

It is with regret that we report that our Patron, George Costain, passed away on Wednesday 10th January.

Whilst this is a moment for sad reflection it should also be a time to celebrate happy times spent in George's company and all the things that George has done to help our Club thrive and create the wonderful facilities we enjoy today.

George was one of our founding members, when the Douglas Gun Club and The Southern Game Preservation Society amalgamated in the early 1970's. As Chairman, President and Patron George was a driving force in the promotion and establishment of both our club and clay shooting on the Island. George was the founding Chairman of the MCPSA and shot for the Island many times including at the first CSFED Games that the Isle of Man competed in and at Home Countries Skeet Internationals. He was Shooting Manager for the Commonwealth Games Team in New Zealand in 1990 and the Commonwealth Shooting Federation Games in India in 1995.

Many of us will have memories of game shooting with George both on and off the Island where his Manx 'skeet' made a three hour journey seem to pass in half an hour! At the drinks and lunch breaks George would take photographs and often produce from his pocket, along with a bag of sweets, old photographs to remind all of previous happy days spent together. George was an excellent game shot being an early member of the exclusive Bols Snippen Club for getting a left and right Woodcock and such feats as bringing down a duck that everyone else had thought out of range (shame it was white and carried a penalty of £25!).

Initially our club shot at Broogh Fort, Santon and many will remember enjoying bacon baps in our port-a-cabin whilst outside the clays often disappeared into the cold mist! When we lost the use of Broogh Fort George was instrumental in holding the club together and, after several years in the wilderness using temporary ranges, eventually charmed and persuaded politicians and civil servants to grant us a lease on Meary Veg. George helped to get planning permission (becoming an expert on the Manx Chough and managing to get a cup of tea out of the planning appeal committee in the process!) and finally assisting with encouragement, shovel, saw, hammer, brush, pork pies and tea as our new home emerged.

George was small in stature but full of energy and a larger than life character in his own polite, understated, gentlemanly but mischievous way. Clay, game and rifle shooting were just a small part of his life. A skilled motorcyclist 'Sparrow' Costain won the 1954 Senior MGP in an epic race in atrocious weather, a report on the race is well worth a read at:

https://www.iomtt.com/TT-Database/Competitors.aspx?ride_id=1704&filter=C

George was also an instrumental member of The Southern Motorcycle Club helping them to establish racing at the Billown Circuit in the 1950's.

There are many more stories to be told of George's sporting achievements and his working life as a butcher and farmer. Our sympathies go to George's family, of whom he was so proud. Like us we are sure that they have many happy proud memories and stories to tell of a Manx gentleman it has been a privilege for us all to have loved and call a friend.