

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTINUING AS A VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION: 2009 –

2009 – 2010

BACK IN VOLUNTEER DIRECTED MODE

The Third Adventure Relay

The event documentation provided by *Life Adventures* included templates so that, for example, the Pledge Forms and publicity materials for the website simply required to be updated each year. Brian and Wilma Millage were co-chairs of the committee which ensured the Third Adventure Relay on Saturday June 20th was a great success. It was clear the relay had become ORTA's Signature Event and Fundraiser for years to come. This story continues in Chapter Eleven.

Uxbridge Designated as the Trail Capital of Canada

Uxbridge was federally designated as The Trail Capital of Canada, on October 3rd, 2009 in recognition of the extensive network of trails throughout the township. *Uxbridge Naturally* had developed nine Town Trails linked into a growing network of Countryside Trails which connected with the two major trails that intersect in the township – the Trans-Canada Trail and the Oak Ridges Trail.

There are also extensive trails through lands managed by Durham Region, TRCA and LSCRA.



ORTA's 2011 Outstanding Member Award was presented to Brian Buckles in recognition of his significant contributions to the development of these hiking trails on the Oak Ridges Moraine.



The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Guidebook

The Fifth Edition delivered from the printers on December 31st 2009 covered the complete moraine-wide trail system. There were three new section maps and revisions throughout on base mapping purchased from *KennKart*. Peter Attfield had once again worked long hours compiling the data and trail notes all under the expert direction of Fiona Cowles.

Leadership Changes

Whilst Stan Butcher as Interim Executive Director was busily tidying off the grant funded projects, the Executive Committee, in particular Peter Schaefer and new Treasurer Kim Aagaard, took on more responsibilities. These included discussions with the ORMLT and STORM on *Working Together for the Oak Ridges Moraine*.

Peter formally became President at the January 2010 Board meeting.

Discovery Nights

This program resumed under the leadership of Diana Smyth and Garry Niece. Here's the program for Winter 2009-2010 as an example of the quality of guest presenters and interesting presentations we have enjoyed:

Thursday December 17: Tracy Simpson of the Canadian Peregrine Foundation – Meet the Raptors.

Thursday January 21: Robert Baker – A Journey to Mount Kinabalu, Borneo.

Thursday February 18: Allan McGillvray – A History of the Glen Major Area

Thursday March 18: Crystal Piche – Artistic Impressions of Killarney, Canadian Painters, the Group of Seven and their associate Emily Carr.



Annual General Meeting – Thursday April 15, 2010.

Last year’s successful experiment of having the AGM on a Thursday evening, usually reserved for Discovery Night at Ballantrae Community Centre was continued. The business included some significant changes to the association’s Constitution; in particular revisions to the Board and Committee structure.



Highlight of the evening was the presentation by Barbara Muirhead on her role as a men’s (!) ski slope supervisor during the Winter Olympics at Whistler, B.C. It was, of course, accompanied by many incredible photographs.

At September’s Discovery Night Rhys Beak, who had been in charge of the Bell Canada facilities at Whistler, gave an account of the complexity of the communication systems.

2010 - 2011

REORGANIZATION

With the ORMF winding down, Judith Reda who had provided both organizations with excellent service as Office Manager during four busy years, left in June for a substantial position with the TRCA. We welcomed her friend Michele Donnelley to our office.

Implementing the New ORTA Regional and Board Structure

The changes agreed in principle during the dialogue led by Ruth Armstong of VISION Management back in 2008 formed the basis for the revisions to the Governance Structure and hence the Constitution. The smaller Board would primarily be responsible for setting policies and standards; Regional Directors would oversee local operations. Peter Schaefer developed the new more workable team composition – see chart opposite. These changes were implemented over time; although no longer defined in the Constitution, Chapters continued wherever leaders formed an effective local committee. See Appendix 4 pages, 414 – 416.

OAK RIDGES TRAIL ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

OWNERSHIP		OVERSIGHT/COORDINATION	
REGIONAL DIRECTORS		BOARD	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
X	Publicity Tools Trail Talk Web E-mail Brochures Mailings Local Media and General Media Guidebook Public Displays and Events	Publicity Director	X
	Trail Management Re-routing Landowner Relations Maintenance and Stewardship	Trail Director	X
X	Membership and Recruitment Volunteer Resource Development Volunteer Recruitment Membership retention and growth	Director M&R	X
X	Activities Local Hiking Social Educational	Vice President	X
	General, Admin and Financial Member database maintenance Treasury Office coordination	Treasurer	X
	Hike Program Hike Coordinator Hike Leader Recruitment Hike Leader Training and Development	Second V. P.	X
		Past President	X
		Secretary	X
		President	X
		Region Director Region Director Region Director Region Director	X rotating
4	TOTALS	13	7

Revitalization of Aurora Chapter

A chapter's organization may decline when key leaders move on and no successors step up despite there being plenty of members locally. This has been particularly noticeable in Aurora; perhaps because the length of trail to be enjoyed is short and folk go out of the urban municipality to hike.

Following contacting all members, on February 25, 2011 a chapter meeting was convened. 30 attended and several newer folk joined with long serving members in accepting new responsibilities.

Annual General Meeting – Thursday April 14th 2011 at Ballantrae

Once again it was a well-attended meeting. The reports from all sections of the association were positive. For example: with more people participating in a larger than ever number of group hikes the cumulative distance hiked in 2010 was 20% higher than in 2008.

