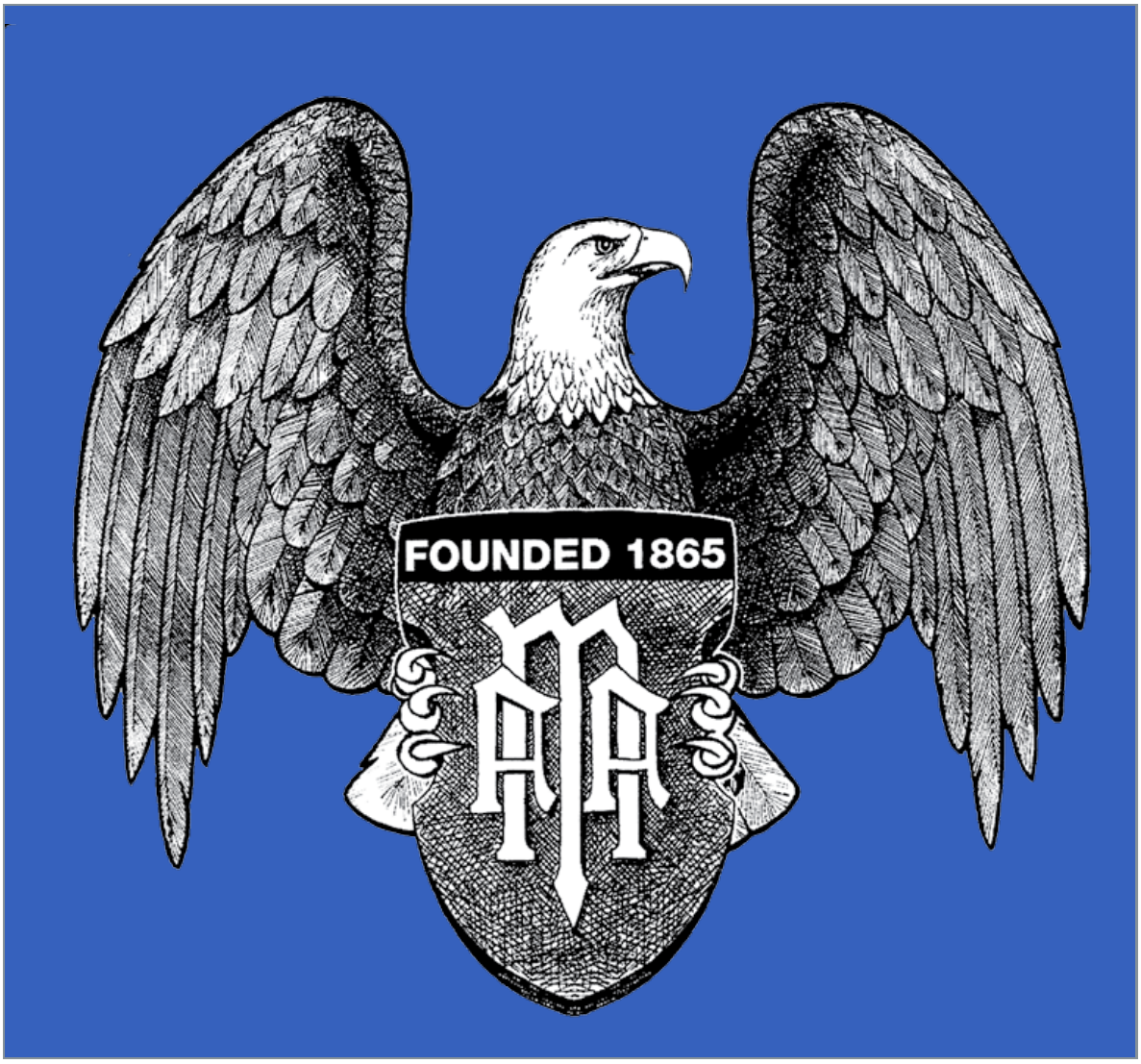
Museum of Augusta Military Academy News



Ad Astra Per Aspera

MUSEUM OF AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

April - 2022

"Look, my friend, one plus one equals two, how in the hell did you get three?!"
"Kick the damned ball!!!"
-Paul Hoover, AMA teacher and coach-

Chairman's Notes

April 1, 2022

Dear fellow Alumni and Friends,

April 2022 marks my fifth year as a member of the AMA Alumni Foundation, it also marks my third year as the Chairman of our organization.

