competition with muzzleloading guns. Those guns may be historic ignitions like flintlocks, percussions and even black powder cartridges. Hunting with those same muzzleloading guns may include rifles, smoothbores, trade guns, pistols, long-range rifles, inline guns and muzzleloading canons used in reenactments, competition, hunting, building and collecting.

Since 1933, the NMLRA has been the voice of its membership, supporting historians, artisans and the industry at large. Along with its big game recognition program, The Longhunter Society, 85 years of history has focused our writers on "everything muzzleloading". Breaking news and problems are always timely and we encourage emails and phone calls so as to be among the first to break these stories.

Our focus is obvious - if it loads from the muzzle and the article focuses on its use...we are interested. There is always a need for well-written articles that cover: beginners' efforts at shooting, rifle frolics, local/national/international competition (rules and how-to), historical re-enactments, rendezvous, primitive archery, historic arts; the list goes on and on.

These guidelines are similar to those in all outdoor publications. We ask that if you are unsure of your topic, reach out to us with your ideas. There is always an interest for unique equipment, adventure stories, advanced how-to pieces, observational stories of encounters with unique individuals.

### HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS

If your article deals with the history of the muzzleloading era or a muzzleloading firearm, be sure to include appropriate **footnotes or endnotes and bibliography**. Footnote and bibliography formats are illustrated in many resources that are readily available, including *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition* (pp.1547-1549). Here are a couple of samples that follow the format:

#### *Footnote or endnote:*

<sup>1</sup>Mark Silver, "Flintlocks: Performance, Touch Holes, and Tuning," *Muzzle Blasts*, Feb. 2000: 5. [Magazine Article]

<sup>2</sup>James T. Butler, Jr. and James B. Whisker, *Long Rifles of Virginia* (Bedford, PA: Old Bedford Village Press, 1996), 112.

<sup>3</sup>Butler and Whisker, 144. [Subsequent Reference]

#### *Bibliography (at end of article; arranged in alphabetical order by author's name)*

Butler, James T., Jr., and James B. Whisker. *Long Rifles of Virginia*. Bedford, PA: Old Bedford Village Press, 1996. [Book]

Silver, Mark. "Flintlocks: Performance, Touch Holes, and Tuning." *Muzzle Blasts* vol. 61 no. 6 (February 2000): 4-6. [Magazine Article]

Footnotes or endnotes and bibliography entries should be included whenever you quote from or refer to someone else's published work, or when statements you make may require substantiation by a third party. **PLEASE be sure to DOUBLE CHECK your historical dates and facts** before submitting your article to be sure they are accurate.

## HUNTING MANUSCRIPTS

If hunting is your focus, begin your article with a short description of the hunting area so the reader can better envision the hunt. Give full details of the firearm used; include the manufacturer or gunmaker, bullet make and caliber, and powder type and load. (*Beware of excessive black powder loads and shooting distances; in the first instance, do not exceed manufacturer's recommended maximums.*) Include details of the hunt (sights, sounds, scents, what you felt physically and emotionally), and relate humorous situations or any potential danger; these details keep the story interesting.

## TECHNICAL/INSTRUCTIONAL MANUSCRIPTS

If your article is technical or instructional ("how-to") be sure to mention the equipment and materials used and describe the procedures step by step. Keep your readers in mind and write for someone who has never tried your project before. Tell why or how your technique works. Include accurate measurements, charts, photographs, and tables that help illustrate the process. Don't forget relevant manufacturer information, especially if the article involves a product evaluation.

Above all, avoid wordiness. Simple and direct writing appeals most to readers. Brevity and clarity appeal to editors! At the same time, be sure to provide all necessary information. Proofread your manuscript carefully, and if your computer has a spell-check function, don't neglect to use it.

## *To Write and Submit an Article*

First, know your topic. Be sure that the subject matter conforms to the standards of our Association and that you have researched it thoroughly and checked your facts. Keep your readers in mind as you write. Upon receipt, articles will be reviewed for publication in *Muzzle Blasts* by the editor, the publications committee, and technical advisors, as deemed necessary.

Conform to all applicable safety measures (*see photo requirements*) when writing articles on topics that may involve potential hazards (hunting, shooting, technical, how-to, operating machinery, etc.).