President Peter Schaefer noted that with the opening of the east and west gateways the length of the trail is officially 273 km with another 76 km of side trails. This would not have been achieved without the funding and practical support of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation.

A change in our Constitution was approved renaming the trail as the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail.

Guest speaker for the evening Richard Stronks of the Ministry of Natural Resources gave a very interesting and informative talk on Bears in Algonquin Park.



Bears at the Algonquin Park Visitors' Centre, Oxtongue Lake.

Photo by Explorer's Edge

2011 – 2012

ORTA'S TWENTIETH YEAR

Adventure Relay Attracts Increased Participation

The Fifth Annual *Moraine For Life Adventure Relay* on Saturday June 18th 2011 attracted over 450 participants including three teams from Sarnia. For the third year in succession the Durham Mountain Bike Association were in First Place with a record breaking time of 9 hours 45 minutes.

When Stan Butcher made a presentation on the event at the Hike Ontario Annual Summit at Elliot Lake in October there was some skepticism whether all the effort was worthwhile. The event may not be raising as many dollars as was originally anticipated, but the participation of teams from our partners CLOCA, LSCRA, TRCA and York Region Forestry in an event with 100 ORTA Volunteers is of inestimable value to our sense of community and moraine-wide publicity.

School Visits to The Moraine and Trail

In Fall 2011 we complemented YRF staff presentations by leading hikes around the Hollidge Tract for three junior schools in the Markham area. We felt these were of great significance as a high proportion of the students were new Canadians.

Preparing for our Twentieth Anniversary

The Spring 2012 *Trail Talk* featured a full colour cover and was mailed to past as well as current members as part of a 20th Anniversary fundraising campaign.

It included memories from some folk who were involved from the earliest days: Fiona Cowles, Peter Attfield, Teresa Porter, Klaus Wehrenberg, Jill Doble, Tom Rance, Bill Roberts, Eric Worsley, Heather Cooper, our first President, Peter Scholefield and our first Life Member, Tom Beakbane.





From top, left: George Fry, Dean of Seneca College, seated with ORTA Vice-President, Fiona Cowles, to sign agreement on March 27, 1995; standing are Eric Worsley, King Chapter Chair, and Stu Koch, of Seneca Outdoor Recreation. Top, right: Peter Attfield, Teresa Porter, Frank Bowman, and Kris Keating at ORT Steering Committee meeting in fall, 1991. Bottom, right: Bruce Chambers and Carl Finkle, September 1993. Bottom, left: Brian and Wilma Millage, 8th wedding anniversary, December 2011.

INSIDE:
 Down Memory Lane
 Lilac Blossom Hike
 Discover Your World at Home

Trail Developments and The Guidebook, Sixth Edition

The Glasgow Side Trail links the Goodwood Side Trail to a new TRCA parking lot at 2nd Concession and Webb Road, Map 5. It was planned in conjunction with TRCA and constructed with assistance from Levi Strauss volunteers. It was first enjoyed by ORTA Monday Trekkers on November 7th, 2011.

That was just one of many detail changes to the trail system which resulted in the Sixth Edition of The Guidebook published in January 2012.

20th Anniversary Annual General Meeting on Thursday April 19th 2012



Tom Rance, Peter Attfield, Fiona Cowles, Eric Worsley and Bruce Chambers about to cut the 20th Birthday Cake

It also celebrated 15 years since publication of the First Edition of *The Guidebook*.

A resolution of special recognition was presented and approved:

"ORTA acknowledges and appreciates the significant contribution that the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation has made in the course of fulfilling its mandate to the realization of the shared vision of the two organizations to have the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail defined to the eastern and western limits of the Moraine."

Completion of the trail to the eastern termini at Warkworth and Castleton and the western terminus in the Town of Mono were essential elements of the ORMF Grant Funded projects. The Gateway at the western terminus was to be dedicated on Saturday, two days after this AGM. It was our final celebration with the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. See Addendum to Chapter Three, page 315.



Treasurer, Kim Aagaard, reported that we were not spending enough! Monies were available for more trail construction and signage and for additional information kiosks. We need more volunteers available to staff such projects.

Keynote speaker was David Phillips, Chief Climatologist, Environment Canada. His humorous presentation provided much food for thought on the changing climate and its causes.

2012 – 2013

AND A NEW HEADQUARTERS

The Sixth Adventure Relay

Records were set with over 500 competitors in 34 teams including a team of Aurora High School Students and Corporate teams from Golder Associates and Toron Investments. Three teams shared 1st. Place.

The Rice Lake Plains

ORTA's interest in the Oak Ridges Moraine extends beyond the metre or so wide path of the trail to adjoining unique natural habitats and spectacular views across

to Rice Lake and Lake Ontario. Maps 11 and 12 show several adjacent areas which are preserved by Ontario Parks, The Nature Conservancy of Canada, and the Lower Trent Conservation Authority. One such NCC property at the western end of Rice Lake Plains is the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve – it adjoins Robson Road south of the junction of Harwood Road and Oak Ridges Drive. Map 10.

