



Rideau Trail

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023

Issue No. 208



Where does the Rideau Trail
take *you*?



Rideau Trail Association



SUMMER PICNIC

Saturday, July 8

(rain date July 9)

Come by boat or by car, or better yet....hike to
the **Conservation Area**
at the Rideau Ferry Yacht Club

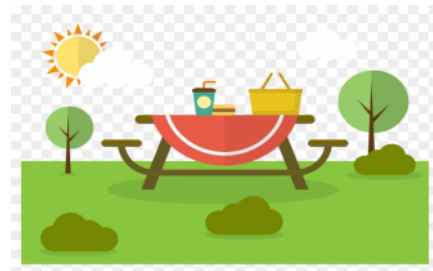
11 am 'to close' Lunch at 12:30 noon

BBQ - Games - Water activities - Comradeship
Swap and Sell Table

Cost: \$5 per person, guests welcome

Reduce waste - BYO dishes and cutlery

See Activity Calendar and website for more detail



Advance registration (preferred) by 30 June 2023



Ottawa Club Publicity Coordinator, Jennifer Kaspardlov speaks to visitors at Outdoor and Adventure Show in April. See opposite.



Warming up after a day on the Trail in winter. Thanks to an unnamed server for the photo.

See more from David McNicoll on page 9.

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The RTA on Display

BY INGRIT MONASTERIOS

The Outdoor and Adventure Show took place in Ottawa on April 15 and 16. This was a great opportunity to promote the Rideau Trail Association to a captive and engaging audience. A total of 18 RTA members volunteered to set-up and greet visitors at the booth. It was a very good show with good energy and great exposure for RTA.



Volunteers Davor and Walter help dismantling the booth

We had a great table near the entrance and far away from noise. The booth looked awesome thanks to the amazing promotional materials RTA has invested in through the years for these purposes.

The "Take a Hike" buttons and the RTA crest stickers were a hit, particularly with kids who would stick the crest on their t-shirts providing free advertising as they walked around the venue.

The booth was busy with people most of the time. On Saturday afternoon, I made a presentation on the stage. A total of 143 people filled out a ballot for a chance to win one of 10 free RTA memberships. It really was an amazing experience and all RTA volunteers who participated in the event had a great time talking to people about the wonderful benefits of being a member of the Rideau Trail Association.



Ingrid Monasterios is Director of Marketing and Communications for The Rideau Trail Association Inc.

Inside Summer. EDITED BY STEVE KELLY (OTTAWA)

Association News		Services, Badges and Other User Info	10
RTA on Display	3	Events and Activities	11
Rideau Trail Directory	4	Features	12
Board Highlights	5	Rideau Trail in Winter	9
Action Plan for Marketing	5	Smiths Fall à Kingston le Rideau Trail en solitaire	15
ONCA Update	6	My Frontenac Challenge	17
RTA Legal Name	6	Kluane!	18
RTA Insurance	7	Advertisers	
In Memoriam	14	The Cove Inn	2
Trail User Information		Brown Rabbit Cabins	3
Trail Reroutes	5	Comfortable Hiking Holidays	7
Anaplasmosis	7	Bushtukah	20

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Cover: RTA members go many places in many ways. Photos: Jack Tannett and Steve Kelly





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The RTA does not share its mailing list with other organizations.

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**Follow, sure.
 Why not lead?
 Help Wanted...**



Next Newsletter: **Deadline August 1, 2023**

We want your submissions! If possible, text should be sent electronically with no document formatting. Pictures with good definition and contrast are most welcome.

Send material directly to the Editor, newsletter@rideautrail.org

Kingston Club Executive

Chair: Jim Moss
 Vice Chair: * VACANT *
 Past Chair: Barry Monaghan
 Secretary: Lynn Esau
 Treasurer: Marilyn Martin
 Landowner Liaison: Hélène Brillon
 Construction: James Lorimer
 Maintenance: Stan Huff
 Communications and Publicity:
 Bill Ottney
 Human Resources: Cathy Fanjoy
 Technical Support: Laura Cybulski
 Outings Coordinators: Karin McInnis
 and Louise Langlais
 Wednesday Walks Coordinator:
 Jennifer Brinkman
 Special Events:
 Jacqueline Pidskalny
 Members at Large: Margaret
 MacSween, Rusty Bassarab and
 Alan Smith

Central Club Executive

Chair: Herman Doornbas
 Vice-Chair: * VACANT *
 Past Chair: Jim Middleton
 Secretary: Mary Robinson
 Treasurer: Gayle Truman
 Trail Maintenance:
 David Skinner
 Hike Leader Coordinator:
 Pat Stranberg
 Landowner Liaison:
 Carol Richardson
 Social Coordinator:
 Angela Quinn
 Communications:
 Linda Hachmer
 Member at large:
 Janet Eckersley

Ottawa Club Executive

Chair: Peter Weir
 Vice Chair: * VACANT *
 Past Chair: Sandy Freeman
 Secretary: Malcolm Sanderson
 Treasurer: Robert Smith
 Trail Maintenance: Ian Campbell
 Landowner Liaison: Roger Reens
 NCC Liaison: Bridget Daley
 Activities Coordinators: Denise Hall
 and Kevin Reynolds
 Publicity Coordinator and
 Website Content Manager:
 Jennifer Kaspardlov
 Member at Large: Brian Grant
 Newsletter Editors: Steve Kelly and
 Peter Weir

Board of Directors

President: Sharen Yaworski, Kingston
 (613) 449-2808 president@rideautrail.org

Vice President: * VACANT *

Past President: Brian Grant, Ottawa
 (613) 225-8770 pastpresident@rideautrail.org

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 marketing@rideautrail.org

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 kingston@rideautrail.org
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 Ottawa: Peter Weir, Ottawa
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 Ottawa: *VACANT*

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 Peter Weir, Ottawa
 newsletter@rideautrail.org

Association News

Board Highlights

April 29, 2023 at McMartin House, Perth
BY RUTH OSWALD, SECRETARY

Board News

Proposed RTA Bylaw 4, updated to comply with the Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA), has been delayed. The RTA ONCA Team will continue to work on the project, with the Bylaw and Articles of Incorporation to be completed this summer. We now plan to hold a virtual information session(s) in late summer, and a virtual Members Meeting to approve the updated Bylaw in autumn 2023. The Bylaw would then go into effect as of the 2024 AGM.

Important Motions

The RTA will enroll in CIBC Smart Banking, allowing certain transactions to be done by secure e-transfer.

Finance

The year-end financial reports and budget were approved by the Board, for presentation to the Members at the 2023 AGM in May. At the AGM, there will be an “extraordinary resolution” to defer a financial review, as permitted under ONCA for public benefit non-profit corporations with revenue less than \$100 K per year. The RTA’s last independent financial review was for 2022. Bank account signatories will be updated to reflect Board changes at the upcoming AGM.

Membership

Total Membership was 1285 as of March 31, 2023 (Kingston 364, Central 167, Ottawa 665, Unaffiliated 89). Membership Director Evert de Boer continues to work closely with the designer of the new RTA website to improve the online “Join” function.

Marketing and Communications

The Board approved the Marketing and Communications Committee Term of Reference and the Marketing and Communications Action Plan for 2023, both presented by Ingrit Monasterios.

The following Directors were absent: Brian Grant, Barry Monaghan, David Skinner.

The next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 24 in Perth.

