

The Rattler



ISSUE #1 2013



Halfway Log Dump - watercolour by Sue Dymont

President's Message

Have you ever had a tingle of guilt when you're out enjoying our fine trails – all built, paid for and maintained by volunteers? Ever wondered how you could give back a bit? Do you wonder how you might best support the BTC mission of "establishing a conservation corridor containing a public footpath along the Niagara Escarpment ..."?

Ten years ago I was finishing my 2^e of the Bruce Trail when I began to ask myself these questions. The answer presented itself in the Rattler: volunteers were wanted for trail work during the SpruceUp The Bruce event.

On the day, Donna Baker marched our crew of "new guys" up a steep access trail and we set to work pruning the encroaching Dogwood and brush. After a good day's work, John & Judy Appleton kindly opened their home to host a barbeque for the motley & muddy work crews. It was a great day! I was encouraged, by the friendly people I met and their obvious dedication, to come back the next year, and the next, and eventually to get even more involved.

Your chance to get involved is May 11 at this year's SUTB – now combined with our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Please join us for a day working on the land. If you cannot do so, then join us later in the day as we celebrate our successes at the barbeque and AGM. (See inside for details.)

Ross McLean's look back in history tells us that the SUTB weekend started as an effort by southern clubs to maintain trail in the Peninsula – as our club was essentially dormant. WE can prevent this from ever

happening again by building an active, engaged membership. Membership Director Rob Straby is working on a process to contact lapsed members in order to understand why they let their membership lapse – and to invite them to rejoin. Volunteer Director Bridget Rosser is working to place new volunteers in their areas of interest – and recognize others for their service. If you have any ideas on how to improve your membership experience, please contact us. Susan Allen has once again organized a full hiking schedule – details enclosed.

I'm told that BTC is in the process of finalizing an exciting new member sponsorship program: "Thanks to a generous donor, Korax Inc., for each new member who joins through a referral, a \$50 donation to the BTC will be generated (up to a total of \$25,000). In this way, we'll not only be Sharing the Bruce Trail with 500 more members, we will help ensure a vibrant and growing membership base for the BTC, and generate much needed funds to support the BTC's mission. Starting in April, we will launch this program for all Bruce Trail Members."

See you on the trail!

John

Peninsula Bruce Trail Club

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Contents Issue #1, 2013

President’s Message pg. 1
 Winter’s Special Places..... pg. 3
 Cheque Presentation..... pg. 4
 The Trail In Winter..... pg. 5
 Cathedral Woods In Spring..... pg. 6
 Nature Close to Your Home..... pg. 7
 Insects In Canadian Winters..... pg. 8
 PBTC Hiking Schedule..... pg. 9
 BTC Spring-Summer Hiking Schedule..... pg. 10
 Sydenham Easy End to End Schedule..... pg. 11
 Spruce Up the Bruce & AGM..... pg. 12
 Devil’s Pulpit Back Trail..... pg. 13
 Meet Russell & Katharine Ferguson..... pg. 14
 Meet Russell & Katharine *cont’d*..... pg. 15
 Meet Russell & Katharine *cont’d*..... pg. 16
 Blue On the Bruce..... pg. 17
 April 1st..... pg. 18
 A Time to Celebrate..... pg. 19

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Any articles or stories of interest?
 Deadline for submissions to next Rattler:
“August 7, 2013”

Rattler Advertising Rates:

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The current executive team of the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club can be found on our website: www.pbtc.ca

Winter's Special Places

Most Thursdays a group of Peninsula friends embark on a hike for a few hours of fresh air and Bruce Trail exercise. The winter trails are quite different from the summer trails often requiring snowshoes and extra care to avoid rock crevices but also revealing many animal tracks and much more open views of forest, shoreline and escarpment. There is still an active living environment with its own sights, sounds, feelings and smells. There are many animals and birds, year-round green mosses and ferns peeking out from the boulder surfaces.

The snow and ice give us some special forms and shapes absent in the warmer months. Wind shaped snowdrifts and huge escarpment icicles appear as the winter progresses and the ever changing light conditions encourage different opportunities for the photographer. One of our favourite winter hike destinations is the Rush Cove ice caves where the meltwater emerges from the rock layers to fall down over the low overhanging scarp along the shore. One can crawl into the caves and stare in wonder at the ice stalagmites and stalactites and through the opaque ice wall hanging from the rock above.

If you decide to hike the trails in winter you are in for a special experience. But don't go alone, dress in layers, take water and snacks, maps and compass or GPS, and fully charged cellphone. Even so, many sections of Peninsula trails are devoid of cellphone service. The trail is open year round.

Enjoy it with care. Don McIlraith

Below: Stuart Burgess in Rush Cove Ice Cave



The Trail in Winter

Even on the wintery Peninsula work and walks continue all season. Hurricane Sandy downed a huge number of trees along the trail and numerous volunteers helped to clear the wreckage. Even after Christmas a small crew of sawyer John Jackson, Donna Baker, and Meg and John Grandy ventured out on the snowy January day to clear several trees down on the main trail on the way out to the Lion's Head Lookouts.

