

M·W·C·A

Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association Official Publication

VOLUME NO. 31

ISSUE NO. 1

JANUARY 2018



“Chickens Come Home to Roost”

can be said about some guns if a collector
is in the business long enough.

See page 15 for the story.

M • W • C • A News

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Official Publication of the Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association

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Staff Dale Peterson, Stan Nelson, Mike Foster

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Editor's Note: For those who are not familiar with Stan Nelson, he is one of the 84 original founding members of the MWCA. We want to personally thank him for his dedicated service to the MWCA, for the many interesting and informative articles he has written over the past 64 years, and especially for his service in the Marine Corps during World War II.

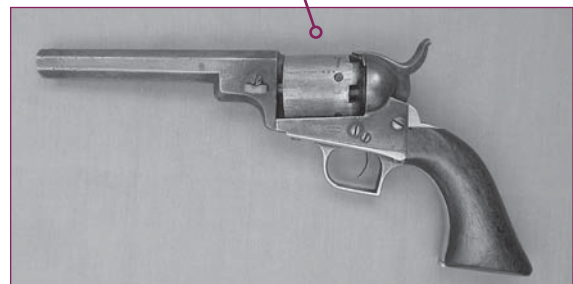
On the cover: It is often said that chickens always come home to roost. That can be said about some guns if a collector is in the business long enough. See the explanation of this in the article on page 15.

GUESS THE GUN!



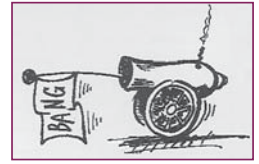
**Win a FREE business card size ad (\$25 value).
First five correct entries win!
Call Dale at 763-753-1663**

For the answer to last issue's "Guess the Gun," see page 18.



Good luck on this issue's "Guess the Gun" and remember that the first 5 winners will receive a FREE business card ad in the next MWCA News.

The President's Shot



2017 has been a great year for the MWCA.

The MWCA has had an ever evolving variety of people setting up at our shows. Look for our upcoming shows with a wide variety of items for sale and display. The knowledge of our members who attend our shows is a valuable resource to the gun owners and the collectors community.

As members of the MWCA, we must remain vigilant, contacting our elected officials. This is often overlooked when there is seemingly a low threat to our freedoms.

The MWCA continues to be active in the community. At our 2017 trophy show we gave multiple donations directly back to the community. A special thank you to our Executive Director Matt Cooklock. He has stepped forward and is leading our shows in a good direction.

A final thank you to all members and attendees to our shows. It is great to see you at the shows. You are the past, present and the future of the MWCA. Let's all work together for our continued success.

David Corbin
2018 MWCA President



2018 Show Schedule

Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association

Celebrating 64 Years!

January 13 - 14 Rochester Mayo Civic Center

March 17 - 18 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

April 21 - 22 MN State Fair Education Building

August 18 - 19 Jackpot Junction Casino, Morton MN

September 29 - 30 MN State Fair Education Building

Annual Trophy Show — Plan Your Display Now!

October 27 - 28 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

December 8 - 9 St. Paul RiverCentre

MWCA 2017 Trophy Show

Our annual trophy show was held on October 29th and 30th at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. We had fewer displays this year but received promises for more next year. If any of you collectors have not tried setting up a display, remember that it's never too late to get into the action and win a few dollars. It's a little work but very rewarding to display and talk about your collection. See you at our October 2018 Trophy Show!!!



Dave Mattson won both the “Best of Show” and the “OK Award” for his outstanding display on WWI. Many of the items on the table were actually dug up from old European battle sites.



**The Winners!
Thanks guys, you make the show a success!**

MWCA 2017 Trophy Show, continued



First place in the “Military Hand Gun” category went to Mark Reese.



Smiling Mike Splittgerber and his award winning “Modern Handguns” display.



Dale Peterson, MWCA Historian, with a display showing the early location of the MWCA shows.

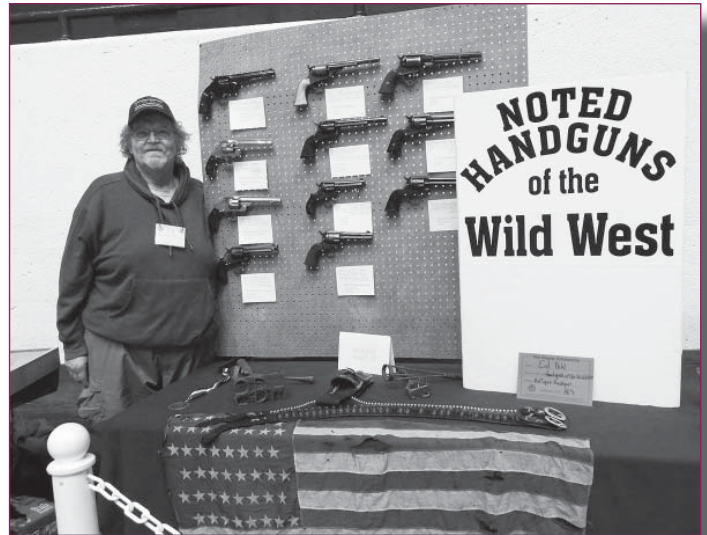


Beautiful nickel, pearl and ivory handguns of Bob Rolander’s display won the “Classic Hand Gun Award”.

MWCA 2017 Trophy Show, continued



Nick Mesenbourg with a table full of the beautiful knives he makes.



Ed Pohl was busy this year putting up three displays. This one was on Wild West Hand Guns.



Ed is truly a Military collector "Extraordinaire." Those are actual TANK Tracks that you see on his table.



Busy Ed with his Russian Long Guns of WWII display.

MWCA 2017 Trophy Show, continued



Rob Pfeffer with his display of "Cacano Rifles." Rob received an award for the "Best Gun."



Rex Brown received an award for his "Classic Long Guns"



Nice collections of percussion long guns and accouterments were brought by Al Rehder.

