

# A Brief History of the Rapids Archery Club

as of  
March 2001

## Preface

This history of the Rapids Archery Club is intended both as a summary of what I have been able to dig up about the club's past and a prod to the memories of others to fill in omissions. Most of the club records, including a considerable collection of photographs, were lost in the fire that destroyed our first indoor range. This is an attempt to gather what information remains before it, too, is lost. It reflects the things that caught my attention as I read through the newsletters that I have accumulated since 1972 and items of interest that others have brought to my attention. This includes information that I have been given either in person or over the telephone, and what I have gleaned from various items that have been given into my hands for the club archives.. Other people will surely see different items worth including in a history. One that immediately comes to mind is to trace changes in the club constitution and bylaws, a topic that is certainly an important part of club history. Another is a more detailed account of the various shoots, complete with dates, numbers of participants and winners, that the club has held or sponsored on its ranges. I leave this to someone more interested in competitive archery.

History is always unfolding, and I hope that this record of some past events and changing equipment, opportunities and attitudes will give greater perspective as the club faces new challenges and opportunities. I also hope that it will stir one or more others to fill in further information that they encounter or may have tucked away in drawers or old memories, and still others to update it periodically.

I owe special thanks to Leonard and Muriel Emmen for reading and commenting on an earlier draft, to Joan Nelson for providing names and addresses of some of the founding members, to Jerry Bennett for donating a number of documents, to Dottie Bork who provided copies of records and encouragement, to Merlin Gunderson who provided a hand-lettered summary of the start, and to Jim Staples and Ken Troye and Bob Guetzko for anecdotes and names. Shell Shroeder loaned many of the pictures including all of those of the burned remains of the first archery building.

Dick Phillips  
March 24, 2001



## Founding of the Club

According to an original member, Jerry Bennett, whom I interviewed over the telephone, and documents that he provided, The Rapids Archery Club was formed in 1958-59. The organizational meeting was held in the barbershop of Marvin Markeson in Coon Rapids. Charter members were: Jerry Bennett, Darrell Danielson, Emmett Danielson, Merlin Gunderson, Clifford Jarvi, Curtis L. Johnson, Marvin Markeson, and Richard Murphy. Other early members included Geraldine Bennett, Jerry's wife, Jack and Donnay Hasselfeldt, Larry Marotte, and Dick and Lorraine Sells and their daughter

In addition to the organizers early club members included Lou and Kitty Rhode, Wes Hagemeyer, Virgil Westlund, Jim and Dorothy Staples, Dean Redmond, Dick McPheeters, Dick Meyers, Bob and Marilyn Jorge (Bob was president the club mortgage was burned in 1964) Richard Lamoureux, and Carl Beaudry. Ron Hagenbarth, Larry and Shirley Schroeder, Gordon Erickson, Dick and Ona Eisenrich, and Harry Walker (said to be one of the leading instinctive shooters) are names mentioned in connection with the early years.

Jerry Bennett related that some of the original members wanted to keep the club private, but after some debate it was incorporated as a non-profit and open to the public. Mrs. Doreen (Dottie) Bork provided a copy of the Articles of Incorporation dated March 9, 1959, and signed by Emmet Danielson, Marvin Markeson and Jerry Bennett as 'incorporators'. Curtis L. Johnson, Emmett Danielson, Merlin Gunderson, Jerry Bennett, and Earl Schlafge became the first board of directors. Tom Forsbert, who notarized the articles and was the attorney who advised the club on the legal aspects of incorporation, is now Country Attorney for Anoka County.

A membership fee of \$5.00 was charged when anyone joined the club. Annual dues were \$12. Memberships have always included spouses and all children under the age of eighteen.

The club started a newsletter soon after it was formed, and Cliff Jarvi wrote commentaries in it under the *nom de plume* of "Fletcher Bowstring". We have one of his letters in the club archives in a copy of the December, 1963, "Gold Fever Gazette". The newsletter had become "The Gold Fever Gazette" by 1963, for Merlin Gunderson has donated a couple of issues for the club archives, but I haven't been able to learn when the title was first used.

## Buying the Range

Very early the club bought 20 acres of land for its field course, paying the then large sum of \$2000. Merlin Gunderson wrote that the club purchased the first 20 acres on Larch Street off Co. Rd 242, from a farmer who raised donkeys. A couple of years later the club bought an additional 22 acres for \$2200. That kind of money was not easy for the organizers to raise, and Jerry Bennett's father helped to finance the loan for the second purchase.

Bruce Edstadt, a bowhunter and bowhunter education instructor today, told me that he grew up on the farm that included what is now the club range. His grandfather, Carl, and father Walter, farmed the area, raising corn and soybeans on part of their 250 acres. During the droughts of the early 1930s Bruce's father raised sorghum on "the front 14 acres" (apparently land that is now part of the golf course). Much of the region was not farmed so Bruce was able to wander freely through prairie grasses and some oak woods without worry about offending neighbors. As Bruce described it, the nearest farm was to the north, on Bunker Lake, and his great uncle's farm was to the east about where the Blaine High School now stands. Bruce says that his father's home stood about where the small parking lot is now (year 2000), and that his grandfather's home was located very close to where the club building stands (as of March 2001).

Mortgage Paid !

November 23, 1963



Well, how does it feel to own 40 acres of land, all paid for. I know it gave those of us who were in on the final payment a good feeling to hand over the check which paid off the land debt.

Now just because the land is paid for, let's not stop there. If we do, our club is doomed. We have to have something to work and drive for. I personally feel very strong about this and hope that someday we'll have a nice club house where we'll be able to hold our meetings, and just sit around (I'm good at that) and listen to all the lies that are told about the hunting trips, tournaments, etc. Speaking of stories—have you heard about Ribhard(The Great) McPheeters getting 4 deer this season besides a Black Bear; personally, I think Judy shot the Bear but that is terrific Dick. You don't get four deer in one year and chalk it all up to Luck because somewhere there has to be skill as a bow hunter and a lot of time and effort spent. (Of course, he's the only guy I know that can fall in a Barrel of you know what, and crawl out wearing a new suit smelling like a rose.

## Early Shoots

Originally the club consisted mostly of target and field target archers, and Jerry Bennett has provided newspaper clippings (through Joan Nelson) reporting that "The Rapids Archery club sponsored a successful fun night and barbecue chicken supper last Saturday evening [June 23, 1962]..." "The evening was capped with an after dark "coon shoot" that was won by Cliff Jarvi and Ray Copeland..." "John Procai, the Rapid's Archers chief chef, deliciously barbecued the chicken to a beautiful brown." On Labor Day weekend that same year the club held the 23rd Minnesota State Archery Association tournament. This shoot included both field and formal target competition. "High score field and target grand champions were Al Muller of Minneapolis, Joan Bollum of Redwood Falls, Sam Fudenberg of St. Paul and Marge Eply of Austin. Al Muller's name appears on one of the early club membership lists. For many years Al owned and ran "The Archery Center" in Bloomington.