When I agreed to run for a director's seat in 2017, my intention was to join an organization that I hoped I would be able to help out by using my decades of experience as the chairman of a very successful nonprofit Independent School in Puerto Rico. It seemed to me, that if I could introduce some time-honored best practices in the running of our small organization, we would be successful in accomplishing what seemed to be unattainable during the previous 18 years. Which was to create a way in which our museum could become a self-perpetuating organization.

It has been an interesting five-year run. In a five-year span, the AMA Museum has had four Administrators. We have suffered financially from unnecessary IRS Fines and penalties for 2017, 2018 and 2019 tax filing issues. A Global Pandemic practically shut down our country and to make matters worse, I estimate that we have lost over 400 AMA Alumni since April of 2017.

All logic and common-sense point to the reality that the long-term survival of our museum is not in the cards.

Yet, there is an amazing group of men that seem to think otherwise. I feel this when I talk to my fellow Board members and many Alumni that are actively involved in the organization.

Case in point are the two gentlemen that are taking the lead to organize and run the 2022 Alumni reunion. Herb Maher and Lee Ramsey both who came to their first reunion last year in forever, are dynamos of energy and fresh ideas. We are well on our way to receive as many sponsorship dollars for Reunion 2022 as our record setting 2021! We have sold most of the Blocked rooms at the 24 South Hotel and reunion registrations are coming in at a brisk pace. The Rifle raffle is well past selling 50% of the allotted tickets with still six months to go for reunion!
Our campus will be hosting a Spring festival on May 7 and there was a well-attended Alumni luncheon in the Virginia Beach area organized by Herb Maher. So, maybe we aren't as quick on our feet as we were 50 years ago, but the AMA spirit still runs deep in many of us.
As long as I feel that this spirit permeates our ranks, I will continue to persevere and work to the best of my abilities to keep the AMA flame burning brightly in Fort Defiance and in out hearts.

Team effort!

Douglas W. Pennock
Chairman
AMA Alumni Foundation, Inc.

AMA Alumni Foundation News

Director Elections

AMA Alumni Foundation, Inc.
2022 Foundation Election Procedures:

As previously announced, the nomination window for participation on the AMA Alumni Foundation Board will closed **on 30 March**. The following four incumbents have expressed their desire to continue on the Board:

Gordon R. Metz '68

Larry D. Nicholson ’75
John E. Arthur ‘75
Brett D. Thompson ’75

In addition to these four nominees, there currently is a **FIFTH** vacancy on the Board, due to the resignation of Ed Rogerville (2024 “rotation”).

As specified in Section 4.4 Nomination of Directors (Revised 08 January 2022), the call for nominations has taken place in our monthly newsletter, AMA website and electronic mail. Nominations are still welcomed and encouraged (up to close of business on 30 March) for those wishing to become involved in the governance of the AMA Alumni Foundation. Any member of the AMA Alumni or qualified members may present a nomination for a qualified candidate. For Board member qualifications, please refer to Article II Section 2.1 and 2.2 of the AMA Foundation By-laws.

The election electronic voting will open/commence on **Friday, April 01, 2022**, and voting will end at midnight (Eastern DST) **Friday, April 29, 2022.** With regard to electronic voting, all alumni are eligible to vote, but they/you must be registered in the alumnus database and have an active email on file. The ballot will be sent via email, and be cross-checked with the alumnus database.

You may cast your votes **HERE**

You may review the AMA Alumni Foundation By-Laws HERE

THE MUSEUM OF AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY

Has been nominated for Shenandoah Valley Best under the category of "Things to do" sub category "Family Attraction and Museum!

Voting is open
Voting Began March 21st and will end on April 8.

You may submit your vote **HERE**.