The Peninsula winter hike schedule resumes January 25 (see club website or last edition of the Rattler) but several local members from Both Peninsula and Sydenham clubs enjoy informal 'Friends' hikes on Thursdays all season. These are usually 2-3 hours of fairly easy hiking often followed by lunch or coffee at a nearby restaurant. See Peninsula Club's Facebook page for links to John Wilkinson's videos of these hikes over the past year.

Don McIlraith



Volunteer John Jackson hard at work on the trail



Group of winter hikers - some of the regulars

* * * * *

Trivia Question:

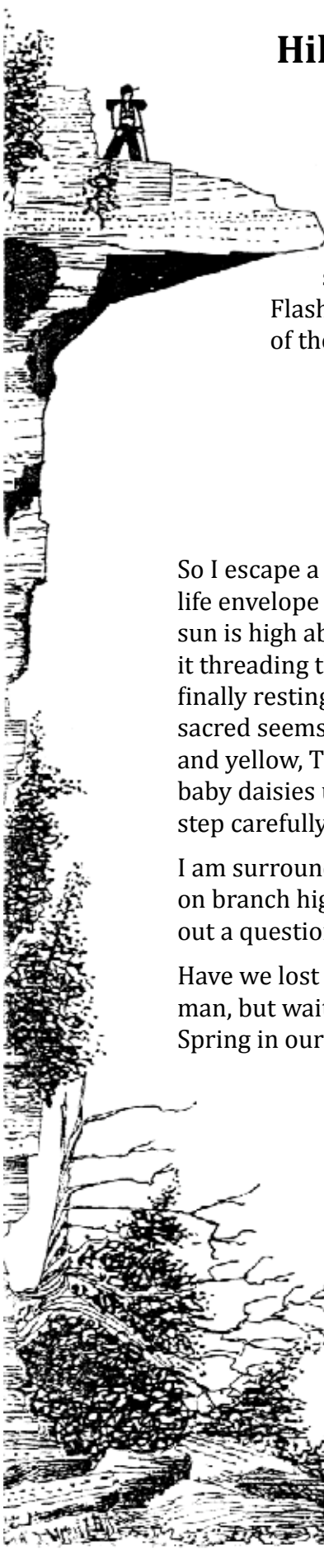
What Eastern European city, since 1800, has had a Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, and German name, all of which can be roughly translated into Lion's Head?

Answer - see page 15

submitted by : Bob Light, Warton

Hiker's Tale

Cathedral Woods in Spring



Have we lost the beauty of Silence? Young, and younger people are subject to the domination of technology. “Boom, boom, boom” goes the so-called music through their headsets, cars, even the stores and outdoors. Flash and crash goes the hectic pictures in a square box reaching every corner of the living space.

There is hope as I hear the Spring muses whispering,

*“Come away, come away,
I will show you heaven,
It is not far away,
For your life it is Heaven.”*

So I escape a few miles through the woods. Soon, after I enter, the tall elegant trees of life envelope me, creating the most magnificent archway of awesome architecture. The sun is high above with its brilliance illuminating the full green pinnacles, with shifts of it threading their way through the branches, ebbing and flowing down the trunks, and finally resting on the profusion of wildflowers covering the leaf covered earth. How sacred seems the resurrection of Cowslips, Jack-in-the-Pulpits, Trilliums, Violets – blue and yellow, Trout lilies, Forget-me-nots – even Raspberry and Gooseberry bushes with baby daisies underneath. In some places the flowers traverse the path and I need to step carefully in homage to all this new life.

I am surrounded by a deep, full silence which is raised by the gentle touching of branch on branch high above, moved by the sighs of the whispering breeze. A song bird calls out a questioning symphony to the chipmunks scurrying through late Autumn’s leaves.

Have we lost the beauty of silence? No, because it is there all the time, not created by man, but waiting on its own for its own pleasure, and perhaps, for the awakening of Spring in our hearts.

*“To see the earth in a grain of sand,
And heaven in a wild flower,
To hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.”*

William Blake

By C. Patricia Horner
For John Byard
May 4, 2010

Nature Close To Your Home

Good detective work helps identify winter's naked trees

If you were to close your eyes and picture a deciduous tree, chances are you would see it in full leaf. In our mind, we tend to remember trees in their summer clothing. It's what gives deciduous trees their character, fleshes them out and helps us to identify them easily by species. But now that "all the leaves are down and the sky is grey", how can you tell the trees apart? In the absence of leaves, flowers and fruit, what's there to go on? Plenty, actually, you can zero in on tree species by considering such features as size, form, habitat, and range, but specially the 3Bs – branching, bark and buds.

When you look at a bare tree, you'll find the twigs branch off of one another in decreasing size. Notice the placement of twigs relative to one another on the main branches. Twigs will be either in opposing pairs (two twigs opposite each other forming a "V") or alternating (a twig on one side of a branch, then a gap, then a twig on the other side). When the branching is opposite, think of the acronym "MAD Horse" for Maple, Ash, Dogwood, and Horsechestnut. If the branching is alternate, then think oak, hickory, birch, and everything else. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule. The Alternative-leaved Dogwood breaks rank with its opposite-branching siblings.

