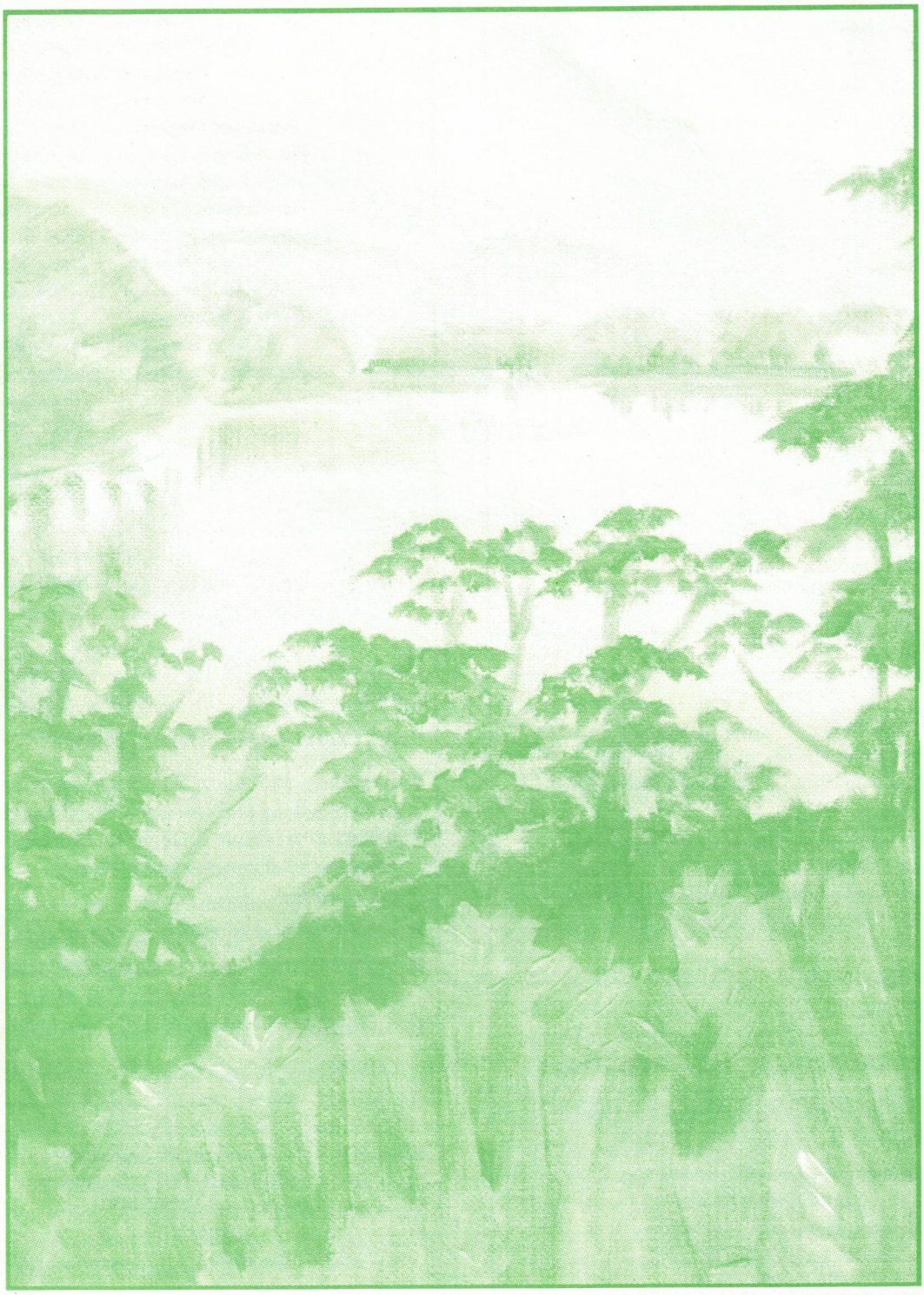
RANDONNEWS

Published by Randonnée Aventure
Montreal's Friendly Outdoor Club

Spring 1997



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Randonnée Aventure, founded in 1986, is a non-profit, outdoor club for adults, with about 400 members.

Randonnée Aventure offers:

- Saturday, and some Sunday, bus trips to prime cycling, hiking and cross-country skiing destinations within a two-hour drive from Montreal. Trips are designed to accommodate all levels — from beginner to expert.
- Long-weekend getaways.
- Frequent social events, such as picnics, barbecues and parties.
- And more ...

Randonnée Aventure
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Montreal, QC H3X 3Y2
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President's Message

An Outdoor Club for all. That was one of the ideas behind the founding of Randonnée Aventure, ten years ago. And its one of the aspects of RA that makes me proud to be a member. We do organize outdoor activities for people who have been skiing, cycling, or hiking for years, but we also design trips to appeal to newcomers to these sports. We do our best to include a range of possibilities whenever it's practical, so you'll find that most trips offer options for everyone.

It's easy for long-time members to forget that trying out a new sport with RA, or returning to an old pastime, can be worrying for someone new to our Club. Not knowing anyone, thinking that everyone must be better than you, wondering about antiquated clothes and equipment – the list is long! Even after hiking for two or three years with RA, I remember being a little diffident on my first ski trip for just those reasons – for example, an almost triumphant lack of skill (except, of course, at falling down).

But in this truly "Friendly Outdoor Club" there are always people of all levels on each trip, and anxiety disappears as you talk to others on the bus. So I'd encourage any of you who are thinking of trying a new sport, or of taking up an old sport again, to do it with us, because at our Club everyone fits in. Maybe there are hikers who'd like to try cycling, and cyclists who'd like to hike – try something new this summer, and let RA be your guide.

Clive Brewer

From the Editor

Last week I received a letter from a friend stating that she holds us skiers personally responsible for the large snowfall of the last week of January. Well, if we skiers can bring forth the wonderful snow conditions which now prevail, then I challenge all the Randonnée hikers and cyclists to start working on their communication skills with the powers that be so that their coming outings will fall on equally wonderful days!

I have just arrived home from my fourth RA ski outing, having signed up as a member in November. Already some people feel like old friends and on each trip I look forward to meeting new people.

The more I learn about RA, the more I am impressed with the input by the numerous volunteers who make this Club run so smoothly. In fact, I was so impressed by the quality of the people at the sign-up evening in November that, before I went on my first ski trip, I volunteered to take over the vacant position of Editor of the Randonnews!

So now I am not only looking forward to the rest of this season's cross-country skiing as well as taking in some of the hiking and cycling events this coming summer, but I am also pleased at having the opportunity of being a member of the RA team!

See you on the trails!

Catharine Findlay

ATWATER INFORMATION & SIGN-UP EVENING
Tuesday, April 1, 7:00 p.m.
Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater at Tupper

This season's Spring/Summer sign-up and information evening will take on a different format. Various club officers will make short presentations about the Club, our activities, the procedures for buying and selling trips, the level of physical fitness required, the equipment recommended, etc. The talks will be followed by a question period, and by a chance to register for the different activities. All are welcome.

SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS

We are always looking for new places for trip destinations, and for new ideas for Club activities. The Management Meeting of the Club, held on the second Thursday of every month, and other committee meetings (Cycling, Hiking, Skiing and Social), are open to all Club members. Come out and attend one and find out more about how the club is run. For information, call the Club tape at 489-0339 and ask for details of date, time and location. Don't forget that this is your Club. It is run by volunteers just like you and we are always in need of an extra hand.

Cross-Country Ski Report

Date: January 5th. Trip destination: Montagne Coupée. Montreal and area forecast: rain and freezing rain. Roads in the Joliette area closed or being closed. Do we cancel the trip? Not if we can help it at Randonnée Aventure!

Fourteen hearty skiers show up for the ski trip. Our fearless leader and assistant, Jill and Rick, pull out the cell phone and start calling. Montagne Coupée, Far Hills, and Sutton en Haut all closed, but at 8:30 Orford responds. It's open, and little rain has fallen. Off we head with Yvon at the wheel, battling winds and rain all the way to the ski centre. Have we made a mistake? No way! The rain stops fifteen minutes prior to our arrival. The day ends up as a good ski, with wet snow on the trails and thin coverage, but, as Michael Jacobson commented, 98% rock free. The weather? Overcast, but no precipitation all day, not until we're back on the bus for the return trip!

All this to say that ,even if the weather doesn't look great in Montreal, it doesn't necessarily mean that there isn't a location where we can find some good skiing. Our trip leaders and I try to find the best possible locations when the weather doesn't co-operate at our chosen destination. Remember though, check the club tape if you think there may be a reason to cancel a trip.

The early '97 ski season, as I'm sure many of you will remember, was not the easiest for snow. However, at least by February, we were getting good accumulations just in time for the Canadian Ski Marathon. This year David Hawrysh and Maida Haltrecht did an excellent job in organizing RA's entries. A total of 28 members signed up for the Maxi Team, and several members formed four-person touring teams. We also had a number of entries in the Coureurs de Bois class. At the time of writing, the results of the CSM were not yet known.