*You may vote once every 24 hrs

The Museum of Augusta Military Academy

Presents

SPRING FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 7, 2022 10:00 am until 4:00 pm

1640 LEE HWY FORT DEFIANCE VA 24437

Car Show **Military Vehicle Club** **Bouncy House**

FOOD TRUCKS by

CRAFTERS AND VENDORS **50/50 RAFFLE** **GIFT BASKET RAFFLE**

Games and Prizes for the kids! **CIRCLE M CARRIAGE RIDES**

Augusta County Sheriff K9 Exhibit **and** **MORE!**

IF YOU ARE A CRAFTER OR VENDOR AND WOULD LIKE TO RESERVE A SPOT FOR SET UP PLEASE CALL 540-248-3007IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BRING YOUR HOT ROD OR ANTIQUE CAR FOR SHOW PLEASE CALL 540-248-3007

REUNION 2022

September 9 - 11

Honoring classes of:
1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982

Headquarter Hotel
Hotel 24 South (Stonewall Jackson)

Call 866-880-0024 or 540-885-4848 to make your reservations now and be sure to tell them that you are with the AMA group so that you get the Reunion group rate of $115.00 per night which includes covered parking.

GUN RAFFLE 2022

It has been customary over the past few years that we raffle a firearm during Reunion Weekend. This has proven to be a terrific fundraiser and very popular with our Alumni. This year's raffle choice, is a Springfield 1903A1. The rifle is in perfect working order and was recently field tested and fired by our Collections Curator, Rich vanBreemen. This rifle is similar to the ones the Roller Rifles carried at all of their performances.

1903 model Springfield bolt-action rifle, caliber .30 (30-06), with reproduction 1907 leather sling. It has a 4 groove barrel which is dated 10-36 with little to no pitting. It is considered to be a "high number" rifle and bolt which eliminate the concern some people may have about early receiver issues.

Total value of the weapon is roughly $1000 and will be considered NRA Very Good - Good condition at auction.

The rifle will have a new leather sling. Also included, are a cleaning kit and manual placed inside the storage area in the butt.

Tickets for a chance to win this Springfield 03 rifle are on sale now!

Ticket cost are $25.00
or
(5 tickets for $100)

Buy your raffle tickets HERE

As of March 31, 2022, 148 of the available 250 raffle tickets have been sold!

You may also purchase tickets by contacting the Museum at 540-248-3007

The winning raffle number will be drawn at the Saturday evening Reunion event. You do not need to be present to win!

You must be 21 years or older to participate in this raffle.
This raffle is void where prohibited by law.

ATTENTION IN THE BARRACKS!

Augusta Military Academy Legacy Preservation Corps

Purpose:

To create a committee of descendants and/or friends of Augusta Military Academy Alumni, Faculty and Staff, who are as passionate about the Academy and dedicated to Preserving AMA's Legacy and to:

- Learn the history of our Academy
- Be trained to be an effective docent at the museum
- Keep the memories and stories of AMA alive
- Manage the AMA Alumni Foundation into perpetuity

Expectations:

- Meet regularly
- Develop a structure of management / leadership
- Seek participants
- Assist with financial stability
- Protect and preserve AMA's history, artifacts and legacy

How to get involved:

- Contact AMA's Curator at **amacurator@gmail.com**
- Contact AMA's Museum Director at **museum@amaalumni.org**

The Museum of Augusta Military Academy

PRESENTS ; N O B L E L E G E N D S

WHAT: GUEST SPEAKERS - Interesting and Factual accounts from those who know

WHEN: Wed April 20, 2022 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm (New Speaker every 3 rd Wednesday of every month) WHERE: 1640 Lee Highway – Route 11 Fort Defiance, VA The Museum of Augusta Military Academy (The large Stucco building on Route 11)

WHO: Evan Knappenberger Independent historian working on the history of education in the Shenandoah Valley. He has a Master of Arts of Religion from Eastern Mennonite Seminary, with a focus in church history, and a BA in philosophy and theology from Eastern Mennonite University. Mr. Knappenberger will be presenting: Harmonic Histories: New Research in Education in Augusta and Rockingham, 1850-1920. This presentation will explore local connections to the history of education in Virginia during the heyday of the Augusta Military Academy. It will provide context and new findings on the Roller family and the community which they served, as well as their relation to famous figures such as Jed Hotchkiss and William Ruffner. It will demonstrate the place of AMA in the rich history of education in the Shenandoah Valley.

