

TRAIL TALK

Oak Ridges Trail Association Quarterly

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Harold Revisits ORTA - Pictured here front row 3rd on right with black t-shirt. Story on back cover.

Photo Credit: Cheryl Fisher

For more pictures from this hike and others visit our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/8968359093>

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Building Pathways to an Active Lifestyle



This has been an eventful year for our trail volunteer force. The tornado that devastated sections of Uxbridge town and forest trails was followed by several brief windstorms that brought down even more weakened trees. Our partnership with Green Durham and DMBA in Uxbridge allowed us to not only clear ORTA trails, but to also assist with maintenance of many of the other trails affected - each group tackled sections, cleared them and made sure they were safe for trail users - walking, cycling or riding. One major contributor to the effectiveness of our teams this year has been the acquisition of new equipment, mowers and trimmers, over the past two years. Special recognition and thanks go to Liz Calvin of Green Durham who spent many hours sourcing the funding for the new equipment. This has decreased the time needed to widen trails and keep ticks at bay- safer hiking. We have made a transition to battery powered tools where possible in an effort to be even more environmentally responsible.

One recent call to action was received from an End2End hiker who discovered a lack of blazes in a section near the east end of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail - the result of trees down and some organized logging. He contacted the ORTA office and within days, six volunteers made the trek from Uxbridge/ Zephyr, Ballantrae and Newmarket to correct the needed blazing. Thanks Bob and Judy, Bill, Wilma and a new volunteer, Craig Barnes. Not only did we solve a problem but we got reacquainted with trails we haven't seen since pre-covid days, and we vowed to go back soon, with friends. We might even stay over for a few nights and do several hikes as we did to complete the last E2E hike series that Wilma and I led.

Every section of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail has its special appeal and hidden gems. Take the time to discover them.

Keep on Trekking!

Keep on Trekking!



30 Years Across The Moraine Trail! 2022 is our year to celebrate a milestone anniversary. Thank you for your donations. <https://oakridgestrail.org/donate/>

News from the Board

As members know Kevin Lowe stepped down from his President position this past April. Now he is further reducing his time and will no longer be on the Board of Directors. Going forward he will continue as a volunteer on ORTA's behalf to continue collaboration with the Greenbelt Strategy to its completion. Kevin's contributions to ORTA include:



- Board director from 2013
- President April 2016—April 2022
- Past president April 2022
- Taught several Hike Ontario Hike Leader courses to our members
- Represented ORTA in an input session organized by Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) for partners of the park, of which we are one, providing commentary and direction to the Park's long-range plan.
- 2020 ORTA Commendation Award: – Teaching Hike Ontario Hike Leader Course for four years.

Thank you for your leadership and many years of distinguished service.

Open letter to Kevin Lowe, past President, past Board Member.

When you joined ORTA in 2009, little could you have known what an integral role you'd play in its story. Joining the Board a few years later in 2013, I remember being grateful that I wasn't the only rookie! From the first meeting you provided a calming and rational perspective that helped to keep the conversation on topic and driven to a decision. The skills you acquired in your education career were well suited to a working Board like ours. You ably represented our voice at event after event, navigated the updating of our Strategic Planning and steered us through the pandemic.

Bringing ORTA's voice to the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) sessions held for stakeholders of the park, you contributed to the direction of the Park and its long-range plans while keeping the Board accurately informed and in turn, our membership.

In 2020, you were recognized for being 1 of 9 Master Instructors for Hike Ontario's Hike Leaders' course. You delivered the courses for four years and many ORTA hike leader graduates are now actively leading a wide variety of hikes.

Late 2021 and into 2022, the Greenbelt Foundation came knocking and you again stood up to be part of that conversation. We are grateful that your plans include seeing that to its conclusion.

You are wished nothing but the best in the coming days. The ORTA Board and Membership are so very grateful for all that you have done to make our organization better. Hope to meet you on the trail again soon.

Thank you.

Lissa Dwyer, Secretary.



Take the Conservation Area User Survey—Lake Simcoe Region CA

SHARE YOUR IDEAS, WE'RE LISTENING!

Do you love our Conservation Areas or wish they could be improved? Every five years the Conservation Authority surveys conservation area users, including hikers, bikers, joggers, dog walkers, photographers, birders, cross country skiers, and more. We're interested in learning your overall thoughts, what you like, and would like to see changed about these special spaces. This information helps us make future decisions to better meet your needs and improve your experience within the conservation area.