Speaking of the CSM, I would like to thank Gerry Bard, who over several years has been in charge of a trail mainentance group. Gerry has done an excellent job of getting people out to clear some of the brush and blow-downs off the trail. He has decided that it is time to pass on the torch, so if there is someone who would like to take on this job, please contact me. Again, thank you Gerry for a job well done!

Your ski committee has already started to look at destinations for the 1998 season. We hope to have a few new ones, plus some of your favorites. If you have a destination that you would like to be considered, please let us know. Some sites that we are scouting are Mont Loup-Garou, Lac des Sables, and Ste-Lucie de Doncaster.

In closing we would like to thank everyone who made the 1997 season possible, the members of the Ski Committee, the trip leaders and assistants, and naturally those of you who participated in the trips. Let's look forward to another exciting year!

Paul Jensen & Diane Lowden



Pearl, Jeannine and Ginette, Lake Placid
(Photo: Catharine Findlay)

Cycling '97

The wonderful thing about Randonnée Aventure is that there are many volunteers, with fresh ideas to help vary the activities offered. This is my first year as Cycling Director and, with the help and support of the Assistant Cycling Director, Linda Lessard, and the rest of the Committee, I believe a great cycling season awaits us.

We have listened to suggestions (and some complaints) and hope that we will satisfy the hard-core cyclists as well as the newcomers. This year we have LOWERED the price for day trips to $27 – how's that for a bargain! We have also added some new destinations specifically aimed at enticing those who have been hesitant about trying a cycling trip with RA. These destinations include flat and easy alternatives. Now we can truly say that our trips offer a variety of terrain ranging from attainable to challenging. Those hikers who join us to escape the hills, and the cyclists who cannot get enough of them, will all be satisfied.

Now for some important details:

Pick-Up Points	*Bus Loading*	*Bus Departs*
Carré Décarie Square (Décarie & Vezina) (Formerly Décor Décarie)	7:00 a.m.	7:15 a.m.
Atwater & Tupper	7:30 a.m.	7:50 a.m.

Please be there with your bike ready to load. Make sure all panniers, water bottles, and pumps are removed prior to loading. Helmets are **mandatory**.

Border Crossing

Acceptable ID (passport, citizenship card or birth certificate) must be carried by all cyclists. Prior arrangements should be made by anyone requiring a US entry visa.

Pricing

Prices are as indicated in the Cycling Events listing. No surcharge applies for payment for trips taking place in August and later, provided a post-dated cheque is received before April 25.

Levels

Short routes are 30–40 km, intermediate routes 50–60 km, and longer routes can go up to 100 km, in round-trip distances.

Linda Shear

QUEBEC MS RIDE

Last August, five RA members participated in the two-day Quebec MS Cycle Ride—Anne Harper, Louise Turcot, Linda Maloney, Brian Leonard and I. Between us we raised $8,000, with the grand total raised by the event amounting to $290,000.

Sincere thanks to everyone who supported us. I will certainly be cycling in the 1997 event, and I hope that we can count on your sponsorship again. Let's all work together to eradicate this debilitating disease.

Linda Lessard

DISCOUNTS FOR RA MEMBERS

The following stores offer RA members discounts on their regular prices. Present your membership card when you make a purchase.

BLACKS INTERNATIONAL (2 stores)
3525 Queen Mary Rd., Montreal
739-4451

1101 Laurier Ouest, Outremont
271-1314

McWHINNIE CYCLE INC.
6010 Sherbrooke St. W., Notre Dame de Grâce
481-3113

MARTIN'S SWISS CYCLE & SKI
313 Victoria Ave., Westmount
481-3369

NORWAY NORDIC
127, rue Ste-Anne, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue
457-9131

BASE CAMP
173 Cartier Ave., Pointe-Claire
630-6717

1997 Cycling Events

WHEN	WHAT	HOW
Thursday, April 24	**Trip Leaders' Briefing** We'll show you the ropes to help you with running one of our cycling trips.	Le Manoir, 5319 NDG Avenue at 7:00 p.m. Phone the Club tape and leave a message for Linda Shear.
Sunday, April 27	**Know Your Bike Clinic** Start the season early with a review of basic bike knowledge (proper fit, how to change a tire, etc.), followed by a quick meal and a ride along the Lachine Canal Bike Path.	NDG Centre, 3857 Prudhomme at 10:00 a.m. No advance registration required.
Saturday, May 3 Trip 1	**High Falls Gorge, NY** A beautiful area on the border of upper New York State and Quebec. Despite the name of the trip, all the routes offered are relatively flat to help ease you into the new season.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Saturday, May 10 Trip 2	**Magog/Ayers Cliff, QC** Come and see the Quebec countryside in the spring in this pretty part of the Eastern Townships near Lake Memphremagog. Routes for all levels.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Friday, May 16 to Monday May 19	**Victoria Day Weekend** White River Junction, VT	See separate write-up about this great weekend.
Saturday, May 24 Trip 3	**Swanton, VT** Beautiful countryside by Lake Champlain with choices of easy or hilly routes. Finish with a beer on the village green.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Saturday, May 31 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	**Lachine Canal Promotion** Parks Canada has given us a permit to mount a display on the Lachine Canal bike path near Lafleur Boulevard. We will display our banner and promote our Club.	Come join us either as part of the "working team" or to show your support. Phone the Club tape and leave a message for Linda Shear.
Sunday, June 1	**Tour de l'Ile**	Check local newspapers for info.
Sunday, June 8 Trip 4	**Williamstown, ON** A new destination. On the same weekend that fanatics will be cycling over 200 miles in the **Rideau Lakes Cycle Tour**, RA will be spending an easy day cycling in this serene area.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Saturday, June 14 Trip 5	**Elizabethtown, NY** One of the prettiest parts of northern New York State. The routes take you to the area where RA hikers will be spending their day. Afterwards cyclists and hikers will meet at a local inn to share experiences.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Friday, June 20 to Tuesday, June 24	**St. Jean Baptiste Hiking & Cycling Weekend** North Conway, NH	See separate write-up
Saturday, July 5 Trip 6	**Arthabaska, QC** If you usually prefer cycling in Vermont, try this area of Quebec. Good roads and pretty villages provide a wonderful day's cycling and a chance to get to know your own province. All levels.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25- $29
Sunday, July 13	**Annual Challenge Ride** Set your own personal goals and challenge yourself to meet them. The Challenge Ride offers routes for all abilities, and will be followed by a barbecue (and as a bonus, a swim in the Richelieu River). This is an opportunity for **all** club members (yes hikers too) to spend the day together. Starting at Claude Bard and Betty Greenhalgh's house in Notre Dame de Bonsecours, not far from Montreal.	Advance Registration $10 which includes the cost of the barbecue

1997 Cycling Events (continued)

July 19-20	**Vermont MS Ride**	Phone the Club Tape and leave a message for Dinsmore Roach.
Aug. 16-17 Trip 7	**Newport, VT** This is a repeat of last year's highly successful two-day trip. We leave Montreal by bus on Saturday morning (regular pick-up times) and return on Sunday evening. This gives us two full days of cycling with a chance to party in between.	Advance Registration $75 After April 25 - $77 Includes bus transportation. and overnight accommodation (double occupancy). Space is limited, so sign up early.
Aug. 23-24	**Quebec MS Ride**	Phone the Club Tape and leave a message for Linda Lessard.
Aug. 29-Sept. 1	**Labour Day Hiking and Cycling Weekend** Bethel, ME	Full information to come in the Summer Randonnotes
Sunday, Sept. 7	**Beaconsfield Century Ride**	Phone the Club Tape and leave a message for Gail Tedstone.
Saturday, Sept. 13 Trip 8	**Hyde Park, VT** This is one of the nicest parts of Vermont but, as the saying goes, "Vermont ain't flat". All the options have some hills but the scenery makes them all worthwhile.	Advance Registration $27 After April 25 - $29
Saturday, Sept. 20 Trip 9	**Knowlton, QC** Our last cycle trip of the season offers routes for all levels, and will end in a local pub with our ever-popular end-of-season party.	Advance Registration $31 After April 25 - $33

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From The Hiking Director

Recently I was looking at some early issues of Randonnews, offering ten hikes and one weekend outing during the season, and realized how hiking with RA has blossomed over the years. 1997 promises to be another season overflowing with hiking activities. Join us on the 15 day-hikes, the overnight stay in New Hampshire, and the long weekends, or by participating in the trail maintenance efforts in Vermont and Quebec. The scenery is breathtaking, the exercise invigorating, and the companionship worth every step.

