

The Rideau Trail NEWSLETTER

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Issue No. 9*



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TERCENTENARY WALK

Arrangements for the Tercentenary Walk are now well in hand. By the time this edition of the Newsletter reaches members, the message of congratulations from the Mayor of Ottawa to the Mayor of Kingston will be on its way down the trail. Reporters from Ottawa newspapers and radio stations were expected to be present as the message was handed to a young RTA member who was chosen to start the walk. On Saturday, September 15th and Sunday, September 16, members of Bill Noormann's family were due to complete the first 20 miles of the walk. Other Ottawa RTC members were to complete the remaining 35 miles and the scroll was to be handed on to Central RTC members at Burritt's Rapids on September 22nd at 8:00 a.m.

Reeve Cranston of Merrickville will be at the Blockhouse in Merrickville at 10.30 a.m. Saturday, September 22nd to meet Duncan Douglas and Mrs. Eradbooke-Smith who will be arriving on horse back from Burritt's Rapids.

Later in the day, Mayor Ashwell of Smith Falls will meet Mr. & Mrs. D. Burtch at Victoria Park, Smith Falls.

On October 6th the final lap of the journey from Highway 401 and Sydenham Road to Trail's End will be a group hike led by Doug Knapp, President of RTA, to which all interested are invited. Be at 401 at 1.00 p.m. and help carry the letters of congratulations to Kingston from Mayor Benoit of Ottawa, Reeve Cranston of Merrickville and Mayor Ashwell of Smith Falls.

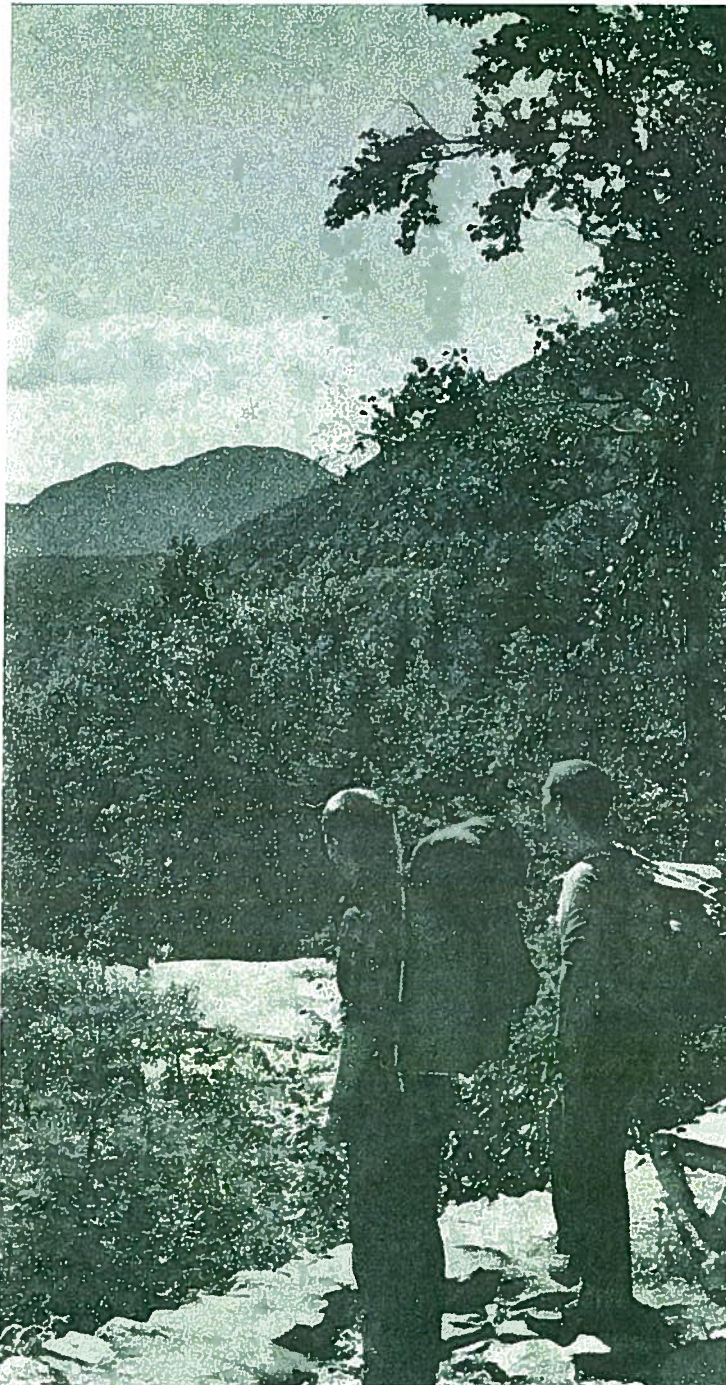
At 4.00 p.m. on Saturday, October 6th the messages will be officially received by Mayor Speal of Kingston at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Authority area. Following receipt of the message, there will be a barbecue which will be open not only to all RTA members, but to the general public as well.

