

FOREWORD

This attempt at recording for posterity, the history of the Guyana National Rifle Association, derived from my concern, on being elected to the post of President of the Association in 1991, at the significant absence of documentation concerning a club that has done British Guiana and Guyana proud!

The fact also, that many of the stalwarts were passing away with increasing frequency, made it mandatory that the oral history of those remaining be compiled as a tribute to those who contributed of their time, patience and other resources to keeping the sport of Rifle shooting, alive!

I hope that on reading this, you will be motivated to become an active participant or an ardent supporter.

Miss Margaret Smith, a University of Guyana student, on assignment in 1991 to the Office of the Chief of Staff, Guyana Defence Force for her National Service Stint, is to be commended for her commitment to the realization of this project.

Yours in sport

J. G. SINGH

Brigadier

Chief of Staff

Guyana Defence Force

And President, Guyana National Rifle Association

15 OCT 1992.

PROFILE OF THE WRITERS

Margaret Smith is a 1991 Bachelor in Social Science graduate from the University of Guyana, majoring in Accountancy.

She researched the data for this document while she was attached to the Guyana Defence Force, completing her National Service Stint.

Presently she is an employee of the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company, she holds a senior staff position.

She lives in Georgetown where she was born and grew up.

NB: Margaret Smith wrote on the History from the commencement of shooting in the 19th Century to 1992.

Subsequently the remaining years and compilation were put together by Mahendra Persaud (Full Bore Captain) Ransford Goodluck and Ryan Sampson (Secretary of The Association) with the assistance of a few members of the Guyana NRA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Thanks to the members of the Guyana Defence Force. They provided assistance, guidance, photographs and typed the material.

Thanks to members of the Guyana National Rifle Association. They made themselves available for interviews and advice.

Finally I wish to thank Mr. L. Dowridge, Mr C. Archer and Mr. M. Yong. They allowed me to access to their valuable mementos from which I was able to gather most of the data. Also, Ms. A. Benjamin who advised me where to locate research material. She also provided me with photocopies of her personal collection.

Margaret Smith

INTRODUCTION

Rifle shooting as a competitive sport is not new to Guyana. It dates back to the early 1790's and was formalized in 1865, with the establishment of the Demerara Rifle Club. The latter became the British Guiana Rifle Association. Today it is Guyana National Rifle Association.

The Demerara Rifle Club was formed by a Regiment of British Soldiers stationed in the then British Guiana, and, was coordinated by the succession of British Troops stationed in British Guiana thereafter. From the formation of the Rifle Club to Independence, the organization responsible for the running of the club was responsible for the running of the Club was variously named:

British Garrison (1878), British Guiana Militia Volunteer Force (1891), British Guiana Volunteer Force, and Guyana Defence Force (1966).

Membership, categorized under individual and block members was opened to all officers, non-commissioned officers and men on the active list of all local forces. Eventually, it expanded to all residents in Guyana over the age of fifteen (15), other than members of the active Force.

Initially, competitions were of two types- small bore rifle and full bore competitions. However, there was a lull in small bore competition for several years, which resulted from a shortage of ammunition. Happily, in 1992, the small bore competition was re- introduced.

Originally, shooters, depending on their shooting ability, were categorized as 'A', 'B' or 'C' class, with 'A' class being the highest. However, if a shooter is selected and participates in an international competition, he immediately becomes a senior shooter and attain 'X' class rating. In keeping with the other countries, the local Association now uses two classes: 'A' class identifies shooters who are selected and participate in an international competition. They are referred to as senior shooters. 'B' class identifies shooters who have not yet competed at international competitions. They are also referred to as junior shooters.

At international competitions, shooters are categorized 'O' or 'X' class depending on their shooting ability. 'X' class is higher.

The Association is entirely responsible for the selection of teams competing/ in local and international meetings. As a result, teams competing, do so in the name of Guyana or the West Indies and not in the name of any particular club or organization.

Interest in the sport is still a far cry from what is desired but from inception of the sport, the Guyanese Standard of Rifle shooting has been exceptional. There have been outstanding performances in local and international competitions. The Association boosted by past greats and current shooters has maintained high standards, while a pool of talent is being developed to carry on the tradition.

The Guyana National Rifle Association has recorded win for every trophy put up for competition among Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad, Jamaica and effective 1989, Bermuda. These trophies include: Anchor Challenge Cup (Benson and Hedges Trophy), Martinez Shield and Swettenham Trophy to name a few. The Association also competed and recorded wins for the Duke of Gloucester Trophy, which is controlled by the National Rifle Association (NRA) Great Britain and competed for among nations at Bisley- the mecca of rifle shooting in world.

Though female membership was still infrequent, Guyana boasted a few greats. They not only made a name for themselves locally, competing among the males, but also managed to be members of teams which competed for the Anchor Challenge Cup and the Duke of Gloucester Cup at Bisley.

Members of the Association won individual events and were awarded prizes, medal and cups.

Initially, shooting took place at Thomas Lands Range. Veteran marksman claimed the windy situation at the Thomas Land Range was responsible for the range being classified as the best in the Caribbean. Some even said that it was better than the Bisley.

On the 7th July, 1964, rifle shooting was temporarily suspended because the rifle range was taken over by the Military and it is now part of Camp Ayanganna.

An 'Arm Call-in-Order ' was subsequently issued by the Governor and ever since, when not in use, the rifles must be lodge at Police Stations or Military Armouries for safe keeping.

Meanwhile, during the Second World War (1939- 1945), the American Military stationed at the then Atkinson Field established the Atkinson Range (now Timehri Rifle Range).

The Timehri Rifle Range is now controlled and maintained by the Guyana Defence Force. It is acclaimed be to be advantageous only to experience riflemen, particularly Guyanese, because of the peculiarities of its conditions.

In 1969, the Guyana Defence Force gave the members of the Rifle Association permission to utilize the Range. This resumption, afforded the Guyanese Shooters the desired practice to recommence participation at local and international competitions.

