



# Footprints

*Published by the Dartmouth Volksmarch Club,  
P.O. Box 28082  
DARTMOUTH NS B2W 3E0  
Volume 31, Number 2, June 2024*

## President's Message

It's June already where does the time go!

We had great walks in January February in urban neighborhoods and on trails that get winter maintenance. With only one cancellation in February due to weather. Old father winter was quite kind to us this year.

Now that spring has sprung and summer has come, we are back on great trails in forests, provincial parks and coastal headlands. This summer we have included many of our old favorites like Chester walk and potluck picnic, Castle Rock Trail, Nine Mile River, and Prospect High Head.

We have also slipped in some new destinations this year. We are very excited about Trips to Cape Split, Victoria Park and McNab's Island, and our anniversary walks and BBQ/Picnic at Shubie. August is going to be a busy month! Many thanks to our trails team for pulling these walks and events together.

The [schedule of guided walks](https://www.dartmouthvolksmarchclub.com/walkstrails.html) is on our website under the walks and trails tab <https://www.dartmouthvolksmarchclub.com/walkstrails.html> Let me know if anyone needs a paper copy.



We are doing our Canada Day walk on July 1<sup>st</sup> with a bit of a difference this year. Margaret Odell will be leading - starting at the Halifax YMCA and taking in the waterfront and Point Pleasant we will return to the Public Gardens to enjoy whatever entertainment our city has arranged. Wear red and white to celebrate our national holiday.

I want to thank our walk leaders and volunteers who give so willingly of their time. That's what makes our weekly walks possible.

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Lovely picture of Johnson Falls, Fall River on the June 9th walk. Thank you goes to Dale Leeson for placing this pic on the DVC Facebook page.

# The Upper Tantallon Fire

- Peter Steeper DVC Vice President and Captain of Trails

I was about to take a nap and I heard a siren. One siren didn't cause any concern but then I heard two more and another one. I walked out on the front porch to find out what was happening. Wow! All the trees behind the house across the street were on fire! I ran back into the house, grabbed my laptop, a small portable cabinet I had built that contained all my backup drives, phone, wallet, my favourite walking shoes and a sweater, got in the car and left the neighbourhood. Fortunately the fire was still behind the houses across the road and the exit road for our neighbourhood was not blocked by the fire. The police had a blockade just down the street and I was surprised to see people trying to drive into the neighbourhood. This fire was about to have a major impact on our family and neighbours for the next year.

The spring of 2023 had been very dry and the day of the fire was hot and windy. There had been burn bans for most of the spring but someone in the neighbourhood had started an illegal fire. The fire spread rapidly and 16,400 people had to be evacuated and 151 homes were destroyed. More than 20 homes were destroyed in our neighbourhood. The fire was a fickle thing as houses across the street, our neighbours house and several behind us were completely destroyed while others on the street survived. We were lucky as our house survived with damage to the siding and roof but we lost the garden shed and all of our ornamental trees.

Since our house was in the middle of the fire, access to our neighbourhood was closed for over two weeks. Fortunately friends of ours were planning to travel and we were able to house sit for them giving us a place to stay. When I returned to our house one of the neighbourhood rabbits was in our yard and he was wondering why the human was in his yard! Our other backyard creatures returned quickly when I started feeding them again although we haven't had any deer visit in the last year. The neighbourhood bears have returned this spring.

A few weeks after the fire I was exploring the woods near Hammonds Plains. While the trees were burnt the ferns were growing. I was surprised to see the greenery on the forest floor. None of spruce trees survived in our neighbourhood but some of the hardwood trees did. We had chosen our lot because of the trees but my feelings about trees near houses have changed due to fires and hurricane winds. Also a whiff of smoke now causes major concern and anyone in the neighbourhood planning to burn something announces it on our Facebook page.

The fire had very little effect on local walking trails although some trails have better views due to less trees. The greenery on the forest floor has increased and it's fascinating to watch the renewal in the woods. The renewal in our neighbourhood is happening as well as every house is now being replaced or repaired and we are in the middle of construction season. Everyone has chosen new layouts and colours for their houses. Version two will be an improvement on the original. One house is finished now and our neighbour moved in last week. I expect most of the construction will be finished by the end of the summer and by this fall most people will be back in their homes.

