Museum of Augusta Military Academy News

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Ad Astra Per Aspera

MUSEUM OF AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

August - 2023

Chairman's Note

August 1, 2023

Dear Alumni and friends,

August is upon us and the summer heat is forcing us to stay indoors and with the air conditioner working on high. But as we all know, summer heat means that the crip air of fall is just around the corner. Unless of course, you live in the Caribbean where summer is really a year-long event.
Yet there is a silver lining in the late summer for all of us AMA Alumni. Reunion 2023! And it is just five weeks away!

Herb Maher, Lee Ramsey, Steve Trent and the rest of the reunion committee and Museum staff have been hard at work making preparations for this year's event.
We have purposely simplified the week end events so that there is way more time to relax and catch up with your old buddies. The hospitality room will be open at 1:00 pm Thursday, and we will be offering light Hors d'oeuvres and begin registration at 5:00 pm. The Friday and Saturday evening events will be held at the Hotel 24 South as will breakfast on Saturday morning, just prior to the annual Members meeting that will also be held at the hotel. On Saturday September 9th, We will hold the annual Founder's Day ceremony at the Old Stone Church Cemetery, which will be followed by lunch at the AMA Memorial Gymnasium.
The Reunion committee has focused on low stress and an excellent outcome for all of the events. I am especially confident that everyone will be very pleased with the culinary aspect of our weekend.
Other events planned for the weekend are Friday Golf, Sporting Clay Shoot, and a tour of the Dynamic Aviation facilities in Bridgewater, where you will have the opportunity to see the first Air Force One which flew President Dwight Eisenhower around the world, and is currently being restored in one of their hangars. As an added surprise, on Saturday afternoon after lunch, all AMA Alumni have been invited to visit the old "Fort" building on Rt-11. The folks that bought it, plan to turn it into a real estate office. They wish to restore the interior with as much of the old patina and history as possible. They will probably ask visitors to share what the Fort meant to them and how they remembered it.
I look forward to seeing everyone in a few weeks!

Team effort.

Douglas W. Pennock
Chairman
AMA Alumni Foundation, Inc.

AMA Museum News

Thank you to Charlie Pascale '69 for donating his time and hardware to maintain the Museum's computers!
We also want to thank Mr. Bob Rafa a buddy of our Rich van Breemen, for spending Saturday and Sunday at the museum repairing the chair lift.
Lastly, we would like to recognise Steve Trent '70 for his continuous help and support by attending most every Noble Legend event this year! Thank you Steve.

Noble Legends a hit with the local community

Noble Legends speaking tour wrapped up the 2023 season with yet another very well attended evening. 38 guests crammed into the Museum to listen to Samuel Lyon from Churchville Va. speak about his father Tunis Lyons who was a Fighter Pilot during WWII. Mr. Lyons was shot down over Germany, was badly burned and was taken POW. One year later General George Patton's army freed him from captivity.

Foto credit: Victor Gomez

Music at the Museum

The Stonewall Jackson Brigade Band played at the museum on Sunday July 30 to the delight of dozens of local visitors.

Stonewall Jackson Brigade Band

Chilling on the Museum Lawn

Alumni visitors to the Museum in July

Eugene Aragona '63

Ray Fink '75

(L-R)
Richard Starr '67 with
his wife Cheroyl, friends
Debbie and Bishop

Ray Sanchez '63
Made his first visit to
AMA in 60 years!

This year, our Sports Hall of Fame Inductees are:

- William J. Lane '42: Basketball & Baseball
- Watson *Hill Ellett '63; Football, Basketball, Baseball & Track*
- *Bruce Reyngoudt '70: Football & Lacrosse*
- 1972 Lacrosse Team

Each inductee will be recognized at the Saturday lunch at the September reunion.

Congratulations to everyone that was selected!

ALUMNI Reunion 2023

Sharing Past Memories.... Making New Ones

September 7-9 2023

ONLY 5 WEEKS TO GO!!

REGISTER HERE

Reunion Committee Co-Chairs Herb Maher and Lee Ramsey along with perennial Alumni Reunion planner Steve Trent, are hard at work to make this year's reunion even more memorable than last year's. We will continue to focus on offering everyone outstanding food and lots of low stress time to give everyone the opportunity to relax and enjoy catching up with old friends.

Reunion 2023 Headquarters Hotel will again be the Hotel 24 South in Staunton (Stonewall Jackson). The special AMA Reunion 2023 rate will be $123.00 per night plus taxes. The hotel rate includes parking.

All reunion events with the exception of Saturday lunch and the Dynamic Aviation tour will be held at the hotel. To reserve a room, call the hotel directly at 540-885-4848 and make sure that you ask for the AMA Reunion rate..

Honoring the Classes of:

1943, 1948,1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983

2023 AMA Reunion
Hotel 24 South
September 7th, 8th & 9th, 2023

Thursday, September 7th

9:00 am – 12:00 pm AMA Foundation Board meeting
@Blueridge Room - Hotel 24

10:00 am – 4:00 pm AMA Museum open

Open at 1:00 pm Hospitality Suite
@Skyline Room - Hotel 24

5:00 pm – 8:00 pm Registration & appetizers
@Skyline Room - Hotel 24

Closes at Midnight Hospitality Suite - Hotel 24

Friday, September 8th

BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN!