Augusta Military Academy
SNIPPETS FROM OUR ARCHIVES

Editor's Note:
The AMA Museum collection includes thousands of documents that were originally kept in files which were found some years after the school closed. The files were discovered in the barracks basement where the old armory was housed. Over the years, volunteers and Museum staff have gone through most of the old files and all of the documents that were found to be of historical significance were saved and cataloged.

Having read hundreds of these documents myself, I was amazed at how much insight they give regarding the day-to-day life of AMA back in the day before internet, computers, TV and any other means of transferring information rapidly existed.
When I studied the handwritten and typed letters, I realized that our grandparents and great grandparents were vastly more capable of putting together huge amounts of information in a classical, graceful and punctual manner in a single one page letter than most of us are today! This wonderful talent and style has mostly been lost due to what we refer to as "progress".
I hope you enjoy reading these interesting snippets from our schools past.
DWP

Museum Collection

By AMA Museum Curator Rich vanBreemen

On the shelf behind my desk, sits a small cardboard box marked, Rack 5, Shelf B, Box CB. Stuck in between numerous other boxes of similar size, shape and color, it tells us nothing about what lies inside. Because I am nosey AND it is my job, I opened said box and what is inside is the topic of this month's Museum Collection Article.

Tucked neatly inside the nondescript, acid free cardboard box sits four black leather cartridge cases, in various condition from fair to good. Object ID # 2001.117.01C slips into my hand for inspection. It is a well preserved, McKeever cartridge case. These would have been worn on the standard issue 1874 pattern US Army black leather belt, in the small of the back. In the Army, they were worn by soldiers as part of their dress uniform as opposed to equipment worn in the field. Most are stamped **US** on the outer flap though some more well to do National Guard units would have their own logo stamped in the leather (i.e. NGP for National Guard Pennsylvania).

These four cases were apparently part of the standard issue dress uniform at AMA between its inception in 1874 to the early 20th century. The McKeever cartridge box is named for its designer, First Lieutenant Samuel McKeever of the US 2nd Infantry Regiment. Designed in 1874, it continued to be used in various calibers and styles by the US Army till 1910. There is a bellows made of webbing behind each row of cartridges, so the rows will incline forward slightly when opened to allow easy extraction. Each side of the case holds 10 rounds of 45/70 ammunition. The hinge is a simple brass rod passing under the two sections, connected at the ends.

This particular case is a later variant in that it has a distinct bulge on the right side where the rifle's take down tool would have been stored. The Mills like webbing inside to hold the cartridges has lost its elasticity and appears to be fragile. The leather while old is still supple and in good condition as is the stitching. Interestingly, the museum does not have an 1873 Trapdoor rifle in its collection but we do have an 1871 Remington Rolling Block, supposedly used by the Corps. So, my next challenge will be to verify the Rolling Block was actually used at the academy as opposed to the standard issue 1873 Trapdoor.

This particular cartridge case came to us via Joseph K Alexander, class of 1928. This would have been a later date than these cases would have likely been worn with the cadet uniform, but since they are worn on a belt in the

small of the back, no photographic evidence is readily available to confirm or deny this. Mr. Alexander passed in 2000. His bio can be found at FIND-A-GRAVE at the following URL [(https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39834480/joseph-knukle-alexander).](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39834480/joseph-knukle-alexander)

In a nutshell, what I have described is the rabbit hole every museum curator faces. Each item has a story to be told and usually, that story is shrouded in mystery. While we may not be able to tell you the exact history of each item, it is our fervent goal and intent to have these items see the light of day and be available to the public for viewing.

FEED THE BARRACKS!!

Please remember that a monthly pledge from everyone that reads this newsletter means that the future of the Museum will be assured.

MUSEUM DOCENT DUTY

THANK YOU!

To those who volunteered in February

SET UP YOUR MONTHLY DONATION HERE

Visitors in March

66

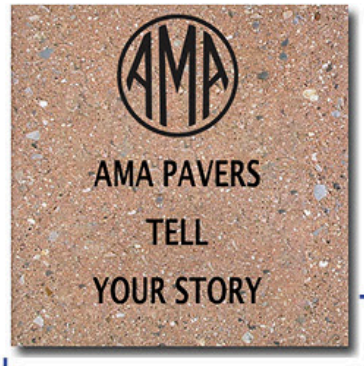
Museum Volunteer's

We really need Volunteer Docents! Please sign up by calling Chris at the museum.

