

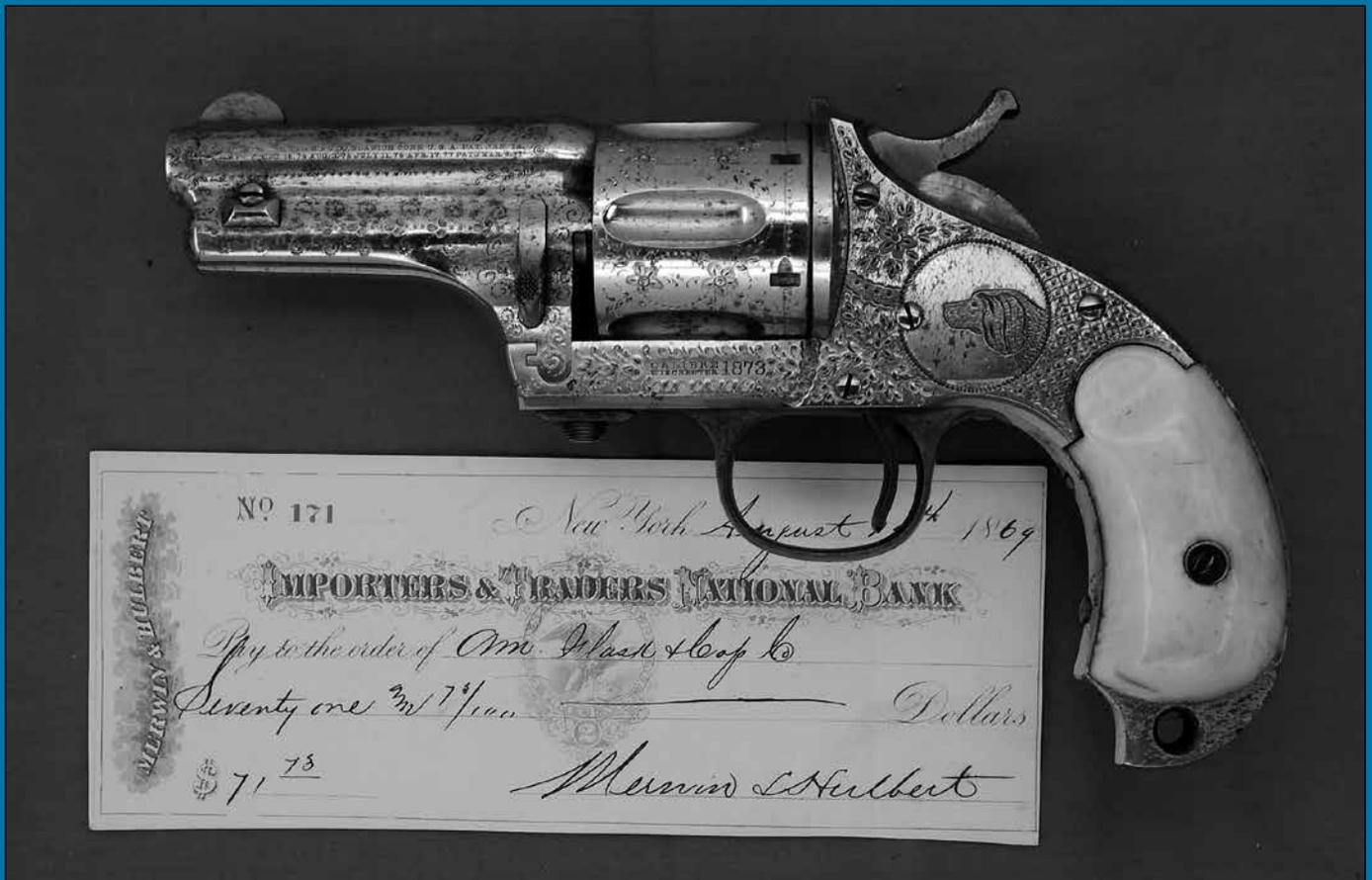
M·W·C·A

Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association Official Publication

VOLUME NO. 34

ISSUE NO. 1

JANUARY 2021



Merwin Hulbert 1st Model Pocket Army

40/44 Caliber, Nickel with Ivory Grips.

Merwin & Hulbert canceled check to
American Flask & Cap Co., dated August 19, 1869.

M • W • C • A News

VOLUME NO. 34

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Official Publication of the Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association

PO Box 662 • Hopkins MN 55343 • www.mwca.org • 612-721-8976

Staff Dale Peterson, Mike Foster

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Editor's Note: This issue of the MWCA News is dedicated to the memory of Stan Nelson, one of the 84 original founding members of the MWCA. We want to remember and honor his dedicated service to the MWCA, the many interesting and informative articles he wrote over the past 67 years, and especially his service in the Marine Corps during World War II. Two of his past articles are reproduced in this publication.

