

THE WINDERMERE GAZETTE

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE VILLAGE?

- **Windermere House** - Lots of things happening at WH. Stop in for a drink or meal at one of their lovely dining options.
 - **Windermere Pub & Patio** - Lunch & Dinner - patio open weather permitting. Reservations on Open Table
- 12pm - 11pm weekdays, Weekends 12pm - midnight
Live music - Fri.&Sat. 7-10pm
 - **The Rosseau**, upscale dining, beautiful setting 7 days/week - 12-9pm.
 - **High Tea** returns June 28th - a timeless tradition
 - **The Trading Post** - Artisanal goods & produce, charcuterie, souvenirs and more.
 - **Spa at Windermere** - Daily 9am - 6pm
- **Windermere Marina** NEW HOURS! - 7 days a week - 9am - 5pm.
- **Windermere Golf Club** - Open to all for lunch and dinner throughout the season at **Iron and Strings Restaurant**. - "**Wing Night**" - every Thursday with live entertainment. **Tuesday night is Euchre Night!**
- **Windermere Garden Centre**
Mon.-Fri. - 8 - 5, Sat - 9 - 5, Sun - CLOSED
- **Taylor Farms** - Mon - Fri, 7am - 6pm. Sat. 9am - 5pm. CLOSED Sunday. Great Cappuccino and Lattes at the cafe!
More details at taylorfarms.ca/market.
Or email strawberries@taylorfarms.ca
- **Lagree by the Lake** - Fitness Studio right in Windermere. Check out **lagreebythelake.com** for hours and classes.

Windermere Lions Club is offering a bottle drop off for your recyclables - this is part of their fundraising for all the great things they do for the community and beyond. Drop off at Taylor Farms.

- **Christ Church Windermere** - services Sunday at 10:30am. Welcome all.
- **Windermere United Church** - services Sunday at 10:30am. Check out "Upcoming Events" for Taize & meditation schedule.

"It Took a Village"

The carefree, unstructured childhood of 1940s and 50s Windermere

By Marcia Shortreed (nee Hill), as told in an interview, Aug. 2026.

Part 1 of 2

For a child growing up in Windermere during the 1940s and 1950s, the summers were defined by an extraordinary sense of carefree, unstructured freedom. Every August, our family would arrive at this beautiful corner of Muskoka, where the boundaries of our daily lives simply dissolved. We had no formal playground, no scheduled camps, and very few rules; the entire village was ours to explore in complete freedom, with only one strict boundary: swimming was forbidden without adult supervision, though the local beaches were easily accessible and perfect for learning to swim. From morning until dinner, the days were filled with outdoor play and exploration, creating memories of a time where it truly took a village to raise a child.

In those post-war summers, a wonderful sense of collective responsibility filled the air—it truly took a village to raise a child here. The local shopkeepers, resort staff, and neighbours kept a benevolent eye on us as we wandered. Our childhood days were measured not by clocks, but by the natural rhythms of the lake and the arrival of the great steamships.

We Children gathered at the dock to watch the arrival of the *Cherokee* and the grand *Sagamo* (which was occasionally replaced by the *Segwun*). The *Sagamo* was an impressive sight, carrying the letters "**RMS Sagamo**" on its bow to signify its status as a **Royal Mail Ship** under a prestigious post office contract. It made a scenic hundred-mile daily cruise from Gravenhurst to the park on Little Lake Joseph and back, stopping at the Windermere dock twice a day - first at 11:30 a.m. and again at 4:00 p.m. While the *Sagamo* brought the mail in, the *Cherokee* was responsible for carrying the outgoing mail.

For the local children, the arrival of these ships sparked an important daily chore: watching the boats dock, witnessing the heavy canvas mailbags being carried up the hill, and waiting expectantly on the wooden steps of the local store. Since the post office was situated on the lakeside portion of the store, children would wait for the postmistress, Mrs. Aiken, to finish sorting the mail. Once sorted, they would retrieve their families' mail box. Ours was mailbox number 151. In an era when correspondence was the primary means of communication, this daily trip was vital—especially for the author's father, who eagerly awaited his copy of the *Hamilton Spectator*, which although a couple of days late, it allowed him to stay connected with news from his hometown of Dundas.

