

Radcliffe

Opening of Crooked Slide Park and Community Centre



Sean Conway MPP sent a log through the schutt

extensively rebuilt with a walkway across the top, so that visitors can cross the creek.

Radcliffe Township Council was fortunate at the outset to gain the generous co-operation of the owner of the land. Murray Bros. Lumbering Company (of Barry's Bay) donated 6½ acres for the project along Byer's Creek. The result is a spacious park with picnic tables set well apart in a serene wooded setting, on both sides of the water. Washrooms are located at a discreet distance.

While two L.I.P. grants, totalling \$35,000 paid for the labor involved, the township had to pay for the materials. Again it was lucky, for the Ministry of Natural Resources permitted the cutting of a hemlock stand nearby, so the major cost to this rural municipality was \$3,000 for hauling and millwork.

All that remains to be done now is to erect a plaque, which will inform visitors of the history and purpose of

the slide, and to set up signs on Highway 62 to direct travellers to the park.

Slides, like this one, which were constructed in the bush for a few years' use, were only wide enough for the long timbers to run loose. Slides which were built on a major waterway were 26 feet wide to allow the passage of the cribs of square timber, usually 25 feet 6 inches in width, without being dismantled.

The most famous slide in Canada was the Government Slide, built in 1846 to by-pass the Chaudiere Falls on the Ottawa River, adjoining the capital. Riding a crib down the rushing white waters of this slide was a sport that was offered to some special visitors to Ottawa, the most famous being H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) in 1860. Just before this slide was closed in 1908, J. R. Booth issued permits to many residents of Ottawa to take a last ride down the slide on a crib.

Saturday May 22 marked the grand opening of two extremely important sites in Radcliffe township.

Officials and residents of Radcliffe were on hand for the grand opening of the new Community Center and the Crooked Slide Park.

Rev. Dobson began the ceremonies with a prayer of thanks for the sunshine. Mr. Len Hopkins M.P. Renfrew North Nipissing East and Mr. Alkenbrack M.P. Frontenac, Lennox and Addington walked down the guard of honour which was formed by the Brownies, Guides, Scouts and Cubs before cutting the ribbon in the doorway. The officials expressed their pleasure at being at the opening and cut the ribbon, declaring the community centre officially open.

The ribbon cutting was followed by an introduction to the council that worked towards the completion of the park and the hall. Council members include reeve Nick Lepinskie, Mr. Tony Shulist, Mr Emerick Etmanskie, Mr Bud Maika, Mr Charles Phanenhour and

clerk Adolphe Pecoskie.

The Radcliffe crest was unveiled by Mr. Wilbert Raglan, Warden of the County of Renfrew. The crest was designed by Mr. Frank Ritza of Barry's Bay.

Mr. Adolph Pecoskie resigning clerk of Radcliffe explained some of the detailed plans that went into designing the crest.

In contemplating an assignment like designing a crest for a municipality, one ponders the wording, suitable symbols and a fitting design that is not too similar to one known to exist.

Tourism is Radcliffe township's industry and revolves around the Indian words Kamineskeg and Madawaska. Therefore, since our first inhabitants provided these names Mt. Madawaska is symbolized by the skiing squaw in full flight for the winter exciting sport.

By contrast, summer is shown in less hectic activity on Lake Kamineskeg. The use of an adjective (recreation) is unusual.

It is meant that these native dressed symbols convey the message that the Radcliffe region is still in its

original (unpolluted) natural state and holds out the promise that hopefully it will so remain.

Perhaps the most exciting event of the day was the official opening of the Crooked Slide Park. The log chute at the Park was restored with the aid of a L.I.P. grant a few years ago. The park is located approximately one mile from Combermere down the Kazuby road.

Everyone left the community center and arrived at the park to see a ribbon cutting ceremony. Much to their surprise they saw a log cutting ceremony. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Alkenbrack cut one side of the log and the other end was cut by Mr. Lepinskie and Mr. Raglan.

Mr. Tom Murray was shown appreciation for his contribution of the land on

which the park was built. Murray Bro. Lumber Co. owned the property when the township decided to go ahead with the construction of the park. They approach-

ed the board members asking what they would want for the property. The land was given to the township as long as the survey price was paid for and the land was used for a public park.

The opening ceremonies at the park ended when Mr. Conway, Mr Alkenbrack and Mr Hopkins, Mr Lepinskie and Mr Raglan sent three logs over the chute.

The ceremonies at the park were original and exciting for all those involved and for the audience. How often do we get to see our local politicians cutting logs?

Following the ribbon cutting ceremonies, a social hour and dinner was held in the new building. Sean Conway, MPP Renfrew North in his remarks thanked those present for his invitation and of his grandfather Mr Tom Murray of Barry's Bay. He reminded those present of the great quality of life which is enjoyed in this part

of the country. Sometimes it is not appreciated until one moves away.

In closing he read two poems written by Mr. Murray, The Pine Tree and Good-bye Toronto.

Mr. Alkenbrack paid tribute to the retiring clerk, Mr Adolphe Pecoskie for his many years of service to the community as clerk treasurer of Radcliffe Township.

He paid tribute to the Recreation Centre Board and Council for their initiative in planning such a building. Many larger towns cannot boast of such a useful and beautiful building.

He explained one good reason for restoring the log chute was to remind us of its importance in the early days. The lumber industry was the important factor in opening up this part of the country. This restored Crooked Slide is a reminder of our heritage.

Following the dinner a dance was held for the residents of Radcliffe.