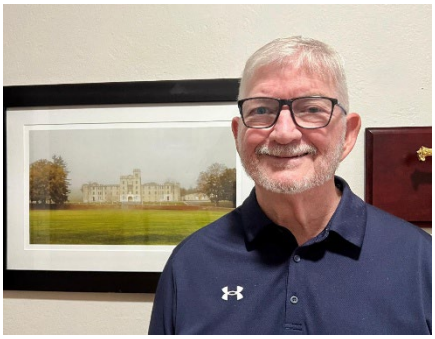
AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY ALUMNI FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026

THE AMA MEMORIAL



Chairman's Message

Douglas W. Pennock '72

July 1, 2026

Dear Fellow Alumni and Friends,

June was a month of many moving parts for me. On June 8th, I began my 73rd journey around the sun. My youngest son, Shawn, flew down to Puerto Rico from Boston to attend his niece, my granddaughter Clara's, high school graduation and to celebrate my birthday. Over the ten days Shawn was home, Trudy, my wife, hosted three separate family gatherings at our house: the first with about 60 people, the second with 25, and the third with around 15. And yes, in Puerto Rico, we celebrate everything with gusto!

One of the highlights of the month was learning that Clara was awarded one of this year's AMA Legacy Scholarships. As her grandfather, I couldn't have been prouder. Seeing another member of our family carry forward the values of leadership, service, and excellence that the AMA instilled in all of us made for a very special moment.

On June 15th, I flew to Dallas, Texas, and met up with my partner in crime, Tom Del Valle, to begin an eight-day, 3,200-mile round-trip road trip to Staunton. Along the way, we visited friends, spent two nights in Staunton, met with our attorney and Pastor Stan Farthing together with Marc Aronson '68, held an AMA Alumni Foundation Board meeting, visited the museum, and returned to Dallas on June 23rd. I'll share more about that memorable trip later in this newsletter.

I know many of you are wondering where we stand with the lease agreement for the AMA Memorial. Quite frankly, I wish I were reporting that it had already been signed. As many of you know, this has been a lengthy process involving not only the leadership of the Old Stone Church but also the

Presbytery, whose approval is required before any agreement can be finalized and recorded.

The encouraging news is that the process has now entered its final stage. Following our meetings in Staunton, the appropriate parties are now engaged, and we are working toward an agreement that protects the interests of both the Church and the AMA Alumni Foundation for many years to come.
While I can never promise an outcome until the ink is dry, I remain optimistic. Given where we stand today, I am optimistic that we can reach an agreement that satisfies everyone involved.

I also want to thank those alumni and donors who have remained patient throughout this process. Your confidence, encouragement, and continued support remind us why this memorial is so important.

The AMA Memorial has always been about preserving the legacy of our Academy and honoring the generations of cadets who passed through its gates. That goal has not changed, and neither has our commitment to seeing this project become a reality. We will continue to keep you informed as meaningful progress is made.

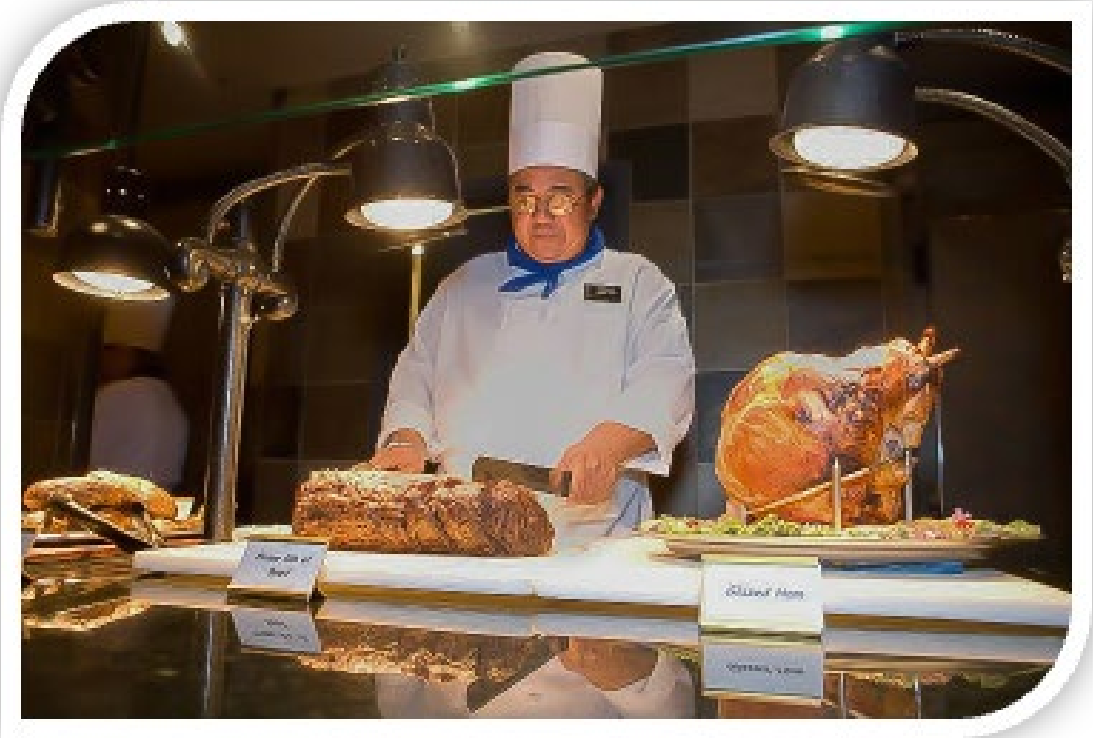
Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Douglas W. Pennock – AMA 1972
Chairman

America's 250th Birthday
1776 – 2026
"I WANT YOU AT THE REUNION!"
America's 250th Birthday
AMA Alumni Reunion • September 10–12, 2026

An Announcement from Your Reunion Committee

New for the **Hospitality Room** on Thursday evening, September 10th, we have added a carving station featuring **roast beef** and **ham** carved by the hotel chef. Hot hors d'oeuvres and snacks will also be available along with soft drinks, water, and adult beverages.



