



THE RATTLER

The newsletter of the



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY

PENINSULA CLUB

2024 #1

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Tamara Wilson

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As fair-weather arrives, hikers and nature enthusiasts of all levels, will brighten up at the Peninsula Club's 2024 line-up of hikes and celebrations. Check out the BTC Hike Schedule for the Club's multiple End-to-Ends (Wiarnton to Tobermory), easy hikes, themed hikes, conservation badge hikes and more! Regardless of your fitness level, the Peninsula Club has a hike for you!

We kicked off the year with a Peninsula Club Fun Family Day event at the Lions Head Rotary Hall featuring family hikes, games, puzzles, hot chocolate and more! Don't miss the PBTC/BTC displays and talks at Tobermory's Sources of Knowledge on May 3-5.

Celebrate our incredible volunteers at celebrations with the Municipality of North Bruce Peninsula and South Bruce Peninsula Volunteer Recognition Awards in April. You are invited to launch the Trail Maintenance Season with the Club's "Spruce up the Bruce Day" and AGM on May 11th. Join us as we support celebrations at the 50th Anniversary of Tobermory's Chi-Cheemaun Festival in mid-June. It's time to start planning and flocking together to celebrate and explore this beautiful part of the Trail.

Tamara Wilson
Peninsula Bruce Trail Club President

THE RATTLER



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY
PENINSULA CLUB

2024, ISSUE 1

PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

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ARTICLE SUBMISSION

If you have a story that might be of interest to Rattler readers, please send it to pbtc.hikes@gmail.com.

Deadline for submissions for the next edition is August 7, 2024

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We acknowledge the Traditional Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. And further give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land.

A 7 year old sets an example of conservation for us all, young and older.



Young Volunteer Spruces Up the Bruce

SAABIR SOHRAB
HIKE DIRECTOR

During our Spruce Up the Bruce event on May 6th, trail maintenance volunteer Randy received some special assistance from his enthusiastic 7-year-old granddaughter, Madeleine! Maddie eagerly joined her Opa to spruce up a beautiful section of the Bruce Trail.

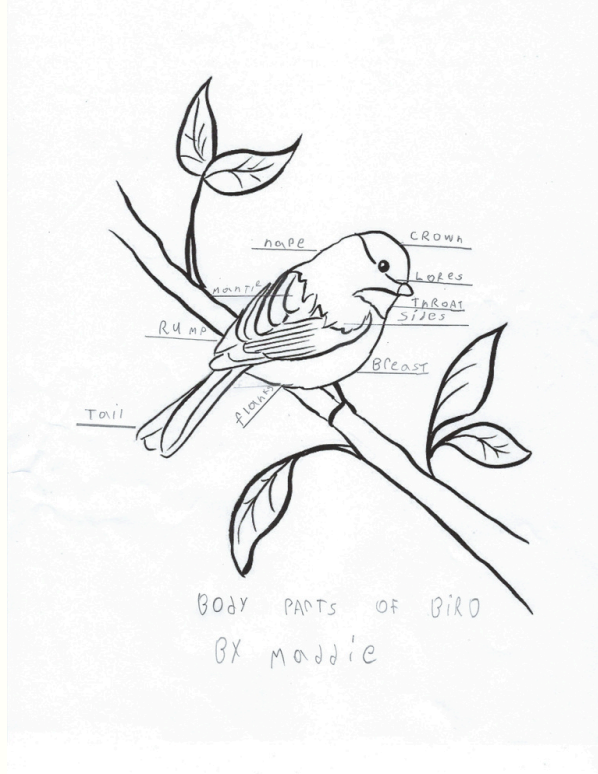
Maddie wholeheartedly took on various tasks, including painting the blazes to ensure the trail remains easily navigable for hikers. She also went above and beyond by moving twigs and logs off the trail, helping to maintain a safe and enjoyable experience for fellow nature enthusiasts. Her eagerness to learn and grow in her conservation efforts is particularly commendable.

But Maddie's work didn't stop there! She also diligently pursued her Junior Birder Badge, deepening her knowledge of the birds found along the Bruce Trail.

Below, you'll see a delightful chickadee drawing she made, naming the various body parts as required for the Junior Birder Badge submission. Remarkably, with the help of her Opa and the Merlin app, Maddie identified almost 20 different bird species by sight or sound during her time on the trail!

Maddie's enthusiasm for nature and conservation at such a young age is a wonderful example. We hope her story inspires other young members of our community to get involved and make a positive impact on their environment.

Inspired to help Spruce Up This Bruce? Join us on May 11th for this year's annual event that kicks off the hiking season. Volunteers are wanted to join work parties; no experience necessary. Email trailreportsbtc@gmail.com to sign up.



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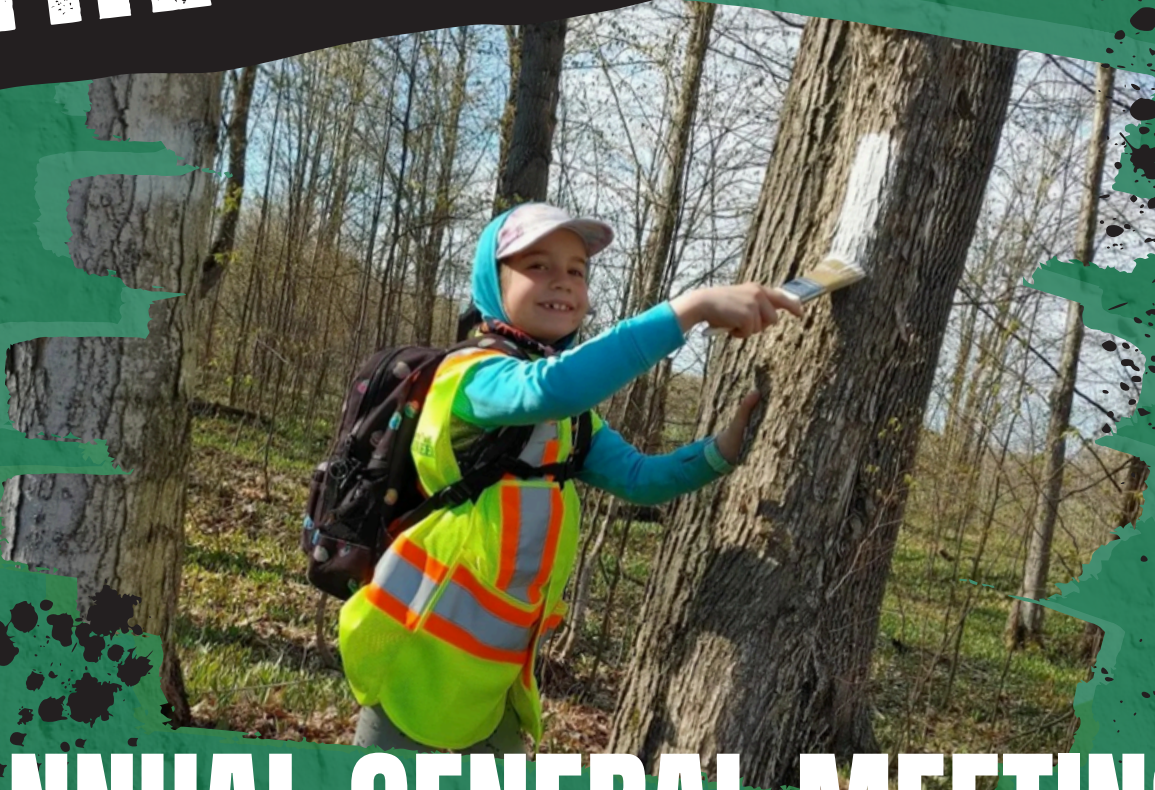
SPRUCE UP

