

April 2016

www.raski.ca

More than just a ski club

SNOWPHONE : 613-736-6235

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

When: Wednesday, April 20th, 7:00 PM

Where: Courtside A, RA Centre (East end of the building)

Mark April 20th on your calendar! It's our RA Ski Club's Annual General Meeting.

Your executive worked hard to set up this year's program. The best way you can thank them is by coming out to our Annual General Meeting.

- See photo highlights of our activities over the past year. If you took part in any of our activities, you're probably in one of the photos.
- Let us know what you did and didn't like this year, and how we can improve.
- Hear the reports from each of the executive portfolios.
- Elect the executive for next year.
- Update the club's By-Laws

We are asking the membership to approve two changes to the Ski Club's By-laws:

1. Add a Snowshoe Chairperson to the executive.
2. Clarify that we can use e-mail or other electronic means to notify the membership of the Annual General Meeting, as postage rates have gone up so much.

All portfolios are up for election but in particular

- Downhill Chair
- Treasurer
- Cross-Country Co-Chair

Volunteer and help us run our programs next year! Nominate yourself or someone else. Send nominations to: secretary_2015@raski.ca.

END-OF-SEASON DH/XC POT-LUCK DINNER

When: Saturday April 16th, 6:30 PM

Where: 1081 Ambleside Dr. (Ambleside 1) Party room

Cost: \$2.00

Come join in a celebration of the ski year just past and of the summer to come. We'll be celebrating with a potluck dinner at a new location. We will also be celebrating 50 years of the RASKI Club!

Bring a dish to share, and your own beverages. Guests are welcome. Attendees are asked to throw a toonie into the pot to cover the cost of the room.

Directions: From Richmond Rd (west of Woodroffe), turn north onto New Orchard Dr, then left onto Ambleside. There is a visitor's parking in front of the building and some parking on Ambleside. (watch the no parking areas!) There will be a notice on the call board informing you of the ring number for the party room. Take the elevator to the Upper Basement level.

A survey about RA Ski's past and future activities will be available at the potluck.

YOU MUST LET US KNOW YOU ARE ATTENDING.

Contact Louise Cameron and Chuck Bain at social_2015@raski.ca **BY APRIL 14th** and let us know if you are coming and what category of food you'll be bringing (i.e. appetizer, main course, salad, dessert).

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The past winter has been very challenging with the negative effects of El Nino to deal with. Despite the late arrival of snow, we have been delighted with the support shown by our members. We still got some good skiing and snowshoeing in during our Meet'n'Ski outings to local hills and trails despite the unpredictable weather. While a few had to be cancelled due to poor weather, others tended to be well attended and our snowshoe program in particular continued to grow in number of outings and participants.

The weeklong trip to France was a huge success with more registrants (65) than we can remember having previously. All participants including your chair seemed to enjoy it tremendously. We welcomed many newcomers and we hope they will join us again in future. The weather co-operated by providing a massive amount of snow as we arrived so everyone got some good skiing in.

The carpool weekend to Val David in early February at L'Auberge du Vieux Foyer was also a success. We also enjoyed our bus trip to St-Sauveur.

Two major disappointments were the cancellations of our three-day trip to Sunday River in Maine and the March 21 bus to Tremblant, Mont Blanc and Domaine St. Bernard. No doubt the warm spring contributed to the low registration for the second trip.

Your feedback is most welcome to help us plan for success next year. Do you want a weekend or weekday trip? Two days or three? What destination would you prefer? Is there a better time to schedule the bus trip?

Our AGM is on Wednesday, April 20th this year and we hope you will come out and hear our reports, see photos of some of the highlights of the past year, and possibly volunteer to take on a position on the executive. As always, all positions are open, and some long serving Executive members will not be returning, so there is a definite need for your help. The time commitment is not great, and returning members will gladly help you get up to speed.

On a personal note, I wish to thank all the executive members and willing volunteers for their patience and cooperative attitude as I learned the Chair's position this year.

The RA staff has been very helpful to us again this year. Despite several changes in staffing during the year, we were well looked after by the people we dealt with. They were helped ably by Nancy Kirkwood, who has been a friend/supervisor for our club for several years. We are looking forward to working with newly appointed Amy Roberts, who has a strong background in sports club administration. We also thank Isabelle da Silva who does a fine job with posters, formatting newsletters, the display in the RA hallway and all the staff who help with the Open House and with preparing the equipment we need to attend the ski show.

