

# Ottawa Ski Club News

PUBLISHED BY THE OTTAWA SKI CLUB  
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## The Ottawa Ski Club wishes its 2,200 Members A Very Happy New Year.

And hands herewith, to each and every one of them, the freedom of the Gatineau hills and of its four lodges—Dome Hill, Camp Fortune, Pink Lake, East Side. May they enjoy them to their heart's content, during a long and steady winter.—The snow is here; what more need be said to skiers? There has been fair skiing on all the trails for nearly two weeks and the next snow fall will make conditions perfect. Come out, all of ye!

**Out with your fees**—Please do not keep us waiting, and if you must resign, notify our membership Secretary **at once**. Fees may be paid (1) by cheque addressed to Miss Ashfield, 150 Third Avenue. (2) at McGiffin's Sparks St.; (3) at Byshe's, 223 Bank St. (4) at Hosterman's Drug Store, 781 Bank St. (5) at the Dominion Bank (corner Sparks and Bank) (6) at the Royal Bank (Third Teller's wicket) Sparks St. (7) at the Bank of Toronto, Union Station—in all, seven places.—No one will be admitted to any lodge after Jan. 8 without the 1928 badge.

**And on to a 3000 membership!**—Three thousand we must have, and three thousand we will have before March 1st if every one of you does his duty to the Club. There is not one of our members who cannot get at least three of his friends to join if he but tries. You will find application forms at McGiffin's, Ketchum's, Bourne's and Hosterman's.

**The Editor** of this Circular solicits your co-operation. Articles, short stories, reports of new trails, suggestions will be gladly accepted. The object of this circular is to keep our members informed of current events and promote skiing. Please help us. Ads for members desiring to sell, buy or exchange ski-equipment will be published without charge. Address The Editor Ski-News P.O. Box 65.

**Coming Events.**—**On Saturday Dec. 31st**, weather permitting, first turn out of the Dome Hill Juniors, in charge of Mrs. F. G. Semple and Miss I. Guppy. Fall in at 10 a.m., Wrightville Car, Chateau Laurier.—**On Saturday Jan. 7**, first preliminary race to the Dome Hill Lodge, starting from Wrightville. Report to Geo. Audette at 2.30 p.m. Classes: Seniors, Juniors, Novices and Girls.—**On Thursday, Jan. 5th**, first night hike to the Chaudiere Club, taking the trail at Wrightville (end of car line) at 8 p.m. (Leave by Wrightville car at 7.30). Watch Thursday morning newspapers.—**Hikes to the Chaudiere Golf Club will take place regularly every Thursday**, circular or no circular, and races every Saturday afternoon as well as Dome Hill Juniors outings.

**The Lodges.**—Greater cleanliness will be the watch-word in all the lodges this year. Camp Fortune is being fitted with a new boiler room (36' x 18') which will also serve as a wash room and ski repair shop. The tables are being covered with beautiful linoleum. Let us hope that our members will keep the frying pans on the stove, where they belong.—Special efforts will be made to get the East-Side Lodge going this year. Notice will be given in the papers as soon as the trails are in shape. Your visit is solicited.—John Kritch the caretaker at Dome Hill stands ready to feed the hungry multitudes from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Night parties of 10 or over should notify him. Address letter, The Caretaker, Ottawa Ski Club, Ironsides.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN THE YEAR 1977

Trim and alert as ever, and with the care-free and ever youthful look that comes of long days spent on the trail, Miss Mildred Ashfield, the devoted Membership Secretary of the Ottawa Ski Club, stepped into her Electric Rolls-Royce (latest model) to make her first round of the sixty odd fee collecting stations of the Club and leave at each a couple of thousand badges and membership cards with a few hundred yards of ruled paper for recording names and addresses. The day was the first of September 1977. Winter had set in at 9 a.m. and snow was falling fast, in big thick flakes, from a promising sky.