In the first years the club held its indoor shoots in the Fred Moore Junior High School, then in the Anoka Senior High School. There they shot the Chicago Round (96 arrows at 20 yards with a 16", 5-ring target) on the dirt floor of the basement. I haven't been able to learn the dates for these changes, but in 1973 -74, 74-75, and 75-76 they were held in the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fridley. The hall had barely enough room, and members got to know one another at close range as they squeezed together behind the shooting lines each week! A note in "The Gazette" indicates that the club furnished refreshments, including beer, for Tuesday night work parties in 1973. Was that the start of something, or was it a continuation from earlier years? The shoots were moved into the new building when it was completed in the winter of (76-77). It was much more spacious than any previous site, and became the best club facility in the state.



**Shooters at an early state competition at the Rapids Archery Club Range**

## Early Facilities

A garage served for registration at shoots as well as for storing targets and other supplies. A separate small building to the north of the garage served as a concessions stand.



Registration line at the Garage



Ruth and Muriel Emmen Register Shooters at the garage  
Muriel is wearing one of the green club jackets



Dick Dalzell loading hand-made 3-D targets from storage in the garage



The Old Concession Stand



## **The First Indoor Range**

When the club bought the land it was rural, but as time went on urban sprawl began to surround it, bringing new problems. The club decided to sell the land to Anoka County in 1972 when it couldn't afford the assessment for sewers that were being put in. After the club sold its range to Anoka County on April 7, 1972, (Dottie Bork provided a copy of the sale, signed by Roy Lillo, President, and Marie M. Wadsworth, Treasurer) for \$52,750 opinions were sharply divided as to what to do with this money. Some wanted to augment it and buy a new range farther north, near St. Francis. Others felt that a building on the present range would be better if a satisfactory arrangement with the county could be worked out. Eventually the latter prevailed.

Leonard Emmen was club President when the decision was made to build, and he worked hard to get the most building for the money. Eventually the choice was a metal-sided pole building over a concrete slab 72 feet wide and 140 feet long. Len signed the agreement with the county on May 21, 1975, stating that the club wished to donate \$40,000 to the county for the construction of an indoor archery range. The same document estimated that the building would cost \$57,000.

On April 16, 1976, Len signed a contract (I do not have a copy but pulled this out of the Gold Fever Gazette) with Morton Builders. On July 12 of that year the materials were delivered. To save money, many members turned out to unload the four semi-trailer loads of building materials. The building was finished that winter, but a Grand Opening and shoot was held December 11, 1977. A picture of the front of the building adorned the cover of "The Gazette" that year (1977). Apparently all pictures of the building were lost in the fire that destroyed the building (see below).

On July 1, 1977 Len Emmen signed a contract, witnessed by Melvin Brandl, with Anoka County for the club's use of the new building and the outdoor ranges through the year 2002. The copy of this contract that Dottie Bork provided for the club archives indicates that the county leased the building to the Club for 25 years, beginning February 1, 1977, and terminating on January 31, 2002. The contract gave the club, free of charge, exclusive use of the indoor range for an average of three days each week for the term of the agreement so long as the use was scheduled by January 1 and June 1 of each year. The new building had a fine kitchen and concessions facility opening either to the inside or outside, so the old concessions building with its propane stove and side-opening counter was removed in November of 1976. Only the garage remains of the early club buildings.

The new building served the club well for several years until June 25, 1985, when it burned to the ground. Initially lightning was thought to be the cause. Len Emmen took the blame for that: he and Muriel were visiting their daughter in Colorado Springs when the building burned, and the previous time that they had visited her a car was driven into their living room. Apparently his absence angered the gods of archers, so, after that, we other members urged Len and Muriel to stay home! The truth emerged later when it became clear that the fire resulted from arson. The arsonist was convicted and sentenced.

Loss of the club building renewed talk of buying a new range, but, after considerable negotiation, Anoka County used the insurance money and more to build the new, fireproof, pre-stressed concrete building that the club now (2001) enjoys. Officially it was opened on January 10, 1986, by 100 club members and guests. Len Emmen had the privilege of shooting the first arrow. Next day 163 archers shot the Grand Opening Shoot. By action of the Board of Directors the building became smoke-free late in 1987 to protect the health of members and to reduce risk of fire

Moving indoor target bales became much easier in 1978 when Ralph Gutzner made a dolly for the job and donated it to the club. We now have two of them with hydraulic jacks to lift the bales and wheels to make moving them easy.

## **The First Indoor Range**



**The still-smoking remains of the club's first indoor range**



**Club members take shelter from rain during a fund-raiser to replace the burned building**



The new concrete building that replaced our burned-out original indoor range. The white rectangle is the outside opening for concessions. (viewed from the southwest)

### **Anecdotes from the Past**

When the club was organized in the 50's the top bows of the time were laminated wood and fiberglass recurves. Most of the original members were primarily field target shooters, so bow weights were light by compound bow standards. Jerry Bennett told me that he shot a Black Widow that weighed 35 pounds at his 28-inch draw, while his wife, Geraldine, shot a similar bow weighing 24 pounds at her 26-inch draw. These were pretty much average weights for indoor shooting those days. When you think of it, those archers held considerably more weight at full draw than compound shooters hold as of this writing (2001)!



Len's opening shot--he missed the money!

Setting up the field course in the poison-ivy carpeted woods put a couple of the early members in the hospital (poison ivy remained a big problem into the 1980's and, to a lesser extent, remains on today). Excelsior bales were used from very early on, and they still seem to be the best. The club tried using baled stacks of corrugated cardboard indoors, but they weren't satisfactory and were soon abandoned. More recently baled carpet has been tried and abandoned. Currently excelsior bales are used outdoors, stacks of fiber sheathing board banded tightly together indoors.

One range cleanup day Jim Staples set fire to a dry swamp on the south edge of the range to get rid of accumulated weeds and grass, but the fire got out of hand and it took the whole crew to put it out. In the process they bogged down a fire truck, and the county had to bring in a vehicle to pull it out. Jim also blasted out a swamp to make a pond on the south side of the range using 50 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer mixed with a quart of diesel fuel and set off with a stick of dynamite (the favorite explosive of terrorist bombers nowadays!). It produced a spectacular mud shower! We might have trouble doing that today! How times have changed.

