



# VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

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**President**  
**Show/Reservations Manager**  
**Membership**

Bernie Breighner  
Rick Nahas  
Bill Chronister

Phone: 703-200-0470  
Cell: 571-215-8761  
Phone: 703-204-0138

[BFBKAC@gmail.com](mailto:BFBKAC@gmail.com)  
[jet53sw@aol.com](mailto:jet53sw@aol.com)  
[Vgca\\_membership@cox.net](mailto:Vgca_membership@cox.net)

Website: [www.vgca.net](http://www.vgca.net)  
Facebook: @VirginiaGunCollectorsAssoc

Twitter: @VAGunCollectrs  
Instagram: @vaguncollectors

## May 2020 VGCA Newsletter

### President's Comments

To VGCA Members,

2020 continues to be a challenging year on many fronts. The COVID-19 virus has forced us to cancel two Gun Shows and all Member and Board Meetings through August 2020. I sincerely hope we can start back with monthly meetings in September. We also have our Fall Gun show slated for Nov 7-8, 2020. I want to take time to thank our Board of Directors, Executive Members and Gun Show Setup and Security Directors. We have planned and cancelled two shows this spring. It takes a ton of energy to plan as well as cancel a show. I really appreciate our Executive Committee's hard work in getting this done. We had a night of marathon calls to all of our table holders to make sure they were informed of the cancellations. Big thanks go to Rick for his leadership as Show Director!

Beginning July 1, Virginia will require all firearms to have a background check with some limited exceptions. We are exploring different possibilities about having FFL's available to facilitate the private transfers. Much more to come. Our goal is to keep our shows strong. We have a great reputation on the quality of the firearms being displayed and sold at our shows. We want this to continue into the future and will come up with a positive solution for non FFL table holders.

I want to wish everyone a safe and happy summer. It may be one for the history books as the pandemic continues to impact everyday life.

—*Bernie Breighner*, VGCA President



# IT IS (ALMOST) TIME TO ELECT VGCA OFFICERS!



## WE WANT YOU!

**In even numbered years (like 2020), the VGCA holds an election for its four officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary). If you are interested in helping run the VGCA and would like to “throw your name in the hat” for one of these positions, please contact Emory Hackman or one of the current officers or directors. We will need a short biography and photograph for the ballot and newsletter. As Bernie announced in his words to the membership published in the March-April newsletter, the elections - which normally occur in May with the results announced in June – have been postponed until the fall. That gives everyone plenty of time to think about running for an office. Please consider supporting the VGCA by pursuing an officer position. Good luck!**



## ★ April Presentation ★

Bill Vanderpool's presentation on the Guns of The FBI was scheduled for the April Membership Meeting, which was subsequently canceled due to the on-going COVID-19 Quarantine. We will try to get his presentation rescheduled for a future meeting.

In lieu of Mr. Vanderpool's presentation being summarized in the newsletter, VGCA Director Marc Gorelick has graciously submitted the following article on the Sig Sauer MG338 being tested by U.S. Special Forces (some of you may have seen this machine gun mentioned in reviews of this year's SHOT Show in Las Vegas). Enjoy!

# SIG SAUER MG338 MACHINE GUN: The USSOCOM Goes Euro

*By Marc Gorelick, VGCA*

The US military has been turning more towards Europe to supply both basic and specialized small arms for our warriors. The US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) chose the Sig Sauer MG338 Machine Gun and its ammunition for its elite warriors as a light weight medium machine gun that bridges the gap between the venerable Browning designed M2 .50 caliber heavy machine gun and the M240 7.62x51 caliber medium machine gun.



*Sig Sauer MG338 machine gun. Photo- Sig Sauer*

The Sig Sauer MG338 is more than a machine gun. It is a weapons system that is comprised of the Sig Sauer MG 338 machine gun, the Sig Sauer .338 Norma Magnum ammunition and the Sig Sauer Next Generation suppressor system – all researched, designed, engineered, and manufactured by SIG SAUER in the US.

Sig Sauer announced on January 15, 2020 that the MG338 had successfully passed USSOCOM's safety requirements and received a safety certification. Further USSOCOM testing, which may include limited combat trials is supposed to run through May 2020. A formal decision about whether to proceed with the program, which it has officially dubbed the Lightweight Machine Gun-Medium, or LMG-M, will probably be made in June 2020.

This is the first time in decades that the U.S. military certified a new machine gun, ammunition, and suppressor at the same time. The SIG MG 338 bridges the gap between the current machine guns currently in use with the U.S. Military. In comparison to the current M240 (7.62x51cal) machine gun, which has been in service with the U.S. Military for 60 years, the SIG MG 338, is noticeably lighter, weighing only 20 pounds, and provides significantly more range and lethality. In comparison to the M2 (.50cal), which has been in service with the U.S. Military for 110 years, the MG 338 is approximately one-quarter the weight, and in a historic first, offers a man-portable solution with similar effective-range. Making this system even more desirable is the new SIG SAUER Next Generation Suppressors which drastically reduces the impact of harmful toxic fumes and signature, making the operator less vulnerable.



*Sig Sauer MG338 machine gun. Photo – from Sig Sauer promotional video*

The SIG SAUER MG338 machine gun is a belt-fed, lightweight medium machine gun weighing under 20lbs., chambered in .338 Norma Magnum. The MG338 features a short-stroke gas piston system and a proprietary recoil mitigation system, with a free-floating, quick-change 24”



long barrel that shifts backward with each shot to absorb and control the recoil of the powerful cartridge and help increase accuracy. It also has ambidextrous controls, switchable feed tray, charging handle that can be alternated to either side depending on operator preference, and as a modern, multi-caliber, modular system the new SIG MG 338 is easily convertible to 7.62x51cal. This feature is useful when .338 Norma Magnum ammunition is not available or when conducting various types of training without having to use the more expensive .338 Norma Magnum ammunition.

