



THE STORY of THE TAY VALLEY CROSS COUNTRY SKI CLUB

A history of dedicated community commitment

Tay Valley Loppett A Smashing Success

January 1977



WINNER of the 30K men's race, Gerhard Schopp, displays his trophy with race secretary, Ann Cheffins.



SMILING after his win in the 10K men's race, Perth skier Stan Earl receives congratulations from Ann Cheffins.



IT WAS A LONG TRAIL and these three skiers are glad to reach the finish line at the Links-O-Tay Golf Club. Most of those who took part completed the race about noon and were ready for a hot lunch.



Dr. Ross McLean, one of the main Loppett organizers, finishes the 30K trail in 138:24 minutes.



Gerhard Schopp of Ottawa steams over 30K ski trail well ahead of competitors during the race, maintaining a lead to the finish.



Bundled warmly against Sunday's cold temperatures, this young skier heads triumphantly to the finish line.



A TIRED but happy Nancy McMahon waves to photographer Ted Dyke while taking a rest after the race.



A STEADY STREAM of skiers head for the several buses which race organizers provided to transport Loppett participants from the Links-O-Tay Golf Club to the two starting points.



A TOTAL OF 232 SKIERS, both tourers and racers, lined up at Murphys Point Park where they started the 30K cross-country route. The 10K trail began at the Tay Valley Ski Lodge.



Murphys Point

Murphys Point in Winter

Better known for its summer camping and canoeing, Murphys Point Provincial Park on Big Rideau Lake is a preferred winter destination for some.

Without the bustle of the summer crowd, the wildlife in the park can seem more noticeable. It is not unusual to see the groomed ski trails criss-crossed by the tracks of mink, fisher, coyote, deer, otter, porcupine and many other common critters. The rollercoaster terrain of the Canadian Shield is also much more noticeable without the dense summer curtain of green foliage.

Ski trails are groomed and trackset through the volunteer efforts of the Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club. Most of the trails are groomed for **classic skiing**, with a 2-km loop groomed for **skate skiing**.



Otter tracks in the snow.

THE STORY of THE TAY VALLEY CROSS COUNTRY SKI CLUB

A 35 year history of dedicated community commitment

Passion for cross country skiing may have been inspired by Canada's 22 year old Chandra Crawford's thrilling gold medal performance in the 1.1 km sprint at the Torino Olympics in 2006, or it may have been stimulated by the legendary exploits of "Jackrabbit" Johannsen who was still skiing at the age of 100. Enjoyment of the sport may have developed from a youthful exuberance to achieve athletic excellence or from the serene experience of back country exploration in perfect harmony with nature. But whatever the motivation, all skiers will agree that this activity is a healthy, flexible and life long outdoor sport which can be practiced over a wide variety of interesting and challenging settings.

Tens of thousands of Canadians have recognized the benefits of cross country skiing. Many have contributed to the formation of local ski clubs which have now become integrated into a national network through membership in their provincial organizations affiliated with Cross Country Canada.

This is the story of the development of our own Perth & District Community XC ski club and the keen collaboration of the local citizens which made it happen.

THE EARLY YEARS

The Club originated as an outgrowth of the downhill ski club associated with Norvic Lodge at Christie Lake where Victor Lemieux operated a small rope tow facility. Dr. Ross McLean and Dr. David Craig spearheaded the movement. The founding meeting was held on December 8th 1972 at the Perth Town Hall. According to Ross McLean, 75 to 90 members were signed up. The Club was named The Tay Valley Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Club. The elected officers included Ross McLean as President and Mavis Marshall as Secretary, assisted by a committee consisting of John Winfield, Hans Van Pelt, Don McAlpine and Ron Trivers.

The first venue selected was at Bass Lake, but it was soon relocated to the Van Pelt Farm, on the ninth line, just outside the village of Balderson¹.

There was lots of snow, but it was used for only one season.

In 1974 the activities were switched to Dr. Grover Lightford's property near Otty Lake, formerly the 500 acre McLaren estate, currently known as Burgess Wood. Grover allowed the use of the old McLaren farm house

as a base for the activities². Trails were groomed by the McLean brothers, Ross and Scott. In this area skiers enjoyed skiing on many trails such as the popular Spring & Molar Runs. (See trails 2 & 3 on map)

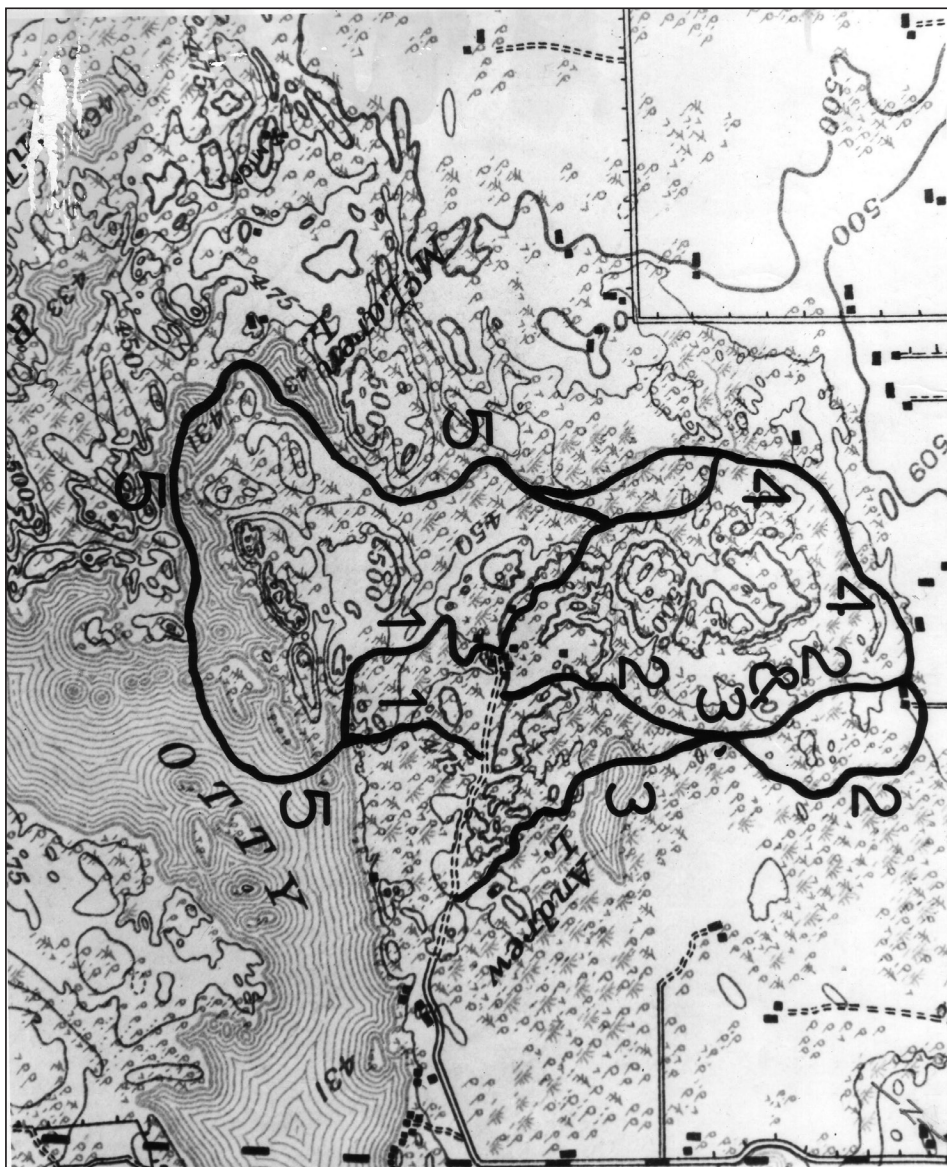
During the years at the Lightford property, more than 100 skiers regularly practiced their outdoor pursuits, mainly on weekends. The location acted as a social magnet where a cohesive spirit prevailed. This was reflected by the numerous potluck events which were held there as well as at the Bass Lake Lodge. In that same year, a youth program was put in place, with David St Onge and Stan Earl giving instruction in fundamental techniques. This was initiated at the Perth Fair Grounds and later moved to the property at Burgess Wood. Later, organized sleepovers became popular and were also an inducement to participation³.

In 1987, the Club decided to recognize Grover Lightford's contribution to local skiing by making him "Honorary Life Member"⁴.

For six years, David St Onge was responsible for cross country ski instruction at the Perth and District Collegiate Institute. He was also instrumental in training ski instructors to the 4 and 5 level standards of the Canadian Association of Nordic Skiers (CANSI)⁵ and became Club president in 1978.

David St Onge and Ross Mclean, who had skied in nine different countries on the World Loppet Circuit by 1983, were recognized as Master World Loppet racers⁶. Later they both became charter members of that organization by achieving the full World Passport standard of 10 events. Both Ross and David had become models for participation in our sport and, through their applied leadership, were to inspire many other club members to venture into the world of competitive and long distance skiing. Some members became regulars at the Canadian Ski Marathon, which, at 160 K, remains the worlds longest ski marathon. Some experienced their first thrills and excitement of racing in the Gatineau 55, now renamed the Keskinada, which is still Canada's premier world racing event. These included Ross's brother, Scott McLean, Ken Barry, Bob Butterworth, Stan Earl, Bill Monaghan, Tom Bowes, and Gloria Opzoomer.

