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2022

The Bursting Bomb

ISSUE
2-22

MARINE GUNNER ASSOCIATION
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE



Editor: CWO-5/Gunner Christian Wade USMC (Ret.)

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*On the Cover: Medal Of Honor Recipient
Marine Gunner Henry Lewis Hulbert, USMC
KIA 4 Oct., 1918 Battle of Blanc Mont Ridge, France*

SMEAC

SITREP...from the Editor:

Welcome to our second issue of The Bursting Bomb, the Marine Gunner Association (MGA) Quarterly Magazine. Membership in our young, but strong, 501(c)(3) organization continues to grow. We warmly welcome our new members (myself included), sponsors, families, and we very much look forward to seeing you at our events. Speaking of new members, I, Christian Wade, have enthusiastically assumed the duties as Editor-In-Chief of The Bursting Bomb. I look forward to connecting with our brothers to endeavor to create a magazine that we enjoy and of which we are proud. After all, since becoming a Marine Gunner, I have felt the enormous responsibility of being entrusted with the legacy that began with the first class of newly Commissioned Marine Gunners (see photo at right) when the program was reinstated by Commandant Gray in 1989. In this issue, I will build upon the excellent first edition created by Ray Browne, who currently serves as the 1st Marine Division Gunner.

The MGA is fresh from its most recent and highly successful Banquet Dinner. Admittedly, I enjoyed the photos of the banquet (provided by Kevin Gonzalez) so much that I immediately joined the MGA. I received further urgent incentive to join the MGA by the tragic news of the loss of another one of our brothers. I offer my sincere reflections regarding our recent heartbreaking losses at the end of this issue.

I will focus much of this issue on our newly selected and Commissioned brothers who have attended and graduated The Basic School and Infantry Weapons Officer Course



The first class of Marine Gunners after Gen. Gray resurrected the program for Infantry Marines. Class of 1989. Photo: IWOC archives

(TBS and IWOC). Many of us did not attend IWOC because, frankly, it did not yet exist in our time. I would like to focus on the content of these courses to hi-lite the fine work of the Gunners who worked so hard to create these Programs of Instruction (POI) and acquire the required funding. This has been no small task. I would also like to show how our community, and ultimately the Marine Corps and her Marines, has/have greatly benefitted from these efforts. After all, **the Main Effort of the US Marine Corps is the Rifleman in the Rifle Squad.**

I am deeply grateful to our fellow members who have created this fine organization. Together we can continue to support each other and our families from Commissioning to Retirement and well beyond.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy The Bursting Bomb, our quarterly magazine, for it is surely my honor and my pleasure to assist in its care.

Christian Wade
The Editor



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Matthew Carpenter*



*Vice President
Matthew Anderson
Marine Gunner, DC, PP&O,
HQMC*



*Treasurer
Kevin Gonzalez*



*Secretary
Sean Flannery*

Message from the MGA President

Members and Friends of the MGA,

Happy Birthday Marines!

The MGA has experienced much over the past year. Over a year ago, our first meeting was held to see if there was an appetite for a Marine Gunner Association. Here we are now, a year later, a fully operational 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We just completed our second Annual Dinner, which has brought huge accolades and requests from many active and retired Marines to attend next year. None of this would have been accomplished if not for the dedication and drive of your Executive Leadership and Committee Chairs.

A huge thanks to our Board of Directors; Chairman Mike Brooks, Director MajGen Dale Alford USMC (Ret.), Director Cecil Beltran, Director Ray Browne, and Director Jeff Eby for volunteering to guide and promote our association.

We recently learned the tragic news of our Brother Mike Beltran, who died of an apparent suicide at his home in Florida, sometime at the beginning of October. Mike is the third Gunner who has taken his own life in the last year. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Beltran family as they continue to work through the grieving process. I am in contact with the family and as of this publication, we do not have any additional information regarding services, as the family continues to process this tragedy. Brothers, **WE ARE NOT** immune from this epidemic of veteran suicide. I know many have struggled—I certainly have. The MGA has proven to be a great way to focus and ultimately help. I have relayed my personal story to many of you. I have found purpose by dedicating myself to this organization. When you start to feel isolated and/or a loss of purpose, do what we did in uniform, find your strength in connecting with your Brothers. If there was ever a time to have the MGA it is now, and we are working hard to combat this plague by throwing some of the best in our community at it.

It is a very exciting time for our new association. Our numbers continue to grow as we have exceeded 100 Members, with more signing up weekly. The word is getting out and we could not be happier, however, our rosters are incomplete, and we do not have contact information for many of our retired Brothers. If you have joined and you are in contact with any retired Brothers, please reach out and ask them if they know about the association and if they are interested in joining.

I have outlined my priorities below and we are working hard to satisfy them:

1. **Gunner Outreach and Recruitment**
2. **Provide Support for the Gunner Community and Infantry Marines**
3. **Provide Support to Children of Gunnery and Infantry Marines**

Message from the MGA President

How I break these down:

1. Outreach and Recruitment
 - a. 100% contact of all active and retired Gunners
 - b. 90% recruitment of entire Community (active and retired)
 - i. Quarterly Magazine
 - ii. Annual Report
 - iii. Linked-In posts
 - iv. Facebook posts
 - v. Webpage updates
 1. Photos from events
 2. Calendar of events
 3. Scholarship Awards
 4. Sponsor's logos
 - c. Open membership up to "Friends of the Gunner Community" or Associate Membership
 - i. Associate Membership and Benefits
 1. Annual Associate membership and renewal (\$100)
 2. Ticket and one seat at Annual Dinner or West Coast Winter Dinner
 3. Quarterly Magazine
2. Support the Gunner Community and Infantry Marines
 - a. Secure Sponsors for the upcoming Calendar Year
 - i. **The MGA cannot exist without sponsors**
 1. Advertise through social media
 2. Advertise through MCA
 3. Send letters requesting support to Industry every September thru December
 - b. Create the Rifle Squad and Weapons Competition Trophies
 - c. Create Gunner Exhibit at the Marine Corps Museum
 - d. MGA Annual Dinner
 - e. MGA West Coast Winter Dinner
 - f. Conduct (2) Annual MGA sponsored events (Hunting/Fishing/BBQ/Beach etc.)
 - g. Create a Support/Bereavement Fund to help the immediate needs of a Gunner's family in time of distress
3. Provide Support to Children of Gunners and Infantry Marines
 - a. Grow the Scholarship Award
 - b. Create a Scholarship Award for children of Active Duty Enlisted Infantry Marines
 - c. Create a Scholarship Award for children of Honorably Discharged Infantry Marines

Message from the MGA President

Many of these agenda items are currently underway through the work of our committees.