Another key identifying feature, and perhaps the easiest to see, is bark. Bark can vary widely by texture and colour between the species. A mature white birch is easily recognized by its papery, easy-to-peel bark. Beech is known for its extremely smooth grey bark reminiscent of an elephant's hide. The mature bark of a black cherry separates into dark squares, which look like burnt cornflakes. My personal favourite in the best bark category is the Blue-Beech. This understory tree (which is actually a type of birch) has smooth bark with sinuous ridges, earning it the nick-name "muscle-wood".



"By the Woods" - painting by Sue Dymant

The third B stands for buds. The buds house the upcoming spring's new growth and are usually covered by scales. The buds of a balsam poplar tend to be large and sticky, with a characteristic sweet fragrance. The buds of a basswood are plump and reddish with two or three scales. They are also edible and taste something like green beans. The flower buds of the red and silver maples are noticeable over the winter, even from a distance. They appear in large clusters on the tips of the twigs, awaiting the spring.

The winter trees are still recognizable individuals even when stripped of their summer outfits. It just requires more detective work.

By Janet Ozaruk

Janet Ozaruk is a naturalist living in the Stanley Park area and is Susan Allen's sister

Insects have their own way of dealing with the Canadian winter

I was recently walking through the bush with my family, when my son pointed out something odd looking. It appeared to be a used up tea bag that someone had flung into a shrub, where it became stuck to a branch. We took a closer look and realized it was an elongated casing made of a tightly woven, hardened organic material. We had found the cocoon of a Cecropia moth.

This led to the bigger question just where do insects go in the winter? Cecropia moths are just one of the thousands of species of insects, and they all have their own way of dealing with the Canadian winter: Some simply get out of town, Monarch butterflies are the best known migrants in our area. Each fall they begin the arduous trip to their over-wintering grounds in the highlands of Mexico. But most local insects stay local and over-winter in a life stage particular to their species.

Insects have either a complete or incomplete life cycle. Those with a complete life cycle (butterflies, moths, bees, wasps, ants, beetles, for example) have four life stages: egg; larva; caterpillar, or grub; pupa; and adult. Those insects with an incomplete life cycle (crickets, grasshoppers, dragonflies, damselflies, for example) have three life stages: egg; nymph; and adult.

A good example of an insect that over-winters in the egg stage is the praying mantis. In the fall, the female lays the eggs in a froth on a stem. The froth then hardens and protects the eggs until they hatch in the summer. In the winter, look for these egg masses, roughly the size, shape and colour of

an English walnut shell half, on grass stalks in old fields.

Insect larvae are not too difficult to find in winter. I stopped by a nearby creek and snapped off the top of a cattail plant. I gently pried apart the cigar-shaped seed head, loosening all the feather-like fluffs and revealed a tiny white grub nestled in this protective abode. Always keep an eye out for tumour-like growths on plants: elliptical swellings on the stems of goldenrods, pinecone-like formations at the tips of willow branches, or woody “apples” forming on oak branches. These formations, called galls, are formed in reaction to larvae dwelling inside the host plant.

Have you ever been surprised by the sight of ladybird beetles clustered on the sun-warmed windows of your house early in spring? These insects over-winter in their adult stage gathering together and hibernating in sheltered areas inside buildings or under fallen leaves and logs outdoors.

Damselflies and most dragonflies spend their winters as nymphs under mud or rotting leaves in the water. Come spring, they crawl up onto land, split open the back of their nymphal skin and emerge with a fabulous set of adult wings.

So remember when you are out walking through a snowy wonderland – you are not alone. You are surrounded by insects. You may not see them, hear them, or feel them, but they are there, nevertheless, just waiting to become active once their surroundings warm up.

Janet Ozaruk



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2013 Peninsula Bruce Trail Club End to End Reference Bruce Trail Guide - Ed 27