Gloria served as Club president, from 1985 to 1990. An avid runner and cyclist, she was later to complete the prestigious Boston Marathon. She credited the influence of David St Onge when she said that "David had an appreciation for the sport which was infectious."

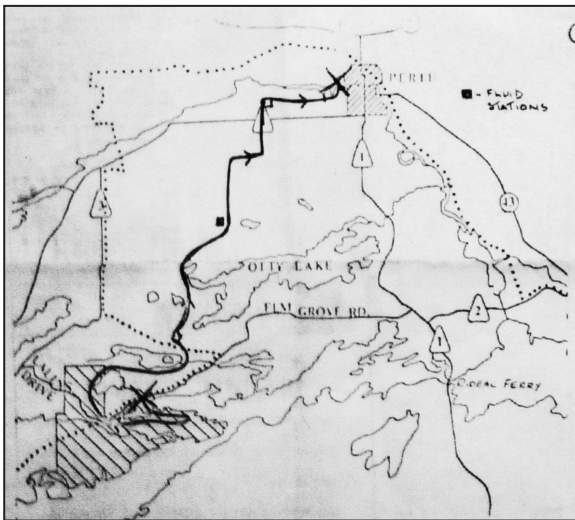


Trail network in the 70's at the Lightford property; now known as Burgess Wood.

THE FIRST LOPPET

“Tay Valley Loppet a Smashing Success” was the headline in the Perth Courier on January 20th 1977.

The life of the early Club took on an enhanced vitality when the Club inaugurated annual ski loppets in 1977. In that very first year, 350 participants were involved in either touring or racing categories over 10K or 30K trails stretching from Murphys Point Provincial Park (MPPP) to the Links of Tay Golf Course in Perth. Trail development was under the guidance of David St Onge, who was an Ontario Journeyman-Linesman, the Race Secretary was Ann Cheffins and the Chief Official was Dr. Bob Chaplin. This course required the cooperation of many landowners and traversed several bodies of frozen water.



Map Showing the 1978 Loppet Trail route from Murphys Point Park to the Links O'Tay Club, in Perth. That year the course was modified so that the trail did not cross any bodies of water and excellent marking of the trail aided the skiers.

The importance of good trail grooming was now becoming increasingly recognized. In 1978, a Bachelor tracksetter and a Raidtra tractor to pull it were purchased from Norway at a cost of \$2500. This was the same brand and model as the equipment used to set tracks for the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics⁷. The course for the Second Annual Loppet was modified to avoid lake crossings. (See map) That year's registration was capped at 500 skiers in order to provide adequate shower and refreshment facilities at the Golf Course. But we are told that the actual participation was nearer to 550. Sixteen categories, including team divisions, were created for this loppet⁸.

This 30 K route was used for six loppets between 1977 and 1983. During these years, skiers from all over Eastern Ontario and even as far as from

Toronto were registering for this popular community event. Victor Lemieux described it as the premier Loppet for Eastern Ontario. In those days, the Loppet spirit reflected the contributions of many community organizations including the Citizen's Recreation Committee, the Tay Valley Snowmobile Club, and others. A Perth Chamber of Commerce Trophy was awarded to the fastest male to cover the 30 K distance, and a Lanark County Sports Trophy was awarded to the fastest female.

But the 1980 scheduled event was cancelled due to lack of snow. This was not a good omen for the years ahead. A full page appeal⁹ was published in the Courier for volunteers to come to a meeting on Nov 4th, 1982, at the Great War Memorial Medical Centre in order to ensure the continuation of the Club. Sufficient energy was enlisted, and the movement continued.



A STEADY STREAM of skiers head for the several buses which race organizers provided to transport Loppet participants from the Links-O'Tay Golf Club to the two starting points.



A TOTAL OF 232 SKIERS, both tourers and racers, lined up at Murphys Point Park where they started the 30K cross-country route. The 10K trail began at the Tay Valley Ski Lodge.

THE MOVE TO MURPHYS POINT PARK

Increased snowmobiling forced an end to the activities at Burgess Wood and drove the Club to its current venue at MPPP in 1982.

That year, a heritage log cabin was donated to the Club by Dr. Drew Armour. It was dismantled, the logs numbered, and reassembled and located at the inside corner of the winter parking lot in 1983, a site previously occupied by a trailer. The reassembly and expansion involved both skiers and non skiers. Again, a social atmosphere prevailed at this new site. Max McIlquham, a local dairy farmer, made a contribution to its reconstruction. The final touches were completed by Earl Kirkham, a contractor from the community.

This cabin became the new quarters for the relocated ski club.

Unfortunately it suffered the theft of its wood stove on two occasions and eventually Rob Ferrier was given the task of installing a concrete anchor to prevent the new air tight stove from being stolen again¹⁰.

The Club cabin was even staffed on weekends with two shifts per day from 8 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon and regular Ski Patrols were maintained¹¹. Moonlight skis in early March became annual events at the cabin. Of course there were always plenty of refreshments.

During this period Annual General Meetings (AGM's) were regularly held sometime between November and February at a variety of locations which included Algonquin College and The Great War Memorial Medical Centre. These were not only business meetings but were opportunities for members to exchange equipment and learn waxing and other techniques related to the sport. For example, in Dec 1981, the Ontario Ski Council came to provide a full 2.5 hours clinic and in Nov 1983, Lana March animated a session on preconditioning training.

During these years John Winfield, who was then the owner of the Tay Valley Sports Store in Perth, produced a regular Ski Report in the Courier which provided a strong stimulus for local skiing. The reliable work of Dave Wigand ensured the continuation of the youth instruction program¹². In 1984 the route for the annual Loppet was converted from a linear course to a loop with both start and finish taking place at MPPP.





Club members relocate donated heritage log cabin to Murphys Point Park, 1983.
(Left to right, David Stevens, Tom Bowes, David St. Onge, Ross McLean)



David St. Onge promotes local cross country skiing, with Dan Patterson at his side, by displaying his World Loppet Master's Medallion at the 1983 Ontario Little League Championship Parade in Perth.



Legendary Arctic adventurer Richard Weber takes 1st place in the 1999 Loppet. He was half the team duo that had completed the four month unsupported return ski to the North Pole in 1995. A colossal feat never yet replicated.

LEGAL STRUCTURE

On March 8, 1984 the Club entered a formal contractual relationship with the Minister of Natural Resources (MNR) to operate the ski trails at MPPP¹³. The Club now felt the need to formalize its legal status and on May 22, 1986, it was incorporated as “The Tay Valley Ski and Fitness Club” The Directors listed on the Letters patent application included David Stevens and Peter Woodwark, both local lawyers, Rick Forsythe, Robert Ferrier and Brad Mills. The first Directors of the incorporated Club were David Stevens, Peter Woodwark and David Flanagan¹⁴. The MNR contract was renewed with some minor modifications on Sept 23, 1993¹⁵. It was not until the AGM of December 5, 2001 that the membership ratified its first comprehensive set of by-laws governing the administration of the Club.¹⁶

NEW LEADERSHIP

Uncertain snow conditions continued. In 1986, two separate attempts to hold the Loppet were aborted. By 1991, the viability of the Club was again threatened. At that year’s AGM another urgent request was made for new volunteers to come to the aid of those few who were struggling to keep



Concerted effort results in Ski Fest 2000 at MPPP. Volunteer organizers from Park Staff, Friends of the Park and the Club, pause for photo break. (left to right) Toby Kiesewalter; Stephanie Gray; Judy Bufton; John Bufton; Frank Roy; Orion Clark.

the Club functioning¹⁷. Tom Bowes was one such devoted person who, for more than 30 years now, continues to contribute freely of his professional forestry skills and strong track grooming abilities. He has also provided waxing clinics and frequently filled in as a Jackrabbit leader. Throughout the 90's, Tom served as Loppet Coordinator. He has always been available when called upon, and frequently when not. Karen McLean a perennial



A Tay Valley Loppet Mass Start - late 90's



Numbered signage system - clear and comprehensive

loppet organizer continued to handle the precisions of timing and checking. Valerie Bowes and her sister Elaine Paterson were always ready to provide a variety of support at various Club functions. Ken Willis, Greg Bullock, Frank Roy and Rob Ferrier were among those who stepped forward to keep

the spirit alive. Ken Willis was elected Club President and Frank Roy was elected Secretary-Treasurer. Ken guided the Club for ten seasons and has been its longest serving First Officer. After a brief sojourn, Frank remains on the executive to this day and continues to devote his numerous skills to this as well as several other community projects. They were soon



Lone skier approaches McParlan House

Photo: Simon Lunn



Coordinator Donna Douglas of the Lanark County Reading Network presents its 1998 championship trophy to team leader Frank Roy and his team of Langlauffers at the Perth Legion. (Left to Right) Donna Douglas; Frank Roy; Alfred Bowes; Jeff Bowes; Josh Roy; Betty Taylor; Carol Fox; John Parnell; Dawn Kierans and Don Boyle.

joined by Marg Graham, Don MacKay, Bob Birse and Bob Taylor. Phil Thompson soon became an active “Trail Boss” designing, cutting, and signing new trails at the Park. This included an interesting 2.5K scenic loop which crosses a small foot bridge over Black Creek and opens onto the old McParlan property, which the Crown had acquired in 1967¹⁸. (See photo of lone skier approaching the restored heritage McParlan House, circa 1850). Phil devoted a multitude of hours to grooming these trails. He became Club President in 2001 and served until 2003. Lily Roy was also a new asset to the Club at this time. Besides helping out in whatever way she could, she prompted the Club to enter a team in the local Trivia Challenge contest in 1998¹⁹. Every year since then, the Club has put together a very credible team for this non physical and fun, but nevertheless competitive, event. During these years the Team took home the coveted championship trophy on three occasions and was runner-up on several others; always finishing well.

