



RIDEAU TRAIL ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026

Issue No. 220





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The RTA does not share its mailing list with other organizations.
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Next Newsletter: *Deadline August 1st, 2026*

We want your submissions! If possible, text should be sent



<https://www.instagram.com/rideautrail/?hl=en>



<https://www.facebook.com/rideautrail>

electronically with no document formatting. Pictures with good definition and contrast are most welcome.

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

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Rusty Bassarab, Mary Carlson, Randy Goodfellow, Hua Lei, Susan Long-Poucher, Jim Moss, and Alan Smith, Margaret MacSween

Jim Moss (Kingston Club Rep.),
Dorothy Hudson (Central Club Rep.),
Roger Reens (Ottawa Club Rep.)

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President: Rusty Bassarab; president@rideautrail.org
Vice President: ***VACANT***
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Treasurer: Jim Fraser
Trail Maintenance: Ian Campbell
Landowner Liaison: Roger Reens
Hike Leader Coordinator: Ingrid Monasterios
Events Coordinators: Carol Seal
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Member at Large: Kevin Chapman
eNewsletter Editor: Peter Weir

Member Services (Who gets your question?)

Whatever the question, just contact the RTA for info on your club at 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"

You can update your membership preferences [here](#) or from the link provided at the bottom of membership related emails.

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

It's a busy organization, volunteers are always welcome. Please contact those listed on (page 3) indicating your volunteer interest such as co-leading hikes, supporting your club's committees, working on the Trail maintenance or any other interest you may have.

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' (<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>) 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)

awards@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

ottawasecretary@rideautrail.org

Denise Hall
Ottawa Club Secretary

Blue Trails

Submit your record of hiking the designated Blue Trails to your Club's secretary / badge volunteer.

Locks Endeavor

Submit your record of hiking the designated hikes to your Club's secretary / badge volunteer.

55th anniversary Challenges and badges:

Submit your record of hiking the designated hikes to your Club's secretary / badge volunteer.



News and Notes from the Clubs - Spring 2026

Central

When attending an outdoor event, be safe; be prepared. 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 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

Events and Activities

Special Events

- Blue Trails in Winter
- My Favourite Hike 55km over Two Days
- Frontenac Perimeter Challenge
- Victoria Day Weekend in Pennsylvania
- AGM

Please sign up on Team Up Activities Calendar so we have an idea of numbers for both activities.

Regular Activities

(Every week, conditions permitting)

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

Friday morning walks—Every Friday from the Hour Glass Coffee Show parking lot

Other Outings

The Central Club offers hiking at Murphys Point and at various conservation areas.

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

Ottawa

When attending an outdoor event, be safe; be prepared. 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.

Kichi Zibi Mikan: Parking lot at the southeast end of the Champlain Bridge often used in winter for hikes but also used in other seasons by some leaders.

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

Bate Island: Meet on the east side of Bate Island. In the Spring, Summer and Fall, meet in parking lot that faces Ottawa and in the winter, in the parking lot that faces Gatineau.

Eagleson Park & Ride: The larger parking lot north of the transitway. Off Eagleson Road, turn onto the transitway and follow it to the left, then turn left into the parking lot and meet in the area immediately to the left.

Questions/Contacts

General: ottawa@rideautrail.org

Activities: ottawa.activities@rideautrail.org

Calendar of Events:

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Events and Activities

A monthly eNewsletter from the Club advises of coming events, but be sure to check the **Activities Calendar** for last minute updates.

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Special Events

- Bi-monthly Social
- 55th Anniversary All-Clubs Picnic in July
- James Auld Waterway Canoe Trip in July
- Potluck Picnic in August
- Ottawa End-to-End Hikes in Fall
- Frontenac trek or Challenge Hikes in Fall

Regular Activities

Planned hikes at various levels most days of the week. Events sometimes include a stop for lunch, often outdoors.

Outings take place in Marlborough Forest, Mer Bleue, Gatineau Park and other locations.

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

Note: After many years, Tuesday Trails has been discontinued. As well, Wednesday Walkers is on a summer break and is expected to resume in September.

Kingston

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

Questions/Contacts

General: kingston@rideautrail.org

Events and Activities

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

<https://teamup.com/ks4o7f1oa94o7taugd>

Special Events

- My Favourite Hike
- Kingston Clean Up
- 10K Trails
- First Aid course
- Dine and Dash

- Kingston Pride Parade
- Mini-Golf Championship
- Tree Top Trekking
- Monthly Socials

Regular Activities

(Every second Tuesday, conditions permitting)

After Work Wind Down Walk - 5 km, at a moderate pace, on trails in and around Kingston

Tuesday hikes at Lemoine Point for those interested in a brisk 10 km walk.

Wednesday Walks - Ideal for people interested in healthy exercise walking at a comfortable pace with some social interaction. Walks depart every Wednesday at 1:30 pm (9:30 am, July and August)

Contact Jennifer at kingstonwalks@rideautrail.org

Thursday - In Little Cataraqui Conservation Area, Lemoine Point and other local areas for those interested in a brisk 10 km walk.

2026 Peninsula Hiking Festival



The Peninsula Club of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) has set a date for its fall Hiking Festival.

SAVE THE DATE | October 2–4, 2026

The **Peninsula Hiking Festival** returns to the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula on **October 2–4, 2026**, bringing together guided hikes, trail community, and a shared celebration of the Bruce Trail and the people connected to it. The theme this year is **Common Ground: A Celebration of Trail, Place, and Belonging**.

The Festival weekend will feature:

- A diverse program of guided hikes
- A Friday evening social at Camp Celtic A Saturday keynote dinner and silent auction Bruce Trail Day activities on Sunday
- Hosted at **Camp Celtic**, the Festival is designed for hikers, volunteers, and members of the broader trail community — a weekend grounded in connection, stewardship, and shared experience.

More details — including hike registration and dinner tickets — will be shared in the months ahead. Check back at

<https://peninsula.brucetrail.org/2026-hiking-festival/>



Shawn Radcliffe (he/him) Social Media (Hikes) Peninsula Bruce Trail Club

socialmediahikes@peninsula.brucetrail.org

<https://peninsula.brucetrail.org/>

The Environment Corner

By Alan Smith

We have added 3 more boot brush stations to the network this quarter thanks to Susan and Rob O'Connor; all three are in the Ottawa section at Dwyer Hill Rd, Kettles Rd and Roger Stevens. With 20 on the network we are two thirds of the way to our initial target of 30.