Present your manuscript by e-mail (*lbrown@nmlra.org*), preferably in Microsoft Word. If that is not possible, please submit the typewritten manuscript on high-quality white paper. If the foregoing formats are not possible for any reason, but you still feel that you have an important story to tell, contact the editor in care of *Muzzle Blasts* for special arrangements.

Features typically run from 1,200 to 1,500 words. We will consider longer pieces, but the story must hold interest throughout to warrant the extra space.

All manuscripts accepted for publication **are subject to editing** to ensure that they conform to *Muzzle Blasts'* format, style, and space limitations. You will receive confirmation via mail or e-mail once your article is received. Decisions on whether or not your article will be published in a future issue of *Muzzle Blasts* is usually decided within 3-6 weeks. Once your article has been scheduled for a particular issue, you will receive a publishing contract before work begins on the issue. Materials are scheduled up to a year in advance. Seasonal or timely subjects, such as scheduled shooting events or seasonal hunting seasons should be submitted six months prior to their start dates.

Be sure your name, address, telephone number, e-mail and social security number are included in a cover letter accompanying your manuscript. *Please note that we require your social security number for payment and tax purposes only.*

*Submit Manuscript To:*  
**Muzzle Blasts**  
**Attn: Editor**  
**P.O. Box 67**  
**Friendship, IN 47021**

*Please include a self-addressed, stamped manila envelope for return of material, if necessary.  
Manuscripts will be acknowledged upon receipt.*

## ***Photos and Illustrations***

All submissions should include high-contrast photographs and/or well-defined diagrams. Digital photos are preferred, and can be submitted by e-mail or on a disk in **high resolution** (300dpi or better) TIF or JPEG formats. If you are sending files through e-mail, please send each one as individual attachment. Please do not embed the files into your article or e-mail, as this reduces the quality of your photo. (You may insert your photos into your article for placement purposes, but please still send those separate as well.) Photos accepted should be color (except historical photos not available in color) and must be of good quality. Digital files should be unaltered and in their original size and form; no photoshop.

Although digital photos are preferred for the best-possible reproduction, printed photos should be at least 5x7 in size, 8x10 preferred. Submitting color slides could result in the return of materials. Photos will be reviewed and selected by the editor and/or director of publications.

Please be sure to carefully label your photo with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Include a separate sheet of paper with captions, and key the captions to the photo(s).

If you submit photos of rifles, don't neglect to include an overall (full-length) view. Many readers appreciate being able to see the whole rifle.

### ***Requirements for Photos and Mechanical Illustrations***

Mechanical artwork, including charts, may be lettered in pencil; such text will be typeset and sized to fit the illustration. Identify the manuscript location for graphics on the back of the sheet.

### ***Be Conscious of Safety when Submitting Photos***

Good photos are an asset to any article, but be aware of safety. We need to see eye/hearing protection in shooting photos, muzzles away from faces and other people...even during those "hero shots" during hunts. Proximity to open fires, cans of powder/caps/horns, or proximity to unidentified backgrounds (houses, vehicles, public sites, ext.) can be deal breakers.

### ***Writer/Artist Responsibilities***

Responsibility for copyright law compliance (e.g., for artwork or text), as well as procuring all model-release forms, is the submitter's and not the NMLRA's or its affiliates'. When submitting materials that have been reproduced whole or in part from other sources, include copies of permission letters from the appropriate person(s) or organization(s).

### ***Payment Procedure***

Payment will be made upon publication of articles that deal with muzzleloading firearms or firearms with historical value, for good instructive or how-to, and similar articles. Payment is normally not made for committee or shoot reports and other Association affairs.

### ***Electronic Rights***

The National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association also publishes a few articles from Muzzle Blasts on the NMLRA website. This electronic version is designed primarily for a non-member audience to let them get a glimpse of what they can expect from the magazine. Writers and photographers may grant or deny this use of their work by including a statement with materials submitted. If no express denial of such use is included, author's consent is implied. (No additional payment will be made for use on the website).

## Muzzle Blasts Writers' Compensation Schedule

### PRODUCT REVIEWS

All reviews \$100-\$300, depending on the amount of research, tests conducted, and number of photos or illustrations submitted (*if applicable*).