Come join us at the 2026 Reunion, where Fun is a tradition!

QUICK LINKS

Register for Reunion 2026

Buy Rifle Raffle Tickets

Reunion Sponsorship

AMA Memorial Sponsorship Donor Agreement

Museum General Fund Donation

AMA Alumni Reunion

September 10 - 12, 2026

Honoring the Classes of:
'46, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, and '81

Headquarters Hotel Hotel 24 South (Stonewall Jackson)

Call 540-885-4848 to make your reservation. Tell them that you are with the AMA group to get your $127 per night rate

Register HERE

Become a Reunion Sponsor

For the past several years, our Alumni Weekend has been fully funded by the generosity of our own. That says a great deal about the kind of men that AMA produced.

If you would like to help sponsor one of this year's events or venues, we would be grateful. Every contribution, regardless of size, plays a role in making the weekend something we can all be proud of.

Sponsors will be recognized throughout the reunion.

Please click HERE to sponsor an event

Below is a list of this year's sponsorship opportunities.

You may sponsor a portion of the venue or the entire venue. Your choice.

Registration	$1,500.00
Hospitality Suite	$1,500.00
Band Company Breakfast	$1,000.00
Friday Banquet	$6,400.00
Saturday Breakfast	$2,300.00
Saturday Lunch	$4,200.00
Saturday Dinner	$6,400.00
Flowers	$500.00
Reunion General Fund	Any Amount

Reunion 2026 Sponsors

Category	Cost	Sponsors	Pledge	Status	Paid	Dat
Registration	$ 1,500	Doug Pennock '72	$ 1,500	Paid	$ 1,500.00	4/25/
Hospitality	$ 2,100	Steve Trent	$ 1,500	Paid	$ 1,500.00	6/19/
		Bill Mc Vey	$ 600	Paid	$ 600.00	5/15/
		Brett Thompson	$ 300	Paid	$ 300.00	6/18/
Band Breakfast	$ 1,000	Doug Driscoll '72	$ 500	Paid	$ 500.00	2/19/
		Joe Gallehugh '70	$ 500	Paid	$ 500.00	4/28/
		Frank Roach '69	$ 250	Paid	$ 250.00	5/17/
Friday Dinner	$ 6,400	Class of '67	$ 3,200	Paid	$ 3,200.00	4/14/
Saturday Breakfast	$ 2,300	Lee Ramsey '73	$ 2,300			
Saturday Lunch	$ 4,200	John Arthur '75	$ 2,500	Paid	$ 2,500.00	6/1/2
Saturday Dinner	$ 6,400	Marc Aronson '68	$ 3,200			
		Anonymous	$ 1,500	Paid	$ 1,500.00	4/29/
		Tom Del Valle '73	$ 2,000	Paid	$ 2,000.00	6/1/2
		George Mineff	$ 500	Paid	$ 500.00	6/15/
Flowers	$ 500	Jim Mitchell '76	$ 500			
Reunion General Fund	$ 2,000	Doug Driscoll '72	$ 500	Paid	$ 500.00	2/19/
		Herb Maher '72	$ 500	Paid	$ 250.00	6/3/2
		Jeff Wenzel '70	$ 3,250	Paid	$ 3,250.00	6/27/
		Doug Pennock '72	$ 300	Paid	$ 300.00	6/30/
		Bj d'Orsay '70	$ 205	Paid	$ 205.00	6/4/2
		Frank Roach '69	$ 500	Paid	$ 500.00	5/17/
TOTAL	$ 26,400		$ 26,105		$ 19,855.00	

Introducing …

$250 Guaranteed!

The all-new drawing
at the 2026 AMA Alumni Reunion

Win $250 CASH!

$5 per ticket, cash or credit card

Drawing Saturday after dinner

Springfield M1A
50th Anniversary Rifle

Watch the Video

This year, we are offering a very special rifle for our annual Rifle Raffle.
In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Springfield M1A version of the iconic semi-auto M14, Smithfield Armory produced a limited production of 1,974 units. This beautiful collector's rifle includes a handcrafted wooden display case, laser-engraved operating rod, a certificate of authenticity, and additional accessories.

Tickets are on sale. Ticket prices are $25 per single or $100 for a five-pack. You may purchase your tickets online HERE, or you can send a check to the Museum at: PO Box 100, Ft. Defiance, VA 24437-0100

22" BARREL

The G.I. 22-inch carbon steel barrel on the M1A 50th Anniversary rifle wrings all available performance out of the 7.62 round.

MATCH-GRADE APERTURE REAR SIGHT

The match grade non-hooded rear sight features a small .052" aperture, ½ M.O.A. windage adjustments, and 1 M.O.A. elevation increments.

ARMY TECHNICAL MANUAL

Like M1A rifles from 50 years ago, a reproduction M14 Army TM-9-1005-223-12 technical manual is included.

TWO-STAGE TUNED TRIGGER

M1A CLEANING KIT

OD GREEN SLING

ENGRAVED OP ROD

Each 50th Anniversary M1A features an engraved 1 of 1974 operating rod, symbolizing its unique place in history.

SHENANDOAH
Valley
BEST
HARRISONBURG MEDIA GROUP
2026

“Coax the Folks”

Herb Maher '73

Your 2026 Reunion Committee has been keeping its nose to the grindstone, preparing for another great reunion. Some of your favorite events and activities remain unchanged, and some have been tweaked a bit:

· The Friday and Saturday Dinners now start at 6:00 PM with Cocktails at 5:00 PM.

