



David Weaver (l) and Craig Ross

## THE ARMS & ARMOUR SOCIETY HAS AWARDED ITS RESEARCH MEDAL FOR 2021 TO DAVID WEAVER ASAC

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David Weaver is a world-class, highest-level authority on and collector of early English firearms, particularly those of the 17th and early 18th centuries. He is a major source of the literature on English antique firearms of this era. His research is outstanding, detailed and thorough. His subjects themselves are original and rarely addressed in the literature. Examples include 17th century English double-barreled pistols; the evolution of English gunmaking and the English gun trade over the course of a century and the evolution of decorative style and design, a crucial and previously under-researched topic. Dave's research and publications have been

iconoclastic challenging established views and "truths" revealing some longstanding "facts" to be myths.

The Arms and Armour Society was founded in May 1950. In May 1982 it decided to award a Research Medal. The current rules for the presentation of this medal state that 'The medal shall be awarded for outstanding published original research on any aspect of arms and armour and will be judged on originality, depth of research and its contribution to the study of arms and armour' and that 'one medal may be awarded annually. The Society also has a 'Distinguished Service Medal'.



The award of the Society's Research Medal is recognised internationally as a great distinction. In total some forty Research Medals have been awarded so far, 11 of these in 1984 as the Society caught up with its first thirty years of activity. The list of distinguished winners over the years embraces names from around the world and includes Howard Blackmore, Arne Hoff, W. Keith Neal, Jim Gooding, Claude Gaier, Stuart Phyrre and De Witt Bailey.

The medal itself is very distinctive, the task of achieving this original design was given to Claude Blair. Claude Blair (1922-2010) was a towering figure in the arms and arms world and had just retired as Keeper of Metalwork in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Following the advice of the then Art Director of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and a former member of the Medal Committee of the Royal Mint, Graham Hughes, and consideration by the Society, it was decided to proceed with a medal produced by casting, rather than one stamped from an engraved die. An independent artist,

Mrs. Jacqueline Gruber Steiger, was ultimately commissioned to produce the medal with some guidance from the Society to ensure the design was archaeologically accurate. She is still active. The final design includes the Society's badge, this is based on a drawing in the Warwick Roll of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (1421-1471), known as 'The King Maker'; a sallet that is still in the Herbert Museum Coventry; and the AVANT Armour, formerly in the Trapp Armoury in the Castle of Churburg, South Tyrol and now in the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. The medal is approximately 1¼ inches in diameter and is cast in phosphor bronze by the *cire-perdue* 'lost-wax' process. The high relief of the medal allowed by the casting process makes it unusually dramatic.

The medal was presented to Dave Weaver at his home in Canada on the 20th of May 2023, by Craig Ross, ASAC, his successor as President of the Canadian Guild of Antique Arms Historians.

