

Since 1887

REVOLUTION OF 1974

KENDALL
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B&C JUNIOR MEMBER
AND HISTORY LIAISON

As we continue to promote the message of Fair Chase, it's imperative that we continually factor in how different generations view the message through varying lenses. While it is easy to look on old established organizations as complacent; one must remember that organizations that have survived over 100 years are not quick to pull the trigger (pardon the pun) on structural or organizational changes quickly.

In the 1970s the Boone and Crockett Club did not have the infrastructure to manage all of the entries into the North American Big Game Awards Program (NABGAP) so B&C regular members

Robert M. Ferguson, Sherman Gray, and Jack S. Parker negotiated a partnership with the National Rifle Association beginning June 30, 1973. The original purpose was to help with record keeping and assisting with the NABGAP and formalize Official Measurer training workshops, thus also moving the B&C offices to the NRA headquarters in Washington, D.C. Leading up to this period, the NABGAP received more entries than ever and B&C found it difficult to verify if all entries followed Fair Chase rules.

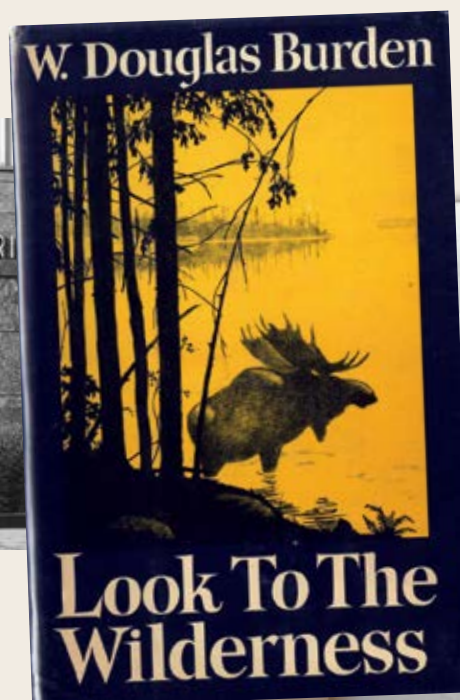
The partnership acted as a catalyst to what can be referred to as the Revolution of 1974.

Many Professional and Regular Members saw record keeping and trophy award programs as counterintuitive to wildlife conservation, B&C's heritage, and its original mission. This was not the first instance when membership debated the relationship between Fair Chase and conservation. In 1922 a B&C committee considered dropping the membership requirement of harvesting three North American big game species. On August 26, 1974, Regular Member W. Douglas Burden, a noted big game hunter and naturalist, wrote a letter to

the membership citing that trophy hunting and record keeping diluted the gene pool, served no scientific purpose, and compromised Fair Chase with competition and commercialism. Burden formally challenged the legitimacy of B&C record keeping and record books as a violation of the 1923 Articles of Incorporation. Burden wanted B&C to "turn [their] backs on competitions and record keeping and give wide publicity to [the] very sound reasons for doing so." In addition, he wanted to have a photography award "making the photograph of the trophy



The Boone and Crockett Club partnered with the NRA from 1973 to 1980 to help with record keeping and formalize Official Measurer's training workshops.



The dedication in W. Douglas Burden's book *Look To The Wilderness* was written, "To those many lovers of the wilderness who, in spite of enormous odds, are making a real fight for its preservation."

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
OF THE
BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB

It is the policy of the Boone and Crockett Club to promote the guardianship and provident management of big game and associated wildlife in North America and to maintain the highest standards of fair chase and sportsmanship in all aspects of big game hunting, in order that this resource of all the people may survive and prosper in its natural habitats.

Consistent with this objective, the Club supports the use and enjoyment of our wildlife heritage to the fullest extent by this and future generations of mankind.

IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES TO STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
OF THE
BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB

The Club's policy will be implemented by:

1. Promoting the establishment and management of habitats and the management of populations so as to maintain a sound balance and diversity of wildlife.
2. Encouraging, through financial support of graduate-level grants and fellowships, research into animal behavior, needs and habitats.
3. Promoting understanding on the part of the public that wisely-regulated hunting is a natural and proper consumptive use of those wildlife resources, which, in healthy populations, produce an annual surplus.
4. Making the results of its research available to and cooperating with the various State and Federal natural resources agencies whose special responsibilities include the administration of land, water and wildlife.
5. Making public the results of Club-supported and other wildlife activities so as to guide thinking and actions in support of programs beneficial to wildlife.
6. Convening meetings of qualified wildlife scientists and land managers for the purpose of exchanging information and developing recommendations for the resolution of particular wildlife problems.
7. Seeking to inculcate a greater sense of value for wildlife in the American public, including outdoorsmen, and in urging that the use of this valuable resource and of the land and water habitat on which it depends comply in all ways with rules, regulations and practices promulgated for their protection and enhancement.

December, 1974

rather than a dead animal," and to retain ownership of the copyright on record trophies, to "combat the evils that result from this accent on record trophies." New, old, Regular, and Professional Members wrote letters to the executive committee, many agreeing with Burden's letter.

Regular Member since 1926, William C. Chandler noted in 1974 "[It is] no longer possible to combine killing with conservation," further stating that conservation should be the "club's primary interest and to eliminate all provisions which encourage the slaughter of wild game." Other Regular Members thoroughly disagreed with Burden such as Samuel B. Webb and Arthur C. Popham who wrote that "the argument so

resoundingly put forth that the system should be abandoned because, by encouraging cheating, it hurts the species appears to be without substance or rationality."

The executive committee appointed the Ad Hoc Committee on Future Direction chaired by Frederick C. Pullman. The committee found that B&C was formed as an association of sportsmen hunters whose interest in trophy hunting led to scoring, record keeping, and award programs; however, it did acknowledge that membership preoccupation with Big Game Awards led to lack of knowledge in contemporary conservation issues. Thus, on December 4, 1974, B&C adopted a Statement of Purpose. This adoption caused 25 Regular

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and Professional members to resign from the Club.

This revolution acted as a catalyst for B&C membership's renewed interest in its legacy, heritage and impact on North American conservation. The NRA partnership ultimately did not work out and was formally dissolved on December 31, 1980.

In troubled times, we must always look back at the original message of the club.

Since its inception, B&C members have been tasked with maintaining relevancy and carrying on the task set forth by Theodore Roosevelt back in 1887. Now, 123 years later, it is apparent that while hunting is not only conservation, the two concepts are linked and must always be at the forefront of B&C's mission. ■

Kendall Hays