· Founder’s Day returns to the Augusta Stone Church with the ceremony at the cemetery and lunch in the John Craig Fellowship Hall.

· Raffles and drawings include the Rifle Raffle, Tower of Power featuring premium brands, The Hotel 24 South “Weekend for Two” drawing, a free ticket for all reunion attendees, and the All-New ***250 Guaranteed!*** Win $250 cash at $5 per ticket.

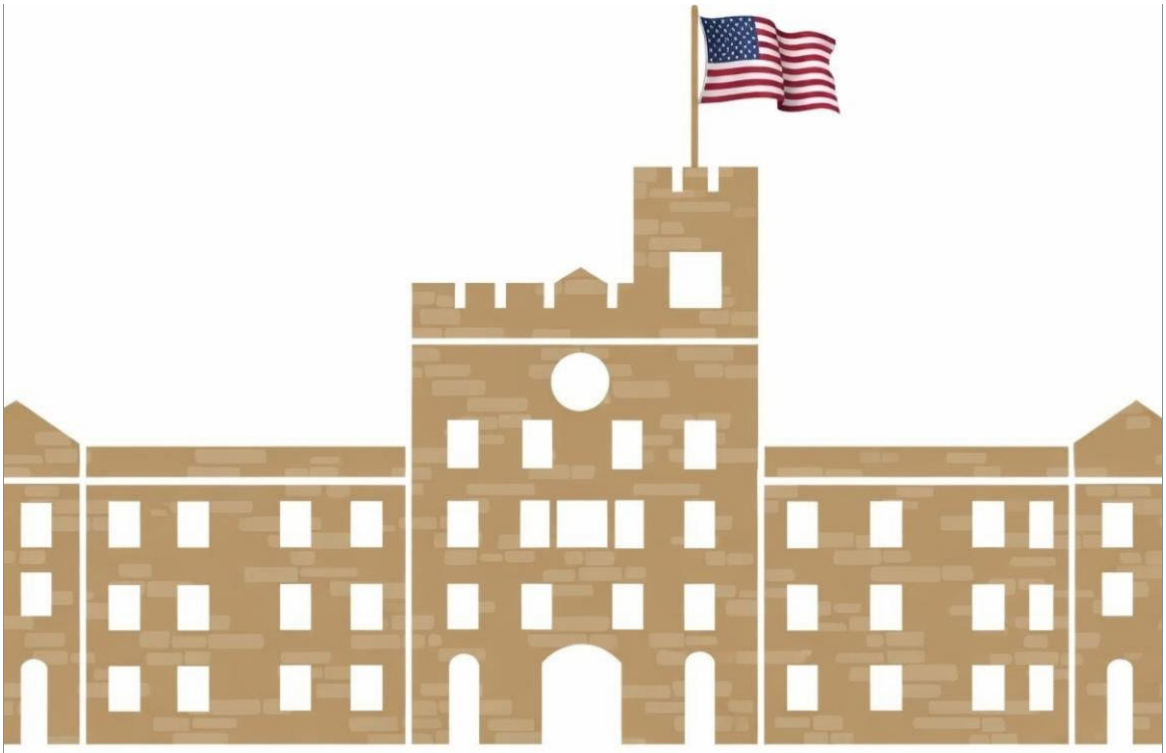
· Thursday evening, the Hospitality Room will include a Carving Station with roast beef and ham.

· Suggested things to see and do in the Staunton area. (See the 2026 Reunion Webpage and schedule)

So please do not delay, go to **https://amaalumni.org/2026-reunion/** and check out the complete schedule of events, get registered, get your hotel room reserved and join the party!

See you in September!

Augusta Military Academy Alumni Foundation Scholarship



Augusta Military Academy Alumni Foundation

2026 Legacy Scholarship Winners

Once again, the competition was fierce. We received numerous deserving applicants this year, and each was deserving of a scholarship. However, we have only three (3) Legacy scholarships to award.