MWCA 2017 Trophy Show, continued



Ingvar Alm received an award for his early antique Air Rifles.



Grace Kotte with a customer at her table. She is smiling; maybe she just made a sale.



These two were wandering in the hall early Sunday Morning. I guess Barb could not find their table and did not want to ask husband Tom for help.



We were visited by the past MWCA Executive Director Gail Foster and husband Mike. Mike is instrumental in assembling this MWCA publication.

We need articles for the next MWCA News.

How about those of you that displayed, and others, sharing some of your knowledge about your personnel collections? That was the original intent of the MWCA founders. Don't worry about correct spelling and grammar as we have people to correct the articles submitted. If we didn't you would not be able to read some of the stuff I put together. Contact me, Dale Peterson, at 763-753-1663 or any of the MWCA board members.

Still Learning

By Stan Nelson

This rambling narrative is something of an appendix to my previous article “LEARNING THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE.” Though episodic in nature my collector friends may find something of interest here.

I signed up for Marine Raider training primarily to escape the horrors of officer’s mess duty, but it proved to be the right move for me at the time. The unorthodox field training was both physically and mentally demanding, but unlike boot camp, we were treated with respect. Even those who didn’t make it were thanked by the captain for volunteering.

Raider training was hard and not without accidents. I saw my first dead and wounded Marines in California. While we were learning to handle rubber rafts in the surf off the coast of Oceanside one of the rafts was flipped over by a wave. Though wearing packs, ammo belts and slung rifles, all but one of the ten guys aboard kept hold of the safety rope attached around the top of the raft. The missing man’s body washed ashore next morning minus his rifle and ammo belt; he had tried hard to make it.



Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR)

We had to qualify with all the infantry issue weapons and, as in boot camp, firearms safety was the primary concern; an accidental discharge could lead to brig time or worse. One day on the rifle range our company had been shooting the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). An instructor was now showing us how to detail strip and clean the piece. With the BAR partially dismantled he used a live 30-06 cartridge to show how it fired on the forward motion of the bolt.

The bullet missed a couple of us but hit the guy next to me who fell across the table with a serious chest wound. A medic was soon on the scene, we were all ordered back to our quarters, and the instructor, a corporal with combat experience, was taken to our HQ tent. We heard later that the kid recovered, but we never saw him again, nor did we ever hear what happened to the dangerous instructor.

A week or so later we were involved in a worse scenario. Crouching in fox holes we listened to the staccato of overhead machine gun fire and the swish and thump of 60 MM mortar rounds. Safe enough; the machine guns were locked in position and the mortars were sighted to drop 150 yards ahead of us. But a short mortar round fell right on our line, killing one man and wounding three others. Another tragedy.

This called for an official investigation, which did not interrupt our training. Our Captain finally told us something that we already knew. That mortar ammo was over 20 years old, from some National Guard Armory. The date of the manufacture was on the shell cartons. Most new production ammo was going to Europe. (I remember shooting .45ACP bullets with 1918 head stamps.) My friend Dick Goss was in mortars and said that even on Guam they received some 10 year old shells. We all had something to bitch about besides the chow.

But Raider training also had more pleasant surprises. One morning our bugler sounded assembly and we lined up on our rustic parade grounds. A few civilians were talking with our officers and one of them, a well built man with a trim beard, was armed with a long bow and a quiver full of arrows. His name was Howard Hill and he was an internationally known archer. He was here apparently to demonstrate the possibilities of bows and arrows in jungle warfare. Whose idea that was never came to light.

Hill put on an amazing show for us. At about 30 feet an assistant rapidly threw a series of 6” cardboard discs into the air, and Hill drawing arrows from the quiver behind his shoulder, put an arrow through every one. Next he put arrows through the chests of man sized targets at distances from 25 to 50 yards. He also broke several balloons rising high in the air without a miss.



Howard Hill with Errol Flynn

Still Learning, continued

In the question and answer period which followed this performance Hill acknowledged that it had taken years of practice to achieve his skill. I might add we were never issued bows and arrows. Hill did the trick shooting in many movies and, for those interested, may be seen in "The Adventures of Robin Hood" starring Errol Flynn on video or DVD.

Another incident with a near fatal finale I remember mainly because I was involved after the fact. At a late evening camp during one of our marches a couple of guys with empty canteens were looking for water in a rocky creek bed. Inadvertently disturbing some rattle snakes, one guy suffered a penetrating snake bite on his cheek. A jeep took the kid back to camp where we arrived late the next day. A call went out for a donor with type O blood, this information being on our dog tags. This sounded urgent so I went to the medic's tent and gave a direct transfusion. The kid looked pretty bad, with a swollen purple face, but eventually he recovered.



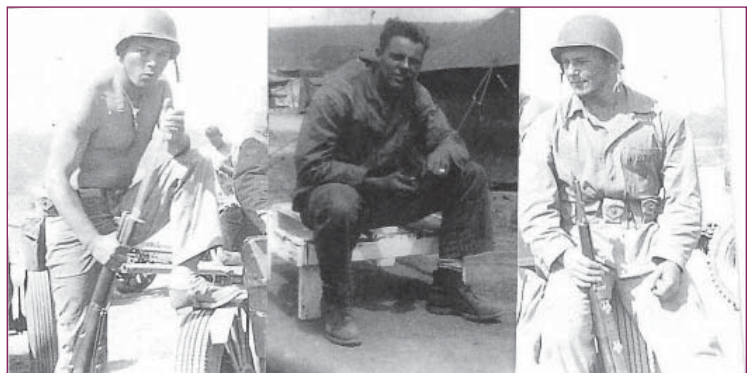
"Stash"

A cherished memory of those California days is a hunting trip. Raider training consisted of 13 days of hard work followed by 3 days of Liberty. Intrigued by tales of debauchery told by our NCO's, most of the avid listeners headed for L.A. to investigate. A few of us lived on the rifle range with all the free ammo we wanted; all you had to do was sign for it. My buddy "Stash" Woropay and I had seen some of the small California white tail deer on our field trips. Woropay had never tasted venison, so with bed rolls and "C" rations we headed for the hills. In centuries past this large piece of real estate had been ranch country; visual evidence of this still remained. Topping a ridge we surprised a small herd of wild horses with long manes and tails who whirled away at our approach. There was water here, a cold water creek, and with plenty of fire wood nearby we made our camp. After some "C" ration stew we heated water in our canteen cups for coffee and, seated on our bedrolls, we discussed events of the recent past and the potentials of our future. After which we hit the sack.