THE BRUCE



Bruce Trail
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MAY 11 2024



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUMMER HOUSE PARK, MILLER LAKE

PIZZA & SOCIAL 4:00PM | AGM 6:00PM

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An artist reflects on how enjoyable it is to paint in the company of other like-minded people who love nature.



PASTELS ON THE BRUCE

Painting the Trail

BY DONNA STEWART
ARTIST

As an outdoor enthusiast who lives on the Bruce Peninsula, it was only natural when I started to paint that I would soon want to ‘take it outdoors’. As it turns out, painting outdoors ticks off all the boxes for me, and many others! I am outdoors, immersed in nature while doing something I absolutely love.

Painting outdoors is a long-established tradition often associated with the French Impressionists. It was made possible by the advance of putting oil paint in tubes which made paint transportable. It is often referred to as painting “en plein air”, which simply means painting ‘in the open air’ in French.

I found there were three hurdles to overcome to leave my studio behind. The first was figuring out what to take! The second was getting over feeling just a little silly about it all! The third was feeling a little isolated when painting on my own in rural parts of the peninsula, or on trails.

I managed to overcome the first, by doing a lot of research. Then, to get over my initial feelings of nervousness, I started by painting very close to home. Sometimes I painted right in my yard or across the road where I could walk back to the house to get what I'd forgotten to put in my backpack! I enjoyed it so much, any worries of looking 'silly', were quickly cast aside! I took an Introduction to Plein Air course with John David Anderson, at Southampton Arts. Third, as I started to venture farther afield and sometimes found myself in locations that felt more isolated, I took steps to find others who were interested in painting in the same type of locations on the peninsula, and quickly learned how enjoyable it is to paint in the company of other like-minded people who love nature.

I contacted other local artists and formed "Saugeen Bruce Peninsula Plein Air." It is one of the best things I've ever done. Our informal group includes painters who are just discovering their love for painting, those who are more accomplished and have strong experience painting plein air and everything in between. We share a common interest in painting outdoors



SAUGEEN BRUCE PENINSULA PLEIN AIR GROUP

from observation and growing as artists, no matter whether we are beginners or experienced. I've met some amazing people who also love painting, the outdoors and the peninsula.

I was delighted to be contacted by Margaret Glendon, Outreach and Membership Director for the PBTC about plein air painting on the trail. I was thrilled when Margaret offered to take our group out a few times this year as a Bruce Trail activity. I am not a certified trail guide, but am aware of the hazards that can be encountered on the trail and had therefore hesitated to take a group out on the trail, on my own. Having the opportunity to benefit from the coordination and management of a certified trail guide ensured safety for our group and increased awareness of the work being done by the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club and the Nature Conservancy. This year, we enjoyed two fantastic paint-outs on the Bruce Trail; one at the Maple Cross Nature Reserve and the other at Otter Lake Nature Reserve.



MARY

Two of the many paintings started on the trail ‘en plein air’, were completed in the studio, then donated by the artists to the PBTC’s fundraiser this year, “For the Birds”. The artists were so happy to support the important work done by the club.

In our first season of Saugeen Bruce Peninsula Plein Air outings, we had 2-3 planned activities per month, from May - October. (Two were Bruce Trail activities.) We vary our events from the north to the south part of the peninsula and include some paintouts that require a short hike while carrying your gear on your back and others that allow painters to be within a few hundred metres of their vehicles.

If you are interested in learning more about PBTC Plein Air Hikes, please contact Margaret Glendon, at pbtcoutreach@gmail.com.

For more information about Saugeen Bruce Peninsula Plein Air, you may contact donna@donnastewartart.com.




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*Women sawyers keeping
the trail clear for all*

Women Sawyers of the Peninsula Club

BY TAMARA WILSON
PRESIDENT

The Peninsula Club has had certified women sawyers since the early 2000s. The first time I saw a woman sawyer out on the Trail, I was filled with surprised admiration. I had worked in a small motors repair shop as a student many years ago, at a time when the vast majority of the chainsaws were brought in or purchased by men. Fast forward, on the Peninsula Section of the Bruce Trail, I saw many crews where the work was shared between men and women volunteers, including the chainsaw work.



That day, I was part of a Trail Maintenance crew that had gathered around a mammoth maple tree which solidly blocked the Trail. The crew had made an insignificant dent in the branches that arched over the Trail, and well above our heads. What we needed was a sawyer to get the majority of the downfall out of the way. It was a long walk into the woods to meet up with our group and the tree. We were standing around, surveying the giant maple when I looked up and there she was, dressed in protective gear from head to foot, her helper packing the saw for support. With a sawyer in the group, work resumed as pieces of the giant tree were carved off for the rest of us to remove. I wondered what drove these amazing volunteers who took on this heavy but critical work. What follows are stories from the perspective of five women sawyers. They share their favourite parts of being a sawyer and why they do what they do.



BRENDA ROPPEL

The following is Brenda Roppel’s story. Brenda is also one of the Peninsula Club’s six nominees for the 2024 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. Brenda started volunteering with the Peninsula Club in 2003, over twenty years! Note: the Bruce Trail changed its name from Bruce Trail Association to Bruce Trail Conservancy in 2007.

I first started becoming involved with chainsaws and splitting wood when I was about 13. We had a wood stove at our cottage in Oliphant and cut and split our own wood. I used to help my dad with the wood duties. One time the head of our Wood Chopper 2 splitting maul flew off and just missed me. We had to make sure we kept the wood handle of the axe soaked in a bucket of water so it wouldn’t fly off.

