



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY

IROQUOIA CLUB

*IROQUOIA BRUCE TRAIL
CLUB*

2020-2021

ANNUAL REPORT



Report of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Online Annual General Meeting May 8-18, 2020

This report serves as a formal record of Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Annual Meeting 2019 which was “ held for the purpose of hearing the reports of the officers and committee chairs, elections of a new Board Director and another business that might arise” as per the Club’s Bylaws¹.

To minimize the spread of COVID-19, the Club's Annual General Meeting originally scheduled for May 2, was cancelled. Instead, the Board implemented an Online AGM that allowed members to learn how their membership made a difference in 2019/20 and give members the opportunity to vote on Club matters.

The decision to host an Online AGM was announced and ultimately an online invitation was extended to the membership on May 8th, 2020.

A formal annual report, ***Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club 2019-2020 Annual Report May 2020*** was published providing the membership with

- Minutes of the 2019 Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Annual General Meeting
- Reports from IBTC Board of Directors
- Nominees for the IBTC Board of Directors 2020-2021
- Financial statements 2019-2020
- Volunteer Awards 2020

The Online AGM formally opened and provided the opportunity for members to vote on three formal motions. It is noted that as per the Club’s Bylaws, at the AGM “forty (40) voting members shall constitute a quorum”. At the close of the voting period May 18, 2020, 52 members had voted. The outcomes of the voting on the three motions follow.

Motion: To approve the minutes from the 2019 Annual General Meeting for the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club. *Motion carried.*

Motion: To approve the financial statements from the 2019-2020 fiscal year as presented in the 2019-2020 Annual General Meeting report. *Motion carried.*

Motion: To agree to the proposed 2020-2021 Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Board of Directors as presented in the 2019-2020 Annual General Meeting report. *Motion carried.*

¹ *Bylaws of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club* – as amended Saturday April 16, 2018.
<http://www.iroquoia.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/IBTC-Bylaws-2018-amendments.docx.pdf>

Report of the Nominating Committee

Nominees for the Board of Directors of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club for the 2021-2022 term are:

Cynthia Archer
Gary Beaudoin
Cheri Chevalier
Cecilia Gibbons
Joseph Gould
Maha Mansoor
Allan Meyer
Trish Murphy
Peter Rumble
Jordan Scott
Ashwini Selvakumaran
Holly Sluiter
Leah Spence
Doug Stansbury
Paul Toffoletti
Doug Yungblut

President's Report

What can I say except it has been a year like no other. The Board has continued to meet on a regular basis through zoom meetings. I want to thank everyone on the Board who have been patient and were more than willing to make the required adjustments to virtual meetings. Sometimes online evening meetings can be tiresome, especially for those who are in online meetings during the day as part of their work. It was with this in mind that we made changes to the way we hold a zoom meeting. We try to do as much as possible through email and then keep our meeting limited to one hour. I have to say that it has been working.

Happily, you will see in our Treasurers report and Fundraising Report that even though we had limited fundraising events, we also did not spend that much and our Clubs financial assets are very healthy.

The fundraising that took place with the "Welcome Back" badge, the charcuterie boards and our share of membership pass through revenue helped us to donate just over \$30,000 dollars to the BTC. Approximately \$10,300 was donated in-kind to the BTC for the specific purpose to replace the roof on the McNally storage barn. Later, the Board decided to donate another \$20,000 to the BTC for any purpose that they felt the money could be used, including to off set any impact because of Covid. The Board feels that we are still in good financial shape for the upcoming year.

Last year, Cecilia Gibbons lead the Board in a special meeting (in person just before covid restrictions came in) to create some special tasks groups on the topics of membership enhancement, youth engagement and connecting with other like-minded organizations. Some great ideas came out of this and we felt energized to see some of the ideas take shape over the next year. Unfortunately, Covid hit and put a stick in the wheels of our plans. It became very difficult to get involved with other groups and people when everyone was focused on trying to live with the restrictions.

This past March, we regrouped and decided to take a look at what we feel we can accomplish in 2021-2022, even if we are still living with some form of Covid restrictions. We broke into groups again and discussed the hiking program, connecting with youth, membership enhancement and communications.

The results were positive and the sessions gave us some ideas and direction to move forward with during the upcoming year. Thank you to Cecilia for running that meeting. Some of the actions we will take may be noticeable and some may not, but we will keep you informed on what is to come.

Something new that we started this past year to engage with youth and the provincial wide environmental community was to support the Ontario Nature Youth Conference. This is usually a weekend long in-person event that bring young people aged 14 to 20 together to discuss nature and the environment. Due to Covid, Ontario Nature changed over to a series of virtual events over four weekends that included projects the kids could do from home. The event went so well that Ontario Nature wishes to double the number of participants to 200 this year. They know it will be a virtual event again and our Club is just waiting to hear from them.

I want to thanks the BTC CEO, Michael McDonald and Board Chair, Leah Myers, for hosting a number of meetings with all the Club President's via zoom. These meetings have been taking place roughly every three months and have been very helpful. He has been able to fill us in on special projects, Staff work, BTC Board happenings and other bits of news. It has also been an opportunity for the Club Presidents to raise issues to the CEO and among ourselves. Sometimes we may think that an issue or problem is just occurring within our Club, but these meeting allow us to understand that a lot od times it is the entire organization, especially on the issues of crowded parking and trails.

This year our Board will be losing two long time members. Gloria Pennycook and Samar Smith.

Gloria started with us six years ago and took on the Volunteer Directors role. Right away

she saw ways we could improve the function of the role by making sure we had proper and up to date job descriptions that were saved on google drive. She then worked on the Terms of Reference for being a Board member, that gave us clear goals and deadlines for Board positions. She then set up a fair and neutral Nominations Committee that makes recommendations to the Board for any new positions that come up. Gloria has also been giving her time to act as a mentor to the women who join our Board from the Girls on Board organization. The work she did for us would make any corporate HR Department jealous. Cecilia Gibbons will be taking over from Gloria and will continue in the V.P. role.

Samar is our Volunteer of the Year. She joined us three years ago and was instantly willing to take on anything we threw at her. Like many of us who did not know much about social media or of web page design she took it on with the help of her children Jeffery and Monica. Samar is our Membership Director, which is not an easy position. Her manners were a perfect fit for this role, as she is the “voice” of our Club when getting in touch with new or lapsed members. She is the one who would always be standing at our membership table at various events eagerly waiting to talk with someone. Samar would also take the initiative to go out on the trail with a table and set up a “pop up” information booth for people passing by. She is also a hike leader and just recently became a Trail Monitor. Finally, she is our representative / organizer, along with Peter Rumble, on the very successful Steeltown Stomp fundraiser. Director at Large, Jordan Scott will be taking over from her.

