

Hamilton to Guelph Line

Open New 40-Mile Section of Bruce Trail

Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club announces the public opening of 40 miles of the Bruce Trail in the Hamilton area. This club, under the leadership of its president, Jan Kamermans of Hamilton, has completed the building of 40 miles of continuous trail along the escarpment from the Flock Road in Hamilton to the Guelph Line in Burlington.

Mr. Kamermans said: "The escarpment runs through Hamilton, and the Trail follows the escarpment right through the city. As far as I know, Hamilton is the only large city with a nature trail throughout its whole length. We hope the citizens will use and enjoy the Trail — use, not abuse!"

After following the escarpment through Hamilton, the Trail winds through Ancaster and Sulphur Springs, crossing the Dundas Valley to reach the escarpment again just west of the town of Dundas; then through Webster's Falls Ravine to Dundas Peak and on to the Rock Chapel Sanctuary of the Royal Botanical Gardens; past Clappison's Cut and down through the foothills to Waterdown, the Trail winds with the escarpment in Burlington to the Guelph Line.

Forty miles represent four days of hiking if one wants to enjoy the countryside and the views, and not be physically exhausted at the end. For the trail builders, these 40 miles

represent far more; the strenuous and pleasant outdoor work and the knowledge of sharing in a great voluntary effort has created an unique bond of fellowship.

"Iroquoia" is the name given to the tourist region in which Grimsby, Hamilton and Burlington are situated, and as the club's 60 to 80 miles of trail will go through this area, "Iroquoia" was the name chosen for the club.

Tremendous Task
The story of putting the trail on the map in "Iroquoia" is worth mentioning. The first task was surveying for the proposed route of the trail. Locating a scenic trail in a highly ur-

banized area such as around Hamilton, is not an easy task. Immediately after the formation of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club, the Trail Committee was given the formidable task of pushing the trail through as the primary objective of the club.

Some statistical information may help readers to visualize and comprehend the extent of this task. In the 40 miles now completed, 23 bridges have been built across streams; 47 stiles have been constructed over fences; and more than 450 steps have been made on steep slopes. An example of the work involved: the possibility of locating the trail in easy terrain near a highway was discarded because

of refuse dumped over the highway edge. Instead, it was decided to locate this half mile off trail in beautiful and enjoyable surroundings and this required the building of an extra bridge and more than 100 steps.

There are many more examples: in the Hamilton City section, one group built their "Blue Knuckle Bridge" in the cold month of January. On a spring day, imagine the drama of 12 men transporting a log estimated to weigh a ton. This log was required for another bridge in the Burlington area. And in summer, three women took to hammer and nails and constructed stiles.

All Volunteers
"People have been wonderful," said Mrs. Edith Lloyd, chairman of the Trail Committee. "This voluntary project has brought to life the old pioneering spirit. People enjoy a day outdoors working on the trail, building a stile, clearing a trail where none existed before, or helping to

build a bridge. And people from all walks of life are working together. We have many backgrounds — but we are all Canadian. The knowledge that we are making a worthwhile contribution to this country, makes trail building a memorable experience."

The need for recreational facilities in rapidly developing areas has long been recognized, especially by the Conservation Authorities. The Twelve Mile Creek Conservation Authority Report of 1960 mentions this and stresses the desirability of using the escarpment for recreational purposes and the development of trails. A great step forward was made when the Federation of Ontario Naturalists sponsored and encouraged the Bruce Trail.

However, the trail would not have been possible at all without co-operation from many sides. This co-operation has been beyond all expectations in "Iroquoia". Planning and assess-

ment departments and parks boards of the various communities have been helpful in many ways. The City of Hamilton in its 1963 winter works program, constructed three miles of trail from Flock Road to Jolley Cut. This stretch, now cleared and blazed, is part of the 40 miles being opened. The Royal Botanical Gardens built the trail in their Rock Chapel Sanctuary. On request, local firms have donated lumber, posts and nails. Trail builders brought their own tools: hammers, pruners, axes, saws, sledges, crow-bars and shovels.

Loan Access
The most outstanding co-operation has been received from property owners. When asked for permission to construct the trail across their lands, their response was magnificent. Since approximately 90 per cent of the trail is on private land, it is the landowners who are making the trail possible in the beginning. The co-operation of the owners is

greatly valued by the club. When clearing for the trail only brush and small saplings are removed. Trees and wildflowers are protected, measures are taken to prevent erosion, and other good conservation principles are followed. Owners are proud of their lands and enthusiastic about the trail, and have kindly granted permission for the trail to cross their property. Therefore, hikers and users of the trail are urged to show their appreciation by exhibiting good outdoor manners:

Protect trees and crops. Leave no litter — neither orange peels nor spent flower bulbs!

No fires or camping. No hunting or poaching. Please stay on the trail!

It must be noted that trail remains private property and destruction of trees, fences or signs on any private land render the vandals liable to (Continued on Page C3)

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