The MG338 has a relatively slow rate of fire of around 600 rounds per minute to help keep it controllable and can be configured to feed its belted ammunition from the left or the right side of the gun. This feature is useful in allowing it to be mounted in various positions on ground vehicles, watercraft and helicopters, including on mounts designed to hold multiple guns at once.

As stated, it bridges the gap between the current machine guns currently being used by United States. In comparison to the current M240 (7.62x51cal) machine gun, which has been in service with the U.S. Military for over 40 years, the SIG MG338, is noticeably lighter, weighing only 20 pounds, and provides significantly more effective range (out to 2,000 meters) and lethality. USSOCOM set the effective range requirement for the MG338 machine guns at between 6,500 and 8,200 feet. By comparison, the maximum effective range of the M240L, the lightest version of the M240 is around 5,900 feet. The MG338 is about one-quarter the weight of the M2 (.50cal), which has been in service with the U.S. military for 110 years. It also provides a man-portable solution with similar effective-range. The new SIG SAUER Next Generation Suppressors which drastically reduces the firing signature making the gunner less visible and vulnerable, as well as lessening the impact of harmful toxic fumes.

The .338 Norma Magnum ammunition, developed by Norma of Sweden, was first introduced in 2008 and entered production in 2009. Similar to the .338 Lapua Magnum, it was originally developed as a long-range sport shooting wildcat cartridge by the American sport shooter Jimmie Sloan. The Swedish ammunition manufacturer Norma purchased the design and the .338 Norma Magnum cartridge was C.I.P. certified in May 2010. The MG338 Machine Gun is not the only US weapon to use this cartridge. USSOCOM awarded Barrett Manufacturing a \$50,000,000 contract in 2019 for the Barrett MRAD (Multirole Adoptive Design) chambered in .338 Norma Magnum and designated as the Mk 22 Advanced Sniper Rifle (ASR).

*Side by side comparison of .338 Lapua Magnum and .338 Norma Magnum. Photo – Wikipedia Commons Public Domain.*





Sig Sauer has already been making significant inroads in the U.S. military, most notably winning the contract to produce the new standard issue pistol for the U.S. Army, a design now slated to become the default sidearm across all the US military services. The 9mm caliber full-size M17 and compact M18 pistols, based of Sig's P320 series, will replace the Beretta M9. Sig Sauer won the Army's Modular Handgun System (MHS) contract in January 2017.  
*P320-M17 Semi-automatic pistol. Photo – Sig Sauer*

The company is also competing in the Army's competition to replace the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) and the M4 carbine.



*Sig Sauer entries in the Army competition to replace the M249 (SAW) and M4 carbine.  
(Photo – Sig Sauer)*

## ★ April Business Meeting ★

★ **April Business:** There was no April Membership Meeting and thus no April business to summarize here. As of now, our next scheduled Membership Meeting will be in September.



★ **Upcoming May & June Membership Meetings:** As announced last month, the May and June VGCA Membership Meeting have been **CANCELED**. In addition to Virginia's ban on gatherings of more than ten people, the NRA has closed its facilities. Please stay tuned to our website as well as Facebook and email notices via Constant Contact for news and updates on future Membership Meetings and events.

# AAF Museum Tour Update



## THE VGCA FIELD TRIP TO THE AAF TANK MUSEUM HAS BEEN POSTPONED!

Due to the on-going concerns about the spread of COVID-19 and the need to self-quarantine, the trip to the AAF Tank Museum in Danville, VA planned for 10-11 April 2020 has been postponed. It will be rescheduled, probably for this fall. If you have any questions, please contact the trip coordinator **Dave Litchfield**; 703-624-8696, [litchfdave@gmail.com](mailto:litchfdave@gmail.com)

### ★ Other News! ★

#### ★ Membership Chairman's Report – May 2020:

**Membership Chairman's Report May 2020 - New Members:** Please welcome new Annual Members.

- **Robert A Kendall** of Alexandria, VA was sponsored by **Mark DiSilvestro**
- **Derek McFarland** of Culpeper, VA was sponsored by **Wayne Sinclair**
- **Chad Stachowiak** of Arlington, VA was sponsored by **Marc Gorelick**

Congratulations and welcome aboard. Your Annual Membership ID will be mailed to your home address.

**New Applications for Membership:** Since the last Newsletter, we had 2 new applicants for membership, both applying via the US mail. The applicants' information and their sponsors' names are published below.

- **Douglas Gravett** of McGaheysville, VA is sponsored by **Michael Alsop**
- **Bruce Jackson** of Stafford, VA is sponsored by **Michael Irvin**

Thanks to the applicants for their interest in the Virginia Gun Collectors Association and to their sponsors for promoting the Association and keeping the membership growing during this hiatus of formal VGCA activity.

If there are any comments or questions on any applicant, please notify an Officer or Director, and the Membership Chair before June 22, 2020. For questions, please email **Bill Chronister, Membership Chair** at [vgca\\_membership@cox.net](mailto:vgca_membership@cox.net) or call me at 703-204-0138.

**Notice to New Member Sponsors:** VGCA is discontinuing hard copy versions of the VGCA Newsletters after June 2020. *Please make sure your prospective applicants include an email address* if at all possible. Without an email address these new members will NOT receive any newsletter or VGCA announcements. Limited hard copies of the current month's newsletter may be available for pick up at the membership meeting.

