

## **One Rifle, One Vision the Legacy of Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Snr As told by Esther (Engelhardt) Weir, his daughter.**

### **A Timeline of Air Rifle Shooting in the Illawarra**

Many immigrants from Germany and Austria settled in Wollongong and the Illawarra, where they established strong communities and formed various social groups.

#### **1961**

The Australian Cultural and Welfare Society of Wollongong and Illawarra was founded. The German School Association of Greater Wollongong was also founded. The society became known as an association in 1962.

#### **1962**

A similar movement took place in Oak Flats. The Wollongong and Illawarra associations were unified in 1964.

#### **1963**

Both associations helped establish the Male Choir Sanssouci.

#### **1965**

Members of the Society, Sanssouci, and the recently formed Germania Club came together to establish the AGA Club of Wollongong (Australian German Austrian Club). However, some members of the Germania Club disagreed with the formation of the AGA Club and chose to remain independent, forming the United German Austrian Club Germania. The Male Choir Sanssouci became the first cultural group of the AGA Club, followed by the AGA Kahner carnival group.

#### **1966**

Towards the end of the year, the Germania Club founded the Mixed Choir Germania. The Germania and AGA Clubs looked forward to establishing their own premises for members.

#### **1967**

The Germania Club purchased a 14¼-acre lot on Northcliffe Drive, Berkeley (now Kembla Grange).

A joint committee meeting between the Germania and AGA Clubs was held, followed by a general meeting on 27 October 1968 to elect an equal committee for the merger of both Clubs. The Australian German Austrian Club Germania Wollongong, *AGA Club Germania* was founded. With capital contributed by the AGA, the land in Berkeley was paid off.

Planning began for a future clubhouse to include all cultural groups: Sanssouci, Mixed Choir Germania, AGA Kahner, the German School Association, the Skat Group (German card game), and the Safari Club.

Eventually, the club premises would be built on Northcliffe Drive, Berkeley.

In the same year, Mr. Karl-Heinz Engelhardt founded the Illawarra Air Rifle Shooting Club in Albion Park Rail. The club was named *Schützenklub Illawarra* (Shooting Club Illawarra).

### **Post-War Cultural Contribution**

It was the German and Austrian post-war immigrants who brought their knowledge and passion for air rifle shooting to Australia. Determined to continue their traditions, they introduced the King Shoot, local competitions, *Schützenfest and the Oktoberfest*.

### **Where It All Began: Introducing Air Rifle Shooting to the Region**

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Snr. and his wife Christel Engelhardt immigrated to Australia from Germany in 1959. They had three children and in 1960 settled the family in Albion Park Rail.

The German community gathered at the German School Hall in Oak Flats, where Fritz Fischer served as President of the German School Association and his wife, Lilly Fischer, was the Secretary. This hall provided a central place for German groups to meet and hold social events.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt arranged a meeting with Fritz Fischer and a discussion took place in regards to a new sport Air Rifle Shooting, they agreed to build a clubhouse with a shooting range in the Illawarra area (now Shellharbour City) sometime in the future. Fritz Fischer informed all the German groups about this plan.

When Karl-Heinz Engelhardt's rifle arrived he travelled along with his son Karl-Heinz Jnr. out to Onkel Tom's Hutte in Jamberoo where they met with Tom Krailach who managed the property and gave permission to use the grounds on a Sunday weather permitting for their target shooting and to also promote the new sport Air Rifle shooting, Karl-Heinz encouraged those interested to come to practice shooting at Albion Park Rail.

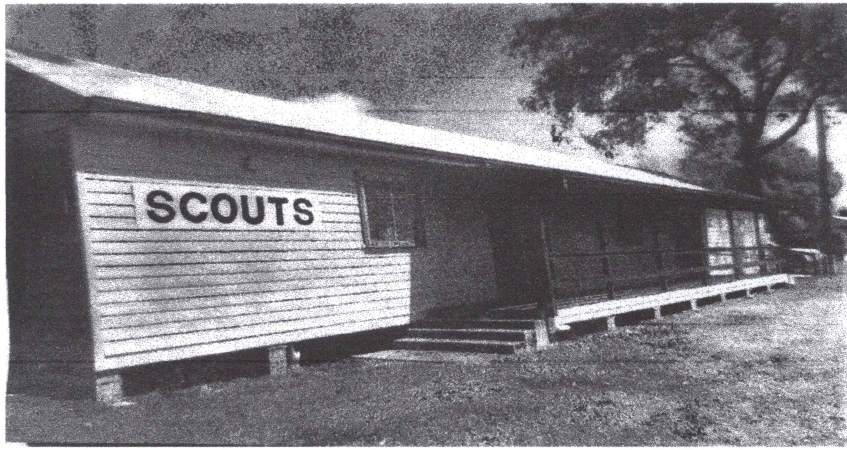
With all the preparation and organisation completed, hiring a venue became possible in Albion Park Rail and the shooting club was ready to begin. As there was no external funding, it was made a reality through funds provided by Karl-Heinz Engelhardt.

