**Wildlife Committee of Washington, Kenmore Range History Outline**

The early history has been compiled from bits and pieces, from conversations with old members, old newsletters and retained files. This was posted on the old website, saved by Vic Alvarez.

***Origins***  
  
The Wildlife Committee of Washington was incorporated as a Washington State non-profit in the fall of 1945 by a group who were interested in hunting, fishing and conservation. The club met for many years in various halls in the North Seattle/Lake City area, until they determined that they needed a permanent home for their meetings and space for shooting. Dues started at a dollar a year.  
  
The club purchased our current property in 1953. The purchase price of $9,000 was paid off over 10 years, and was our first and last outside debt. At the time, our 80 acre property was at the end of the road with typical rural surroundings.  
  
***President: 1945,1946,1947,1948-Frank Collins, 1950-Al Rice, 1951,1952-Fred Kelso, 1953-Fred Smith, 1954,1955-Elmer Parsons, 1956,1957-Bruce Bartlett, 1958,1959-Ray Parnell***  
  
***Mid 1950's***  
  
As the club started developing the property, the local North Seattle archery club, interested in having space for an archery range, merged into our club. Their first project as our Archery Committee was to develop a 14 target Field range (walk-thru).  
  
In the mid 50's the club was divided between those members who wanted a 500 yard rifle range and those who wanted a large social facility. The building of the clubhouse prevailed and many of the long range shooters went a little farther north to develop their own club, Seattle Rifle and Pistol at Machias. The clubhouse was the first major facility completed, and several ranges were laid out and roughed in for member shooting.  
  
The original range facilities included a 200 yard rifle range (Range #1) with a true pole building shooting shed (poles cut from the property) covered with galvanized metal, an second 100 yard range (Range #2) which was open to the elements, a small uncovered pistol 25/50 yard range (Range #3), and two trap fields with a shotshack (the Chalet).  
  
Hired a caretaker/rangemaster.  
  
By this time 228th was extended over the hill (the Nike missile site was on the top of the hill) and paved.  
  
***1960's***  
***President: 1960-Wayne Bishop, 1961-Gerard Loupe, 1962-Cliff Aldrich, 1963-Ted Zennan, 1964,1965- Dick Smith, 1966,1967-Don Power, 1968,1969-William Rae***  
  
In 1962 work was started on the archery flat range. By 1965 the club was holding National Team selection matches on the upper range.  
  
Several of the members in charge recognized that the land around the club would be developed and they investigated ways to make our activities compatible. As a test of techniques used in Europe, the club added safety features to Range #3 (pistol). The main safety features were down range baffles which would stop an accidental discharge from leaving the range.  
  
With typical club funding, projects during this period took a long time as member volunteers were the sole available option and the ability to purchase the necessary materials was a problem. Annual dues by this time were $12.50 and they were raised to $17.50 to generate more funds for the pending projects.  
  
The completed pistol range proved successful and it was decided to apply the same techniques to the rifle ranges. While wanting to protect the range both from safety liability hazards and also from committing the land to debt, the club went back to the membership with a bond issue. The members invested in $50 club bonds paying 4.5% annual cash interest. The structures on Range #2 were built with the funds generated by these bonds. The bonds were redeemed after 10 years and retired in the mid 80's.  
  
Moved the range public business office from the front gate to range office.  
  
About 1968 the club realized that the shot from the trap fields was leaving the property and decided to relocate the shotgun facility to it's present location. All in all the next 5 years were very busy, completing the pistol range, range #2, a range office, and constructing a new shotgun facility. The first shotgun building was the portable school room which is still in use.  
  
Hired a shotgun manager and trappers.

***1970's***  
***President: 1970,1971-Donald Stewart, 1972,1973-Ray Hunter, 1974-Jerry Provorse, 1975,1976-Barbara Hunter, 1977,1978-Clem Hayes, 1978,1979-Al Henne***  
  
The club applied for and received one of the first "Open Space" property designations from Snohomish County. This recreational property protection eliminated the constantly increasing property tax burden and requires that the use of the land remain as defined.  
  
