

MIRAMICHI CROSS COUNTRY SKI CLUB

In April of 1975 a steering committee spearheaded by Marilyn Boston was formed to pursue the establishment of a cross country ski club on the Miramichi. In October of that year an executive committee was formed consisting of Marilyn Boston as president, Diane White vice president, Bill Purtell as treasurer, John Boston, Jaunita Purtell, Dianne Kethro, Jan Truka and Mike Cashin as committee members and the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club was born.

The original aim of the ski club was to provide outdoor recreation through cross country skiing for people of all ages. This continues to be the clubs purpose.

During the early years the club had no trail system or clubhouse and skiing consisted of weekend tours to various locations around the Miramichi. Meetings were held in members homes. From 1976 to 1979 the club used a building located on the rifle range property in Nordin as their clubhouse. A network of trails was developed in the Nordin area that would serve the club for several years.

In 1979 the club obtained a building from the Woodlands division of Boise Cascade Canada Limited which still serves as the clubhouse today. The clubhouse was first located on the Newcastle side of the French Fort cove area and remained there until 1982 when it was moved to Douglastown. In Douglastown a new network of trails were developed and the club grew each year until membership exceeded 400.

In 1986 after a severe forest fire destroyed the trees surrounding 80% of the trail system the club started to look again for a new home. In October 1991 the clubhouse was moved to Nelson and the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club was amalgamated with the Nelson ski club. The Miramichi Cross Country Ski club continues to operate in Nelson and has expanded the trail system during the last ~~four~~ ^{FIVE} years.

During it's ^{Two} twenty year history the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club has hosted many skiing events at both the local and Provincial level. From 1978 to 1985 the club co-hosted the North 100 ski marathon with the Bathurst ski club. This was a two day ski event where skiers would ski from Douglastown to Bathurst. The North 100 was one of only three two day ski marathons in the country. The 160km Canadian Ski Marathon from Quebec to Ottawa is now the only two day ski marathon in Canada. Since 1986 the ski club has hosted a one day "loppet" known as the Miramichi Loppet.

In 1984 the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club hosted the Provincial Fraser Cup ski championships. The Fraser cup championship is the final leg of the Fraser Cup Provincial race circuit in the Province.

THE MIRAMICHI LOPPET, IN IT'S ~~THE~~ 12TH YEAR OF OPERATION, IS ONE OF EIGHT LOPPETS WHICH MAKE UP THE PROVINCIAL LOPPET CIRCUIT. THE MIRAMICHI LOPPET IS A MASS PARTICIPATION EVENT AND IS OPEN TO ALL SKIERS REGARDLESS OF AGE OR ABILITY.

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Today, the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club is an active club with an executive staff working year round planning and organizing programs for skiers of all ages.

Programs offered by the club include the popular Jackrabbit program, this is a program for children ages 4 to 13 and runs every saturday during January and February. The program is designed to teach children the fundamentals and proper techniques of cross country skiing in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.

New this year is the Challenge program which is designed for youth between the ages of 13 and 18. The challenge program is a skiing program for youth who would like to participate in competitive and recreational activities while developing leadership and teamwork skills and improving their technique and fitness level. This program runs every saturday at 1:30pm at the clubhouse.

This year the clubs social program will include three moonlight ski tours. The moonlight skis are open to everyone and include singles, couples and families. There is always some food and hot drink to warm up after a moonlight ski and sometimes there is entertainment provided as well. This years moonlight skis will be held on January 14, February 17 and March 17th.

The Miramichi Loppet will be held on February 25. The loppet is a recreational event for skiers of all ages and abilities. There will be shorter distances for the beginners and longer ones for the more experienced. The loppet is open to all skiers and you do not have to belong to a ski club to participate. There will be food and drinks available after the loppet and participation pins will be awarded to all who participate.

The Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club offers something for everyone no matter what level of skier you are. Whether your goal is recreation or just socializing, the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club is the place to be.

This years executive members are Gerald Smith president, Norm Brown vice president, Dan King past president, Jennifer Cain secretary, Peggy Doyle treasurer, Andy Bahm loppet, Maggie Pearson social, Fred Savoie trails, Ray Thibodeau coaching, Holly Arsenault jackrabbit, Gerald Smith instruction.