Jim also reported in a telephone interview that, when he joined the club in 1960, Jerry Bennett was president. Already the focus of the membership was shifting more toward hunting than target shooting. Jim was perhaps the first archer in Minnesota to shoot a compound bow, starting in 1966 or '67. In 1967 he became an Allen dealer and sold many bows to club members. Allen once offered him a job, but Jim decided to stay in Minnesota.

vent of commercially-produced ethafoam animal targets, many other clubs now hold 3-D shoots. Another favorite shoot that also is still going was the Coon Shoot.

During Jim Staples' time the club held shoots every month except October, the month when most members were hunting (the archery season lasted only a month back then). Running frequent shoots was important to make enough money for the club to pay off the mortgage. Camp Ripley opened for bowhunting in 1952, and many club members used to travel there to hunt together. They saw lots of deer including some big bucks, which made waiting in the long lines at the gate, often overnight, to get in, tolerable.

Many trees were lost from the club range in 1966 when a tornado roared through. Larry and Shirley Schroeder were out on the range at the time and had to flop face down in the poison ivy for safety! The garage was being built when Jim joined in 1960, and there was another little building to the northeast of it that opened on the side to sell concessions. The garage still stands in 1998, but the other building was removed in 1977 when the Archery Building was built.

Tuesday night was the time for club shoots, winter and summer, but in the latter the mosquitoes were often so bad that Jim Staples finally bought a Tote-Goat and a big fogger with which he fogged the trails before shoots, making them much more enjoyable. What is now the golf course was still all wooded in those days.

Snowshoe "shoots" (as nearly as I can tell they weren't shoots but were friendly (?) softball games in competition with other clubs), the batter wore snowshoes and had to run the bases on them. This made local TV one year with Rapids Archers playing against Elk River. Other special shoots were St. Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day.

Jim Staples told an anecdote from the days of the little concession stand. It seems that there was a well for drinking water near the old stand. One season the water got worse and worse until someone checked and found that a mouse had managed to get into the well head and was rotting there! Another time the refrigerator in the stand stopped running thanks to a chipmunk that got caught in the drive belt! In a move to increase visibility of the club and to encourage pride of membership, the club bought club jackets in 1973. They were green and each was embroidered on the front with the member's name. They cost \$9.95 at the time. They had a place on the back for the colorful embroidered patch featuring a raccoon on a rock in the middle of a rapids. In the same year heavy gold-colored club T-shirts with members names embroidered on the front were provided to each member. The multicolored embroidered club patched had become too pricey by 1976, so a contest was held for the design of a less expensive replacement. Mel Brandl, long time club member and editor of the club newsletter won the contest with the design that is current.



Rapids members wearing the green jackets during a wet Trail Shoot

The colorful patch that became too expensive



One of the gold club shirts

The current patch



The green jackets were replaced with black and gold in 1984 under the leadership of Ed Wiley. Still more recently camouflage jackets with club embroidery have been adopted, and the price has risen to \$66.

Another social event was born in 1996 as the "Annual Keg and Kamo Pigout". It changed its title in 1998 to become the Annual Corn Feed, open to non-members as well as members. This is a good time to introduce prospective members to the club.

## Safety

**The**        *Club has never had an archery-related accident on the range!*

## Annual Banquet

These presumably started early, but without newsletters before 1972 I can't determine when. Over the years the annual banquet has been one of the social highlights of the club year. This is the time to see slides of each other members trophies, to admire mounted heads and other displays of trophies, and to swap hunting stories. Awarding trophies for the various leagues shot during the year is always a major feature. Big game awards are also given out that night, with pins for all animals reported and trophies for biggest buck and biggest doe. This is the time, too, for special recognition by the President of outstanding contributions to the club by particularly hard working members. Len Emmen began this in 1979 to recognize Bill Voight's contributions, and succeeding presidents have continued it. In 1994 a new "honor", the "Whiner's Award" was instigated with the awardee's name being engraved on a plaque in the archery building. Some banquets have featured an after dinner speaker, but that seems to have been replaced with a "Liar's Contest".



**Dave Condon and Bob Wagoner receive Big Buck awards at an annual banquet**

For many years dancing to live or recorded music was an integral part of the evening, but that, too, has waned. Is this a sign of an aging membership or changing interests?



**Dorothy and Jim Staples Swing at an annual banquet dance**

## **Controversies**

The Rapids Archery Club, like every voluntary organization, has struggled with the problems associated with fact that a few members do a disproportionate amount of the club work, and some do none of it. Both carrot and stick have been tried, but still some members put in much more effort than do others. As of this writing the classification of paying members into working and non-working memberships with the latter paying higher dues is in effect. All working members are required to put in a minimum of fifteen hours a year. Apparently this hasn't resolved the issue to general satisfaction since the Board of Directors is currently actively searching for more effective carrots or sticks or both.

Another controversy arose when the Minnesota State Archery Association and the Minnesota Bowhunters, Inc. began discussions of a merger. Until that time Rapids was 100% affiliated with MSAA and Rapids members were automatically also members of MSAA (dues for the latter were included in club dues). Feelings ran high about the way the discussions were handled, and, ultimately, Rapids withdrew from 100% MSAA membership and became 100% affiliated with MBI in October of 1994. Currently membership in Rapids automatically enrolls a member in and pays the dues for either MSAA or MBI, the member chooses which. Members are free to join the other by paying their own dues, and many Rapids members do just that.

Rapids Archers began with most members shooting fiberglass backed and faced laminated recurve bows which were largely replaced with compound bows as they began to catch on. Crossbows have never been included, but this was challenged a couple of years ago when the club was sued by a crossbow user who wanted to shoot on the club ranges. Ultimately the club and Anoka County prevailed, and crossbows are not permitted on the ranges.

## **Life Memberships**

Life memberships are given to members 55 years old or older who have been members for twenty-five years. For a list current as of June, 2008, see under "Update"/Gazette" for that month.

## **Bowhunter Education Program**

Sheldon Foard first offered the Minnesota Bowhunter Education Class course through the club in 1988. The first class in the Archery Building was held on January 6, 1990 according to "the cants for archery licenses have proof of having taken it, and almost all of the Metro special hunts require that participants to have taken it. The club has continued to offer courses annually. Several years ago Dottie and Howard Bork took charge of these courses and Dottie continues as Education Coordinator as of this writing. Many other Rapids members have become instructors and have taught the course at numerous other sites as well as at our Archery Building. The course has become very popular mostly because several states require it.

## **Youth Archery Program**

Rapids Archers have actively promoted archery and bowhunting through a variety of youth archery programs. The club owns a set of about twenty fine recurve bows, both left and right handed models. The weights are twenty pounds or less as youth draw lengths, ideal for beginners to learn proper form under the guidance of club members. The bows and sets of excellent arrows provide first-rate equipment for learning. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and others have been scheduled in increasing numbers for instruction in the Archery Building, and several members have borrowed the club equipment for instructions elsewhere. Club members have also been active instructing youth at a booth at the Game Fair each August.