MGA Committees:

-Communications: Chairman Shelby Lasater

-Outreach: Chairman Cannon Cargile

-Scholarships: Chairman Vince Kyzer

-Events: Chairperson Annie Carpenter

Thanks to each of these Chairs and their committee members for their dedication to our Brothers. We need volunteers to assist with this vital work, please help!

A huge thank you to Chris Wade for volunteering as the MGA Editor-in-Chief! “The Bursting Bomb” Quarterly Magazine will prove to be a professional, informative, and coveted periodical. If you have any ideas for stories or focus pieces, please contact Chris.

I would like to thank you, the Membership for your confidence and trust in me to lead the MGA into the future. Without your support, the association would not exist. I am grateful to be a small part of this Team and humbled by the great work this Association has accomplished and I am excited for what the future will bring.

Semper Fidelis,

Matt Carpenter



*The MGA President addresses the recent Annual MGA Banquet Dinner
Photo: Kevin Gonzalez*

Message from the MGA Vice President

Happy Birthday Marines! It's been a busy couple of months since seeing everyone at the Gunner Association Banquet. Following the dinner, we wrapped up the FY23 Gunner Symposium as well as the Combat Marksmanship Symposium. The Gunner community is continuing to make significant improvements within the Ground Combat Element and service level marksmanship.

MARADMIN 444/22 Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Enlisted To Chief Warrant Officer 2 (Gunner) Selection Board Results. I am proud to welcome the newly selected Marines to the Gunner community.

These Marines will attend Warrant Officers Basic Course in the upcoming months followed by Infantry Weapons Officers Course before hitting the FMF and the supporting establishment as Battalion Gunners.

GySgt Shaye Carter
GySgt Zebulon Enright
GySgt Christopher Gentry
GySgt Nathan Kerr
GySgt Neil McCoy
1stSgt Joseph Sabel
GySgt Justin Winters

GySgt Christopher Darcy
GySgt Richard Flavell
GySgt Vincent Havelaar
MSgt Andy Lee
GySgt Daniel Moore
GySgt John Seifert

GySgt Joshua Doyle
GySgt Sean Gallagher
1stSgt Troy Hotaling
GySgt Joseph Martin
MSgt Michael Porter
GySgt Jerel Thompson

Fair winds and following seas to those Gunner who will be retiring in the next couple of months. It has been a pleasure to serve alongside all of you. Thank you for your service and contribution to the infantry community.

CWO5 Josh Smith (31 Oct, 2022)
CWO3 Stu Shine (31 Jan, 2023)
CWO2 Patrick Cockrane (31 Oct, 2022)

CWO4 Dave Tomlinson (31 Jan, 2023)
CWO3 Fred Lewis (30 Nov, 2022)
CWO2 Phillip Clinton (31 Dec, 2022)

As we wind up 2022 and look forward to what is in store for 2023, my family wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! I hope that everyone is safe, and I look forward to getting a chance to see everyone again in the next year.

Semper Fidelis,
Matt Anderson



Message from the MGA Secretary

Brothers,

I find that the desire to be involved in something greater than myself doesn't go away when one takes the uniform off. Being involved in this association gives me an opportunity to continue to serve those in need. I am filling a role where I am involved with initiatives across the association. If you are having a difficulty with membership, you find yourself unsure of who to contact about something, or just need to discuss something with a like-minded individual, reach out—I am a mere phone call or email away. The true strength of the Gunner is our network, our brotherhood. I am honored to be a member of this organization and look forward to our future.

Semper Fi,

Sean Flannery

s.flannery@marinegunnerassociation.org



The MGA is extremely grateful to the members who create such a fine Banquet Dinner setting.



The MGA Banquet Dinner offers fund-raising events to increase the MGA's ability to assist members, Marines, and their families.



The MGA Banquet Dinner in Virginia. Fine people and much talent in one place. All photos on this page: Kevin Gonzalez.



Group photo from the most recent MGA Banquet Dinner near MCB Quantico, VA. Photo: Kevin Gonzalez

Membership

To become a member of the MGA, the requirement is as follows: Active or former/Retired Marine Gunner, MOS 0306, Infantry Weapons Officer with an Honorable Discharge. Naturally, we heartily also welcome into our membership Infantry Marine Gunners who were Commissioned as Gunners before the 1989 “rebirth” of the program. Membership for an active or former/retired Marine Gunner requires a minimum donation of \$50 dollars. An Associate membership program is currently being designed—more word to follow. As this is a non-profit organization without pay for the board and executives, the donations serve to cover

operating costs of the MGA such as, but not limited to; administration fees, materials for events, costs associated to setting up the MGA to include web domains, emails, programs, periodicals, logos and other operating costs typical to organizations like this.

Becoming a member not only provides access to a unique group and network, it also grants access to our annual dinner with immediate family guests, and events as they arise. As this is a new organization, there continues to be discovery learning. To become a member, please visit

<https://marinegunnerassociation.squarespace.com>.

***Administrative note:** The current website-based membership system will be **offline** for maintenance from 1 November 2022 until 2 January 2023.

Members of the MGA staff will be making refinements to the membership system.

The MGA will step off, with a full 30-inch step, into 2023 with a membership and sponsorship drive which begins on 3 January 2023. We welcome our new members and sponsors in the new year!

