

OWLKILL ROD & GUN CLUB

February 2017



President: John D'Allaird

Vice Pres.: Bret Seiler

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

Treas.: Randy Burgoyne

Secretary: Tom Duclos

What's happening at the Owlkill? Check out www.owlkill.org

Monthly Meeting: This month's meeting will take place on Thursday, February 9th at 7:00p.m.

Board of Directors: Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday** February 28th at **6:00p.m.**

President's Comments:

Groundhog, woodchuck, whistlepig, rodent; Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow on Thursday, suggesting there will be six more weeks of winter, if you take the prediction of an overgrown marmot to heart.

Then there is '**Malverne Mel**' on Long Island and '**Staten Island Chuck**' - two more oversized whatsits who differ with the Pennsylvania groundhog, both asserting spring is soon to arrive; though some have interpreted **Mel's** report this year to agree with **Phil** for some reason. Chalk that up to **fake news**- a condition rife on the airwaves these days. Who really wants to argue weather with an oversized rodent anyway? In either case, **we prefer the early spring forecast.**

We are not moved to low spirits regarding a long winter by such folklore. Ice fishing is still on the menu and small game is still open 'til the end of February. As the in between weeks approach we withdraw to our gear room, re-spool our fishing reel, oil our firearms, wax our bowstrings and read whatever suits us 'til fair weather draws us outdoors from the winter cave into the sunshine. **So... we are eager... and prepared.**

The Club is preparing for the upcoming year on all fronts:

-We are eagerly looking forward to a year in all our efforts- especially in the education department, which was the theme of the PresComm in last month's Newsletter and is worthy of repeating, given the club's emphasis on education. There are going to be **six 4-H Shooting Sports events between March 18th and May 6th**, then the **graduation will be on May 8th** - see the webpage calendar. Offering education in our sports will renew the venues with vigor and carry on the activities into the future. Soon there will be a closet at the end of the kitchen space to house the 4-H gear, streamlining the tool-up process for all 4-H events and classes.

-This year is also promising to be a good year for keeping up with the club properties and physical plant. The Lottery is very important in this plan because the proceeds from it will be directly applied to the '**to do**' list.

-The first large ticket item will be siding the clubhouse, something that has been deferred for many years by the tyranny of the urgent regarding our funds. Providing our own labor will save many dollars in this job. As the proceeds from the Lottery start flowing in at mid-year, the schedule will be posted for this effort.

-Stay tuned for opportunities to volunteer in sprucing things up around the club grounds and buildings.

February 21st is Presidents Day! Most of our nation's Presidents have been exemplary men and the

greatest thing is the system of governance that they've served under. I believe most of us take for granted the singular blessings of our American heritage because we have not lived under the tyranny of baser forms of human government that nearly all the people in the world labor under. Many still risk life and limb to get here, not primarily for economic favor, but with conviction in the type of governance and this should be our litmus test for citizenship. This form has been infringed upon much since global socialism has infiltrated the world and even our land in the highest offices and this we've seen for what it is in recent years. But... our founding is still worth defending and guarding, whatever the cost to our comfort. I thought it fitting as we celebrate **President's Day** to focus on **our nation and those men of character it produced who have served as our Commanders in Chief.**

-Election of Club Officers to take place at the February 9th meeting.

-Turkey Shoot planned for May 21, 1:00PM - 4:00PM, a Fundraiser for "Loaves and Fishes" food pantry in Cambridge.

-The Lottery is moving along for 2017. Tim's work has been **outstanding- setting new standards-** but he is seeking to step down from his admin-chair. **Please consider your part in the Lottery and contact Tim or me.**

See you Thursday, February 9th.

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



EDITOR'S COLUMN

I hope this newsletter finds all of you in good health and spirits. We're "in it" – a Washington County winter, and this means several things. The clean, crisp air that ten degrees and ten percent humidity bring. Neighbors in hibernation. But most of all, it means Spring is somewhere around the corner with all of the optimism that the blooms will bring. So for those of you in the winter doldrums, remember – when the permafrost lifts off the Owlkill, we'll be waiting for you - .22 matches. Skeet. And all the other good stuff that makes us a community that you want to be a part of....