ORTA on hand for opening of Hazel Bird Nature Reserve



Judy Comfort, Brian Millage, Garry Niece, Wilma Backus, Bob Comfort, Mark Stabb (Central Ontario Program Manager, NCC).
By Judy Comfort

On June 10 a small group of ORTA members attended the opening of the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve at NCC's newest Rice Lake Plains project. This 290 acre property is the largest example of unprotected tall grass prairies and oak savannahs in Ontario and it is at the easternmost segment of the Oak Ridges Moraine. On a walk through part of it that day, we watched for the rare hog-nosed snake, red-headed woodpecker, ghost tiger beetle, and blue butterfly. We even helped pull up some invasive non-native Scotch Pine seedlings along the way. The rehabilitation of this heritage plains area looks promising and some of our existing trail on Beaver Meadow Road will traverse this property in the future.

Some Especially Memorable Hikes

Dave Hinton opened his garden several years for us to view his collection of hybrid Azaleas. His 70th Birthday was celebrated during a Spring hike.

For several years a highlight was the late June hike from the Ganaraska Forest Centre after which we were invited to John and Patricia Windatt's incredible garden for a Strawberry Social.

ORTA's New Office

As the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation was winding down Seneca College advised their intent to close the Gatehouse to make major repairs – no surprise to the folk who'd been working there! It would have been too large for the ORMLT and ORTA without the ORMF as the primary tenant. We were looking for new "digs."

After a number of fruitless enquiries we learned of space becoming available at All Saints Anglican Church on Keele Street in King City. ¹

¹ Guess we got to hear of this as Fiona Cowles and Ed Millar were active members of this church.

The ORMLT relocated to Ontario Nature's Cawthra Mulock Nature Reserve, 18462 Bathurst Street, Newmarket, L3Y 4V9 Tel:(905)853-3171.



In addition to a pleasant office it included an exclusive use storage room in the basement for our archives. Volunteers assisted Office Manager Michele Donnelly in packing up and relocation on December 1st, 2012.

ORTA greatly appreciates this facility; when not required for church activities a lounge is available for our Board Meetings and the basement gymnasium for larger meetings; so convenient.

The ORMF's residual activities were integrated with the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition at the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority's offices adjoining the Mabel Davis Conservation Area, Bayview Parkway, Newmarket. Michele is based there three days a week and can be found in our office at King City on Tuesdays and Thursdays; an effective happy working relationship with our moraine partners.

2013 Annual General Meeting at Ballantrae Community Centre

After once again enjoying the social time and a wonderful selection of sandwiches, the reports presented noted that it had been another busy year during which ORTA's local leaders had participated in planning developments with our moraine partners and communities. TRCA were rehabilitating trails and providing additional parking in the Palgrave Forest. In Richmond Hill work commenced on the primary trail through the Jefferson Forest - the east tract of the Oak Ridges Corridor Conservation Reserve east of Bayview Avenue where the new Community Centre includes a Moraine Ecology Centre. Initiatives in Whitchurch-Stouffville included York Region Forestry events at the Hollidge Tract and participation in the Strawberry Festival. The Hiking program continued to be strongly supported in all seasons; nine new Hike Leaders qualified and leaders meet twice a year.

Kim Gavine introduced David Burnett of the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition as the guest speaker. He emphasized the significant work required to fully protect the moraine; in particular there was a need for all moraine partners to participate in preparations for the review of the Act scheduled for 2014.

2013 – 2014

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Seventh Adventure Relay

Since we no longer had our office at the Gatehouse Seneca College generously allowed us to relocate the final Checkpoint #15 to the Log Cabin. This provided a spectacular run-in to the finish line. This year's relay on June 15th 2013 will be particularly remembered for completion by the two person "Team Connini."

Citizens of King Township

At the ceremony on May 1st 2013 Fiona Cowles received the King Township Citizen of the Year Award.

On Sunday September 22nd our new sign at All Saints Church off Doctor's Lane, King City was officially unveiled. Local Councillor Debbie Schaefer welcomed ORTA to the community.

*Ed Millar, Wilma Millage,
Fiona Cowles, Bob Hughes,
Debbie Schaefer and
Brian Millage.*

This was, sadly, the last time we saw Fiona Cowles as she passed away just ten days later on October 2nd. A good number of ORTA

Members joined the large congregation of church and community friends for her Memorial Service. We will always remember the wonderful tribute by her daughter Maggie.



The National Hiking Trail

At a Hike Leaders' Meeting David Francis made us aware of the little known National Hiking Trail (NHT) – not to be confused with the Trans-Canada Trail. Whilst the latter is a multi-use trail – even catering for motorized users in some regions - the NHT seeks to “link Canada together through its trails and hikers as one hiking nation.” The project has been around for over 40 years, and whilst in BC, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland a great job has been done by connecting their hiking trail systems, little has been attempted in Ontario, although Hike Ontario is represented on the Hike Canada En Marche (HCEM.) The board agreed that the ORMT should be part of this trails network.

2014 Annual General Meeting at All Saints Church, King City

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville would no longer allow us to have our own bar under the care of Russ Burton at the Ballantrae Community Centre. So, on April 10th we held our AGM for the first time in the large basement hall of All Saints Church, which was very convenient for Michele and team organizing the event.

A Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bob and Diane Hughes. Diane had been processing Membership applications since 2000. Bob joined the team soon after and designed a custom Membership Database which handled communications, such as renewals and donation tax receipts; he became Membership Coordinator in 2004.