Our Club owes a great deal of gratitude to Gloria and Samar, and the good news is that they plan to stay involved with the Club or BTC in some manner.

I wish to also thank Anne Armstrong who stepped in as interim Hike Director last year when our Hike Director at the time took a job opportunity in Nova Scotia. Anne’s strong leadership and experience in hiking help us pull through the up and downs of the Covid restrictions. But time has come for her to move on as we bring in a new Hiking Director Leah Spence. I am sure we will still be seeing Anne around and helping out. Welcome Leah!

One other change to our Board that I am very please about is that Ashwini Selvakumaran will be joining us as a Director at Large (Please see her report further down). Ashwini was our Board member from the Girls on Board program that we have been a part of for the last two years and is this years Iroquoia Club Youth Volunteer Award recipient. But hold on, she is also the winner of the Hamilton YWCA Youth Trailblazer Award for Halton Region. She is very interested in getting young people interested in the Bruce Trail in an ongoing consistent program. She has completed a survey of young adults to find what would attract them to the BTC and is sharing that information with the Staff at head office and Iroquoia Board members. Welcome Ashwini!

We are also bringing on two very enthusiastic Directors at Large in Cheri Chevalier and Maha Mansoor. They both bring some useful skills and knowledge to the role. Welcome Cheri and Maha!

I hope everyone gets a chance to get back on the trails this summer and hopefully we can meet in person in 2022.

Paul Toffoletti
President, Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club

Vice-President's Report

It was certainly a challenging year for us all. Our hearts go out to all who experienced hardship, health and / or financial challenges and the loss of a loved one. May you find peace and healing in the months to come!

Many of us had time to reflect, spend more time with our families and reconnect with nature. This year, many people re-discovered the outdoors, hiking, biking, just being in nature, "forest bathing". We connect to something larger when we are in nature and can forget our own perspective, come back refreshed and stronger. The pandemic has also illuminated many of our social problems and certainly shown how important nature is for our communities. The mission, vision and work of the Bruce Trail Conservancy is more important than ever, and it is wonderful to support it with such a talented and committed group of volunteers on our Iroquoia Board and in the Iroquoia section.

It has been a challenging year for our Iroquoia Board, yet it was amazing at how everyone adapted, changed, and adjusted to the constantly revised guidelines.

Kudos to the entire team and more so, the people working on the trails, trying to lead the hikers safe or lead safe hikes!

In January last year I organized and facilitated a strategic planning session focussing on key areas we identified. The areas we chose were in line with the overall strategic priorities of the Bruce Trail Conservancy and covered increasing the impact of membership, volunteer engagement and building relationships with other similar organizations.

We generated great ideas and in a separate subgroup we discussed how to implement them. Unfortunately, the pandemic put those initiatives on hold.

Last month we held another brainstorming session that I organized where we discussed in small groups, virtually of course, how we could proactively drive certain areas forward despite the challenges and restrictions. We identified the following areas of attention membership, communications, and youth engagement. Again, many great ideas for initiatives came out of the meeting.

I am grateful to be part of this committed group of volunteers who are dedicated to protect the ribbon of wilderness for everyone, forever!

Cecilia Gibbons

Vice President, Iroquoia Board

Treasurer's Report

Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Treasurer's Report For the twelve months
ending March 31, 2021

The accompanying Statement of Activities and Net Assets present the financial position of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club ("IBTC") as at March 31, 2021 and the results of its activities for the year then ended.

IBTC officials exercise such controls as determined necessary to enable these financial statements to be prepared free from material misstatement, and assess that IBTC is financially able to continue its activities for the coming year.

A budget for the fiscal year April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 has been prepared and approved by the IBTC board of directors on March 15, 2021. The budget is presented in the same form as the annual statement of activities.

The budget is an important tool to plan and monitor IBTC activities based on assumptions about the future. It is possible that the budget may not be achieved. Actual activity may vary from the budget and favorable or adverse variances may be material.

Joseph G. Gould

Treasurer

April 7, 2021

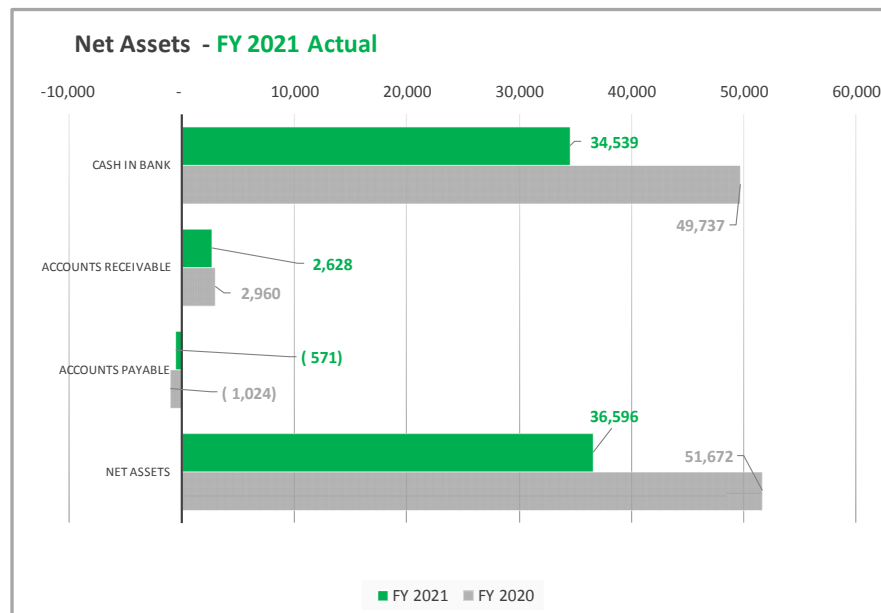
Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club
Statement of Activities and Net Assets
For the twelve months ending March 31st

	FY 2021	FY 2020
REVENUE	\$	\$
Membership	28,023	25,404
Donations	545	9,894
Hiking Programs	5,658	13,315
Fundraising & Events	3,605	8,175
Communications	194	1,570
BTC - AGM Revenue	-	21,156
	38,026	79,514
EXPENDITURES		
Donations to BTC	31,110	20,690
Hiking Programs	2,307	6,136
Fundraising & Events	2,352	3,291
Communications	5,824	6,410
Trail Maintenance	9,428	12,934
Landowner Relations	499	109
Volunteer Recognition	280	1,433
Office and Admin	1,303	727
BTC - AGM Expense	-	17,013
	53,103	69,144
Net Activities - revenue over expenditures	(15,077)	10,370
Net Assets - beginning of the year	51,672	40,901
Net Activities for the year	(15,077)	10,771
Net Assets - end of year	36,596	51,672

