



The Bullet Hole

March 2021

Next Match April 18, 2021 - Shooters' meeting at 9:30 a.m.

SILVER STATE SHOOTISTS MARCH 2021 MATCH IN GOLD HILL



March 21, 2021 match

We had 15 shooters at our match on March 21, 2021. It was overall a really nice day. A few times a cold breeze would come up but it did not last long and then it was warm and pleasant again. The membership dues are coming in fairly well but if you haven't got yours in please do. During the shooters' meeting Georgia Blue told us the unique story of the flag we use at our meets. It has 36 stars and is the "Nevada Flag." Also during the meeting, we voted to only shoot two shotgun targets per stage due to the ammo shortage. Scurvy Kid was the only shooter to shoot clean.



The Fairview Kid just moved back to Nevada from Alabama. He lives in the Virginia Highlands. He will hopefully be shooting with all of our local clubs in the near future. Welcome.

Our friend and fellow shooter Juan O' Akind has now joined SASS and applied for his alias. It appears that one is already taken so henceforth, he will be known as Johnny Ringer. For this match he shot 22s rather than his Scofields.



Last month we had a number of shotgun targets that were really tough to get down. This month prior to the match, Wylie Fox was kind enough to adjust and test them for a reasonable shot weight to go down. However, our own Red Eye Hull had to push the limits of testing. During the third stage, he had a really light load, as in no lead in the shell. The wad hit the target and it went down! We are voting on changing his alias to "Heavy Wad."

DIAMOND DIRK SLADE



From Jackpot Jerry –

APRIL MATCH

Some of us have shot at the Railroad Flats site in California. Their range is on the site of the Petticoat Mine from the mid 1800s. It was one of the most productive gold mines and was famous for having a short railway to move ore. They usually have two major matches a year. In the spring is the High Sierra Shootout and in the fall is Peaceful’s End of Track. They have some very unique and very fun stages so next month in homage to their having a Shootout this spring after

cancelling both matches last year, I am going to set up our April match with some of their stages. Two of their twelve stages allow you to shoot your 10-10-and 4 from a moving ore cart but that is a bit much for us to put together so next month our stages 4 and 6 will be based on their stages 11 and 12. These stages will have two very unique bonus birds for each stage (not poppers). They will be holding the High Sierra Shootout May 27 to May 30, 2021 where stages similar to these will probably be included.

I am trying to write stages that are unique, fun, yet challenging. My philosophy is that to have a successful club we need to have matches that are enjoyed by the entire spectrum of shooters. Throwing in a couple of “Easy Peasy” stages along with some marksmanship challenges followed by something to laugh about. I would really appreciate any and all input about how we can make our matches good for everybody.



There was a lot of positive response to the story of Sam Brown in the last newsletter so I went back to Nevada Magazine looking for articles written by Ron Soodalter that were notable for this area. I found this personally interesting for reasons I’ll share after the story.

Not so Lucky Lucky Bill



William “Lucky Bill” Thorington, was a handsome, charming six-footer in his mid-40s when he first appeared in Genoa in 1853 and immediately set himself up in business. He bought a mill, operated a hotel, and opened a toll road (now Kingsbury grade) and trading post for westering emigrants. But it was as a skilled professional gambler that he made his reputation. Although he seemed always to win (hence the sobriquet “Lucky Bill”), he was apparently well-liked. As one chronicler stated, “Lucky Bill could make a man count it a distinction to lose his shirt at a single turn of the card.”

Thorington was blessed with a young son and beautiful wife, and life was good. By all reports, he was a caring and generous member of the community. As a local later recalled, “A better neighbor never lived near any man, or a better friend to the weary traveler.”

Unfortunately, Carson Valley had become a refuge for bad men, and Thorington was less than discerning about the company he kept, or the friends he made. This applied to women as well. Around 1856, he impregnated a woman named Martha Lamb, and moved her onto his ranch. Among the fiercely anti-Mormon members of the community, this gave rise to the idea that he was a polygamous member of the Latter-Day Saints, and according to some, this was the underlying reason he was hanged.

Around that time, William Ormsby came to Genoa. A trader by profession, he was by all accounts also vain, ambitious, opinionated, and excitable. Ormsby assumed the running of the community, including the newly-formed vigilance committee, which Thorington and others vehemently opposed. He and Lucky Bill soon became bitter enemies.

In December 1857, a man named William C. Edwards murdered the leading citizen of Merced County, and escaped to Genoa. As one historian states, "Edwards sought out a man who had a reputation for helping all who asked, Lucky Bill Thorington." He told Thorington that he had acted in self-defense, and asked him to hide his money while he looked up old friends. A gullible Thorington complied.

Shortly thereafter, Edwards and his cronies murdered a cattleman and stole his herd. He returned to Thorington's door, again swearing his innocence, and seeking help in escaping. The vigilantes soon captured Edwards, and arrested Lucky Bill and several others. Edwards soon confessed, and Ormsby immediately helped organize a "trial" for Lucky Bill. Reviewing the transcript, a later chronicler wrote, "Not a thing appears there implicating Lucky Bill in anything except the attempt to secure the murderer's escape. Edwards swore positively that he had assured Lucky Bill that he was innocent."

Nonetheless, the verdict was a foregone conclusion. Even as the trial was taking place, vigilantes were constructing a gallows within earshot. The gambler died with dignity and courage, shouting, "I ain't never lived a hog, and I ain't gonna die like one, screamin' about bein' butchered!" A noose encircled his neck, and after singing "The Last Rose of Summer," he leapt to his death. Somewhere, someone owes "Lucky Bill" Thorington an apology. So Lucky Bill became the first person to be hung in Nevada although at that time it was still Washoe County, Utah. The Nevada territory was not established until March 2, 1861.



FYI – In July 1856 Lucky Bill sold a 600 acre ranch in what is now Fredricksburg, CA about 10 miles south of Genoa to a Mormon rancher from Mormon Station (Genoa). Joseph Stacy Murdock was one of the first 40 families to settle the area under the direction of Brigham Young. Murdock used this ranch and his 500 acre ranch in Mormon Station to supply the gold miners in California with eggs, meat, and other provisions. He possibly even provisioned the Petticoat Mine. Twice monthly in fair weather he would take a pack train of supplies over Carson Pass to Placerville and the gold mines of California. He had adopted two local Indian children that had been enslaved by a war party whom he was raising as his own and therefore had very good relationships with the various native tribes whom he respected and treated as friends. He was one of the only white settlers able to pack across the mountains without fear of Indian attack. Joseph Stacy Murdock is Jackpot Jerry's great, great, grandfather.



The gulch is just south of the Gold Hill train depot and west of the Gold Hill Hotel.

If you have a problem finding the location, or if you would like more information about the information in this newsletter, call Jackpot Jerry. My cell phone number is: 310-990-6482