### COLUMNS AND ARTICLES

All standing columns \$50-\$150 depending on the amount of research, tests conducted, and number of photos or illustrations (*if applicable*) submitted.

All feature articles \$100-\$400 depending on the amount of research, tests conducted, and number of photos or illustrations (*if applicable*) submitted.

### ELECTRONIC USE

The only time payment will be made for electronic use is when an article is used exclusively on the Web and it has not been printed in the paper version of the magazine. No additional payment will be made for use on the NMLRA website. Once again, if you do not wish your article to be used on the website, please state so when submitting your article.

## Muzzle Blasts Cover Art Submission Guidelines

Our diverse members are knowledgeable in various fields of our muzzleloading sport and in the era we represent. Our magazine publishes articles on the history of the muzzleloading era, on hunting with muzzleloading guns, on technical aspects of the muzzleloading sports (including gunbuilding), and on the muzzleloaders themselves. If you would like to submit a cover related to any of these topics, here's the information you will need:

If your cover submission deals with an historical event of the muzzleloading era, please include detailed information about all references used in developing the artwork. If your submission contains elements taken from a book, please include the author's name, title of book, city and state of publication, publisher's name, year of publication, and page references. If periodicals (such as magazines) are used as sources, include the author's name, title of periodical, volume and issue numbers, cover date, and page references. Standard bibliography form can be seen above on page 1.

For hunting pictures, include brief background information on the scene and the events that led to development of the artwork. Specify the geographic location where the photograph was taken and provide information on any animal depicted.

If your artwork contains technical or instructional ("how-to") elements, be sure to submit explanations of the equipment used and the procedures featured in the artwork. List the names of any models present and include copies of the model release forms with your submission.

If your submission features a muzzleloading gun created by a past or present gunsmith, list the maker's name, type of gun (smoothbore, rifle, shotgun, handgun), caliber or gauge, ignition system (e.g., flint or percussion), style or "school" in which the gun was made (if appropriate), and the year of production, if known. Note any peculiarities or unusual features. ***Make sure that the gun is depicted in a safe manner:*** hammer down on a percussion gun, or hammer down and frizzen open on a flintlock. The muzzle must be pointed in a safe direction, with no body parts exposed to danger (e.g., hand or forearm resting on muzzle, or head positioned over muzzle).

*To submit cover art, send artwork and description to:*

**Director of Publications  
Muzzle Blasts  
P.O. Box 67  
Friendship, IN 47021**

Please include a self-addressed, stamped manila envelope for return of material we decide not to use. Artwork will be acknowledged upon receipt.

When submitting cover art, **high resolution** digital files in TIF or JPEG format are preferred. Do not submit originals of artwork. Shots will be considered for cover art only if submitted in portrait (vertical) format, or if they are able to be easily manipulated to fit into the vertical cover space. Please make sure to provide your name, address, phone number, e-mail and social security number. *Your social security number is required only for tax and payment purposes.*

Once your artwork is selected and scheduled for a particular issue, you will receive a publishing contract before work begins on that issue.

***Be Aware of Safety when Submitting Photos***

Do not submit photos that depict guns used or held in an unsafe manner (such as with an obstructed muzzle, pointed in an unsafe direction, being carried or loaded at full cock, and so forth. Trigger finger should not contact trigger unless the photo depicts someone in the act of firing.) Any such material will automatically be returned without further consideration. If you have any questions about safe practices, contact us before submitting your material. For cover art that features technical aspects of muzzleloading, be aware of and demonstrate all applicable safety measures, such as the use of hearing and eye protection by shooters.

### *Writer/Artist Responsibilities*

Copyright-law compliance for submitted materials (such as artwork or text), as well as obtaining all model-release forms, is the responsibility of the submitter and not the NMLRA or its affiliates. When submitting materials that have been reproduced whole or in part from other sources, include with the materials copies of permission letters from the appropriate person(s) or other entities.

### *Payment Procedure*

Upon receipt, the art director and the editor will review artwork for publication in Muzzle Blasts. Payment of \$300 will be made for cover art upon publication. The Director of Publications will contact the artist with any questions about a submission.



*We appreciate your expertise and good efforts in helping us bring the best information to our readers. If you need any assistance in preparing your material for our consideration, be sure to contact us.*