Paver Special!!

If you buy a paver brick between March 1 and April 30, you will receive a 20% discount on the 4" X 8" and the 8" X 8" bricks.

If you order a 8" X 8" brick with the graphic, you will receive a 33% discount!



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

Purchasing a Paver Brick allows you to recognize anyone that had a positive impact on you while attending AMA

All Paver Bricks are placed in a permanent location along the sidewalk running East of the Museum

Visit the Brick virtual map HERE

Please order yours TODAY!

Brick Order Form

SHOP THE PX

THESE ITEMS and MANY MORE

ARE AVAILABLE IN OUR ONLINE STORE,

shop.AMAalumni.org

AMA

New AMA Blanket at the PX

We all remember our AMA blanket. It kept us warm and it was a little bit scratchy. This new version is even warmer and softer than a newborn baby's gluteus maximus!

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?

Doug Pennock's Viewpoint

April 1, 2022

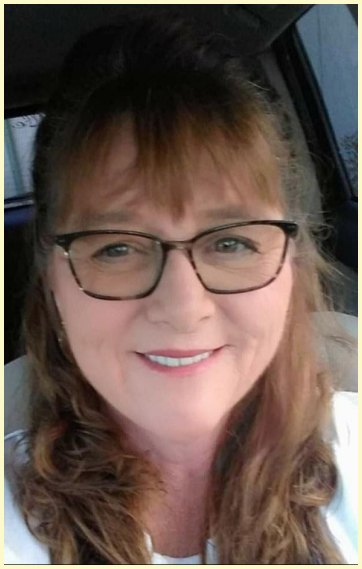
Dear Readers,

I write this viewpoint from a new station in my life. As of March 31, 2022, I will officially be retired.
You would think that I am giddy and celebrating my new status in life, but I am a little confused at what my new reality will look like.
I have worked my entire life and am satisfied that my sweat and energy had a positive impact on many people. I am also clear that I will find one or two things to keep me busy.
I find it interesting that life has a tendency of going full circle. Fifty years ago in June 1972, I graduated from AMA after a six-year stint at Fort Defiance. Fifty years later, I will probably spend much more of my time dedicated to the AMA Alumni Foundation and possibly will leave Puerto Rico and move to the Virginia, North Carolina or possibly South Carolina to live out the rest of my life.
I could think of worse outcomes in a man's life.
I look forward to being able to drive unlimited miles in any direction on a whim and not be dependent of an airline to get me of an island. Believe it or not, that is huge for Trudy and me!
So, think about getting in a car and take a drive to Fort Defiance sometime soon. Maybe I will have the pleasure of greeting you and sharing a few stories on Ben's Porch at our Museum…

Doug out

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



From the Administrators Desk

April 1, 2022

Ad Astra Per Aspera: Through Hardships to the Stars
The phrase was coined by John James Ingalls in 1861 and is the motto for the state of Kansas. To some alumni of Augusta Military Academy this Latin phrase was bestowed as an honor for the achievement of success through challenging times during their academic studies at AMA.
Ad Astra Per Aspera does hold truth in its meaning. To rise from difficult times to great achievement is worthy of acknowledgment and can only be reached through perseverance, dedication and commitment.
As we continue our mission to preserve and share the history of AMA this same perseverance, dedication and commitment is paramount to our success in continuing the legacy. Perseverance to keep our foothold in the history of Augusta County, the Shenandoah Valley and the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Dedication to share the history of the founding of AMA and education of so many young men who trod her campus and the Commitment to being a part of the local community through sponsoring programs and events.

All of this can be achieved with participation and there a many ways one can participate in the achievement of our goals. Volunteering to docent, helping with programs and events, actively serving on committees and pledging to provide financial support.

There are several opportunities available and underway now in which you can participate. Our Noble Legends Speaker Series begins April 20 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm and will run every third Wednesday through July. Our Spring Festival will be on Saturday, May 7 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Please contact the museum if you would like to be a sponsor or volunteer for either of these events or if you would like to docent one weekend.