## Shoots

The main reason for the existence of most archery clubs is to provide opportunities for members to shoot and compete, and Rapids Archery Club has done that well. In the early years the club held monthly shoots to raise the money to pay off the mortgage on the land. Currently regularly scheduled club shoots include monthly Indoor Bowhunter shoots in January, February and March, a Coon Shoot in April, a Spring Fever 3-D shoot in May, the Traditional shoot in June, Trail Shoot in July, and Broadhead Shoot in August. For the past several years the Indoor Bowhunter Shoots have begun with a shoot and a pot luck dinner for club members only on the Saturday night before the public shoot on Sunday.

### Trail Shoot

**Trail Shoot** One of Jim Staples' many contributions to the club was his promotion of what was to become the club's biggest money maker, the Trail Shoot. Jim said that he got the idea from a Safari Shoot that was very successful in California. Rapids Archers was the first club in the state to hold such a shoot. Club records show that the 5th annual shoot was in 1974, so the first one was most probably in 1970, and the club continues to hold it each summer.

In 1970 commercial 3-D targets were still in the future, so club members made their own from styrofoam blocks, burlap, paint, gallons of white glue, and lots of artistry and ingenuity. The work parties needed to produce the targets were full of camaraderie and friendly competition to produce the most realistic (or the most imaginative) creations. The first purchase of commercially made targets was an order for 10 in 1984, but members were still building their own the next year. Since then the very life-like commercially-made 3-d targets have become standard and provide excellent practice for hunting. They are also much more durable than the old Styrofoam and burlap targets were. Some old timers, however, miss the camaraderie and friendly competition that went with building the old targets.

The first year of the trail shoot the club put out 56 targets, a number that took eight hours to shoot. One of the targets was an owl in a tree. It was backed with a large Styrofoam block to catch arrows that missed the owl; a club member, working from a ladder, pulled the arrows of all shooters for safety sake. Another memorable target was a huge pink elephant that was often the last target of the day. Its size made it look much closer than it was, and many an arrow fell short.

At first the trail was marked with baseball lime, but it was obliterated by evening, so it had to be renewed next morning, a job that took about three hours! Using twine to mark the trail was a big improvement! In subsequent years the number of targets was reduced to 48 then 36 (40 in 1974, the last I found recorded in the newsletter) so that the course could be shot in half a day or less.

Part of the challenge in shooting the course was to decide when to shoot: the rules were that one could shoot anywhere between the marker stake and the end of the string, but that one was not allowed to go back along the string for a better shot. The temptation was to get as close as possible, but sometimes the target was no longer visible once one walked farther toward the end of the string. The range was much more heavily wooded then than now, making it easier to keep shooters from seeing the targets at a distance. Oak wilt has returned the vegetation more nearly to prairie.

To provide shade and shelter from all-too-frequent rains, the club rented a large canvas canopy each summer until it built the Archery Building in 1976. One particularly rainy day Jack Sullivan, professor of endocrinology at the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine (and former bronco rider, steeple-jack and more) put a towel over his hat and did a rain dance to appease the skies--and the rain stopped and the sun came out for the rest of the day!

For years the Trail Shoot was the most popular event that the club put on, drawing over 600 shooters in 1977. Recently participation has fallen off substantially, probably because, with the advent of many more 3-D shoots made possible by commercially available targets.



Carving styrofoam blocks for 3-D animal targets for an early Trail Shoot



## **Traditional Shoot**

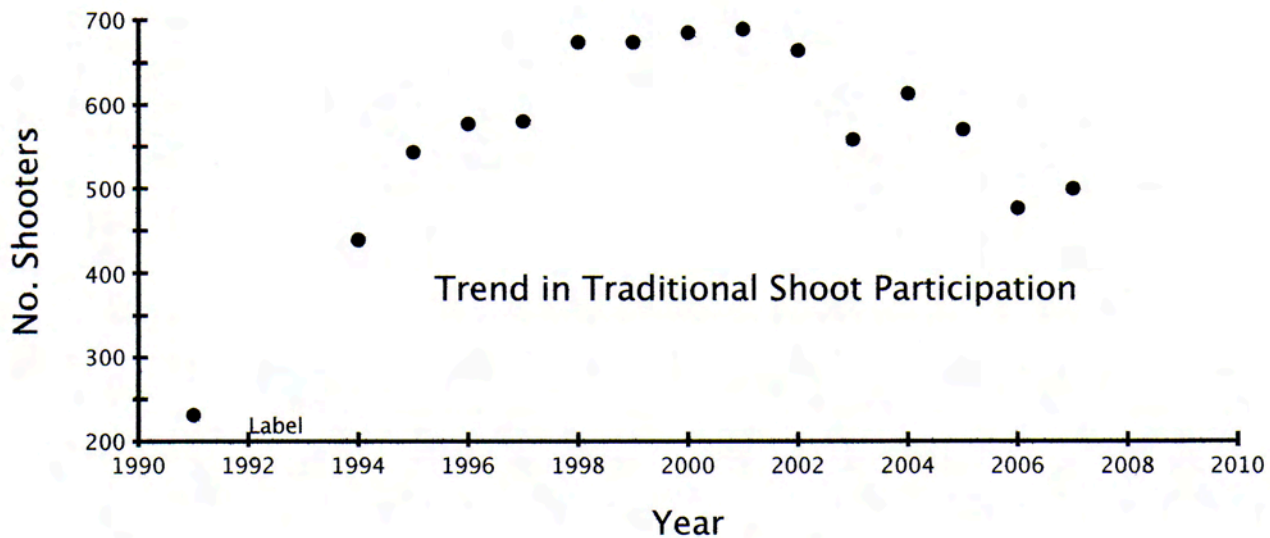
The Traditional Shoot was organized by a group of club members who most enjoy shooting their longbows or recurves without sights and who wanted a 3-D shoot with realistic ranges for traditional tackle. The first such shoot, in 1991, drew 231 ardent traditionalists, and the numbers have kept climbing each year. It is now the clubs largest shoot and biggest money-maker, taking over the place formerly held by our Trail Shoot. Popular novelties have included a chance to shoot at flying discs with flu-flus, a "flying" turkey (runs on a cable), and a "Tough Man" competition. A further attraction is that the shoot is attended by many vendors of leather goods, flint-knapping, traditional supplies, hand-made clothes, furs, even archery books. Many folks bring their families and camp in the park to be able to shoot both days. Several free seminars provide a break from the range, and dinner Saturday evening becomes a festive celebration of the day's activities.



