



VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.ORG



Est. 1983

(A Non-Profit Organization)

NRA Affiliate Number G 8162

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Newsletter September 2006

Program from the August 24, 2006 Meeting: The August presentation was another of the joint NRA National Firearms Museum (NFM) and VGCA Speaker Series. Phil Schreier kicked off the show by introducing some noted guests in attendance, and museum personnel, the NFM Director, the Senior and Assistant Curators of the museum, and the NRA Counsel. These presentations are world class and a rare chance to hear noted experts and scholars cover various aspects of collecting and history.

The speakers were FBI Senior Special Agent Robert Whitman, and Attorney Robert Golden, formerly a federal prosecutor in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. These two gentlemen were part of the FBI's Art Crime Team and are responsible for successfully returning over \$150 million dollars of stolen art and firearms, as well as investigating various fraud schemes used to bilk, and otherwise separate well-heeled gun collectors from their



money. After introductions (Mr. Golden is a UVA graduate in History), they started with the basics, an overview of fraud and interstate transportation in stolen property, violations which are often at the heart of art and collecting scams. Bob Whitman provided detailed background information into a complex scheme that involved scripted appearances on the *Antiques Roadshow*, one of the most popular shows on PBS. As he laid out the specifics, it was evident many of those in the audience had seen the shows in question and/or were familiar with the case. Through a spirited back and forth narrative, the speakers described how seemingly separate cases mushroomed into a major criminal conspiracy. They also covered some other cases, one which involved personalities with whom some club members were personally familiar. One case involved a wealthy collector set on having a world class, museum level collection. An agent would locate the arms, and a partner would misrepresent their value, desirability, and provenance. In short, after spending \$32 million, this person had a collection worth \$12 million. Lesson learned and stressed in the talk – verify and get credible documentation. They covered how they had recently brokered the safe return of Theodore Roosevelt's San Juan Hill Colt revolver to the National Park Service after a theft some 16 years ago. The revolver, which

Teddy Roosevelt had received as a presentation from the USS Maine, had been stolen. It was later to resurface as the result of a divorce dispute. SrSA Whitman and Mr. Golden facilitated the return of the revolver after it was carefully authenticated with the assistance of the National Park Service and Phil Schreier and the NFM. Many questions followed, and it was evident that this presentation definitely struck a nerve and would have held interest for a longer session.

While the vast majority of members will most likely not be purchasing a \$4 million firearm, this was definitely a unique opportunity to hear about how to protect yourself and learn how cases are developed. Morals and lessons: “Buy the gun, not the story,” and “Trust, but verify.” It was a rare treat.

UPCOMING Presentation for September 28 meeting – We are fortunate to have a guest speaker scheduled for the September 28 meeting who will cover Japanese rifles and arms. Mr. Shannon Zeigler, a local resident and member of the Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania has agreed to give the presentation. He recently earned a second place at their May 2006 show with a fine display of some exceptionally nice Japanese military rifles.



This will be a good chance to learn about these under-appreciated rifles used by the Land of the Rising Sun from the early 1900s through WWII. I can remember just a few years ago, these rifles were thought by many to be no better than tomato stakes (and many looked like they had been used as such). However, in the past couple of years, interest (and unfortunately prices) has grown greatly and collectors are appreciating the variety and rareness of many of these pieces, especially as they surface from the collections and households of the departing WWII veterans. As always, I would encourage everyone to bring in some of their Japanese rifles or militaria for display, and I know this club has some great Japanese collections. ☞ *The meeting begins at 7:00PM, and food will available shortly after 6:00PM.*

From the Podium - Announcements from the Club President, Addison Hurst:

- Just another reminder that all guns brought in for show and tell at the monthly meetings **MUST** be TIED. The only exception will be flint locks or percussion arms that have no cap on the nipple. (Even with a muzzleloader, it is a good idea to check the bore with a ramrod to ensure there is not a load present. This is a good idea, especially if it is a new acquisition) Ties will be present for all to use. Members can tie at home or tie when you arrive before show and tell. There can be **NO** exceptions.
- Show fliers for our October 14-15 VGCA Show at the PWC Fairgrounds will be at the meeting. Please take a packet and distribute to all other shows in the area and outside of the area.
- We still need more helpers to sign up to help with Security at the show. (See other Show-related announcements on following pages.)
- We need someone to take over the photo ID camera. Jack Looney takes photos during the meetings to include in the flyers. So, we need someone to take over the photo badges. We have all the gear and film and can set up at meetings and we can take it to the shows. Call Addison Hurst if you can help with this important responsibility. The club camera will be available at the monthly meetings, so all members needing the VGCA photo ID badge can get them at the NRA meetings. Yearly and life stickers are now available.
- There will be **no meeting in October** as the October 14-15 Gunshow at the PWC Fairgrounds will take the place of a monthly meeting.
- If you missed the August 28 presentation on recovering art and firearms, you missed one of the best programs in recent years.

August 28 Business Meeting: President Addison Hurst opened the meeting at 9:00PM, following the great presentation and a spirited question and answer period. He covered ID card issues, which are detailed above in the Comments from the Podium section. The importance of ties for both the meeting Show and Tell and the Gunshow was stressed. The Club will be renting chairs again for the show and will inquire about larger chairs. If you believe you may want a stronger chair for the show, members may wish to bring a personal, comfortable chair. (I wonder if there is a relationship between the perceived strength of chairs and the narrowness of the aisles. It surely has to be the weight of the guns << ☺ >>. Ed.) VGCA will have advertisements at the Militaria Show at Chantilly advertising our show.

Larry Hare presented the new member applications. Joe O'Hara is a Smith and Wesson Collector and was sponsored by Rick Nahas. Ed Cercone was sponsored by Bill Dangoia. Ed collects S&Ws, Lugers, Single Action Army revolvers, and Engravers Guild firearms. Both were approved by universal acclaim and are now members of the club. We welcome the new members.

The October 14-15, 2006 VGCA Gunshow: Rick Nahas provided an update on preparation and table sales for our October 2006 Fall VGCA Gun Collectors Show at the PWC Fairgrounds. Even though our show is the same weekend as the large Chantilly Militaria show, the number of vacant tables is growing smaller, so again, if you have ever been considering getting a table, or doing an educational display on your favorite subject or family of arms, now is a great opportunity to request a table while there may still be some choices of table location.

Security Volunteers for October 2006 VGCA Show Security Detail should contact **Show Security Chief Larry Hunt** at 703-932-1020 or by email at ldhunt@idsscan.com. This is a crucial part of the show and the efforts of the Security volunteers and Chief ensure both security of property and safety at the shows. As many past volunteers will tell, there are benefits from volunteering for the security details. If interested, please let Larry Hunt know, or contact any club officer at the September meeting. It will be relayed to Larry.

We also need help on the **Show Committee** as well. Please contact **Jim Burgess** at 703-754-7800 or at Jim_burgess@NPS.gov. Setup is on the afternoon of Wednesday, October 11, and takedown is on Sunday, October 15, after the show concludes. I will have sign up lists at the meeting.