**Notification of Possible Email Problems:** We have been monitoring the bounce lists of our monthly Newsletter e-mailings and have found that members using **Juno.com** as their email provider and/or Internet Service Provider

(ISP) have frequently shown up with our mailings being “blocked.” The Constant Contact (our commercial e-mail provider) definition of blocked is “Blocked - The contact’s Internet Service Provider decided not to deliver the email. This is usually due to reputation or content (images, links, text, etc.), or a filter on the recipient’s end.” This does not happen with every issue, and some members have reported they have received the ‘blocked’ Newsletters. There is nothing that can be done on the VGCA end if your ISP is censoring your emails. Members with this problem may wish to contact their ISP and/or consider using an alternative email provider.



# CMP UPDATE

*By Marc Gorelick, CMP Liaison*

## 2020 NATIONAL MATCHES CANCELLED

On April 1 the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) announced cancellation of all its activities until at least May 4 with a full resumption of business to be undetermined. On April 22, the CMP went further and announced the cancellation of the 2020 National Matches that are held at Camp Perry, Port Clinton, Ohio. Usually held in July and August, the National Matches date back to 1903 and have been held at Camp Perry since 1906.



The National Matches include the CMP National Trophy Pistol and Rifle Matches, the Pistol and Rifle Small Arms Firing Schools, the National Games Rifle Matches, the National Smallbore Matches and the National Long Range Matches. These matches are conducted by a partnership of the CMP and Ohio National Guard. They have become a huge, national shooting sports event with well over 4,500 annual participants. Competitors range from beginners to many of the world’s best.

The CMP Board decided that the health and safety of the competitors, participants, vendors, military support, volunteers, and staff members overrode the historical imperative of maintaining the continuity of the Matches. It was unable to come up with a way to safely conduct the matches.

The CMP intends to hold the National Matches at Camp Perry in 2021. In the meantime full refunds will be made to those who have already registered for the 2020 matches.

As stated the CMP has been closed due to the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdowns in the states where it has facilities and operates. It has only recently opened its offices on May 14 and is starting to







The fourth item shared at the February Show-n-Tell was a Cooney Model 82 Canadian trainer (*above*). This single shot, manually cocked, bolt-action in .22 LR was manufactured by the H.W. Cooney Machine & Arms Company in Cobourg, Ontario. Between 1940 and 1944, 34,810 were produced as training rifles for the Canadian military at a unit cost of \$13.80 (in 1942 Canadian dollars). Model 82s are encountered with two different rear sights – a forward barrel-mounted ramp (like this example) better replicated the sight picture of No.1 Mark III Enfield rifle, while a rear receiver-mounted peep would be more useful in training troops on the later No. 4 Mark I Enfield (*see picture below left – note the dovetail for the rear peep*). Similar civilian variants of this model typically lack a serial number while the only serial number on the military versions is stamped in the wood on the bottom of the pistol grip. This example also has the Canadian military acceptance mark of a “broad arrow in a C” stamped on stock above the serial number, on the bolt handle, and on the top of the receiver over the chamber (*see latter two “broad arrow in a C” in picture below right*). Member 4 purchased this example at the Ohio Valley Military Collector’s Show of Shows in Louisville, KY earlier in February.



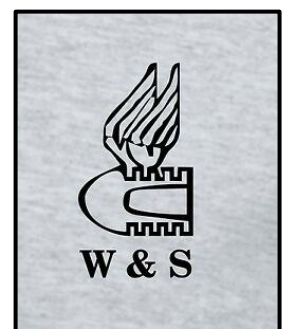




Member 5 brought in a Webley Mark VI revolver (*at left*). Produced by Webley & Scott of Birmingham, England (*their “Flying Bullet” logo is shown at the bottom of the page*) from 1915 to 1923, the Mark VI was used by British and Commonwealth forces during WWI. The Mark VI is the culmination of a series of large, big bore, break-top Webley revolvers going back to the mid-1870s. It was chambered in .455 Webley, a round which first appeared in 1891 as a black powder straight wall rimmed case firing a 265 grain lead bullet at 600 fps. By 1897, the .455 Webley was shortened and loaded with 6.5 grains of cordite. The Mark VI was initially issued to officers and pipers, but was later provided to airmen, naval crews, trench raiders, machine-gun teams, and tank crews. During WWI, several accessories were available for the Mark VI, including a bayonet made from converted French Gras rifle bayonets as well as different speed-loader designs. After WWI, it was determined to be too difficult to train new troops on using this heavy sidearm and the smaller Enfield No. 2 Mark I in the lighter-recoiling .380/200 was selected in 1932 to replace it. The Webley Mark VI nonetheless continued to serve throughout WWII.

After WWII, the Mark VI was declared surplus and thousands were imported into the U.S. In order to make them more appealing to American shooters, most were rechambered to use .45 ACP in half- or full-moon clips like those used with Colt and S&W Model 1917 revolvers (it can also use the .45 Auto Rim case – essentially a .45 ACP with a rim). This conversion involved removing metal from the rear of the cylinder – known as “shaving” it. Unfortunately, a steady diet of the more powerful .45 ACP round (standard .45 ACP pressure is close to the .455 Webley proof load!) is not considered prudent in these revolvers and it is best to reload light loads for it.

This example was made in 1918 and has a shaved cylinder and replacement grips. Member 5 noted that he does indeed fire light loads using .45 Auto Rim brass.