Contact: Susan Allen 519 534 5898

DATE	Lat - Long	Where to Meet	Where to Meet	DOD	Km.	Hike Details
Sat. August 10, 2013 8:00 am Hike 1/9	44.83637786170,-81.05441057510	From Bruce Rd. 9 travel East on County Rd. 18 (Purple Valley Rd.) At stop sign continue straight as road becomes gravel to Wright's Cres. parking area on right.		Strenuous	14.8 km	Start: Wiaraton - km 0.0 End: Purple Valley ST - km 14.8
Sun. August 11, 2013 8:00 am Hike 2/9	44.89146252190,-81.09071863570	Meet at Cape Croker Campground gates. From Wiaraton , Hwy. 6 north to exit right on Bruce Rd. 9. Right on Sideroad 18. Left on Purple Valley Rd. Right on McIver Rd. and left on Campground Rd to gates. From Lion's Head south on Bruce Rd. 9 exit left on Waugh's Rd. and right on Purple Valley Rd., left on McIver Rd. then left on Campground Road to gates.		Strenuous	16.8 km	Start: Purple Valley ST - km 14.8 End: Park Rd Cape Croker - km 31.6
Sat. August 17, 2013 8:00 am Hike 3/9	44.93953641460,-81.133331855860	Meet at Jackson Cove Parking lot located at the top of the hill. Take Hopeness Rd from County Rd 9 to Jackson Cove Rd.		Very Strenuous	20.4 km	Start: Park Rd Cape Croker - km 31.6 End: Jackson Cove Parking - km 52.0
Sun. August 18, 2013 8:00 am Hike 4/9	44.95882510070,-81.22616782720	Meet at Barrow Bay BT Parking at East side of the road: County Rd 9 South of Lion's Head or County Rd 9 North from Wiaraton.		Very Strenuous	14.4 km	Start: Jackson Cove Parking - km 52.0 End: Barrow Bay Parking - km 66.4
Sat. August 24, 2013 8:00 am Hike 5/9	45.02046007880,-81.28378993170	Meet at Richardson ST parking lot North of Lion's Head on Forty Hills Rd.		Very Strenuous	19.8 km	Start: Barrow Bay Parking - km 66.4 End: Richardson ST Rd Lot - km 86.2
Sun. August 25, 2013 8:00 am Hike 6/9	45.10869955010,-81.31195343710	Meet at roadside parking along shoulder of Cape Chin North Rd.		Very Strenuous	18.4 km	Start: Forty Hills Rd Parking Lot - km 86.2 End: Cape Chin N Rd - km 104.6
Sat. August 31, 2013 8:00 am Hike 7/9	45.10869955010,-81.31195343710	Meet at roadside parking along shoulder of Cape Chin North Rd. We will be hiking north to south.		Very Strenuous	22.9 km	Start: Crane Lake Rd Gate - km 127.5 End: Cape Chin N Rd - km 104.6
Sun. Sept. 1, 2013 8:00 am Hike 8/9		Meet at parking area in NE corner of Hwy 6 and Dyer's Bay Road. We will be hiking north to south.		Very Strenuous	18.6 km	Start: Horse Lake, National Pk - km 146.1 End: Crane Lake Rd Gate - km 127.5
Mon. Sept. 2, 2013 8:00 am Hike 9/9		Grand Finale - Meet at the Tobermory Chamber of Commerce Parking Hwy. #6, Tobermory, Ontario, Canada N0H 2R0. Tobermory.	7420	Very Strenuous	19.9 km	Start: Horse Lake, National Pk - km 146.1 End: Tobermory Cairn - km 166

This will be a challenging End to End. The Degree of Difficulty is Very Strenuous. Expect difficult footing and/or steep slopes on major portions of the section. The group size will be limited to 20 participants who will be hiking together at a steady pace (there will not be checkpoints or dropout points along the way). Meeting time is 8:00 am and we will carpool to start point. As this is a Peninsula Club fund raising event we are asking for a donation of \$100.00 - receipt will be issued. Upon completion a Peninsula End to End Badge will be awarded. Please confirm that you are attending by emailing susan_allen@sympatico.ca Early accommodation reservations are recommended.



2013 SPRING and SUMMER PENINSULA-BRUCE TRAIL HIKE SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	NAME AND WHERE TO MEET	DOD	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION AND CONTACT INFORMATION
Wednesday April 24, 2013	11:00 AM	THE SPRING FLOWERS OF HOPE BAY FOREST PROVINCIAL NATURE RESERVE From County Rd 9 turn east on Hopeness Rd and south on Cathedral Rd. Parking at the south end of Cathedral Rd.	Easy	Approx 3 km	On our first hike of the season we hope to see trout lilies, red and white trilliums, squirrel corn, dutchman's breeches, violets and perhaps spring-beauty. Leader Elaine Wassermann 519 795 7407
Thursday May 2, 2013	10:00 AM	RURAL ROCKS SIDE TRAIL - Take County Rd 13 West from Warton for 2 km. Turn right on North Acres Rd - parking at bottom of hill.	Moderate	4.4 km	Potluck sandwiches at Harriet and Roy's home, 534 Gould St., Warton following the hike. Beverages will be provided. Hike Leader: Harriet Nixon 519 534 0426
Sunday May 5, 2013	11:00 AM	SANDRA PURCHASE MEMORIAL HIKE Cape Dundas parking - A parking lot at the end of Scenic Caves Rd with room for ten cars at the Pease Side Trail	Moderate	6 km	Sandra Purchase was the first trail captain at Cape Dundas and after her death, her family and friends held a memorial hike in her name on the land she loved. 2013 will see the third annual Sandra Purchase Memorial Hike and you are all welcome to share the beauty of the land and the volunteer spirit which created the trails. Contact Ross Mclean 519 821 0243
May 11, 2013	Saturday	SPRUCE UP THE BRUCE AND PENINSULA CLUB AGM			Bruce Trail maintenance and development day followed by our volunteer appreciation dinner and the club's AGM. It's a wonderful way to start the season and reconnect with friends. Please contact trailreportsbct@gmail.com for more information.
Wednesday May 15, 2013	9:00 AM	SPRING BIRDING WALK Dyer's Bay Rd. at the Dyer's Bay community parking lot	Moderate	10 km	Spring birding walk for Birding Novices to Experts - All are welcome. We will carpool to favourite birding spots in the area and then walk. Bring lunch, water and dress for the weather. We work together to sight as many species or more than previous years. Leaders: Ray and Marlene Rothenbury plus local birding enthusiasts. 519 795 7483
Wednesday May 22, 2013	11:00 AM	FON ALVAR AND CRANE RIVER PLANT APPRECIATION Parking area on west side of HWY 6 just north of Dyer's Bay Rd.	Easy	Approx 3 km	A prime location to see lakeside daisies, dwarf lake irises, seneca snake root and polygala Leader: Elaine Wassermann 519 795 7407
Wednesday June 19	#####	SHOWY LADYSLIPPERS & PETREL POINT - Meet at Lion's Head Cemetery on Cemetery Rd off Hwy 6	Easy	Approx 3 km	A walk to appreciate local orchids and wildflowers. Leader Elaine Wasserman 519 795 7407
Wednesday July 17	10:00 AM	SINGING SANDS AMBLE - Parking lot at Singing Sands National Park - Dorcas Bay Rd west off Hwy 6	Easy	Approx 3 km	We are hoping to see Purple Fringed Orchid, Rose Pagonia and Grass Pinks. As we amble along the beach, Butterwort, Bladderwort, Calamint, Slender-leaved Sundew and Spotted Coral Root. Bring lunch and have a swim afterwards. Leader Elaine Wasserman 519 795 7407
Wednesday August 21	10:00 AM	WHITE BLUFF NATURE RESERVE - from Hwy 6, E on Lindsay Rd 5, N on East Rd then E on Cape Chin South Rd. At the 1st T junction turn left. At the 2nd T junction turn right.	Easy	Approx 4 km	A pleasant loop along an old logging road, then along the Georgian Bay shore. Leader Elaine Wasserman 519 795 7407