Congratulations to these three (3) offspring of AMA Alumni

alijohnson.co

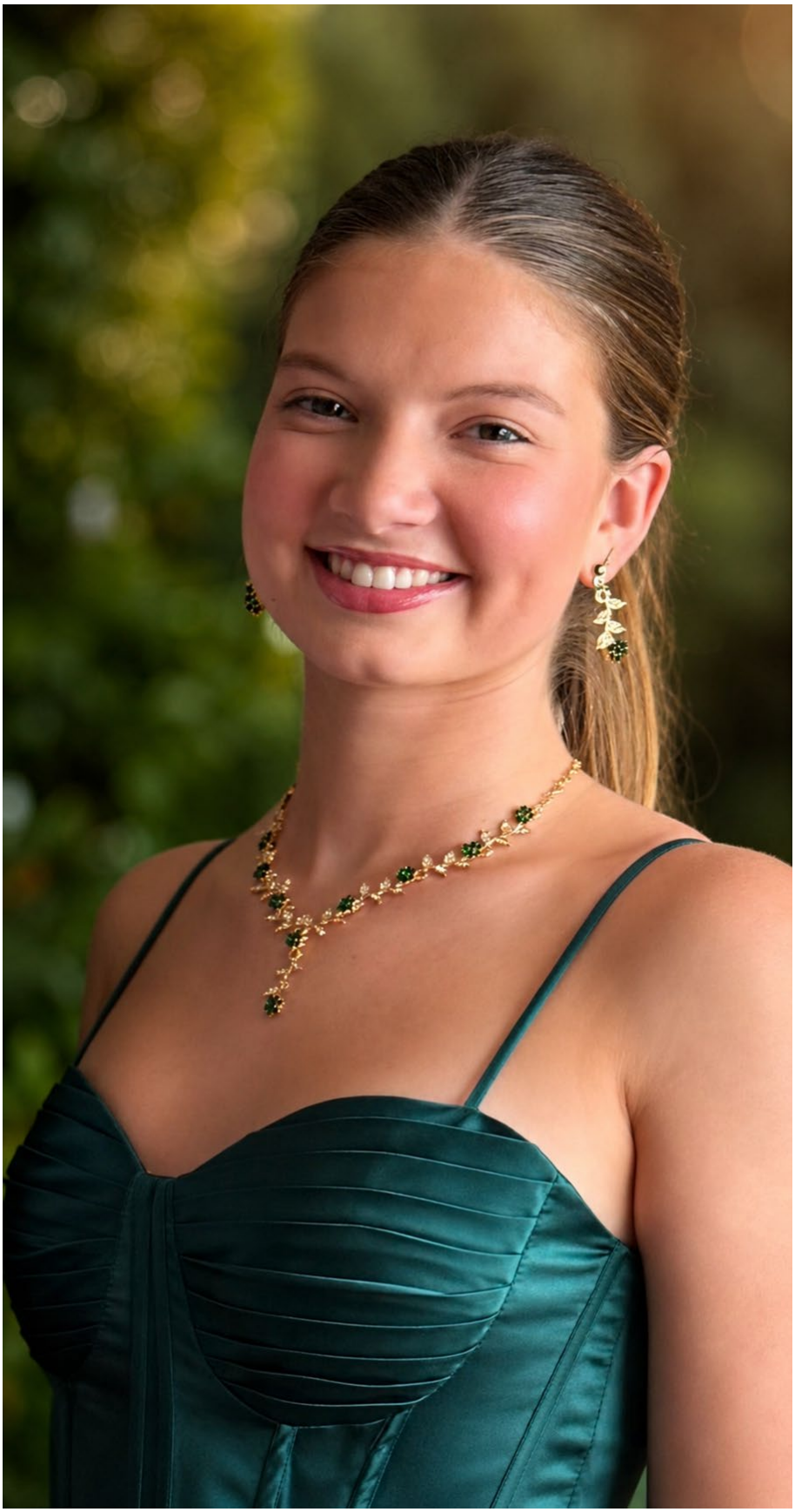
Lillian Liles – Granddaughter of Edwin Liles ‘61

Lillian will be attending James Madison University in Harrisonburg in the fall of 2026 and seeking her bachelor’s degree in nursing. Lillian competed at the highest levels of track while attending High School in Louisa, VA. She ran indoor and outdoor track, is a team leader, and is someone the coaches depend on to help motivate & elevate the team.

Unfortunately, she began having fainting spells after strenuous runs, which eventually led to a diagnosis of Exercise-Induced Asthma. That didn’t slow her down…she kept at her skill level until severe pain began, which was followed by a diagnosis of Complex Regional Pain Syndrome in her right leg. This ended her athletic career. To some, this diagnosis would have led to depression and severe anxiety. However, Lillian looked in the mirror and made a conscious decision not to disappoint herself … meaning “Little Lilly”, the little girl inside her that always pushed forward, always stayed the course, always gave her all.

Today, this remarkable lady coaches, encourages, and motivates, is a junior volunteer at a local hospital, and continues earning her associate’s degree at a local community college. This supports the promise she made to herself to pursue her passion to help others, thus her focus on Nursing. Further, she credits her grandfather (Papa) with his wisdom and for instilling in her the idea of “never give up”. Lillian quotes: God gives the toughest battles to his strongest soldiers”.

So true, congratulations, Lillian!



Clara Pennock – Granddaughter of Doug Pennock ‘72

Clara will be attending the Universidad Alfonso X el Sabio near Madrid, Spain, in the fall as a freshman. Her objective is to study Sport and Physical Activity Science & Physiotherapy for 5 years and earn two (2) bachelor’s degrees.

Clara has been trained as an athlete since age 3 and has accomplished a great deal. Currently, she coaches gymnastics at the same facility where she was trained. She is a leader and helped choreograph a large group for a Sports Fest at her school and serves as President of the Mental Health Club.

Clara is thankful that she has not experienced catastrophic events in her life. Knowing this motivates her to push through pain, exhaustion, and self-doubt to become her very best. Along the way, she helps others be better. Not just physically, but mentally as well. She also currently coaches a Volleyball team at an elementary school.

Clara has been influenced by AMA’s Legacy as her great-great-grandfather (’26), her great-grandfather (’48), and her grandfather (’72) are all AMA graduates. She credits her Grandfather for helping develop her leadership skills, teaching her to be curious and learn as much as you can. His quote to her is ”You never know what you don’t know”.

Congratulations Clara!

WHEELING
CROSS COUNTRY

Erick Berroa – Son of Billy Berroa ‘81

Erick is a second-time Scholarship Winner…receiving the Chairman’s Option Scholarship in 2025. Erick will be returning to Wheeling University, where he is on the Dean’s List. Erick is ranked third in the Dominican Republic for his athletic discipline. At WU, he runs the 200m and 400m meets, throws the javelin, and is a decathlete and a triathlete. He currently works as a lifeguard and a children’s swimming instructor. Erick gives thanks to his father for teaching him many life lessons and establishing his work ethic. He states that his father taught him Augusta’s strong values and principles.

We wish you our very best, Erick

A heartfelt THANK YOU to Marc Aronson ‘68, Phil Bentley ’83, Soumi Eachempati, and Brenda Martinez (non-alumnus judges) for their time and energy with the Scholarship Committee

Garry Granger’71
AMA Alumni Foundation
Scholarship Committee

Museum Visitors

On June 14, the museum welcomed 19 members of the Waynesboro-Staunton Region Antique Automobile Club of America for a tour.

MUSEUM

DOCENT DUTY

THANK YOU!

A monthly pledge from everyone who reads this newsletter supports the Museum's operating costs.

