

Caledon Bruce Trail Club is marking its 50th in April

Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club (CHBTC) will celebrate its 50th anniversary April 6.

The Club was formed in 1964 to support a section of the newly established Bruce Trail, a public footpath along the Niagara Escarpment from Niagara Falls to Tobermory.

Starting in 1960, the Bruce Trail Committee began exploring the feasibility of a footpath along the Escarpment. The group was composed of Norman Pearson, Ray Lowes, Robert McLaren and Philip Gosling. For two years, they talked and studied maps, and then in 1962, Gosling made a commitment to spend a full year in putting the Trail on the ground.

From this ambitious beginning, regional clubs were established along the length of the Trail.

The Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club was one of the last to be organized in 1964, with Gosling as its first president. He has been appointed to the Order of Canada this year, in part for his outstanding work with the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

From the Cheltenham Badlands in the south, to Mono Centre in the north, the Caledon section of the Trail offers something for everyone: well-maintained wooded paths through dense forests, challenging steep climbs and descents, open meadows, rocky outcroppings, impressive wild flower displays, cedar groves and meandering streams and rivers. The Caledon Hills section of the Trail offers the best of every season.

CHBTC has a commitment to organize hikes year round with leaders offering a range of distances and difficulty. Easy, introductory hikes are offered each spring and fall to attract new hikers; some hikes have a specific focus for photographers or wildflower enthusiasts; and often hikes end with a social gathering at a local restaurant to enjoy a relaxing meal together.

Members are kept informed of events with a quarterly newsletter, an up to date web site which lists all of our activities and a Facebook page with members' contributions.

Club members can volunteer as hike leaders; trail captains responsible for inspecting portions of the Trail; in maintenance projects (bridge and boardwalk building); or as board members. Those who make an outstanding contribution are honored each year at a volunteer picnic.

Many people think the Bruce Trail is complete. But it is actually a 'work in progress.' Only 51 per cent of the Trail is secure. The Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) is working to secure more Niagara Escarpment land for a permanent Bruce Trail Conservation corridor.

The Club's 50th anniversary will celebrate the first 50 per cent of trail securement and take up the challenge to continue what the founding members began 50 years ago. This year, the Club will be celebrating with many special events.

Visit the web site at www.caledonbruce-trail.org for more information.