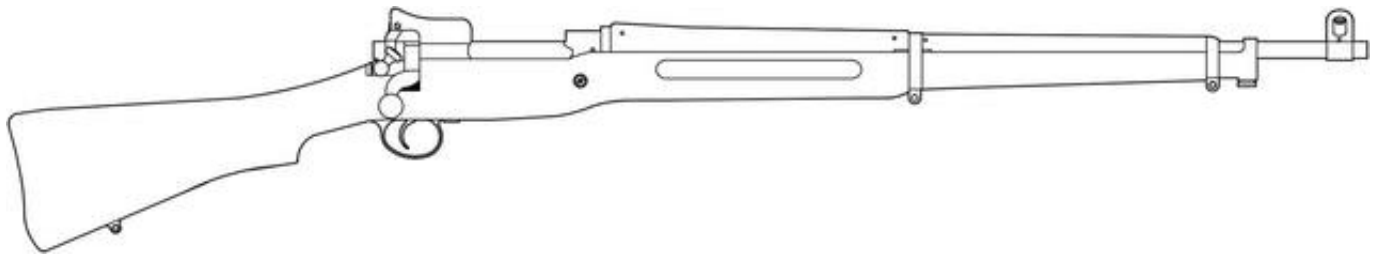
Member 6's grandfather served in the Philippines in 1901. He brought back several items, including a "sea box" with several peso coins and a "Barung" knife (*above*). The "Barung" features a thick and heavy single-edged blade with an average length of 14 inches. The weight allows it to cut like a sword. It is a weapon generally used in the southern Philippines by Tausug, Sama-Bajau, or Yakan groups.

The final Show-n-Tell from the February meeting was from the speaker himself. He shared several actual and dummy guns (for the display dummies!) covering the weapons used by the Philippine Scouts. These included a "Trapdoor" Springfield in .45/70, a Krag rifle in .30/40, and an M1 "Garand" in .30/06. Our speaker noted that the Philippine Scouts were amongst the last to use the old single-shot Trapdoors and among the very first to be issued the semi-automatic M1. There was also a Thompson submachinegun and a M1917 "Enfield" rifle (which was used by the Philippine Army) as well as M1911 and M1917 pistols. There was even a M1902 as used by the Constabulary. Unfortunately, we did not take any photographs of these weapons – the images below were taken off of the internet.

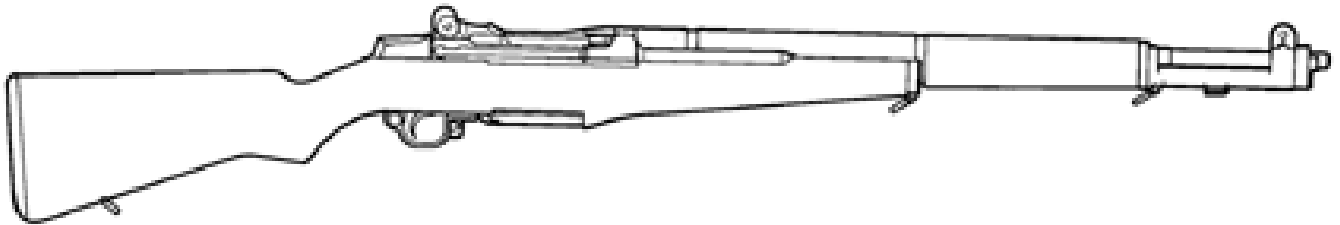


M1888 Springfield "Trapdoor" Rifle (.45/70) (*above*)

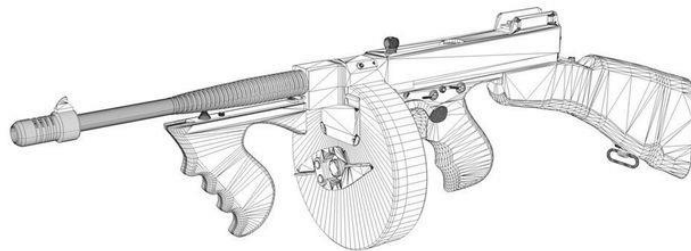




M1917 "Enfield" Rifle (.30/06) (*above*)



M1 "Garand" Rifle (.30/06) (*above*)



M1911A1 Pistol (.45 ACP) (*above left*)    M1928 "Thompson" Submachinegun (.45 ACP) (*above right*)

**NOTE – Since we will not have membership meetings until September (at the earliest), we will not have new material for the Show-n-Tell section of the Newsletter until after that . . . UNLESS . . . members would like to share their spring and summer acquisitions via email. If you would like to feature something new (or old) from your collection, please send a photo or two, along with a description of the item to [rpebecker@verizon.net](mailto:rpebecker@verizon.net). A Show-n-Tell Fact Sheet on the next page lists the type of information we are looking for in order to describe your prized possessions.**

# VGCA Show-n-Tell Fact Sheet

Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Action Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Caliber: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Production: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Produced: \_\_\_\_\_

Year this example was manufactured (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Significance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Question(s) for members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Where acquired (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ When acquired (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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## ★ In Review ★

The “In Review” section to the newsletter includes VGCA member reviews of guns shows, books, and museums. If you would like to submit a review, please send it to the editor at [rpebecker@verizon.net](mailto:rpebecker@verizon.net).