The authors of this article joined the Club executive in the mid 90’s and we made our own efforts to contribute to its vision and enthusiasm. The Club took the decision to affiliate with Cross Country (XC) Ontario on Nov 9th 1995 and through it to XC Canada. One of the several benefits of affiliation was the entitlement to third party liability insurance which provided coverage to Club members and to the owners of lands accessed by Club trails. The first edition of The Club’s regular newsletter first

appeared on Nov 2 1995. It was named The Tay Valley Langlaufer in Feb, 1997²⁰ and is poised to publish its 11th volume in preparation for the coming season.

THE JACK RABBIT PROGRAM

This new relationship led to the founding of a formal Jack Rabbit (JR) Program under the standards set by the national organization. This came about after Frank Roscoe; the Director of Youth Programs for the National Capital Division (NCD) of XC Ontario accepted the invitation to speak at the Club's AGM in November 1996 on the merits of the JR Program.

The first recruitment and instruction took place on the grounds of the Glen



Orion Clark and Pat Bowles muster the Bunny Rabbits and Winnie the Pooh for fun in the snow.

Tay School with the collaboration of its Administration and Staff in January, 1997. Approximately fifty-five children showed up for this inaugural session.

The authors, who are both retired High School teachers, conducted this first session and recall that it was opened with a practical demonstration of trail breaking in deep snow around the school's playground. These first instructional sessions were soon switched to the Links of Tay where the Club set tracks.

During the remainder of that year a successful program was carried out there²¹. Pat Bowles and Geoff Hodgins, both possessing CANSI qualifications, assisted in

providing instruction, organization and leadership. The program resumed on this site the following season in the weeks leading up to the great ice storm. An on-site session for the training of future JR leaders was provided by Jim Hanrahan, from the NCD of XC Ontario, in the principles and pedagogy of JR instruction.

At the Tay Valley Loppet held in February, 1998 on the Links of Tay site, 44 out of 60 participants were under the age of 19 yrs. But most came



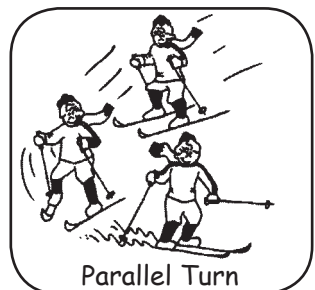
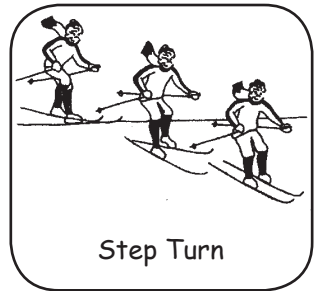
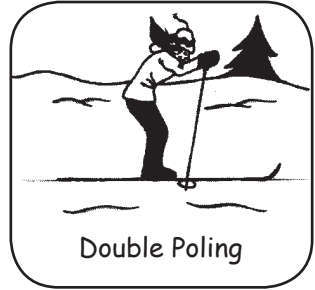
Jack Rabbits on instructional tour.

Photo: Simon Lunn



A Tay Valley Loppet Youth Event - late 90's.

TECHNIQUE



Courtesy of Cross Country Canada Jack Rabbit Program



Visiting Jack Rabbits at the 1999 Loppet include youngsters from some well renowned skiing families. (From left to right) Tessum Weber; Sven Niderhauser; Kieran Jones; Aaron Barber



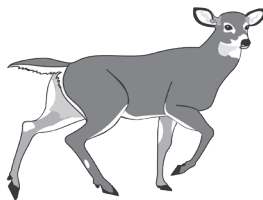
Claire Marble, upper left, makes visiting Jack rabbits feel at home.

from established JR Clubs outside the locality.

In November of the following season, a more formal JR registration and off snow instruction was held at McMartin House. The National Capital Division provided a JR leaders training session at Gatineau Park in December. This was the first of five one day training courses over the next few years destined to prepare a core of five competent leaders.

The local impetus continued to grow under the leadership of Orion Clark and Geoff Hodgson, assisted by Rick Forsythe. Structured instruction for Bunny Rabbits and Jack Rabbits proceeded for seven years at MPPP, from 1998 to 2004. The annual participation was usually around 20 to 30 youngsters, ranging in age from five to thirteen. The Club provided financial, material and promotional support for this program. The charge for the annual individual JR membership was only \$10²² and was capped at \$15 per family. The regular family membership allowed youngsters JR access at no additional charge.

In 2001 each participant received the revised JR booklet where individual progress was recorded by the instructor. Ski equipment could always be obtained through ski swaps arranged by the Club, or from its donated inventory maintained by Frank Roy in his garage. A number of dedicated volunteers, including Dr. Siobhan Muldowney and Steve Mercer, came forward from the parent group to assist in a variety of ways. A social convener looked after “cold” Bunny Rabbits and coordinated the provision of refreshments for all participants. This more formal structure has now gradually evolved into regular Sunday family ski afternoons.



THE GREAT ICE STORM

The Club struggled after the scheduled Loppets in 1996 and 1997 were cancelled. But it rebounded, even after the Park had to be closed because of damage caused by the Great Ice Storm of 1998 which had been dubbed a “Magnificent Disaster” by a contemporary humorist. An alternative location was resourcefully established when volunteers constructed a connecting trail linking Conlon Farm to the Links of Tay.

A shortened version of the annual Loppet was held in the wake of the storm. Club volunteers managed to overcome most, but not all, of the challenging difficulties. With the approval of owner Jim Baxter, a short course was quickly designed at the Links of Tay. Both registration formalities and award Ceremony took place at Conlon Farm. A 12 K event was held by racing three times around an incredibly icy 4K loop which even made use of the new back nine, then under construction.²³ Unable to follow the roughly prepared tracks and due to the shortage of monitors available several of the younger skiers briefly lost their way and did not successfully complete the course. Some frustration was expressed, but in the end no harm was done.

We leave it to the imagination or the personal recall of the reader to contemplate the enormity of the work required and carried out by Club members and Park Staff in the “Great Cleanup” which followed, and which was required to ready the trails at MPPP for the following ski season. Only one short loop, the Sylvain, remains closed to this day.



Phil Thompson, Lily Roy, Ken Willis, cleaning up after The Great Ice Storm



Members prepare course at Links O'Tay following 1998 ice storm. (Left to Right) Phil Thompson; Don Boyle; Ken Willis; Frank Roy

A NEW PARTNERSHIP

The Park administration relocated the Ski cabin in the fall of 1997 and placed it on the shore of Loon Lake close to the administration building



Ski Club Chalet now doubles as the Park Store during the camping season and accessible through its parking lot. It was to become the Park Store during the summer as a fund raising asset for the Park to be included in its newly required business plan. The Park equipped the cabin with gas heaters and lighting²⁴ and it served as the winter meeting place for Jack



Warming Hut at the Lally Homestead

Photo: Simon Lunn

Rabbit and other Club members or non members wishing a break from their activities. This led to a new working partnership with the Park. The formal contract which had been in place since 1984 was terminated in 1998 and replaced by a more informal arrangement whereby the Park would recognize all Club members as Park volunteers and grant them free access to its winter facilities.²⁵

The club has made every effort over the years to keep its own fees to a minimum. So while these were \$5 in 1974 and \$35 in 1985, family memberships are now, at only \$40 in 2007, the best value in town for any sporting activity. Under this new arrangement the Park also took over full responsibility for the cabin's maintenance and significant insurance costs which had become a considerable financial burden to the Club. The Park also later provided improved quality machines to pull the tracksetting equipment, still Club-owned. The Club then sold its own Alpine machine putting an end to ongoing insurance and maintenance costs. For several years, as Club Treasurers, Don Earl, a local financial advisor and Richard Brownrigg, a local chartered accountant volunteered their competent

money management skills. All this had the effect of setting the basis for the improved financial health of the Club. In the 70's and 80's paid membership was usually maintained between 175 and 200²⁶. But since then, with the increasing unreliability of snow conditions it has fallen off somewhat. It has, however, remained generally stable, usually varying only between 75 and 100²⁷.

