



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

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SNOWSHOEING ON THE DESBARATS SECTION

EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT, OCTOBER 20, 1979

I'd like to talk to you about our past, our present and our future. Our past is history but I'd like to remind you that the Voyageur Trail Association began in 1973 with 8 persons and a shared vision.

We have continued to share that vision with more and more people until today our support comes from more than 200 persons, distributed along the route of the Voyageur Trail and beyond. That is encouraging and gratifying, to think that that many people share the desire to see a continuous footpath from Thunder Bay to South Baymouth.

In the past year we have made considerable progress to that end. The Peniwobikong Voyageur Trail Club has laid out and cleared some few kilometers of trail. A large gain has been made on the Echo Ridges Section this past year and in that regard, we must express our thanks to the Garden River Band of Ojibways for permission to cross the Garden River on their bridge, and to the White Pines Outers Club (S.S.M.) for the efforts they have put into clearing this difficult section.

The Goulais River group have selected a route from Highway 17 at the Mile Hill north of Sault Ste. Marie, to Kirby's Corners.

The Michipicoten V.T. Club members have cleared trail so one can walk from Wawa to the Mission. At Schreiber, the Trail that last year extended between Terrace Bay and Rainbow Falls Provincial Park west of Schreiber, has been officially turned over to the Voyageur Trail Association and is being extended to Rossport by the Schreiber V.T. Club.

At Nipigon, we have acquired 2 new members, with a potential for a new club there in the future, while at Thunder Bay, a revitalized Club has recently chosen a new executive, flagged a few kilometers of trail and hopes to gain some real momentum.

Many enquiries have been personally answered, including one from the Secretary of State's Office; responses to land-use questionnaires from several M.N.R. Districts; the Boy Scouts of Canada, Kent District Council; and the 2nd Field Ambulance, Canadian Forces Base, Petawawa.

As to the future, I see diminishing responses within some trail clubs in southern Ontario. Why? I do not know. I only hope that the same phenomenon does not occur within our territory. I know we are all busy with a multitude of commitments. I've said so before, we are an organization of "doers" - people who like to do things rather than passively watch the world go by. So let's

set our priorities right. If the Voyageur Trail is to be completed, we ALL have to help, in two ways: We have to continue to build trail, for there is a lot of trail to be built yet. But, we have to enlist more help, for the job eventually becomes too big for a few. For our own future viability, we have to build up our membership within each club. The future of the Voyageur Trail Association and the future existence of the Voyageur Trail depends on a strong membership willing to make some sacrifices for the creation of what is becoming a truly remarkable footpath across northern Ontario. A footpath that will fill the hearts of all hikers with desire.

With the kind of progress we have made so far, I foresee a bright future, for as the trail is extended in bits and pieces, and linked up here and there, what remains to be done looks less and less like an impossible task, and more and more like an accomplishable goal. Don't try to mentally bite off the entire route from Thunder Bay to South Baymouth, but within your own Club's Section, try to set an objective for the season and then commit yourself to helping to achieve that objective. In that way, the Trail gets built, step by step and each year more and more gets linked up, until one day we shall see that elusive continuous trail along the shores of Lakes Superior and Huron.

I would like to extend again, my deepest thanks to all of you, present to-day or not, who have helped in many ways to further the aims and objectives of the Voyageur Trail Association.

--- Paul D. Syme

ATTENTION LANDOWNERS

The wheels of progress grind slowly! In 1977 we informed you that the Ontario Trails Council had recommended to the Government of Ontario that legislation should be enacted so that landowners who graciously allow recreational use of their land would be relieved of civic liability.

We are happy to report that such legislation has received first reading in the Ontario Legislature this fall, and hopefully, we will be able to report the acceptance of the Act in our spring Newsletter.

In the meantime, English Common Law still protects you.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SECRETARY'S REPORT AND OTHER NEWS

OF INTEREST

The following is a brief digest of some of the points contained in the Secretary's Annual Report as presented to the Board of the Voyageur Trail Association at their meeting prior to the 1979 Annual General Meeting held in Wawa on October 20, plus some up-date information. Membership in the Association as reported in the Secretary's Report was 209. This has now (at the time of writing, January 14) increased to 238, and with three months to go in 1979/80, we are bound to easily surpass last year's total of 244.

News of the Voyageur Trail continues to spread! This year's enquiry-from-farthest-away came from Lichtaatt, Belgium (last year it was England, the year before, Holland). Others this year came from Berkely, California, Tucson, Arizona, Evanston, Illinois, Providence, Rhode Island, to name a few.

This year the Association voted on and accepted a new Constitution. In accordance with the previous Constitution (in effect at the time of the vote), ballots were issued to all members. Of the responding ballots, all were in favour of the revised Constitution. Appropriate mechanisms were put in place at the Board and Annual Meetings so that, if accepted, the new Constitution would automatically come into effect when the 30-day time limit for return of ballots expired. The new executive of the Voyageur Trail Association is: President: Paul D. Syme (Saulteaux); Vice-Presidents: R. Andrews (Echo Ridges) and T. McGrath (Schreiber); Secretary: I. Morrison (Saulteaux); Treasurer: D. Ropke (Desbarats).

The Annual General Meeting was held in Wawa, Ontario, and was hosted by the Michipicoten V.T. Club. After a wet but thoroughly enjoyable afternoon hike along the beautiful Michipicoten Section past the magnificent Magpie High Falls, participants repaired to a sumptuous dinner at the Wawa Motor Hotel. The evening was capped by two presentations on Pukaskwa National Park, by Cordy Tymstra and by Mike O'Connor.

NOTICE

The Voyageur Trail will be closed for one day, the first Monday in February, February 4, 1980.