The Archers started another range in 1971, the FITA range, which took a couple of years to become usable. It was originally called the "mud flat range" and later the West Target Range. From sometime in the mid 60's we had a whole slew of the top ranked archers in the nation, with our members receiving 4 out of the 41 invitations issued for the National Olympic Team tryouts in 1970. Ed Eliason was the most successful of our amateur archers making several Olympic Teams. We also had several of the top professional archers in the country as members. Our archers set several national and world records.  
  
The club's Sportsman Newsletter was produced on a mimeograph and the mailing list was a collection of small metal address plates used in a large addressograph machine.  
  
By the mid 70's most of the scheduled projects had been completed, including the shot shack addition, and the club settled down to a more normal routine, of holding matches and taking care of the public shooters. Membership continued to increase as more people learned of the facility and the club's membership peaked at about 800 members by the late 70's and then began to decrease.  
  
***1980's***  
***President: 1980,1981-Al Henne, 1982,1983-Don Hyde, 1983,1984-Ray Hunter, 1985-Don Hyde (deceased), 1985-Ed Burkley, 1986-Harry Hayes, 1987-Ed Burkley, 1988,1989-Vic Alvarez***  
  
  
The club did little development from the mid 70's to the mid 80's, except to try to extend the rifle ranges by allowing the Corps of Engineers and other military construction units to come and play with their big equipment whenever possible. The archers expanded their field course to 28 targets. But the club was essentially in a low maintenance mode and concerned itself with club politics, social events, and matches. This was a period of limited disposable club income and the various club committees were constantly competing for the few funds available. The dues were kept low at $34 and the new member initiation fee was set very high...$100/$125.  
  
A newsletter editor/typist was hired and the newsletter was printed outside, then assembled at the club. The mimeograph was scraped.  
  
About 1986 it was decided that using Range #1 was too much of a hazard to our neighbors and shotgun without proper safety baffles and it was shut down completely. The new baffle lines, the new range shed and the concrete shooting benches took about 4 years to complete and by 1990 our original range had been transformed into a first class 300 meter highpower range.  
  
In 1988 the Board determined that the over-use of alcohol at the club was a risk we could no longer take and completely banned the use of alcohol on the property. After a great deal of in-fighting, the club reaffirmed that decision in 1989 and again in 1990. We lost a good many old members during this dispute and we hit a low of about 500 members in 1989.  
  
The member list was computerized and mailing labels were used for the newsletter. The addressograph machine was scraped. An accountant was hired to keep the club books.  
  
The annual budget passed the $200,000 mark.  
  
Because the heavy use of the facilities since the mid 70's, without adequate maintenance, had taken its toll, the club was faced with a lot of projects to schedule. The first major project was to finish the perimeter fence which was less than half completed. Next we paved the shotgun road to save the annual effort and expense of maintaining the gravel road. The next major project was to rebuild the pistol range baffles which were completely shot up and rotted out, and to get rid of all the old tires which were used for a backstop. A modular baffle design was developed which would provide the ability to better maintain the baffles over time and that design has become a standard for all clubs in the area.  
  
Hired an assistant/pistol rangemaster.  
  
From 1986 to 1994 one of our members, Chris Alvarez, set virtually all the National Junior pistol records and all the National Collegiate pistol records and won over 100 National Championships.

