



# VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.NET

Est. 1983 (A Not-for-Profit Organization)

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## April-May 2024 VGCA Newsletter



### President's Comments

Fellow members—

I'm happy to report that our first Gun show at the VFW in Dale City in April went smoothly – a big “Thank You” to our new show manager, Andrew Woodard, for putting all the pieces together and to the many VGCA volunteers who made it happen. Total weekend attendance was over 700 and our gun show

balance sheet is back in the black! Shannon Zeigler will provide details at our membership meeting on May 23rd.

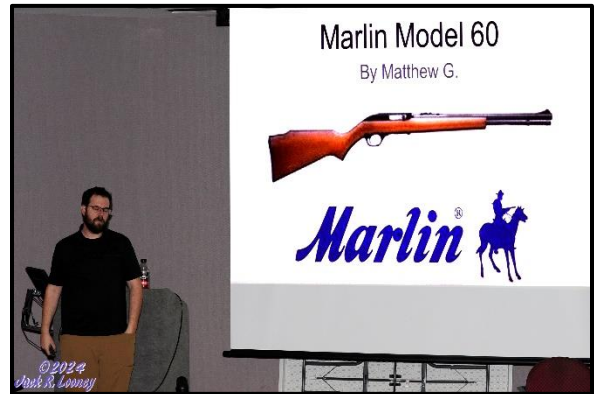
Next, we have a new list of Officers. As there was only one candidate nominated for each officer position and we had no nominees from the floor in March, per our bi-laws a ballot is not required and the nominated officers are elected “by acclamation.” Your new President is Rob Becker; George Dungan comes back as Vice-President; Shannon Zeigler is once again our Treasurer; and Bruce Buchner is now Secretary. Congratulations to each of you and I am confident that VGCA has selected an experienced and capable team to lead us over the next two years.

This May meeting will be my last as President – it has truly been an honor for me. Reflecting back, two accomplishments stand out: getting through COVID and moving our Gun Show to a new and better location. Both were only possible with the support of our great members. Please continue supporting your new Officers and Board members!

*Ed Costello, VGCA President*

# ★ March Presentation – The Marlin Model 60

VGCA Director Mathew G. (*right*), gave a very interesting and informative presentation on a rifle that many of us “cut our teeth” on – the Marlin Model 60. The Model 60 is a tube-fed, semi-automatic, direct blowback rifle chambered in .22 rimfire. It features the trademarked Micro-Groove rifling, a grooved receiver for mounting optics, and is generally sleek and thin. It was produced from 1960 until 2020 and 11 million were made during those six decades!



Why collect the Model 60? Matthew observed that they were and remain relatively inexpensive, are ubiquitous (just about every pawn shop selling guns has one on its rack), come in many varieties/variants, and if you grew up in the 1960s or 1970s then you or one of your friends probably had one. If so, it is hard not to be somewhat nostalgic about this Marlin product.



The Marlin Model 60 is a follow-on development of the earlier Marlin Model 99, which was itself developed in 1959. The Model 99 featured many milled parts which added to the cost of manufacture. Marlin asked Ewald Nichol, the designer of the Model 99, to come up with a less expensive alternative. By replacing milled parts with cast or stamped parts, using a Microgroove barrel instead of one with standard lands-and-grooves rifling, and substituting birchwood for walnut/hard wood, Mr. Nichol was successful in creating a profitable design for Marlin. Production of the Model 60 started at Marlin’s New Haven, Connecticut factory in 1960.

The Model 60 and its variants were not only produced under the Marlin name, but also under several other monickers, including Glenfield (*at left*), Western Auto Supply, Big 5, Cotter and Company, and Coast to Coast. Among the large number of variants (possibly as many as 35)

are:

Model 60C – Camouflaged version

Model 60SN – Basic rifle with black fiberglass stock

Model 60DL – Basic rifle in a Monte Carlo walnut stock

Model 60SS – Basic rifle in nickle-plated stainless steel version with grey/black laminate stock

Model 60SSK - Basic rifle in nickle-plated stainless steel version with black fiberglass stock

Model 65 – Made for Oklahoma Tire and Supply Company, features a brass outer magazine tube

Model 600 – Made for Big 5 Sporting Goods (1986-1989), features polished bolt & gold-colored trigger

Model 70 – based on Model 60, has detachable 10-round box magazine and short 16 ½ inch barrel

Model 75 – also based on the Model 60, tube magazine only holds 8-rounds

Model 795 – another rifle based on the Model 60, this one features a detachable 10-round mag and lightweight synthetic stock

Papoose – a take-down variant that has grown very popular (and relatively expensive) recently

With such a long production run, there are of course many variations within the models. Among those are:

Serial numbers – none before they were required by the Gun Control Act of 1968. If the first 2-digits of the serial number are 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, or 73 – add that number to 1900 for the year of manufacture. If the first 2-digits are 01 through 27, subtract that number from 2000 for the year of manufacture. And if the first numbers of the s/n are 00 through 10, add them to 2000 for the year it was made. After 2010, the s/n starts with the letters “MM” or “MR”

Buttplates – Plastic with Marlin, Glenfield, or other brands as well as blank. On some upscale variants there was a cowboy on a rubber pad

Trigger Guard – there are 3-screw trigger guards, 2-screw with a long tang, 2-screw with a short tang and wrist reinforcement screw, and ones with a cut-out for the bolt release lever (after 1985)

Firing pins – three distinct styles

Front sights – numerous variations

“WARNING” rollmark – added after 1982

Remington Arms acquired Marlin in 2007, and the resulting products became colloquially known as “Remlin”. Prior to 2007, Marlin firearms had been proudly marked with a “JM” for John Marlin, who in the 1870s founded the company. This marking was dropped after the Remington acquisition. Many felt that the quality of Marlin products dropped following production transition/relocation to Remington facilities. As a result, older guns with “JM” marking are preferred in the collector and shooter markets.

Matthew has the great ability to combine humor with knowledge. The next time you see him, please be sure thank him for sharing his expertise with the rest of us!

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## ★ Discontinuing the Paper Newsletter

In early 2020, as a cost savings measure, the VGCA Executive Committee announced that we would be discontinuing the hard copy newsletter mailed to less than 40 of our members without an email account. Shortly after that decision we found ourselves in world-wide pandemic. In order to keep our lines of communication open to as many members as possible during those stressful times, the Executive Committee voted to postpone that decision until after “things returned to normal.”

We may never truly return to “normal” – but we have reached a point where we need to discontinue this costly service. The June 2024 Newsletter will be our last printed issue, after that, the electronic version transmitted via Constant Contact will be our only newsletter.

The differences between the two versions (printed and electronic) are striking. The printed version is typically 8-12 pages long in black-and-white. The electronic version is 30+ pages in color and includes many features that we simply don’t have room to publish in the hard copy version, including book, show, and museum reviews, CMP Updates, and our monthly Show-n-Tell write ups.

If you currently receive our printed newsletter and would like start getting our electronic version, please provide George Dungan or Rob Becker with an email address and we ensure it is added to our Constant Contact database. **Again – the last printed version of our newsletter will be the June 2024 edition.**

# ★ VGCA Spring Gun Show

The VGCA spring gun show was held for the first time at the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) General Lewis B (Chesty) Puller Post 1503 in Dale City on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. This move was forced on us by rapidly escalating costs associated with our previous venue at the Prince William County Fairgrounds. Those costs resulted in our organization actually losing money in 2023. Moving to the VFW has proven that we can once more operate a gun show “in the black” and generate necessary operating capital. Well done to all involved!

There were several “firsts” associated with this show. Not only was it the first at a new location, it was also the first conducted by acting Show Director Andrew Woodard. Mentored by Rick Nahas, who served as Show Director for the previous 21 years, Andrew effectively executed this show despite many changes and unknowns. He also developed an extensive list of “lessons learned” to improve future shows at this or any other venue. Be sure to thank him the next time your paths cross!

Under the able leadership of Al Reid (another VGCA member stepping into a new role, this one as Show Security Manager, for the first time), the following volunteers conducted security duties:

Jim Burgess	Tom Ciarula	W Ludwig	Keith Simmons
Frank Cambria	Al Crosby	Rich McCormack	Karl Warthurst
Bob Candido	Dan Helm	Dave Perkins	

Overnight security on Friday and Saturday night was provided by Jack Looney. Again, thank you all!

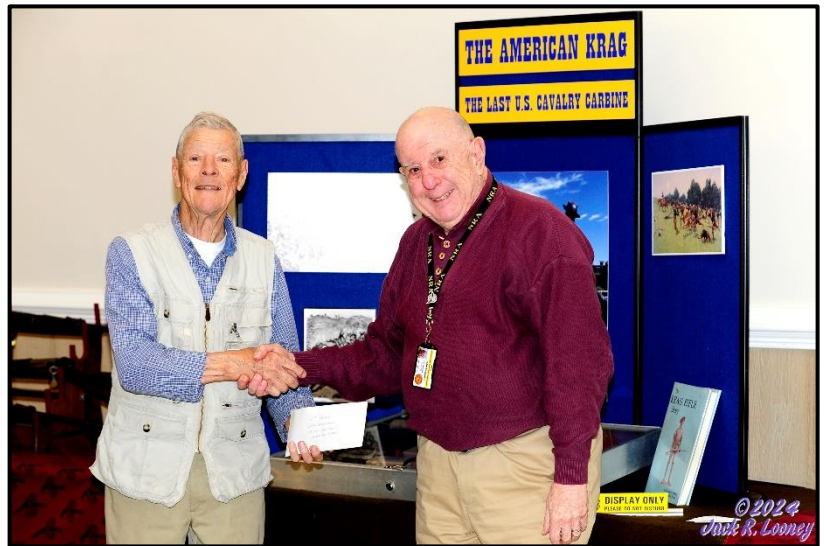
Attendance was over 750 people for the weekend. This compares favorably to our typical Spring Gun Show attendance and there was no drop-off due to the change in venues.

Member and former VGCA President Jim Burgess once again shared his considerable expertise at the Evaluation Table. Member Gary Holderman assisted Jim on Saturday. This service is unique among our area gun shows and allows attendees to bring in their “closet queens” and get some information – think “Antiques Roadshow” but with guns. There were 11 firearms brought to the evaluation table on Saturday and 2 more on Sunday. In addition, Jim and Gary looked at a lot of cell phone pictures of firearms. Other members helped out as well – for example, Dave Litchfield (another former VGCA President and our resident German handgun expert) went above and beyond the call of duty to evaluate an Erfurt P08 Luger and Walther P38.

