



The Rideau Trail NEWSLETTER

Published by The Rideau Trail Association



Spring & Summer 1973

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

Douglas J. Knapp

At the second Annual General Meeting, held this year in Merrickville on May 6th, the annual election of executive officers of the Rideau Trail Association took place.

The new executive is as follows:

President	-	Douglas J. Knapp
Past-president	-	Fred Cooke
Secretary	-	Georgina Pickett
Treasurer	-	Chris Cooke
Vice-presidents	-	Hugh Monroe, Ottawa George Bracken, Central Guy Thorne, Kingston
Publicity Chairmen	-	Harry Walker, Ottawa Joyce Halliday, Central Catherine Cutts, Kingston
Trail Club Chairmen	-	Gilles Côté, Ottawa Han van Pelt, Central Norman McLeod, Kingston
Routes & Negot.	-	Duncan Douglas & H.W.A. Moxley, Central
Design	-	Andrew Connidis
Membership Secretary	-	Helen Quilliam Stan Segel

Dr. Fred Cooke, president of the Association since its inauguration in May 1971 had previously indicated his desire to retire from this position - a position filled by Fred with admirable skill, energy and dedication. His contributions have been invaluable, and it is with sincere gratitude that an honorary R.T.A. life membership was given to Fred on his retirement.

As we enter now into our third year of existence and consider our objectives, it is my sincere expectation that the Rideau Trail Association will continue to develop as a significant recreational resource of south-eastern Ontario. The two hundred or so miles of trail have now been completely marked, a working system of trail maintenance has been established for the whole length, active trail clubs are now a reality and a guide book with excellent quality maps and trail descriptions is about to be provided to all members. Much remains to be done, however. Our quarterly newsletter will continue to need contributed material as well as the services of a layout artist, editor and individuals to undertake the mailing out to all members. Jobs such as emergency trail rerouting, construction of elevated walks above flooded areas, construction of shelters and camp-sites, general trail maintenance etc. will continue to need interested volunteers.

An entirely new field of involvement is beginning too. This concerns communication and coordination with other trail associations and the provincial government for the purpose of long-range development and protection of trail systems such as the Rideau Trail. An invitation was received in early

June inviting the R.T.A. to participate in a Trails Symposium on June 27th at Queens Park, organized by the Deputy Provincial Secretary for Resource Development, the Hon. Bert Lawrence. Douglas Knapp and Norman McLeod represented the R.T.A. and a report on this milestone conference is presented elsewhere in this issue. Certainly without some sort of protection, continued population growth and expansion of leisure time will inevitably continue to increase the pressure on undeveloped land, until within a generation or two such an entity as the Rideau Trail will simply be an impossibility.

Another major direction of our interest concerns the development of side trails and loops. Those few that already exist have shown themselves to offer convenience and opportunity for day hikes far beyond that of a linear trail and the R.T.A. has committed itself to the development of not just a trail, but of a trail system centred around the Rideau corridor. At present the network includes about six miles of side trails in the Gould Lake Conservation Area near Sydenham, a closed loop around Slide Lake near Perth Road Village, parallel main trails east of Buck Lake and west of Opinicon Lake, a spur trail from Rideau River Provincial Park (near Kemptville) to about four miles east of Merrickville and a short spur trail into the Limerick Forest (east of Merrickville).

One of the planned major trail extensions is to continue the dead-ended trail at Jones' Falls south to Kingston Mills. This and other loops and side trails will be constructed only as resources of interested persons become known. Expressions of interest and willingness to work are always gladly noted by trail club and association executive.

In summary, much has been accomplished in the last two years, but much remains to be done. The Rideau Trail System offers a truly exciting opportunity for individuals to not only enjoy, but to contribute. We have the heritage of a lovely section of Ontario, rich both in history and natural beauty and in hiking the Rideau Trail you have the opportunity to enjoy both. DO IT!

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THANK YOU VENTURERS!

The second edition of "Ad-Venturer News" was published in June by the 85th Venturer Company, Ottawa.

In one article they made an appeal to the entire Scouting Movement in Canada to "take an active part in organizing an anti-pollution effort to preserve Canada's natural heritage of clean air, water and beautiful forest lands".

Another lengthy and informative article was written promoting the Rideau Trail.

When young people value their natural environment like this, undertakings like the Rideau Trail will certainly continue to flourish.

Shirley Simpson.

OTTAWA TRAIL CLUB HIKES

- Saturday September 15th - Corn boil in Limerick Forest.
Meet at Bell Arena, Cedarview Rd. 12.30 p.m.
Bring own corn.
- Saturday & Sunday
October 13th & 14th - Back-packing and overnight in Gould Lake
area. Meet at Bell arena, Cedarview Rd. 8.00 a.m.
Saturday. Bring own food and camping equipment.