When I bought my first house in Red Bay in my late 20s I had a wood stove and my dad gave me his old chainsaw. I used to cut and split all my own wood. I remember when Hydro One was going up the Peninsula and I asked them if I could collect all the wood they were leaving

behind as they were cutting all the trees to maintain the Hydro lines and they said sure go ahead –less wood for us to deal with. So I gathered tons of wood in my pickup and trailer and hauled it all back to my place to cut into shorter lengths, split and pile. It was great.

In January 2003, I found out about the Bruce Trail Association and started attending many hikes. In March 2003, I attended a BTA Trail Workers Workshop in Orangeville for Trail Captains. By August of 2003, I became a Trail Captain on the Peninsula for a section of trail at Purple Valley. The section was 6 km long one way, so I was very glad I had a small chainsaw. Carrying a chainsaw for 12 km is a bit of a workout, especially wearing full PPE (chainsaw helmet with full face shield and attached whistle, safety glasses, chainsaw chaps, chainsaw boots and gloves).

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In April of 2004, I took the BTA chainsaw course at Mansfield Outdoor Education Centre. On arrival at Mansfield, I went into the classroom and the instructor looked at me funny and said, “You aren’t here for the chainsaw course are you?”, while I was standing there with the chainsaw in my hand. The instructor then told me that in the 10 years that he had taught the course, I was the first woman to have ever taken it. I wasn’t sure whether to feel insulted or flattered. At that point in my life, I had already been using a chainsaw for many years. We did in-class and practical training including cutting some trees and bucking and limbing.

In June of 2006, I took the Standard Hike Leader Certification Course to become an official Hike Leader. In September 2006, I got married and I bought myself something traditional as most ladies would with proceeds from wedding gifts would do. I bought myself a Stihl MS170 chainsaw, which is a great little saw for carrying on the trail. I also worked for two years for the County of Bruce at the two mountain bike parks on the Peninsula and took the chainsaw certification course again with their forester Ken Goldsmith. We used the chainsaw quite often as we were mapping out, designing and building mountain bike trails which required a lot of tree clearing.

In 2010, I started working at the 4th Canadian Division Training Centre at the Meaford Military Base in the Roads and Grounds Dept. and operated skid steers, dump trucks, backhoes, loaders, tractors and yes, again, chainsaws. I was then required to take a Hazard and Dangerous Tree Cutting and Felling course in May of 2016 taught by Arboriculture Canada. In 2020, I took another Technical Tree Felling and Hazard and Danger Tree Felling course. I’ve had my share of courses!

In parting, I have to say that I love being in the outdoors. Any day in the woods is a good day. Spending time in nature is so awakening and we need to encourage more kids to get out and get dirty. My 10-year-old daughter is part of my Trail Maintenance Crew and she wouldn’t trade it for anything in the world.

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LAURA BROWN

I began my trail sawing journey in 2012 when I received a chainsaw as a birthday present from my partner, Tom Hall, PBTC Trail Maintenance Coordinator. Initially, this was to allow us to get into our property near Hope Bay. We have a long lane lined by many trees. Shortly after receiving this much-appreciated gift, a large beech tree fell across our lane and I had to put the chainsaw to use. Wow! I did not particularly know what I was doing, but no one died! After that episode, I vowed to learn how to saw properly and safely.

Fairly early on in our Trail Maintenance role, Tom and I volunteered to help another sawyer and we were matched up with Rich Moccia, Sawyer Extraordinaire. Rich has been invaluable as my Chainsaw Mentor. Early on, I was just part of his brush-clearing crew. But, “watch and

learn” was part of the education. Rich has imparted a huge amount of cutting knowledge and chainsaw maintenance tips to both Tom and me. Every tree is different. Sometimes even the “easy-peasy” are not so “easy-peasy”. Each tree needs to be read and respected. Knowledge is gained by experience - sometimes, when out as a brush clearer with Rich, I envision how I would cut a certain tree, and then I am greatly pleased when Rich proceeds to cut as I would have. But, sometimes I am wrong and have failed to see a certain tension or aspect. I learn from that. Novice cutters should have an experienced mentor. In fact, I think prospective cutters should volunteer as brush clearers for a seasoned sawyer before they even consider taking the BTC Chainsaw Certification Course

In 2016, I took the 2-day BTC Chainsaw Certification Course, led by Ken Goldsmith, and held at Mono Nordic Ski Club. The first day involved a lot of



safety videos and cutting technique discussion, followed by some chainsaw maintenance instruction. On the second day, we got down to business and did some of the various cuts that we might be expected to use on the trail. It was a fabulous learning experience. Since the certification is only good for 5 years, I re-certified in 2021. Re-certification only involves attending the first day.

My preferred saw is my personal Stihl MS 170 with a 16" blade. It is gas-powered, and although noisy, the noise alerts other users of the trail that sawing is occurring. It also reminds me that I am using a very powerful tool. The saw is small, and so it is relatively light, making it ideal to carry long distances along the trail. For most jobs, it is quite adequate. I have purchased my own set of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as chaps, gloves and helmets with ear protectors. However, the PBTC does keep such gear in their maintenance sheds if one does not want to lay out the funds for their gear.

The second saw that I sometimes use is the PBTC's Stihl MSA 220C with a 16" blade. The body of this battery-powered saw is quite light to carry, and the very heavy batteries can be carried in a backpack. This saw is much quieter than my saw, but I don't feel that it has as much power.

No tree is "easy". Each presents its own challenges. While many of the trees are already down, there are often some that are broken leaners. The ones that are hung up on other trees are the worst. I've made plenty of mistakes, but luckily nothing fatal. My most common mistake is getting the saw stuck because I failed to put a wedge in soon enough! In that case, Tom has a hand saw in his pack to help me get it out.



FUN FACTS

During Tamara's interviews of women sawyers, Laura Browne (and Tom Hall) shared this fun fact about the work she and Tom do on the Trails. In 2023, Tom and Laura completed approximately 60% of the reported Peninsula Work Party Requests (WPR's) for this past season. Together, they cut 420 downed, leaning or hazardous trees out of the 800 that were removed.

PBTC spent over 465 sawyer hours on the trail, not including travel to and from the various sites. If we use 2022's total Trail Maintenance Volunteer hours, Chainsaw work represents about 20% of the maintenance that the Trail Maintenance Volunteers report. The Peninsula Club performed 2414 hrs of Trail Maintenance in total in 2022.



Of course, some trees are above my pay grade (skill level). Many a time I will have a look and say, “Nope, not doing that today.” I’ll leave that tree for someone with more experience and better skills. In any case, there is a huge sense of

satisfaction when a tree that has been impeding the footpath is now removed to reveal a clear path. I feel that sawyer work, and any trail maintenance for that matter, is “hiking with a purpose”. There is such peace in the woods, which I unfortunately sometimes interrupt with the sawing, but there are long stretches in between tree cutting where one can be alone with their thoughts and marvel at nature’s glory. Each trip into the woods, even though I might have been there the week before, reveals something new – a different flower, mushroom, bird call or perhaps a rock formation that I haven’t noticed before.