I've had the opportunity to serve the Club in several capacities, but this is my first year as Hiking Director. With the assistance of the super people on the hiking committee, I look forward to this new challenge and hope to maintain the high standards of my predecessors.

Dig out your calendar and your RA registration form, and plan to join in the mountains of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Quebec in 1997. See you on the trails!

Susan Harris

IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT HIKING FOOTWEAR

To buy or not to buy hiking boots – that is the question. The answer is **buy.** Although RA does not require all hikers to wear hiking boots, you are **strongly urged to.** Others in the know, such as the Forest Rangers in the Adirondacks of New York, frown upon hikers who are improperly dressed and equipped. The terrain covered during our hikes is often rugged, and possibly wet and muddy. Running shoes are not as safe as hiking boots. They do not provide enough ankle support, grip, or protection from impact. While hiking boots cannot be expected to prevent all accidents, they are the preferred footwear for this sport.

You can rent boots for your first couple of hikes from stores like La Cordée or Boutique Yeti. Good second-hand boots can be purchased at Play It Again Sports and other similar stores. Hiking boots don't have to cost a fortune. There are the $200 to $300 models, certainly, but you can get a decent pair for as little as $60 or $70. Investigate, shop around, and equip your feet properly.

EXTENDED HIKES — NOT FOR BEGINNERS

RA has developed the extended hike to provide intermediate and strong hikers with an opportunity to hike for up to six or seven hours, instead of the usual five hours. New hikers are advised not to register as these trips may be too strenuous.

The bus leaves Montreal at the regular times, but departs from the hiking area later than usual, around 7:00 p.m., finishing the drop-offs around 10:00 p.m. The longer day allows hikers who normally choose a moderate option to tackle a more difficult or longer trail. A pub stop at the end of the day provides a very welcome reward. We recommend bringing extra food to leave on the bus for the trip home.

This year's choices:
Mount Moosilauke, NH, June 6–7 (overnight stay)
Adirondak Loj, NY, Saturday, June 21
Mount Dix, NY, Saturday, July 5
Dial & Noonmark, NY, Saturday, August 23
Mt. Mansfield, VT, Saturday, September 6

SOMETHING NEW ! RA HIKING AWARD PROGRAM

We have designed an award for completing 25 hikes with Randonnée. Starting in 1997, keep track of your RA hikes using our handy Hiker's Log. The logs will be available on the buses. After each trip (day-trip or weekend) enter the name of the hike completed, and ask one of your hiking partners to initial it. There is no time limit for collecting the 25 hikes. When you've completed them, send your log to the attention of the Hiking Award Program Coordinator. Your reward will be a special pin designed by the Hiking Committee.

TRIP LEADERS & ASSISTANTS

Day-trip leaders and assistants, please reserve Tuesday, April 22 for our usual once-a-year gathering. We will go over the trip procedures, and the responsibilities of hiking leaders and assistants, and we'll distribute the information you'll need. Aspiring leaders and the curious are welcome as well.

Date:
Tuesday, April 22, 1997 at 7:30 p.m.

Location:
Details will be available on the Club tape (489-0339) the week before the meeting.

1997 Hiking Destinations

TRIP	DESTINATION	TRAIL RATING
1	**24 May – Lac Supérieur, QC** Picturesque hiking in Tremblant Park. The newly opened Sentier du Centenaire has a vertical rise of 1350 ft. and crosses 9.5 km of virgin forest. Experience "L'Arc de Triomphe" and the "Inside Passage" with excellent views of Mont Tremblant and Lac Supérieur.	E-M
2	**31 May – McKenzie, Haystack and Scarface, Lake Placid, NY** Great views from the ledges of Haystack (2878 ft) and the summit of McKenzie (3861 ft) with its 360 degree view. The seldom visited ledges near the summit of Scarface (3088 ft.) offer a less strenuous climb, perfect for the beginning of the season.	E-M-D
3	**6 & 7 June – Mount Moosilauke, NH (EX/OV)** See full description under OVERNIGHT STAY on page 13.	M-D
4	**14 June – Hurricane & the Crows, NY** Panoramic views of the Adirondacks, Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains of Vermont. A chance to meet your RA cycling friends in the local pub at the end of the day.	E-M
5	**21 June – Adirondak Loj, Lake Placid, NY (EX)** One of RA's most popular destinations, Adirondak Loj is a hiker's paradise. Choices include easy hikes to Rocky Falls and Indian Pass, moderate hikes to Mount Phelps (4161 ft) and Avalanche Lake, or expert hikes to Algonquin Peak (5114 ft), Mount Colden (4714 ft), or Mount Marcy (5344 ft), the highest summit in the Adirondacks. Being an extended hike, this trip is not recommended for beginners.	M-D
6	**28 June – Madonna & Whiteface, Smuggler's Notch, VT** Follow the Long Trail of Vermont north to Sterling Pond Shelter and to the ridge of the Sterling Range. This ridge includes Madonna Peak (3,668 ft.), with good views in all directions, and Whiteface Mt. (3,715 ft.) with vistas of Mount Mansfield and the west wall of Smugglers' Notch.	E-M-D
7	**5 July – Dix, NY (EX)** Mount Dix is the southern-most mountain in the Adirondack Range that RA visits. It is a tough, spectacular hike over massive rock slides. There is a beautiful lakeside section as well. Not recommended for beginners.	M-D
8	**16 August – Chertsey QC** If you are new to hiking, Chertsey is a good choice. You'll see wild flowers, relax at a scenic viewpoint and be rewarded with a swim halfway through. This pleasant summer walk on low rolling trails was developed by an RA club member.	E-M
9	**23 August – Dial & Noonmark, NY (EX)** Round Pond and Dix trails are pleasant ways to Round Mountain, with an elevation gain of just 1,520 ft. Continue on via the Stimson Trail to the summit of Noonmark or head to Bear Den Peak and Dial Mountain for a gain of 3,060 ft. The day ends with a walk along a beautiful stream and a visit to a great pub.	M-D
10	**6 September – Mount Mansfield, VT (EX)** Mount Mansfield, Vermont's highest peak, offers a variety of trails. This natural landmark is known both for its distinctive ridgeline resembling the profile of a human face and for its delicate alpine vegetation. The planned ascent is via the "easier" western route, "Sunset Ridge". The exposed summit ridge can be treacherous in poor weather. Pack extra clothing.	M-D
11	**13 September – Mont Ouareau, QC** This section of The National Trail of Canada, blazed by members of RA, now includes nine additional kilometres of new trail with views of St-Donat and Lac Ouareau. Have lunch at the refuge near Lac Lemieux and hike to Mont Kaaikop. Gentle climbs throughout.	E-M
12	***21 September – Mont Sutton, Eastern Townships, QC** Gradual ascents and numerous trails make this popular ski mountain a great hiking spot. This year, we are tackling the north side. The trails lead past beautiful lakes to a platform at the top of Round Top (3,156 ft.) which offers a panoramic view of the US and of the surrounding area.	E-M

1997 Hiking Destinations (continued)

13	**27 September – Giant, Keene Valley, NY** Giant lives up to its name. At 4,736 ft. high, it is the 12th highest in the Adirondack Mts. and one of the most spectacular mountains we climb. Superb views, with waterfalls and lakes. For intermediate and advanced hikers only.	M-D
14	**4 October – Jay Peak Area, VT** This strenuous hike up the Long Trail to Jay Peak (3,861 ft.) in the Fall foliage season will reward you with views of Vermont's Green Mountains, the White Mountains in NH, the Adirondacks in NY and the Sutton Mountains in Quebec. The true enthusiast can continue on the LT over Jay, Doll Peak (3,380 ft.) and Burnt Mountain (2,570 ft.) for a long but invigorating day. A more relaxing hike follows the Long Trail to its northern terminus on the Canada/US border.	E-M-D
15	***12 October – Cascade, Porter, Blueberry, Pitchoff, NY** All levels of hikes have excellent views. Balanced Rock is an easy hike to a large open rock ridge. For a moderate hike, try the trail through the woods to Cascade's open summit or the more challenging route to Pitchoff with its five summits. Due to its length, the Blueberry to Cascade hike provides the most difficult option.	E-M-D
16	**18 October – Devil's Gulch & Belvidere, Montgomery Centre, VT** Choose the leisurely southern route starting on the Babcock Trail and ending at Devil's Gulch, a fern-filled gully of jumbled rocks. Or, take the more challenging northern route ascending 2,080 ft. to Belvidere Mountain (3,360 ft.) for a great autumn vista. The truly keen can combine the Babcock Trail and the hike to Belvidere. The day ends with refreshments at a pub in Montgomery Center where we toast the end of the 1997 hiking season.	E-M-D

* Sunday Trip; EX: extended trip; OV: overnight stay

BUS DEPARTURE TIMES

Departure times and locations are:

Carré Décarie Square 7:15 a.m.
(formerly Décor Décarie)
(Décarie and Vezina, in the parking lot on the south side of the building)
Namur metro

Queen Mary/Décarie 7:25 a.m.
(north-west corner, in front of the newsagent)
Snowdon metro

Atwater/Ste-Catherine 7:45 a.m.
(outside McDonalds on Atwater)
Atwater metro

TRAIL RATINGS

The following ratings are to be used as guidelines only, because other factors enter into estimates of difficulty. Please note that almost all hikes involve uphill walking. If you are unfamiliar with RA hikes, please choose the easiest option to avoid unpleasant surprises during the hike.

