



MMA TIMES

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USAMU celebrates 56th Reunion and Hall of Fame Induction

USAMU PAO



Hall of Fame Inductees (Left to Right): LTC Don King, USAMU Commander, Bruce Meredith accepting for MAJ Verle Wright, SFC Jerald "Hook" Boutin, SSG Greg Strom, Mr. J.B. Hudson, Guest Speaker, and USAMU CSM William H. Koller, Jr.

FORT BENNING, Ga. - More than 250 Soldiers, civilians and Family members, past and present, of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit gathered together to celebrate the USAMU's 56th birthday Oct. 18-20.

The bi-annual reunion affords past members of the unique unit time to reminisce with fellow former shooters and gunsmiths, as well as meet the current USAMU Soldiers and personnel.

The USAMU is the only unit of its kind in the Army. Home to 24 Olympic medalists, more than 45 World Champions, countless World Cup and national champions and the most competent gunsmiths in the world, the USAMU raises the standard of the Army's marksmanship proficiency, supports the Army's small arms research and showcases the Army in competitions around the globe and at clinics and demonstrations nationally.

USAMU commander Lt. Col. Don King Jr. presided over the 2012 Hall of Fame induction ceremony Oct. 20. Mr. Joel "J.B." Hudson was the guest speaker and presented the new inductees with their medals and plaques.

USAMU Commander's Report

LTC Don A. King, Jr.



First and foremost, Season's Greetings to all!

With the Holiday Season upon us, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a belated Happy Thanksgiving and I would also like to wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year. That being said, what an incredible year it has been! For the USAMU, we

once again had an incredibly successful year that culminated with a Gold medal win at the 2012 Olympic Game and the great success of our 56th USAMU Reunion and Hall of Fame Induction. Not only were we able to show case the outstanding talents of our current world class Soldier Shooters to the nation and world, but we able to honor the outstanding legacy contributions of those hand-selected individuals that were inducted into the various USAMU section Halls of Fame and to those small few that were inducted to the USAMU Hall of Fame. This year the USAMU family brought home two Gold medals; one from SGT Vincent Hancock and the other from Mrs. Jamie Gray, the wife of SSG Hank Gray. Also, during this year's Hall of Fame induction ceremony, the USAMU sections inducted eight individuals and the USAMU Hall of Fame inducted three individuals – a great moment for all in attendance. This year's Reunion and Hall of Fall was a great collaborative event between USAMU and the MMA and I was extremely honored to host it, but more importantly, I was honored to meet those MMA Alumni that were able to attend. Being in the presence of such great individuals was humbling and made me feel very proud! Furthermore, I really enjoyed the many conversions and stories that I heard. This gave me an even better understanding of this unit and its lengthy and proud history. I would like to thank Mr. Rob Harbison and the efforts of the MMA Officers for supporting this reunion and making it a "top notch event". Without your support and hard work, we would not be able to have such a great event. Hopefully next reunion, we will see more MMA Alumni in attendance – it would be great to meet as many of our MMA family as possible.

As we begin to prepare for this upcoming year and continue the legacy of this great organization, I'll look forward to your continued support and attendance with the many events that are to come.

Home of Champions!!

MMA President's Report

Rob Harbison



It was great to see those of you who were able to make it to Fort Benning for the USAMU 56th Reunion! We had about 300 members and friends in attendance. The Soldiers and Civilians of the United States Army Marksmanship Unit once again did a first class job in hosting and running the reunion. Every year the unit's facilities seem better than the year before,

keeping pace with the remarkable performances of the unit's Soldiers. I think I can speak for the MMA board when I say that it is always a pleasure to work alongside the USAMU leadership in collaborating for an event such as the USAMU reunion. The professionalism, courtesy, and capability of the command group, staff, and Soldiers are top notch.

As the sun sets on another year, I hope that you have been blessed with joy, fond memories, and prosperity in all things. The reunion was an opportunity for me personally to reconnect with old friends and make new friends. Those friendships are among the highlights of my Army career and I count it a blessing to have been privileged to serve with the wonderful men and women that have served our country in the United States Army Marksmanship Unit. During this season of hope and joy, I hope that you will take a moment to pause to lift up the Soldiers of the unit deployed in harm's way, and ask for their continued protection until they are safely back home with their families.

