



VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.ORG



Est. 1983 (A Non-Profit Organization)

NRA Affiliate Number G 8162

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May 2009 VGCA Newsletter



April 23, 2009 Meeting Presentation: The presentation was on the U.S. Rifle M1 Garand courtesy of member **Larry Babcock**, author of the new photo book, *M1 Garand Photo Essay*. This book, filled with high quality, expert photographs taken by Mr. Babcock, is a wealth of information for collectors and technical arms historians. Mr. Babcock was joined on the stage by **John Wallace**, noted VGCA Garand collector, who added his expertise and presented a number of exotic and rare M1s from his personal collection. The evening kicked off with Larry describing what led him to become the author, although reluctantly, of his own book. He was being constantly asked when he would print his body of work, which documents many of the small parts and 1800 change orders Springfield Armory made to the M1 over its life. Although he always answered ‘no’, he eventually ended up producing a book. However, in spite of his newly published work, he is the first to dissuade folks from calling him an expert or a ‘Guru of Garands,’ preferring a more modest ‘Guru in Training’ term. He showed two of his cutaway M1s that are used to reveal the inner workings

and mechanisms of the rifle. One included a grenade and rifle grenade launcher and the other was one he made himself from a CMP welded drill rifle. Both were expertly executed and revealed all you could want to know of the hidden recesses of the rifles. He also had a December 1944 rifle with both GAW (George A. Woody) and NFR (Norman F. Ramsey) stock cartouches. It is possible this was a high number production presentation rifle. His last rifle was a Korean War vintage International Harvester (IHC) ‘gap letter’ variant. **Addison Hurst** added to the discussion with his DCM sold MID and a Harrington and Richardson (HRA) and IHC manufactured examples. **John Wallace** provided a brief history of M1 early developments in .276 caliber which was ordered dropped for logistical reasons in favor of the standard US round – .30-06. Keeping with his early history, he displayed an extremely rare example of the first production variant – the Gas Trap Garand. As these were recalled for conversion to the improved gas cylinder model, few now exist. His rifle was a restoration that was all original with the exception of a reproduction gas trap and stock. He explained the lend-lease rifles provided to the British which often bear a red stripe painted on the upper hand guard by the British to designate the U.S. .30-06 caliber and NOT .303. This is also found on lend-lease M1917 rifles. In many cases, collectors would “restore” their rifles and remove this evidence of the rifle’s history. He covered the developments of the sniper variants, with a focus on the M1C, which led to a simplified M1D. Original M1C rifles can command over \$12K on the collector market. He concluded by displaying a Beretta manufactured M1 with Indonesian crest. This presentation was very well presented and well attended. Club President, Addison Hurst wished to convey his thanks and comments on a job well done. If you missed this one, you missed some museum quality specimens of rare and classic US battle rifles. If you want a copy of the *M1 Garand Photo Essay*, copies may be ordered from the author.

Photos from the April 23rd Meeting



UL: Larry Babcock shows the cutaway rifle.

UR: Detail of the cutaway receiver.

ML: John Wallace and the Gastrap Garand showing gastrap detail.

MR: M1C scope mount detail.

LL: Chris Smith and his Hoffer-Thompson Gallery rifle.

LR: Detail of Jim Vaughan Confederate sword.



Presentation for the May 28, 2009 Meeting: Thanks to the efforts of Board Member Larry Hunt, we are pleased to announce that the evenings speaker will be Mr. Paul Barron of the George C. Marshall Museum and Foundation, located in the beautiful and historic town of Lexington in Rockbridge County, Virginia. Mr. Barron will be bringing original D-Day maps (some bloodstained) and material from the museum. Remember that this talk will be 8 days before the 65th Anniversary of D-Day on June 6th. Fitting with the tradition of the past VGCA presentations and in honor of those who stormed the beaches of Festung Europa, folks may wish to bring in any WW2 items – knives, arms, web gear, etc. for discussion.

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***** IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT on the NEWSLETTER *****

Opt-In for the Mailed Newsletter: LAST CHANCE! *Third and FINAL* Announcement – As mentioned in the last 2 issues, to minimize address errors and reduce postage costs, as well as encourage the enhanced e-Newsletter, we are initiating an **Opt-in Program** for the mailed Newsletter. This is the last chance to opt-in for the mailed newsletter. There is a pre-addressed form for members to verify their mailing address and confirm their need to receive a mailed hardcopy. Members should complete the form, fold it, tape it closed, add a First Class stamp and mail it back to the address on the form to continue receiving the mailed newsletter. ***If no reply is received by the June meeting, you will be dropped from the newsletter mailing list.*** **Opt-In** requests **MUST** be received by regular mail. If you wish to receive an e-Newsletter via email, please notify Larry Hare via email. In June the Membership List will be reviewed and all members getting mailed newsletters who have NOT Opted-in, or ***who have NOT PAID their 2009 dues*** (now six month overdue), will be dropped from the mailing list. We believe members without email should not be disenfranchised and mailed copies will continue, however, we strongly encourage those with email use it.

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★ UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS: **Phil Schreier** at the NRA museum is finalizing up a speaker from the *American Hunter* covering hunting rifles, for the first NFM presentation on June 25th. Members should bring in their favorite hunting arms – rifle, shotgun, pistol, spear or bow – or even the tall tales of the ones that got away for the discussion. There are four NFM/VGCA sessions planned. If you have never attended one of these special events, treat yourself, as these are unique and memorable opportunities. We **will** have pizza and food on these four special meetings. These dates are June 25th, August 27th, October 22nd and December 3rd (the combined November / December meeting). The topics will be announced as soon as information is available. As customary, there will be **NO MEETING** in July.

