



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 Rosspoint 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 Tymatra and by Mike O'Connor.

NOTICE

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



A great way to spend the Victoria Day Weekend!



HIKE ONTARIO! and its now familiar green and white logo, has appeared many times in this newsletter during 1979, providing you with exciting information about the first Ontario hiking conference May 16 to May 19 at Trent University, Peterborough.

A program has now been finalized and a preregistration form is included in this newsletter. You are invited to plan your Victoria Day long weekend now at a truly inexpensive family holiday cost.

"Big Doings" are planned: hardy, outdoor appetites will enjoy a cook-out luncheon and a pioneer breakfast; children will have a special program of their own; many organized outings are scheduled, and the evenings will be alive with square dancing and entertainment.

For those of you who want to learn more about how other Clubs maintain their trails; gain technical and

educational information for the improvement of hiking trails and programs; discuss problems facing Ontario trails, and pick up some new hiking tips, a number of exciting workshops are planned. Group sessions will also allow participants an opportunity to discuss how they can influence government decisions relating to hiking trails.

Mr. Justice Thomas Berger, who headed the historic MacKenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, will be the guest speaker at the Sunday banquet.

An exchange/sale of hiking, cross-country and snow-show equipment is also planned, so bring along all your outgrown or outdated equipment.

At **HIKE ONTARIO!** you will be staying in residence or camping at Trent's 1,500-acre campus which is situated at the northern edge of Peterborough. The campus is cut by the Otonabee River, a part of the popular Trent Canal System that carries boaters between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay.

During the organized outings you will enjoy the Peterborough area — the lakes, granite and evergreens of the Canadian shield to the north and the softly rolling St. Lawrence Lowlands bordering Lake Ontario to the south. Those who know the area best will recommend the trips to Serpent Mounds at Rice Lake Provincial Park, Petroglyph Park and the High Falls Trail, the Warsaw Caves and a 600-acre wildlife sanctuary just next door to Trent University. The City of Peterborough, the gateway to the Kawartha Lakes, recreational area is also worthy of a visit. Peterborough is charming — homes and business buildings from many decades of Victorian and later eras . . . good homemade peanut butter . . . one of the world's largest hydraulic lift-locks . . . parks, playgrounds . . . a friendly farmer's market . . . spinners, weavers, potters, artisans . . . a new art gallery.

Preregister before March 31, 1980, for **HIKE ONTARIO!** and your name will be entered in the lucky draw for prizes donated by Margesson's Sports Ltd. and Thomas Black and Sons Canada Ltd. The draw will be made at the Conference.

Make the Victoria Day weekend a memorable mini vacation by joining hundreds of fellow hikers at **HIKE ONTARIO!** in 1980. Register now.

Program

MAIN ACTIVITY

CONCURRENT ACTIVITY

Friday

Afternoon 4 to 6 p.m.

Registration

Campus orientation tours

Evening

Socializing

Displays

Saturday

Morning 8 to 9 a.m.

Get Acquainted Pioneer Breakfast

Registration, displays,

9 to 10 a.m.

Presentations on Ontario trails

Campus/orientation tours

10:30 to 12 noon

Keynote speaker and discussion panel on
Conference theme

Young people's program

Afternoon

Study groups on Conference theme

Outings, displays

Technical workshops

Used equipment exchange/
sale

Experience exchanges

Ideas for hikers:

1. Hiking with children
2. Zero impact camping
3. Mapreading and orienteering
4. Trail maintenance and construction
5. Ideas for backpackers
6. Great North American trails

Evening

7 to 8:30 p.m.

Trail presentations

Displays

8:30 to —

Square dancing

Socializing

Sunday

Morning 8 to 8:30

Ecumenical service

Young people's program

10 to 11:30 a.m.

General assembly,
reports from study groups,
general discussion,
resolutions

Afternoon 12:15 to 1:30

Sunday Cookout

1:30 to 6 p.m.

Organized outings

Displays

Evening

7 p.m. to —

Banquet and speaker,
Mr. Justice Thomas Berger,
followed by entertainment

Displays

Monday

Morning 9:30 to 11:30

Organized outings

Displays

12 noon to 12:30

General closing ceremony