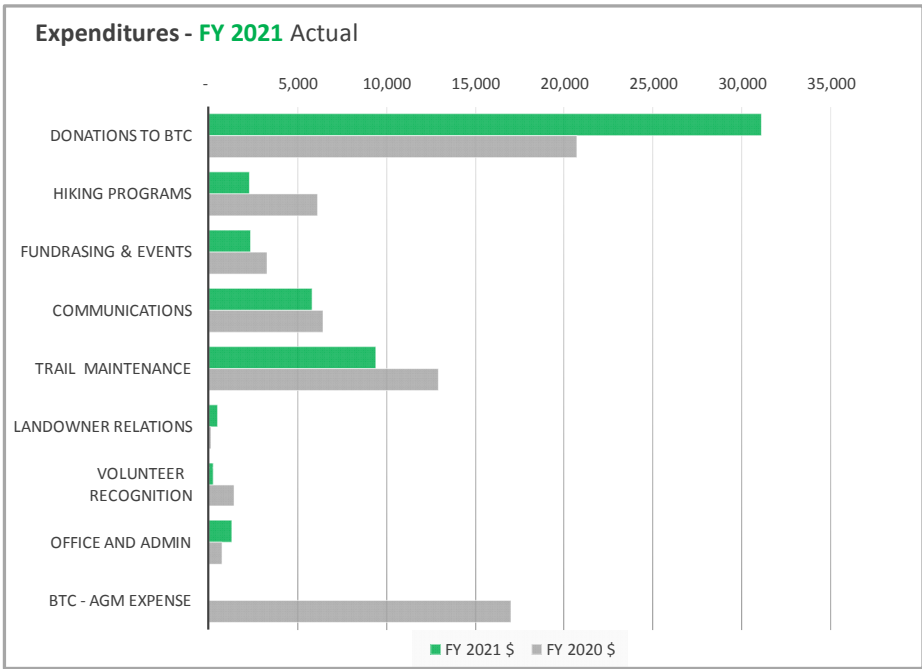
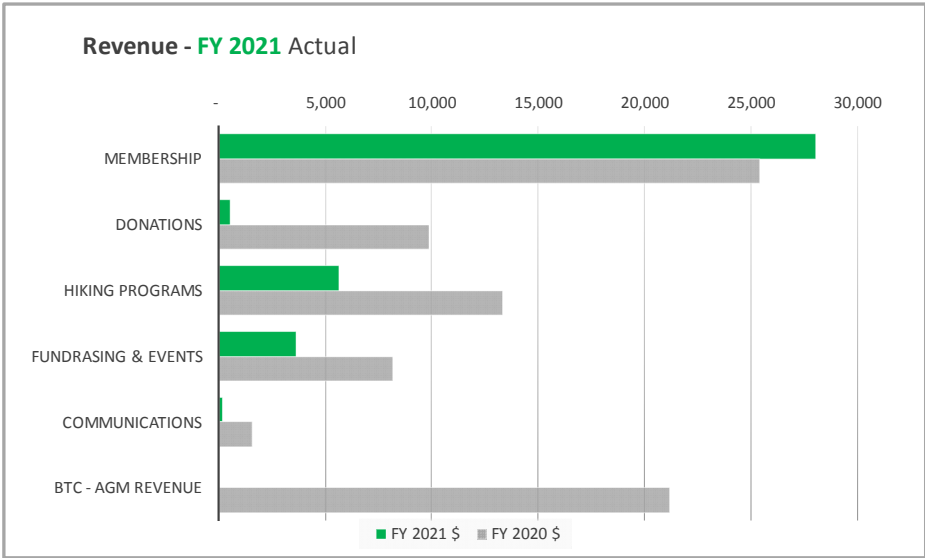
Represented by:

Cash in Bank	34,539	49,737
Accounts Receivable	2,628	2,960
Accounts Payable	(571)	(1,024)
NET ASSETS	36,596	51,672

FY - Fiscal Year



Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club
Statement of Activities and Net Assets
For the twelve months ending March 31st



Note 1 Organization and Purpose

The Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club ("IBTC") was formed in Hamilton on September 5, 1963 choosing the name "Iroquoia" being the same as that given the tourist region from Grimsby through Hamilton to Burlington.

IBTC is a community volunteer organization and member club of the Bruce Trail Conservancy ("BTC") in accordance to the by-laws of each of the IBTC and the BTC. IBTC's objectives are to build and maintain through voluntary labour the BTC main and side trails from Grimsby to the Kelso Conservation Area near Milton, and to support the BTC's mission and vision by undertaking activities deemed necessary or advisable by its Board of Directors.

Mission

Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.

Vision

The Bruce Trail secured within a permanently protected natural corridor along the Niagara Escarpment.

All IBTC activities are overseen by volunteers and include organized hikes and other special events, trail development and maintenance, land stewardship, public education, landowner relations, newsletter, website and social media publishing.

Note 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation

These financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis of accounting and only consist of IBTC financial transactions. They do not include the full scope of the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Revenue Recognition

Donations are recognized as received. Restricted donations are deferred and recognized as revenue when the expenses are incurred.

Membership revenue is recorded on an accrual basis, and consists of a portion of BTC membership fees of BTC members choosing to affiliate with IBTC.

Cash

Cash represents cash in the bank.

Inventory and Capital Assets

Merchandise for sale, badges, tools, equipment, hardware and supplies purchased in connection with IBTC activities are expensed in the year acquired. Proper accountability is exercised at the time these assets are purchased, and assets are subject to proper custodianship and care by volunteers.

The value of each asset type on hand is not material, and in the aggregate is estimated to be approximately \$8,000.

Volunteer Service

The work of the IBTC is accomplished by volunteers. IBTC does not record the value of volunteer services or their out of pocket expenses. These services and expenses are received gratuitously and therefore no value has been included in these financial statements as the fair value is not determinable.

Note 3 Financial Risk

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk IBTC will not be able to meet its financial obligations when they become due. Sufficient liquidity is maintained by monthly review of its financial position. IBTC has low liquidity risk given the nature of its obligations and large amount of cash in the bank.