The first air rifle club in Australia was Faulkenauge, founded in Adelaide in 1964.

The first NSW Clubs were established in the Illawarra and Stanmore in 1967.

### **1968**

*Schützenklub Illawarra* held the first target practice in the Progress Hall on a Wednesday night located at 175 Princes Highway in Albion Park Rail, as there were no club rifles, Karl-Heinz Engelhardt and Helmut Schleinitz made their rifles available. The progress Hall was relocated to the Albion Park Showground many years later and restored and is (now known as a Scout Hall).



Karl-Heinz Engelhardt mentored and taught the shooters their first lessons, welcoming new shooters and ensuring everything was done in accordance with the sport's rules and regulations. He also became the club's official Grader. Helmut Schleinitz, a good friend and fellow shooter, assisted with target practice and served as the group's representative, later becoming their Captain. The first junior shooters were Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Jr., Esther Engelhardt, and Martin Hesse. The first Ladies shooters were Christel Engelhardt and Rosa Hesse. Karl-Heinz Engelhardt was also supported by Karl-Heinz Pohl and his wife Elenora Pohl, who both went on to become shooters themselves.

### **1969**

Fritz Fischer organised a meeting with members who were involved in other German groups to create a small committee for the planning of a future clubhouse and shooting range.

To support their fundraising efforts, the grounds at Onkel Tom's Hütte were made available by Tom Krailach, along with the Waldeslust Restaurant and its facilities for future Committee Meetings.

### **Onkel Tom's Hütte (Uncle Tom's Hut)**

Onkel Tom's Hütte was managed by Tom Krailach and located on a property that included a German restaurant and licensed bar. A wooden sign at the front of the restaurant displayed the name Waldeslust (meaning 'Woodland Joy'). It was also known as a German beer house by both the Australian, German and Austrian communities.

Kegel (German bowling) played indoors on the dance floor and other German groups made use of the Waldeslust facilities. The property was located on Jamberoo Mountain Road and included a main residence adjacent to the restaurant, with three wooden huts situated at the back. The property was originally known as Onkel Tom's Hütte and later became known as the Jamberoo Valley Lodge.

The first committee meeting was held on the 5th January 1969, under the name 'Shooting and Bowling Club Waldeslust, at Onkel Tom's Hütte. Gustav Eckler and Reinhold Locher, from the Hubertus Rifle Club, attended to offer support and advice. Gustav Eckler also drafted the club's statutes and presented them to the committee. An executive board would need to be implemented going forward.

Appointments:

**President:** Werner Jezek

**Vice President:** Gustav Eckler

**Secretary:** Fritz Fischer

The men's shooting sessions were held once a month on a Sunday, on the grounds of Onkel Tom's Hutte weather permitting. The shooting range was outdoors with no undercover shelter. A presentation would follow with trophies donated by Tom Krailich.

The Concordia Schuetzenklub Stanmore provided rifles on loan.

Invitations were extended by the Sydney Clubs as the men's competition had now commenced.

SchuetzenKlub Illawarra practice shooting continued on Wednesdays in Albion Park Rail with the mens, ladies, and juniors, and on Tuesdays at the German School Hall in Oak Flats. The hall was made available to the group free of charge through the German School Association Committee.

The first Kings Shoot were held on the grounds of Onkel Tom's Hütte in 1969, with Michael Huedig becoming the first King. Erwin Haider donated the first King's necklace.

The first Kings ball was held at the Centenary Hall, Albion Park. Tom Krailach arranged the application for a public hall booth licence to serve alcohol during the evening of the Kings Ball. Tom had given the name Waldeslust to many other German Groups for events where alcohol was served.

The funds raised at the Kings Ball were successful, enabling the purchase of two club rifles which were assigned to Karl-Heinz Engelhardt and used at practice shooting.

Throughout the year, the committee faced many challenges. Undeterred, they worked diligently to resolve these issues, including addressing concerns about the name Shooting and Bowling Club *Waldeslust*.

In 1969, there were at least eight German clubs in Australia, which each had a group of air rifle Shooters. The Illawarra group of air rifle shooters did not have their own German Club at the time.

### **1970**

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt approached the licensee of the Oaks Hotel located on the Princes Highway Albion Park Rail and an agreement was reached to make an area available for the shooters to continue their Wednesday night practice. Tuesday night sessions ceased once the group relocated to the Oaks Hotel. By this time, the number of shooters had grown significantly.

On January 16th, the first Australian Championship was held in Adelaide, hosted by Falkenauge at their German Club. Shooters from the *Schützenklub Illawarra*, caravans in tow, travelled to Adelaide to take part in this inaugural event. For the first time, the ladies and juniors, who had previously only participated in practice sessions were now competing in a national competition.