CONSTITUTION OF THE Guyana NRA

The constitution of the GNRA can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

Due to a bad experience in the Benson and Hedges competition held at the Timehri Rifle range in 1987, a few features have been added in 1991. These features are an addition to Paragraph 24 of the constitution.

They are:

1. The ammunition boxes must be opened in the presence of all shooters.
2. The weight of the trigger pressure must not exceed 1.5 kilograms.
3. Once shooting has commenced, movements are prohibited between the firing points and the butts.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF the Guyana NRA

1. An application form can be uplifted from the Secretary of the GNRA.
2. When filled, the form must be submitted to the Secretary. It must be accompanied with a copy of the applicants Police Clearance and References about the applicants temper and character.
3. At the Association's next meeting, the Secretary would present the application to the general membership. If any member is in doubt about the applicant's character, further enquiries would have to be made about the applicant.
4. If members are not in doubt, the application would be accepted. Two members of the association would be required to support the application. One member would propose the acceptance of the person as a member, while the others would second the motion.

SUBSCRIPTION

When the application has been approved, the applicant will be required to pay an entrance fee of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to become a member of the Association. He will also be required to pay an annual subscription of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to maintain the membership.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR RIFLE SHOOTING

When Rifle shooting was introduced as a sport in the 1790's, military rifles were used. Subsequently, they were found to be inadequate and their caliber was modified to .303 inch. This later became standard. In 1970 the teams from the Caribbean Countries met in Barbados for a friendly reunion meeting. At this meeting it was realized that the .303 inch rifles used by the local teams were outdated. Members of the other teams were using custom made rifles.

Details of the equipment necessary for rifle shooting are:

RIFLE DESCRIPTION

Calibre

7.62 millimeter

Manufacturers Trade Marks:

Swing Target Rifle, Steyr – Mannlicher, P-17 Winchester Conversion, Sportco, Paramount, Musgrave,

Barrel make Length and Twist:

Schultz and Larsen : 28 inches and 30 inches: 1 in 14 inches or 1 in 13 inches twist.

Stocks:

Standard, Non-Standard

Locks:

Designed by the Manufacturers

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Rifle shooting Equipment :

Shooting Telescope, Telescope Stand, Hand Stop, Sling, Shooting Gloves, Ground Sheet, Ear Defenders, Shooting Jackets made of Canvas or Leather, Score Book.

TYPES OF SHOOTS

The members of Guyana National Rifle Association engage in three categories of shoots during the calendar year. Shoots of each category are organized on a monthly basis. As a result, a shooter can get the opportunity to participate in all three categories each month.

1. Practice Shoot - No record is kept.
2. Record Shoot -

This is a competitive shoot but prizes are not awarded. A record is kept of the scores. They are used to select teams to represent Guyana at international competitions.

3. Competitive Shoots

There are many types of Competitive shoots. Records are kept and prizes are awarded for these shoots. These Are:

a. Spoon Shoot :

One silver spoon with the rifle shooting crest is awarded each month to the shooter with the highest aggregate.

b. NRA Silver Medal:

The National Rifle Association (Great Britain) donated a silver medal annually, to the Guyana NRA. The Guyana NRA has stipulated the following conditions under which this Medal can be won.

I: 15 rounds shoot at 300 and 600 yards.

II: The winning score must not be less than 140.

III: Postal Shoot

This shoot is organized by the country which is controlling the prize that is Being competed for. On a selected day, each team shoots in its respective country, under conditions stipulated by the country controlling the prize. The targets are sent to a neutral country which determines the winner.

c. Annual Prize Meeting:

At his shoot, four trophies and cash Incentives are competed for. All prizes won during this year are awarded.

d. Christmas Hamper Shoot :

This is the last shoot in the calendar year. All members of the Association compete for the Christmas Hamper. The hamper is presented to the winner with the highest aggregate at 300, 500, 600, and 900 yards.

GUYANA NRA PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

The Guyana National Rifle Association is affiliated to the following organizations.

1. Guyana Olympic Association.
2. West Indian Full Bore Shooting Council.
3. National Rifle Association. (NRA Great Britain).

Through these affiliations, the Association is eligible to send teams of representatives to international competitions. Teams participation depend upon the financial status of the Association. If the Association cannot afford to send a team, a few shooters may sponsor themselves, and participate in the meetings.

The most favoured competitions are:

1. Benson and Hedges –

Competitors for this shoot are from Barbados, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica and Bermuda. It is held annually in each of the first four countries listed above on a rotation basis. Bermuda has never hosted the competition because they do not have a full bore range. Suriname is being encouraged to join the competition.

2. Bisley -

This competition is held annually at Bisley in Great Britain. Bisley is the mecca of rifle shooting in the world. All the countries that are affiliated to the NRA can participate. There are some events in which the Caribbean countries and Guyana do not compete as separate teams representing their

respective countries. Representatives from each country are selected and they compete as a West Indian team.

3. Palma Match –

This competition started in the Last century and is restricted to teams from the United States of America and all Commonwealth countries including Guyana are represented collectively as a West Indian team. This Annual competition is held on a rotation basis in all participating countries.

4. Postal Shoot –

On a particular day all the Countries participating in this competition, do so in their own country. The targets are sent to a neutral country for it to declare the winner.

5. Geddes Grant –

This is not a competition by itself. It is a trophy that is presented to the team whose first six shooters out of the eight shooters participating in the Benson and Hedges competition, achieved the highest score.

GUYANA NRA ANNUAL PRIZE MEETING COMPETITION TROPHIES

There are a number of trophies and shields which have been competed for by the members of the GNRA since colonial days. Winners of some of these trophies and shields have failed to return them to the Association for further competitions. This has seriously affected the number of competitive events for shooters, especially those in the `B` class.

The trophies competed for by shooters in the `A` class at their annual fifle shooting meeting are:

1. Lushington –

The Governor of the colony, Sir Charles C Lees KCMG boosted the sport by donation this trophy which was first presented in 1895 as the Governor's

Prize! The trophy is now presented to the winner of the Queen's 1st stage. This event is seven (7) rounds to count with two (2) sighting shots at 300, 500, and 600 yards. The highest possible score is 105.

