

WESTERN ONTARIO FISH & GAME PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION INC.

LONDON, ONTARIO



By JACK LIVERMORE

Notations on old Property Deeds indicate that our Club was probably founded in the year 1895. No records or Minute Books prior to 1945 are available, however, Members and Ex-Members with good memories have helped provide some information as far back as 1925. This information is supported by newspaper clippings as well. Members and Ex-Members who have contributed to this club record include: Chas. Selby, Jack David, Norm Bohanon, J. A. "Bert" Woodley, Orval Boxall and Jack Livermore.

Chas. Selby served as President for nine years, for that period meetings were held in various halls in London.

Conservation efforts have included Tree Planting in the London Area, Stream improvement and Trout planting in Medway and Caddy creeks, and Fanshawe. Brown Trout were introduced in the lower Medway Creek, Black Bass in the North and South Branches of the Thames River and Pickerel were planted in the Lower Thames at Delaware.

The Club conducted "Carp Derby" trips each spring to fill in the time before the regular fishing season opened.

The Association acquired fishing rights in Pond Mills and later stocked the Pond at Arva Mill for the Public use as well as for the Club Members.

Pheasants were released in the surrounding area and Pheasant eggs were distributed to farmers, who used their brood hens for hatching, and later released.

The Cottontail Rabbit population became so depleted, due to the Market Hunters, that the Club petitioned the Ontario Government to pass a 6 Bag Limit and a No Sale restriction on this animal hunting. Middlesex and two or three other Counties were the only Counties to secure and enforce this law in Ontario.

The Association organized Jack Rabbit drives because of the over-population of this animal.



Down through the years the Club Members were very much aware of the signs of pollution, particularly with regard to local water areas, and have tried to prevent such shameful treatment of our natural resources.

Our Club became interested in what is now known as the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters in 1940, according to a newspaper clipping we have, indicating that representatives of the Club attended a Meeting in the Hotel London. While we have no definite date of our joining Federation, we do know that Jack Livermore has been a Zone 6 and Federation Delegate since 1946, which accounts for at least twenty-five years.

The Zone 6 January (Quarterly) Meeting has been held at our Clubhouse each year for quite some time.

Records indicate that at least part of our grounds and the pond was purchased in 1910. More land was added in 1925 and the last portion was acquired in 1946. Some time after 1925 a Boat House and Bathhouse were built and served until 1946 when two army huts were purchased and moved to the property. The completion of this building took quite some time and was done by club members. The memory and leadership of the late William C. "Bill" Leigh will long be remembered for his part in this project.

Incorporation came in 1954 and the first Officers were: Jack Livermore, President; Curly Arscott, Recording Secretary; Doug Woodley, Secretary; Freeman McLeod, Treasurer; and Norm Goodey, Executive Member.

Boys from the Salvation Army Village were brought to the pond for fishing for some years.

During 1948 a start was made on a preserve for small game and birds at the rear of the Clubhouse. Permission was granted by Westminster Hospital authorities to use part of their lands. This project was under the Chairmanship of Bob Ramsay and Curly Arscott, President.

Trees were planted, brush piles built with multi flora rose as climbers. Pheasants were released in this area.

The latest addition to the Clubhouse was made in 1962 with washrooms for both ladies and men installed. Our President at that time was Tom Lee.

October 29th, 1966 the pond was poisoned to remove the large quantity of coarse fish in the pond, President Tony Powell supervised this project in conjunction with the Department of Lands and Forests Officers from Aylmer.

Safe Hunter Training started in 1957 and since that time a total of 963 students have been trained. The Instructors have all been members of our club as follows: Bill Liddiard, Sandy Sanders, Stan Richardson, Curly Arscott, Art Boyle, Ray Hodgson, Frank Potter, Harry Livermore, Bill Smith, and Jack Livermore. The Department of Lands and Forests used our Clubhouse for the Examinations at that time.

Monthly Dances have been held at the Clubhouse since 1948 and the Members helping this effort are just too numerous to mention.



The Sportsman of the Month Draw was started by Harry Livermore in 1958 and has provided much revenue since that time.

An Annual Liars Night attended by other Club Members in the Area has been an attraction over the years and always provides a chance to meet other Club Members.

Our Club participated in the Sports Show here in London from 1947 till 1962. First Committee Chairman was Gord Lamson. From 1962 on, the cost of participating in the Sportsman Show, became too much for us to handle.

During the 1940's a Training School was operated to teach general Conservation and such things as Fly Tying, Winter Hunting, Bait Casting, etc. This was eventually taken over by the Recreation Department of the Public Utilities Commission.

Some other activities offered to Club Members and their Families are: Children's Christmas Party, Annual Corn Roast, A Family Day and the Annual Long Point Fishing Trip in July.

Our future efforts will be in the areas of Conservation, Pollution, Farmer-Hunter relations, Co-operation as far as possible, with the Department of Lands & Forests and support of the Federation.

Our 1970-71 President, George Chambers, is also 2nd Vice-Chairman of Zone 6 of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Jack Livermore, in addition to serving as a Zone 6 Delegate, is the Finance Chairman for the Zone.