The first Australian Champion in the Men's Class was Peter Gattung from Concordia with a score of 350/400. The Ladies' Class was won by Ursula Pieconka from Falkenauge achieving 324/400, and the Junior Class by Gary Fleetwood, also from Falkenauge with a score of 295.

On January 16th, representatives from various German clubs attended a meeting to form an Association of Air Rifle Shooting Clubs in Australia. The aim was to promote the sport and provide shooting clubs across the country with opportunities to organise competitions against one another. Peter Irgang from Cabramatta *Schützengilde* proposed the name *Deutscher Schützenbund* in Australia (German Shooting Association in Australia). At that meeting, Richard Worbel from RDC Perth, Alderauge, was elected as the first President, and Karl-Heinz Schubert from DOG Cabramatta *Schützengilde*, NSW, was elected as the first Secretary.

The representatives were:

Harry Krueger, S.A.A. Dv. Adelaide, Falkenauge  
Hugo Rost, S.A.A. Dv. Adelaide, Falkenauge  
Richard Wrobel, R.D.C. Perth, Adlerauge  
Erich Schume, D.O.G. Cabramatta, Schuetzengilde NSW  
Karl-Heinz Schubert, D.O.G. Cabramatta, Schuetzengilde NSW  
Peter Irgang, D.O.G. Cabramatta, Schuetzengilde NSW  
Christian Fassbaender, Tivoli Melbourne  
Gustav Eckler, Hubertus Liverpool NSW  
Karl-Heinz Gross, Hubertus Liverpool NSW  
Ted Schroeder, Concordia Sydney, Schuetzenklub  
Karl Neube, Concordia Sydney, Schuetzenklub  
Fritz Fischer, Waldeslust Wollongong NSW

Overall, it was a memorable shooting experience in Adelaide, capped off with celebrations at the Shooting Festival in Hahndorf.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt developed a strong passion for air rifle shooting after participating in both the Australian and NSW Championships. He recognised the sport's potential and saw the growing value of club and competition-level championships for all involved.

On February 1st 1970, Karl-Heinz Engelhart was elected to the committee of the Shooting and Bowling Club along with Helmut Schleinitz and Rosa Hesse.

Pins were introduced for A, B, C, and D grades, as well as for Ladies and Juniors. These groups were now included in the handicap rounds during practice shooting, giving all participants the opportunity to compete for trophies.

At a committee meeting a member requested that the Secretary, Fritz Fischer, write to the German Shooting Association *later the Air Rifle Association of Australia* to formally confirm that Helmut Schleinitz was the official representative of the *Schuetzenklub Illawarra*. This step aimed to avoid any further registration issues for the Illawarra Club and its shooters at the upcoming Australian Championships. The team would continue to compete under the name *Illawarra* at the competition level.

Karl-Heinz Pohl, who attended the first Australian Championship, wrote a letter to the President, Werner Jezek, requesting a name change for the *Shooting and Bowling Club Waldeslust*.

A concern had arisen between Tom Krailach and the committee, but the matter was resolved, and it was agreed that the words 'Shooting and Bowling Club' would be removed. Moving forward, any shooting events held on the property would require a formal application to Tom Krailach.

A complaint had been made regarding rifles being used and in Karl-Heinz Engelhardt's possession. He explained to the police officers' that there were five air rifles on the premises, two belonged to the club, and the others were family-owned. All the necessary paperwork and licenses were presented for inspection. Karl-Heinz Engelhardt then informed the two officers that the Illawarra Shooting Club held its practice sessions on Wednesday nights at the Oaks hotel and invited them to attend to observe that all rules and regulations were strictly followed and that supervision was maintained at all times. The officers accepted the invitation and did attend.

After a meeting with Tom Krailach the first Schuetzenfest and Open King Shoot went ahead and took place on the grounds of Onkel Tom's Hütte with Agnes (Annie) Schaettler becoming the first Queen.

After the Shooting Festival and Open King Shoot, no further events, Committee Meetings or fundraisers were held at Onkel Tom's Hütte. The air rifles on loan were returned to the Concordia Club. The committee began holding meetings at the Oaks Hotel and various other locations throughout the local area.

## **1971**

In January 1971, a name change to *Schüetzenklub Waldeslust* Wollongong was agreed upon until the Annual Meeting.

Prior to the Annual Meeting, Fritz Fischer submitted an application under the name *Waldeslust* to establish an association with the AGA Club Germania Wollongong. As explained by the AGA Secretary, this association made it easier to obtain permission to serve alcohol.

At the Annual Meeting in February, the name Schüetzenklub Illawarra was officially restored.