2. Wood Davis -

This trophy was presented at The Demerara Rifle Club's twentieth prize meeting in 1887, by the then Mayor of Georgetown, Mr. G A Forshaw.

The trophy is now presented to the winner of the Queen's 2nd stage. This event is 10 rounds to count with two (2) sighting shots at 300, 500, and 600 yards. The highest possible score is 150.

3. Valladares -

This trophy was presented to Mr. Valladares. Subsequently, his widow presented the trophy to the Association for competition. The name of the original donor and precise dates of the activity are unknown. The records have shown that since its re-presentation, competitions for the trophy began in the BGVF era.

This trophy is now presented to the winner of the 10 rounds to count with 2 sighting shots at 500 yards event. The highest possible score is 50.

4. The Neville Denny Trophy -

Mr. Neville Denny who is an Outstanding shooter and an executive member of Guyana NRA donated this trophy in 1987, to the Association for annual competition. This trophy is presented to the winner of the grand aggregate.

The Shields competed for by shooters in the 'O' class at the Annual Rifle Shooting Meeting are:

1. Junior Challenge

This shield was bought by the Association in 1984. It is presented to the winner of the grand aggregate.

2. Professor Steven Mona Singh

This shield was donated by Professor Steven Mona Singh in 1989. It is presented to the Winner of the 7 rounds to count with two sighting shots at 300, 500, and 600 yards.

OUTSTANDING SHOOTERS

Outstanding performances of rifle shooters which are worthy to note are:

1952

C. Archer won the 'News of the World' Club Member Competition organized by the NRA.

1953

Ms. O D'Agrella and Major F Manley won prizes for their outstanding performances during the St. George's event, at Bisley. They scored 72 and 71 respectively.

1960

C C Allen won the Wogart Cup with an aggregate of 140 points, at the Anchor Challenge Cup competition held in Barbados. (The Wogart Cup is won by the shooter who obtained the highest Grand Aggregate).

1962

M A Ali recorded the highest score in the West Indian Cup competition. He scored 146.

1979

P Archer won the Wogart Cup with an aggregate of 146 points, at the Benson and Hedges competition, held at the Timehri Range.

1982

Richard Fields won the grand aggregate title with a score of 414.

1987

Byron Noble won the Wogart Cup with an aggregate of 146 points, at the Benson and Hedges competition held in Guyana.

1988

L Braithwaite won the Gurkha Appeal at Bisley. He was presented with a Kukri. Other outstanding rifle shooters whose high standard of performance locally enabled them to perform creditably internationally are:

In the period of the British Guiana Volunteer Force 1948-1966.

A Sutton A Wight J Driver

H Alleyne L Dowridge W Fields

In the period of the Guyana Defence Force 1966-1991

H Mc Cowan N Denny M Yong

C Das P Slowe R Goodluck

THE BRITISH GARRISON 1795- 1891

The British Government established the West Indian Regiment of troops in 1795. The Troops visited British Guiana from time to time, in order to maintain law and order and control of the local population. It was during this period that rifle shooting was introduced as a sport in the colony.

Historical events relating to this period are as follows:

1867

Rifle shooting became a competitive sport in the then British Guiana. Thus began the Rifle Association as we know it today, under a different name of course.

1878

A locally based volunteer force was established and this added impetus to competitive rifle shooting.

1887

The Mayor of Georgetown, Mr G A Forshaw, donated the Wood Davis Trophy at the Demerara Rifle Club's twentieth annual prize meeting.

1891

The locally based Volunteer Force, titled the British Garrison, became defunct in 1891 in name only.

1895

The Demerara Rifle Club was formed.

PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION

1. The Wood Davis Trophy- It is presented to the winner of the Queen's 2nd stage of the GNRA Annual Prize Meeting. It was first presented at the Demerara Rifle Club in 1895.

THE BRITISH GUYANA VOLUNTEER MILITARY FORCE 1891-1984

The locally based Volunteer Force changed its title to British Guyana Volunteer Military Force in 1891. At this point in time, rifle shooting was restricted to all personnel of the local forces and all members of the public who belonged to the property- owning class.

The historical events that related to this era include:

1895

The Governor of the Colony, Sir Charles C Lees, KCMG, donated the Lushington Trophy. It was presented as The Governor's Prize.

1900-1919

During this period, the Police Commissioner Mr Swettenham donated the Swettenham Cup.

1928

The makers of the Anchor Cigarettes, donated the Anchor Challenge Cup. It was competed for annually among teams of the English- speaking Caribbean countries- namely: British Guiana, Barbados and Trinidad. Trinidad won the first competition held during the same year with a score of 549.

1932

British Guyana won the Anchor Challenge Cup having scores 579.

1936

British Guiana won Anchor Challenge Cup having scored 816.

1939

Presumably, Regional competitions were suspended because of the Second World War. During this period The American Military Stationed at Atkinson Airbase (now Timehri) built the Atkinson Range (now Timehri Rifle Range), to facilitate range practice for their troops. After the Americans departed, the local marksmen were allowed access to the Range which was similar to Thomas Lands Range, since, it could have accommodated shooting up to 600 yards.

1947

There is no record to show the year in which the Demerara Rifle Club changed its name to the British Guyana Rifle Association. The record in existence showed that as early 1947, the name of British Guyana won the Anchor Challenge Cup with a score of 825.

The local association won the Martinez Shield. Also during the same year it won Swettenham Cup.

1948

Most of the members of the local Rifle Association were expatriates. Guianese members of the local forces demonstrated aptitude were organized and became members of the club. Mr L Dowridge who was one of such Guianese, was presented with the Encouragement Cup, for outstanding performances. This Cup was donated by Mr L F Edmonds who was an expatriate and a senior shooter, at the time. The British Guyana Volunteer Force was disbanded. However, the Companies were retained as an interim Volunteer Corps.