This year I am hoping that we can also focus on understanding and mapping the invasive plants on our trail network. This will add to the collective knowledge of those organizations working to control invasive plants in our region and hopefully allow us to identify infestations before they become major issues. To that end, I am looking for a small group of interested members, who are willing to help record invasive plants during hikes. This will not be a burdensome task, as the group will be able to report invasive plants during their regular hikes, and I will provide group training on the use of the reporting apps. Please let me know if you are interested in helping by emailing me at Trailcoordinator@rideautrail.org and I will be able to provide more information.

Our invasive plant focus this edition is on Dames Rocket, a perennial flower that has escaped cultivation and become invasive in Ontario. It is recognized by its dense cluster of 4 petal purple (sometimes white) flowers and is quick to follow the native Spring ephemerals; it will already be in flower when this newsletter is released. It is biennial and flowers in the second year, rapidly propagating by seed and spreading once established in an area. It displaces other native flowers by its presence and thus reduces bio-diversity. Fortunately it is easily pulled in moist ground, but the large quantity of plants in some infestations can make manual control difficult. It is a prolific seed producer, so it is important to remove all in an area before it goes to seed, and return again in subsequent years to prevent re-establishment. I have been battling Dames Rocket at the edge of my lot for a number of years.

It is worth mentioning that the beautiful and more dainty native wild phlox looks similar, but can easily be distinguished by its 5 petal flowers arranged along the stem. I recall a couple of years ago spotting some purple flowers on a sunny hike by a lake in the north of Frontenac Park and was cursing the spread of Dames Rocket under my breath, but as I drew closer, I was delighted to see that it was the native phlox.



For more details about some of the plants that are invasive to Ontario and best practice management guides you are recommended to visit www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca

What is the RTA Activities Committee?

Members will be aware that the RTA has various Committees to run the Association, but questions do come up as to 'who does what'. Here are some details about the 'Activities Committee':

Meets every 4-5 weeks to Coordinate **Association** Level Activities & Events. Members are:

- Activities/Outings Coordinators from All Three Clubs
 - Karin McInnis (Kingston)
 - Pat Stranberg (Central)
 - Carol Seal/Ingrit Monasterios / Denise Hall (Ottawa)
- Marketing (Louise Langlais - Kingston)
- News Letter Editor (Peter Weir – Ottawa)
- Chaired by Jim Moss (Kingston)
- Focus on **BOTH** "How We Do Activities' & 'What Activities We Do' as an Association
- Does not do any coordination of Club Activities and Events, though we do share ideas at our Meetings – what worked, what didn't etc.

How We Do Activities...Discuss Such Issues As:

- New Hike Leader Training – Arrange Hike Ontario Courses
- Existing Leaders – Keeping Certifications Current
- Arranging Hike Leader Meetings
- Waiver Content
- Waiver Storage
- Incident Reports
- Arrange First Aid Training – Multiple sessions held during the year
- Debate Topics Such As
 - How Do We Recruit More Hike Leaders?

- How Do We Get Existing Hike Leaders To Lead More?
- How Do We Keep More Members?
- How do we Match Activities to Member's Wishes
- Website Improvements related to Activities & Hike Leader Info

What Activities We Do - Arrange Association Activities or Association Participation in Such Activities As:

- End to End Hikes every three years
- Frontenac Park – Perimeter Challenge in May
- Frontenac Challenge/Trek in Sept/Oct
- Create Hiking Challenges such as:
 - Locks Endeavour
 - Blue Trails Challenge
 - 'I DID 55'
 - My Favorite Hike/Bike – 2026 initiative
 - A Trail for All Seasons
 - Trails Less Travelled
- Winter End to End
- Association Summer Picnics in Rideau Ferry
- Plus so much more...

We are always looking for New Ideas for Hiking Challenges, or New Ideas for Badges (after all it is all about collecting those Badges!).

If you have any ideas we would love to hear from you. Please contact your local Activities Coordinator, or e-mail Jim Moss at

Activities@RideauTrail.org



MUSINGS ON 55 YEARS OF THE RTA

As we approached our 55th Anniversary and were continuing efforts to attempt to implement our strategic plan and make the Association an even better group to belong to, I decided to look to our early history to see if some of those experiences could assist us today. Accordingly, I spent some time going through old Newsletters and some of our historical records. Reviewing the period from a motion at a Kingston Field Naturalists (KFN) meeting in Feb 1971, through to the official opening ceremony at Foley Mountain in Nov 1971 and the completion of the first year or existence is always a motivating and worthwhile endeavour. As is often the case with new ideas, people were energized and motivated to make “the dream come true.”

As I progressed through the Newsletters energies and motivation were still present, but the strong volunteer willingness to do the work did the normal ebb and flow. It struck me that we are still facing many of the same issues that our predecessors had to deal with in that first decade of existence – finding sufficient volunteers in every necessary area; trying to get the trails off of roadways; keeping membership numbers up; keeping up with changes and modifications in laws, rules and technology; providing members and trail users with up-to-date information (including maps); and forging new partnerships and relationships while maintaining previous ones.

It is difficult to not fall into the trap of deciding that nothing has changed in all that time. More detailed review indicated that while many of the same issues remain; the factors, potential solutions and levels of complication have all changed considerably. Certain aspects are now considerably easier than in the early days, while other areas are more technical and require more specific expertise from volunteers.

Before continuing with musings, and developing some “so whats”, it is worthwhile to highlight some key developments from the first decade of the RTA (to not go too long, emphasis will be on the first 5 years):

1971:

- from idea to reality, the Rideau Trail was built by dedicated coordination groups in each of the three sectors, assisted by students working in a summer employment program.
- incredible achievement, but it did result in the use of more roadways that was initially hoped/ intended.
- Nov 7, Official opening ceremony held at Foley Mountain



1972:

- legal incorporation of the RTA as a charitable organization (*Notes: charitable tax status took a couple more years. RTA incorporation lapsed in the late 1980s and a reinstatement process was required in the early 1990s.*)
- no “opportunities for youth” grant was possible, so the RTA organized volunteers to do trail maintenance.
- E2E certificate was created for people having hiked the entire (main) trail.
- hiker associated liabilities were examined for the first time.
- publicity about the trail was started.
- decision made, and efforts started, to create “day hiking loops” near the main trail to avoid the need to shuttle for every hike.

