

Winter 2003



NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, March 9th at 1:30 p.m.
in the Municipal Hall / Library
10 Jondee Road, Danford Lake

Everyone welcome!

Please remember: family memberships have only one vote.

MONT O'BRIEN CRESTS FOR SALE

The new Mont O'Brien crest is now available for purchase:

1. at the Miljour Store, Danford Lake (Cawood Road and Route 301), or
2. at the Municipal Hall / Library (10 Jondee Road), Monday to Friday from 8:00 - 4:00, or
3. send a cheque to the "Association du Mont O'Brien", P.O. Box 904, Danford Lake, QC, J0X 1P0

Cost: \$3.00 a crest

Shipping: \$1.00 / for up to 5 crests

A large thanks to Georgia West for designing and arranging for the production of the crests!



MONT O'BRIEN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of January 2003, our Board members are:

President

Michele Sura
(819) 467-2835
eems@sympatico.ca

Vice-President

Roy Peck
(819) 467-5473

Secretary-Treasurer

Ed Elliott
(819) 467-2835
eems@sympatico.ca

Community Director

Georgia West
(819) 467-3249

Community Director

Harold Emery
(819) 467-5251

Community Director

Seaton Findlay
(819) 467-2058 or (613) 533-4660
Seaton.Findlay@sympatico.ca

Municipal Council Director

Pam Miles
(819) 467-4468 or (613) 724-5959
pmiles@cprn.org

At the 2003 Annual General Meeting, four Board positions will be up for election.

The election of the four officer positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) will take place during the first Board meeting directly following the AGM.

In you are interested in becoming a Board member, please make sure that you attend the AGM on March 9th.

OUR RIGHT-OF-WAY ROAD:
PROGRESS REPORT

A very large "thank you" must go out to the following people for their invaluable assistance this past year in improving our road into the Mont O'Brien region:

Rick Courchaine
Harold Emery
Jason Emery
Fern Fredrick
Randy Gabie
Leonard Heeney
Roger Johnson
Neil Lacharity
Danny Lalonde
Renato Livinal
Andrew Miles
Lyndsey Peck
Perry Peck
Roy Peck
Doug Picard
Mick Picard
Robert Rogan

Due to the hard work and generosity of these community members, the road into the Mont O'Brien region is close to completion. We are happy to report that in 2002:

- a sign was placed at the road's entrance at Route 301
- a gate was constructed and erected at the Route 301 entrance
- the road was widened to its full 40 feet throughout the property of the Miljour Estates
- gravel was laid along a good portion of the first half of the road
- most of the road was graded

The Miljour Estates, a building lot development project, have generously provided the Mont O'Brien Association with the right-of-way on this road.

If you would like more information about the lots for sale within Miljour Estates, please contact Renato Livinal at (819) 827-5803.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2003

Did you know that in 2002 we had 150 memberships representing 500 people? The word is getting out about Mont O'Brien, thanks to you our members. Your membership is an encouragement to all those who volunteer countless hours each year to ensure that this beautiful wilderness area is accessible to you.

To renew your membership, send in your:

- (1) 2003 Membership Renewal Form
- (2) the \$10.00 annual fee, and
- (3) the Membership Responsibility Acknowledgement Form

And you will receive:

- (1) 2003 membership card
- (2) a key for the entrance gate, and
- (3) a map of the Mont O'Brien area

There are a few things you should know about your 2003 membership:

1. **The membership fee for 2003 is \$10.00.** The Board of Directors decided to keep the fee the same as in 2002 to ensure that everyone will renew and to encourage new memberships. The number of memberships has an influence on the Board of Directors' ability to make the proposed Mont O'Brien park a reality. Your membership demonstrates your support to keep this wilderness area accessible for all.
2. Family membership is for spouse and partners and children that are 17 years and under. **Separate membership is now required for anyone 18 years and older, even if they are living at home.**
3. Corporate memberships are also available. Fee is \$50.00
4. Your membership fee helps offset the costs of trail construction and maintenance, completion of the road to Lac O'Brien, distribution of the access keys and communicating with you, the members.
5. With your 2003 membership, **you will receive a key for the lock on the gate** to the entrance of the Mont O'Brien area but you must sign and return the Acknowledgement Form with your Membership Renewal Form first. A key will be sent to you. (See Key Section of the newsletter for more details).
6. All 2003 members will also **receive a map of Mont O'Brien, which** shows the main road into the area and the trails to the top of Mont O'Brien and the Lac O'Brien. You will soon be able to download this map off the website.

You can also access the 2003 Membership Renewal and Member Responsibility Acknowledgement Form on the website (www.danfordlakevillage.qc.ca) - so tell all your friends!

UPDATE ON OUR GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

We are happy to report that thanks to the funding we received from Natural Resources Canada's Sustainable Communities program we now have a functioning GIS installed in our office in the Municipal Hall.

In the early part of the summer four training sessions were provided by GeoSolutions Consulting, a GIS and geographical data company based in Ottawa. These sessions provided a group of interested volunteers with an introductory geographical information session, two hands-on sessions to explore MapInfo, our chosen GIS software and an overview session on our GPS units.