PHOTOGRAPHS CAPTIONS

2. The Lushington_Trophy- It is presented to the winner of the Queen's 1st stage at the Guyana NRA Annual Prize Meeting. It was first presented to the Demerara Rifle Club in 1895.

THE BRITISH GUIANA VOLUNTEER FORCE 1948- 1966

Recruitment for the British Guiana Volunteer Force (BGVF) was conducted by a Selection Board. Members recruited were also eligible for membership in Rifle Shooting Association.

The records show that Rifle Shooting was considered a national sport since its colonial days. The Government supported it by contributing an annual vote, a gesture which continued over the years. Subsequently this responsibility was taken over by the National Sports Development Council. The contribution was to assist the National teams with the preparation for overseas competitions. Additional funds were raised by the Association's members. They put their resources together and held fund raising events, such as public dances, bingos and cinema shows (coloured films). The Association also received nationwide financial support from individuals and organisations.

Rifle Shooting was indeed a national sport for it even attracted the support and participation of women. The women who became members, received support from their fathers and husbands who were members of the local forces. Their participation was by no means poor, for they were able to match the performance of their male counterparts and went on to represent the country internationally. Three women worthy of note were Mrs. C Bernard, Ms. O D'Agrella and Ms. Porte.

In the 1950's the Rifle Association membership was still restricted to members of the local forces and property owning members of the public and their children, some of whom were members of Queen's College Cadet Corps. As such the sport

was considered an 'elite sport'. One other reason was the high cost of owning the required. 303 inch rifle and other rifle shooting equipment.

Mrs. Christine Bernard was influential in changing the status of the sport. She spotted the potential of Maurice Yong, Cecil Das, Vernon Chung and Henry Mayers, who were all referred to as 'the four Guianese upstarts'. Their participation in the sport was restricted by their financial status.

Mrs. Bernard encouraged her husband, Major Bernard who was the head of the BGVF at the time, and, four rifles were made available to them. Subsequently, similar gestures were made and the Association was opened to all sundry.

Mr Yong and Mr Das are still active members of the Rifle Shooting Association at the time of writing in 1992.

During the 1960's the last years of this period, the British Guiana Rifle Association membership began to change. Its members were mostly Guianese by birth, ho were shooting at high standards which allowed them to represent the colony at international competitions.

During this era, rifle shooting reached its peak. High standards were achieved and records were established. Inter-Colonial competitions were frequently held.

Apart from participation in the Anchor Challenge Cup competition, the local Association participated in Overseas Postal Shoots. The trophies competed for among the West Indian Colonies were: The Swettenham Cup which was controlled by British Guiana; The Martinez shield which was controlled by and was the most important shoot for Trinidad; The West Indian Shoot Trophy which was controlled by Jamaica and the Duke of Gloucester Cup which was controlled by the NRA. Prizes and medals were presented to winners for the highest individual scores. The Medals included the Wakefield and the Donegal which could only be one once. If a shooter won the same event at a next meeting, he had to settle for a bar. The shooter with the highest score who had never won the medal, usually received the medal.

Other historical events relating to this period included the following:

C. Archer became the first Guianese (the only Guyanese to date) to win the “News of the World” Club competition.

1953

The teams that represented the colony at Bisley: Major F Manley, W Cyril, M Edmonds, C Allen J Driver, and MS O D’ Agrella and Major Manley won prizes for their achievements during the St George’s event at Bisley.

They scored 72 and 71 respectively. St George’s event is the second only in importance to the ‘Queens’

1955

History was created on the 24th January, when the first international rifle shooting meeting to be held in the British West Indies was declared open at the Thomas Land Range. At this meeting British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica and Canada competed against Devon – Jersey team from Great Britain. British Guiana won with 843 points. Devon Jersey was their nearest rival with 824 points. Members of the British Guiana team were J A Sutton, (top shooter), C. C. Allen, Ms. O D’ Agrella, L F Dowridge, M A Wight and N J Driver.

In December, British Guiana participated in the Inter Colonial Rifle Shooting meeting for the Anchor Challenge Cup in Trinidad. The team comprised J A Sutton (captain), M A Ali, C.C. Allen, F. G. Ibbott and E. C. Innis - Cpl L F Dowridge, N J Driver and M A Wight as the waiting man (standby), P U Hing (second waiting man) and E W Fields (third waiting man).

1956

The shooters called to practice for Martinez Shield competition were: N J Driver (captain), M A Ali, C C Allen, C K Ridley, M A Wight, J A Sutton, Lt D E Yong, C A Archer, E C Innis, F G Ibbott, L F Edmonds, W S Cyril, and E J Wishart.

1957

Teams from British Guyana, Barbados and Trinidad met at the Government Rifle Range in Barbados, for a triangular shooting competition. They competes for two cups. Guianese W S Cyril was fifth among the top five who competed for the Major Cave Challenge Cup. Among the top six who competed for the Edgar Armstrong Challenge Cup, Guianese F G Ibbot, W S Cyril and P U Hing were second, third and fifth respectively.

In the senior spoon competition F H Allen won the March and April Spoons scoring 99 and 139 on each occasion.

M. A. Ali won the May, June and August spoons scoring 146, 141 and 101 on each occasion.

In the Junior spoon competition Capt. De Barros won the April, July and August spoons scoring 127, 129 and 95, on each occasion. Mr A Ali won the local Association's championship. He was awarded the Governor's Cup.

In the Martinez Shield competition, M. A. Ali top scored for the locals with 99 points.

In the Anchor Challenge Cup competition the colonies top shooter was M. A. Wight, who scored 135.

1958

In the senior spoon competition M. A. Ali won the June and July Spoons, scoring 97 and 95 on each occasion.

N. J. Driver won the August spoon with a score of 98. M. A. Wight won the September Spoon with a score of 142. In the June spoon competition, Const. L. F. Profitt won the April and September Spoons, scoring 132 and 94 on each occasion. M. A. Ali won the Associations Championship.