Invitation to all members: If you wish to do a presentation at a meeting, please notify Addison or any of the board members. You can team with another member for a joint session. The purpose is to educate, share camaraderie and gain knowledge. We have all the 2009 meetings booked, so you do have time to prepare and get on the list for 2010.

Correction: The VGCA wishes to thank Dennis Gerdovich whose name was omitted from last month's list of those who worked security at the show. Again thanks for your assistance in making the show safe and successful.

Larry Hunt and **Addison Hurst** are exploring the logistics of a VGCA bus field trip to the George C. Marshall Museum and Foundation, located in Lexington, Virginia. This would be a behind the scenes tour exclusively for members of the VGCA. This would definitely be a rare opportunity. Members would pay for this trip, as it would not be funded by the Club treasury. Stay tuned for further information via the newsletter or at monthly meetings.

April 23rd Business Meeting of the VGCA: The business meeting reviewed the March show and gave updates. Larry Hunt briefed on the Show Security which was well organized and had no incidents. Membership Chair **Larry Hare** introduced Fred Fees (son of departed member Fred Fees who was known for his tireless efforts to promote youth shooting) as a new member applicant who was voted into the club by unanimous popular acclaim.

Show and Tell at the April Meeting: Led off by **Larry Hare** with his new Baltimore Show acquisition, a Venezuelan FN-49. This rifle was designed prior to WW2, but the designer, when escaping from the Nazis, took the plans to the UK to prevent the design from being used by the Germans. **Chris Smith** displayed a M1903

Springfield Hoffer-Thompson Gallery Practice Rifle. 15,525 rifles were made from Standard M1903 receivers that were specially marked with a 22 on the receiver bridge. They fired a .22 RF short using a chamber insert to carry the sub-caliber round. **Dan Szatkowski** showed a Navy Webley revolver that was refinished to a classic S&W high polish blue. This was the last gun sold by Front Royal dealer John Appleton before he died. **Jim Burgess** displayed some of the targets he shot with his DCM HRA M1 Garand. Although really small bore for Jim, they were very fine targets indeed. **Bob Sears** displayed an old ¾ inch tube rifle scope apparently made by E.C. Sabin of Ayers, Massachusetts. He has only seen one other that was owned by Ned Roberts of .257 Roberts fame. While the power and age are only approximations, it may have been a 6X circa 1871 judging by the rear mount which may have been based upon or may have been a Pope mount. **Jim Vaughan** presented his newly acquired 1840 Confederate Artillery Officer sword from William J. McIlroy of Macon, Georgia. He also showed a research book on Confederate edged weapons.

Upcoming Events and Shows

Words to the Wise: There are sometimes changes in schedules by gun show promoters or errors on websites. Members are strongly encouraged to verify before driving to a show. These dates have been published as of this writing, but are not guaranteed. If you have a favorite show you would like to tell other members about, please email the Editor with a short review, including the show content, i.e., modern, new, collectible or antique, and I will include it.

VIRGINIA

- ☞ May 23-24, 2009 - Harrisonburg, VA - Rockingham County Fairgrounds – *Showmasters*
- ☞ July 11-12, 2009 – Richmond, VA – Showplace - *C&E Gun Show*
- ☞ July 18-19, 2009 – Salem, VA – Salem Civic Center - *C&E Gun Show*
- ☞ July 24-26, 2009 - Chantilly, VA - Dulles Expo Center - *C&E Gun Show / Showmasters*
- ☞ August 1-2, 2009 - Fredericksburg, VA - Expo Center - *SGK, LTD*
- ☞ August 15-16, 2009 - Richmond, VA - Raceway & Fairgrounds – *Showmasters*
- ☞ August 22-23, 2009 – Roanoke, VA - Roanoke Civic Center – *Showmasters*
- ☞ August 29-30, 2009 - Fishersville, VA - Augusta Expoland – *Showmasters*

MARYLAND

- ☞ June 20-21, 2009 – Timonium, MD - Timonium Fairgrounds - *Appalachian Promotions*
- ☞ June 27-28, 2009 - Frederick, MD - Frederick Fairgrounds – *Silverado Promotions*
- ☞ July 18-19, 2009 – Upper Marlboro, MD - Show Place Arena – *Silverado Promotions*

PENNSYLVANIA

- ☞ June 12-14, 2009 - King of Prussia, PA - Valley Forge Convention Center - *valleyforgegunshow.com*
- ☞ June 20-21, 2009 – Greensburg, PA – Event Center at Westmoreland Mall, Rt. 30 - Pennsylvania Gun Collectors Association. Contact: PGCA P.O. Box 246, Glenshaw, PA 15116. (412) 486-1129 or www.paguncollectors.org.
- ☞ June 27-28, 2009 - York, PA - York Fairgrounds - *Appalachian Promotions*
- ☞ July 11-12, 2009 - Allentown, PA - Agricultural Hall - *Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society*. Contact: FDHAS, 3491 Linden St., Bethlehem, PA 18017. 610-997-8613 after 6pm.

OHIO

- ☞ May 30-31, 2009* – Wilmington, OH – Roberts Centre - *Ohio Gun Collectors Association*. **OGCA MEMBERS ONLY**. For membership information contact Laura Knotts (330) 467-5733.
- ☞ July 18-19, 2009 – Wilmington, OH – Roberts Centre - *Ohio Gun Collectors Association*. **OGCA MEMBERS ONLY**. For membership information contact Laura Knotts (330) 467-5733.

Address for any Newsletter related matters or submissions is VGCAnews@cox.net. Feel free to email items for inclusion in the newsletter. For changes of address or non-receipt of the newsletter, either via email or the mailed hard-copy, please contact Larry Hare at the numbers on page one.

V/R, Bill Chronister, Newsletter Editor