Perhaps the most interesting firearm Jim examined was a matchlock musket. The owners were unsure whether it was original or a copy. A centuries-old firearm would have a little patina by now and so it was ruled a very nice, hand-made reproduction. Note - if it looks like it was made yesterday, it probably was! Though he did not bring it to the evaluation table, member Forest Lindsay brought in a very nice reproduction Ferguson breechloading flintlock rifle that he had built to share with his fellow enthusiasts. Jim, a frequent participant in North-South Skirmish Association competitions and no stranger to shooting antique weapons, noted it would be a fun gun to shoot!

My personal favorite parts of our gun shows are the educational displays created by our collectors. I always learn something and this show was no exception! Judging was organized by Jim Burgess with himself, Bryan Pelton, and Rob Becker serving as the judges. The results are posted on the next few pages.

Winning 1<sup>st</sup> Place and its associated \$300 prize was John Vagnetti's display of "The American Krag: The Last U.S. Cavalry Carbine." John (*shown at far right receiving his prize from VGCA President Ed Costello at near right*) displayed six superb carbine variants of the U.S. Army's Krag-Jorgensen rifle (*below*).

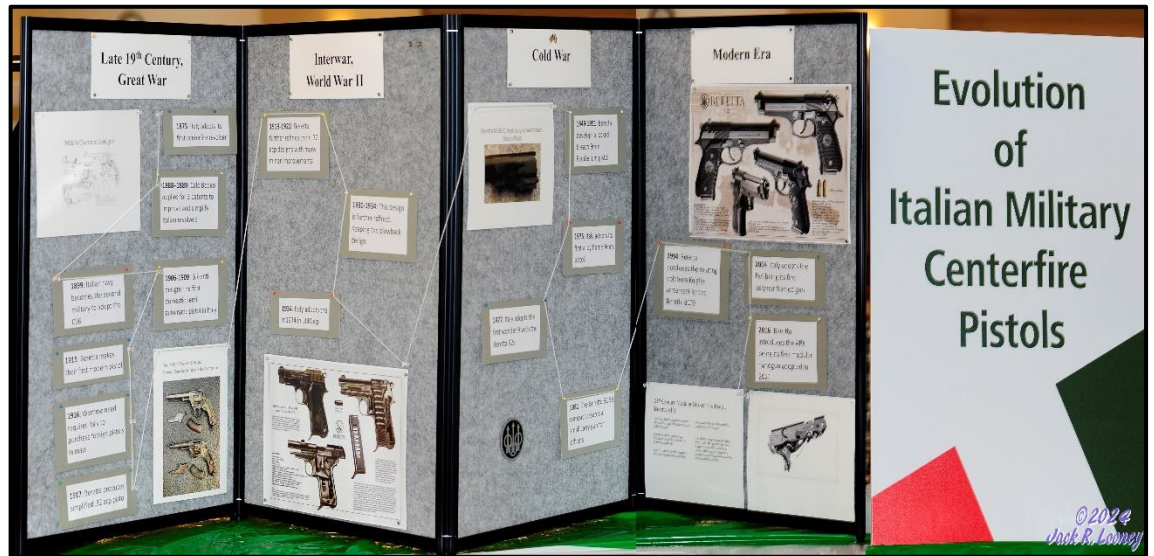


John's M1899 (right, middle) Krag carbine also won the Top Military Firearm Award. It is one of 5,150 built featuring a Model 1898 rear sight. However, the sight was calibrated using Kynoch ammunition which was loaded with cordite and generated unsafe pressures. After cracking several bolts, the ammunition was withdrawn from service and the sights replaced and destroyed. This carbine remains unmodified and is quite rare!





A well-deserved 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (and \$200) went to Louie DiGaelano (*near left*) and Troy Blackwood (*far left*) for their extensive display on the “Evolution of Italian Military Centerfire Handguns.” There display included a story board with a timeline of key Italian military handgun milestones (below) as well as a comprehensive display of the sidearms themselves, including some rare pieces.



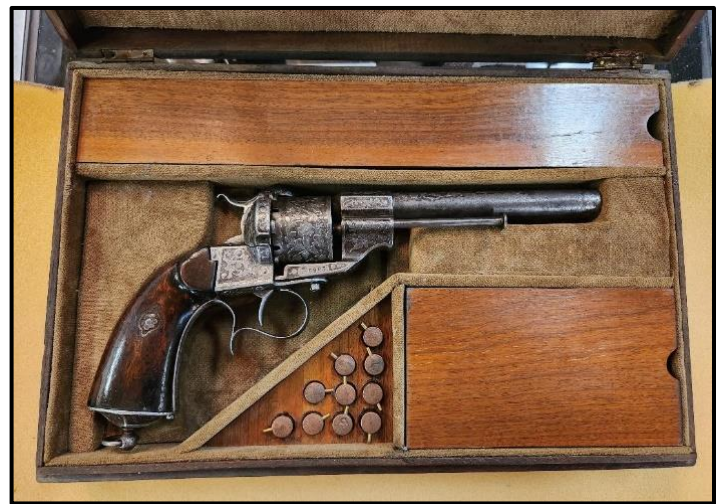
This display contained several rare pieces, including the Mauser C96 with shoulder stock (*above, left center*), one of 5000 ordered for the Italian Royal Navy in 1899.

3<sup>rd</sup> Place was awarded to Mickey McIntire's display of "Pinfire Cartridge Weapons."

Mickey (*near right and receiving his \$100 award from VGCA President Ed Costello*) had a truly fascinating display of, as he put it, "the underappreciated cartridge firearm option of the 1840s-1870s." His display not only contained a myriad of both pinfire handguns (*bottom left*) and long guns (*below*), but displayed examples of the pinfire ammunition itself.



Mickey's cased M1854 LeFauchaux pinfire revolver (*right*) attributed to the Boissier family of Paris, France also won the Top Antique Award.





Our final display was Paul Veneziano’s extensive, multi-table display of World War I guns and accessories. While he has presented this same display in the past and it is thus ineligible for judging, it did garner the People’s Choice Award, as it is always a crowd pleaser!

Bottom line – the VGCA spring gun show was a big success. As with all human endeavors, there is room for improvement and Show Director Andrew Woodard (recently approved by the VGCA Executive Committee as our next permanent Show Director) has a list of ideas to improve our next show. Speaking of which, our Fall Gun Show will return to the Dale City VFW on 19-20 October, 2024. We hope to see you there!



## ★ VGCA Director Opening

With Andrew Woodard’s recent appointment as our permanent Gun Show Director, his elected position as one of the three VGCA Directors is now vacant. Per VGCA Bi-Laws, the Executive Committee may appointment a VGCA member to serve the remainder of this Director’s term (June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 until May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025). If you want more information, please contact one of the current VGCA officers or directors.





# ★ Next Membership Meeting: May 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Presentation: “The Beretta Model 1951”  
by Troy Blackwood**

**Location: NRA HQ Basement Auditorium**

Our May VGCA Membership Meeting will be in the basement auditorium of the NRA Headquarters. The room will open at 6 p.m. with pizza (we are asking for a \$5 donation per person for the pizza) arriving shortly thereafter and the meeting starting at 7 p.m. We hope you can make it!

NOTE: The originally scheduled presentation on “Finnish Mosin-Nagant Rifles” by Matt DeRisio will be rescheduled at a later date.



## ★ VGCA Tee Shirts

New VGCA Tee Shirts are now available for purchase. Tan colored and featuring the VGCA patch on the left breast, the VGCA logo on the right sleeve, and the Virginia state flag on the left, they are available in sizes from medium up to XXL. The cost is \$20 and they can be purchased at our membership meetings – but don’t wait – more than half have already been sold!

*Member Bryan Pelton (on left) was selling VGCA Tee Shirts at our November Gun Show while Bruce Buchner (on right) proudly wore his new shirt while manning the membership table.*

## ★ Officer Elections in 2024

Our officer elections for president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary are scheduled in May of even numbered years. We currently have one confirmed candidate for each office. They are:

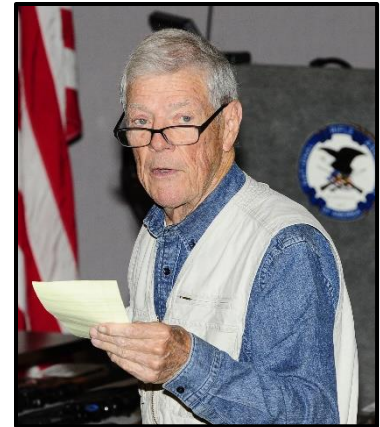
**President - Rob Becker**  
**Vice President - George Dungan**  
**Treasurer - Shannon Zeigler**  
**Secretary - Bruce Buchner**

As there were no further candidates nominated from the floor after the March Membership Meeting, the four members listed above will be elected by acclamation, per the VGCA Bi-Laws. Their two-year term of office begins on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. A short introduction of each will be published in the June newsletter. Congratulations gentlemen!

# ★ March Meeting Notes



VGCA President Ed Costello (*at right*) called the March membership meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Jim Burgess led us through the Pledge of Allegiance, following which guests and prospective new members were introduced. There were 48 members and guests in attendance and an additional 4 participated via webinar.



Acting Show Director Andrew Woodard provided an update for our spring Gun Show. All 137 tables have been reserved and we now have a waiting list. This is great news and means we are already on “the plus side” of the ledger!

Vice President and Membership Chairman George Dungan provided an update on our membership numbers. The VGCA now had 107 annual members and 429 life members for a total of 536.

Ed announced that we have been forced to cancel the buy of Commemorative VGCA Henry rifles due to insufficient pre-orders. We may try again in 2033 in honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Members were reminded that we still have some VGCA tee-shirts for sale. The cost is \$20 each, with \$5 of each sale going to the VGCA general fund.

Ed also reminded everyone that officers elections are scheduled for May. We currently have one candidate for each office. They are:

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| President      | Rob Becker      |
| Vice President | George Dungan   |
| Treasurer      | Shannon Zeigler |
| Secretary      | Bruce Buchner   |

If there are no further nominees before the May membership meeting, then per our By-Laws, these individuals will be elected “by acclamation” and there will be no need for ballots. The officers will assume their new roles on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and serve for two years.

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## THANK YOU!



Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to give a presentation at a membership meeting this year – our 2024 calendar is now full! If you have a topic you would like to present at a future meeting, please contact any of the VGCA officers or directors. We will begin filling out our 2025 presentation calendar starting at the May membership meeting.