1973:

- the first Ontario Trails Symposium was held in Toronto, RTA attended (evolved into Ontario Trails Council), represented by Doug Knapp and Norman McLeod.
- work continued on side trails, and the first large group hiked the Slide Lake Loop.
- relay hike was conducted from Ottawa to Kingston, carrying a message of congratulations from the mayor of Ottawa to the Mayor of Kingston (for Kingston’s Tercentenary).
- trail map kit, with individual map sheets, was developed.
- RTA’s first photo contest was held.
- a 14-year-old from Ottawa completed a through hike of the trail.



1974:

- the RTA, the Bruce Trail Club, and the Guelph Trail Club led efforts to create the Federation of Ontario Hiking Trails Association (FOHTA) (initially consisting of 8 hiking clubs), which later became Hike Ontario (in 1983).
- efforts started to raise funds and improve the financial position, with the aims of improving the trail, adding campsites and acquiring access to property.
- first property obtained through donation – 5 acres beside the trail, about 25 miles from Ottawa (*that property was later disposed of as the RTA could not then afford the associated taxes*).
- contest initiated to design a new crest for the RTA.

1975:

- first guidelines published for hikers, backpackers and campers.
- the concept of organized E2E hikes was introduced.
- Derek Raymond won the contest for his design of a new crest.
- RTA invited to participate in the planning of two “new” Provincial Parks – Frontenac Park and Murphys Point.
- Smiths Falls/Central Club was disbanded as no volunteers could be found to lead the Club.
- Ottawa Carleton took over management of the Marlborough Forest.
- the first children’s nature discovery walk was conducted.



SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE R.T.A. BOARD MEETING, APRIL 25, 1981

5) Trail maintenance people take note! One of the R.T.A.'s 10th Anniversary projects is to recognize the role landowners have played in our history. You may be called on to present a certificate of appreciation to private landowners along sections of the trail.

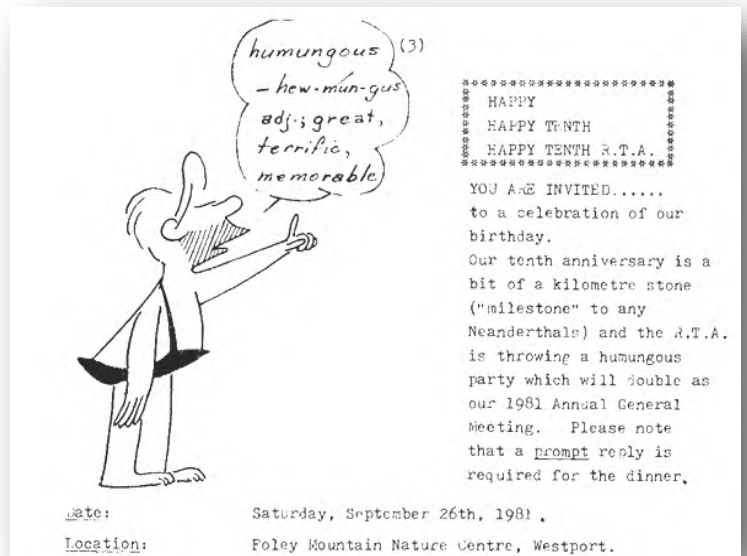
6) The Kingston Federation of Naturalists has purchased land in the Gould Lake area, through which the Rideau Trail passes. A donation to the KFN of \$250.00 was approved from our Corridor Preservation Fund.

7) Here are two dates to keep in mind:

Rideau Trail Annual -General Meeting - September 26, 1981 at Foley Mountain Conservation Area.

Ontario Hike Day”

Below is the ad taken from the Fall 1981 Newsletter



1980:

- FOHTA held the first conference for Ontario Hikers (Hike Ontario Summit) and was held in Peterborough.
- RTA’s Doug Knapp was presented with a special award.

1981:

- 10th Anniversary, with the first “look back to see the way forward” (reviewing historical problems and developments and holding discussions to improve the Association in the future) approach was taken by Association leaders.
- AGM held Sep 26 at Foley Mountain/Westport.



Back to the present day and our 55th Anniversary.

RTA AGMs have changed in terms of when they occur and what the format of the day is, but an opportunity presented itself to allow us to celebrate our 55th Anniversary in a manner that corresponds to many aspects of that first decade of the RTA. We will be acting as the hosts (along with Green Trails Ontario) of this years Hike Ontario Summit, in Westport, the weekend of Sep 25-27. We will be showcasing our past history, our current status and our future plans during the event. We are striving to ensure that the breakout sessions at the Summit will be on topics of interest to us and to the other Hiking Clubs that will be attending. The intent is that we can all share our issues and determine if there are better approaches to solving them.

There will also be some RTA Anniversary components to the weekend.

- Saturday, Sep 26 (*there is that date again*) will include a BBQ type picnic with an Oktoberfest food theme, to be held at Shillington Park, just outside of Westport (for RTA members and those interested from the Hike Ontario Summit).
- On Sunday, Sep 27, we will be conducting a series of hikes commemorating the past and one new blue trail.
 - a partial redo of the original opening ceremony, again at Foley Mountain, but with an updated theme.
 - Little Slide Lake (originally Slide Lake Loop, one of the first RTA side loops)
 - Gould Lake (hopefully to dedicate the Tom Dixon Trail).
 - the new blue route at Westport that bypasses the area normally closed for hunting season and offers numerous combinations going right through downtown Westport.

Back to the “So Whats” of the historical review. It is true that, as an Association, we face many of the same problems that our predecessors dealt with in the first decade of existence. Also true is that, in many respects, we live in a more complicated, legalistic and technical environment where there are more challenges to individual mental health, increasing threats to our natural environment and greater competition for our available free time. The last factor means that obtaining the significant amount of volunteer effort required to keep the RTA functioning properly is even more difficult. We need to partner with landowners and organizations (whether they be Conservation areas, Provincial Parks, towns, cities, counties or townships. We need to share ideas and best practices and be willing to adapt where either necessary or beneficial. These “so whats” have led to the choice of theme for the Hike ON Summit – “*Success Through Adaptation, Sharing and Cooperation*”. They also serve as a reminder of what we need to keep in mind as we strive for continued success in the future.

If we would like those who follow us to be able to continue to celebrate future anniversaries, then we will need to continue to pay attention to those principles. The RTA has a great history; let’s all do what we can to ensure that it has great future.