E(asy):
5–7 miles and/or 1,000–1,500 feet elevation gain

M(oderate):
8–9 miles and/or 1,500–2,000 feet elevation gain

D(ifficult):
10–12 miles and/or 2,500–3,500 feet elevation gain

1997 HIKING TRIP PRICES

Regular day trips	$24 (same as last year)
Trip #3 (overnight)	$76

Book before April 25 and avoid a $2 surcharge. Trips scheduled after August 1 may be booked at the lower price, with a cheque post-dated to August 1, as long as the cheque is received before the April 25 cut-off date.

LEARNING TO LOVE VERTICAL YARDWORK (OR, WELCOME TO TRAIL MAINTENANCE)



Like many new people in member-run clubs, I felt the need to volunteer for ***something*** when I joined Randonnée Aventure. I hate planning, organizing and committee work – that's the sort of thing I do daily at work, the stuff that inspired me to escape with a hiking club in the first place. I nonetheless wanted to do my part, so hello, "trail maintenance," whatever you may be!

The information evening was pleasant and would have been very informative, if I had fathomed the vocabulary. Earnest, fit-looking people showed me colourful slides of peaceful, sylvan glades, and spoke knowledgeably of water bars, blowdowns, rock-work and blazing. Clueless but convinced, I ranked myself with the committed and signed up. A few weeks later, thanks to the experience and energy of the trail maintenance alumni, I was whisked away from the Big Smoke one Friday night and welcomed by friendly strangers to a weekend of communal living in Vermont. Actually, it was a lot like going to camp, but with hard labour instead of games.

Vermont woods in May are achingly beautiful. Fragile flowers and delicate ferns are just starting to unfold across the sun-dappled forest floor. The air is redolent with the rich sweetness of new growth springing forth from decay. Footfalls make a loamy thud, punctuated by the occasional muddy squelch or crunch through lingering pockets of sugary snow.

The lyrical stroll in the woods was short-lived. Reality was scaling a vertical trail with some serious gardening tools. Reality was heavy yardwork in a garden that's eight feet wide by who-knows-how-many miles long! I couldn't see for sweat, nor hear anything but my own panting. Not that it mattered much. No one could hear me over the roar of the chain saws. I soon found out exactly what a blowdown was, and what we were supposed to do about it. (For newcomers like me, a blowdown is a fallen tree, and you have to cut it up and drag it off the trail.)

Did I mention I was a complete neophyte, a never-before hiker who had cautiously signed up only for those hikes that had an "easy" option? Can you imagine the intensity of my dismay as I craned my neck back and looked up, looked way up, to see where we planned to work? Me neither; I have a blessedly short memory for horror. Besides, it turned out I was in better physical shape than I knew and – most important of all – I had the exceptional good luck to be wearing a truly comfortable pair of boots!

Should you volunteer for trail maintenance? If you like honest hard labour and teamwork, then emphatically, yes! Equally emphatically, ask questions first! (Despite the preliminary shock, I've been back repeatedly.) Experienced hikers can elaborate on the benefits of the work, maybe even the nobility of our cause. But I like trail maintenance because its a valid excuse to go to spectacular surroundings and get filthy and exhausted with a bunch of interesting, dedicated people. What more could one ask?

Vivien MacCallum — August 30, 1996

RA on the Web!

Randonnée Aventure proudly announces its presence on the World Wide Web! Thanks to tremendous work by Club member Gerry Bard, the designer and maintainer of our Internet Web Site, you can visit us at http://www.aei.ca/~ramtl.

The idea behind this Internet venture is to provide another way in which people can find out about our Club and its activities. The principal means we use to communicate with our members will remain the Randonnews, the Randonnotes, and the Club Tape. However, some of the information available there, as well as general information about the Club, will also be published on the Randonnée Home Pages.

So, with apologies to the Beach Boys, why not go "Surfin' to RA"!

Outdoor Literacy

A Workshop On Hiking Skills — For All!

Date:
Tuesday, May 6, 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Location:
Thompson House, McGill University
3650 McTavish, between Pine and Dr. Penfield
(downstairs)

Cost:
Free!

Randonnée Aventure presents its annual Outdoor Literacy clinic for those interested in developing their hiking skills and improving their confidence in the outdoors. Talks and discussions will cover:

1) Topographical map reading
2) Clothing and equipment
3) Hiking strategies
4) Hiking ethics – the courtesies of the trail
5) Survival skills for day hikers
6) Getting fit for the hiking season

Handouts will include a day hiker's equipment checklist. Time will be available to answer questions and to deal with your special concerns. No prior registration is required.

Map-Reading Session

On Sunday, May 11 at 9:00 a.m., there will be a two-hour map-reading session on Mount Royal. You will gain "hands-on" experience in using a map and compass.

Beginners' Hike

On Sunday, May 18, a morning hike up Mont St-Hilaire on the South Shore is being organized to give beginners an idea of what is involved in hiking. Car-pooling will be arranged from Atwater & Ste-Catherine, leaving at 8:00 a.m. There will be no charge for this outing but passengers will be expected to reimburse their driver for the cost of gas. To express your interest in participating in this half-day hike, please check the appropriate box on the registration form and we will get in touch with you.

NEW IN 1997 AT NORWAY NORDIC

Norway Nordic will be holding discussion evenings on Tuesdays in May and June, from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., at 127 rue Ste-Anne, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. The cost is $5.00 per seminar. R.S.V.P. to Norway Nordic, at 457-9131.

April 5
Wilderness First Aid – An Introduction to Warm Weather Hazards.

May 13
Sea Kayaks – Choosing the Right Equipment.

May 20
Sea Kayaks – Safety and Safe Boating Practice.

May 27
Sea Kayaks – How to Plan a Tour.

Further discussions will be held throughout the summer. Please call Norway Nordic for updates to their schedule.

DRINKING ON BUSES

It is illegal to consume alcoholic beverages on buses. Infractions of the law could result in the bus driver and the bus company being fined. All members are requested to respect the law and to refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages on the bus.

SMOKING POLICY

The vast majority of Randonnée Aventure members are non-smokers and prefer a smoke-free environment. Members who smoke are requested to respect the preferences of the other participants, and to smoke only where other members will not be affected.

BORDER CROSSING

Acceptable ID (passport, citizenship card or birth certificate only) **MUST** be carried on all trips to the USA.

Persons travelling on a passport from a country other than Canada or the USA are reminded that they must obtain an I-94 or I-94-W when they enter the USA. These entry documents are valid for 3 or 6 months, and cost $6 US, payable at the border. Please make sure you have $6 US cash with you, and please make yourself known to the Trip Leader before you reach the border so we can cross as speedily as possible.

SHOPPING IN THE USA

Shopping in the USA on day-trips is not allowed. Members found breaking this rule may be left at the border and be asked to leave the club.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN LINCOLN, NEW HAMPSHIRE, Friday, June 6 To Saturday, June 7 to Hike Mount Moosilauke

After the success of our 1996 overnight hike, we are planning another for 1997. We will climb Mount Moosilauke, near Franconia Notch in New Hampshire, a mountain normally only available to us on a long weekend trip. From the large plateau summit, there is a rewarding 360-degree view, including the White Mountains of NH and the Green Mountains of Vermont. With a 3,400 foot elevation gain during the hike, this is not a trip for beginners.

The bus will leave Montreal at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 6 from one pick-up point *only*, at Atwater and Ste-Catherine. After a 3.5 hour ride, we arrive at the Red Doors Motel. Breakfast will be at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday and by 9:00 a.m. we will be starting to hike. The bus will depart at around 5:30 p.m. for the return journey to Montreal. You should bring a lunch for the hike, and are advised to also pack food for the ride home. The cost is $76.00 Canadian including luxury coach transportation, shared accommodation on Friday evening, breakfast on Saturday morning, and all taxes and gratuities. Seats are limited to 47 people, so don't delay in signing up.

1-603-745-2267

VERMONT TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Once again we are looking forward to another fulfilling season of trail work. This is possible thanks to RA's financial support, the technical support of the Green Mountain Club including Lars Botzojorns and Tim Tierney, and the friendly welcome extended by our hosts, Sharon and Rolf Anderson. This season, in addition to our usual work of clearing blowdowns and trimming back annual growth, we will be replacing the tin roof on Tillotson Hut, courtesy of a donation from RA. A re-route has been approved for the upper Frank Post Trail, and this will also keep us busy.