Our two main GIS volunteers, Chris Kirby and Ed Elliott then spent time acquiring and setting up our computer, printer, scanner and the necessary GIS software and data. Chris has also been working closely with Rick Courchaine, our Municipal Building and Roads Inspector and Kim Cartier-Villeneuve, our Municipal Secretary-Treasurer to ensure that Albyn-and-Cawood will be able to take full advantage of the benefits of the GIS.

Chris and Ed have also produced an initial map of the Mont O'Brien region for the Association's membership. The map will soon to be put up on our website and it will also be distributed with the 2003 membership cards.

If any member would like to borrow a GPS, please contact Kim in the Municipal Hall at (819) 467-2941.

GET OUTDOORS AND EXPLORE THE MONT O'BRIEN REGION: JOIN OUR TRAIL WORK TEAM

New trails: We now have a marked and cleared trail to the top of Mont O'Brien, thanks to several teams of volunteers who worked throughout the summer and fall. You can now hike to the three lookouts on Mont O'Brien on a path that is at least a couple of feet wide and cleared of brush, stumps and fallen trees. The new trail maneuvers around a few steep areas to ensure that it is safe for members.

Follow the orange markings, which are located on your right hand side on the way up and on your left-hand side on the way down. The hike begins 6.5 kilometers from Hwy 301 entrance and it is 45 minutes to the top, at a medium pace. Don't forget to bring a map, compass, water and proper clothing. Enjoy!



... **CONTINUED**

Our faithful trail volunteers include: Chris and Bertha Kirby, Ron Bedford, Seaton Findlay, Georgia West, Lana Merrifield, Rene Farladeau, Albert Clermont, David Holland, Margaret Camfield Holland, Martha Camfield, Roy Peck, Andrew and Pam Miles.

Plans for 2003: Seaton Findlay, the newest member to Mont O'Brien Association's Board of Directors, will be heading up the trail work for 2003. The goal is to extend the trail across the top of Mont O'Brien and down to the lake. This will make a complete trail loop. We would also like to make the trails that presently exist in other parts of the Mont O'Brien area more accessible and officially register them with the Province of Quebec.

We are always looking for volunteers - so don't be surprised if you get a call to come out and help. We usually go out for two to three hours and stop to enjoy the view as much as possible. It is amazing how much you can do in just a few hours! All you need are long handle clippers and good hiking shoes. Please contact Seaton Findlay at (613) 533-4660 or Pam Miles at (613) 724-5959 or (819) 467-4468 for more information.

THANKSGIVING FAMILY HIKE - A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

Despite the early morning fog on the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend, 48 people came out to enjoy the hike up our beloved Mont O'Brien. This very keen and fit group met at the Miljour Store in Danford Lake to sign up for the hike and then we made our way to the base of the mountain. Since our road into the Mont O'Brien region is not quite complete, Lucien Mineault gave us permission to enter the Mont O'Brien area through his gated entrance. Thank you Lucien!

Children, parents, friends and a few hike-loving dogs made their way up the mountain after listening to Pam Miles, a Board member and the hike leader, provide an update on the proposed park. The hike was led by the very fit, including several younger members who never seemed to be out of breath! We all met at the third lookout to enjoy the south view. We still had a bit of fog but not enough that we could not see for many miles and enjoy the colourful leaves.

A great time was had by all - and we recruited a few more members! See you all next year.



UPDATE ON OUR APPLICATION TO FAPAQ

In March 2002, the Mont O'Brien Association applied to FAPAQ's Forest and Fauna program. We had requested funding to hire two wildlife technicians and a biologist to conduct a thorough inventory of the flora and fauna inventory in the Mont O'Brien region and to then assist us in putting together an integrated resources management plan which would shape the development of the infrastructure of the future park.

The deadline for applications was originally set for the end of March; the provincial government extended this to the end of April. This meant the decision date was first pushed from early May to sometime in June.

Unfortunately, unbeknownst to us at the time, the provincial government had decided to include the funding for this program as part of its new "Resource Region" funding program for the MRC Pontiac. This meant that the funds were then further delayed in addition to now being part of a much bigger program distribution plan. This also meant that the FAPAQ office in Hull no longer had complete jurisdiction over the decision-making process for its program. When the Selection Committee in our MRC finally met at the end of July, it was decided that no applications for the Forest and Fauna program would be accepted; instead the money would be diverted to other FAPAQ programs. We were quite disappointed and more than a little frustrated!

After consulting with Jean-Pierre Ledoux, Executive Director of our MRC's CLD (Centre local de développement) in order to explore other funding options for our inventory and the integrated resources management plan, the Board decided to follow the CLD's advice and direct our immediate energies into the creation of Parc Mont O'Brien's business plan. Our business plan, which would clearly explain the need for our flora and fauna inventory and integrated resources management plan, could then be used to acquire necessary funding.