August 28 Show and Tell: Patrick Rice, Con Rice's son, proudly displayed a model he and his father made representing the M1919 Browning machinegun and belts of ammo. Seeing this brought back memories of much cruder versions made of window blind rolls, 2 x 4 lumber, and black paint. It was a job well done and a nice project to keep alive a young boy's interest in history, shooting and collecting. Larry Hare showed a British Saxby and Palmer pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) air rifle from the late 1970s. Of note was instead of a large multi-shot air cylinder, these rifles used a cartridge-sized air capsule which was filled to 2000 PSI and into which a pellet was inserted. Muzzle velocity approached 1000 FPS with this design which was later improved and expanded by the Brocock firm. Unfortunately, UK anti-gun hysteria brought about a ban on this technology. Bob Sears presented a .38-55 auxiliary rifle barrel insert for a shotgun. The 30 inch barrel slips inside of a 12 gauge shotgun and converts it to a rifle. The quality of the machining was evident, and combined with an unusual caliber, ensured this is not a common item. Jim Leahigh displayed a belt buckle (from his Aunt Tillie) that was a relic from the U.S. Navy battleship USS Maine, the sinking of which served the basis of a rallying cry in the Spanish American War. Bill Chronister showed a long sought NRA Civilian Sales model Springfield M1922M11 with original Armory installed Unertl scope blocks, to which he had mounted a Unertl scope. An unidentified member (sorry) displayed his Walther Model HP (Heers Pistol, the predecessor to the wartime P-38) and a very interesting Mauser 1896 Broom handle pistol converted to a carbine configuration. The session was closed by Addison Hurst, who presented a newly acquired Harrington & Richardson M65 WWII USMC .22LR training rifle. This will be a very nice companion to his Reising in .45 ACP. Unfortunately, we do not have photographs of the last meeting.

Want Ads and Requests for Information (RFI) Department –

- ⊙ **Roger Sherman** needs an early Russian Tokarev TT-35 pistol magazine suitable for Cyrillic character like K M 600 star 1938. Markings are across the toe as well as a small lanyard loop on the base. You may contact Roger at 704-620-3652 (after 4:00PM please) or email him at sandlent@verizon.net
- ⊙ **Addison Hurst** needs an original manual for a Browning Medalist .22 pistol. He can be reached at 540-882-3543 or emailed at HurstA@mediasoft.net.
- ⊙ **Bill Chronister** is looking for a source for original manuals for a 1976 vintage Japanese Grade II Browning Semi-Automatic .22LR (SA-22) takedown rifle, and also a Jonathan Browning Mountain Rifle. He can be reached at 703-204-0138 or at wchronister@cox.net.

Upcoming Events and Gun Shows

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

VIRGINIA

- ☉ **September 30-October 1, Harrisonburg, VA – C&E Gun Shows** at Rockingham County Fairgrounds
- ☉ **October 7-8, Dale City, VA - Old Dominion Gun Shows** at the VFW on Minieville Road
- ☉ **October 7-8, Fishersville, VA - Southeastern Gun & Knives, Ltd** at the Augusta Expoland

- **October 14-15, Manassas, VA - *Virginia Gun Collectors Association*** at Prince William County Fairgrounds.
Contact: Rick Nahas, (571)215-8761.
- **October 13-15, Chantilly, VA - *C&E Gun Show & Showmasters***, Dulles Expo Center Militaria Show
- **October 21-22, Richmond, VA - *C&E Gun Shows*** at the Showplace
- **October 28-29, Roanoke, VA – *Showmasters*** at the Roanoke, Civic Center

MARYLAND

- **November 4-5, Upper Marlboro, MD – *Silverado Promotions*** at the Showplace Arena
- **November 11-12, Frederick, MD – *Silverado Promotions*** at the Frederick Fairgrounds

PENNSYLVANIA

- **October 21-22, Allentown, PA - *Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society*** at the Agricultural Hall in the Fairgrounds
- **October 21-22, Carlisle, PA – *Appalachian Promotions*** at the Carlisle Expo Center
- **October 28-29, York, PA - *Appalachian Promotions*** at the York Fairgrounds

OKLAHOMA

- **October 21-22, Tulsa, OK - *Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show*** at Expo Center-Expo Square (Tulsa Fairgrounds)
<http://www.tulsaarmsshow.com>

“The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living, and the get-rich-quick theory of life.”

- Theodore Roosevelt, letter, January 10, 1917

“They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

- Benjamin Franklin, Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759

NOTE: There will be no newsletter or meeting in October, the month of the Fall VGCA Gun Collectors Show at the Prince William County Fairgrounds.

As I will be flailing the water to a froth surf fishing on the Outer Banks during October 14-15, I wish all a great successful Fall 2006 VGCA Gun Show. Save the good stuff for March...

V/R Bill Chronister, Newsletter Editor