Rusty Bassarab
President, Rideau Trail Association

RTA CRESTS & LOGOS



1971 “ORANGE” ISOCELES TRIANGLE FROM REDDISH MARKERS



1975 CONTEST WINNER DEREK REDMOND



PROFESSIONALLY REDONE CREST IN 1990'S



RIDEAU TRAIL ASSOCIATION

PROFESSIONALLY DONE LOGO IN 1990'S

55TH Annual General Meeting of the Rideau Trail Association

The Rideau Trail Association held its 55th Annual General Meeting on Saturday May 9, 2026 at the Smiths Falls Gold and Country Club, 125 Golf Club Road in Smiths Falls from 8AM to 1PM.

56 folks were in attendance. While enjoying a coffee and tea welcome, people had time to mingle and chat over muffins and danishes prior to the meeting start at 9AM.

We also had a variety of RTA merchandise for sale, and well as the offering of tutorials on the use of the Activities Calendar. Thank you to Chuck Paterson and Karin McInnis for providing guidance on the use of the activities calendar and to Jon Mortensen for selling the merchandise.

The meeting got underway on time, ran smoothly, ending earlier than expected! Thank you to Rusty Bassarab for keeping us on time, and to the presenters for being mindful of time allotments provided.

47 participants enjoyed a generous lunch provided by Tina's Catering Service at the Club, while listening to our guest speaker from Bennet Labs at Carleton University.

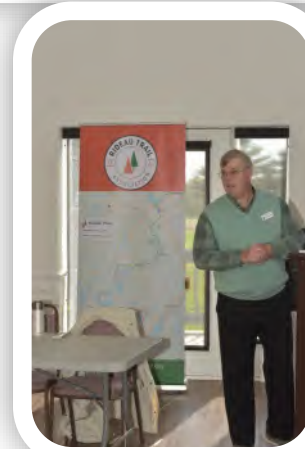
Amy Bachhuber, who is currently in her second year of her Master's program in the Bennet Lab at Carleton University spoke about how to deal with invasive species by providing an overview on the identification of several varieties of invasives found along the areas the trail traverses and offered some insight on the management of several. Amy's presentation material contributed greatly to the groups knowledge on how to identify them, and what is being done to mitigate their spread and how to properly remove and dispose of these plants.

As Amy has had direct involvement with the RVCA remediation efforts it was also of interest to many of us to hear of some of what is being done as the trail does go through five different RVCA property areas. There were several questions posed after her presentation, and it appeared that members found the topic of interest.

After our speaker presentation, there was a local hike offered, and at last count 19 people had signed up to participate.

Thank you to all those individuals who volunteered their time to help including Jim Fraser and Andy Glazin on registration, Kevin Chapman for being our photographer and Jim Moss and Mary Carlson who led the post meeting hike.

Respectfully Submitted
Melodie Mortensen, Vice Chair
Ottawa RTA Chapter



Pictures from the 2026 Annual General Meeting, 09 May 2026



Picture from the Post AGM Hike

Folks are at the big blue Muskoka chair near the Lockstation House at the intersection of Jasper Avenue and Lombard Street (near the Combined Locks) in Smith's Falls. ..Ron Hunt



Certificates of Appreciation

Alan Johson—Director & Ottawa Club Chair, 2025/2026
Karen Toon—Marketing Communications Director 2024/2025

Winter E2E Badges

Number	Name	Start	Finish	Club
125	Robin Andrew	Jan 24, 2021	Jan 2, 2026	Ottawa
126	Sanjay Ramloll	Jan 7, 2023	Feb 21, 2026	Ottawa

Regular E2E Badges

Number	Name	Start	Finish	Club
672	Sue Goff	Jan 15, 2021	Apr 19, 2025	Kingston
673	Paul Galipeau	Sep 26, 2015	Aug 25, 2025	Ottawa
674	Chris Johnston	Apr 24, 2010	Oct 5, 2024	Central
675	Kathy Baker	Sep 14, 2021	Oct 2, 2025	Kingston
676	Lisa Nicholas	Sep 14, 2021	Oct 2, 2025	n/a
677	Melodie Mortensen	Apr 8, 2021	Nov 6, 2025	Ottawa
678	Jon Mortensen	Apr 8, 2021	Nov 6, 2025	Ottawa



Present at the AGM were Sanjay Ramloll and Robin Andrew to collect their Winter E2E certificate, also Melodie and Jon Mortensen received their E2E certificate and "I did 55" badge

Congratulations to all



RTA AWARDS PRESENTED AT THIS YEARS AGM

Outstanding service awards

Central - Joint Winners: Bill Ottny and Gunhild Karius



Ottawa - Robert Smith

Association Awards

Governance Committee: Chair Margaret MacSween



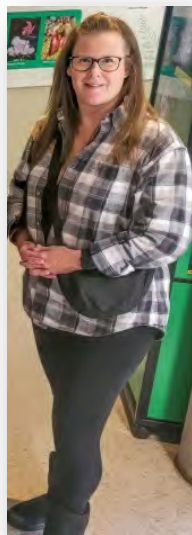
Members: Mary Carlson, Bill Davies (missing), Sue Lansing and Sanjay Ramloll



Dorothy Hudson



Kingston - Karin Mcinnis and Susan Lansing



SUMMER IS GETTING CLOSER... and so is the RTA PICNIC!

Last time I promoted the Summer Picnic there was snow on the ground. Now it has all melted I just want to remind everyone about the arrangements for the RTA 55 Year Anniversary Summer Picnic on July 11th, running from 11am to 4pm.

We have booked the location, The Rideau Ferry Yacht Club, 133 Yacht Club Road, Perth, ON.
Thanks Peter W.

Format will be similar to last year with swimming, games and fun – LOTS of Cornhole!

BBQ will be served at 12.30pm. The BBQ Cook last year was awesome by the way and he is returning this year too....no bias at all! Anniversary Cake will round off the food.

All the details can be found on the Calendar..



While prices have gone up, we are hoping to keep the cost at \$5 per person, cash on the day only. Guests are welcome too as long as we know they are coming. We just need to know that we have enough food – kind of important

Hope you can make it. It was a big success last year. Let's celebrate 55 years of the RTA by making it even bigger success this year.

Hope to see you there, and hope to beat you at Cornhole! Jim Moss

Author of *Hiking Trails of Ottawa* Has Passed Away

Michael Haynes died at his home in Halifax on March 19, 2026. He was 70 years old. Many of you are familiar with his book, and a few of you have had the pleasure of hiking with him or attending his presentations when he was in the Ottawa area.

Here is a link to a tribute posted on the Hike Nova Scotia website that describes Michael and his many accomplishments.