Note 4 Related Parties

Related parties of IBTC are considered to be the Bruce Trail Conservancy, board members, volunteers, and the other eight BTC clubs.

A significant portion of revenue \$28,023 or 74% (FY 2020 - \$46,560 or 59%) and expenses \$30,735 or 59% (FY 2020 - \$37,013 or 54%) are with the BTC for membership fees, and donations to BTC, respectively. Last year, activities included the BTC AGM revenue \$21,156 and expense \$17,013.

Volunteers have been reimbursed for expenditures made on behalf of IBTC activities amounting to \$10,309 (FY 2020 - \$ 21,082).

Notes to Financial Statements

Transactions with board member and volunteer owned businesses are minimal at \$1,029 (FY 2020 - \$311), and with other clubs is nil.

Note 5 Economic Dependence

IBTC, as a member club of the BTC, is reliant on its continued membership and BTC member fees allocated to the IBTC to conduct its activities. Should IBTC cease to be a BTC member club it would not be able to continue its activities.

Note 6 Taxation

IBTC tax compliance is effectively within the context of its status as a member club of the BTC. The BTC is a registered charity, HST registrant and operates on a not for profit basis. Only the BTC may receive donations and issue charitable donation tax receipts.

Accordingly, as a not for profit organization, IBTC is not subject to income tax. IBTC is obligated to charge HST (Excise Tax) on goods and services sold, pay HST on purchases, and obtains a rebate of a portion of HST collected or paid. BTC is responsible for all tax reporting.

Net Assets

Net Assets declined in the year by \$15,077 to \$36,596 (FY 2020 - \$51,672).

Despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club continues to have a strong liquidity position with cash in the bank amounting to \$34,539 (FY 2020 - \$49,737).

Highlights of the year include

- 10% increase in membership fee revenue;
- No comparable donation of last year's Hydro Flask denotation;
- Canceled events due to COVID-19;
- Doubling of badge sales.
- Reduced spending in communication, TD&M, and general expenses
- Reduced total revenue and expenditures due to last year's hosting the BTC AGM;
- 50% increase in donations to the BTC

Membership

Membership pass-through revenue from the BTC increased to \$28,023 (FY 2020 - \$25,404) allaying earlier concerns of membership decline due the pandemic, and is the largest revenue source.

The BTC passes \$11 of a member's fee who chooses to affiliate with a club through to that Bruce Trail club as follows: \$9.00 directly to the Bruce Trail club and \$2.00 for trail maintenance, aggregated for all clubs and then apportioned to individual clubs according to their percentage trail kilometers in their section. IBTC's percentage is currently 12.25%

BTC memberships are charitable donations, provide an altruistic not an economic value, and are eligible for charitable donation tax receipts.

Donations to IBTC

The one-time Hydro Flask donation of \$9,000 last year was not matched by comparable donations this year. The donation funded projects representing 70% of last year's TD&M activity.

COMMENTARY

Hiking and Fundraising Events

The Steeltown Stomp, Official End to End, and Concert events were cancelled this year due to Covid-19 resulting in a net loss of \$9,461 compared to last year; ie. a loss of \$16,873 revenue offset by \$7,412 event costs.

Badge and Merchandise Sales

Badge sales more than doubled to \$5,658 (FY 2020 - \$1,807) helped by increased use of the trail arising from the pandemic, and the special Welcome Back badge (300 badges sold); Merchandise sales increased to \$3,605 (FY 2020 - \$1,640) mostly through selling 36 charcuterie boards, a new item this year.

Overall, sales less costs increased to \$4,656 (FY 2020 - \$3,344). *NB. IBTC policy to fully expense purchases in the year acquired has an adverse effect on accurately measuring gross margin.*

Other Functions

Communications, Trail Maintenance & Development, Landowner Relations, Volunteer Recognition, Office and Admin in the aggregate reduced spending by \$4,278 due to reduced activity; e.g. no in person AGM, fewer TD&M work parties, fewer newsletters printed.

Donations to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

Total donations were \$30,735 (FY 2020 - \$20,000). \$10,735 was donated to replace the McNally barn roof, a facility owned by the BTC and available to IBTC for trail maintenance and land stewardship purposes. \$20,000 was donated in January 2021 when it became clear the pandemic did not adversely impact the club's finances.

The Club continues to face uncertainty during the present health crisis, and its strong financial position should be reassuring to all, and enable IBTC to plan confidently within the restrictions faced, and also to rely on the conviction of our fellow volunteers to do their best in any circumstance.

Budget Highlights

- Membership fee revenue remains steady ;
- Hiking events contemplated but not budgeted due to COVID-19;
- Badge sales remain strong at 500 items;
- Communication spending remains steady;
- TD&M expense increases to address trail work backlog;
- Other expense areas increase;
- Donations to the BTC not budgeted; to be reviewed.

Net Assets

The budget plans for a decrease of net assets to \$31,751 from \$36,596 on a net deficit of \$4,845 for activities, and prior to any BTC donation.

Budgeted net assets at \$31,751 is sufficient to continue activities for another year.

Membership

Membership fees budgeted at a level that is considered to be certain and does not anticipate fully the positive 10% growth seen in the last year. The growth trend may continue but being the major revenue source has been conservatively budgeted.

Hiking events

The 2021 Steeltown Stomp has been scheduled for Saturday September 25, 2021 pending a review meeting to be scheduled in the spring to review the possibility to hold events. The event is administered by the Niagara Bruce Trail Club; with volunteers from both clubs and both clubs share net proceeds equally. Net proceeds has not been included in the budget.

FY 2022 BUDGET

The 2021 Official End to End event has yet to be considered and has not been included in the budget. The volunteer organizing group is intact and able to stage the event if pandemic guidelines permit.

Concert Event

The Fundraising Director budgets a concert event in the fall that adds a net \$1,600 to the budget. Details of the event are pending.

Communication

Spending on communication remains steady in the budget. Electronic processes are being developed and improved, and newsletter production and distribution continue to be reviewed.

TD&M

The Trail Director is expecting normal trail operations to resume by the summer and the budget includes higher expenses to address trail work backlog.

