

NW Dept. Shoot/School, 4-5 November.

Site is Ft. LaBuse, Doc Shaffer's place

Directions

The address is [7243 Shaffer Rd., Belleville, Ohio 44813-9085](#).

The telephone number of the property owner is [\(419\) 886-2097](#), but should only be used in case of an emergency.

Bob Cairns' cell phone will be at the event, and is [\(330\) 806-1485](#). **Call this number first.**

Belleville is southeast of Mansfield, Ohio.

- take I-71 to Exit 165, Ohio Rt. 97

- turn EAST off the exit toward Belleville

- in Belleville turn RIGHT onto Main St., Ohio Rt. 13

- take Ohio Rt. 13 to Bangorville East Rd. (County Rd. 405)

- turn LEFT onto Shaffer Rd., and take it to the end. Parking is just up the hill from the last house.

Fort LaBuse is a very rustic, roomy place in the woods above a nice shooting range. There is a lot of room for indoor sleeping and all the buildings are heated by wood-burning fireplaces or stoves. We will shoot live and learn to bake bread with the large out-door oven. We'll have a tavern Saturday evening with amusements, and I know you'll enjoy an 18th c. atmosphere. We will have an artillery class to teach how to crew the NW Dept. howitzer, as well as a 3 lb. cannon. This instruction will be by Jim Workman, a VERY experienced black powder artillerist. This event is a great way to end our 2017 season.

Meals

You are on your own for every meal except Saturday supper. Chris Ankeney will be preparing supper for us (food provided by the NW Dept.) using 18th c. recipes and cooking methods. If you wish to eat this meal, you MUST pre-register with Bob Cairns by Wed., Oct. 25th. (See his contact info below).

Live Shooting

Bring 50 prepared lived rounds. These live rounds are to be rolled in aluminum foil. We will be shooting individual and team matches. This shooting is to help you be/stay familiar with your firelock so that you can accurately interpret to the public, and you may also have some fun doing it. (see attachment for rolling live rounds). We'll shoot our matches on Saturday, but we can also shoot Sunday.

Sleeping Arrangements

You will have to carry everything you bring from your car to the fort, so inflatable mattresses or sleeping pads are good.

Please also bring a full canteen of water, since the water we use will need to be carried in.

NW Dept. Board Meeting

We'll hold a NW Dept. Board meeting Sunday morning after breakfast, and you are, of course, welcome to attend.

Please come and help us close the NW Dept. Season with a great experience. Don't forget to let B. Cairns know by 25 Oct. that you plan to eat Saturday supper. Contact him with any questions.

Bob Cairns
[1919 Yale Ave. NW](#)
[Canton, Ohio 44709](#)
[\(330\) 455-9722](#)
robtcairns@cs.com

What should I bring?

- a full canteen of water (all our water has to be hauled in, so we need to conserve).

- bed roll (18th c. if you will).

- tent, if you're not sleeping indoors

- eating utensils

- firelocks and live, foil wrapped rounds (50).

- food for breakfasts and lunch.

What should I Not bring?

- any food or beverage in a modern containers (**No cans or modern bottles**, cellophane or aluminum foil).

- tobacco in modern forms (cigarettes, etc. . .)

Attached to this email are instructions to make live rounds in case you have never done it. There will be PLENTY of help and instruction for new shooters, so don't be bashful.

I'll see you all at Ft. LaBuse !!!

Bob Cairns



Live Fire

At our Authentic Weekend I talked with a number of shooters that had never fired in B.A.R. live-fire matches, and would like to share with you what I talked about. First, I believe that if you are going to interpret a musketeer of the Revolution, you should have practical, first hand knowledge of loading and firing your musket live at a target. So, I believe you all should live-fire your musket once and a while so you can accurately relate this to the public.

The B.A.R. requires that muskets be loaded from foil (aluminum or tin) cartridges. There are several reasons for this. First, it is nearly impossible to mistake a foil cartridge for a blank paper round, which means our tacticals are safe from this error. Secondly, when you ram the foil, it actually acts as a scraper, cleaning some of the fouling from the barrel, making your musket a little easier to load a number of rounds in succession. And thirdly, we do it because it is a B.A.R. regulation, and keeps us within our insurance requirements.

I'm going to share how I roll cartridges and get ready to shoot. These aren't the only ways to do it, but they have worked for me for 30 years. What you need to roll live rounds is;

- aluminum foil** (buy good foil, if you get cheap stuff it tears too easily)
- copper tube**, 6"-7" in length, and slightly smaller diameter than the ball you use

If you use a wooden dowel, the foil tends to collapse when you remove it.

- powder measure**, if your measure has a funnel, it makes pouring easier
- powder can spout**, optional, but makes pouring from the can easier, usually made from a spent brass rifle shell
- wooden cartridge block**, from your cartridge box
- lead balls**, make sure these are pure lead. Balls cast from tire weights or other Alloy metals are hard, and difficult to pull if need be.
- BLACK POWDER** the unit uses GOEX or SCHUETZEN brands. **DO NOT** use black powder substitutes such as Pyrodex. You will be creating a very dangerous situation. The two brands used by the unit are readily available. Use **ONLY** FFg or FFFg granulations for cartridges.

- 1st cut your foil cartridges out using the pattern diagram included. You can cut squares, but then the seam of the cartridge runs straight down the side instead of spiraling around the cartridge, which I believe is a little stronger
- 2nd lay your former (copper tube) with a ball at one end, on the cartridge. (see the diagram). Make sure to leave enough foil beyond the ball so you can twist it closed.
- 3rd roll the former and ball up in the foil, making sure you keep the ball tight against the former, and roll it tightly in the foil. Twist the ball end shut.
- 4th remove the cartridge w/ ball from the former, and put it in your cartridge block. When you have a block full, the measure your powder charges and load each round. Fold down the tops, and you're ready to go.

