



VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.NET

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

NRA Affiliate Number G8162



President and Founder (Emeritus) Ed Johnson

Acting President
Show/Reservations Manager
Membership

Jim Burgess
Rick Nahas
Larry Hare

Cell: 571-215-8761
Cell: 540-946-2050

jet53sw@aol.com
LaurenceHare@gmail.com

December 2015 VGCA Newsletter

★ **VGCA Important Announcement!** This year the **VGCA Annual Membership Meeting, Holiday Pot Luck Dinner and Swap Meet** will be **Thursday, December 10, 2015** at the NRA. During the meeting we will be holding a vote on the amended **By-Laws**. It is important that as many of our club members attend as possible. Come celebrate a great year for the VGCA and the holiday season with friends, fellow club members and collectors, and guests. Bring your family members if you like. There will be a great pot luck Dinner with a ham provided by the VGCA. We will also have officer nominations for the upcoming election to the Executive Committee, as well as a fascinating Show and Tell and a fun Swap Meet!



★ VGCA Presentation for October 22, 2015:

Steve Wesbrook, our October presenter, is a restorer of classic American double barrel shot guns. He spoke about cartridge breech loading shotguns made from the late 1860s through 1900. During this time period, shotgun buyers had several options, hammerless or hammer gun, side lock or box lock, and various barrel options. However, in the 1800s, steel was too brittle, and iron was too malleable, so until the 1890s, to make something both lightweight and strong they had to combine steel in layers of high carbon and low carbon.

Hammer guns and hammerless guns, which have their hammers inside, were both manufactured for quite a while. The first hammerless gun was the Colt hammerless manufactured in 1883 followed closely by the LC Smith hammerless in 1886. LC Smith manufactured their last hammer shotgun in 1932, while J&D Folsom made theirs in 1929. As for side lock or box lock, most guns were front action, complicated side lock. Ithaca came up with a box lock that had fewer pieces and an ingenious design.

The last big difference between shotguns was the barrel type. Decarbonized steel, steel with the carbon pounded out of it, was mostly found on lower grade guns of this period. Pounding the carbon out of the steel significantly weakened the steel. As a result, you wouldn't want to use modern rounds in decarbonized steel gun because it won't hold up to the pressure.

Laminated steel – Damascus steel and twisted steel – was made by alternating high carbon and low carbon steels, hammering it out into bars, and then for Damascus steel cutting the bar into a ribbon and twisting the ribbon together to make attractive designs. Standard versus fine Damascus steel barrels was mostly based on how fine the layers are. Most American guns were standard Damascus rather than fine Damascus since American guns needed to be less expensive so the average person could attain them.

Laminated steel barrels typically came in two color combinations: black on white or brown on white. The finishing process brings out the color and design in the steel because the etching acid works at different speeds on



the high carbon and low carbon steels, creating a color differential. The more steel in the barrel, the more it tends to be grey, rather than defined layers. The finer the lamination, the less crisp black and white it is because during the etching process, the smaller layers blend together a bit.

There was also a third kind of laminated steel called Stub Twist, created by using some iron from the scrap pile along with low carbon steel, to make a mix of high carbon and low carbon steel. This type of barrel usually has a mottled look due to the non-uniform size pieces.

In the 1880s, skilled workers made \$15 a week and unskilled workers made \$8 a week, and affordable shotguns cost anywhere from \$8 to \$20. Many farmers had a shotgun as an investment, something that cost some money, but could also provide money in the form of game, shot for both food and sale.

Acting President's Comments

In October we attempted to make our regular meeting a special meeting to vote on proposed bylaws amendments, copies of which having been mailed to every member. Article X of our current Bylaws mandates that such action take place at a regular or special meeting. However, we failed to get a quorum (20% of our total membership) in order to conduct business. We will try again to get a quorum at our December 10 meeting. Everyone is strongly encouraged to attend and remember to bring a covered dish to share as this will be our annual holiday meeting featuring good food, good company, a good show and tell, and an opportunity to buy, sell and trade collection items.

Although attendance was low as it normally is in the fall, our November show was still quite successful. There are many members, too numerous to mention here but listed elsewhere in this issue, that need to be recognized and thanked for their help over the weekend of the show. I am most grateful for their support and teamwork. As always Rick Nahas deserves accolades for his tireless efforts in managing the show. Another individual that needs to be singled out for my deep appreciation is John Satanek who stepped up to take over the important task of show security chief in the absence of Kent Jefferies. John and his volunteers put in some long hours, making sure all the bases were adequately covered. Their devotion to the cause merits special recognition.