### Gun Show

*A Gun Show Review:*

## REVISITING THE SHOW OF SHOWS

*By Marc Gorelick*

The May 2017 issue of the VGCA Newsletter had a review of the Show of Shows, arguably the largest militaria show in the United States, if not the world. This is an updated review of the latest Show of Shows which was held this last February 20-23 at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Held once a year and sponsored by the Ohio Valley Military Society (OVMS), it can be called the Mecca of militaria shows. The militaria items range from antiquities to the latest used today, and span the world. They include edged weapons of every kind, use and age, medals, patches, uniforms, gear, armor, helmets, ordnance, tank parts (I saw the muzzle brake from a Tiger tank), airplane parts, gun parts and memorabilia - there is something there for most collectors. If you only collect navy or air force of a particular country or period, you can probably find it at the Show of Shows. There were enough flare guns to satisfy the most avid collector. For instance, I saw at least six scarce World War II German

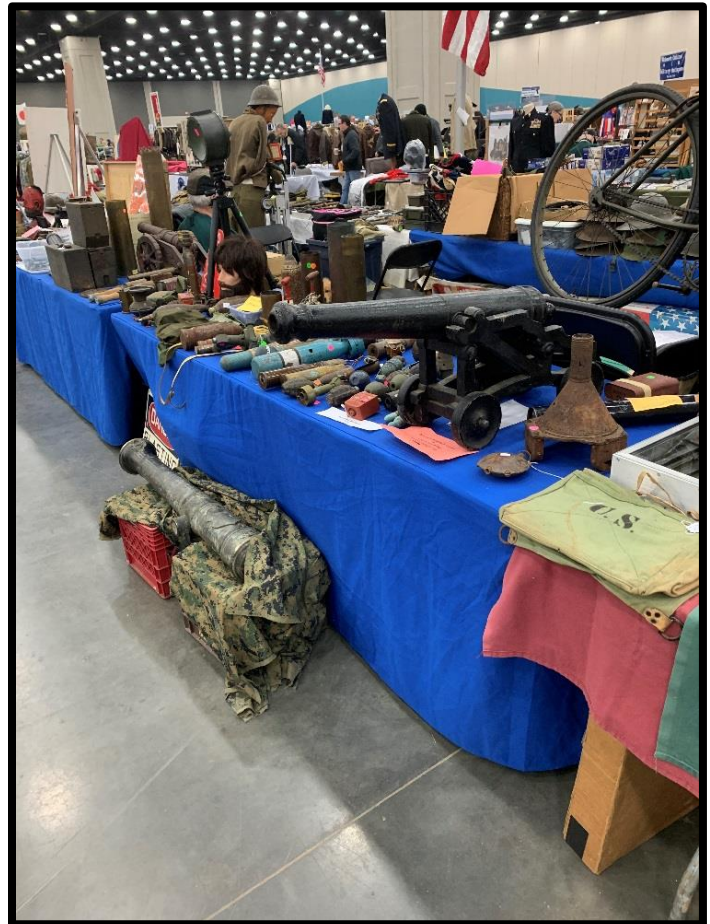
Kriegsmarine double barrel flare guns. There were also numerous military model, toy and book dealers. While many items on sale are rare or priced for the most discriminating collector, there are still large numbers of bargains to be had. And there are many items that are rarely, if ever seen at local shows. While it is primarily a militaria show and not a gun show, there are more than enough antique, historical, C&R, historic machine guns, and even some modern firearms, and a treasure trove of accessories and accoutrements to satisfy most gun collectors.



The show attracts dealers and collectors from all over the world and you hear conversations in German, Italian, French, Norwegian, Danish, Russian, Polish, Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese, as well as English spoken with many accents, including British, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian. With such an influx of well-heeled foreign buyers many of the items are priced to the market, and some are overpriced. Indeed, some are priced so high above market that you wonder what the dealers have been smoking. For instance, I saw Remington Model 1903A4's priced as high as \$6,900 and a 1941 dated Italian Carcano rifle had a price tag of \$1,500. Still, there were more than enough bargains to be had and most of the dealers will bargain. Indeed, many are only too happy to answer any questions you may have. In any case, you should go there with cash and expect to spend money (*Editors note – I went to the SoS this year and even though I took what I thought was a sufficient amount of cash, I still went to the on-site ATM four times! I consider everything I bought at or below market*).







This year there were 1,970 tables at the show and 703 table holders listed in the show magazine/guide. However, many dealers appear to share tables, so there may very well have been as many as 750 dealers present. There is also a row of tables set aside for veterans, authors and museums, where the public can talk to the vets. There were eight veterans, including five from World War 2. Among the Second World War vets were Bradford Freeman and James "Pee Wee" Martin who both served in the 506<sup>th</sup> Parachute

Infantry Regiment (of Band of Brothers fame). Another veteran at the show was Don. J. Jenkins, who won the Congressional Medal of Honor while serving in Vietnam.

Unfortunately, the number of veterans, especially World War 2 veterans, is swiftly dwindling. Just four years earlier there were 17 veterans. This year the Gettysburg Museum of History and the



General George Patton Museum and Center of Leadership had displays at the show.



The Show of Shows is well worth attending, even if only once in a lifetime. The drive can be daunting, 9 to 11 hours from Northern Virginia, but there is some magnificent scenery along the way in the West Virginia mountains and there are plenty of things to do in Kentucky, such as the Bourbon Trail tours of distilleries. Or if you don't want to drive, you can fly. The Louisville airport is practically next door to the Expo Center. The show is four days and OVMS members get in for free. Thursday morning is only for dealers and OVMS Life members. Thursday afternoon the hall is open to all OVMS members. Friday and Saturday it is open to OVMS members and the public, and Sunday is dealer pack out and OVMS members. As you can imagine, there is a lot of buying, selling and trading between dealers. Friday and Saturday were especially busy and the aisles were packed. Inside the show is a UPS table so those who fly can have your purchases shipped home.



