



# The PATH FINDER



c/o 144 Wilson Ave, St. Thomas, ON N5P 3R3 • [www.elginhikingtrailclub.org](http://www.elginhikingtrailclub.org)

## FALL EDITION 2025 SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • NOVEMBER

The Elgin Hiking Trail Club



Jim Northey celebrates after Richard Wright presented him with an award of merit during the ribbon cutting ceremony at the 50th anniversary hike. Tom Beharrell is pictured on the right. Photo by Jan Witmer.



John Kirkland, a retired hiker and volunteer with the Elgin Hiking Trail Club in the 1990's, celebrated the 50th anniversary of the club by donating a cheque for \$5000 to help the club maintenance projects.



The guest celebrities are Ann Wise, front, an original landowner. Elfriede Atcheson, left, an original landowner and her son Jay, and daughter Grace, and her daughter Tara and Ever and Archer.

## Ribbon Cutting

See Story on page 2

# 50 YEARS OF THE ELGIN HIKING TRAIL

Half of a century ago a local freelance electrician, Brian Henson, who was also a hiker, attempted to start up a trail in Central Elgin. Other volunteers signed up and by September, 1975 they had secured 6 Kilometres from the car wash on Sunset Drive in St. Thomas to County Road #45. John and Ann Wise were land owners who gave permission for a hiking trail at the back of their farm overlooking the Kettle Creek valley. To officially open the trail there was a ribbon cutting ceremony and followed by a hike along the new trail. The trail soon expanded south to Port Stanley and north west to Payne's Mills. This summer, 50 years later, hike leader Jim Northey, of Aylmer, had an idea to repeat the ribbon cutting ceremony and hike. It was a pleasant surprise to him Saturday morning when 50 hikers

showed up. And most of them walked the full 6 Kilometres. Ann Wise, who was there 50 years ago, and Elfriede Atcheson, a landowner for the full 50 years were involved in the ceremony. And as an added surprise the Elgin Hiking Trail Club executive presented Jim Northey with an award of merit for leading over 500 hikes on the trail. The Wednesday morning walks from behind Sunset Cafe are still a popular event. And another surprise for the 50th anniversary was a donation to the club for \$5,000 from 95 year old retired hiker John Kirkland. The Elgin Hiking Trail now runs 42 Kilometres from Mackie's in Port Stanley north to the Elgin/Middlesex Line (Southdel Bourne) From there the trail is connected to the Thames Valley Trail and ultimately to the Bruce Trail. The trail is open to the public with



the assumption that they will stay on the designated trail and not wander off. The network of hiking trails in Ontario are all marked with white blazes approximately six inches long. The purpose of the local clubs like the Elgin Hiking Trail Club is to maintain the trails and to promote hiking for the public. Parts of all the trails are on the side of roads but when they are off road, as much of the Elgin Hiking Trail is, credit goes to the generosity of the landowners.

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## STORY OF SUMMIT SEPT 26, 27, 28

Congratulations to Richard and Loretta for organizing the 50th anniversary of the Elgin Hiking Trail Club in conjunction with the annual meeting of Hike Ontario all within walking distance in the centre of

picturesque Port Stanley. Friday night of September 26 is a meet and greet affair at 782 Tap House at 305 Bridge Street. There will be hikers from all across the province as well as our own members. Saturday, September 27 is the big day at the Port Stanley Festival Theatre, 302 Bridge Street. In the morning is registration, Hike Ontario annual meeting, welcome, awards, land acknowledgment, and water blessing. Lunch will be served at the Port Stanley United Church on 239 Colborne St. In the afternoon, back at the theatre, those registered will have choices of speakers on various hike related topics. They include extreme weather situations, digital mapping, trail challenges, risk management, insurance and Be a traveller, not a Tourist by Tom Friesen. A fish dinner will be served by the Royal

Canadian Legion, 310 George Street just across the bridge. An entertaining presentation on travels to 82 different countries will be received during dessert. This dinner must be reserved at eventbrite. Please see Al Sharpe's note. On Sunday there will be an assortment of hikes offered including a Port Stanley Historical tour, a ride on the Port Stanley terminal rail, and optional hike, and Springwater and the Elevated Park walks.



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# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF HIKING



CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL  
HIKES OR UPDATES TO SCHEDULED HIKES



## FALL 2025 ACTIVITIES IN OUR 50TH YEAR.

### SUN. SEPTEMBER 7

**FULL MOON HIKE** around Lake Margaret.

Leisurely. Scenic walk all on cement.  
Meet at 9 p.m. at the south side of  
Pinafore Park Info : 519 633-3064

### SAT. SEPTEMBER 13

**End-to-end hike #3**

Call Loretta to register 519 782-7550

### SAT. SEPTEMBER 20

**Moderate hike in the Fingal  
Wildlife Management Area  
followed by pie or food of your  
choice at the Tall Tales Cafe.**

Meet at Jumbo in St. Thomas at 9:15 a.m.  
to car shuffle, or 34469 Fingal Line at  
10:00 a.m. Info : Brian 519 633-3064.