Other expense areas

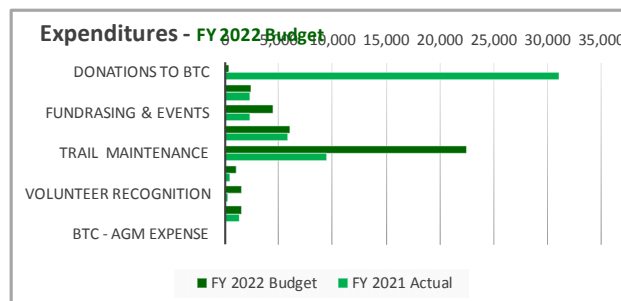
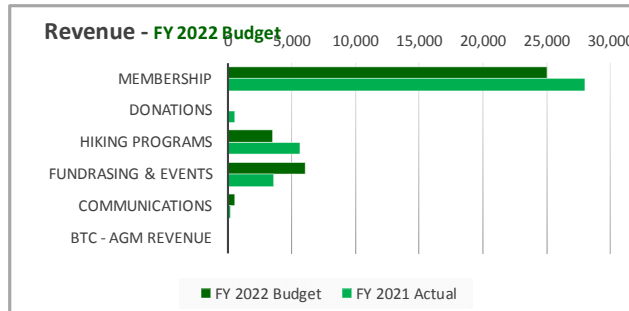
Landowner relations, Volunteer Recognition, and Office expenses have been budgeted at higher levels to allow for possible changes and improvements.

Donations to BTC

IBTC traditionally makes donations on a discretionary basis to the BTC in a range of \$10,000 to \$30,000. Donations have not been budgeted pending review.

Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club
Fiscal Year 2022 BUDGET - Statement of Activities
For the twelve months ending March 31st

Fiscal Year 2022 BUDGET		
	FY 2022 Budget	FY 2021 Actual
REVENUE	\$	\$
Membership	25,000	28,023
Donations	-	545
Hiking Programs	3,500	5,658
Fundrasing & Events	6,100	3,605
Communications	500	194
BTC - AGM Revenue	-	-
	35,100	38,026
EXPENDITURES	-	-
Donations to BTC	375	31,110
Hike Programs	2,470	2,307
Fundrasing & Events	4,500	2,352
Communications	6,000	5,824
Trail Maintenance	22,500	9,428
Landowner Relations	1,100	499
Volunteer Recognition	1,500	280
Office and Admin	1,500	1,303
BTC - AGM Expense	-	-
	39,945	53,103
Net Activities - expenditures in (excess) of revenue	(4,845)	(15,077)
Net Assets - beginning of the year	36,596	51,672
Net Activities for the year	(4,845)	(15,077)
Net Assets - end of year	31,751	36,596
Represented by:		
Cash in Bank	29,475	34,539
Accounts Receivable	3,276	2,628
Deposits / Inventory	-	-
Accounts Payable	(1,000)	(571)
NET ASSETS	31,751	36,596



Trail Maintenance & Development Director's Report

What a year it has been for Iroquoia BTC Club Trail Maintenance volunteers, as they have worked to maintain a safe and accessible footpath along the 121 km of main trail and 48km of side trails in the Iroquoia Club section.

Included are 63 trail captains, 56 trail monitors and 24 work party volunteers who put in a total of 2,619 hours. Together they have worked through trail closures, work party size limitations and parking restrictions which did not allow completion of the planned structure repairs and/or replacements. Work party size was limited to 5 volunteers. The primary activity for the year was hazard tree removal. In total some reported 50 trees were cut by our six volunteer sawyers and their crews. More trees were removed through local zone maintenance teams.

Also the usual blaze repainting, trimming and grass cutting continued although at a somewhat reduced level compared with other years.



It is not all work. To maintain the sense of team work and camaraderie two open air coffee socials were held on July 14th at Battlefield Park, Stoney Cheek and September 24th.

The Trail Director's Award (the Golden Shovel) is an award given annually to a trail worker who hard work on a day to day basis to maintain the Bruce Trail stands out. The winner of the award for 2020/21 was Joe Verhagel. Unfortunately the Christmas Volunteer Recognition Social could not be held and Joe's award was presented at home.





Some Outstanding Trail Highlights

- Relocation of the Main Trail through Sherman Falls. Thanks to the local land owner's generosity and commitment to sharing the natural environment the Main Trail was returned to its original location.
- Leeds Porter Boardwalk Repair. The past year saw a tremendous number of ash trees fall and occasionally damaging trail structures. Repairs were completing in a timely basis to restore the route.
- Fisher's Pond Lookout. The volunteers' creativity and hard work has provided a rest stop complete with benches overlooking Guelph Line and westward to Toronto skyline. The site will be completed with an obelisk which will recognize BTC donors.



- McNally Barn Reroof. All of the tools and equipment used by volunteers to maintain the Iroquoia section of the Bruce trail are stored in the McNally Barn. The Iroquoia Club donated the funding to replace the existing well-worn tin roof with a much stronger steel roof.
- Two new side trails were constructed at MapleCross Nature Reserve at River and Ruin, the Squire Cleaver .24 km and the Dan Welsh .12km Side Trails. Both trails have been well received by hikers.

- The 2020/21 Trail Maintenance Award winner is Harry Vanderveen. Harry has worked exceptionally hard as a trail captain and chief grass cutter for the northern section of the club. A great team player!

Special thanks to the Trail Maintenance Management Team; Zone Coordinators - Paul McLanachan, Paul Ford, Art Johnston, Daryl Keays; Volunteer Coordinator – Peter Morin and Date Management Coordinator – Richard Pomeroy. Finally, thanks to all the Trail Maintenance Volunteers, whose dedication and patience have supported maintaining a safe and accessible “Ribbon of Wilderness”

Peter Rumble, Trail Maintenance and Development Director

Hike Director's Report

The year 2020 has been a very challenging one for the Iroquoia hiking program. Just as Katie Halsall the previous Hike Director was leaving and the club took on Samantha Ceci as our new director we were impacted by the arrival of Covid 10 and all its effects on us. Samantha left us for a new job and the club was left without a Hike Director. I stepped in to try and mitigate the effects of not having a director in the face of all that Covid was bringing to us and indeed our province and country.

1. Last March the province went into lockdown, BTC shut down the trail and all club organized hikes were suspended. These three things presented never before experienced consequences.
2. BTC immediately met with all club directors and together we set up Covid 19 protocols to be implemented when restrictions would be lifted. This happened several times with limits set up for numbers. These limits went up and down depending on the severity of Covid 19. As of this writing organized club hikes continue to be suspended.
3. A new registration system was set up for members only and it continues to be updated to make it more functional for both hikers and leaders.
4. All official in person events run by the club were cancelled and, in all likelihood will not be held until 2022. (Official E to E, Bruce Trail Day, New Year's Day Hike and possibly Steeltown Stomp)
5. We will have a number of new hike leaders trained and hopefully registered as Iroquoia leaders in the BTC Hike Submission System by late Spring, early summer. 12 candidates begin training March 31 with another 7 beginning April 28.
6. Hikers continue to use our trail either on solo hikes or small group hikes. People are hiking for badges and it is gratifying to see and hear of so many people using Bruce Trail, even with some challenges which the club continues to monitor and try to mitigate undesirable effects in our section. Thanks for the Keep the Trail Clean

badge which brings awareness of that problem and helps to educate hikers on uses of the trail.