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# JAMES PURDEY & SONS;

## OVER 200 YEARS OF GUN MAKING PERFECTION

*By Marc Gorelick*



*Purdey London Deluxe Model side x side 12-gauge shotgun. Self-opening bar-action Beesley sidelocks. s/n 22209. Manufactured 1920. Bright action & fences carved with oak leaf, foliate scroll before shaded background. Photo courtesy Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*

James Purdey & Sons is one of the “Holy Trinity” of British gunmakers, along with Boss & Co., and Holland and Holland. James Purdey was born in 1784 in Whitechapel, East London. In 1805, after he completed his seven-year apprenticeship, he went to work for Joseph Manton, the “King of Gunmakers,” the gun manufacturer par excellence of his time. Manton was known for his penchant for perfection and passed this quality on to Purdey who became his head stocker. Three years later, Purdey began working for Alexander Forsyth, the inventor of the percussion cap. In 1814, after six years with Forsyth, Purdey decided to go into business for himself and opened his own shop at No. 4 Princes Street, near Leicester Square. In 1826 he took over the property of Joseph Manton at 314/315 Oxford Street. Manton had previously gone bankrupt. Purdey’s only son, James the Younger, was born above this shop two years later. When he was 14 years old, James the Younger was apprenticed to his father. James the Elder retired in 1858 at the age of 74 and sold the business to his son.



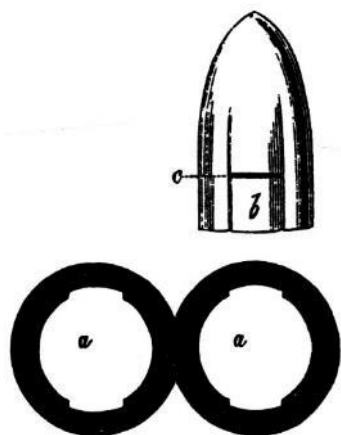
*James Purdey shortly before his death in 1863*



*Photo left – Early Purdey flintlock double barreled shotgun number 86. It has rainproof pans (developed by Joseph Manton) and a grip safety. Photo James Purdey and Sons*

Under James the Younger the company moved from muzzle loading percussion guns to breech loading hammerless ejectors. James saw rapid change in the design and development of shotguns and rifles and was always at the forefront of advances in firearms. He took out several patents for technical innovations over the years, many of which were adopted by other gunmakers. In 1883 the company moved from Oxford Street to new premises on South Audley Street in London’s Mayfair

district, where the company remains to this day. James the Younger designed this building, called Audley House, to accommodate his showroom and the factory. He brought his sons James and Athol into the business and changed the company name to James Purdey and Sons. James's son Athol took over from him in 1900 and ran the business until he retired in 1929 when his sons, James and Thomas took over from him. After the Second World War after 132 years of Purdey family ownership, Hugh Seely, 1st Baron Sherwood, purchased James Purdey & Sons Ltd. Richard Beaumont, who had been chairman since 1970, upon deciding to retire, sold James Purdey & Sons Ltd to Compagnie Financière Richemont SA in 1994. Commonly known as Richemont, it is a Switzerland-based luxury goods holding company. Under Richemont, Purdey name is not only on custom shotguns and rifles and also luxury clothing, leather goods and accessories, even luxury tableware.

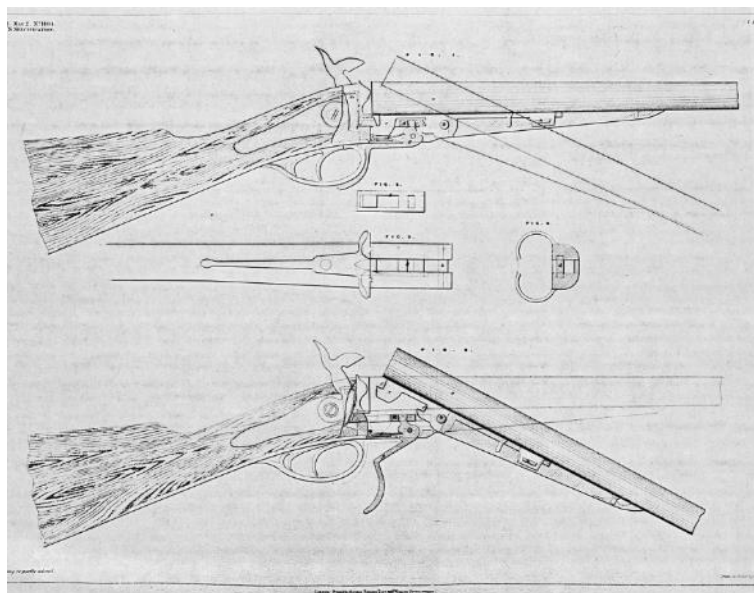


The goal of manufacturing to the highest quality was part of James Purdey's work ethic from the beginning and this has remained a hallmark of Purdey shotguns and rifles. During its 210 years of history the company has maintained its reputation for producing the highest quality custom shotguns and rifles, as well as being in the forefront of technical innovations. For example James the Elder and James the Younger collaborated on their 'winged' bullet in 1851 to create a high-velocity, flat-trajectory rifle named after the newly-introduced high-speed express trains of the time. Today the term "Express" has become a byword for big bore, dangerous game double rifles.

*Left – Patent drawing of Purdey express “winged bullet” and two groove rifling in a double rifle. From James Purdey & Sons.*

James Purdey the Elder died in 1863 at Rifle House, his home in Margate, at the age of 79. Having been born in the flintlock era, he lived long enough to see his son James the Younger patent the Purdey bolts, the locking system still used on Purdey Side-by-Side guns today.

By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century James Purdey was already in the top echelon of British gunmakers, in terms of both quality and introducing technical innovations, many of which were adopted by other gunmakers. In



addition to a grip safety on percussion shotguns, the Purdey nose and the Purdey double underlug, as a locking device for break-barrel guns, Purdey introduced the self-opening shotgun. The system, originally invented by Frederick Beesley, used the residual energy of the mainspring to open the gun. Purdey purchased the patent rights, then adapted and perfected it both technically and commercially. Purdey side-by-side hammerless shotguns and rifles have been built on the Beesley self-opening system ever since. The transition from breech-loaders with external to internal cocks (now hammers) became a complete success for Purdey.

*Patent drawing from British Patent 1104 of 1862 for Purdey bolts, the locking system still used on Side-by-Side guns today.*

Purdey's clientele came to include the upper strata of British society and the elite of the British Empire. In 1838 Purdey won Queen Victoria as a customer, supplying her with a pair of pistols, but it wasn't until 1868 that the firm received its first Royal Warrant as gunmakers to Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and later King Edward VII. It actually wasn't until 1878 that Queen Victoria issued a royal warrant appointing James Purdey and Sons as her gunmaker. Purdey has remained the monarch's gunmaker ever since, in recent times holding warrants from Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and Queen Elizabeth II. Today the company holds warrants from King Charles III. Over the years the company has served almost all of the royal families of Europe, as well as various Indian potentates.



*Purdey Ultra Round Bar sidelock side by side 20 gauge shotgun, s/n 30098. Automatic sliding tang safety, single trigger, bearded edge trigger guard, rounded Beesley type self-opening bar-action sidelocks. Barrel length 28" (71 cm), stock length 15" (38 cm), overall length 45.25" (115 cm), choke 1/4 & 3/4 (IC & IM), weight 2.7 kg. Manufactured in 2003. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Purdey Ultra Round Bar sidelock side by side 20 gauge shotgun, s/n 30098. Decorated with richly detailed engraving with large arched shaded arabesques and floral ornaments, sidelocks engraved with game scenes; on the right side (above) are mallards. Engraving by Master Engraver Cécile Flohimont. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Purdey Ultra Round Bar sidelock side by side 20 gauge shotgun, s/n 30098. Left side with engraving by Cécile Flohimont of sweeping chamfers. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Photos above and below, top and bottom of action: Purdey Ultra Round Bar sidelock side by side 20 gauge shotgun, s/n 30098. The bottom is decorated with engraved snipes. Photos courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben.*



Today, regardless of model, every bespoke Purdey gun goes through a seven stage process that combines the best of traditional methods with state-of-the-art precision machinery to ensure that every gun is a work of art that fits, feels and fires as well as it looks. Each Purdey custom shotgun or rifle is hand built at Purdey's factory in Hammersmith, West London. To create a Purdey gun from scratch requires from six to eighteen months, depending on the model and features.

The first stage is making the barrels. All models of the Purdey product range have their barrels hand built by Purdey crafts people. The tubes that form the barrels are machined at Purdey's factory to ensure from the start that the high level of quality required for a Purdey gun is achieved. The barrels are then assembled and hand built over a two week period by the same craftsman using the same techniques which have been employed by Purdey for over a 150 years.

Once the barrels are complete, they are handed to the actioner, who will undertake the most labor intensive part of the process, fitting the barrels to the action. Purdey has struck the right balance between craft and precision engineering to ensure reliability at this stage.



*Purdey sidelock over/under 12 gauge shotgun, s/n 26887. Barrel length 28.25" (71.5 cm), stock length 15.125" (38.5 cm), overall length 46" (117 cm), choke cylinder & 1/2 (Cyl & M), weight 3.6 kg. Made in 1961. Lawrence ejectors with titanium-nitrated leaf springs, light-colored base. Woodward type side bolted action, upper lever open worked like a kite, back-action sidelocks, partially titanium-nitrated. Photos courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben.*



*Purdey sidelock over/under 12 gauge shotgun, s/n 26887. Right and left sides. This is an early masterpiece by master engraver Ken Hunt who decorated this shotgun with images of Beelzebub bordered by shaded foliate ornaments. The sideplate flank is decorated with rose bouquets and arabesques and the framed maker's inscription "J.Purdey & Sons". Photos courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Purdey sidelock over/under 12 gauge shotgun, s/n 26887. Top of gun showing engraved fences on barrels, upper tang, engraved cherub on lever, and a god's (Zeus?) face on the tang in front of the safety. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Purdey sidelock over/under 12 gauge shotgun, s/n 26887. Bottom of action with engraving of the head of Artemis, (the Greek goddess of wild animals, the hunt, and vegetation and of chastity and childbirth) and images of cherubs surrounded by rose bouquets and arabesques. Also, note engraved cherub on triggerguard. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*



*Photo James Purdey & Sons*

Upon completion of the barrels being precisely fitted to the action, the next (third) stage is the ejector work. This is the 'heart' of any gun and accounts for a significant number of the 170-plus components that go into every Purdey, being hand fitted. The gun is tested at the end of this stage.