After last year you would think everyone would be careful with fires in the woods but we have had two cases of people having campfires in the woods near our neighbourhood! This has happened in other parts of Nova Scotia which has resulted in the fines for illegal burning being increased to \$25,000. Hopefully the high fines will influence people to make better choices about fires.



Ferns near Hammond Plains Rd, five weeks after fire.

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This has been a year of renewal and our neighbourhood will be restored by the end of the year. Nova Scotia is a great place for outdoor adventures and I hope everyone we will be careful so we can continue to enjoy it safely.



Someone tried driving along Hammonds Plains Road during the fire and their vehicle caught fire. It was hot enough to melt the aluminum.



One of the many burnt trees along Hammonds Plains Road. Many have been removed by a lumber company now.



When I left during the fire the trees behind our neighbour's house were on fire. When we returned after the fire, their house was one of more than 20 that burned to the ground in our neighbourhood.







## **“WALK IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN”**

**\*\*\* Save the Date – Jun 12 - 14, 2026\*\*\***

Canada's Walking Club is excited to announce that our 2026 Festival will be held in Yellowknife, NWT, June 12 - 14

Registration will open in January of 2025

We look forward to seeing you at this very special Volkssport event, hosted by the Northern Lights Walking Club.





## New Member Profile:

- Gerard Grimard

My Wife and I along with our 2 daughters moved to Nova Scotia in the summer of 2017 from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. We have always dreamed of living by the ocean and when this transfer opportunity came up, we decided to take the leap. Everyone in our family is enjoying Nova Scotia, and we have enjoyed exploring every part of the province and the Maritimes. We even owned a 30-foot sailboat for 4 years and became official Maritimers, sailing our boat around the harbour and Bedford basin.

We call the Maritimes home now and can't see ourselves living anywhere else. I started my fitness journey about 4 months ago on the recommendation from my doctor to get more active. I try to walk about 30km a week with a mix of treadmill walks and outdoor trails as the weather permits. I am also an avid beer homebrewer and lover of craft beer. I am enjoying the DVC, and company of the group and look forward to more walks and talks! True to our Saskatchewan roots, we do "bleed green" and cheer for the Saskatchewan Rough Riders! GO RIDERS!



## Secretary's Report

*Margaret Odell*

As DVC secretary, my duty is to record and retain meeting minutes. Also, our club recognizes and expresses condolences on the deaths of members and former members. In the recent past we sent sympathy cards to the families of David E. Bryson, Carole C. Poirier, Wendell Robbins and Marilyn Bowlby, and to Cecilia Cogan on the death of her sister Eileen MacKinnon. A get-well card was sent to DVC member Dan Haycock. We take this opportunity to thank Dan for his faithful service for many years to DVC as a walk leader and volunteer.

### **Kingston Walk Fest**

I attended, with three other DVC members as well as Rick and Lynda Kanne of the Valley Trekkers Volkssport Club, the 2024 CVF Kingston Walking Festival in Kingston, Ontario, consisting of self-guided walks with maps and written directions, a silent auction, a meet-and-greet, a banquet, a boat-cruise of the Thousand Islands with a post-cruise dinner. Also a post-festival South Western Ontario bus trip hosted by Sue and John Osborn of the Kings Town Trekkers Volkssport Club with self-guided walks in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Stratford, the Toronto Islands and downtown Toronto and Coburg. Weather was ideal with some showers at Niagara Falls. We met and got acquainted with other Volkssporters, including some of our "American cousins" from Massachusetts, Delaware and Hawaii.