Remember, if people like us are not doing volunteer work on the trails, there will be fewer trails and less pleasant hiking conditions. If you have a free weekend, join in for a few days of hard work and great camaraderie. Come to the Tuesday, April 15 information meeting (see page 3), check-off the box on the registration form, or leave a message for me on the Club tape (489-0339).

The scheduled weekends are: May 23–25, July 4–6, August 15–17, October 17–19

Departures, by car pool, are Fridays after 6:00 p.m., returning Sunday evening.

Maureen Robertson
Trail Maintenance Co-ordinator

SECOND ANNUAL TRAIL MAINTENANCE INFORMATION MEETING

Date:
Tuesday, April 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Location:
TBA on the Club tape the week before the meeting.

To learn what trail maintenance is all about, come to our second annual Trail Maintenance Information Meeting. Maureen and Mike will talk about the trails we maintain in Vermont and Quebec, the work planned for this year, and the kind of help that's needed. We're always happy to welcome new people, with or without experience, as well as old friends, so please join us on April 15.

6th ANNUAL GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB (GMC) TRAIL & SHELTER MAINTENANCE WEEKEND

Date:
Saturday, May 10, 1997, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Location:
Southern Vermont

The Green Mountain Club is organizing a workshop on trail maintenance. If you would like to attend, contact Lars Botzojorns at the GMC at (802) 244-7073. Pre-registration is advised.

Among the many topics to be covered are blazing, drainage, installation of rock steps, stairs, and waterbars, and trail design and layout. This is a hands-on workshop that takes place on the trail — rain or shine. Registration is free and a hearty dinner will be served for $5 US per person. Bring your own lunch and work gloves.

Victoria Day Weekend, Friday, May 16 to Monday, May 19, 1997

Our first cycling weekend of the year brings us back to our all-time favourite place –White River Junction, Vermont. Anyone who has been there can attest to the warmth, charm and hospitality of the Hotel Coolidge. The hotel was named after Colonel John Calvin Coolidge, the father of President Calvin Coolidge. Rumour has it that the President was an avid cyclist and that his ghost appears when cyclists are in residence!

The area offers spectacular scenic routes for cyclists of all levels of ability, with perfect cycling roads criss-crossing the Connecticut River, leading through New Hampshire and Vermont. Leave your worries back in Montreal and explore the picturesque village of Woodstock, or visit Bennings Farm where you see what farming is all about.

Finally and most importantly, enjoy the company of like-minded, fun-loving people for what promises to be yet another memorable Randonnée Aventure Victoria Day Weekend.

Destination: Hotel Coolidge, White River Junction, VT

Registration: Space is limited to 49 people. Mail the completed registration form by April 25. Registrations received after that date must include a late registration fee of $20.

Cost: $135.00 ($155 if received or dated after 25 April) Non-members must also include a separate cheque for $32 to cover the membership fee. All cheques payable to **Randonnée Aventure**.

Includes: Three nights accommodation, three full breakfast buffets, and one dinner.

Transportation: Car pool, leaving Montreal Friday and returning Monday. Shared transportation costs will be arranged between driver and passengers. Please indicate on the registration form if you have a car for car-pooling. A car pool coordinator is also needed, so check the appropriate box if you are interested in helping out.

St. Jean Baptiste Weekend, Conway, NH, June 20–24, 1997

St. Jean Baptiste falls on a Tuesday this year, so Randonnée has elected to make it a four-day weekend. We are going to the White Mountains where we will be staying at the Merrill Farm Resort, situated on the banks of the Saco river just 10 minutes south of North Conway on Rt. 16.

Merrill Farm originally belonged to Thomas Merrill, the first Justice of the Peace in Conway. In 1885, Thomas' great-grandson turned the farm into Merrill House, with the idea of welcoming summer boarders. The parlour, lobby, and three guest rooms in the Inn are all part of the original home. In 1985 the Gregory family purchased the property and began modernizing it. Today it is a three-diamond AAA resort, offering a variety of rooms, 60 in all. A heated outdoor pool, horseshoes, volleyball, shuffleboard, badminton, and canoes are all available.

We will be staying in loft-type units, three or four people in each. The rooms are spacious, with queen, double, or sofa beds, and each has a TV, VCR, fridge, and a modern bathroom. The price of the weekend includes four nights accommodation, four breakfasts, one barbecue supper and an evening of line dancing.

For those who come to hike, Merrill Farm is located near the Kancamagus Highway where trails are plentiful. For the cyclists there are lots of gentle rolling hills that are ideal for beginner and intermediate cyclists, as well as more challenging routes. Merrill Farm offers the best of all worlds, hiking, cycling, and yes, you guessed it, shopping. So come join us for a fun-packed weekend in the White Mountains.

Destination: Merrill Farm Resort, Conway, N.H.

Cost: $207 Canadian per member, $227 if cheque dated after May 23, 1997. Non-members must include a $32 cheque for membership.

Includes: 4 nights lodging, 4 breakfasts, 1 barbecue supper, line dancing.

Registration: Only 40 spaces are available, so reserve early by sending in the completed registration form. Registrations dated after May 23rd must include a $20 late fee.

Transportation: By car pool, shared costs to be arranged between driver and passenger(s).

Contact: To volunteer as car pool coordinator or for information about the weekend, please call the Club tape (489-0339) and leave a message for Mike De Tracey.

Membership Information

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Annual Membership fee is $32

SEPARATE CHEQUES PLEASE! **Don't forget that your membership fees and activity registration fees must be on SEPARATE cheques.** Government regulations require us to deposit all trip payments directly into a special account, to be used for trip expenses only. Our general administrative expenses, which are covered by your membership fees, must be paid from a separate account — hence the need for separate cheques. Your cooperation is appreciated.

NON-MEMBERS AND EX-MEMBERS

Newcomers to the Club may participate in ONE day-trip before paying the membership fee. They can choose from either a cycling, hiking, or cross-country ski trip. They must, of course, pay for the trip and sign a waiver. They can register by mail, at the sign-up evening, or by using the Club buy/sell procedure the week of the trip. This is a **once-in-a-lifetime** trial offer and is not open to those who have previously been a member of RA or participated in any of our trips. Ex-members are reminded that they should renew their membership before using the buy/sell procedure.

RANDONNEWS AND RANDONNOTES

To reduce costs, the current Club policy is to send members only one issue of Randonnews after their membership expires. If your membership expired in March of this year be forewarned. This will be the last copy of the Randonnews that you will receive. Randonnotes, our mid-season publication, will contain information about our Labour Day and Thanksgiving Weekend trips, and will be mailed **only** to current members.

Don't risk missing out on the latest information on upcoming events. Check the expiry date on your mailing label and renew now.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Randonnée Aventure strongly recommends that anyone participating in Club events outside Quebec obtain travel insurance. Quebec Medicare covers only a small portion of medical expenses incurred outside the province. Hospitalization in the USA can cost over $2000 per day and less than $100 of that would be covered by Quebec Medicare.

The importance of ensuring that you have adequate insurance before travelling to the United States cannot be emphasized enough. Even if you have private insurance through your employer, you should review and clearly understand what is and what isn't covered. Things to look at include:

- Is transportation by Air Ambulance covered?
- Will it cover costs to return you to Montreal if you are hospitalized?
- Does it cover semi-private or private rooms?
- Do any pre-existing conditions affect the policy?
- What do you have to do if an accident does occur?
- Is there an 800 number to call?

Make sure you are covered before going to the US, for even a few hours, and make sure you have the telephone number with you on your trip. Travel insurance is not expensive – when you look at the alternatives.

Be prepared — make sure you have adequate insurance coverage.

CONTACT IN CASE OF ACCIDENT

We recommend that all participants in Club trips carry with them the name and phone number of a person to contact in case of an accident. This information could be written on the back of your RA membership card, perhaps with the phone number of your Insurance Company.

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DEADLINE FOR FALL/WINTER RANDONNEWS

The deadline for submissions to the Fall/Winter edition of the Randonnews is September 4, 1997. If you have any articles, photographs, cartoons, or drawings pertaining to Club activities, we'd love to see them. Classified ads related to club activities are also welcome and are free. Submissions on diskette, in ASCII text file format, are preferred. Please mail contributions to the Randonnews Editor at the Club address.



Buying and Selling Trips

TRIP REGISTRATION

To get your first choice of trips, sign up early by doing one of the following:

- Mail the registration form and payment to the Club address
- Sign up at the Spring Party on Saturday, March 22, at the McGill Grad Centre, 3650 McTavish (between Dr. Penfield and Pine). Registration is from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.
- Come to our Sign-up night on Tuesday, April 1, at the Atwater Library, Atwater and Tupper, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Registrations by mail will be accepted after the sign-up evenings, but please call the Club tape first to find out which trips have space available. Your cheque should arrive at least one week before the trip, and should include the $2 surcharge for each day trip if the cheque is received after April 25.

