



Left: Bill Flikweert and his daughter Isabella enjoy a day of skiing.

Top: Fat biking is growing in popularity on the Trails.

Above: The Club has been hosting a New Year's Eve event which includes the dropping of a silver ball and potluck food.

TRIANGLE SKI CLUB

Embracing Our Canadian Winter in McIntosh Mills

By Sally Smid

If you live in Canada, you are probably realizing that it is best to embrace the winter season and consider the many pass times available. Skiing is only one sport that takes place on the trails at the Triangle Cross Country Ski Club area in McIntosh Mills on Leeds Rd 5 south of Athens. More winter sports enthusiasts are discovering this beautiful area where many winter activities are possible. It is a wonderful way to keep active and fit in the winter while also enjoying the beauty of nature. The picturesque tranquility is revitalizing in many ways.

The history of the Trails goes back to 1971 when the local "Y" decided to develop an interest in cross country skiing in the area. It was considered a new sport then, and was obviously very fitness oriented. Marg Barraclough volunteered her property for the first set of trails which became part of the trail

system. The founding group and the Charleston Lake Provincial Park Commission got together to develop trails for hiking and skiing. The big breakthrough in the Club's history came when the MNR gave permission to use government land at McIntosh Mills. It took a while to get permission from landowners to use intervening land and to blaze the trails. A Club Chalet was built just off Marsh Lane. Property management and trail development were established as Club responsibilities. A skidoo and groomer were eventually acquired and the trails were finally established, which are a source of great pride to Club members.

Bill Flikweert, the club's property and trails director, has a real love for the outdoors and for biking. He and other club members have been working for several years to expand activities at the trails. Skiing depends on area snowfall which is not always adequate. However, mountain biking, hiking, trail running, snowshoeing and fat biking can be more year-round activities and much effort is being given in upgrading and maintaining trails to make this all possible. Memberships can now be purchased on a yearly basis or just for the winter.

The 30-year old club now consists of 35 kms of beautiful trails with the Trailhead at 114 Marsh RD, Mallorytown, On.

Much of the land still belongs to the Ministry of Natural Resources which the group rents. The club continues to work with the MNR to provide safe trails that are free of motorized vehicles. The trail system could not operate without volunteers and the continued generous consent of the many private landowners. About half of the trails are groomed with club equipment.

Day users are welcome (**However, it is requested that non-members of the club deposit a \$10 contribution towards the cost of maintaining the trail systems in the box located beside the sign at the entrance to the West trail system**) and the 40-member group strives to make the club family oriented and welcomes new members. All of the dedicated hard work and effort is being rewarded with the success of the winter activities that are taking place. An annual New Year's event involves a candle lit trail to a bonfire which includes the dropping of a large silver ball to help greet the new year. The Club has become a place where many memories are being made. A growing number of participants are celebrating the Canadian winter in new ways thanks to much dedication and hard work. **LH**

Marsh Road must be accessed from Bally Canoe Road. A bridge reconstruction project has cut off access from Leeds Road 5 at McIntosh Mills.

You can find out more by going to the Club's web page triangleskiclub.org or by visiting their face-book page for updates at [Triangle Cross Country Ski Club](https://www.facebook.com/TriangleCrossCountrySkiClub).