



# MMA TIMES

MILITARY MARKSMANSHIP ASSOCIATION, INC.  
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## USAMU Commander's Report

LTC Frank Muggeo



This has been another busy quarter for the Army Marksmanship Unit. There have been numerous competitions, awards and trophies - not to mention what we did for soldiers going into combat but also some major changes in what we will be able to do for Soldiers in the future. Of course I can't mention every match and victory but I would like to highlight a few things.

This unit is comprised of competition shooters, many of which are combat veterans, and a world class R&D section. I am certain that there is no better combination in one organization that can address the issues of marksmanship in the Army.

To be able to take the lessons learned over years of competition, and the lessons learned on the battlefield - and have a world class R&D section right here to develop solutions for the warrior is a great asset for the Army. The possibilities for the Army were displayed, again, at the Creedmore Cup this past quarter.

The Creedmore Cup competition is a gathering of some of the best high power (bolt action) shooters in the country. Our Service Rifle Section competes in this event with their gas operated service rifle and has always performed well. This year with a combination of training and R&D improvements the team actually won the match. So a service rifle that was worked on in the AMU Custom Firearms Shop (CFS) actually beat the best BOLT GUN shooters in the United States! I have used the Service Rifle section as the example here but the CFS incorporates this type of expertise for all of the sections, both International and Service.

Another highlight over the past quarter was AMU's involvement in improving the overall marksmanship of the Army. Several months ago we submitted a paper that addressed ways we could help the Army in this area. One of the major areas we wanted to focus on was to make sure that Drill SGTs were experts in instructing Basic Rifle Marksmanship. The Army asks a lot of our Drill SGTs and we wanted to offer our expertise to the Drill SGT School to ensure they had the resources we felt they needed.

Last month we ran two proof of concepts at FT Jackson, SC for the Drill SGT school and the results were exactly what we were hoping for. The Drill SGT Leaders that attended the two, five day courses had great praise for the

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## MMA President's Report

Bob Hoidahl



Hopefully, everyone had a superb Thanksgiving with family or friends. As you are reading this, the Christmas and Hanukah holidays are in full swing and 2008 is just around the corner. May each and every member of our association enjoy their special holiday season. On behalf of the entire MMA Execu-

tive Board, I would like to pass along our best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year!

**MMA Annual Membership Meeting, 18 JAN 08, 1500 hours, Pool Indoor Range.** Mark your calendars!! MMA will recognize the "Soldier of the Year" and conduct our annual membership meeting.

**Roundhouse Restoration Project:** A potential donor remains optimistic about their foundation's funding approval. Final approval/disapproval is forthcoming in early 2008.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Yearbook:** Every time I open our yearbook, I find something new and interesting. However, sometimes I recognize innovative spelling/grammar, or even an inaccurate photo caption. If you have found a minor error, please email your catch to our Secretary, Red Mosely. He in turn will pass them to Mr. Bob Aylward, USAMU Deputy, who will collect the data for a possible future reprint, if demand warrants, of the yearbook. At this time there is no plan for a reprint.

**MMA Tax Status Change:** Regrettably, I must inform all that the MMA does not currently meet the membership test to qualify as a "war veterans" organization under IRC 501 (c) (19). Since, March 23, 2004, donors could deduct contributions made to the MMA under IRC 170(c) (3). However, at our recent MMA Executive Board meeting, we determined that the number of "war veterans" within MMA has fallen below the required 90 percent threshold and

consequently; "donors cannot deduct contributions to or for the use of" our organization, as provided by IRC 170 (c) (3). Of course, donations could still be made to MMA but such donations would not be tax deductible to the donor. There have been no donations made to MMA in tax year 2007. What is needed to correct this situation? We need ALL members to recruit and build up our war veteran numbers.

**2007 International Sniper Competition:** I would like to pass along my personal congratulations to the recent winners of the International Sniper Competition, SFC Jason St. John (Service Pistol NCOIC) and SSG Robby Johnson (Shooter, Action Shooting Team). Comments were made during the competition that questioned why USAMU soldiers were allowed to participate in this competition; after all, they are not "real soldiers, all they do is shoot." Obviously, we know that isn't true! Both these great soldiers had been assigned to the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment and have served multiple tours in Afghanistan and Iraq! HOOAH! Way to go guys!

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instruction on their end of course critique. The intent of the training was to ensure that the Drill SGT was an expert in the fundamentals of Marksmanship and was a master of the M16. This is the beginning of a reoccurring program we will run at the school.