ICYMI - old news: AGM Saturday, May 27, 2023
Perth Legion

Action Plan For Marketing and Communications

BY INGRIT MONASTERIOS

The newly formed Marketing and Communications Committee has put together an exciting action plan for communication and promotion of the Rideau Trail Association.

The committee is composed of me, as Director for Marketing and Communications, the two Newsletter Editors, Peter Weir and Steve Kelly, and the three Communications/Publicity Coordinators of the three clubs: William Ottney for Kingston, Linda Hachmer for Central and Jennifer Kaspardlov for Ottawa.

Through membership registration we know that the vast majority of new members find out about RTA through friends, this means that it is our own members who are best at promoting RTA through word of mouth. For that reason, this year’s theme for marketing RTA is “Members Promoting RTA”, we are already doing it, we just want to facilitate and support members in the process. The first initiative got underway in April when we started distributing free RTA Crest badges to all members wishing to display it on their backpack or any other surface visible to others. There will be other activities through the year centered in supporting and encouraging our membership to further self-promote RTA.

Other planned activities include:

- Expansion of social media: Facebook & Instagram
- Targeted promotion and advertising opportunities
- Community events for families with children
- Survey for ideas regarding RTA Newsletter Facebook, Website, weekly communications, etc.

If you have any ideas and/or if you want to volunteer to see these initiatives come to fruition, do not hesitate to contact me at marketing@rideautrail.org.

Trail Reroutes

Kingston

- Kingston City
- Between RT 08D and RT08E

Central

- Between 11A and 11B is coming

Ottawa

- Between 19C and 19H - variable due to a construction issue

Association News

ONCA Compliance Update

BY RUTH OSWALD

As reported in the Spring Newsletter, the RTA Board of Directors is working diligently to meet compliance with the Ontario Not-for-profit Corporations Act (ONCA) by the deadline in October 2024.

We must update the Association's Bylaw and Articles of Incorporation (formerly called "Letters Patent") to comply with the requirements of the new Act. The ONCA Team (Brian Grant, Roger Reens, and Ruth Oswald) had planned to present the new Bylaw to RTA Members for approval at the 2023 AGM. Alas, delays have been encountered. Here is the new timeline:

- Complete the revised Bylaw and Articles of Incorporation by the June Board meeting.
- Hold a virtual information session(s) for RTA Members in late summer 2023.
- Hold a virtual Members' meeting in the autumn of 2023 to seek Member approval.
- Implement the revised Bylaw effective with the 2024 AGM.

The ONCA team welcomes Rusty Bassarab, RTA Trail Coordinator, who has offered his help on the project.

Benefits of Membership

The Rideau Trail Association Inc is committed to preserving and promoting the use of over 400 km of Trail system between Kingston and Ottawa.

Volunteers do the work, but membership fees pay for the upkeep and improvements to the Trail, including construction materials, signage, insurance, mapping, etc.

Benefits include

- Quarterly Newsletter
- News from the clubs
- Retail discounts
- Voting privileges
- The knowledge that you are supporting and protecting this world-class treasure.

Discounts for Members

- 10% off at Ottawa stores Trailhead Paddleshack, Bushtukah, Great Escape Outfitters
- 10% off at Novel Idea in Kingston, and 10% off at Smith Army Surplus
- 10% off Annual Pass purchased at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area
- Discounted Winter Trail Pass at Gatineau Park

Who Are We, Really?

BY RUTH OSWALD

We are legally: "The Rideau Trail Association Incorporated", a not-for-profit corporation in the Province of Ontario, and a registered Canadian charity.

Why is this news? During research to update the our Bylaw to conform with ONCA (the Ontario Not-for-profit Corporations Act), the sharp eye of Roger Reens (Landowner Liaison - Ottawa Club, retired lawyer, and ONCA Team volunteer) detected a potential discrepancy in the Association's legal name.

The history behind this potential discrepancy follows (and as you read this, please remember – we are ALL volunteers!). As most of us know, the Rideau Trail Association as a group was initiated by Doug Knapp and others in 1971 (the date shown on our crest).

On September 3, 1974 The Province of Ontario granted Letters Patent (now known as "Articles of Incorporation") in the name of The Rideau Trail Association Incorporated. Unfortunately, on July 17, 1979 the Corporation was dissolved for failure to file its annual returns under the Corporations Information Act. The Corporation had two years to submit an application for revival under the Corporations Act but didn't do so and carried on operating.

The Corporation, therefore, had to petition for a private act to revive the Corporation. On June 25, 1992 Bill Pr94, being an Act to revive "Rideau Trail Association" received Royal Assent.

And therein lies the potential discrepancy in the legal name of our Association. The Board of Directors recently engaged a law firm who confirmed that the Association's legal name is, indeed, "**The Rideau Trail Association Incorporated**". They also reminded us that we should consistently display our full legal name on the website, letterhead, newsletter, invoices, and other important documents.

The Board thanks Roger for identifying this legal question and helping to get it answered.

Donations to the Rideau Trail

Robert Charest
Catherine Fanjoy
Verena Hammerli
Thomas Irwin
Jacqueline Pidskalny
Randy Smith

Thank you.

Anaplasmosis

BY ALETA KARSTAD

I had been suffering for a couple of weeks from back aches – figured I was just getting old. Then I felt slightly feverish for a few days, and went for a PCR test – Negative. Then the fever got serious. Son-in-law Rory took me to the Ottawa General on Sunday, June 12, with a rising fever that Tylenol was failing to control.

Once I was checked and tested and everything else ruled out, the Emerg doctor began to wonder if it could be a tropical disease. I hadn't been traveling. Then he guessed that it was likely Anaplasmosis – so I was tested for tick-borne Rickettsial diseases and sent home with a prescription for two weeks of Doxycycline which would knock out any of them.

The Doxycycline worked within 7 hours, as he had predicted, to stop the steadily rising fever in its tracks! The results came in on Monday, the next day:

Serology: Borrelia (Lyme) NEG

Serology: Erlichia NEG

Blood smear: Anaplasmosis POSITIVE

I returned home on June 19 after convalescing for a week at our daughter's place in Kemptville, feeling normal and VERY lucky!

The scary thing is that I had not been aware of any tick bite this spring. Must been one of the tiniest ticks, and didn't stay on! Not only is Anaplasmosis more dangerous than Lyme, it can be transmitted right away – as soon as the tick bites!

Fred has had four embedded ticks this spring – two Dog Ticks, and two of the Lyme-carrying Black-Legged Ticks. For the first one, he went to Emergency in Kemptville for a dose of Doxycycline. But we'd found none on me....

If I'd known I had a tick, I'd have gone to Emerg in Kemptville for a dose of Doxycycline, early on. In fact, I was there on Saturday, June 12, complaining of fever – but without information about a tick bite, and no rash, they figured I must have a blood infection, gave me a broad-spectrum IV antibiotic and sent me home with a prescription for Amoxy-Clav.

I find myself wondering how many of the “negative” tests for Lyme are really Anaplasmosis. It causes kidney and liver damage if not treated early, and is very dangerous “for the elderly and those with underlying conditions”. Check, and Check. The late stage symptoms match those of COVID – respiratory failure, etc. I'm glad to be alive and well, instead of in the ICU, or dead!

Watch out, everyone! Anaplasmosis is here – use insect repellants (best is Pactive, from Canadian Tire. Lasts for 12 hours and is safe for kids and pets) and get yourself some “No Fly Zone” pants from Marks Work Warehouse, impregnated with Permethrin, and lined for safe wearing. I have always worn skirts, everywhere except in a kayak. But now every day until the snow flies, I'll wear my tick pants, even around the yard – with lemongrass spray on my ankles and feet. Not taking any chances.