Stocking the gun is the fourth stage. This is when the customer-selected walnut is hewn and carved by hand in order to perfectly fit each client, to the measurements taken at the time of ordering their gun. From the honing of the stock between its 'roughing-out' and completion – this involves hand-applied checkering all undertaken by Purdey craftspeople, to ensure the high level of quality.

From the Purdey Trigger Plate model onwards, customers can choose the engraving for their gun. The engraving is expertly completed by one of Purdey's master engravers. Engraving adds value as well as beauty to a gun, and engraving done by a known master can increase the value of a gun by several orders



of magnitude. Some custom engravings can take three or four months of design work and up to eight months to complete the engraving.

Some customers know exactly which engraver they want working on their guns. According to the company, only the best engravers are allowed to engrave a Purdey. Many apprenticed at Purdey. They included such well-known master engravers as Ken Hunt, who started as an apprentice at Purdey under Harry Kell when he was just 15 years old. During his illustrious career Hunt was commissioned by Holland and Holland, John Rigby & Co, James Purdey & Sons, Westley Richards and other fine English gun makers. Since his retirement in 2009, Ken Hunt engraved guns (*see photos of Purdey shotgun s/n 26887*) are in high demand and are avidly sought after at auction houses where these artistic masterpieces bring high prices. Another Master who engraved guns for Purdey was Cécile Flohimont who studied at the Léon Mignon Armoury School in Liège where she was taught by René Delcour and Philippe Grifnée. At the end of her studies in 1984, Cécile started working at Francotte under the attentive eye and guidance of her mentor Philippe Grifnée. Her illustrious career took her to Holland & Holland, then to her own studio where she worked for several English gun makers such as Westley Richards, W.J. Jeffery, William Evans, David Mackay Brown, Rigby and Purdey and in Europe for Lebeau Courally & Hartmann & Weiss. Until 2009, the majority of her work was for Purdey (*see photos of Purdey shotgun s/n 30098*). Since then, private clients have been added to her list.



*Ornate shaded foliate engraving on a Purdey Sidelock side by side shotgun, 12 gauge, s/n 26454 manufactured 1953. Engraving on the sideplate, bascule, and lever, with ensuite engraved trigger guard and trigger plate. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria.*

Today, Purdey master engravers include father and son duo Simon and Philip Coggan in Wales who are known for large scroll engraving, game scene inscriptions and gold work. Stefano Pedretti in Italy, is known for his photo realism bulino technique, which involves thousands of tiny dot indentations to make up the final image. And Paul Chung has been engraving for Purdey since he was 18 when he started his apprenticeship there in 1990. Chung is said to be one of the most versatile engravers in the UK, with a wide array of techniques in his arsenal.

The sixth stage is proofing and finishing. All Purdey guns are proofed at the London Proof house which has been located at its current home since 1675. During the finishing process, which can take up to eight weeks, the walnut stock will receive a daily meticulous oiling, which is repeatedly polished-off until the grain takes on a rich lustrous glow. At the same time all parts are polished and the final assembly regulated. The gun is fired for the first time at Purdey's Shooting School, based in Royal Berkshire.



During the seventh and last stage the gun will have a final inspection by a Master Craftsperson and the member of the Gun Sales Team who is responsible for the customer. New Purdey gun owners receive an official certificate of completion signed by each of the Purdey craftspeople who worked on the gun. A custom leather gun case can be sent to the customer.

*Left – Custom Purdey shotgun in its case. Photo courtesy of Joh. Springer’s Erben, Vienna, Austria.*

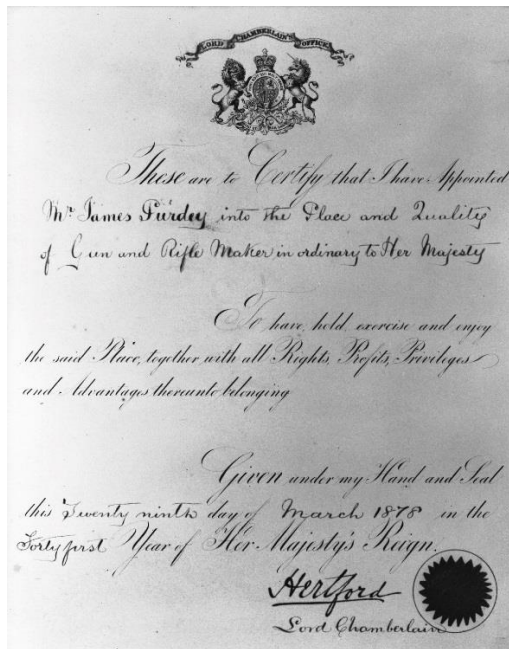
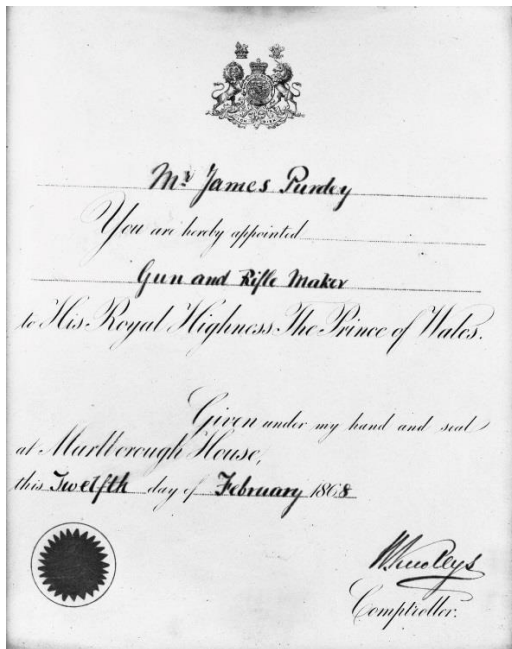
Purdey currently produces eight bespoke models of rifles and shotguns. They are: the Sidelock Side by Side, the Sidelock Over and Under, the Damascus Guns, the Sidelock Hammer Ejector, the Purdey Trigger Plate, the Purdey Sporter, the Purdey Bolt Action Rifle, and the Sidelock Double Rifle. Although Purdey had sold bolt action rifles since the 1890’s, it did not produce its first one until 1931. These were based on Mauser actions and were offered in 7x57mm and .404.



Today, Purdey continues to embrace James the Younger’s legacy of technological innovation. For example, in 1970 Purdey introduced a new inertia bobweight single trigger design that was fitted first in Side-by-Sides then in Over & Unders, and remains in use today. Recently, Purdey introduced the Damascus Model side by side and over/under shotguns. The guns are hand crafted using Damasteel steel alloy forged in Sweden. Each gun has more than a hundred layers, which creates the distinctive Damascus pattern. Damascus guns don’t feature the traditional engraving of a Purdey gun as the metal creates its own unique pattern when forged so that every Purdey Damascus gun is different.

*Purdey Damascus over/under shotgun. Photo – James Purdey & Sons.*

Custom Purdey bespoke best guns are not cheap. Even used ones bring high prices. The Purdey London Deluxe Model side x side 12-gauge shotgun, s/n 22209, made in 1920, pictured above brought over \$18,000 at a recent Springer auction in Vienna, Austria. The Sidelock Side x side shotgun s/n 26454 was offered for over \$40,000 at auction in 2022. The Ultra Round Bar Sidelock side x side 20-gauge shotgun, s/n 30089 engraved by Cécile Flohimont had a starting price of about \$59,000. And in November 2022 the sidelock 12-gauge over/under shotgun engraved by Ken Hunt, s/n 26887, sold for about \$78,110 at Joh. Springer’s Erben 38<sup>th</sup> Classic Auction in Vienna, Austria. It would not be unusual for a well-heeled sportsman to pay well over \$100,000 for a new bespoke richly decorated custom Purdey shotgun or rifle.



Left – 1868 Royal Warrant appointing James Purdey gun and rifle maker to Edward, Prince of Wales.  
 Right – 1878 Royal Warrant appointing James Purdey gun and rifle maker to Queen Victoria. Photos – James Purdey & Sons.

## ★ 2024 Presentation List ★

MEETING DATE	TOPIC	PRESENTER
23 May 2024	The Beretta Model 1951	Troy Blackwood
27 Jun 2024	The FN FAL	Carlos Davila
	<b>No meeting in July due to our Summer Break</b>	
22 Aug 2024	Guns of the Old West	Expanded Show-n-Tell
26 Sep 2024	TBD (The History of the Finnish Mosin-Nagant?)	Matt DiRisio
24 Oct 2024	The Marvelous Mauser	Bryan Pelton
	<b>No meeting in November due to our Fall Gun Show / Thanksgiving</b>	
TBD Dec 2024	Annual Holiday Pot Luck & Swap Meet – no presentation	

If you have any presentation suggestions – or would like to make a presentation yourself in 2025 – please contact Matthew G. at [matthewofmclean@gmail.com](mailto:matthewofmclean@gmail.com) or one of the VGCA officers or directors.

# VGCA GUNS OF DISTINCTION: **BERNARDELLI EXTRA LUSSO SxS SHOTGUN**

*By Marc Gorelick*

*Photographs courtesy of Joh. Springer's Erben, Vienna, Austria*



The history of the Gardone Val Trompia region in Brescia, Italy, is the history of people who for centuries dedicated their existence to the manufacture of quality firearms. The Bernardelli side by side featured here epitomizes the tradition of producing only guns of the highest technical and artistic merit.



Although the company of Vincenzo Bernardelli S.p.A. was founded in 1865 by Vincenzo Bernardelli, the Bernadelli family's involvement in the firearms business can be traced back to 1631, when Bernadelli forebear Bartolino Barnelli married into the noble Acquisti family which owned several gun factories in Gardone Val Trompia at Brescia, Italy. The ties between the families were further sealed when Bartolino's sister married his wife's brother in 1632. Sometime between 1632 and 1721, the Barnelli family changed its name to Bernardelli. Local records show that in 1721 the Bernardelli family bought a large firearms factory but the modern firm of Bernardelli really wasn't born until 1865 when Vincenzo Bernardelli left the Franzini Arms Factory, where he was master of making Damascus twist barrels, to start his own manufactory. He and his sons started their business by manufacturing handguns for the Italian army. By the early 1900's, the Bernardelli product line included the superb side by side shotguns that were world famous. A leader in innovation, Bernardelli was the first Italian company to manufacture a semiautomatic shotgun in 1947. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the company expanded its product line to include semi-automatic pistols and rifles. It was heavily involved in the military sector and in the 1988/1989 Italian Army trials to choose a replacement for the Beretta BM59, its version of the Galil lost to the Beretta AR70/90. In its last years of operation, Bernardelli focused on the production of semiautomatic shotguns, high-end side by side shotguns, and pump shotguns, all of exceptionally high quality. Unfortunately, in 1997 Vincenzo Bernardelli was forced into bankruptcy and its assets, brands, and trademarks were acquired by Sarsilmaz, a major Turkish arms company.

