**History of the Dryden Rifle and Pistol Club Training Centre**

 In the early 1970’s Katherine Griffiths informed me there was a large crawl space below the Dryden High School that was unused and undeveloped. She suggested this might be of use to our Club. The concept of a rifle range under the school was not new to us as there had been a range under Central Elgin Collegiate in St Thomas where she was a teacher and I a student.

At the risk of sounding self indulgent, I brought her suggestion to the Dryden Rifle and Pistol Club Executive for their consideration. The Club then pursued the idea with the Board of Education and the proposal was accepted. Club members pitched in and after a lot of heavy labour the facility we now enjoy was developed. We had to jack-hammer an opening through the outside wall and remove many wheelbarrows of gravel to make clearance for the concrete that was brought in to pour the floor. We were so eager to make use of our new space that the first shooters walked on planks to the target stands. It became a wonderful winter facility for some shooting and fellowship. It was very busy many nights of the week.

When our new facility was suitable for the general public to come in, Bryan Buffett and Jake Voth were able to use this location as a base for their PAL courses and Hunter Safety programs. There were other Club members who were also instructors for this much needed service. Bryan and Jake deserve our special Thanks as they each gave more than fifty years of service. Many years they gave up fifteen to twenty-five weekends for this instruction.

Over time with the increasing demands of the Range Inspectors and the threat that the Ministry of Environment might get involved the Executive decided it would be wise to discontinue using the facility as a range. It would require the switch to an air gun program. We still enjoy using this location for that purpose and as a firstrate Training Centre.

Sincerely,

James Vandermeer