7. As a club we look forward to the time when things might return to some normalcy.

Submitted by Anne Armstrong

Media Director's Report

With your help, our community on social media has continued to grow. In the last year, we increased our Facebook likes from 1964 to 2200. Our Twitter account has grown from 1080 followers to 1166 new followers and our Instagram account has grown from 993 followers to 1490. More and more people are sharing and tagging us in their posts, making our social media accounts more interactive and fun! We keep a positive community focused on hiking and the Bruce Trail.

We have had some fun social media contests, with some very talented artists. We had an art contest to design both the Welcome Back Badge and the Keep It Clean Badge. We sold 300 Welcome Back Badges and the Keep It Clean badge will be available shortly.

Our social media accounts have continued to be an extremely important tool due to the pandemic. It allows us to share important information but also have fun, interact with each other and support our fellow hikers. Now more than ever we need to support each other and stay positive!

Things continue to go well with our website. We continue to update it as needed and have added the E-Blasts to the website for anyone who might miss it in their emails. If you have a suggestion for something you would like to be added to our website, please do not hesitate to contact me and let me know.

We are currently looking for a new Newsletter editor. We also continue to work hard to be more environmentally friendly. If you are currently receiving the newsletter via mail, might we suggest you changing to email. All requests can be sent to editors.iroquoian@gmail.com. Our newsletter is about our club and our hiking community. If you ever have something you would like to contribute send me an email.

Thank you to everyone respecting the trail closures, as hard as it is and I wish everyone a great and safe hiking season once the trails reopen.

Holly Sluiter, Media Director

Landowner Relations Report

- We continue to develop our Landowner Ambassador program. We now have 8 people supporting us in this role. It has enabled more focus on individual landowners

- We responded to 2 major issues with landowners and headed off potentially serious losses of access
- We have purchased honey as a give away and plan to do a second visit in the spring to help build our relationships
- BTC continues to provide additional resources and support for land acquisitions
- We have a working group looking at possible approaches to the first few kilometers of trail in the Grimsby area where there are over 30 landowners
- Mara McHaffie has taken over for Lyndsey who is on maternity leave. We are working with Mara to provide stewardship services to landowners on request.

Doug Yungblut

Publicity & Education Report

The year of Covid has been a challenging one. Although, there was not much to promote this year, I concentrated on expanding the ENotes content and its audience.

In June 2020, when I started publishing the IBTC ENotes, we had 222 subscribers, now 10 months later we have 356 subscribers. A steady increase each month, with subscribers contributing to some of our publications as well as sharing experiences through photos and stories.

Regular features of the ENotes is information regarding new badges, winners of badge design contests (which are held through social media), Share Your Experiences with Us, Important Messages from Our Club, Junior Hiking badges feature, Independent Hiking Article and many photos taken on The Bruce Trail. Aside from these regular features, we publish stories from contributors and timely information.

A new monthly feature to the ENotes, in conjunction with Bruce Trail Conservancy head office, is the Legacy Donor Feature, highlighting one person or couple with a story of their love of the Bruce Trail and their decision to become a legacy donor.

This feature recognizes the commitment of long-standing supporters of the BTC. Further, this feature enlightens readers, who may not have otherwise thought of a legacy donation to consider such a worthy legacy.

Gloria Vidovich from BTC is working on another feature which appeared in the BTC spring magazine and would like to align our efforts so we may strike a nice balance of information distribution using the ENotes.

From an educational standpoint, I have worked closely with social media to get the word out to our hiking public about dog's on leashes and bicycles on the trails. This will continue. My hope is for 2021 to erect more visible signage and continue the educational aspect in hopes of helping the Bruce Trail remain a hiking footpath which is respected by all and thus protecting the nature within.

Looking forward to what the rest of 2021 has to offer on the trails!

Submitted by Trish Murphy

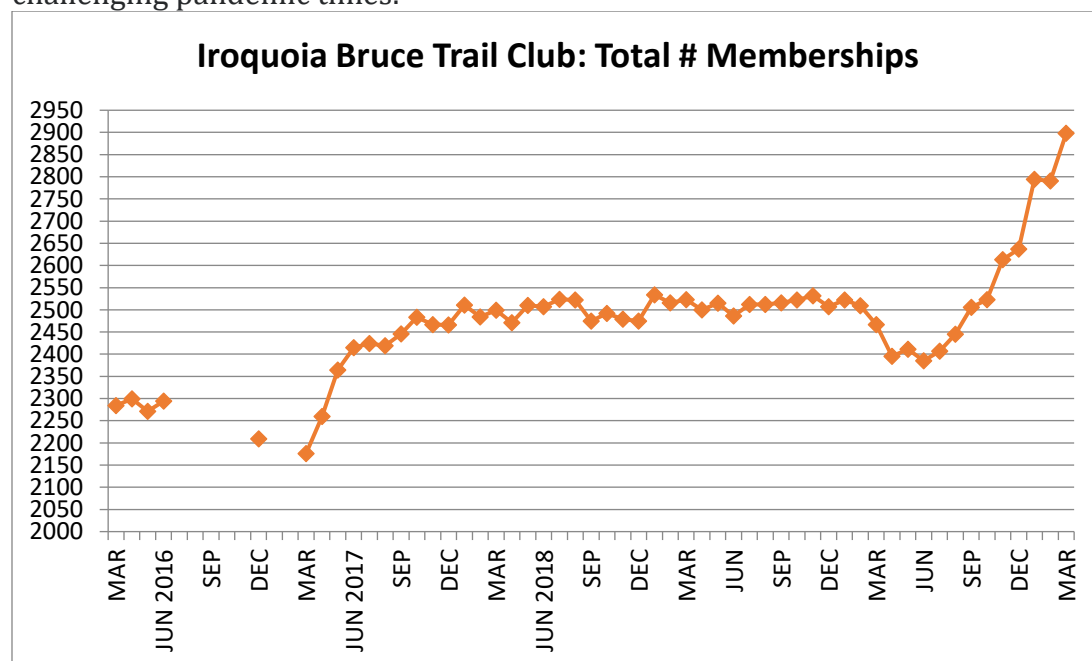
Membership Director's Report

The Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club is the second largest club of the nine clubs of the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Membership for the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club has increased by 17% over the past fiscal year, and for the BTC overall the increase has been 19%.