## **The Kingston Volksmarch Festival 2024**

*Elaine Dawson and Edie Ward*

Kingston is located on Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Cataraqui and Saint Lawrence River. The festival started with the “Festival Walk”. We chose to do the 5km walks so missed some of the historical buildings. The second day was the “Historical Kingston” walk where we saw Syden St. United Church “The Spire”, Elizabeth Cottage and Kingston City Hall. The third walk was the “Doug Fluhrer” walk (city's commissioner of parks and recreation for 36 years) passing the Slush Puppy Centre on Tragically Hip Way and walking through Doug Fluhrer Park. We then passed the Woolen Mill which was constructed in 1882, closing in 1966. It now contains 40 businesses and its 100 ft square chimney is used as a climbing gym. We saw numerous turtles along the inner harbour. Next was the “University” walk, which brought us through the Queens University Campus. Passing beautiful old homes across from Richardsons Beach where young people were jumping from the Gord Downey Pier into cold Lake Ontario. On the last day we followed the “Gord Downie” walk, ending when we reached the Kingston Penitentiary. We took the KP tour and learned it opened June 1, 1835 and closed Sept 30, 2013. It housed some of Canada's most notorious criminals. It also housed women and in the early days even children, the youngest who was 8 years old. There is also a museum across from the pen in the warden's house. It contains many weapons confiscated from inmates, “rehabilitation devices” and a complete history including riots which had taken place. On the walk back we passed the Martello Tower, a defence system to protect Kingston from the Americans. The festival attracted 6 provinces, 26 states and 3 other countries. We had 8 Volksmarch members from Nova Scotia. As well as 5 well marked 5-11 km walks there was a meet and greet and buffet dinner. We also joined the Thousand Island boat cruise, followed by a buffet. The trip organizers, John and Sue Osborn and Karen Venema smoothed out any wrinkles that occurred making the festival a great experience. Meeting friends new and old and creating new memories. Hoping to see familiar faces again in 2026 in Yellowknife.

### **Post Festival Bus Tour**

Edie, Margaret, Karen and Elaine joined the post festival bus tour. The first day we walked the waterfront in Niagara On The Lake. On day 2 we found ourselves at Niagara Falls where we crossed into the US to walk around Goat Island to view the falls from the American side. Beautiful weather on the Canadian side and rain in the US. We then walked the length of sidewalk following the falls on the Canadian side. Day 3 we traveled to Stratford, home of the Stratford Festival. The walk took us along the Avon River. Day 4 we were in Toronto and in the morning took the Ward Island ferry to walk on Toronto Island where there is a beautiful view of the Toronto skyline. In the afternoon we did a tour of downtown. Waiting for our bus under the CN Toronto Tower. Day 5 we walked in Cobourg. Walking on the beach, you would swear you were on the ocean. Lake Ontario is so big!

On our way home we decided to stop in Quebec for a day and enjoyed a walk around the old city



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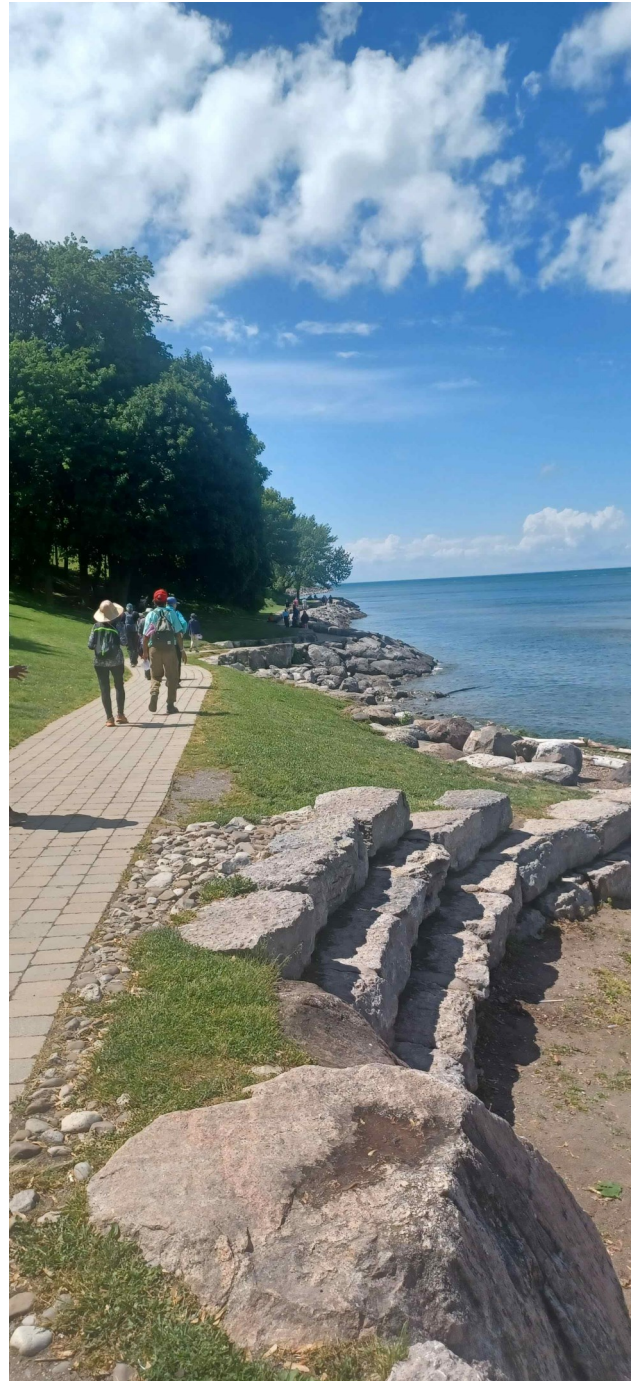
Stratford Festival Hall



