

## The Headliner

# Ready, aim, pull at Winnipeg Trap and Skeet Club

By: Andrea Geary

Posted: 07/21/2015 2:47 PM |



[Tweet 0](#) [Post 8](#) [Reddit 0](#) [ShareThis 11](#) [Print](#) [Email 0](#)

Driving a few kilometres west of Oak Bluff on Highway 3 you will notice a high red and white ladder-like tower standing next to the Winnipeg Trap and Skeet Club's one-storey building.

Your question is likely to be, "What the heck is that thing?"

The answer comes from club president Ken Wight. It's an old Air Force ejector seat tester that's been modified to transport a load of clay targets to the top, then throw them high into the air so the shooters can practise their skills for game bird hunting.

Your second question might be, "What goes on in the clubhouse?"

Plenty. Wight, of Sanford, said the club has about 200 members. Each year between 350 and 400 novice shooters



ANDREA GEARY

Harry Humby demonstrates his shooting stance, with an empty rifle, prior to practising trap shooting at the Winnipeg Trap and Skeet Club in Oak Bluff.



ANDREA GEARY

Winnipeg Trap and Skeet Club president Ken Wight, of Sanford, aims at a clay target when skeet shooting on the club's range in Oak Bluff.

come to the club to attend events such as stags and stagettes, corporate outings and birthday parties.

"We throw approximately 200,000 targets per year," he said.

The clay targets used come in a few different sizes, and can be broken with a sharp tap of a finger as the club's trap director Harry Humby demonstrated.

The shells used for shooting are filled with BB pellets that, when fired, will travel fast and far enough to break the airborne clay targets at a determined safe range of 40 to 50 metres.

Humby, a St. Vital resident, said the clay targets used for trap shooting simulate live pigeons that were once the target of shooters in the late 18th century. During the switch from live birds to clay targets, glass balls filled with feathers were used so a successful hit would still result in a burst of feathers.

Trap shooting is one of three main disciplines available at the club. In it, targets are released from a single machine that throws them away from the shooter. In skeet shooting, targets are released from machines located on either side of a shooter and cross their path horizontally. The third discipline is called sporting clays and features a variety of target launch points.

The Winnipeg Trap and Skeet Club is celebrating its 50th anniversary with dinner and open shoot on Sat., Aug. 8. Club vice-president Tom Hancock, of Oak Bluff, said the clubhouse and range are located on 25 acres first leased in 1965 from local farmer Nick Manchur, and now from his family. The facility was constructed to allow Winnipeg to host shooting competitions at the 1967 Pan Am Games.

"We were left a legacy of some equipment," Hancock said. They also hosted shooting events at the range during the 1999 Pan Am Games, as well as international, national and annual provincial competitions.

"Our mandate is to promote and support safe and responsible clay shooting," Wight said. The sport is open to anyone aged 12 and over, even if they have never held a gun before.

First-timers must take part in a safety briefing that teaches them how to safely handle and load a gun. They are accompanied by experienced mentors at all times.

"Safety for us is our No. 1 priority," Wight said. "It's very controlled here."

He said that there has never been a shooting-related accident at the range.

The club offers gun rentals, and the price charged for a round of shooting is lower for a guest's first three visits.

Wight admitted that the federal government's long-gun registry resulted in fewer new club members but, since it was repealed in April 2012, the club's membership has been growing again. Youth members make up about one-fifth of total membership.

"It used to be a retired guy's sport," said Humby, whose own interest in trap shooting grew following his retirement. However, now the popularity of clay target shooting is increasing among women and the young professional sector.

Humby said most novices begin by trying all three disciplines, but will gravitate to the one they feel they are best at.

He and the other board members are proud of past-president David Mosscrop, who competes internationally in trap shooting. The Fort Garry resident, who's ranked in the world's top 100 for international trap shooting, will compete in a World Cup event in Azerbaijan in August.

At 55, Mosscrop is older than many of his competitors, but he's hoping to place highly enough in this event and at the world championship in Italy in September to capture a spot on Canada's shooting team in the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

He attributes his success at national and international trap shooting events to his ability to train at the Oak Bluff range.

"Winnipeg is fortunate to have a club of that calibre so close," he said.

The club is open year-round on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. to dusk during summer months.

For more information, see [www.winnipegtrapandskeet.com/](http://www.winnipegtrapandskeet.com/)

[Facebook.com/TheHeadlinerWPG](https://www.facebook.com/TheHeadlinerWPG)

Twitter: @HeadlineCanstar

REPORT ERROR

SUBMIT A TIP

You can comment on most stories on [winnipegfreepress.com](http://winnipegfreepress.com). You can also agree or disagree with other comments. All you need to do is be a Winnipeg Free Press print or e-edition subscriber to join the conversation and give your feedback.

## Have Your Say

DISPLAY COMMENTS

New to commenting? Check out our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The Winnipeg Free Press does not necessarily endorse any of the views posted. By submitting your comment, you agree to our [Terms and Conditions](#). These terms were revised effective January 2015.

---