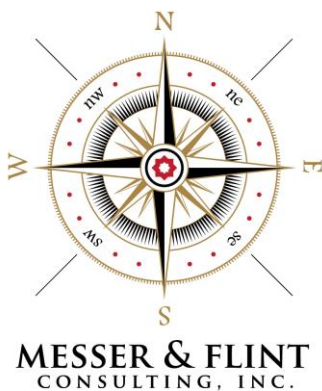


The Editor



*Revelries at the recent MGA Banquet Dinner
Photos: Kevin Gonzalez*

MGA Sponsors



SAAB



MGA Sponsors

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“Such as Regiments Hand Down Forever...”

IWOC Updates

Our newest generation of 12 Marine Gunners graduated TBS, representing themselves and our community well—graduating with 10 in the top 10 percent. The TBS Honor Graduate was Gunner Beau Winn, and the Gung Ho Award recipient was Gunner Alex Dykerhoff. Congratulations to all of them! The class also recently graduated IWOC and they have arrived at their first duty assignments; both at rifle battalions and rifle range facilities. While the IWOC POI places an emphasis on what we, as Gunners, intuitively expect (Combined Arms Live Fire and Maneuver), recent additions to the POI include battle studies at the Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania and at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument on the Crow Reservation, Montana. These events were added to the POI and fully funded to develop Gunners’ historical knowledge as MAGTF Officers, commensurate with the POI, for example, of the US Marine Corps Command and Staff College. Commanding Officers, from the platoon/company level all the way to Commanding Generals have come to greatly depend on their trusted Gunners. After all, those Commanders who were Lieutenants and Captains when the Marine Gunner Program was reinstated (see class photo on page 1) are now Commanding Generals...and they still look to their Gunner for counsel. Borrowing a quote from General Mattis, “...you learn through others’ experiences, generally a better way to do business, especially in our line of work where the consequences of incompetence are so final for young men.”



The 2022 class of Marine Gunners attend a battle study with Gunner Matt Carpenter (Ret.) at Gettysburg, PA. They stand by the Pennsylvania State Memorial, located on Cemetery Ridge. Photo: Matt Carpenter



The 2022 IWOC class listens to Gunner Christian Wade (Ret.) at the Little Bighorn Battlefield on the Crow Reservation, Montana. This stop is where Major Marcus Reno conducted his ill-fated attack on the south end of the Lakota village. The weapon being discussed in the photo is a Henry 1860 rifle. Photo: Keith Eggers

“Such as Regiments Hand Down Forever...”

IWOC Updates (continued)

The IWOC POI is a four-phase program which covers 17 weeks. The phases cover Basic Skills, Individual Weapons and Tactical Small Unit Leader packages (TSULC), Advanced Skills and Company Installation Range Building, and the Capstone Expeditionary Range Event Build.

Gunners from generations before the creation of IWOC will still recognize many of the training and education events—from certification in the creation and management of Surface Danger Zones and combined arms live fire exercises, to proving one’s mastery of individual and crew served weapon systems. There are also events which are conducted while teamed up with the Infantry Officer Course (IOC), i.e., Range 410A at MAGTF-TC, CA.

IWOC students are afforded many opportunities throughout the POI to connect with Marine Gunners who preceded them in service. Naturally, this allows younger Gunners to soak up lessons learned, program history, and other valuable experience from our community’s earlier generations. The Marine Gunner Program continues to evolve, grow, and thrive in large part due to the hard work and contributions of those Gunners who went before us. After all, some of those Company Grade Officers who came to trust and rely on their Battalion Gunners shortly after the Program was reinstated are now General Officers.



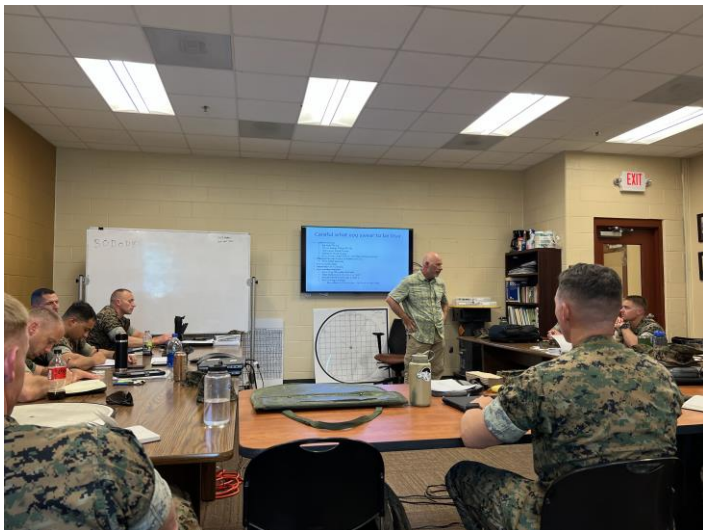
IWOC Gunners conduct training on the venerable heavy anti-armor system, our old friend the “TOW”. Photo: IWOC archives



Gunners attending IWOC conduct live fire training with basic demolitions. Photo: IWOC archives

“Such as Regiments Hand Down Forever...”

IWOC Updates (continued)



Gunner Jeff Eby (Ret.) is one of many Retired Gunners who continue to provide a historical perspective and insights to our newest generations. All photos: IWOC archives



IWOC students learn the science and procedures of the Fire Direction Center.



IWOC Gunners conducting firearms ballistics education from the Laboratory Division of the FBI aboard Quantico, VA.



IWOC Gunners discussing the engineering of 19th century US small arms including the Winchester 1873 (pictured), Henry 1860, the Win 1866, and the Colt revolvers 1851 Navy, 1860 Army, and 1873 Peacemaker.



Man, Train, and Equip

The Marine Rifleman—An MCDP-1 doctrinal/philosophical discussion

The M27 IAR continues to serve as the standard infantry rifle in the USMC Rifle Squad. The M4 and M4A1 carbines are issued to the remainder of the personnel in rifle battalions. Photo: US Marine Corps

Rifleman are issued 4x Trijicon Rifle Combat Optics (RCO) and a 1-8x Variable Combat Optical Gunsight (VCOG)

Rifleman are now benefiting from helmet systems previously restricted only for Special Operations use.

