

Guelph Hiking Trail Club

Annual General meeting

Union Hall – Silvercreek Parkway N, Guelph

Tuesday, November 20, 2018

Members in Attendance- 33

Motion to convene meeting and accept the Minutes from the November 2017 Guelph Hiking trail Club's Annual General meeting made by Dave Hull, seconded by Bill Mungal. All were in favour.

President's Report- Mike Curtis

Welcome everyone to the 47th Annual General Meeting of the Guelph Hiking Trail Club. Please ensure that you have signed the attendance sheet, as only members are permitted to vote in the upcoming elections. I extend my thanks to the social committee and Norm Salian for arranging the Hall this evening.

We have another good year of hikes, walks, explorations and a few social events, including our Trek and Tells. I would like to thank our hike leaders who take the time to organize and lead our many hikes, as well as our trail maintenance volunteers who work diligently, to keep our trails safe.

Our new publicity banners are again on display. If you know of a location where we could display these, please let Suzanne Gates know.

We had to modify our Trails Open event in April this year, due to the damp and slippery conditions near the Speed River at Speedvale Avenue. This year we are once again planning to participate in Trails Open at a place yet to be determined.

Congratulations to our members who have submitted photos for our photo contest this evening. Gayle will be presenting the awards later this evening.

Our new website is up and running and again I extend our thanks to Sandra Morrill, Gayle Jeffery, Julie Noordhoek and Ruth Bowes for developing it.

Our former site was developed and maintained by Pat Scott for many years. Pat and her first husband Jack, who passed away several years ago, were executive members for many years. Pat has been our secretary and also maintained our telephone answering machine since the early nineties. She is not able to be with us this evening due to a recent hip replacement. I spoke with

her yesterday evening and let her know that she has been awarded an honorary lifetime membership in the Club. Thank you Pat.

On a sadder note, Dorothy Scott, former activities co-ordinator, passed away a month ago. She, along with her husband John, a former Club treasurer, who passed away ten years ago, were valued members of the Club.

In closing my remarks, I again express my thanks to the many volunteers who support the work of the Club, with their labour but also to those who support with only their membership fees. We need both.

Vice-President's Report- Cynthia Corks

Thank you to all of the GHTC members for making this another challenging and hike filled year. Serving as your vice-president is a pleasure especially since Mike Curtis is such a reliable president. I only had to chair one meeting this year. I would like to thank my fellow board members for all of their contributions throughout the year. It takes a tremendous amount of work to keep our trails open and accessible.

In June of this year I arranged an exploratory trip to Georgian Bay Islands National Park after the club received an invitation from Mike Lavin, Interpretation Coordinator for Parks Canada. Mike reached out to hundreds of hiking organizations in Ontario, offering a guided hike for hike leaders, and an introduction to exploration on Beausoleil Island. We were the only club to respond. Gitta Houser, Florence White, Doris Harper and I planned an overnight stay in Midland, met Mike and proceeded by ferry to Beausoleil Island. We had a wonderful day exploring the southern portion of the island. The purpose of this trip was to lay the groundwork for a future trip of GHTC hike leaders. In September, I expanded the group to 11. Logistics were finalized and Mike met us on the north end of the island for another great day of hiking. We stayed overnight in Midland and cycled the next day on local bike trails that are extensive and scenic. I will organize another trip in 2019. An important relationship has been forged with Parks Canada through Mike Lavin who has invited us back next year. He was very impressed with our club members and their enthusiasm.

Membership Coordinator's Report- Leilan Baxter

The position of Membership Coordinator was created in 2014 in an effort to more fully engage new members and retain past members. Over the past year, this role has changed slightly, as we have redistributed the tasks of the former position of Membership Secretary, and with the launch of our new website and membership management system.

Previously, the main responsibility of this position was to provide an initial point of contact for new members, by getting in touch with a personal email shortly after a new membership was registered. This typically provided information on our website and social media, hike calendar, upcoming events, and volunteer opportunities. The position also involved running the

membership renewal campaign, by contacting members to see if they plan to renew their association with the club.

With the initiation of our new website and membership management system this past year, both of these tasks were automated, so now I will continue to monitor and update the process as necessary. I will also remain the primary point of contact for any members seeking general information on club membership or use of our website, and I am usually the one sending out emails seeking volunteers for various activities and events, by making use of the database of volunteer interests noted by each member when they joined. Finally, I take care of any periodic maintenance of our membership profiles in our database, in an effort to keep it up to date and as accurate as possible.

Big thank you to Julie Noordhoek who took over in this role over the summer and early fall for me, coincidentally just as we were switching everything over to the new website system.