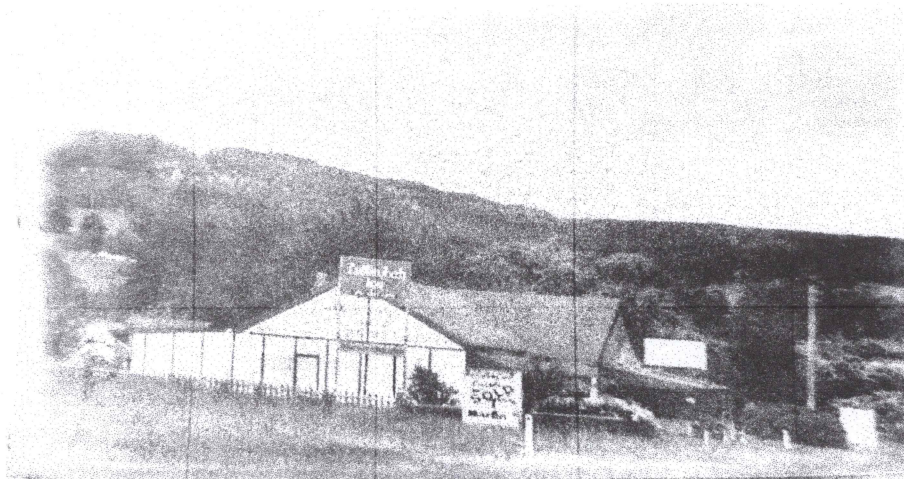
The club also joined the Smallbore Association.

At this time, Illawarra had 34 active shooters. Gold, silver, and bronze badges were introduced for shooters who reached specific point or ring milestones.

Adelaide was the venue for the second Australian Championship. Overall, the shooters performed very well. Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Jr won a gold medal in the C Class, while Willi Sadlowski took second place in the B Class, earning a silver medal. In the shooting competition, Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Jr also won first prize in the B Class, Helmut Schleinitz took second prize, and Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Snr placed third in the C Class. The Illawarra Senior Team finished fifth, and the two women's teams placed fourth and fifth.

After the presentation, *Schützenklub Illawarra* marched alongside other clubs at the Hahndorf Shooting Festival, with Bernie Lemke proudly carrying the Illawarra banner. The ladies marched in their white uniforms, while the men wore green jackets, white shirts, and grey trousers.

The monthly shooting sessions for men, women, and juniors, including presentations continued to be held on Sundays at Paul Schaeffer's family-owned, licensed restaurant, *The White Horse Inn* (formerly the Tullimbar Inn), which also had a single BP petrol bowser. The Inn was located on the outskirts of Calderwood, along the Illawarra Highway. Paul Schaeffer supported the group by providing an all-weather, enclosed, and undercover shooting range where all required rules and regulations were implemented.



On April 24th, 1971, the *Schützenklub Illawarra* held a shooting festival at the Albion Park Showground. On the same day, the first Illawarra Championship was held in the pavilion, open only to junior shooters. It provided an opportunity for the Illawarra juniors to socialise and compete with junior shooters from other clubs.

The first Illawarra Junior Champion was Werner Rauch Jr. from the Hubertus Club, with a score of 341. As the day progressed, the beer steins and schnapps were overflowing, and the enormous beer tents were filled to capacity. Franz Kirchner and his wife, Martha Kirchner, ran

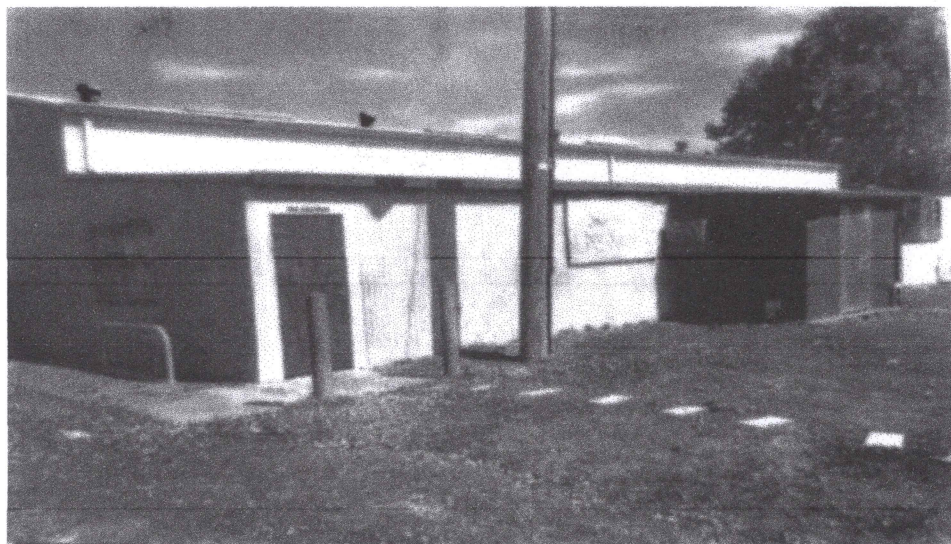
a popular stall selling traditional *Kartoffelpuffer* (potato pancakes), which always attracted a long line of customers.

