



# VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION  
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No. 63

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SPRING 1996

## 3RD EDITION OF GUIDEBOOK IS OUT

### Voyageur Hiking Trail GUIDEBOOK



Your patience is finally being rewarded! The long awaited new Voyageur Hiking Trail Guidebook is now available. At over 120 pages, two colour maps, and housed in an attractive six-ring binder, this edition is a major expansion and improvement over previous editions. Added Trail Sections include the Nipigon, Marathon, Coureur de Bois, Lake Superior Provincial Park and Pukaskwa National Park. Updates can be easily inserted into the book, and trail maps readily removed. There is also a wealth of useful trail information for users.

This Guidebook has been over a year in the making, and required many hundreds of hours of volunteer labour. Two of the key individuals involved are Karen Zhou and Dan

by Steve Dominy

Wheeler, who prepared maps and trail descriptions, respectively. In addition, I would like to thank all the committee members whose time and dedication made this all possible, as well as the many others who made contributions too numerous to mention. These efforts are greatly appreciated. Without a doubt, this was my biggest volunteer undertaking with this or any other organization, and I am now breathing a long sigh of relief.

The Guidebook cost has increased to reflect the higher quality product. Members can buy up to two Guidebooks for \$15 each, postage paid, while non-members will pay \$25. We are strongly encouraging people to become members, and are offering a \$5 rebate to those who buy a Guidebook and later decide to join the VTA. For the first time, the books are available (for non-members only) at a number of retail outlets. At the time of printing, these included:

In Sault Ste. Marie:

Clean North, 736A Queen St. E.;  
Dunn's Authors Bookstore, Wellington Square Mall; and  
The Trading Post, Great Northern Road.

In Blind River:

The Public Library; and  
The Travel and Information Centre.

In Wawa:

The Tourist Information  
Centre.



## THE VTA AND LAND USE ISSUES

For those who completed the VTA questionnaire recently, you may recall the question: "Should the VTA take a stand on land use issues which do not directly affect the Trail"? The summary of the questionnaire results indicate that this was the only question which resulted in a clear split in the membership. About half our members feel we should be taking such a stand, even when the issue does not directly affect the Trail.

The executive has decided that the Association will not take such positions, except when the issues directly threaten the Trail. Our reasoning for this decision is that we are a small group with a very specific mandate, that of maintaining and building a hiking trail. To become active in other land use issues would require that the executive become familiar enough with the issue to be able to come to agreement on an Association position. We would then require a group of strong advocates to represent us at public fora.

The executive feels that this would be too great a departure from our current mandate at this time, given our current level of active volunteers and the difficulty we have in maintaining all

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**THE VTA AND LAND USE ISSUES**

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of the Trail we have. Nevertheless, we would be happy to hear further opinions on this topic.



**OF SNOWSHOES AND PORCUPINES...**

The snowshoe outing of March 23, 1996 along the Red Rock shoreline of Lake Superior was glorious under sunny skies.

frame takes on this look it is a scream for help.

The babish had the parched look of a seven-day camel on day nine just before it passes on. The tail of the snowshoes had been consumed by a desperate porcupine, some feat when you consider the random feeding habits of this mammal, it actually ate the lower third of both snowshoes.

At the break and enter of the Bruce Mines Historical Museum in late 1959, a similar pair of snowshoes was stolen. The faded library card attached to them said: "These snowshoes were worn by P. Chapeau when he discovered the ore body at Rock Lake on December 11, 1892." Could it be that...

by **D.R. who was there**



As it was, there were around 30 people who actually did turn out to join us, which was a fantastic number—6 from Sault Ste. Marie! Several people came without the proper footwear and had to run home to pick up their boots, so everyone arrived at the trailhead at a different time which made introductions and instructions a little difficult. As soon as I introduced myself and started to give instructions about the proper use of the tools, people were firing questions at me about the VTA itself. There was a definite interest in who we are, what we do, and everyone was anxious to get out on this trail, especially me!

Soon we were underway. Jack Smit led a fast-moving group ahead to try to get as much accomplished as was possible. I pulled up the rear to make sure that everyone who had decided that they had had enough, passed by me in order to leave.

It was a perfect day—lots of sunshine and warm breezes. About 10 minutes in on the trail, it opens on to a beaver pond that is absolutely breathtaking! I could tell that a lot of people would have been happy just lunching on the banks of this peaceful area.

After crossing on the dam, we re-entered the bush and worked along for another half hour or so when we came upon a huge logged-over section. Some of us slower members decided that this was a good lunch spot in the sun and we enjoyed several birds singing during the break.