8:00 am – 12:00 pm Golf - *"Gypsy Hill Golf Course"*

10:00am – 4:00pm **Registration open**
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24

10:00 am – 4:00 pm AMA Museum open

10:00 am – 2:00 pm Sporting Clays – *"Flying Rabbit*
Sporting Clays"

10:00 am – 12:00 pm *"Dynamic Aviation"* Tour
Group will depart AMA Museum @ 9:30 am
*Note: There will be no transportation provided to Dynamic Aviation

Open at 1:00 pm Hospitality Suite
@Skyline room - Hotel 24

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN!

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm Registration Open
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24 South

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Cocktails
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Banquet
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24
** Scholarship awardees presented
** Alumni Medals presentation

Closes at Midnight Hospitality Suite - Hotel 24

Saturday, September 9th

8:00 am – 9:00 am Breakfast
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24

9:00 am – 10:00 am Annual membership meeting
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24

10:00 am – 4:00 pm AMA Museum open

11:00 am – 11:30 am "Founders Day" Ceremony
@Augusta Stone Church Cemetery

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm "Mission Barbecue" Lunch
@ AMA Memorial Gym
***Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm Tour of "the Fort" (the old post office)
****All AMA Alumni welcome to this "Open House"

Open at 3:00 pm Hospitality Suite
@Skyline Room - Hotel 24

2:00 pm – 6:00 pm Fellowship time
"You're on your own!"

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Registration Open
@Shenandoah Ballroom – Hotel 24

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Cocktails
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Dinner
@Shenandoah Ballroom - Hotel 24
*****Raffles will be selected

Closes at Midnight Hospitality Suite

List of registered Alumni and guests

Larry Reed '69 and Geri
Jeff Wenzel '70
Marc Aronson '68
Jorge Rovirosa '70 and Kiki

Garry Granger '71 and Becky
Larry Nicholson '75 and Deborah
Herb Maher '72-73 and Anne
Phil Bentley '83
Doug Pennock '72 and Trudy
Tom Del Valle '73
Doug Driscoll '72 and Anita
Don Studer (faculty)69-84
Luis Marien '73
Ainsley Bloomfield
Willie (Lee) Ramsey '73 and Karen
Brett Thompson '75
Susan Lambert Yates SH '73
James A. Johnson (Jim) '70
Bob Adams '63
Mike Payne '76
Brian Hart '63 and Sue
Karl Haleamau '71
David Brown '73 and Sarah
BJ d'Orsay '70
Jim (Mitch) Mitchell '76 and Krista
Mike Kidd '72
Steve Trent '70
Victor Gomez '69 and Evelyn
Steve Casey '75-76 and Brenda
Thomas White III '77 and Debbie
George Mineff '77
Lee Lewis '77
James Rochelle '68

REUNION SPONSORS NEEDED!

Individual sponsorships are the reason that we have excellent events and meals at our annual get together. The 2021 and 2022 Alumni Reunion were so successful because so many of you generously sponsored part or an entire venue.
We are way behind on sponsorships pledges this year even though we expect this year's turnout to be similar to last years, so please help us out and call Herb or Amy with your sponsorship.

Following is a list of venues that are available to sponsor:

THURSDAY NIGHT/HOSPITALITY $1,500 Legacy Property Holdings/JPR $1,500

FRIDAY BANQUET $6,000.00 Jeff Schroeder $1,000

SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST $1,500

SATURDAY LUNCH $3,500.00 Tom Del Valle $3,500

SATURDAY ITALIAN DINNER $5,500 Jeff Schroeder $1,100, Steve Trent $1,000

REGISTRATION $1,500 Doug Pennock $500, Doug Driscoll $500

FLOWERS $500 Jeff Wenzel $500

Faculty Lunch sponsors J. Wenzel $200 B. Miller $100 Charlie Pascale $50

Our estimated expenses for the reunion is $20,000
We have received $10,125

Sponsorship Shortfall $9,875

GET IN THE NFL FOOTBALL SPIRIT!

Tom Del Valle has donated this Dallas Cowboy memorabilia to be auctioned off exclusively to AMA Alumni and Friends at Reunion 2023. All proceeds will be added to the Reunion sponsorship tally.

The first item is a brand new out of the box official Dallas Cowboy Helmet. Minimum bid $600.00

The second item is a replica helmet that was worn by Dallas Cowboy players during a game honoring the Military Services. Minimum bid $450.00

The third item is a limited edition autographed (#13 of 20) of Micah Parsons. Minimum bid $1,100.00

All of these items will be on display Thursday, Friday and Saturday at Reunion. There will be a silent auction sheet with each item so you may bid on any or all of them.

If the minimum bid is not reached by the Saturday evening dinner, the items will be offered to the general public on eBay the week after reunion.

As we mentioned before, all proceeds will go to the Reunion 2023 sponsorship tally.