Another crowd favourite was the 'noodle shoot', where you hit the noodle to win the flower. Pony rides and merry-go-rounds kept the children entertained throughout the day. The evening concluded with lively dancing to the German Big Band and a performance by the German folk dancing group.

The success of the Illawarra Shooting Festival was made possible by the generous support of the Albion Park community, sponsors, the Lions Club of Shellharbour, various small German groups, and a dedicated team of volunteers. Proceeds from the event were donated to Port Kembla Hospital in Warrawong for the purchase of a cardiac machine.

## 1972

When The Oaks Hotel on the Princes Highway Albion Park Rail changed ownership and renovations were scheduled to begin, the Shooting Group was relocated to the Pavilion (also known as the Cow Shed) at the Albion Park Showground. Part of the pavilion was converted into a shooting range, and Wednesday night practice sessions continued there until the Illawarra Shooting Range was constructed.



The *Schützenfest*, King's Ball, and New Year's Ball continued to raise funds, with the support of many dedicated volunteers who helped organise and run the events.

The Illawarra Championships were expanded to include the Ladies Class. The first Illawarra Ladies Champion was Esther Irgang from the Cabramatta Club, with a score of 346/400.

## 1973

Schuetzenklub Illawarra members voted to amend the club statutes to redefine the agenda and formally include it as part of the Annual General Meetings, aiming to create greater transparency. It was also agreed that the club would be managed by a Board of Directors. The Captain would be responsible for organising shooting events in consultation with the Board and for overseeing their management in accordance with the official sports regulations.

The AGA Club Germania Wollongong organised and held the first Oktoberfest at the Wollongong Showground.

## 1974

On January 8th, 1974, the Air Rifle Association of Australia (ARAA) held its Annual General Meeting in Adelaide. The following committee was elected:

**President:** Karl-Heinz Schubert

**Vice President:** Gustav Eckler

**Secretary:** Ted Schroeder

**Vice Secretary:** Karl-Heinz Gross

**Treasurer:** F. Meyer

**Vice Treasurer:** Peter Irgang

**Range Officer:** T. Jobst and D. Evans

**Grader:** Karl-Heinz Engelhardt and E. Beckmann

Since its foundation in 1970, the Association has grown significantly across all aspects of the sport. The original member clubs included Adelaide, Perth, Cabramatta, Tivoli, Hubertus Concordia, *Waldeslust* Wollongong, and the Illawarra Rifle Club. New clubs have since joined, including Mt Gambier, Newcastle, Canberra, Darwin, and Whyalla. The Association is currently working towards official recognition by an Australian sporting shooting body, which will enable members to participate in both national and international competitions.

In February, the Illawarra Shooting Club was offered three building sites:

1. The Warilla Bowling Club site
2. Land on Tongarra Road, Albion Park Rail provided by Shellharbour City Council is part of the Aerodrome.
3. The grounds of the AGA Club Germania in Berkeley.

The members voted in favour of building on the land at Tongarra Road, Albion Park Rail.

The first plans for construction were presented at the meeting, along with two proposed amendments to the club's statutes:

- To lower the minimum age for full membership (with voting rights) from 21 to 18.
- To stipulate that only club members who speak German may be elected to the Board.

It was also suggested that the statutes be translated into English, as confusion caused by overlapping regulations had drawn criticism.

To help raise funds for the construction of the shooting range and clubhouse, the "Buy a Brick" initiative was launched. A motion by Werner Daniel, seconded by Peter Faber, to convert the *Schützenklub* into a company was approved. Sunday shooting was to continue at the pavilion at Albion Park.

The Air Rifle Association of Australia, in collaboration with Lufthansa German Airlines and *The Bridge*, welcomed Mr. Gotfried Kustermann Jr., World and German Champion in Smallbore and Air Rifle Shooting from Munich, West Germany.

Arriving in Sydney on May 1st, 1974, he was invited by the Air Rifle Association of Australia to assist in coaching and mentoring Australian sporting shooters and to initiate training programs for association members. The visit also included scheduled discussions with the Federal and State Smallbore Associations, as well as the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, with the goal of strengthening relationships and elevating the standard of shooting in Australia.

During his stay, Gotfried Kustermann Jr. would visit NSW, the ACT, South Australia, and the Northern Territory, travelling by car and plane.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt accompanied Gotfried Kustermann Jr. to the Albion Park Showground Pavilion, where he was introduced to the Illawarra shooters. Karl-Heinz Engelhardt became a technical trainer and used his knowledge to train others. He and Gotfried Kustermann Jr. remained in contact for many years.