Over a period of more than 20 years the Club has received strong cooperation from the Park staff. They have regularly assisted in the timely production of improved signage and updated maps. They have always effectively overseen the prompt snow removal from the winter parking lot. Currently, they offer regular safety clinics for groomers and maintain updated ski condition information on the Ministry's website and phone messaging service.

ROUND LAKE

In the fall of 1996 the then existing 14 K trail network was expanded by reopening the 10K "Round Lake Loop" Part of this had served in previous Loppets in the late 70's and through the 80's. It had long since been allowed to grow over and fall into disuse because of the lack of snow. This additional trail extends from Black Ance Pt. Rd., familiarly known as "The Cottage Road", and continues through the old Lally Homestead where the Park has equipped a small surviving heritage outbuilding with a wood stove to serve as a warm-up hut. It then skirts the old abandoned Silver Queen Mica Mine. By a connecting trail it joins the Park's road which leads to the Group Campground. From there, it moves onto private backcountry wilderness land where the skiing can be rough at times. This section of trail offers the greatest challenge to machine tracksetting which cannot be done in limited snow conditions. It returns via a usually unploughed private road to the winter parking lot which serves as the trailhead for the ski network. The Club appreciates the collaboration of Peter Jones, Clifford Lally, and Sabah Towaij, all of whom are private landowners whose properties adjoin the Park.



CLIMATE CHANGE

There was a regular abundance of snow in the 70's. Old timers say that the snow was so high that some fences did not have to be taken down. This had so changed by the mid 80's that it was hard to run the Loppet in early January. Snow conditions were so poor in 1988 that participants raced three times over a 10K course to make up the 30K distance. The start location and distances became a function of the weather. The 1992 event was held, as scheduled, in January, but in the 23 years from 1980 to 2002 forced adjustments or cancellations had to be made on eight occasions due to poor snow conditions. The President's report given at the AGM on Dec 4, 2000 records that snow conditions for the previous season were "the worst in living memory",²⁸ The most recent Loppet held at the Park was in 2003. Fortunately a large dump of snow arrived just in time to make it an enjoyable success.

Thanks to the volunteer efforts of Doug Hollingsworth and a small group of local citizens, including Tom Shoebridge and Phil Laflamme, from the Lanark Highlands region, a second venue was prepared at the Timber Run Golf Course just outside of Lanark Village. During the past six years, Bill Neilson, the owner, has given his full support. In addition to allowing trails on his land, he opened his magnificent log Club House for skiing events. For a golf course, this area has the surprising advantages of being unusually hilly in the open areas and offers a wooded protection from the wind on the varied and picturesque terrain which completes the undeveloped portion of the property.

Even more importantly this region forms part of a minor snow belt. When there was insufficient snow for the opening of the JR season in early January the initial lessons were conducted there from 2003 through 2006. Successful 10K "Lanark Loppets" have been held there, in conjunction with The Lanark Winter Carnival, in each of the last four years and, in that period, have effectively substituted for the "Tay Valley Loppet". For the 2007-8 season, the Club will not offer skiing at Timber Run as all efforts are directed at Murphys Point.

Doug Hollingsworth is himself a strong lifelong skier and paddler who can always be counted on to medal in his category, in either event. He is a former President of the National Capital Division of XC Ontario. He is the serving President of the Club and brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this position. Together with his support team on the executive, he is on a mission to revitalize and promote local Cross Country Skiing.

In spite of the prevailing spring-like mid January conditions which forced a late start to the 2007 season, Phill Brackenbury, a teacher at St. John Elementary, spearheaded several well attended clinics/races at Timber Run and at MPPP, some in conjunction with the Ski Fast program of the NCD. After a hiatus of more than a decade, a ski party was held under the full moon of March 2007 at the Ski Club cabin at MPPP. Will the tradition continue? Only the Goblins know.

As climate change does indeed appear to be having an effect on our local snow conditions, trail grooming takes on an ever increasing importance. Consideration had been given as early as the spring of 1994 to obtain a light weight grooming machine called a Tidd Tech Trail Tenderizer and Tracksetter, but it was not until the spring of 2003 that the decision was made to purchase this machine, at a cost of \$5000²⁹ to add to the available grooming equipment. The current executive hopes to meet this challenge with the increased use of this state of the art equipment so that skiers may derive the maximum benefit and enjoyment from minimum snow.



Jim Ronson records staggered timing starts at the 2003 Loppet

Photo: Simon Lunn

So whether you see yourself as a team player or a solitary skier,
or whether you are five or ninety-five,
we echo the exhortation of
Jackrabbit Johannsen:

Just get out there and ski!

The weather soothsayers predict we will get snow this winter.



What a day. What a feeling.



NOTES

- 1) Perth Courier, Nov 18, 1987, Article by Bob Rupert
- 2) Idem
- 3) Club Executive Minutes, Feb 2, 1987
- 4) Club Executive Minutes, Feb 25, 1987
- 5) Perth Courier, Dec 11, 1985, David St Onge teaching XCcountry Skiing
- 6) Perth Courier, Nov 9, 1983, Story of David St Onge
- 7) Perth Courier, Jan 20, 1977, First Loppet
- 8) Perth Courier, Dec 8, 1977, Expectations for Second Loppet
- 9) Perth Courier, Oct 27, 1982, Urgent request for volunteers
- 10) Club Executive Minutes, Jan 9, 1992
- 11) Perth Courier, Nov 18, 1987, Article by Bob Rupert
- 12) Club Executive Minutes, Oct 9, 1988
- 13) Club Archives, Copy of first Contract with MNR
- 14) Club Archives, Copy of Act of Incorporation
- 15) Club Archives, Copy of Contract renewal with MNR
- 16) Club AGM Minutes, Dec 5, 2001
- 17) Club Executive Minutes, Nov 27, 1991
- 18) Archeological Report to MPPP, summer, 2007
- 19) Club Executive Minutes, Oct 27, 1997
- 20) Club Archives, Newsletter Collection
- 21) Club Executive Minutes, May 4, 1998
- 22) Club Executive Minutes, Oct 23, 1998
- 23) Club Executive Minutes, Dec 1, 1998
- 24) Idem
- 25) Club Executive Minutes, May 4, 1998
- 26) Club Archives, Membership Records
- 27) Idem
- 28) Club AGM Minutes, Dec 4, 2000
- 29) Club Executive Minutes, Feb 26, 2003

Useful Resources:

www.cccski.com/main.asp

Official site of Cross Country Canada

www.xco.org/

Official site of Cross Country Ontario

www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16297-16299-10170-16405-28595&lang=1&bhfv=7&bhfx=7.0.0.0&bhsp=22395&bhgs=1

For ski conditions at Gatineau Park





**Club Presidents
since inception**

Dr. Ross McLean
David St Onge
Dr. Bob Chaplin
David Stevens
Tom Bowes
Gloria Opzoomer
Ken Willis
Philip Thompson
Doug Hollingsworth

Current Executive

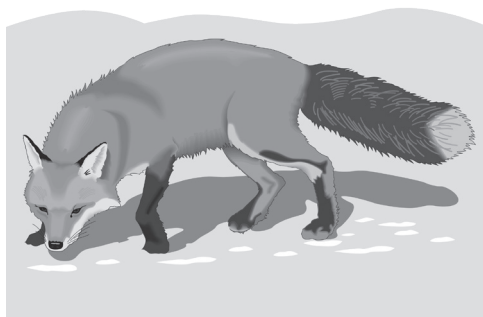
President,	Doug Hollingsworth
Vice President,	Don Boyle
Secretary-Treasurer,	Frank Roy
Trail Boss,	Orion Clark
Member at Large,	Phil Laflamme
Co-Chairs for Youth Programs,	Phill Brackenburry and Geoff Hodgson



The authors wish to acknowledge the collaboration received from
the following persons and organizations
for their contribution of information and photos published herein:

Tom Bowes, Valerie Bowes, Cross Country Canada, Sheila Clark,
Doug Hollingsworth, Dawn Kierans,
Tobi Kieseewalter from the MNR, The EMC, The Perth Courier, The Record News,
Dr. Grover Lightford,
Simon Lunn, Karen McLean, Dr. Ross McLean, Frank Roy,
Gloria Opzoomer, and Ken Willis.
Special thanks to Dr Bob Chaplin for digitizing many of the photos.