In 2022, we're gathering information on the following conservation areas:

Scanlon Creek (Bradford) - Holland Landing (East Gwillimbury) - Beaver River Wetland (Brock Township) - Thornton Bales (King Township) - Whitchurch (Whitchurch-Stouffville) - Pangman Springs (Whitchurch-Stouffville)

Tell us what you LOVE about these properties and what you wish could be improved. Now is YOUR chance to have YOUR say!

<https://www.lsrca.on.ca/UserSurvey> Take Survey Now!

You could also win a \$50 gift card to Vince's Market. Don't delay, **the survey closes Oct. 31, 2022.**

Central Lake Ontario Conservation EVENT—Forest Therapy Hikes

Come join us on Sunday, September 18 or Saturday, October 15 for a FREE Forest Therapy hike with Soul-Led Wellness at Enniskillen Conservation Area.

This hike will be led by Randi Micklewright, a certified forest therapy guide and a CATS (Conservation Area Trail Stewards) volunteer!

Forest therapy, forest bathing, Shinrin Yoku, green therapy, eco-therapy - the concept goes by many names but is really very simple: we feel better after spending time in natural settings.



Kawartha Conservation announces inaugural

Kawartha Fall Festival at Ken Reid Conservation Area near Lindsay.

Running from October 1 to 10, festival will feature family-friendly activities, special guests, up-close animal encounters, birds of prey demonstrations, guided hikes, and more.

<https://kawarthanow.com/2022/09/06/kawartha-conservation-announces-inaugural-kawartha-fall-festival-at-ken-reid-conservation-area-near-lindsay/> 4

Anna Santarossa



Hi, I'm Anna, and even though I have only been a member of ORTA for a short time, I decided to become a hike leader because I enjoyed the hikes that I participated in and thought it would be nice to have some hikes closer to home. Traveling an hour and a half for a two-hour hike did not seem environmentally responsible.

Most of my hikes will take place in the cooler months. The type of hikes I enjoy is those that take a slow to moderate pace. On the trail, there is always something to admire, whether it's the landscape or the plants or some man-made feature, and I enjoy taking the time to do so.

If possible, I also like to hike to a destination. For example, at Mary Lake, I like to hike to the apple orchard nearby, where you can use the facilities and maybe even buy a butter tart or two!

I enjoy meeting new people, and I have to say that the hikers I have already met are all wonderful. The conversations that we have as we hike are interesting. I am looking forward to this winter season!

In memory of two well-known ORTA members who recently passed. We convey our deepest sympathies to their respective families and friends.

*Wilhelm (Bill) Pressmar
Member from 2009—2022*



*Rosalie (Rose) Schaefer
Lifetime Member from 2001—2022*

We thank you for your many contributions to the organization over the years. We are better because of you and your presence will be missed.

RENDEZVOUS 2022 IS BACK IN HIKING ACTION!

This is Your Invitation to Register. Sunday October 16th has been chosen for the resumption of the Fall Rendezvous- a restart to energize and reconnect our members, and to recognize volunteers from the past several years.

For new hikers with ORTA - the Rendezvous is an event that starts with a series of slow/moderate/faster hikes - your choice, and continues with lunch and an opportunity to share trail stories with other hikers. Mark the date on your calendars and watch for hike postings on the website. Hikers must register to join this event as per ORTA covid protocols. The Rendezvous is a time to take part in one of the four hikes on offer and meet up with ORTA members afterwards.

In previous years hikers were invited to bring foods for a pot luck lunch, but this time, the Trail Hub Cafe is available to purchase your lunch and drinks. The Trail Hub offers spacious indoor and outdoor eating options, and multiple no pay parking options. Cafe services are provided by Annina's of Goodwood - you won't be able to resist the pastries for dessert. Lunch can be eaten in the spacious, glass-walled dining area or outside, weather permitting.

Take a look at their website for more info. Parking is free and washrooms are available before your hikes, most of which will start from this location. If you haven't had the chance to visit the Trail Hub event centre, you will find a spectacular lookout towards Lake Ontario from a high point on the Oak Ridges Moraine in Uxbridge.

This event will also give us the opportunity to present some awards to our dedicated trail volunteers, something we have not been able to do over the past two years.

Our special thanks to John Fisher and the Trail Hub group for allowing us to meet at their very special location on the Oak Ridges Moraine, surrounded by the trails we hike so often.