Bernardelli firearms are highly appreciated by shooters and collectors for their high quality, superb handling, technical precision, and exquisite decoration. The firm engaged some of the best engravers in Italy to decorate its shotguns, which are sought after by shotgun enthusiasts. The Italian word “lusso” means luxury, and this “Extra Lusso” 12 gauge side by side shotgun was the highest grade Bernardelli at the time it was made in 1976.



The tops of the shotgun’s 27.6 inch (70 cm) long barrels are machined in matte Damascus style (the bottoms are smooth), have half and full chokes and there is a concave rib between the barrels. The top of the left barrel has the maker’s name inlaid in gold and “Made in Italy” in gold inlay on the right hand barrel. The gun has bar action sidelocks, intercepting sears, cocking indicators, a sliding tang safety with gold inlaid “S“, and a non-selective mechanical single trigger. The strikingly grained burr walnut stock has a straight grip with a slight swan neck, fine hand checkering, and a checkered butt end. The long fore-end also has fine hand checkering, an Anson push-rod and a gold inlaid maker’s coat of arms incorporating a blank panel for a monogram beneath a coronet,



The action is bright and the fences are deeply carved with scrolls and blossoms. The action is fully covered in exquisitely detailed scroll and foliate scroll engraving, highlighted by gold inlaid relief

engraved and carved game scenes of various African animals. There is a gold leopard and mountain reedduck on the right side, a gold male lion and gold zebra on the left side, a gold trumpeting elephant on the action bottom, a gold meerkat on the triggerguard, and the pierced and richly engraved top lever to open the gun has a gold inlaid Cape Buffalo head.



The master engravers who decorated this Bernardelli shotgun signed the trigger guard “*Sabatti e Bertarini*“. Sabatti is likely Gian Marco Sabatti, one of the most well-known modern master engravers from Brescia. He has engraved custom guns for the likes of FAMARS, Ivo Fabbri, and other Italian high-end gunmakers. Bertarini is probably Dorian Bertarini, an internationally respected custom knife maker and master engraver from Gardone Val Trompia. The beauty and value of any gun is enhanced if it is decorated with either Sabatti or Bertarini engraving. To have two such masters collaborate is uncommon.

This superbly decorated shotgun (with custom leather covered case) was offered at a November 2019 auction in Vienna, Austria by the house of Joh. Springers Erben. The starting price was a mere \$16,000 (15,000 euros.)

## HAMPTON ROADS MILITARY SOCIETY

The Hampton Roads Militaria Society (HRMS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to assist collectors and historians in the collection & preservation of militaria of all sorts and periods, preserve and honor our military past, and honor the veterans of all our conflicts. They generally meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month, but this can vary. VGCA members are welcome. Upcoming meetings (at 1243 Bayne Drive in VA Beach) are:

4 June 2024 Continuation of “the Evolution of the Rifle into the 20th Century” by Chris Betcher

For more details, HRMS website is: [Hampton Roads Militaria Society \(classicfirearmsandechoesofglory.com\)](http://classicfirearmsandechoesofglory.com)

## MAY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*By Al Reid, VGCA Legislative Affairs*

As most of you are aware, the new ruling on “Engaged in the business” of being a firearms dealer went into effect as of May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It would appear that the mere act of walking around a gun show carrying a firearm with a “For Sale” flag can get you classed as an **unlicensed dealer**.

What will this mean for us in Virginia, with our already mandatory background checks on individual firearm sales? That remains to be seen. It would be safe to say however, that if you don’t have an 01 Federal Firearms License (FFL) for a firearms business, then it is quite possible that you may come under Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (BATFE) scrutiny.

If you practice any of the following without an FFL then you will probably be classed as an unlicensed dealer:

- Selling guns primarily to earn a profit. So, if **you sell even one gun and make a profit or intend to make a profit**, that could put you under the microscope
- If **you offer to sell** a purchaser of a firearm additional firearms
- Selling a gun that **you purchased less than 30 days** after you purchased it

- Selling a gun that you purchased less than one year from when you purchased it and the gun is new, or like new, in its original packaging. Or if you are selling guns that are the same make and model or variants thereof
- If you repetitively advertise, market, or otherwise promote a firearms business
- If you make available business cards or **place price tags** on firearms
- If you secure permanent or temporary physical space to display firearms offered for sale, including all or part of a business premises, have a **table or space at a gun show**, or use a display case
- If you use merchant services as a business to repetitively accept payments for firearms transactions
- If you hire business security services to protect firearm assets
- If you establish a business entity, a trade name, or online business account or get a state or local business license to sell guns
- If you **more than occasionally sell** to a family member OR an FFL. This is saying that if you buy guns and hold on to them **while they appreciate** and then sell them back to an FFL at a profit, with some kind of regularity, you could be considered a **dealer**.

The recent raid (March 19<sup>th</sup>) in Little Rock, Arkansas by BATFE agents illustrates the potential danger of coming under scrutiny by Federal Agencies. An individual whose hobby was selling firearms at gun shows came to the attention of the BATFE which ultimately resulted in a No Knock dawn raid by BATFE Tactical Units at 6 am. The individual, allegedly believing he was the victim of a “home invasion,” acted to defend himself and his wife and was ultimately killed in the exchange of gunfire. *Editor’s Note: Interestingly, the Department of Justice has informed Arkansas Senators Tom Cotton and John Boozman that there is no body camera footage available from the agents involved in this raid.*

There are many facts related to this incident that we may never know, including what was the catalyst for such a drastic action? This is important considering there were probably many other non-kinetic means of achieving a desired result.

**For those that are curious or potentially directly affected by this rule the link below goes to the updated regulation:**

<https://www.atf.gov/rules-and-regulations/docs/ruling/atf-final-rule-definition-engaged-business-dealer-firearms/download>

### **The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act – Conforming Regulations**

More rules from the BATFE? Yes, it’s happening again, all because of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA). ATF’s new rule 2022R-09, which is meant to bring the CFRs into compliance with the United States Code which was amended by the BSCA. BUT, this rule, like many ATF rules, does much, much more than what is advertised and will have a major effect on the ability of some Americans to arm themselves moving forward. Read the Proposed Rule Here. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/F...>

Interestingly, the Rule will go into effect on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 if sufficient comments are received by May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The rules concerning comment are also convoluted and not easy for the common man to navigate. The link below gives an outline of the proposed Rule.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=H\\_NFmGmEG1o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=H_NFmGmEG1o)





# ★ Membership Chairman's Report – May

**New Applications for Membership:** Since the last Newsletter, there have been eight new applications for membership.

- Wayne Hallem of Gainesville sponsored by Bruce Buchner
- Douglas Cavileer of Burke sponsored by David Perkins
- Edward Land III of Triangle sponsored by Maj. Edward Land
- Mickey McIntire of Beaverdam sponsored by John Babey
- Trent Maly of Woodbridge sponsored by Keith Simmons
- Chris Parios of Gainesville sponsored by Ted Fries
- Josh Batten of Fairfax Station sponsored by Rick Hanson
- Keith Showman of Falls Church sponsored by Keith Simmons

**Please welcome the following new member to our group:**

- Michael Jambrosic of Aldie sponsored by George Dungan
- Michael Chowanic of Spotsylvania sponsored by Dan Helm

**If you know of anyone who would be interested in joining our organization, please invite them to a meeting or to our upcoming VGCA Gun Show.**

**Notice to New Member Sponsors:** VGCA will be discontinuing hard copy versions of the VGCA Newsletters in July. Please make sure your prospective applicants include a legible email address and telephone contact number if at all possible and make sure that your name is on the sponsorship form. Without an email address new members will NOT receive the newsletter or VGCA announcements.

**Membership Numbers:** There are currently 433 Life members and 105 Annual Members for a total of 538 members in the Virginia Gun Collectors Association, Inc.

**Recruiting:** Membership in the VGCA is a great way for people with an interest in the history, development, and use of firearms to broaden their knowledge and pass what they know on to others. It also offers the opportunity to network with individuals who have similar interests. To help facilitate new membership we have a Membership Table at every Chantilly and Fredericksburg gun show and also at our VGCA gun shows. If you would like to volunteer to work a shift at an upcoming show, please contact George Dungan at [george@ecominv.com](mailto:george@ecominv.com) or Bruce Buchner at [buchnerb@cox.net](mailto:buchnerb@cox.net).

**The next Chantilly show is June 14th, 15th, and 16th and we need volunteers to work our membership table. Please contact Bruce Buchner at [buchnerb@cox.net](mailto:buchnerb@cox.net) to get on the schedule.**

**Membership Renewal:** All annual dues were due by the end of December and you need to be current to get in our VGCA shows for free. You can renew annually for \$30 or \$150 for life. Please use the form below to renew and either mail it in or bring it to a meeting and give it to either George Dungan or Bruce Buchner. If you are unsure of your membership status email [george@ecominv.com](mailto:george@ecominv.com) and I will let you know.

*George Dungan*, Vice President and Membership Chair

Dues may be paid by mail by sending a Check for \$30 (please, NO USPS or other Money Orders) and the completed membership renewal form above to the address on the form. VGCA will also accept payments in person (CHECK or EXACT CHANGE preferred – I have NO CASH for change) with a completed renewal form. If members have questions, please email **George Dungan, Interim Membership Chair** at [george@eccominv.com](mailto:george@eccominv.com) or call me at **571-243-6387**.

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Please detach and return with your payment  
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## Membership Renewal Request (AMR-2023\_Oct)

VGCA, Inc., P.O. Box 2318, Merrifield, VA 22116-2318

Please complete and return this renewal form with your payment. Indicate Annual, Life or that you do not wish to renew your membership by checking the appropriate box below.

Please Print Clearly

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Enclosed is a check for \$30.00 for CY 2024 VGCA Annual Membership dues.
- I wish to upgrade to Life Membership in VGCA. Enclosed is a check for \$150.00.
- Remove my name from the VGCA membership roster.

Make all checks payable to VGCA (Please - NO CASH or Money Orders). If members have questions, please email **George Dungan, Interim Membership Chair** at [george@eccominv.com](mailto:george@eccominv.com) or call me at **571-243-6387**.

