



NO. 125 WINTER 2017

Published by the  
**VOYAGEUR TRAIL  
ASSOCIATION**  
P.O. BOX 20040

150 Churchill Blvd.  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON  
P6A 6W3

Visit our web site at:  
[www.voyageurtrail.ca](http://www.voyageurtrail.ca)

Email address:  
[info@voyageurtrail.ca](mailto:info@voyageurtrail.ca)

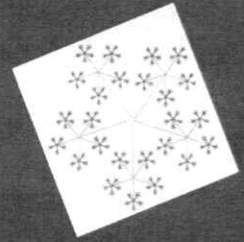
The Voyageur Trail Association is a non-profit, volunteer group dedicated to building and maintaining a public hiking trail along the northern shores of Lakes Superior and Huron, from Thunder Bay to Sudbury.

The VTA is a member of Hike Canada En Marche, Hike Ontario, Ontario Trails Council, and Trans Canada Trail.

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# Voyageur Trail News



No. 125, Winter 2017

EDITOR: Fiona Ortiz

## AGM Report *by Carole Blaquiere*

We had 12 attendees to the AGM which was held at the Legion in Schrieber on September 24<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the VTA president and membership secretary, six VTA members of the Casque Iles club, two volunteers and representatives from the town of Schrieber, Terrace Bay and the Lake Superior Marine Conservation Area attended.

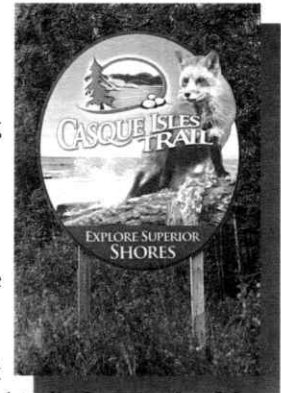
Kees and Janice were acclaimed in their positions of treasurer and volunteer coordinator respectively. No one volunteered for the position of publicity. After the business of the AGM was completed, we had an excellent SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) session in which many ideas were generated for the strategic planning committee. This is the second year that we included a SWOT exercise after the AGM business and both have generated much discussion. I plan on continuing this practice for future AGMs.

Lunch was served, after which we headed out on a lovely hike from Lyda Bay to Terrace Bay Beach along the Casque Iles Trail. This was an excellent opportunity to meet with the new people on the Casque Iles executive as well as to re-establish ties with the long time members.

Since we were in the area, we took some time to meet with other stakeholders in the area, including Dean Main, Community Development Manager in Terrace Bay on Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Sylvio Pelletier, Acting Manager, LSMCA, Ron Salo and Ashley of the Northwest Superior CFDC on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> and Bob Hancherow, Economic Development Manager in Marathon on Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the meeting was to increase the awareness of the VTA and to determine what relationships could be developed in the area.

There is a Northwest Trail Association being developed through the EDOs of the towns from Marathon to Dorion. This entity is still trying to determine what its mandate will be and has started working on a pamphlet which will have selected trails from each of the communities. Matt Borustski has already indicated to the group that they should involve the actual people who are developing and maintaining the trails in the area which I believe is going to be done. The next meeting is going to be held in November.

We stayed at a lovely little cottage that I had booked on Walker Lake in Schrieber. Since the owners decided not to charge the VTA for the lodgings due to some mishaps, we donated a guidebook which can be used both by the owners and any future guests they have at the cottage.



### Volunteer Appreciation

We are planning a Volunteer and Landowner Appreciation Hike and Potluck on Feb 18th at the Sault Ste. Marie Regional Conservation Authority Sugar Shack. Nominate a volunteer for the Steve Taylor Award and look for your invitation in early February.

## Hike Ontario Annual Summit Report *by Carole Blaquiere*



Chris Kuntz and Carole Blaquiere attended this year's Hike Ontario summit held in Perth, Ontario, which allowed for networking with the Rideau Trail Association (RTA) club members from Ottawa, Perth and Kingston areas. Members of southern Ontario clubs such as the Thames Valley, Avon, Guelph, Lambton Shores, and Meaford areas were also in attendance.

The keynote speakers were Doug Knapp, who spoke about the creation and early years of both Hike Ontario and the RTA, and Ron Knight from the Bighead River Heritage Association who spoke about John Muir, celebrated naturalist who travelled through and worked in Ontario as a young man. Doug Knapp was instrumental in the creation of Hike Ontario and the RTA. Although he remembers much, he admitted the needed to refresh his memories by searching the archives at Queens University. Of note to the VTA, Paul Syme (see page three for list of original hikers)\*, one of our founding members, was part of the group founding the original Hike Ontario organization which was called FOHTA (Federation of Ontario Hiking Trail Associations). Mr. Knapp asked about Mr. Syme and was glad to hear that he was still a member of the VTA.

