

# SKI TRACKS

## President's Notes

I am writing this note after the first day of skiing at Silver Star. A terrible start to the week (HaHa!). We woke to 8 centimetres of fresh snow, and the morning was a great, no AWESOME, time. At least for those of us that like powder. Along some of the trees, it was even deeper. Unfortunately, by about 9:30, it was getting to be a bit of a challenge to find untracked snow, but we persevered. As they say, somebody has to do it.

That being said, I am sure the Tour Hosts will fill you in on the full events of the week.

As many of you must know by now, I love to ski. So, I thought the following picture of one of our grandchildren's shirts was most apropos. Like Donna and I, our oldest son Ken loves to ski and his kids are loving it too. Perhaps it's a genetic thing. All I can say is a big thanks to Donna who bought me my first set of skis many years ago, as a Christmas gift.



Donna and I have a day at Sunshine with the two grand-kids and then wrap up a great ski season skiing at Whitefish, Montana on the Club's last tour. Hopefully, you had as much fun this ski season as I did. Soon, spring will be upon us and we will be biking and golfing. See you at Whitefish, the AGM in April, or over the summer season.

### Getting to Know Esther and Gordon Oaks

Esther and Gordon have been with the Club since 2002. Indeed, they were part of the Northern Branch Executive of the Seniors Alpine Ski Club based in Calgary, that steered the creation of the Rocky Mountain Seniors Ski Club in 2008. Because they have an interesting background, and since they were



two of the several key members that helped to establish the Club, they are a natural source of interest. Gordon was born and raised in Calgary. His grandfather was a member of the Northwest Mounted Police (now the RCMP) that came out west in 1885. His grandfather later moved to Priddis and then to Calgary. Gordon attended the University of Alberta, Calgary Campus to obtain a degree in Psychology and Sociology. He later moved to the University of Alberta, Edmonton, where he obtained a degree in Theology.

Esther was born and raised in Edmonton. She attended the University of Alberta in the Faculty of Psychology, saying that she was interested in learning about how the mind worked. She transferred to the Faculty of Education, started teaching and, at night, finished her Bachelor of Education degree.

After graduating with his Theology degree, Gordon joined the United Church of Canada and was appointed to Fort Nelson. After the end of World War 2 and with the completion of the Alaska Highway, Fort Nelson became a booming community with exploration and development of oil and gas a driving force wanting additional pastoral care. In 1970, he moved to Edmonton, to the Robertson-Wesley United church, where he served for 7 years. Feeling the urge to improve himself, Gordon left to obtain a Doctorate in Theology in Boston.

Gordon completed his thesis in 1978 and his official title is Reverend Doctor Gordon Oaks. Now "Doctor Oaks", he joined the congregation in Forest Heights where he also became single parent raising his three children, two girls and a boy, when his first wife died a year earlier.

It was at a wedding that he was introduced to Esther. Esther, like Gordon, was a single parent of a young son. Gordon and Esther saw each other socially for a few years and then more seriously. In 1981 they married.

In 1984, the opportunity to undertake an exchange with a minister in Melbourne, Australia arose. Esther was in the final stages of completing her Masters in Education and she took all of her material to Melbourne with her with this goal in mind. The exchange would also give Esther, Gordon and kids the opportunity to visit Australia (they love to travel). While the intent was sound, Esther was far too busy and curious about the new country to finish her degree until she arrived home.

The congregation in Melbourne had established a Family Life Centre with one of its programs being "Living in Step-families". Well, Esther and Gordon had been living this life for the past four years. With their personal experiences as a merged family, the program was a hit. After six months serving the congregation, they then spent two months travelling around Australia and New Zealand. They made many friendships and have returned frequently to visit their far-away friends.

Upon their return to Canada, Esther did complete her Masters in time to begin teaching in the fall of 1985. Gordon began working with the congregation at St Paul's United Church.

In 1991, an opportunity arose for Gordon to undertake another exchange, this time to Harare, Zimbabwe.



**Travelling in Africa**

This time they left for 8 months, 6 months serving the new congregation, and another two months of travel. They found this a fascinating cultural learning experience. They felt safe and, except for the use of malaria tablets, life was good.

In 1999, Esther retired from teaching. In 2002, Gordon retired from St. Paul's. He joined McDougall United Church and continued to provide pastoral care a few days a week. And, as mentioned above, they joined the Club.

They had both skied earlier in their lives and the Club's other activities of golf and biking fitted them to a "T". Not only have they been on the Executive, more recently they have hosted tours to Kimberley (2005) and Marmot (2006 and 2018).

They have been, and remain, active travellers. They arranged several tours including one to the Galapagos and Peru, a Danube river cruise from Vienna to the Black Sea, Africa, a trip to eastern Canada and Ireland. Gordon said arranging a tour and looking after the diverse interests of the individuals on a tour is very much like pastoral care.