|  |
| --- |
| ***1990's President: 1990,1991,1992,1993,1994,1995,1996,1997,1998,1999-Vic Alvarez***   The club installed a fax machine and put the club records on a new computer.  Regular monthly Benchrest matches were started and annual club championships established.  Eliminated "hand" traps at shotgun after a accident and a personal injury claim.  Faced with the need for a great deal of funds to cover the long list of projects, the dues were doubled, the public fees were increased, and the Board assumed tighter control of the business operations. We decided to recognize the fact that we had a large commercial operation which needed rational and coordinated management that the separate committees could not provide. Also instituted at this time was a stronger set of financial and funds controls. With the increased controls, the Board was able to insure that all the public areas were generating a profit and that the member dues were covering the general expenses, thus providing the club with the operating capital needed for the projects. We also started vigorously advertising and promoting membership in the club. The stated goal was 1500 members by 1995.  Obtained the services of the last Olympic Archery coach of the USSR to help with our youth group and training techniques.  Started up a youth smallbore rifle program.  With an eye toward the future, the Board began upgrading the shotgun facility, even though the operation had always operated at a loss. We began an ongoing trap machine purchasing plan which brought in new automatic Beomat machines to replace our old Remingtons and Winchesters. Because of the investments we made in our shotgun facility, we were able to readily assume the increased business caused by the unfortunate closing of the Paine Field Trap and Skeet and the Seattle Skeet and Trap clubs, both of which lost their leases.  With the increased activity and interest at shotgun, the development of a first rate 5-stand was approved, the center piece being a 65 foot duck tower. A great deal of work was also done improving and expanding the parking lots to handle the increased business, along with bring in sealand containers for more storage of birds and supplies.  The club financials were transferred to a club computer and we started using computer generated checks.  The next major project was a remodel of the Chalet building and the Range Office. We obtained additional funds for these projects from a matching funds grant of $50,000 from the State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. Both areas were completely transformed and began our move toward true handicap accessibility and a more professional appearance. We added CCTV at this time to increase the rangemaster's level of control.  Began a collegiate small bore program, supporting the UW Navy ROTC rifle and pistol teams.  Instituted "Special Use" permission procedures for unsupervised member range use.  The new club face and improved facilities along with the advertising effort brought in new members by the droves, and by the mid 90's we had close to the 1500 member goal.  About this time we offered Life Memberships for the first time as a way to generate additional funds and we obtained a couple more State matching grants totaling about $80,000. The new capital was used to completely remodel the pistol range, to complete the Chalet remodel, and to add an extensive handicap ramp system tying all the ranges together. Included in these projects was a new meeting room at pistol, an administration office at the Chalet and four ADA restrooms, along with septic systems, new electrical services, new and improved parking areas and access roads.  Additionally during the mid 90's we started to focus on the issues of sound control and added many improvements to reduce our impact on the neighborhood. Sound control walls behind all the ranges, acoustic tile and tectum was extensively used to absorb sound on the ranges. All new structures were designed in such a way as to intercede between the sound and the neighborhood. We also door-belled the neighborhood to find out what the neighbors thought of our operation...and we were pleasantly surprised with the results. Talked to 400+ neighbors and only found one who had a strong opinion against our activities.  In 1998 the county started its negotiations for widening 228th. The process has been a real boon to the club. The club negotiation team of Vic Alvarez and Carl Brattain, with advice from our legal eagle, Joe Fischnaller, kept the club's interests as paramount. The club received a good chunk of change for the bit of frontage the county needed and more for the relocation of the fence line and front gate. More money and benefits were obtained from PUD so they could relocate their power poles. Concessions from the water district resulted in two new fire hydrants at the front of our property and a new 1 inch water service at the front gate. Additionally we were able to tap into the sewer line for the new caretaker residence and we gained access to natural gas service. All things we have wanted in the past, but were either unavailable or prohibitively expensive.  Using the poles donated by the PUD we replaced the original lighting at shotgun with new high output units and added more to boot, including lighting the 5-stand. Of course, the PUD requested a new larger electrical service be installed after the third transformer blew.  Additional negotiations by the county and its contractor for permission to do some flood control work on the southeast corner of our property resulted in a new berm and maintenance road along the front of the property, permission to reuse the fence material we sold them, preparing the area for our new caretaker residence, and a bit of work out at shotgun.  Monthly highpower prone rifle matches were begun as a winter substitute for the DCM matches.  Began holding regular 2700 Bullseye pistol matches again.  We put up our first web site in 1998. Registered a URL name in 1999 and a second name in 2000.  The annual budget passed the $500,000 mark.   We received the NRA Most Improved Club Award for 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998.  We received the NRA President's Award (for Club excellence) for 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000. |