<https://hikenovascotia.ca/resources-remembering-michael/>

Michael was a very good friend of mine and we had lots of fun and many adventures together. I had the privilege of accompanying Michael on quite a few hikes while he was doing field work for his books. He put a lot of effort into collecting detailed information and photographs that would serve as the raw data for his hiking guides.

One of the most memorable trips was a 5-day, 60-kilometre hike on the Pukaskwa Coastal Trail on the east shore of Lake Superior. This trail is described in Volume 2 of *The Best of the Great Trail* (now known as the TransCanada Trail). Our backpacking trip took place in August 2016 after Michael had been on the road for 59-days doing research for the other trails described in that book.

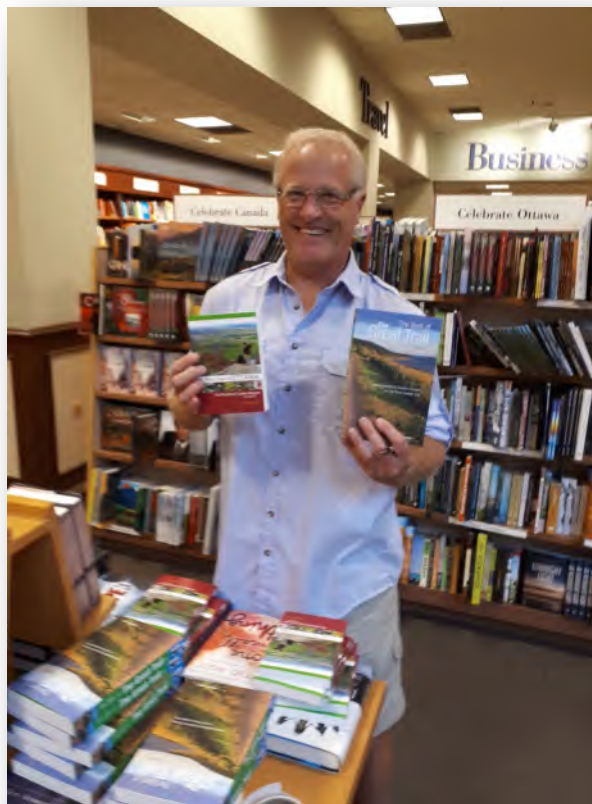
It was also fun to be present when Michael dropped into bookstores to sign copies of his books. There was always an air of excitement in the store when he showed up, and I teased him

about his celebrity status.

The last of Michael's book projects was the updated edition of *Hiking Trails of Cape Breton*. The launch for that book was scheduled for July 14, 2026 in Halifax, and was intended to be Michael's retirement as an author. Unfortunately, he's going to miss the party.

Happy Trails Michael. We are going to miss you.

Ron Hunt



RTA Fall Hiking Trip **Tues., Oct. 13, Wed., Oct. 14, and** **Thurs., Oct. 15th, 2026.**

This trip will provide opportunities to hike in the great outdoors in beautiful Frontenac Park, parts of the Rideau Trail and other surrounding areas. It is also an opportunity to meet and socialize with other members of the RTA.

The trip has been booked for the week days after Thanksgiving Monday with accommodations at the Cove Inn (www.coveinn.com), 2 Bedford St., Westport, Ontario. The Cove has 13 rooms available as they renovated the room off the lobby this winter. This room is called Room 1. All rooms at the Cove have new heating/AC units. Overflow rooms are available at the Black Dog and the Upper Rideau B&B. The overflow accommodations are in very close proximity to the Cove. If you are housed at one of these locations you will book through the Cove and have your meals at the Cove.

Rideau Trail Club Rates

Tues.Oct.13, Wed.Oct.14 and Thurs.Oct.15.2026 (for free!)

The Cove Inn in Westport, ON www.coveinn.com

Double Occupancy/Night

Room with full buffet breakfast \$219 + HST + 5% room gratuity = \$258.42

Dinner (includes dessert) \$45 x 2 = \$90 + HST + 15% gratuity = \$115.20

Total \$373.62

Single Occupancy/Night

Room with full buffet breakfast \$219 + HST + 5% room tip = \$258.42

Dinner (includes dessert) \$45 + HST + 15% gratuity = \$57.60

Total \$316.02

We will be served a hot buffet **breakfast all 3 mornings**. If you have any dietary restrictions, you should let the Cove know when you book and remind them the actual day you arrive so that alternatives can be provided.

For **dinner at 6:00 p.m.**, we will be served a buffet style in the dining room with multiple mains and a dessert with tea/coffee included. We will be set up in the dining room the first two nights.

So, to reintegrate, the trip includes two nights accommodations (Tues. and Wed.) with a third night free (Thurs.) Pricing includes dinner on Tuesday + room, breakfast and dinner on Wednesday+ room, and breakfast on the Thursday. If you are opting to take advantage of the 3rd night (Thurs.) free you are

responsible for covering the cost of your dinner that evening either at the Cove or nearby restaurants. The Cove will provide a hot breakfast the following morning (Friday) before we check out. The Cove will make bag lunches on request for an additional fee of \$14.00 plus HST. If you want to bring your own lunches from home or from purchases at stores and bakeries nearby, know that all rooms have a mini-fridge with the exception of the Upper Rideau B & B which provides access to a communal fridge.

All proprietors are offering a third night free if you stay for two. **The additional night on this trip is Thursday only.** You can request the extra night when you book. If you wait and request it later, it may not be available. **If you do request the extra night, it is expected that you will not cancel at the last minute.**

Hikes will be offered Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Expect that most hikes will be at the levels 2 and 3. Every evening after supper we will gather in the main lobby at the Cove to hear what hikes are on offer for the next day. The hikes offered on Tuesday will be announced in advance of the trip which may involve going directly to the trailheads or meeting first at the Cove.

Other Notes:

Parking is available across the street from the Cove at the lot overlooking the water and also on the street

Free WiFi is an open network to guests. The WiFi has been improved to even faster speeds with fibre.

Check in time is 3:00 p.m. on the Tuesday. In past, if your room is ready earlier you may be able to store luggage in it right away. - If not, a place to store luggage will be available.

There is **live entertainment** at the Cove every night until 8:00 p.m. There is no charge but the musicians who are playing for gratuities are extremely appreciative of any support.

Vegan, vegetarian and gluten free individuals can be accommodated by the Cove.

Registration: If you want to join this trip you must check in with me first via email at

rebeccahall@rogers.com.