Infantry Marines are equipped with sound suppressors.



Rifleman are now authorized to camouflage their otherwise black weapon with approved paints.

An updated Plate Carrier system is being fielded that reduces carrier weight by ~30%.

All Marines are issued polymer 30 rd. magazines which have proven more reliable than any previous models.

Considerations

Cause and Effect. Since the 1940's, the US Marine Corps Fireteam has traditionally included the billets of Team Leader, Rifleman, Automatic Rifleman, and Assistant Automatic Rifleman. The Grenadier assignment has been somewhat fluid since the removal of the M79 grenade launcher—and the weapon mounted M203 was issued to the Team Leader or the Rifleman depending on the unit practices. Other factors include the removal of the M249 SAW and the presence of the M38 Designated Marksman Rifle (an M27 IAR with a Leupold MRT optic and suppressor). Marine Gunners, CD&I staff, and MARCORSSYSCOM staff have worked diligently over the years to improve the

materiel capability of the Marine Rifleman. Look at the photo above and ponder that all four Marines in the Fireteam are issued a rifle, an automatic rifle, a designated marksman rifle, two advanced optical systems (RCO and VCOG), a sound suppressor, night aiming device and advanced NOD. Note the [stand alone] M320 Grenade Launcher can be issued to anyone in the team at any time.

- Who now is the Rifleman?
- Who is the AR Man?
- Who is the Grenadier?
- Who is the Designated Marksman?

Answer: **Whoever needs to be when they need to be.** *We must now **train and educate** them all to do all these tasks.



Man, Train, and Equip Focus on High Explosives in the USMC Rifle Squad

“Why don’t I have one of those?”

Many of us have been fired upon by, for example, the RPG-7 (or similar) enemy system. As we sought cover or concealment in those moments, we may have asked ourselves, “Why don’t I have one of those with me right now?”

Simply stated, we have this capability (++) now. Enter the M3A1 Multi-Role Anti-Armor/Anti-Personnel Weapon System (MAAWS), also known as the “Carl Gustav” or simply “The Goose”.

System specs:

- Shoulder-launched, reusable, 84mm recoilless rifle.
- Fire Control System: Aimpoint FCS13RE
- Weight (Unloaded with FCS): ~15.5 lbs.



The MAAWS is typically manned by a gunner and a/gunner to achieve the highest efficiency. The manufacturer currently offers many different ammunition capabilities which are detailed on the next pages. Photos: Saab

Man, Train, and Equip Focus on High Explosives in the USMC Rifle Squad



Current/Future USMC HE Ammunition



Type: 84mm HE 441D/441D RS
Weight: 7 lbs.
Eff Rng: 1300M
Type: Airbursting (or direct) easy setting fragmentation warhead



Type: 84mm HEDP 502/502 RS
Weight: 7.25 lbs.
Eff Rng: 300M
Type: AFV and enemies protected by structures and bunkers



Type: 84mm HEAT 551
Weight: 7 lbs.
Eff Rng: 700M
Type: AFV, IFV



Type: 84mm MT 756
Weight: 9.68 lbs.
Eff Rng: 600M
Type: Defeat structures, bunkers, IFV



Type: 84mm ASM 509
Weight: 9.2 lbs.
Eff Rng: 300M
Type: Anti-Structure (and personnel inside structures)



SAAB

Current USMC Special Purpose Ammunition



Type: 84mm SMOKE 469C
Weight: 6.8 lbs.
Eff Rng: Up to 1300M
Type: Mark, obscure, screen



Type: 84mm ILLUM 545C
Weight: 6.8 lbs.
Eff Rng: 300-2100M
Illum burn time: 30 sec.
Type: Battlefield illumination

MAAWS ammunition continued next page...

Man, Train, and Equip Focus on High Explosives in the USMC Rifle Squad



Current/Future USMC Training Ammunition



Type: 84mm TPT 552
Weight: 7 lbs.
Training Rng: 700M
Type: Non dud prod. **training**



Type: 84mm TPT 141
Weight: 5.5 lbs.
Training Rng: 300M
Type: Non dud prod. **training**
HE 502 Ballistic profile



Type: 7.62mm Subcal Adapter 553B
Weight: 9.9 lbs.
Training Rng: Up to 700M
Type: Subcal **training** device



Type: 20mm Subcal Adapter
Weight: 9.9 lbs.
Training Rng: Up to 300M
Type: Subcal **training** device

MAAWS Ammunition (Other)



Type: 84mm HEAT 751
Weight: 8.3 lbs.
Eff Rng: 700M
Type: AFV, IFV, MBT w/ERA



Type: 84mm HEAT 655 CS
Weight: 10.5 lbs.
Eff Rng: 300M
Type: AFV, IFV, MBT
(Confined Space round)



Type: 84mm HE 448
Weight: 6 lbs.
Eff Rng: 1500M
Type: Multi-fuze direct or
airbursting fragmentation warhead



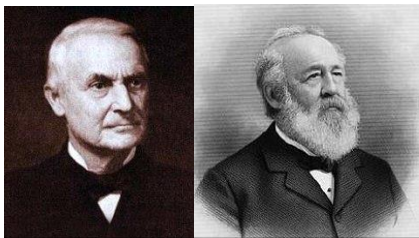
Type: 84mm HEAT 551C RS
Weight: 7.7 lbs.
Eff Rng: 700M
Type: AFV, IFV, MBT



The Infantry Rifle 1850-2022

An MGA Quarterly Magazine Historical Series

1855- Horace Smith and Daniel Wesson form the Volcanic Repeating Arms Company to develop Walter Hunt's 1848 Rocket Ball and lever action mechanism.



