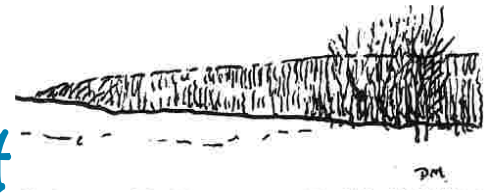




Bittersweet

CROSS COUNTRY SKI CLUB



NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER, 2014

Remembering Margaret Woodward

A wave of sadness and loss swept over Bittersweet in May when it was learned that Margaret Woodward had died.

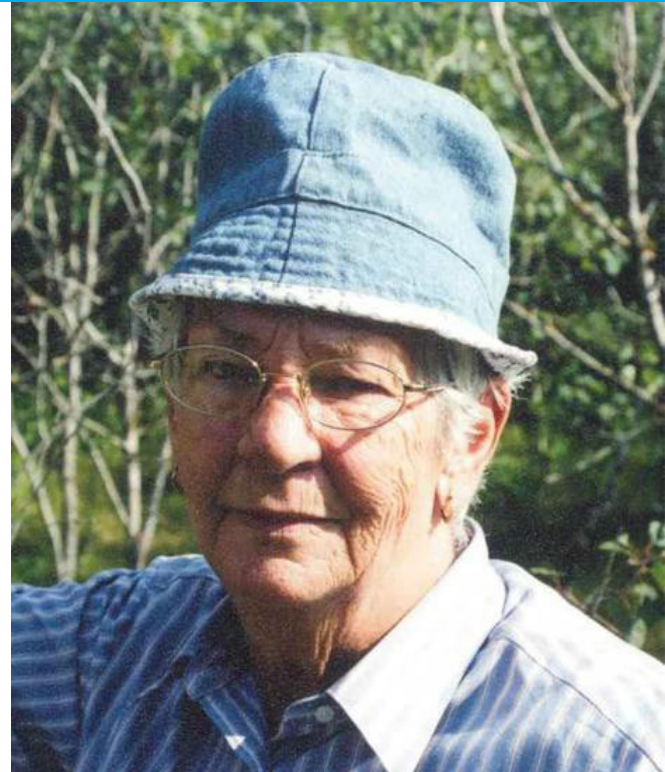
Margaret could be called Bittersweet's original trail maker as, in those long ago days, she headed out to set a ski trail across the family pasture. (The Farm Trail). As she loved to relate, Hartley could not understand her fussing about the horses trampling her tracks, so she gave him a pair of skis too! It was an inspired move. They both grew to love skiing.

Gradually, as time passed, trails were extended and refined, friends and neighbours were invited to join in the fun, and the farm name, Bittersweet Farms, was assigned to the trails. In 1993, the Bittersweet Ski Club was formed.

Over the years, some gallons of apres ski coffee were enjoyed by countless skiers invited to the Woodward kitchen table, always accompanied by lively conversation and Margaret's generously shared baked goodies.

In mourning her loss, we pay tribute to Margaret who, with Hartley, contributed so much to the establishment and growth of the Bittersweet Ski Club over a period of so many years.

Our condolences to Hartley and the family.



Trails Report

Over the Thanksgiving Weekend, a work crew completed some significant trail improvements:

1. On Big Woods Classic, the furthest west corkscrew trail has been straightened.
2. The difficult downhill near Cardinal Cutoff has been moved back to the site of the once named Sling Shot, as the bottom has dried out. The trail has been widened, and renamed The Snow Plow. It will not be tracked at the top, so skiers can snow plow the run, for a better ski experience.
3. A number of trees have been removed from Cottonwood and North Star to accommodate the new wider Gator groomer. All stumps have been ground down.
4. Stakes have been set out in open areas to mark trails after heavy snowfalls or drifting have buried the old tracks.

Our thanks to Glen McMaster, Ross Brownlee, and Jason Playter for doing so much of this heavy work.

Still with trails, we report that Hartley Woodward, the original trail maker and groomer, has announced his retirement from active trail duty, effective April 2015. His enormous involvement in the Club will be sorely missed. He taught us so much! It is now time for young, strong skiers to step forward and carry on the the trail grooming tradition.

Our heartfelt thanks to Hartley for so many years of dedicated, skilled grooming of our trails to the highest standard that we have all come to expect.

Some Bear Facts

Bears were active on our trails this past summer, demolishing a number of our bluebird boxes. If skiers can slow down at the base of Whitetail Hill, they can see a bear tree which bears (pun) a number of bear claw scars. However, at Whitetail speed, those skiers may have to wait to see that signed tree in another season!

Deer Hunting Season November 10-23

Although the muzzle loading season is underway at time of writing, it is the rifle season which brings most hunters into the woods. Hunters may be encountered anywhere in our ski area. Hikers and skiers are cautioned that for safety's sake, they should wear an item of clothing in conspicuous blaze orange. Better yet, we recommend that everyone stay out of the woods until the season ends. Warning signs have been posted at both trail heads.

Insurance Coverage

This is an update to remind skiers that membership in the Bittersweet Ski Club includes accident insurance while you are skiing. Although it is not required that all skiers "sign in", the Club does appreciate knowing who is out there. Non-member skiers are also covered by insurance, but only if they "sign in" when they are skiing.

Insurance is provided by CCSAM, the **Cross Country Ski Association of Manitoba**. The general public also has access to all parts of the Wildlife Management Area in all seasons, but the CCSAM insurance does not extend to them.

Appeal for Assistance

After the Trail Grooming seminar last year, it was generally agreed that there should be grooming teams. We now have machines that will comfortably accommodate a driver and a passenger. A passenger is a real asset when hitching up trackers, pulling out winch lines, or even just chatting, while learning the ropes and routes. With the approaching retirement of Hartley Woodward, it is even more obvious that more volunteer groomers are required to step up and help out.

As this is not an onerous job, volunteers can be men or yes, women too!

Please contact Don McMaster (252-3270) to volunteer to help grooming this season.



Trailside First Aid Course, December 13

On Saturday, Decmber 13, Stu Phillips will be offering a short course on first aid for ski injuries. Stu is well qualified and experienced, and will teach us safe ways to help injured skiers.

Stu will be at the December 7 Open House to take registrations and to answer questions, or you can contact Stu directly. uts9151@mts.net

The first aid course is free.



Club of the Year!

Bittersweet Ski Club was surprised and honoured to be named Club of the Year at the CCSAM windup celebrations last spring!

Winnipegger Laura McMaster accepted a trophy on behalf of the Club, as yet another snow storm kept the rest of us at home. The trophy can be seen at the Nordic Centre throughout the coming winter.

News, Announcements & Updates

Bittersweet Open House, Sunday, December 7, 2014 (noon to 4 PM)

Open house is the day we urge everyone to come and renew memberships, as well as hiking or skiing, depending on conditions. The Nordic Centre will be open, free barbecued hot dogs and refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you then!

Bittersweet Annual Loppet & Family Fun Day Sunday, February 15, 2015

As always, we schedule our loppet for the Sunday of Louis Riel Weekend. This event grows more successful each year, with more participation, more options, and more fun. Please circle the calendars now, and watch for more details in the New Year.



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