

A "BULLY" ROOM

Two guns that belonged to U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt will be a part of NRA's new National Firearms Museum.

BY PHILIP SCHREIER

THEODORE ROOSEVELT—the 26th President of the United States, hunter, conservationist, outspoken advocate of the National Matches and NRA Life Member—is an icon of his age epitomizing the American gentleman hunter of that era. It is difficult, however, to gain an accurate measure of Roosevelt, the man, without visiting his beloved home on Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York. Today Sagamore Hill stands as a shrine, not only to a great man and his family, but to the grandeur that marked the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

The new National Firearms Museum will depict a vignette of that time by recreating the library from Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill home. It was in that room that Roosevelt successfully negotiated an end to the Russo-Japanese War, becoming the only U.S. president to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Rectangular in shape, a shoulder-height bookcase runs the entire length of the left side of the room. The room's far end has a mantle and fireplace flanked on the right by windows, and against these windows is Roosevelt's work desk. The floor is carpeted with a patchwork of oriental rugs and animal skins; trophy racks and mounted heads adorn the walls.

The museum's gallery is laid out to duplicate this library, and from a few feet away the wall-length book case will appear full. But, when visitors approach they will trip a motion detector and activate an illuminated display, rendering the hand-painted "scrim" of book spines invisible and highlighting a collection

of high-grade safari rifles hidden therein. Purdeys, Rigbys, Webleys, Holland & Hollands and other fine arms will dominate the wall cases evoking an age of safaris and big game hunts.

Another case will highlight his service as a conservationist, hunter and NRA Life Member. Also shown will be arms used a century ago in our war with Spain—a war that some argue made a president out of a Rough Rider colonel.

Of special interest are two firearms in the museum's collection that belonged to President Roosevelt. One, a Browning-Patent, Fabrique Nationale Model 1900 semi-automatic pistol, was shipped to the White House in 1902 for the president's use. Chambered in .32 ACP, this pearl-stocked pistol is elaborately embellished with banknote scroll engraving and gold ribbon inlay. It was kept in a bedside table drawer for protection (more than one person tried to force their way into Sagamore Hill). In 1919, this pistol was passed down to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.—who earned the Medal of Honor for his actions in clearing Utah Beach on D-Day.

The other Roosevelt gun is a beautiful side-by-side double rifle imported by Frederick Adolph and engraved by Rudolph Kornbrath with U.S. presidential seals at the breech of each barrel. Chambered in .500-450 Nitro, this double did not accompany the president on his famous 1909 safari, but was made for him upon his return in 1910.

Visitors will leave the "Age of Elegance" gallery with an awareness of the positive aspects of hunting, the beauty of finely-crafted firearms and of wildlife conservation, as well as the feeling that, for a few minutes, they have stood in the presence of one of this country's greatest presidents.

The museum will have 13 other galleries and will open in June 1998. Gallery sponsors, museum donors and volunteers are still needed. For information write: Whit Fentem, Director, NFM, Dept. AR, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400.