A few people decided that they had had enough already, so after lunch a sporadic flow of trail cleaners started to file past me on their way back to the highway and their cars. As they passed, they told me that they had had a wonderful experience and gave me their phone numbers

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**ELLIOT LAKE TRAIL CLEANING A HUGE SUCCESS!**

by **Gayle Phillips**

On Sunday, May 5th as we arrived at the W. H. Collins Centre in Elliot Lake (the advertised place to meet) there had to be close to a hundred cars parked there! This unnerved me a little because we only brought tools for a small number of people to clean the Elliot

Lake section of trail. As it turned out, when I chose the Collins Centre as a meeting place, I didn't notice that there was a church next door and the spill-over parking for this church was the Collins Centre!

Gail A. showed up on snowshoes she borrowed from a certain member of the VTA executive. The woodframe had the impoverished patina money could not buy. People with grey hair look eminent, some are called Your Eminence. When an ash snowshoe

**ELLIOT LAKE TRAIL  
CLEANING A HUGE  
SUCCESS!**

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to contact them if we ever did this again. All-in-all, the weekend was a great success as we managed to clean the trail all the way to Turtle Lake, blaze with vinyl to Christie Creek, install two 100' ropes on slopes to make climbing easier, and make about 25 new friends to boot! (A big thank you to Mike Landmark who provided the rope and lots of elbow grease!)

Jack Smit told me that he and his daughter were planning to canoe up the Black Creek to Turtle Lake to continue cleaning towards McGiverin Lake on the long weekend in May and invited all of us to join him. I almost wished that I hadn't committed myself to leading hikes that weekend.

All-in-all this trail is a real treat and I hope that the next time anyone is in the area they will give the Elliot Lake Section a little inspection.



**THE SAULTEAUX  
CLUB - RUNNING  
ON FAST  
FORWARD!**

While some V.T. clubs appear to be suffering from a lack of enthusiasm, the Saulteaux Club must have a 'Fast Forward' button that someone has pushed: Membership numbers are up this year, people are calling to ask if they may lead an outing(!), new members are volunteering for anything asked of them. Probably a good deal of this heightened activity can be credited to Gayle Phillips' efforts to get the Voyageur Trail name known in the area (but we won't give her all the credit as she

may get a swelled head). Newcomers Mike and Cheryl Landmark have also pitched in to assist Gayle, notably with the development of an audio tape to accompany the VTA slide presentation. Mike has shown the slides to several groups north of the city and has distributed pamphlets to the businesses, with the hope of getting a V.T. club started in the Goulais area.

The hiking schedule for this spring (if we get one), summer and fall is exhaustive - literally! From short hikes to backpacking trips and canoeing, there is surely enough to please everyone's tastes/abilities/timetables.

At the recent Annual Dinner, a new executive was elected, consisting of:

- Susan Graham - President
- Laura England - Vice-President
- Gayle Phillips - Secretary
- Gale Koteles - Treasurer

Saulteaux Club meetings will continue to be held on a bi-monthly basis. Most often they will consist of a short business meeting followed by a talk or presentation of interest to the members. All members are encouraged to attend to keep informed of club events as well as getting to know your fellow members better and perhaps learning something new from the presentation.

Let's keep the Saulteaux Club soaring!



**REMINISCING**

**by Jeanette Cave**

- 25 years later and still loving it.

A Toronto Star article opened the door to years of pleasure. In 1971 we had four young children and very limited funds. Joining the Bruce Trail was reasonable and still is. It is by far the most economical exercise club there is. The mind, body and soul are all invigorated by a hike along the trail.

With Trail Guide in hand the hike leaders willing to lead, my adventures started. Learning to find my way to the trail head was a definite adventure. Sometimes it was found - after everyone had left. At times my navigating was right on and I did find the other hikers. On the trail I could never figure out how they knew where to go as my eyes were always looking down trying to keep from tripping along the pathway.

Now it's time to introduce the family to the great outdoors. First, learn to pay attention to the hike description, not all hikes are suitable for families. Hike leaders have always been great but I'm sure they would not have missed the six of us. Some family hikes were done on our own. Try letting a 5-year old lead, it can be a wonderful experience. Children see things we would never see. We saw nature in all its seasons and different moods.

The years start passing, we gain experience and ability to hike more miles. Our circle of friends is expanding. People are talking about backpacking or skiing. Are we capable of doing these activities? Of course we can. We borrowed backpacks and headed out for the Beaver Valley in the peak black fly season. Despite the problems we had, we loved it. We have now backpacked all over North America. Cross country skiing brings its own challenges and the beauty of our Canadian winter. Now our grandchildren are appreciating the great outdoors too.

The more I saw of the trail, the more I wanted to see. I had never heard of the Niagara Escarpment. Now I could see the beauty of this special area. I have led hikes now for a number of years as I'd like to pass on some of this love I have for a very special part of our province. The

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