



VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

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(A Non-Profit Organization)

NRA Affiliate Number G 8162

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Newsletter October-November 2006



Program from the September 28, 2006 Meeting: We were fortunate to have Mr. Shannon Zeigler, a local resident and member of the Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania give a presentation on “Japanese Military Rifles from 1893 to 1945 – Points of Interest for the Collector.” Bill Chronister introduced Mr. Zeigler, a Major in the Medical Corps stationed in Falls Church. The presentation was originally intended to be heavy on the identification and authentication of the various Japanese rifles, commonly referred to as Arisakas, that are encountered by collectors. Originally planning to rely on a detailed audio-visual display and a series of datasheets of the various markings and proof marks, due to a snafu, a projector was not available. However, Mr. Zeigler was able to adapt and proceeded to give a comprehensive review of the subject matter using an extensive set of exemplars of rifles ranging from the more common to rare variants from his personal collection, while fielding questions and comments from the audience.

Fortunately, the datasheets were distributed and will serve as useful resources for evaluating these rifles. He started with the basics: history, developments, the incredible strength of the design, and the logistics of supplying two calibers, 6.5 x 50 used in the Type 30, Type 38 rifles and carbines, the Type 44 Cavalry carbine, and the 7.7mm round used in the later Type 99 short and long rifles. He covered issues like assembly numbers versus serial numbers, a detail which has led many starting collectors to assume rifles are mismatched. He also covered the wood and finish of the rifles to include the lacquer that was made from a plant that is related to the poison sumac family. This lacquer can cause dermatitis from careless handling or misguided attempts to refinish the stocks on these rifles. Finally, Mr. Zeigler displayed a Type 2 take-down paratrooper rifle and a number of rare sniper variations, and told of Japanese experiments on folding stock versions. As he explained the rarity of the folding stock experimental rifle, VGCA member John Gebhardt produced one of these rare pieces. In the break and examination period that immediately followed, many comments were made on the fine condition of the examples present. It was a very detailed look at school of collecting that is rapidly gaining adherents.

UPCOMING Presentation for December 7, 2006 meeting – C.G. Sweeting, formerly curator of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum and author of the book, “*Blood and Iron – The German Conquest of Sevastopol*” will be the guest presenter at the December 7th meeting. He will cover the German conquest of Sevastopol, a campaign marked by the use of a huge 80cm gun named “Dora.” (pictured at left) The author will have books available and will sign copies. ➔ **Meeting at 7:00PM, food will available after 6:15PM**



Photos from the September 28, 2006 Meeting



Far Left: Presenter Shannon Zeigler compares two Arisaka rifles.

Center and Right: Member John Gebhardt shows his experimental folding stock Paratrooper rifle



★★★ The October 14-15, 2006 VGCA Gunshow ★★★



Top: First Place - Addison Hurst, John Wallace & Karl Karash with U.S. Rifle M1 Exhibit.

L: Second Place Shannon Zeigler, display on Small Arms of Imperial Japan 1893-1945.

R: Third Place Pete Roberts, display on the SW N-Frame Shroud.



★★★ The October 14-15, 2006 VGCA Gunshow ★★★

Well folks, the show has come and gone. I was not present for the show, but have heard many viewpoints of the show, most notably the dismal attendance. These reasons and issues will be addressed further along in this issue, and will be the subject of discussion and debate at the upcoming meetings. However, in spite of this less than positive note, I have to admit, I was told by more than a few members that I missed some really fine displays, so good news first.

The Show Awards: This show contained a series of fine displays of collectible firearms, accoutrements, and history, by club members and guests that once again were exemplary. All were well researched, documented, presented and showed a lot of work and preparation.

- **First Place** – The Award for First Place went to John Wallace, Karl Karash, and Addison Hurst for their cooperative display on the “*U.S. Rifle Cal .30 M1...the Evolution 1936-1957.*”
- **Second Place** – was awarded to Shannon Zeigler for his display of *Small Arms of Imperial Japan 1893-1945*
- **Third Place** – went to Pete Roberts for his well documented display on *The S&W N-Frame Shroud.*

Plaques will be mailed to the winners. As before, the small photos do not do justice to the work and research that goes into displays. From reviewing the fine photos from Jack Looney, there appeared to be quality in depth with a display of Civil War carbines and others great efforts. Congratulations to all the awardees and additionally to all those who take the time to share their knowledge and expertise and collections. The displays are, and will always be, the best feature at a VGCA show.

From the President's Podium, Comments from VGCA President, Addison Hurst:

I am sad to relate to you that our last show was the worst show I think we have ever held. The attendance was about half of the Spring 06 show. I was disappointed by the turnout of our own members. I was disappointed by the quality of the guns on the tables. The quality of the displays was quite good. There are many problems — not all of our making — the market is saturated with gun shows. There is no huge panic now by gun owners. That may change since the Democrats are now in charge... ie., Nancy Pelosi, Schumer, Kennedy and the other anti-gunners are now in charge..., who knows what will happen now? We seem to be drifting away from a group of collectors to a bunch of retail merchants. I am very saddened by this. We had some outstanding items for sale — and for that I am thankful. Many of the faithful in the club did their usual outstanding jobs — you know who you are.

