

The Best Laid Plans

Well, we tried. Following the disappointment of the cancelled spring hike schedule and all of our Hiking Events, we were encouraged by summer's falling Covid numbers and the gradual opening up that followed. The hike schedule returned to much fanfare, the 25 K Challenge was rescheduled for November and we were hopeful that we might even be able to hold some kind of in person Bruce Trail Day event. And then the second wave arrived.

Although this newsletter contains numerous articles about what we were able to do despite the pandemic (quite a lot, actually), we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge the volunteers that worked tirelessly on events only to have them cancelled. Twice.

Hike Director Les Babbage and his talented crew of hike leaders planned a terrific list of interesting winter hikes only to watch with trepidation as the Province went into another lockdown and then issued a stay at home order. All that work for nothing – just like in the spring. Newly minted Hike Event Coordinator Rob Wray signed up folks for our spring 25 K Challenge, only to refund their money. He then expanded the event and signed everybody up once more only to have it cancelled again. And to add insult to injury, the November dates were absolutely beautiful. Oh well..... hope springs eternal and better days lie ahead.

This newsletter has been delayed a number of times due to changing restrictions imposed by the Province and the BTC due to the pandemic – hence the lack of a hike schedule. Our Club finds ourselves in an unusual position as we've not much in the way of ongoing events to report on and can't promote upcoming events due to pandemic uncertainties. However, the trails remain open, the trail conditions thus far have been excellent (very little ice) and it has been a mild and very pretty winter in the Dufferin section. Please, get outside and enjoy it.



What on earth do these pictures have to do with the Dufferin Hi-Land Club?

Look inside to read the exciting stories.

Our private landowners year after year allow the Bruce Trail on their properties. Their generosity and support provides wonderful hiking and enjoyment of panoramic views, rushing streams, and forests. We are truly grateful for their sharing, particularly during the pandemic.

A goal of the Conservancy is to secure a permanent corridor for the trail. The Van Nostrand families since the 1950's have owned recreational land in Mulmur. Unexpectedly in December 2020, Peter Van Nostrand donated twelve beautifully forested acres on the northeast corner of 15 Sideroad and Prince of Wales Road. In 2021 this will allow a portion of the Kilgorie Side Trail on the travelled road to be rerouted into this forest.

Another Van Nostrand family owned 86 acres on the opposite corner. The Bruce Trail crosses that property to connect the Pine River Fishing Area to 15 Sideroad. For many years I have chatted to Felicia Van Nostrand about the Conservancy's interest in acquiring all or part of her property. Peter's son, John, was instrumental in encouraging her branch of the family to decide what to do with that property. Fast forward: as of July 31, the Conservancy acquired the complete property by a combination of donation and purchase. We feel humbled to be entrusted with the stewardship of this property that provided the Van Nostrand family so many enjoyable memories over the years.