British Guiana won the Duke of Gloucester Trophy and M. A. Ali was the top local shooter with 141 points. M. A. Wight was the local top shooter in the Martinez Shield competition with 132 points. M. A. Ali was the local top shooter in the Swettenham Cup Competition with 99 points. J. K. Ridley was the local top shooter in the Anchor Challenge cup with 142 points.

1959

- The Anchor Challenge Cup Competition was held at the Thomas Lands Range. British Guiana won with 831 points- four points ahead of their nearest rival Trinidad. The victorious six-man team comprised J. A. Sutton (shooting Captain), N J Driver (manager), M. A. Wight, M. A. Ali, G K Ridley and Lt. H. D. Yong. The same team along with L. F. Edmonds and Sgt. Dowridge created history by being the first team from a colony to defeat a Great Britain team. The team scored 1095 to Great Britain 1093.

At the same meeting a British West Indian team defeated Great Britain, 1087 to 1075 points. Out of the eight rifle men who participated in the competition, the outstanding Guianese was N J Driver who placed fourth with 136 points.

M. A. Wight was the local top shooter in the Martinez Shield and Swettenham Cup Competitions. He scored 132 and 100 in competition.

C. C. Allen was a local top shooter in the Duke of Gloucester competition with a score of 139.

In the Senior Spoon shoot, M. Ali won the April spoon with 95 points. J. Sutton won the May Spoon with a score of 96. M. Ali won June Spoon with a score of 97. N. Driver won the August Spoon with a score of 89. M. Wight won the September spoon with a score of 142.

In the Junior Spoon shoots, Const. Profitt won the May Spoon with 94 points. C. A. Harding won the June Spoon with a score of 90 points. H. Mc Gowan won the July and August Spoons with scoring 91 and 93 on each occasion. Const. Profitt won September Spoon with a score of 132. M Ali won the Association's Championship in the senior category. Const. Profitt won the Championship in the junior Category.

1960

In the Senior Spoon shoot M. Ali won both of the Spoons shot for in February scoring 100 and 99 on each occasion. J. Sutton won the March Spoon with a score of 95. M. Ali won the April Spoon with a score of 134.

In the Junior Spoon competition N. Denny won the April Spoon with a score of 128.

M. Ali won the Association's senior championship.

The British Guiana Team came second in the Anchor Challenge Cup meeting held in Barbados. The Team scored 811, 6 points behind the winning Barbados team. The local ace Marksman C .C. Allen won the Wogart Cup with an aggregate of 140 points. H. McGowan was the local top shooter in the Martinez Shield competition with a score of 131.

M. Ali was the local top shooter in the Swettenham Cup and the Duke of Gloucester competitions. He scored 103 and 145 on each occasion.

- 1961

In the senior Spoon Shooters, N J Driver won the March spoon with a score of 95. M Ali won the April, May, July and August Spoon Shoots. He scored 94, 149, 149, 133 and 101 on each occasion.

In the Junior Spoon Shoots, S. Wishart won the May Spoon with a score of 131. M Yong won the September Spoon with a score of 88.

At the Annual Prize Meeting M. Ali was the outstanding shooter in the Senior Category. S. Wishart was the outstanding shooter in the Junior category. At the Anchor Challenge Cup meeting, the local team came second with 823 points to Trinidad's winning total of 826. The local top shooter was M. A. Wight with a score of 141. M. Ali was the outstanding shooter in the Martinez Shield, Swettenham Cup and Duke of Gloucester competitions. He scored 132, 103, and 147 in each competition.

1962

In the senior category M. A. Ali won the two Spoons competed for in April. He scored 96 and 100 on each occasion. C. A. Ridley won one of the Spoons shot for

in July with a score of 93. M. A. Ali won the other Spoon shoot for in July with a score of 95. C Archer won the August Spoon with a score of 93.

In the Junior Category, C Das won the April Spoon with a score of 86. M V Yong won the May Spoon with a score of 97. C Das won the two Spoon Shoots in July. He scored 88 and 90 on each occasion. Mr V Yong won the August September Spoons. He scored 138 and 90 on each occasion. M V Yong won the August and September Spoons. He scored 138 and 92 on each occasion. Mr Young won the August and September spoons he scored 138 and 92 on each occasion. M V Yong won the Valladares Trophy – senior trophy with a 50 possible. He also won the Yong Cup, the E. C. Inniss Cup, the India Cup and the Junior Aggregate.

British Guiana won the Anchor Challenge Cup with an aggregate of 831 points. N J Driver was the local top shooter with 145 points. M. A. Ali was the local top shooter in the Martinez Shield and the Swettenham Cup competitions. He scored 134 and 105 on each occasion.

N. J. Driver top scored for the locals in the Duke of Gloucester competition with a score of 139.

1963

In the Senior Spoon shoots, M. A. Ali won all the Spoons that were competed for. He scored 95, 97, 95, 120 and 145 on each occasion.

In the junior spoon shoot R Rodrigues won the March Spoon with a score of 88. R Rodrigues won one of the spoons shot for in April with a score of 88. Cpl. Meigon won the other spoon shot for in April with a score of 95. R Rodrigues won the May Spoon with a score of 91. Cpl. Meigon won the June and September Spoons of 95 and 138 on each occasion.

At the Annual Prize Meeting, the Governor General's Prize was won by M. Ali who had an aggregate of 284 points.

In the Guyana NRA mid - year meeting, M. A. Wight recorded the only possible at 35, at the 300 yard range. A team which comprised M. Yong, L. Profitt, A. Wight, D. De Barros, C. Das, C. Archer, H. Mc Gowan and M. Ali competed in Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica and other West Indian Islands for the West Indian Club Trophy, which they won.

The local team scored 791 in the Martinez Shield competition. The members were M. Ali (captain), C. Archer, A. Sutton, L. Profitt, M. Yong, A. Ridley, A. Wright, D. De Barros and V. Sandiford as the waiting man.

