

Saturday, February 12

Viking skiers turned out in good numbers for Derek and Hjordis Wills' tour February 12 despite poor driving conditions on the autoroute. And those who skied agreed it was worth the drive – and the climb up the Wills' hill (always good conditioning!).

Once everyone had gathered, booted up, waxed, decided on appropriate clothing, etc., the two groups (longer tour led by Derek and the shorter by Hjordis) set out. The 12 skiers on the long tour headed up behind the cottage to the Western trail, following the usual route through the Girl Guide camp, across the road and into the woods. Light fluffy snow made for excellent skiing and for very fun and controllable downhills, even if occasional snowsqualls reduced visibility to near zero.

As usual, this tour arrived at the junction where one could start the trek up Loup Garou. We decided to fortify ourselves with lunch before making any decision. In recent years, there has always been hesitation to make the climb: too icy, too cold, too late. But on this day, there was pretty much unanimous agreement that we should carry on. So after a lovely downhill bit from this junction and a brief "being lost" moment (which way to go?) we began the long ascent to the summit. Two made the decision to turn back part way up, but a hardy group of 10 got to the top and after a stop for snacks and drinks, enjoyed the wonderful downhill as a reward (even though it seemed to be over in seconds!).

Our total outing was some five hours, and, proud to have reached the elusive Loup Garou goal, the tired skiers returned to the Wills' cottage ready for Hjordis' delicious soup and other goodies.

(I'm sorry I don't have details on the shorter tour – if anyone has details to add to this report, just let me know.)

All in all, a highly successful day. Many thanks to Derek and Hjordis for their wonderful hospitality.