Annual Club Membership Growth

Club	March 31, 2021	April 1, 2020	Total # Increase	% Increase
Niagara	1268	919	349	38%
Iroquoia	2898	2467	431	17%
Toronto	3177	3000	177	6%
Caledon	1148	988	160	16%
Dufferin	592	445	147	33%
Blue Mountain	944	680	264	39%
Beaver Valley	760	590	170	29%
Sydenham	650	538	112	21%
Peninsula	922	758	164	22%
Members at large	33	46	-13	-28%
Total BTC	12392	10431	1961	19%

The chart below shows continuous growth in membership for our club over the past 5 years. This past year, we saw a dip early in the pandemic, but then followed by a steep rise. The increase in membership is likely due to more people using and appreciating the trail and also having a better understanding of the relevance of the BTC mission during these challenging pandemic times.



We are very thankful to our members for continuing to support our club despite the cancellation of our larger events in the past year and limits to our group hiking and trail activities. Being one of the more urban clubs, our activities were more restricted, resulting in our membership growth to be not as strong as some of the more rural clubs. Hopefully the coming year will see a lifting of these restrictions so that we can get together again to expand our programs and events.

It has been a privilege to serve as an IBTC board member over the past three years. I welcome Jordan Scott, currently Director-at-Large, who has excellent experience and ideas to be your new Membership Director.

Wishing you all good health and happy hiking!

Samar Smith, Membership Director

Fundraising Director's Report

As it was for everyone, 2020 was also a difficult year for fund raising. Our efforts were scaled back due to Covid 19 restrictions. Our wildly successful fall concert series was put on hold due to these restrictions. We are currently making tentative plans for a concert in fall 2021. Keep your fingers crossed.

One fund raiser that we were able to launch was the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Charcuterie/Cutting Boards. These boards were well received and helped raise funds. We continue to offer the charcuterie/cutting boards for sale (please go to our website for order details).



Sales of badges continue to go well, with a number of new badges being offered.

We hope that as we work our way through 2021 we will see Covid-19 restrictions lifted and we will be able to have a concert fund raiser in the fall of 2021 along with other fund raising events.

Allan Meyer, Director Fund Raising

Land Stewardship Director's Report

Properties...We have 18 properties, managed by 14 Steward/Steward Teams.

Reporting...Our Stewards inspect and report on their properties a minimum of twice per year, specified as spring and fall visits. In spite of COVID 19 lockdowns and other COVID problems this year, our Stewards managed to perform most of specified inspections in a timely fashion. There were no serious problems on properties that we manage, though there were serious parking capacity problems at a nearby Conservation area parking lot, in one of our properties.

Training...The usual spring Training Workshop was cancelled, due to COVID 19.

Commendation Awards...These were awarded to Sheryl Johnston and Kathleen Lawday...engraved plaques..."For dedication to the Land Stewardship Programme", over many years.

McNally barn roof...This structure is on our McNally property, and is used as workshop by Iroquoia TD&M, BTC, Iroquoia LS, and Iroquoia generally. It had a leaky roof, which was replaced over the winter.

Gary Beaudoin, Land Stewardship Director

Volunteer Director's Report

Members and volunteers are the backbone of our organization. The Iroquoia Club is very fortunate to have over 200 volunteers who devote many hours to manage trails, lead hikes, support publicity events, manage our land and land owners, support social media, write our newsletter and much, much more. However, we always need more volunteers particularly in the areas of special events, projects, social media, fund raising and publicity. An important process that we have for volunteers is recognition at the AGM. As a result of our current situation, volunteers will still be recognized but "virtually".

We have a strong Nominations Committee tasked with identifying and selecting new candidates for the Board. We have had several changes this year with a few members stepping down after their term and new members joining our Board. We would like to thank Samar Smith and Anne Armstrong for their service on the Board. I will also be leaving the Board after 6 wonderful years. Jordan Scott has moved from Director at Large to Membership Director and Cecilia Keller has assumed the Volunteer director in addition to her Vice President role. In addition, we have been very fortunate to have a youth Board member for the last year from the Girls on Board organization, Ashwini Selvakumaran. Ashwini has supported many initiatives such as social media and youth engagement. Ashwini will assume a Director at Large position in the coming year.

We are fortunate to have an enthusiastic, diverse Board who are motivated to make the Iroquoia Club the best it can be. If you have an interest in volunteering, please let me know.

Gloria Pennycook, Volunteer Director

BTC Land Acquisition Committee Representative Report

The Land Acquisition Committee continues to make a number of recommendations to the BTC Board for approval to acquire certain properties along the entire Niagara Escarpment.

Unfortunately, there have been no new acquisitions in the past year, however, those in the Club involved with Land Owner Relations and Land Securement met with Staff and put together a list of priority properties that we wish to make further contacts with over the next year.

The rising cost of property in the Golden Horseshoe is starting to become a concern. A special meeting of the Land Acquisition Committee was held to discuss this issue. Our ability to purchase an entire property and sever off the lands we wish to retain, and sell those we do not (sell the land that contains a house) may become more difficult to do.

Doug Stansbury, BTC Land Acquisition Committee Representative

BTC Board of Director's Representative Report

Throughout COVID, BTC Board and Staff successfully ensured the ongoing health of our organization while building BTC's capacity to meet its mission.

Stakeholder Relations, led by CEO Michael McDonald, is critical as BTC negotiates with municipalities, conservation authorities, parks and landowners on how to manage and respond to exceptionally heavy trail use and related issues of garbage, parking, washrooms, etc.

Land Acquisition Committee (LAC) makes decisions and recommendations regarding land acquisitions. It has been a remarkable year. It was exciting to acquire 500 acres of land at Cape Chin (Map 29) while at the same time gradually securing smaller but essential sections of the trail where it weaves across the escarpment. Did you know that agricultural land is protected and consequently NEC approves only the narrow fencerows that border a field?

Conservation activities were strengthened. With several professional branding experts working pro bono, a Branding Task Force helped articulate a branding statement that underscores BTC's contributions to conservation. BTC operations also reorganized internally to create two distinct departments. Land Acquisition and Management focuses solely on land securement while a new Conservation and Trail oversees conservation including stewardship and trail maintenance.