Meeting folks on the trail, who are usually so thankful for our work, is another highlight. It is great to see people out, enjoying what the Bruce Trail and environs have to offer. This is also an opportunity to promote the conservation concept and to encourage membership in the BTC.

Trail workers and prospective sawyers should be encouraged to take the BTC Chainsaw Certification Course, both for personal benefit and satisfaction, as well as to be a resource for the PBTC.

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LAURA PISKO

Laura has used her chainsaw skills on Trail maintenance and conservation and restoration work with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club and also for her niche garden design business. Her recent chainsaw activities include removal of invasive Scotch pines at the Vanishing Stream property (Colpoy Bay) and the wall-to-wall lilacs at the Barrow Bay restoration property (the Palmer property). Here is Laura's Story.

I decided to use a chainsaw after trying to clear my Lake Huron property with loppers and a hand saw. My first chainsaw was light - a 14" Echo. My family was always concerned about my safety using it. Now I also own a Stihl MS 170 with a 16" blade but the Echo is still my favourite, mostly for sentimental reasons - we went through a lot together!

I got my certification and learned more about using safe techniques - I find using a chainsaw enjoyable. Getting chainsaw certification is a great way to go. You can not only help the Bruce Trail with its

activities, but you can also safely help yourself on your own property, your neighbours, and in my case, my business.

On the Peninsula, getting the chain sharpened can be a challenge when home touch-ups no longer work. The closest place I have found is Springmount.

In using a chainsaw, I like the efficiency of getting a job done but I also enjoy the opportunity to be creative. I especially like looking at trees' architecture in winter, when you can see the shape and flow of their limbs and trunk. I appreciate trees and shrubs as landscape design elements. You can do more than just cut down trees with chainsaws - you can also enhance their attractiveness and improve their health through strategic limbing.

I (and the BTC) often leave wood and brush in place as shelter and food for wildlife. I remember one time cutting up lengths of tree trunks to line a pathway. After finishing the job, I heard a horrible racket and saw a pileated woodpecker chipping the logs to pieces looking for insects. There were just chunks of wood left. The woodpecker was having a great meal and reducing my nicely lined path, to a wood chip path!





DEBORAH WONG

Deborah was a twice-certified sawyer and bought the lightest version of Stihl M170, under 9 lbs for her trail maintenance work. Deborah is no longer a sawyer but continues to enjoy Trail Maintenance work. Deborah’s transition demonstrates that just because our physical abilities change over time, it doesn’t mean that the camaraderie we experience on the Trails needs to be over as well. The following is Deborah’s story:

The beauty of trail work is that there is something different to do when you want or need to switch activities. Now my tool of choice is a hand saw as the pull start of the chainsaw has become a challenge. Though my chainsaw activities have wrapped up, I continue joining work parties, painting blazes and performing Trail Captain duties on my Section of the Trail from the Water Street parking lot to Glaciers Potholes in Hope Bay. I also belong to the Sydenham Club’s, The Trail Boss Group, doing brush clearing and handsaw work.

If weight and hand strength are a challenge, I recommend a chainsaw with a power starter and as light as possible. As the hike gets longer, the saw gets heavier.

As for Trail Maintenance work, I enjoy the teamwork and the prospect of having a fun day in the woods.

Trail Maintenance tip: Never agree to hold a stuck chainsaw on a dead tree. Deborah is still haunted by the concerned look on the saw owner’s face as the falling tree missed her by inches. It is important to stay clear of potentially dangerous situations.

The nice thing about sawyer work is that there is flexibility. When working a chain saw no longer works for you, you can switch to doing other Trail work activities. Volunteers should get out to do what they can, but still smell the flowers- Enjoy!

Take the path
less travelled.

Upgrade **RATTLER** and for each time booked for your hike for 2024 we will donate \$25 to the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Image courtesy of Tourism PEI/Neil Joy

2024 GUARANTEED DEPARTURES!

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|------------------------------------|----------|----------|
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| Newfoundland Coast-to-Coast | DOUBLE | SINGLE |
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| Gaspé Hiking | DOUBLE | SINGLE |
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NATALIE MECHALKO

Natalie first earned her chainsaw certification through one of her student jobs while completing her Bachelor of Environmental Studies and Biology at the University of Waterloo. Now Natalie is a Planning Ecologist at Grey County with aspirations to become a Registered Professional Forester.

In terms of hobbies, Natalie developed an interest in trees in university when she took a tree ID course, and ever since I've been trying to get more experience in forestry and particularly understanding forest management's role in climate change. Though being a sawyer is no longer part of her day-to-day work, Natalie finds her Chainsaw Certification has come in handy in her volunteer work with the Bruce Trail. "I like the technical aspect of being a sawyer. There is a lot to consider when cutting a tree." Natalie enjoys the team environment of working on the Trails and is also one of the hike experts for the Club's new Tree Badge.

Thank you, Brenda Roppel, Laura Browne, Laura Pisko, Deborah Wong, and Natalie Mechalko for sharing your stories. Thank you to all of our Sawyers and Trail Maintenance teams for keeping the Trails of the Peninsula Section free and clear! If you are interested in becoming a certified sawyer, the BTC runs Chainsaw Certification courses. If you notify PBTC Trail Maintenance Coordinator, Tom Hall, he can add your name to a list and let you know when a course is available. The BTC requires that only certified sawyers operate chainsaws on their properties and Trails. As a sawyer, you never work alone and you can ask your Trail Maintenance helpers to also help carry equipment if you prefer. The entire team pulls together to keep the Trails safe and clear.

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Completing the 910 km BTC E2E!

BY SHARON MAH-GIN
END-TO-END FINISHER

It took me 10 years but I finally completed the entire BTC! It was an incredible and fulfilling hiking experience on the BTC's Peninsula portion as I hiked it with an awesome group of hikers over 18 hikes! Hanging out at the back, I even learned about birdwatching and identifying ferns (thank you, Darlene). It was wonderful to share this accomplishment with Ingrid and to have our badges presented personally by Tamara, the President of the BTC Peninsula.

So grateful to our outstanding hike leaders, Randy and Saabir, and the entire group. A special shout out to Kim who created a beautiful BTC glass tree ornament that she gifted to each of us to remember this forest bathing experience.

Hiking often fosters a sense of camaraderie, and the memories created during this adventure are extraordinary. The laughter, friendships, and shared experiences contribute to the overall joy of the journey.

Reflecting on my journey and the people I've met along the trail is a testament to the power of outdoor activities in building connections and creating lasting memories.