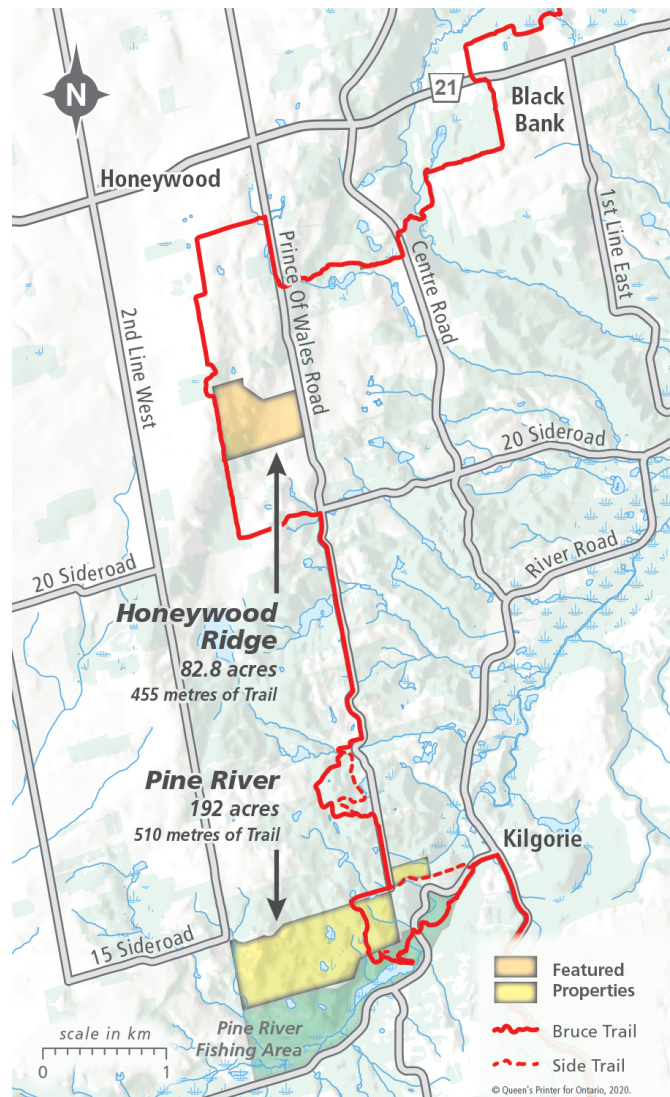
West of Felicia Van Nostrand's property is 94 acres that had been overrun and damaged by off-road vehicles for years. The noise and littering destroyed the peace and tranquility of the community. It was up for sale off and on for several years. Fast forwarding, a community initiative raised the funds for the Conservancy to purchase the property in September but with the stipulation that the off-roaders had to go and the property had to be cleaned up and rehabilitated. Club volunteers Brian Cornfield, Tom Thayer, and myself took on the challenge.

Nine damaged but usable concrete barriers were donated. Local excavation contractor, Jim Patton positioned them and hauled away three large dump truck loads of abandoned building debris and garbage. A tree removal contractor, Rudy Meeser, brought three loads of very large, twisted willow tree logs to block additional entrances and we erected some wire fencing, signs, and security cameras. With relief, we can report a 95% success rate.

Together, the properties have created Pine River Nature Reserve. When combined with the fishing area, there will be a block of 365 acres of managed conservation land. For sure our Club trail director, Carl Tafel, will be opening up more side trails on the new properties.

Further north on Prince of Wales Road, the trail goes west on 20 Sideroad and then north through private properties. A key property, Honeywood Ridge, has been acquired in a plan to secure the trail. This property provides important grazing and hay lands for Carl Cosack's nearby Peace Valley Ranch. Through BTC ownership, most of this land can be preserved in its current state to ensure the panoramic views are not lost to development, a win-win result.

For sure, we will vividly remember 2020 (and not just for Covid). Our Club can add to those memories the generosity and good will of people supportive of the Bruce Trail that is so vital to our health and outdoor enjoyment.



This sequence of reports was sent to the Board from Land Steward Director Brian Cornfield.

Date: September 24, 2020

Three loads of logs were placed at access points to the Van Nostrand and Quaid properties yesterday. Along with the concrete barriers recently placed this completes the blocking of the ten main intrusion points to the two properties. Another load of logs may be required in the future if more large intrusion points develop. It is understood that these blockages should halt large vehicle entry but ATV and dirt bike access cannot be completely thwarted by any reasonable measures.

Date: September 28, 2020

Over the weekend one of the logs on 2nd Line W was moved aside allowing room for ATV's and dirt bikes to enter the Quaid property. There also appear to be a couple of areas where access was achieved by driving around the barriers on the 2nd Line West. On Sunday 20 to 30 ATV's and dirt bikes were seen on the Quaid property. This was not unexpected, however the log person is very busy and we may not be able to get another load of logs for a while. Today we put the moved log back in position against the concrete barriers and used T-Posts and fence brace wire to secure the top of the log. Today we also replaced the signs that were recently removed. We attached a "BTC Managed Land" and a "No Motorized Vehicles" sign to each of the 5 groups of concrete barriers. With the proper signage in place again we will likely speak with the OPP about monitoring the properties.