**Golfing in PEI**

This spring, they are off to participate in "The Friars' Briar" in Regina. The Briar is held at the same time as the site of the Canadian championship, allowing members of the clergy and their associates to both enjoy the fellowship gained through curling and to also watch the sport played at by some of the best curlers.

Esther remains active with the Edmonton and Alberta Retired Teachers Association.

While officially retired, Gordon does, on occasion, continue to provide pastoral care. In 2012, Gordon and Esther joined with other Club members for a "bike

and barge" trip from Bruges, Belgium to Paris, France. As the barge pulled into Paris, much to the surprise of the Club members on the tour and other guests on the barge, Gordon married Robbie Steen and Charlotte Quelch.

Esther and Gordon are two very active members in the Club. You can stop and chat with them when skiing, biking or golfing.

**Jim Vine**  
President



**Robbie, Charlotte, Esther and Gordon**

## Marmot 2, Tour Report: January 28 - February 1

### Ski Better and Race Incognito

The Jasper Inn staff welcomed 108 enthusiastic skiers in a steady stream as we arrived from Edmonton and area, Alberta Beach, Seba Beach, Edson, Anzac, and WeyWey, Australia. Rumours were shared. Fresh snow! The powder hounds were ecstatic. Warm temperature predictions elated all of us. We shared stories about skiing the Knob, Jasper Avenue, Highway 16, or Izzie's run and wondered about Tres Hombres while we scarfed down our pizza and beer at the Welcome Party.

The 46 skiers who chose to improve their skiing skills met in small, manageable groups Monday morning to challenge their abilities, to learn some new skills in carving, attacking moguls, sharpening their GS racing techniques but, most of all, improving balance and speed control. The Marmot ski instructors were patient and encouraging. With the big dump of snow on Monday night, many got an extra lesson in powder skiing. Most had a great time and said they would register for lessons again. Everyone had a new technique to take to the slopes to practice. Thanks to Clare Radis for coordinating the registrations and Carling Breuning for organizing the instructors and classes.

Each morning we headed to Marmot Basin and waited impatiently for the wind to drop at the top, so the light would improve for skiing top to bottom. We skied in and out of the clouds at the bottom watching for our ski buddies to reappear, to head up the lifts again. Everyone found a run to carve the fabulous snow.

Wednesday, 28 skiers brought an extra bag with them to the hill. The big reveal came after lunch when

skiers transformed into a mushroom, a sweet potato, a clown, a bee, a flower pot, a headless rider, a devil, a zebra and more. The designated judges had a difficult decision choosing the best costumes among the racers. Jasper the Bear came to cheer on the racers and pose for pictures at the Costume Parade. Thanks to Milt Gilmour who solicited merchants in Jasper to provide a tremendous assortment of prizes to the participants. Thanks also to the Marmot staff who assembled gates and timers on the lower slopes of Tranquilizer to legitimize the race. No pressure. Getting dressed up, ascending the Eagle Chair and lining up for the starting gates was just one big chuckle. Thanks to Al Burkin for coordinating the event. Be sure to assemble your costume for next year.

Thursday was the best ski day of all as the sun revealed Tres Hombres so that some of our expert skiers, challenged their skiing abilities to descend the sheer slope on the opposite side of Paradise chair. Was it a "paradise experience"? You'll have to ask one of them. They did survive to tell the story. Your tour hosts, Esther Oaks, Gordon Oaks and Clare Radis would like to thank the staff at Marmot Basin, at the Jasper Inn and the Inn Grill for the extra efforts they made to care for us and our special needs. It was a great week.

**written by Esther Oaks**

# Marmot 1, Tour Report - January 14-18, 2018

The First Marmot trip of the year enjoyed great warm weather, no lift lineups and decent snow. Fifteen members were registered, however unfortunately due to flu or other illnesses, four members were unable to attend.

However, undaunted, three of us added a trip to the Maligne Adventures Canyon Ice Walk on the Tuesday Jan 16 as a added bonus for the trip.



Marmot Basin also sponsored a Seniors Tea on Wednesday January 17 in lower lodge. Seniors were bused in from Hinton and Jasper to attend. Club members were also invited to participate. Another bonus for the trip. The buffet spread exceeded anyone's expectations, it was an incredible event.

**written by Bernie Bartko**



# Fun Race Update

Following our Fun Costume Race, we took this picture of JoAnn Grand (incoming President) and myself (still dressed in my Devil Costume from the race), thanking Brian Rode V.P. Marketing of Marmot. In recognition of Brian and his supporting/staging of our Fun Race for the last 6-10 years. He was presented with the Devil's own Trident as a keepsake. He could not have been more thrilled with our gesture.

**written by Robbie Steen**



# Incognito Fun Race



# Kimberley Tour Report: Feb 11-16, 2018

In frigid -20 degree weather, the resilient Rocky Mountain Senior Ski Club members met early on Sunday morning, Feb 11, 2018. After the bus arrived, the brave Luggage Loaders did their thing and away we went in a warm bus driven by Koll. Less than 3 hours later, food was found at the Cross Iron Mills outlet mall, north of Calgary.