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 13.



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



MWCA membership.

As 2020 came to a close and 2021 is upon us, I would like to thank all of you for your patience and understanding through these troubling times. We have encountered many firsts last year, and they continue this year. Never before have we experienced lock downs, event attendees limits, and growing health concerns. We, as MWCA, have had to make many difficult decisions regarding show promotion. Most of them not in any of our favor, as we continue to try to stay in compliance with Governor Waltz's mandates, that restrict us to less than 250 people at one time in any event, as of 1-20-2021. Shows have been unavailable to have. We look forward to the mandates lifted so we can get gun shows back to normal.

I stress that we must keep the faith that all this will change, and will get better. We, as 2nd Amendment supporters, need to keep our eyes and ears open and stay involved in the fight for our Constitutional rights. With a new POTUS and his administration taking charge, we must stand up. This is more important now than it has ever been. Stay in touch with local representatives, express your concerns with them and follow that up the ladder to the top. Support your local businesses, and do all you can do to buy American products. Just those small things can make a giant difference. We can endure anything if we stand together.

Please watch the website for updates because that is our fastest way to communicate with you. Show schedules will be posted there first because of the uncertainty of social media platforms. Be aware, by staying in compliance with our Governor, some future shows may be very short notice.

It is my honor to serve as your Board of Directors President for 2021. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please feel free to contact me directly. Thank you!! Stay healthy, safe, and informed.

Jim Walters

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



“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

At the time that this issue of MWCA News was being created, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives was engaging in an attempt (H.R. 127) to circumvent the Second Amendment. This proposed legislation includes mandatory registration of every gun possessed by every U.S. citizen, an “assault weapon” ban, psychological evaluation (approval) of every U.S. citizen who owns or wishes to own a firearm, the banning of “certain types” of ammunition (including every shotgun shell larger than .410), and much more. If approved, you could own a gun but your continued ownership of it, your sale of it, your purchase of another gun, and your use of any gun would be rendered nearly impossible. You must pay attention to any legislative attempt to further limit our rights, make your views known to your government representatives and, come election time, vote accordingly.

“No man's life, liberty, or property are safe while the legislature is in session.” (Attributed to Mark Twain.)

Stanley Nelson

By Dale H Peterson



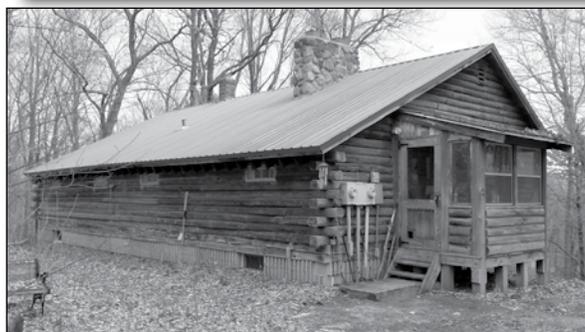
This issue is dedicated to “Stan” Nelson for his tireless work in contributing articles for the MWCA Publication.

Stan was a charter member in the MWCA having joined and attended the first meeting in 1954. He was an avid gun collector, book collector, western historian, artist, book binder, WWII Marine Veteran, cabin builder and to me a very good friend. He had a very full life and enjoyed it.

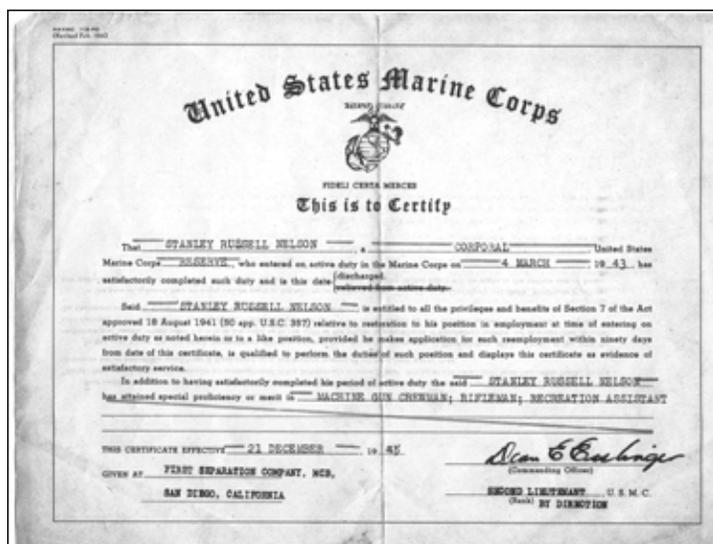
Stan contributed an article or two in many MWCA publication, well over 68 articles. His favorite subjects were the history of Western Sheriffs and Outlaws, growing up in the north woods, his experiences while in the Marines and many gun articles. From his early days while working at the Stage Coach, in Shakopee, MN, he had a keen interest in Merwin Hulbert revolvers and collected an outstanding assortment of them. The Pocket Army Model being his favorite.