Membership numbers:

Memberships	2016	2017	2018
Individual	87	82	
Family	75	80	
Organization	1	0	
1-year (total)			116
5-year	74	84	79
Life (complimentary)	5	6	6
Total	242	252	240
<i>New Members</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>95</i>

Treasurer's Report- Sandra Morrill

Last year's themes: Transitions, Stewardship, Process Improvement, and What's New

And, this year I was able to focus on Stewardship, Process Improvement, and Wild Apricot!

Stewardship:

- Continue to "spend" with passion:
 - Supplemented Hike Ontario training costs with \$420
 - Donation to G2G of \$1,000
 - Increased costs for Wild Apricot of ~\$600 (some of which are one-time)
- Special handling of large donation from John Wood of >\$3,000 for benches on SRT Section 1 (Donation & Expense)

Process Improvement:

- Tracking of Inventory movement
- PayPal reporting streamlined with Wild Apricot integration
- Executive Committee “Calendar” so that tasks are handled on-time.

Year-End Financial Highlights:

- Statement of Financial Position (Page 2): Equity > \$31,000
- Statement of Operations and Net Equity (Page 3): > -\$3,200 reflecting increased utilization of Club funds (we had budgeted -\$2,000)
- Notes to Financial Statements (Page 4): continue to have fair-sized inventory of both guidebooks and badges with no purchases required this year. The inventory “Write-up” and “Write-down” was necessary align the books to physical inventory taken.

Thank you to the Executive for their openness and support of these activities.

Sandra provided an overview of the attached Financial report. Motion to approve the Financial Report made by Sandra Morrill, seconded by Peter Jasper- Fayer, all were in favour.

Speed River Trail Report- Bill Mungall

Despite the biggest flood of the Speed River since 1980 over the trail, we lost no structures and the trail survived. However, the flood brought mud and seeds, and the heat of the season brought record weed growth....including ragweed over 8 feet high along the trail! But again, through diligent mowing and weed whacking by the trail captains, undergrowth was generally kept in check. “Mow, and they will come” should be our slogan.

The trail captains are:

Section 1 – Peter Jaspers-Fayer, assisted in his absence by Jennifer Nichols.

Section 2 – Linda Markle and Jane Haack

Section 3 – Paul and Florence White; Eric Pool; Dave Culham; Lisa Mungall

“The O.R.” Sidetrail – Norm Sailian; Mary Henderson

We could still use one more volunteer trail captain in all.

We have had one change to our 18 landowners over the past year, and while this owner has agreed to support the trail on his land, he has at the moment the property listed for sale. We are most grateful for the landowners' support for the trail, which has now been in existence for 45 seasons.

Thanks to the generosity of John and Barbara Wood, two premium-quality metal benches have been mounted overlooking the river on their lands, at two locations in Section 1. The northerly bench is accessed by a short new "Watchin' the River Flow" Sidetrail (title of an old Bob Dylan song) and features views of the river for several hundred metres both upstream and downstream. A third bench (sourced gratis from a garage sale) has been placed at the end of the Lookout Sidetrail, which is further upstream on the City's land.

We look forward to increased use of the trail once the Niska bridge is opened in the spring, along with a new multi-use path leading west out of the city that will end at the Niska trailhead.

On Section 3, we have placed an aluminum bridge (an 8 foot truck loading ramp) over a small creek, replacing two large logs that had been washed away in a flood. This ramp was brought to the site by a 3 kilometre canoe ride down the Speed, the ramp carefully balanced across the gunwales. We still have a small amount of work to do to build a 30 foot boardwalk over the southern approaches to this bridge.

Keeping the central section of Section 3 mowed or weed whacked has been a challenge due to lack of easy access from a road. We believe we have solved this problem by caching a new lawn mower, chained up and tarped over, along with a supply of gas, hidden deep in the woods halfway between two trail captains' sections. "More than convenient" as one trail captain has put it.

We are noticing that the mowing is attracting a regular flow of hikers coming in from the Cambridge end. And the Guelph end sees runners and walkers that use the trail every single day. And this year, several hikes made use of the entire trail from end to end, including one put on by the Caledon BT as well as our own club, from downtown Hespeler to downtown Guelph, 18 km in all.

Radial Line Trail Report- John Fisher

The Radial Line Trail (RLT) is in good shape. Organised maintenance activities were a little lighter this year as the Radial Line Trail Coordinator worked to sell his house on Fifth Line Nassagaweya and move to Guelph. I can report that this was successfully accomplished!

Trail Re-Routing/Maintenance:

I will only talk about those sections that have had significant activities on them, but as you appreciate all sections require ongoing maintenance and review by section leaders to maintain their safety and passability.

