

OWLKILL ROD & GUN CLUB

AUGUST 2015



President: John D'Allaird

Treas.: Randy Burgoyne

Vice Pres.: Bret Seiler

Secretary: Tom Duclos

Board of Directors: Mark Mahoney (Chairman), Tim Barry, David Langlois, Lance Allen Wang

What club stuff have you been missing? Check out www.owkill.org

COMING UP

OWLKILL MEMBERS' OPEN HOUSE – PICNIC – SWAP MEET: SAT. AUG 8TH FROM 10-4!!!

Monthly Meeting: The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Owlkill Rod & Gun Club will be held on Thursday August 13th at 7:00p.m. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. *We will have an abbreviated meeting, followed by our rescheduled presentation from Chief George Bell of the Cambridge-Greenwich Police Department on concealed carry! Don't miss it!!*

Board of Directors: Board of Directors meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. on August 27th.

President's Comments:

ATTENTION : SKEET, PISTOL, RIFLE AND SILHOUETTE SHOOTERS, ARCHERS, FISHERMEN, KAYAKERS, FAIR AND PICNIC GOERS- OUTDOORSMEN ALL: It is August already - the Dog Days of Summer- and this season is flying by fast, so "...make hay while the sun shines". The streams are very low requiring more stealth to fool the wary fish. Hunting is yet to commence- who would want to be cooked on the frypan of the August turf anyway. **But-** the club facilities are here for your use, so come, take advantage of all the benefits the club offers, much under cover of a roof.

We have great plans for this month. The monthly meeting of 8/13 will commence at normal time to finish business by 7:30PM so **Cambridge/Greenwich Police Chief George Bell** can take the floor with a presentation on [Concealed Carry Laws](#) and to field questions from the membership.

There is a **Club Picnic / Swap Meet on this coming Saturday, August 8th**, beginning at 10:00AM and running until 4:00PM. John Sheaff has planned a fantastic 'meet and greet' for the Club Membership with lunch provided. Bring some items of value that you no longer use, to trade or sell to a fellow member- they may need what you would like to clear out of your cabinets- a **WIN/WIN PROPOSITION**. This type of event fosters **esprit de corps** within the club.

esprit de corps, (e, sprē də 'kôr), *noun*: **esprit de corps**; plural noun: **esprits de corps**

1. a feeling of pride, fellowship, and common loyalty shared by the members of a particular group.

Esprit de corps cannot be bought, it must be wrought. Getting to know your fellows and working together fosters unity. A unified group coheres and pulls together- like a strong rope of many otherwise easily broken individual fibers. Unbreakable when properly woven and tended. We welcome your active participation as a member here at Owlkill Rod & Gun Club. We're only a strand until we're woven into the rope.

“Only mad dogs and Englishmen brave the noon day sun.” A few hearty fellows- no mad dogs or Englishmen so far as I know- have braved some very hot July hours on the roof of the **Pistol Shed** to move the project along. There is still more to go with finish materials for roof, exterior siding and doors. The comradery among the crews has become infectious and makes the work fun, despite the heat, and is a good healthy work effort resulting in a very useful asset.

Sign up with our **General Contractor Mark Mahoney** for a work tour- you will not regret it. Don't worry about your skill level- we have lots of experience guiding this effort- you'll fit in. **Join!** Gary Danforth has penned an article of his experience working on the team so be sure to read it. Pics below:



Speaking of work- thanks to Tim Barry for mopping clean the clubhouse floor! The scent of ammonia smells - clean.

Volunteers- Step up! We are in serious need of some one (or more):

... to build doors for our new pistol shed.

... to build a new door on the skeet field high house.

... to hang a drop ceiling in the kitchen in the clubhouse- the materials are here.

We also need a new Grounds Committee Chair and Members. See John W., Mark M. or John D.

We look forward to the cooler Fall weather when a **General Work Day can tend to all necessary maintenance without the gallons of sweat rolling down, blinding our vision. Let's prepare for that.**

The Silhouette Shoot on July 25th was a bit warm but a great time. Two shooters were new to the event and new to the club. A brief perusal of this shooting masks the true difficulty of doing it well. ‘Sure, just line up and fire and that's all there is to it!’ Hmmm! It is free hold/no supports with small targets and reveals every bad habit we have, contradicting our minds of how great a marksman we think we are. Come and be bit by the bug and you'll do it again, & again. **Thanks to John Wiley** for fielding and running the events. The next SilShoot is August 29th, so give it a try- entry fee is only \$5.00. **The Skeet field** runs like a top and is in much good use under John Wiley's watch as Skeet Com. Chair. **John, the Tireless.**

Everyone using the new archery target is impressed. Someone with a powerful crossbow is surely poised for the ultimate test! It will hold up to the powerful bolt no doubt!