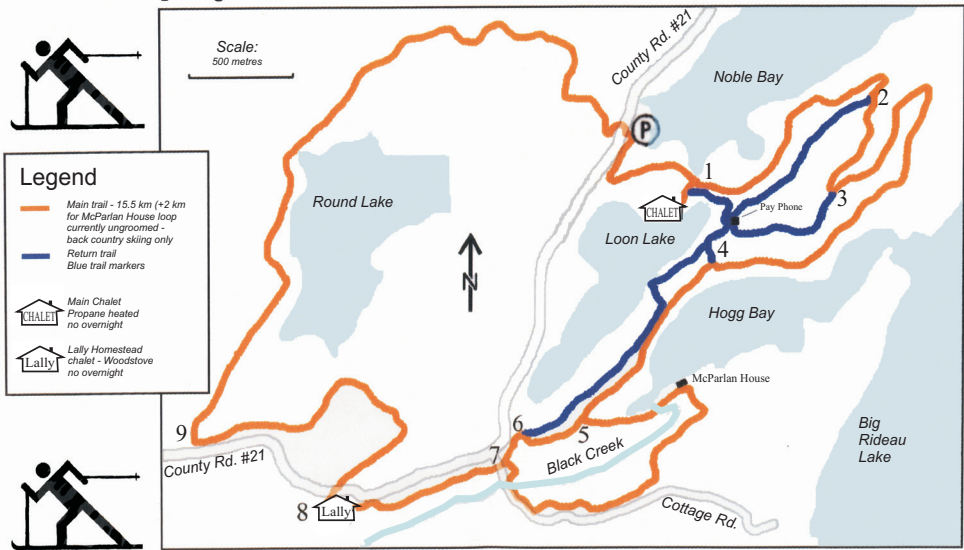
This project has been researched, written and assembled by Don Boyle and
Orion Clark, both long standing active members of the
Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club.



This first edition published by the TVCCSC in Nov. 2007
and printed by Clement Printing, Perth, ON



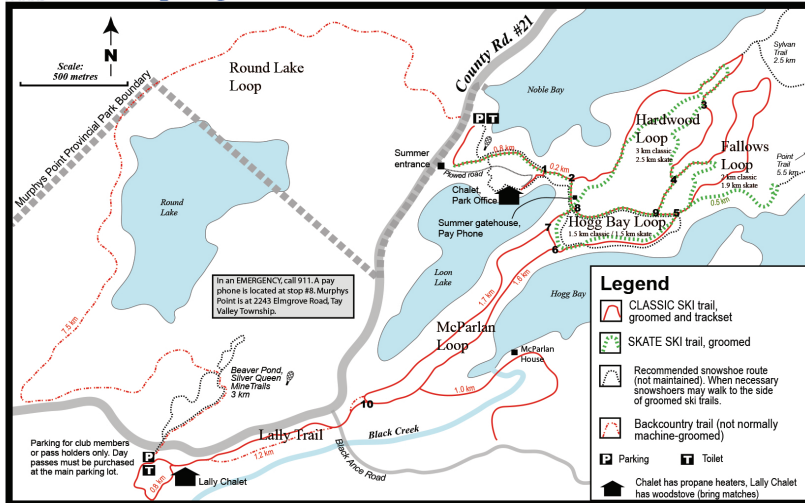
Murphys Point Provincial Park Ski Trails



Circa 1997-2007



Murphys Point Winter Trails



Snowshoers:

Recommended trails indicated on the map are NOT maintained. Here are some recommended options.

- Park at the Lally Chalet parking (obtain pass from main lot) and snowshoe the Mine and Beaver Pond Trails.

- or -

- Park at the Main lot and snowshoe the orange-flagged trail (approx. 2km).

- Continue to Hogg Bay Loop if desired.

- or -

- Snowshoe to the side of ski trails to access the Point or Sylvan hiking trails.

Walkers:

Obtain pass at the main ski lot. Park at the summer entrance. Walk the plowed road to the office. From there, the Hogg Bay Loop Snowshoe Trail is periodically packed with a snowmobile for easier walking.

Existing network 2018 displays Skating, Classic, Snow Shoe and Walking trails.

THE STORY CONTINUES

The first edition of the Story of the Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club (TVCCSC) was published in November 2007. Eleven years have now passed and the Club's Board has authorized an updated version describing the ongoing story of the Club. I have agreed to write and assemble this project.

Don Boyle

Co author of the first edition.

DEDICATION

This second edition is dedicated to all those whose efforts have contributed to the construction and development of the Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club; a now well established successful community institution.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my special appreciation to:

The Board of the TVCCSC for authorizing, funding and publishing this Project,

Dawn Kierans for her meticulous editing of the text,

Brad Mills for providing me with unfettered access to the Club's minutes and archives,

Nancy Gaudreau for her assistance in assembling and accrediting the photos,

Frank Roy for his wise advice and counsel,

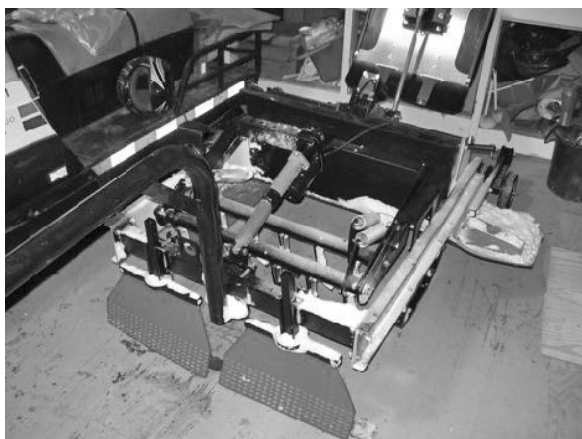
Denise Guerin for her technical assistance and arranging for the electronic publication on the Club's Website and Facebook Page.

This 2nd edition is published by the Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club and printed by
Impression Printing, Perth, Ontario



CRISIS of GOVERNANCE

In April 2003 a dispute developed among some Board Members over the wisdom of implementing an earlier resolution authorizing the purchase of a \$5000 Tidd-Tech grooming machine. A crisis of governance arose when four of the Executive Members, including the President and the Treasurer, resigned without replacement. With this collapse of leadership, the Club effectively ceased to operate as a rules-based corporate entity. For the next three years there were no efforts made to hold Annual General Meetings, elect officers or report finances to members. In spite of this committed skiers in the community continued some core activities. Four successful annual Loppets were organized at The Timber Run Golf Course at the initiative of Doug Hollingsworth with the help of some members of the local Lanark Community. Jack Rabbit activities continued based at Murphys Point Provincial Park (MPPP) under the leadership of Geoff Hodgson. These morphed from formalized lessons into regular Sunday distance ski outings with about ten families regularly participating. Phill Brackenbury continued his successful efforts to promote skiing within the local school community. Details related to the purchase of the groomer were finalized by Club Secretary Frank Roy and it was eventually acquired. Phil Thompson recruited Richard Brownrigg to manage membership fees, National Capital Division (NCD) liaison and basic financial matters. Phil and Tom Bowes continued to handle most of the grooming requirements at MPPP sometimes assisted by Tobi Kiesewalter from the Park Staff. Dave Reesor came on board in the 2006-07 season. He has since acceded to the title and function of Chief Groomer and has served in this capacity as a most valuable asset ever since.



**Tidd -Tech groomer - subject
of 2003 controversy**

A FRESH START

Against this backdrop a gathering of some fifteen members of the Club came together at McMartin House in November 2006. The last General Meeting of Club members had been in December 2001.

A consensus developed that there was a critical need to reestablish a formal Club structure operating within the framework of its established bylaws. Issues identified included the importance of putting into place stable contractual relationships with the Club's partners at MPPP and Timber Run and maintaining a strong connection with the NCD of Cross Country Canada (CCC) with the access it provides for liability insurance and to National and Provincial ski programs. Special consideration was to be given to grooming at MPPP with emphasis on the acquisition and use of suitably effective equipment with appropriately trained groomers. An interim executive led by Doug Hollingsworth was assembled, the composition of which is chronicled on p. 25 of the first edition of this story. It was formally elected at a duly constituted AGM and Social held at the Perth Restaurant in January 2007.

Following the formal business meeting, according to a tradition established at former AGM's, the meeting was addressed by guest speaker Geoff Tomlinson the Youth Coordinator for the NCD of Cross Country Canada. He spoke informatively of the Sport for Life Program and its ancillary Ski Fast program more fully described on p 48.

Phill Brackenbury announced that arrangements had been made with Geoff for its introduction in Perth and Lanark schools in a series of events scheduled for February.

AGM's

Regular Annual General Meetings were reestablished. They have been held in early November ever since. These have been well attended events operating under the principle of democratic accountability where Club members have received financial reports, have been consulted on policy and have elected its officers. Over this period Club membership has varied between 140 and 170. This narrow variance has always been closely related to each season's snow conditions.

Club By-laws previously revised in December 2001 were newly revised and ratified by the membership at the 2013 AGM.

Annual operational budgets have not exceeded \$8000 but have been supplemented on occasion by grants and fund raisers for special projects.

Under the guidance of successive treasurers Frank Roy, Beth Graham, Denise Guerin and current membership coordinator Ray Schmidt, a strong effort has been made to keep increases in annual membership fees to a minimum with the aim of encouraging participation in our sport. These have been slowly increased to the current level of \$75 for families, \$50 for individuals and \$25 for students.

Still the best value for money for any locally organized athletic activity.

The following invited speakers have generously shared their expertise at successive AGM's and entertained members with their special experiences.