A huge thank you to all members of the executive for all the work done in planning and organizing our outings and all the other work you do that benefits our club. Thanks to all who volunteered as trip leaders on our outings, at the ski show and open house and to those who participated in our outings and trips.

Bill Buck, chair_2015@raski.ca

CROSS-COUNTRY NEWS

What a change from last year!! From subarctic temperatures in 2014-15 to a late start followed by rain and mild temperatures in 2015-16. Although many of us haven't skied as many times as last year, the experience when we did ski has been much more pleasant than skiing in -30 ° weather. The few snowfalls we've had were followed by several days of superb skiing. Already many of us are enjoying some early spring skiing under brilliant sunny skies.



New Year's Day ski to the new Renaud cabin

Both weekend day trips and weekday trips were well attended this year. A few trips had to be cancelled or rerouted for rain or lack of snow but, generally, trips went as planned.



Mar. 19/16 – XC ski to King Mountain

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our 2 outings this year outside of Gatineau Park – la Petite Rouge due to lack of interest and Nakkertok due to rain. We would like to continue to include one or two outings outside of Gatineau Park each season. Please let us know where you would like to ski.



Feb. 6/16 – Lusk cabin

Nineteen enthusiastic RA skiers and snowshoers converged in Val-David in the Laurentians on Friday, February 19th. Many took advantage of the passes offered by the Auberge du Vieux-Foyer to cross country ski or snowshoe that

afternoon, while others had a leisurely lunch or did some shopping in town. After a complimentary drink at the bar, we enjoyed a gourmet four course meal at the Auberge with many choices to choose from.



Feb./16 – XC skiing at Val David

Overnight it snowed about 15 cm, and the morning saw everyone head out to the various locations for their activities. Although the trails were closed down in the afternoon due to the weather, everyone found something to do after that such as more shopping, sightseeing, reading or the outdoor hot tub. We spent the evening enjoying a four course meal again, with lots of discussions around the table, with particular interest in the latest of Downton Abbey! Sunday morning was a great ski and snowshoe with some sunny skies. Doris reached a milestone that day leading the largest group of RA snowshoers at an outing - nine in total! All in all a very enjoyable weekend.



Feb. 2016 – XC skiing at Val David

Your XC co-chairs would like to extend a very special thank you to the people who led trips this year. To put it quite simply, without these generous volunteers, we would not have a XC program. If you haven't volunteered in the past, you might want to consider this for next year. Speaking from experience, it is a very satisfying and rewarding opportunity and the more leaders we have, the better.



Mar. 12/16 – XC ski around Taylor Lake

Your feedback on any aspect of the cross-country program is welcome. E-mail your comments to:
Jane Rau & Francoise Lecrouart, xc_2015@raski.ca

DOWNHILL NEWS

This season, the warm weather and lack of snow outdid last year's frigid temperatures. A couple of outings were cancelled and, on occasion, the location had to be changed, but RA skiers rallied and made the best of the conditions. Local ski hill operators worked against all odds to keep us skiing, even near the end of March.

Meet 'n' Ski Outings

Despite the El Niño effects, the mid week Meet'n'Skis drew hearty skiers who enjoyed the company of other like-minded enthusiasts.



Jan. 25 – Meet'n'ski to Edelweiss

The Saturday Meet'n'Ski to Calabogie did not draw many 'working people' as it was intended to do, and the retired folks who did go would have preferred to go during the week to avoid the crowd. The viability of that outing will be reviewed for next year.

Many thanks to our trip leaders who kept track of our skiers and ensured that everyone was included, both on the hill and during our lunch breaks.

Day Bus Outings

Once again, non-members were invited to join one bus trip outing so that they might experience our friendly club and, hopefully, become members. We need people on our buses to make these bus outings viable, so inviting non-members was a Win-Win.

Our mid-week bus trip to **Mont St-Sauveur** took place on January 15th and we enjoyed very good ski conditions. Twenty-seven downhill skiers, two cross country skiers, and two Getaway enthusiasts registered, for a total of thirty-two registrants. This was the first time that cross country skiers joined the trip and we will include that option in the future. Once all of the expenses, including the RA fee were paid, we made a surplus of just over \$90.