L. A. Wang, Editor

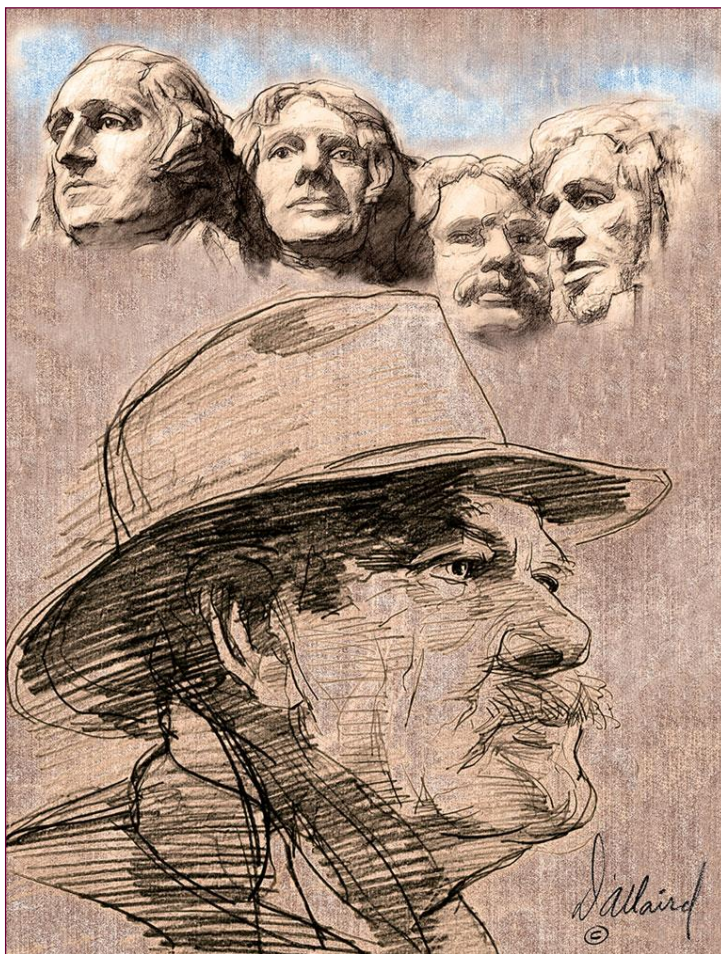


Early in the 20th century several of our notable President's images were carved into a mountain in South Dakota called Mt. Rushmore. In 1924 the former South Dakota state historian, Doane Robinson, invited a sculptor named Gutzon Borglum to survey the Black Hills for a worthy stone mountain and to design a carving suitable for a memorial. No federal or state funds were given for the effort at first but it started with funding by three railroads, mining companies, private individuals and a South Dakota State authorized association- The Mount Harvey Memorial Association- to organize the effort. The work was slowed by and even languished with extremely limited funds until President Calvin Coolidge encouraged Washington DC to help in 1927. The Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission was voted into being on George Washington's birthday in 1929 enabling the work to carry on ultimately to the finish. So meticulous for the safety of his crew was Borglum that there were no deaths or serious injuries in the carving of this masterpiece. He though, was much harder on himself and suffered health problems from

the extreme nature of the effort, passing away in March 1941. In failing health, he did not live to see the finishing touches administered under the oversight of his own son Lincoln Borglum within the ensuing year.

Note his son's name- **Lincoln**- named many years before this project was even a thought

This mountain memorial, in the form of a masterpiece of craft, well symbolizes the rock solid resolve of our founders in times of crisis and the soul of the nation they served.



***Gutzon Borglum**, the dreamer in stone whose monumental vision transformed a huge granite upthrust in South Dakota, called Mount Rushmore, into a tribute to the soul of America.*

The following foreword was written by Borglum in what amounts to his statement of intent for the project before it was undertaken. It was printed in a book about the process of Mt. Rushmore's realization after the memorial was opened to the public.

FOREWORD

A monument's dimensions should be determined by the importance to civilization of the events commemorated. We are not here trying to carve an epic, portray a moonlight scene, or write a sonnet; neither are we dealing with mystery or tragedy, but rather the constructive and the dramatic moments or crises in our amazing history. We are cool-headedly, clear-mindedly setting down a few crucial, epochal facts regarding the accomplishments of the Old World radicals who shook the shackles of oppression from their light feet and fled despotism to people a continent; who built an empire and rewrote the philosophy of freedom and compelled the world to accept its wiser, happier forms of government.

We believe the dimensions of national heartbeats are greater than village impulses, greater than city demands, greater than state dreams or ambitions. Therefore, we believe a nation's memorial should, like Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt, have a serenity, a nobility, a power that reflects the gods who inspired them and suggests the gods they have become.

