

# 'Have gun, will place in films'

## Cimarron sells to Hollywood

By Richard Zowie

In the 1990 science fiction film "Back to the Future III," the first time Dr. Emmett Brown appears on screen in 1885 is when he saves Marty McFly from hanging by shooting the rope with a Winchester model 1873 lever-action rifle (equipped with a neo-1885 version of a sniper scope).

Chambering a new round, he then announces to Buford Tannen: "It'll shoot the fleas off a dog's back at 500 yards, Tannen! And it's pointed straight at your head!"

That rifle, along with the pistol Tannen uses in the movie, and the unused pistol Marty gives to his great-great-grandfather, all came from Cimarron Firearms, a Fredericksburg-based company that provides authentic reproductions of Colt and Winchester firearms. (The "Back to the Future" production crew provided the scope).

Mike Harvey, who co-owns Cimarron and Texas Jack Wild West Outfitter with his daughter, Jamie Wayt, said they have original replicas made in factories in other countries and then have them imported here to be sold to dealers and distribu-

tors. Among Cimarron's clients is Texas Jack's.

Other customers are Hollywood companies that provide western-era movies with guns, rifles and other props needed to capture the authentic, "Old West" look. Wyatt Earp using a .50-caliber Desert Eagle pistol at the O.K. Corral probably would scream of anachronisms.

"Just about every firearm you see in a western movie was made with one of our guns," Harvey said. "If it wasn't, there are some that were already made when we started our business."

The first western movie they supplied weapons for also happened to be James Arness' final film. Known for his Marshal Matt Dillon character from the long-running TV western "Gunsmoke," Arness reprised his character for the 1990 TV movie "Gunsmoke: The Last Apache."

"We were very small back then," Harvey said. "We loaned guns to them and told them we wanted them back. Arness used our single actions and a lever action 1873."

Since then, Cimarron has supplied pistols and rifles to various other western films. Among them: "Lonesome Dove," "Young Guns 2," "Unforgiven," "Far and Away," "Tombstone," "The



Among the Old West replica weapons Mike Harvey's company Cimarron sells to Hollywood include the Winchester 1873

Quick and the Dead," "3:10 to Yuma" and, most recently, the remake of "True Grit" along with "The Lone Ranger."

"The biggest deal we ever did was for all of the guns in Back to the Future III," Harvey said. "We sold them about 70 guns."

What started out as a hobby for Harvey and his family began in the early 1990s, when they moved

to Fredericksburg. Harvey originally made muzzle-loader rifles, and it led to his interest in a gun-manufacturing business.

One of Harvey's more memorable gun orders came during the filming of "Texas," a mid-1990s TV miniseries based on James Michener's novel. "Texas" was filmed in Bandera, and during production, the prop master entered Texas Jack's to look

lever-action rifle, such as the one Doc Brown used in "Back to the Future III." — Standard-Radio Post/Richard Zowie

at the weapons and clothing. "He told us that quite a few people had told him there was a store with unique stuff, possibly to be used in the movie," Harvey said, remembering the man bought a lot of French leather shirts and other clothing common in Texas in the 1840s.

The prop master also had one particular problem: the only weapon available to

Texas Rangers at that time period was a Colt Paterson five-cylinder revolver. Replicas of this firearm, which helped begin Colt Firearms, are extremely rare.

"The guy said he'd been all over the U.S. looking for the revolvers, and they had only one revolver on set, and all the stars had to share the same revolver," Harvey said. "He told us it was killing their production and he was ready to pay for information on how to get more. They needed 30."

Harvey's wife located 26 and sold them to the prop master.

Wayt said the weapons they sell to movie makers depend on each movie.

"Sometimes they buy directly from us, other times they get them from a Hollywood prop house and we only discover their use after the fact," she said.

Once, Wayt and Harvey got to visit the set of the 1991 miniseries "Son of the Morning Star" and see a few events filmed. Some of the celebrities they've met in their ventures include Roy "Dusty" Rogers Jr. and Frank Stallone (Sylvester's younger brother). At Texas Jack's, Tommy Lee Jones and Madeleine Stowe both are known to visit every so often.

Cimarron is online at [www.cimarron-firearms.com](http://www.cimarron-firearms.com).