An added bonus is that the Show of Shows is the same weekend in the same facility as the big National Gun Day show. A short walk down the hall in the Exposition Center, this show, of about 1,000 plus tables, is mostly gun and gun related. The guns range from antiques to the latest bleeding edge civilian models. Having both shows in the same facility is a boon for attendees and dealers alike as it generates large public cross-traffic for both shows.



OVMS is one of the oldest militaria collecting clubs in the country. The primary endeavor of the OVMS is to promote the study of military history and artifacts through the collecting of historic military items. The OVMS has well over 3,000 members in the U.S. and in 25 countries. Besides the Show of Shows, the OVMS also sponsors two smaller militaria shows (400 tables) in Wilmington, Ohio and the MAX show, until recently in Monroeville, PA. This year the MAX show will move to York, PA, (Sept. 17-19) and will be held in conjunction with the York Antique Arms Show at the York Expo Center. The MAX show alone will have 1,000 tables. The Antique Arms Show, sponsored by North South Traders Civil War Magazine, is well known for putting on excellent Civil War and antique arms shows in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

## Museum

*A TRIP TO THE MUSEUM:*  
**THE GUNS OF FERLACH**  
*Artistic Masterpieces in Wood and Steel*  
By Marc Gorelick



There is a museum dedicated to guns, gunsmithing and hunting in the town of Ferlach, Austria, the Buschsenmacher and Jagdmuseum (Gunsmithing and Hunting Museum). But in reality the museum is as a small part of the treasure. The entire town is a living entity dedicated to the artistry and craftsmanship of manufacturing fine high-quality custom firearms.

Ferlach, a town of about 8,000 people in Carinthia in southern Austria, close to the Slovenian border, is the southernmost town in Austria and is home to some of the oldest and finest gun makers in the world. The firearms that the Ferlach gun makers produce are true works of art, and names like Josef Just, Koschat, Borovnik, Fanzoj, Karl Hauptmann, and Hambrusch, are renowned among those who appreciate and can afford the ultimate in high quality European firearms, especially those that are known as “art guns.”



*Ludwig Borovnik double rifle*

Ferlach is also host to the world’s only Buschsenmacher (Gunsmith) apprentice training college in the **Euregio HTBLVA Ferlach**. Students from all over the world go there to learn, during their four years at the school, gunsmithing, engraving, stock making and all the other skills required to produce precision high-quality custom guns. Weapon engineering, ballistics and optics are also taught at the institute.



Ferlach got its start as an arms producing center in 1558 when the Hapsburg Emperor Ferdinand assigned 100 gunsmiths from the Netherlands to Ferlach for the purpose of producing arms. By the time of the 30 Years War (1618 – 1648) arms production in Ferlach was well established and weapons from Ferlach were already renowned throughout Europe both for their quality as well as their artistic beauty. This was exemplified in 1628 when the Archduke Leopold V commissioned his famous parade rifle from the Ferlach gunsmiths. This gun is considered the epitome of Austrian “art guns.” At this time weapon production was organized as a “house industry.” The manufacturing process was divided strictly into several different tasks - every master gunsmith had a specialized skill and a weapon went through many a master gunsmith’s hands before it was offered for sale. Master gunsmiths learned the trade from their fathers, and passed the knowledge on to their sons.



*Archduke Leopold V Parade Rifle*

Between 1740 and 1780, during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa, Ferlach became the center of the arms industry of the Habsburg Empire. The Empress created the first set of guild rules for the gunsmiths of Ferlach. The name “Fanzoj” appears in the chronicles for the first time as a local gunsmith, as did the name “Hambrusch” in 1752, making these firms among the oldest, continuous family-owned gunmakers in the world. The Fanzoj firm was established as a firm in 1790. (In contrast, Ludwig Borovnik I did not establish himself as Ferlach gunsmith until 1848, making the firm Borovnik a relative newcomer.) In 1793 an exclusive trade mark is granted to the Guild of Ferlach Gunsmiths to protect the “authenticity and quality of the arms from Ferlach.” And in 1878 the “Imperial Professional School for the Arms Industry” is founded. Today it is still regarded as one of the world’s premier schools for gunsmiths and weapon experts.

However, Ferlach was about to undergo a drastic change. With the introduction of the “Wendl lock” in 1880, the Austrian military arms industry was transferred to Steyr, bringing on the decline of the Ferlach firearms industry. In response Ferlach shifted its focus from military arms and began to specialize in producing the highest quality precision hunting rifles and other sporting arms for those who could afford them. In 1845 there were 308 “Master Gunsmiths” in Ferlach. Today, there are only 11 “Master Gunsmiths” who manufacture only about 200 rifles a year.



*Karl Hauptmann double rifle, side lever, round body, caliber 9.3x74R*

Today, just as it has been during its long history, the gun makers of Ferlach are known for their “art guns.” These finely crafted guns are not only well made, dependable and highly accurate but are masterpieces as works of art and beside their utilitarian use they inhabit a unique place in the world of rare collectibles. Throughout history, the well-made richly ornamented custom arms of Ferlach have been emblems of pride, courage, distinction, wealth and social rank for the people who commissioned and owned them. Even in this modern age of mass production, guns made today in Ferlach are unique, being tailor-made by hand to the requirements and specifications of each individual customer. The gunmakers pride themselves on the quality of their work – for example, only the finest wood is used and all engraving and decorating is by hand. It can take up to two years to make such a masterpiece.