*Back for more in 2024!
The theme for the
Peninsula Hiking
Festival is “Listen to
the Land”*

Save the Date: Peninsula Hiking Festival

BY MARGARET O’DELL
HIKING FESTIVAL
COMMITTEE MEMBER

After a resounding success in 2023, planning for the 2024 Peninsula Hiking Festival is well underway. We are excited to announce the Festival will be held on October 4 and 5, 2024.

The theme for this year’s Festival is Listen to the Land. Our programs and activities centred on this theme will explore our inter-connectedness with the land and deepen our relationship not just with the land, but to others we’ll meet through our engaging and unique experience on this stunning UNESCO Biosphere of the Northern Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula.

Centred at Camp Celtic located in Lion’s Head, our venue is surrounded by nature. Close to the shores of Lake Huron, Black Creek Provincial Park, Camp Celtic provides a rustic camp-like atmosphere and a communal setting where participants are away from the bustle of life and fully able to connect with the land and others.

Our programming begins on Friday October 4 where you’ll be able to enjoy a full day geology hike or participate in shorter afternoon hikes focused on the theme. After an enjoyable evening of socializing and a casual meal, you’ll be able to enjoy musical talent and night programming.

Our Saturday programs include both morning and afternoon hike and non-hike program options followed by an evening of dining (for an extra fee), complete with an engaging speaker and a silent auction.

October 6, 2024 is Bruce Trail Day. If you're able to extend your stay, activities and hikes are being planned at Cape Croker Park, located in Neyaashiinigmiing, Ontario

The Event website is under construction and expected to go live in mid-April. As programs and activities are finalized, more information will become available. Registration is expected to go live on June 15, 2024.

Listen to our social media updates for more information soon.

Photos from the 2023 Hiking Festival by Jess Pridham



Devil's Monument Update

BY TAMARA WILSON
PBTC PRESIDENT

One of the Peninsula's favourite geological landmarks and loop hikes includes the Devil's Monument Side Trail on Dyers Bay. Over the last four years, this location has experienced explosive growth in visitors making it named one of the summer "hotspots" on the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula. Through discussions with the Northern Peninsula's Sustainable Tourism Advisory Group, one of the ways the Municipality has helped the Club manage the overwhelming visitor traffic is by installing paid parking at the Municipal lot at the end of Borchardt Rd, "No Parking" signs along Borchardt Road as well as "Private Property" signs for local homeowners who found their property being used and even advertised on Google, as excellent large RV parking areas. So far, these measures have helped curb the inundation of visitors and some of the illegal camping activity that had plagued the area.

There is free parking access to Devil's Monument for hikers who are willing to park a little further afield by the mailboxes on Cape Chin Rd North (but don't block the mailboxes!) or access through Britain Lake Rd where the hike-in is just a few hundred meters further from the BTC's Lillie Britain Lake Rd./Cottrill Side Trail Parking.



Another modification to the area came with the building of the Devil's Monument platform in the spring of 2023. BTC Ecologist, Brian Popelier, coordinated and liaised between the property owner, Ontario Heritage Trust and Doug Hill, the local Contractor who oversaw the build. A team of dedicated volunteers hauled in the platform materials from the Borchardt Parking Lot and the builders under Doug Hill's leadership, completed the platform.

The platform ultimately helped manage traffic on a few levels. First, it improved people flow going down the metal stairs as people used to cluster at the top of the stairway unsure of what lay below. Another pinch point happened on the first landing mid-stairs where visitors who ventured down, would stop once they saw the final big step down. This collection

point also blocked access as these visitors would linger on the landing and then try to turn around and head back up, often into oncoming traffic.

Now the platform provides a secure destination for visitors going down to get a closer look at the Monument. There is also a signature “Doug Hill bench” which the Club has dedicated to fifteen-year PBTC Board Member, Darci Lombard. Darci’s bench can be used for a rest before heading up the stairs again. The Club also hopes that the platform will dissuade visitors from getting too close to the Monument, discouraging rock climbing, graffiti or picking out rocks from the base all of which have been problems in the past.



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Once on the platform, visitors can take the stairs to the left to view the beautiful waterfall that emerges from the escarpment face or from the platform, venture right to make their way down to the beach. As you make your way down, from the top of the final set of stairs to the beach, can you hear the water flowing under the monument? Access to a free beach that is often swimmable in mid-summer, is also a big draw for visitors. Unfortunately, the Club still struggles with shore campfires, rock piling, illegal overnight camping and litter. Devil's Monument Beach is an area that must be frequently monitored in order to keep it as pristine as possible.

If we think about our own experiences, places can go by different names and be called different things by different people. Devil's Monument was not always known as such. You may hear some of the long-time residents still refer to it as "Devil's Pulpit". In Sherwood Fox's well-read book, *The Bruce Beckons*, even the 1962 edition refers to Devil's Monument as Devil's Pulpit- not to be confused with the Devil's Pulpit ski and golf area in Caledon.

Renowned Storyteller and Saugeen Ojibway Nation Elder, Lenore Keeshig, has another name she calls Devil's Monument: Akandoowinini which is the Ojibwe word for guard, watcher, or sentinel. Its literal translation is "Bone (Akandoo) man (Winini)." In discussing this name, we found it interesting that the limestone that makes up the Monument is in fact the shells, the crustacean version of bones of the dead sea life from an ancient era. As a visitor, when you spend time with Devil's Monument, Devil's Pulpit or Akandoowinini, either sitting on the platform's new bench or from the bench above, or listening for the trickling water from below, it's easy to imagine an ancient sentinel looking over Dyers Bay. And we wonder, what does he watch for?



DEVIL'S MONUMENT

by Lenore Keeshig

This ancient one came
into being during the
last great flood -
its rocky connection to
the scarp weakened.
Time over time
rock flakes -
rock chunks
tumble and
roll down,
dust onto dust,
leaving
Akandoowinini -
the old sentinel
in isolated
attention
to watch over the
mysterious green blue
Sweetwater Sea, and to tell of
times gone by.

Chi Miigwetch to Lenore Keeshig
for sharing her beautiful poem
with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club.





**Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY**
PENINSULA CLUB

UPCOMING HIKES

- 04/20** PENINSULA IN 6 CHALLENGER SERIES A
- 04/24** PENINSULA IN 6 CHALLENGER SERIES B
- 04/29** SPRING EPHEMERALS DISCOVERY HIKE AT JACKSON COVE
- 05/02** PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB: END-TO-END 18-DAY HIKING SERIES
- 05/04** PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB: END-TO-END 9-DAY HIKING SERIES
- 05/13** BIRDING WITH BRIAN
- 05/27** WARBLER WONDER
- 06/03** BIRDING WITH ROD
- 06/10** SPRING BIRDS AND BLOOMS
- 06/11** SPRING BIRDS AND BLOOMS #2
- 06/24** ORCHIDS AND WILDFLOWERS AT PETREL POINT

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Family Day Fun in Lion's Head

BY MARG GLENDON
OUTREACH & MEMBERSHIP
DIRECTOR

What a great way to banish the mid-winter blues! Picture an East Coast Kitchen Party where music, friendship, fun and laughter provide just the right ingredients for a community get-together.