I would also like to announce with great excitement that the Museum of Augusta Military Academy has been nominated as Shenandoah Valley's Best in the category of THINGS TO DO under the three sub-categories of ATTRACTION, FAMILY ATTRACTION and MUSEUM. You can vote by visiting votesvbest.com. You can vote once every 24 hours. If you use more than one IP address you can vote more than once per day. Voting closes on April 8. If we win, we will be listed on the winners list on the Shenandoah Valley's Best website and we will be listed in Shenandoah Valley's Best magazine publication.

I wish you all a Happy Easter and I pray that we all take time to reflect on the blessing of God's gift of grace and mercy to us all.

Sincerely,

Amy Hensley
Administrator
AMA Alumni Museum

vanBreemen's Expressions

April 1, 2022

Easter Eggs

By: Rich vanBreemen

Those of us with grandkids (or great grandkids) may be familiar with PIXAR films. Around 1980, they burst onto the world with a new form of computer animation taking kids films to a level Walt Disney could only have dreamt about. Toy Story, Finding Nemo, Bug's Life, Monsters Inc are just a few of the films Pixar created. From their first short films, to their latest production, they have hidden clues of future projects and pay tribute to their beginnings. The most famous being the term "A-113" which appears SOMEWHERE in every film. It is a reference to the classroom where the originators first met in college. People spend an insane amount of time reviewing these films to find these hidden **Easter Eggs**.

What the hell does that have to do with the Museum of the Augusta Military Academy? Nothing – I'm just trying to impress you with my knowledge of inane trivia. Actually, that's not true: In many ways, what we do at the museum, in relation to artifacts, documentation and former "participants" (that includes all alum, faculty and staff) is an Easter egg hunt of its own. Sometimes it is an item already in the museum's collection. Other times it's something that shows up on our doorstep.

Take the following as an example: Amy Hensley found an "AMA Paperweight" on E-bay, bought it and donated to the museum for our collection. As you can see from the included photo, it is not some cheap reproduction or knock off. The casting of the bronze logo is clean, crisp and sharp. It is affixed to the heavy metal base, measuring 2.5" across, by means of hollow rivets, formed in the logo and passing through holes in the base. The base itself is an enigma – made of rough formed steel, it shows signs of having been painted green. It is strangely reminiscent of old armor plating I have seen on military vehicles.

Where did this originate? When was it made? "WHY was it made?" our young intern Ainsley asked. While this may sound crazy, think about it – at 22 years old, she has grown up in a world where the climate inside the home or business is controlled year-round. In my explanation of what it was used for, I painted a picture of a time gone by.

Imagine you are working in the Big Barracks in the early 20th century. That year's Corps of Cadets finished the school year and left a week ago. Now the campus is quiet leaving you to do the paperwork, preparing for next year's Corps. It's a warm, almost hot, early summer day. There is no A/C to give you comfort so you have the door and windows of the office open, hoping to get a cross breeze. If you are lucky, there is a small electric fan to generate a

false breeze and move the hot air around. The stacks of papers on your desk get blown about anytime the air does happen to move. How do you keep your work organized? Why you put a heavy object on it so it doesn't blow all over the office. Second nature to us old folks, but something akin to BLACK MAGIC to the youth of today.

Call me crazy (you won't be the first) but I can close my eyes and actually picture that scene in my mind. Sometimes it's General Roller himself and other times, the office secretary. It may be in black and white or color, but the image is clear as if I am watching a PIXAR film. There, on that pile of papers is my Easter Egg – this metal paperweight. I can imagine it was a gift from a wealthy patron or a now successful former cadet. Was it a one-off casting or some kind of trinket sold in the PX? We have no way of knowing from the literature we have on hand.

Unless one of this Newsletter readers can share some insight, it remains an intriguing mystery. It's origin and purpose left to our imagination. We do intend to put it on display next to other memorabilia in the museum. Maybe I'll just hide it in plain view, and next time you visit the museum, you can try to find this interesting Easter Egg on your own.

Rich vanBreemen
Curator, Museum of the Augusta Military Academy

NEW

The 2022 WINTER FALL BAYONET

READ HERE

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

This issue of the AMA Museum Newsletter was sponsored by
The 2021 Reunion Committee

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
1640 Lee Highway
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Fort Defiance, VA 24437