**Shots are both challenging and**



**Vendors are a big attraction during Traditional Shoots**



In addition to putting on week-end shoots, club members form several leagues that shoot weekly during much of the year. Indoor target leagues have been standard fare on Tuesdays since the club's inception, and often a second league has been shot on Thursdays. Since 1992 a traditional league (only longbows or recurves with no sights) has been popular on Sunday nights as well. Outdoor leagues include one shooting the NFAA field targets and another Bowhunter League that transforms into a broadhead league for the last few weeks to prepare members for the deer season.

In 1962, only four years after the club was formed, it hosted the Minnesota State Archery Association state tournament. Since then the club has been host to many shoots including (to name a few): the Midwest Sectional Tournament in July of 1975; the State Indoor Championship 1985; the MSAA Conservation Shoot in 1985 and 1995; MSAA State Field Tournament in 1985; the MBI Indoor State Championship 1992, 1995 & 1997; Responsible Bowhunter Shoot 1995; NFAA Field Shoot in 1995 and 1997; a 10,000 Lakes Tournament, and more.

### **The Club Enters the Information Age**

Rapids Archers entered the Information Age in 1997 when Mark Russell put a club web page on internet. The page lists club activities and contains links to other archery-related web sites.

### **The End of an Era**

In 1998 the country developed new plans for the park that did not include archery in the current location. Instead park land west of the railroad tracks will be developed and a new archery building built. Uncertainty was rife for two or three years, but as of March, 2001, the club and the county are agreed on plans for both the new ranges and new building. The country expects us to be in the new location by the fall of 2001.

# The New Archery Center



Open Shooting



Registration Desk and west door



View toward shooting line from targets

# **Update of Rapids Archery Club History for the period 2001-2008**

## **New Range and Building**

The club is celebrating its 50th anniversary at the 2008 annual banquet in the Mermaid Entertainment Center in Minneapolis. I thought it would be appropriate to bring the written history of the club up to date for the anniversary.

We have been in our new building and on the new range for six eventful years. Both range and building have turned out to be very satisfactory and club membership remains strong (see graph of member numbers over the years). The grand opening of the new building by the county was held on October 27, 2001, and was attended by the mayors of Coon Rapids and Andover as well as by the Anoka County Sheriff and other county officials. The absence of supporting pillars in the shooting area is a welcome improvement over the previous building, and the classroom provides a fine venue for the bowhunter education and other classes. Storage space in the building is severely limited, so the club build a 26' x 36' x 10' storage garage next to the practice range. Club member Bob Wagoner was the licensed contractor for the job and another member, Rob Bullis, did the electrical work. This space is mostly devoted to storing the club's many 3-D animal targets.

The new outdoor range occupies 70 acres (the old range was 50.9) and includes one 28- and two 14-target loops, one of which is handicap-accessible. It also includes a small broadhead practice range and a large target range. The latter provides distances from 10 yards to 90 meters. The shooting line is paved, and a high berm behind the targets stops any stray arrows. An open kiosk or gazebo provides a shade (and rain shelter) with picnic tables and benches. The first shoot on the new range combined a 300 round indoor and a 3-D outdoor shoot on February 24, 2001.

Poison ivy continues to be a problem on the new range as it was on the old, but the continuing efforts of Jim Williams has pretty well freed the regular shooting lanes of the noxious plant.

The club's relationship with Anoka County continues to evolve. The club's contract with the county is for ten years with an automatic rollover clause, giving the club exclusive use of the building three days a week and sharing maintenance of the outdoor ranges with the club providing most of the labor (except for mowing) , and the county providing building maintenance and having use of it outside of the club's scheduled times.

## **Safety**

The club continues its record of never having an archery-related injury.

## **Annual Banquet**

Some concern has been expressed that attendance at the annual banquets has been declining for the past few years, but it remains the social highlight of the year for the club. It is the time for voting and for passing out awards. Trophies for the winning teams in the various leagues, Big Buck, Big Doe, Big Bear awards are given, and the \$100 each toward the taxidermy fees for animals that qualify for the Pope and Young record book is also donated by the club. The banquets feature displays of trophies taken by club members and a slide show of members' hunting activities gives us a chance to share our experiences with other members.

## Controversies

Discontent over the fact that members do not share equally in the work required by the club's activities continues and most likely will continue as long as the club is composed of human beings. The current situation is to have two classes of membership, working and non-working. A By-Laws change to make the annual dues for the former \$30 and \$125 for the latter has had a third reading at the time I write.

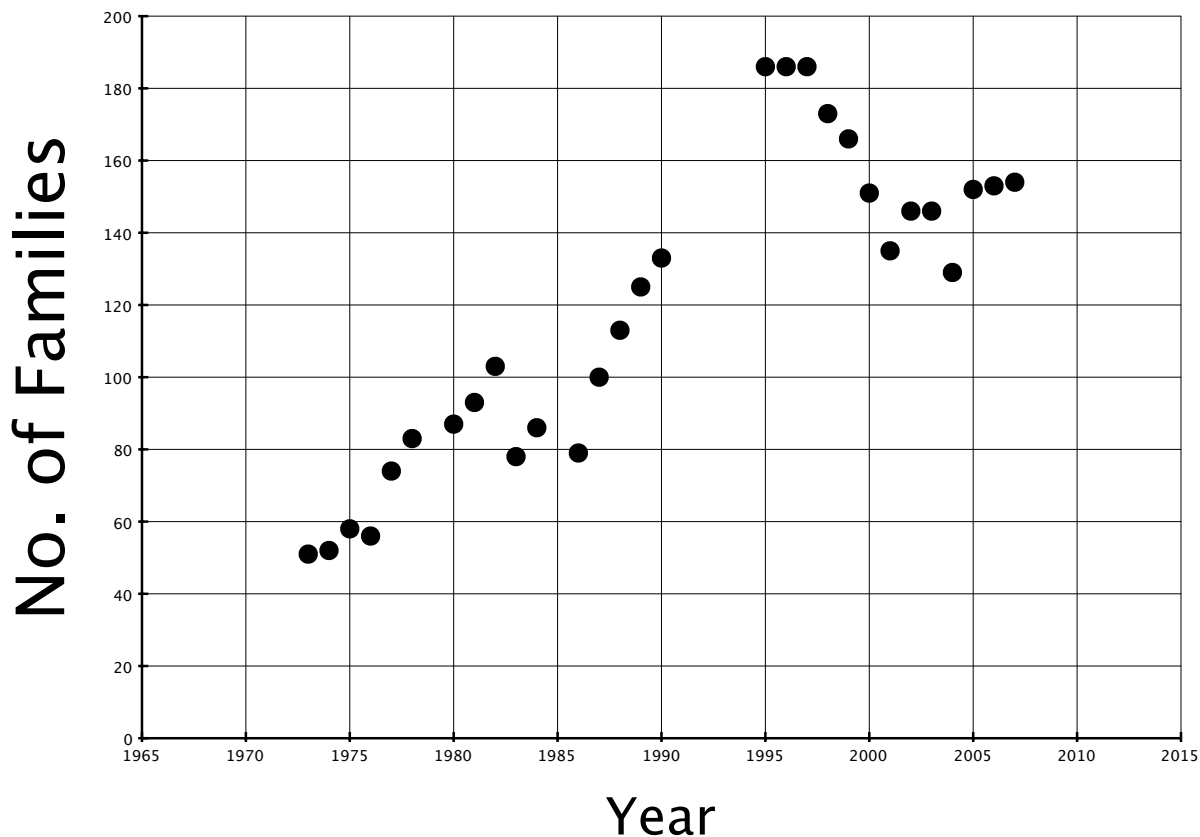
Several newsletters mention negotiations with Andover to change their limit of 50 occupants in the building, but I have not found a report of a resolution to the issue.