Visitors in June

74

SET UP YOUR MONTHLY DONATION HERE

Museum Volunteers

Elizabeth Andrews
Brian Miller '67
Jim Alexander
of Fort Defiance

***B*e a Volunteer Docent for a weekend. You may be surprised how much fun you will have!**

To order items from the PX, call the Museum at 540-248-2007

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY
AD ASTRA PER ASPERA
1865

CHARLES S. ROLLER
III
RIFLES

AMA

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY
BAND

AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY

CROSSLAND
AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY
AD ASTRA PER ASPERA
1865

PAVER BRICK

Celebrate a life, a legacy, or a special memory by purchasing a personalized Paver Brick at the AMA Museum.

Every brick is proudly placed along the sidewalk running east of the Museum. When the time comes, all paver bricks will be relocated and permanently displayed at the AMA Memorial — ensuring your tribute endures for generations.

Visit the Brick virtual map HERE
Brick Order Form

AMA

1-LT John Arthur

Class of 1975

+/– 30 minutes

HDP

vanBreemens Expressions

July 1, 2026

Legacy or Destiny?

By Rich vanBreemen

Last month, I shared with you what we've been doing at the museum and where we expect to head with that work. Digitizing the school's records, documentation, and other resources may seem, at worst, like a waste of time and, at best, an exercise in futility. That notion is ironic because it is most likely the same thing local farmers told C.S. Roller in the 1860's when he said he wanted to build a school for boys. Why would a young man need an education when his future will be behind a horse and plow?

Today, as back then, reality ends up being a little different than the naysayers would have had you believe. C.S. Roller saw his school as a way of lifting students (young men) out of the narrow confines of farming and give them a path to bigger and potentially better things. He saw education as beneficial not only to the student but also to the community.

Over the next 100+ years, AMA would continually evolve so that the school on Rt. 11 in 1984 would have little resemblance to the Academy on the Valley Turnpike in 1874. Although the campuses were significantly different in appearance, their purpose remained the same – to deliver a premium education and life-learning experiences to their cadets, making them better and more productive citizens.

In the winter of 1983, that story, seemingly, came to a sudden halt. Over Christmas break, cadets returned home or to guest houses only to be told, ***"Do not return to AMA."*** The alums who had come and gone before would not let that lie. They eventually rallied and coalesced into a group that created the AMA Museum to continue educating the public about AMA.

At first, the museum was a bittersweet reminder of times gone by. Of friendships made that would last for decades. Alums would gather every year for their reunion and for a few days, be wild and crazy teenagers again – reliving the fun and excitement of their youth. Throughout the rest of the year, alums and their families

would visit at different times and share their story with their families or the public who may have been there as well.

It's been 26 years, and that story continues to play out. However, each year, the number of actors on stage becomes fewer and fewer. But something was going on at the museum that, other than Divine intervention, would be hard to explain. While the number of alums who could docent, visit, or be involved was dwindling, some new faces arrived to pick up the torch and continue the school's story. Eventually, telling that story required us to dig through the records to understand the history better. The sharing of that story was once again evolving into a digital or virtual world, so AMA could still influence people without ever stepping on campus.

Don't misunderstand, NOTHING will ever be able to replace standing on the Parade Ground, in the shadow of the Big Barracks. We don't pretend to do that. But what about the family in Kansas who has gotten into genealogy and wants to learn more about their

grandfather's time at AMA? How do we satisfy their questions? Electronically!

By digitizing the records and documents we can salvage, we can now provide families with data that, 20 years ago, would have at least required a trip to Virginia. That in and of itself is phenomenal and a gift to those who have been able to take advantage of it. But is that enough to garner the support of the alums who continue to back the Foundation and the Museum? Let me help sweeten the pot, and you decide if what I tell you was coincidence or destiny.

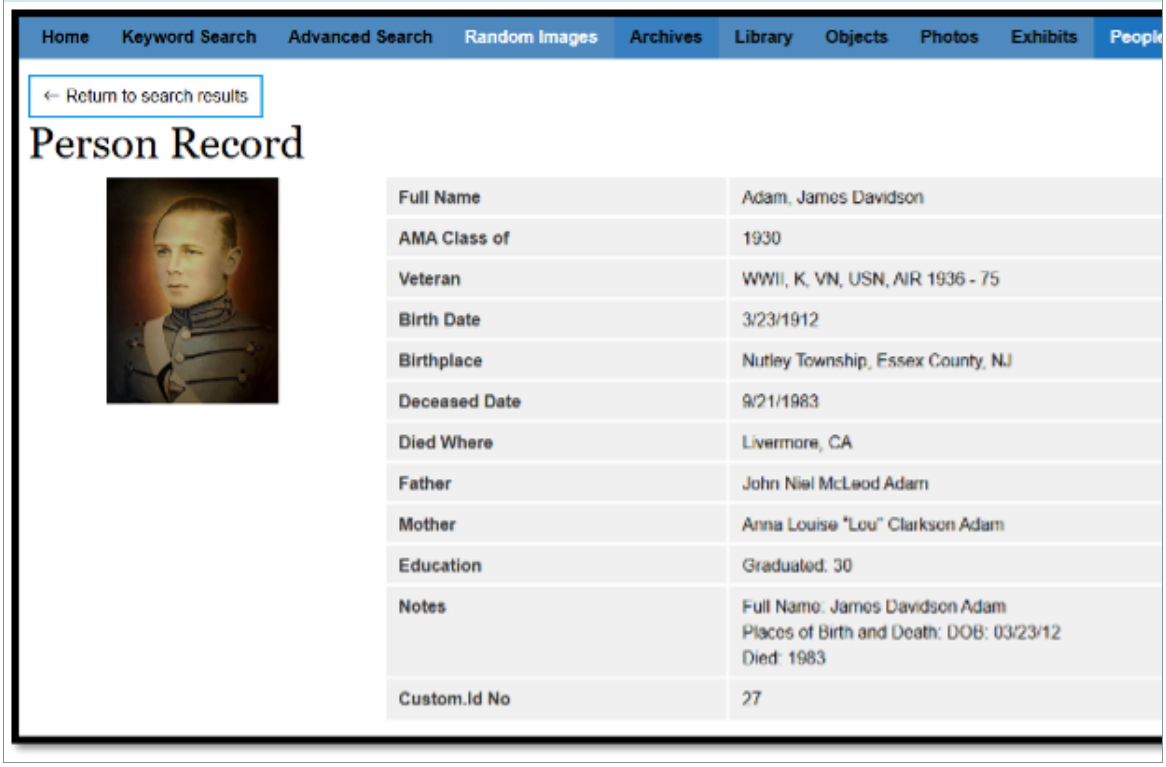
You have heard the Board and Museum staff talk about PastPerfect software (PPS). This is the database where ALL alum records are tracked. It is very powerful software, and the early museum staff were wise to invest in it. Unfortunately, that early staff member was not familiar with PPS operations and made a significant error when entering the raw data. No blame, just the way things work out.