A community outreach panel consisting of representatives from Lanark Tourism, the Rideau Trail Association, Rideau Valley Field Naturalists and The Friends of Murphys Point Park.

Club founders Dr. Ross McLean and Tom Bowes Video presentation of their Sea to Sea Trans Canada Cycle adventure.

Dirk Van Wijk and Claudia Kerckhoff on their experiences at the Vancouver Winter Olympics where Dick was lead groomer and Claudia was an event marshall.



Dick and Claudia

Nancy and Louis Gaudreau about their experiences hiking the Appalachian Trail with special insights into useful equipment.

Shannon Baillon gave a talk centered on training and formulas for healthy living.

Peter Rozmovits, President of Canadian Winter Sports; all you need to know about waxing

Local Olympian Perianne Jones from an athlete's perspective at Vancouver, Sochi and on the World Cup Circuit. Recalls her first Loppet participation as a young Jack Rabbit was at Tay Valley.

Greg Earl and Jenn Bonn from Smiths Falls' Sport X outlined the availability of new ski and outdoor gear.

Curtis Thompson Superintendent at MPPP spoke on the history of Park-Club relations.

NEW ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A confluence of events including the possible sale of the Golf Course and the limited availability of Club volunteers caused the new Board to make the strategic decision to terminate its engagement with Timber Run and concentrate its energy on the venue at MPPP. Accordingly during the ensuing period the Club has negotiated and applied several cooperative agreements with the very receptive representatives of the Minister of Natural Resources (MNR) at the Park.



Kilted Skiers Brian Rauwerda and Kandice Brown

Photo: Simon Lunn



41^{st/ième}



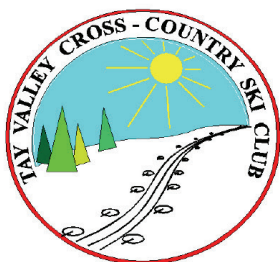
Tay Valley Loppet

10 and 20 km / 10 et 20 km

Sunday, February 11th, 2018

Dimanche, 11 Février 2018

Start time /Départ: 11:00 a.m.



10:00 a.m. for Kids 2.5 km race and
5 km race all ages!

10:00 am 2.5 km pour les enfants et
5 km pour tout le monde!

Murphys Point Provincial Park
Parc Provincial Murphys Point
Perth, Ontario

Details and entry forms available at

Formulaires d'inscription et détails peuvent être trouvés à

<http://tayvalleyskiclub.wordpress.com>



Please support our Sponsors

N'oubliez pas d'encourager nos commanditaires svp

Tay Valley Loppet returns to Murphy's Point

In 2008 because of the transition issues previously described, and for the first time in its history, the Club was not in a position to hold a Loppet despite the strong snow conditions which prevailed that season. But beginning in 2009 and for the nine years that followed, the Club planned for its annual signature event. First held in 1977 and almost every year since, snow conditions permitting, it is now recognized as Eastern Ontario's senior Loppet.

In this more recent period the first three of these years were under the direction of Loppet coordinator Jim Reain an experienced and skilled Loppet skier. Jim put in place a strong team of some 30 dedicated volunteers which remains mostly intact to our current time. Special recognition needs to be given to the grooming team and to the food detail led by Dave Reesor and Ray Schmidt respectively for the work they continue to do so well.

Nancy Gaudreau, a newcomer to our region from Vermont, and a former High School coach was chosen to replace Jim Reain when he stepped down. Both Jim and Nancy have been well supported by the Club and indeed the entire community in their efforts to make our Loppet a first class event.

Successful Loppets have been held in all but three of the last eleven years when unfortunately the weather proved uncooperative. Participation has varied between 60 and 75 skiers. These have regularly included strong contingents from our neighbouring Kanata club, and from the Ontario Masters Skiers which has placed our Loppet on their competitive points list.

In September 2013, the decision was made to hold our Loppet on the Sunday of the same week-end as the Canadian Ski Marathon (CSM) historically held in Mid-February. This date appeared to offer the highest probability for the holding of a successful snow event in our region. This decision did not disappoint. Successful February Loppets were held in 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018. In 2016 there was not enough snow. For the 2014 event, Nancy connected with Mary Stewart, co-owner with her husband Terry, of Perth's Running Goat shop. This couple has made a strong impact on local and international athletics by their efforts in promoting numerous running events. This includes the prominent Perth Kilt Run. It is recognized as the world's largest kilted race. This influence is now reflected in our winter event in that many kilted loppeteers and

volunteers can now be seen sporting their favorite tartans at the Loppet. On the technical side, the efficiency of the operation was improved with the hiring of Running Goat's Timing chip equipment which accurately records and allows for quick and easy on-line access to all results. Taking into account existing facilities for food and shelter and with this organization now in place the Club assesses that it can accommodate up to 100 skiers and expects to grow in that direction.



2018 Cookie Race Start



**Doug Hollingsworth & Jim Reain, 20 Km,
Gold and Bronze medalists in their
respective age categories**



2015 Loppet Start 20/10km event



2018 Loppet Start 20/10km event



**Soup and sandwiches
with a smile;
Judy Buehler, Myrna Lee,
Maggie Campbell, and
Ray Schmidt.**

Photos: Simon Lunn



Cookie racers show support for local Olympian Perianne Jones at upcoming Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games. Mary Stewart officiating.



Margarita Gorbounova overall Silver medalist and age group champion at 2011 20 km Tay Valley Loppet. This Kanata Racer was winner of three Gold medals at Canada Winter Games Para Nordic visually impaired event.



Terry Stewart starting 2017 Cookie Race



2017 Cookie Race in Progress



Mary Stewart and Loppet Coordinator Nancy Gaudreau officiating at 2016 Loppet

Photos: Simon Lunn



Trail design and maintenance

The current trail map reveals the extent and complexity of the network at MPPP. Easily understood and accurate signage is essential for skier safety and enjoyment. In 2016 a new directional system was designed by Park Naturalist Tobi Kieseewalter and paid for by the Club. The 80 signs were installed in time for the season.

Pre-season trail preparation is an important aspect of the Club's activities. Orion Clark took on the position of Trail Boss in 2007. During his term and inspired by the vision of Doug Hollingsworth, twelve hundred meters of new trail from Black Ance Rd to the old Lally Homestead were put in place with the approval of the Park Authority. This now formed a new loop and added a useful option for Loppet planners wishing to make use of this area under conditions of adequate snow.

The region in the vicinity of the historic homestead, with its easy access to parking, trails and warm-up facility, was now seen as a more suitable base for Jack Rabbit operations. Accordingly, the area was further developed, again with park approval. This was done by the modification of an eight hundred meter scenic loop located just to the south of the surviving buildings. This expanded venue continues to be the center for regular Sunday afternoon fun-filled Jack Rabbit activities.

When Orion left the region he was replaced by Don Frizell in 2010. As Mechanical Coordinator at Albany Felt, Don is especially suited for this role. He has coordinated the preparation of the trail infrastructure ever since.

Over many years Club volunteers have responded to the call of the Trail Boss for the routine Fall cleanup. They would show up with their own hand tools including saws, clippers, axes, sometimes sledge hammers, crow bars and even pitch forks. Not to be mistaken for a modern Peasant's Revolt these work parties provided the essential service of cutting long grasses, digging out troublesome rocks and protrusions, clearing fallen branches, removing uprooted trees and mounting ski markers along the way. In more recent years the Heigh-Ho Gang can now expect to be greeted at the point of assembly by Don, well installed on his own ATV, suitably equipped with an array of more specialized tools. The Club has now funded the purchase of a new Honda four stroke trimmer used in conjunction with a rented walk-behind mini bush-hog. It also funds training for chain-saw certification required to conform with MNR safety standards. Now entire sidehills unfriendly to the passage of grooming

equipment can be removed. Loads of gravel are transported and spread as required. The use of these more efficient mechanical labour saving devices offers a curious contrast as they are still supplemented by the basic tools of times gone by.

Always a pleasant blended experience of exercise and fellowship in the cool crisp air which heralds the splendid colourful autumn panorama.



The season starts with trail preparation.

Here we have a hearty crew of volunteers:

l to r, Frank Roy, Craig Wormold, Dave Ressor, Doug Hollingsworth as sawyer, Orion Clark and Jim Reain.



Bush Hog operator, Phill Brackenbury



Linda Cairncross and Frank Volkner (ATV driver) at work with trail boss **Don Frizell**

Quality Grooming means Quality Skiing

The acquisition of the Tidd-Tech Grooming Machine in 2003 was significant. It represented a recognition by the Club of the importance of regular quality grooming for its effect on the enhancement of the skiing experience. Over the following years, a series of projects were undertaken which demonstrated a commitment to grooming as a Club priority.

One of the first actions of the new executive in June 2008 was to apply for a \$15000 Trillium grant to assist in the purchase of a Bombardier Skandic Snow Mobile. It was felt that a machine with sufficient pulling power was required to drag a variety of pieces of grooming equipment sometimes around tight turns in deep snow. Ultimately an amount of over \$10000 was received and the machine was acquired.