. . . Lest the reader should be astonished at such an early setting of winter, let us hasten to say that the men of 1977 had at last learned to control the weather. By a clever and simple manipulation of switches and levers at the North Pole Meteorological Station, snow, rain, sunshine and moonshine could be made at will, for any district, and the seasons shortened and lengthened as one saw fit. There being no dissenting voice in the Capital of Canada, where everybody skied, from the Prime Minister down, it had been arranged to make the winter last from the first day of September to the last day of May, leaving three months for the farmers to grow their little crops, which was ample. The thermometer never dropped lower than 20 above zero nor rose higher than 25 above; Every day the sun shone and every night the moon shed its soft light over the numberless trails bordered with fragrant pine, that ran through the wilderness of the Gatineau land. Every Saturday morning, the trails were carpeted by a fresh fall of snow. In short, it was a skier's Paradise.

Under such favourable conditions, the Ottawa Ski Club had made most amazing progress and there it stood, in the year of Our Lord 1977, a highly prosperous and powerful organization, the biggest in the land, looking down, with amused contempt, upon the three thousand members of fifty years before, with their five dollar fee, much as we of to-day, on the threshold of this year 1928, look down upon the nineteen members at one dollar, who made up the membership of 1919. The Club owned the whole of the Gatineau Valley, where not a single fence remained and where not a tree could be cut without its consent, other and smaller industries having been ruthlessly expropriated; it owned its own bank, its own ranch out West, where buffaloes were raised to supply the leather from which real ski boots were made; it had its own ski manufacturing plant and its silk plant, where silk worms ceaselessly toiled to prepare the silk for the making of the badges, and its own bamboo plantations. One hundred and fifty thousand members stood on its membership lists and one hundred and fifty thousand more waited impatiently to be admitted. To save their progeny vexatious delays, it was not unusual for young couples, on being united in wedlock, to file at once twelve applications with the Club, so that the gates of the great ski country might be opened to their children as soon as they came into this land of perpetual bliss. No longer was the City catering to American tourists; in fact, most of them were banned, they messed up the trails so! So rigid were the conditions of admission that only a score or so of the poor people from the other side of the border, out of the many hundred thousands of those who applied for admission, were allowed in every year. No Chicagoan was ever known to pass the test.

The yearly revenue from fees, at the rate of \$50 a head, amounted to \$7,500,000, and the Club had a rest fund of \$100,000,000. Expenditures running into the millions were decided by the Directors as quickly as an expenditure of \$50 would be in our days, and the Club was actually engaged in raising the height of the Gatineau hills by the simple process of digging earth from the bottom and dumping it over the top. A thousand steam shovels were at work, day and night, on this great scheme, while hundreds of men were busy jacking up the palatial structure of Camp Fortune higher up into the skies.

But the greatest accomplishment of the Ottawa Ski Club, the one assuredly in which it took the most pride, was the fact that it had at last succeeded in

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making ski-ing safe, painless and effortless for all. Whereas in the dark days of 1927, people laboriously trudged their way along, in deep, icy ruts, or wildly danced over a horrible sea of bumps, dodging sharp stumps sticking out here and there through the snow, or painfully herring-boned their way up steep hills, in the year of our Lord 1977 all skiers, from first to last, be they twelve or ten thousand on the trail, always had a broad expanse of immaculate snow in front of them, where the slightest unevenness of level would at once have aroused comment. No sooner had a skier passed anywhere than rollers and rakes, manned by expert hands, at once obliterated all traces of his passage. Escalators took people swiftly to the top of the steepest hills, conveyances took them over flat stretches to save them the drudgery of ski-ing on the level. Whereas, in the days of 1927 the population took turns about on the Lord's Day, one half remaining at home to pray for the other half in peril on their skis, in the year 1977 prayer meetings were held on the trail for the poor people left at home, exposed to the dangers of the streets.

Moreover, clumsy skiers had become as rare as penguins in the Gatineau Land. People were taught the art from infancy. Stemming, turning and jumping exercises had long since replaced the cadet drill in the Public schools. A fall on skis, let alone an accident, would have been reported in the newspapers. In fact, falling was no longer allowed, and any one who, through carelessness, lost his balance and endangered his fellow skiers, had his ski licence suspended or cancelled.

