Ad Astra Per Aspera

MUSEUM OF AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

September - 2020

"Always do what is right. It will gratify half of mankind and astound the other."

-Mark Twain-

Chairman's Note

September 1, 2020

Greetings fellow Alumni and friends,

The last few months have brought a series of eye-opening events to our attention. As I have stated several times in my previous letters, my strategy immediately after being elected as the Foundation Chairman, was to dive into and explore, investigate and analyze what the overall pulse of our organization is.

Over the past first four months of my role as Chairman and after many, many hours of interaction with the Museum staff and various key Board members and Alumni, we have found several serious issues and have developed plans to address them all in an expedient, collaborative and professional fashion. The issues revolved around various serious discrepancies in our bookkeeping, insurance and other day-to day administrative tasks. As soon as each inconsistency was discovered, we immediately intervened, and we initiated an action plan to mediate and restore the proper procedures and best practices to the business. All the necessary remedial actions are now in place, and I expect that within the next 30 days, The AMA Museum corporate organization will be totally buttoned up and will once again be able operate as a sound business.

My grasp of all things AMA Foundation Inc., is now complete enough to move forward with a new comprehensive strategy based on sound business practices. We are extremely fortunate to have a group of gentlemen on the Board today, who's mere presence generates the perfect recipe and synergy needed to keep our organization out of the malaise we have coasted into. This team has made it possible to assure we get back on track in short order!

Changes have occurred in our Museum Management leadership and as of August 9, 2020, we have a new (interim) Museum Administrator/Collections Curator in the person of **Rich vanBreemen**. Rich will be assisted by **Chris Correa** and **Ainsley Bloomfield**, our new Charleston Intern. Ainsley's salary will be paid for with moneys drawn from the generous endowment **John Botcheller's** Aunt, **Helen Charleston** gifted us in 2018.

Our new office hours will be Tuesday to Friday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. The museum will be open to visitors, Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. These changes in operating hours seem minor, but in reality, we will be providing the same service to our Alumni and visitors, only with about 20 less man hours expended per week!

Our customer service, bookkeeping, house maintenance, PX, community outreach and the multiple tasks that the museum staff and our volunteers perform every week, **WILL** soon reach the highest levels of performance and efficiency that our organization has seen in years!

That is my commitment to everyone!

I accepted the responsibility of leading our organization with trepidation, a natural emotion one would have when entering an unknown situation.

I can now say to all of you, that the principle emotion I feel towards the future of our organization is "tremendous energy and cautious optimism!"

We still have work to do, but I am eager to continue with the tasks entrusted in me and hope that all of you will continue to support us as we create a vision for AMA bolstered by a forward-looking business plan that will sustain us long into the future.

Team effort!

Douglas W. Pennock
Chairman

A MESSAGE FROM B.J.

Friends,

I accepted the job of Editor of the Bayonet at the 2017 Reunion. When I made my announcement, I told everyone present that while I had the skills to produce such a fine newsletter, I would need everyone's help with content. I received a great round of applause, much back slapping, and assurances that I would be receiving articles and stories for future Bayonets.

Well, I have indeed received a lot of help over the past three years. But I could use more. My time for AMA is taken up with much more than just the Bayonet. I also manage our website, and perform countless tasks for the Board of Directors. I spend over 100 hours just

producing each issue, and the extra time needed to research and write original stories is simply more than I have. So please help out, and send me more stories and articles. I do not need ideas for good articles ... I need the articles themselves.

I thank you for your support over the last three years, and with your help I can continue to produce our most excellent and informative newsletter far into the future.

~ B.J. d'Orsay, '70

Augusta Military Academy Oral History

MEMORIES FROM OUR ARCHIVES

Mowbray Allan, Faculty Member, 1959-61
Written March 2, 2003

Memories of General Charles Somerville Roller, Jr.