While I have only scratched the surface of what the unit did this past quarter, I hope I have given you a taste of how successful this past quarter was for the Unit and the Army. I continue to be proud and amazed at the professionalism and expertise of all the members of this unit.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to the members of the MMA for the First Annual Army Marksmanship Unit Ball. The Ball will be held on 25 January 2008 at the Columbus Ironworks Ball rooms A & B. The cost is \$25 per person attending. This will be a formal dinning out and dress for the event will be formal attire. We have limited space, so if you are interested in attending please RSVP no later than 17 January 2008. You can email us or call at (706)545-1272 or [cheryl.bagby@usarec.army.mil](mailto:cheryl.bagby@usarec.army.mil). We look forward to seeing you.

## Coats Brown, A Legacy

Ken Hamill

*This series is about the life and times of a shooting legend who became the first Service Rifle Head Coach of USAMU in 1956. If you shot or worked with Coats Brown, please send any memories you have of those times to the Editor so the membership can share or relive them.*

**Fort McClellan, Alabama.** Privately owned vehicles were not common among the soldiers of the 1930's. Some years six POV's were parked in the lot next to the team headquarters building. Coats remembers eight privately owned vehicles belonging to shooters during his four summers with the Infantry Team. Major Kaelin Maertens owned a car; as did Major Kerry Berry, Sergeant Otis Lowe, First Sergeant Sarmon, Sergeants Galman, Duke, Nelson, and Wright.

Each shooter was issued an 18" X 8" X 8" leather box with a carrying handle. This served as their toolbox for carrying cleaning equipment, carbide lamp, shooting glove and other accessories. A wood ammunition loading block was attached to the inside rear of the leather box. The leather box top protected ammo in the loading block from rain or direct rays of the sun. Placing the leather box close during a long-range string kept the loading process convenient and the ammo protected. Each shooter was issued a small can of oil, Hoppies #9 solvent and a one-piece steel cleaning rod with a detachable brass bore brush. Rifles were cleaned every day that they were fired. In 1937 through 1939, rifle bores were scrubbed with water and a brass brush because of the corrosive powder used in the ammunition. A clean commode made an excellent rifle cleaning receptacle. The muzzle end of the rifle was supported above the water line and the brass brush drew water up through the bore with each stroke of the cleaning rod. The rifle bore and chamber was scrubbed, then dried and a light coat of oil applied. The light coat of oil was removed from the bore, chamber and face of the bolt prior to firing the first shot the following day. Starting in 1940, ammunition with non-corrosive powder was issued.

The Infantry Team did not have a gunsmith assigned. The 1903 Springfield Rifle required very little maintenance. Sights and triggers were the most prevalent 03 problems. Major Easley did the team gunsmithing. He could hone the trigger components

to a clean breaking, four-pound mechanism without creep. He also had the know-how and tools to make the leaf sight fail safe and reliable. Most rifle work was accomplished during the first couple of weeks at Camp Perry.

Fort Benning provided a service detachment of approximately 75 men. Service detachment soldiers pulled targets, worked the firing line, pulled general details and ran the messhall. There was a separate service detachment complex with its own mess hall and latrine. Team shooters were discouraged from fraternizing with service detachment personnel. Coats thought the non-fraternization policy was in place for two reasons. 1-To keep the shooters focused on team goals. 2-To prevent collusion between a target puller and a shooter which might lead to cheating. The mess sergeant was hand picked at Fort Benning by the team OIC. The same mess sergeant served the team during the four summers that Coats spent at Erie Ordnance Depot. The mess sergeant had good cooks on staff too. Every meal was a delight. They could bake, blanch, braise, broil, fry, grill, roast, sauté, simmer, steam and stew all types of meals to perfection. The kitchen was well equipped including standard coal burning stoves. The mess eating area accommodated all team members at a single seating. There was an officers dining room and enlisted dining area.

### TAPS, PRESENT ARMS

The MMA announces with sorrow the passing of the following MMA family members:

**Judy Pate** died on September 6, 2007. Judy was a long time NRA Volunteer at the National Matches and the wife of SPC Richard H. Pate (late 1950 era USAMU NTG pistol shooter).

**1LT Thomas Martin** was killed in action in Iraq on October 14, 2007. 1LT Martin was the son of SGM (Ret) Edmund F. Martin.

**Elizabeth Barrington** died on November 15, 2007. Elizabeth was the wife of SGM (Ret) Max Barrington.

**Naomi O'Neill** died on November 27, 2007. Naomi was the wife of SGM (Ret) Alfred J. O'Neill.

The MMA also notes the passing of **Gertrude "Trudy" Schlernitzauer**, 86, of Lowell, Michigan, who was the Michigan State women's pistol shooting champion from 1960 to 1967. Schlernitzauer, as a member of the 1962 United States Pistol Team and was awarded the U.S. International Distinguished Shooter Badge number 25 for her bronze medal performance at the 38th World Shooting Championships in Cairo, Egypt. She also won the 1969 women's National Pistol Championship at Camp Perry, Ohio.