On June 7th, 1974, the Illawarra club held a meeting to discuss the possibility of building on the grounds of the AGA Club Germania in Berkeley. The AGA Club Germania had recently been granted its liquor license, and contact was made to discuss the proposal further. During the meeting, Karl-Heinz Engelhardt raised the importance of ensuring that junior shooters received proper training in practice shooting. He requested to be relieved of his duties as Junior Trainer and Range Officer, resigned from the committee, and left the Club. For Karl-Heinz Engelhardt, the most important outcome was that the Illawarra shooters were now closer to securing a permanent shooting range and that the sport was progressing successfully into the future.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt and his daughter Petra Engelhardt became members of the Hubertus Rifle Club, Badgerys Creek.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1974 the Air Rifle Association of Australia was incorporated in Canberra, ACT. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1974, Walter Krikowa from Harmonia Air Rifle Club was appointed Public Officer.

*Schützenklub Illawarra* held a meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1974 at the Progress Hall in Albion Park Rail. The meeting was conducted in both English and German. President Fritz Fischer gave a brief update on the negotiations with the AGA Club Germania regarding the construction of a Shooting Hall on their premises in Berkeley. The options presented to members were to:

- Remain independent and build in Albion Park Rail, or
- Merge and build in Berkeley.

The members voted to remain independent and build in Albion Park Rail.

## **1975**

The development application and final plans were submitted to Shellharbour Council, with construction of Stage 1 of the Illawarra shooting range to commence pending approval.

In January, the AGA Club Germania expressed in their newsletter that their efforts over the past years to merge with the Illawarra Shooting Club had not been successful. Some members expressed a desire to form their own shooting group. A meeting was scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1975 at Warrawong Hall, providing the shooting group an opportunity to contribute to the future planning of the clubhouse, particularly regarding the sports facilities. Those present at the meeting formed a temporary committee. The committee comprised of:

**President:** T. Hiesgen

**Vice President:** G. Thiedeke

**Secretary:** F. Sengstock

**Treasurer:** E. Hiesgen

**Captain:** M. Galke

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt was invited to attend the meeting and the name of the newly formed shooters group *Diana 1975* joined the AGA Club Germania Ltd Wollongong. Shooting practice sessions were held at Warrawong Hall.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt, a member of the Hubertus Rifle Club of Badgerys Creek, then became a member of the Diana group and took over as technical trainer, teaching the shooters their first lessons. He warmly welcomed every new shooter into the Diana family and continued to train, mentor, and support the group, especially the juniors, just as he had done earlier with the shooters from the Illawarra Shooting Club.

On March 8th, 1975, Diana became a member of the Air Rifle Association of Australia Inc, with a membership comprising 26 shooters.

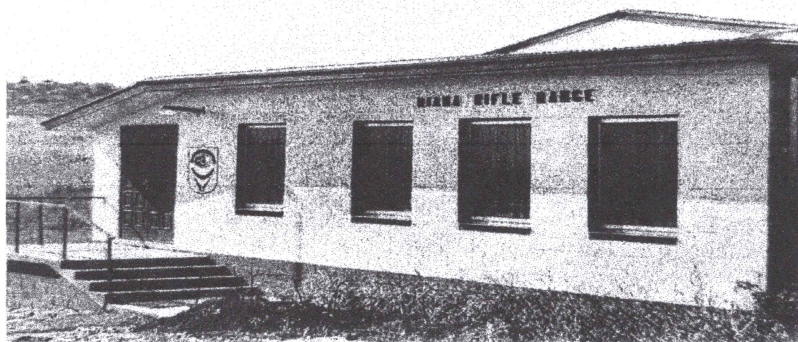
The Diana group participated in their first club championship at the City of Sydney Championships in Liverpool, with five shooters proudly bringing home their first medals.

Prior to Christmas, an architect was commissioned to draw up plans for the Shooting Range, and the financial aspects of the project were successfully resolved.

## **1976**

On April 17th, 1976, the AGA Club Germania Ltd officially opened its doors and welcomed all members and guests. During October the Diana group held their first King's Ball.

Construction of the Diana Rifle Range was well underway, carried out by group members with assistance from a few tradesmen. The range was completed within five weeks, officially opening on June 4th, 1976. Featuring 25 shooting lanes, it became the most modern facility of its kind in Australia. The Air Rifle Group Diana was now ready to host the first City of Wollongong Championships on June 6th, 1976. Two hundred shooters gathered for the competition, and the first Ladies Wollongong Champion was Ruth Fussi from Hubertus, scoring 369 out of 400.



The AGA Germania Club Ltd reserved a page in their newsletter to acknowledge the achievements of the Air Rifle Group Diana.

With eighty members, Diana had become the strongest rifle group in Australia.

The President of the Diana Shooting Group attended monthly meetings alongside the President and Secretary of the AGA Germania, as well as the presidents of all affiliated associations and groups.

Meanwhile, *Waldeslust* ended its association with the AGA Club Germania Ltd.