I remember that it was at one of General Roller's semi-weekly addresses to the faculty and cadets assembled in the Mess Hall for lunch. If we had been good, we would be given the "At Ease" command before the address and our lunches would be kept warm in the kitchen. But this time a cadet or two had been very bad the night before, making the central square of the barracks (the quadrangle) resound and reverberate with huge firecrackers every two hours or so. After each explosion, the whole cadet corps had to turn out and stand at attention on the balconies while a room search was conducted. No sooner were we back in bed and asleep than another would go off. How did they get away with it, given that after the second one, at least, sharp eyes would no doubt have been watching? An inside job by those on guard duty? (Maybe now someone can take credit for it?) So that day the General stalked grimly and heavily up to the microphone with a huge blacksnake whip under one arm. He looked, in his early eighties then, much like another memorable old man of those days, Pope John XXIII, craggy face, large aquiline nose, posture stiff with age, so that he had to shuffle his whole body around to look behind him.

READ THE ENTIRE STORY HERE

MUSEUM

DOCENT DUTY

THANK YOU!

-ALL OARS IN-

We are excited that our recent "All Oars In" plea has resulted in an increase in donations to the museum! **Thank You!** Please remember that a monthly **$** pledge from everyone that reads this newsletter means that the future of the "Bayonet" and the Museum will be assured.

SET UP YOUR MONTHLY DONATION HERE

To those who volunteered in July!

Brian Miller '67
Victor Gomez '69
Mike Hall '72

Note:
Victor Gomez volunteered 78 hours working on a special investigative project requested by the Chairman!

Visitors in August

96

(46 separate tours)

Museum Volunteer's

We really need Volunteer Docents! Please sign up below.

SIGN UP HERE

AMA Alumni Foundation Board and Museum NEWS

ROLLER SOCIETY

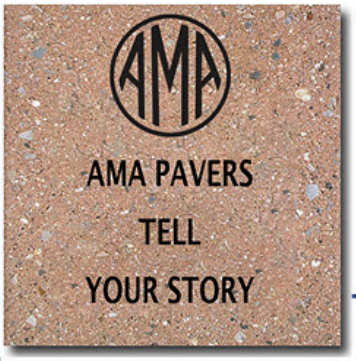
George Reeves ‘69, true to his word and promise, bequeathed the AMA Museum a **Roller Society** inspired gift of $25,000 last month. George was a quiet and unassuming man who persistently was present and accounted for at AMA Reunions. He never turned down the request to help out with any task assigned to him and at the time of his death, he continued to help with a financial gift that is very much appreciated and so necessary at this time.
Rest in Peace Gorge, and thank you sir!

Monthly Donors Announcement

If you have agreed to donate a fixed monthly amount to the Museum and have noticed that your credit card has not been debited over the past few months, please write or call Rich at the museum so that he can continue the process.
I had my credit card on file at the museum for years and the Museum Administrator was tasked to debit my and many other cards at the beginning of each month.
I decided to change the way I get my monthly donation to the Museum, by signing up at the **DONATE** button at the Museum Webpage. My monthly donation is now

automatically paid via PayPal, plus you can choose to use your credit card also, so no reminders are necessary.
I urge all of you current donors and invite everyone to do the same. It is simple and painless.

Thank you,
Doug Pennock



Paver Order Form

Options:

4" x 8" ~ 3 lines of 20 characters each - $50
8" x 8" ~ 6 lines of 20 characters each - $100
8" x 8" ~ 3-6 lines of 20 characters plus graphic - $225
*number of lines depends on size of graphic

Left: example of 8 x 8 with graphic and three lines of text.

Fill in the blanks below. **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!** Only one paver per order form. Print additional copies for additional pavers. When you buy a paver, you SUPPORT AMA'S ALUMNI FOUNDATION.

Your Name : _____ Class, if any: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____ Email: _____

WHAT SIZE PAVER DO YOU WANT? ____ 4" x 8" - $50
____ 8" x 8" - $100
____ 8" x 8" with _____ graphic - $225
graphic at ____ top or ____ bottom

Punctuation marks and spaces count as characters!