Crossbows are not permitted indoors and can be used on the outdoor ranges only with a permit from the county. It must be carried by the shooter while on the range.

One loop of the outdoor range is closed to shooting and used for cross-country skiing each winter by agreement between the club and the county

## Membership

Memberships continue to include spouses and children under the age of eighteen. Membership peaked in the mid-nineties and has remained steady at 150-plus families for the past several years.



## **Life Memberships**

Initial requirements for life membership included continuous membership for 25 years and age 55 or older. This has been changed to 25 years of continuous membership since age 18 or older. As of December 2000 the club has fifteen life memberships. These are: Howard & Dottie Bork (1987), Mel & Gloria Brandl (1970), David Emmen (1981), Len & Muriel Emmen (1970), Bob & Kathie Guetzko (1972), Stan & Dianne Hahn (1972), Brad & Deb Holm (1980), Art & Deborah Johnson, (1972), Del & Dianne Jones (1975), Dick & Judy McPheters (?), Dick & Elaine Phillips (1972), Paul Riedel (1966), Rob & Dianne Riedel (1980), Lou Rohde (deceased), Shel Schroeder (1965), Jim & Dorothy Staples (1959), Ken Troye (1967), Mark Troye (1981), Bill Voight (1972), and Don Wojciechowski (1969).

## **Education and Outreach**

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of a number of members the club has not only continued to hold several leagues and numerous shoots throughout each year but has also greatly increased its education and outreach activities.

## **Bowhunter Education Program**

The club continues to offer Minnesota Bowhunter Education courses twice a year under the leadership of Dottie and Howard Bork. The classes are always filled to capacity, mostly by bowhunters who want to participate in special hunts in the Metro Area, and also by some who want to hunt other states or countries that require the course.

## **Other Adult Education**

In 2004 the club sponsored archery instructor training class designed to give all our instructors a common background was attended by 20 participants. Discussions are underway currently about sponsoring another such class.

## **Youth Archery Programs**

Providing instruction and shooting opportunities for young or beginning archers has become a major activity of the club in the past few years thanks to the leadership of Dan Erickson and Bill Voight and to the willing help of many members. A note in the December 2005 Gazette says that the club instructs over 2000 students annually! Youth classes include two six-week series designed for but not limited to young beginners. Originally the club charged \$5 for each student for each class, but that was changed to \$5/student for the series-- a real bargain. The club furnishes bows, arrows, targets and instruction.

Other classes are given for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H members, Home School students, Spring Brook Alternative School students, and Courage Center and more. We also operate a shoot for children at the Game Fair in conjunction with the Minnesota Bowhunters Association and Wolf Track Archery Club. Last year (2007) 1,354 shot!

For the past several (10?) years the club has provided member Rob Bullis with bows and arrows for archery instruction and shooting at the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge Fall Festival. Last year (2007) 286 (one note says 363 vs 315 in 2006) people shot during the event!

Paul Boecher and Mike Horak have begun an Archery Day Camp for youths in conjunction with the Wargo Nature Center that was attended by 11 students for 4 full days plus 10 more for the last day in 2006. In 2007 attendance was 24 students. This is a great collaboration with another Anoka County program.

Our club has provided major support to Andover High School for its archery program contributing \$2500 (matched by DNR funds) toward the purchase of 10 right and 3 left-hand bows and 150 arrows.

Rapids Archers JOAD club open to both stick and compound shooters ages 7-18.

## **Leagues**

Tuesday and Thursday night indoor target leagues and Sunday night traditional 2-D leagues continue in the winters. Field, bowhunter, and broadhead leagues run through the summers.

## **Shoots** (11 in 2008)

The club continues to hold several shoots annually (11 by my count in 2007) that include our spring "Coon Shoot", an indoor 2-D shoot combined with a pot-luck social, a Spring-fever outdoor 3-D combined with an indoor 300 round, and the long-running Trail Shoot. Our biggest and most profitable shoot continues to be our Traditional Shoot that brings in hundreds of archers and scores of vendors. The number of shooters has dropped somewhat from its peak between 1998 and 2002, but it still drew about 500 shooters in 2007. Competition from other big shoots on the same week-end. e.g. one in Cloverdale, Indiana, and the Compton Traditional Bowhunters shoot in Michigan, has diverted some former attendees and vendors, but many vendors report that ours is their favorite venue. The 60 life-like 3-D animal targets are set up in realistic hunting settings by experienced club members and form a big part of the appeal of the shoot. So do the vendors who fill the indoor space and spill out into tents adjacent to the practice range.

## **Web Page**

The club's web page, started by Mark Russell in 1997 has been ably maintained and improved by Glen Traefeld.

## **Targets**

The search for ideal affordable target butts continues. Baled straw went out decades ago and was replaced by excelsior, but it tends to rot outdoors and to be messy indoors, so the club has tried various synthetic materials. Currently banded foam sheets by "Block" seem to be working well indoors.

Home made styrofoam and burlap 3-D animals were replaced with commercially-made targets years ago. Now the garage storage is largely filled with them ranging in size from turkeys to life-sized moose.