COWBOYS

Official NFL Dallas Cowboy Helmet

Minimum Bid $600.00

DAL

Replica Dallas Cowboy game helmet (Green)
Minimum Bid $450.00

HM
The Highland Mint
HM
The Highland Mint
Certificate of Authenticity
MICAH PARSONS
COWBOYS
LINEBACKER
AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO MINT
Limited Edition 20
13
DALLAS COWBOYS
EST. 1960
HM
THE HIGHLAND MINT
HM
THE HIGHLAND MINT

Limited edition autographed Micah Parsons picture
Minimum Bid $1,100.00

TAPS

Christopher "Vet" Vetick '77

4/5/1959 - 7/9/2023

L-R Bruce Justice '80, Brett Tompson '75, Jim Mitchell '76, Mal Livick Jr. '75, Col. Livick, Leon Armentrout '75, Tommy White '77, Todd Livick '81.
AMA was well represented at the memorial service held to celebrate "Vet's" life in Annapolis Md. on July 20. He will be missed.

AMA Faculty Spotlight

Charles Eugene “Doc” Savedge

12/17/1922 – 12/7/1990

Charles' life revolved around Augusta Military Academy in Fort Defiance, Virginia. It was the only job he had after his discharge from active service in the Navy in about 1946. Known as "Doc" (based on the fictional character Doc Savage) to the cadets, it might be said that Colonel Savedge was one of the most important members of the AMA family that held the school together until it closed in the winter of 1984 after suffering dramatic decreases in enrollment and the resulting income stream.

He was the eldest child born to Charles and Eva Savedge, who also had two daughters, Eva and Dorothy, after Charles. He was born in Hanover, Virginia but grew up in Richmond, where he attended Thomas Jefferson High School and was a member of the History Club.

Following High School, Charles enrolled in Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. He immediately began learning the art of Yearbook by joining the W&L Yearbook (Calyx) staff which he served on for his four years at the university. He was also a member of Gamma Phi Zeta, The Forensic Union, the Graham-Lee Literary Society, the White Friars, the Troubadours, Tau Kappa Iota, president of Lambda Chi Alpha, and the honorary Biology Society.

His college education was interrupted after his third year by his service as a Navy officer (LTJG) in the South Pacific during World War II. It is not known whether he enlisted or was drafted.

Upon discharge from the Navy, he returned to Washington & Lee university where he graduated in 1947.

He immediately joined the Augusta Military Academy (AMA) faculty where he taught Biology. Throughout his 37-year career at AMA, he taught Biology, Chemistry, U.S. History, and Economics. But Chemistry and U.S. History were his favorites, based on the number of years he taught these courses. He became the Chairman of the Science department in 1967 and Headmaster (Dean of Students) in 1969.

His passion at AMA was his role as advisor to the school yearbook, the ***RECALL***. He began this role in 1956 replacing Col. Paul Hoover. Col. Hoover had elevated the ***RECALL*** to a prize-winning publication, but Charles took it a step further, winning national awards year after year. He came to be recognized as the leading authority in the U.S. on High School yearbooks as he began traveling the country giving lectures and seminars on the art of yearbook publication. He even went so far as to co-author a Scholastic Press publication, ***Yearbook Fundamentals***, in 1972. His influence on the yearbook community can still be felt as a College Scholarship, the **Virginia High School League – Col. Charles E. Savedge Student Journalist Scholarship**, is to this day being awarded to deserving students entering college.

Charles was featured in a story in the December 1992 issue of Reader's Digest, by Katie McCabe. She tells of her journey as her school's yearbook advisor under the mentorship of Charles. During their first encounter at a workshop, he told the audience, "*You're writing history. The story you tell in your yearbook is the last thing anybody will write about most of the people in your school until their obituary. Think about it.*" He fixed his gaze on each individual. "*it's all up to you - and you - and you.*"

He was not just an advisor for the ***RECALL***, but he took each of the ***RECALL*** staff (known as Doc's boys) under his wing, mentoring them in life beyond AMA. During most of his tenure, he occupied two rooms at AMA. One was his personal quarters in the tower (central structure of the barracks). His other room was his "office" where he held his yearbook staff meetings, cooked his own meals (often sharing them with his "boys"). In later years, he moved off campus, living in nearby Verona.

Doc loved his dogs too. **Tallulah** was a cocker spaniel female and he had several during his time at AMA. Each had the same name and were usually offspring of a previous Tallulah. She went everywhere with him and lived in the Barracks with him.

When not teaching at AMA, or presenting yearbook seminars, you would likely find Charles traveling across the western United States. He was an avid photographer, not only for the ***RECALL***, but also of his travels during the summer. He often shared his slides with his history students.

Perhaps the most notable tribute to Doc is that recorded in the 1974 ***RECALL***, "*Sometimes, cadets believed that Col. Charles E. Savedge, headmaster. was perpetual motion. Around Finals, that was especially true. Adviser of the* ***RECALL****. teacher of three different subjects. President of Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association, and a judge for Virginia, Texas, CSPA and Oklahoma. The man was here, there, and everywhere. Even at VHSL there was also Tallulah, "Doc's" cocker spaniel. And she was in class, bedded down, sometimes snoring. Nightly smells issued from the second stoop and cadets popped heads in asking if they could grab a bite. Several of the new courses which became a part of the curriculum had been ideas of his - Mythology. Contemporary Problems and Comparative Government, Russian and Chinese*

history, and Consumer Mathematics. Widely known in journalism circles, he directed Ball State's summer yearbook workshop program, taught at Iowa, Oklahoma, South Carolina, California, Ohio, Catholic University, and several points in-between. "It's easy" was a laugh to chemistry students. Above all, in every course, his ambition was to make every student think - and then to make him do his best."