* contact museum for custom size and placement of graphic, additional charges may apply

Please PRINT below what you want on your engraved brick:

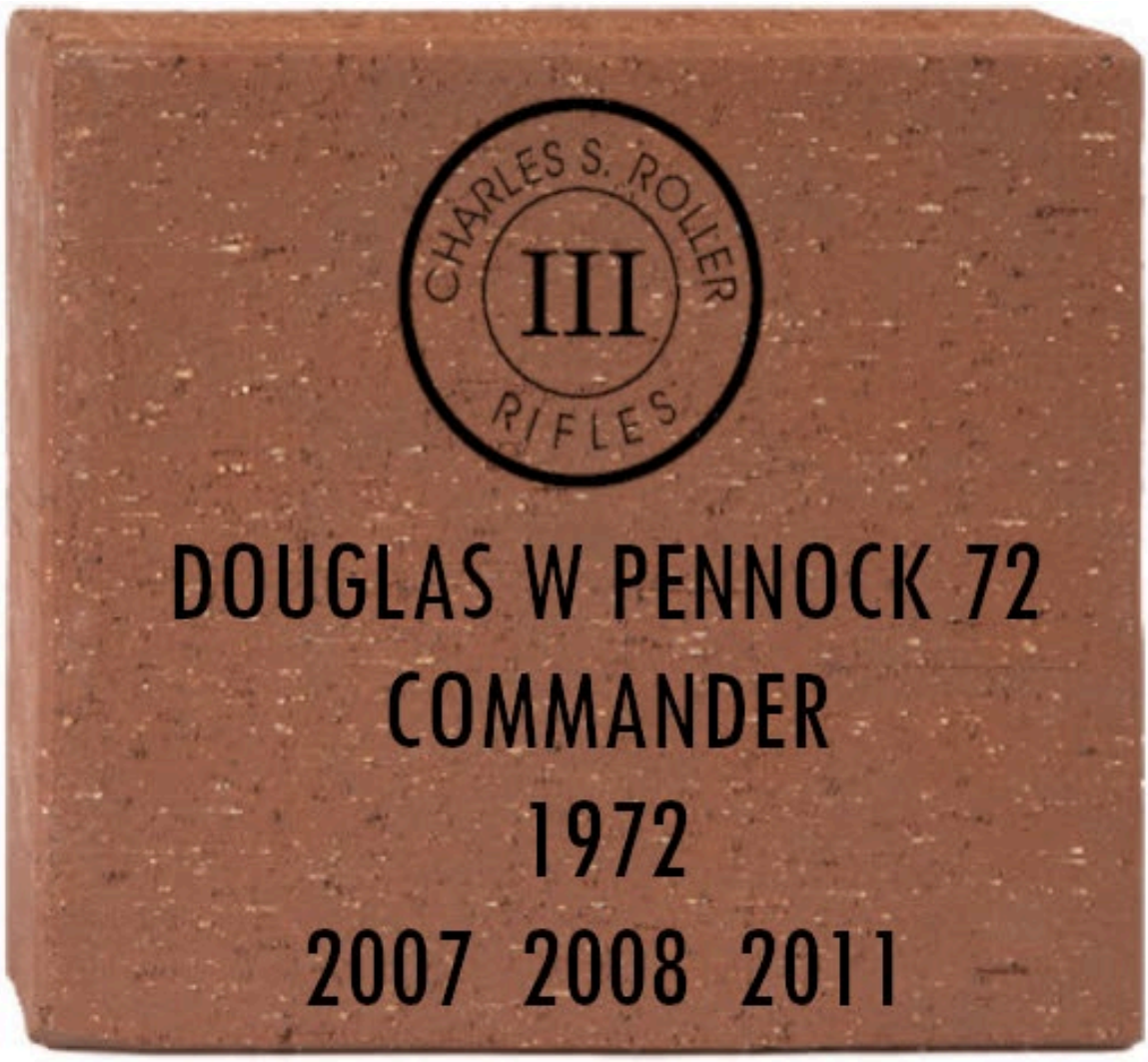
Line 1: _
Line 2: _
Line 3: _
Line 4: _
Line 5: _
Line 6: _

Mail form to: AMA Museum, PO BOX 100, FORT DEFIANCE, VA 24437
Include check or money order made payable to AMA Alumni Foundation
OR call the museum at (540) 248-3007 with your credit card information
OR email form to museum@AMAalumni.org, then call with payment information
OR call the museum to place your paver order over the phone.

BAND AMA ROLLER RIDERS ROLLER RIFLES

Revised May 2020

Download the Brick Order Form



Doug Pennock's Viewpoint
August 2020

Editor's Note:
The following expressions are mine alone. I look forward to your feedback. You may contact me directly at:
chairman.amafoundation@amaalumni.org

The Dream

I have been fortunate to have kept in close contact with many of my AMA classmates and friends over the past nearly five decades since my graduation in June of 1972.

