

# RASki & Outdoor Club

December 2020

www.raski.ca

More than just a ski club

SNOWPHONE : 613-736-6235

## RA SKI CLUB STATUS

Due to COVID-19, the RA and the RA Ski Club Executive have made the difficult decision to put the 2020-2021 Ski Club season on hiatus. The ability for our Club to safely meet in groups will be very limited, and health concerns and restrictions make it almost impossible to plan for an inclusive and cost-effective weekend or a weeklong trip for non-bubble partners.

We will be back for the 2021-2022 season! In recognition of your commitment to the Club throughout this COVID break, all 2019-2020 members will retain their active membership status for 2020-2021. When you return for our 2021-2022 season, the RA will waive the RA association fee AND provide a 10% discount on the Ski Club fee.

For 2020-2021, although we are taking a pause, we stay connected via the Club's Facebook page (RA Ski & Outdoor Club of Ottawa), web site (www.raski.ca) and Ski-Mails.

Members have been organizing hikes and bike rides on their own, and posting photos on our club's Facebook page, and will continue to do so as cross-country, downhill, and snowshoeing get underway. We hope to see you out and about on the trails!

In the meantime, we have arranged for the same discounts as last year at a number of local stores and Ontario resorts. Watch the Discounts tab on our website as the season progresses (discounts subject to change)



15 March 2020 – Final XC ski before COVID shutdown.  
P9 to P5 (Penguin)

## DISCOUNTS

Your 2019-20 RA Ski Club membership card is good for this year as well, and entitles you to the following discounts:

### STORES

**Kundstadt** – 15% off regular-priced winter merchandise

**Bushtukah** – 10% off regular-priced merchandise

**Euro-Sports** – 15% off regular-priced merchandise

**Fresh Air Experience** – 10% off merchandise (except bikes)

**Great Escape Outfitters** – 10% off regular-priced merchandise

**Trailhead Paddleshack** – 10% off regular-priced merchandise

### SKI HILLS

**Calabogie** – 20% off lift tickets

**Pakenham** - \$5 off lift tickets

For complete details go to the discounts page on our website:

<https://www.raski.ca/index.php?target=discounts>

## OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

One last unfinished piece of business from our shortened 2019-2020 season was the acknowledgement of our Club volunteers. As always, the Club is dependent upon and very grateful for all the volunteers who contribute to the development and running of our programs.

This year, we had the opportunity to nominate a couple of outstanding Club volunteers under the biennial RA Recognition & Awards program. We were extremely excited and pleased when both nominations were accepted and the nominees to be awarded – only to be crushed when the pandemic cancelled the planned celebrations!

Congratulations to our Outstanding Volunteers – Roger Duffy and Jane Rau.

### Roger Duffy



Since 2002, Roger is a staunch supporter of the Club as a friendly, welcoming, and outgoing member, volunteer and trip leader. He served nine terms on the Executive, bringing new ideas and conversations to the table for aspects of many programs.

He took the initiative to develop a new program (Meet'n'Ski) to augment dwindling bus trips and spark renewed interest in the downhill activities, retain members and slowly grow a loyal following to the program. Additionally, Roger contributed to the creation of four seasons of programming and a Club rebranding ("More than just a Ski Club"), again sparking new interest and attracting new members to the Club. He is a true ambassador for the RA Ski Club.

### Jane Rau



Jane has been a long-time participant in Club activities, particularly in cross-country skiing, cycling, and hiking. She joined the Executive as Social co-chair in 2006 and helped build a vast catalogue of store discounts to benefit our members.

In 2012, Jane took up the Cross-Country portfolio and built from a strong foundation. In addition to a full weekend calendar of outings, she added a mid-week program and contributed to the burgeoning Spring and Fall Hiking program. Jane's amiability and passion for the trails led to the formation of an impressive cadre of willing volunteers who lead nearly 40 outings December to April annually for Jane - an XC champion for the RA Ski Club.

**Jaime Impey**, on behalf of the RA Ski Club Executive



## WEEKLONG TO ST. MORITZ

JAN. 25 – FEB. 2, 2029

Another sold-out weeklong adventure for RASkiers – this time to the Club Med Roi Soleil at the foot of the snow-covered mountains of St. Moritz Switzerland.

We arrived without mishap on a blue sky Sunday, January 26 while an annual festival was underway. Changing quickly into winter fun-wear, many set out to explore the upper and lower towns. First stop, the Snow Polo World Cup taking place on the frozen lake and an opportunity to skate the renown outdoor oval where Barbara Ann Scott became the first and only Canadian woman to win an Olympic gold medal in figure skating in 1948.