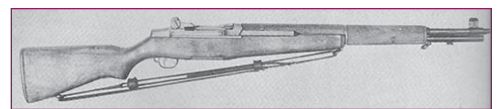
We awoke to a few drops of rain and constructed a lean-to with our shelter halves to cover our gear. Then with loaded rifles we headed up the valley looking for deer. Luck was with us again for we soon flushed a small white tail buck at which we fired simultaneously. He kept going and Woropay fired again, dropping him in his tracks. "Stash" was as happy as a kid with his first BB gun. He even wanted to carry the deer back to camp on his shoulders which was all right with me.

What a treat. We dined that evening on broiled venison, canned beans, and a couple of those petrified chocolate "Jungle Ration" bars for desert. We were also entertained by a chorus of coyotes, who kept their distance, no doubt aware of firearms. In the morning they were still around, watching us from the hills. Later, before leaving, we cut up the deer carcass with our Ka-Bar knives and spread the chunks around in appreciation of the coyote serenade. Woropay never forgot that hunting trip (his first) and often referred to it in post war years (with considerable emotion).

As I have previously written, those of us who graduated Raider training were sent to New Caledonia, a French island near Australia, as replacements for the four Raider Battalions. Some of us, including myself, Woropay, Bracamonte and others from our company were assigned to the 4th Raider Battalion who were just back from combat in the Northern Solomon Islands. Some of them still carried Johnson rifles and had large "Gung Ho" knives on their belts which looked like a small version of the "Bolo" knife used on the Pacific island sugar cane plantations.

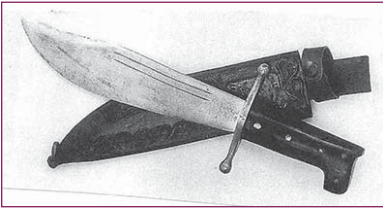


Woropay, Bracamonte, Stan Nelson 1943



Government Issue Deer Rifle, M-1 Garand

Still Learning, continued



Bolo Knife

In mid January, 1944, all Raider units left New Caledonia heading for Guadalcanal to establish a permanent base. We had some unexpected excitement here. Our fleet of transport ships had been guided to a sandy beach near a river and had started ship to shore unloading. We, of course, were part of the work force. The sound of diving airplanes brought this to a halt.

Some Jap planes coming in from the north had been intercepted by some Marine Wildcats from Henderson field on the canal and we watched in fascination. Our Wildcats shot down three twin engine Jap bombers, apparently headed for our troop ships, but had trouble with the faster and more maneuverable Jap Zero. Using two against one team work our Wildcat Pilots finally had a couple of Zero's in flames which ended in explosions; and the remaining Japs, probably low on gas, left for home. Our planes, two of them trailing smoke, headed back to Henderson Field. Gratefully we went back to setting up camp; it had been a close call.



Our New Home

Our new home was in the orderly rows of trees in a coconut plantation, perfectly spaced for our four man tents, but it was no vacation home. Things started happening. The four Raider battalions were organized into a new 4th Regiment under Col. Alan Shapley, and he arrived with our first assignment. This was the capture of Emirua, a small island north of Rabaul, wanted for a landing strip and fuel station for marine fighter planes flying cover for long distance bombers.

This was a relatively bloodless operation and after a month or so we were back on the 'Canal where living conditions were improving. Gaudal Canal is a sizeable island and had a growing navy and army presence north of our camp.

We marines even had a mess hall now. A tin roof on posts, with plank tables and benches. Our chow was mostly bulk C rations though we at times had powdered eggs and Spam for breakfast. And there were other sources.

Using hand grenades, we had a variety of fresh fish from rivers near our camp. One member of G Company was an avid and fearless fisherman. In a rubber raft, using improvised fishing tackle, he would spend most of a moonlit night drifting over the coral reefs a half mile offshore. Often one of us would go with him to handle the boat, for he caught big fish. Enough for the whole company, Sword fish, Barracuda and Sharks.

He was popular with the officers whose cooks knew how to prepare such culinary delights. One of our cooks did a good job with Shark steaks. He fried them in peanut oil drained from the gallon cans of peanut butter we swiped from army food depots. He was a character; we called him "Egghead" for his dome shaped skull. On Guam, while unloading a crate of C rations, he suffered a cut eyebrow and later asked for a purple heart. (He didn't get it.)

In May, 1944, training for the Marianas campaign began. This took us through the thickest jungles we had yet seen. With "Gung Ho" knives and sharpened bayonets we hacked our way to a previously determined objective. One of these arduous trips, led by Lt. Leo Gotsponer, had a real purpose in mind. We encountered a long swath of downed trees and brush at the end of which lay an American TBF. The Lt. said a coast watcher had seen the plane go down a year earlier. The desiccated remains of the pilot and gunner were still there. No longer "Missing in action," perhaps some solace for the folks back home.

Back at our camp in the coconut grove we could see the various ships of war assembling for a convoy to the Marianas. We wondered what the discomforts might be on whatever craft we were assigned to. We found out soon enough. In early June, crammed like sardines in the "Living" quarters of an LST full of Amphtracs, we learned that we would be aboard till we hit Guam.

