

Major Waldron Sportsmen's Association

HISTORY

Major Waldron Sportsmen's Association was started in Dover, NH in 1927 as the Dover Chapter of The Izaak Walton League. The first home of the club was Varney's Laundry and Fred Varney was the first President of the club and Paul Knowlton was the Secretary. These two men continued to lead the club through the early stages of its growth.

The membership grew over the next 3 years and so did the dues to the Izaak Walton League and on June 19, 1931 the members voted to drop the membership in the Izaak Walton League on a motion by George Moody and a second by Dr. Brown and the charter was returned to the National Office.

A new club was formed immediately and Fred Varney was chosen to be temporary chairman. The meetings were still being held at Varney's Laundry but a search was started to find a new home. They had less than \$200.00 in the treasury so something cheap and also near Dover was a must for the building committee to find.

A committee of three was named to choose a name for the club the name submitted was Major Waldron Sportsmen's Association and the members voted to adopt that name. A motion was made, seconded and carried that the Directors and Officers of the old club be carried forward to the new club.

The December 18, 1931 Annual meeting minutes are interesting there were 9 names entered into nomination for President and after several attempts no-one elected would take the job. It was moved and passed that Fred Varney continue as President. Mr. Varney flatly refused and the election of officers was tabled to the next meeting. The treasurers report was "very little money and lots of bills".

At a special meeting on January 22nd the election of officers was taken off the table and President Fred Varney informed the members that this was the last meeting he was going to chair and that was final. After several attempts to elect a President failed Bert Meader moved that all present write their name on a slip of paper and put all the slips in a hat and the name drawn must serve as President for 1932. John Grady was finally elected President. A resolution was passed that Fred Varney be voted a special vote of thanks for all his efforts on behalf of the Association.

At the regular meeting on February 19, 1932 a motion was made to change the name of the club to the Dover Sportsmen's Club that motion was defeated.

A motion was made to keep the name Major Waldron Sportsmen's Association and that motion carried.

At the regular meeting on November 10, 1932 a motion was made by Lawyer Blackburn that the club be incorporated and it was discovered that at the August 21, 1931 meeting a vote was passed to incorporate and Mr. Blackburn had volunteered to take care of the paper work. At the February 15, 1933 meeting it was announced that the club was incorporated.

During the period from 1929 thru 1933 the club members worked with the N.H. Fish & Game Department on several projects stocking fish and improving habitat for small game. They also had membership drives and awarded prizes for the most members signed up.

At the regular meeting on October 18, 1933 the Chairman of the membership committee Wright Sykes reported that very little progress had been made in signing up new members and that more time was needed. At this point in the minutes the Secretary noted that Wright Sykes and President Fred Varney got into a argument that threatened to go on into the middle of next week but by persistent efforts a motion to adjourn was finally obtained around mid-night.

The annual game supper was held at Simpson's Pavilion on January 18, 1934 and the tickets were .75 cents each. There were 267 people in attendance counting everyone in the building including cooks, waiters and members of the orchestra.

At the regular meeting on February 18, 1935 the building committee reported that the Ham farm in Barrington was for sale and they recommended that the club purchase that property. The asking price was \$1800.00 for a fire damaged house and 80 acres of land.

A motion was made directing the committee to move forward on the purchase of the property. The committee reported back that the bank would loan the club \$1800.00 IF 5 responsible men would sign individual notes that the money would be repaid. This was not acceptable to the committee. A member Austin L. Calef loaned the club the money so the property could be purchased before someone else got it. The committee went to another bank and got a

\$1000.00 loan on the property and gave that money to Mr. Calef and he carried the \$800.00 as an interest free loan.

Work started In April of 1935 to repair the fire damaged house the labor was all volunteer lead by Freeman Drew a carpenter by trade. John Grady was in charge of grounds and his crew was busy filling in the cellar hole where the barn had stood. The trucks were donated and a steam shovel was rented for \$55.00 per day to load them.

Skeet fields were up and running and the interest in shooting was good. 24 seats were purchased for the meeting room from the Strand Theatre in Dover for .75 cents each.

At the December meeting in 1939 it was voted to have the annual dinner on January 18, 1940 and that ladies be invited. The cost of the tickets was to be \$1.00 each paid in advance. The dinner returned a profit of \$97.35.

At the March 1940 meeting it was voted to build a 30 X 70 foot addition to the club house for a indoor rim-fire shooting range. The hole was dug for the foundation but due to lack of funds that project was put on hold.

On September 25TH 1942 a mortgage burning ceremony was held and a lobster dinner was served by Roscoe Simpson at the club house at a cost of \$1.00 per person.

In January 1943 Ralph Kimball reported that 19 members had been called to serve in the military for World War II and he presented the club with a shield containing the names of those members.

During the winter months of 1942 thru 1945 the monthly meetings were moved back to Varney's in Dover and the clubhouse closed. The club paid Fred Varney \$15.00 for the use of the room for the period. On July 1st , 1945 20 members and 2 guests removed a porch from the front of the house and painted the entire house. When the work was done they all enjoyed a rabbit stew prepared by Roscoe Simpson.

written by,
Les Waterhouse