Reprinted with permission from Ms. Karstand and the North Dundas Times

RTA Insurance – What Does It Actually Cover?

As there are frequently misconceptions about what the RTA purchased insurance covers, your Board felt that it would be worthwhile to explain to members what the insurance does, and what it does not, cover.

First and foremost, **it is Liability Insurance**. It is purchased to protect the Association from lawsuits that could bankrupt and destroy our Association. It covers the Association itself, the Association Executives (Board members, Club Executives), Hike Leaders, Trail Maintenance Leaders, Landowners, and all volunteers working on behalf of the Association. Again, to be clear, it protects them against lawsuits, but it does not provide any personal injury coverage whatsoever to anyone.

Here are some example situations:

Example 1. Injury to hiker while on an RTA sanctioned hike (or similar outing, as long as it is a sanctioned event. In somewhat simplified terms, sanctioned events are self powered activities under RTA leadership/umbrella, but official meetings also qualify. Activities do not have to be on an RTA trail).

The hiker who is injured **does not receive any compensation** from the Association's Insurance. (NOTE the importance for individuals to have their own personal injury insurance) CONTINUES ON PAGE 8



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Should the injured individual, or one of their family members (historically this is a more frequent occurrence in lawsuits generally), initiate a lawsuit against the Hike Leader(s) then the insurance company will provide legal representation to the Hike Leader, AND coverage (to the extent of insurance that we hold) in the event that the lawsuit is successful. (NOTE: this is why the Insurance Company is insistent upon signed waivers for all sanctioned events). Waivers do not excuse responsibility when a leader takes irresponsible actions, but they do cover the majority of situations as the participants have legally acknowledged that they are participating at their own risk.

Example 2. Injury to trail maintenance worker while performing trail maintenance.

This is quite similar to example 1, with some additional aspects. The injured volunteer does not receive any compensation from the Association's Insurance (again, **volunteers should have personal injury insurance**).

Once again, the injured individual (or family members) may decide to bring forward a lawsuit. Our insurance company would provide legal representation and financial coverage for the Trail Maintenance Leader (or the Association/specifically named Association Officer) if there is no leader present. Per usual, it is very important that a waiver was signed for either that specific trail maintenance activity, or else one was signed for ongoing activities for the year (NOTE that in such cases it is recommended that waivers are re-signed each spring or when new maintainers start).

Additional Aspects. It is important that trail maintenance volunteers receive safety training appropriate to the work they are doing and are wearing any required safety equipment. If the individual is putting up trail blazes and doing minor branch trimming, then the safety briefing is quite short. If the individual is using power equipment, then they need to be shown (or their stated ability confirmed) how to safely use the equipment - and it may require that safety goggles are worn. For the use of chainsaws, a safety course is required, as are helmet, goggles, special pants and protective boots.

Example 3. Error made by Association Officer (this could be a Board Member, or an Association Officer, or a member of a Club Executive – for this example I will use the Trail Coordinator). The Trail Coordinator publishes a new map but made a mistake that showed the trail going directly over a dangerous ridge. A trail user, not even a member, follows the trail indicated on the map and falls, resulting in an injury. That individual decides to sue the RTA and the person who endorsed the map as correct.

If the individual(s) decide to sue, then the insurance company provides representation for both the Association and any named/implicated officer.

There is no signed waiver involved, but there is the basic understanding that trails are used at own risk.

The outcome of the lawsuit would depend upon the extent of the error, and also the determination of whether a "reasonable approach" would be to ignore the trail blazes and follow the map trail over the dangerous ridge. Regardless of the outcome, the insurance would cover (to the limit of the policy) any costs involved and would protect the Association and the Individual.

Example 4. An individual wanders off the trail while crossing private property. The individual trips over an implement in the long grass and is injured. The individual, and the legal representative involved, decide to sue both the RTA and the landowner.

As you would expect by this stage of the article, the insurance provides legal and financial coverage for the RTA.

One of the key commitments that we make to all of our landowners (remember – the RTA does not own any property) is that our insurance would also provide legal and financial coverage (within the limits of the insurance) for the landowner involved. This is true for all landowners, and not just the cases where more formal signed agreements are signed.

Example 5. During a shuttle for one of the hikes, a car carrying hikers is involved in an accident.

The reason this example is included is to make sure everyone understands that **RTA insurance does not cover any aspect of any accidents that happen while in vehicles**. Drivers and passengers participate in shuttles at their own risk and drivers need to have insurance (just normal insurance). This does mean that hikers who will be passengers do have the right to indicate that they do not wish to travel with a particular driver and that individual should not be forced to do so if the concern is for safety reasons (in such a case the individual should express any particular concerns to the Hike Leader(s) in advance of passenger assignments).

While there could be numerous other potential examples, it is hoped that this provides members with sufficient understanding of what the insurance is for – it is liability insurance to protect our Association, our volunteers, and our landowners, from lawsuits resulting from RTA trail use. Everyone needs to arrange their own personal injury insurance.

PRESENTED BY RUSTY BASSARB,
TRAIL MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR

Before you go, check the

Trail Alerts

<https://www.rideautrail.org/discover-the-trail/trail-alerts/>

Afterwards, anyone can report the need for maintenance or repair on the Trail.

Be sure to do your part.

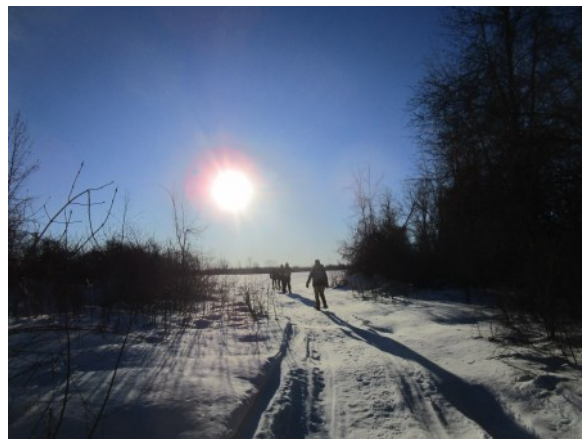
More from the Rideau Trail in Winter

BY DAVID MCNICOLL



Started on January 7th near the tiny chapel at Bedford Mills (Map 6 - 06D), heading north. Four weekends later, we paused on February 12th on a bend of a rural road where the trail veers east into some woods towards Merrickville (Map12 - 13A). Five of us in all, still 'los incognitos'. Thanks to Diane, Luc and Colette, who kept us on the straight and narrow, with a fair quantity of laughter. And graced on other days by Mary, Pat and Bert. Many adventures over the 8 days, averaging 14 km/day, for a sweet total of 113 km. Total trail Kingston-Ottawa 325 km, if continuing therapy is to be desired next winter.

David McNicoll is an Ottawa Club member who plans to walk the Chemin des Outaouais from Ottawa to Montreal.



DIANE GIGUÈRE PHOTO



Member Services

(Who gets your question?)

Whatever the question, just call the RTA for your club (page 4) or email: info@RideauTrail.org

Address Changes / Paper Newsletter

To stop it, or to receive it, call or email: membership@RideauTrail.org

DIY Option: "Update your Preferences"

This link at the bottom of emails from the Rideau Trail, enables you to verify or change your information/interests.

