



OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

- 3rd Greenlands Centre Wellington workshop, "Designing Your Future Community", March 1, 2008. (p.4)
- Members are eligible to win prizes. Details on p.4.
- Sat. October 4: hike along a section of the Trailway as part of "Sensational Elora".

From the Chair

In 2007 the Elora Cataract Trailway received recognition from the Ontario Heritage Trust by being listed in the Trails Open Ontario magazine. The Heritage Trust also sponsored the tree planting activity held on September 16 when many association members gathered near the Gerrie Rd. trailhead to witness the planting of a grove of oak trees and the dedication of a plaque in recognition of the contributions to the trail of Deryk and Shirley Smith. Nonie Crete was

present to perform a musical tribute to the Trailway which she wrote for the occasion.

During 2007 the association continued its program of tree planting along the trail. In October, local volunteers and students from Rockway Mennonite School, Kitchener, worked under the ever watchful eye of Barrie Hopkins to plant 200 trees and bushes along the Trestle Bridge Trail. Thanks to Barrie for his continued work greening our community. (A timely article written by Barrie, a former board member of ECTA, and first published in 1988 appears in this newsletter.)

As we look ahead to 2008 I am pleased to report that the Association is working on three exciting initiatives. We have been invited to participate in the 2008 Trails Open magazine which gives exposure province wide to our community and trail. The local Heritage committee is in the process of



Deryk and Shirley Smith



having the Trailway designated a "Heritage Feature", in recognition of its historical significance as a transportation corridor. In addition, the trailway association has agreed to conduct, on Saturday October 4, a hike along a section of the Trailway as part of "Sensational Elora". More news about these events and activities related to them will appear in the local newspapers and on the trailway website, www.trailway.org. We hope that association members will participate.

Members are invited to join us at the Annual General meeting, April 20, 2008 and are urged to promote memberships in the association among neighbours and friends. Check the details of our 2008 membership drive lucky draw to be held at the A.G.M. Each new member you introduce to ECTA brings you one step closer to a \$100 voucher good at a variety of local businesses.

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Bits and Pieces

(11-27-89)

The following article first appeared in the Wellington Advertiser in November of 1989, almost twenty years ago when the first meetings were being held to propose the conversion of the abandoned C.P right-of-way to a walking/hiking nature trail to join Elora and Cataract. Barrie's detailed vision aptly describes what hundreds of citizens are currently enjoying on the Trailway. It seemed appropriate to have this article read during the tree planting ceremony which honoured Deryk Smith's contribution to the Trailway last September. It seems appropriate to include Barrie's musings in our spring newsletter. We must keep this vision alive as our region enters a stage of more concentrated housing development.

Gail Brown

Rail Trails

There is a railroad right-of-way that runs 47.5 kilometres from Elora to the Cataract. It runs through a very scenic region of both Wellington and Dufferin counties, winding its way through rolling hills and wooded ravines of the Grand River valley, passing through, and near, the small communities of Elora, Fergus, Belwood, Orton, Hillsburgh and Erin.

Throughout the corridors of time, it has known many travelers and changes. Giant steam-powered locomotives once stood impatiently panting at the stations, waiting to haul material riches to the markets of the nation. But times have changed. C.P. Rail, lacking the grasp of economic change, dropped the service to the point of disuse. No longer will we hear the lonely whistle wail in the darkness of the night, nor will we longer listen to the lament of powerful labouring diesels struggling to move the freight on this section of the track. The great railroad building age of the latter nineteenth century has come, sadly, to an end, just as the twentieth century likewise draws to a close.

Perhaps the shrinking of this great empire, whose giant machines once munched their way across our countryside, devouring our past, has left in its wake the creation of a far better place for the needs of our future. We must jump at this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and convert the railway's abandoned right-of-ways to trails, linking these narrow ribbons of open space one to the other, creating linear parks, spider webbing our province.

A couple of nights and a while or so ago, I had the privilege and opportunity of joining a gathering of about seventy concerned citizens. They were attending the initial meeting discussing the possible use of these abandoned lines. Rail lines, like all else that is abandoned, sooner or later becomes a problem. Disuse encourages abuse and misuse; lacking methods of control. This is not in the public's interest; converting rails to trails is.

What I saw at this meeting was the public of three generations. When I looked around at the calibre of persons among which we mingled, I realized that, breaching the standards of economics, an across the board wilderness exists in the human animal's heart which refuses to be extinguished; and though it may appear to be in some sense old or out of fashion, each entertained interior thoughts harbouring a place for bunny rabbits, robin nests, buzzing bees busy among native flowers; and uninhibited nooks with crystal water brooks, near which sweet scented ferns unfurl their curly-cue spicy fronds, and from which dappled fawns drink and speckled trout jump for sheer joy. I feel no shame in proffering memories of childhood emotions, for I felt privileged to be among their midst, sharing their fears of the future; for there would be no sight sadder than a polluted stream where no child fishes.

What I heard was not a diehard group of preservationists. What I heard was an expressed determination striving to make a better future for those of the upcoming generations. A place where one can relax the outcry of whipped nerves; where one can ride a bike, walk or hike, jog or saunter, wiggle or wobble, away from the traffic. A place with Moms and baby carriages, Daddies with strollers, and Kids pulled in wagons. A place where Grandmas can wander and toddlers can toddle; and Grandpas can dawdle if they so should want. A place for teens to go with one, with whom, to while away an hour or two, sprawled on the lee of a sunny bank; out of the wind, soaking up the atmosphere and chatting the talk of the teen.

A walking/hiking nature trail is a tremendous passive recreation which may or may not be fully appreciated until future development has further stressed existing recreational resources. Nevertheless, this railway right-of-way should be acquired and retained in the public domain, at all cost, for whatever need of the future.