Illawarra was on target with the construction of their shooting hall. The *Schützenklub Illawarra* shooting hall was officially opened by Dr. Helmut Tuerk Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, on March 27th, 1976. The hall's construction was completed on September 24th, 1976, and it received approval for use from the Town Clerk on September 30th, 1976. Finally, the Illawarra shooters had their own dedicated range, a successful outcome.

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt and Helmut Schleinitz always made time to discuss the ongoing growth and future of the sport.

### **1977**

The members raised additional funds for Stage 2: the construction of their German Clubhouse.

### **1978**

The balls continued to be held at Centenary Hall, Albion Park, consistently well supported by the wider shooting community, with many enjoying the traditional German schnapps.

### **1979**

By March 22nd, 1979, construction of Stage 2 of the German Club was well underway. The work was completed and officially approved by the Town Clerk on August 15th, 1979. The club's new signage went up, and the club was officially named the German Air Rifle Club Illawarra and later renamed *Schützenklub Illawarra Ltd.*

Many dedicated ladies volunteered their time for the bar and kitchen, preparing traditional German dishes and cakes that quickly became crowd favourites. Adding to the festivities, a pig on the spit was introduced as a beloved fundraiser, delighting members for many years to come.

Sunday afternoons became a highlight for members, following the monthly presentations, music filled the air, dance floor came alive, and raffles raised funds. Special performances from the German Dance Group and the Sanssouci male choir, affiliated with the AGA Club Germania, added warmth to the celebrations. All hopes and expectations were fulfilled by the members of

the German Air Rifle Club Illawarra and the AGA Germania Club Ltd, as their clubs officially opened and flourished.

The Diana Shooting Group took the lead in organising the first Wollongong Schützen Festival at the Wollongong Showground (now Wollongong Entertainment Centre). The festival celebrated air rifle sport while embracing German and Austrian traditions, introducing both to the wider community. At the event, Karl-Heinz Engelhardt was crowned the first Wollongong King, with Martha Kirchner as Wollongong Queen.

### **1980**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January, 1980, Karl-Heinz Engelhardt was honoured to start his first day as President of the Air Rifle Association of Australia Inc *ARAA*. The Air Rifle shooting communities were all well established throughout Australia, membership is a multi-cultural society where every person adds their own unique contribution to the Association. Over the many years that Karl-Heinz Engelhardt was President he would travel to many shooting clubs within Australia to offer his support, he was always approachable and would share his knowledge and experience of the sport with everyone

The clubs and shooting groups continued to thrive, with competitions held regularly across Australia.

### **1985**

The German Air Rifle Club Illawarra had an official opening six years after the club was completed, opened by The Hon. J.A Crosio, Minister for Natural Resources and Dr. G. Pagenstert, Consul General for Federal Republic of Germany, Assisted by Alderman R.J. Harrison, Mayor of Municipality of Shellharbour, on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 1985.

### **1989**

The Oktoberfest was then introduced, an annual three-day event held on the grounds of the AGA Club Germania, Northcliff Drive, Berkeley, *Kembla Grange*. Organised and run entirely by volunteers, the festival aimed to celebrate and promote German culture within the wider community. It quickly grew in popularity, becoming the largest regional Oktoberfest in Australia.

### **1990**

Air Rifle Association of Australia Inc celebrated its 20th anniversary, reflecting on two decades of growth and achievement since its founding in 1970. The Association proudly acknowledged the contributions of its founding members and all those who had shaped its journey.

Since the 1974 World Championships, twenty-one Air Rifle Association of Australia Inc members have gone on to represent Australia on the international stage. Their success includes medal wins in Seoul and Brisbane, with the standout achievement being a bronze medal at the Brisbane Commonwealth Games.

### **Air Rifle Association of Australia Inc National Representatives**

Wolfgang Jobst – Hubertus Liverpool Rifle Club

- Olympic Games
- World Championships
- Commonwealth Games
- European Tours

Jan Kobier – Germania Air Rifle Group Newcastle

- World Championships
- European Tours



In June 1987, a new Australian record of 593/600 was achieved. During the 20th Anniversary celebrations, President Karl-Heinz Engelhardt expressed his pride in all that the members and the 26 associate clubs had accomplished, particularly the significant improvements in both shooting standards and sporting facilities over the past two decades.