*Johann Fanzoj side by side shotgun*



The Buschsenmacher and Jagdmuseum (Gunsmithing and Hunting Museum) is located in Schloss Ferlach, once the home of the local nobility. The museum celebrates not only hunting and the animals being hunted but also the gunsmiths’ craft. Although hunting displays and exhibits take up a large part of the museum, the firearms that are used, and how they are made, occupies a central place. Indeed, the museum presents the crafts involved in gunsmithing as an art form. The museum exhibits include some of the most ornately decorated firearms in the world, most of which were produced in Ferlach. It is a visual

symphony that celebrates the gunsmiths of Ferlach. The exhibits not only show guns but they also explain what went into their manufacture. The museum presents the history of gun making in Ferlach, showing the progression of, and innovations in, gunsmithing and manufacture through the ages as well as extant examples of period firearms. The museum also highlights the roles of the various artisans and craftsmen who are involved in making a high quality custom gun. A visit to the museum deepens one’s appreciation for just how much skilled labor goes into the making of a high-quality custom made firearm.

The guns in the display cabinets are exceptional examples of the Ferlach gunsmiths’ art. The cabinets are well-lit and the signage is legible. The guns themselves can be seen from various angles. They range



from the earliest, including matchlocks and wheel locks to the most modern. Many of the local gunsmiths showcase their fine handmade products here. Besides the videos and displays that illustrate the crafts and advances in gunsmithing, there is often a student from the nearby gunsmith school who describes the displays and how guns are made.

But the town itself is a living museum that is dedicated to custom gun making. Many of the gunsmiths' workshops and stores are open to the public and a visitor can walk the quaint streets of Ferlach and be able to visit many of the gunsmiths' shops. It is not out of the ordinary to talk to the men who made the guns on display in the museum.



*Johann Fanzoj Big Game double rifle in 470 Nitro Express*



It is fascinating to witness the combination of many highly specialized crafts, which only survive through the art of gunsmithing: garneurs, engravers, stockers, polishers, basculeurs and regulators work hand in hand to produce individual pieces which the master gunsmiths fit together produce the perfect weapon. Once complete, the weapon is submitted to the Beschussamt (quality control office), to ensure the finest quality. Of course, a visit to the gun makers affords the visitor the opportunity to order a superb gun to his personal specifications. *Johann Fanzoj Big Game African double rifle w gold inlay*

To get to Ferlach from Vienna by car, you take the E59 south to the A2 east to Klagenfurt. Then take the 91 south to Ferlach. It is a shorter drive from Ljubljana, Slovenia. From Ljubljana drive northeast on the E61 and then take the E652 north to the Austrian border where the E652 changes into the 91, which takes you into Ferlach.

The museum, and Schloss Ferlach (or Ferlach Castle) is located at:

Sponheimer Platz 1

9170 Ferlach

The phone number is +43 4227 4920.

The museum's e-mail address is [ferlach.tourismus@ktn.gde.at](mailto:ferlach.tourismus@ktn.gde.at).

For additional information go to the museum website: <http://www.jagdmuseum-ferlach.at>.



*Johann Fanzoj 4-barrel combination gun. Two shotgun and two rifle barrels.*

The dates and hours that the museum is open appears to change but it should be open from May 1 to October 28, seven days a week, from 10:00am to 6:00pm. For other dates and time you should contact the museum. Admission for adults is 6.50 euros and there are different prices for groups, seniors, students and children under 15 years old.

More information about some of the famous gunmakers in Ferlach is available at the following websites:

- Ludwig Borovnik: [www.ludwigborovnik.com](http://www.ludwigborovnik.com)
- Fanzoj Jagdwaffen: [www.fanzoj.com](http://www.fanzoj.com)
- Karl Hauptmann: [www.hauptmann-rifles.com](http://www.hauptmann-rifles.com)
- Koschat Jakob: [www.jagdwaffen-ferlach.at](http://www.jagdwaffen-ferlach.at)



*Two highly exquisitely engraved shotguns from Karl Hauptmann*

## ★ 2020 Presentation List ★

Scheduled presentations for our upcoming membership meetings:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PRESENTATION</u>	<u>PRESENTER</u>
<del>May 28<sup>th</sup></del>	<del>Colt Walker Revolvers</del>	<del>CANCELED — Charlie Pate</del>
<del>June 25<sup>th</sup></del>	<del>Gun Buying Lessons Learned</del>	<del>CANCELED — VGCA Members</del>
July	No membership meeting scheduled	
<del>August 27<sup>th</sup></del>	<del>Engraved Colt Pistols</del>	<del>CANCELED — Phil Hill</del>
September 24 <sup>th</sup>	My Favorite Gun	VGCA Members
October 22 <sup>nd</sup>	German Weapon Markings and Proofs	Dave Litchfield
November	No membership meeting scheduled due to our Fall Gun Show	
December TBD	Holiday Pot Luck and Annual Swap Meet	Show-n-Tell Only

## ★ Upcoming Events and Shows ★

**PLEASE NOTE:** There are no shows scheduled in May 2020 due to COVID-19 Quarantines. The June shows listed have not yet canceled, but members are strongly encouraged to *verify before driving to a show*. These dates have been published as of this writing, but are not guaranteed.