The village store itself was run by Mr. Aiken, a cousin of the family that owned the historic Windermere House, and was a hub of community life. We grew up alongside a close-knit group of seasonal and local children.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you have a community event to announce, let us know!

Muskoka Arts and Crafts at the Village Hall!

Open 6 days a week for July and August
Tuesday - Sunday.

Open weekends only after that until
Thanksgiving

Sept 3rd & Oct. 1st - The **"Garden Club"** meeting at Windermere Garden Centre - FREE for all you interested gardeners.

Sept 16th @ 7:30pm @ Windermere United Church *"Peace and Presence in Taizé Tradition"* -

Sept 10, October 8th @7:30pm
Windermere United Church is holding *Mindfulness Meditation in the Zen Buddhism tradition.*

The Windermere Gazette will NOT be publishing September 16th or 23rd.

If you have any Fall events you would like our community to know about it, let us know. ASAP

Every Friday all summer long!!
The Windermere and District Lions Club
will be hosting their fabulous BBQ!
On the Wharf - 11:30am - 2:00pm

Submissions, content, or to subscribe
windermeregazette@icloud.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Police - Non-Emergency 705-645-2211

Fire Department 705-765-3156

District of Muskoka Office 705-645-2100

By-Law Office Township 705-765-3156

Wharf Master 705-769-3611

Windermere Golf Club 705-769-3381

Windermere Marina 705-769-3661

Windermere House 705-769-3611

Taylor Farms 705-769-2368

Windermere Garden Centre 705-769-3238

Archives windermereandareaarchives@gmail.com

Lions Club - windermereclionsclubmuskoka@gmail.com

My brother, Peter, ran around with Henry Longhurst and Rod Wessels, and later became lifelong friends with Edward Skinner and Ian Turnbull. I spent my days with Pat Parker (later Pat Holden) and her sister, and also Marilyn Wilson, whom her family had affectionately nicknamed "LadyBug". To this day, a small wooden plaque of a ladybug, placed by her brothers in Christ Church after her passing, serves as a poignant reminder of those summer friendships.

Our adventures frequently took us onto the water. Early on, we didn't own a boat, but the community stepped in - my father's close friend, John Turnbull, generously lent us his boat, which we kept at the Maple Leaf Bay government dock. Eventually, our family purchased our own vessel: an eye-catching, pink, molded-plywood boat built in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. Sporting stylish fins on the stern that resembled a 1953 Cadillac, it boasted a twenty or thirty horsepower engine that felt incredibly fast compared to the old five horsepower Turnbull boat.

Whether we were cruising the bay, waiting for the mailboats, or simply roaming the unpaved streets, we felt entirely secure. Everyone knew who we were, and everyone cared. Looking back, the unstructured ease of those Muskoka summers was a rare gift, made possible by a village that embraced its children with open arms.

Thank you to the Muskoka Chautauqua Team!!

Windermere Village came together in support of an amazing Festival line-up this year!! A thank you to everyone in our community and beyond who helped with support, donations, and logistics!

Congratulations on a great event!!

Muskoka Arts & Crafts

will continue to operate their gallery and boutique at the Village Hall six days a week (closed Mondays) until the end of August, and then will be open weekends only until the Thanksgiving weekend. The organization would like to express their gratitude to both the year round and seasonal residents for their generous support of this pilot project! If you have any feedback you'd like to share with the organization as they plan for next year, please reach out to Miranda at info@muskokaartsandcrafts.com

NEWS BULLETIN!!

Unbeknownst to the Gazette (!), The **Windermere Garden Centre** has been running a **"Garden Club"** - and it is still meeting - May - October - first Thursday of every month - with the hopes of uniting local gardening enthusiasts:) Its been a great success so far. For every club meeting, there is a topic of the evening and a speaker as well as an exclusive sale for attendees. There is a facebook group where all is communicated.

Check it out if you are curious or interested!! Put it in your calendars for NEXT SUMMER!

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/19YZF9pEb3/>