Still Learning, continued

Adaptation is the key to survival, and a few incidents helped break the monotony. One windy day a huge waterspout swept through the convoy; we had been ordered below before it hit us but we saw it coming. Topside later we saw stuff floating by and we now had more room. Anything not securely tied down was gone. Some sailors were missing too but wearing life jackets were soon picked up. A week or so later the convoy was strafed by four Jap Zero fighter planes, possibly from an aircraft carrier.

Woropay and I were sitting on the fantail of our LST looking back to where we heard machine gun fire. Suddenly a Zero came up between the two lanes of our convoy and banking slightly came out of the lane right behind our LST where Woropay and I were crouching. In that fraction of a second we had a clear view of the pilot who smiled and waved as he flashed by. Then staying just above the water he finally rose into the clouds from which he and his compatriots has dropped. This gave us something to talk about; had the intrepid pilot turned out of the lane because he had seen us on the LST? (He was probably out of ammunition.)



Japanese Zero

On July 21st we finally made our landing on Guam, of which I have previously written. Many of my friends were killed or wounded the first week. (I never saw Woropay again, though we corresponded after the war). We developed a vast respect for Jap artillery, the only defense being a deep hole, which is hard to make in coral rock. In our beach landing we lost more men than in all the Banzai attacks on Guam. In combat one does not have time to dwell on these facts but they get stored in your memory for later review.



Results of a Banazi Attack, 4th Marines on Guam, Enemy bodies at the end of the battle. Opossum Patrol checking for those playing dead!

But funny things happen too, and are also remembered. Like crawling, and sometimes running, up the slopes of Mt. Alifan looking for die hard Jap soldiers we came to a small creek. What a break! With empty canteens, and sweating in the hot sun, we took turns guzzling water and filling canteens, then continued our climb. Not much later we discovered the source of the creek. This was a spring fed pool and in it lay the bloated bodies of two Jap soldiers. As the word spread there was some moaning, but Sgt. Hank Bauer put it in perspective, "What the hell, we'll probably all get killed tomorrow."

That day was full of surprises. About noon we came under fire from what looked like a reinforced

cave. With the help of a Bazooka and a few grenades we gained entry. The cave ran back about 20 feet and was lined with shelves full of long necked bottles of "Sake" Japanese beer and a lemon tasting soft drink. Many bottles had been broken by the rocket and grenades, and our Captain posted a guard on the cave. A runner was sent back to H.Q. notifying Col. Shapley of our find, and our officers took inventory of the liquor. Late that afternoon word came from Col. Shapley: demolish the cave and its contents, dig in for the night and return in the morning. Our Col. was a realist.

With us that night was Alvin Josephy, a Marine Corps. correspondent whose reports of our doings (censored) were relayed to U.S. newspapers. In later years I met him at meetings of The Western History Association of which we were both members. He was also Book Editor of "American Heritage" publications, and wrote of his experience on Guam. We had something in common.

Still Learning, continued



Japanese NCO with his
Samurai Sword

We found other caches of “Sake” on Guam which often led us to conjecture about its possible use as “Bottled Courage” in those irrational Banzai attacks which, though scary, were counter-productive in their loss of life. Just as useless were those personal attacks by sword swinging Junior officers with a few loyal followers, hoping to behead a Marine or two before joining their ancestors. Perhaps it’s a cultural hang up. Japanese folk heroes are Samurai Swordsmen. During WWII Japan had the only major army which issued swords to officers and NCO’s. These had long curved blades and long hilts for the two hand overhead swing, designed for the art of decapitation. They were handy for beheading wounded men or unwanted prisoners; evidence of this was plentiful.

Marine patrols in Northern Guam found several scenes of mass murder. Bodies of native men, hands tied behind their backs, and heads scattered around like winter squash. At one site a Jap sword was thrust into the ground, a handy souvenir for one of our officers. But memory is a better souvenir for some things; it made killing wounded Japs easier for us.

We had left Guadalcanal June 1st and those of us who returned were happy to get back 3 months later. It looked like home. But things were different now. Replacements were filling the gaps in our ranks, all strangers of course, including most of our company officers. A new division was formed, the 6th, consisting of the 4th, 22nd and 29th Regts, plus artillery, tank, and medical units. Gen. L.C. Shepherd was our commander.

My situation changed also: with Woropay, Bracamonte and others gone, I accepted a position as Recreation Assistant (boxing instructor) in H.Q. BN. which I came to regret. Things went well for a while, but a couple of months later, when division combat training began in earnest, I had a lot of free time (unlike my boxing students). I felt guilty at times; what was I doing in H.Q.? I was a Raider, I had been in combat – so ran my thoughts.

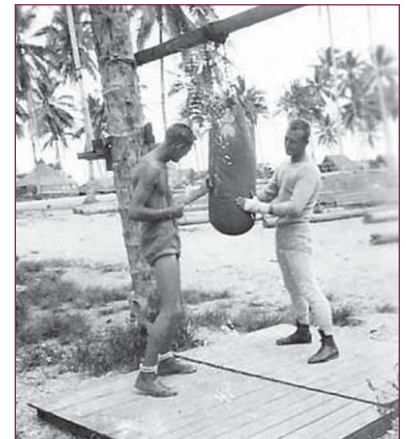
Anyhow, in March, 1945, I and other flunkies were left behind as our 6th Division steamed toward a rendezvous at Okinawa. Helping me with cleanup duties was a Sgt. Persky, recovering from a wound received on Guam. He wanted to rejoin his infantry Co. So, after pleading our case, we eventually got a ride on an ammo ship heading for Okinawa.

We were put ashore at a wrecked set of buildings near which we could see a U.S. Army tent where a helpful Lt. gave us guidance. Sgt. Persky had a compass and, with full canteens, we headed east.

It took over 2 days to reach 6th DV. H.Q. and locate our 4th Rgt. where Persky went to his infantry company and I was assigned as guard for Graves and Registration details. I was able to help here, for Persky and I had seen a number of dead marines on our trip.

