



Story by Brad Heidel, Photos by Tracy Halpin



## Saving a Classic Shotgun

*To restore or not to restore — that is the question*



**IMAGINE IT IS 1961**, 51 years ago. It is early evening, the dog is still wet and you and your hunting buddies are sitting around the wood stove. You put up your gear, including the guns, to dry off. The stories of the day's success and good natured ribbing fill the air around you. Then suddenly, the stock on your favorite firearm catches fire!

I'm not sure how my Parker 16 received the burn down the stock, but regardless, my real question is how to fix it? This begs the age old question of whether to restore a classic firearm or leave it in original condition? This same

question pertains to classic cars, homes or any antique. In doing the research for this article, I can tell you the question will rage on for years.

Should you decide to restore your old trusty firearm or even enhance it, there are options. Here at Pheasants Forever we have had the pleasure to work with one of the best restorers, Doug Turnbull of Turnbull Manufacturing Co. out of Bloomfield, New York. Doug has specialized in faithful and accurate restoration of vintage firearms, as well as custom work and upgrades, for over 30 years. In those 30 years



Before



After

**“ Should you decide to restore your old trusty firearm or even enhance it, there are options. ”**

Turnbull Mfg. has repaired or restored over 25,000 firearms!

In 2011, I was introduced to Doug and we began to think of how we might work together on a project for National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic (February 15-17, Minneapolis, Minnesota). On his recommendation, we decided to work on a Parker Trojan 12-gauge for auction at Pheasant Fest. We also decided to fully restore the gun and to add some enhancements as well.



**Shaping of stock around the pistol grip.**



**Gunsmith, Sam Chappell, using a barrel channelling tool to shape inside of forearm.**

The restoration and enhancement of this shotgun was exciting, but what really excited me about this project was how it was going to be accomplished. For one, Turnbull Mfg. uses the same process and techniques used by the original makers to bring these vintage firearms

back to original factory condition. All checkering and engraving is done by hand, stocks are carved to exact factory dimensions, case coloring and bluing is deep and lustrous.

When he works, Doug likes to imagine that the original old world craftsmen are smiling down upon him and his crew. "The craftsmen at Turnbull Mfg. are dedicated to continuing the great gun making tradition in this country. We hope the original gun makers would be proud to see the care and attention to detail that we put into every restoration."

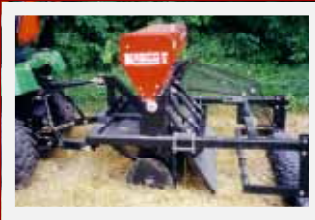
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### Do It Yourself

One option to hiring a company to restore your firearm is to do it yourself. Start with an Internet search, where there is plenty of information. Many of the supplies you need can be found at your local woodworking store or, better yet, from PF supporters Brownell's or Midway USA.

I chose to keep my Parker in its original condition. Every time I carry it to the field, I think of a new way that the old burn mark came to be on my gun. Perhaps someday I'll find the answer.

In the meantime, please be sure to attend National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic 2013 to see Turnbull's latest restoration and enhancement of an A.H. Fox 16-gauge. ■



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