St. Moritz group photo

One advantage of Club Med is that everything is included: meals, drinks, snacks, and ski lessons - both downhill and cross-country.

Club Med guests enjoyed instructor-led ski lessons weekdays, so on Sunday night we selected applicable alpine or XC levels to form group classes the next day. Groups were led daily to 1 of 3 alpine destinations, walking 400 m to the closest – Corviglia and Signal - or bused to Corvatsch and Diavolezza from the courtyard of the hotel or to XC trails. Most instructors arranged a group dinner during the week.



Jan. 2020 – St. Moritz weeklong trip

All skiers experienced a vast expanse of trails and breathtaking scenery on most days. The snow conditions improved daily thanks to fresh snowfall, but led to at least one day of extremely poor visibility so a number of participants switched to XC trails or exploring the towns for the morning.

While we may have arrived without mishap, the same can't be said before we departed. There were a few medical emergencies, particularly on that day of poor visibility. No major accidents occurred - people simply tipped or slipped and

landed badly. Thanks go out to very helpful Club Med folks, fellow RASkiers, and Anita at Uniglobe, for assisting our unfortunate companions in the various arrangements of a medical, comfort, care, companionship, and travel variety.

Each day, the hard-working Club Med GO team saw us off in the morning, greeted our return in the afternoon, hosted après-ski activities pre-dinner and entertained us in the theatre and main lounge in the evening. Periodically, some key GO members checked in with us at lunch at the Club Med slope-side restaurant and popped up on the mountains (with accompanying refreshments) for a preview of the *Time-warping* experience we were in for that evening.



Cross-country skiing at St-Moritz

There was no chance of going hungry (or thirsty) during our stay. We had reserved tables in the main dining room for our buffet meals, and the choice of selections from both the main and auxiliary "Italian" restaurant nearby. If you missed breakfast, there was always a spread in the main lounge to tide you over to lunch. If you missed lunch, the spread was refreshed all afternoon for "tea", then après-ski (also in the courtyard some days), then pre-dinner, and then after dinner and the many dessert selections, you could find late night nibbles to ward off the hunger pangs until morning. The drinks service was terrific and a majority of the group drifted into the main lounge for a pre-dinner beverage or cocktail after wandering up and down the mountain between St Moritz-Bad and St Moritz-Dorf (where you found the premium shopping - the Fifth Avenue or Rodeo Drive of the Alps).



Taking a break snowshoeing

It may have been our first Club trip to an all exclusive ski resort, but from the feedback of the 48 participants, it may not be the last!

Jaime Impey, Weeklong Chair, [weeklong-2020\[at\]raski.ca](mailto:weeklong-2020[at]raski.ca)



## CROSS-COUNTRY NEWS

Unfortunately, we have had to put this winter's cross-country ski season on hold, because of the COVID-19 epidemic. However, with one or more vaccines in sight, we expect to be back in full force for next year (2021-2022.)

### DAY TRIPS

A good start last winter with our first ski on November 13!! But the season ended abruptly on March 19, the first day of spring. Overall, the season was more enjoyable than the previous year where we experienced many rainy days immediately followed by plummeting temperatures and icy conditions. We had 37 outings planned last winter, including a few that were added last minute to take advantage of some great conditions. We canceled 10 but half of these were related to COVID-19 restrictions.



Feb. 22 – XC skiers on Taylor Lake loop

As always Demsis did a great job with grooming the trails in Gatineau Park and several of the trails on the Ottawa side were well maintained by groups of local volunteers and sponsors.

As for day trips outside the city limits, we had excellent turnouts for both our Montebello and Bourget outings in early March.



XC skiers at Montebello, March 7, 2020

We would like to send a great big shout out of thanks to a wonderful team of volunteer trip leaders who made all these outings possible this season.

However, we have one small problem. There are a lot of requests for day trips outside of Gatineau Park and Nakkertok. Many members have said they prefer the trails in and around Ottawa and the Greenbelt. So we scheduled 9 of these last winter. The problem is that our current very dedicated group of leaders are only interested in Gatineau Park or places like Nakkertok. And, to be fair, they already volunteer to lead a large number of outings each year. **So we need those who are interested in skiing on the city and Greenbelt trails to step up and volunteer to lead.** Please let Jane know if you'd be willing to do so. The alternative will likely be fewer City and Greenbelt outings next season in 2021-22.



March 1 – XC skiers at Larose Forest

### WEEKEND TRIP – VAL DAVID

This year's weekend trip started in a snowstorm, on Feb 7. Fourteen of us met up at L'Auberge de Vieux Foyers in Val David. Although the weekend was quite cold, even breaking a record one night, the great snow conditions made up for it. Participants engaged in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing and perhaps some shopping, while staying warm.