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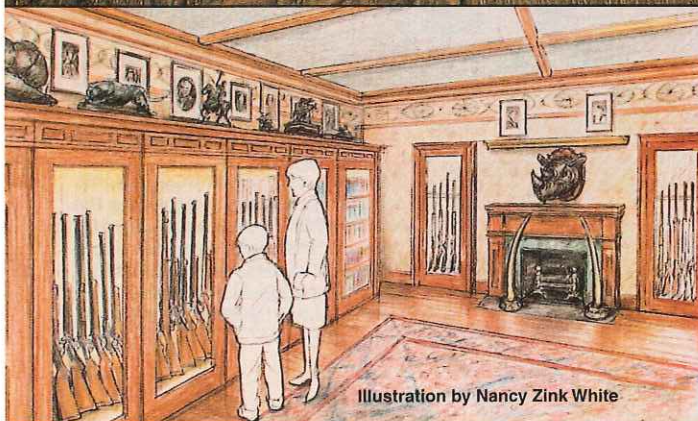
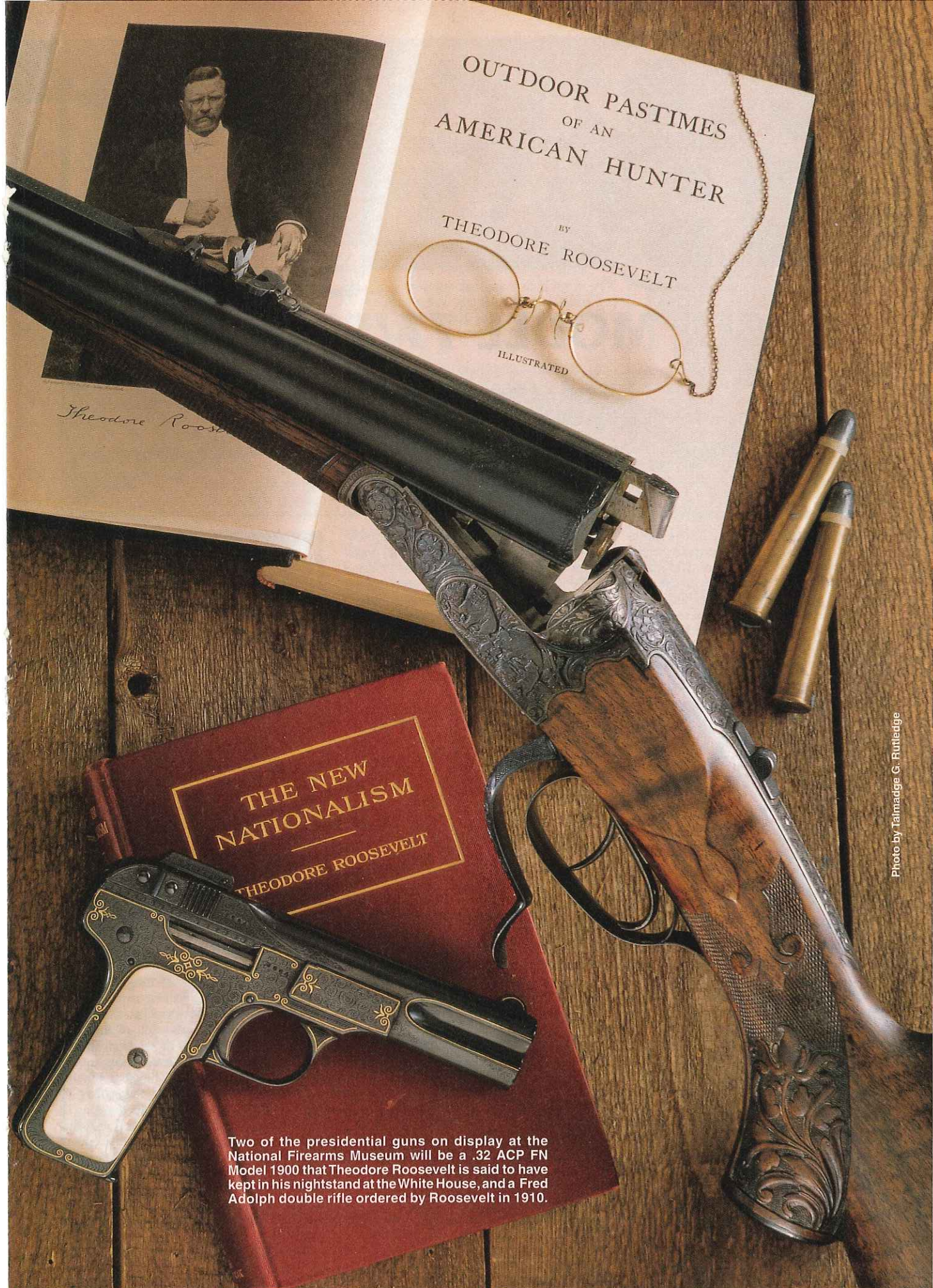


Illustration by Nancy Zink White



OUTDOOR PASTIMES
OF AN
AMERICAN HUNTER

BY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

ILLUSTRATED

Theodore Roosevelt

THE NEW
NATIONALISM
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Two of the presidential guns on display at the National Firearms Museum will be a .32 ACP FN Model 1900 that Theodore Roosevelt is said to have kept in his nightstand at the White House, and a Fred Adolph double rifle ordered by Roosevelt in 1910.

Photo by Taimadge G. Rutledge