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# CMP UPDATE

*By Marc Gorelick, CMP Liaison*

*The VGCA is a CMP Affiliated club. The VGCA club number is 026160.*

## CMP TALLADEGA MARKSMANSHIP PARK & CMP SOUTH STORE

If you are ever driving through Alabama, as I did in April, be sure to stop off and visit the CMP South Store in Anniston and the CMP's Talladega Marksmanship Park. Both the CMP South Store and the Marksmanship Park are close to each other, (about a 15 minute drive apart) 90 miles west of Atlanta, just off Interstate 20, in the foothills of the Appalachians.



Known as the “Home of Marksmanship,” the Talladega Marksmanship Park consists of 500 acres of rifle, pistol, shotgun and archery ranges, as well as a large club house where classes and clinics are held. The facility is located only two miles from the world-famous Talladega Superspeedway and features a 600-yard high-power rifle range with 54 covered firing points and all-weather Kongsberg Target Systems electronically-scored targets at 200, 300 and 600 yards. A 100-yard multi-purpose range has the same technology with monitors at each firing station. There are also 25-yrd and 50-yard pistol ranges with turning targets and an unknown distance rifle range. The park also has 15 action pistol bays that can accommodate

a variety of competitions. In addition, there is a 15-station shotgun sporting clays field, a trap field, 5 skeet fields and a 5 stand field – all with automated trap machines.

The 13,000 square foot clubhouse features a check-in & reception area, two multimedia classrooms, spacious lounge areas where visitors can observe range activities via closed circuit TV, and a CMP Pro Shop which sells firearms, accessories and ammunition. The CMP Park is the venue for a number of CMP matches, classes and clinics. These include weekly firearms safe handling and basic fundamentals classes which are taught by CMP certified instructors and will include both classroom training and live firing on the Talladega ranges, rifle and pistol marksmanship classes, armorer's classes, GSMM Master Instructor classes, advanced Garand classes, range officer training and more. This year the Talladega D-Day Matches on June 6-9 will honor the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Allied Forces landing at Normandy Beach in France.

The park is open to the public weekly, Wednesday-Thursday (11 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Fri-Sun (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Rifle and pistol ranges are available for public use for a \$30 daily fee or \$12.50 hourly fee. Archery is \$12.50 per day, while shotgun includes variable pricing based on use (one round of skeet/trap/wobble, \$8; 5-stand, \$12; Sporting Clays, \$45 per 100 clays; golf cart rental, \$15 half day, \$30 full day). For more information about the Talladega Marksmanship Park go to the CMP website at <https://thecmp.org/ranges/talladega-marksmanship-park/#Clinics>.



Just east of Talladega is Anniston where the CMP South store is located. The store has surplus rifles, ammunition and accessories for sale and experienced armorers on staff. Unfortunately, I stopped in Anniston on a Tuesday and the store is only open Thursday-Saturday, 8:00AM – 3:00PM. Bring your VGCA ID if you visit to show your club affiliation.

For additional information go to the CMP website at [https://thecmp.org/cmp\\_sales/cmp-stores/](https://thecmp.org/cmp_sales/cmp-stores/).

## CMP 1911 AND SURPLUS RIFLE SALES



The CMP received the fiscal year 2024 tranche of 10,000 surplus M1911s from the Department of the Army a couple of months ago. However, because the CMP is still in the process of filling M1911 orders for Round 4 it doesn't expect to announce Round 5 until this fall, once Round 4 starts winding down. The CMP is still assessing the pistols it received, but it looks like the quality is pretty good.

The M1917 and M1903 rifles are limited in quantity, with no future plans for those models in the foreseeable future, according to the CMP. Navy Mod 0 and Mod 1 rifles were just released in April. The CMP is selling what it has in inventory for all of these rifles, and once they are gone the CMP doesn't expect to see more transferred from the Department of the Army or Department of Defense in any significant quantities.

For further information about sales of surplus firearms go to the CMP website at [https://thecmp.org/cmp\\_sales/](https://thecmp.org/cmp_sales/).

## CMP AMMUNITION SALES

The CMP is selling .45 ACP ammunition. This is a limited supply so don't delay. This ammunition comes



in 200-round boxes and was produced by Winchester Military Ammunition (WMA) & Western Cartridge Company (WCC), between the 1950's – 1990's. It non-corrosive, in reloadable brass cases. At 230 grains, expect a muzzle velocity of around 830 feet per second. The ammunition features high quality Winchester components, and delivers outstanding reliability. This ammunition is loaded with a 230 grain full metal jacket bullet which is known for its positive functioning and exceptional accuracy. On impact this bullet does not expand and is ideal for target shooting. Whether for practice, target shooting or training exercises, Military Service

Grade ammunition is a superb choice for high volume shooting. Orders are limited to one box per customer. Citizenship and proof of affiliated club membership are required. If the customer has moved, a new 2A will need to be provided as well. The cost is \$150 plus \$15 shipping. The CMP has a limited quantity of this ammunition and will not be restocked once it is sold out.



The CMP also has .22 Long Rifle surplus ammunition for sale. The ammo comes in 500 round bricks. Sales are limited to two bricks per customer per calendar year. Caliber .22 LR ball, 40 gr lead round nose. Standard velocity. Mixed manufacturer, Winchester or Remington. Manufacturer is not guaranteed. The Army originally ordered the ammunition for use in pistols, but it is safe to fire in pistol or rifle. There is a limited quantity of this ammunition and will it not be restocked once it is sold out.

The CMP is also selling Creedmoor Sports .223 caliber, 77 gr Core XTC ammunition in 200 round packages, and Creedmoor 9mm Match HP 115 gr ammunition in 250 round cases. The Creedmoor ammunition is made with new Starline brass. They are limited quantity and will be restocked once sold out. However, the restocking date is dependent on the manufacturer's production schedule and is unknown at this time.

For additional information about these and other ammunition sales, as well as sales of shooting equipment, books, parts and tools, including prices and ordering instructions, visit the CMP e-Store at <https://shop.thecmp.org/>.



# DE WITT BAILEY, A GUN COLLECTING ICON

*By Marc Gorelick*

The gun collecting world lost a giant when De Witt Bailey, well known author, scholar and preeminent researcher passed on March 10, 2024. Bailey's contributions to the world of antique firearms research, scholarship and collecting, cannot be overstated.

Born in New York in February 1938, Bailey's interest in gun collecting and shooting began early when a family friend gave him a Model 1861 Bridesburg rifle-musket. He soon became part of the eastern US gun collecting and muzzleloading shooting communities. He attended the University of Virginia and University of Connecticut from which he graduated in 1961.

Bailey moved to Britain in the 1960's and spent four years studying and cataloguing the study collection at the Tower of London. He later he obtained a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) from King's College in London. His 303-page thesis, "*The Board of Ordnance and Small Arms Supply: The Ordnance System 1714 to 1783*," is available at the King's College London websites, <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/persons/de-witt-bailey/studentTheses/> and <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/2934113/287105.pdf>.

A noted authority on British antique firearms, Bailey was a highly skilled and influential researcher and scholar, and a prolific author whose work has had a significant impact on the world of British antique firearms collecting. He set the standard for firearms research and scholarship and has at least 12 book titles to his name, many of which are considered the definitive reference books on British military firearms from the 1680's to the 1860's. He wrote two general books about gun collecting, contributed to others, and co-authored the main directory of English provincial gunmakers, and a book about Robert Wogdon, who is considered by some to be the pre-eminent gunmaker of the Georgian/early Regency periods. His last book, *British Powder Flasks*, was published in 2023. He also had numerous authoritative articles published in antique arms journals.

Bailey also conducted extensive research on the Sharps Rifle Company and its products. His detailed notes and analysis of company records served as the basis for a definitive series of books authored by a who's who of the Sharps collecting world.

A list of his books includes:

- Small Arms of the British Forces in America, 1664-1815
- Percussion Guns & Rifles: An Illustrated Reference Guide to the Muzzle-Loading Percussion Guns and Rifles of the Nineteenth Century
- British Military Longarms, 1715-1865
- British Military Longarms, 1815-1865
- English Gunmakers: The Birmingham and Provincial Gun Trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century (w. Douglas Nie)
- Guns and Gun Collecting (w Ian Hogg and others)
- British Board of Ordnance Small Arms Contractors, 1689-1840
- Pattern Dates for British Ordnance Small Arms, 1718-1783
- Sharps Firearms Model 1874 Rifles (w. Frank Sellers)
- British Military Flintlock Rifles, 1740-1840
- British Ordnance Muskets of the 1830s and 1840s; George Lovell's Legacy (w. Adrian Roads)
- British Powder Flasks, 1700 to the Present Day (w. Ian Ford)

De Witt Bailey was a member of the American Society of Arms Collectors, The Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain, and the Sharps Collectors Association.

# ★ Show-n-Tell ★

**NOTE: For anyone bringing in items for Show-n-Tell - please hold the item up so the members in attendance can see it. This will also help your photographer get a sharp picture and allow people who could not attend the meeting to see it clearly in the newsletter. We also ask that you provide a Fact Sheet (copies of the one below will be provided at the meeting) to assist the newsletter editor in accurately describing your item. Thank you!**

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## 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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A message from your VGCA Photographer--

I ask those who bring items in for Show-and-Tell to PLEASE hold the item UP and in view of the audience so that they can be seen clearly, and so that I might be able to get a decent picture for the newsletter. PLEASE stand behind the tables and simply hold the item at chest or waist level, face forward, stand still, and give me a five or six seconds to grab a decent photograph of the Show-and-Tell item.

If you do not want your Show-and-Tell item to be shared with other VGCA members, just tell me in advance and I will not attempt to take a photo of it.

I do the photography for the VGCA and its' members, not for myself, and not for any personal gain. Your assistance in documenting your items will be a great help. I spend an average of five hours editing the pictures for the newsletter and not having a clear view of the subject has been a great and constant frustration for me.

