

2016-2017 Annual Report from the President

It has been another great year of activity, events and improvements on the City of Fredericton's beautiful trail system now expanded to over 90 linear km. Existing trails such as the Nashwaak Trail, has had infrastructure upgrades and paving to further enhance its' usage.

The Trail Visitor Centre usage was comparable to previous years with approximately the same numbers of out of town visitors and foreign tourists stopping in for information, water, coffee, washroom use, and trail maps. The Railway Museum, with all its' pictures, tends to attract the older generation who grew up with the railroad being part of their life. The TVC has been the central starting and ending point of numerous events such as the weekly Folks on Spokes rides and the Moms on the Move group to name a couple.



We were most fortunate to be able to host a small gathering at our June meeting of the surviving founding members of the FTC. We got to hear stories from Dave Peterson, Patty Trail and just say hello and thank you to Harold Boone, Maureen McKee Buck, and Vern Smith. All were so instrumental in the formation of the "rails to trail" system and the founding of the Fredericton Trails Coalition Inc. on February 9, 1994. It was somewhat sad that deceased founding President Bill Thorpe could not have been a part of this historic gathering. Throughout the summer and fall months numerous marathons, walks and other fundraisers took part in joyous activities on our trail system. As a result, thousands of dollars were raised in support of the many charitable causes that are so dear to the hearts of the citizens of Fredericton.

Our City sponsored Earth Day in the spring went well with several tons of garbage extracted from along our trail network mostly in or near the downtown core. Many thanks go out to the City and all the individuals and groups such as our Adopt-A-Trail Volunteers for a great effort. The day ended with food and entertainment at the Station on York.

A major part of our purpose has been to publish an annual Trail Guide brochure for the public and tourists alike. To finance this we rely heavily on our loyal local sponsors whom we wish to thank very much for their contributions to make this happen.

As we move forward in Canada's 150th Celebration year I have some thoughts to put forward: What do I see in the future of trail expansion for the City and the Fredericton Trails Coalition? I can envision the existing trail network being expanded beyond what we have today to reach out from Cliffe St, along Two Nations Crossing to Killarney Lake and to Brookside Drive to Killarney on the north side.

On the south side a trail system along the Hanwell Road area to pass by the Shannex property as envisioned by deceased City Councillor David Kelly. Ideally this trail would eventually hook up to trails in New Maryland eventually. The City is also working closely with the First Nations community to join and complete the North Riverfront Trail along the river at the foot of Cliffe St with a lookout being developed on the old ramp. The Gibson Trail could eventually be paved from Watters drive to the Marysville Heritage Centre now that the upgrading to the underground services has been completed.

How do I see the Fredericton Trails Coalition becoming more involved in promoting increased trail use?

We will be looking at ways to take a more active role in direct or shared sponsoring of events being held on our city trails. There are numerous charitable fundraising events held throughout the year on our trails where we could assist by offering trophies, plaques, certificates or apparel as ways to promote more healthy activities for people of all ages through trail related activities. How do I see the Fredericton Trails Coalition improving safety on the trails as more people use the system more frequently?

We can start by encouraging and educating the public on the proper rules of walking, running, cycling and rollerblading on the trails such as keeping to the right and obeying speed limits. There has to be rules for everyone to ensure the safety of the public is foremost. This can take several forms such as signage, posters, and the use of social media within the schools own Facebook and websites. Perhaps we could have inter-school poster contests with prizes?

The FTC and the City also have to be more proactive in promoting trail safety on our own sites as well. Seasonal trail patrols by City Police Cadets should be used more efficiently during the busier summer months. The use of bells and helmets should be enforced for the safety of everyone. The public must learn to yield to vehicular traffic at all street crossings. This is the law in NB.

Looking forward to trail news in the coming months we should see the extension to the Cliffe Street Trail to Two Nations Crossing completed. The South Riverfront Trail behind the Beaverbrook Art Gallery is expected to re-open in the fall. The Crosstown Trail along Aberdeen Street is being rerouted to hook up with the trail through Rabbit Town Park and it too will be paved.

On the other hand, it is expected the planned infrastructure upgrade on the Nashwaak Trail from Canada Street to Barker Street is expected to be closed again for a period this summer. Other closures will be posted on the City and our Facebook sites.

The Fredericton Trails Coalition Inc has been the recipient recently of a generous endowment by a loyal and regular trail user who passed away a few months ago. More on this will be announced later.

At this time I want to wholeheartedly thank my Executive for the outstanding efforts they put forth this past year to carry out the many activities demanded of them to make the FTC a stronger organization.

Thank you all,

Respectfully Submitted,

Arthur J. McFadden
President
Fredericton Trails Coalition Inc.