Snowshoers at Val David, Feb. 2020

The hot tub and the food at the Auberge added to the enjoyable weekend with a very sociable group of people.



XC skiers at Val David, Feb. 2020

We are hoping to have another similar getaway 2022.

Jane Rau & Louise Cameron, XC co-chairs,  
[xc-2020\[at\]raski.ca](mailto:xc-2020[at]raski.ca)



## DOWNHILL NEWS

Despite the abrupt ending, the downhill ski season actually started well with the first outing on December 6<sup>th</sup> – a week ahead of our planned schedule. Camp Fortune was celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and they were making snow and had more runs open ahead of every other hill, so it was our preferred destination for the first couple of day trips. By Christmas, every local hill was open, and we had mid-winter conditions almost right from the start.

This year, we added one weekend day-trip destination a month and this proved to be popular with members who we don't regularly see during our weekday outings. We also kept our "Fortune Fridays" event going – an informal weekly Friday meet-up at Camp Fortune for the many season pass holders and for those just wanting to take a "Me Day" off work. Our friends at the National Capital Ski Club also extended an offer for our club members to go on their weekly bus trips to Tremblant at their club member prices, which added to our selection of day trips to local ski hills. Altogether, we had 18 outings from the start of the season to mid-March.



**Jan. 17 - Meet 'n Ski at Camp Fortune**

Our day bus trip program took a hit, with the January trip to St-Sauveur being postponed to February due to bad weather. It's always hard to recover from the enthusiasm and then disappointment that people have if the first bus trip of the year does not go as scheduled, but the re-scheduled trip on Monday, Feb 17 was a success. Eighteen downhill & x-country skiers had great ski conditions - nice sunny day, not cold - and slopes and x-country trails were well groomed. After a full day of skiing, there was a nice meetup at the bar, and an easy bus trip home.

Many thanks to Guyanne Desforges, who filled in as trip leader for the St. Sauveur bus trip and did an excellent job.

The early and sudden closure of ski hills due to corona virus concerns forced the cancellation of the last seven Meet n' Ski dates. The March 13 bus trip planned for Mont Tremblant, Mont Blanc, and Domaine St. Bernard was also cancelled due to low enrollment and growing concerns over viral spread.

Many thanks to our trip leaders - Bill Danson, Glen Campbell, Roger Duffy, Bill Buck, Guyanne Desforges, Marian Barton – for leading and offering to lead trips.

While our club's group activities have been curtailed, the good news is that all local ski hills will be opening this year with safety protocols in effect. Some hill operators like Mont Ste. Marie will actually increase all their ski run availability to 7 days/week, and you will find that hours of operation, limitations of crowd size, and day pass re-structuring will probably allow you to enjoy more time on the hill.

I know we all miss our "friends to be with and ski with" but our club motto this year is "Ski well - Be well".

**Bob Cavan, Downhill Chair, [DH-2020@raski.ca](mailto:DH-2020@raski.ca)**

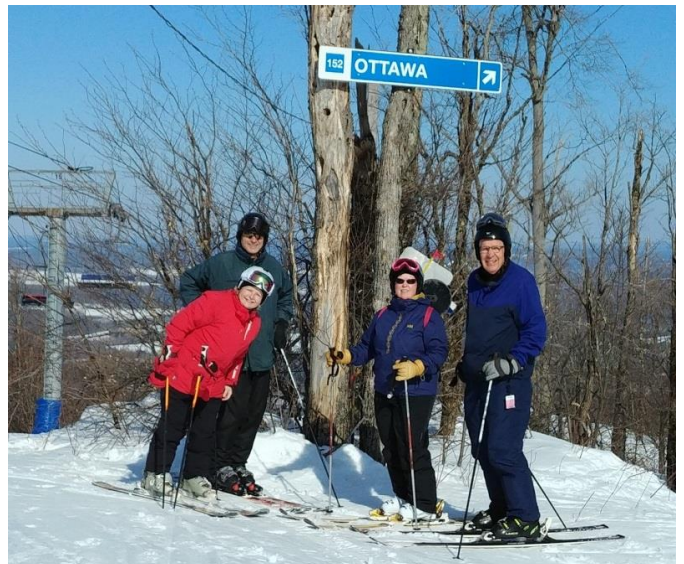
## BROMONT/SUTTON 3-DAY TRIP

**Feb 23-26, 2020**

Ten ski club members came on this carpool trip. This was the club's second trip to the beautiful Eastern Townships of Quebec, where we stayed at the lovely Château Bromont, a stone's throw from the mountain and offering all the amenities of a full-service hotel, including hot tubs, pool and spa.