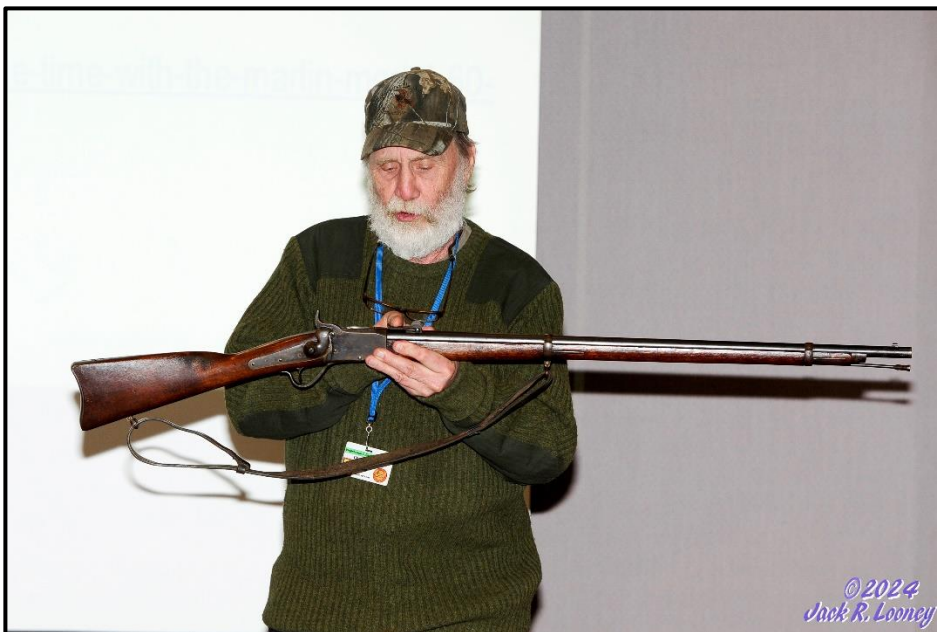
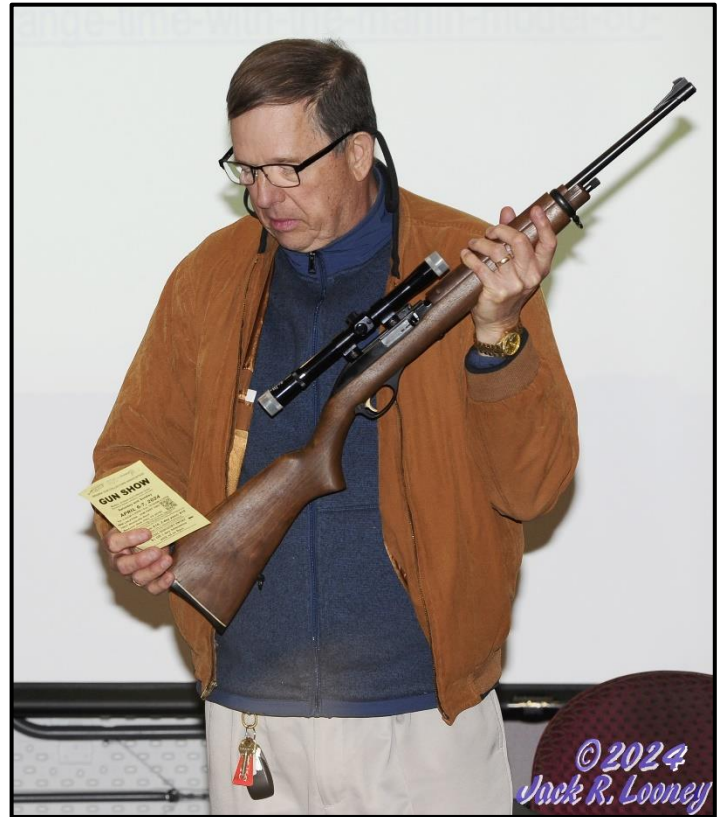
Your help will assist in making a better newsletter for all VGCA members. Thank you!

*Jack Looney*

# MARCH SHOW-N-TELL

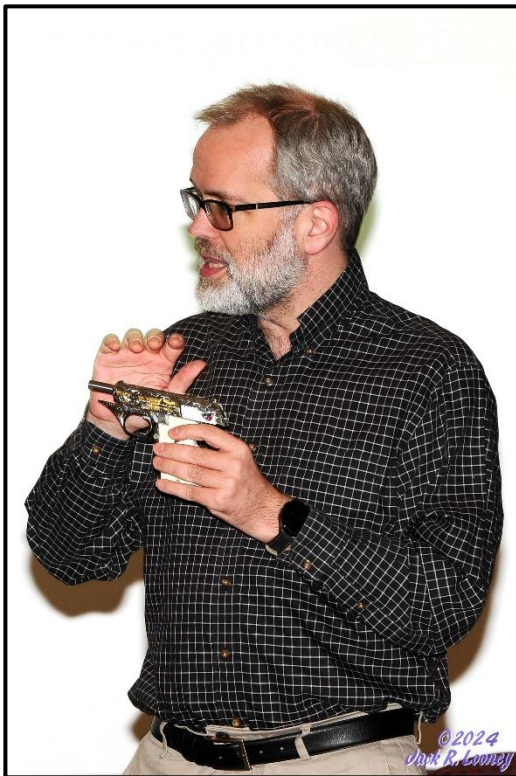
Member 1 brought in a Marlin Model 99 M1 (right). Designed to be similar in appearance to the U.S. military's M1 Carbine, the Model 99 M1 was an upscale Model 60, with a walnut stock, more machined parts, a white spacer in front of the buttplate, and a gold plated trigger. Chambered in .22 Long Rifle and featuring an 18-inch barrel and 10 round tube magazine, the Model 99 M1 was manufactured from 1966 until 1979.

This example was purchased by Member 1 in 1969 or 1970 and includes a Marlin factory 4x20 scope. It was acquired by turning in the required number "True Value" trading stamps. Trading stamps date back to 1896 and reached their peak popularity in the 1950s and '60s. They were the "rewards points" of their era.



Member 2 shared his Romanian Contract Peabody Model 1868 (left). This single shot breechloader is chambered in 11.4mm x 44, a black powder cartridge roughly equivalent to .43 Egyptian necked up to .45 caliber. The Romanian Peabodys have a slightly longer rear sight than the similar Model 1867 that was made for Switzerland. Approximately 20,000 to 30,000 were ordered between 1867 and 1869, though the last batch was not delivered due to lack of payment.



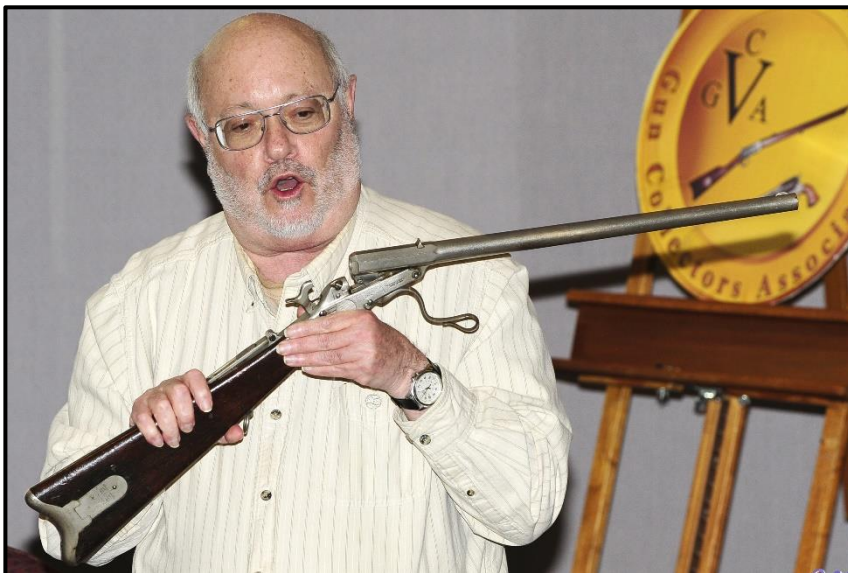


Member 3 brought in two Spanish handguns chambered in .22 Rimfire. The first was an Astra “Constable” model (*left*). This semi-automatic pistol was designed to appear similar to the hugely popular Walther PP. This example was made in 1981 and features factory engraving.

His second handgun was an Astra “Cadix” model (*right*). This 9-shot revolver was introduced in 1958 and replaced the Regent revolver in Astra’s catalog. It was a



nearly identical copy of a post-WWII Smith & Wesson. Also chambered in .22 WRM (9-shot), .32 S&W Long (6-shot), and .38 Special (5-shot), the Cadix was produced from 1958 until 1982. This example was made in 1975.

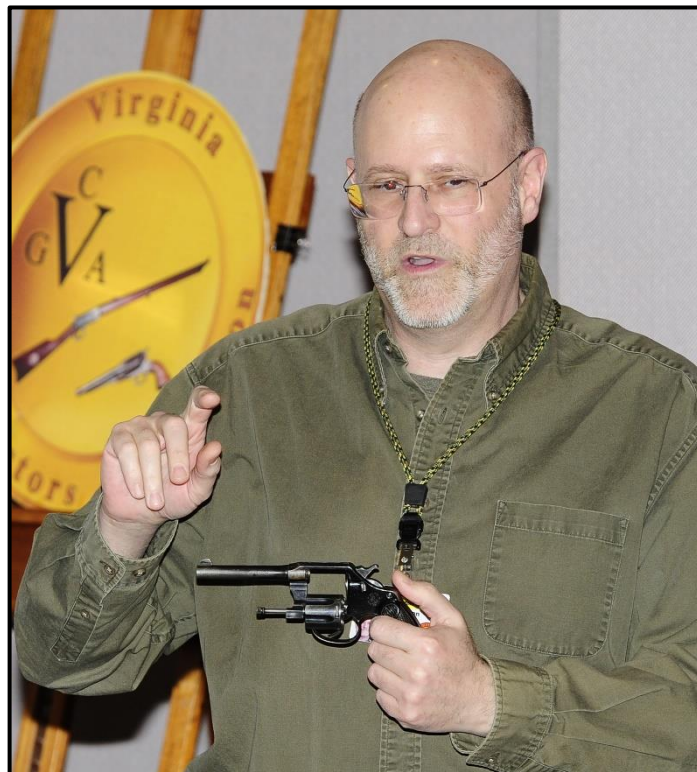


Member 4 shared a rare piece of U.S. Navy firearms history – a Maynard 1<sup>st</sup> Model Carbine (*left*). This single shot breechloader features a unique hybrid ammunition – a reloadable metallic cartridge that still utilized percussion ignition. In this case, it was .50 caliber with a 343 grain bullet and 40 grains of black powder. Produced from 1857 through 1860, the U.S. Army purchased 400, the U.S. Revenue Service bought 200, various Southern States bought over 2000 pre-Civil War, and in 1860 the U.S. Navy bought 60. Of these, about 20 were issued to the U.S.S.