Charles Eugene Savedge passed away on December 7, 1990 and was interred at Forest lawn Cemetery in Richmond.

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 July

Brian Miller '67

SET UP YOUR MONTHLY DONATION HERE

Visitors in July

158

Museum Volunteer

***Be* a Volunteer Docent for a weekend...**

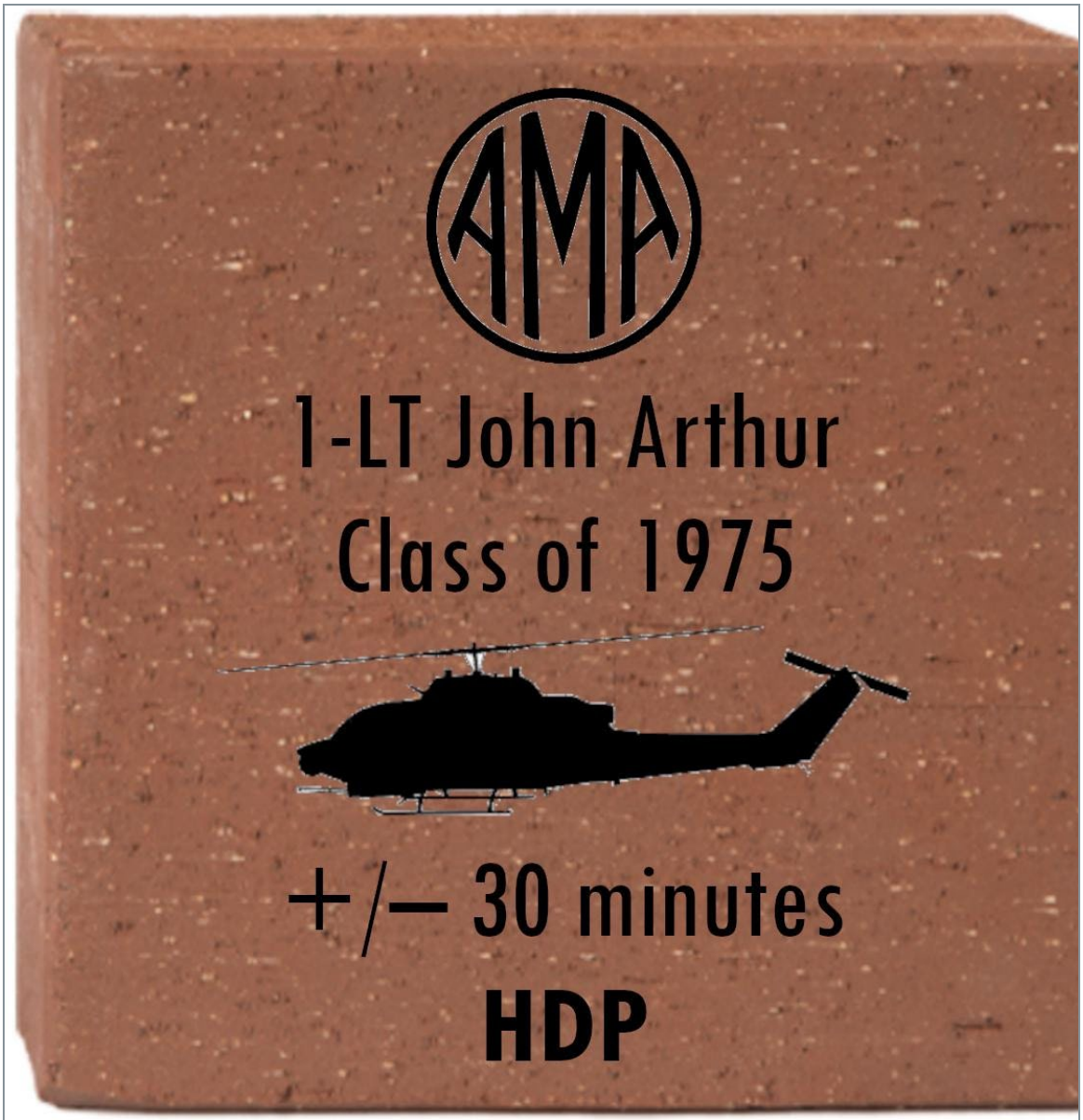
Purchasing a Paver Brick allows you to recognize anyone you knew while attending AMA

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 at the PX

Important Notice!

The AMA Alumni Foundation would like to clarify that all of the profits of the merchandise

that is sold through our Museum PX store, the official AMA Facebook page or the AMA webpage, go exclusively to help offset Museum operation costs.

AMA branded merchandise that is sold outside the Museum PX store, an unsanctioned Facebook page or unsanctioned eBay account has no connection or benefit to the AMA Alumni Foundation, Inc. or the AMA Alumni Museum.