Our small but mighty group was evenly split between downhill and cross-country skiers. First day conditions at Bromont were excellent with blue skies and well-groomed trails making for one of the best ski days of the entire winter; and even allowing us to sample après-ski micro-brewed refreshments outdoors. Temperature and snow conditions were spring-like, a mix of soft snow on south-facing sunny slopes, and hard/icy conditions in shaded areas. It took a few runs to figure out the best trails to take but with 141 trails on 7 slope sides, we had lots of choices.

Bromont has a unique system for identifying ski trails – named for cities & towns in North America, so you can ski the "California" runs (Los Angeles, San Jose, etc.), the "Canada" runs (Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, etc.) and even a run called Ottawa which, just like the city roads, was bumpy, icy, and full of potholes. The cross-country skiers had a bit of a slower start. The tracks had not been groomed and conditions were fast; but as temperatures climbed things improved considerably.



**On the Ottawa trail, Bromont weekend trip, Feb. 24**

On day two, the downhillers made the short drive to Mont Sutton to enjoy the destination's glade skiing experience. With mid-week crowds at a minimum, we had many runs all to ourselves.

The second day was the ticket for cross-country skiers with early grooming, making for great ski conditions at the Des Cèdres outdoor centre. For après-ski, the hot tub and bar plus wonderful evening meals filled out the day. By all accounts the trip was a fun adventure and an easy ride not too far from Ottawa.



**Snowshoers at Sutton, Feb. 25**

**Louise Lefebvre, DH Weekend Chair, [dhweekend-2020@raski.ca](mailto:dhweekend-2020@raski.ca)**



## SNOWSHOEING

The snowshoe season for 2020 was off to a successful start. We had several outings to local Greenbelt venues and some out of town. Several people volunteered to lead some outings as well which was greatly appreciated.



### Jan. 19 – Snowshoeing in the Greenbelt

In March, as the season was winding down, it suddenly came to halt because of COVID. For that same reason, we are not able to provide a schedule of activities of any type this season which is most unfortunate. Although many of us will still be keeping active and going out on our snowshoes on the various trails in and around Ottawa. Perhaps we'll run into each other on the trails as we emerge from our homes to get some fresh air on nice winter days.



### Jan. 30 – Lauriault trail snowshoeing. At Mackenzie King ruins

It's important to stay active not only from a physical aspect but also for our mental health. So don't hesitate to contact a couple of friends and go enjoy the outdoors as much as possible but please keep your distance and wear your masks as required. We'll hopefully be able to offer our regular schedule next season. Stay safe and stay healthy!

**Doris Dallaire, Snowshoe Chair,** [snowshoe-2020@raski.ca](mailto:snowshoe-2020@raski.ca)

## SOCIAL

Unfortunately due to COVID restrictions, so many activities such as Theatre in the Park, and other plays and social events were cancelled. This meant our social program was basically decimated. At this time, as the pandemic continues, we are unable to plan any social activities for the coming season. We miss you and hope that perhaps in the summer or later in 2021 we'll be able to resume our social lives in a more normal fashion and have some fun together once again.

**Doris Dallaire, Snowshoe Chair,** [snowshoe-2020@raski.ca](mailto:snowshoe-2020@raski.ca)

## CYCLING

We bike fairly leisurely and take time to smell the flowers. We like to take photos, enjoy ice cream, and stop for a look at the views.

The 2020 official cycling program was sadly cancelled by the RA due to COVID. However, members emailed each other to organize a few unofficial cycling day trips with club members or other friends. The following ride reports were posted on our Facebook site:

- Old Ottawa South to Pink Lake, while the Gatineau Parkway was free of cars,
- Britannia to Island Park, and the War Museum on the SJAM, look ma, no cars
- Britannia to Shirley's Bay, March Road, Bell's Corners on the Trans Canada Trail
- Petrie Island,
- a Wine and Cheese Party by bike (check our Facebook site to read all about it!),
- the Waterfront Trail from Guindon Park just west of Cornwall to Grey's Creek just east of Cornwall,
- Shirley's Bay from various starting points (40-65 km),
- Chelsea via Sentier de la Riviere Gatineau, sentier du ruisseau Leamy, Chemin de la Mine and Notch Road (the last two with new designated bike lanes),
- Lac Leamy
- Perth to Murphy's Point Provincial Park
- Green's Creek to Petrie Island via the Ottawa River Parkway
- Billing's Bridge to Manotick
- East Ottawa to Britannia Village (38 km round trip),
- Kingsmere

And lots of ice cream was had by all!