The barbecue will consist of beef, baked beans, salada, a roll and soft drinks. The Conservation Authority will provide tables. Tickets for the barbecue will be on sale at various locations in Kingston, Smith Falls and Ottawa. Members should check with their own Trail Club or watch local newspapers for announcements. The price of tickets will be \$2.00 for adults, \$1.50 for children 12 and under.

Police will be on hand to give directions to those arriving by car.

HIKING IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Did you know that the highest mountain of north-eastern United States lies only six to seven hours drive from eastern Ontario? Did you know that in the same general area are over three hundred and eighty miles of spectacular trails - much of them above treeline and commanding unsurpassed views for up to one hundred miles in all directions?



The highest mountain referred to above is Mount Washington of course. Elevation of the summit is 6,288 feet above sea level, easily(?) reached by numerous hiking trails as well as by a unique cog railway constructed in 1869 and an auto road. At the summit are three main buildings which include "Summit House" - a souvenir shop and snack bar, weather observatory - noted for having observed the unsurpassed record windspeed of 231 mph, and a small museum.

At the foot of Mount Washington, in Pinkham Notch on Route 16, New Hampshire, is the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) Hiking Centre - an invaluable stopping place for hikers. The main building of the hiking centre contains a large dining room, reservation and information desk, weather report bulletins, automatic clothes washers and dryers and coin-operated showers. Maps may be purchased here, and you can even stay overnight and eat in the rustic but attractive dining room if you wish.

Now let's assume that you are there with all your hiking equipment and maps. What now?

There are three main ways you can hike. One is to make "day" hikes from a base camp just off the trail and not too far from the highway, leaving your camp each morning and returning to it each evening. The advantage, of

course, if that you do not have to carry a heavy pack up the mountain. Except for a small number of well-defined areas, hikers are permitted to camp anywhere in the White Mountains and to light campfires. Restricted areas occur where the traffic is so heavy that serious ecological damage would result if no such restrictions existed. These are clearly specified in the AMC hiking centre at Pinkham Notch, and also by large signs posted at the site. During the summer hikers are also required to obtain a fire permit if a wood fire is to be used. This may be obtained free at the AMC centre, or at any forrester's office in surrounding towns.

A second way to hike is simply to carry your whole pack with you everywhere you go. This is more arduous, of course, but offers the greater variety and freedom to travel over a more extensive route.

The third and easiest but most expensive method is to use the AMC hut system. This is a series of hostels, generally high in the mountains, spaced a day's hike apart. The hiker need carry only extra clothes and a bag of money, using the huts for dinner each night, the night's lodging, the next morning's breakfast, and being provided with a packed lunch for the next day's travel. Cost for adults is about \$12.00 for the three meals and lodging and about \$8.00 for children.

The towns surrounding the White Mountains are geared to the tourist industry and offer excellent motels and restaurants at reasonable prices. The luxury of soaking in a hot bath after the eight mile round-trip to the summit of Mount Washington is still fresh in my memory.

Obtaining drinking water while hiking is absolutely no problem. Often the trails follow mountain streams, all of which offer crystal-clear, ice-cold, uncontaminated drinking water. Every hiker has a serious obligation to ensure that the brook remains uncontaminated downstream of his camp. This means that one essential piece of equipment is a small bucket in which dishes and oneself may be washed, and the dirty water disposed of well away from the stream.

Another point of importance is to be aware of the effect of altitude on temperature. Often when the temperature at the foot of Mt. Washington is 70° F, the temperature at the top may be as low as 40° F - a difference of 30° F over an elevation difference of 5,000 feet! Generally, snow falls at the summit of Mt. Washington during some days in June, July and August. A sensible hiker comes prepared! Many people have died of exposure in these mountains. This is not intended to sound too intimidating, however. On August 28th when my family and I (my wife, twin boys 8 years old, a boy 10, a girl 13) climbed Mt. Washington, the day remained consistently bright and sunny, the temperature at the foot was about 75° F and at the top was 60° F.

The eight mile round trip took eight hours, but this included rest and lunch stops. We were tremendously impressed by the hugeness of the landscape, particularly above the treeline, and by the magnificent views. There was no question but that it was extremely worthwhile.



Lake of the Clouds Hut with Mount Washington in the background

One should work up to such demanding hikes as Mt. Washington slowly. It would be a poor idea to go from a rather sedentary life to such a challenge without some conditioning. This might consist of a series of shorter hikes, gradually becoming more difficult and longer and to which the body responds surprisingly quickly. After three or four conditioning hikes, a five or six-thousand foot peak will not present any serious difficulty to hikers who are in general good health.