Oct 2 - We met with Dufferin OPP who agreed to patrol the properties and follow up on license plate data we provided to them of intruders on the properties.

Oct 6 - We built 40 feet of wire fence at north end of the south set of barriers on 2nd Line to stop intruders from driving around the barriers.

Oct 9 - We installed a BTC issued trail camera which was several years old at the middle set of barriers on 2nd Line in an attempt to record license plate data on intruders over the long weekend.

Oct 13 - A newly purchased trail camera was installed at the middle set of barriers on 2nd Line. The old one only recorded a few minutes after installation, even with a new set of batteries so no license plate data was recorded over the long weekend. Two more cameras are on order and will be installed during the week of Oct. 18th.



Although Christmas is over, a Dufferin Hi-Land Club membership makes for a thoughtful and much appreciated gift for friends and family any time of the year.

As you will have heard, our hiking program has been suspended indefinitely. Currently scheduled hikes, including the Winter Badge series are cancelled. We continue to monitor changes in emergency public health regulations and BTC hiking guidelines and will resume our club program when it is safe and legal to do so. Current BTC hike guidelines can be found at <https://brucetrail.org/pages/explore-the-trail/hike-schedule#guidelines>. Please check the Club's web site for the most current updates and changes.

The good news is that the Bruce Trail remains open for individuals and small groups to hike. Exercise is recognized in the provincial Stay at Home order as an essential purpose for leaving home. If you are going to hike on the Trail, following are some suggestion for ensuring a safe, legal outing:

- Keep your hike local. Non-essential travel between regions is still in effect.
- If hiking in a group of less than 5 people, don't car pool, except with people in your household or bubble.
- Throughout the hike, maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres and, if circumstances arise where you can't do this, put on a mask.
- If approaching other hikers, step off of the trail to let them pass or thank them if they step off for you.

Also, please remember that we hike across private property with the generous permission of our landowners. You can thank them by:

- Avoiding overcrowded roadside parking locations - we have lots of great hiking from less popular trailheads.
- Avoid blocking driveways (5 metres clearance is a good rule of thumb) and parking cars on both sides of the roadway.
- Observe the BTC "Leave No Trace" rule, by picking up and carrying out any garbage you may create.

Hike on and stay safe!

Winter Parking and Driving

Driving and parking in the Dufferin section can be challenging during the winter months depending on conditions. Although this winter has been mild, with snow cover but not much snow, that can change, and winter is only half over. It is always best to be prepared: check the forecasts for Orangeville and Shelburne before you leave and have a shovel and some sand in your vehicle in case they're needed.

With the exception of the 3rd Line lot at Mono Cliffs, our parking lots aren't plowed. In most years they are inaccessible due to snow. This year has been an exception, but they are still icy. Please don't drive on roads that are marked "No Winter Maintenance", and don't be fooled if conditions initially appear to be ok. Sometimes roads are plowed part way. If you get stuck, you may find yourself out of cell phone range and may find that CAA is unwilling to pull you out for fear of getting stuck themselves. Be careful if parking on the roadside as you maybe pulling over into a snow filled ditch. And keep in mind that if conditions deteriorate, prompting roads to be closed and thus leaving you stranded, the arenas aren't open because of the pandemic and you will apparently be spending the night in a bus.

I suppose the vehicle below is technically parked at the side of the road, although I doubt that was the driver's intention.



Mono Cliffs Park News

On the subject of parking, Ontario Parks will be building a 150 car lot at the end of 2nd line south of 20 Sideroad to try to alleviate parking issues. The 3rd Line lot is often full and the spillover is dangerously parked on both sides of the road approach. They hope to have it finished next fall.

