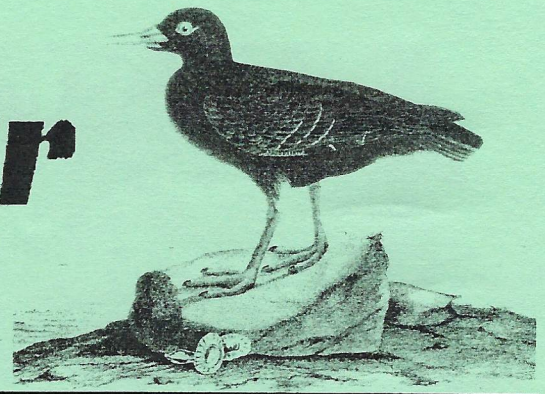


Oystercatcher

The Newsletter of the

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club

Fall 2003



Calendar



Nov. 27

Social in United Church.
7:30 p.m.



Dec. 9

Christmas Lunch.
Meaden Hall. 11:30 a.m.



Jan. 22

Pot Luck and AGM.
Meaden Hall
Doors open 5:30
Supper 6:30
AGM 7:30



President's Message

Dear Members,

I hope you all had a great summer. So far the Fall schedule has got off to a fine start with a successful fall trip to Squamish, in spite of weather and the fire ban, and then a delicious Blackberry Festival. Thanks to Al Robertson for overseeing that.

I should alert you all to the arrival of the TRAIL AND NATURE CLUB WEBSITE. Thanks to the valiant efforts of Lynn Thompson you can now access the schedule at:

<http://saltspring.gulfislands.com/lthompson/>

(Make sure you type in the address exactly as written)

We have two interesting speakers for the October and November socials, and of course the Christmas lunch and the January pot luck and AGM.

Your executive would like you to think about the two annual trips and how they are organized. It has usually fallen to the executive to arrange them, but recent developments have caused us to revisit this topic. For the last several trips the Ramblers have preferred to go their own way, and there is a group of keen hikers that would like to do the same but has so far not acted on that. Should they do so, the trips would more or less be trips for the walkers. So the question is: should each sub-group organize their own trip? Also, in spite of the best recruiting efforts of the organizers, the number of participants seems to be steadily declining.

There will be a full discussion of this at the AGM, so we ask that you all think about this and make your views known then.

Your President,
Simon Rook

OYSTERCATCHER

Oystercatcher is published three times annually. Comments, articles or ideas are welcome. Mail them to Oystercatcher, Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club, Box 203, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V9

<http://saltspring.gulfislands.com/lthompson/>





Trail Mix

New Members:

Kees & Nieke VISSER

Terry SIMARD

Marise PACKER

John MCCAWE



Taxi Fare: Remember, \$1 for a trip to North End, \$2 to South End, Ruckle Park, \$3 to Musgrave, etc.
Day trips off-island, \$0.25/km.



Email : If you now have an Email address, send it to Membership Secretary Lynn Thompson at lthompson@saltspring.com



Fall Trip to Squamish

Our fall outing this year was to Squamish from September 8th to the 11th. The prospects for this trip coming off at all were definitely “iffy “ towards the end of August. A total ban on the use of all trails in southwest B.C., due to extreme fire hazard had put our planned trip in jeopardy. However, our esteemed Presidente persisted, and discovered that we could at least take the Whistler gondola up the mountain and hike the trails above the treeline. This proposal met with general approval and the trip was a “go” for us all, 34 in number.

Most of us caught the 10:30 a.m. ferry from Departure Bay and lunched at various spots along the Sea-to-Sky highway, finally arriving in Squamish mid-afternoon, checking into the Best Western hotel and eventually finding our way to Happy Hour in the Cartwright Suite. And we were treated to a fine dinner at 6:00 p.m. followed by an entertaining and educational talk and slide show given by two ladies from the Squamish Trails Club.

Breakfasts, too, were varied and hearty, presided over each morning by our waitress, Chris, disgustingly bright and cheery for that hour of the day.

Tuesday morning at 9:00 we all drove to Whistler and those of us who had not been for some years, or had never been, were astonished by the enormity and affluence of the “Village”. (One trembles at the oft-heard suggestion of Salt Spring becoming the “Whistler of the Gulf Islands”). The gondola ride is spectacular and the trails at the top quite varied and well laid out. Coffee time at the terminal afterwards, then back down the

mountain and to the hotel in time gain for the Cartwright Happy Hour and on to dinner. We were now advised that due in part to some previous rain in the area, coupled with an advancing change in weather for the worse, trails in the vicinity of Alice Lake were once again open.