BUYING AND SELLING PLACES ON FULLY BOOKED DAY TRIPS

Fees for day trips cannot be refunded to anyone for any reason. If you are unable to come on the trip, you may personally sell the trip to anyone you wish – for example a friend or a relative. If your buyer is a non-member, inform them that they **must** sign a waiver on the bus. We also offer a service by which we attempt to sell the trip to one of our members.

Once you have activated the RA service, you **must not** attempt to sell the trip on your own. This might result in double-selling the trip, and in such a case priority will always be given to the person who bought the trip through the RA system.

A common occurrence is members phoning to buy or sell several weeks prior to the trip. To be fair to all members, neither buys or sells are accepted until Monday of the week of the trip. Buys and sells are then handled in order of the call, with members given priority over non-members. Remember that RA does not guarantee the sale of any trip, and the number of people wanting to sell sometimes exceeds the number of buyers available. Obviously, the earlier in the week that you call the better chance you have of either selling or buying a trip – just don't call too early or you won't be on the list. The procedure to follow is:

TO BUY A TRIP

From **Monday a.m. to Wednesday 9:00 p.m., the week of the trip**, call the Club number (489-0339), and leave your name and the name of the trip you want to buy. Calls outside this period will be disregarded. Indicate if you are a non-member taking your first trip, and leave your phone numbers. We do not phone back to confirm; you must call the Club number on the Friday evening before the trip to listen to the list of people for whom there is a place on the bus. If you hear your name, show up with exact change or a cheque (we do not carry change).

Important: **If you are confirmed as a buyer, you have made a commitment** to pay for the trip. If you cannot make the trip, you must send a cheque for the trip fee to the Club. This applies to non-members also. **If you do not do so promptly, you will be "blacklisted" and will not be allowed to register for any more trips until payment is made.**

If you do not hear your name on the Friday evening tape, you can go to the **last** pickup point with the correct payment and take a chance. You have a good chance of getting on the bus if there are "no-shows". Those who have tried to reserve by phone have priority as walk-ons.

TO SELL A TRIP

Monday a.m. to Wednesday 9:00 p.m., the week of the trip, call the Club tape (489-0339), and leave a message. RA will not call you back, but, if a buyer is found, a cheque will be mailed to you for the amount that you paid for the trip.

RA does not guarantee the sale of any trip. Once you have given your name to sell your trip, you no longer have a reserved seat on that bus. Should you want to go on the trip after all, you may do so on a standby basis at the last pick-up point.

WAITING LISTS FOR DAY TRIPS

There are no waiting lists for any day trips. The Club tape will give you information on which trips still have space. Any cheques received for sold-out day trips have to be returned, so please check the Club tape **before** you mail in your registration form. If a trip that you want is already sold out, use the buy/sell procedure the week of the trip to purchase a seat. Your cooperation is appreciated.

BUYING AND SELLING WEEKEND TRIPS

Weekend trips are not refundable, but RA will attempt to find a buyer if you are unable to make the trip. To sell a trip, leave a message on the Club tape (489-0339) as soon as possible, and you will be contacted by the weekend coordinator. Requests to sell must be received at least 7 days before the date of the weekend trip. RA does not guarantee the sale of any trip.

There is a waiting list for each weekend trip. To be placed on this list, for sold-out weekend trips only, send a cheque for the full amount to the Club. You will be contacted if a space becomes available and given the option to purchase the trip. Your cheque will be returned should you decide not to go, or if a place is not found for you.

BACKPACKING THE LONG TRAIL (265 MILES)

Three years ago, we were looking for a backpacking destination, but where to go? Having met a number of through-hikers doing the 3,000 mile-long Appalachian Trail (or AT), we both thought of following in their footsteps. Why not start with the Long Trail (only 265 miles) to find out if we had the right stuff; then maybe one day we would find the time for the great AT adventure. So we studied the Long Trail maps, made check-lists, packaged and re-packaged our food, and weighed our packs.

Our first four-day expedition took us from Route 118 in Vermont north to Journey's End at the Canada/US border. The first night we camped in our tiny two-person tent at Tillotson Camp. Next day we continued north, reaching Hazen's Notch Camp late in the day. We met Dutch Pop, an end-to-end hiker, and Bill Irwin, a blind man in his sixties who had hiked the entire AT with his German shepherd dog, Orient, a couple of years before. They were great company for dinner and Orient's presence in Hazen's Notch Hut kept the mice away that night!! Day three was the longest and most strenuous but we finally arrived at Laura Woodward Shelter where we pitched our tent and enjoyed a visit from an inquisitive hare. Day four was our last day on the LT. We kept moving northward, and on our way saw a little hummingbird looking for nectar in a meadow of flowers. At last we arrived at Journey's End. Exhausted but exhilarated; the first leg of our Long Trail experience was complete. We had only 236 more miles to go!

Last year we tacked on another 35.1 miles to our total, by returning to Route 118 and heading south. We stayed in a beautiful new lean-to at Corliss Camp on the first night, then moved on to Roundtop Shelter the next day. We chose to use our tent after being advised that there were bats in the roof of the shelter! After a night in Bear Hollow Shelter, on the last day we slogged up and down peak after peak to get to Watson's Camp. Here we rejoiced in our accomplishment, realising that the final section would be an easy 2.9 mile hike out.

We've already made our plans for this summer, and if all goes well we should be at the half-way mark of the Long Trail by the end of September 1997. It's been a great experience so far. The people we've met have been interesting and friendly and we're getting better each time at reducing the weight of our packs! Let's hope the weather stays in our favour this year too.

Susan Harris & Maureen Robertson

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

What caption would you give the photo below?
Whoever comes up with the most innovative caption will get a
FREE ONE-YEAR MEMBERSHIP WITH RANDONNÉE AVENTURE!



(Photo: Nancy Des Roches)

CYCLING IN DENMARK

The idea for our cycle trip came from Susan. She had long wanted to visit Denmark, the home country of a close friend. She mentioned her interest to Paul, whose ancestry is Danish, and last August Annie, Diane, Gerry, Linda, Paul, Sue, Talia, and Wayne jetted their way to Copenhagen.

Denmark is a cyclist's paradise, boasting over 22 000 km of well-marked cycle paths. On country and city roads blue cycle signs indicate dedicated paths, and there are even stop lights in the shape of bicycles! In Copenhagen, rush hour takes on a whole new meaning, with traffic jams in the cycle lanes as bikers jockey for position. Everyone follows the rules of the road. Buses and cars yield if you have the right of way, and if you cycle out of line, people let you know it.

Even when off the bike, getting around with your two-wheeled friend is easy. Most trains have sections designated for bikes, indicated by a bike painted on the side of the car, and conductors gladly assist with loading and unloading. Inter-city buses have bike racks on the back and rural buses have storage compartments.

The Danes claim that in other parts of the world people eat to live, while the Danes live to eat! Each village had at least one bakery, designated by the large pretzel hanging outside the store, selling rich, buttery, Danish pastry – nothing like the imitation we get here. It was a good thing we were cycling, and burning off all those extra calories.

On our first day out from Copenhagen we cycled along the east coastal route of Zealand to Gilleleje which we made our base for the first week. Though most people think of the country as flat, it has pleasant rolling hills. Whitewashed churches and thatched houses dot the mainly agrarian landscape. The Danes are proud of their Queen and their country, and flags fly everywhere.

We visited Helsingor (of "Hamlet" fame), and the town of Roskilde, with its magnificent cathedral where Danish Kings and Queens are buried, before moving on to our second base in Dyngby.

The ride from Dyngby to Arhus, the second largest city in Denmark, was one of the most beautiful we took, passing through a beech forest and along the coast. The rolling terrain, the views, and the general peacefulness of the area were wonderful.

The little town of Ribe is the oldest in Denmark, with many 17th century homes. Streets are lined with beautifully decorated doors and facades, medieval half-timbered buildings, and old fashioned street lamps. Seen from the top of the tower of Ribe Cathedral the beauty of the city is breathtaking.

Legoland is exactly what it sounds like – an entire amusement park built out of Lego blocks! We were charmed by the whole place and amazed at the number of Lego pieces used to construct such marvels as the Statue of Liberty, a harbour in Amsterdam, Mount Rushmore, and the White House.

We ended our trip in Copenhagen, a beautiful city with lots of interesting places to explore by bike, on foot, or by canal. Of course we saw the Little Mermaid, marvelled at Tivoli, and strolled through the pedestrian streets.

If you ever plan to go to Denmark, we would be pleased to pass on information to you. Be sure you study the language a bit beforehand, though most Danes speak English. Warning: don't believe Paul when he tells you that "Du har en dejlig nømse" means "Could you help me".

Har en rigtig god tur!