Well, 2020 was certainly an unusual and at times challenging year for trail work.

It began with four of us slogging through the snow with chainsaws to deal the best we could with a number of giant Basswood trees that had fallen across the trail at km. 11.5. The trees were so large that for the most part the best we could do was to cut them into pieces so that the farmer could push them to the side using a backhoe in the spring. One large section was left to be rerouted around by both hikers and the farmer. Two days later we received word that the trail had been closed.

It was a frustrating time, as the trail was being accessed by others while members and trail workers stayed respectfully on the sidelines. The only work I was allowed to do was to install Trail Closed signs at a number of locations while we roped off access to parking lots. In time, the trail officially reopened after a two week grace period to complete the necessary maintenance; but restrictions of varying degrees remained throughout the year.

As a result, almost all of our trail maintenance in 2020 was done alone, with the exception of chainsawing, which generally consisted of a physically distant crew of two. We were fortunate to have a year with very few storms and very few trees across the trail – at least until Nov. 15, when a wind storm necessitated the chainsawing of almost twenty trees and the hand sawing and/or dragging off the trail of three times that. Much thanks goes to Carl Alexander, Brian Cornfield, Bryan Foley and Bob Collin who helped me with the sawyering, and to Lynda Vera, Carol Foley and Margery Cruise who were able to help their husbands without distancing restrictions in this, and other, endeavours.

The pandemic didn't stop the grass from growing, and I want to thank Norm Wingrove and Carl Alexander for helping me with this chore, and landowners Bill Duron and Mark Richardson, who cut Bruce Trail on their private properties. I'd also like to give a big shout out to our almost thirty Trail Captains who patrolled and worked on their sections throughout the year – thanks so much for your efforts.

There are an incredible number of people who have made these difficult times liveable, and who have gone out of their way to allow all of us some semblance of normalcy. Although I'm not comparing us to them, access to safe hiking on the Bruce Trail has been, and continues to be, of great importance to many; and I know I speak for all Dufferin trail workers when I say that we are glad that we were able to do our small part to contribute in a positive way during challenging times with our trail efforts.

Norm Wingrove Tribute

Many of you will have noticed the plaques interspersed along the trail, which are installed to thank donors for monetary contributions to the BTC. The Dufferin Club put up three more this year. Normally they are installed with little fanfare, but an exception was made when we found out Norm Wingrove was receiving this honour.

Norm is deserving of a plaque just for his many years of volunteering, particularly in trail maintenance. He joined the Club in 1978 when he moved to Collingwood and has helped out ever since. We were pleased to install the plaque on the trail section where he is Trail Captain (km. 53.6). Thanks Norm – this is well deserved.



Norm is wearing the orange jacket. Check out Jim in shorts – this picture was taken at 10 am on November 10th.

Board News

After a delay of approximately four months, the Dufferin Club held our AGM on August 25 at the home of Carl Alexander and Lynda Vera in Mulmur. It was a surprisingly well attended event – at least it seemed surprising, as so many of us had been starved of much in the way of social interaction. We safely spread out in their garage and on their driveway to watch and contribute to the proceedings.

Club President Susan Ford presented retiring Board members Glenys Williams and Tony Hopkins with a Certificate of Appreciation for all of their volunteering and fund raising efforts. Carl Alexander was presented with a Trail Angel Medallion for his effort in driving hikers to trailheads in Dufferin.

Membership Director Pauline Lloyd introduced the three new members of the Board: Jackie Foster has been hiking Dufferin trails for 2 or 3 years. She has volunteered to do End to End challenges and has also been a hike leader. Melina Cormier has hiked for 3 years in Dufferin and also been a hike leader. She has experience with health care communications and the Chamber of Commerce. Rob Wray has been a Trail Captain since 2008. He has taken over as Hike Event Coordinator from Carol Foley. Rob works in the field of renewable energy.

