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ALICE HIGGINS

1920 - 2011

An Era Ends

An era has ended at the Colorado Rifle Club with the passing on January 6, 2011 of the Club's matriarch, Alice Higgins. Not many of the present membership may be aware of her importance to CRC over the last half century. Lowell Higgins joined the Club around 1950 at a time when organized rifle shooting among civilians was mostly smallbore prone. Lowell became Secretary/Treasurer in 1959 and held that post until failing health forced him to give it up in 2001. For all of those years the Higgins family personified the shooting sports in the Rocky Mountain Region. They traveled from border to border and almost from coast to coast, including more than 35 consecutive years attending the National Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio. Lowell, Larry and Barney took care of the shooting, but Alice was always there usually running or helping in the statistical office without which matches do not run. She developed a record keeping system that remained in widespread use until recent time when computers finally took over the job. As recently as last spring she was out at the range helping in the smallbore stat office.

In 1973, CRC finally joined the 20th century and accepted women members. How could they be excluded when one was so central to the clubs successful operation? In 1995 as Lowell's declining health became apparent, Alice was made a member of the Board of Directors so she could do officially what everyone knew she was doing unofficially . . . a lot of the S/T work.

After we closed the Morrison Road range in about 1979, the club had a lot of cash in the bank and there was a strong movement to dissolve the club and distribute the money among the 65 or so members at that time. The Higgins' were determined to hold the club together. It was a bitter battle in which long standing good friendships were torn apart, and they personally took a lot of stress and abuse for a couple of years until it was finally settled. They had some dedicated members support, but it was almost totally their fight - they were out in front at all times suffering personal vilification, abuse, law suits and all sorts of troubles in the name of CRC. Their victory, dedication and personal integrity gave us the facility that we enjoy today and inspired the tribute in stone on the smallbore range. Lowell did great things for CRC but could never have done them without the total support at every turn from Alice. Her children continue to work for and build the club - Barney is currently serving on the Board of Directors, and I can't remember a smallbore match in the last 30 years he hasn't mowed and prepped the range for. Alice had a long and good life. She will be missed.

Editor's Note: Alice's final days were peaceful, with thanks in part to the Collier Hospice facility. In lieu of flowers the family has asked any memorials be made to Collier Hospice Center, in Wheat Ridge. The BoD has voted to make a donation in Alice's memory.



Lowell and Alice Higgins - their dream of A Great Place to Shoot lives on

James E. Harrison

1925 - 2010

We are also sad to have lost long-time club member and honest to gosh national hero, James Harrison, who passed away in December. Jim was another living example of determination. Never letting idiot bigots stand in his way, he attended Prairie View A&M University in Texas, served in World War II as a pilot in the 332nd Fighter Group - one of the historic Tuskegee Airmen. His military career lasted more than 30 years and included serving as Commander of a B-52. He loved flying too much to stay out of the sky and had a second career as a pilot for United Airlines, their first African American pilot. He was a man who could have let the circumstances of the world around him hold him down, but who instead took to the skies and fought for his right to fly high above it all. CRC is contributing a gift to the NRA in Jim's honor, and our thoughts go to his wife Margaret, his three children, four grandchildren and great grandson.

COLORADO RIFLE CLUB ANNUAL MEETING

Please join us Saturday, February 19 for the 86th Annual Colorado Rifle Club Dinner. Last year we tried a new venue for the event that featured both great food and a great view, so we'll be there again this year. Join us at the Sheraton Denver West Hotel at 360 Union Blvd., Lakewood 80228. The cash bar will open at 6:00 pm and dinner will be served at 7:00 pm. You have your choice of entrée, either beef or chicken and cost is just \$30 per person. At 8:00 the meeting itself will begin. It's important you attend – we'll be electing three positions on the Board of Directors, reporting on the 2010 club activities, and getting ready for a very busy year ahead. It should be easy now to truly appreciate how much this club and its members can impact our lives, and how much individual efforts can accomplish for the shooting community as a whole. The members who give their time and effort to ensure we have a world-class shooting facility are not doing it just so we have a place to exercise our rights. They are doing it because they love the shooting sports and understand that a club like this truly is more than the sum of its members. We are a community that relies on each other for support. So put on some clean duds, take the family out to dinner and get to know your shooting family too. The sooner you let us know you're coming the better we can stock the bar, so fill out your enclosed reservation card today, and return it to **CRC, 6921 Oak Street, Arvada, CO 80004**. You'll be glad you did.