Section 1

We replaced the bridge on a section of trail next to Barber scout camp just as you leave the parking lot in early spring as it was “listing” and a safety issue. We have been advised by The Guelph Water Services department that they have plans to do construction work on the aqueduct between the scout camp and Watson Rd..Expect sections of the trail to be closed and the route will revert to Cooks Mill Rd. to avoid construction.

Starkey Hill

Last year I announced that we were looking for volunteers to help with garbage removal. I am pleased to report that we got 3 volunteers who organised themselves into a monthly rotation to empty the garbage container and move the bags to the roadside for pickup. (Thanks to Cyndi Washington, Rick Petersen and Albert Schumperli).

Section 2

Signage controversy and update. The Water Services department encountered 2 incidents in recent months that caused them concern and demanded a response. In the first incident there was a downed electrical cable in an operational area and they had trouble controlling foot traffic in the area. In the second incident a walker got lost and called EMS who broke down access gates and left the area exposed. The department was concerned about their exposure and this resulted in replacing existing signage and adding new pictograph signs intended to communicate to non-English reading trespassers. These signs were placed around the south and west side of the property in some cases at our approved trailheads and side trails. Not surprisingly this caused consternation in the hiking and dog walking community. When photos of the signage were forwarded to our contacts at the Water Service Dept. They acknowledged that it had not been their intent to discourage hikers on approved trails and the signs were removed. However this is an ongoing process within the department which seeks to discourage traffic in operational areas and we expect ongoing pressure to restrict part of the property from pedestrian traffic.

Section 5/Sugar Shack, Blue Springs Trail

We delayed the boardwalk replacement work party usually scheduled for October until next year.

We completed adding handrails and rebuilding 2 small bridges on section #5 and one on Blue Springs side trail.

Section #7

I reported at last year's AGM that the "Moroz" property on Section #7 was for sale. Unfortunately the new owner asked that we remove the trail pending clarification for his planned development of the property. The "de installation" of the trail took place in May and the trail reverted to the old route down Dublin Line and along #25 Sideroad. We continue to communicate with the new owner in the hope that we will be able to open up a trail on the property at a later date. Construction work has just begun and will continue through the summer of next year but the owner has expressed an interest in talking with us once the work is complete.

New Maintenance protocols

Special thanks to Sandra Morrill who has agreed to store equipment required to maintain the trails at her home in Rockwood. Section leaders can contact Sandra directly for maintenance activities they have planned. Work parties and additional help still will go through the Coordinator.

Landowners:

As usual we acknowledge and thank the landowners for their permission and ongoing support of the trail.

And thanks to our **Trail maintenance captains:**

Who take the initiative to maintain and keep the trail way safe and in some cases deal directly with the landowners.

Thanks to,

Section 1:	Steve Mercer
Section 2/Arkell Side trail:	Dave Hull /Wayne Hillman
Section 3/Starkey Hill	Jim Hoare
Section 4:	Gusti Matteis
Section 5:	Phil Kidston
Section 6:	Bob Fanning/Fraser Brown
Section 7:	Sandra
Morrill(reassigned)	
Section 8:	Mike Curtis
Blue Springs/Sugar Shack trails:	Chris Ferguson
Smith Property Trail:	David Scott Thomas

We appreciate any input on trail condition by hikers so that we can address concerns promptly.

Kissing Bridge Trail Report- Mike Curtis

As per usual, I once again can state that the Trailway remains popular with walkers, joggers and cyclists. There are usually several cars parked at the side of the Marden Road, or in the Ariss parking lot, while their owners partake of the scenic Trailway. Litter is not usually a problem; however canine feces do present a problem, especially near the Marden Road.

G to G Inc. has worked hard over the past year to open the Trailway between Millbank and Goderich and most of the Trailway is now passable, with several bridges put in and trail resurfacing completed.

The engineering study of the piers over the Grand and Conestogo Rivers has proved inconclusive as to whether they could support a walkway; however, the Great Trail (formerly The Trans Canada Trail) has become interested in developing the G to G Trailway as a tourist venue, so we remain hopeful!

We contributed to the rental of a trail groomer this year which dug and resurfaced much of the Trailway and left it with a six foot wide pathway with an even surface.

Four work parties were held south of Katherine Street in the fall, which widened the Trailway by a metre on either side. This was the first time in 20 years that this section has been looked after. Thanks to Andy Heal and many volunteers.

Again I thank our section leaders, John Buttars, Jane Shifflet, Terry Spittles and Al Couture for their assistance in maintaining the Trailway.

Hike Ontario Report- Mike Curtis

This year's Hike Ontario Summit (AGM) was held in Orillia as the Ganaraska Trails Association celebrated their 50th anniversary. Bill Mungall and I represented our Club at the meeting. Tom Friesen, who has served as president for the past decade has finally been able to retire, as a former president, Terri LeRoux has returned to lead the organization. It continues to operate programs for group insurance, Mood Walks and training for both hikers and hike leaders.