If, by chance, we do not achieve a quorum at the December meeting, we will need to proceed under the old Bylaws and initiate the nomination process for the election of officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) at the December meeting. Let me state it has been an honor and privilege to serve as Acting President this past year but I do not intend to run for any office next year and I will decline any nominations. I have always been more comfortable in the role of Indian and not chief but there are other, more practical reasons why this club would be better served by another, better qualified individual. An organization without a head will not be very viable so start thinking who you would like to see leading the VGCA for the next two years.

One last announcement, as incentive for members to share their knowledge and collections, the Executive Committee has approved awarding honorariums in the amounts of \$50 for members and \$100 for non-members giving presentations meeting certain qualifications at our monthly meetings effective in January 2016. We are currently looking for speakers for 2016 so give it a thought and let me know if you would like to present a program next year. Technical support is available if needed.

-Jim Burgess

★ **Business Meeting for October 22, 2015:** The meeting began with Larry Hare, introducing two new membership candidates, Christopher Mooney, who collects all sorts of military weapons, sponsored by Greg Thompson; and Wesley Chappell who, in his own words, collects whatever is interesting to him. After some words

from them and their sponsors, both were unanimously accepted to the VGCA. Welcome to the club, gentlemen. Afterwards, Sign-Up sheets for the upcoming November Gun Show's security volunteers were passed around. Club Treasurer, Shannon Ziegler, brought attention to the club's redoubled advertising efforts for the November Gun Show, including fliers and advertisements both online and in local Northern Virginia papers as far south as Culpeper. Trader Jerry also placed fliers for the Gun Show in the bag with every gun he sold at the last Chantilly Show. Rick Nahas, Show Admin, then announced that all display tables for the Gun Show had been successfully sold out.

Other News!

✦ **Request for 2016 Speakers:** We still need a few more speakers for the 2016 calendar year. This is an opportunity to share your knowledge and passion for collecting guns. As was mentioned in the President's comments the Executive Committee has approved memorandums of \$50 for members and \$100 for non-members who give qualifying presentations starting with January 2016. Presentations need not be elaborate and may be put on by a group of people if you desire. Please contact any board member if you would like to present for the upcoming year. Contact information can be found on our website.

✦ **Continued Call of Articles for the Website:** We are making a call for articles for the website. They must be about guns or gun collecting not shooting sports or hunting. No political articles will be used. Articles may be about modern or antique firearms and may be historical and/or technical in nature. Detailed guidelines will be available on the website. Please fact check and proofread your own work. All articles may be submitted to Marc or Richard at web@vgca.net. Official Guidelines for articles may be found on the education page of the VGCA site.



Show and Tell

✦ **Member 1** brought in an interesting 1879 Remington Rolling Block which curiously contained a spent casing embedded in the stock of the rifle. The hypothesis that was reached about this casing's purpose was a way to quickly and easily determine the caliber the rifle was chambered to. **Member 2** brought in several double-barrel shotguns; the first being a 10 ga. made by W.H. Baker and Co. between 1877 and 1880 with a rather unique break action mechanism which requires the trigger to be pushed forward in order to open. The second was a Parker 12 ga. from the 1880's. The third being an 1896 Baker with a case hardened receiver and Damascus barrels. The fourth and final double-barrel was a Hopkinson Allen 12 ga. and was likely built between

1900 and 1903 before their production factory burned down in 1903. **Member 3** brought in a family heirloom; Folsom Arms Co, Belgium made 12 ga. with laminated steel barrels, which as they said, was probably purchased down at the local hardware store to scare off birds from the garden. They also brought in a Stevens Model 255 12 ga. with fluid steel barrels for 'Cowboy Action Shooting'. **Member 4** brought two shotguns in, the first being an 1889 Remington grade 3 16 ga. Lightweight, the second being an 1889 Remington as well, but this one was a grade 4 12 ga. with only 11 of its kind known to exist currently. **Member 5** brought in one of the stranger, and more unique weapons the club has seen; a single-shot pellet pistol made in the USSR, with a personalized laser engraving on the side from Mikhail Kalashnikov himself. The pistol also had front and rear sights which are adjustable for windage and elevation.



★ **Fall 2015 VGCA Gun Show:** Our fall gun show was a lot of fun for all those in attendance. We'd like to thank the following people for being part of the Set-up crew: Bernie Breighner, Chris Britton, Jim Burgess, Bob Chapman, Joe Ramsay-Clark, Dennis Gerdovich, Marc Gorelick, Lynn Jones, Rick Jones, Ernie Lyles, Rick Nahas, Richard Pripeton, Joe Roberts, Greg Thompson, Bill Troy, Lee Turner, and Joe Wagner. Below are the results of the display table judging from the show:

- 1st Place (\$300) went to Bill Troy for his Thompson Sub-machine gun display
- 2nd Place (\$200) went to Bill Chronister for his display titled, "EKSV, Swiss Ordonnanz Match Rifles"
- 3rd Place (\$100) went to Shannon Zeigler for his "Imperial Japanese Army Infantry Small Arms" display
- Judges' Choice Award (\$50) went to Dan Szatkowski for his display of .22 Single-Shot Pistols
- Honorable Mention was given to Bill Spence for his display focusing on the Battle of Little Big Horn.