British Guiana won the Swettenham Cup with a record score of 786. The team was selected from D De Barros, A. Ridley, L. Profitt, M. Yong, H. Mc Gowan, C. Archer, B. Nichols, M. Ali (captain), C DE Freitas (president), J. Sutton and M. Wight.

An eight man team won the Duke of Gloucester Trophy with a score of 1140 out of a possible 1200. D De Barros was the local outstanding shooter with a score of 148. Members of the team received silver medals. This was the first time British Guiana had entered a team of eight to compete for the British Commonwealth Trophy at Bisley.

The team did well to finish second to New Zealand with their 1140, New Zealand had scored 1156. M Ali who was the Captain of the team scored 147.

1964

In the Senior category G. Ridley won the January Spoon with a score of 96. M. Ali won the February, March and May Spoons. He Scored 145, 145 and 143 on each occasion. M. Yong recorded the first and only possible 100 at the Thomas Lands Range, during March.

In the Junior category, J. Jhips won the February Spoon with a score of 139 J. Kranenburg won the March Spoon with a score of 135. L. Fraser won the May Spoon with a score of 138. Shooting was suspended with effect from 7th July, after the Thomas Lands Range was taken over by the Military and the Governor issued an `arms-called-in-order'. This prevented the colony from participating in international competitions.

With the aid of the British Military, the Government of British Guiana established a National army. The Headquarters of the GDF (Camp Ayanganna) now occupies what used to be the Thomas Lands Range.

THE GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE – 1966-1991

Plans to gain Independence from Great Britain were in progress when it was realized that a national army, suitably equipped to combine development with defence, should be established. Having the British Garrison here after Independence would have been completely unacceptable, since their presence here was not only to maintain law and order but to protect British Colonial interests.

The attainment of Independence in 1966 saw the legalisation of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), which was formed on the 1st November, 1965.

While the British Garrison was here, it was customary that the head of the Military automatically became President of the Rifle Association, a tradition which has continued. As a result, Brigadier Joseph Singh, current Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force, was the President of the Guyana National Rifle Association from 1991. He will hold this Executive post until his term of office as Head of the GDF expires.

Historical events relating to this period are as follows:

1966

The Guyana Defence Force inherited the Timehri Rifle Range and has since controlled and maintained same. The Range which is situated 28 miles from Georgetown was constructed with ranges up to 600 yards.

1969

M A Ali, a member of the Rifle Association sought and was successful in getting the GDF to grant permission to members of the Rifle Association to utilize the Timehri Rifle Range. After the Association was re-activated, its title was changed to the Guyana National Rifle Association (GNRA). When activities recommenced, members of the Association were:

Senior Shooters Mohamed Ali, Claude Archer, J Sutton, Const. L Profitt, H Mc Cowan, Cecil Das, Maurice Yong and Leslie Dowridge. The Junior Shooters were Neville Denny, L. Fraser, Lt Col R. Owen, Claude Chung, Paul Archer and Sgt R. Khan.

In the Senior category, Claude Archer won the first Spoon shoot in June with 75 points. Cecil Das won the two spoons competed for in July and, also, the September spoon. He scored 100, 93, and 102 on each occasion. H. Mc Cowan won the October Spoon with 97 points. Const. L. Profitt won the November Spoon with 64 points.

In the Junior category L. Lam won the May spoon with 92 points. Paul Archer won one of the spoons competed for in July with 98 points. While, Lt Col R. Owen won the other spoon having scored 87 points. Mr Neville Denny won the September spoon with 97 points.

1970

Teams from Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica met in Barbados for a friendly reunion meeting. At this meeting it was realized that the 303 inch rifles used by the Guyanese were outdated. The other countries were using 7.62 millimeter rifles and on their return, members updated their equipment.

The local Association participated in the Duke of Gloucester Shoot. Mr Yong was the outstanding Guyanese having scored 142.

In the Senior spoon shoots Claude Archer won the April Spoon with 103 points. L Fraser won the May spoon with a score of 145. Cecil Das won the June spoon with a score of 102.

The NRA Medal was shot for in August. It was competed for in two parts. Maurice Yong won the Medal having scored 145 and 102 on each occasion.

Mr. Yong won the August, September and October Spoons, scoring 141, 144 and 100 on each occasion.

Cecil Das won the other spoon competed for in October, with a score of 101.

In the Junior Category P Archer won the April spoon with a score of 100. Cpl. J Rossan won the May spoon with a score of 140. L. Lam won the June Spoon with a score of 100. Paul Archer won the August spoon with a score of 93. The Grand Aggregate was won by Senior Shooter Cecil Das.

1971

Members of the team that participated in the commonwealth Overseas Postal Shoot were Paul Archer, Claude Archer, Maurice Yong, Cecil Das, Neville Denny, L Fraser, J Sutton, H Mc Cowan (captain) and Leslie Dowridge as waiting man.

Prior to 1969, the makers of Anchor Cigarettes who had sponsored the Anchor Challenge Cup had relinquished this responsibility. The British American Tobacco Company which has branches in the Caribbean, commenced sponsoring the sport. The cup was renamed the Benson and Hedges Trophy.

In the Senior spoon shoots, Yong won the April and May spoons having scored 98 and 140 on each occasion. Claude Archer won the June spoon with a score of 99. Paul Archer won the July spoon with a score of 95. Yong won the August spoon with a score of 141. Paul Archer won the NRA Medal.

In the Junior Category, Claude Chung won the April Spoon with 133 points. E. Norton won the June spoon with a score of 93. M. Driffield won the July spoon with a score of 90. L. Lam won the August spoon with a score of 133. Lt Col R Owen won the September spoon with a score of 94. M Driffield won the October spoon with a score of 96. I. Stoll won the November spoon with a score of 133 Paul Archer won the Guard Aggregate. Paul Archer scored 138, the highest for the local team at the Martinez Shield shoot. Claude Archer scored 138, the highest for the local team at the Duke of Gloucester shoot.

1972

The team that represented Guyana at Bisley comprised H Mc Cowan (captain) P Archer, M Yong, C Das, N Denny, C Archer and A Sutton. L Lam and I Stol also accompanied the team but participated in the open competitions.