. . . . . And so, on the first day of September 1977 trim and alert as ever, Miss Mildred Ashfield set out in her Rolls Royce to distribute badges and cards to the ski-ing multitudes. And two weeks later, the same Miss Ashfield made a second round to collect the money received and make her first bank deposit. To her intense surprise, she found that not one fee had been collected—not a single one. Phone calls to the caretakers of the three hundred lodges of the Club, from Dome Hill to the Transcontinental revealed an absolute dearth of visitors. Old man Joe, the hermit who lived at the top of the World, reported that no track had been seen in front of his shack. What on earth could be the matter? In this occurrence Miss Ashfield did what she was wont to do whenever she was in trouble. She called up the Editor of the Daily News and said "These people are asleep. Please give them a rap, a good rap!" That was the extent of Mildred's wickedness.

But the Editor's rap, vigorous as it was, did not stir anyone to action. The good people of Ottawa seemed to have fallen into a strange apathy. They no longer read the Ski-News. They no longer cared for the trails. They could not explain why; they were unable to analyse their feelings; they just were fed up with ski-ing, that was all. As in the days of 1900, before the great ski-ing movement started, they were seen shuffling their feet aimlessly along the sidewalks of Sparks St., hand in hand, peacefully chewing gum, and the sight of the white domes across Sapper's bridge appeared to awake no memories and no ambition in their bosoms. The girls were fast losing their complexion, the men walked like old men, with stooped and round shoulders. Grips, colds and all the ailments of sedentary life fast reappeared among them, but they did not seem to care. People talked of reopening the bars so that they might have some object in life. They actually raised an agitation to have the summer lengthened! Meanwhile the vast expanse of snow over the Gatineau land remained untrodden, the lodges of the Club were deserted and skis were offered for sale by the cord, for fire wood. Something had to be done, and done quickly, to save the race.

In their predicament, the Directors called in a body upon Old Man Joe, a very old Sage, nearing the century mark, who lived alone with his skis in a half tumbled down shack on the heights of the Top of the World, and who had seen generations of skiers pass in front of his door. It was rumoured that he had something to do in his youth with the making of the Canyon, a once very dangerous trail, responsible for many wrecks, and that public indignation had

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caused him to retire to the wilds and live a hermit's life. Measuring the trails was the hobby of his old age; his activities for the previous ten years had narrowed down to the Canyon Trail, where one inch appeared to be missing over a distance of some three quarters of a mile. Up and down he went every day on four skis, at a speed that many a young man would have envied, dragging a tape line that had seen much service, in search of the missing inch which he might find on the way down and lose again on the way up. It was a harmless hobby.

However, while Old Man Joe's method of surveying might not have been up to date, his opinions on ski-ing were highly valued by the Club, as he had the accumulated experience of nearly a century. The Directors found him, as usual, squatting in front of his fire, busily mending his measuring tape and puffing at an old pipe, exhaling the fragrance of home-grown tobacco. They gave their message and put the question squarely: "What could be done to bring the people back to the hills?"

Old Man Joe remained silent for a long time, his eyes dreamily looking into the past, his thoughts wandering back to the days of his youth, when a misguided public opinion had sent him an exile to this dreary spot. Suddenly he pulled his pipe out of his mouth, spat vigorously into the fire and ejaculated "Huh! You people have made ski-ing to d——d safe and easy, that's what is the trouble. You have taken the pep and thrill out of the game. That's why people are fed up with it. Just put traps on the trails and let some one break his leg. As soon as they hear of it they will all come back." And as the Directors shook their heads at the idea of applying such a heroic remedy, Old Man Joe added with a twinkle in his eye that made him look like the Joe of 1910, "Leave it to me, I will fix it. Just send a couple of skiers along and the rest will soon follow."

To send people out under such conditions was little short of a crime, but the safety of the race as a whole and of the Ottawa Ski Club in particular, demanded it. A heroic remedy was required: "Aux grands maux, les grands remèdes." Two skiers were hired—no volunteer could have been found—to go and help Old Man Joe to remeasure the Canyon. They did not find the missing inch, but they found something else that they didn't expect. Not that they got very much damaged, just a couple of broken ribs and a sprained ankle, a thing of daily occurrence fifty years before and that no one would have thought worthy of reporting, but such was the effeminacy of the times that the newspapers from coast to coast displayed the news of the dreadful casualties in broad headlines. They hunted up Old Man Joe's past record and held him responsible for the disaster. The Governor General issued a proclamation warning against the use of skis. Meanwhile, the Ottawa Ski Club, acting on Old Man Joe's advice, officially acknowledged that its trails had been neglected and were no longer safe.