Most of the G&R trucks were going further east toward Shuri Ridge where the rumble of artillery was almost constant. The movement of G and R trucks to and from the battle zone was also almost constant. I could see why at the large tent where bodies were prepared for burial. In a large cleared area were rows of cleaned bodies or wrapped body parts on stretchers. I recognized two from my machine gun company. Years later my old friend Bracamonte said he was wounded in the fire fight in which they were killed.

But the Japs had suffered greater losses. Remnants of their army were moving to fortified areas in the south while many dissidents were slipping north through our lines, mostly at night. So I found myself on a machine gun again, covering various roads. Nights were pretty busy for a couple of weeks. Machine guns draw fire and we moved around quite a bit. We often heard a “Screaming Meemie.”

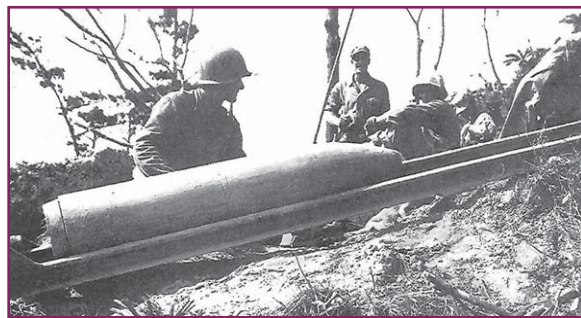


Stan Nelson HQ Boxing Instructor
Guadalcanal 1944

Still Learning, continued

This was a 5 foot 650 lb. rocket. Ignited by a hand held hammer, it shot skyward on a bed of parallel steel rails embedded in concrete. It was wildly inaccurate but could be heard a mile away, which made people nervous. We never knew where it was headed and it was powerful, killing a number of marines in our area. (See page 384 in GOODBYE DARKNESS by WM. Manchester.)

But, despite Screaming Meemies, Banzi attacks, Kamikaze planes and Samurai Swords, Okinawa was declared secured on June 21st, though a few guys discovered it was not yet safe for souvenir hunting.



Screaming Meemie

The 6th Division now headed back to a new base on Guam to prepare for the “Big One”: the invasion of Japan.

Fortunately that never happened. After the A Bombs, Emperor Hirohito, the 124th direct descendant of the Sun Goddess Amateurish, accepted the terms of an unconditional surrender. This triggered a series of ritual suicides among the surviving members of his military hierarchy, probably worried about being tried as war criminals (as some of them were).

Coming up from Guam my outfit, the 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment, took part in a different ritual. We became the first foreign invaders to set foot on the mainland of Japan. This happened at 5:50 A.M. on August 30, 1945. See p. 203, HISTORY OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, Ed. by Bevan C. Cass, 1948.

SEMPER FIDELIS. Every Marine knows this bit of Latin (and its true meaning).

PS. My thanks to Dale Peterson whose translation of my miserable hand writing is beyond the call of an Editor’s duty.

A Tale of Two Cities	Chicago, IL	Houston, TX
Population	2.7 million	2.15 million
Concealed Carry Legal	No	Yes
Number of Gun Stores	None	184 dedicated gun stores plus 1,500 legal places to buy guns: Wal-Mart, K-mart, sporting goods, etc.
Homicides, 2012	1,806	207
Homicides per 100K	38.4	9.6
Avg. January high temperature (F)	31	63

Conclusion: Cold weather causes murders. This is due to global warming.

Chickens Come Home to Roost

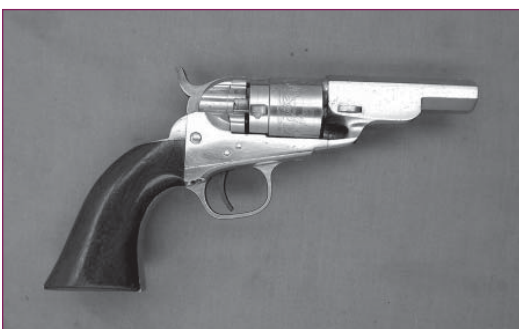
By Dale H. Peterson

It is often said that chickens always come home to roost and I guess that can be said about some guns if a collector is in the business long enough.

This short article is about a short barreled revolver I like to call “Stubies” or “Belly Gun” often carried in the belt, undercover, and used at a short range. Such a revolver is this Colt Pocket Navy conversion in the 38 rim fire caliber with a 3” barrel, no ejector rod or loading gate.



Top photo: 1862 Pocket Navy, .36 caliber Percussion, 5 1/2” Barrel, SN 13049 produced in 1862.



Left and right view of the New Model Breech Loading Pistol, .38 RF caliber, 3” Barrel, SN 20745, converted from an original percussion revolver like SN 13049, converted in 1871-72

According to a book coauthored by a good friend of mine, Bill Pirie, entitled “Variations of Colts” a study of Colt conversions. There were approximately 24,000 1862 Police and Pocket Navy revolvers that were converted from percussion to cartridge. Most of these were from an overrun of percussion revolvers that were no longer in style as cartridge revolvers had taken over the market in the early 1870s. Only 410 were made in this configuration with the 3” barrel and are found in the serial number range between 19900 and 21200. This particular revolver is number 20745. They were finished in nickel and blue, with the majority having the nickel finish. Bruce Mc. Dowell’s book “A Study of Colt Conversions”, published in 1997, states that it is an extremely rare configuration and in his book he states he has only seen 9 such revolvers.

Now let us get back to the “Chickens.” Bill and I both have an interest in Colt conversions; Bill being more knowledgeable than me as his main interest is in Colts. He knew I was interested in a short barrel conversion and said he would bring several to the next Duluth Gun Show, and he would sell me one.

Bill made his annual trip to Duluth last June and after we got done with the hand shaking, health issues and how was the family doing etc., I asked if he brought any “Stubies” with him. He opened his bag and laid out 6 of them on the table. Wow. McDowell had only seen 9 and here were 6 in front of me at one time in various conditions but all genuine. Needless to say I was drawn to the one with all the bright finish. I looked over the assortment and purchased what I thought was the best of the bunch. If you are only going to have one, it should be a good one.