We have all faithfully followed each of our post AMA lives, and cheered or comforted each other for whatever situation each of us has encountered.

My 2 siblings share DNA with me, but the bond and friendship I have with many of my AMA brethren, is as strong, and sometimes it seems stronger than the ones between my biological brothers. That reality is the net effect of us having attended AMA together!

One of the most fascinating phenomena's that I have encountered frequently over many years is the AMA Dream. Apparently many if not most of my close AMA buddies, maybe even you, have had one or more AMA dreams.

Every one of my dreams is different, but the central theme is always the same. I will find myself on campus in Ft. Defiance and the date is usually in the present. I am my current age and body type. The campus layout is the same as when I was there, but the facilities have been upgraded with today's technology and amenities. I meet new and younger cadets, but I run into my old classmates living or deceased. All school activities appear to remain as they were when I was there. But the most frustrating recurring thing, is that I am expected to form up with the corps in full regulation uniform, but I can never seem to figure out where to get one! When I finally find a uniform that fits, I never find a black tie or oversees cap! I rarely find my room in the now upgraded, modern and slick "Big Barracks". Worse yet, the fact that I have been away from the school so long, I am told that I no longer hold any rank!

When I wake up in the morning, I will probably say something to myself like: "Damn! Who else had "The Dream" this week"?

Maybe some of you have the same recurring memory from days past. That important time-line of our growing up, truly molded our character and made us into the person we are today.

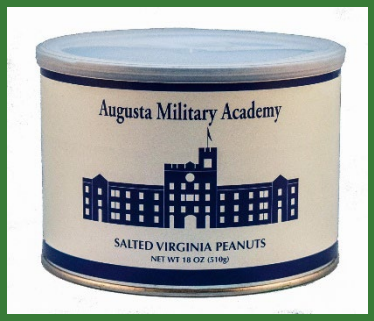
In these difficult times of Pandemics, political differences and economic uncertainty, I find it reassuring and comforting that my frequent subconscious recollections of what may have been the best years of my life are still alive and well.

Doug out

PX/Gift Shoppe

SHOP HERE

Featured is a small sample of what we have for sale.



BONUS GIFT

Offer begins September 1, 2020 and ends December 31 2020

With the purchase of $50 or more from the PX, you will have your choice of one FREE copy of AMA WAY or the ROLLER RIFLE RETIREMENT CD! ($25 Value!)

Note: Shipping and postage will be billed separately.

VIDEO SPOTLIGHT

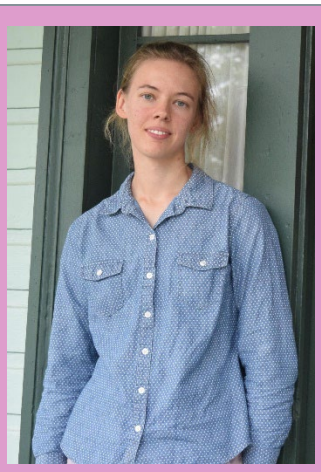
Garry Granger '71

Full Interview Here

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Painless Giving

Imagine if you could send the AMA Foundation a little bit of money every time you bought something on Amazon. YOU CAN if you sign up to Amazon Smile.
You are going to buy stuff anyway, why not allow Amazon to help the Museum?



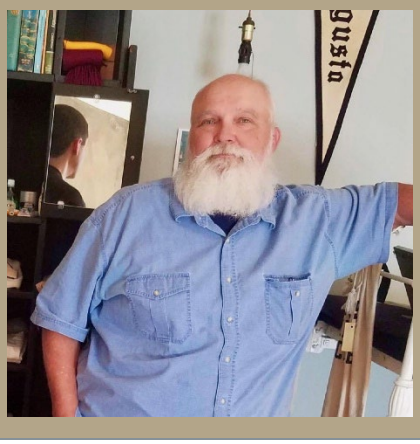
Charleton Intern

Ainsley Bloomfield

Hello, I'm Ainsley Bloomfield, and I'm the new Charleton intern at the AMA Alumni Museum.
I'm 20 years old, was born in Virginia, and live in Grottoes. When I was being homeschooled, history was my favorite subject. I plan on graduating in two years from Liberty University's online program. I'm majoring in Accounting because of its rigor, practicality, and versatility, but my greatest aspiration is to become an illustrator. My favorite media are ink and watercolor and I've self-published a book for the kindergarten age group. I am also active in my church, play piano, garden, hike, sew, and read. I was thrilled to get this job among fascinating artifacts and stories. Serving veterans, alumni, and the wider public is a great pleasure to me; respect for our country's great past is essential.
I look forward to seeing you when you visit the Museum!