(L-R) Horace Smith and Daniel Wesson

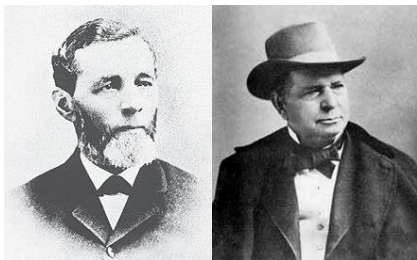
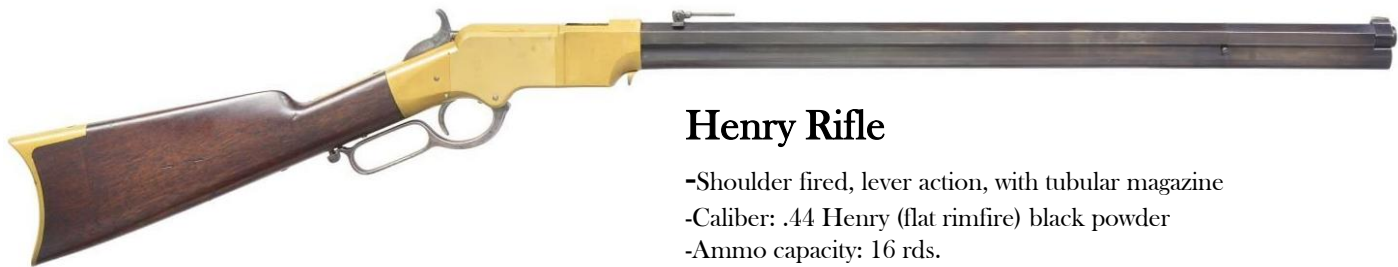
New Haven Arms Volcanic Carbine

- Shoulder fired, lever action, with tubular magazine
- Caseless ammunition design
- Caliber: .41 Volcanic
- 16.5 inch barrel
- Manuf. 1857-1860 by New Haven Arms

Note: Volcanic Repeating Arms Co. (H. Smith and D. Wesson) became defunct in 1856 when this design was taken by the New Haven Repeating Arms Co., CT.

Issues: Underpowered cartridge.

1857- The Volcanic company became defunct, and this design was purchased by the New Haven Repeating Arms Company (Oliver Winchester was a principal financier). Development continued with contributions by Benjamin Tyler Henry. Oliver Winchester was not a weapon designer.



(L-R) B. T. Henry and Oliver Winchester

Henry Rifle

- Shoulder fired, lever action, with tubular magazine
- Caliber: .44 Henry (flat rimfire) black powder
- Ammo capacity: 16 rds.
- 24 inch barrel
- Manuf. 1860-1866 by New Haven Repeating Arms Co.

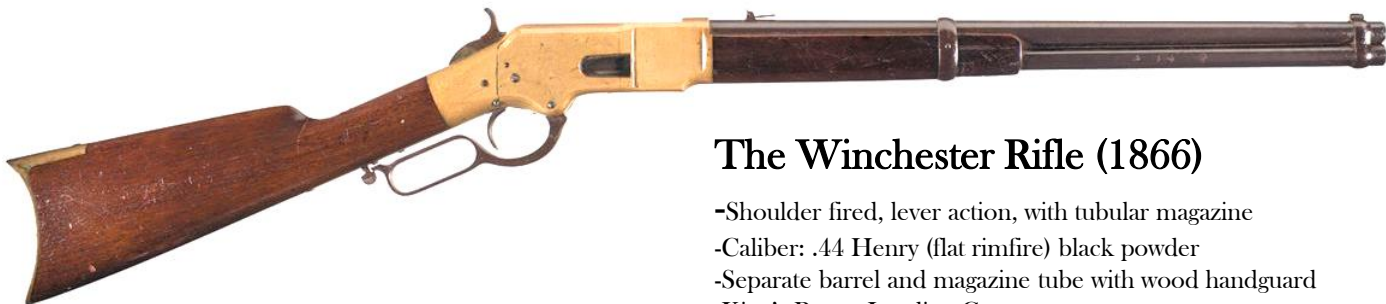
Note: An improvement on the Volcanic Rifle, the Henry Rifle was used during the US Civil War, however, **was not issued by the US or Confederate governments**. Private citizens often purchased these rifles for use on the battlefield.

Issues: Relatively expensive (~\$1500.00 adj. for inflation). The .44 Henry cartridge was underpowered relative to standard US and Confederate infantry rifles and carbines. No handguard (heat) and awkward loading procedure.

The Infantry Rifle 1850-2022

An MGA Quarterly Magazine Historical Series

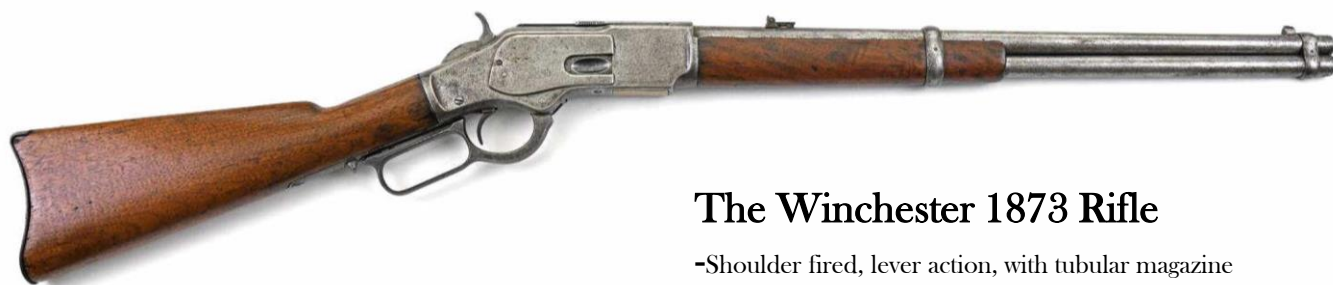
1866- Oliver Winchester renames the New Haven Repeating Arms Co. the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. and engineers improve the Henry design, creating the “Winchester Rifle”.