### **1990 Committee Members**

**President:** Karl-Heinz Engelhardt, Air Rifle Group Diana, Wollongong (since 1980)

**Vice President:** Peter Kobier, Germania Air Rifle Group, Newcastle (2<sup>nd</sup> Term)

**Secretary:** Hans O. Kamm, Air Rifle Group Diana, Wollongong (5<sup>th</sup> Term)

**Treasurer:** Gertrud Kamm, Air Rifle Group Diana, Wollongong (5<sup>th</sup> Term)

**Chief Range Officer:** Barry Shaw, Hubertus Liverpool Rifle Club (3<sup>rd</sup> Term)

**Statistician Grader:** Manfred Knorr, German Air Rifle Club, Illawarra (2<sup>nd</sup> Term)

**Publicity Officer:** Gemelo Alvez, Harmonie Air Rifle Club, Canberra (1<sup>st</sup> Term)

## **Foundation Clubs**

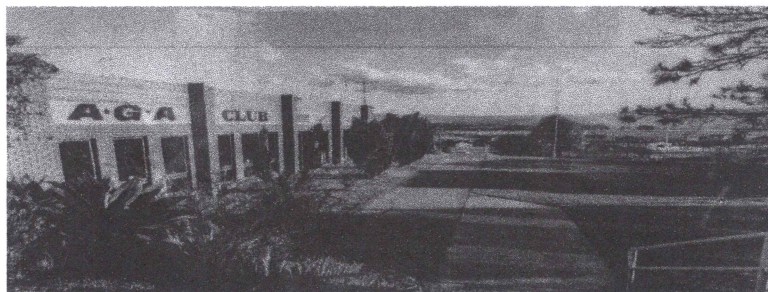
Falkenauge, Adelaide  
Concordia, Sydney  
Illawarra, Wollongong  
Cabramatta, Sydney  
Eagle Eye, Perth  
Hubertus, Liverpool

## **Presidents Serving since 1970**

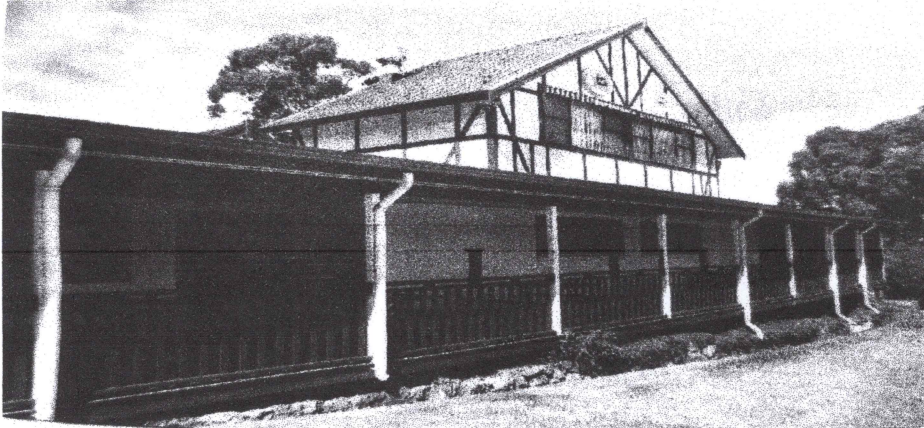
**1970:** Richard Wrobel, Perth  
**1971:** Gustav Eckler, Liverpool  
**1972-74:** Karl-Heinz Schubert, Cabramatta  
**1975:** Erwin Beckman, Liverpool  
**1976:** Gustav Eckler, Liverpool  
**1977-78:** Karl-Heinz Schubert, Cabramatta  
**1979:** Gustav Eckler, Liverpool  
**1980-93:** Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Snr, Wollongong  
**1994-95:** Arthur Stewart, Cabramatta  
**1996-98** Barry Shaw, Liverpool  
**1999:** Colin Lawrence, Newcastle  
**2000:** Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Snr, Cooma  
**2001-2003:** Sandor Madai, Victoria  
**2004 -** Robert Prstec, Illawarra

## **1993**

In May 1993, the AGA Club Germania Ltd premises on Northcliffe Drive, Kembla Grange, were purchased by Hanson and Cole Funeral Home, which was subsequently established on the site. The AGA Club Germania then relocated next door to the former Air Rifle Group Diana Wollongong building, originally established in 1975 as a rifle range.



The building underwent extensive renovations, incorporating traditional German and Austrian influences, and was reopened to the General Public, as the German Club.



Karl-Heinz along with the active shooters from the former Air Rifle Group Diana Wollongong became members of the Illawarra Club in Albion Park Rail which was renamed to Schuetzenklub Illawarra Ltd in 1993 restoring the name from 1967.

### **1996**

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt retired in Cooma and became a member of the Monaro Air Rifle Club, where he continued to mentor and support fellow shooters for over twenty years.

His recognition came from the shooting community. Everything he envisioned for the sport was achieved during his lifetime, leaving a lasting and inspiring legacy.

### **2025**

*Schuetzenklub* Illawarra Ltd is still proudly run by dedicated volunteers



**Information provided by:**

Karl-Heinz Engelhardt Jnr.

Esther (Engelhardt) Weir

Petra Engelhardt

**Sources:**

- AGA Germania and Affiliated Groups: Booklet (1961–1976)
- *Schützenklub* Illawarra
- Family Video Footage (1970–1971): Australian Championships, Illawarra Championship, and *Schützenfest* in Albion Park
- Shellharbour City Council Archives
- Air Rifle Association Inc: Booklet (1970–1990)