The error was in where the ALUM was entered into the database. To be concise, the names and information were entered into an area accessible only to the museum staff. However, if it had been placed in the correct area, we could have made that information available to the public. Contacting PPS tech support for a method to bulk move the data was met with a firm "Can't be done. You have to do it manually." UGGGGG!!!

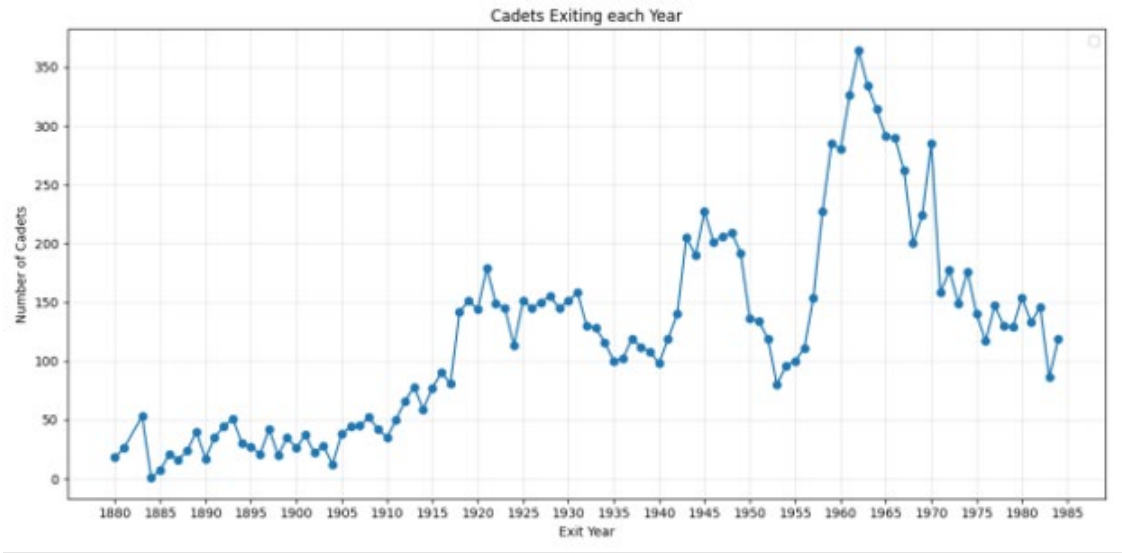
One evening, our museum historian, Chris Correa, was having dinner with his grade school friend, who happens to be the head of Computer Training at a local university; we'll call her Dr. D. As Chris explained our conundrum, Dr. D asked if she could see if there was a way to automate the process. Long and the short of it was we agreed to her request, and she got to work.

Early on, she recognized that this would make a great practical experience project for her students. The museum staff and Dr. D agreed to some basic rules to protect the privacy of the AMA alum, but beyond that, Dr. D was given carte blanche to play with the data.

One of the first things Dr. D and her students did was create an automated program that duplicated the manual effort of copying the data from the wrong database into the correct database! I watched a video of this process in real time, and I tell you, the results saved the museum staff HUNDREDS of man-hours! Now, all the alumni were located in an area in PPS accessible to the public. We turned off the switch to allow public access to anyone who had not already passed away. Not every record is detailed, but you can search for alums who were here before 1945. After that, we handled it on a person-by-person basis.



That work was significant, but Dr. D saw additional potential and continued working with her students to extract information from the raw data of the old AMA records. By reviewing these records and massaging the data, we get a clearer picture of the workings of AMA, and, against the backdrop of local events, can draw some conclusions as to WHY things happened at and to AMA when they did. Detailing these findings will be fodder for a future article. Bear in mind that the museum is the recipient of the results of these efforts. The students are doing the hard work and in doing so, continuing their education with a real-life scenario.



Here's where I question the distinction between destiny and coincidence. See, Dr. D and Chris were high school friends back in California, 30 years ago. Dr. D's education and desire to teach led her to find employment here in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. In 2017, Chris was looking for a more affordable place to live, and she convinced Chris to relocate from his home in California to Virginia. With no job, no place to live, and limited resources and support, Chris took that leap of faith and relocated to Virginia. Two

years later, Chris secured a position here at the AMA Museum, and the rest is history.

My mind works in mysterious ways (even to me), and I ponder some of these things:

· How different would things be for AMA if Dr. D had never convinced Chris to relocate to VA?
· Did these things unexpectedly extend AMA's life?
· Would the Professor be pleased to know that his efforts to bring education to the Valley continue to bear fruit, 150+ years later?