You must be an RTA member. I will want to know how many nights you plan to stay at our accommodations and if you are sharing a room with someone. This trip fills up very quickly and I need to keep track of who is attending for future emails about the trip and being fair to those who end up on a waiting list. Once you get my okay to call the Cove (1-888-268-3466) you can go ahead to make your reservation. The Cove will want your credit card # and will want to know how many nights you are staying.

Denise Hall – Trip Organizer

rebeccahall@rogers.com

Best Practices for Leading Hikes

- Choose a route that you know well
- Advertise the hike clearly for difficulty of length, speed, terrain, equipment required and any hazards that you are aware of.
- Pre-hike the route that you chose as close to the date of your hike with at least 2 companions
- Hike with no less than 3 participants, so are able to leave one person with an injured participant, and two can go for assistance if needed
- Check the weather ahead of the hike and especially on the day of the event.
- Encourage proper footwear, clothing and water. TURN away any unprepared hikers.
- Ensure all hikers have locked cars, have their keys, and all equipment required
- Ask hikers to disclose medical issues privately to either you as the Leader or whomever is the Sweep. Location of Epi-pen, or Nitro-spray and ASA should be shared
- Check if you have medical helpers or First Aiders
- Go over whistle blasts:
****1 = Attention; 2 = Come Here; 3 = Emergency****
- Group your hikers between a lead hiker and a sweep
- “Call Back” down the line, any trip or slip hazards
- Pause after 10 minutes for a pace check, clothing adjustment and hydration opportunity
- Encourage anyone who steps off trail for any reason, to inform the Lead or the Sweep
- Pause at all forks and turns in the trail or appoint someone as a “post” to wait for slower hikers, until the sweep arrives
- Rest for 5 minutes for hydration/snack, clothing adjustments every 1 hour
- Do a sweep count after every break
- Remind hikers to check for left equipment or garbage after every stop or break. The sweep should be doing a final look around prior to leaving the area.
- Practice “Leave NO Trace” (LNT) and leave areas cleaner than they were when you arrive.

Upon Ending the Hike

- Check with your Sweep that everyone is accounted for
- Let them know of upcoming hikes/events
- Have a closing thought
- Ensure everyone has a way home
- Remind the Participants to pay drivers the gas money if applicable
- Thank everyone for coming and a safe journey home

Best Practices to Engage in as a Hiker

- Wear boots or shoes with a good tread, and good support. TIP: Purchase your hiking boots/shoes in the early evening or late afternoon when you buy them, as your feet do swell throughout the day.
- Wear light-colored long pants and long-sleeved shirts. (Bugs tend to be attracted to darker colors)
- Wear layers. Wicking, warming, windproof/waterproof are the order in which to wear them
- Have extra socks, mitts, hat, buff and head lamp with you at all times.
- Use man made materials that are “quick dry”.
- Bring water and snacks as well as a lunch, with you. A rule of thumb is 0.5 L of water for every hour of moderate activity you will be doing. (2-3 L for half day or full day of a moderate hike).
- Have your own map of the hike. Don't be a “follower”.
- Have a whistle, a watch, bug or sun hat, sunglasses and an emergency blanket with you .
- Bring rain gear if rain is forecasted.
- Know your own comfortable speed, distance and terrain limits and STAY within those parameters. DO NOT sign up for a hike that is beyond your limits.
- Park on one side of the road or in designated parking areas at the Trail Heads. Pay the fee for parking. You do not want to return to the car at the end of a hike and find it has been towed.
- Bring identification by way of health card, driver's license, allergies and list of medications. Have this in an easily found spot in your pack.
- Bring allergy medications, epi pen; inhalers, nitro spray if needed.
- Know how to use your hiking poles, and how to carry them.
- Do not follow hikers with poles too closely.
- Pass poles through fences when passing over stiles to go over fences. DO NOT THROW them over the stile to the other side.
- Make sure hikers ahead or behind, do not get out of sight.
- Participate in “calling back” hazards to fellow hikers following you.
- Do not leave Packs by the trail when taking a break. Take them with you, leave them on, or have a buddy hold them.
- Yield to horses, trail users going DOWNHILL and to bikes.
- Move to the SAME SIDE when others pass.
- Bring a bag to pack out your own garbage, and to pick up other garbage found on the trail.

Continued on next page:

- Pack out all garbage. Banana and orange peels are NOT NATIVE to our areas and therefore WILL NOT break down properly.
- Use privies when available. Otherwise, bury waste 6-8” below the surface, and 150 feet from the trail or any water source. Toilet paper, baby wipes and sanitary pads and the like are not only unsightly on the trail, but will also not decompose quickly or properly, so pack them out.
- Be aware of the LEAVE NOT TRACE PRINCIPLES.



References/Adapted from:

Hike Ontario – Certified Hike Leader Manual

A Guide to Hiking Trails in Ottawa and Region. girlgonegood 3rd Edition – Vicki (Walsh) Lanthier

Hiking Trails of Ottawa and the National Capital Region and Beyond. Michael Haynes

Views from on High: Fire Tower Trails in the Adirondacks and Catskills. 2nd Edition. John P. Freeman and Jim Schneider.

Adirondack Trails – High Peaks Region. Adirondack Mountain Club. Editor Tony Godwin

Respectfully submitted by Melodie Mortensen
(RTA Member and Hike Leader)

The Rideau Trail Association announces the new Junior Hiker Program

The Junior Hiker program opens on June 1. Hike 3 km on the Rideau Trail each season and earn these lovely badges. This is open to the public; it's not just for RTA members. And adults can earn badges too!

Get the details here: <https://www.rideautrail.org/rideau-trail-junior-hiker>



***** **Trail Alerts** *****

There are 2 new trail alerts:

Temporary closure of a section of the Lime Kilns blue trail by NCC, duration TBC.

Long term blue trail closure between 14BC and 14D, until the City of Ottawa replaces a damaged bridge The following maps have been recently updated:

Map 2 - Changes to the main trail between 2B and 2C.

Map 5 - Change to new map format and Buck Lake mapping improvements.