Hike Ontario has lobbied the provincial government to provide tax incentives for private citizens who allow trails to cross their land, but has had little success. Even the dropping of the sales tax on our insurance premiums has not been possible. The government's official trails' strategy has some very nice words in it, but little to benefit the groups who build and maintain trails for the public to use.

Publicity Report- Suzanne Gates

XXXXXX on the phone

Newsletter Report- Peter Jasper- Fayer

Nothing to report

Hike Coordinator Report- Gayle Jeffries

One hundred and twenty hikes were scheduled from Oct 2017 to end of Sept 2018, an 11% increase over the previous year. Additionally Wed morning ad hoc hikes were offered most Wed from beginning of Nov until the beginning of May. The offerings covered:

- GHTC maintained Starkey Hill, O.R., Kissing Bridge, Speed River and Radial Line Trails
- GRCA and Halton conservation areas, agreement forests and provincial parks
- Bruce Trail as far south as Burlington up to northern section of Beaver Valley
- Elora Cataract, Caledon and Kissing Bridge rail trails
- Guelph city trails
- GVTA trails
- a series of hikes at Ignatius Jesuit Centre
- and even an out of country hike in Niagara gorge

Seventy-three % of hikes were 3 hrs or less and 17% of hikes were 10 km or more.

For those with a sweet tooth we had a maple syrup festival hike and for those wishing to be entertained, a Guelph Little Theatre hike.

For the photographers there were 9 photo hikes and for the cyclers the annual spring Magnolia and fall Tweed bike rides. And for the youngsters 4 Kid's hikes.

Eleven "short and easy" hikes of 30 or 60 minutes were offered from beginning of May until end of Aug on local trails. These were well attended and attracted in new hikers.

Wed Ad Hoc hikes continued to be well attended. Wed Ad Hoc hikes don't appear in newsletter, they are just listed on GHTC website on the Sunday evening prior to the hike. This allows leaders to choose appropriate hike locations based upon weather and trail conditions.

Four ski hikes were offered, locally and out of town.

Registration for hikes should only be done on GHTC website. This allows system to email all registrants if hike needs to be cancelled. And if you don't register, please check the GHTC home page for any cancellations or changes to hikes.

Thanks to the eighteen GHTC hike leaders that led hikes over past year.

Social Convenor Report- Susan McMillan

We started the year off well with our Winter Party in January. The Theme was France or French Canadian. We had costumes ranging from Tour de France bicyclists to authentic looking voyagers, terrific food, French wine and of course trivia. Thank you to Paul White for a wonderful Photo Op both of a very lifelike canoe with a very real looking background.

Our Summer Solstice Party was held in June at my house. The theme was picnic. As always, the food was wonderful. We had outdoor games planned with terrific prizes but alas the rain held off just long enough for a little social time and for Paul White our chef BBQer to get most of the cooking done. There was lots going on both inside and outside on the covered decks. People are wonderfully creative and just like at the cottage, we all made the best of it and had a great time.

The Winter Party next year will be held on February 1 and the plans are well underway. We have some great ideas and I won't give you any hints just yet but I promise you it will be fun.

I'd like to say thank you to Florence, Gitta, Janet and Kathy for all the help and ideas they offer. It would be impossible to do this without such a great committee.

Also a big thank you to Paul White for his special skill of being able to put together whatever Florences asks him to.

Remember to keep February 1 open for a fun party with terrific food and a great get together.

New Business

Suggestion from Phil Kidston to circulate the 2018 Annual General Meeting minutes by way of the Club's website prior to the 2019 Annual General Meeting for members to review.

The three winners for the 2018 GHTC Photo Contest were- Gitta Housser, Jim Hoare and Trudy Turner.

Elections- David Wallace

David called for any nominations from the floor. No nominations were made. The current executive members were put forward as the slate for the 2019 Executive. Motion was made to close the nominations by Blair Copes, seconded by Dave Hall. Candidates were elected by acclamation. All were in favour of the slate of Executives for 2019.

The Slate of Executives for 2019 will be:

President- Mike Curtis Vice president- Cynthia Corks

Secretary-Mary Grensewich Treasurer- Sandra Morrill

Sandra Morrill announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Treasurer in a few months. Mike Curtis asked that members present consider the role or suggest anyone who would consider taking over the role of Treasurer.

Motion to close the 2018 Guelph Hiking trail Club 2018 Annual General Meeting was made by Susan McMillan and seconded by Phil Kidston, all were in favour.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Mary Grensewich - Secretary