Thank you to the hike leaders below that have indicated their willingness to lead you on our Rendezvous. Register for your preference hike online using your email and password: orta.wildapricot.org



Photo Credit: Vadimas Geguzinskis

SLOW PACE HIKE WITH CAROL FRASER:

Sunday, October 16, 2022—Uxbridge - Brock-Wilder (Durham Rd. 1 / Brock Rd.) ORTA Map 5; 1.5 hours; Join me as we do a loop hike through a mix of open meadow and canopied mature forest trails with moderate hills. This is a Rendezvous hike, so following this outing, meet your fellow hikers at The Hub where you could have lunch, catered by Annina's of Goodwood.

SLOW TO MODERATE PACE HIKE WITH BRIAN AND WILMA MILLAGE:

Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022 - Rendezvous 2022 - Slow/mod-2 hrs.- 930-1130 a.m.- Join us at the Trail Hub, 722 Chalk Lake Rd, Uxbridge, for the resumption of the annual ORTA Fall Rendezvous, with several hikes organized by ORTA hike leaders followed by lunch at the Trail Hub.

MODERATE PACE HIKE WITH BILL MORRISON:

Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022—Rendezvous 2022—Moderate 8km; Moderate pace; 2 hours. Hike through Skyloft / Durham Forest. Hilly. Hike through Skyloft/Durham Forest. Lunch at The Hub.

MODERATE TO FAST PACE HIKE WITH BOB COMFORT:

Sunday Oct 16, 2022, - Rendezvous 2022 Map 5; 13+km; Moderate to fast pace; 3.5 hours. Hike through Skyloft / Durham Forest. Hilly. Lunch at The Hub.

CHECK THE MEMBERS WEBSITE FOR THE FULL LISTING AND REGISTER orta.wildapricot.org if you require assistance please email the office info@oakridgestrail.org and Michele can help sign you up.



**Hiking in
Rabbitkettle
Hot Springs
and Tufa
Mounds
(Nahanni
National
Park Re-
serve) -
Derek
Cowbourne**

In July I finally got to paddle the Broken Skull and Nahanni Rivers of the Northwest Territories, a trip delayed two years by the pandemic. We spent 21 exciting and sometimes wet(!) days on the water, but this brief article is about the most interesting of the hikes that we did, to the Rabbitkettle tufa mounds.

Tufa mounds are created by the precipitation of dissolved minerals from thermal spring water. Here the water is 20 °C year-round and, as it flows from the spring, it radiates outwards over the surface of the tufa mound. Calcium carbonate precipitates out of the spring water and hardens to form tufa. As the calcium carbonate hardens it forms series of intricate terraces and basins, visible in the second photo.

There are two Rabbitkettle mounds, believed to be 10,000 years old, and the larger is 30 m high and 70 m wide and is the largest tufa mound in Canada. They are the only tufa mounds in the world known to be located on permafrost.



The tufa mounds are considered a sacred place by the Dene people and are very fragile. They are accessible only through guided hikes with National Park staff and visitors must remove their shoes and

walk barefoot. Oh, and yes, as the photo shows, some of the canoeing was quite exciting!!!



Top picture: Panorama from the top the mound.

Above: Hiking to the mounds.

Top Right: On top of the mound.

Bottom Right: George's Riffle, a class III rapid on the South Nahanni River.



Harold Revisits ORTA

Those of you who hiked with ORTA pre-2006, couldn't miss the presence of Harold Sellars. He was our Wednesday hike leader, and sometimes Sunday Strolls, and as Executive Director, Harold directed the completion of the eastern Oak Ridges Moraine Trail to Warkworth and Castleton. He made our presence known to the Conservation Authorities and municipalities along the way through countless meetings and emails. By the time those Wednesday hikes were done in the early years, we had completed the entire length of the trail - not so easy to do now.

Harold and Linda moved west to B.C. and love living in the mountains, but still have ties to Ontario and their many friends here.

We were very pleased when he announced a return visit this past summer and a desire to share a trail outing with us.

Several of his Wednesday hiker group were able to join us at the Trail Hub in Uxbridge where our fall Rendezvous will be held this year. We completed a 5km hike along pathways specially designed and constructed by the Trail Hub for hikers and then through the TRCA Skyloft forest trails on a very warm day. Later we returned to lunch and shared tales of the trail in the dining area looking out towards Lake Ontario. Thanks for the memories Harold, and Keep on Trekking.

Brian Millage

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED An organization such as ours cannot be successful and persevere unless it has a large cadre of dedicated volunteers. While we have many members who give generously of their time to ORTA, we can always use additional support. Volunteering is a way to give back to ORTA and can be very rewarding. Positions open currently, Board Member, Whitchurch-Stouffville Chapter Co-Chair, and Publicity Coordinator. If you would like more information on these openings, please contact info@oakridgestrail.org

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