Susan Harris, Linda Lessard,
Diane Lowden & Paul Jensen



Susan, Linda, Gerry, Talia, Diane, Wayne and Annie – time out on a ferry (Photo: Paul Jensen)

Al Ramsay and Brian Abbott's CYCLE TRIP IN ENGLAND & WALES

Last July we flew to London with our bicycles safely (we hoped) stowed in the hold of a 747. Once securely at Heathrow with everything intact, we were delighted to find that there was a bike path all the way into town, where we spent the first night with my brother.

The next morning we set off through Richmond Park (which is full of deer), then along the Thames to Hampton Court Palace. The following day we cycled to Windsor in glorious sunshine, to see the park, the polo, and the castle.

From Windsor we continued to Oxford and Blenheim Palace, then through the Cotswolds with their pretty, strangely-named villages, through Ross-on-Wye and Hereford, and on up to Iron-Bridge with its history of the ironmasters and the Industrial Revolution.

The glorious weather continued as we headed along the River Severn into Wales. We climbed some impressive hills, cycled along the coast and headed back towards London through Snowdonia.



Al and Brian, cycling in England

After cycling over 1000 km we were left with vivid memories of incredible scenery, palaces, castles, many pubs and, of course, a daily ration of English breakfasts.

Brian Abbott

QUO VADIS?

Our 1996 intelligence reports indicate that Randonnéers' quest for the "perfect hike" continued with undiminished intensity. Overseas sightings were even more numerous and widely distributed than last year.

Those concerned with our balance of payments, enjoying what Canada has to offer, included Dave Hawrysh who hiked the Rockies near Lake Louise, Nancy Des Roches who hiked in Jasper and BC, and Jacques Bisson and wife Sylvie who hiked Gros Morne, Newfoundland.

As extensively described in a previous Randonnews, a team of intrepid explorers led by Susan Harris, and including yours truly, conquered the Knife-Edge at Mt. Katahdin, Maine. Meanwhile, our indefatigable telephone coordinator, Ricky Zurif, rambled through the Olympics (the mountains of Washington, not the streets of Atlanta).

Our energetic president Clive Brewer, and chauffeur Karen Findlay, were among those exploring Europe; they hiked the Lake District in England, and the French Alps. Al Ramsay and Brian Abbott took time out from their cycling trip for some hiking in Wales, Claudia de Fulviis hiked in Italy, and Françoise Bibor took in the Alps near Mont Blanc. A later report had Karen Staudinger hiking the Scottish Highlands.

Conspicuously far afield, Susan Ketterman was sighted hiking the rainforests of Hawaii, and our Far-East correspondent spotted Hélène Millas as far away as Bhutan! But the laurels for the most energetic hiker must surely go to Mylène Pepin – who hiked an amazing 250 km over 16 days in the Atlas Mountains in Morocco.

No doubt these despatches will inspire our intrepid members to even greater feats next year – read all about it in future editions.

Bob Yarnold



VIOLIN AND VOICE RECITAL – Sheila Miller and Holly Larsen

8:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Sunday March 9
St. Columba-by-the-Lake Church
11 Rodney, Pointe Claire

Join us for a evening of music by two talented club members. This recital, combining Holly's violin and Sheila's voice, will include works by Bach, Saint-Saëns, Vaughan Williams, Schubert, and Mozart. No RSVP required. A collection will be made, to cover the costs of the accompanist.

Directions by bus: From Lionel Groulx Metro Station take the 211 to the Dorval train station. Transfer to the 203. Get off at Chanteclerc and Sources (1st stop on Sources after you turn off Highway 20). Cross the street at the lights and go through the break in the fence. Continue on the path and turn right on to the next street. The church is just ahead on the left.

By car: **Take the Sources North exit from the 20. At the second light, turn left on to Belmont and then left on to Rodney.**

SPRING PARTY AND SIGN-UP

Saturday, March 22, 8:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m
McGill Grad Centre, 3650 McTavish
(between Dr. Penfield and Pine)
Entrance Fee: $11.00

Dress up in your best western duds, dudes, and join us for an old-fashioned western dance. Along with our regular DJ we are going to have a Caller for Square Dancing. Offers to help with decorations, door duty, and food tables are welcome – y'all just leave your name on the Club tape for Janet.

Note: Registration for the summer season is only open between 8:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

SOCIAL DANCING

Wednesdays, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
April 2, 9, 23, 30
May 7, 14, 28
June 4, 11

Social dancing with Tony and Rosie continues for another nine-week session. Think you've forgotten everything you learned? You'll be surprised how quickly it comes back, even after weeks of thinking only about snow and how to avoid that tree in the trail. We will review dances already learned, and add to our repertoire. If you have a dance partner, all the better, but don't be shy to come by yourself. Tony and Rosie will keep us all moving. Try it! Newcomers are welcome – no dance experience is required.

Cost: **$126**

Location: The gymnasium of the Montreal Association for the Blind, 7000 Sherbrooke Street West, NDG (across from the Loyola Campus of Concordia University)

Registration: Registration will not be done through Randonnée Aventure. Instead, please call Susan Harris at 878-8881 **by Thursday, March 27** to express your interest. Bring your cheque-book to the first class.

Note: On April 16 and May 21, the gymnasium is not available. We will organize outings to dance clubs for these evenings.

LASALLE AQUADOME – INDOOR WATERSLIDES AND POOL – "SPLISH AND SPLASH"

Sunday April 13, 1:30 p.m. onwards
1411 Lapierre St. North, LaSalle

What to do – skiing is over, but it is still too early for cycling or hiking. Stretch those muscles by joining us for an afternoon of waterslides, whirlpool and swimming. Only $3.00 per person, but bring a lock and towel. No RSVP required – just meet us there at 1:30 p.m. For more information, leave a message on the Club tape for Joan O'Brien.

MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDENS TREE TOUR

Sunday June 1, 1:00 p.m.
Botanical Gardens, Gate #6 on Sherbrooke St. East.

46% of our land is covered by forest. This is your chance to learn more about the grandeur and durability of our trees and their importance in our ecosystem, while enjoying fresh air and the beautiful surroundings of the Montreal Botanical Gardens. This guided tour (in English) will cost $7.50 per person. Reservations not required. For more details leave a message for Janet on the Club tape.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Check the Club tape and the Summer Randonnotes (sent to members in late June) for more details.

June 19	Verdun Kite Festival
July 6	Brunch and Jazz
July 15	Rollerblading in the Old Port
August 10	The 1st Annual RA Picnic and Games Day
Mid-September	Hikers vs Cyclists Softball game

BOUTIQUE DE PLEIN AIR
CAMP DE BASE

Last summer the staff of Base Camp:
(Peter, Guy, Janet, Phil, Christel & Nick)

Kayaked 107 days on the rivers...
Spent 123 nights in *tents*
Watched 32 sunsets in remote areas...
Canoed 21 days of whitewater...
Fed 93 000 blackflies and mosquitoes...
Sea-kayaked through fog, winds and high waves...
Climbed 72 vertical miles...
Hiked through 210 km of forests...
And swam 17 miles with a *paddle* in hand!

NOTHING BEATS EXPERIENCE

Canoes, kayaks, sea-kayaks and tents available for rent

173E Cartier, Pointe Claire, QC. (514) 630-6717
25 minutes from downtown - highway 2-20 west, exit 49 -Cartier

SPELUNKING

For something different, why not try spelunking — crawling on your hands and knees through cold, dark, muddy caves — it's fun. In the distant past, Randonnée Aventure ran several very successful and enjoyable trips, but this time it is strictly a private initiative. Details are a bit vague at the moment, but the preliminary plans are:

Where:	Half-day visit to the cave of Boischatel, near Quebec City
When:	Saturday or Sunday in mid-June, or later
Cost:	Approximately $30, plus car-pooling expenses
Equipment:	Old, warm, waterproof clothing, rubber boots and mitts. Lights and a helmet are furnished. An experienced guide will be provided by the Société québécoise de Spéléologie.

If you are interested in caving, call Cal Hindson at 445-4457 or Egon Nickel at 683-2397. Depending on the level of interest we may organize additional trips to different caves.

E. Nickel

CLASSY ADS

- Club member Tierry Maxwell will overhaul and repair your bike. This professional mechanic has worked at RA's Cycle Clinic for several years. Expert work at reasonable rates. Pick up and delivery available. Call 761-0529.
- Miyata Model 312 Road Bike for sale. 47 cm frame, 12 speed SIS. Asking price $375. Call Tony at 444-8710.