My visits with him were like living the Old West and meeting all the famous characters. As years passed he was having physical problems which are expected of a person in their mid 90s. He had another article started but his eye sight was getting so bad he would write notes with black magic markers on 1/4” lined paper. Even more so he had trouble reading, which was his favorite past time. He had a dry sense of humor as noted from his last outline that he was preparing for another article. It read, “True Meaning of Semper Fidelis.” “I thought he said seventy-five dollars so I signed up.”

Good Bye Old Friend.....



Stan’s log house and bindery which he built in the 1970s near Harris, Minnesota.



Stage Coach Museum, Shakopee, MN

Stanley Nelson, continued



Stan on board ship.



Stan (left), U.S. Marine Raiders,
Camp Pendleton.



Hand to hand combat practice.



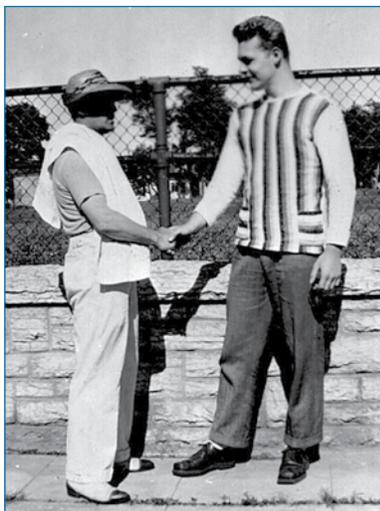
Stan (right) with Anderson family, Guam, 1945.



"Buster" Nelson, The husky beginner.
Picture was featured in a 1940
Minneapolis paper



Stan packed quite a punch.



Stan (right) and Jean LaRue
near Eau Claire, 1940.



Stan with Ozzie Klavestad.

Stanley Nelson, continued



Stan shaking hands with Stage Coach bartender Jim Jirele.



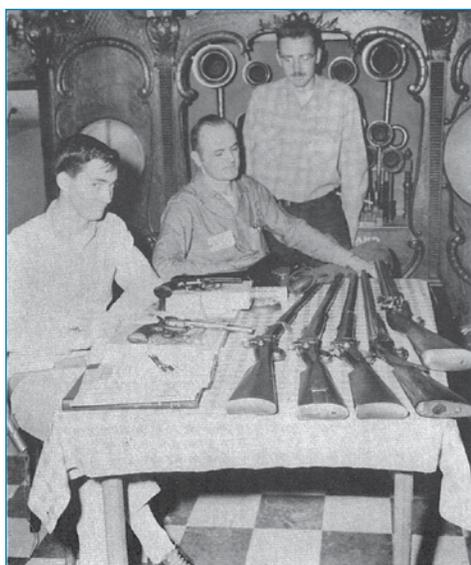
Stan (center) with Marie and Ozzie Klavestad at the Stage Coach Museum



Dale Peterson, Dave Fjesteth and Stan at a MPLS Show



Stan working at the Stage Coach gun room



Stan's Sharps for sale at the Stage Coach



Stan and Fred Maurer at the 1998 State Fair Grounds show.

Some of Stan's Favorites

By Dale H Peterson

I would say at the top of Stan's list were Merwin Hulbert Pocket Army revolvers as he had acquired about a dozen or more of them, both single-action and double-action revolvers, engraved and plain. I'm not going to elaborate on the design of this firearm but just try to show the diverse interest that Stan had in collecting. If you still have a copy of the MWCA 50th Anniversary publication from February 2004, Stan's article entitled "Closed Frame .44 Cal. M&H Revolvers" explains the mechanism of these well engineered revolvers. Through the years many pieces of Stan's collection have been featured in the various articles he authored in the MWCA publications and in the February 1960 Issue of old Gun Report Publication. That particular article "The Merwin Hulbert Pocket Army" was also published in our Spring 1992 issue.

His interest included Merwin Hulbert of course, Colts, Smith & Wesson, Hopkins & Allen, Forehand Wadsworth, Allen & Wheelock, Moore, Whitney Arms, Remington and Sharps but there was not a Winchester or Marlin in the collection. He owned a few but mostly for shooting. He enjoyed guns with a history and had several well documented revolvers such as the Colt 1878 Sheriff's model that belonged to Jeff Melton, the Texas Ranger and southwest lawman in the 1880s thru the early 1900s. Stan's article in the MWCA publication dated December 1998 tells the story of this man and his revolver.

