

Group of cross-country skiers

Long way in eight years

Jan Truka bought cross-country skis eight years ago and then found that there was no-one around to teach him the sport.

So he got together with Marilyn and John Boston, John Nimchuk, Ray Thibodeau, Mike Cashin and Juanita Purtell and the Miramichi Cross Country Ski Club was formed.

Later they were joined by Diane White, John McMaster, Bunny Dempsey and Edith Boudreau.

There wasn't any club house in those days.

"We used to meet in schools, private homes, and hold clinics at The Enclosure," recalled Jan Truka.

"A few years ago we were allowed to use the rifle range building in Nordin, but unfortunately some vandals burned it down and we were without a club house again."

"We heard that Boise Cascade were auctioning off some buildings at one of their lumber camps. We decided to put in a bid for one of the buildings," said Truka, "and were successful."

CANDA WORKS GRANT

The club managed to get a Canada Works Grant to move the building and assemble it on its present site, behind French Fort Cove.

Land for the club house was leased from Tom Preston who lives close by.

The 20 miles of ski trails around the club house are on land owned by the Department of National



photo by Janice Cowan

Touring awards

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Last year the club had 200 members. Already this season 155 people have joined and the number is expected to double by the end of January.

"We have a small group of people who do most of the work," said Truka.

"The president, Don Wilson, the past president, Bunny Dempsey, tours chairman, Olie Hansen, and trails chairman, John Nimchuk."

Other hard workers are treasurer and membership secretary, Marjory Langford, Edith Boudreau, and trails chairman, Rolly Paradis.

Instructor Ray Thibodeau said the club's aim is to promote cross country ski-ing in the area.

People tended to join the club, learn to ski there, and then leave -- which unfortunately had the effect of leaving a small nucleus of people doing all the organization.

The expertise at the club is outstanding.

Besides the instructors, Jan Truka, Ray Thibodeau, and John Nimchuk, there are four tour leaders certified by the Canadian Ski Association.

They are, level 1: Don Wilson, Bunny Dempsey and Olie Hansen; level 2, John Nimchuk.

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Beginning skiiers

Instructor Ray Thibodeau assembles some beginning skiers for one of the many cross-country ski clinics organized by the Miramichi Cross-Country Ski Club.

The leaders conduct tours safely into the bush and safely back. They are trained for almost any situation

that might occur, including injuries, rescue work, and the treatment of hypothermia.