And then, one by one, in the dark of night, timidly at first, then with growing boldness, and in full daylight the skiers came out to taste of the forbidden fruit and to see if things were as bad as they were painted. Dozens followed, then hundreds, then thousands and very soon the echoes of the hills again rang with the sound of the sharp poles gripping the crusty snows; the wilderness again became alive. Ski-ing had recaptured the good people of Ottawa, the girls regained their rosy cheeks and the men their manly bearing. Old Man Joe gave up his search for the missing inch and spent his days laying cunning traps and pitfalls in all the trails, to catch the wariest skiers. And all the girls, whole or crippled, stopped at his shack and called blessings upon his dear old head—which all goes to show that human nature, be it in man or in woman, is a thing very mysterious and very complicated. Old Man Joe knew it and the Ottawa Ski Club found it out in the year 1977.

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**Everything will go well**, says our membership Secretary:—

1. When old members stop using application forms for renewal purposes. Application forms are for new members only.

2. When out-of-town members drawing cheques on banks outside of Ottawa, include the exchange. Only one has done so, out of 14 received to date. Take 15c out of a dollar cheque, and what is there left?

3. When persons intending to resign do so immediately, instead of waiting until the end of the season, thus putting the Club to unnecessary expenditure.

4. When changes of addresses are promptly reported to the Membership Secretary (150 Third avenue).

5. When ladies changing their names (by marriage or otherwise) report the change promptly so that they can be kept on the list as old members and not entered as new. How are we to know, for instance, that a Miss Pink has blossomed into a Mrs. Rose, unless she tells us?

6. When young people bent on marriage choose their life partners outside the Club. People who marry within the Club, cause a loss of revenue of \$3. (\$6. per couple as against \$5 and \$4.)

(7) When members pay their fees promptly. There are still about 1200 to hear from. What are they thinking of?

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**THE TRAILS!** Regarding trails from Kirk's Ferry, J. P. Henderson says:—

**McAllister's trail** from Kirk's ferry is in good shape for two way traffic, in many places even double tracked so that passing is easy when trail is crowded. If taking bus get off at entrance to trail about two hundred yards or so beyond Reade's store. Considerable work was done particularly to secure good clean runs on the hills.

This week end I was over Cooper's trail twice and cleaned it out with help on Sunday. Many fresh deer tracks, rabbit tracks, in fact between Sat. night and Sunday morning the deer, etc. had used by ski tracks as convenient runway. So that:—

**Cooper trail** is in splendid condition having had a fairly good shave of underbrush, etc. and several trees that had fallen across having been sawed clear. It is a most gorgeous trail, particularly the section passing through stately evergreen trees, often covered with light mantle of snow. If taking 10 a.m. bus ask driver to let you off about a mile **beyond** Read's store at Kirk's Ferry, right at a gate in fence which leads directly to trail entrance into woods. If from train get off at La Charité, follow summer road up to main Gatineau highway, go south on it about 200 yards to actual entrance to trail (or cut off this 200 yards by crossing field towards south diagonally). Just before Dunlop's cross creek on improvised ski bridge downstream slightly.

**Burnet to Camp Fortune.** (F. L. Barrow). The skiers should de-train at Burnet Station, proceed a hundred and fifty yards to the highway and follow the highway for six or seven minutes to a gate where a tree is marked with bunting.

The trail from the highway is marked with bunting until it reaches an open field where Cowden's Farm can be seen across the creek. Passing through Cowden's yard and beyond through a gap in the fence, bunting marks the trail through the bush to the edge of Meach Lake beside a shack. This point is on an arm of the Lake which should be crossed to a point about two hundred and fifty yards directly opposite. The trail should then keep beside the shore around the next point and to the left of the Island, then in a southerly direction to the foot of McCloskey's Hill (or to Alexander's if desired). If McCloskey's is chosen, the road to Point Look out is taken, thence the blazed trail through the bush to Camp Fortune.