Stan started collecting after WWII. In the early 1950s he managed the Stagecoach Gun Shop where he had access to many of the firearms coming into the shop. At that time there were many collector guns of fine quality available, the type you usually see at the big auction houses now. Stan zeroed in on the Merwin Hulbert revolvers as they were not well known like Colts, Winchesters, etc. and could be purchased at a more reasonable price for a fine quality piece. One thing that was prevalent in Stan's collection was the condition, not only the Merwin Hulberts but also in the other models he collected as can be seen in this group of pictures.



Boxed M H 38 Single Action with the cleaning rod



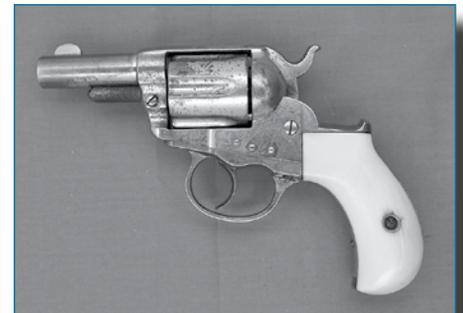
Boxed M H Double Action Two Barrel Set 32 CF



Remington O/U Deringer



Hopkins & Allen XL Revolvers;
Stan liked those short barrels

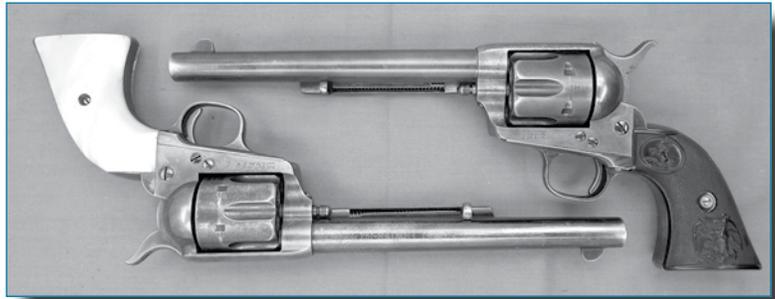


Colt "Thunder" Sent to J. P. Lower,
Denver, Colorado in 1870

Some of Stan's Favorites, continued



Pocket Army Revolvers



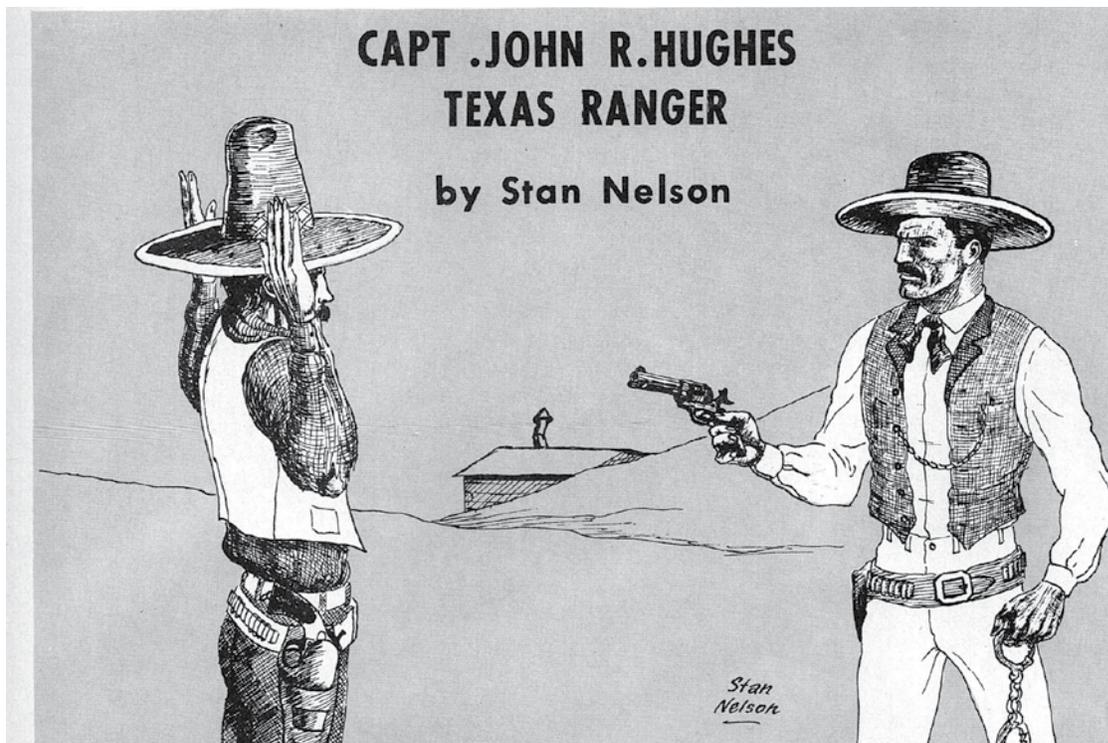
Nice pair of Colt SAAs



Colt SAA Stan carried in the service

John R Hughes

By Stan Nelson; article featured in MWCA News, April 1956



John R. Hughes by Stan Nelson, continued

Enlisted Aug. 10, 1887, made Corporal 1889, replaces Bass Outlaw as Sergeant of Co. D 1890, put in command of Co. D July 4, 1893, after the death of Capt. Frank Jones. Held the rank of Capt. until his resignation Jan. 31, 1915. This is the imposing service record of Texas Ranger Capt. John R. Hughes, and from the records and reports of the Adjutant General has come most of what we know of his long and bullet punctuated career on the Texas frontier. For he was another of the old breed who refused to talk about himself.

He was born in Cambridge, Illinois, and as a youth, went west to the Indian Territory where he lived with the Indians for a while, tried his hand at punching cows for Government beef contractors, and started his own horse ranch in central Texas in the late 1870's. For 9 years he made his living breaking and selling horses. But an incident in 1884 started him toward his Ranger Career. A group of horse thieves ran off with a bunch of horses including several good ones belonging to Hughes. He made a deal with his neighbors to watch his ranch while he set out after them. It took him nearly a year and he followed the trail clear across Texas and into New Mexico before he finally hit their camp.

Things must have been pretty hot for a while as they had him outnumbered 6 to 1. But all he ever said about it when asked was that, "he took the two surviving theifs to the nearest town and delivered them to the authorities".