Saturday July 27, 2013	9:00 AM	PINETREE HBR TO JOHNSON HBR - HURON SHORE This is not on the Bruce Trail but will show the beauty of the other side of the Peninsula. Meet at the boat launch on Huron Drive. From Hwy 6 take Johnson Harbour Rd (7 km) or Dorcas Bay Rd (12 km) to the end. From there follow Huron Dr approx 200 m to the boat launch.	Moderate	Approx 9.8 km	From the boat launch on Huron Drive we car pool to Pinetree Harbour. We first walk through the forests and meadows along Lake Huron. Later along the boulder shore line of the lake, crossing the Crane Rive East of Lake Scugog (you might get your feet wet) to Johnson Harbour. Bring lunch, water and insect repellent. Leader: Rainer Hoffman-Taylor/ 519 596 8359
Wednesday September 18	10:00 AM	JACKSON'S COVE LOOKOUT - Bruce County Rd 9 E on Hopeness Rd, turn right on Jackson's Cove Rd and park at top of the hill	Moderate	Approx 5 km	First walking along the escarpment we then loop back through deciduous forest where Christmas ferns are abundant. Leader Elaine Wasserman 519 795 7407
Wednesday October 23	11:00 AM	DEVIL'S MONUMENT AND MINHINNICK ST LOOP - Borchartt Rd. Parking Lot, Cape Chin North	Strenuous	Approx 8 km	A lovely walk along the escarpment, lunch overlooking Georgian Bay, looping back through forest. Leader Elaine Wasserman 519 795 7407



2013 Peninsula Club does the Sydenham Section - Easy End to End - Bruce Trail Reference Ed 27

contact Susan Allen 519 534 5898 or susan_allen@sympatico.ca

Date	Distance km	Start - End Points @ kms	Description of Meeting Location (end point of day's hike)	Hi-Lites of the Day
Tues Apr 30 9:45 am	14.5	0 - 14.5	Roadside Parking on 2nd Concession	Blantyre, Rocklyn Creek, boardwalks, Walter's Falls, surviving water turbine
Tues May 7 9:45 am	15.2	14.5 - 29.7	Bognor Marsh Cons. Area County Rd 18	Bighead River Valley views (extensive road walking)
Tues May 14 9:45 am	12.3	29.7 - 42	Woodford Community Hall, Woodford	Bognor Marsh- boardwalks with bird and wildlife sightings, valley views, glacier spillway, coral fossils
Tues May 21 9:45 am	12.9	42 - 54.9	Bayshore Escarpment Prov. Nature Reserve Parking	Limestone kiln, disappearing waterfall, narrow crevice, views over Georgian Bay and Meaford Training Ctr, Lebanon Mountain Friendship Trail
Tues May 28 9:45 am	9.8	54.9-64.7	Roadside Parking-Irish Block Rd where trail crosses	Hawthorne hedge, hardwood forest, wetland, view to the waters of Owen Sound plus the Beaver Springs ST if there is time (extensive road walking)
Tues June 4 9:45 am	9.6	64.7 - 74.3	Roadside Parking on west side of 8th Con North	Small valley between escarpment and hill, numerous crevices, Lloyd Laycock Caves
Tues June 11 9:45 am	11.9	74.3 - 86.2	Centennial Tower on west side of Hwy 6 & 10	Polish Soldier Tree, very exciting giant dolostone blocks,
Tues June 18	9.4	86.2 - 95.6	Roadside Parking at end of Con 3	The Pallisades, Inglis Falls, cliff swallows, Raven's Nest ST
Tues June 25 9:45 am	14.6	95.6 - 110.2	Benallen	Lookouts to city, harbour and Georgian Bay, Jones Falls views to Sydenham Valley, flowerpot formation

Break for July, August and September - check the Fall issue of the Rattler for details - see you in October

Spruce Up The Bruce & Annual General Meeting

Saturday May 11, 2013

"Spruce Up The Bruce" day has been a regular Peninsula Bruce Trail event for many years. Originally a work day for trail workers, it has evolved into a spring barbeque and our annual general meeting for all members & guests.