The board is looking at many things... I hope we can turn this mess around. We are in serious trouble. If you did not show up to help at the show, you are part of the problem and not a part of the solution. You know who you are.

For those of you did turn out to help, we all owe you a big thank you. You know who you are.

I look forward to seeing you at the December 7 meeting. I am sure we will discuss the past show and Ed Costello will have the facts and figures for you.

Addison Hurst

VGCA Gun Show Attendance for the Past Four Years

March 2003 (Hugo's)	2,230	September 2003 (Hugo's)	1,508
March 2004 (Hugo's)	1,674	September 2004 (Hugo's)	1,863
March 2005 (Hugo's)	1,609	October 2005 (PWC)	1,418
March 2006 (PWC)	1,631	October 2006 (PWC)	<u>922</u>

Members interested in the continued success and future of the club are strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the business meeting and discussion following the presentation.

September 28 Business Meeting: Addison Hurst Opened the evening announcing the recent death of two firearm notables, Colonel Jeff Cooper of .45 and combat shooting fame, and Cecil Brooks, builder of fine custom rifles. Both were NRA members and made a major mark on the Association, the sport, and the industry.

After the presentation and break, Larry **Hare** presented the new member applications. The following were voted into the fold: Robert Eganhouse was sponsored by Larry Hare. Dennis Gerdovich was sponsored by Addison Hurst. Both were approved by the members present and were welcomed to the club.

Referencing the upcoming Fall VGCA Show and the large C&E/Showmasters Chantilly Militaria Show in Chantilly, Addison informed members present that the club would be working with the promoters of the Chantilly Militaria Show to ensure both shows cross advertised to increase attendance at both. **Rick Nahas** provided an update on preparation and table sales, with notification that there were 38 vacant tables due to a number of cancellations and a local dealer ceasing operations. The possibility of consolidating into one building in case of a worse case scenario was discussed. Also discussed was the possibility of a joint show with another collector organization based upon an inquiry from that organization. **Addison Hurst** announced that the chair issue had been successfully resolved with his locating a source of sturdy chairs. Pitches for **Security Volunteers** and **setup volunteers** were reiterated.

September 28 Show and Tell: Holding with informal tradition, the show and tell had a decidedly Japanese focus. Larry Hare showed a Nambu pistol Type 14 with small trigger guard and a Nagoya Arsenal Type 94 automatic. Bill Chronister, while lacking a Type 2 take-down paratrooper rifle, displayed a Japanese-made Grade 2 Browning .22RF Auto with engraved French grey receiver and matching Browning suitcase. Jerry Keathley, confessed how he was seduced away from his regular area of interest by the allure of an FN90 bullpup carbine rifle 5.7 x 28 caliber. This is the small personal defense weapon adopted by police and shown in the TV Sci-Fi show *Stargate SG-1*. Hal Johnson showed an example of a rare Swiss Model 1870 Vetterli Cadet in great condition. This is unusual since these rifles were used very long and hard by young school-age cadets. Roger Sherman had a number of unusual Japanese military items. He brought a number of Arisaka muzzle covers including a rarely encountered version for the Type 44 folding bayonet cavalry carbine. This was eclipsed by a beautiful Japanese katana sword. This sword was made circa 1941-42 both by hand and machine with domestic prison labor under the direction of a famed swordsmith. A unique feature was a reinforced tip for thrusting. During the S&T, at least one animated presenter had to be cautioned lest he become impaled by this sharp blade.

Upcoming Events and Gun Shows

(Please verify dates with the promoter/club before travel, there have been many recent schedule changes and cancellations.)

VIRGINIA

- ☞ **November 25-26 – Hampton Roads, VA** - Hampton Convention Center - *Southeastern Gun & Knives, Ltd.*
- ☞ **December 2-3 – Richmond, VA** – Showplace - *C&E Gun Shows*
- ☞ **December 9-10 - Harrisonburg, VA** - Rockingham County Fairgrounds - *Showmasters / C&E Gun Shows*
- ☞ **December 16-17 - Fredericksburg, VA** - Expo Center - *Southeastern Gun & Knives, Ltd.*
- ☞ **December 16-17 - Salem, VA** – Salem Civic Center - *C&E Gun Shows*
- ☞ **December 30-31 - Virginia Beach, VA** - Convention Center - *Southeastern Gun & Knives, Ltd.*

MARYLAND

- ☞ **March 17-18, 2007 – Timonium, MD** – Maryland State Fairgrounds – “*The Baltimore Show*” by *Maryland Arms Collectors Association*

NEW YORK

- ☞ **December 9-10 – Freeport, NY** – Freeport Recreation Center - *Long Island Antique Historical Arms Society*, Contact: Dave Gruner, P.O. Box 41, Jamesport, NY 11947. (631)722-3248.

PENNSYLVANIA

- ☞ **December 2-3 – Allentown, PA** – Agricultural Hall in Fairgrounds - *The Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society, Inc.*, Contact: FDHAS, 3491 Linden St., Bethlehem, PA 18017. (610)997-8613 after 6pm.
- ☞ **December 9-10 - Harrisburg, PA** – State Farm Show Complex - *Mid-Atlantic Arms Collectors*

V/R and have a Happy Holiday Season, Bill Chronister, Newsletter Editor