## A True Cribbage Player

Laurence K. "Red" Mosely

Several AMU pistol team members, including Roy Sutherland, were at Parks Range training with the free pistol. "Free" meaning there are few restrictions on the design of the pistol. A free pistol also has very light trigger pull requiring only a couple of ounces of pressure applied on the trigger to fire the pistol. The course of fire then was 60 shots fired in three hours and often the shooters would play a quick card game of Cribbage between the first 30 shots before firing the final 30 shots.

During one such break, Roy, Lloyd "Whitey" Burchett, and Sam Hunter were playing cribbage while Floyd Oliver was still on the firing line. Floyd had fired several errant shots and had not been able to "call" those shots correctly. A good shooter can see where the sights are in relation to the target when the shot is fired and will "call" were they think the shot should have hit the target.

Floyd was shooting a modified free pistol with a shortened barrel, which had an extended front sight so that it had the same long sight radius as an unmodified free pistol. The extended front sight was inserted into a dovetailed slot on the top of the barrel and held in place by a setscrew.

Floyd had loaded his free pistol in preparation to fire. He was gripping the pistol with his right hand with his trigger finger lifted away from the trigger while resting the pistol on the bench in front of him. Just before he raised the pistol to fire the shot, Floyd noticed that the front sight appeared to have slid forward in the dovetailed slot and reached over with his left forefinger and thumb to check if the sight was actually loose.

Well, the force applied while checking the front sight caused the pistol to slip and bump Floyd's trigger finger against the trigger causing the pistol to accidentally discharge. Floyd's left forefinger was on the front sight forward of the barrel and his finger must have slipped off the sight and in front of the barrel as the pistol fired. Fortunately, the bullet only grazed the top of Floyd's fingernail but the hot gas of the powder added insult to injury making his fingertip look somewhat like an exploded cigar.

Floyd, with his finger wrapped in a handkerchief, walked up behind the group of cribbage payers, waited until the hand was played out, and then announced that had shot himself. Roy, looked over his shoulder and seeing no blood on Floyd and that

Floyd was standing on his own, turned back to the card game to count aloud his hand, "Fifteen-two, fifteen-four..." and peg his count as any true cribbage player would do.

*Editor's Note: MSG Roy Sutherland was assigned to the AMU in the late '50s and early '60s. He was a member of the U.S. Free Pistol Team that won a silver medal at the 1958 World Championships in Moscow, USSR, and a member of the gold medal Center Fire Team at the 1959 Pan American Games, Waukegan, Illinois. Roy is 89 years young and lives in South Charleston, West Virginia.*

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Back in February of this year, **Charlie Fisher** was in the hospital and was not doing very well. Recently he wrote, "The operation went the way it was suppose to and I was able to go back to work in six weeks. I am really doing great now. It's just like I have a new heart."

By the time this issue arrives, **Earl Waterman**, should have checked out of Emory University Hospital in Atlanta and returned to Columbus. Earl is hoping that the skin graft on his stomach heals up well enough to allow him to travel. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, he started a physical therapy program and did fifteen minutes on a stationary bike trying to build his leg muscles up again after laying on his back for three months. As of the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, he was able walk on his own without the aid of a walker. Earl wants all to know much your telephone calls meant to him and how they raised his spirits. He thanks everyone who called or sent an email. He said he is not able to answer your e-mails just yet but will do so when he returns home.

MMA member and full time police officer, **Brian K. Sain**, was awarded the *National Defense Industrial Association Carlos N. Hathcock II Award for 2007*. Brian started *American Sniper*, which is an organization to assist U.S. military snipers in Iraq and Afghanistan obtain the gear that their units could not provide. Please enter the URL below into your Internet web browser to view how this excellent organization is helping our warriors—and how you can help, too.  
<http://www.americansnipers.org>

## Conway Chronicles

Francis B. Conway

Back in the early 50s, before the interstates, my friend A.D. Moulton and I used to go varmint hunting just about every Sunday morning. One of our favorite spots was the dirt road exit off of Highway 80 that is now our range exit off of I-10. At that time A.D. had a pickup and I had a 1946 Buick Roadmaster Convertible. It had a lovely straight eight engine and for some reason got around on the desert dirt roads just fine. Needless to say the weather determined if the top was up or down. At that period in history the Fish and Game people wanted you to kill all the hawks, owls and even golden eagles, as they were predators. We would toss up to see who got the first shot at a sitting target. Jack rabbits you shot as quick as you could. One Sunday morning I got 18 jacks with 18 shots using my 22-250 carbine with set triggers, all running! It was A.D.'s turn to shoot and there was a hawk on a fence post probably two miles from Highway 80. A.D. used the 30s Remington 30-06 that I carried in Europe in W.W. II. I had loaded up some 125 grain Sierras. He rested his hands on the roof of the car and at a distance busted the hawk. But, in the process the muzzle blast of the '06 split the convertible top across the middle bow! Best I remember the new top cost me about \$135. I installed it myself, but that had to be the most expensive predator we ever killed!