Back at his horse ranch he ran into more trouble. His victims had friends or relatives who were set on revenge. It was at this time that Hughes joined the Texas Rangers, reasoning logically, that as long as he was fighting outlaws he might as well be paid for it. One of his first arrests was of the Mexican Revolutionist Catarina Carza, who was something of a self-styled gunman. In 1889 Hughes and several other members of Co. C were sent to the Shafter Mines in the Big Bend Country after ore thieves. Shortly thereafter Hughes and three of his men surprised four Mexican ore thieves at work and in the ensuing gunfight three of the thieves were killed. Needless to say this had the desired affect, no more ore stealing.

Hughes was a Sergeant now, having replaced Bass Outlaw when that testy little gunman was persuaded to resign by Capt. Jones. And it wasn't long after that, in June 1893 that Capt. Jones was shot and killed by Mexican cattle thieves just over the border. On July 4 the Governor of Texas appointed Hughes as Capt. in his place.

Every year, from the Adjutant General's office, came a list of fugitives from justice. It was made up of name of wanted criminals sent in by County Sheriffs all over the state. It also gave a physical description and known habits of each. Hughes memorized these lists and during the 1890's conducted a clean-up of the Big-Bend Country in which primeval wilderness the outlaws had found haven. It was hard work, night and day riding and usually culminating in a lead and black powder finale. But it was work for which Hughes was particularly adapted and the Big Bend country's reputation as an outlaw resort began to wane. During a two year period Co. D made 139 scouts and rode over 26,000 miles horseback according to Gene Cunningham.

Capt. Hughes was an excellent shot with both hands with a revolver, as he had to learn to shoot left handed when his right arm was disabled by a gunshot wound early in his career. He also had the closest thing to the drop loop "Buscadero" belt used by our Hollywood cowboys than any old timer I've read of. His was no fancy girdle however, he merely had a piece of leather stitched to his belt which dropped his holster lower. I have also read a statement attributed to Hughes wherein he stated a liking for an 1886 Winchester 45/70 for fast hip-shooting, and he always carried his when expecting trouble. Capt. Hughes is not with us anymore having gone to his reward just 10 years ago in December 1946. Jack Martin wrote a book on Hughes in 1942, but to date I have been unable to get a copy.

By – Stan Nelson

Bear River Tom

"BEAR RIVER TOM"

By Stan Nelson; article featured in
MWCA News, January 1956

Abilene, Kansas, most famous of trail towns, is to most people synonymous with another famous name, Wild Bill Hickock. However, Abilene's first marshal, Thomas James Smith (nicknamed "Bear River Tom"), was Hickock's peer in every department except shooting first and asking questions later.

Appointed marshal on June 4, 1870, by T.C. Henry, Abilene's first mayor, Smith stepped into a herculean task. Riding herd on the Texas cowboys who were in to "see the elephant" after trailing cattle up from Texas many months was no easy chore. For three previous seasons 1867-69 the Texans had become accustomed to taking over the town and shooting it up.