Three new Directors, Kevin Lowe, Lissa Dwyer and Vicki Chan, were elected at the AGM; each soon made their mark with contributions to the system changes reported below. Katrina Bin was the newly appointed *Trail Talk* Editor.

The evening's guest was ORTA Member Mark Stabb, Central Ontario Program Director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada who spoke on "*Protected Spaces on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Where we are, where we need to go.*" He described the conservancy's plans for the Happy Valley and Rice Lake Plains properties under their care. There have been negotiations over the preceding two years, headed up by King Chapter Chair Ed Millar, resulting in ORTA having increased Side Trail access in Happy Valley, TRCA's Humber Source Woods and a Main Trail re-route around Love Mountain. See The Guidebook Map 2.

2014 – 2015 MANY NEW INITIATIVES

Record Participation in the Adventure Relay

The Adventure Relay on June 14th was another great success with 35 teams participating; a head wind created choppy waters on Rice Lake and provided work for the Safety Boats. We note that we've never had to move to the default date on account of inclement weather; this came close.

Technical Advancements

Groundwork for the technical changes summarized below had commenced earlier; they came to fruition over the next two years.

On April 24, 2014 ORTA met another milestone with the launch of *Pay Pal* on the Adventure Relay website.

Live Time reporting of checkpoint data initiated by Bob Comfort and Patricia Ward enabled Michele Donnelly to update the current team positions and announce results at the Finish.

A beautiful new **PowerPoint Presentation** compiled by Joan Burton enhanced our public information meetings.

Publicity Chair Vicki Chan developed the completely new **Website** using *Concrete 5* – “an Open Source Content management system designed for ease of use, for users with a minimum of technical skills to update the pages” – Wikipedia. It has been greatly appreciated by everyone for content including exquisite artwork.



Back in 2011 Hike Coordinator Malcolm Hann had introduced a custom development of an *Excel* spreadsheet in which Hike Leaders directly enter next quarter's offerings; it saved a lot of time and ensured a standard format for the listings. Thanks to Ronald Tring the Hike Schedule can now be uploaded directly in *MS Word* to Trail Talk. Incorporated with the new website are maps showing hike locations; the opportunity to add hikes planned after Trail Talk has been sent to press; and, submission of Hike Reports.



Membership Coordinator Kevin Lowe presented to the January Board meeting criteria for a new association database. It must seamlessly replace that which had served the Membership functions well over a decade. It should be user-friendly so the Office Manager and Directors could each use it for their area of responsibility. *Wild Apricot* – a cloud based Membership Management System was chosen. Conversion took a couple of years; Bob Hughes continued in the background assisting in the transition. It facilitates easy electronic communications with all Members whose email address are in the database or with selected groups such as the Monday Trekkers.

Revitalization of Central Region

Frank Alexander accepted the role of Regional Director and organized meetings in the "chapters." With Kathy Clark stepping down as Aurora Chair – she and Brian moved away soon after – Bruce Corbett agreed to be Chair with Teresa Porter as



Deputy Chair. Teresa had been a member of the CORT Planning Committee, ORTA Treasurer for several years and more recently was active in various committees. Rhys Beak moved from Richmond Hill having worked diligently with TRCA in planning trails east of Bayview Avenue; local members participated at the Mill Pond Splash. Frank continued to head up Whitchurch-Stouffville; activities included booths at the Strawberry Festival.

Relocation of the Western Terminus to Glen Haffy.

The majority of the route established in 2009 from Palgrave Forest to the terminus with the Bruce Trail at Mono was along dusty side-roads. Hikers who started their End-to-End Hikes at Mono expressed disappointment with this first leg. Following a discussion in January 2014 with David Moule, a local landowner and veteran member of the BTA, negotiations were commenced with the BTC and TRCA for the Bruce Side Trail from Palgrave to the Kolodziej Tract to become ORTA's Main Trail. Relocation of the Trailhead on September 15th 2016 is described in Chapter Five.

The Mood Walk Initiative

ORTA joined in partnership with Hike Ontario and Conservation Ontario to lead Mood Walk Hikes for the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) York and South Simcoe branch. CMHA made their clients aware of the opportunity to become more active and live healthier lives; both physically and mentally.

Between June 11 and October 29, 2014 Jerry Wasjgensberg assisted by Peter Schaefer and Klaus Wehrenberg led 10 hikes with a total of 117 participants accompanied by CMHA staff. Time and transportation constraints limited this program to venues in and around Aurora: Sheppard's Bush, The Arboretum, Hadley Grange Ecological Reserve and Jefferson Forest. The mood was enhanced by Klaus playing his Concertina and his knowledge of nature along these trails. Nine of the staff and participants subsequently participated in the Safe Hiker Program; the first group to receive Safe Hiker Certificates from Hike Ontario.

Trail Bites in Trail Talk.

ORTA hikers have become an increasingly sociable bunch and Après Hike refreshments are not just an opportunity for rehydration. A new feature in Trail Talk in Summer 2014 was Trail Bites. Where else could Wilma Millage choose for the first location in this series but Sheena's Kitchen in Schomberg, home of the famous Lemon Cake?

In the same issue the Blossom Café at Pathways to Perennials in Pottageville advertised their "Trail Trekker's Lunch."

In Winter 2015 Michele Donnelly wrote about the café at Pine Farms Orchard; she is not the only one to declare their Wicked Thai as the favourite lunchtime soup.