Schedule of events:

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

work parties - as arranged through Walter

5 p.m. – 6:30

barbeque & pot-luck dinner at Summer House Park

Food and beverages are supplied

6:30 p.m. Volunteer awards

7:00 p.m. PBTC Annual General Meeting

Members & Guests: anybody interested in a day of trail work, please contact Walter. Everyone is welcome at the barbeque & AGM afterwards.

Trail Captains: we encourage you to do your spring inspections on or before this day. If done before then you are invited to join work parties for larger projects such as trail reroutes or construction. If you need help on your section, please let Walter know in advance.

If anyone wishes to contribute potluck salad or a dessert, that is entirely optional, since we understand that trail workers can't leave food in their cars all day.

Contact Walter Brewer trailreportsbptc@gmail.com closer to the date to volunteer for work parties.

See you there....

NOTICE re ADDRESS CHANGES

To all members: If you receive The Rattler via Canada Post please ensure that your address is accurate. Canada Post will no longer sort mail that only has a R.R. #, fire numbers or street addresses must be included. There have also been recent changes to some postal codes, so in order to receive your next newsletter, **please ensure your mailing address is accurate.**



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Devil's Pulpit Back Trail

I always take my dog, but only occasionally take the camera along. Over the years I have seen a few of the Massassauga Rattle Snakes, but never much more than the 12 to 18 inch, little ones. On this particular walk not only did I see the only large rattler I have ever seen, I even had a camera! I leaned forward and the snake rose higher in it's coils, when I leaned back it lowered, suddenly the idea occurred to me that while I was playing with the snake's comfort zone, my darling Pixie had run ahead and might just come back to see what was keeping me. Quick one pic. Then I walked off the trail to continue south past the snake and back onto the trail below it. Now on the same side of a possible hazard, I headed north to see if it was still there. I guess there was a little too much traffic so it had decided to leave, but I got a pic with it stretched out full length. What say, five feet? You know, I had a digital camera, with lots of extra batteries and 3 extra Compact flash cards (this was about 5 or 6 years ago), I could have taken a hundred pics.... darn. Here are the two snake shots and one earlier same day off the cliff over the water....can you magnify the pic enough to find the loon that was calling.

Roseleen Turk



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Our Perennial Volunteers

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So many of our members can be described as perennial – they are perpetual, they are long lasting, dependable, welcomed time and again, they are there – the foundation – the glue that holds the culture of our club together – the continuing thread that weaves through all of the jobs that need to be done in order for the thing to survive. The thing is our Peninsula Bruce Trail Club.

You know them, over there hiking with the multitudes of trekkers that have come our way from both local and far away; over there, helping with the Outdoor Festival registering, organizing; back there maintaining trail; in their home collating once again the Rattler; up there interviewing and writing profiles of interesting members.

Meet Russell and Katharine Ferguson



Russell and Katharine are a team. They came from Verona, a small village near Kingston, ON. They had decided it was time to reinvent themselves and move to a new location. Russell's sister Jean had a home in the Lion's Head area. Through all of the thinking and planning, they had a dream of owning a mail order perennial plant business and running a B & B. The farmland here was plentiful and relatively clean from pollutants. They found their paradise on a 140 acre farm on the Bury Rd. A real estate agent had been showing them countless places but it was this one, with the small dilapidated house and the very good barn that captured their hearts within 5 minutes of walking up the drive. The plan was to build a house..."what about the barn?"

They built a most amazingly unique house with the good barn as its backbone. Huge barn timbers were evident inside and out. Light streamed in with views out to countryside – not to mention that majestic elm on the south side, which framed the view from the sitting area. Here was a perfect situation for a B & B. The farm and ultimately, the B & B would be called Wakerobin Woods.

All through construction during the fall and winter of 1988 and spring and summer of 1989 they lived in a small uninsulated cottage owned by Russell's sister Jean and her husband. The adventure had begun. Katharine recalls cutting a hole in the ice of Whippoorwill Bay for water in the winter, keeping the fire indoors and using the outdoor loo. If you know Katharine and her indomitable optimism, you'll appreciate her quip, "It gave us the opportunity of star gazing and viewing the Northern Lights at 2:00 in the morning". Russell and Katharine were 58 years old; a fine age to start a new life.

Remember, this was to be their new venture, a B & B. They thought they might as well get started, so they joined the local B & B Association in December, as the house was being framed around that solid barn, announcing they'd be open for business in June. A call came in May – from Wales – their first customers, 2 adults and 6 children, would be arriving in August for an overnigher before catching the ferry early next day. Predictably, the house wasn't complete – 'never mind – they will stay in our cottage; we'll find a place to sleep with a friend'. Their first customers arrived late and left early with travelling breakfast in hand. Katharine laments they didn't even get a view of this spectacular landscape along Whippoorwill Bay.