Peninsula Bruce Trail Club organized a free community event at the Rotary Hall on Sunday, February 18th. Although the wintry weather kept some folks away, the snowy trails did not deter PBTC Hike Leaders and their adventurous group of hikers at Lion's Head! Hikers had options of choosing a guided hike which matched their stamina, skill and interest - all to celebrate "family".

While hikers explored the trails, non-hikers enjoyed the warmth of the Rotary Hall to play board games, listen to live music, enjoy some hot chocolate and homemade cookies! Wingspan was the favourite board game and puzzlers almost finished a 275 piece puzzle during the afternoon.

Thank you to the musicians who volunteered to share their time and talent with us - lifting up our spirits in the midst of winter. Blue Sky Band opened and closed with East Coast ballads, Neil Young tunes and even a Stompin' Tom song! Sadaf Sohrab offered a toe-tapping set of traditional Scottish and Irish fiddle tunes. Beige McIntosh used her musical magic to create an indoor campfire singalong - with call and response songs by Blind Melon, Bill Withers and Jack White.

Thanks to Dan Bryans for his huge help in setting up and cleaning up the Rotary Hall. Thanks to MNBPC for its support. Thanks to all the PBTC outreach and snack volunteers, too!

PBTC President Sheds Light on Sustainable Tourism and Bruce Trail Conservation Efforts

BY LES MCBETH
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On April 4, 2024, The Sources of Knowledge Board, in collaboration with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club, hosted a presentation focused on sustainable tourism and conservation efforts along the Peninsula section of the Bruce Trail. This free event was held at the National Park Visitor Centre and led by PBTC President, Tamara Wilson. Despite the blustery weather, more than 30 community members were warmly welcomed.

In 2020, the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club (PBTC) observed a significant increase in foot traffic along its trails and conservation areas. With Ontario residents seeking respite in nature during challenging times, the trails experienced an influx of visitors, many of whom were unfamiliar with wilderness trail etiquette and conservation practices. This unprecedented surge in visitor numbers posed unique challenges, particularly as certain parts of the Bruce Trail, previously known for being tranquil waypoints, suddenly became popular destinations.

PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB & SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

BLAZING NEW TRAILS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



April 4th, 7pm at Parks Canada Visitor Centre, Tobermory
www.sourcesofknowledge.ca

Faced with these challenges, the PBTC collaborated with various stakeholders, including the Sustainable Tourism Advisory Group (STAG), formed by the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Ontario Parks, and RTO7. This partnership aimed to develop sustainable tourism strategies, manage visitor traffic, and protect the natural beauty and integrity of the trail and its surrounding areas.

The presentation highlighted the journey of the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club from 2020 to the present, discussing the challenges faced, the collaborative efforts undertaken with local stakeholders, and the strategies developed for sustainable tourism and trail conservation. Attendees also learned about future plans to ensure the continued enjoyment and preservation of the Peninsula section of the Bruce Trail.



Update to Orchid and Birder Badge Requirements

BY BARB REUBER
PBTC BADGE COMMITTEE

Hikers spoke and we listened! We are updating the requirements for the Orchid badge and the 100 Birder badge in response to input we received from hikers who have taken on these badges.

PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL 100 BIRDER BADGE

We have removed the one-year time limit for the Peninsula Bruce Trail 100 Birder badge. There is no time limit for meeting the badge requirements. This change will assist those new to birding and people who only occasionally visit the Peninsula.

ORCHID BADGE

Experience has shown that it is extremely challenging to meet the requirements of the Orchid badge. We are reducing the number of orchids that are to be identified from 15 to 8 to qualify for the badge. We are clarifying that the orchids must be found along the sides of the main trail or the side trails of the Bruce Trail from Wiarton to Tobermory. In addition, you can include orchids identified during PBTC supported events (e.g. PBTC Orchid Hikes with partnering organizations as posted on the BTC Hike Schedule, hikes with the Tobermory Orchid Festival, etc.).

The diligent orchid hunters who identify 15 orchids, including those who have already identified 15 orchids under the original badge requirements, will receive the “15 Orchid Elite” badge.

The PBTC website provides the full, [updated requirements](#) for the orchid and birder badges.

Happy searching!

60 Years Ago - Building the Trail

**BY DEB STURDEVANT
FROM THE RATTLER IN 2014**

60 years ago this year, a tremendous amount of work was being done to get the Bruce Trail ready to open. In this article by Deb Sturdevant for the Rattler in 2014, she describes how two pioneers of the Bruce Trail, Howard and Bruce Krug, helped forge the trail in the Peninsula section. The Krug's donated their diary, "Notes of the Chesley Bruce Trail club" to the BCM&CC archives, from which part of this article is based on.

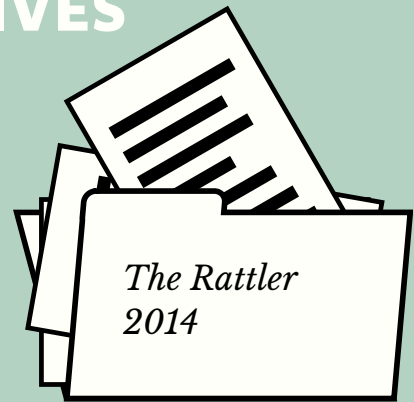
50 YEARS AGO - OCTOBER 8, 1964

"At a meeting held last Thursday at the home of Mr. A.K. Adams, a club was formed to be known as the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club. The club was a territory of roughly 40 miles in length from Tobermory southward. At present, 25 miles of the trail have been completed and it is expected the remainder will be finished by early spring."

From the Warton Echo, October 13, 2014

Chesley Bruce Trail Club Howard Krug (1904-1997) and his brother Bruce Krug (1919-2013) of Chesley, Ontario are known as two of the pioneers of the Peninsula section of the Bruce Trail, having cut and blazed portions of original trail between Cabot Head and northwest of Cave Point fifty years ago. Bruce Krug was awarded a Pioneer Plaque at the PBTC 2003 AGM for his contributions to establishing the

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Learn how the trail was built, through the hard work of volunteers, 60 years ago.

trail, and in 2007 he was awarded the BTC's Calypso Orchid Environmental Award for his significant contributions to the restoration and preservation of the Bruce Trail and Niagara Escarpment.