End to End Badges

Keep track of the details of your hikes, whenever you did them: Date, start and end point of the hike and the leader's name. Send questions or claims to the RTA by phone, or you can email the appropriate club contact.

Getting Involved

Thank you for wanting to help out. Feel free to contact any of those listed (page 4). Your interest might be about event ideas, co-leading hikes, your club's social committee, working on the Trail or whatever. It's a busy organization, and your help would be welcome.

What Will the Outing be Like?

The three main factors in rating an outing are Effort Intensity, Technical Challenge and Pace Intensity. For each, Moderate is defined this way:

Effort Intensity: similar to walking on a hilly forest trail

Technical Challenge: similar to needing careful footing

Pace Intensity: steady, with periodic breaks and allowance for unplanned breaks

The Levels serve to summarize that detail.

Level 1: All parameters are "Low" or up to one parameter may be moderate. The least difficult type of outing.

Level 2: At least 2 parameters are "Moderate" and no more than one parameter is "High". An outing with mid-range difficulty.

Level 3: At least 2 parameters are "High" or at least 1 parameter is "Very High". The most difficult type of outing.

Note that you can also find the latest, detailed guide to the Hike Classifications by going to the 'RTA Calendar Help' and click on "Outing Classifications".

Hike Leaders can gain further assistance on completing the Hike Description portion by clicking on the "Leader Instructions" link in the area immediately under that.

Badge Request Contacts



Entire End to End

(Winter or otherwise)

secretary@rideautrail.org
Rideau Trail Secretary



Kingston Club

jkbrinkman59@gmail.com
Jennifer Brinkman,
Kingston Club Volunteer



Central Club

hmrob@storm.ca
Mary Robinson,
Central Club Secretary



Ottawa Club

mxjxsanderson@gmail.com
Malcolm Sanderson,
Ottawa Club Secretary



Blue Trails

Submit your record of hiking the 12 designated Blue Loops to your Club's badge volunteer.



RIDEAU TRAIL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Calendars ^ << > Today > Feb 12 - Mar 11, 2023

CANCELLED

EVENT

- MEETING/WORK PARTY
- SOCIAL
- TRAINING
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- RTA All Clubs
- RTA Central
- RTA Kingston
- RTA Ottawa

Filter v

RTA Calendar Help ^

See definitions of the outing classifications at the following link: [Outing Classifications](#)

Leaders: to add or modify events see the instructions at the following link [Leader Instructions](#)

Feb 12, 2023

- Gatineau Hike
- Route Finding for Level 3 Hike Loops
- 9am Ferrier Road Loop - West to

Feb 19, 2023

- Winter Adventure @ Charest's
- 9:30am Hike/Snowshoe Blakene

Feb 26, 2023

- Hike Leader Training Event
- Smiths Falls to Numogate on the
- Murphy's Point Ski

Mar 5, 2023

- Crazy Horse Trail
- Mer Bleue Sector Sunday March
- Hike 10B to 9E & Return

Coming Events - Summer 2023

What to Bring

- Water
- Lunch or snack
- Identification
- Footwear (suitable for the outing)
- Emergency contact info
- List of medications

In Season

- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Insect repellent/treatment
- Sunscreen
- Handwarmers
- Spare hat
- Dry mitts
- Lock de-icer (also good for frozen bindings)

Carpooling and Fees

Be at the meeting place at least 15 minutes before the departure time.

Where a gas share is indicated, it is a suggested, voluntary contribution. Fees for parking and entry to parks are shared among the driver and passengers.

Questions?

Contact the leader or the club's activity coordinator.

Note

Hiking boots are recommended for hikes rated at Level 2 or higher. A **high level of fitness** is required for Level 3 outings.



Activity Calendar

Each club uses email to remind members of hikes and other outings. Check the member hub at <https://www.rideautrail.org/member-hub/>
<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>



Participants' Responsibilities

Participants are expected to choose a trip suitable for their physical abilities and their skill level. At the start they should inform their leader of any health problems or potential difficulties with their equipment. Each participant will respect all financial obligations. The volunteer leaders will expect the support and cooperation of each group member. Parents and guardians are expected to supervise their own children. Dogs are not generally permitted.



Before you go, check the **Trail Alerts**

Calabogie Parking

The message from Calabogie Peaks is, "hikers are welcome anytime to hike the mountain. There is a lovely little cabin at the top called "Top Hut" where hikers are welcome to have a picnic lunch. Also, anyone wanting to hike "The Eagles Nest" trail are welcome to access it from our ski run, 'Ole K & P'.

"Sometimes it's just nice to settle in for a quiet evening away from home."

www.calabogie.com

Events / Dates

See details in the Calendar or club information

Special Events

Social gatherings

Rideau Trail Annual meeting: May 27, in Perth

Picnic: July 8

Outings

Regular weekly outings in each club, in season

- Tuesday Trails
- Wednesday Walks/Walkers/Wanderers
- Friday's urban walks
- Urban walk and lunchtime concert

Events are added to the Calendar all the time. Check it often, so you're there in time!

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Trail Markers



Orange
North-bound
Rideau Trail



Orange-Yellow Tip
South-bound
Rideau Trail



Blue
Side trail or
Blue Loop

News and Notes from the Clubs - Summer 2023

Kingston

When attending an outdoor event, be safe; be prepared (page 11). Remember, for the safety of the group, a leader can refuse to accept a participant who is not ready for the outing's challenges.

MEETING PLACE

Unless stated otherwise, the meeting place is the Canadian Tire parking lot, along Bath Road, towards the gas station.

Questions/Contacts

General: kingston@rideautrail.org

Activities: activities.kingston@rideautrail.org

Wednesday Walkers: Contact Jennifer at wednesdaywalks60@gmail.com

Leaders: please send the completed waiver to HR Coordinator, Cathy:
waiver.kingston@rideautrail.org

Calendar of Events:

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Events and Activities

The Club sends regular notices by email. Be sure to check the Activity Calendar for the latest updates.

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Special Events

Monthly Socials: Starting June 29

Regular Activities

(Every week, conditions permitting)

Wednesday Walkers - Ideal for people interested in healthy exercise walking at a comfortable pace with some social interaction. Walks depart every Wednesday at 1:30 pm.

Other Outings

The Kingston Club often has walking, hiking or cycling outings.

Remember: <https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

All Clubs Summer PICNIC!

July 8 - page 2

Central

When attending an outdoor event, be safe; be prepared (page 11). Remember, for the safety of the group, a leader can refuse to accept a participant who is not ready for the outing's challenges.

MEETING PLACE

Unless otherwise specified, meet at the specified trailhead.

Conlon Farm in Perth. Gore St. southeast through Perth to County Road 10 (Scotch Line), turn right towards Westport, then turn at the 4th street on the right (Conlon Drive) and proceed to the Conlon Farm parking area. GPS: 127 Smith Dr. K7H 0A3

Questions/Contacts

General: central@rideautrail.org

Activities: activities.central@rideautrail.org

Calendar of Events:

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Events and Activities

Although emailed notices might come from the Club, be sure to check the Activity Calendar for the latest updates. <https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Special Events

July 17: History walk

Blue Loop hikes in June

Regular Activities

(Every week, conditions permitting)

Wednesday Wanderers - Shorter, leisurely hikes for those who want a mid-week stretch.

Friday morning walks

Other Outings

The Central Club is active in winter with snowshoe/hike and ski events are offered at Murphys Point and a various conservation areas.

