

## **Thursday, Feb. 7**

by Derek Wills

In case you fellow Thursday tourers were wondering.....

What's the Montreal Islander Viking Thursday tour group, with cabin fever and vitamin D deficiency, to do....with the Laurentian ski networks in glacial lock-down, plus gas prices reaching the boiling point.....a desperate solution; go local!

And so, out of the woodwork, and into the forests, 8 Vikings: Gordon, Derek, Paul, Jacques, Richard, Tim, Richard and token lady, Daphne had a 10:30 am rendez-vous at the West Island's Morgan Arboretum. After paying the \$7 day entry fee (for non-season pass holders) at the gatehouse, we could proceed to park, and with -15 deg. C temperatures, retreat into the heated Conservation Centre to prepare for a ski around the flat 5.8 km "round the perimeter" Blue Trail. With the usual affable chitter-chatter en-route, we were back again after an hour plus, having skied past possibly every species of tree!

At least we were in blazing sunshine, minimum wind but with a "firm" ski track loosely covered in a dusting of snow. In some sections, the trail was carpeted in wind strewn twig debris.....no doubt a boon for the nest building Home Hardware avian community....when Spring-time eventually comes!!!

Following lunch in the spacious Conservation Centre, which we had all to ourselves, it was decided that we should do a repeat performance around of the 5.8 km Blue Trail, which we did less Daphne who headed of back home to do some local ice skating. So at least we gents had ~ 12 km under our Thursday tour belts.....better than nothing!

For future reference, the website is here: [www.morganarboretum.org](http://www.morganarboretum.org)