

Tower Road, how things have changed.

I wanted to share some Tower Road memories with you. Many of you reading this may be surprised to learn there was a time when arriving at Tower Road on a Friday night meant strapping on a pair of skis, throwing on backpacks and skiing in. Driving in wasn't an option as four-wheel drive vehicles weren't that popular and the road wasn't plowed, not to mention most cars didn't even have snow tires. As a toddler, before my skiing days, I remember walking in most of those 3.5 km to the cottage. I would walk behind my parents and older siblings, trying to keep up, at least until there was a hill to go up. It was at that point I'd quicken my pace so I could jump onto the toboggan and enjoy a free ride up a hill.



Tower Road & old Hwy 506, shoveling out after the plow had been by.



Precursor to Bike Lanes – motorized vehicles and pedestrian traffic lanes.

After several years, my father purchased a snowmobile, which made the trip easier. I remember there used to be two "ski-doo" trails, one for going in and one for going out, as the road was still not plowed. As a little kid, it reminded me of our own little highway. I think back to all the supplies that were first carried and later pulled in with the help of the ski-doo. It seems so long ago and kind of hard to



That's the way we did it, Dad, 3 kids and a trailer full of stuff heading out to 506. After dropping us off he'd head back to get Mom.

believe, now that we have a plowed road, four-wheel drive vehicles equipped with snow tires and can simply drive in.

Springtime presented its own unique set of challenges as ponds would develop across the road from the melting snow. I even remember several spots where you needed a bit of speed, a quick prayer and luck to get through the muddy road where the ruts could be a foot deep. Yes, there were times when those three things failed us and we had the pleasure of pushing the car to get out of the mud, all the while fighting off the black flies. Thankfully those times are history.

And yet, back then, there was a real sense of community on the road; there had to be. There were far fewer people using the narrow road and when you met a car, it often meant that one closest to a “wide” section of the road would back up and pull over so the other car could pass. A friendly nod or wave would be exchanged and each would go on their way.

The road has been transformed over the years to the point that many people often express compliments about its condition, even saying that it’s the best in the area. Former cottager, the late Frank Canning was the first volunteer who took on the responsibility for maintaining Tower Road and started the transformation to what it is today. Twenty years ago, Red Emond took over from Frank and has done an amazing job maintaining and improving it during that time. I can’t imagine the number of hours he spends each year volunteering his time working on the road so we can drive safely and freely to our cottages.



Road washed out at the Beaver Crossing, culvert had to be replaced.

Whether it's clearing a fallen tree so a fellow cottager can pass, filling pot holes, grading the hills, arranging for gravel to be delivered and spread, keeping the road wide enough for cars to pass in the winter when the snow banks get too big, or addressing emergency needs such as a washed-out road at one of the swamps, you can always count on Red. Without Red, we'd be lost. After all, who else would be willing to volunteer that much of their own time? How would it get fixed?

This a private road, the township does not maintain it. Today maintenance is done by one individual who volunteers his time so we are all able to access our cottages.

I’ve travelled Tower Road for over 50 years and it’s never been in better condition. I want to give a big thank you to Red. Without his efforts, there would have been many times we would not have been able to drive in to our cottages.

Each of us should be willing to volunteer our time to assist with some of the road maintenance.

However small the contribution, I’m sure it would be greatly appreciated. If anyone has any suggestions on how best to establish the "Tower Road Volunteer Crew" or would just like to contribute their share and volunteer, please let me know.

Regards

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