Activities 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>

DONATIONS—THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY

Jean Sunter
David Ott
Peter Burbridge

Welcome New Members to the Rideau Trail Association

Central

Jim Gardiner
Ian Britnell
Carol Morrison
Corey Chivers
Joann Madsen
Lorraine Devanthey
Julie Chanon
Colette Kenny
Dorothy Martel
Melanie Taylor
Bobbi Chiappetta
Donna Bales
Richard (Dick) Green
Jill Bryant
Angela Doré
Sandra Petzelt
Janet Kuster

Kingston

Sharon Carr
Jolanta Harding

Noreen Macklin
Stacey Campbell
Toni Towle
Margie File
Craig Simpson
Deborah Bach
Barbara Walsh
Lee Fisher-Goodchild
Maureen Dunne
Svetlana Rytchkova
Darek Osostowicz
Leigh-Ann Pahapill
Kyle Wood
John-Angus Davison
Marcus Verbrugge
Debra Verbrugge
Lyndsey Dennis
Dan Resmer
Sana Rahmani
David Roff
Sandra den Otter
June DeMers
Pamela Manders
Linda Fontaine
Tracy Acres
Jen Liptrot
Isabelle Couture
Robert Cumming
Brendan Bailey
Chantal Thompson
Brent Rogers
Steph Durocher-LeBlanc

George Dehoop
Theresa Schneider

Ottawa

Catherine Gagnon
Audrey Tétreault
Chris Nestor
Alison Kealey
Lydia Schmidt
Veronica Nazareth
Andrea Harding
Ed Miner
Ruth Steinberg
Debby Voskamp
Una Pretty
Helen Reiss
Stella Hines
Juliana Caicedo
Greg Torossian
Stephen Keough
Natasha Joukovskaia
Helen Lynn
Jessica Thomson
Chantal Hicks
Anne-Mari Aunaste
Mary Henri
Hilary Geller
Cheryl Mulvihill
Abdo Bazerly
John Guy
Caroline Warburton

Ed Fitzgibbon
Preston Blair
Naomi Ireland
Emily Griffiths
Lois Sowden-Plunkett
Inge Dam
Denyse Geronazzo
Patrizia Huot
Elizabeth Cameron
Karen Badgerow
Janice Melanson
Janet Thomson
Peggy Fox
Randy Kimmett
Peggy McNulty
Marg Peixoto
Alison Sinclair
Pam Schwieg
Bev Scullion
Kathy Copeland
Danielle Filteau
Kylah Cawley
Deanna Drane
Sharon Ilavsky
Martin Burt
Cathy Head
Roderick C Moores
Bonnie Kammer

No Affiliation

Sylvia Miller

Discovering the Earth Star section of the Rideau Trail By Sonja McKay

Many members have walked the Rideau Trail in the Marlborough Forest and taken a break at the Earth Star shelter between waypoints 14D and 14E.

My husband Greg and I did the same last October. We went with two friends on a beautiful sunny fall day. I was intrigued to see the shelter, and to experience what looked on Map 14 like a rather winding route leading to the shelter. Why did it follow this undulating path, I wondered? And why is the shelter called "Earth Star"?

As we reached that area, I saw how the land became uneven, hilly and rocky in this generally flat region, and how the trail passed through a lovely mixed forest that held the shelter in a clearing. It did wind a lot but we were able to follow the path easily with well-placed orange markers. At times we thought we saw the shelter off to the left, but we walked to the right. No matter, the trail did wind its way to the shelter after a little meander and we ate our snack.

We also saw two worn signs on the way to and from the shelter with the words "Earthstar Trail" hand-painted on them. They sported illustrations of small round balls with what looked to me like little appendages. Were these planets? Aliens? I wondered as we continued on our way.



Figure 1: Sonja McKay with the one of the Earth Star trail signs, October 2025.

My curiosity was piqued, to say the least. I figured some members would be able to answer my questions. After getting home and posting on the RTA Facebook group, Carol Seal and Jack Tannett kindly responded: the earth star is a mushroom which appears in the late summer or fall. Looking a bit like a puffball, it has an outer wrapping that splits open, creating a star-shaped collar. They also told me that the Earth Star trail has existed and been so named since before the Rideau Trail was created in 1971. At first it was incorporated as a blue loop of the Rideau Trail, and now is part of the main trail.

I never did find the reason for the meandering route, but my guess is it is intended to help people slow down and maybe spot mushrooms or other interesting things along the way.

Grateful for the hiking experience and for the stories behind this part of the Rideau Trail, I offered to make new signs over the winter. Carol, a volunteer trail maintainer for that part of the Rideau Trail, agreed to put up the new signs.

In February and March I made the signs using mostly material on hand. On each sign I painted an illustration of the earth star mushroom. They may look a little like a flower or an octopus, but I'm hoping that, like the original signs, the images will help clue in the average visitor to the mushrooms they may see on the ground.



Figure 2: A newly-installed Earth Star Trail sign (May 2026) - Photo Kevin Chapman

So the next time you are out that way, keep an eye out for the mushrooms, the winding path, the mixed forest, and other unexpected things you may find on the Earth Star Trail.

Rideau Trail Association Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose: To support the Association's integrity, promote its goals, and enhance public confidence in the Association and those who support or are associated with it.

Background: Section 7 of RTA's Bylaw Number 4 outlines the expectation to disclose any conflict of interest. However, a policy with a procedure for providing an opportunity to do so at Board and Committee meetings is needed.

Policy: This policy applies to members of the Board of Directors, Board Committees, Officers and all other Committees.

A Director, Officer or member of any Committee shall not receive personal benefit or financial gain as a result of his or her position with the Association.

A Director, Officer or member of any Committee who has, or knows of, a real or perceived interest, directly or indirectly, in any matter under consideration by the Board or a Committee which he or she is a member shall:

1. Declare to the Board or the Committee, as the case may be, the nature and extent of the interest as soon as possible and in any event not later than the meeting at which the matter is to be considered;
2. Refrain from taking part in any discussion or vote related to the matter.