vanBreemen Expressions

Rich vanBreemen is the AMA Museum's interim Administrator/Collections Curator



SURPRISE, SURPRISE, SURPRISE

Being in the AMA Museum presents a variety of challenges and surprises each day. You would think that an institution that bordered its doors nearly 40 years ago would not have anything new to be discovered. If we were simply talking about bricks and mortar, that may very well be the case. However, we are not. This museum has practically taken on a life of its own based on the people who were and are involved with it.

Case in point, Victor Gomez '69, has been working diligently these past few weeks, tracking down former Latino cadets and reaching out to them about the Foundation and the reunion. It's meticulous and time-consuming work which he accomplishes without complaint. Since he has been doing much of this research from the museum, the staff has been assisting by providing records or information from the database.

One day, Victor was in my office going over addresses when a package arrived from AMAZON. I didn't order anything and no one else had either. Being Santa as my alter ego, I felt like it was Christmas and tore open the package. Inside we found a softcover book titled: "A DIFFERING VIEW OF CUBA'S HISTORY / a family's journey from 16th century Spanish Colonialism to Modernity." That's a mouthful, but why is it here? Inside was a note from Amazon stating, "a gift to you. Dr. Charles A. Santos-Buch, MD, AMA'48"

"Hey Victor, this is from one of the guys you are checking on." "WHO?", he said? Seems, Dr. Santos-Buch was not on his radar because of what we would assume is the Dr's advanced age. NOW is the time you go back and re-read the title of this article in your best Gomer Pyle accent. The good news for our beloved doctor is he is alive and well in Florida. A quick check of Past Perfect records confirmed his association to AMA and a new / old student had been recovered or discovered. **NOTE: What was it about the class of '48 that produced so many notable alumni?**

I have not had the chance to read the book, but have gleaned through it. It is incredibly detailed with maps, photos, and transcripts along with the good doctors' own observations. AMA is mentioned in more than just passing, starting on page 168 of a 300-page book. The school's influence on the young Charles is duly noted and left a lasting impression which helped carry him through medical school at Cornell, Harvard and New York Hospital. I look forward to reading it in its entirety and learning something about CUBA my public school education, no doubt, failed to teach me.

The things we find out about this school and alumni is never ending. Buried in obscure books, newspaper articles, our own Bayonet or letters in archives are snippets of information. Like putting together a puzzle, these pieces form a clearer picture of life at the Academy as well as the life lived afterwards. I can't wait to see what the next surprise will be.

If you are interested in Dr. Santos-Buch's book, you can find it on Amazon here:
A Differing View of Cuba's History
https://www.amazon.com/dp/1943401713/

Regards,
Rich vanBreemen
Interim Museum Administrator/Collections curator

The 2020 Summer BAYONET is now available

READ HERE

The Museum Newsletter was written and prepared by Doug Pennock and edited by Trudy Pennock

This issue of the AMA Museum Newsletter was sponsored by: AMA Class of 1972

MISSION STATEMENT "To preserve the traditions of the Augusta Military Academy and to honor the memory of the life and times of its alumni, faculty, staff, and supporting families through permanent and temporary exhibits and diligent conservation the museum's collections of artifacts, archives and photographs."
The AMA MUSEUM is operated by the AMA Alumni Foundation, which is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization. The museum is manned by former cadets and faculty members, who volunteer their time and talent. Funding for the museum is totally dependent on tax-exempt financial gifts and donations made by the alumni, former faculty, and friends of Augusta Military Academy, as well as the community and visitors to the museum.

Augusta Military Academy Museum | 540-248-3007 | Museum@AMAalumni.org | http://www.amaalumni.org
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