Members found it difficult to attend practice sessions every Sunday, as was done at the Thomas Lands Range and sought an alternative venue. Some of the members identified land at Non Paniel on the East Coast Demerara, 14 miles from Georgetown.

It was ideally situated, not only because its distance was shorter than Timehri but because of the advantage of the wind, necessary for good shots, which the Timehri Rifle Range lacked. This alternative venue however was never pursued.

At the Senior shoot competitions, Paul Archer won one of the February Spoons with 101 points. J Sutton won the other spoon with a score of 141. Paul Archer also won the March and April spoons having scored 147 and 143 on each occasion, J Sutton won the June spoon with a score of 143. H Mc Cowan won one of the October spoons with a score of 147. M. Yong won the other spoon with a score of 149.

M Yong won the GNRA Medal with an aggregate of 287. In the Junior Category, Lt Col Owen won one of the February spoons with a score of 94. C. Rajhu won the other spoon with a score of 140. Claude Chung won the March spoon with 137 points. M. Driffield won the April spoon with a score of 34. G. Lee won the June spoon with a score of 140. M Driffield won one of the October spoons with a score of 139. Lt Col Owen won the other spoon with a score of 137.

1973

The Guyana NRA sent a team to participate in the rifle shooting meeting at Bisley. The Benson and Hedges Trophy was first competed for in Trinidad. Trinidad won the 830 points. For the first time, Jamaica participated as a team in the Inter-Caribbean Countries Meeting.

1978

Guyana participated in the Benson and Hedges competition held in Barbados. Paul Archer was the outstanding Guyanese shooter, he scored 142.

The NRA eliminated the 200 yards shoot from their competition. Subsequently, all other countries followed suit.

1979

The GNRA members ascertained that if they used an eight-man team, instead of a six-man team, they could beat their Caribbean counterparts. They initiated and were successful at changing the number of persons representing a team of the Caribbean champions from six to eight. This strategy proved successful when Guyana won the Benson and Hedges trophy for the first time. The team scored 1113, the highest, since the inception of the competition in 1793.

The outstanding Guyanese shooter was Paul Archer, who won the Wogart Cup with a score of 146. The other shooters on the victorious team were seniors Richard Fields, Maurice Yong, Cecil Das and Neville Denny and gaining their first international exposure were Ransford Goodluck, Paul Slowe and C. Kirton who were Juniors at the time. The competition was held at the Timehri Rifle range and the Chief Range Officer was Colonel Martindale.

Goodluck won the Young cup and the Association's Junior Annual Prize Meeting.

1980

Jamaica won the Benson and Hedges Trophy, equaling Guyana's 1979 score of 1113. The outstanding Guyanese was R Fields who scored 139.

Plans to improve and extend the Timehri Rifle Range to include 900 and 1000 yards were initiated. The local shooters found that they were unsuccessful in Barbados, Jamaica and Great Britain (Bisley) because they were inexperienced at the 900 and 1000 shoots.

1982

The Association did not send a team to the Benson and Hedges competition in Barbados. However, rifle shooting enthusiasts C Das and R Fields sponsored themselves and were able to participate in the individual competitions. R Fields was rewarded for his effort. He won the Grand Aggregate with a score of 414.

For the first time, a West Indian Team participated in the Palma Match, which was held at the Connaught Range in Canada. Guyana's representatives on the team were Paul Archer, Richard Fields and Cecil Das.

1983

With the assistance of Major General Norman Mc Lean who was the then President of the Guyana NRA, the Timehri Rifle Range was improved and extended to include 900 and 1000 yards.

The local team won the Benson and Hedges competition held at the Timehri Rifle Ranges. The Chief Range Officer was Colonel Martindale. The team scored 1081. The outstanding shooter for the team was M. Yong who scored 139.

On the improved and lengthened Range Paul Slowe scored the first possible. The association was awarded runner-up for the "Association of Year 1983".

1985

The Association did not send a team to Bisley, but R. Fields, N. Denny, R. Goodluck, P. Slowe and C. Das sponsored themselves and participated in individual competitions.

1986

The West Indian team participated in the Palma Match at Bisley. The Guyanese representatives on the team were Richard Fields, Ransford Goodluck and Neville Denny.

In the Benson and Hedges competition, Trinidad recorded 1138 points to beat the record of the highest score established by Guyana in 1979.

1987

Guyana won the Benson and Hedges Trophy with a score of 1135. The outstanding shooter on the Guyana Team was Byron Noble who won the Wogart Cup with a score of 146. The competition was held at the Timehri Rifle range and the Chief Range Officer was Captain Ross. Neville Denny donated the Denny trophy to the Association. It is presented annually to the winner of the Grand Aggregate.

During the Association's Annual Prize Meeting Richard Fields was the first winner of the Trophy.

N. Denny won the Wood Davis Trophy.

R. Goodluck won the Lushington and the Valladeres Trophies.

1988

The Association sent a team to Bisley. The most outstanding team member was L Braithwaite. He won the Gurkha Appeal event and was presented with a Kukri.

Guyana prepared a team to participate in the Benson and Hedges competition in Jamaica. It was cancelled due to Hurricane Gilbert.

1989

Guyana participated in the Benson and Hedges competition, held in Trinidad. Bermuda participated in this competition for the first time.

At the GNRA Annual Prize Meeting, in the Senior category Neville Denny won the Wood Davis and the Valladares Trophies. R. Goodluck won the Denny and Lushington Trophies.

In the Junior category, John Fraser won the Junior Challenge Shield and the Professor Steven Mona Singh Shield.

The Rifle Association conducted a 'Basic Hand Gun Course' for licenced firearm holders. Successful participants were presented with certificates.