Little is known of Smith before his arrival in Abilene. Records show, however, that he was a policeman in New York where he learned the fine points of fisticuffs. Later he drifted west and worked for a railroad construction outfit in Bear River, Wyoming. Here he managed to quell a riot single-handed, and in so doing picked up his nickname. Later he was town marshal of Kit Carson, Colorado, where in 1868 Billy Breckenridge met him. Breckenridge called Smith the bravest man he had ever known.

In 1870 when Smith took the marshal's job in Abilene he posted ordinances prohibiting the carrying of firearms in the city limits. The citizens were aghast, considering it suicide to go out without a gun. The first cowboys to decipher the printed posters promptly shot them full of holes.

Within the first week Smith had gained confidence of the citizens and the Texans were eating out of his hand. Smith, of course, carried guns but used them only as a last resort. His method was to tell them quietly to check their weapons at their favorite store or saloon until leaving town. When the cowboy objected in words or action, Smith (who must have been a mighty puncher) would flatten him usually with one blow and then carry him over his shoulder to the hoosegow.

Smith was shot at several times but never hurt and the coolness with which he disarmed belligerent cowboys soon gained him the respect of all concerned. They not only obeyed the law but told newcomers of Abilene's iron fisted marshal.

During the summer of 1870, Smith kept law and order in Abilene and then on Nov. 2 Tom Smith was slain, not by Texans, but by two farmers outside the city limits.

It seems Smith was asked to assist in the arrest of two men one of whom was wanted for murder by Sheriff McDonald who evidently had no stomach for such work. While trying to arrest the two farmers one of them shot Smith in the chest and the other gave battle to the sheriff, who fled. Smith, not knowing this, and despite his wound, had his man down putting on the handcuffs when the other felled him from behind with an ax. Tom Smith need not have died but for the cowardice of his fellow officer.

Smith lies buried in the Abilene, Kansas cemetery. A bronze plaque on his monument reads:

**THOMAS J. SMITH
MARSHAL OF ABILENE 1870
DIED A MARTYR TO DUTY NOV. 2, 1870
A FEARLESS HERO OF FRONTIER DAYS
WHO IN COWBOY CHAOS
ESTABLISHED THE SUPREMACY OF THE LAW**

By - Stan Nelson



Canceled

By Dale H Peterson

I, like many others, was excited for our spring show scheduled at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds. It gives us the opportunity to see friends and unload all the new merchandise we had picked up over the winter months. Being a board member, I know this is our major fund raiser for the year as it helps carry some of the smaller shows. It also supplies the funds for our annual donations to the High School Trap League, NRA, the shooting clubs around the state and our annual trophy show awards.

I was ready for set up on Friday a little before noon. Like past shows, many of the exhibitors were ready to set up. Wow! What a surprise when I walked in the door and saw a room full of empty tables. The “PANDEMIC” had struck. We finally got the word at noon that the Governor had shut down the building. Many of the major gun shows around the country had been canceled also so I guess we were not the only ones that were disappointed. It turned out that the remainder of our shows had to be canceled also because of the small number of people allowed in the building at one time. Hopefully we will get back on schedule in 2021.



PO Box 662 Hopkins, MN 55343
612-721-8976 or info@mwca.org

2020 Schedule

February 1-2nd 2020
Rochester Mayo Civic Center

February 22-23rd 2020
St. Paul RiverCentre

March 14-15th 2020
State Fair Coliseum Building

May 2-3rd 2020
State Fair Exposition Building

October 3rd - 4th 2020
State Fair Exposition Building

October 24 - 25th 2020
State Fair Coliseum Building

December 12-13th 2020
St. Cloud River's Edge

Show Hours: BUY, SELL, TRADE
Saturday 8am-5pm \$7 admission
Sunday 9am-3pm

Two Stories Behind Collectible Firearms

By Ron Geppert

What drives me to collect? There are several reasons. I am always impressed with the mechanical designs of firearms, their place in history, further education of a particular model, the friendship of fellow collectors and the circumstances of finding something I did know I “needed”.

My 1944 Spreewerke P-38 “find story” was shared in the September 2019 issue of Guns & Ammo. I acquired it a few years back from Ralph Hettig, a long time Rochester dealer and MWCA member. I asked him if he knew the back story on the gun but all he could tell me was he bought it from a WW-II vet who brought it back after the war. He shared the vet’s name and phone number so I called him.



I asked the vet how he acquired the P-38 and he told me that during the liberation of France, he was assigned to a detail with several other GIs to confiscate all the firearms they could find in a small town. A small trailer was attached to a Jeep and they were filling it with firearms when someone threw a loaded P-38 into the trailer. It went off with the bullet striking the future owner in the hip. He hollered, “That is now my gun.” With a story like that, I said the gun should remain in his family and I would gladly return it to him. He told me none of his kids wanted it, so he sold it and now I have a unique piece of WW-II history which I deeply cherish.

