

SIXGUN MAGICIAN — AS ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN AMERICAN EXHIBITION SHOOTERS, Ed McGivern proudly billed his performances as offering “The Fastest Shooting in the World.” McGivern’s legendary skills with revolvers, including fast draw, speed shooting and aerial targetry at thrown lead discs or playing cards, were well-represented in his 1938 book, *Fast and Fancy Revolver Shooting*, which is still in print today. Until his death in 1957 at age 83, McGivern devoted considerable time to teaching many others, ranging from private citizens to FBI agents, how to shoot fast and accurately.

Fourteen of the handguns that Ed McGivern used in his rapid-fire demonstrations across America are now part of the National Firearms Museum collection—a gift of McGivern’s Philadelphia patron, Walter Groff. One of these historic guns, a Smith & Wesson .38/44 Outdoorsman, bears a bronze sideplate that commemorates McGivern twice firing a five-shot group at 20 feet in 9/20th of a second. Each group could be completely covered by a half-dollar. Like many of McGivern’s customized arms, this revolver has a reshaped trigger guard to allow faster access to the trigger. For National Firearms Museum information and hours, call (703) 267-1600. Admission is free (donations are encouraged), and children are welcome.