The Bard has said “... **brevity is the soul of wit**”, so to wrap up this month’s PresCom let’s expand on the conclusion from last month’s Newsletter- of how blessed we are to live in this Country and this locale- with two items:

1. Tim Barry sent an e-mail on 7/21: “I’ve seen countless does with single fawns, and nearly as many with twins. This afternoon on Center Road just North of Turnpike Road (in Eagle Bridge, NY) not far from Owlkill R&G I watched a doe with triplet fawns cross the road. I was too stunned to get a picture and the quartet wasn’t hanging around for publicity pix. The woman in the car in front of me appeared as surprised as I was. I don’t think she had time for a camera either. Owlkill members may want to keep a camera handy... “. What Tim did not know then is that my wife Marianne and I were in the car in front of him- here is my response: “Tim, the exclaiming woman was Marianne and the driver was me. We slowed to a stop to watch the frisky fawns cross several feet from our bumper in disbelief. The last little one seemed curious and turned for a look back before it went down the embankment.” **What a sight- less than 100yds from the Club! I have never seen three fawns with one doe either.**
2. Also, last week I stopped briefly at John Sheaff’s place and he and I were talking in the shade of his garage as he worked on a project. He said something about how beautiful it is right in our own backyard, and I hope he does not mind if I quote him, “**Every day we wake up in paradise**”. So much to be thankful for. A couple pics...



In the backyard pine tree no less!



West Branch Ausable River. Not the best time of day to fish but consider the location!

Have a great month- and see you at the Picnic / Swap Meet on Saturday 8/8!

John D’Allaird, President, Owlkill Rod & Gun Club

EDITOR'S COLUMN

I am impressed as can be by our President John D'Allaird for many reasons, not least of which is that in my recent memory, I have not heard a club official quote "The Bard" – William Shakespeare – well, ever, now that I think about it.

A preview of coming attractions – when the 2016 membership renewal forms come out (its coming sooner than we think!) there will be a place for a voluntary donation in lieu of volunteering to serve on committees or participate in work parties. Would we like everyone to participate or serve? Of course! Is it practical for everyone to do so? Of course not. We all have lives and responsibilities and there is never enough time. We all don't live breathe and eat the Owlkill Rod and Gun Club. So what we will be asking – expecting, really – is that those of you who KNOW you can't participate to that degree will help by providing needed funds for supplies and operations. Volunteers and funds are always the most needed things in small organizations like ours. If you can't give one way, give another. Its that important, gang.

It has been my honor to be nominated by the caucus of the White Creek Republican Committee to run on their party line for White Creek Councilman this November. Its been an interesting journey, and I will say, for me, one of the positive side effects of the SAFE Act. Those of you who know me know that I served 21 years in the Army, and during that period, as was appropriate, I avoided speaking about politics. Since I retired in 2009, I have devoted my political energies to simply encouraging people to vote and get engaged in the process. Since the SAFE Act was passed, I became much more engaged, including bringing speakers to our club to offer us perspective. Far from being a "one-issue voter" as opponents of the SAFE Act are sometimes considered, I considered the SAFE Act a symptom – not a disease. The SAFE Act takes a fundamental stance on the role of government which I disagree with, and also takes a skewed view of the citizen's competence, responsibilities and rights. The bottom line of my bringing this up – continue to be involved with the political system. Vote. Run, if you are so moved. But do not forget President Franklin Roosevelt's admonition: "Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves and the only way they could do this is by not voting."

L. A. Wang, Editor

TRIVIA

Hats off to John D'Allaird for answering last month's trivia question (with a big ol' asterisk, as he did have to look it up)..... After Washington was sacked by the British in 1814, with the White House and Capitol burned, the British didn't stop. They continued north and made an amphibious landing outside Baltimore. The sea battle that took place was chronicled in our National Anthem, written by Francis Scott Key while held by the British off shore as the British vessels bombarded Fort McHenry. The land battle which took place at North Point (just east of Baltimore) was led by British General Robert Ross, who when told he was being faced by American militia, reportedly scoffed and said he didn't care if it "rained militia."



Two American militiamen, Privates Daniel Wells and Henry McComas, apprentice saddle makers by trade, by many accounts had a pivotal role in the battle, and some might say had a tremendous impact on American history. What was that role?

Well, the role of these two American marksmen was that they cut down General Ross, resulting in the demoralization of the British force, which ended up retreating from their beach head East of Baltimore. They died

in the exchange of fire, sadly. Neither had reached the age of 20. In modern terms, they fulfilled the role of the “Strategic Corporal,” in which we used to say that the actions of one Corporal guarding a bridge somewhere in Bosnia could end up influencing events around the world.

As an interesting aside, it was said that Ross’ body was put in a keg containing 129 gallons of rum for preservation on the ship transporting his remains. Not ones to be denied, author Walter Lord wrote of rumors that British sailors would still sneak drinks of rum out of the keg.

Anyway, McComas and Wells’ bodies were later exhumed and buried under a monument in the city of Baltimore.



McComas and Wells’ honor guard following exhumation of their bodies to be re-buried under the monument bearing their name in 1858 in Baltimore.

Another interesting aside from this period is that McComas and Wells represented the American sharpshooter image, long a controversy in the American psyche. The frontiersmen represented the “one-shot, one-kill” mentality or rugged outdoorsmen (and long treasured by the US Marines). Later weapons development and training in the US military focused on sending more bullets, not more accurate fire. However, it took a while to reach that point. For instance, during the Civil War, repeaters got very little traction with the Union, because high ranking generals felt that more bullets would be more wasted bullets. Even in the Spanish American War, the famed 30-40 Krag-Jorgensen rifle was magazine fed, but it had a blocking device which allowed it to be used as a single shot, instead. But that is a whole different discussion.