After our transaction was complete Bill asked me if I remembered that particular gun and I said “No, I do not think so.” “Well, you should. You sold it to me 48 years ago at an old Anoka Armory gun show.” WOW! 1969, that is one I should have kept. I then recalled that I had sold or traded two guns to him. One was a Colt Single Action Army Artillery and also this conversion. I think I ended

up with a Smith & Wesson, as I had an interest in Smiths at that time, and maybe a few dollars. I’m glad his memory was better than mine and I really appreciated getting the little Colt conversion, especially a rare one. Thanks Bill.

So, if a guy hangs around long enough a few of them do come back, so to say, TO ROOST.

MWCA's Appraising Service Entering Fourth Year

By Mark D. Reese

Last April marked the third year MWCA members offered free appraisals of firearms and related accoutrements at our spring show in the Education Building at the MN State Fair Grounds. A complete list of items we offer to appraise is listed on show fliers available before the show and are posted on sign boards at the show. Mr. Matthew Cooklock, MWCA Executive Director, also directs many customers seeking evaluation service or help to this show. During the 2017 show, just as in the past, our volunteer staff of appraisers were very busy evaluating a wide variety of items. I think it is safe to say our appraisers see some unique, relatively rare and many times very high quality items.

This free service really sets MWCA apart from any other gun show venue. Show attendees seem to really appreciate the professional customer service we provide. Collectors and business owners both know that developing a positive rapport with fellow collectors or customers is vital if transactions are to occur on a regular basis. All of us appreciate fairness and honesty.

Mr. Dale Peterson, cochairman of the annual appraising event, brought numerous examples of firearms and spent a great deal of time explaining condition. It appears from the collector, retailer and customer sides that condition is often misunderstood and oftentimes overestimated. Having something tangible for comparison sake has been very beneficial.

If you like looking at firearms and related accoutrements, enjoy meeting new people and like to help others, maybe volunteering to work a shift as an appraiser is for you. We really need more help staffing our booth and there is a need for a wider variety of expertise. If you are willing to help us out, please contact me at mdrsales@hotmail.com.



29th Annual Heritage Arms Society's Antique Arms Collectors Show

Saturday, March 31, 2018 • 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Public Welcome - Admission \$5.00 (Age 16 and under free with adult) - Free Parking all day.

**Friday, March 30, 2018 • 12:00 - 6:00 PM
(members & exhibitors only)**

This is Minnesota's longest-running show dedicated exclusively to antique sporting arms, accoutrements, ammunition, edged weapons and militaria produced from pre-Colonial days through WW 2.

This vetted quality arms show is sponsored and attended by leading collectors who offer and display historical, antique & collectable arms & related items.

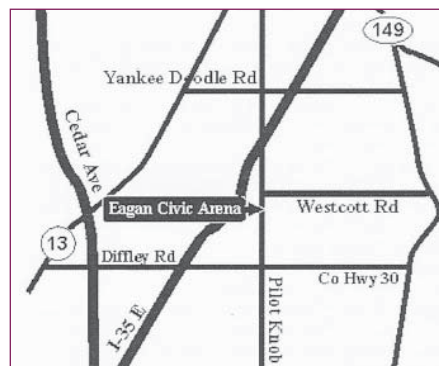
Only legal historic arms and related items produced before 1945 are allowed.

Expert appraisals available.

For table reservations call evenings 651-260-4532.

Eagan Civic Arena

3830 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, Minnesota.
One mile South of 35E on Pilot Knob Road.
(3 miles South of 494)



Future HAS Date: March 30, 2019

Firearms Appraising

By Dale H. Peterson

Over the past several years I have been asked to appraise gun collections which generally start out with a phone call. The call usually follows this pattern: “I have Grandpa’s old 1897 Winchester, what is it worth?” Generally I would respond by asking, “What is a ’57 Chevy worth without looking at it” and on the other end of the phone I would hear a “HUH.” I would go on to explain it is hard to determine the value without seeing the item’s condition. “Oh, it is in good condition.” “OK, how much blue is left, has the barrel been cut off, does it have the correct wood, is there a recoil pad, what gauge is it, etc.” “Oh, I guess you need to see it!” As you can see, it is nearly impossible to do an appraisal over the phone unless, of course, you have a smart phone and can send pictures. But then an older fellow, such as I am, does not really know how to operate one of those fancy devices.



Often the owner will say that for a 100 year old gun it is in good condition. Well, according the “NRA Condition Standards of Firearms,” “Good” is at the lower end of the scale. When working the Appraisal Table at the last April Gun Show I brought the same make and model rifle in different condition and configurations. It was easier to show what determines the different values. The examples were 1894 Winchester rifles and rated them like the old Sears and Roebuck catalogs did: “Good, Better, Best.” You got what you paid for at Sears. Maybe that was a bad analogy, as some of the readers may not remember the old mail order catalog company.

If you watch the “Antique Road Show” you will often hear the appraiser say “For Insurance Value...” which was about a third more than the appraised price. I think the reasoning for this is if you kept the item for a number of years the price would increase like an investment. Some investments are a gamble just like the stock market and the guns have high and low trends also. Examples of this: a few years back little Stevens

Boy’s rifles were really a hot item until the market was flooded with them and the price dropped considerably. More recent was Remington Nylon 66 rifles following the same kind of trend, with the exception of the rarer ones as with the Stevens.

Appraisals can have three different values:

“Wholesale, Retail and Insurance.” Wholesale generally is based on the owner’s need for money and a quick sale. Thus, more people would have the opportunity to get in on the action at a lower price. A retail situation (Retail Situation ... I got that from the Antique Road Show) is what you would expect to pay for at a gun show or auction, whether live or catalogue sale. Insurance value is as mentioned above.

In the above pictures I’ve tried to show the different things that determine the value of firearms. Being that we do not publish this in color I’ll try to explain the physical condition of each rifle.