(P.S. Cowboy, Zoot, and fashion forward shooters – this is your chance to show off your best shooting style! Please feel free to dress to impress!)

DUES ARE DUE

Ok, now that we've reminded you how much we love and appreciate our members, pay up! We have 139 shooting events on the books for your enjoyment in 2011, but you can't get in the gate till you help pay for them. Annual Dues notices are in the mail, and the gate closes to non-current members April 1. The only way to get in is to **send your membership dues payment to CRC, P.O. Box 218, Bennett, CO 80102**. Individual memberships are \$65 and family memberships are \$90. Since undertaking the bookkeeping tasks, Donna Kingcade has done an amazing job – sending her your information is fast and easy and you'll get your new membership card in no time. Also if you plan to fulfill your workbond in cash this year, include that with your dues and let us put the money to good use now. And everyone please also take a moment to confirm your email address to crci@comcast.net Thanks for shooting with us another year!

NOTES FOR THE NEW SHOOTING YEAR

If you really want to know what's ahead, you'll come to the annual meeting, but for those who can't, here are a few range notes and things to plan for in 2011:

SAVE THE DATE

Mark both April 16-17 and October 8-9th on the Calendar right now. Those are the Annual Work day weekends. Spend just one of those days helping on a work project out at the range, save yourself \$100, and help keep your club a pleasant shooting facility. Contact Workbond Coordinator Dave Paananen at dpaananen@metzero.net, or at 303 673-0106 to plan your workbond fulfillment goals now!

MAKE LODGING RESERVATIONS EARLY!

Heads up to members who come a long way to shoot at the range: The Super 8 Motel in Byers has closed, and the rates at some area facilities have risen to clearly take advantage of demand. Also we are hosting a lot of big events for a number of disciplines on the same weekends, so we encourage members who plan to camp either on our range or stay in area lodging – book as early as possible. If you wait till the last minute to decide where to stay on a competition weekend you may end up staying closer to home than you planned! Visit our website at crici.org and see our links section for a list of hotels and lodging in the area.

CRC TOOL TIME

The Workshop in the equipment building is complete and Dave Paananen is working on organizing it. This will be an excellent facility to build and repair target frames, maintain range equipment, and keep projects in progress. Members are welcome to use it for the improvement of the range – but this is NOT a place for you to use free tools and re-finish your kitchen cabinets. Use it for range improvement projects only! And remember – if anything needs fixing or replacement please let Equipment Manager Maurice Settles know at mms454@hotmail.com or 303-622-6340. We don't really care how things get broken, only that somebody tells us about it so we can fix it. Thanks all!

RANGE SAFETY

Ricochets continue to be a problem on the schuetzen range. We've made changes to the target frames and firing positions on the line, contacted the NRA for help with a safety assessment, and are exploring all possible causes/solutions. The only thing we can't control is member behavior. We shouldn't need to remind you that for your own safety and that of others, please obey all posted rules and use proper target frames at proper distances on the correct ranges. And even if you are in complete compliance, if you continue to hear ricochets,

please make notes on your position etc. (so the BOD can define the problem), then MOVE! Change your angle of fire, place on the line, whatever – just be aware that you should only hear ricochet noise on an action movie soundtrack – not on the range while you’re shooting! **Any member deliberately disregarding any club rule should be reported to the board immediately for disciplinary action.** If just one of us screws up we all can suffer, so please, practice safe shooting.

We Have the Technology....

