

## THE MOUNTAIN STATE STORY

In the fall of 1940 a small announcement appeared in the Parkersburg newspapers. The announcement stated that anyone desiring to organize a sportsmen's organization, to assist in the enhancement of the state's natural resources, were to meet in the old Y.M.C.A. building on 8th Street on a given date and time.

The gentleman running that announcement was William R. (Bill) Clinger. Approximately 15 persons attended that meeting and Fred H. Davis was one of those 15 or so people.

That meeting was the founding of Mountain State Sportsmen's Association. Of the original founders at that meeting all are gone except Bill and Fred. The old Y.M.C.A. building, where Mountain State originally held its meetings, is gone. But Mountain State Sportsmen's Association lives on.

In late 1942 Mountain State purchased 31 acres on Stillwell Road off U.S. Route 50. There the members held their meetings in a small house located on the property.

The organization was incorporated under the laws of the State of West Virginia, as a non-profit corporation, on March 28, 1946 by W. H. Bickel, O. H. McDade, H. R. Jemison, H. L. Deever, R. R. Smith, S. J. Willard and Fred H. Davis, under then Secretary of State William S. O'Brien.

After a few years on Stillwell, the members sold that clubhouse to the late Gib Furr, who was a member of this association. Gib's sons, Jim and Bob, remain active members of Mountain State.

Mountain State then purchased the old Pilot's Clubhouse on Hoagland Road off State Route 2, north of Parkersburg. That club building was later sold to the Pioneer Antique Auto Club of Marietta, Ohio. That building has also since been torn down.

In 1966 Mountain State launched a fund raising drive among its 180

members to build a new clubhouse on it's own property. E. J. Tanner, one of our current members, served as chairman of the building committee, under then President James E. Bradford.

On Sunday, September 22, 1968, the brand spanking newly constructed clubhouse was dedicated with ceremony. Today, that clubhouse is considered one of the best located and furnished in the state.

Our organization is currently affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation, the West Virginia Wildlife Federation, the National Rifle Association, the National Muzzleloading Rifle Association, the West Virginia Rifle & Pistol Association, the National Field Archery Association and the West Virginia Archery Association.

We've come a few years since that fall evening of 1940 in the Y.M.C.A. building. I would like to think that nothing else has changed all that much. That the members of this association have the same dedication and drive to see that our natural resources are protected, developed, and conserved so that future members of Mountain State Sportsmen, even yet unborn, can look back and see with pride the strife and accomplishments we make in our efforts today. With our work and dreams, their hopes and efforts for their future and God's guidance they will be proud we were here to protect the same outdoors environment they love as those before them so dearly loved.

As we've mentioned Bill Clinger was the founder of Mountain State Sportsmen's Association. Fred Davis is the only other surviving charter member and incorporator of this Association. Brad, although not a charter member, has served this organization in virtually every office of this association. All three have earned their Life Membership.

These men built the foundation on which we reside as an organization of sportsmen (and sportswomen). We are both proud and honored to have them with us here tonight.