As we crossed into BC, we could see the results of the snow they have recently received. After a Tim Horton break near Invermere Corner, we arrived in the town of Kimberly for some food and beverage shopping. A short 5 minute ride later, up mountain, found us checking into the Trickle Creek Lodge at the Kimberly Ski Resort.

We all gathered a little while later at the Slopeside Cafe in the nearby Polaris Lodge for our Welcome Dinner. New members and the executive were introduced.

A cold -18 morning greeted the brave skiers as they explored the 4 slopes of the resort. Warmth was



found at the 4:00 pm Monday Après Ski Mixer in the Buckhorn Pub of the Trickle Creek Lodge. Tall tables strategically placed by the bar, offered a great ambience for over 40 members to stand/roam/mix with others who were seated.

The weather warmed up as the week progressed. Over the week, members who had chosen a 3 day lift pass, were able to walk around and take photos, or walk down into the town. There is a beautiful winding trail through forests and behind architecturally interesting log homes. There is a 120 step stairwell that brings you right to the



Platzl of downtown Kimberley. This Bavarian themed pedestrian street offers several small unique shops and restaurants.

On the hill, some members enjoyed mining history lessons provided by some snow hosts. They also explained the resulting topography left behind by approximately 100 years of mining.

On Wednesday, the Club Dinner was held at the Stemwinder Bar and Grill in the Polaris Lodge. Being that it was Valentine's Day, the hosts presented decorations and little chocolates at the tables for the members. A few speeches were made and a wonderful dinner was enjoyed. In fact, both the Sunday and Wednesday locations/meals were well prepared and managed by the staff.

On Friday, we returned to Alberta bringing back more ski memories with us. The lunch stop was at the Canmore Coast Hotel. A soup and sandwich lunch was prepared for our group.

Tour hosts Céleste and John Zurbrigg, wish to thank all the members who loaded/unloaded the luggage, as well as the tour coordinators who made hosting very easy!



# Spring Dinner

Woodvale Community Centre  
(Millwoods)

Thursday, May 17, 2018.

Looking forward to another great meal and expect a great turnout.

Mark your calendar

Tickets will be available at the AGM April 25th.

Bonnie Burn and Judy Anderson  
Social Coordinators

# Executive Contact Information

Position	Name	Email
President	Jim Vine	<a href="mailto:president@seniorsski.com">president@seniorsski.com</a>
Past President	Doug Knight	<a href="mailto:pastpres@seniorsski.com">pastpres@seniorsski.com</a>
Vice President	JoAnn Grand	<a href="mailto:vicepres@seniorsski.com">vicepres@seniorsski.com</a>
Secretary	Wendy Saunders	<a href="mailto:secretary@seniorsski.com">secretary@seniorsski.com</a>
Treasurer	Alan Lister	<a href="mailto:treas@seniorsski.com">treas@seniorsski.com</a>
Communications	Bob Rose	<a href="mailto:communications@seniorsski.com">communications@seniorsski.com</a>
Membership	Art Robinson	<a href="mailto:info@seniorsski.com">info@seniorsski.com</a>
	Deanna Sharratt	
Newsletter Editor	Don Blackwell	<a href="mailto:newsletter@seniorsski.com">newsletter@seniorsski.com</a>
Social	Judy Anderson	<a href="mailto:social@seniorsski.com">social@seniorsski.com</a>
	Bonnie Burn	
Special Activities	Darryl Reimche	<a href="mailto:activities@seniorsski.com">activities@seniorsski.com</a>
	Rob Fenton	
Tours	Bernice Gordeyko	<a href="mailto:tours@seniorsski.com">tours@seniorsski.com</a>
	Gaye Carter	
	Blaine Larsen	
Webmaster	Bryan Harris	<a href="mailto:webmaster@seniorsski.com">webmaster@seniorsski.com</a>

<p><b>Calendar</b></p> <p><b>April 25, 2018 AGM (NOTE TIME CHANGE)</b> 10 am - 1 pm, Snow Valley</p> <p><b>May 1, 2018</b> Cycling Program Begins (Tuesdays and Thursdays)</p> <p><b>May 11, 2018</b> 1st of 6 planned Special Rides in various locations - Fort Saskatchewan (1st), Red Deer, Elk Island, Sherwood Park, St Albert, Camrose TBA</p> <p><b>May 17th, 2018 Spring Dinner</b> Woodvale Community League</p>	<p><b>July 19, 2018</b> Summer Barbecue</p> <p><b>Remaining Ski Tours 2018</b></p> <p><b>March 11 - 16, 2018</b> Whitefish</p> <p><b>April 2 - 6, 2018</b> Marmot 3</p>
---	---

## Membership

As of March 1, 2018, the Club had 681 members which includes 94 new members. Last year at this time, there were 631 members.

Members gathered in the lodge at Snow Valley on February 6 to welcome new members, ski for the morning, share stories, and enjoy coffee and cookies.

**Art Robinson**  
**Deanna Sharratt**