Fall 2015 Gun Show Displays!



Above is Bill Troy's display, "Thompson Sub-Machine guns" which was awarded the first place prize for the display table judging at the show. There was an interesting story behind every one of the weapons on display. Either Bill or his Wife were always around to tell you all about them and keep you interested and informed.



To the left, we take a closer look at one of the five Thompsons, this one from WWII as well as accessories accompanying it on display, which includes some fine historical photos as well.

The couple had Thompsons from numerous generations and events on display in beautiful wood cases with class tops. Above each case was an information page not pictured explaining the contents. Bill and his Wife were more than willing to stop and talk to you about each item in the cases.



To the left, we take a closer look at another of the five Thompsons, this one from an earlier time period, as well as a 50 round drum magazine accompanying it. Included in this display were some fine historical photos and military memorabilia as well.

Below is Bill Collister's display titled "EKSV Swiss Ordonnanz Match Rifles" which was awarded second place in the display table judging at the show this year. Each gun on display had a matching document describing their specification and history in good detail and the history of these Match Rifles as a whole.



Shannon Zeigler's display on "Imperial Japanese Army Infantry Small Arms" was awarded third place in the display table judging at the show. It was a very interesting set-up, including just about everything that a typical Imperial Japanese Army Infantryman would be carrying.



Dan Szatowski's display on .22 Single-Shot pistols which had tons of interesting facts all about the history and different uses of the firearms. Some of these pistols were even advertised as toys for kids to shoot inside at one point. This display was also awarded the Judges' Choice Award for the display table judging at the show.



Bill Spence's Display on The Battle of Bull Run which was given an Honorable Mention from the judging at the show this year. There was an abundance of historical information on the events and the weapons of the time. It was definitely a truly interesting and worthwhile read.



Upcoming Events and Shows

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

VIRGINIA 2015

- December 12-13, 2015 – Fishersville, VA – Augusta Expo – *C&E Gun Shows*
- December 19-20, 2015 – Doswell, VA – Meadow Event Park – *SGK*
- January 1-3, 2016 – Chantilly, VA – Dulles Expo Center – *The Nation's Gun Show*
- January 16-17, 2016 – Hampton, VA – Convention Center – *SGK*
- January 23-24, 2016 – Manassas, VA – Prince William County Fairgrounds – *SGK*
- February 12-14, 2016 – Chantilly, VA – Dulles Expo Center – *The Nation's Gun Show*
- **March 12-13, 2016 – Manassas, VA – Prince William County Fairgrounds – *V.G.C.A Show***

MARYLAND 2015

- December 5-6, 2015 – Stevensville, MD – Kent Island American Legion – *GunShows*
- January 23-24, 2016 – Frederick, MD – Annapolis National Guard Armory – *Silverado Gun Show*

PENNSYLVANIA 2015

- **December 4-6, 2015 – Allentown, PA – Allentown Fairgrounds – *Forks of the Delaware***
- December 19-20, 2015 - York, PA – York Fairgrounds – *Appalachian Gun Shows*

The e-mail address for any Newsletter related matters or a submission is Newsletter@vgca.net. Feel free to email items for inclusion in the newsletter. For changes of address or non-receipt of the newsletter, either via email or the mailed hard-copy, please contact Larry Hare. v/r Richard Pripeton, VGCA Newsletter Editor

Membership Renewal Request (AMR-NL-2016)
Larry Hare, P.O. Box 102, Afton, VA 22920-0102

VGCA annual membership requires yearly renewal and payment of \$30.00. Life membership is still only \$150.00. If you have paid your 2015 dues, you may upgrade to life membership during the 2016 dues cycle for \$150 (only \$120 over the cost of annual membership.) 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.

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

- Enclosed is \$30.00 for CY 2016 VGCA annual membership dues.
- I wish to upgrade to Life membership in VGCA. Enclosed is \$150.00.
- Remove my name from the VGCA membership rolls.

Make all checks payable to VGCA (NO CASH PLEASE). If you have any questions contact Larry Hare, Membership Chair at (540) 946-2050 or by email at LaurenceHare@gmail.com.