### FRI. SEPTEMBER 26

**As a part of the Summit.**

Meet & greet at 782 taphouse at 6:00 p.m.

### SAT. SEPTEMBER 27

Summit at the Festival Theatre in Port  
Stanley plus supper at the Legion.

### SUN. SEPTEMBER 28

**Historic walk in Port**

**Stanley, Train ride and hike, and  
Springwater.**

Hike times to be announced. To hike  
on the trestle bridge to see the elevated  
park meet at Jumbo at 8:30 a.m. All other  
times will be released closer to the date.

### FRI. OCTOBER 3

**ICE CREAM , FALL COLOUR  
HIKE. Moderate. 4 Kms.**

Meet at Shaw's Ice Cream at 10:00 a.m.  
Hike side trail and view the scenic  
valley. Info : 519 633-3064.

### SAT. OCTOBER 11

Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot by  
the ball diamond just past Meadowlily  
Road for a 4 km walk in the woods.  
Info Charlie 519-474-6902.

### SAT. OCTOBER 18

**Scenic fall colour walk on a piece  
of the Dutton/Dunwich Trans  
Canada Trail.**

Meet at 10 a.m. at 28055 Lakeview Line  
for a leisurely 4 km walk.  
Info: Marg Hulls 519 762-2049.

### SAT. OCTOBER 25

**Leisurely fall colour leaves walk at  
Hawk Cliff.**

Meet at 10 a.m. at 4437 Hawk Cliff  
Road. Leader is Dan

### SUN. OCTOBER 26.

**TRESTLE BRIDGE TO LYLE  
ROAD.**

For information and time, contact  
Loretta at 519 782-7550

### SAT. NOVEMBER 1

**Fall colour hike around  
picturesque Dorchester Pond.  
Moderate 3 kms.**

Meet at 10 a.m. at the entrance off  
Hamilton Road.

Info : Charlie 519 474-6802.

### SAT. NOVEMBER 15

**Leisurely walk on the Spicer trail  
and John E. Pearce Park 29551  
Lakeview Line.**

Meet there at 10:00 a.m. or 9:15 a.m.  
at Jumbo in St. Thomas for car shuffle.  
Optional lunch after at the famous Tall  
Tales Cafe in Wallacetown.  
Info : 519 633-3064

### SAT. NOVEMBER 22

**Hike around Dalewood Lake.**

Meet at 1:00 p.m. at the parking lot  
on Dalewood Drive just south of Ron  
McNeil Line.

Info : 519 633-3064.

### WED. DECEMBER 3

**Leisurely walk at Springwater  
to preview the Spirit Walk and  
decorate a Christmas tree.**

Meet at 9:30 at the school house at  
the corner of Conservation Line and  
Springwater Road.

Info Jim Northey 519 773-8185

**All leisurely and  
moderate hikes are  
FAMILY FRIENDLY.**

# KERMIT TRAVELS THE GLOBE

Over his 50 years, Kermit the frog has travelled to an amazing 82 countries. He has sat on the Equator, sat on the great wall of China, served food in a soup kitchen in the Philippines, and toured an elephant sanctuary in Thailand.

He has seen lots of Europe and visited all seven continents. He is excited to attend the Hike Ontario Summit and 50th Anniversary of the

Elgin Hiking Trail Club on Saturday, September 27. Accompanied by his travel companion Linda Chapman he will be the after dinner speaker at the Port Stanley Legion. Around the World With Kermit is the title of the presentation which will feature Kermit at dozens of landmarks on the globe. Mrs. Chapman, a retired public school



teacher enhanced her classes after he traveled to Europe with her and her husband Paul in the year 2000.” The kids loved it” said Mrs. Chapman who retired from teaching Grade 4-6 at Scott Street Public School in 2014.”

He became embedded in my classroom philosophy, including every test paper” she said. In all he has been to 82 countries. But the pair have had adventures at home too.” I was devastated when he was kidnapped at the Relay For Life in 2002” she laments. After four weeks missing she got a note to pay ransom in Canadian Tire money at the Witches Grave in the Old English Church cemetery. Many yarns about their adventures will be told at the Saturday night dinner at the Summit.



Tilman Joosten, left presents a cheque for \$500 on behalf of the Thames Valley Trail Club to Richard Wright, President of the Elgin Hiking Trail Club, to support the Summit activities September 26, 27, and 28.



## ELGIN HIKING TRAIL EXECUTIVE

### PRESIDENT

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Vacant

### SECRETARY

Vacant

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