I am continually amazed when I witness "the Butterfly Effect" in real life: how one small, innocuous event triggers a string of other positive events. I no longer question it. Now I grin and nod my head in appreciation for the blessings bestowed upon us.

So as you can see, even though it may appear that things at AMA are fading, the reality is that it is simply morphing into something new. This new something will require our time, efforts and backing to get a firm foothold. I believe this work is not only necessary but preordained. AMA will live on – longer than the Tower of Power!

If you have any questions about what we are doing, or suggestions on how to improve the work, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at the museum via email (**museum@amaalumni.org**).

Doug's Commentary

July 1, 2026

The Road to Staunton Part -1

A Doug Pennock journal

I am certain that most of you keep in touch with one or more of your AMA buddies. That, in itself, is one of the things that binds us together long after graduation. The friendships formed at AMA are unlike any others. This is a story about two old classmates who could have flown to Virginia, rented a car, attended a Board meeting, and been home a couple of days later.

Instead, we did what we usually do—we took the long way. Tom Del Valle and I call it a road trip.

This year's adventure covered more than 3,200 miles through five states, included countless cups of coffee, more than a few cigars, one very capable John Deere tractor, and memories that will last a lifetime.

I flew to Dallas, Texas, on June 15, and the following morning, Tom and I began our journey. Our first day was a 650-mile drive to Tuscaloosa, Alabama. We spent the night there and the next morning had breakfast at a restaurant overlooking the beautiful Black Warrior River, right next to the University of Alabama.

Stone Hege in Alabama, sort of like V-1 of The AMA Memorial

Breakfast on the Black Warrior River

As we walked in, I noticed two distinguished-looking gentlemen wearing Alabama lapel pins. I greeted them with a cheerful "Good morning," but apparently my greeting didn't warrant a response. As we walked past their table, I couldn't resist. I turned, formed a big "U" with my hands, and said, "Go Canes beat Bama!"

Probably not the most mature thing I've done. But then again, I am only seventy-three years old.

After breakfast, we continued to Buchanan, Georgia, to spend the afternoon with our good friends Mike Payne '76 and master gunsmith Steve Edwards, and Steve's friend Dave. While Tom, Mike, and Steve disappeared into Steve's shop to work on Tom's latest rifle project, I wandered outside.

Steve owns a beautiful piece of property, complete with a 600-yard

Doug and the Deere

shooting range that allows him to sight rifles from the comfort of an air-conditioned shop. But what really caught my attention was his John Deere 6140M tractor.

Seeing me admire it, Steve casually tossed me the keys and suggested I could smooth out a section of rutted roadway leading through his property.

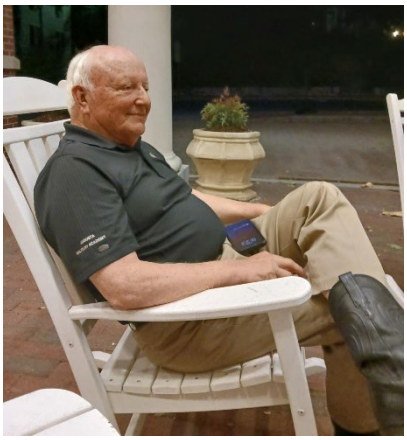
For the next couple of hours, I wasn't Chairman of the AMA Alumni Foundation. I wasn't thinking about leases, Board meetings, or fundraising. I was simply an old retired farmer having the time of his life.

Funny how life changes your perspective. Fifty years ago, operating heavy equipment wasn't recreation—it was simply work. Today, sitting in the cab of that 140-horsepower John Deere with a bucket in front of me and dirt rolling smoothly beneath the tires, I couldn't wipe the smile off my face.

Sometimes life has a funny way of reminding us where we came from.

Late that afternoon, Tom and I said goodbye to Mike and Steve and drove on to Rome, Georgia, where we spent the night before making the eight-hour drive to Staunton the following day.

L-R Mike Paine, Steve Edwards, Dave, and Tom Del Valle, talking about guns in Steve's barn



As always, arriving in Staunton feels a little like coming home.

After checking into Hotel 24 South, we met Marc Aronson '68 and Lee Ramsey '73 for dinner before returning to what has become our unofficial AMA headquarters whenever we're in town—the rocking chairs on the hotel's front porch.

Gordon Metz '68 is enjoying the banter

Before long, Steve Trent '70, Gordon Metz '68, Gary Cripps '71, Herb Maher '72, Jeff Wenzel '70, Lee Ramsey '73 and others had joined us. What has always amused me is how often complete strangers stop when they hear a group of AMA graduates laughing, telling stories, and enjoying one another's company. Before the evening was over, several hotel guests had pulled up rocking chairs of their own, asked about AMA, and joined the conversation.

There is something about the fellowship of old AMA friends that seems contagious. It reminded me that while the Academy itself may be part of history, the friendships it created are very much alive.

Friday morning, it was time to get down to business. Tom, Marc, and I met with our attorney to continue work on the proposed lease agreement for the AMA Memorial. Later that day, we met with Pastor Stan Farthing over lunch to continue those discussions. By the time the meetings ended, I had completely run out of steam. After a quick stop at the Museum, I returned to the hotel for what turned into a much-needed two-hour nap.

That evening found us right back where we had started the night before—in our rocking chairs on the front porch. We found Jeff Wenzel, along with several other of our buddies, and before long, another couple had wandered over after hearing all the laughter. Someone mentioned they both worked for the U.S. State Department. Naturally, I couldn't resist asking, "Spooks, eh? Is Staunton the newest sleeper-cell location?"

The gentleman's expression suggested I may have been closer to the truth than I intended—or perhaps he simply wasn't accustomed to the unique sense of humor shared by a gathering of AMA alumni.