Remember: <https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

News and Notes from the Clubs - Summer 2023

Ottawa

When attending an outdoor event, be safe; be prepared (page 11). Remember, for the safety of the group, a leader can refuse to accept a participant who is not ready for the outing's challenges.

Meeting Places

Transit construction can affect access to the meeting places. Check with the Calendar or the leader.

Tunney's Pasture: The government parking lot on the west side of Parkdale Avenue just across from Emmerson Avenue.

Fallowfield Park & Ride: The northwest parking lot of the Park & Ride station, off Fallowfield Road west of Woodroffe Avenue. Park near the drop-off area by the bus shelters.

Baseline Park & Ride: The parking lot at the Park & Ride station on Woodroffe Avenue south of Baseline Road. Meet at the south end of the parking lot, farthest from the bus stop.

Questions/Contacts

General: ottawa@rideautrail.org

Activities: rtaleaderottawa@gmail.com

Events and Activities

A weekly email from the Club advises of coming events, but be sure to check the Activity Calendar for last minute updates. <https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Special Events

Watch the Activity Calendar for urban walks, mid-week hikes, and the occasional option for swimming.

Regular Activities

(Every week, conditions permitting)

Events include a stop for lunch, sometimes **outdoors**.

Wednesday Walkers: Impromptu hike, XC ski and snow-shoe outings - Level 2 or 3. fellwalkerca@gmail.com

Other Outings

Weekend events are also plentiful with various level outings that might visit Marlborough Forest, Hollow Glen, Mer Bleue, Lac Philippe and other locations.

Remember: <https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Emergency in Greenbelt or Gatineau Park?

Is it a life threatening emergency? Call 911! As a second step or for any other emergency, call 613-239-5353

Welcome New and Returning Members

Kingston Club

William Arsenault
Evelyn Berkshire
Norma Boulet
Patricia Bowers
Meredith Carty
Jean Crowder
Debbie Farr
Kari Galasso
Nina Greene
Jeff Harkness
Kyle Hartwick
Louise Hunter
Adrienne Hussey
Jim King
David Marcus
Michelle Methot
Kim Nash
Diane Newman Reed

Roberta Panter
Gloria Seeley
Cynthia Simpson
Rachel St-Jean
Polly Van Luven
Maggie Warner
Mary Zureik

Unaffiliated

John Beamish
Allison Vereyken

Central Club

Tim Allen
Diane Cross
John Grierson
Christine Kilburn
Reid Kilburn
Annette Lebrun
Bonnie Levesque

Paule Marquis
Ernie O'Dell
Rebecca Rothwell
Danielle Shinkfield
Neil Shinkfield

Ottawa Club

Gudrun Allen
My-An Auprix
Ali Bakhshi
Isabel Barnes
Brian Carr
Stacey Cohen
Bridget Daley
Tamara Derksen
Sandra Duff
Gail Faulkner
Emma Gofton
Bridget Grounds
Sherida Harris

Susan Hefler
Suzanne Huva
John James
Linda Janveau
Leslie Kathmann
Fiona Keith
Mary Korpan
Mark Kuisma
Catherine Lafontaine
Michael Lesser
Emily LI WU
Fiona MacMartin
Elizabeth Marston
Robert McCulloch
Ryan McKenzie
Laura McLellan
Lauren McVean
Dennis Moran
Sue Morton

Rubby Neville
Theresa Paolasini
Marion Perry
Cedric Poon
Kristy Ready
Kristina Sabou
Matthew Schmidt
Jami Styan
Gabe Thirlwall
Chris Vanderford
Rosa Venuta
Venise Volodarsky
Dianne Wadden
Colette Zaharie

Absent Friends

Konrad Wolf 1936 - 2023

Our Rideau Trail Kingston Club lost a long-time member and friend to many with the recent passing of Konrad Wolf. Konrad was a member of the Kingston Club since 1987 and was well known known to many of our long-term members.

Konrad was passionate about sailing, hiking and traveling. He was an active member of the Kingston Yacht Club until 1999. In 1982, he took a sabbatical year from Alcan to work as a sailing master on a 70-foot ocean going yacht.

He is fondly-remembered by members Lynn Nolan, Lars Thomson, and Robert Tolley as the person who arranged transportation and served as the tour bus driver on many memorable skiing trips. Lars



Thompson was the ski trip organizer for over 10 years and bonded with Konrad as they worked together to make each trip memorable. Even after Konrad's retirement at age 70, he and his beloved Cécyle continued to join the group on ski trips.

Per Cécyle Trépanier, "Konrad always said that to start the tradition of the annual ski trip, the bull, the wolf and the fox met in the fox's den to discuss the possibility.

These animal names were also the family names of the initiators. "One year, the chef at Hotel l'Esterel, presented to the group for the Saturday night dessert, a beautiful and colourful cake made in the shape of a bus! Konrad said he had done many things with a bus before, but had never eaten one. It was a special thank you for all the years he had driven the group."

Coming from a musical family in his native Germany, Konrad also played cello in the Kingston Symphony Orchestra for 40 years and, states Lynn Nolan: "I was always pleased with the classical music he played on the bus sound system."

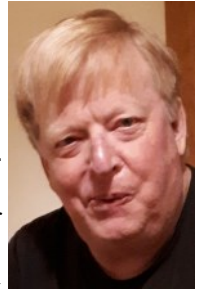
Konrad is remembered by all as being a true gentleman: naturally happy, kind-hearted, loyal, considerate and full of enthusiasm.

Gott segne dich, Konrad

John Sidney Crysdale 1954-2023

John died on April 21st, 2023 at the age of 69, after sudden complications from a rare auto-immune disease.

John was a loving father and grandfather, and the best friend, partner and husband of Johanne Pineau-Crysdale for over 20 years.



WENDY STASHICK: I have John to thank for helping me find my first set of X-country skis and introducing me to the Gatineau Park. He was patient and kind and always willing to share his passion for the outdoors. He will be missed.

STEVE KELLY: When I learned of his passing I thought: friend, neighbour, hiker, paddler and philosopher. John was all of those. In my mother's final years, during COVID in a retirement residence, John found a way to come by and share a beer and times on the trail with her. She loved those patio visits. John was one of those people who are always there when they are needed.

John was known in the Ottawa Club, the Ottawa Rambling Club, the Coureurs de Bois paddling club, Club Oxygène, and possibly others. His spirit touched many outdoor enthusiasts.

Geoffrey Arnold Berry 1930 to 2023

Geoff was born in Halifax, Yorkshire, and immigrated to Canada in 1957. After a few years at the Royal Canadian Mint in Winnipeg and Ottawa, he joined the National Research Council. A Tool & Die maker, he enjoyed working with Laser & Plasma Physics Scientists at NRC until retirement in 1990. Geoff loved the outdoors, biking, hiking, and XC skiing. He was a long-time member of the Rideau Trail Association.



He will be missed by his son, Paul, his daughter-in-law Christine, his wife Jennifer Housden, and his many friends. Complications from pneumonia and Covid ended a good long life.

CAROLINE WHALEY: I met Geoff on my first Rideau Trail hike, in 1988. In those days Geoff was the person who made all the triangular trail markers for the Rideau Trail.

We regularly hiked and skied in the same group and Geoff became a good friend, as did Jenny a few years later. Geoff was always great fun and a good person to have with us on a trip - hiking the Bruce Trail, a long weekend at Tanglewood, a day of local cycling, or a week at Mt-Tremblant. I will miss him.