Good: Standard 1894 Winchester Rifle, octagon barrel, full magazine, plain wood with a crescent butt plate, standard sights, condition of the bore, this one happens to be in the 30 WCF caliber. It has the features mentioned so we go to the condition: Receiver has a patina finish and has lost most of the blue finish, wood is solid but shows discoloring and wear, very good bore, front sight is not original (not shown). According to the NRA standards it would be in the **Very Good** to the **Good** category.

Firearms Appraising, continued

Better: Standard 1894 Winchester rifle with the same features but better wood with varnish remaining, the receiver has nice blue but is thinning, excellent bore, shows some case colors on the hammer and lever, express rear sight. The major difference is that this is an antique manufactured before 1898 which enhances the value. NRA standards would be in the **Fine** category.

Best: Standard 1894 Winchester with similar features but bright blue, excellent wood with most of the original varnish, very good case colors on the hammer and lever, 32 WS caliber with the special sight to go along with this caliber. Overall just a beautiful rifle and would be in the NRA **Excellent** category.

The 4th 1894 is in a completely different category because of the Factory Special Order Features which make it harder to appraise: bright blue, bright case colors on the hammer and lever, shot gun butt, sling swivels, take-down, rare 22" barrel with an even rarer $\frac{3}{4}$ magazine, Lyman receiver sight. All of these features are on the Winchester Factory letter. Better get some help on this one.

There are references that can help appraise firearms such as: *Blue Book of Gun Values* modern and antique, auction catalogues, fellow collectors and there are always the internet auctions but first you need to understand the condition of the firearm.

Listed below are the NRA Antique Firearm Condition Standards:

- **Factory New:** All original parts; 100% original finish, in perfect condition in every respect, inside and out.
- **Excellent:** All original parts; over 80% original finish; sharp lettering, numerals and design on metal and wood; unmarred wood; fine bore.
- **Fine:** All original parts; over 30% original finish; sharp lettering, numerals and design on metal and wood; minor marks in wood; good bore.
- **Very Good:** All original parts; none to 30% original finish; original metal surfaces smooth with all edges sharp; clear lettering, numerals and design on metal; wood slightly scratched or bruised; bore disregarded for collectors firearms.
- **Good:** Some minor replacement parts; metal smoothly rusted or lightly pitted in places, cleaned or re-blued; principal letters, numerals and design on metal legible; wood refinished, scratched bruised or minor cracks repaired; in good working order.
- **Fair:** Some major parts replaced; minor replacement parts may be required; metal rusted, may be lightly pitted all over, vigorously cleaned or re-blued; rounded edges of metal and wood, principal lettering, numerals and design on metal partly obliterated, wood scratched, bruised, cracked or repaired where broken; in fair working order or can be easily repaired and placed in working order.
- **Poor:** Major and minor parts replaced, major replacement parts required and extensive restoration needed; metal deeply pitted; principal lettering, numerals and design obliterated, wood badly scratched, bruised, cracked or broken; mechanically inoperative; generally undesirable as a collector's firearm.

Last Issue's Guess the Gun

No winner on the last issue's Guess the Gun. Well, it was a Colt Model 1848 Baby Dragoon Revolver, serial number 424, 31 Caliber, 5" barrel with the butt inscribed "MN. NISBET." Nisbet was a surgeon in the 53rd Regiment, Virginia Infantry, C.S.A. There were 15,000 1848s manufactured from 1847 through 1850.





Founded in 1954

MWCA Contributes

Thank You

**for your support of the
Minnesota Weapons
Collectors Association!**

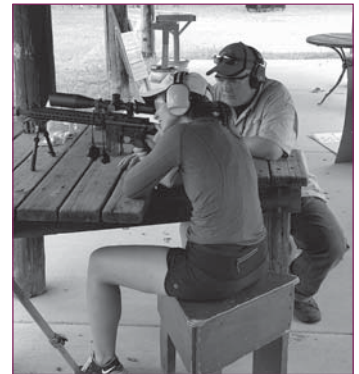
MWCA donated \$23,250

during 2017 to a wide variety of local youth-oriented firearms safety and skill development organizations and the National Rifle Association:

- Minnetonka Game and Fish Club
- Owatonna Gun Club:
- South Metro Friends of NRA
- Edina Firearms Safety Class
- Red Arrow Camp
- American Legion Post 435
- Northern Star Council
- Buffalo Youth Shooting Sports
- Boy Scouts Troop 406
- Minnesota Volunteer Safety Instructors Association
- NRA-ILA
- NRA Museum

“Women On Target”

More than thirty ladies got acquainted with a variety of firearms at the Minnetonka Game & Fish Club while attending the annual “Women on Target” day, thanks to the MWCA’s contribution.



For 2018: All requests for contributions must be submitted in writing to the MWCA Board of Directors by October 1, 2018 to be considered in the MWCA 2018 budget. In addition, you must agree to have a representative attend the December 2018 show to receive that contribution.

Minnesota Weapons

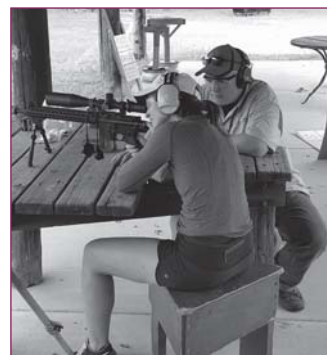
Post Office Box 662, Hopkins MN 55343 • Phone/Fax 612/721-8976

The Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association was established in 1954 by a group of collecting enthusiasts. The MWCA provides an opportunity for collectors to buy, sell, and trade firearms, and provides a forum for social interaction and fellowship for those interested in the hobby of arms collecting. Up to eight shows are sponsored each year throughout Minnesota.