In 1990, the B & B really got started. They ran it as a team, serving countless breakfasts and the occasional, on request, dinner. Once they accepted the request of a Christmas Special for two couples and the 'tables were turned' on one of those nights when one of the pairs, an Indian couple, prepared a delicious Indian dinner for everyone. The B & B ran for 7 successful years. They didn't advertise, no road signs, but they welcomed a steady flow of visitors over those years.

As a couple, they were integrating into this new community. John Appleton, a long standing member of the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club and outstanding Trail Director for many years, was invited by Russell to participate, over coffee, in a weekly men's casual discussion group. Out of this came another and another coffee meeting; they invited friends and soon that first small coffee get together was a regular Tuesday meeting of minds, usually kept to about 6 men. Sadly, over the years, Russell and John have lost some close friends from the group; it endures today though, with some familiar and some new faces, but always Russell and John somewhere on the Bruce on a Tuesday morning.

The first real involvement for Russell and Katharine with the local Peninsula Bruce Trail Club was an offer by them to host two couples, free of charge, who were in Tobermory for the annual Bruce Trail Association – not yet renamed the Bruce Trail

Conservancy – AGM. The couples.....??...none other than the highly recognized, and invaluable in their contribution to the Bruce Trail: Ross McLean and his wife Janet and Chris Walker, and his wife Judith. We can only imagine how the contagious enthusiasm of Ross and Chris drew Russell and Katharine into the Peninsula club as volunteers.

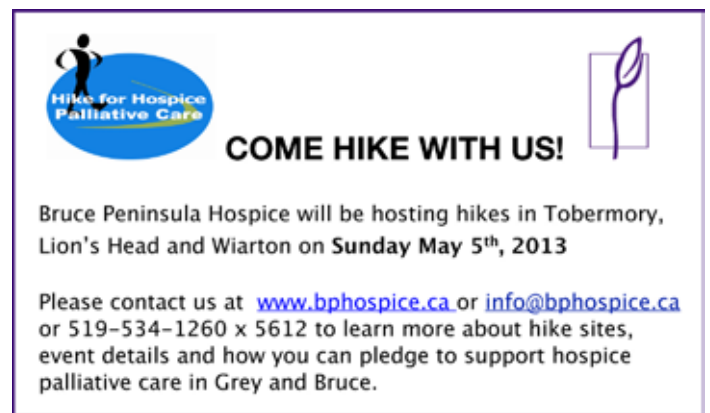
Their first job with the club was as Trail Captains for the formidable Inland Trail near Lion's Head. It was a half hour hike just to get to the access point of their section. Often they carried a large, 2 person saw to clear away deadfall in the spring and fall. Katharine remembers that Russell "dealt forcefully" with poison ivy on that stretch of trail. She remembers him leaving the farm dressed from head to foot, including overalls, a face mask and gloves, at 5:00 in the morning, whipper-snipper in hand, to cut the encroaching ivy back, way back, from the trail. "It was hot in all that gear" explains Russell, early was best to get the job done! Katharine, in doing her part in the trail maintenance for the club, wrote her first story for the Rattler, called "Blue on the Bruce". Her story went that on one work day, she wore a "beautiful" pair of boots as she painted the blue Side Trail blazes. She describes the boots becoming increasingly blue splattered as she worked, blue on rocks, blue everywhere, even the "air was blue" by the end of the day! See this story reprinted in this edition of the Rattler. (con't pg. 16 - "Blue on the Bruce" pg. 17)



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Answer to Trivia question on page 5:

Currently, The City of Lviv [Ukrainian] in The Western Ukraine
Known as Lvov [Russian] when The Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union
Known as Lwow [Polish] when part of Poland
Known as Lemberg [German] when part of the Austrian Empire
The rough translation is 'Lion Mountain' or 'Lion Head'.

Blue on the Bruce

It is a matter of pride to Bruce Trailers that all eight hundred and something kilometres of this amazing collaboration between nature and the human animal is entirely maintained by volunteer labour. Russell and I felt excited and honoured, some years back, when we were allotted our first "own" piece of it, part of the blue inland network linking opposite curves of the white Gun Point Trail around the coast from Lion's Head through McKay's Harbour. We had to hack back growth along the edges, both early and late in the summer, fill dangerous little pot holes, steady up or remove loose pavers, and so on. It was a beautiful piece of trail and we loved it more as we became more closely acquainted. The only problem was that to get to it we had a hike of twenty or thirty minutes along a logging road, often carrying trimmer, gasoline, loppers, even a two man cross-cut saw on one or two occasions, as well as water for ourselves and the dog.

The incident I remember especially was caused by pride, and we all know where that leads a person! You have to watch your footing along the trail, no hardship to me that day as I was wearing a brand new pair of hiking boots, the first real ones I had had, and they were comfortable, functional, and fitted like a dream. So I watched my feet striding along nimbly, feeling great, stopping every so often to uncap the little bottle of blue paint, dip my brush, and touch up each blue blaze that required it, even occasionally making the big decision to create an absolutely new one where it seemed necessary. It was a hot day and by the time I caught up with Russell, way ahead of me sizing up the poison ivy crop and planning our method of control, we were both weary and sweaty and ready for a break as we came through the final clump of bush out onto rock overlooking Georgian Bay -- keeping aside the knowledge that there was also the trip back!