The new website has been up and running for over a year now (so eventually I’ll stop calling it “new”) but it’s more picture friendly than ever and Nick Obee has added a new feature – the *Ranges In Action* page, where we’ll post your photos. Did you just shoot an amazing group in a fierce wind? Enjoy your bragging rights by taking a picture and sending it in. Did you see one of our resident turkeys while you were driving to a range? Snap his picture and share it with us. Who on Facebook really cares about the perfect spring day conditions for shooting – we here at CRC truly appreciate it! Since your phone probably has a camera in it anyway use it at the range and share your shooting day with club members. .jpeg, .tiff, .pdf, or most any kind of format – Nick Obee can work with them all so don’t be shy – send any range images you’d like posted to him at nickobee@comcast.net, then watch for them at crci.org Thanks for sharing everybody!

And speaking of technology

In order to save the club money the newsletter will now be distributed via email. Please send your current email address to crci@comcast.net. Put “Email Confirmation” in the subject line. That way you’ll be sure to get your issue and save the club some money. Thank you for your prompt response!

MATCH DIRECTORS UPDATE

The Various CRC Match Directors had their annual meeting January 15th, and they all have a lot to report. There are plenty of matches that need volunteers, and some that are worthy of note by all members, including the Armed Forces Memorial Match April 28-May 1 and The Rocky Mountain Regional Raid June 1-5; Plus we’re hosting State Championship matches for several disciplines including Bench Rest, Smallbore, Highpower, Pistol and Silhouette. We need competitors and volunteers for all so contact the various match directors now to help them plan and execute!

NEW THIS YEAR

We’re glad to welcome the Marine Corp League to our shooting lineup. The Marine Corp League is an organization of active, retired or reserve marines, and uses both highpower and pistol skills. You don’t have to

be a marine to participate in these matches - those who just support them (ooohh raa) are welcome! Mike Dighero has organized 6 shoots this year including an opening match March 19th, designed to include new shooters, and a final Championship match just for qualifying Marine Corps League members. Contact Mike at digherom@msn.com or 303-367-0770 for more information.

Also new this year, in an effort to improve our outreach and provide a safe and educational environment to introduce people to proper marksmanship we’re looking to host the Johnny Appleseed Program. The program is designed to introduce those completely new to shooting to the fundamentals of safe firearm handling, basic shooting skills, and an appreciation for the role firearms have played in American history. If you’ve ever met someone who said something like “My grandfather left me some of his firearms, and I want to learn about them and even shoot them well someday, but I need someone who understands that I’m starting from scratch and don’t want to feel intimidated while I learn” this is the perfect program. They are designed to take place over a weekend and we’ve got a pretty full calendar now, but we’re trying to get a few scheduled. If you’re interested in participating let Denny Reul or Martin Everitt know and it’ll help in planning.

CRC IN THE NEWS

You know you’ve “arrived” as an organization when you make The Wall Street Journal. Well, it’s finally happened for CRC. In case you missed the January 4, 2011 edition, an article written by Lauren Etter, playfully titled *Range War: Cowboys, Gangsters Take Aim at Each Other* highlights the new practical shooting sport – Zoot Shooting. Like Cowboy shooting, participants shoot in different courses (called capers in Zoot Shooting) for both speed and accuracy, and they dress in period attire – just a different period! The article interviews Jason Huss, Co-founder of the American Zoot Shooters Association about the sport and its growing popularity. CRC hosted a demonstration for the article and WSJ photographer Matthew Staver took some great photos for a slide show that accompanies the article at their website (www.wsj.com) Thanks to all the CRC members including Steve Fowler and Al Ashton who participated in the shooting (literally and figuratively!) for the article. CRC is proud to be on the forefront of new shooting sports and recognized in positive press for it!

Lost and Found

CRC member Dean Marsh on December 27th reported finding a half box of .17 HMR rounds and a pair of covers that go on the elevation/windage adjustments of a scope. If this sounds like your equipment and you can identify them please contact

him at sautedscallop@q.com. Thanks Dean for being on the lookout for your fellow club members.