A high point of the season was the NCC's decision to close the parkways to cars, from 8 am to 4 pm on Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays, from May 14 to Thanksgiving. The objective was to give pedestrian cyclists more room to socially distance, as the recreational pathways were very crowded due to COVID. The NCC clocked 600,000 individual visits to the parkways by pedestrians and cyclists during the periods the cars were banned!

We also welcomed the re-opening of the Harmer Avenue Bridge to cross the 417 between Wellington West and the Civic Hospital.

Who knows what 2021 will bring, but we hope the RA will permit us to run official club trips next year, and if not, we can continue contacting each other for informal rides and posting our trip reports on Facebook.

Many thanks to all those who kept on biking, and posting their trip reports on Facebook to inspire us all.

**Maureen Adamache, cycling coordinator,**  
[hikes-2020@raski.ca](mailto:hikes-2020@raski.ca)



## HIKING

We hike in the spring after the snow and before the bugs, but mostly in the fall to get our legs in shape for skiing. We do urban, Greenbelt and Gatineau hikes, at various levels of difficulty. We usually stop for coffee or lunch after hiking.

The 2020 official club hiking was sadly cancelled by the RA due to COVID. The border closures between Ontario and Quebec also kept us out of Gatineau Park at times. However, members emailed each other to organize a few unofficial hiking day trips with club members or other friends. There were a few unofficial hikes:

- a walk along the Poet's Pathway (read all about it on our Facebook site!)
- a hike at the High Lonesome Nature Reserve on Carbine Road just outside Pakenham
- Gatineau Park hikes
- nature walks around Mud Lake

Who knows what 2021 will bring, but we hope the RA will permit us to run official club trips next year, and if not, we can continue contacting each other for informal hikes.

Thanks again to the participants who posted on our Facebook site to inspire us.

**Maureen Adamache – Hiking Coordinator,**  
[hikes-2020@raski.ca](mailto:hikes-2020@raski.ca)

## PHOTOS & TRIP REPORTS

Photos and trip reports from most of our outings are on the RA Ski web site, [www.raski.ca](http://www.raski.ca).

### Trip Reports

Downhill and cross-country trip reports for the last month are put on our web site [www.raski.ca](http://www.raski.ca). Click on “Trip reports” on the left-hand sidebar 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](http://raski.ca).

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

## SOCIAL MEDIA & SNOWPHONE UPDATES

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

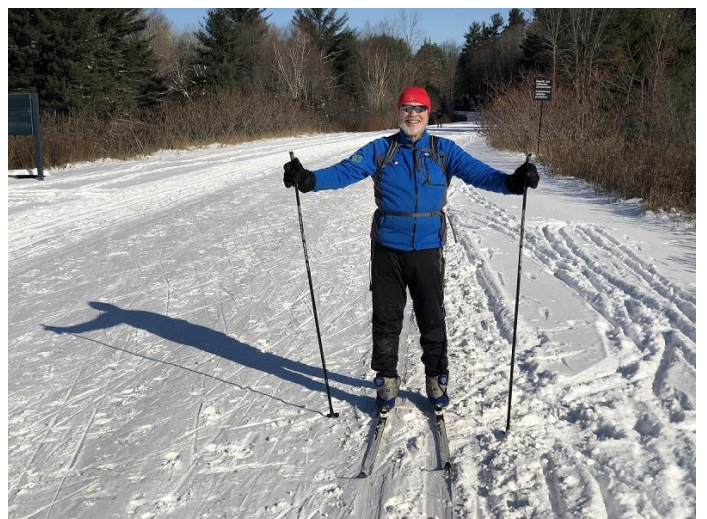
- **SnowPhone** 613-736-6235. The SnowPhone gives you last-minute status, changes and additions to our trips.
- **Website** [www.raski.ca](http://www.raski.ca)
- **Ski-mail** Sign up for our e-mail with the latest club news: go to [www.raski.ca](http://www.raski.ca)
- and click on “e-Maillist” in the “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.



**Roger on the St. Moritz weeklong, ready for COVID**



**Jan. 5, 2020 – DH skiing at Calabogie**



**Nov. 13, 2019 – First XC ski of the season**



**MORE PHOTOS**



**Jan. 2 – Snowshoers at Bruce Pit**



**Jan. 2020 – DH skier at St. Moritz weeklong**



**Feb. 20 – XC ski to Huron cabin**



**Mar. 1 – Snowshoeing at Larose Forest**



**Feb. 22 – At Renaud cabin, Taylor Lake XC ski**



**Jan. 2020 – DH skiers at St. Moritz, Switzerland**



**Feb 17, 2020 - Skiers at St-Sauveur**



**St. Moritz – View from downtown**