

How The CLAY PIGEON Changed My Life

— LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #26 —

Were it not for my introduction to the clay pigeon, this story couldn't have been written; and possibly I wouldn't even be involved in the shooting sports industry.

Growing up in Marion County, Missouri, I don't recall ever having seen a clay pigeon, though we did have real pigeons in the barn; so my first glimpse was upon moving to Columbia, to attend the University of Missouri. Tigertown Trap and Skeet Club was located in the coal-mining strip pits, just north of town and a fellow student from back home invited me to shoot skeet one afternoon. I was hooked immediately; and apparently for life. Skeet shooting burns a lot of ammo and soon thereafter I bought a MEC reloader.

There was this long date with the Air Force for a few years after college and I shot mostly skeet at my bases in, Arkansas, Texas and South Dakota. One spring we put a team together and attended the Armed Forces Championships in Colorado Springs. On the first day I shot 100 straight (my first and only in registered competition), using an old Remington 11-48 in 12 gauge. The

second day I broke the first 50, then dropped one each in the last two rounds, to finish with a 198 of 200 – that was quite a confidence builder for a young man.

We started the business in 1977 and it was a very busy time for the next ten years. The British game of sporting clays made its way to America and what a grand game it



Clay pigeons have been around since the 1880s. They are a marvel of simplicity, and sometimes durability.

has been. We sponsored the Louise Mandrell and Charlton Heston celebrity shoots for a few years in the 90s and got to meet and shoot with movie stars like Charlton Heston, country singers like the Mandrel sisters and too many politicians to keep track of.

“...what a grand game it has been.”

Since my introduction to the clay pigeon,

I've had the opportunity to introduce many, many people to shooting – most importantly my wife and children and MidwayUSA Employees. In 2007, Brenda and I started the MidwayUSA Foundation, with a sole mission of helping to fund high school and college shooting teams, mostly shotgun teams, shooting clay pigeons.

So, who can say how much credit the clay pigeon should receive for helping me get where I am today? I don't know, but do highly recommend clay pigeon shooting to everyone. It may just change your life.



Larry Potterfield
The Sporting Clays Range
Midway Farms
Fayette, Missouri
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Many of today's traps hold a case or two of birds and are battery operated, like this one.



In this picture I am smiling, so you know the shooting went pretty well.