For further information call Trix Geary 722-2736.

KINGSTON TRAIL CLUB HIKES

- Saturday July 21st - Meet 9.30 a.m. Chaffey's Locks. Bus to
Upper Rock Lake and walk back to cars.
For information call Doug Knapp 542-2039
- Sunday August 19th - Meet at Elevator Bay to Conservation area
at 2.00 p.m. Bus to Princess St. near
Muttart's and walk back to cars.
Leader Don Schweitzer 389-0539
- Saturday September 15th - Meet at Perth Road Village at 9.30 a.m.
Walk the Slide Lake Loop in Frontenac Park.
Leader Dr. Alex Bryans 389-2320
- Sunday October 21st - Meet at Desert Lake Road & Famous Trail at 2.00p.m.
Follow Famous Trail, Tom Dixon Trail & Wagon
Trail back to Desert Lake Road.
Leader Stan Segel 544-1386
- Saturday November 17th - Meet at Murvale at 9.30 a.m. Bus to trail
1 mile west of Sydenham and walk back to cars.
Leader David Holden 389-4296
- Sunday December 16th - Meet at Bullen Road and Old Highway 38 at 2.00 p.m.
Bus 2½ miles north and walk back to cars.
For information call Fran Goring 354-4352.

KINGSTON TRICENTENARY RELAY EVENT

You read in the Newsletter for Winter 1973 about Kingston celebrating its 300th birthday. At the same time, the Rideau Trail will be celebrating its 3rd summer.

To celebrate both these events - as if an excuse were needed for a good time on the trail! - co-ordinators from each trail club will be soliciting volunteers to walk short section of the trail, from Ottawa to Kingston. One idea that seems to be gaining prominence and acceptance is that a sealed message of greetings and congratulations from Ottawa's mayor will be carried by the relay hikers to Kingston's mayor.

The hike is tentatively planned for mid-October, with a "Grand Finale" to take place in Kingston and to include a public bar-b-que at the Trail's southern origin, in the little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

In Ottawa, the newly elected chairman of the publicity committee of that Club, Harry Walker, has been named Ottawa co-ordinator. He has already announced that several Ottawa hikers have expressed an interest, including Mr. & Mrs. Bill Moorman and their six children, ranging in age from six to fifteen. Harry says that no doubt the Moormans could carry the relay event off by themselves, but he is, nonetheless, looking for backup support from other Ottawa hikers. If you're interested, give him a buzz at 825-2193 in the evenings.



CAMPING OUT

On the morning of May 26th under cloudy skies and a forecast of a wet weekend, twelve enthusiastic trail members turned out for a weekend camp out.

We met at our usual spot and proceeded by car to the Rideau River Provincial Park where we pitched our tents in one of the group camp sites. After a quick lunch we set out for a walk in the Howard Ferguson Forest. By this time the skies seemed brighter and we felt the weatherman was wrong again. The forest was full of sights and sounds and besides seeing many birds such as the rose-breasted grosbeak, orioles, cat birds and warblers, we found and identified about twenty five spring flowers from Mr. John M. Gillets book of Spring Flowers of the National Capital Region.

While we were resting beside a pond one of the children noticed a lot of sticks moving on the bottom and upon looking closer we found the sticks had heads and legs. This well camouflaged animal is the larva of the Caddisfly. Since none of us had seen these strange creatures before we spent some time watching and examining.

After a long and interesting walk we returned to our camp pleasantly tired and very hungry. A central campfire was built and we enjoyed some liquid refreshment while dinner was cooking. After dinner we played an exciting game of baseball until the adults decided they should get back to some serious and interesting fireside talk and more liquid refreshment.

Sunday was another pleasant day and after bacon and eggs cooked over the campfire we packed up and explored the park.

Heading back to Ottawa we stopped in the Limerick Forest for lunch and walked through stands of Red and Jack Pines and hardwood forest.

We all agreed before parting that the weekend had been a great success and if the weatherman calls for rain, ignore him but be prepared.

Trix Geary.



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PICTURE CONTEST

Attention shutterbugs! We're holding a contest for the best black and white photographs taken on or near the Rideau Trail.

Send all entries to the Rideau Trail Association, Box 15, Kingston before December 31st 1973 and include your name and address.

Winners will have their pictures used on the cover of future newsletters.

Those appearing in this issue were taken in the Slide Lake area by Norman McLeod, 153, Morenz Crescent, Kingston.