Back row
Second Lt. Taylor Pennock, USAF, and my brother Chris, Taylor's dad

Front and center

Leo Pennock, my great nephew, Taylor's brother, Charles's son

Reference of scale: Chris is a tad over six feet. Leo is much shorter than his Grandfather.

Saturday morning was the primary reason we had driven more than 1,600 miles. To hold the Summer AMA Alumni Foundation Board meeting.

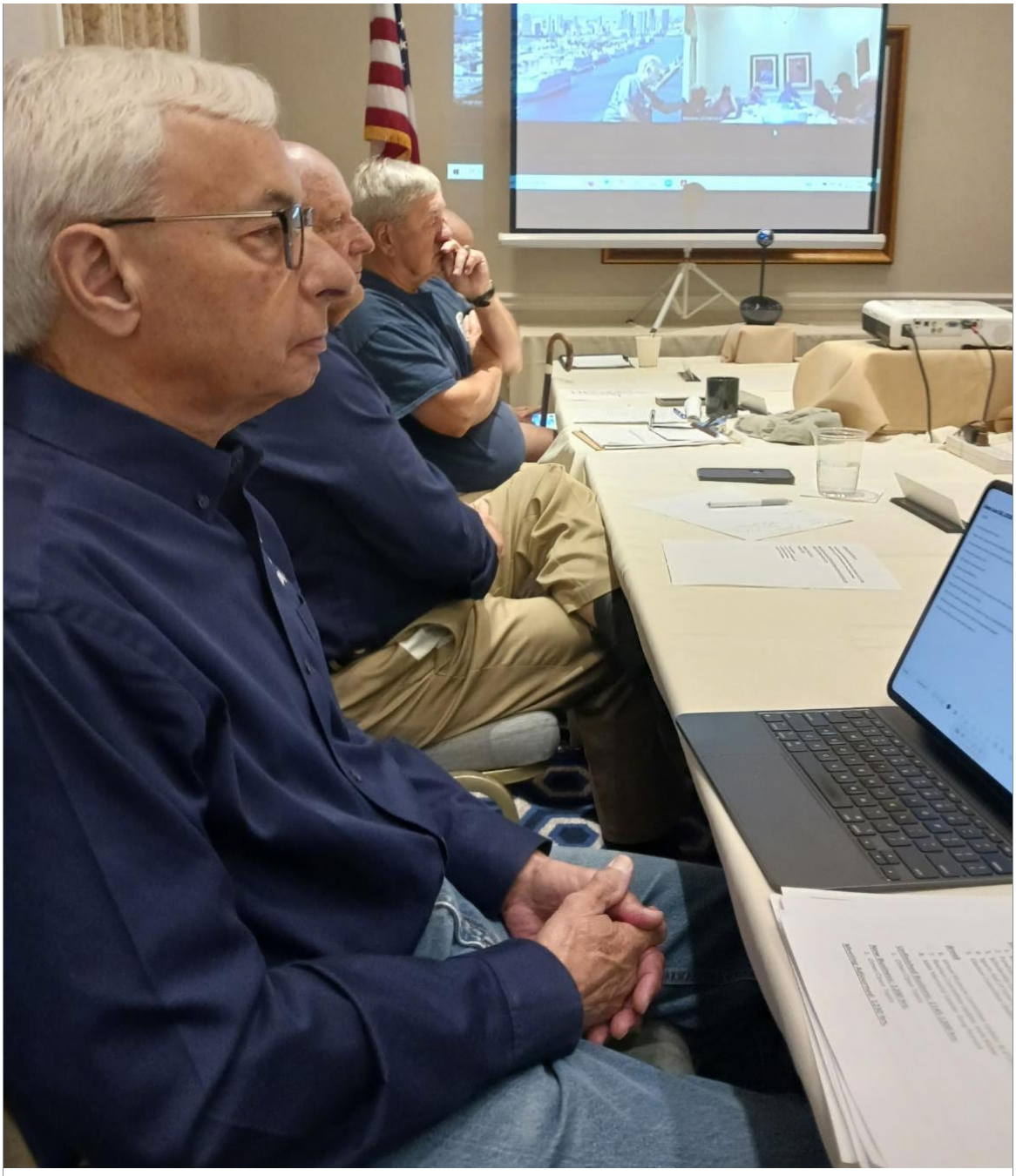
During a break in the meeting, we surprised my nephew, Taylor Pennock, with a Zoom call.

Taylor had just graduated from college in Puerto Rico with a degree in finance and was about to be commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force through Air Force ROTC. I had promised him I would attend his commissioning ceremony, but unfortunately, Foundation responsibilities had brought me to Virginia instead.

When Taylor appeared on the screen, I introduced him to our Board. Without hesitation, a room filled with AMA graduates—many of them retired military - offered him a spontaneous ovation and their heartfelt congratulations as he prepared to begin his military career.

It was one of those moments I'll never forget.

Watching one generation of AMA alumni encourage a young officer as he begins his own journey of service reminded me why our Foundation exists. We preserve documents and artifacts, but more importantly, we preserve the values that AMA instilled in all of us—leadership, service, integrity, and lifelong friendship.



Marc Aronson '68, Gordon Metz '68, and Steve Trent '70 at the Saturday Board Meeting

Shortly after the Board meeting, as Tom and I climbed back into the SUV for the long drive home, I realized our 1,600-mile journey had never really been about the miles.

It was about old friends. It was about preserving the legacy of our Academy. And it was about watching a new generation step forward to carry that legacy into the future.

I don't think you can ask for a much better road trip than that.

Next month, Part-2, I will share the last 1,600 miles of our road trip with you...

Doug out

The Museum Newsletter is written and prepared by Doug Pennock.
Trudy Pennock and Marc Aronson '68, editors.

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 a paid staff. Former cadets volunteer their time and talent most every month. 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.

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