The Winchester Rifle (1866)

- Shoulder fired, lever action, with tubular magazine
- Caliber: .44 Henry (flat rimfire) black powder
- Separate barrel and magazine tube with wood handguard
- King's Patent Loading Gate
- Sold in “Carbine”, “Sporting Rifle”, and “Musket” and custom models
- Manuf. 1866-1899 by Winchester Repeating Arms

Note: The rifle was retroactively named the “Winchester 1866” when the 1873 rifle was released and is often called a “Yellow boy” due to the finish of its gunmetal receiver. The design solves several key problems with the Henry 1860 design. Loading gate significantly improves loading/reloading, handguard mitigates heat, separate magazine tube easier/cheaper to build and repair.



The Winchester 1873 Rifle

- Shoulder fired, lever action, with tubular magazine
- Caliber: .44-40 Centerfire black powder
- Multiple barrel lengths and custom packages
- Manuf. 1860-1923
- Dust cover added to receiver

Note: An improvement on the 1866, key improvements were made possible by significant technological advancements within the firearms industry (i.e. centerfire metallic cartridges and advances in steel and case hardening for receivers). The Winchester 1873 is often called “The gun that won the west.” This is Winchester’s first centerfire rifle design.

The Infantry Rifle 1850-2022

An MGA Quarterly Magazine Historical Series

1860-1880- What was the US Government doing for the Rifleman during this time? Were they procuring the most technologically advanced and effective infantry rifles for the age? We will see. Thus begins the US Government's early and often very flawed requirements development and acquisition programs.



United States Soldiers relaxing in Centerville, Virginia in 1862. They are armed with single shot, muzzle loading US Springfield rifles with bayonets.



Christopher Spencer



Some US Soldiers were issued the caliber .56-56 Spencer Repeating Rifle or Carbine—the world's first metallic cartridge repeating rifle. (Designer photo to left)



The US Government continued to procure the single shot infantry rifle well after the end of the Civil War. This is a Springfield 1873 Trapdoor Rifle. A shorter carbine was also produced and issued to US Cavalry troops (i.e. the 7th CAV at Little Bighorn).

The Infantry Rifle 1850-2022

An MGA Quarterly Magazine Historical Series

1860-1880- What were the shoulder fired weapons of choice of our enemies (at the time)?



Lakota warrior armed with a Winchester 1866 Carbine at the Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876) Artist: Zhou Shu Liang



*Lakota warrior armed with a Winchester 1873 Carbine in 1876. Artist: Zhou Shu Liang
Chief Crazy Horse was well known for employing a Henry 1860 rifle in battle.

Historical considerations (opinion)

Why are we reading about small arms weapons in use before the current MARCORSSYSCOM GCE Portfolio and IWOC POI? Why should we care? Because history matters. Marine Gunners should have an insatiable appetite for not only technical knowledge, but also historical and [therefore] contextual knowledge. Gunners should be ever asking, “Why are we doing it this way?” and, “How did we get here?” Often, the solution to a present or future problem lies in the past. There is nothing new under the sun. Marine Gunners are the wise old sages who [should] know about all the mistakes that have already been made so that they are not repeated at the cost of US Marines and

Soldiers (the men and women who do the overwhelming amount of fighting and dying in today’s close combat). Marine Gunners should always be on guard for “Because we’ve always done it this way.” We know that in the USMC, “always” can mean something more akin to within the four-year period of generational forgetfulness suffered by an institution that brings in and loses about 75% of its total manpower every four years. In the author’s humble opinion, we, Gunners, should endeavor to know about every infantry rifle that has ever existed everywhere in the history of homo sapiens. For these reasons, we will continue this in the next issue.

The Infantry Rifle 1850-2022

An MGA Quarterly Magazine Historical Series

Snapshot 1876- US Service Weapons during the Great Sioux War of 1876

US Service Weapons (Cavalry)



(Top to Bottom): Springfield 1873 Trapdoor Carbine. Caliber .45-70 Govt. (light load for carbine). Single shot, breach loading. (Not shown to scale) Colt 1873 Cavalry P "Single Action Army" or "Peacemaker" .45 Colt revolver.

1873 was a big year for firearms technological development. The self-contained metallic centerfire black powder cartridge in both "long guns" and handguns became the state of the art.

No less than three unique firearms in the photos above are called "1873".

Hostile Forces Weapons



(Top to Bottom): Henry, Win 66, Win 73, captured US Springfield 1873 Carbine, captured US Colt 1873 Cav P.

To be continued...

Next Quarterly issue: US Army and Marine Corps Service Rifle selections (focus from 1880-1920) and combat marksmanship program development.



*-US Marine Corps Service Rifle-
Lee Rifle, Model of 1895, caliber 6-mm
(USMC Service 1896/97-1899)
This is the Service Rifle depicted on the USMC
Good Conduct Medal*



MGA Program Updates

Scholarship Committee

First, I would like to thank each of you who have become members of the MGA as I believe this organization has the passion and dedication to do great things for the Marine Gunner Family. Thank you to the new members who volunteered to support this great endeavor. I would like to thank the following individuals; Patrick Cochrane, Thom Layou, Nicholas MacDonald, and Joh Smith for dedicating their time and efforts to support this committee. The MGA has teamed with Aimpoint and they have generously offered money to help Infantrymen and their families to achieve their educational goals. Once funded, the MGA scholarship program will provide multiple scholarships each year to students which will assist with their studies at the collegiate level. We are hoping to award the first scholarships in the summer of 2023.

Semper Fi, Brothers.

Vince Kyzer

Scholarship Committee Chairman



Outreach Committee

The MGA Outreach program is an active committee that makes and maintains connections with our retired and active brothers.

Our goals are to:

-Be Proactive in engaging all Marine Gunners.

-Be responsive: Our dialogue will flow two ways (give & receive - advise & LISTEN).

-Engage in Person: Phone calls and text messaging are great ways to maintain contact, however, when possible, we intend to engage in person with our brothers.

Our strength is in our numbers and the fact that we already have a good understanding of our target audience— “The Marine Gunner Family.” Our goal is to raise the awareness of existing services and programs that may assist our brothers in need.