In Spring 2015 Kim Aagaard wrote about Rhino's Roadhouse in Bewdley. It was already well known to ORTA Hikers as one of the places Harold Sellers used to choose for a good beer and fries.



Sadly in September it burnt down – but it reopened on June 12, 2016, - just in time for the Adventure Relay spectators' to enjoy breakfast.

Bill Patterson described his enjoyment of lunch at Annina's Bake Shop in Goodwood. He appreciated the servers bringing meals upstairs and the wide variety of baked goods for sale. Sitting at the window in Summer 2015 we watched filming of an episode of the CBC comedy series *Schitt's Creek*.

Trail Talk continues to be an important publication. Despite communication options such as the website, many people it seems still like to have the Hike Schedule in hard copy. Does reading stories of people and events in a printed journal have a warmer feel than on a computer screen? Over the next while it will be noticed that *Trail Talk* is more frequently in full colour.

Special Board Meetings and an Amended Mission Statement -

On August 23, 2014 the Board had spent a full day reviewing the current status of the association and future directions using the format of a "SWOT" Analysis. This was a particularly valuable exchange between new and returning Directors. It was

felt a simpler statement of purpose was needed than the Objects in the Letters Patent and reflecting the fact that the trail had been completed. At their meeting on January 24, 2015 an amended Mission Statement was drafted for approval by Members at the AGM:

To build and maintain a public hiking trail system on the Oak Ridges Moraine, *off-road where possible*;² and,

to organize and promote hiking on this trail system and encourage responsible stewardship of the Moraine's natural environment.

Thursday April 16, 2015

Annual General Meeting at King City

Again this year the meeting was preceded by a short hike around the Eaton Hall and Seneca College grounds led by Peter Schaefer.

The business session dealt with the amended Mission Statement and the reports presented focused on the developments noted above.

A Lifetime Achievement Award was presented by Past President Peter Schaefer to Stan Butcher recognizing his years of service as a Director, President and Interim Executive Director. An Outstanding Member Award was made to David Francis who had been a guiding light to the association, facilitating ORTA's Planning Retreats in 1999 and 2005 and through his outstanding service to Hike Ontario for over 20 years.

The guest speaker was Rick Stronks, Chief Naturalist, Algonquin Provincial Park. His presentation *Wolves of Algonquin Park* was much appreciated – especially his audible and visual illustrations.



² The phrase "*off-road where possible*" was added at the AGM on an amending motion moved by Klaus Wehrenberg

2015 – 2016 REVITALIZATION CONTINUES

The revised ORMT route to the new terminus with the Bruce Trail became a reality attracting new local Trail Captains Dave and Jill Whiffen and Bogdan and Kim Ivic.

Frank Alexander helped set up a meeting in the Fall of Scogog Chapter which resulted in Monika Rothman and Bill Morrison becoming co-chairs. They organized participation in a number of events staged by CLOCA (Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority – their *Cloca Nuts* are regular participants in the Adventure Relay) and the City of Oshawa.

Ninth Adventure Relay

Instead of the day before Fathers’ Day, the event was held a week earlier on June 13, 2015 to avoid clashing with other fundraisers. A good number of local businesses were successfully solicited for supporting donations.

George and Denise Jones, new owners of the property where the race starts, readily agreed to continue the tradition especially when they realized the thousands of volunteer hours contributed each year by ORTA Members. Their neighbours Mike and Sarah Herati continued their support.

There were three team categories: Corporate, Elite and Recreational.

Growing Participation in the Hiking Program

Under the leadership of Malcolm Haan the hiking program continued to grow in all facets. Twice each year Malcolm brought the Hike Leaders together for a meeting. Here the newer leaders were able to discuss issues with those with years of experience. Each year new leaders qualified; Malcolm reported that in 2015 the 366 group hikes led by 28 hike leaders.

Participation in the Wednesday hikes was less than a decade ago as some “graduated” to the Monday Trekkers option. New leaders added variety to the hikes offered by way of days of the week; location; distance and speed.

Malcolm organized an End-to-End series at quite an arduous pace to cover the whole distance in 13 stages starting on April 6th and finishing at Castleton on September 8th: nine E2E badges were presented. Meanwhile, in September Brian and Wilma Millage commenced a moderate paced End-to-End series, 10 to 12 km legs, which continued into the next year.

Following is a comparison of hike statistics for several years.

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Number of hikes	366	371	345	319	350	288
Number of hikers	4,501	4,192	4,021	4,606	4,813	4,220
Distance walked (Km)	41,805	37,349	39,968	43,176	44,328	44,258

The above numbers don’t include the Adventure Relay, hikes for registered hikers such as the 2015 E2E, Monday morning fast hikes and accessibility walks.

David Francis organized an expedition to check out the fairies on Beausoleil Island, Fairy Lake, on September 14th. Getting to this National Park was by boats provided by Parks Canada from Honey Harbour. This popular adventure was repeated in 2016 with three different hikes offered to suit participants’ abilities.

Aurora Trail Re-Route Option Approved by the Ontario Municipal Board

Prime amongst desired improvements has been to get the trail off-road across the Highland Gate Golf Course. A developer’s proposed route would have placed the trail on a sidewalk very close to housing. Aurora Chapter’s input to an appeal was crucial; in December 2016 the OMB ruled in favour of an alternate plan providing a “greatly expanded trail network.” See details in Chapter Five.