## Rapids Officers

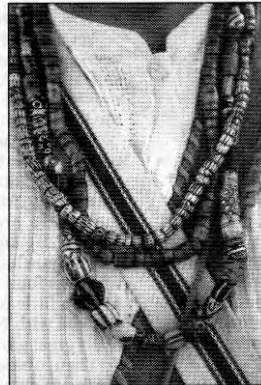
Year	President	Vice-President	Secretary	Treasurer	2nd Treasurer	Editor/Publisher
1959	Curtis L. Johnson					
1962	Jerry Bennett					
1963	Jack Hasselfeldt		Mrs. Richard Meyer	<i>Dick Meyer</i>		
1964	Bob Jorges	Steve Baker	Donna Walker	George West		
		(was president with the mortgage was paid off (1964) and literally burnt)				
1965						
1966						
1967						
1968						
1969						
1970						Beth Procai
1971						Muriel Emmen
1972	Roy Lillo	Dick Dalzell	Harriet Sullivan	Marie Wadsworth	Dorothy Staples	Muriel Emmen
1973	Dick Dalzell	Leonard Emmen	Harriet Sullivan	Paul Reidel	Dorothy Staples	Muriel Emmen
1974	Dick Dalzell	Leonard Emmen	Tom Thorson	Paul Reidel		Frank & Jan Strauman
1975	Leonard Emmen	Tom Thorson	Sharon Larsen	Paul Reidel		Frank & Jan Strauman
1976	Leonard Emmen	Tom Thorson	Sharon Larsen	Paul Reidel		Bob & Judy Rank
1977	Leonard Emmen	Mel Brandl	Judy Rank	Paul Reidel		Bob & Judy Rank
1978	Leonard Emmen	Bob Rank	Dorothy Staples	Paul Reidel		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1979	Leonard Emmen	Bob Rank	Dorothy Staples	Paul Reidel		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1980	Leonard Emmen	Bob Rank	Dee Berg	Paul Reidel		John & Lynn Pennoyer
1981	Roger Tenold	Wayne Langton	Pat Roberts	Paul Reidel		John & Lynn Pennoyer
1982	Roger Tenold	Wayne Langton	Joan Morris	Paul Reidel		Carol & Harry Werlein
1983	Bill Voight	Gary Morsch	Joan Morris	Debbie Holm		Carol Werlein
1984	Leonard Emmen	Gary Morsch	Judy Stahl	Dick Phillips		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1988	Tom Jwanouskos	Debbie Holm	Carrie Kemp	Lucy Kemp		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1989	Bill Voight	Kevin Kemp	Carrie Kemp	Lucy Kemp		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1990	Bill Voight	Verlan Pasche	Cheryl Erickson	Kevin Kemp		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1991	Bill Voight	Verlan Pasche	Cheryl Erickson	Kevin Kemp		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1992	Bill Voight	Mike Fizpatrick	Cheryl Erickson	Paul Mitton		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1993	Bill Voight	Mike Fizpatrick	Cheryl Erickson	Paul Mitton		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1994	Bill Voight	Kevin Kemp	Cheryl Erickson	Verlan Pasche		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1995	Randy Stitt	Doug Whittleif	Cheryl Erickson	Verlan Pasche		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1996	Randy Stitt	Doug Whittleif	Cheryl Erickson	Verlan Pasche		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1997	Dennis Johansen	Lucy Kemp	Cheryl Erickson	Ray Kukowski		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1998	John Diebel	Bob Harrison	Cheryl Erickson	Ray Kukowski		Mel & Gloria Brandl
1999	John Diebel	Kathy Strecker	Cheryl Erickson	Ray Kukowski		Mel & Gloria Brandl
2000	John Diebel	Kathy Strecker	Cheryl Erickson	Ray Kukowski		Mel & Gloria Brandl
2001						

Year	Registrar	Publicity	Concessions	Education Coordinator	Membership Secretary
1959		Harry Walker			
1962		Wes Hagemeyer			
1963					
1964					
1965					
1966					
1967					
1968					
1969					
1970					
1971					
1972					
1973					
1974	Muriel Emmen				
1975	Muriel Emmen				
1976	Muriel Emmen				
1977	Muriel Emmen				
1978	Muriel Emmen				
1979	Muriel Emmen				
1980	Muriel Emmen				
1981	Muriel Emmen				
1982	Muriel Emmen				
1983					
1984		Dorothy Woodington			
Year	Registrar	Publicity	Concessions	Education Coordinator	Membership Secretary
1988			Tom & Joan Nelson		
1989			Doug Whittlief & Lou Rhode		
1990	Steve White	Doug Whittlief	Doug Whittlief & Lou Rhode		
1991		Doug Whittlief	Lou & Kitty Rhode		
1992		Doug Whittlief	Bob Lund		
1993		Doug Whittlief	Bob Lund		
1994		Doug Whittlief	Bob Lund	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
1995		Debbie Holm	Bob Lund	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
1996		Debbie Holm	Kevin & Lucy Kemp	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
1997		Debbie Holm	Kevin & Lucy Kemp	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
1998		Carrie Kemp	Kevin Kemp	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
1999		Carrie Kemp	Randy Stitt	Dottie Bork	Barb Pasche
2000		Carrie Kemp	Randy Stitt	Dottie Bork	Maggie Alexander
2001					

Wednesday, September 14 • 2005

[hunting'05preview]

BY THE NUMBERS 4



# HISTORY,

For Grandma and Grandpa Bork and grandson Joe, muzzleloaders and primitive bows aren't tools so much as time machines, taking them back to when hunting and life were simple.

# REMADE

**By Ron Schara**  
*Star Tribune Staff Writer*

When daylight-saving time ends, time falls back one hour this fall.

But not for Dottie Bork.

When autumn arrives, the hands on Dottie Bork's clock are apt to go back 150 years or more.

It's a feeling Bork gets whenever she picks up her .50-caliber muzzleloader or totes an ancient longbow into the woods in pursuit of deer.

Funny thing. Joe Bork feels the same way.

What is it they say, like grandmother, like grandson?

Dottie, a 58-year-old Robbinsdale grandmother, and her grandson, Joe, 15, of Dayton, have turned out to be two peas in a very primitive pod: They are entranced by a time in American history when life was hard but simple. To a time when you used your own hands to make your own weapons of survival and used your own skills to shoot straight.

"There's more satisfaction, and you get a sense of history," said Dottie, who shoots a .50 Hawkins percussion cap for target practice but hunts with a primitive handmade longbow or recurve bow.

Grandson Joe said he likes

to make his own bows, arrows, knives and pottery. "It makes me feel more one with it," he said. "It's unique, one of a kind."

Both grandmother and grandson credit grandfather Howard Bork for introducing them to the idea of shooting or hunting with primitive weapons. Dottie said she was raised in Crystal and her parents were "both city people with no exposure to hunting, fishing or even camping out."

The clock is back a long ways now.

Said Dottie: "You get to feel like you belong in another era."

Said Joe: "It's like living

BY THE  
NUMBERS**49** Percentage who owned guns who said the main reason was for hunting. Twenty-six percent cited protection, and 8 target shooting, according to an ABC News/Washington Post poll.