As for sculptured mountains —

Civilization, even its fine arts, is, most of it, quantity-produced stuff; education, law, government, wealth — each is enduring only as the day. Too little of it lasts into tomorrow and tomorrow is strangely the enemy of today, as today has already begun to forget buried yesterday. Each succeeding civilization forgets its predecessor, and out of its body builds its homes, its temples. Civilizations are ghouls. Egypt was pulled apart by its successor; Greece was divided among the Romans; Rome was pulled to pieces by bigotry and a bitterness much of which was engendered in its own empire building.

I want, somewhere in America on or near the Rockies, the backbone of the Continent, so far removed from succeeding, selfish, coveting civilizations, a few feet of stone that bears witness, carries the likenesses, the dates, a word or two of the great things we accomplished as a Nation, placed so high it won't pay to pull down for lesser purposes.

Hence, let us place there, carved high, as close to heaven as we can, the words of our leaders, their faces, to show posterity what manner of men they were. Then breathe a prayer that these records will endure until the wind and the rain alone shall wear them away.

Culzow Borglum



TRIVIA

Last month's question – two answers, so two points each to Mark Mahoney and Rich Allen. *Last month's question was about anti-aircraft weaponry. Throughout World War II, all major armies fielded anti-aircraft weapons, either machine guns mounted in pairs or quads, or cannons such as the American 3" gun or the feared German 88mm FlaK. However, American B-24 pilot Owen Baggett claimed a kill during a mission over Burma with a most unusual weapon. What was it?*

Well, Owen Baggett claimed a kill of a Japanese fighter with a Colt 1911. Seems after he bailed out of his stricken bomber over Burma in March 1943, Japanese fighter aircraft were making sport of strafing the helpless crewmembers in their parachutes. When one fighter made a slow pass with his canopy open to see if Baggett was alive in his harness, Baggett, playing dead, then purportedly pulled his .45 and shot the Japanese pilot in the head, killing him and causing the Japanese fighter to stall and plunge to earth. Baggett survived his ordeal, ending up a POW in a Japanese camp in Singapore. He was repatriated after the war and continued his career, retiring as a Colonel from the USAF. His feat remains unconfirmed, but if true, it is certainly worthy of a place among great, and unlikely, feats of arms.



US Army Air Force pilot 2nd Lt Owen Baggett. His middle name probably should have been "He Did WHAT?"

This month's questions:

1. Hunting: To go or not to go (near your tree stand or hunting blind), that is the question. Well, kind of. Bottom line question – will human urine run off deer, attract deer, or will they be indifferent?
2. Military: Many Civil War battles have two names – such as the “Battle of First Manassas” also being known as “Battle of First Bull Run.” Why?
3. Presidents: What President's last words were “Jefferson survives!” – and what was ironic about these last words?



FROM TIM BARRY, OWLKILL LOTTERY CHAIRMAN AND SIRIUS, THE UNOFFICIAL OWLKILL MASCOT AND HONORARY LOTTERY CHAIRMAN

Early Ticket Sales are Very HOT!!! One of our retailers requested an extra 40 tickets one day into sales. They have received requests for large quantities of tickets (one for 30). Club members are encouraged to request tickets with their membership renewals or purchase them at our meetings.



EARLY PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BY ROMAN SLINGMEN?

(Thanks to Tom Duclos, reprinted from livescience.com)

Some 1,800 years ago, Roman troops used "whistling" sling bullets as a "terror weapon" against their barbarian foes, according to archaeologists who found the cast lead bullets at a site in Scotland. Weighing about 1 ounce (30 grams), each of the bullets had been drilled with a 0.2-inch (5 millimeters) hole that the researchers think was designed to give the soaring bullets a sharp buzzing or whistling noise in flight.

The bullets were found recently at Burnswark Hill in southwestern Scotland, where a massive Roman attack against native defenders in a hilltop fort took place in the second century A.D.

These holes converted the bullets into a "terror weapon," said archaeologist John Reid of the Trimontium Trust, a Scottish historical society directing the first major archaeological investigation in 50 years of the Burnswark Hill site.

"You don't just have these silent but deadly bullets flying over; you've got a sound effect coming off them that would keep the defenders' heads down," Reid told Live Science. "Every army likes an edge over its opponents, so this was an ingenious edge on the permutation of sling bullets..."



Roman "sling bullets" found at the Burnswark Hill battle site in Scotland. The two smallest bullets shown at the bottom are drilled with a hole that makes them whistle in flight.