Jan. 2016 St-Sauveur - Group photo

Instead of a dinner option back in Ottawa, I changed the time

for the return bus and arranged for a private room upstairs in the bar. That gave all participants the opportunity to gather together and share stories from their day. Most participants preferred this option and feedback was very positive.



Jan. 25/16 - T-Bar 70 at St. Sauveur

Our second bus trip to **Mont Tremblant / Mont Blanc / Domaine St-Bernard** was scheduled for March 21st. It was with great disappointment that I cancelled the trip. With the rain and mild temperatures preceding the trip, we did not have the usual registration for this outing and were, in fact, significantly below the minimum number.

Facebook

Total number of members to date: 91

Our Facebook page has become an important communication tool to compliment our website, in particular for those who use Facebook regularly and who, perhaps, use the RASKI website less frequently. I am able to see how many people look at each posting, which gives a clear indication of the regular following. All of our club activities draw significant interest and I have received feedback that people like to read about the DH, XC and Snowshoe locations that have good, or not-so-good conditions. This page has also drawn a number of non-members, and some have written to ask about our club and about coming on our downhill and cross country outings. I would recommend that all club activities utilize this publication opportunity to promote their outings.



RA skier at Edelweiss



Another RA skier at Edelweiss

Andrea Conway, Downhill Chair, downhill_2016@ra

WEEKLONG TO TROIS-VALLEES, FRANCE

RASki Club - Making History in our 50th Season

The 2016 RASki Weeklong excursion drew participants from far and wide, making it the largest group in decades. Family, friends, and new members from around the region (Ottawa, Gatineau, Orléans, Nepean, Kanata, Manotick, Greely, Osgoode), the province (Westport, Perth, Belleville, Trenton, Thunder Bay) and other provinces (Montréal QC, Calgary AB, and Vancouver BC) joined us this year.



Lift at Trois Vallées

What sparked the interest of so many for this trip – the destination of Les Trois Vallées (the world's largest ski area), the competitive price, or the reputation of the RASki members for fun and inclusiveness? According to our 2016 registrants, it was a bit of each... Our initial allotment of 34 places on the Air Canada flights rapidly sold out at September's Registration Night and there was a wait list of 31. Happily for all, we were quickly able to satisfy all 65 applications by successfully obtaining additional air seats, rooms, and transfers at a modest price increase. As this meant two sets of transfers and flights on two airlines, thanks to our second flight leader, past Chair Doris Dallaire, our companions on the Swiss flights didn't miss a thing! Both groups spent a few hours touring and lunching in the ancient town of Annecy on the way from Geneva to Bride-les-Bains.



Andrea Conway, DH Day Chair at Trois Vallées

The renowned downhill and cross-country ski areas of les Trois Vallées didn't disappoint, nor did the hospitality of the Savoie region. Lockers conveniently located at the Olympe Gondola ski shop started the vacation off right - no heavy equipment to drag back and forth daily, – just stroll over in regular boots, carrying

your poles. On the first and fourth days, RASkiers were greeted by rain and extremely mild temperatures at low elevations but there was fresh snow (and corresponding low visibility) at the higher elevations. Forty participants toured the areas under the tutelage of instructors from the École du Ski Français on day one. Subsequent days were filled with fresh snow, long trails, sunny days, warm temperatures, wonderful slope-side and village lunches, and hot shows by the burlesque entertainers of La Folie Douce every day from 2:30 PM.



Burlesque entertainer

Off-piste, we were treated extremely well by the staff of the 4-star Hôtel Golf, from Reception to Hospitality to Dining. Our accommodations were very comfortable and the valley view was impressive. A wide selection of breakfast choices started each day and the dining room opened at 7:30 PM to deliver the slow-paced 3-courses of works of art on a plate. We salute Chef Sébastien Roux, and the kitchen and wait staff of the Hôtel Golf Restaurant, for excellent service to our very large group each evening.