Elizabeth Cottage, Kingston



Kingston Penn



Niagara on the Lake



# Thank you for your donation DVC

From: Carolyn Heald, King's Town Trekkers Kingston ON  
To Dartmouth Volksmarch Club Nova Scotia

Sun, Jun 2, 2024

On behalf of the King's Town Trekkers, host club of the Canadian Volkssport Federation Walking Festival, I want to thank you for your generous donation to our silent auction. We had 68 items or groups of items for auction and raised \$2,840. We couldn't have done it without you. The money raised will help to pay expenses from the Festival and the remainder goes back to the Canadian Volkssport Federation for the benefit of all clubs.

Carolyn Heald, King's Town Trekkers



## Membership Report

*Elaine Dawson*

Renew	63
New	12
Re-join	9
Total	84

Welcome new members:

Ted Devitt  
Deanna Wentzell  
Heather Belanger



We had 21 walkers out today for our Fathers' Day hike along the Sackville River. It was a gloriously sunny day, - many thanks as always to the Leaders and organizers! Photo by Anthony Scoggins



## A blast from the past

In years gone by when we were all a lot younger and had a lot more energy, we had some wonderful away trips and social events including barbecues and potlucks. These were great times with lots of fun and friendship. One such event in August 2016, was a “Three-in-One “. Walks and social gatherings in three provinces in one weekend. Arranged by Sandy Hickey and Mike Senman, Sandy and Mike checked out the walks in New Glasgow, Summerside & Charlottetown, and Sackville, NB. The walks in NS and PEI utilized the lovely Permanent Trails (PT’s) already set up in those areas, and our club sponsored a guided walk in Sackville. Below are some photographs from the weekend. In the same year Lionel and Lily arranged a wonderful 14-day coach tour of the New England states and New York, for 37. DVC ‘Happy Hoofers’.







# IVV AWARDS



Heather MacLeod	650 events	Elaine Ryan	3500 kms
Edith Ward	650 events	Edith Ward	7500 kms
Lily Conrod	3400 events	Barb Thistle	8000 kms
Wands Bonk	500 kms	Cal Thistle	9000 kms
Elaine Ryan	3000 kms	Beth Moore	17000 kms
Marilyn Bowlby	3500 kms	Sheila West	32000 kms

**Congratulations to one and all!**

Please turn in your completed IVV Record Books to Lily Conrod, in order to receive your IVV awards.

New IVV Distance & Event Record books, and club coupons are available before the start of the walks from Lily. They cost \$5 each.

Members may buy coupons, 10 for \$15, to pay for their walks

## Members Discount Card

Don't forget we have discounts at MEC (15% off) and Fjallraven (15% off)

If you don't have your members discount card email Elaine Dawson

[emdlantz@gmail.com](mailto:emdlantz@gmail.com) and she will send you a new one

All the Very Best

Mel

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