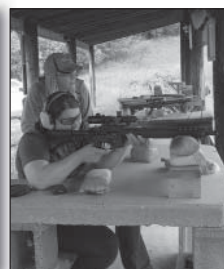
Founded in 1954, MWCA is the largest and oldest gun collecting group in Minnesota.



The Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association is a member and contributor to the NRA and displays at NRA annual conventions.



MWCA contributes to firearms safety and skill development organizations.



MWCA donated \$23,000 for education of young shooters in 2017.

Visit www.mwca.org for more information.

Collectors Association

Visit www.mwca.org

The Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association is a proud supporter of the Minnesota State High School Clay Target League!



MWCA awards scholarships to students entering college. Visit www.mwca.org for details.

MWCA Show Dates

January 13 - 14 Rochester Mayo Civic Center

March 17 - 18 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

April 21 - 22 MN State Fair Education Building

August 18 - 19 Jackpot Junction Casino, Morton MN

September 29 - 30 MN State Fair Education Building

Annual Trophy Show

October 27 - 28 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

December 8 - 9 St. Paul RiverCentre

Visit www.mwca.org

And Facebook.



Free - up to \$25.00 admission value MWCA Show Pass

For student participating in the State High School Clay Target League Trap Shooting Championship and parents, brothers & sisters.

Present this pass directly to ticket-taker.

(Valid through December 8, 2018. No reproductions.)

Show hours Sat. 8 - 5, Sun. 9 - 3

Under 18 not admitted without parent or guardian.

www.mwca.org

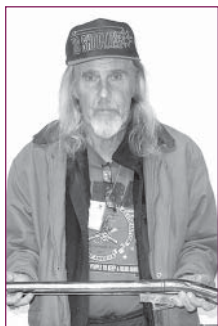
In Memoriam

Remembrances by Dale H. Peterson



Gary Kottke

Gary started coming to the MWCA shows as a teenager and was one of the most knowledgeable persons on any firearm ever made. If you had a question on just about any gun whether it was correct, value, production date, etc., he always seemed to have the answer. He served as Secretary on the Board of Directors, Judge at the Trophy Shows and was always willing to help when ever asked. He was a good friend and will be missed.



Ingvar Alm

Ingvar was an active MWCA member and collector. He always displayed his vintage air rifles at shows. He received an award at the 2017 Trophy Show.



Clair Eigen

Clair was an active member in the 1960s – 1970s. He served on the Board of Directors as Treasurer. He was the guy that got me into this collecting game. I shared tables with him at the old Anoka Gun Shows. Many memories of the shows we traveled together will always be a highlight of my life. He was a good friend with a ready smile and will be missed by his family and the older collectors who remember him.



Vern Berning

Vern will be long remembered for his displays at our annual Trophy Shows and for the many times he represented the club at the NRA shows. He had served on the Board of Directors and was an active member of the MWCA for many years.

Robert J. “Bob” Klink

His close friends always jokingly called him “Colonel Klink.” He was one of the Good Guys, always with a big smile. He enjoyed the Tulsa Gun Shows where he seemed to always find some Winchesters that he would bring to the MWCA shows.

Allen Thies

Al, an ex Marine, was a long time member, his main collecting interest was military weapons and accouterments. He will be missed by his close circle of Military Collector buddies.

Mark E. Lee

Graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point; was a veteran of 6 ½ years in the U. S. Army.

Walt Beinke

Walt Beinke was a long time member of the MWCA. Walt was a very active member and set up at all the local gun shows.

Letters to the Editor

Hi Dale,

This 2017 issue is the best and largest issue I can recall. A great job was done by all involved and Stan Nelson’s contribution was extremely interesting. His boot camp description brought many memories I made 25 years later in Army basic training.

Ron Geppert

Thank you for such a wonderful January 2017 publication. Best ever, I think. Please pass on my thanks to Stan Nelson for his service to our country and for such a great article.

Jim Stoker

Past President, MWCS

Meet Your 2018 Board Of Directors

Dave Corbin President, Dave Feinwachs Vice President, Brian VanKleek Treasurer, Jim Walters Secretary and Dale Peterson Historian. If you have any questions and/or suggestions about MWCA policies, show rules etc., they will be glad to answer them.



Dave Corbin
President



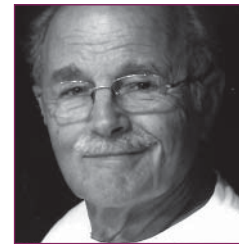
Dave Feinwachs
Vice President



Jim Walters
Secretary



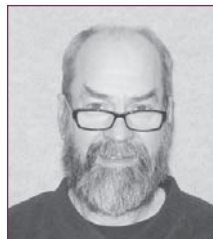
Brian VanKleek
Treasurer



Dale H. Peterson
Historian



John Chappue



David Hinrichs



Jim Wright



Ed Pohl
Trophy Show Coordinator

We wish to thank
Mark Reese for his
terms of service.



Tony Schwab, MWCA Life Member and Past President, presented Gail Foster with her MWCA Life Membership at the October 2017 Trophy Show.

Support The MWCA!

Visit www.mwca.org for show, membership and other important info.



Support The NRA!

Sign up now! Call 800-672-3888 or go to www.nra.org



Just in case you find any mistakes in this MWCA publication, please remember that they were put there for a purpose. We try to offer something for everyone. Some people are always looking for mistakes and we didn't want to disappoint you!

Consider becoming a member of the Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association!

- **Responsible firearms ownership.**
- **The enjoyment of collecting.**
- **Firearms safety.**
- **Hunting and shooting sports.**

Without involvement of our current members and the encouragement of new members of all ages to join the MWCA, the enjoyment of firearms and interest in ownership that brings you to our shows will not continue to grow.

Help us to promote safe and rewarding firearms use and to contribute funds to other organizations that share and teach the same values.

As you can see from reading this publication, there are many reasons to become a MWCA member.

Visit our membership table at a show or our website www.mwca.org for more information about the benefits of joining the MWCA!

MWCA is the largest and oldest weapons collectors group in the state of Minnesota.