After Bruce's passing in 2013, his Estate donated Peninsula properties to the Bruce Trail Conservancy. The Estate also donated many boxes of Krug family personal, business, and local history records to the Archives at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. Among those many treasures was one of particular interest to the PBTC - a diary created by Howard Krug entitled "Notes of the Chesley Bruce Trail Club"! As Howard noted in the first entry, this was "an unorganized group from Chesley and vicinity which helped to cut and mark parts of the Bruce Trail. Although other parts of the trail were much closer to Chesley, the group decided to help in the Peninsula area "where it appeared that there might be less people interested in helping with the Trail." From Chesley to Cabot Head, the southern most starting point, would have been more than two hours of driving.

They made their start on November 24, 1963, meeting Jack Johnson and his son at Cabot's Head Light-house. At that time, until 1978, the Trail ran from Wing"eld Basin, along the base of West Blu! and then beside the escarpment edge to High Dump. Currently, the trail cuts inland north of Dyer's Bay, before Cabot Head, emerging along the escarpment edge again at High Dump. The BTC is working towards the possibility that one day the trail will again follow a route similar to that blazed by the Chesley group.

The diary records their trail work activities on thirteen weekend days, from 1963-1965. The group ranged from two to nine people, including: Howard and Bruce Krug, Jeff Ankerman, Dennis Bradley, Ted Cobean, Floyd Dudgeon, Doug Gaelor, Don McLean, Jim Siegrist, Tom and John Soper, Ken Steinhoff, Sid, Peter and Bud Street, George Toner, and Jim Witzhee.

It is clear from Howard's notes that they enjoyed the unexplored nature of the area, including the fascinating views and interesting discoveries. Perhaps not so enjoyable were the access challenges, sometimes resulting in more time spent hiking to the trail than working on the trail. The following is a selection of excerpts from the diary, the original of which is available to view in the Research Room and Archives at the Bruce County Museum brucemuseum.ca.

November 24, 1963: From Cabot Head Lighthouse, "we walked south of Wing"eld Basin and the small lake coming out of the stony shore near the old boiler. Continuing along this stony and pebbly shore, we came to where the Blu! approached the shore and we were all fascinated by the large rock boulders which had fallen from the bluff and made it nearly impossible to get by at places."



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Chesley BTC members among remains of ship boiler on shore north of Wingfield Basin, November 24, 1963 / by Bruce Krug. Courtesy of Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, A2014.003.K63-14-03.

The February 1968 Bruce Trail Guide Book notes in the Rocky Bay area description “For the next mile the Trail follows the shoreline to reach West Bluff. Here several house-size boulders pepper the Trail where previous mountain climbing experience is an asset.”

April 12 or 19, 1964: “We came across a trail running away from the lake here, so Tom and I followed it and it led to Urbshott’s hunting camp.

May 3, 1964: “...we drove in to the north end of Gillies Lake...we went in the trail past Lymburner Lake and Conlon Lake to Urbshott’s camp and then on to join up with our previous stopping place. We did not cut trail today, but carried on along the top of the cliff and partly marked where the Trail should run, going as far as the High Dump. Here we went down to the shore (only place of access in this section and had our lunch. Some of the old timber work still remains of the slide which they had to put logs down to the shore from the top of the cliff. From the High Dump, a trail leads in towards Moore Lake so we took this trail and after about a 4 mile hike, we came out to the road, after which Jack [Johnstone] and I had the additional walk of about a mile to get to the cars.

May 10, 1964: “We drove to Gillies Lake and in by way of Urbshott’s camp. We worked on the section towards High Dump, having our lunch at noon up on one of the rock lookouts. The view today was excellent and we could see Halfmoon and Lonely Islands and beyond. On our way back, we wanted to get down to the shore for water at the flat area north of Urbshott’s but when we thought we were almost there, we found another cliff. I went towards the east, and Jim went westerly and Jim did find a place where he got down. In the meantime, the rest of the party found the “spring” which is a little north of our Bruce Trail ...”

October 18, 1964: “We walked in the Umbrella-Moore Lake trail to High Dump. After our long walk in from the car, our group were pretty leg weary, especially since some shoes were not fitting too good, so after cutting between 1/4 and 1/2 mile, we retracted our steps on that long walk out.”

October 25, 1964: “The road that we took in today from near Emmett Lake goes past what is called Burdock Camp. This is an old logging camp of Casters and the clearance around the remains of the log buildings gives ample evidence of the name of the camp without any need of signs.”



Howard Krug, Bud and Peter Street, and Dan McLean at old Burdock Camp, May 9, 1965 / by Bruce Krug. Courtesy of Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, A2014.003.K65-09-20.

May 2, 1965: “We went in the Emmet Lake road and trail to Halfway Rock Dump. At places we had quite a lot of snow on the road but, with the help of others pushing, we managed to get through. ... We were working in deep snow for most of the way until we got on top of the ridge running out to Cave Point.”

May 16, 1965: We worked east from the end of the road [Cameron Lake Forest road] towards Crawford Warder’s cabin. When we got near it a thunder storm came up and we had to run for shelter. Fortunately, he does not leave the place locked so we spent the duration of the storm inside and watched the storm over the lake...we headed back for the car with not too much work to show for the day’s trip.”



Howard Krug, north of Cabot’s Head, April 1964 / by Bruce Krug.
Courtesy of Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, A2014.003.K64-08-11.

More information about the Krugs’ contributions to conservation, the BTC and Bruce County communities may be found in Ross McLean’s booklets “50 to Remember” (2012) and “Forty Years of Trail Building: the People and Stories of the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club” (2004), as well as the book “A Century of Excellence: Krug Bros. & Co. Furniture Manufacturers” by Howard Krug and Ruth Cathcart (ed.), (2001).

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EASY HIKES

The Spring Easy Hike Series is back! Join one of these **FREE** hikes to learn more about Spring birds and wildflowers. These small group hikes are generally shorter in length and duration with an opportunity to learn from an Ecology Expert or Nature Enthusiast.

APR 29 **SPRING EPHEMERALS**
9:30AM | JACKSON'S COVE

MAY 13 **BIRDING WITH BRIAN**
9AM | GLASSFORD WETLAND

MAY 27 **WARBLER WONDER**
8:30AM | COLPOY'S BAY

JUNE 3 **BIRDING WITH ROD**
7:30AM | OTTER LAKE

JUNE 10 **SPRING BIRDS & BLOOMS**
8:30AM | COTTRILL LAKE

JUNE 11 **SPRING BIRDS & BLOOMS 2**
8:30AM | COTTRILL LAKE

JUNE 24 **ORCHIDS & WILDFLOWERS**
9:30AM | PETREL POINT

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Volunteering - Just Do It!