*Saratoga*, a sloop of war sent to Africa in 1860 to interdict slave traffic. Considered by some to be too delicate for general service, the remainder were only issued to officers upon request during the Civil War. The 1<sup>st</sup> Model was handy carbine just 36 ½ inches long with a 20 inch barrel. The Navy contract features a long-range tang sight (but without gradations!) and a patch box in the stock. This example was tin-plated to protect against corrosion and is one of the few survivors of the 60 purchased over 160 years ago!

Member 5 had a random box of .32 S&W ammunition and obviously needed a firearm to shoot it in. The solution, a Colt Police Positive (*right*), presented itself at the VGCA Gun Show in April (thanks Ed!). This Double Action / Single Action (DA/SA) revolver was produced from 1907 through 1947 and was chambered in .32 Colt New Police (aka the .32 S&W), .38 Colt New Police (aka the .38 S&W – heaven forbid Colt list a major competitor’s caliber on their barrel!), .32/20, and .22 Rimfire. Noted for their accuracy, the Police Positive incorporated an internal hammer block for added safety.

This example was made in 1907, the first year of production.



Continuing his program of sharing semi-automatic versions of famous WWII submachine guns, Member 6 brought in two more in March. The first was an Auto Ordnance semi-automatic M1 “Thompson” (*left*). Except for operating from the closed bolt and its barrel being just over 16 inches long this M1 is a faithful representation of the WWII version. Chambered in .45 ACP, this steel-framed beast comes in at over 11 pounds!

Member 6 also brought in the modern German Sport Gun (GSG) semi-automatic copy of the classic MP40 (*right*). Marketed in pistol form in order to keep the barrel to the original's 10 inches, this version does not have the original's underfolding stock. The first MP40 reproduction that has been importable to the U.S. for several decades, this version is chambered in 9mm Parabellum (9x19) and uses 25-round magazines. To ease manufacture, the frame is zinc alloy and polymer. No parts or magazines are interchangeable with the original, but it is still lots of fun!



Member 6 noted that he wanted an MP40 since he was a kid!



Member 7 shared his Heckler & Koch Model MR762 (*left*). This is American civilian version of the HK 417. This semi-automatic rifle is chambered in 7.62 NATO, has a 16-inch barrel, and uses very expensive 20-round proprietary magazines.

This example is a special edition that features a Cerakote “Midnight Bronze” finish and is outfitted with a 1-10x Vortex scope with a first focal plane reticle.

Member 8 presented his Argentine Colt Model 1911 (right). As iconic as John Browning's design has become (and how many guns are still in production after more than eleven decades?), only two other nations besides the United States adopted the M1911 as their primary military sidearm and acquired the manufacturing rights. Those countries were Norway and Argentina. In addition to purchasing M1911s and M1911A1s directly from Colt, Argentina bought tooling from Colt and produced up to 120,000 copies of their version of the M1911A1 (designated the Model 1927) from 1927 (some sources claim production did not begin until 1945) until 1966.

This example was manufactured in 1946 for Argentina's Army.



Member 9 brought in a Lee-Enfield No 4 Mark I\* (left). The standard British battle rifle of WWII, the bolt action No 4 Mk I was chambered in .303 British and manufactured in England, Canada, and the U.S. This example was made by Savage Arms in Utica, New York and is marked U.S. PROPERTY as an item that was provided via the Lend-Lease Act. Bought as a sporter, this rifle was restored

to its military configuration by Member 9. What is unique about this rifle is that there are Chinese markings electro-penciled on the receiver for the Chinese National Armory. Per Ian Skennerton in his definitive work "The Lee-Enfield – A Century of Lee-Metford and Lee-Enfield Rifles and Carbines," this could be one of 40,000 No 4 Mk I\*s provided to China during the war.

Member 10 brought in a Marlin 989 M2. Similar to Member 1's Model 99 M1, the semi-automatic Model 989 M2 was configured to be reminiscent of the M1 Carbine, to include an upper handguard and associated barrel band. Differences from the Model 99 M1 include a shorter 16-inch barrel and a detachable 7-round box magazine. Two magazines were apparently included with each rifle through 1969, though this was reduced to one mag in 1970. The Model 989 M2 was introduced in 1965 and was manufactured until 1978, with production totaling approximately 160,000.

This example was purchased for Member 10 by his parents for Christmas 1971. Made that same year, it came with a Marlin 2-7x scope. Fondly remembered as a fun gun, Member 10 "shot it a lot!"

Apologies to Member 10 – we did not get a picture of his show-n-tell item.



## ★ Upcoming Events and Shows ★

**PLEASE NOTE: VGCA members are strongly encouraged to verify shows before driving to an event. These dates were confirmed when this newsletter was written, but are not guaranteed.**

### VIRGINIA – 2024

- Jun 14-16, 2024 – Chantilly, VA – Dulles Expo Center – *Showmasters*
- Jul 13-14, 2024 – Hampton, VA – Hampton Roads Convention Center – *SGK*
- Jul 13-14, 2024 – Richmond, VA – Richmond Raceway Complex – *Showmasters*
- Jul 19-21, 2024 – Chantilly, VA – Dulles Expo Center – *Showmasters*
- Jul 20-21, 2024 – Salem, VA – Salem Civic Center – *C&E Gun Shows*
- Aug 24-25, 2024 – Richmond, VA – Richmond Raceway Complex – *Showmasters*
- Sep 7-8, 2024 – Fishersville, VA – Augusta Expo – *Showmasters*

### MARYLAND – 2024

- Jun 22-23, 2024 – Crownsville, MD – Anne Arundel Fairgrounds – *Appalachian Promotions*
- Jul 13-14, 2024 – Timonium, MD – Timonium Fairgrounds – *Appalachian Promotions*
- Aug 24-25, 2024 – Frederick, MD – Frederick Fairgrounds – *Appalachian Promotions*

### PENNSYLVANIA – 2024

- Jun 1-2, 2024 – Lebanon, PA – Lebanon Expo Center – *Eagle Shows*
- ~~Jun 1-2, 2024 – Wind Gap, PA – Plainfield Twnshp Fire Co – M2 Promotions – CANCELLED~~
- Jun 7-9, 2024 – Oaks, PA – Greater Philadelphia Expo Center – *Eagle Shows*
- Jun 8-9, 2024 – Tobyhanna, PA – VFW Post 3448 – *Jaeger Arms*
- Jun 22-23, 2024 – Allentown, PA - ParkView Inn & Conference Center - *Eagle Shows*
- Jun 22-23, 2024 – Monroeville, PA – Monroeville Convention Center – *Showmasters*
- Jun 22-23, 2024 – Sellersville, PA – Forrest Lodge VTW245 – *Jaeger Arms*
- Jun 22-23, 2024 – Washington, PA – Washington PA County Fairgrounds – *ARH Sport Shop*
- Jun 29-30, 2024 – Gilbert, PA – West End Fairgrounds – *M2*
- Jun 29-30, 2024 – York, PA – York Fairgrounds – *Appalachian Promotions*
- Jul 6-7, 2024 – Reeders, PA – Jackson Township Vol Fire Co. – *Jaeger Arms*
- Jul 13-14, 2024 – Allentown, PA – Allentown Fairgrounds – *Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society*
- Jul 26-27, 2024 – Gettysburg, PA – Gettysburg Fire Dept – *Hallowed Ground Militaria*

## PENNSYLVANIA – 2024 (continued)

- **Aug 3-4, 2024 – Bloomsburg, PA** – Bloomsburg Fairgrounds – *Eagle Shows*
- **Aug 9-11, 2024 – Oaks, PA** – Greater Philadelphia Expo Center – *Eagle Shows*
- **Aug 17, 2024 – Greencastle, PA** – Greencastle Sportsman’s Assoc – *Izaak Walton League of Franklin County*
- **Aug 17-18, 2024 – Lewis Run, PA** – Lewis Run VFD Station 6 – *Lewis Run VFD*
- **Aug 17-18, 2024 – Monroeville, PA** – Monroeville Convention Center – *Showmasters*
- **Aug 24-25, 2024 – Trevoze, PA** – Radisson Philadelphia Northeast – *Eagle Shows*
- **Aug 31-Sep 1, 2024 – Harrisburg, PA** – Farm Show Complex – *C&E Gun Shows*

## SPECIAL EVENTS / SHOWS – 2024

- **May 15-19, 2024 – Winchester, VA** - Fort Shenandoah, VA – *North-South Skirmish Association*
- **Jun 1-2, 2024 – Cleveland, OH** – The I-X Center – *Ohio Gun Collectors Association*
- **Jul 13-14, 2024 - Wilmington, OH** – Roberts Convention Centre – *Ohio Gun Collectors Association* – Remington Society of America and Ruger Owners and Collectors Association
- **Jul 20-21, 2024 – Doswell, VA** – Meadow Event Park – *North South Trader’s Civil War Magazine* – National Civil War and Antique Arms Show

**NOTE: OCGA Gun Shows are not open to the public – Members and invited guests only**

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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 and is intended for listing firearms and firearm related items. 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. Items will be listed for one issue of the Newsletter.

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### **FOR SALE:**

✪ **FINNISH MOSIN-NAGANT** is authored by VGCA member Matt DiRisio and published by Wet Dog Publications. The list price is \$99.95. It is 584 pages long with over 1,500 color and black and white photographs.

For ordering information go to the Wet Dog Publications website at:

<https://www.fnbrowning.com/book-finnish-mosin-nagant>.

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### **FOR SALE:**

✪ After more than two and a half years of research, VGCA member Bill Vanderpool has 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:**

✪ VGCA member Larry Babcock has published a companion piece to his earlier book **M1 Garand Photo Essay**. This second book, titled **M1 Garand Photo Essay Volume II** covers all new material, to include the M1C and M1D sniper rifles as well as a myriad of M1 accessories. Best of all, both books are offered at a discount to VGCA members. Volume I is normally priced at \$69 and volume II lists for \$49, VGCA members can buy them directly from Larry for \$60 and \$40 each respectively - or \$90 total if you buy both. Look for Larry Babcock set up near the VGCA recruiting table at the next Chantilly Gun Show or order from him directly at [larrybab@comcast.net](mailto:larrybab@comcast.net) / or text to 703-856-2561.

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**WANT TO BUY:**

✪ Browning lever action Gold Medallion, short action, blue or silver.

Also: Browning lever action with pistol grip and take down. Prefer .308 but any considered.

Call King at 703 576-7016, if no answer leave name and number with brief description.

Thank you, King von Schilling

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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 George Dungan.