Jeff Wheeler/Star Tribune

**Dottie Bork and grandson Joe have an affinity for the pioneering lifestyle, right down to the garb and black-powder guns. Joe likes to make his arrows, bows, knives and pottery. They are shown above at the archery range at Bunker Hills Regional Park in Coon Rapids.**

**Top left: Dottie Bork's antique trade beads made of glass.**

with no modern things. I feel better."

Besides shooting or hunting with primitive weaponry, grandmother and grandson also attend special rendezvous of like-minded folks who pretend, if only for a weekend, to be living in the past.

"We go dressed like the pre-1840s, the fur trade era," Dottie said. "We wear the clothing and carry the equipment, but we don't talk the language."

Attending a rendezvous, Dottie said, sparked her interest in muzzleloader shooting.

"A muzzleloader is simple, yet it does get complicated to get the gun ready to fire," she said. "What I like is it's not all done for you like with modern rifles. You have to measure the powder, place the patches correctly. It's more of a challenge and more self-satisfaction when it fires."

She said her husband built the Hawkins she uses.

And Joe, a 10th-grader at

**"Grandpa got me started shooting longbows and throwing tomahawks. I got hooked on it right away."**

**— Joe Bork,**  
who attends special rendezvous events with his grandmother

Champlin Park High School, hunts with a longbow made by his grandfather.

"Grandpa got me started shooting longbows and throwing tomahawks," he said. "I got hooked on it right away."

Their mutual interests also have led to an unusual bond between grandparents and grandchild.

"It's special to me to be with my grandma," Joe said. "I enjoy doing things with her. She's smart, friendly and active."

Grandma feels the same. "He fell into it," she said. "He couldn't wait to get his first rifle. He's really a good shot. He also hunts with a longbow. I think it's great he wants to hang around with Grandma and Grandpa. How many 15-year-olds want to do that?"

Joe said his goal is to bag a deer with a longbow, and he prepares for the moment by shooting 50 arrows a week. "I almost got one last year," he said.

He said only a handful of his classmates share his enthusiasm for hunting or primitive weapons.

"They think I'm weird," he said. "I make my own arrowheads out of flint, my own arrows out of cedar, lilac or willow. The feathers on my arrows come from turkey wings."

Weird? Not in 1840.

# By-Laws of the Rapids Archery

## BY-LAWS OF THE RAPIDS ARCHERY CLUB

### Article I

#### THE CLUB, ITS TITLE AND MEETINGS

##### Section I

The name and title of this club is Rapids Archery Club.

##### General Meetings

- A. The Board of Directors will establish date, hour and place of forthcoming regular club meetings at the first board meeting for the current year. Not less than four (4) general meetings will occur during the year, except as the board determines that special club meetings will be necessary. It is understood that the annual meeting, during which election of officers takes place, will be in October of each year, and will constitute one (1) general club meeting. Roberts Rules of Order will govern the procedures at all meetings.

##### Board Meetings

- A. The President will establish date, hour and place of Board of Directors meetings. Not less than four (4) board meetings will occur during the year.

##### Special Meetings

- A. Special meetings will be called under the following conditions:
1. When 10% of the existing club members request the president to do so.
  2. When three (3) members of the Board of Directors request the president to do so.
  3. When the President deems it necessary.
- B. The President shall be empowered to set the date, hour and place of a special meeting, notifying the club members at least five (5) days prior to a special meeting.
- C. The President shall be empowered to call an emergency meeting with the approval of 2/3 of the board members consent. A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours notice shall be given to club members.

### Article II

#### MEMBERSHIP

Memberships in the Rapids Archery Club are family memberships. (Husband and wife and all children under eighteen (18) years of age.) Membership in the Rapids Archery Club shall exist under the following conditions:

- A. By paying existing club fees applicable, established at the annual meeting in October only. These fees must be determined by 2/3 of the membership present at the annual meeting and any change to go in effect on November 1.

- B. By adhering to the constitution rules and by-laws established for the Rapids Archery Club.
- C. By adhering to established sportsmanlike behavior and participating in no activity which will endanger a fellow archer, nor himself, while participating in a club associated activity, whether on club property or in other places where the club's reputation is at stake.
- D. All memberships are subject to approval by 2/3 of the members present at any club meeting. Also, anyone may be expelled from the club by 2/3 of the members present at a club meeting; provided that prior recommendation comes from the Board of Directors.
- E. All new members shall be on a one (1) year probation period.
- F. Voting members are all adult members eighteen (18) years of age or older with a limit of two (2) votes per family membership.

### Article III

#### OFFICERS - THEIR ELECTION AND DUTIES

##### Section I

The elective officers of the club shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting in October.

The elective offices of the Rapids Archery Club shall include:

- A. President -- one (1) year term.
- B. Vice President -- one (1) year term.
- C. Secretary -- one (1) year term.
- D. First Treasurer -- one (1) year term.
- E. Second Treasurer -- one (1) year term.
- F. Six (6) Directors -- Each for a two (2) year term.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR HOLDING OFFICE

##### Section I

###### President

Person shall have been a member in good standing of the Rapids Archery Club for three (3) years prior to his election; or have served in any other elective office for one (1) year.

###### All Other Elective Offices

Person shall have been a member in good standing of the Rapids Archery Club for one (1) year prior to taking office.

The President, after installation, shall appoint officers as may be required, subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

##### Section II

The installation of officers shall take place the first business day of November following their election.

Article IV

USE OF ALCOHOL

- A. Alcohol and alcoholic beverages shall not be sold on any premises under control of the Rapids Archery Club during shooting.
- B. No alcohol or alcoholic beverages may be consumed while participating in any Rapids Archery Club sponsored tournament.
- C. No person under the influence of any controlled substance shall be permitted on the Rapids Archery Club premises nor any other premises under the clubs control during shooting.

Article V

CONTRIBUTIONS OR DONATIONS

Section I

No contributions or donations shall be given to any religious organization or charitable organizations.

Article VI

Section I

No member shall officially represent the club, unless so officially appointed to do so.

Article VII

DUES AND GRACE PERIOD

Section I

Dues are payable November 1st of each year. No member shall be delinquent for a period of more than two (2) months. If so, said member shall be notified by mail that he is to be dropped from membership in ten (10) days. (Any extension of time shall be brought up to the vote of the Board of Directors.)

Article VIII

DISSOLVING OF THE ORGANIZATION

Section I

If any member or group of members wish to dissolve the organization, a suggestion may be brought up at a regular business meeting, and a waiting period of one hundred (100) days must pass before a final vote shall be cast by all voting members at a special meeting.

75% of the membership present must be in favor of disorganization before it can be dissolved.