Now for the rest of the story. In the January 2020 issue of Guns & Ammo, a reader responded to my September story with the suggestion that I destroy my P-38 because it is dangerous to shoot. Several collector friends have graciously offered to take possession of it so no one gets hurt.

Two Stories Behind Collectible Firearms, continued

Another favorite “find story”

The hunt for old military guns is always an enjoyable experience and the following story of finding my Danish KjobenhavnsToihuus M-1867/96 rolling block is just one such example.

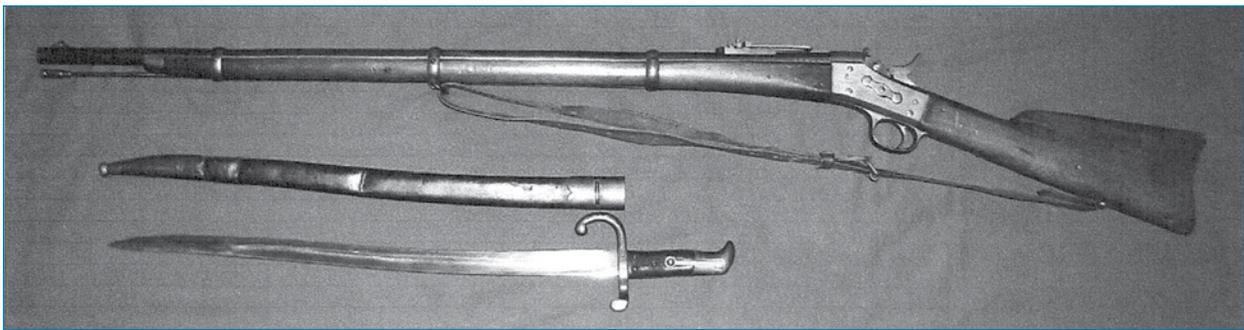
I was visiting a terminally ill friend and was helping him sell a few of his NIB investments before he died. While we were in his attic looking for the boxes, he needed to rest so we found some ammo cans to sit on where we resumed our visiting. I saw an old long barreled rifle leaning against the wall all by itself. I inquired as to what it was and he thought it might be a Swedish 45-70. I knew that was not correct and asked to look at it closer. It had a Remington type rolling block action and had hung over his father’s fireplace for many years. His father would occasionally take it out and fire a few 45-70 cartridges through it but the cases always split.

Because my friend had abandoned this old rifle for many years in his attic, he definitely did not appreciate old military firearms so told me to take it home, identify it, find out what it was worth and make him an offer. After about five minutes on the computer, I learned it was a Danish M1867/96 made in Copenhagen in 1875 and called him immediately. He appreciated learning what it was and said it would be mine after I determined its fair value. I took it to a gun show that weekend, showed it to several collector friends and came up with a range of values. My friend willingly accepted the average and told me to have fun with his dad’s old rifle.

The original M1867 was chambered for 11.7mm x 51R rimfire and mine had been converted to centerfire of the same caliber, thus the /96 designation. I doubt it had ever been issued because the brass unit marking disk on the stock was blank, the bore was perfect but the new firing pin was hanging up slightly which made the rolling block breech difficult to operate. I disassembled the rolling block and removed a small burr in the firing pin hole which then made the action smooth as butter. It still had the screw on the side of a forward barrel band that served as a volley front sight in conjunction with an ear on the rear sight.

Now that I was the proud owner of a very special rifle to me, I needed to find the correct bayonet which is one of the dangers of collecting. At the next MWCA gun show I asked Ed Pohl (the curly haired Nazi collector) if he knew of a bayonet for it. He informed me that Ralph Hettig (yes Ralph again) had one on his table which I now own. What are the chances I would find such a rare bayonet at the very next gun show? Again, fellow collector friends are valuable help.

I lost my friend shortly after that but have his family rifle, a vivid memory of our attic visit plus the fruitful gun shows that followed. Collecting just does not get any better than this.





2021 Show Schedule

Minnesota Weapons Collectors Association

Celebrating 67 Years!

May 1 - 2 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

Free appraisals are done at this show.

August 28 - 29 Graham Arena, Olmsted County Fairgrounds

October 2 - 3 MN State Fair Education Building

October 30 - 31 MN State Fair Coliseum Building

Annual Trophy Show

December 11 - 12 St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center

Tentative Schedule, due to Government Mandates.

Please check www.mwca.org web site for changes.

BUY, SELL, TRADE

**\$7 admission for
general public**

Show Hours:

Saturday 8am - 5pm

Sunday 9am - 3pm

Visit www.mwca.org And Facebook.