1991

Guyana repeated their home winning streak and won the Benson and Hedges trophy with 1103 points. The outstanding Guyanese was R Goodluck who scored 143. The team also won the Geddes Grant Trophy with a score of 1078. The team members were Richard Fields (captain) Ransford Goodluck (vice Captain), Neville Denny, Lennox Braithwaite, Dylan Fields, John Fraser, Dane Blair and Paul Slowe. The Chief Range officer was Capt. Enoch Gaskin.

At the GNRA Annual Prize Meeting, in the Senior category, Dylan Fields won the Denny Trophy. R Goodluck won the Wood Davis, Lushington and the Valladares Trophies.

In the Junior Category, D Blair won the Junior Challenge Shield and the Professor Steven Mona Singh Shield. R Goodluck won the Association's Annual Christmas Hamper shoot.

The Association also won the National Sports Council's Association of the Year award and R Goodluck was runner-up sportsman of the year 1992. The Guyana National Rifle Association participated in the 1992 Benson and Hedges meeting in Jamaica at the Twickenham Park Ranges , where Jamaica won the Benson and Hedges Trophy.

At present most of the members of the Association are civilians, unlike membership in the colonial days. Members of the Disciplined Services have indicated their willingness to join the Association, once they are sponsored. The high cost of the Rifle Shooting Equipment has restricted membership. New members will not only raise the current standard of the game, but will also contribute new ideas on the Executive Committee.

The standard of rifle shooting among the Association's members are highly competitive. It will continue to improve since members benefit from guidance and advice from the senior shooters and stalwarts of the sport.

All efforts are being made to ensure that the enthusiastic member's performances and contributions are publicized.

PHOTOGRAPHS CAPTIONS

14. The Timehri Rifle Range with lengths up to 600 yards in 1969. Shooters in the back row from left: Messrs. Sutton, Mr. Yong, Fraser and at extreme right Mr. P. Archer.
15. The Anchor Cup Challenge Cup which was renamed the Benson and Hedges Trophy in 1973.
16. The victorious Guyana team and their Trophies which they won at the Benson and Hedges competition, held at the Timehri Rifle Range. P. Archer won the Wogart Cup. From left to right: C. Das, R. Fields, N. Denny, P. Archer, P. Slowe, R. Kirton, R. Goodluck, M. Yong and F. Chung.
17. The team that represented Guyana at the 1980 Benson and Hedges competition in Jamaica was selected from: Stopping (left to right): Messrs. Lee, Yong, P. Archer and Das. Standing (left to right): Messrs. Fields, C. Archer, Chung, Owen, Denny and Dowridge at the extreme right.
18. The new improved and extended Timehri Rifle Range: Photograph was taken from the 1000 yards range.
19. The Butt Range at the new improved and extended Range in 1991.
20. The Butt Party at work during the 1991 Christmas Hamper Shoot.
21. A Target at close range.
22. Rifle shooter during 1991 Christmas Hamper Shoot: From left: Messrs. J. Fraser, N. Denny, L. Braithwaite and R. Goodluck.
23. Rifle shooters in action during the 1991 Christmas Hamper Shoot.
24. Rifle shooters in action at the 300 yards range, during the 1991 Christmas Hamper Shoot.
25. Photograph shows a shooter standing with his rifle shooting equipment.
26. The President of the GNRA Brigadier J. Singh who is the current Chief of Staff of the GDF in discussion with R. Fields right and N. Denny left. Both are executive members of the GNRA. Photograph was taken during the Association's last shoot for 1991, at the Timehri Rifle Range.
27. The Kukri: It was won by Mr. L. Braithwaite at Bisley in 1988.

28. Results of the 1992 Shoots are listed as under:

CONSTITUTION OF THE GNRA- APPENDIX 1

NAME 1. The name of the organisation shall be the 'GUYANA 'GUYANA NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION' herein after referred to as 'The Association', and its official address shall be the Guyana Defence Force Headquarters, Camp Ayanganna, Thomas Lands, Georgetown.

OBJECTS 2. The objects of the Association shall be the promotion and welfare of rifle and revolver shooting in Guyana.

MEMBERSHIP 3. The Association shall have the following categories of membership:

- i. Ordinary
- ii. Associate
- iii. Block
- iv. Life
- v. Honorary Life

All categories of membership are subject to positive security screening.

Ordinary Membership shall be open to all persons over the age of fourteen (14) years resident in Guyana and to all members of any of the Disciplined Forces in Guyana.

Associate Membership shall be open to persons over the age of twelve (12) years who wish to take part in small bore rifle shooting only.

Block Membership shall be open to any of the Disciplined Forces in Guyana.

Life Membership shall be open to ordinary members on condition to be fixed by Council from time to time which said conditions must be ratified by a majority of the ordinary members in General Meeting.

Honorary Life Membership shall be open to persons or organisation which are not members of the Association on conditions to be fixed by the Council and ratified by a majority of the ordinary members in General Meeting.

- a) Candidates for ordinary membership shall be proposed and seconded by two members of the Association and their names together with those of their proposer and seconder shall be circulated to the general membership for a period of not less than two weeks before the application is due to be considered by the Council. Any member wishing to object to a candidate must notify his objections and the reasons therefor in writing to the Secretary at least one week before the meeting at which the application is due to be considered.
 - b) A candidate shall be admitted to membership automatically if there is no objections as provided for in (a) above. Otherwise the candidate shall be admitted on a majority vote of the Council. Any candidate refused admission may not reapply for at least one year from the date of his notification of the refusal.
5. a) Candidates for associate membership may be proposed to the council on the recommendation of any two members. The council may admit such candidates at its discretion.
- b) Such members shall be under the direct control of the Council and shall have no voice in the management of the Association.

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4. The victorious B G Team and their Trophies 1947
5. B G Rifleman their Guest and Trophies 1947
6. The News of the World certificate 1952
7. Riflemen at Thomas Lands Range 1953
8. Stalwarts of the Sport 1953-1955
9. Members of the team at the first International Rifle meeting in the West Indies 1953
10. Guianese Riflemen at the Thomas Lands Range
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12. The victorious B G Anchor Challenge Cup and the shoot against Great Britain Team 1959
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