|  |
| --- |
| ***2000's*** ***President: 2000-Vic Alvarez, 2001,2002,2003,2004,2005,2006,2007,2008-Carl Brattain, 2009-John Conderman***  The turn of the century found us still involved with the county's road project. It also found a completely profitable shotgun line operation for the first time in history, throwing in excess of a million birds in 2000.  Held a PITA shoot for the first time in 10 years.  To help with the funding of the project list, we asked the members to include a donation along with their dues if they were too busy to help as a club volunteer. This has been an unqualified success and an easy way for all the members to show their appreciation and help out.  A Member of the Year Award was instituted with Carl Brattain named as its first recipient.  Membership passed the 2000 mark.  King County put us on a short list of six possible sites for their new waste treatment plant in April 2001. The club put up a massive effort to remove the club's property from consideration. Members attended county meetings in mass, sent a blizzard of emails and letters to the King County Council and Snohomish County Adminstration, collected opposition signatures on petitions, published many letters to the editor, used our web site to continuously put pressure on the process, and made it very clear that we would not sell or be displaced. We joined with our neighbors and formed the 228th Street Coalition as a unified opposition group protesting both the choice of the club property and the gravel pit property across the street. On September 15, 2001, the King County Executive threw in the towel and put two other sites on the final list for further study.  A new caretaker residence was purchased and installed on the old upper trailer pad. A matching two car garage has been built to complete a much nicer look to the front of the property.  The last of the old baffle lines were rebuilt (Range #2) which makes the range much nicer and safer for the public's use. The Range Office was expanded and the coke machine relocated to allow more storage room.  Remodeled the shotgun 5-stand, adding more traps and different throwing directions. Installed a computer throwing system on the 5-stand. Purchased voice calls for all the trap fields.  A new (heavy-duty) front gate was constructed and installed. Attention was directed to improving the side berms on the rifle and pistol ranges and improving the sound berm on the shotgun range.  NRA basic rifle and basic pistol classes were instituted on a regular monthly schedule.  A charity shotgun shoot sponsored with the NFL Alumni Association, "Klays for Kids" was held in 2002 and again in 2003 with proceeds of just under $10,000 a year donated to charities in the greater Seattle area which are focused on children.  Re-grading and re-seeding of the FITA range. Grading and re-shaping of the shotgun fall-out area for better mining results. Re-shaped the shotgun parking lot for more room.  May 1st, 2004, we held our first Ladies Only shotgun clinic and trap event. It was well attended by over 50 women and well received.  The Shotgun clubhouse interior was remodeled in 2006 with new windows, new walls and removal of the drop ceiling. A new store room and employee station were constructed. Constructed a new shop at shotgun for working on the trap machines and other equipment.  In 2007 we constructed a 5th trap house and short field (Trap 0) and rebuilt all the trap fields using full concrete between the shooting stations for good handicap access.  New roofs were also installed on the shotshack, the Chalet, and the clubhouse.  A neighbor's complaint about our FITA range parking lot caused a several year negotiation with Snohomish County over grading permits and wetlands. The beautiful berm and plantings at the edge of that parking lot was the result.  New walkways were poured at shotgun connecting the trap fields making good access for our wheelchair shooters. The shotshack was resided and now looks a lot better.  Purchased a new blue mowing machine and a new blue tractor.  Replaced the range CCTV's with a new system. Put in more camera's and a big display to see them all. The everything is recorded on the new system and is easily reviewable.  Initiated a new policy to require chamber flags be used on all the rifle ranges.  ***Future*** Projects which may be possible in the future include a new equipment shed and maintenance shop, an addition to the clubhouse for a full time air gun range, an International smallbore 50 meter range, a field target air rifle range, paving the major parking lots, and making the club pond area useable and park-like again. |

***2010's***  
***President: 2010, 2011 - John Conderman***  
  
New walkways were poured at shotgun connecting the trap fields making good access for our wheelchair shooters. The shotshack was resided and the floors were refinished. A new gas fireplace was installed in the shotshack. New Handicap walkways and ramps around the Shotshack were constructed so that wheelchairs can easily get to the upper office and the ADA bathroom.  
  
Initiated a new policy to require chamber flags be used on all the ranges.

The intersection of the shotgun road and the range parking lot was re-paved.

The Clubhouse was re-sided and windows replaced. The ceilings were insulated and several gas furnaces were installed. New lighting was also installed for a much more usable space.

An ongoing painting schedule has been established to keep the place looking good.

A 5-stand shed was constructed to provide shelter to the 5-stand shooters while waiting for a place on the line.