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY

Augusta Military Academy

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY
AD ASTRA PER ASPERA
1865

17 oz. Mug

Only $12.00 plus tax and shipping

Just arrived to the PX!

Beautiful Wendell August Forge metal serving tray

$50.00

(Limited quantity)

THE PX ONLINE STORE IS NOW OPEN!

SUMMER SALE!!!!

All AMA branded merchandise will be sold at a *20% discount for August 2023

**The 20% discount does not apply to the Wendell August Forge Serving Tray

Doug Pennock's Viewpoint

August 1, 2023

Dear Readers,

I volunteered for the job of preparing and publishing the AMA Museum Newsletter in May of 2017. Six plus years later, I'm still pecking away at my keyboard doing my best to keep you informed and hopefully, somewhat entertained. I was never a "Doc Boy" while at AMA, but I suppose that after a six year stint producing this periodical to connect with my AMA family, Doc would have given me a thumbs up.

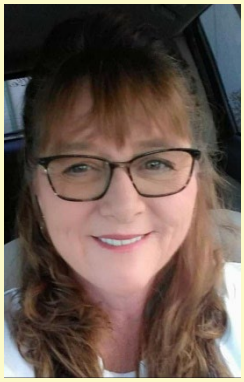
While speaking to my classmate Doug Driscoll '72 a while back, Doug enlightened me with what his world as Editor in Chief, CEO and owner of his newspaper, "What's Up" had been like over the twenty two years he owned it. Doug told me that during the years he operated the newspaper in Fort Wayne, Indiana, his life was consumed by his work and that he was constantly under the relentless pressure to make the dreaded publication "deadline". Free time and vacations were far and few between for Doug and his wife Anita. He even said that he had regretted taking the one vacation they took over that span of time!

I too experience that ever-present pressure, albeit to a lesser degree, but the pressure is surely there at the end of every month when my self-imposed first day of the month Newsletter launch deadline is around the corner! Fortunately, I get help with some of the Newsletter content, and my wife Trudy will proofread and edit the final publication before I send it.

This month is no different. The piece on Doc Savage was written by Bj d'Orsay, a genuine "Doc Boy", Amy Hensley our Museum Administrator writes her monthly message that will announce upcoming and past events, our newest contributor is our Museum Volunteer Coordinator, Chris Correa. I asked Chris to write something for the Newsletter a few months ago, and because his message resonated so well with all of us, I have asked him to write a monthly column. I am confident that you will enjoy Chris's August contribution. Rich vanBreemen, our Museum Collections Curator, has a way of connecting all of us with our history through his writing. This month will be no different.
So, I feel pretty good about sharing our current and not so current events with all of you every month, and I am proud to say that our newsletter averages a 50% plus open rate. (The national average for a Constant Contact Newsletter is less than twenty percent!)
Not bad for an Academy trained team!

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



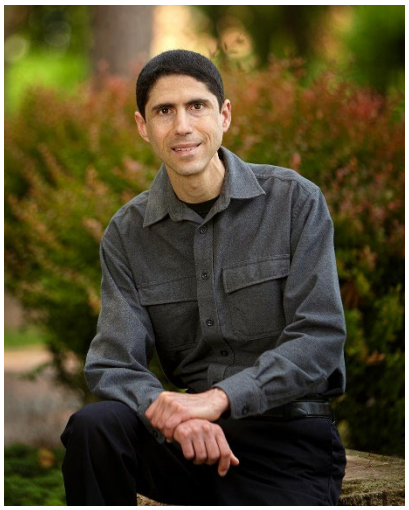
From the Administrators Desk

August 1, 2023

Can you believe we are now through July and August is upon us! We are just about 45 days to Reunion 2021!
It has been a busy summer here at the Museum. August will end our Noble Legends Speaker Series that started in May. This has been an excellent program and we are looking forward to starting a second “season” beginning in March. Not only have we had support of this program by the community, but also had a few Alumni in attendance as well.
PX sales are doing very well. New items have been added and will be appearing on the website very soon. We have added long sleeve shirts, golf shirts. I encourage everyone to please check out the online PX.
The Alumni Foundation has raised over $1100.00 in funds for school supplies for E.G. Clymore Elementary School in Fort Defiance. The Museum staff will be presenting these supplies to the school Principal, Fonda Morris on August 5th. The supplies will be issued to underprivileged children whose families would not otherwise be able to purchase the supplies needed.
All of us at the Museum look forward to seeing everyone at Reunion 2021. If you have not registered, you can do so by going on to the AMA website or call the Museum and I will be happy to get your registration completed. If you live local

or will be in the area please come by and visit. If you can donate a few hours of your time and docent on the weekend that would be greatly appreciated.
I look forward to seeing everyone soon!