Semper Fidelis,

Cannon Cargile

Outreach Committee Chairman



MGA Program Updates

Events Committee

Members and Friends of the MGA,

Hello and Happy Birthday, Marines! I am Annie Carpenter. I am the Event Committee Chairperson, and I would like to introduce my committee, our responsibilities, and what our plans are for the future.

I would like to thank Pat Woellhof and Tina Smith for volunteering for the Events Committee to ensure the association executes events throughout the year.

The Event Committee is charged with planning, organizing, and conducting the Annual Dinner, the West Coast MGA Dinner, and any/all other events throughout the year.

a. Plan Annual Dinner (Quantico area) which includes venue, menu, catering, advertising, pamphlets, Guest(s) of Honor solicitation/communications.

b. Planning West Coast Dinner which includes venue, menu, catering, advertising, pamphlets, Guest(s) of Honor solicitation/communications.

c. Plan and execute Membership Events and activities throughout the year (fishing, hunting, retreats, etc....)

We are currently in the process of planning the West Coast Dinner, which will be held on 18 March 2023 at Camp Pendleton, California. More details to follow.

We are also looking to establish contact and relationships with outfitters and retreat venues who provide outdoor opportunities for veterans. We are also beginning to look ahead to our Third Annual MGA Dinner, which is scheduled for 17 August 2023 in the Stafford Area. Our goal for the Annual Dinners, is to make them week-long events (BBQ, USMC Museum Tour, Shooting, Fishing etc...) enabling retirees to spend a few days together with our active members, which will culminate with the Annual Dinner on Thursday evening.

I look forward to seeing each one of you at our upcoming events!

Annie Carpenter

MGA Events Chairperson



Mental Health

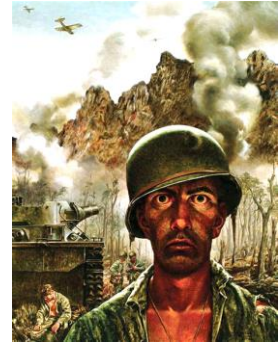
An open letter from the Editor

Brother Marine Gunners,

This morning I awoke to a message that we have lost another one of our brothers-in-arms to suicide. I did not know him well since circumstances and timing did not allow us to serve closely together. My thoughts immediately turned to his family and his friends and my sadness for their loss, however my thoughts quickly and selfishly turned very intensely inward. Our brother is sadly not the first Marine Gunner we have lost due to suicide. For me, with each tragic loss, it is as if Death walks into my home, sits down next to me, looks me straight in the eye and offers to me that perhaps I am not nearly as strong and resilient as I would like to believe. Admittedly, while I mourn the loss of our brothers who have recently taken their own lives, considering their character and accomplishments, my own position seems to be more and more tenuous. With each loss, I realize that if this can happen to the likes of these warriors, it could happen to me.

We likely have all experienced the loss of friends during and since our time in service—brave and honorable men and women who never turned away from the enemy in battle, over and over again. We

*"The 2000 Yard Stare"
Painting by Thomas Lea
Battle of Peleliu*



sit in fear and in shock when we consider that our brother Gunners, seemingly giants among men, suffered and were destroyed by a mysterious enemy who lurks and hunts far from the battlefields of our past...an enemy we struggle to fully understand, an enemy who stalks us and attempts to destroy us every day. I have yet to understand, for example, why I endured crippling panic attacks for all the years that covered my four tours to Iraq...but only while back in the States between the tours...never in theater while in direct contact with the enemy. I was perfectly fine [I was truly happiest] while fighting for my life in the streets of Fallujah, Karmah, and other places, but I suffered incapacitating, heart-attack like episodes where I ceased to function while sitting in otherwise mundane staff meetings in Camp Pendleton and Quantico. This is the incomprehensible nature of our condition.

I expected to die in the service of my country. I embraced this and seemed to actively endeavor to make that happen. Alas, it didn't. After many combat tours with countless direct and

Mental Health

An open letter from the Editor (Continued...)

close engagements with worthy enemies, many of whom I destroyed with the greatest of joy in my heart, I suddenly found myself standing at my own retirement ceremony. If you attended the ceremony, you witnessed my shock when I saw the entrance of a stranger who had decided to arrive late...only for me to realize I was staring at the reflection of my severely damaged self in a mirror. In that instant, I realized that I had no idea what to do from that point forward nor was I prepared to do it. I simply never expected to survive to that moment. To further complicate matters, as I out-processed with the Veterans Administration psychologist just prior to my formal end of service, I lied like a professional and presented a falsely positive portrayal of the state of my mental health, the effects of several traumatic brain injuries, and the quality of my life. I was not only afraid of the potential societal consequences resulting from my poor state of mental and physical health, I also did not want to admit to myself (or anyone else) the true extent of the damage and profound suffering. I told the doctor everything was copasetic and believed the wonders of Montana would heal me. And despite the seven prescribed medications on which I

had been surviving for years, the doctor took me at my word.

After returning home to the relative isolation and challenges of Montana, I didn't make two months before I began to spiral downward and out of control towards self-destruction. Thankfully, my wife, in a desperate attempt to prevent me from destroying myself (and/or others), called the VA Suicide Prevention hotline and arranged for me to immediately consult with a mental health professional here in my hometown. Oh, and she didn't leave me. Ponder for a moment, brothers, when you consider how insidious and self-destructive this condition can be after I admit to you that when she told me she had done this for me, I immediately and deeply resented her for it. You are absolutely correct in your estimation that I do not deserve her love, but you will understand her nature immediately upon your good fortune of meeting her. For the record, I continue to enjoy the support of my VA provided counselor on a weekly basis (or more often if required)...since arriving home in the spring of 2018. I will [must] continue this very productive and rewarding work for the rest of my days not only to survive, but to enjoy wellness, or as Aristotle liked to say, "eudaimonia".

Mental Health

An open letter from the Editor (Continued...)