BY MARG GLENDON
OUTREACH & MEMBERSHIP
DIRECTOR

April 14- 20 was National Volunteer Week in Canada. During this week, we set aside time to acknowledge the importance of volunteerism in our communities. This year, the theme of National Volunteer Week in Canada is “Every Moment Matters”.

“Every Moment Matters” highlights the impact of every community volunteer. At this crucial time around the world, we recognize the significance of creating a sense of belonging and strengthening social connections.

Shortly after we moved to Tobermory, we began volunteering with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club. It was a way to build social connections and make meaningful contributions to our community. I was inspired by the many individuals who devoted so much of their time and energy to maintaining Bruce Trail, stewarding BTC Nature Reserves or leading hikes. I don't have special skills or expertise to share, but I do have a willingness to help others, a desire to protect the environment, an interest in learning, and enjoy being part of “something bigger”

I discovered that many of the PBTC volunteers feel the same way! In 2023, PBTC volunteers contributed over 2400 hours of trail workers' time, and thousands more hours stewarding nature reserves, restoring land and Club leadership contributing toward environmental integrity here on the Saugeen Peninsula. That takes my breath away and has inspired me to offer what I can, too.



When I asked PBTC volunteer, Randy Vanderlaan, “Why does your young granddaughter volunteer?” Randy replied, “Maddie volunteers because her parents showed her how good it is to help out, especially on behalf of BTC. She loves hiking, learning about nature, and meeting new people while she volunteers.”

PBTC is grateful for all community volunteers, and would particularly like to recognize PBTC volunteers who participate in a spectrum of activities including work on the Bruce Trail and BTC Nature Reserves - all who contribute in their unique way to make this a kind, safe, and grounded community!

If you would like to volunteer with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club, please contact Marg at: pbtcoutreach@gmail.com.

“Each of us has something unique and important to offer. It doesn't matter how you get involved - just do it!” - Canada's 28th Governor General David Johnston.

Try volunteering - however you can. Find people who inspire you and activities that energize you. You will find the experience will enhance your life - more than you imagine!

Lloyd Hayward and Darci Lombard have each served the PBTC Community for 15 years



LLOYD HAYWARD

Lloyd Hayward has been a member of the PBTC Board for more than 15 years, serving as board members, trail maintenance director, treasurer, and trail captain. If you're stalwart enough to complete a Peninsula End-to-End, he's also the volunteer who will send you your badge.

Lloyd wasn't always a hiker. It was his wife, Mary, who first convinced him to go hiking on the Bruce Trail in August 2006. The short hike ended up being about 26 kilometres due to a reroute around construction on Highway 6 near Hamilton.

Undaunted by the foregoing experience, in 2008 he signed up for a Peninsula E2E lead by Marlene Rothenbury. In 2009 he completed the Sydenham E2E, and in 2012 reached the cairn in Queenston.

Lloyd's proudest moment was when he became trail captain of McIver Side Trail on the newly acquired Glassford property. So, it's only fitting that the PBTC has submitted a request to rename this Side Trail the Lloyd Hayward Side Trail, in honour of his years of service to the PBTC community. Thank you, Lloyd!

Honouring Two Long Time Board Members

As you may know, the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club is managed by a Volunteer Board of Directors. This group, elected each May at the Annual General Meeting (see page 7 for details) organizes nearly all of the conservation activities, trail maintenance, hiking program, outreach, and communications initiatives of the club. From organizing thousands of hours of volunteer work, to writing the articles that you read in these pages, the PBTC board represents a diverse and dedicated group of citizens. We are fortunate to have in our ranks two exceptionally loyal and hard working volunteers who have now served on the Board for 15 years. Here are their stories.



DARCI LOMBARD

Raised close to Akandoowinini (Devil's Monument), in Miller Lake, Darci spent much of her childhood hiking nearby with her family, where she surely developed her passion for nature and outdoor activities. It was only natural that when she returned to the area to operate her family business, that she gave back to Bruce Trail and volunteer her time with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club.

To learn more about the club's activities, she attended a hiking festival in 2007, and quickly found herself working with an outstanding group of volunteers to help organize the next year's festival. She joined the Special Events Committee under the leadership of Marlene Rothenbury, and after a year, she took the reins from Marlene as the chair of this committee, and joined the Board of the PBTC as the Special Events Coordinator.

Not only was there a festival to organize that year, but it was the Peninsula Club's turn to host the Bruce Trail Conservancy

Annual General Meeting. The committee decided to combine the two events to host what turned out to be one of the most successful and memorable events for the Club!

The 2009 Bruce Trail Conservancy AGM/Peninsula Bruce Trail Club Outdoor Festival was an awesome event, thanks to Darci's leadership and sense of fun. As then club President Don McIlraith said in his report to the PBTC Board in November 2009;

"It's a bit difficult to wrench ourselves from the glow of approbation flowing our way from what some of the past presidents of the BTC have told us was the best AGM ever. We even had a special motion of congratulations and thanks passed at the recent BTC board meeting. Well done to all of our volunteers - especially Darci and her planning committee."

Darci remained on the Board as the Special Events coordinator, until 2011 when she moved into a position as the Landowner Relations Director, a position which she continues to hold today.

In Darci's role as Landowner Relations Director, she maintains contact with landowners on whose property the Bruce Trail crosses, as well as neighbouring landowners. There is an extremely important relationship between Peninsula landowners and the Bruce Trail Conservancy, and Darci's personal connection with Landowners is pivotal in the success of the trail crossing private land on the Peninsula. You might say she is the Club's first point of contact with landowners, and she manages this very important relationship with great success!

Over the years, Darci has been involved in many other trail-related activities, including leading hikes, trail building and maintenance, and organizing landowner appreciation events. She obtained her Hike Leader Certification in 2007.

Her and her family have been long-time residents and business owners of Summer House Park on beautiful Miller Lake, where they have enjoyed hosting the PBTC Spruce Up the Bruce and AGM event for many years.

Darci continues to enjoy working with all those involved with the Bruce Trail and is proud to support the organization's mission to conserve natural spaces for future generations to enjoy!



“It has been a gift to work with such dedicated, passionate volunteers, to build relations with generous landowners in the area, and to learn from the knowledgeable staff at the BTC head office. The love of the outdoors and hiking is what brought me to be involved with the Bruce Trail; it is the people and everyone’s dedication to such a great cause, that inspire me to continue volunteering.”

- Darci Lombard



Landowner Appreciation hike on the property of a prominent landowner in Colpoy’s Bay, Ron Gatis, who guided the hike and shared his knowledge of the history of the property. Organized by Darci May 11, 2014



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