A troublesome issue, particular to our climate region, has been the occurrence of frequent mid-winter thaws typically followed by deep freezes. The resulting hard icy conditions have often made skiing either dangerous or impossible. Trails have sometimes remained in these ruined conditions for many weeks at a time. In the Fall of 2014 the Club Executive began planning for the acquisition of an \$8000 Ginzu grooming machine capable of cutting through the hard ice surface and turning it into granular snow. This was the same model used at the Vancouver Olympics. The AGM supported a motion for \$4000 from Club funds to be allocated towards the purchase. The remainder of the cost was successfully raised through a fund raising drive. At the 2015 AGM, President Drew Lampman thanked all those who had contributed, making possible the realization of a dream. These included many Club members, the NCD of CCC, and local corporations Kilmarnock and 3M.

The dream machine was put to effective use as soon as the snow arrived. In April 2017 the Park contributed to the overall effort by purchasing a new tracked 4X4 with winterized features and considerable pulling power. This was made available for the use of our groomers who had been given the required training for its operation. Their feedback was that it worked well in the snow and provided additional flexibility to the overall operations.

At the November 2017 AGM a motion was adopted setting aside \$3500 for the replacement of the 15 year old Tidd-Tech grooming machine. Informed recommendations with respect to the above Club hardware purchases were made by Chief Groomer Dave Reesor in consultation with his growing team of committed groomers. This practice of relying on the experience of volunteer operators proved to be especially effective in obtaining the desired outcome.



**l to r: intrepid groomers:
Jack Roe, Dave Reesor and
Brad Mills**



Photos:
Simon Lunn



KUDOS to OUR MOST RECENT TEAM of GROOMERS

Brad Mills Serving Club Secretary
 Dave Reesor Chief Groomer
 Dave Salte
 Don Frizell Serving Club Trail Boss
 Doug Hollingsworth Former Club President
 Drew Lampman Serving Club President
 Jack Roe Originally from Pakenham and Ottawa Ski Clubs
 Linda Cairncross
 Lynn McIntyre
 Phil Thompson Former Club President
 Rick Sauder
 Robert Mears
 Tobi Kiesewalter Staff Naturalist at MPPP

The Build the Bridge Bash - A Model of Community Cooperation.

In the spring of 2008 a torrent of water through Black Creek washed out the old bridge along the McParlan House trail. This cut off a section of the Rideau Trail Club's route, the link to the Friends of MPPP's Archaeological Apprentice Site and a popular section of the ski trail network.

In February 2011, Beth Peterkin representing the Friends took the initiative to invite these three groups to organize a funding event to help build a new bridge. Our club enthusiastically joined in. Secretary Brad Mills and Treasurer Beth Graham volunteered to be the point persons for the Club. Through this joint effort over \$10 000 was raised at an April dinner and auction held at the Civitan Club.

Within eight months, Ontario Parks came up with the remaining two thirds of the budget and a new bridge was built.



Old Bridge and New Bridge crossing Black Anse Creek on McParlan House Trail.



Photos:
Tobi Kiesewalter

Build the Bridge Bash at Civitan Club, November 2011



Communications and The Digital Evolution

By the time the Hollingsworth Executive was elected in 2007 hard copy methods of communication were falling out of favour everywhere. New cost effective electronically based platforms were replacing outmoded paper versions. More and more the Club began to rely on e-mail as a method of reaching members. As early as 2002 this writer had circulated a proposal for the design of a Club Website. The suggested template it contained was adopted as a framework and remains mostly intact today. Credit goes to Jeff Bowes for his early efforts on this, but especially to Stephanie Gray from the Friends of Murphys Point Park who worked closely with Frank Roy to develop the final product. Only in October 2010 was Frank able to report to the executive that the Club now had a new working Website of the Blog variety. It was then decided that publication of the Langlauffer newsletter and the snail-mail circulation it required would be no longer necessary. Ray Schmidt inherited the task of managing the site. When the position of Membership Coordinator was established in 2013 it made sense that Ray would handle both jobs. The work it took to produce and operate this asset demonstrated yet again the growing team spirit now animating the Club. The yearly number of hits it receives is now recorded to be in the thousands.

A variety of communication methods is now in place and reaching out to the broader Community.

The Club's Facebook Page is another project falling within this category, whose concept was floated long before it was finally implemented. But when Treasurer Denise Guerin embraced the idea in October 2013 she was quick to put it into place. Nancy Gaudreau can be counted on to feed it with a steady stream of interesting postings. Indeed this is another effective resource by which the Club can communicate its message and its happenings. This popular feature now has many hundreds of regular followers.

In both cases the Town of Perth's original motto: "Make Haste Slowly but Surely." was closely adhered to and both turned out to be successful in the end.

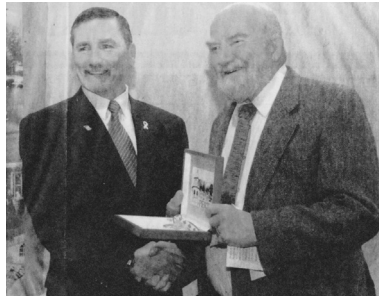
The following year CCC selected "Zone 4 Systems" of Canmore, Alberta to deploy a national membership electronic registration system and data base. Our Club has made good use of this new tool for tracking memberships and other related information. Applications for membership and Loppet registration are now easily completed on-line.

Some communications, especially those with the broader Community, have remained non-digital. Tobi Kiesewalter continues to make good use of the generous auspices of Radio Station Lake 88. Of special interest to week-end skiers is the trail condition information he contributes to a regular Friday afternoon feature for a local radio audience.

Current Secretary Brad Mills is the only remaining Club Director listed on the Club's 1984 Letters patent application for Provincial incorporation who is still active in its governance. Brad continues to enjoy especially good relations with the local print media who are always ready to relay news about Club events which they receive from his communiques.

Outreach

Over these years the Club has come to realize that alongside its mission to provide an important health and recreational community service, it can also play its part in contributing to the the local economy. By supporting a number of related and unrelated activities, it has increasingly responded to opportunities to connect with the broader community. It is from this standpoint that the Club cooperates with the Lanark Tourism Association and several local business and service organizations. Many of its members take on prominent roles throughout the community.



Frank Roy receives
2010 Perth Medal
Photo: Perth Courier

In 2010 our Club successfully nominated long time community activist Frank Roy for the annual Perth Medal Award. This prestigious recognition for outstanding volunteer work is jointly sponsored by the Town of Perth and the local Chamber of Commerce. In making the nomination the Club's letter testified that "Frank has shown great distinction in a number of endeavours to benefit the community as a whole with no monetary gain to himself."



Phill Brackenbury receives
2017 Perth Medal
Photo: Perth Courier

At its 2017 awards dinner the Chamber again honoured the efforts of yet another Ski Club Board member for his numerous community contributions. This time it was Club Vice President Phill Brackenbury who became the recipient of the Medal. It was presented to him by Mayor John Fenik who spoke of how Phill met the high criteria set out for the Award.

LANARK COUNTY SKIER PREPARES FOR THE WINTER OLYMPICS



The Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club presented a donation of support to Almonte's Sprint Skier Perianne Jones of Canada's Olympic Ski Team as she prepares for the 2010 Winter Games. 1 to r. President Don Boyle, Secretary Frank Roy, Perianne, and Past President Doug Hollingsworth

Photo: Perth Courier

Financial support of \$500 was provided to assist local athlete and friend of the Club, Perianne Jones, as she conquered a variety challenges on her way to representing Canada at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

The Club has also conferred its own awards on occasion, including recognition of its volunteers and cooperating land owners. Donna and Jenna Sweeney were honoured for their role in the rescue of a member skier from a life threatening skiing accident at MPPP.

Practical hands-on and technical measures have been put in place to assist local organizations when requested. These have included the Super Kids in Parks (SKIP) Program sponsored by the Friends of Murphys Point Park and the Special Olympics Committee when it has held events at the Perth Civitan Club.

Through its connection with the NCD the club has successfully facilitated the introduction of the Ski Fast program into the network of local schools.

PROGRAMS

Jack Rabbit & Bunny Rabbit Activities



Photos: Drew Lampman & Nancy Sweetnam



End of Season Closing Event

Jack Rabbits and Bunny Rabbits

The first edition of this story tells how the Club's commitment to introducing local youth to our sport began with the efforts of David St. Onge and Stan Earl in 1974. This took on additional impetus when the Club embraced the mission of promoting the set of National skill standards developed by CCC through its Jack Rabbit Program in the 1996/97 season. Under the leadership of certified instructors it continues today to be the core youth activity managed by the Club.

As previously described the 2006/7 season marked a fresh start for the Club. A new measure reflecting this spirit was the provision of annual funding for instructor certification. In this way a significant body of adult leaders, mostly parents with children of Bunny Rabbit and Jack Rabbit ages, has been developed.

Many thanks go out to the following devotees who have so generously and enthusiastically contributed to the success of this fun program as it continues to attract between twelve and thirty young athletes annually. Special thanks to Geoff Hodgins, Nancy Sweetnam and Drew Lampman who have succeeded each other as Jack Rabbit Coordinators.