One of the most spectacular sections of the White Mountains is where the Appalachian Trail winds its way through the Presidential Range, following the ridges from Mt. Jackson to Mt. Madison, above treeline almost continuously for over twenty miles, experiencing both the fascinating arctic flora and fantastic views and open space on all sides.

One of the many interesting aspects of this high region is the existence of plants above treeline that are found nowhere else in the world except in the arctic. This unique situation is a result of the southward march and then gradual retreat of the glaciers during the ice age. As the glaciers advanced to the south, the arctic flora

and fauna crept southward just ahead of it. Then as the glaciers retreated small islands of arctic vegetation remained in the only places still suitable - the peaks of the Appalachian mountains. Campfires are not permitted above treeline in order to protect this very delicate environment, so hikers are obliged to use a small hiker's stove of some sort.



Air view of the Summit of Mt. Washington and the Northern peaks of the Presidential Range, White Mountains, N. H.

Another characteristic of interest is the geology of the White Mountains. The whole Appalachian range (of which the White Mountains are simply a small part) is composed of metamorphic rocks - schist, gneiss, slate, marble, etc. These originally were sedimentary rocks, formed on the bed of a warm shallow sea. Gradually they became deeply buried, and subject to heat and pressure, they gradually changed - metamorphosed - and were thrust high above sea level by the wrinkling of the Earth's crust that formed this great range about 250 million years ago. Finally the glaciers came and rounded off the tops and began filling in the valleys. It is rather fascinating to know that the Adirondack Mountains, only one hundred or so miles away to the west, have an entirely different geological structure. But more will be said about the Adirondacks in our next issue of the newsletter.

Postscript: The AMC White Mountain Guidebook may be obtained at any AMC facility and many bookstores.
AMC headquarters is at Pinkham Notch Camp, Gorham, New Hampshire
03581

OTTAWA TRAIL CLUB HIKES

- 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

- Sunday October 21st - Meet at Desert Lake Road & Famous Trail at 2.00 p.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.

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.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIKERS

If a landowner chooses, with no prior notice, he has the perfect right to refuse any hiker passage across his property. It is only with the landowner's generous permission that the trail crosses his property. Thus any hiker has the responsibility not only to protect the environment but to respect the property of all landowners over whose property the trail may pass. With these general guidelines the following responsibilities of all hikers should be obvious:

- recognize the landowner's generous contribution
- always obtain the landowner's permission to camp on private property and camp on public land only in authorized locations
- never litter. Try to leave camping site and the trail cleaner than you found them
- protect the landowner's fences and other property
- never start a fire without the landowner's permission
- wash dishes in a bucket and dispose of waste water away from lakes and streams
- on property where one is given permission to camp overnight, all traces of that campsite should be eliminated before the site is vacated. Even the stones that may have been used to surround the fire should be removed so that it is not obvious that there was once a fireplace on that spot. Bits of aluminum tend to be left around a fireplace by sloppy campers, and special care should be given to see that none are left. This is where a small plastic bag for garbage is really necessary, and will be carried by all considerate hikers.
- always bury human waste.

BUR CREEK

Hikers going north on the Trail from Bullen Road ' (off old highway 38 near Kingston) may have noticed an interesting minor phenomenon: two streams which disappear into the ground. This takes place just south of the hamlet of Bur Creek, and the courses of the streams are such that a casual glance might not reveal what is happening.