### VIRGINIA – 2019-2020

- Jun 13-14, 2020 – Roanoke, VA – The Berglund Center – *Showmasters*
- Jun 19-21, 2020 – Chantilly, VA – Dulles Expo Center – *Showmasters*
- Jun 27-28, 2020 – Lynchburg, VA – River Ridge Mall – *Showmasters*

### MARYLAND – 2020

- None listed for June

### PENNSYLVANIA – 2019-2020

- Jun 13-14, 2020 (new dates) – Gettysburg, PA – Allstar Events Complex – *Eagle Arms*
- Jun 13-14, 2020 – Spring Brook, PA – Spring Brook Fire Co. – *Jaeger Arms*
- Jun 20-21, 2020 – Bloomsburg, PA – Bloomsburg Fairgrounds – *Eagle Arms*
- Jun 20-21, 2020 – Washington, PA – Washington County Fairgrounds – *ARH Sports Shop*
- Jun 27-28, 2020 – Monroeville, PA – Monroeville Convention Center – *Showmasters*



# LOOKING FOR:

Member Jack Looney is trying to get in touch with Gunsmith Robert (Mike) Ahlfeld. If you know Mr. Ahlfeld, or have contact with him, please inform Jack at [looney.house@verizon.net](mailto:looney.house@verizon.net) or have Mr. Ahlfeld contact Jack.

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# FOR SALE:

The "For Sale" section of the Virginia Gun Collectors Association (VGCA) Newsletter is provided as a service exclusively to the members of the VGCA. The VGCA, its officers, and directors are not responsible for any listings made in any VGCA Newsletter. We are not responsible for the accuracy (condition, value, etc.) of any listings. All buyers, traders, and sellers agree to comply with all local, state, federal, and international laws in regards to items sold via the VGCA Newsletter. It is their duty and responsibility to ensure the quality and value of the transaction and that all such laws are followed at all times. Buy, sell, or trade at your own risk.

If you would like to list an item (or items) in the VGCA Newsletter, please send your description, price, and contact information to [rpebecker@verizon.net](mailto:rpebecker@verizon.net). I must receive your material no later than the second Sunday of the month for it to be included in that month's newsletter. Unless other arrangements are made, items will be listed for one issue of the Newsletter.

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## FOR SALE:

- ★ Star Super Model B, 9mm Luger, EC overall. \$549
  - ★ Original Colt 1862 Pocket Navy, 5-shot .36 caliber. VGC. Includes original Colt bullet mold, Colt screwdriver and nipple wrench, original period powder flask, Eley cap tin and Taylor display case. \$2750 Now \$2595
  - ★ Walther Model 8, 25acp. 8-shot magazine, 2nd variation, WW2 German officer bring back, w/ rare, reduced size, custom C96 Broomhandle-type holster. EC. \$1495 Now \$1295
  - ★ Walther PPK Stainless, .380 ACP, original case, manual safety, lock. EC ccw pistol, three 6-round magazines, manual, semi-auto DA/SA decocker, wood grips, 3.3" barrel, holster, 2-1/2 boxes of Browning ammo. \$795
  - ★ Smith and Wesson 1912, .38 S&W New Departure or Lemon Squeezer, 5-shot revolver, rare 4 inch barrel, sharp nickel plating, minty bore, pearl grips and original factory letter. EC. \$749
  - ★ Featherweight 12 gauge LC Smith SxS . Classic American sidelock shotgun w/ 28 inch M&F choked barrels: excellent bores, bluing & case hardening; vent rib; 2-3/4 inch chambers; DT; extractors. \$1295 Now \$1195.
- If interested, call 571-308-4978 or send email to [jrbzn13@aol.com](mailto:jrbzn13@aol.com)
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## FOR SALE:

★ After more than two and a half years of research, VGCA member Bill Vanderpool has recently published his book "**Guns of the FBI**". This book is available at GunDigest.com or can be purchased directly from Bill by calling 703-626-2975. He is more than happy to sign a copy for you. Cost is \$50.00.

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## FOR SALE:

- ★ VGCA member Charlie Pate has four books that he has authored for sale, at discounted prices to VGCA members. These include:
- "U.S. Handguns of World War II" - \$45.00
  - "The Smith & Wesson American Model" - \$55.00
  - "U.S. Military Arms Inspector Marks" - \$45.00
  - "The Colt Model 1860 Army Revolver" - \$60.00

If interested, please contact Charlie at [usarmsresearch@gmail.com](mailto:usarmsresearch@gmail.com)

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**FOR SALE:**

✦ Clarke Custom Ruger Mk II, .22 LR, 5.5" Heavy Barrel, Weaver/Picatinny rail, (2) Magazines, with Custom Thumb Lever Magazine Release, (Pistol built in 1991), \$695.00

✦ Mike Ahlfeld\* Custom Ruger Mk I, .22 LR, 5.5" Heavy Barrel, Weaver/Picatinny rail, (2) Magazines, (Pistol built in 1980), \$675.00 \* Mike Ahlfeld is a Virginia-based custom gunsmith

Contact Jack for details at [looney.house@verizon.net](mailto:looney.house@verizon.net)

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**FOR SALE:**

✦ S&W Model 4013 TSW in .40SW, 3 DOT Tritium Night Sights, Walt Freer Trigger Job, Hoge Grips, new Milt Sparks Black Leather Holster, new Mixon Black Leather 2-Mag Belt Pouch, 2 x 12-round S&W Magazines, 8 x 9-round S&W Magazines, soft side pistol bag, and over 300 rounds of .40SW ammo. Entire Package \$600.00

Buyer must have a Virginia CHP, be a credentialed LEO, or submit to a Virginia State Police background check. If interested, call John at 703-281-2478.

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The e-mail address for any Newsletter-related matters is [Newsletter@vgca.net](mailto:Newsletter@vgca.net) - or you can reach the editor directly at [rpebecker@verizon.net](mailto:rpebecker@verizon.net). Feel free to e-mail items for inclusion in the newsletter. For changes of address or non-receipt of the newsletter, either via e-mail or the mailed hard copy, please contact Rob Becker or Bill Chronister.