Amy Hensley
Museum Administrator



Notes on Museum Tours

by Chris Correa, Museum Volunteer Coordinator

August 1, 2023

People tell me things.
I'm amazed at how much our visitors reveal by their reactions to the stories I tell. Veterans are struck by the parallels of the AMA experience and their military service. Some visitors learn about several hundred children handling their own affairs and are darkly reminded of *Lord of The Flies*. On the other hand, at least as often, guests declare that today's schools should emulate AMA or that the academy's discipline culture is "sorely lacking" in "today's" kids.
Plenty of others are animated just by the existence of the museum itself. I've lost count of how often people thank me for preserving this history instead of "tearing it down" since schools

“don’t teach history anymore. A less polemical view comes from the family who are grateful to stand on the grounds that their ancestor mentioned so often and to learn the unique details and broad themes that shaped his life here.

Some of the most interesting responses come from kids who are fascinated by the contrasts with their own school – and the surprising similarities. I had a tour this month with three girls: 7th, 8th, and 10th graders. What interest could they have in a boys military school that closed when their *parents* were toddlers? Yet I held their attention for over an hour, because your history is built on timeless themes of growing up, and recognizing one’s own experiences in a context that appears so foreign can captivate us at any age.

What all these responses share is the magnetic draw of visitors to AMA’s deep history once they start to hear it. It’s more than uniforms and drill, more than buildings and artefacts. It’s a window into an unknown world and a mirror that reflects visitors’ own experiences, ideals, anxieties, and assumptions.

I tell stories to put visitors in the place of cadets so they can wonder how they might’ve handled the pressures, hardships, temptations, and dilemmas that were endemic to the barracks. From whatever perspective, empathy is what makes those who know nothing about military schools suddenly transfixed by what happened here and the lessons they can learn. I think that’s why one of the 3 girls wrote in the guestbook, “This is awesome!!” and another wrote “THIS WAS RAD! GO HISTORY! PS CHRIS IS THE BEST HOST.” Yes, kids will appreciate history when a well-told story sparks their empathy with people of the past.

That’s why we must keep *telling* these stories. All the opinions and memories expressed by our visitors come during guided tours, because that’s when they get the most complete, most

evocative stories. When visitors feel compelled to share their reactions with me, that's peak engagement. That's when they're most likely having an experience that they'll recommend to others and support with a donation.
When people tell me things, I know that this museum has transcended from a tucked-away house of old stuff to a public asset for understanding how the past was made, how the past led to now, and what lessons we can take into the future.

Chris Correa

vanBreemen's Expressions

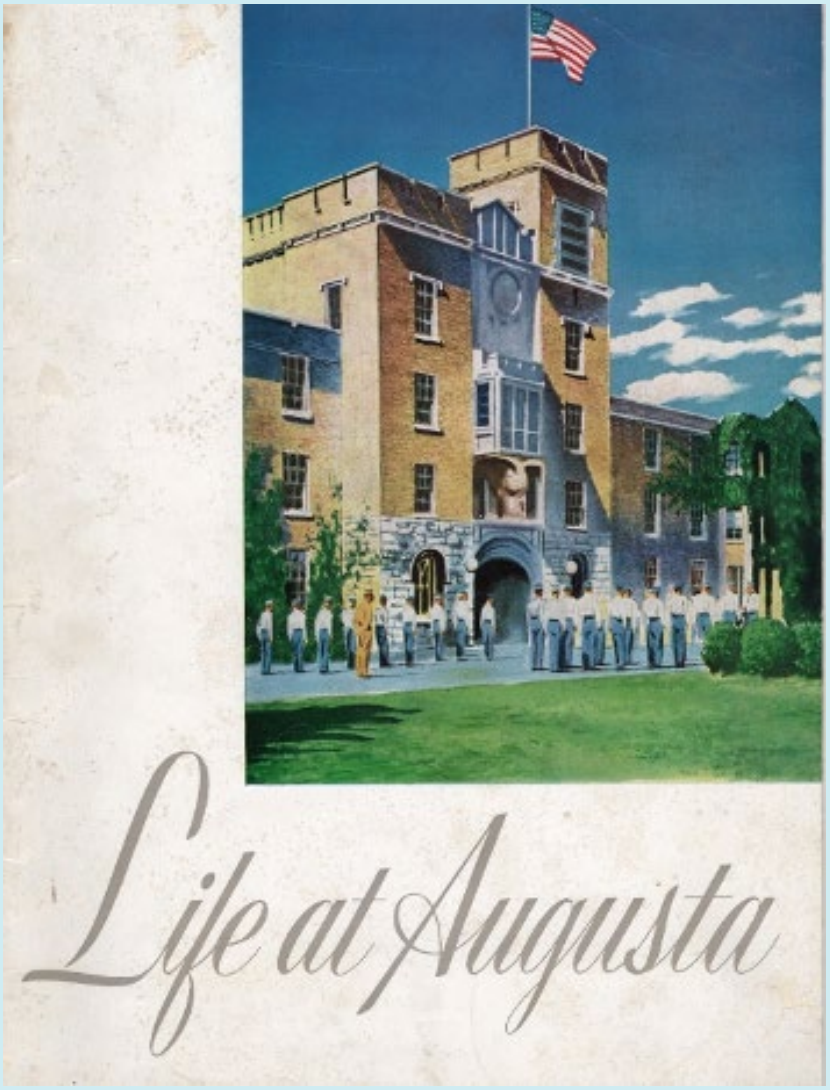
Down the Rabbit hole

by: Rich vanBreemen

AMA Museum Curator

It started out so innocently – as do so many requests. BJ D'Orsay sent an email; ***"I ran across this in the 1961 Recall. Any idea what "Life at Augusta" is referring to?"*** I knew I had seen that phrase associated with something in our database. A quick search turned up the item in question as a booklet in our collection – SOMEWHERE. Once again, the fickle finger of fate had struck as the database location was listed as "Archival Storage Room". Yikes, can we narrow it down to something better than my room?