Thursday April 21, 2016 AGM at King City

Kevin Lowe succeeded Wilma Millage as President. Wilma's four years at the helm had been busy as the volunteer association embraced new challenges. Past President Peter Schaefer continued ORTA's active participation in Hike Ontario.



ORTA Board 2016 – 2017: Garry Niece, Brian Millage, Lissa Dwyer, Kevin Lowe, Ed Millar, Wilma Millage, and Peter Schaefer.

Kim Aagaard had made significant contributions as a member of the Executive Committee in addition to his duties as Treasurer winding up the Strategic Plan financial accounts. Kim was presented with the Outstanding Member Award. A Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Ed Millar recognizing his many years work developing – by negotiated agreements and physical work - the trail system in King Township.

Membership Fees were increased to \$40 from June 1st.

The guest speaker was Richard Scott, Senior Planner, Rouge National Urban Park and of course his subject was Rouge Park. An exciting development - Canada's first urban National Park. Members recalled that former ORTA Publicity Director Diana Smythe heads up the hiking program in the park.



2016 – 2017 ORTA'S TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR

Corporate Volunteer Days

The **Levi Strauss** company has a policy whereby employees volunteer in a variety of worthwhile endeavours. For several years a group has come out for a day's construction and maintenance on various sections of the ORMT. May 16th this year was a beautiful day – last year had been a rain-out - and they enjoyed working under the direction of Garry Niece on trails in the Secord property, in particular brush cutback and reblazing of the Secord Side Trail.

On May 26th sixteen enthusiastic **IBM** Volunteers joined Brian Millage and our Uxbridge Maintenance team in further work around the Secord property. One group helped relocate and repair boardwalks on the Side Trail whilst the other cleaned up the Secord length of the Main Trail – ready for the Adventure Relay.

Tenth Annual Moraine Adventure Relay – June 11, 2016

Seneca College, King Campus, was unable to accommodate the Finish due to improvements to the parking lot between the Gate House and Log Cabin. Thanks to the Country Day School for use of their facilities, further south off Dufferin Street, for the Finish. *See Chapter Eleven.*

Seven Marathons in Seven Days - #ORMT 300 End to End

On Sunday, August 28th Kelly Matthews set off from the new west terminus at Glen Haffy to hike along the entire length of the ORMT to Warkworth in seven days – a record attempt challenge which she had created for herself over the previous winter and prepared for by increased personal fitness training through the spring.



Kelly is the Manager of Community Recreation, King Day Camp and Seneca's Outdoor Education Centre. As she explained at a Discovery Night and wrote in Trail Talk, her second purpose was:

“To raise money and generate awareness for two fundraising campaigns that are incredibly important to me . . . the ORTA ‘Experience the Moraine Campaign’ and Seneca College’s ‘King Campus Expansion Campaign’ . . . I hope to raise at least \$5,000.” . . . “I will be completing this trek completely on my own . . . living out of my backpack for seven days. . . . To make up the 300 km of trail I will be utilizing all of the main ORMT and some of the side trails.” . . . “If you see me along the trail during my seven day adventure . . . I take my ‘Timmies’ double-double.”

Several ORTA Members keenly embraced the project, which raised almost \$9,500, with practical support along the way whilst many others followed on www.canadahelps.org/en/pages/ormt-300. Kelly arrived on schedule at Warkworth on Saturday September 3rd.

Her account from Winter Trail Talk is in Appendix 6.2. At the AGM she was acclaimed 2016 – 2017 Member of the Year.

Oak Ridges Moraine Trail West Kiosk Dedication - September 15th 2016

A very significant change to the ORMT was made in 2015 when ORTA took over the BTA's Palgrave side trail making it our main trail joining the Bruce Trail at Glen Haffy. This final development is recounted on the last page of Chapter Five.

15 Years of Protection for the Oak Ridges Moraine

On Monday April 24th, 2017 Klaus Wehrenberg and Michele Donnelly represented ORTA at Queen's Park along with representatives of Ontario Nature, EcoSpark, STORM Coalition, Earthroots and other advocates to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. John Munro, MPP for York Simcoe acknowledged all these groups in a speech in the Legislature. Revisions to the plan approved in May took effect July 1st, 2017.

ORTA Twenty-fifth Anniversary Annual General Meeting - April 27, 2017

With almost 100 people in attendance – one of the best ever – the gathering time once again featured delicious refreshments and beverages. In addition to developments described above, President Kevin Lowe observed the many highlights for the association over the past year. The Wild Apricot Database became fully operational saving considerable time in managing members' accounts and data. The guidebook was updated – Edition 6.1 reflects changes to the western end trail sections in the Palgrave area.

After completion of the formal business we welcomed Toronto's former Mayor and current Commissioner for the Waterfront Trail Foundation, the Honourable David Crombie. Having contributed to the 1991 meeting which led to the formation of ORTA and keynote speaker at our 10th Anniversary.

He expressed great pride in the success of ORTA and all the people who have contributed to make it work. ORTA's people were revolutionaries, on the forefront of the revolution in building a positive relationship with nature.