George Audette reports that his trail is now in good shape, all windfalls having been removed.—Captain T. J. Morin and his trusted lieutenants Geo. Hurdman, Alf. Bouchette, L. St. Laurent put in four week-ends on the Canyon removing stumps and piling brush in low places. More snow is required at the foot of the



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hill above the bridge. Some one got hurt there last Sunday. Check your speed or take the lane.—K. Chisholm is blazing a new trail to the Dome Hill from Welch's hill. Tiny Sutherland is or should be at work on his trail from Chelsea to the East Side Lodge.

**Hints to Ski Purchasers.** (1) Do not choose the lightest skis in the store because they are light. Lightness and strength do not go together. A few more ounces in weight will carry you much further and you won't notice it.—(2) Make sure that your skis are absolutely true on all sides. Never buy a warped ski on the understanding that it will be straightened. Once a crook, always a crook. (3) Get skis of comfortable width so that you can turn on them. Leave the very narrow skis to the racers. Cross country or "Trekking" skis should not be less than 2½" wide.—See that your skis are not too long. They should not reach higher than the middle of your fingers, arm extended—never more than the tips of the fingers at any rate.—Buy your skis from people who advertise in this circular. They are reliable.

**Hints for Skiers.**—When going up a steep trail, always keep your head well up, and look up. You will find the climbing much easier.—When coming down a hill, never take someone else's track. Make your own. A single track spoils a trail; it gets deep, hard and bumpy. When the whole surface of the trail is even and hard packed, it is much easier to control one's speed by stemming. The way to get an even surface is for every one to make a different track.—When you fall, repair the damage done by filling the hole with snow and tramping it. To fall is no disgrace. To leave a gaping hole is a crime. Replace the snow as you would replace the turf on a golf course.—Learn to control your skis before attempting a twisty trail. If you cannot stem, snow plough or jump, you have no business there. Remember that the "sitting down stop" is the most dangerous of all stops.—Do not let your skis run away from you. Stay with them by leaning forward and keeping the centre of gravity where it should be.

**Tid-bits.**—"What a wonderful chest protector your 1928 badge would make if it was only half an inch wider" writes a sarcastic young man. (It is a pretty good chest protector as it is Johnny, by admitting you to the lodges, and you are going to catch an awful cold if you do not get one pretty soon.)—President Mortureux, who is in the habit of enjoying an early morning constitutional, when in the city, has been accused in a contemporary, by a ski Editor short of copy, of having something to do with the mysterious disappearance of milk bottles in the said Editor's ward. It has always been thus. Slothful people, unable to pull themselves out of bed in the morning, cannot conceive of anyone displaying early signs of activity unless it is for sinister motives. From time immemorial, early birds have been slandered by inebriated worms straggling home in the wee hours of the morning from a drinking party, and good people, out for an early airing, have roused the ire of those lazy milk-sop wretches, whose dream of supreme felicity is a life spent in bed, with dozens of milk bottle within easy reach.—Come out and ski, Eddie, and forget about milk bottles.—The news that Captain T. J. Morin, better known throughout the Ski World as "Bad Man Joe of the Canyon Trail," was lying on a hospital bed and the rumour that his condition was due to a fall on his own Canyon seems to have aroused a whole lot of interest among our members. For days Ye Editor's office was besieged by an army of cripples—some on crutches, others with one or both arms in slings, and those who could not sit down because the end of the spine was "touchy", and those who could not stand up because the spine was wobbly in the middle. They all wanted to know if it was true, and if justice had been meted out at last. No such luck, Joe hurt himself while tugging at a big fish in the Upper Ottawa, where he spends the summer (a fish big like that—you know); he is already out of bed and planning new contrivances to make the Canyon more interesting. Beware and learn to ski!