This week’s question:

Perhaps tangentially related to the last paragraph, a former Union general became the president of a national organization fostered to increase the marksmanship skills of Americans not quite fitting the “frontiersman” mold, based on his own observation of their skills during the Civil War. Who was this General, what was the organization, and as a bonus, he also was an inventor of some repute – what was his invention?



Hmmm.... Now what is the answer to this month’s trivia question? Blimey, I know it’s in here somewhere....

And now, with all the news that’s fit to print, Gary Danforth moves away from memory lane (not too far, of course!) and talks about current goings on at that club. Over to you, Gary....

NEW PISTOL SHED SHOOTING UP by Gary Danforth

Well, it sure is a good thing that there are some guys connected with the Owlkill Rod and Gun Club who know a lot more about building than I do. If they waited for a guy like me to get the job done they might be

sweeping as much snow off the new roof as Frank Sheldon put nails in the new roof with his nail gun. My father was a great carpenter. Unfortunately, I had neither the interest nor was I blessed with his building trades intellect. But, if it could be built, and built well, he was the man for the job. He built houses, garages and did just about everything else from Hoosick Falls to Amsterdam and from Williamstown to Buskirk. To this day, every time I drive by one of his "monuments," be it a house or garage, with my son or daughter in the car, I point out that I may have swept the floor while those buildings went up. My father, despite his 10th grade education(he said he quit school in 1936 because he didn't like school but I always had an idea it was to help his three brothers and Mom and Dad during the depression), was extremely bright. Two things told me that. On more than one occasion people told me over the years that my father would gently remind engineers the best way to do something on a building project. The smart ones listened to him. The second thing was when he handed me a broom. I was simply too dangerous to have a hammer in my hand.

But, the new pistol shed is progressing nicely, despite my presence. I've enjoyed getting to know my fellow Owlkill members a bit better during this process. On any project, there are leaders and near as I can tell we have two main guys for this project. Mark Mahoney is the leader on the ground and Lloyd Wetzel is the leader in the air.

Mark and Lloyd coordinate everything. Of the three Wednesday mornings which I have showed up to work, I use that term loosely when associated with my skills, Lloyd and Mark have kept the project moving forward. The first Wednesday I showed up we didn't have any lumber to work with so everybody was safe from any possible injuries associated with my swinging a hammer. I hardly know a header from a footer. I thought a header was something archery chairman Bill Zeppetelli might take if he mistook a step off the roof. A footer I thought was a guy with big feet. I tell you I could watch Mark Mahoney work all morning. In fact, the first Wednesday of actual work, I think I did mostly just that. I tell you, Mark can walk right by me, pick up a two by four, mark and square off the ends and get a measurement from Lloyd, before I can look for a shady spot to stand. Lloyd just knows what he's doing up there. We all know that. Frank Sheldon has been around and I can tell he knows what he's doing, too. Bill Zeppetelli knows what he's doing. Bill keeps the other guys loose. Our club president, John D'Allaird, he knows what he's doing - both with a hammer and a camera in his hands. He has documented our progress with his pictures. The other main guys to date on this project, Artie Erbe, Nelson Eddy, and Joe Ahrberg have been invaluable. They do what needs to be done and have done it well near as I can tell. Me, heck, I had to find something to do. I could only lean against the building or hold a piece of wood so long to pretend I knew what I was doing. So, I decided to become the ground gopher. It's very important to keep the guys who know what they're doing busy and to keep them going.

Yup, I figured if I could keep Mark huffing and puffing and the sweat glistening off his forehead, I was doing a good job. That's what I would do. I'd keep everybody else going. If somebody dropped a hammer while up on the roof, within five minutes, I'd fetch it and hand it right back to them to keep the project moving. If somebody said they needed more nails, I'd break away from taking a cold drink, to get them more and keep things moving along. If Mark needed a board to cut, far be it from me to keep him from slowing down. And, on and on it went until the morning was gone and everybody else was tired. Me, fresh as a daisy, felt real good about all their work. But, seriously, I am feeling good about "working" with the guys. Last week I couldn't be there but I stopped by later and saw more progress on the building. I believe we have a right to keep and bear arms. A right to own pistols, rifles, shotguns and shoot them, hunt with them and defend ourselves with them if need be. Almost daily, I'm glad I live where I do rather than Albany, Schenectady, Amsterdam or Troy. It must be difficult to fall asleep at night within the sound of gunfire on the streets. And, I believe I have a right to own my 1860 Army Colt .44(made in 1863). And, my 1860 Army Colt .44 Mason/Richardson conversion Colt. Samuel Colt, who got the idea for a moving cylinder for his first pistol from looking at a steamboat water wheel, knew what he was doing. And, so do I.

If I can find a way to help on a club project, anybody can. Somebody has to keep Mark Mahoney moving.