At the 2011 AGM the Club received a cheque for \$2000 presented on behalf of the Perth and District Community Foundation. This was the result of an application made by the Club for funding the purchase of good quality equipment to be offered to youth new to the sport on a rental basis. A number of sets of performance grade skis, poles and boots with compatible bindings were acquired. This is an ongoing issue which continues to require creative funding initiatives.



Certified Instructors

Level 1*

Brian Rauwerda
Coleen Bracken
Hillary Lawson
Joanne Fisher
Kandace Brown
Lori Beckstead
Tobi Kieseewalter

Level 1**

Geoff Hodgins

Nancy Cairncross
Robert Meers

Level 2*

Drew Lampman

Nancy Sweetnam
Ramsay Hart ***

*National Coaches Certification Program (NCCP) of Cross Country Canada

**Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors.

***Final paper work pending.



Free Clinics for adult skiers

In 2013 the Club received an additional boost when Rick Sauder, a qualified ski instructor, moved to Perth. Together with Nancy Gaudreau, a former racer on the University of Vermont XC racing team which had significant successes at the US national level in the US, a series of scheduled clinics was established. It offered skiers at the beginner level an introduction to the basics of our sport. For intermediate skiers it was an opportunity to upgrade their skills. All aspects of classic and skate techniques were covered. Linda Cairncross was one of those athletes accomplished in other sports who quickly took to X Country skiing and soon obtained Canadian Association of Ski Instructors (CANSI) certification.

When Rick returned to B.C. Nancy and Linda continued the effort. Last season Rob Mears another qualified CANSI instructor joined the team. This program has sometimes been hampered by the reliability of suitable snow. The plan forward will replace fixed scheduling. Clinics will be held on short notice depending on conditions.



Downhill Ski clinic Calabogie Circa 2014. Rick Sauder demonstrates telemark turn. Photo: Nancy Gaudreau



Ski Clinic in progress
circa 2017. Photo: Ray Schmidt



Adult Ski Clinic
Instructors Robert Mears, Nancy Gaudreau,
Linda Cairncross 2018 Photo: Louis Gaudreau

School Activities

Largely due to the efforts of St John's Elementary teacher Phill Brackenbury and through the Club's connection with the National Commission of CCC, the Club has facilitated the introduction of the SKI XC FAST program into the local school network.

Beginning in the 2006/07 season it has attracted participation based on the concept that skiing XC fast is an exciting and challenging activity. Since then it has grown to reach a significant number of students in the region. A unique feature of the program is that trained and experienced instructors go to the participating schools where they provide students and teachers with all the equipment required for a successful session. The program operates in full compliance with the Ontario Physical Health and Education Association (OPHEA) guidelines.

In tandem with this effort Phill with Club and Park support has been continuing to organize and hold successful annual regional School Loppets.

Worthy of special mention in connection with school activities is the achievement of a student-led team of skiers from Perth and District Collegiate Institute (PDCI) inspired by team founder Bronwyn Hodgson. After several seasons of solid training, a group of some 20 athletes reached a level capable of competing favourably alongside some of the best skiers in Ontario at the 2011 Provincial School Championships. Bronwyn has the distinction of having been one of the Club's original Jack Rabbits.



SkiFast program St Johns School circa 2011

Photo: Phill Brackenbury

By the light of the silvery moon.

A short window of opportunity sometimes becomes available for night skiing under the brilliant light of a winter full moon. Whenever the required conditions converged, the opportunity was seized, the invitation was sent, the enthusiasts assembled, and another memorable combination of adventure and companionship was experienced. In recent years credit goes to Don Frizell for taking on the convening of this event.



Moonlight skiers
Photos: Don Frizell



Moonlight skiers après- ski

LEADERSHIP RENEWAL

In February 2009, Doug Hollingsworth gave notice of his intention to step down at the next AGM. This writer succeeded him and served for the following two years. During that entire five year period a high priority had been that of insuring the Club's future viability. A significant effort was made to recruit a new cohort of younger persons willing to take on the administration. In November 2011 Drew Lampman, one of several serious cyclists now engaged in the Club, was elected to preside over a new capable team which had been put in place well equipped to support him.

The issue of leadership renewal is critical to the survival and vitality of most organizations reliant on the commitment of volunteers. They are motivated by the understanding that satisfaction brings its own rewards. Hopefully this story inspires others to come forward to make their own future contributions.

It takes a whole community to maintain an institution.

Snow Tonight

Deep woods in December—we've hiked there all day
Bare trees—oaks, maples and beeches all gray
The leaves of last summer cover all of the ground
Like a soft brown blanket tucked in all around

The brook running softly to places below
All ready to hide under deep winter snow
The beaver pond frozen among the dead trees
Beavers, are you ready for a long winter freeze?

The weatherman says tonight it will snow
My woods will be changed tomorrow, I know
Each season is lovely but what a delight
To find a new world when it snowed in the night.

Excerpt from an inspirational Work by Okie Howe.



Pat Graveline next to Black Ance Creek February 2017. Photo Dave Salte

Keep on Skiing!

2017/18 EXECUTIVE

President Drew Lampman

Secretary Brad Mills

Membership Ray Schmidt

Loppet Chair Nancy Gaudreau

Chief Groomer Dave Reesor

Vice President Phill Brackenbury

Treasurer Denise Guerin

Trail Boss Don Frizell

Youth Coordinator Drew Lampman



Some current and former Club Executives at 2017 AGM - Denise Guerin, Don Boyle, Doug Hollingsworth, Drew Lampman, Gloria Opzoomer, Frank Roy, Curtis Thompson (MPPP Superintendent)

Club Presidents since Inception

Dr. Ross McLean

David St Onge

Dr Rob Chaplin

David Stevens

Tom Bowes

Gloria Opzoomer

Ken Willis

Phil Thompson

Doug Hollingsworth

Don Boyle

Drew Lampman



This season Murphys Point Park will be open for skiing, snowshoeing and hiking, conditions permitting from mid December 2018 to the end of March 2019

Become a Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club Member!

The club has decided to go to on line membership registration exclusively. You can still use paper registration and cash or cheque if you attend the AGM. After that membership registration will be on line.

Membership costs for 2017/18 are:

Family – \$75; Individual – \$50; Student – \$25

You can become a member on line by going to:

<https://zone4.ca/register.asp?id=16286>

A small fee will be applied to your credit card. A printable parking pass will be emailed to you

Please contact rayschmidtperth@gmail.com
for all inquiries.

The Club membership card serves as a valid parking permit which must be displayed on the dash. It also entitles you to full participation at the Annual General Meeting . You will want too keep up to date with Club affairs and post your contributions by accessing our Blog at:

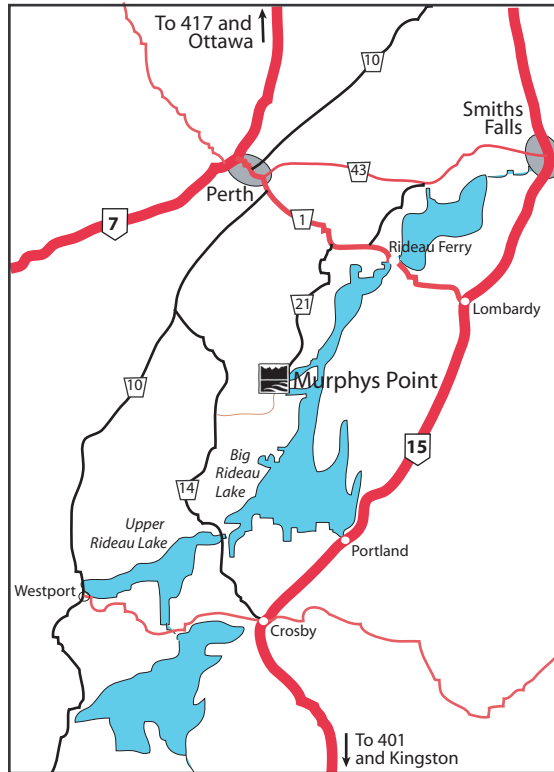
<https://tayvalleyskiclub.wordpress.com/>

You will also receive a complimentary copy of this Club History upon request.

Your input and volunteer assistance to our projects and activities are welcomed and encouraged.

For updated ski conditions:

Go to Trail Information on the Club Blog, click on Trail Conditions and scroll down to Murphys Point Park
Often a more detailed report, frequently provided by skiers own recent experiences, can be found by consulting the Tay Valley Cross Country Ski Club Facebook Page.



How to Find Us

From **Ottawa**, take Hwy. 7 to Perth,
then follow Park signs
(left on Wilson, left on Foster, right on Gore. Gore turns into #1,
then 6 km outside Perth, turn right on #21).
Follow this road 12 km to the Park.

From **Kingston or Smiths Falls** take Hwy 15 to Lombardy,
follow park signs
(west on #1 through Rideau Ferry, left on #21. 12 km to the Park.