Reflecting back many years he honoured Charles Sauriol as a pioneer trail advocate, “father” of the concept of conservation areas, and Jane Jacobs who encouraged people to participate in their local communities. He suggested ORTA

is continuing their legacy. Toronto is largely defined by its waterfront and the moraine, thus the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail contributes enormously to the quality of life for everyone. These contributions extend beyond the physical to the economic, ecological and social, all of which are interdependent.³

In closing, he deftly answered some excellent questions posed by members. His charisma was very much appreciated by all. David promised to be with us when we celebrate our 35th!



L to R: Marlaine Koehler, Executive Director, Waterfront Regeneration Trust; Klaus Wehrenberg, Director at Large, Municipal Liaison; Ed Millar, Director at Large, King Chapter Chair; Brian Millage, Regional Director (East & West); Garry Niece, Vice President and Trail Director; Lissa Dwyer, Secretary; David Crombie, Commissioner for Waterfront Trail Foundation, Guest Speaker; Kevin Lowe, President; Wilma Millage, Past President; Robert Alexander, Treasurer; Peter Schaefer, Director, Trail Club Relations; Frank Alexander, Regional Director (Central), Whitchurch-Stouffville Chapter CoChair

³ SGB. Note from Chapter One: it was the 1991 report of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront which recognized this ecosystem approach to environmental planning; put simply “everything is connected to everything else” and “people are to be considered an integral part of the environment.” This has remained David Crombie’s mantra over the years. We are honoured that our association’s achievements are recognized as one of the successful practical outcomes of his work.

Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebrations continued to the end of 2017

A 25 Year Crest was designed by Brian Millage. This was awarded to each person who participated in any 25 listed ORTA Group Hikes between January 1st and December 31st 2017.



The variety of opportunities presented by ORTA’s Group Hiking Program continued to generate enthusiastic support. At least a third of the 300 plus offerings each year are beyond the ORMT. In particular this September there were “out of town” challenging hikes in the Hardy Lake Wilderness led by David Francis and on Beausoleil Island led by Malcolm Hann.

The Eleventh Adventure Relay was on Saturday June 10th, 2017.

ORTA Rendezvous 25 Celebration on Sunday October 1. 70 hikers participated in one of four hikes on the beautiful forest trails of Uxbridge. Then the party began at Goodwood Community Centre where more folk joined adding to the great selection of pot-luck dishes – what a feast!



Several of the newly designed ORMT End2End badges and twelve more “25 Hike” badges, bringing the number of recipients to 38, were presented.

And, not surprisingly, a great crowd gathered once again at Goodwood on December 4, 2017 for the Millages’ 14th Anniversary Hike and Hikers’ Christmas Party.

**We celebrate all who have contributed to make the
Oak Ridges Trail Association
the ongoing volunteer organization expressing the Founders’ Vision.**

APPENDIX 4 ORTA DIRECTORS AND KEY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2009 – 2010

Executive Committee

President from January 2010	Peter Schaefer
Vice-President	vacant
Past President	Stan Butcher
Secretary	Jill Doble
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Trails Director	Garry Niece
Membership Coordinator	Bob Hughes
Publicity Director	Diana Smyth

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	vacant
Whitchurch-Stouffville	vacant
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Scugog	vacant
Clarington	vacant
Hope-Hamilton	Petra Hartwig
Northumberland	Tim Lawley
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak

Directors

Fund Raising to end 2009	Peter Schaefer
Trail Talk Editor	Jacqueline Gazley
Volunteers Coordinator	vacant
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Hike Coordinator	Malcolm Hann
Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Special Projects	Wilma Millage
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton

Executive Director to end of July Harold Sellers
 Interim Executive Director from August Stan Butcher
 Office Manager Judith Reda

2010 – 2011

Executive Committee

President	Peter Schaefer
Secretary	Jill Doble
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Past President	Stan Butcher
Vice-President – Trails	Garry Niece
Vice-President – Publicity and Volunteers	Diana Smyth
Vice-President – Membership	Bob Hughes

Chapter Chairs

Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Frank Alexander
Uxbridge	Brian Millage
Northumberland	Tim Lawley
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak

Directors

Trail Talk Editor	Jacqueline Gazley
Hike Coordinator	Malcolm Hann
Guidebook	Fiona Cowles
Webmaster	Susan Sellers
Special Projects	Wilma Millage
Director-at-Large	Audrey Fullerton

Other vacancies were not being filled as steps were begun to implement the new governance structure approved at the 2010 AGM

Interim Executive Director to July 2010 Stan Butcher
 Office Manager to July 20: Judith Reda
 Succeeded by Michele Donnelly

2011 – 2012

Executive Committee

President	Peter Schaefer
Vice-President & Trail Director	Garry Niece
Past President & Aurora	Stan Butcher
Secretary	Patricia Ward
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Membership & Hiking Operations	Bob Hughes
Regional Director	Brian Millage
	Uxbridge, Scugog, Clarington

Directors

Regional Director	Tim Lawley
	Hope Hamilton, Northumberland
Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Frank Alexander
Publicity and Recruitment	Wilma Millage

This continued the process of implementing the new governance structure approved.

Office Manager Michele Donnelly

2012 – 2013

Executive Committee

President	Wilma Millage
Past President	Peter Schaefer
Vice-President & Trail Director	Garry Niece
Secretary	Patricia Ward
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Adventure Relay Chair &	Brian Millage
Regional Director - Uxbridge, Scugog, Clarington	
Regional Director – West	Stan Butcher

Directors

Membership	Bob Hughes
Director at Large	Joan Burton
Caledon	Sheilagh Crandall
King	Ed Millar
Aurora	Kathryn Clark
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Frank Alexander

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor	Jacqueline Bapooji
Guidebook Chair	Fiona Cowles
Hike Co-ordinator	Malcolm Hann
Webmaster	Hannah Sweet
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Administration

Office Manager	Michele Donnelly
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This continued the process of implementing the new governance structure.