**Ski-Exchange.**—Ottawa Ski Club crests may be procured at Murphy-Gamble's. —**For Sale:**—Lady's ski suit, skis and ski boots. Apply Miss Elizabeth Gaskell, Q. 2043.—**Fore Sale:** One pair Norwegian hickory skis 6' 6", M.E. fittings, new last season. Call R. 1005 J.

## CHRISTMAS REVERIE.

Replete with turkey, plum pudding and Yuletide cheer generally, I sit by the fireside in a state of expansive reflection as my umptieth Christmas draws to a close. The end of a perfect day, barring a few of the minor mishaps incident to the season even in the best regulated families; such as having mailed Aunt Jane's bobettes with a coy card: "Hope they fit; you look so sweet in pale blue" to Uncle Simon, while the latter's lavender silk suspenders went to Grandma; and received an overwhelmingly cordial card from that snippy Floozlem girl whom I had left off my list because she didn't send me one last year.

Looking through the "loot" as my kid nephew inelegantly dubs the net product of the Grand Swap, I found a copy of the Rubaiyat. This was not surprising; in fact I count that Christmas lost when I don't get at least one. This brings my collection up to twenty-seven. In days of youthful enthusiasm I expressed extravagant admiration for the sentiments of the Persian convivialist, and my friends and—ahem admirers, have long memories. Turning the pages to look for underscored lines—did anyone ever present old Amar's verse without special allusion?—I found only one: "Now the New Year reviving old desires," and sketched opposite it a rotund skier poised fearfully on the brink of a hill marked 1928. I sighed. Time was when another verse was emphasized in my annual Rubaiyat, the one beginning: "Ah! Love . . . ." Oh, well—other times, other manners. The poetical lovers of yesterday are the Good Ole Scouts of today, and at forty-odd ethereal sentiments can't be expected to survive the equalizing jolts of the Canyon.

The waggish donor of the book has been chiding me for weeks past for tardiness in getting out on the trail; and he turned a skeptical ear to pleas of too little snow, a bad cold, Christmas shopping, and the final, irrefutable feminine argument of "nothing to wear". He has been skiing since October, sometimes on snow, sometimes on faith!

The third reason for delay in getting out was, of course, the real one, but it had to be bolstered up with others because masculine obtuseness can neither comprehend nor sympathize with the complexities of Christmas shopping. What mere man would trudge the length of Sparks and Bank streets to match three inches of baby ribbon to the exact shade of his infant daughter's blue eyes? Or rummage frantically through all the bargain counters in town to find something that costs only one dollar but looks like five to send to his next-door neighbour?

However, now the fray is over, and as I sit in leisurely solitude for the first time in weeks, I feel the urge of old Omar's message. "The New Year reviving old desires"—there really is quite a lot of snow in the streets, and probably there's more in the bush. My share of the loot includes a new red beret, ski bands and fur-lined gloves. Even with my old clothes they'll look quite swanky. Impulsively I leave the drowsy fireside to dig my skis out from the cupboard where they have been smothered under Christmas parcels, and shake the moth balls out of my slacks and windbreaker. Automatically I grease my boots, with vanishing cream, since dubbin is not handy, stick the skeleton of the turkey in my rucksack and set the alarm for six A.M. Then I retire with a serene conscience. Alas! not entirely serene. There is a little pricking in the region of the pocketbook which will not let me sleep. Unable to silence the still small voice I finally get out of bed, with a rebellious groan, to search my pockets and purse. Nothing—less than nothing—only a mocking jingle of pennies is the depressing reward. Then I look at my bank book. Wonder of wonders, it shows a balance still! Four dollars and thirty-nine cents. How that got overlooked in the melee of last minute purchasing is a mystery. Something seems to be indicated. I draw out my cheque-book and sign the four dollars over to the Ottawa Ski Club. A millionaire flourish defiantly enlarges the accustomed modesty of my signature as I thus dispose of my last visible means of support. Poor but honest—that's me! How am I going to get to Camp Fortune between now and January fifteenth on thirty-nine cents in a problem for the higher mathematicians. In the meantime **noblesse oblige**, which translated into ski language means "I should worry."

Next year I'll pay my fees in November if the President will promise to hang mistletoe in the lodges for Christmas.



Edition No. 1

# Ottawa Ski Club News

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