Hills of Headwaters Workshop Informs & Challenges

The Headwaters' Trail Working Group, a citizen advocacy organization, hosted a workshop at the Mono Community Centre in October, 2007. Ric Goodfellow, Ian Rankine and Tom Skimson represented the Elora Cataract Trailway Association.

The Working Group shared their vision, mandate and workplan:

Vision:

- a safe, interconnected network of multi-use but non-motorized trails, bike lanes and walkways throughout the Regions of Dufferin County, North Caledon and Eastern Wellington;
- trails seen as essential component of community **infrastructure** and financed appropriately.

Mandate:

- advocate for trails with various levels of government and non-governmental organizations;
- develop an inventory and map of existing trails in the region;
- identify priorities for future development.

Workplan:

- promote the health, environmental and economic benefits of trails to the community;
- learn from "best practices" of other trailway groups;
- link existing trails within the region.

This workshop challenges the membership of the E.C.T.A. to act locally.

E.C.T.A. Initiative Proposals

- present amendments supporting trailways to the Township of Centre Wellington's Official Plan before June 2009;
- inventory and map all trails [urban and rural] within the Township;
- develop new and promote existing short urban loop trails for both tourists and citizens;
- host a workshop with Waterloo County to explore links with Wellington County trails.

Last fall we honoured two of the founders of our trailway: hard work turned a dream into a reality. Our task is to grow the dream. Growth is coming to Centre Wellington and the Headwaters' Working Group rightly asserts that **"trail development keep pace with population growth"**. Contact our web-site to volunteer to help grow our trailways.

Ian Rankine



Bits and Pieces, cont.

What I can foresee is the inauguration of a rail trail campaign that will not accept 'no' or rejection as an answer; for if this opportunity slips by and is lost, it will be a once in a lifetime loss, gone for ever and forever and forever.

The goal suggested for supportive memberships is minimal at 2000 members; with a token fee of only \$5.00 each. If this membership can be quickly reached, governments will listen. Do your bit, folks, five bucks ain't going t' break y'; and what a wonderful affordable lasting gift to your children, grandchildren, neighbours and friends. Buy a mitt full of memberships and dole them out proudly. This right-of-way **IS** going to be saved for the future. You can pick memberships up at my place of business.

Take care, 'cause we care,

Barrie Hopkins



2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting will be held Sunday April 20, 2 – 4 p.m. at the Belwood Hall.

Deryk Smith has agreed to bring the membership up to date on the activities of Greenlands Centre Wellington.

We look forward to welcoming you on April 20.

News from CVC

Victoria Maines,
Lands Technician, CVC

The Elora Cataract Trailway is a unique linear conservation area and an important element to Credit Valley Conservation's (CVC) system of conservation areas.

The Elora Cataract Trailway offers an excellent background for visitors to participate in a number of recreational activities; including hiking, bike riding, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and sightseeing. The Trailway also provides a unique opportunity for visitors to gain an appreciation for both the natural and cultural landscapes of the Credit River watershed. Running from the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park in Cataract, westward towards the Town of Erin, and on through Hillsburgh into the Grand River watershed, the Elora Cataract Trailway represents an important regional greenspace and as such, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority is continually working towards maintaining and upgrading the Trailway. Resurfacing was completed late in the fall of 2007 for the following sections of the Trailway:

- From the 6th Line in Erin to Station Road in Hillsburgh;
- From County Rod 22 East to the 8th line in Erin;
- From 8th Line to 17th Side Road in Erin.

Additionally, CVC is working with the Ontario Trail Riders Association and has the support of the Elora Cataract Trailway Association to erect a memorial stepping block, honouring the memory of Rhonda Rathbun. Rhonda was a beloved member and a passionate supporter of the Elora Cataract Trailway. The memorial will be housed at the Hillsburgh staging area off of Station Street, and it is expected to be in place by the summer of 2008.

The upkeep and safe use of the Trailway by all visitors is important to CVC and as such we would like to remind all users to please stay on the groomed trail surface and to always practice appropriate trail etiquette. Additionally, for all equestrian users on the Trailway, please keep in mind that **horse-use is not permitted** on the Trailway between **March 15 and May 31**. The temporary closure of the trail for horse-use is put into effect in order to maintain trail safety and surface conditions. Also, CVC would like all visitors to note that motorized vehicles, with the exception of snowmobiles in designated areas, are prohibited at all times along the Elora Cataract Trailway.

MEMBERSHIP PRIZE DRAW

I wish to thank those members who renew their trailway association membership each year. Those memberships allow us to operate as an association and to contribute to upkeep and improvements to the trail. Adding to our membership would permit us to do even more.

The board has decided this year to offer three draw prizes each worth \$ 100 to members who have renewed their membership or who have introduced new members to the association. The prize will be in the form of a voucher which the winner can spend at any of the businesses who advertise in our 2007 pamphlet. The draw will take place at the Annual General Meeting on April 20.

Each member who has renewed their membership (including 5 year memberships) for 2008 will receive one ballot in the draw. In addition, each member who convinces a friend or neighbour to take out a membership will receive one additional ballot (for each new member). Please ask the new member to print the member's name on the back of the membership application.

You will receive blank applications with this newsletter and additional forms can be printed on the website or phone 519-846-5635 to ask for more forms.

Tom Skimson

GREENLANDS CENTRE WELLINGTON WORKSHOP

Greenlands Centre Wellington is holding the third in a series of workshops on **Saturday March 1, 2008**. The workshop, titled "*Designing Your Future Community*" will be held at the Fergus Sportsplex between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. For further details or to pre-register check www.greenlandscw.org or call 519-843-3650.

For further information about Credit Valley Conservation, our conservation areas, or upcoming events and activities, please give us a call at 1-800-668-5557 or visit our website at www.creditvalleycons.com.