Fundraising is critical to all the successes above. Donors who value conservation and hiking made it possible to meet operation expenses and secure significant sections of land. Thank you one and all. The new Branding Statement aims to ensure more people recognize BTC's place in Canada as a major conservation organization meriting their support.

Cynthia Archer

BTC Board of Directors, Land Acquisitions Committee & Branding Task Force
IBTC Secretary-Archivist, Land Ambassador & Hike Leader

Director at Large

While it has been a challenging year to implement new initiatives, we have been doing our best to plan for how we can make an impact in the short term and the future. The IBTC Membership Task force was created this past year to develop ways to increase the impact of membership within the IBTC and review the membership structure moving forward in accordance with the overall ideas from the BTC. I had the privilege of leading this task force in responding to the consultation from BTC on membership structure. All clubs of the BTC were part of this consultation which focused on communicating what aspects of membership each club felt were important, ways to improve the current membership structure, and how benefits of membership could be changed moving forward.

During this time I have worked closely with Samar Smith, and have begun my training to take over the roll of Membership Director in 2021. I look forward to continuing my training as well as continuing our work on the IBTC Membership Task Force.

Submitted by Jordan Scott

Special Board Director – Girls on Boards

The summer of 2020, I performed an analysis of our social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) alongside our website for general maintenance. I concluded that our social media engagement is reaching a population of mostly 30+ adults.

Utilizing this data, I implemented a new social media initiative called "Spotlight Mondays" (from June 2020, to November 2020). The purpose of Spotlight Mondays is to interview and feature the faces behind the board, alongside the accomplishments of our volunteers throughout this initiative, I highlighted how their contributions started and what their favourite spot on the trail is (a chance to share hidden gems with the wider public).

In 2021, I spearheaded the idea of creating a youth advisory council for the Iroquoia Bruce trail club.

I participated in consultation sessions with both board members and volunteers, to design a virtual youth council. With my findings, I began the development of a youth engagement survey to gauge how much youth know about the IBTC/BTC already. This survey will be released in late April. Gain further suggestions.

A few members of the Board have been very valuable in connecting me to wider members, and from the three consultation sessions I participated in, I concluded trail maintenance is a main priority. With that in mind, I have started an outline of the Youth Council, which involves the participation of park maintenance keepers, hike leaders and general members at large who have valuable connections to the Bruce Trail.

Submitted by Ashwini Selvakumaran, Young director with g(irls)20, June 2020 - present

2021 Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Awards

Volunteer of the Year – Samar Smith



She joined us six years ago and was instantly willing to take on anything we threw at her. Like many of us who did not know much about social media or web page design she took it on with the help of her children Jeffery and Monica. Samar is our Membership Director, which is not an easy position. Her manners were a perfect fit for this role, as she is the “voice” of our Club when getting in touch with new or lapsed members. She is the one who would always be standing at our membership table at various events eagerly waiting to talk with someone. Samar would also take the initiative to go out on the trail with a table and set up a “pop up” information booth for people passing by. She is also a hike leader and just recently became a Trail Monitor. Finally, she is our representative / organizer, along with Peter Rumble, on the very successful Steeltown Stomp fundraiser. It should be noted

that her son Jeffery, was awarded our Club Youth Award a number of years ago. Thank you for everything Samar.

Words from Gloria Pennycook:

When Samar joined the Iroquoia Board as the Communications Director, she admitted that she knew little about social media but was willing to learn. And she did!! Samar enlisted the help of her children and together, they accomplished a great many improvements to our communications. Above and beyond that, Samar volunteered for almost everything! She was always the one who put up her hand to help out. Samar is very passionate about the Bruce Trail. She made great contributions to our Board. Thanks so much for your service on the Board and beyond. See you on the trails!!

Words from Cynthia Archer:

Samar actively contributed to the Iroquoia Club community on many fronts – filling a variety of Board positions, providing leadership for the Steeltown stomp, volunteering to assist at check points, BTC promotion tables, etc.

I will miss Samar as she so often in board meetings shared thoughtful alternative views to problems, issues and solutions that helped us grow intellectually and make wiser decisions for the club's community.

I am glad she will stay involved so we may continue to benefit from her sage perspectives on issues.

Iroquoia Club Trail Maintenance Award

- Harry Vanderveen



The Iroquoia Club Trail Maintenance Person of the Year is awarded to Harry Vanderveen for 2020.

Harry has been a BTC member for 7 years and has been volunteering with Trail Maintenance for over half that time. The past year has been very challenging for Iroquoia Trail Maintenance. In this time of restrictions and reduced activities on the trail, Harry stood out. For the last few years, he has taken over the unenviable task of grass cutting in the top half of Iroquoia. 2020 was no exception; Harry was out every week throughout the grass cutting season making sure the grass was cut back and helping out countless other Trail Captains who might have had a much more difficult time in maintaining their sections.

Harry is also the Trail Captain at the BTC MapleCross Nature Reserve at River and

Ruin in Lowville. Harry was instrumental in helping get the new Squire Cleaver and Dan Welsh Side Trails established on the property.

Harry's energy and enthusiasm for the Bruce Trail is highly contagious and as a result he is very well known to local hikers in the areas that he maintains.

Land Stewardship Awards

Volunteers are a vital component of the Land Stewardship Program. The primary volunteers in this program are the Land Stewards who are the caretakers and eyes of the land. Land Stewards visit their assigned properties at least twice a year, complete annual reports on the conditions of the property, provide input into the stewardship plans, and help to organize and carry out stewardship activities such as tree planting in abandoned fields, garbage removal, and installing signs and fences.

This year we wish to recognize the following people for their dedication:

Sheryl Johnston and Doug Johnston – Land Stewards for seven years.

Kathleen Lawday – Land Steward for five years.

Junior Appreciation Award - Ashwini Selvakumaran



Ashwini joined the Iroquoia Club Board in June 2020 as part of the Girls on Board organization. This group pairs up young women with Not for Profit Boards to provide them with training and experience. Ashwini immediately became involved by supporting the social media efforts - an analysis to make improvements, creation of Spotlight Mondays amongst other things. In addition, she has reached out to all Board members and the CEO to determine opportunities for increasing youth engagement in the Bruce Trail. As a result, Ashwini is now involved in the Youth Engagement Team being lead by the BTC. Ashwini has provided a helping wherever it has been needed including the organization of our first virtual AGM. It is important to note that she is also the winner of the Hamilton YWCA Youth Trailblazer Award for Halton Region. Congratulations!!