SUBMITTED BY BILL OTTNEY, KINGSTON CLUB

Smith Falls à Kingston

le Rideau Trail en solitaire
PAR FRANÇOIS CYR (OTTAWA)

Après avoir complété 99.7 km de « Rideau Trail » (RT) majoritairement dans la section Ottawa, de Smith Falls à Kingston, en solitaire à 61 ans. Et bien voici le récit, étapes par étapes.

0. **24/05 Ottawa à Smith Falls** train
1. **25/05 Smith Falls à Beveridge Lock**
12B-11BA+ 2 extra = 14.9km 9 h00-13h30

En bordure de route pavée et en route de gravelle, la marche est facile. Lunch en bordure de cascade. Derniers 4 km sur route de gravier en construction. Je marche le long de la route pendant que le trafic alterne tout en faisant monter la poussière. En arrivant aux écluses, un écriteau indique que le lockmaster sera de retour bientôt et de l'appeler pour urgence à un numéro. ... 2 heures plus tard, il m'indique de camper n'importe où pour un maigre \$5.25 avec code d'accès pour une douche. Après une bonne douche, soirée et coucher bien tranquilles avec feu de camp.

2. **26/05 Beveridge Lock à Perth**
11BA-10E + 3 extra = 22km 10 h00-14h15



PHOTO: JACK TANNETT

3. **27/05 Perth à Murphy's Point**
10E -9A+ 3 extra = 32km 7 h30-20h00

Il pleut, il pleut et il pleut pour un total de 15mm. Les bottes, les bas et les pieds sont mouillés toute la journée de randonnée en sentiers forestiers à 80%. Je suis complètement trempé par la sueur sous le poncho. J'arrive au camping provincial (déjà payé), me présente à l'accueil, le bureau est fermé et nous indique de check-in le lendemain à 10 AM, avec la liste des gens qui doivent se présenter (plus d'une vingtaine).

Je connais mon numéro d'emplacement mais je ne sais pas où il se situe. Eureka, je trouve une carte du camping au kiosque à côté. Je me dirige au site (trop pentu à mon goût) et décide alors de planter la tente une place directement dans l'espace gravier plus plat prévu pour

le stationnement du véhicule. Déception, j'entends des chiens aboyer, des gens arriver rapidement avec leur roulotte, et une famille bruyante, s'installe sur le site voisin.

Tout se calme après le coucher du soleil. Point positif, je prends une bonne douche.

4. **28/05 Murphy's Point à Narrows Lock**
9A-8C = 14.1km 11h15-16h45

Puisqu'il n'en avait pas eu assez la veille, il pleut un autre mm à 6h00AM. À défaut de sécher le reste (bottes, bas, linge, etc.), je dois sécher la tente (essuyer) avant de partir. Après une pente descendante abrupte, arrivée aux 2 écluses de Narrows Lock; particularité les 2 éclusiers font pivoter un pont pour laisser passer les véhicules au-dessus du canal. Je m'installe entre des arbres et le lac (rivière à moins de 50 pieds de la route principale (pas le choix à cet endroit). Beaucoup d'activités à cet endroit : pêcheurs sur le quai, bateaux accostés pour la nuit, bateaux traversant les écluses et véhicules empruntant le pont, unique lien routier entre les 2 côtés du canal.

Après un souper copieux composé de légumes déshydratés, de ramen et d'une petite boîte de thon, j'hisser mon sac de victuailles dans l'arbre pour ne pas qu'il soit happé par un ours. Une heure après être tombé en sommeil, j'entends cric, crac, croc comme les Rice Krispies. Je sors de la tente avec appréhension et ma lumière frontale. Un bandit masqué croque mon sac de bouffe; il est déjà parvenu à manger une barre Cliff macadam (ce bandit a du goût). Il s'agit d'un raton voleur.

J'essaie de sauver mon sac de bouffe (le contenu est essentiel pour terminer ma quête). Je tire sur la corde mais le sac est coincé entre la branche et le bandit. Je finit pas réussir à tirer et faire tomber le sac. Le bandit me regarde droit dans les yeux. J'ai beau l'éclairer, faire du bruit; rien ne le fait broncher. Sur la table à pic-nique je constate les dommages; le sac a été grugé (mordu) à plusieurs endroits. Je sors les éléments pour constater que ce raton avait un goût prononcé pour le sucré; à part la barre cliff, il avait rongé du chocolat au lait, une coffee crisp, les biscuits aux figues et les biscuits secs. Il n'avait pas touché aux pepperoni, ramen, poudre de gatorade, craquelin fromage, etc.

Je pourrai continuer ma quête sans avoir à me ravitailler. Je jette les éléments contaminés, et me demande quoi faire avec mon sac que j'ai soigneusement « tapé ». Alors germe une idée de génie dans les circonstances. Les toilettes des écluses sont ouvertes toute la nuit. Je prends mon sac et le dissimule dans la poubelle de métal de la toilette pour handicapés.

Seule hic à cet éclair de génie, c'est que je n'ai aucune idée quand Parcs Canada (ou son contracteur) font le ménage. S'ils viennent durant la nuit et vident les poubelles, c'en est fait de mon sac de victuailles. Bref, comme d'habitude, je me lève plusieurs fois dans la nuit, prostate de 61 ans oblige, mais dors d'un sommeil ultra-léger, anticipant un ménage impromptu.

CONTINUE A PAGE 16

5. 29/05 Narrows Lock à Westport

8C-7D = 15.7km

Sentier montagneux difficile dans le Foley Mountain Conservation Area. Descente très abrupte pour se rendre au pittoresque village de Westport. Je me rends au « Westport Station Motel » et me fait faire un « prix » pour 2 nuits. Je vais au « laundromat » à 500 m et constate qu'il n'y a pas de savon à linge. Je me présente au dépanneur /poste à gaz à côté et j'achète du savon à linge. Seul hic, je pourrais faire de nombreuses brassées avec le seul format disponible. Je pars le lavage et décide d'aller au « chipwagon » un autre ½ km plus loin.

Enfin un souper gastronomique québécois: une poutine (large), un pogo et un ginger ale. C'est vraiment bon. Je retourne au lavage, procède au séchage et revient au motel. Va chercher le linge et revient au motel. Je fait une petite tournée du village pour me familiariser avec le lieu (tout est fermé, on est dimanche). Toute une épopée cette première journée à Westport!

6. 30/05 Westport REPOS

7. 31/05 Westport à Mosquito Lake

7D - 6C = 22.6km 8h00-18h00

Je quitte Westport tôt le matin. Je marches dans un mélange de toute surface du RT : sentier forestier en montagne, bordure de route, route de gravelle, champs d'herbes hautes mouillées (qui mouille les bottes de bord en bord pour le restant de la journée), sentier de bas en haut, visite de swamps et de barrages de castor, etc.

A Bedford Mills, une petite église se trouve sur mon chemin. Je m'installe dans les marches de ciment et élève mes jambes. À ma surprise, je vois des tiques se promener sur le ciment. C'est ma première rencontre à vie avec des tiques!

Je continue mon chemin jusqu'à Mosquito Lake (pourquoi ce nom ?) où il y a un site de camping du CRCA (un club de canoïstes) qui donne la permission aux membres RT de l'utiliser. J'arrive sur les lieux. Impossible de trouver un espace plat assez grand pour installer la tente; disons que je serai à plat pour 3/4 du corps.