For those of you in the local Columbus/Fort Benning area, the date for the MMA annual meeting has been set. The USAMU has again graciously agreed to host the meeting on **Friday, January 25 at 1430 at Pool Indoor Range, Fort Benning**. Of course everyone is welcome; maybe this year we'll have a door prize for whoever travelled the farthest for the meeting. At the annual meeting we will have a brief "state of the association" update as well as the annual recognition and presentation of awards to the USAMU Soldier of the Year. Hope to see you there.

All ready on the firing line.

Coats Brown Legacy

Ken Hamill

This series is about the life and times of a shooting legend. If you shot or worked with or for Coats Brown, please send any memories you have of those times to the Editor so the membership can share or relive those memories.

Coats was reassigned to Fort Benning sometime in the summer of 1948. Rental houses and apartments were extremely limited in Columbus in the late 1940's and 1950's. Family housing on Fort Benning was sorely inadequate. There were a lot of unhappy Army families renting in town those days, because they lived in substandard housing. Mrs. Brown and the two boys stayed with Coats' family in Myrtlewood, Alabama where the oldest boy Vic attended second grade in the one-room school house there. The family reunited in January or February 1949 when Coats found a rental unit on Wynnton Road.

M/Sgt Brown had been reassigned to the training and publications section of the Infantry School at Fort Benning. Located in building 35, two officers, four enlisted men and nine civilians did artwork illustrating publications and editing texts. They printed new field manuals and training pamphlets and made changes to current publications. In 1950, Coats military occupational specialty opened up for warrant appointments and he applied. In 1951 Coats Brown was promoted to Warrant Officer Junior Grade and remained with the training and publications section. He was still a supervisor and illustrator, but now with a little more horsepower.

Coats fondly remembers the Infantry Cooks and Bakers School located across the street from the first cuartel on Fort Benning. Students made bread once a week which was for sale to the military community. Coats said it was great bread, fresh, hot and tasty. He bought two or three loaves every week for his family. It cost 11 cents a loaf. The Infantry Cooks and Bakers School was closed in the early 1960s.

Coats Brown had shot as a member of the Infantry Team in 1937, 1938, 1939 and 1940. He was about to return as a shooter and coach. The National Matches were coming back after a long war break 1941-1950. The 1951 National Rifle matches were to be conducted at the Marine Base at Camp Matthew's, California. The Infantry School pulled ten rifle shooters together from various parts of Fort Benning and arranged transportation to California. The team OIC, Major Davis was a non-shooter.

There were no assigned coaches. The shooters coached each other. The team practiced for a few days and then loaded their gear onto a railroad train - Pullman car. It took four days to make the trip in each direction. A porter kept the car neat, made up their beds at night and converted the car back to seating in the morning. They did a lot of reading and sightseeing. Exercise was difficult. They might take a walk through the train for a change of scenery. Their Pullman car changed trains in Birmingham, Alabama and St. Louis, Missouri going west. On the return trip they changed trains once, in Chicago. A dining car was available on the host trains east of the Mississippi River. West of the Mississippi, they ate at Harvey Houses located in train stations enroute. Entire trains would stop for 30 minutes, passengers would disembark, Harvey House would feed them all quickly. Everyone would get back on the train and they would be off again. Major Davis kept track of the men and their meals.

Welcome!

New LIFE Members

Earl Waterman
Richard L. Jones
Ray P. Carter
Anthony W. Kidd
Michael P. O'Neil
Robert Hixon Hanson
J. Scott Rupp

New MMA Members

Simon Reynolds
Arthur E. Austin
Richard E. Rodriguez
John W. Joss
Denise L. Loring
Seth D. Inman
Erin M. Lorenzen
Ronald Brooks
Michael J. Encinas
Frank J. Zupancic, Sr.
Michael D. Butterfield
Ryan A. Calhoon

REUNION / From Page 1 _____

Inducted into the USAMU Hall of Fame Class of 2012 were: Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Gerald "Hook" Boutin; Master Sgt. (Ret.) Greg Strom; and Maj. (Ret.) Verle Wright.

"(The) AMU is a special organization because its members are the best in the Army at what they do," Strom said. "Because of the unit's unique mission, its members in my opinion are actually ambassadors and interact with more organizations than any other unit in the U.S. Military.