ONTARIO TRAILS SYMPOSIUM

On Wednesday June 27th an event of potentially tremendous significance to the Rideau Trail Association took place at Queen's Park in Toronto. This was the first Ontario Trails Symposium - a conference on Ontario trails organised by the Ontario Government. R.T.A. delegates were Doug. Knapp, president of the association and Norm. McLeod, chairman of the Kingston Trail Club. Altogether there were some three to four hundred participants from all across the province representing all sorts of groups interested in all sorts of trails - hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, equestrian, trail biking, snowmobiling and canoeing, as well as representatives from many branches of the business community and the government.

The direct sponsor of this symposium was the Ministry of Natural Resources under the Hon. Mr. Leo Bernier and the Provincial Secretary for Resource Development, the Hon. Bert Lawrence. Each of these gentlemen offered their comments in the general sessions and both helped to firmly establish the government's view of its role in Ontario trails as one of support rather than initiation and organization. Up to this time private individuals have provided both of these essential commodities and this shall continue to be the case. However, there has been a growing awareness among hiking enthusiasts that long range protection of wilderness trails is essential as the wilderness continues to diminish, and it is essentially in this regard that the government's involvement is necessary.

Besides the two general sessions of the symposium, there were workshop sessions of which each delegate attended three. These were entitled as follows:-

- a. Programme Co-ordination
- b. Trail Planning and Development
- c. The role of Trail Interest Groups
- d. Legislative issues.

All of these concerned, in one way or another, the tremendous growth in demand for trails of all types in recent years and the conflicts which inevitably accompany new activities and demands on the environment. For example, there is the basic need to preserve trails for future generations conflicting with the right of a landowner to develop his property any way he wishes, within certain possible restrictions. Then there is the conflict between a landowner's willingness to have a trail cross his property and his natural reluctance to incur liability for those using the trail. A third conflict of quite a different nature is that between trail users themselves. Hiking trails are basically incompatible with trails for motorized transport of any type, and both are probably incompatible with equestrian trails.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has recognised trails as a resource and thus also the obligation of encouraging and protecting this resource. Dealing with the many conflicts such as those mentioned above will require thoughtful legislation and it was for the purpose of guiding such legislation that the symposium was held.

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... Trails Symposium, continued.

In summary, as stated by Mr. Bernier, the government was not seeking decisions at this time, but ideas and guidance. It is their hope that legislation will be drafted for the reconvening of the Legislative Assembly in October. At the moment, we can only offer a sincere vote of confidence to the Ministry and hope that the final results are compatible with their enlightenment in sponsoring this symposium, and with the general high quality of the proposals and discussions. Doubtless, there shall be much more to be said on this broad topic of government support in further newsletters.

SPRING FLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION/FLEURS PRINTANIERES
DE LA CAPITAL NATIONALE by John M. Gillett.
Published by the National Capital Commission, Ottawa, 1973.
Soft cover, 116 pages. Price \$1.50

This hand pocket or purse-sized book (about 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ by 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches) is a little beauty. Rumour in Ottawa has it that it is selling like the proverbial hot cakes. By the time this appears in the Newsletter, the book may have sold out in its first edition.

Envious Rideau Trailers outside Ottawa will find the book just as fascinating as Ottawans, I believe. Dr. Gillett has chosen fifty of the most common spring flowers to illustrate and to explain. The photographs, reproduced in three-color lithography by George Merritt, are by the author, formerly with the Plant Research Institute, now with the National Museums, and Orin Hanright. Together with the text, which appears opposite the picture, it's easy, even for a duffer like me, to identify common spring wildflowers.

I assume its greatest appeal will be to the general "lay" reader (that's me, dear reader). I'm delighted with the complete bilinguality of the booklet. Although "pussytoes" is a lovely enough name in English, I think "antennaire negligee" adds intriguing color. And, of course, the French names of the flowers are closer to the Latin botanical names which cannot be avoided, if one wants to be precise about identifying plants; it can be confusing if one uses only the common names which vary from place to place.

My copy has upside-down pictures on pages 77 and 78, but the author assures me this error apparently has occurred only in one batch of the first edition. My copy should therefore eventually become valuable as it becomes rare! But it already is very valuable and, at \$1.50 it's a real bargain in these days of inflation. Get yours quickly, or don't say I didn't warn you. Some book stores do not have it; some cigar stores do.

Harry Walker.

LIVING OFF THE TRAIL

An added joy of being in the country is finding something edible. At least it is for me. I quickly revert to the gathering stage of human civilization, keeping my eyes moving in the hope that there may be some berries or mushrooms to be found along the trail. A Spangled Drongo or a Nymphaea Gigantea might be noticed, but only if I knew of a recipe for Drongo au Porto or Water Lily roots au Beurre. But to find wild asparagus!