Perhaps I was still admiring my beautiful boots instead of watching where I was putting them... or instead of taking a moment to wind down and absorb the tremendous view... suddenly the blue paint went flying, splattering rocks and trees (will it be there forever?) and the boots as well. It was then that I opened my mouth and the air turned a ferocious shade of blue! I did not know I had it in me... A little later on in our trail days we were given a new piece much closer to home and altogether easier of

access. We go over it fairly frequently, enjoying most of all the early spring and the late fall, but a brisk hike very early on a summer's day when the air is still crisp can take care of a lot of things easily. One such hike not too long ago was another blue paint-poison ivy combo, and I looked at my beloved boots somewhat ruefully. They were going to last me forever, I had declared way back at the beginning, and Russell had done a good job of cleaning up blue paint on that other occasion. But what had it mattered anyway? Now there are holes in the tops where my toes peep out, but the boots are still comfortable and functional and I'm still wearing them.

Russell was way ahead of me again, moon-walking through a sea of poison ivy as I smartened up most of the earlier blazes on our trail, and made a series of new ones where we had had to re-route around an enormous fallen tree. And yes, I managed to get tangled up in a harmless twig and go flying again, but this time I was much more canny with my paint pot and hardly spilled a drop.

The bluest thing to come out of it all was a tremendous bruise down the side of one leg, a silent and hidden testimony to the travails and successes of the committed trail volunteer -- and a long-suffering spouse.

Katharine Ferguson



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April 1st

Trail Director Laurence Ackland announces new 1 kilometer tunnel directly connecting Sydney Bay to Hope Bay (Map 37). "When completed, this project will eliminate 2 steep climbs and shorten the trail by 5 km. And, I need the steel stairs for another project."



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Then cross the border into Croatia for a week along the Dalmatian Coast. Hike along pristine pebble beaches, enjoy al fresco dining & swim in the Adriatic.

A TIME TO CELEBRATE

The Bruce Trail Conservancy is celebrating fifty years of its history over a five year span. 2012 was the fiftieth anniversary of the first clubs being formed and the first blazes being painted, and 2017 will be the June 1967 anniversary of the opening of the completed Trail at Tobermory.

The initial meeting for a Peninsula Bruce Trail Club was July 31, 1962, at the old Arlington Hotel in Wiarton.

There are two significant anniversaries which occur in 2013. Remember that the Wiarton Club was the Lower Bruce Club. In the north there were discussions about an Upper Bruce Club and the archives show Philip Gosling's meetings in 1962 with Alfie Adams. They became close friends and Alfie the first president (or chairman) of what was named the Peninsula Club. The archives show clearly that the first formal meeting of this group was at the Tobermory Fire Hall on Friday May 17, 1963. Within its first year the Club had approved and surveyed ten miles of Trail.

Of course, all three original clubs in the Bruce amalgamated in 1980 into the Peninsula Club which we know today.

The second anniversary that should be celebrated in 2013 is the rebirth in 1993 of the Peninsula Club. President Fred Binding had resigned and there was no succession plan. For several years, the Club was essentially dormant. The situation reminded me of the remarks of a Lower Bruce co-president in the 1970's at a BTA AGM: he said that the objective of the club was to "keep on keeping on. ... We do not have annual meetings; we do not have any other kind of meeting; we do not publish a newsletter; we do not organize hikes; we do not sponsor landowner's nights; we do not award end-to-end badges; but we DO have one of the most scenic sections of the trail." The club in 1993 was surviving only because four southern clubs had taken over all its trail maintenance responsibilities.

Twenty years ago the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club desperately needed new leadership. A meeting was scheduled by the BTA Board of Directors for Sunday January 24, 1993. Why in Guelph, you ask? 75% of the paid-up Peninsula members lived outside

the Bruce, and a large meeting room was available there free-of-charge. To attract a large crowd we scheduled a morning hike in Guelph, and only four people came out (two of whom were the hike leaders!) But 39 people were there for the afternoon meeting, and 18 of those volunteered to serve of an interim committee to resurrect the club.

From that group came some of the notables who gave the Peninsula Club the strength to grow quickly: Ed Doadt who went on to be the long-serving chair of the National Park Advisory Committee; Jim Wadleigh who served over the first decade as both President and Trail Director; Stan Litch as a landowner relations director; Joan Bowman as Treasurer and also later as a Susan Oleskevich Award Winner for her dedication to trail work; Don Irish as both Club President and BTA representative; and Laura Klager who not only invented the name of the newsletter but also went on to be its first editor.

What would have happened if that 1993 meeting in Guelph had failed? Certainly we would not have the Trail we do today. Indeed we might not even have the Bruce Trail in the Peninsula.

2013 is the year in which we celebrate both of these anniversaries: the founding of the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club fifty years ago, and the birth of its modern incarnation twenty years ago.

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