Next morning found the weather prognostication right on the mark. Rain!! How good it felt. Obviously gooder for some than for others as only ten of us decided to brave the elements (after much will-we’s or won’t-we’s) and drive to Alice Lake, there to hike the 6 km. Four Lakes Trail. Others took a more cautious approach, heading off to the Railway Museum in Squamish and/or the Mining Museum at Britannia Mines. The weather had turned kinder in the p.m. allowing several of the latter folk to have their hand at the Alice Lake trails. Again we jammed ourselves into the sumptuous Cartwright digs for libation and conversation, then on to the dining room for dinner after which thank-you acknowledgments were given to Joanne and Tom Cartwright for arranging the accommodation, to Simon for the hiking, and to Norma Eves this in absentia for getting the ball rolling in the first place. Entertainment was provided in the form of insults traded between Simon and Jim.

Thursday was the customary “you’re on your own” activities with some visiting at the aforementioned museums, a few others during the Alice Lake thing enroute home. All in all a most enjoyable four days. No ascertained regrets other than Jim B’s failure to carry out his planned afternoon of shopping in Whistler. I believe he slept through it.



Trailblazers: Bob & Betty Ball

Bob was born in Essex, England. During WW2 he was stationed at Pat Bay, Sidney and fell in love with B.C. He emigrated to Canada in 1950. Until 1975 he was employed by Saanich Municipality Works Department. He became an active hiking member of the Victoria Outdoor Club. It was 1975 when he and Betty met on a hike to Saltspring Island. In 1976 they married, moved to Saltspring and Bob built their dream house, 380 Mt. Belcher Heights. That same year they formed our Trail and Nature Club. They were hikers then! Bob explored and lead hikes and was twice the hiking co-ordinator. Canoeing became an alternative attraction for them, and in his spare time Bob built cedar canvas canoes. Betty, a retired dietitian, volunteered for the Community Centre, United Church, Seniors for Seniors, Library and Meadowbrook. Although Bob has now joined the Walkers, we all will remember that when it said "Hike to be lead by Bob Ball", we knew it would be an adventure — and tough.



THIS YEAR HAS BEEN A PRODUCTIVE ONE AS FAR AS TRAIL ADDITIONS ARE CONCERNED.

At the beginning of the year, the Vogt property at the end of the Arnell Way trail was donated to the conservancy, and for which the club donated \$1000 for acquisition costs. Over the next little while, a group of ardent members made a very fine trail through this property, which includes some very fine views. This trail connects with the trail on the 80 acre park and with the 80 acres of crown land abutting it, so the intrepid trail blazers found a route through the crown land that makes a fine looping hike. Much of this can be done by walkers, so you should all be inspired to go on this great new trail when it comes up in the schedule.

In the spring, the 80 acres of Martin Williams land that we had tried to acquire a dozen years ago came up for grabs again. As you know, we fundraised hard to raise the money to buy this land, and I am happy to report that you all, individually and jointly (we donated \$5000 from funds and individual members gave another \$14000) raised by far the most of any of the groups on the Island. WELL DONE!!! Your intrepid group of trailblazers has now put a trail in along the right of way that Martin Williams gave so that the donated land could be reached without crossing any private land, and when the Conservancy has decided on the best route through the property we can put the trail through to the top. This will give us a route to the top of Erskine from Toynbee road, something which we have been dreaming about for a long time.

Simon Rook.

2003 Executive

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Loes Holland	Eleanor Lloyd
Jean Holmes	Joan Lott
Marc Holmes	Tony Pedersen

General Information

The Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club features Tuesday outings September through June at three levels of ability. The monthly schedule of outings and events is published the final Wednesday of the month in the Driftwood. The fourth Thursday of each month the Club meets at 7:30 PM in the lower hall of the Ganges United Church. The Club is affiliated with the Federation of BC Naturalists.

Ramblers enjoy walking without pressure to keep up speed. Members of any level fitness are welcome. Ramblers have frequent "time-outs" for taking pictures, examining flowers, plants, stones, fossils, and hugging trees. Karnoles start at 10 AM and usually end around 1:30 PM

Walkers move at a relaxed pace taking time to smell the roses. Walkers usually try to avoid long steep climbs and will stop to catch their breath along the way. Walks are generally less than 8 km and end around 2 PM.

Hikers like long, adventurous and occasionally quite strenuous hikes, and like to gain a bit of altitude. Hikers need good strong boots and a good but not excessive level of fitness. They may smell the roses, but do it rather quickly. Hikes usually start at 10 AM and finish between 2:30 and 3:30 PM.

Membership: Annual dues are \$17.00 per person. New members must sign a waiver. Send waiver form and membership dues to Membership Secretary, Box 203, Salt Spring Island BC, V8K 2V9.

Annual Membership Dues - by January 1/04

Annual Membership Dues for 2004 are due January 1, 2004. The dues are \$17.00 per person. Please send your cheque and any changes to your current address, phone number or address to: the Treasurer, Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club, Box 203, Ganges PO, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V9, before the end of December. Payment can also be made at the annual Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 9.

In January we face the decision of how many members to register with the Federation of BC Naturalists (our insurance provider). Members who pay late leave us in the position of paying the FBCN for their registration. Last year we lost a considerable amount of money on members who would not let us know that they were not renewing. PLEASE renew or let us know that you are not!

Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club,
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