As it is, I had an idea where to start looking and in good order a copy of the booklet was discovered. More to the point, 4 versions of the book were uncovered! It seems that from (roughly) 1954 through 1963, the school published this book as a supplement to the normal school catalog. It was meant to show what life at AMA was like, outside the normal catalog. Oh, those were flush years and spending a few bucks to help sell the school was not a problem.

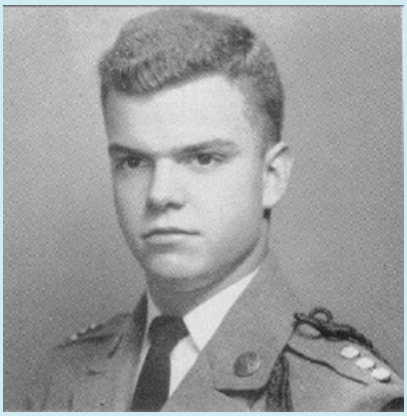


Within our collection, we have copies of 1954, 1959, 1962 & 1963. We have scanned all 4 of these and they are now available to view on the web page (https://amaalumni.org/life-at-augusta/). What makes these so unique is that they contain photos previously unknown to the museum staff. They are a significant "find" as it relates to telling the AMA story.

The 1954 edition follows a "new" cadet from his initial arrival to the campus through a normal school year. Interestingly, the editors used photos of the same cadet throughout the book which

subconsciously has the reader following his experience. What a clever marketing ploy and it must have been successful because they copied most of this in subsequent years.

So now the rabbit hole; I am sitting at my desk for some time scanning each page and I become curious as to WHO this mysterious cadet is. They did a good job of making him 'generic' but there were a number of clues I was able to use to track him down. Allow me to introduce you to T.C Lea Jr., class of 1955.



Thurmond C (TC) Lea Jr. '55

Thurmond, or TC as he was known at AMA, was a handsome young man and an accomplished student and athlete. It's no wonder that he was enlisted to be the subliminal spokesman for the school. It would appear that upon arrival he was welcomed with open arms; an experience I'm sure you can all relate to (cough, cough).

As I mentioned, the booklet is full of interesting photos and descriptions of the school. One of the more interesting finds was, what we so far believe to be, the only published photo of AMA cadets at THE FORT:

Yup, there is ole TC laughing it up with his pals over an extra tall milkshake.

No published document from AMA would be complete without photos of General Roller and his wife. TC is shown being greeted by the couple as a normal function of cadet life – and

maybe it was. Rumor has it the General would pop-up around campus at any time.

There must be 20+ photographs of TC throughout the booklet in various activities and functions at AMA. While maybe not a typical experience for a new cadet, I have every reason to believe this WAS the norm for TC; a cadet who was immersed in the entire AMA culture from military to scholastic achievement, sports, and social life. His record at AMA is chronicled in the 1955 RECALL:

"One of the best combinations of brawn and brains we have had for some time. Also one that is good in both while still being eligible for all young ladies. Top performer on the Varsity Football and Baseball Teams, one of the Officers of the Student Body and Honor Court, Roller Rifles, Cotillion Club, Decorating Committee, "C' Co. Captaincy, more than average student and more so when his activities are concerned. Designated for many educational honors, entry in Air Corps Exams and Naval R.O.T.C. in short a true representative of Augusta."

All this just wanted me to learn more about TC. We have a fair amount of information on him squirreled away in various BAYONET

articles. Suffice it to say – he did well. Post AMA he received his undergraduate from Virginia Tech and Juris Doctor from University of Richmond. He practiced law in the Commonwealth from 1962 to 2010! A loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather; I think it fair to say they picked the right guy.

Thurman Carlyle Lea Jr. passed away in 2011. TC loved his time at AMA, and he had written a number of articles for the Bayonet over the years. I picked one at random which led me down another rabbit hole. It seems one of TC's best friends at AMA was Hugo Fleites Rodriquez "THE" Cuban man in 1954-55. Hugo was also class of 1955 and after graduation, had invited TC and another friend to come visit him in Cuba. Things with Cuban President Batista were beginning to go sour, and the friends declined Hugo's invitation – something TC always regretted and wrote about in his Bayonet article (Fall 2005, pg. 41).