Unlike in previous years, the Club Directors' reports were not presented but were all available on the web site. The membership was informed about the exciting plans for Virtual Bruce Trail Day, the new Board gathered for a quick, unsocially distant picture and a much enjoyed and safe social gathering followed the meeting.

Subsequent Board meetings have been held by Zoom or, when the weather permitted, outdoors. Zoom still presents a problem for a few of us who lack the bandwidth, reception or equipment to fully participate.

Dufferin Hi-Land Board Fun Facts (or things you wished you knew before they were allowed on the board).

See if you can match these fun facts associated with the Dufferin Hi-Land Board member. Sorry for the incomplete list. (answers on back page).

Which Board member:

- (1) Has owned and operated a successful coffee shop in west end Toronto for over 20 years?
- (2) Attended the Kilgorie School (km. 35.1)?
- (3) Is a certified accountant?
- (4) Grew up on a mixed farm in Amaranth and attained an Engineering degree at the University of Waterloo?
- (5) Was born in Bristol England and emigrated at age 9?
- (6) Has co-authored two published books with his wife?
- (7) Is an IT specialist?
- (8) Is a current or former teacher?
- (9) Has a two year old daughter?
- (10) Played bass in three different versions of the band Cardboard Brains in 1978, 1980 and 2000?

Land Stewardship News

With funding and help from the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, 250 trees and bushes were planted this fall on the west end of the Bruce Trail managed land east of the parking lot on 1st Line. BTC staff members Adam Brylowski and Brian Popelier were helped by Land Steward Director Brian Cornfield and Dufferin Club members Ian Shelton, Helen Bailey, Pauline Lloyd, and John Dickason. They planted a great variety in the cleared area east of the lot and in the first field just past the bridge, including Sugar Maple, Red Oak, Shagbark Hickory, Black Cherry, Chokecherry, Red Raspberry, Bush Honeysuckle, Nannyberry, White Oak, Basswood, Dogwood, Black Raspberry, White Pine, Eastern Hemlock, Balsam Poplar, White Birch and Pin Cherry. This is in addition to the 250 Fir, Birch, Black Walnut and Oak seedlings that were planted in the large field to the east a few years ago. A couple of weeks later about 40 Scotch (Scots) Pines were cut down on the property as the BTC considers them to be an invasive species.

Speaking of the lot on 1st Line – the NEC has given us permission to expand this lot eastwards, thus doubling its present size. Parking is at a premium all along the trail, and this is very welcome news. Work will hopefully be done in the spring, depending on the pandemic, the ground and the availability of the contracted workers.

WE'RE OPEN!

**TAXES HANDLED.
WHEREVER YOU ARE.**



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Dufferin Hi-Land Board of Directors



top row: Rob Wray (9) Carl Tafel (10) Bob Slack Peter Blackmere(3) Carl Alexander(4) Tom Thayer (7) John Dickason (8) Jim Preyde (6) Brian Cornfield (2) bottom row: Melina Cormier Helen Bailey Jackie Foster Susan Ford (1) Cathy Krar (8) Pauline Lloyd (8) MIA: Les Babbage (5) Brenda Carling (8)

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Past President	Jim Preyde	Land Stewardship Director	Brian Cornfield
Secretary	Cathy Krar	Membership Director	Pauline Lloyd
Treasurer	Peter Blackmere	Hike Events Director	Rob Wray
BTC Director	John Dickason	I.T. Director/Webmaster	Tom Thayer
Trail Director/Newsletter	Carl Tafel	Publicity Director	Melina Cormier
Hike Director	Les Babbage	Directors	
Published by Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club P.O. Box 698 Alliston, Ont. L9R 1V9 www.dufferinbrucetrailclub.org www.facebook.com/DufferinHiLandBruceTrailClub		Brenda Carling Helen Bailey Bob Slack Jackie Foster	
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Brian Cornfield: pages 1,3,8
 Carl Tafel: pages 4,5,7
 Bryan Foley: page 8

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