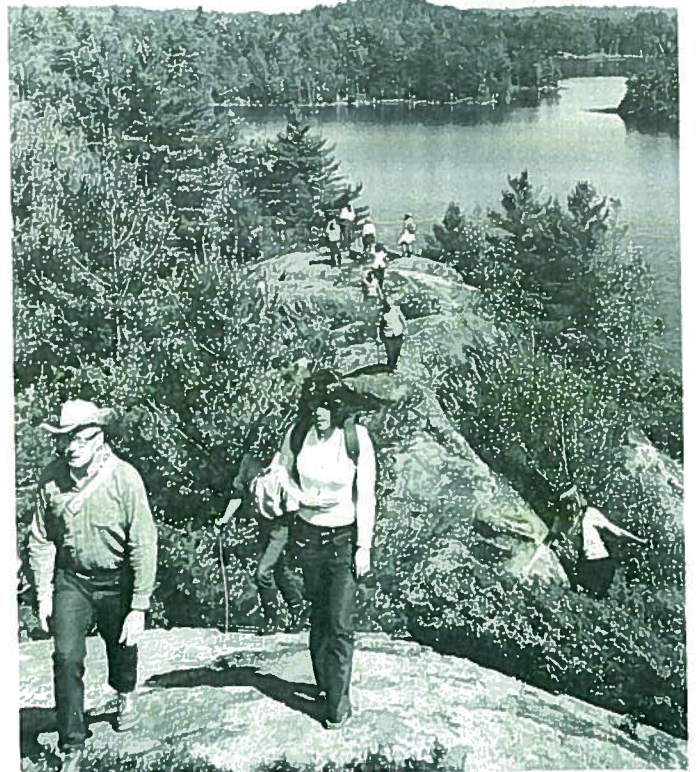
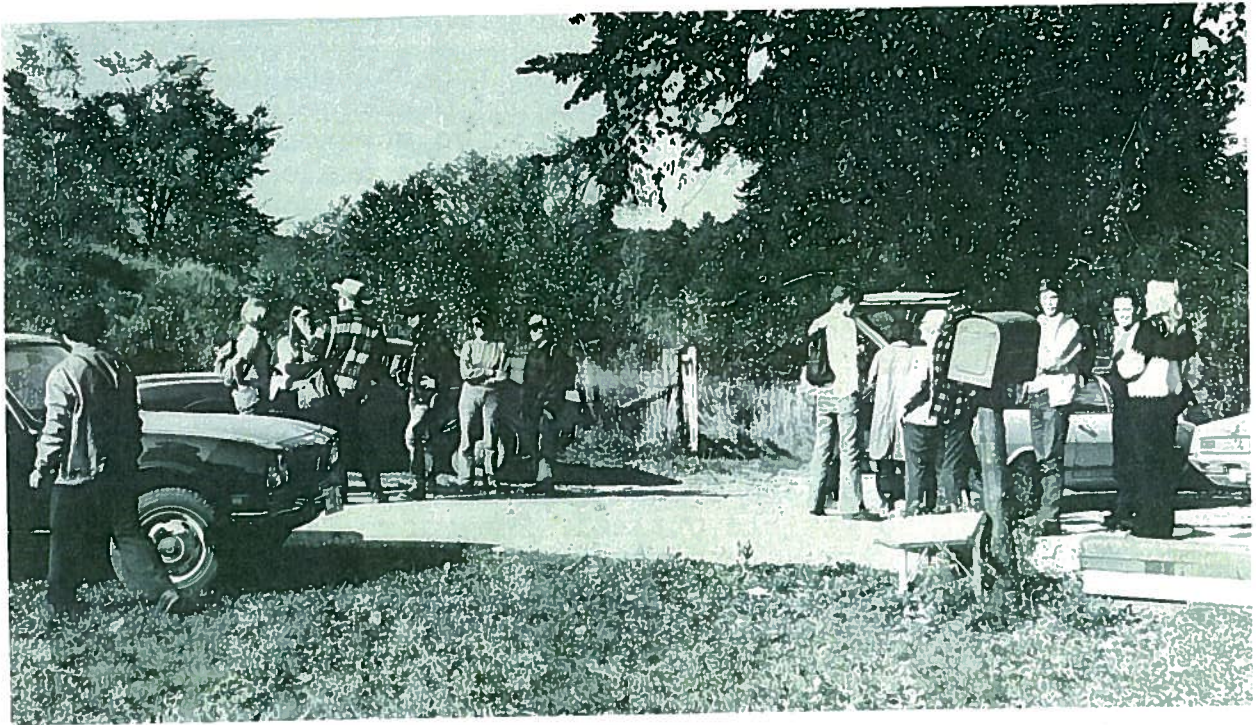
One follows a small stream flowing northward to a low-lying area, where it appears to meander off to the east; but follow it for about fifty yards and you will find it leads to a substantial waterfall flowing in the opposite direction! At some seasons an impressive volume of water pours into this small area, with no visible outlet. The water is escaping, however, through an underground channel which empties into Collins Creek, about a quarter of a mile to the north.

A local resident says that the two streams used to feed a lake, the overflow being led off through a man-made channel. This can still be seen, cut through the limestone, and its depth and length would indicate that a lot of work was involved in making it. But, before the time of our middle-aged informant, some sort of subsidence took place and the lake drained away, leaving the present curious situation.

Other members who have some knowledge of the history of this place may want to write in to the newsletter.

Guy Thorne

SLIDE LAKE WALK - SEPTEMBER 15, 1973
Pictures by J. N. McLeod





APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

ASE CHECK:

RIDEAU TRAIL ASSOCIATION,
P.O. Box 15,
Kingston, Ontario, Canada

☐ NEW

☐ RENEWAL

- ☐ Student\$3.00
- ☐ Adult\$4.00
- ☐ Family\$6.00
- ☐ Senior Citizen\$3.00
- ☐ Plastic Folders\$1.00
- ☐ Crest\$.50
- ☐ Affiliated Organization\$5.00

The membership year of the Association is from April 1st to March 31st. Dues paid after 30th November will be for the following year.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

Membership Fee _____

Plastic Folder _____

Donations _____

Extra Crests (@ .50) _____

Total _____

Please indicate which Trail Club you would like to be a member of: OTTAWA, CENTRAL, KINGSTON.

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