In the meantime, this spring, it is hoped that a volunteer team will begin our inventory of the flora and fauna in the Mont O'Brien region. This information will be recorded in our GIS and will provide the backbone of the infrastructure plans for the future park.

If anyone is interested in taking part in this exploration team, please contact Michele Sura at (819) 467-2835 or via email at eems@sympatico.ca

KEYS FOR THE LOCK ON THE GATE AT ENTRANCE

As per the agreement between the Mont O'Brien Association and the owners of the Miljour Estates property, who are providing right-of-way access to the Mont O'Brien area, a locked gate is now in place at the Route 301 entrance.

All current members of the Mont O'Brien Association are eligible to receive a key for the lock. To receive the key, a member or a representative of a membership family is required to read and fill out the Member Responsibility Acknowledgement Form. Only one key is provided per membership.

Options to receive the key:

1. Fill out and sign the Membership Acknowledgement Form and mail it to the Mont O'Brien Association. A key will then be mailed to you:

Mont O'Brien Association
P.O. Box 904
Danford Lake, Quebec
J0X 1P0

2. Deliver in person a completed Membership Acknowledgement Form to the Alveyn-and-Cawood Municipal Office during regular business hours (8:00 - 4:00 Monday to Friday). Kim Cartier-Villeneuve, the office administrator, will supply you with a key.

Tel: (819) 467-2941
Address: 10 Jondee Road, Danford Lake, Quebec.

If you have any questions, please contact Michele Sura at (819) 467-2835 or by email eems@sympatico.ca

FEASIBILITY STUDY TO BE DONE FOR MONT O'BRIEN OBSERVATORY AND DARK SKY PARK

In October 2002, the Board of Directors of the Mont O'Brien Association submitted a funding proposal for the creation of our business plan to the CLD (Centre local de développement) in the MRC Pontiac.

Our Board has long known that the next crucial step to be taken towards the establishment of a park in the Mont O'Brien region is the creation of a full business plan which could be shared with potential funding bodies and development partners.

When the Executive of the CLD met to discuss our request for business plan funding, they decided that they would prefer to see a feasibility study done first for the proposed astronomical observatory since it presently is the largest and most elaborate part of the Parc Mont O'Brien vision.

Since the late fall, CLD staff have worked to secure the research and analytical services of CRAI E (Centre Régional D'analyse Intégrée en Entrepreneurship de l'Outaouais) which is located in Gatineau. The funding arrangements for the Observatory and Dark Sky Park Feasibility Study should be finalized within the next month and CRAI E proposes to submit a final report a few months after.

At the same time our Board will still be researching other options to assist in the creation of our full business plan since this work is beyond the present volunteer capacities and resources presently available to us.

If any member has experience writing business plans and/or acquiring business plan funding and is available to assist with this work please contact Pam Miles at (819) 467-4468 or (613) 724-5959.

REMINDER:

THE MONT O'BRIEN ASSOCIATION IS PART OF THE DANFORD LAKE WEBSITE

<http://www.danfordlakevillage.qc.ca>

From the homepage, just click on the Mont O'Brien link located on the left-hand sidebar.
You can download the membership form and past newsletters.

MANDATE OF THE MONT O'BRIEN ASSOCIATION

Maintain the wilderness environment of the Mont O'Brien area by protecting the numbers and varieties of flora and fauna while providing educational opportunities and recreational access to the forests, lakes, rivers and mountains.

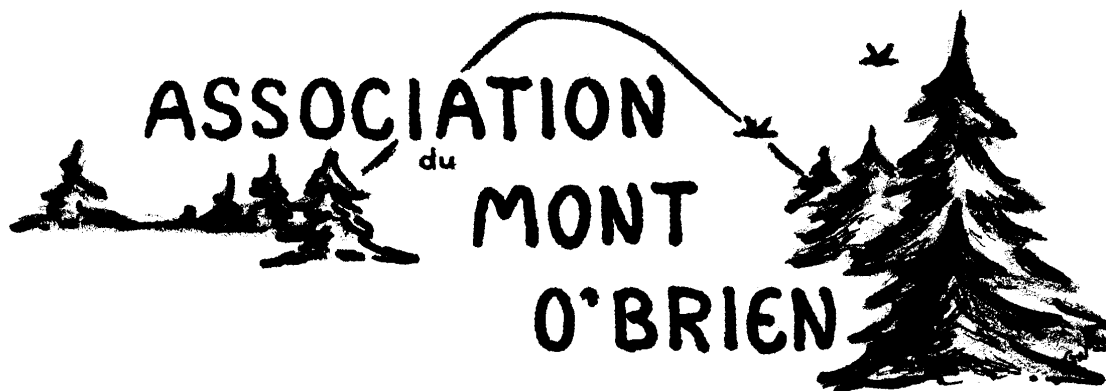
NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION TEAM

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Ed Elliott - Editing

Michèle Thèbaud-Borchers - French translation



**Hope to see you at our 2003 Annual General Meeting
on Sunday, March 9th at 1:30 p.m. in the Municipal Hall/Library!**