Last Issue's Guess the Gun



Jim Stoker is the winner of last publication's "Guess the Gun." It is a Colt Model 1911 U.S. Army .45ACP.

From Jim Stoker to Dale Peterson:

Dale, thank you for all the work you do getting the MWCA magazine written, published and sent out. You write good articles, take good photographs and are a great Historian. Keep up the good work. Thanks again for all you do for the MWCA.

Thanks for getting Stan Nelson to write his stories. I really like and enjoy them. Stan has lived an interesting life and I thank him for sharing it with us.

P.S. My thanks to Mike Foster as I send him a pile of photos and copy, and he returns it as you see the finished publication. Dale

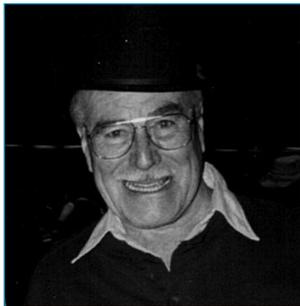
In Memoriam



Stan Nelson

Stan was a charter member of the MWCA. He passed away August 14, 2020 at the age of 96. This issue of MWCA News is dedicated to Stan and the many articles he authored for the publication.

Stan was a WWII Veteran, serving with the Marine Raiders in the Pacific Theater. He was a boxer in his younger years which kept him in the top physical condition that he maintained throughout his life. He was an antique weapons and western literature enthusiast and was especially fond of the Old West/Southwest where Barb and he would travel.



Don Galloway

Don was a Charter member who still attended shows when his health allowed. He set up a several Trophy Shows displaying his Smith & Wessons with attachable shoulder stocks.



Rick Madden

Rick was a regular exhibitor at our shows.

Tom Stelter

Tom always had a happy disposition; he enjoyed a variety of firearms and had an extensive collection of cap guns and toy cars.

Howard Lee



Bob Enlow



Russ Mosey

Karl Reuter *(Not pictured)*

These three men were not active members of the MWCA but were well known in the local Gun Show Circuit and will be missed by many who knew them.

The MWCA donates \$100.00 to the NRA for each member who has passed.

If members know of any members passing please advise a Board member so that they can be listed in this Memoriam Section in the next MWCA News.

Meet Your 2021 Board Of Directors

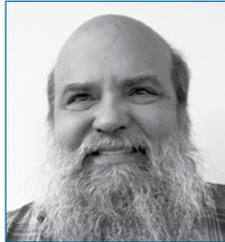
Jim Walters - President, Jim Wright - Vice President, Marty Brady - Secretary, Brian VanKleek - Treasurer, and Dale Peterson - Historian and Publication Staff. If you have any questions and/or suggestions about MWCA policies, show rules etc., they will be glad to answer them.



Jim Walters
President



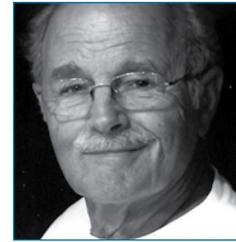
Jim Wright
Vice President



Marty Brady
Secretary



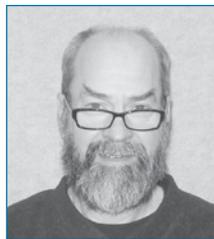
Brian VanKleek
Treasurer



Dale H. Peterson
Historian & Publication Staff



John Chappuie



David Hinrichs



Ed Pohl
Trophy Show Coordinator



Dave Feinwachs
Past President



32nd Annual

Heritage Arms Society's Antique Arms Collectors Show

Saturday, March 27, 2021 • 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Public Welcome - Admission \$5.00 (Age 16 and under free with adult)

Friday, March 26, 2021 • 12:00 - 6:00 PM
(members & exhibitors only)

Minnesota's longest-running show is dedicated exclusively to antique sporting arms, accouterments, ammunition, edged weapons and military items dating from before 1945.

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

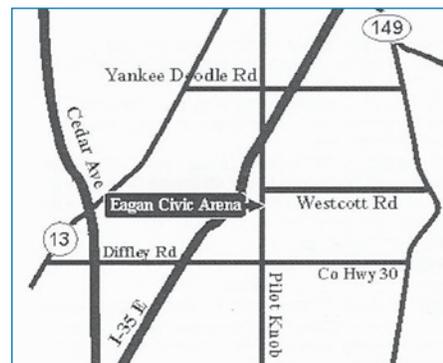
Only legal historic arms and related items in production before 1945 are allowed.

Expert appraisals available.

For table reservations call evenings 651-260-4532.

Eagan Civic Arena

3830 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, MN 55123
One mile South of 35E on Pilot Knob Road.
(3 miles South of 494)



Future HAS Date: March 26, 2022

For more info: www.heritagearmssociety.org

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.