By week's end, after basking in the sun and mild temperatures on the trails for 6 days, and having our fill of regional wines, cheeses and meals for 7 nights, the 2016 participants returned home via Geneva. As the Air Canada group prepared to leave the hotel on departure day, we were treated to a tremendous sunrise over the mountains. While everyone was still filing away all their wonderful memories of this trip, participants were surveyed for their suggestions of destinations the RASki Club should investigate for 2017. Resorts in Italy and Austria are garnering a lot of votes. Do you have a suggestion to share? Please email Weeklong_2015@raski.ca or contribute to our annual survey in April – look for it on www.raski.ca.



Jaime Impey, our trip leader

Jaime Impey, Vice Chair & Weeklong Coordinator
weeklong_2015@raski.ca

SNOWSHOEING

Despite being an El Nino winter, we still had very good conditions for snowshoeing and only had to cancel two outings at the end of the season, one due to a raging snowstorm and the next because of poor conditions.

We snowshoed at Calabogie to begin our season in early January and although we had only had one snowstorm, the trail was beautiful. We had several outings in the Greenbelt both in the west end of the city and the east end, including a moonlight outing in February with the cross-country skiers.



Jan. 16/16 Pinegrove forest

We also had a guided snowshoe outing in France during the weeklong trip to Les Trois Vallees which was very enjoyable and informative. And there were two outings in the Val David area also in February during our weekend trip to L'Auberge. The first day of these was somewhat spoiled by rain which started around mid-morning but the next day was beautiful and we had a record number of participants to enjoy it.



Snowshoeing at Val David weekend

In general all outings saw a good number of people, several who had never snowshoed before and I hope they enjoyed themselves enough that we'll snowshoe together again next year. Unfortunately, spring came suddenly in early March and the season ground to a halt for snowshoeing.

I would have liked to continue well into March but our last outing was at Wakefield on March 5th where we went from the community centre all the way to behind Vorlage and back, a very decent trail about 5 kilometres in length. It seems more working people than retired ones come on these outings and this will be kept in mind when scheduling for next year.

And now we're looking forward to keeping fit by hiking and cycling and perhaps a bit of golfing!



Doris Dallaire

Doris Dallaire, Past Chairperson, pastchair_2015@raski.ca

PHOTOS & PHOTOS & TRIP REPORTS

Photos and trip reports from most of our outings are on the RA Ski web site, www.raski.ca.

Trip Reports

Downhill and cross-country trip reports for the last month are put on our home page at www.raski.ca. For older trip reports, click on "Trip Reports" on the left-hand box on our home page.

Photos

For photos, on the left sidebar click on "Photos", then on the appropriate album ("Cross-country", "Downhill", "Snowshoeing", or "Biking Hiking and Skating".) To see the photo larger, double-click on it.

To see the photos as a slideshow:

1. Double-click on the little square icon on the top right under the number of photos. Wait a few seconds and the slideshow will start. Click on the right arrow to advance to the next slide.

Downloading photos: (Unfortunately you now need a Yahoo account.)

1. Double-click on the photo.
2. On the bottom right, click on the down arrow with the bar underneath it.
3. Click on the size you want (i.e., "Original".)
4. Click on "Save File", then click on "OK."

Your file will be downloaded to your directory "Downloads."

We also put "RA Ski Photos of the Week" on our home page raski.ca

Thanks to our RA Ski photographers for providing us with some great pictures of our weeklong, weekend and day trips.

SOCIAL

RA SKI ANNUAL POT-LUCK DINNER – Sat. Apr. 16

6:30 p.m., Ambleside Party room

Join your fellow skiers for delicious food! See page 1 for all the details.

HIKES

Meeting point (unless posted otherwise):

Supreme Court Building (east side) on Wellington at 9:45 a.m. for a 10:00 a.m. car pool departure.

- **Sat. April 23:** Urban hike to explore another neighbourhood in Ottawa, destination TBD after some reconnaissance forays. Meeting place depends on the destination. Check the SnowPhone and the website.
- **Sun May 1:** Gatineau Park, Pine Road to Herridge cabin. 10 k round trip on an easy trail. Bring a lunch.
- **Sat May 7:** Gatineau Park. P7 to King Mountain. The wildflowers should be in bloom!



Oct. 2015 – Hike to Lusk Falls

CYCLING

Note that we are leisurely cyclists, and are not training for the 2016 Olympics.

