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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE WHITE GATES SKEET CLUB:

I appreciate your invitation to the fiftieth anniversary of your club. There are several reasons why I cannot attend.

Dick Mott has asked me to reminisce a little and tell how the club was started, etc. I bought the farm in 1946. As I had been shooting skeet at the St. Charles Country Club since the late thirties I decided it would be a good idea if I and my hunting partners, Dick Graff, Louise and Monty Orr, and John Dole could find a place on the farm for our private enjoyment.

In 1947 we selected a swampy area near the road and absolutely safe from doing any harm. We secured the traps, built the houses and field to specifications. We then built the rustic house which, as you know, turned out to be far too small.

It was not long before other shooters, hunters, and interested people wanted to join and were accepted. The ones that come to mind, but not in proper sequences, are Dick and Mary Burke, Bob and June Cave, Bess Dougherty, Bud and Marge Odegard, Gordy Ware, and J. McWilliams Stone, Sr. The latter's son, the lovable Bill Stone, then a teenager, threw one of the traps and would occasionally give us an aluminum bird to his delight.

We permitted a limited number of guests. Louise Orr brought her sportsman cousin, Brooks McCormick, of Wheaton, several times and we brought our skeet shooting and duck hunting friends, Dan and Ada Rice, who had a skeet field at their home south of Wheaton. Ada won first place in an Illinois Women's Skeet Shoot one year. The membership increased rapidly as you all know, but we were happy with the small, rustic, inadequate surroundings, and we had fun.

Another item of interest is that John Dole and I decided to build a covered wire pen and raise pheasant chicks to be banded and shot in the fall. Skeet

members were to be invited to hunt. We bought 200 five-day-old chicks from Fin and Feather Club of Elgin and Dick Graff, living very near, volunteered to feed and water them.

In October the Game Warden banded and released them, one-half on the farm and one-half on the Dunham property. We shot only cocks, but the fox ate all of the hens. The gate to the pen was not closed entirely one evening and about eleven o'clock I was called by my neighbors who said my pheasants were all around their house. We called for volunteers and got about half of them back in the pen. Somebody said, "Why don't we leave the gate open, this is their home." We did and they were all back in the pen the next morning waiting to be fed. For about seven or eight years, until the pen rusted out, we had some beautiful pheasant dinner parties. I wish you good luck and thanks for the invitation.

-Rick