My experience with finding things to eat is only within a short distance of Perth. If you are looking for something you are not likely to make time along the trail. But then making time can be left to the person who drives across Canada in three days so that he may have more time to relax in the wilds of Vancouver.

Each thing found seems at the time to be the thing that I have waited for a whole year. But it is probably the wild asparagus that is anticipated the most. May is the time for it. It is found growing in fairly well drained places. No use looking for anything that is not close to the ground when asparagus is the goal. If the feathery foliage makes finding it easy then finding it has probably been too late. There are certain things best kept secret, and the exact places where asparagus is found is one of mine, but there are plenty of places along the edge in open areas that might not otherwise be interesting. About asparagus time the morels are also ready. The too curious who want to know what you are doing when looking for asparagus or morels might be put off with the information that you are a member of a fertility cult out looking for sacred symbols. Morels are just as difficult to find as asparagus is, but they take you into a different type of area, under light forest. They become one with the fallen leaves, but suddenly are there for picking, looking rather like coral growths rather than the usual conception of mushrooms. If fear of horrible death or wild hallocogenic experience keeps you away from eating any mushrooms, avoid morels, but their distinctive appearance makes them "safe". Similarly, in the fall, the shaggy manes and inky caps are easy to identify. They bleed black, and the mature specimens fall away into a black mess. Unlike the morels, which are well hidden and guarded by mosquitoes, they grow in open grassy areas.

Another find of open grassy areas, but this time in June, are wild strawberries. Raspberries are more plentiful, and they certainly are tasty, but there is no berry that brings me more pleasure than the wild strawberry. Probably the difficulty of the search as much as the taste of the berry adds to the pleasure. If you have will power and enough time you may even be able to pick enough to make jam and thus save June memories for mid-winter. If you go out in the fall to pick wild grapes, jelly is probably the only thing you want to use them for, unless you like wine with a peculiar taste. Where the trail follows roads is a good place to find them. And if the road has not been improved by widening, the chance is better. The vines grow along old rail fences and loop over small trees. To gather wild grapes is to go beyond food gathering as a pleasant occupation, for the signs of fall are around and the realization that winter's death is near gives a poignancy to the activity.

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MAINTENANCE TREKS

The Spring maintenance of the Ottawa Rideau Trail Club got under way early in April.

There have been three group outings for general maintenance, two in April and one in May. These consisted mainly of respraying and improving markers, also picking up garbage. In this manner approximately thirty miles or more of trail have already been covered.

To the Third Venturers Group of Westboro United Church we would like to express our appreciation for volunteering for the task of spraying markers and painting stiles in the Jock River and Moodie Drive areas. A big job being well done.

For those hikers who might have found themselves stranded at one side of a creek, or the Jock River, some progress has been made. The small bridge near the Richmond Road has now been replaced after floating downstream during the heavy rains. A lot of time and effort has been spent by a group of members to replace the sixty five foot bridge crossing the Jock River. It should be completed by the end of June.

We want to thank all those members who have given their time to assist in the maintenance of the trail, those who have come out with groups and those who on their own have picked up litter, given reports of areas that might be misleading and areas that could be impassable.

We also want to express our thanks to Mr. D. Zimmerly of R.R.2 Richmond for granting us permission to cross his property.

Not all the large number of people in the Ottawa Rideau Trail Club who have offered their services have been called upon at present. But a large amount of maintenance is yet to be done, so hopefully their offer will be taken in the near future.

Ed Simpson,
Maintenance Committee,
Ottawa Rideau Trail Club.

.... Living Off the Trail contd.

During full summer there are raspberries and blueberries for eating fresh and choke cherries to make into syrup with pancakes. The three of them are easy picking and plentiful - by the standards of wild fruit. And if you go armed with more esoteric knowledge you will probably find things I haven't mentioned. Some year I'll try fiddleheads and cat tails, frogs legs and a really good recipe for Mosquitoes a la Flamands.

Peter Mc.Mahon.

TRAIL CLUB EXECUTIVESOTTAWA

Chairman	-	Gilles Cote
Secretary	-	Jane Johnston
Treasurer	-	Ted LeSage
Routes-Negotiating	-	Walter Roche
Trail Maintenance	-	Ed Simpson
Activities Coordinator	-	Trix Geary
Publicity	-	Harry Walker

CENTRAL

Chairman	-	Han van Pelt
Secretary	-	Joyce Halliday
Treasurer	-	John Hollinger
Trail Maintenance	-	Shared by committee of 19.

KINGSTON

Chairman	-	Norman McLeod
Secretary	-	Guy Thorne
Treasurer	-	Stan Buxcey
Trail Maintenance	-	Doug Knapp
Publicity	-	Catherine Cutts.