- **Mon. May 16:** A short, easy bike ride from the RA to Mooney's Bay, along the canal, Dow's Lake (to see the tulips), and back along the Rideau River. 19 km round trip. Meet outside the West main doors of the RA Centre at 10:00 a.m.
- **Sun. May 29:** Bate Island to Shirley's Bay. Depart 10:00 a.m. (from Bate Island, under the Champlain Bridge). Bring a lunch.
- **Sat Jun 18:** from Mousette Park to Aylmer. Depart 10:00 a.m. from Mousette Park on Lucerne Blvd, Gatineau.
- **Wed. June 29:** Bate Island to the Brasseurs du Temps pub. 23 km round trip. Meet at 10:00 a.m. under the Champlain bridge.
- **Tues. July 12:** Bearbrook Road to Petrie Island. Bring a lunch. Departure time (from the P25 parking lot on Bearbrook between St. Joseph and Innes) - 10:00 a.m. 27 km round trip. We'll make this a biathlon with a short hike on the island. If anyone wants to go for a swim, then we'll have our first club triathlon!
- **Sat. July 23:** RA Centre to Lac Leamy. Bring a lunch. Departure time (from RA west wing) 10:00 a.m. We'll bike from the RA, along the Rideau River, across the MacDonald Cartier Bridge to the beach at Lac Leamy, where we'll stop for lunch. We'll return via the Ruisseau de la Brasserie, the canal and Rideau River to the RA. 32 km round trip.



May 18/15 - Cycling to Dow's Lake

GOLF

Sunday, August 28 – we'll play some best ball golf – details to be decided.

BASEBALL

Wednesday, June 22 – Let's go to the ball diamond (on Coventry Rd) and cheer on the Champions against Trois Rivieres. Tickets are general admission and \$12/person. Let us know at social_2015@raski.ca so that we can arrange to meet up.

OUTDOOR SUMMER THEATRE

In July, join us for some outdoor theatre with the Company of Fools in a local park. This summer's production is Shakespeare's "The Amazing Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre". Check our web site and SnowPhone later for all the details.



July 2016 – Company of Fools outdoor theatre

In August, we will see Odyssey's Theatre's annual Theatre Under the Stars. They haven't announced their play yet, so check our SnowPhone and website later for details.

SPRING THEATRE

Once again, we'll enjoy the Phoenix Players at the Gladstone Theatre. This year, the show is "Staff Room" and we'll go on Thursday, April 28. Those who wish can join the group for dinner beforehand. Tickets are \$18 or \$15 if you are 65+. Louise will have gotten a block of tickets before this newsletter, but others wishing to join can easily get their own ticket. See <http://www.phoenixplayers.ca/tickets/> for more information and to buy tickets. (We'll let you know where the first group is sitting.) Let us know if you wish to join us for dinner and if you are joining us at the theatre.

AND MORE...

We are still lining up more hikes and bike rides for the spring and summer. There will be more cycling and hiking in the fall and we may add other summer events as they come up.

If you would like to lead one of these events or have ideas for other RA Ski Club social activities, please contact us. We welcome your input, especially over the summer holiday months. Please keep checking the RA Ski Club website, SnowPhone and Ski-Mail for updates and for news of more upcoming social events.

Louise Cameron, Chuck Bain,
Social Co-chairs, social_2015@raski.ca


SOCIAL MEDIA & SNOWPHONE UPDATES

You can find or receive news and updates about Club activities through a number of methods:

SnowPhone 613-736-6235. The SnowPhone gives you last-minute status, changes and additions to our trips.

Website www.raski.ca

Ski-mail Sign up for our e-mail with the latest club news: go to www.raski.ca and click on “e-Maillist” in the “Stay Informed” box on the lower left side of the page.

Facebook  Visit us on Facebook to learn about upcoming events, read members' comments, and much more! Go to **RA Ski and Snowboard Club of Ottawa** and ask to join in.



Mar. 26/16: RA Ski biathlon - 9.5 km XC ski



Mar. 26/16: RA Ski biathlon - 800 m hike



Bill Buck, RA Ski Chair, relaxing at Trois Vallées



July 2015 – Cycling to Brasseurs du Temps pub



Jan. 2016 – RA downhillers & snowshoers at Calabogie



May 2015 – Hike to Keogan



Jane Rau, our XC Co-chair, leading a trip to Western