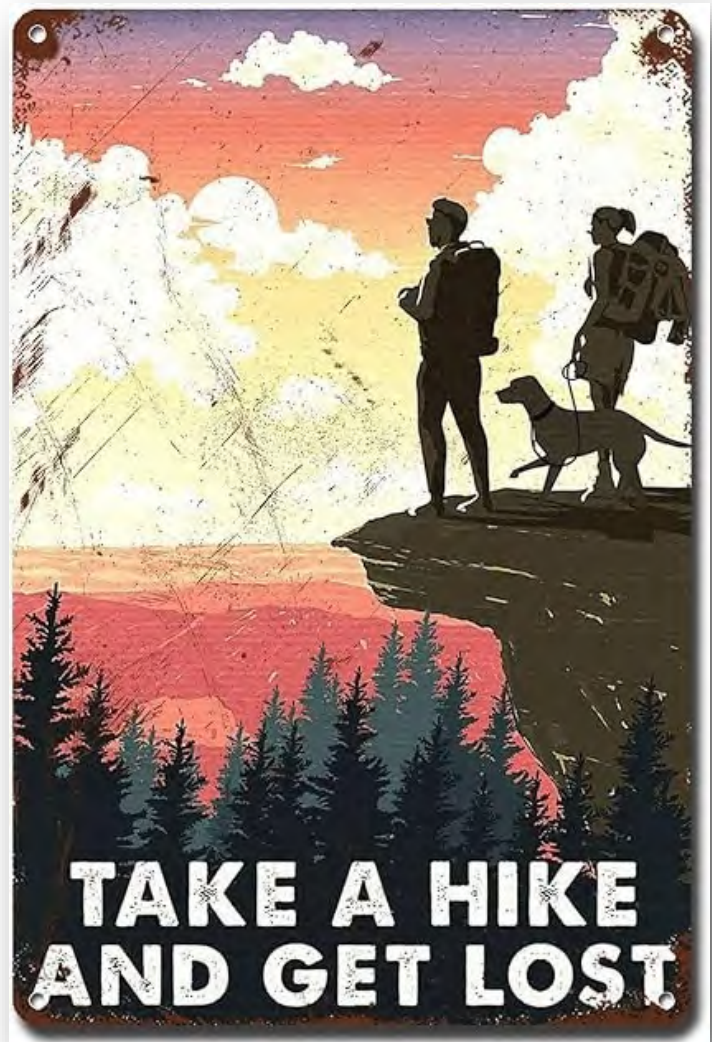
If a Director, Officer or member of any Committee acquires an interest in a matter after the meeting of the Board or Committee, as the case may be, of which such person is a member and at which the matter was raised, they shall make a declaration of such interest at the next meeting of the Board or Committee, as the case may be.

If no quorum exists for the purpose of voting on a resolution to approve a contract or transaction only because a Director, Officer or member of the Committee is not permitted to participate in that part of a meeting due to the conflict of interest, the remaining Directors or Committee members are deemed to constitute a quorum for the purposes of

voting on the resolution.

If a Director, Officer or Committee Member fails to comply with this Policy, the Board may remove such Director, Officer or member from the Board or Committee, subject to any limitations placed thereon in the by-laws of the Association.

Procedure: Agendas for Board and Board Committee meetings shall contain a stated opportunity to declare a potential Conflict of Interest. Immediately after approval of a meeting's agenda, the Chair will ask if anyone present is in a position of a Conflict of Interest. If so, he/she will refrain from taking part in any discussion or vote related to the matter



Healing on the Winter Rideau Trail by Robin Andrew

The Rideau Trail was Paul's happy place. For my husband, Paul Nichols, and me, Sundays were Rideau Trail day. Over the course of 2 years we hiked the trail, eventually completing it end to end. As we popped champagne at the finish of our last section a new plan emerged. We decided to take on the winter challenge, hiking it all again, but only in January and February.



January 1, 2022 we were behind parliament hill, slightly hungover, but ready to begin. Paul wore a goofy mohawk winter hat he'd been gifted at Christmas. We set off down the parkway, Paul, as always, engaging passers-by with greetings and the occasional dad joke.

Many weekend adventures followed. We mastered navigating stile ladders in snowshoes. We sank thigh deep into three foot snowbanks (Paul had decided we didn't need snowshoes for that section). Even blizzards didn't hold us back. With a zest for life and Ontario winters, we embraced the wind and horizontal snow. Paul's goofy hat became a fixture. Almost every weekend saw us engaged in the challenge and joy that is the Rideau Trail in winter. By the end of February, we had completed the Ottawa section. We figured it would take us two more seasons to complete the challenge.

Then in November that same year, Paul had a sudden stroke. He passed away 10 days later.

Shock and grief were overwhelming. Walking in nature was the one thing that provided some relief and comfort. The Rideau Trail had been such a large part of

our lives. I decided to complete our winter challenge in his honour.

January 1 2023, less than one month after he passed away, I set out solo on the first portion of the central section. Tucked in my pack between granola bars was a small silk bag with a few of Paul's ashes. The grief hit hard, but the hike felt right.

Family and friends of Paul's began to join me on different stretches of the trail - an opportunity to remember Paul, share stories, and a few tears under snow-covered trees. There were many memorable moments: Breaking tracks for 10 km in deep snow while chasing a 4pm sunset; Paul's son identifying animal tracks and a deer den on a sunny day with paper-white, fresh snow. Just as I was worrying how to manage the furthest sections, an email arrived out of the blue from a Kingston based friend Paul and I had lost touch with years ago. Now I had a trail buddy for the Kingston sections. Laughter and love of the trail began to emerge again. And Paul's presence was always felt.

It took four winters, but on January 2nd, 2026, friends cheered as I emerged with my snowshoes from my last section of trail. I had completed the 327km winter challenge.

There was a small silk bag in my knapsack. Paul had finished it also.

(In memory of Paul Nichols)
(January 24, 1962 - December 5, 2022)



MEMORABILIA AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

RTA Merchandise is available for purchase and will be available at various events through the year, if you are interested in a purchase of one of the items below (Limited quantities), please email awards@rideautrail.org and our Awards Coordinator Janice will action your requests for processing any payment etc. This email is just 'the order desk'. No payment due until delivery which will be arranged separately. No money needs sending to this e-mail.

Arrangements will be made by one of the clubs to get the items to you and to arrange payment



NEW - Buffs
\$15.00
Orange Tuques
Plain \$7.00
Printed \$20.00

Bucket Hats
Plain \$27.00
Orange \$27.00



Only 1 x Orange XL Woman's and 1 x Green small Men's T-shirts
\$20.00 each



RTA Badges
\$3.00



Water Bottles
\$25.00



Stickers \$3.00
Car Window Stickers \$3.00



PM40022816

Return undeliverable Canadian
addresses to:

RIDEAU TRAIL ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 15

KINGSTON ON K7L 4V6

Start of the Rideau Trail CA.1900

Mr. Doug Wood sent us this picture, and knowing that a lot have started or ended there hike at this spot, wanted to show what the area was like 126 years ago and noting lots of empty whisky/rum barrels lying around. Looks like a good way to end or start your hike :)

Doug Woods Past President, King's Town Trekkers Walking Club



**RIDEAU CANAL, WINTER VIEW
SHOWING THE RIDEAU LOCKS AT THE OTTAWA RIVER FROM UPPER LOCK CA. 1900**

Cover photos by Peter Weir (Ottawa Club), Bedford Mills Early May 2026