Enter the Marine Gunner Association—a sincere and righteous organization, intent on healing, connecting, supporting, providing a sense of purpose and meaning, and if necessary, facilitating a path toward forgiveness and redemption...an organization I have heretofore stubbornly, if not belligerently, refused to join. Here is my confession: I have deprived myself of the joy of the connection with some of the finest human beings I have ever known, all the friendship and support they can (and have) provide/d, and the possibility that something I might do could help another, because of my resentments for a mere few—who, by the way, expend no effort whatsoever to occupy free and otherwise useful space in my own mind. It's as if I drink the poison and expect them to die (figuratively speaking, of course). After the sadness and frustration at the loss of another one of our brothers, I have [again] changed my thinking and my actions, and I am [again] moving forward out of the kill zone. I joined the Marine Gunner Association today and I am going to begin participating and enjoying the connection, camaraderie, healing, and the counsel of many of the wisest and most honorable men, and their families, whom I could know. Was it not enough evidence for me to simply accept at face value the

membership of the likes of Matt Carpenter, Cannon Cargile, Mike Brooks, Jeff Eby, Cecil Beltran, Dale Alford, and many more of these extraordinary people whose company we enjoy? There are too many exceptional people to list. Besides, who doesn't want to sit, listen, and enjoy what Mike Brooks has to say about anything? There are many in our organization, like him, who make our lives better simply by their positive energy. That's reason enough.

So, I have changed...time now. I will also continue to look for other mentors who are not yet members, in the hopes that they will join our remarkable association of extraordinary humans so that we might also benefit from their presence, as we did while we served on active duty. For those few brothers with whom I have feuded (we likely all have our own equally absurd list of Gunner nemeses and seemingly mortal enemies), I will offer a handshake of forgiveness and support in the genuine hope that they, too, will forgive me for the grief that I have caused them (and I certainly did cause them grief). This morning I realized that I am not without fault in these turbulent relationships and that I have some amends to make. I believe that I will enjoy the peace that follows those handshakes, assuming they can tolerate being in the same room as me.

I used to sit and think, as I read about the dreadful and ever-present scourge of Veteran suicide, that there is nothing

Mental Health

An open letter from the Editor (Continued...)

we can do to prevent this from happening. I scoffed at the “22 push-ups a day...” and other efforts to save lives, thinking something akin to, “We’re all grown men and women. Once we make up our mind, there is nothing to be done.” Given my own very repetitive experience in seeking and receiving very effective help and my personal knowledge of friends who have fought and continue to win battles in the same fight, I cannot accept that we are unable to prevent Veteran suicide.

I am a walking case study in Veteran mental health and TBI care, with credit to my wife, family, and friends (including the Marine Gunner Association), my membership as a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous for over a quarter century, and my continuing hard work with my VA-provided counselor here in my hometown.

Here’s health to you and to our Corps. I will look for you at the next event, my brothers.

Semper Fidelis,

Christian Wade

October 7, 2022



**** If you, or someone you know needs help, support is available 24/7. Service members and their families can call Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647, or chat at militaryonesource.mil. Service members, Veterans, and their loved ones can also call the Military and Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat at veteranscrisisline.net, or text to 838255. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available to anyone at 1-800-273-8255.**

Reprinted from the “Semper Fidelis Newsletter for Retired Marines”

In the Next Bursting Bomb...

MGA SITREP & Message Traffic from the Executives and Staff

Profile of a Gunner from the First Class and Most Recent Class

Update on the Marine Gunners at TBS

High Explosives in the USMC Rifle Squad

USMC Fireteam Concepts

USMC Rifle Squad Concepts

United States Service Rifle and Marksmanship Historical Study

Contributions from our Members

Mental Health Concepts



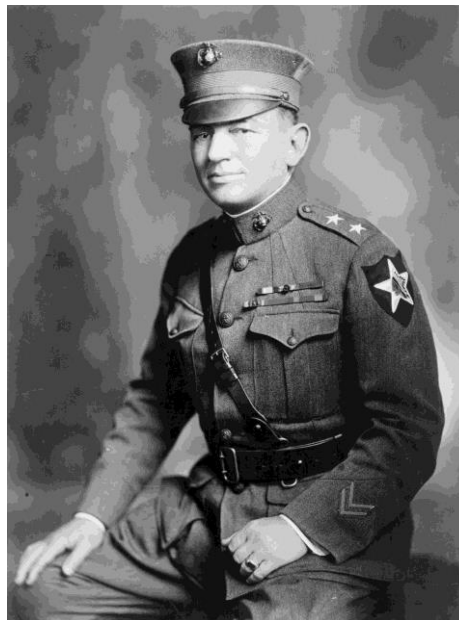
US Marine Corps Raider Knife (c. 1942)

(1) On November 10, 1775, a Corps of Marines was created by a resolution of Continental Congress. Since that date, many thousand men have borne the name “Marine”. In memory of them, it is fitting that we who are Marines should commemorate the birthday of our corps by calling to mind the glories of its long and illustrious history.

(2) The record of our corps is one which will bear comparison with that of the most famous military organizations in the world’s history. During 90 of the 146 years of its existence the Marine Corps has been in action against the Nation’s foes. From the Battle of Trenton to the Argonne, Marines have won foremost honors in war, and in the long eras of tranquility at home, generation after generation of Marines have grown gray in war in both hemispheres and in every corner of the seven seas, that our country and its citizens might enjoy peace and security.

(3) In every battle and skirmish since the birth of our corps, Marines have acquitted themselves with the greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion until the term “Marine” has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue.

(4) This high name of distinction and soldierly repute we who are Marines today have received from those who preceded us in the corps. With it we have also received from them the eternal spirit which has animated our corps from generation to generation and has been the distinguishing mark of the Marines in every age. So long as that spirit continues to flourish Marines will be found equal to every emergency in the future as they have been in the past, and the men of our Nation will regard us as worthy successors to the long line of illustrious men who have served as “Soldiers of the Sea” since the founding of the Corps.



**Happy 247th Birthday,
Marines!**

**Semper Fidelis,
MGA Staff**



MajGen John A. Lejeune,

13th Commandant of the Marine Corps