## Membership Benefits

The MMA is an affiliated Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) club. The MMA club number is 30449. The MMA will not be displayed in the online database of CMP affiliated clubs because only shooting clubs are displayed and the MMA is grouped in a class of special organizations. However, the MMA satisfies all the requirements of an affiliated club so that our members can purchase surplus military firearms. Your MMA membership card meets the CMP requirements for membership in a CMP affiliated club. Other eligibility requirements are listed on the CMP website.

[www.odcmp.com](http://www.odcmp.com)

### Welcome New Members !

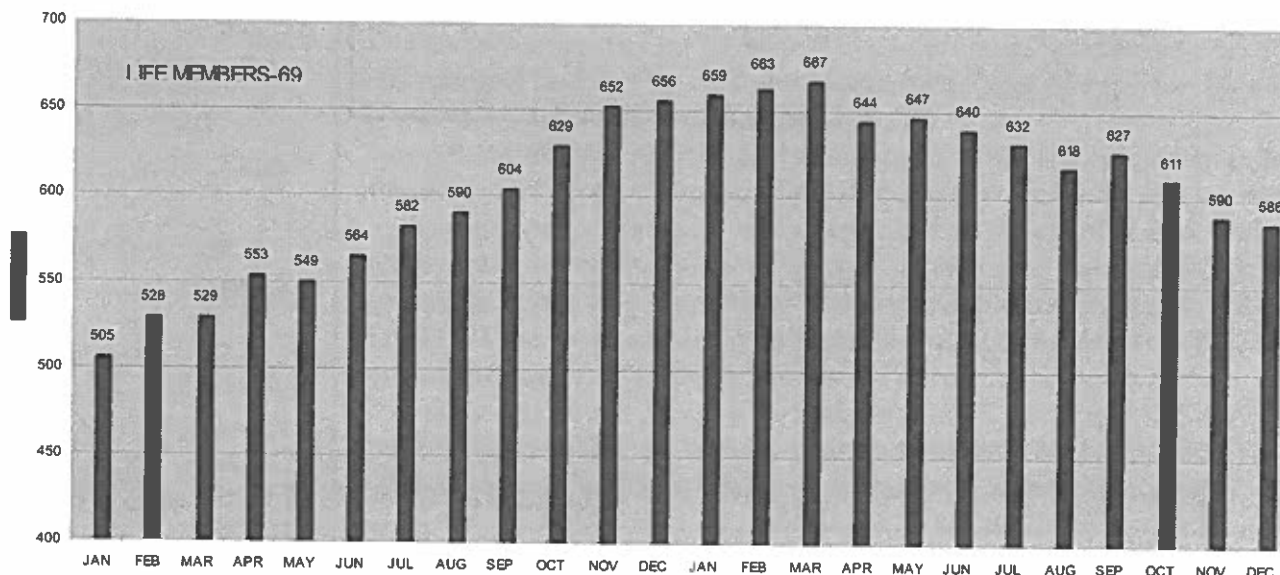
Thomas N. Fuller

Norman E. Peterson

**First Annual  
Army Marksmanship Unit Ball  
25 January 2008  
Columbus Convention Center**

**Make Your Plans Now To Attend**

MEMBERSHIP 2006-2007



## USAMU Soldier Named USA Shooting Shooter of the Year

USA Shooting and U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit

FORT BENNING, Ga. — A Soldier with the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit has been named as Shooter of the Year. PFC Vincent C. Hancock, a member of the USAMU Shotgun Team, was chosen by USA Shooting as the Male Shotgun Shooter of the Year.

Hancock, 18, had a very successful year winning the World Cup in Italy and setting a finals World Record in Men's Skeet. He also captured the Gold Medal at the 2007 Pan-American Games and won the Bronze Medal at the 2007 World Clay Target Championships. Hancock is currently leading the Olympic Selection process in Men's Skeet by winning the first Shotgun Olympic Selection Match.

Born in Port Charlotte, Florida, Hancock graduated from Gatewood High School of Eatonton, Ga., in 2007. He joined the Army Reserve while still in high school in June 2006 and completed Basic Training during the summer of 2006 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was attached to the USAMU after graduating high school and has trained with the USAMU since entering the military. Hancock completed his advanced individual training as a motor vehicle operator at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri on November 16, and was assigned to the USAMU as a regular Army Soldier on November 21.



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