I don't use any lubricant on the cartridges, although so folks do. I've found it just made a mess for me, and if you have the right sized ball, lubricant isn't necessary. (Bore Butter is the brand named used by some shooters, if you're inclined to try a lube). Now you're ready to shoot.

Live Firing Tips

- Never step off the line to load your musket or with a loaded musket. If you have a problem, notify the range officer.
- Although at B.A.R. matches it is permissible to prime before you load, if you prefer not to (as I do) it is also permissible to prime from a horn with less than 2 oz. of powder. Make sure you return the horn to a safe place on your person before you fire.
- If you have a "hang fire", or if only your prime goes off, continue to Hold your musket on the target for several seconds before lowering it.

- If the foil bothers your dental work, tear the top of the cartridge off with your fingers.
- Always start your shooting day with a CLEAN musket. It makes things work better.
- **Ball Size.** Trying to shoot a ball too large is a common problem that That can take a great deal of fun out of your shooting, so I recommend that you start with the following ;

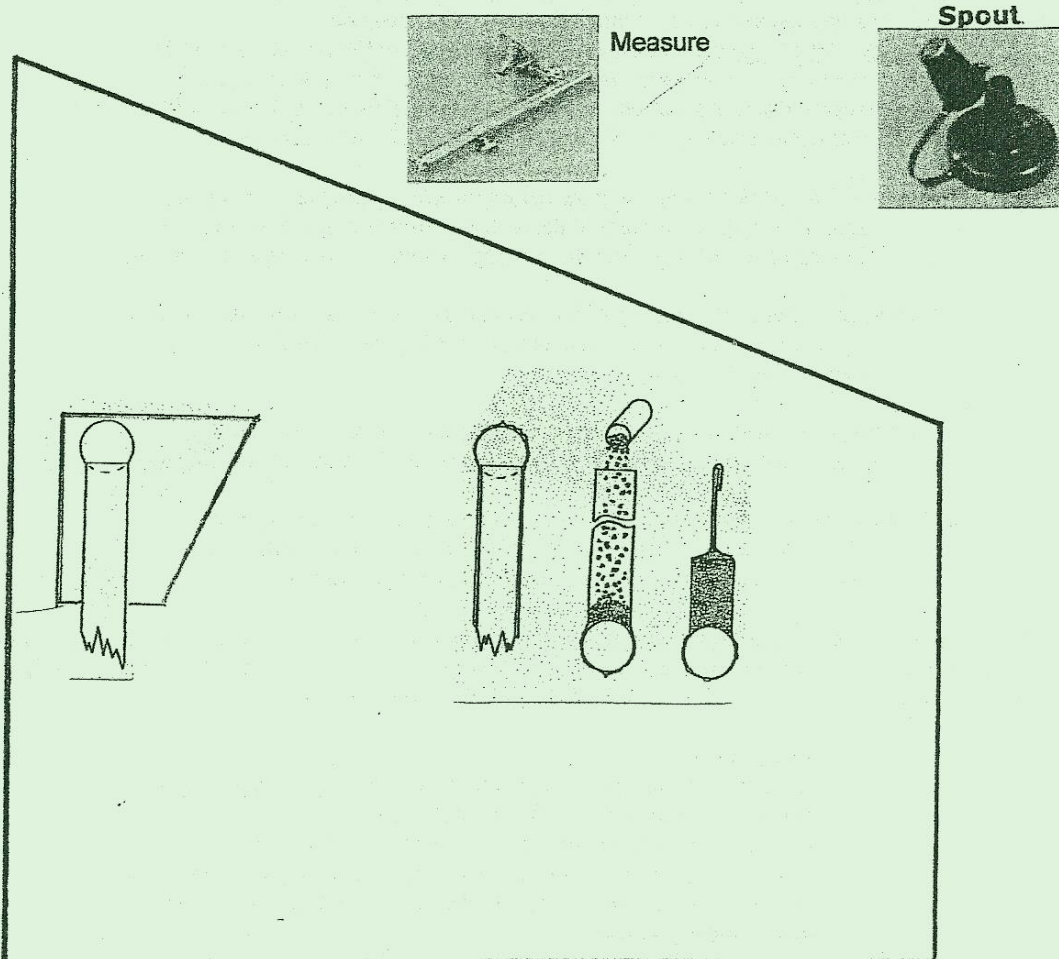
.75 cal. Musket – No larger than .735, but many very experienced shooters use .730 or .715. (I shoot a .730 in my .775 musket, with good results).

.69 cal. Musket – No larger than .662, but I recommend .648, .620, or even .600. (many of the Navy Arms French muskets seem to have a choke several inches from the muzzle, and a smaller ball works better.

Never use .678. I guarantee you'll get one stuck, and your shooting day will be over.

Precast round ball are available from many sources, including Dixie Gun Works, Track of the Wolf, and The Log Cabin Shop. If you can't find the ball size you want from these folks, it might not be made. If you want to cast your own, make sure that you use pure lead. Tire weights, or other such metals may, and probably do, have tin and other things alloyed with them that will make it very difficult to get a ball puller in if need be. Save this harder metal for casting buttons.

Powder Charge Your charge will vary with your musket, but I recommend you start with about 65 grains of FFg. Shot this charge till you get all the rounds going in about the same place at about 35 yds. If you're consistently low, add 5 grains and keep experimenting until you get a charge that puts the ball where you want it. If you are priming from the cartridge, take this into account and add 5 grains.



A final note on live-firing. Don't be embarrassed if you don't know something. There is no problem in not knowing. **The problem is not knowing and NOT ASKING for help.** We have many experienced shooters at our shoots, and they are glad to help by sharing what they know.