I attended an information session "Using Digital Media to Promote Hiking" with Paul Galipeau. Paul works in communications as a consultant and previously worked for Parks Canada at the Rideau Canal as a communications specialist. He currently volunteers as the RTA as publicity. When he began the RTA, website and social media pages were trending up in usage but membership was trending down. He believed that using social media and revamping the communication strategy, including the website could align the two trends upwards. The RTA has recently launched a new website that includes new branding and revised logo. The new website is also mobile friendly and has a member only portal.

Mailchimp is used to send a monthly members-only hiking e-letter which includes special announcements and upcoming hikes. They also launched a monthly public e-newsletter, sent to complimentary members as well as lapsed members and non-members that indicate they want to be on their mailing list. They are no longer sending out physical newsletters to any of their members.



Chris and Carole at the Hike Ontario Summit  
Photo credit: Howard Robinson (Rideau Trail Association)

In addition to using Facebook and meetups to indicate weekend hikes, they use Instagram to publish pictures and short videos of their events. They monitor Twitter to answer questions about the trails and association. They also monitor metadata, the data associated with the usage of these communication systems. The result of all of this work is impressive: in just one year, the membership trend has not only reversed but now number more than the last 3 or 4 years. Membership retention is 77%, the highest in the last 10 years. New members are surveyed to find out why they are joining and how they learned about the organization. All of this is food for thought for the VTA.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST PUBLIC HIKE BY THE  
SAULTEAUX SECTION OF THE VOYAGEURS TRAIL ASSOCIATION  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH CONSERVATION WEEK  
MAY 11, 1975

NAME	STREET	CITY
Paul Syme	449 Henderson Park	S.S.M.
John Libby	3 Broadway Ave	S.S.M.
Richard Group	3 Broadway Ave	S.S.M.
Dick McClatchey	119 Lockhart St	S.S.M.
Kirk McClatchey	"	S.S.M.
Tony Allerson	176 Broadfield	S.S.M.
J. Melton	R.R.#2 Soo	
Myrland Waldman	R.R.#2 Soo	
Goodman Pleman	99 Pine St. Apt. 503	S.S.M.
H. Thompson	120 Pine St	S.S.M.
Annie Matt	1691 Sec. Line W.	S.S.M.
Ralph Kenna	280 Old Goulans Key Rd	S.S.M.
Chithan		
Bob Campbell	39 Kent Ave.	S.S.M.
B. Tompsett	1691 Second Line W.	S.S.M.
W. H. H. H.	162 - Second St.	S.S.M.
Wayne McAllen	72 Pine St	"
Mary Ellen MacLellan	42 Pine St	"
F. N. Robinson	92 Potts St	"
J. D. Hagan	Box 1027	S.S.M.
John Hagan & wife	115 Simpson St	S.S.M.
Dabbe Watson	115 Simpson St	S.S.M.
John Smith	512 Wellington	Sault Ste Marie
Mary Smith	690 Wellington	Sault Ste Marie

\*Thanks to Mike Landmark for finding the list of participants from the first official hike of the Saulteaux Section of the Voyageur Trail in an old file box! Note that Paul Syme is first on the list, dated May 11, 1975.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SAULTEAUX SECTION OF THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL, GROS CAP, SEPTEMBER 21, 1975

NAME	STREET	CITY
Tobert	120 Grant Blvd	Log
Ray A. Tobert	120 Grant Blvd	Log
John W. Burt	44 Jackson Ave	
John Burt		
John Burt	22 VICKI ST	500
John Burt	201 Maple St	500
John Burt	22 Second	500
John Burt	97 Pine St	500
John Burt	1000 1st Ave	500
Ronald Burt	28 Dundy Ave	500
John Burt	507 1st St	500
John Burt	224 Wallace Terr	500 ✓
John Burt	120 1st St	500 ✓
John Burt	143 N. Green	500
John Burt	"	500 ✓
John Burt	"	500
John Burt	1500 Jackson St	500
John Burt	119 W. Weston St	500
John Burt	179 Carroll Ave	500
John Burt	63 Blushaw St	500
John Burt	147 Second St	500
John Burt	501 1st St	500
John Burt	2 1st St	500
John Burt	76 1st St	500
John Burt	172 1st St	500
John Burt	11 1st St	500
John Burt	140 Roosevelt Ave	500
John Burt	45 1st St	500
John Burt	22 1st St	500

**Landowner Appreciation**

The VTA appreciates its landowners, since it is through their generosity that we have a trail. Please think of this when you use the trail. Stay on the trail, obey trail signs, don't litter and clean up any garbage. It makes sense to treat crown land in the same manner as we all own it.