KAYAKING AND CANOEING

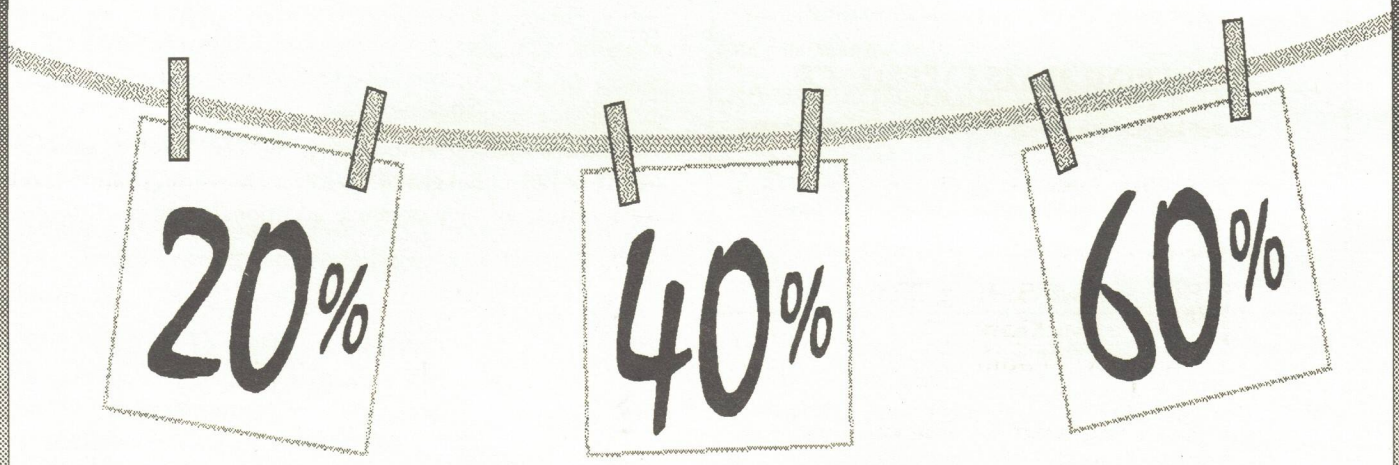
The Pointe Claire Canoe Club on Valois Bay (Lakeshore Blvd.) will have several Open Houses on Saturdays starting in late May (actual dates not yet finalized). If you are interested in trying out racing or recreational kayaking and canoeing, or in talking to the coaches, call the City of Pointe Claire Recreational Department at 630-1214 and leave a message for Jan Kruk. Or, if you are cycling by on your way to St. Anne de Bellevue, just drop in.

E. Nickel

Great renovation sale

We will be renovating the store on Queen Mary Rd. (end of February - beginning of March)

We will mark this occasion with a sale that you should not miss !



Sale begins February 22nd and lasts through the month of March

The most specialized outdoors store in Montreal

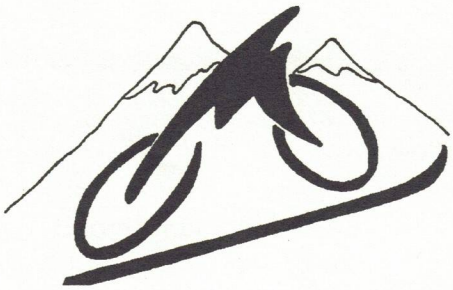
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3525, ch. Queen Mary, Montréal,
Tél.: (514) 739-4451/2141

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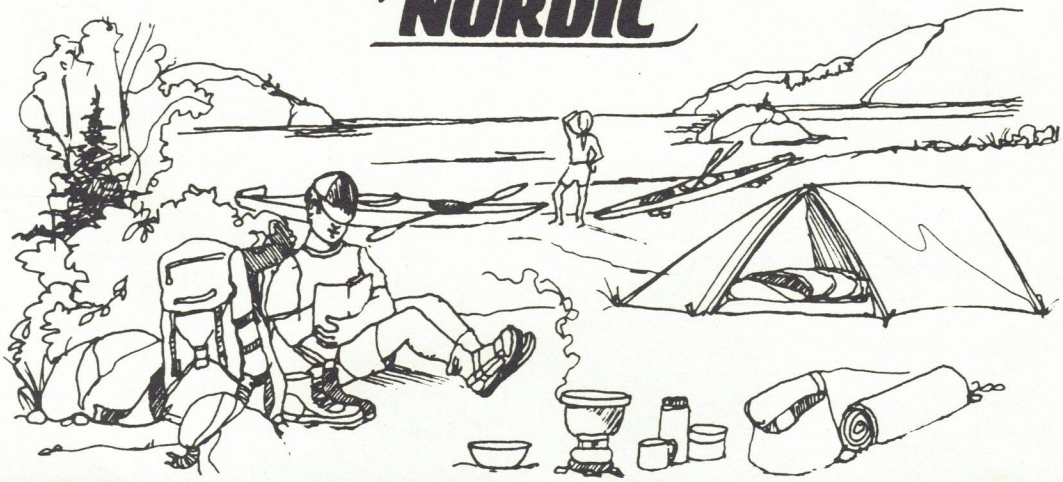
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Dealer for Specialized and Trek
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Special price on bikes along with
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127 Ste Anne, *Ste Anne de Bellevue,* Qué
(514) 457-9131 Fax: (514) 457-9541

NEW For Spring '97: SEA KAYAKS!

Randonnée Calendar

MARCH

22 ... Sat ..... Spring Sign-up, & "Western" Theme Party

APRIL

1 .... Tue..... Atwater Library Sign-up Evening
10 ... Thu..... Management Meeting
13 ... Sun..... Aquatic "Splish & Splash"
15 ... Tue..... Trail Maintenance Info Evening
15 ... Tue..... Wilderness First Aid (Norway Nordic)
22 ... Tue..... Hiking Trip Leaders' Meeting
24 ... Thu..... Cycling Trip Leaders' Meeting
27 ... Sun..... "Know your Bike" Clinic

MAY

3 .... Sat ..... High Falls Gorge, NY – day cycle
6 .... Tue..... Hiking Outdoor Literacy Clinic
8 .... Thu..... Management Meeting
10 ... Sat ..... Magog/Ayers Cliff, QC – day cycle
11 ... Sun..... Map Reading Clinic – Mount Royal
16-19 ..... Victoria Day Cycling Weekend, White River Junction, VT
18 ... Sun..... Mont St. Hilaire, QC – beginners hike (car pool)
23-25 ..... Vermont Trail Maintenance
24 ... Sat ..... Swanton, VT – day cycle
24 ... Sat ..... Lac Supérieur, QC – day hike
31 ... Sat ..... McKenzie/Haystack/Scarface, NY – day hike
31 ... Sat ..... Lachine Canal Promotion

JUNE

1 .... Sun..... Montreal Botanical Gardens visit
6-7 ..... Moosilauke, NH – overnight hike
8 .... Sun..... Williamstown, ON – day cycle
12 ... Thu..... Management Meeting
14 ... Sat ..... Elizabethtown, NY – day cycle
14 ... Sat ..... Hurricane/The Crows, NY – day hike
19 ... Thu..... Verdun Kite Festival
20-24 ..... St. Jean Baptiste Wknd, Conway, NH
21 ... Sat ..... Adirondak Loj, NY – extended day hike
28 ... Sat ..... Madonna/Whiteface, VT – day hike

JULY

4-6 ..... Vermont Trail Maintenance
5 ..... Sat..... Arthabaska, QC – day cycle
5 ..... Sat..... Dix, NY – extended day hike
6 ..... Sun ..... Brunch and Jazz
10 .... Thu ..... Management Meeting
13 .... Sun ..... RA Challenge Cycle Ride
15 .... Tue ..... Rollerblading in Old Montreal
19-20 ..... Vermont MS Cycle Ride

AUGUST

10 .... Sun ..... Games Day & Picnic – Cap St. Jacques
14 .... Thu ..... Management Meeting
15-17 ..... Vermont Trail Maintenance
16 .... Sat..... Chertsey, QC – day hike
16-17 ..... Newport, VT – overnight cycle
23 .... Sat..... Dial/Noonmark, NY – extended day hike
29-Sept 1 ..... Labour Day Weekend, Bethel, ME

SEPTEMBER

6 ..... Sat..... Mansfield, VT – extended day hike
11 .... Thu ..... Management Meeting
13 .... Sat..... Hyde Park, VT – day cycle
13 .... Sat..... Mont Ouareau, QC – day hike
20 .... Sat..... Knowlton, QC – season's final cycle
21 .... Sun ..... Sutton, QC – day hike
27 .... Sat..... Giant, NY – day hike

OCTOBER

4 ..... Sat..... Jay, VT – day hike
10-13 ..... Thanksgiving Day Weekend, Waitsfield, VT
12 .... Sun ..... Cascade/Pitchoff/Blueberry, NY – day hike
16 .... Thu ..... Management Meeting
17-19 ..... Vermont Trail Maintenance
18 .... Sat..... Devil's Gulch/Belvidere, VT – season's final hike
25 .... Sat..... Winter Sign-up Night & Halloween Party

RA Tel. No. – 489-0339