"I loved teaching people what I learned through my own experience to help them shoot better. It was especially gratifying to help Soldiers increase their effectiveness on the battlefield."

Strom is one of the most successful service rifle shooters in the history of the USAMU. After entering the Army in October of 1978, Strom served in the USAMU from 1979 to 1988. He is a Distinguished Rifleman, member of the President's Hundred, and a member of the NRA 495 and 790 clubs. Strom is the only shooter to win all three major matches--the U. S. Army Championships, the Interservice Championships, and the National Championships, in the same year.

Boutin entered military service in 1944 from his hometown of Waterville, Maine. As a decorated veteran, he served his country in Germany, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg to include crossing of the Rhine River in 1944 and remained long enough to catch the Vietnam Conflict as a Soldier in the 101st Airborne Division in 1966. He is credited for his early accurizing techniques of the M-1 Garand and later the M-14 service rifle. He was also credited for his support of the National Service Rifle Team

Trophy Groups over a 12-year period until his retirement from the Army in 1974.

Wright is one of the Army's most unique shooters since he started to make his mark on the international shooting scene before the USAMU was formed. Wright was commissioned as a reserve officer in 1953. He came on active duty until 1956 when he was assigned to the newly formed USAMU. He shot with the unit until the autumn of 1965. When asked about any distinguishing or peculiar events of his shooting career, Wright recalled the 1958 World Shooting Championships held in Moscow. It was there that he won a gold medal in the 300-meter kneeling free rifle event with a new world record score of 385.

Sections also elected former and two current members into their respective Halls of Fame. 2012 Section Halls of Fame inductees were: Lt. Col. (Ret.) Phillip Cannella, service rifle; Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Herbert Duncan, service rifle; Master Sgt.(Ret.) Aubrey Smith, service pistol; Lt. Col. (Ret.) Rhonda Bright, international rifle; Sgt. 1st Class Eric Uptagrafft, international rifle; Sgt. 1st Class Armando Ayala, running target; Sgt. 1st Class Charles Gartland (Ret.), support; and Mr. Tony Kidd, support.

The Hall of Fame ceremony was the highlight of the weekend, but other fun and festivities were had by all. Former team members got acquainted with Soldiers currently serving in the unit at team dinners on the evening of the 18th. The next day the ranges were open for attendees to see improvements since they called the USAMU home and got a chance to fire some rounds downrange.

The reunion concluded with a farewell picnic after the Hall of Fame ceremony.

**MMA Annual Meeting and
MMA Soldier of the Year Presentation
2:30 p.m., Friday, January 25, 2013
Pool Indoor Range, Fort Benning.**



Col (Ret) Stanley Parmentier and 1LT (Ret) Jasper Kleinjan both earned their Distinguished Rifleman Badges in 1956.



Hall of Fame Inductees, Greg Strom and Hook Boutin cut the USAMU Reunion Cake



USAMU Section Halls of Fame Inductees (L-R): LTC King, LTC Cannella, Mrs. Duncan and daughter accepting for SFC Duncan, MSG Smith, LTC Bright, SFC Ayala, Mrs. Uptagrafft accepting for SFC Uptagrafft, Mr Kidd, and CSM Koller accepting for SFC Gartland.



USAMU Hall of Fame

Class of 2012

Section Hall of Fame Inductees

Service Rifle – LTC Phillip F. Cannella

Service Rifle – SFC Herbert L. Duncan

Service Pistol – MSG Aubrey E. Smith

International Rifle – LTC Rhonda L. Bright

International Rifle – SFC Eric A. Uptagrafft

Running Target – SFC Armando R. Ayala

Support – SFC Charles "Chuck" Gartland

Support – Mr. Tony Kidd

USAMU Hall of Fame Inductees

SFC Gerald J. "Hook" Boutin

SSG Greg A. Strom

MAJ Verle F. Wright

1956-1957 USAMU Members attending Reunion gather for a photo opp.

Hall of Fame Inductees with Commander and Guest Speaker - LTC King, Bruce Merideth for Verle Wright, Hook Boutin, Greg Strom, and J.B. Hudson.



Hall of Fame Inductees