2013 – 2014

Executive Committee

President	Wilma Millage
Past President	Peter Schaefer
Vice-President & Trail Director	Garry Niece
Secretary &	Patricia Ward
Adventure Relay Co-Chair	
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Regional Director (East)	Brian Millage
& Adventure Relay Co-Chair	
Regional Director (West)	Stan Butcher

Directors

King	Ed Millar
Aurora	Kathryn Clark
Richmond Hill	Rhys Beak
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Frank Alexander
Membership	Bob Hughes
Director at Large	Joan Burton

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor	Jacqueline Bapooji
Guidebook Chair	Fiona Cowles
Hike Co-ordinator	Malcolm Hann
Webmaster	Hannah Sweet
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Administration

Office Manager	Michele Donnelly
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This continued the process of implementing the new governance structure.

2014 – 2015

Executive Committee

President	Wilma Millage
Vice-President & Trail Director	Garry Niece
Past President	Peter Schaefer
Secretary &	Patricia Ward
Adventure Relay Co-Chair	
Treasurer	Kim Aagaard
Regional Director East &	Brian Millage
Adventure Relay Co-Chair	
Regional Director Central	Stan Butcher

Directors

King	Ed Millar
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Frank Alexander
Volunteers	Lissa Dwyer
Publicity and Fundraising	Vicki Chan
Membership	Kevin Lowe

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor	Katrina Bin
Guidebook	Peter Attfield
Hike Co-ordinator	Malcolm Hann
Webmaster	Hannah Sweet
Northumberland	Tim Lawley

Administration

Office Manager	Michele Donnelly
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This more or less completed the process of implementing the new governance structure.

2015 – 2016*Executive Committee*

President Wilma Millage
 Vice-President & Trail Director Garry Niece
 Past President Peter Schaefer
 Secretary & Volunteers Director Lissa Dwyer
 Treasurer Kim Aagaard
 Regional Director East & Brian Millage
 West & Adventure Relay Co-Chair
 Regional Director Central Frank Alexander
 & Whitchurch-Stouffville Chair

Directors

King Ed Millar
 Membership Kevin Lowe
 Publicity Director Diane Anderson

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor Katrina Bin
 Guidebook Peter Attfield
 Adventure Relay Co-Chair Patricia Ward
 Aurora Co- Chair Bruce Corbett
 Aurora Co-Chair Teresa Porter
 Hike Co-ordinator & Malcolm Hann
 Richmond Hill Co-Chair
 Webmaster & Vicki Chan
 Richmond Hill Co-Chair
 Northumberland Tim Lawley

Administration

Office Manager Michele Donnelly

2016 – 2017*Executive Committee*

President Kevin Lowe
 Vice-President & Trail Director Garry Niece
 Past President Wilma Millage
 Secretary Lissa Dwyer
 Treasurer Robert Alexander
 Regional Director East & Brian Millage
 West & Adventure Relay Co-Chair

Directors

King Ed Millar
 Director, Trail Club Relations Peter Schaefer

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor Katrina Bin
 Guidebook Peter Attfield
 Volunteer Co-ordinator Gaye Mas
 Adventure Relay Volunteers Corie Bonnafon
 Webmaster Bob Charlton
 Aurora Chair Bruce Corbett
 Hike Co-ordinator & Malcolm Hann
 Richmond Hill Co-Chair
 Richmond Hill Co-Chair Vicki Chan
 Whitchurch-Stouffville Co-Chair Jim Rhyness
 Scugog Chapter Co-Chairs Bill Morrison &
 Monika Rothman
 Eastern Trail Liaison Kim Aagaard

Administration

Office Manager & Michele Donnelly
 Adventure Relay Co-Chair

2017 – 2018*Executive Committee*

President Kevin Lowe
 Vice-President & Trail Director Garry Niece
 Past President Wilma Millage
 Secretary Lissa Dwyer
 Treasurer Robert Alexander
 Regional Director East & Brian Millage
 West & Adventure Relay Co-Chair
 Director, Trail Club Relations Peter Schaefer

Directors

Regional Director Central Frank Alexander
 & Whitchurch-Stouffville Co-Chair
 Municipal Liaison Klaus Wehrenberg
 King Ed Millar

Key Committee Members

Trail Talk Editor Marilyn Bardeau
 Guidebook Peter Attfield
 Volunteer Co-ordinator Gaye Mas
 Adventure Relay Volunteers Corie Bonnafon
 Webmaster Bob Charlton
 Hike Co-ordinator Malcolm Hann
 Adventure Relay Co-Chair Patricia Ward
 History and Archives Stan Butcher
 Aurora Chair Bruce Corbett
 Richmond Hill Co-Chairs Linda Weston &
 Briefon Feng
 Whitchurch-Stouffville Co-Chair Jim Rhyness
 Scugog Bill Morrison
 Eastern Trail Liaison Kim Aagaard

Administration

Office Manager & Michele Donnelly
 Adventure Relay Co-Chair