Une fois installé dans la tente, bottes mouillées en espoir de séchage, je découvre une minuscule tique (pas plus grande qu'une tête de stylo) sur le milieu de mon mollet gauche arrière. Je l'extirpe du mieux que je peux avec le « tick remover ».

À ma grande surprise, elle est toujours vivante après l'extraction, qui n'a pas été faite professionnellement. Je la mets dans un sac sandwich ziploc) avec une autre tique plus grosse trouvée sur le corps dans le même coin sans s'être incrustée dans ma peau. Après plusieurs tentatives, je hisse mon sac de victuailles tapé pour le protéger des ours (ça semble un bon endroit pour en rencontrer). Bonne nuit!

8. 1/06 Mosquito Lake REPOS

Il pleut dès 6h00 AM. Il pleut sans arrêt toute la journée. Il fait plus que pleuvoir; j'expérimente 3 orages sous la

tente. Bref, une journée très reposante malgré tout.

9. 2/06 Mosquito Lake à Doe Lake

6C-4G = 27.2km ? -19h00

Après le RT s'engage dans le parc provincial Frontenac avec des sentiers forestiers difficiles, et des bottes toujours mouillées par les sentiers. Je ne trouve pas le camping rudimentaire de RT et il se fait de plus en plus tard (6h00, 6h30, 7h00 PM. Gros lot, j'arrive à un camping clairement identifié avec bécasse, boîte de métal pour bouffe anti ours, carré de gravier pour mettre une tente, bordure de lac, pit à feu, table à pique-nique; bref, le pérou!

Mon poêle rend l'âme (la bonbonne de gaz est vide) après mon souper gastronomique de ramen/légumes déshydratés/thon aux poivrons et tisane. Les bottes sont ... toujours mouillées. J'essaie de partir un feu de camp; rien n'y fait; le bois est humide. Avec la longue journée, je dors très bien.

10. 3/06 Doe Lake à Gould Conservation Area

4G-4A = 19.9km ? -19h30

J'arrête à l'entrée du parc et profite d'un bon repos sur table à pique-nique sur le bord d'un lac ensoleillé. Je quitte le parc Frontenac et m'engage dans le Gould Conservation Area.

C'est un sentier difficile en montagne. Je cherche le sentier où les triangles sont absents pour un bon 2 km. Je trouve la sortie de l'aire de conservation et me mets à la recherche d'un endroit où camper (aucun endroit prévu dans le guide).

Je trouve un endroit parfait et je m'installe dans la tente, et , une 2e tique, plus grosse que la première est bien installé dans mon bas ventre droit avec son crochet bien incrusté. Encore, je me sers du « tick remover » Ce camping impromptu est le meilleur que j'ai vécu dans ce périple. Une bonne nuit de sommeil avec aucun dérangement.

11. 4/06 Gould Conservation Area à Kingston

4A-1D/C = 35.1km

Aujourd'hui est un grand jour; je compte me rendre jusqu'à Kingston! Premier arrêt : Sydenham à 6.2 km.

12. 5/06 Kingston

1D-1A = 12.9km

Je descends la longue rue Princess jusqu'au CV de Kingston. Je me présente à l'Hôpital Hôtel-Dieu Hospital ou un médecin me prescrit des antibiotiques afin de traiter un potentiel Lyme.

Le Lendemain, après 246.4km de marche en 12 jours dans des conditions difficiles, ça fait du bien de retrouver son « home sweet home ».

This article was shortened to fit the Newsletter.
Cet article a été raccourci pour s'adapter à ce bulletin.

My 2022 Frontenac Challenge

(a crunch of leaves)

BY DAVID MCNICOLL

There are way too many challenges in life (insert your own list here). So why would one add to this list? I'm afraid I/we have no obvious answer. Worse, this was a challenge that Janice and I accepted with our eyes wide open. And we still do years later.

Now this so-called Frontenac Challenge is simple enough – hike all the 11 trails in a little park north of Kingston, Ontario, over a two-month period.

The park is called Frontenac, after Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac et de Palluau, a Governor General of New France for nearly twenty years.

It's an ancient place with billion year- old bedrock thrusting up higgledy-piggledy, separating the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes Lowlands.

Reportedly these rocks were part of a long-gone, ancient supercontinent. A couple of dozen lakes are scattered about, giving us unusual bits of life. A place that might well be called Up, Down and Around Provincial Park.



It was several years ago we were first drawn onto its footpaths by two serious hikers. Serious as in thousands of kilometres under foot. Now at that time, if they had said to us, “hey, come join the challenge, burn your oxygen-starved legs off in the rain for days at an end,” well, we might have declined. But instead, they cheerfully pointed to a completion certificate and a badge that would soon be ours. In any event, several challenge-years have flown past so any aspersions of blame have long evaporated. And it's way too late to pick on their always smiling faces.

For 30 years this challenge has been adroitly organized by Friends of Frontenac. There are rules of course. On each trail, attached to a single tree, there is a sign clue that you have to log to prove you were there. Sneaky.

Each year there is a different theme (e.g. amphibians, homesteaders, and fungi). This past fall, staring at maps, we contemplated the 2022 challenge, given with an orchid theme. Of course, there is a minor technical aspect – you have to actually hike 160 km.

It can appear daunting as you ponder these 160,000 metres. But no more so than a garage mechanic or an orderly in a hospital doing their shift. As so, on Monday September 5th we stepped gingerly onto the 7 km Little Clear Lake loop and soon found the Green Adder's Mouth orchid sign as we moved around the sun.

In our own fashion we continued with day hikes, over-nighters in Kingston and Westport (for the three northern trails) as well as three nights based at a raccoon-governed campsite on Big Salmon Lake (for the two longest trails). We were graced by friends: Michel, Fernando, Alejandra and Franco.

The park is rugged-going in places, breath-taking (ha ha), with the surrounding colours being truly exceptional. The trails slid by – Arkon Lake, Tetsmine Lake – as did the orchid clues: Putty Root, White Adder's Mouth and Slender Ladies Tresses.

And then on one particular day, Sunday, October 23rd, it's all done. Goodbye Loesel's Twayblade. And later we're in the Frontenac Park building, crowded with hikers as the resilient Friends' President, Chantal St-Amour, cheerfully hands out certificates, badges and note that the 30th anniversary cake is waiting in the wings.

We are tempted to let your ego grow but then Chantal introduces a shy 6-year-old who first hiked the entire challenge when she was 4. Or the two women who ran the challenge in a day. Or you try to pull your age card, except for that woman in her mid-eighties who has hiked the challenge for nearly 30 years.

So, we eat our yummy cake and have it too. Then stroll back along an uncounted trail to the car, with the leaves still falling. The orchids are resting, and we've forgotten the names of the 700 species of fungi. But we do remember meeting on a trail a strapping person with a massive pack – hiking and camping by herself, crushing her posttraumatic stress from working in a senior's residence. And the memories of your friends are robust. As our Tai Ji teacher has noted, we “remember to keep breathing.” Perhaps it's life itself that is the challenge.

Reprinted with permission from the
Old Ottawa South Community Association



Frontenac Park Visitor Centre

STEVE KELLY PHOTO



Kluane!

BY CAROL VANDENENGEL AND GLENN GREEN

Kluane National Park is a vast wilderness of ice fields, forests and towering mountain peaks. After spending two weeks paddling the Yukon River, a multi-day hike was in order to take us into the interior of the park. Kluane is home to Canada's highest peak, Mount Logan at 5,959 meters, contains the world's largest non-polar ice field, and a diverse grizzly bear population.