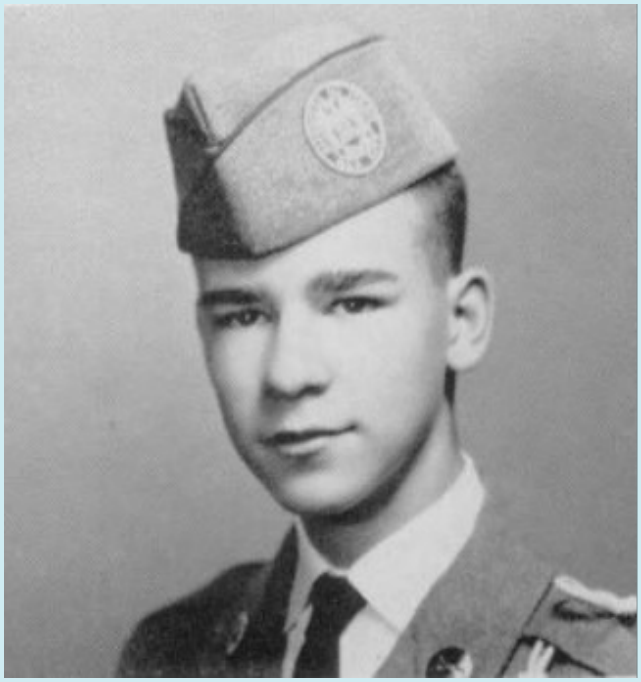
This also intrigued me, so I started to look up what we had on Hugo Fleites Rodriguez. Our records are slim, with little more than a birthdate and an unconfirmed report of his passing. To make things even more interesting, Hugo's last name is listed as Fleites or Rodriguez in different publications. Through the help of Doug Pennock, Jorge Rivorosa and Victor Gomez, I learned just how confusing the naming practices are for Latin American countries. A sleuth's nightmare I tell you! Using the resources I had at my disposal, I was able to determine that Hugo passed away on February 10, 1979, in Perth Amboy New Jersey but the circumstances have not been discovered – he was 43 years old. There was a report he died in a plane accident, but after digging through FAA accident reports and online searches for plane accidents at that time, I found nothing.

Hugo Fleites Rodriguez
Born: 8/15/1935 CUBA
Died: 2/10/1979 NJ, USA

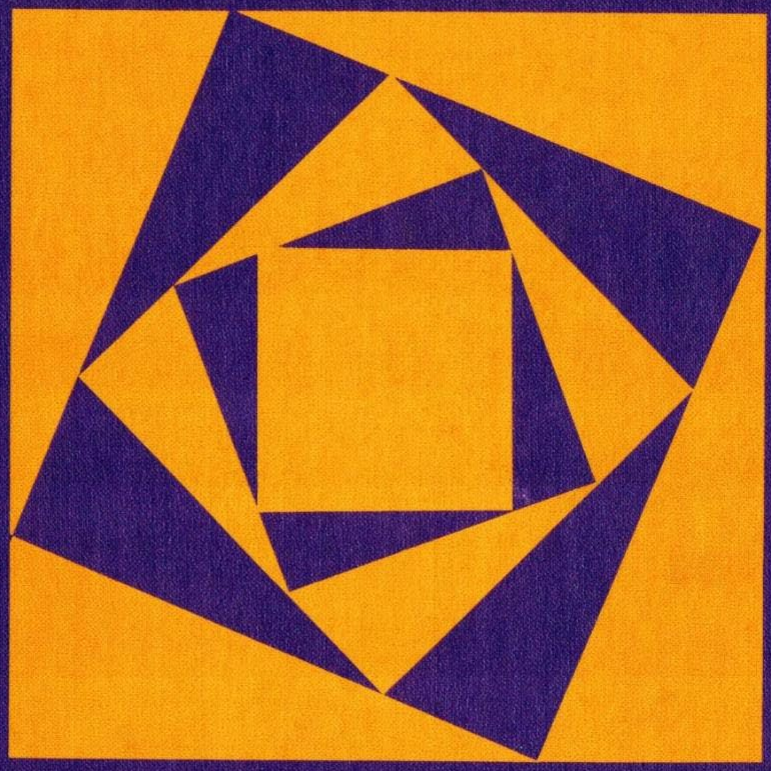
Hugo's story, as told by TC in his Bayonet article, would make a great article by itself, and would illustrate the peculiarities of friendship, loyalties, and betrayals. However, by this time I realized I was getting pulled deeper and deeper down the rabbit hole and I better find light soon or miss my deadline for THIS newsletter article.

Backtracking from the rabbit hole I had fallen victim to, I reviewed what I had written for this article and the information I had read in the RECALLs and Bayonets I realized one more interesting tidbit from the LIFE AT AUGUSTA booklet. The following photograph shows our "generic cadet" interfacing with the Officer of the Day:

We now know, that at the time of this publication, TC was Captain of C Company, but here he is in his shirt with no rank, highlighting the OD as a senior NCO. I believe that NCO was Luther David Lea – TC's cousin who was also a 1955 graduate of AMA. In the '55 RECALL, "David" is called "One of the top NCO's" and "Most dependable member of the guard when he is on duty."



According to our database, David is 86 years old and still with us, living in Charlottesville, VA and is also a lawyer. I hope he sees this article and can fill us in on some more of their story.
Who would have known that such a simple question from BJ would reveal such a rich historical story of AMA's past – not to mention giving me more fodder for another newsletter article!



Recall '73

50 YEARS AGO

Read the 1973 Recall
HERE

The Recall Gallery
HERE

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

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