Our sights are focused on the Slims River Trail West (Ä'äy Chù). We registered at the park office and completed the mandatory wilderness permit process. Questions such as what is your wilderness survival experience? What was our emergency backup? All very important to the park staff to distinguish well-prepared hikers from tourists. We were approved and issued a pass to venture into the Slims River Trail and were told there is no cell phone coverage and no search parties, should we get lost.

Our trip plan was simple. We were going to hike to an established camp at the 22.5-kilometre point, spend the night and then hike to Observation Mountain, a viewing



After about three kilometres, we had to undertake our easiest of many stream crossings.

plateau for a glimpse of Kaskawulsh Glacier. After another night at camp, we would go back along the same route from whence we came.

We both were excited and well-rested when starting out early in the morning of July 19, 2022. The trail was mostly unmarked, only recognizable by cairns that have been erected by previous hikers.

At the 5.8 kilometre mark, we came to fast moving Bullion Creek. Alluvial fans made creek crossings a multi-crossing task as the volume of water in the streams depends on the weather, the season and the time of day. Early morning has less volume; late afternoon, after a day of sun-melt snow, has more.

Caution needs to be exercised when crossing creeks. The best way to tackle crossing each creek is to wade into the frigid cold waters facing the current as a pair, your partner holds your hips or backpack from behind and the person in front uses hiking poles. Both walk sideways carefully in tandem to the other side. This gives you both stability and support against the strong current. We removed our hiking boots to keep them dry and slipped on our heavy-soled sandals and shuffled across the numbing cold waters to reach the other side using our buddy system.

Past Bullion Creek we came across a large expanse of sand dunes with colourful, highly mineralized mountains towering behind. After the dunes, the trail goes through an area of dry salt flats, where the mud is covered with a crust of white minerals. All very strangely beautiful and new in this vast land of wilderness.

Just after the halfway point to our destination, we came across a mother grizzly and her cub. We saw her first before she saw us, and together we shouted to give warnings that we were near. The mother grizzly stood up on her hind legs, arched her neck and extended her nose to get a better sense of us. We realized then how much larger a grizzly bear was compared to a black bear. The bear and her cub then proceeded to head off down the same trail we needed to go. Nervous as we were, we thought the best strategy was to circumvent the trail and walk along the river bank until it was safe to get back on the trail. With our bear spray in hand, we sang and spoke loudly approaching every turn and blind hill on the trail, making ourselves known.

After approximately ten hours of hiking including lots of rest to enjoy the views, we eventually reached the camp. It had a designated cooking and food storage area that is several dozen meters away from the assigned areas to erect tents. We obtained our drinking water from the stream near the campground which was running clear. Those wishing to use this as a day camp, do so to explore the area. Others may rest, spend the night and hike out the following day.

On day two, we decided to hike to Observation Mountain with the intention of getting a view of Kaskawulsh Glacier. This day we woke up to clouds but decided to venture out anyway knowing the view could possibly be impeded by clouds, rain and fog.

CONTINUED

There is no maintained trail to the summit so the day would involve some route searching. Fellow hikers from camp pointed us in the right direction and off we went with our GPS.

We crossed Canada Creek, hiked up the canyon towards Columbia Creek, and finally followed a narrow and steep game trail carved out on the edge of the long hill. The ledge dropped off to the river below.

The sights here were remarkable. It was one of the steepest climbs we have ever experienced. Pausing momentarily was the best way to take a breath and enjoy the river and distant hills below. Unfortunately, cloud cover over the summit did not permit us the visual presentation we had hoped for. We decided to fly over the glacier on a local air tour upon our return.

After a restful night's sleep and a hearty breakfast of oatmeal and coffee, we left for the trailhead. The scenery always looks different when traveling in the opposite direction and we noticed things we did see on our trip coming in. We gazed at the snow-capped mountains ahead of us on the opposite of the river. We paid more attention to the river and the way the sunlight seems to



illuminate the surface. Human footprints along the bank of the river told us that others had hiked along the flat river bank surface to avoid the hilly rocky terrain along the river. We did the same to have a wide-open view of our surroundings as well as to avoid any surprise future grizzly encounters.

According to local legend, the English name of the river "Slims" refers to a horse that sank and was killed in dangerous "Quick Mud" along the river banks. We kept this in mind walking on the firm drier surface following the footsteps of the others and avoiding the bubbling sandy wet areas. The riverside is a travel corridor for wildlife which was evidenced by the tracks in the mud of bears, wolves, and a multitude of birds. The route along the river would not take us all the way back to the trailhead so we had to leave the river and head inland to search for cairns again.

With the warmth of the afternoon sun, we were concerned with the volume of water at our crossing at Buillon Creek. When we did arrive at the creek late in

the day our concerns were valid. The volume of water was high including a fast current flowing down each tributary.

Experience has shown accidents happen with fatigue and exhaustion. After walking close to sixteen kilometres we were not as energetic as we were when we first started. The crossing would require many multiple times removing our boots to cross the extended alluvial fan. Rather than risk disaster, we weighed the pros and cons, and decided to camp on the shore and cross in low, morning volume.



This was a decision we did not reach easily. First, we were alone in grizzly territory, but the expanse of the alluvial fan gave us great visibility to witness any approaching animals. Second, it would be difficult to secure the tent on the smooth rock-strewn surface. But there were lots of larger stones to weigh down the tent corners. We spent a restless night with the noise of blowing wind, fine silt collecting in our tent and alert to the possibility of large animals approaching.

At daybreak, the winds had ceased and we crossed the creek with little effort. Once back on the trail we observed fresh bear tracks in the soft earth and started to sing verses of songs to create noise.

When we deregistered at the park office, we reported the bear sighting. They told us that because four other parties of hikers had also encountered bears, the park would shut down the trail for several weeks. The park must follow certain formula criteria to protect the bear's exposure to humans: We felt guilty that this closure happened, but understood, after all, we are in the animal's backyard. The well-being of the bear is a priority in Kluane.

In conclusion, it was an excellent hiking trip into the backcountry of a Canadian national park! We would recommend it to anyone that wants to avoid the crowds of Jasper and Banff further south.

Even though there were many challenges, the scenery was uniquely beautiful and the experience is one we will never forget.



Carol VandenEngel and Glenn Green are with the Kingston Club



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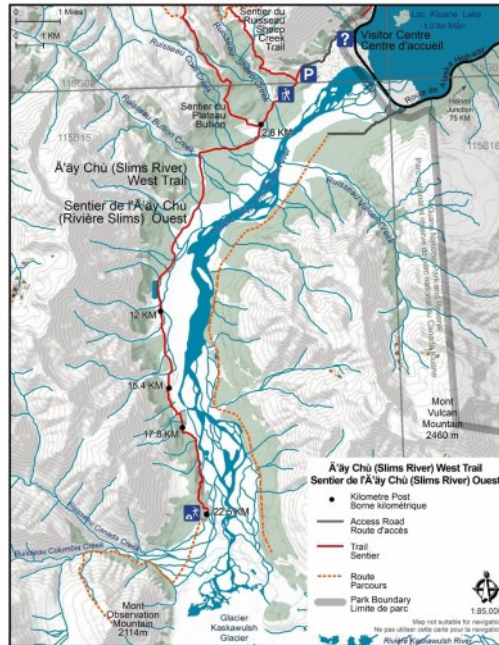
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