

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 - 10pm Sunday - Thursday
 - 12pm - 11pm Friday & Saturday
 - **The Rosseau**, upscale dining, beautiful setting
 - Thursday, - Sunday - 5 - 9pm until October 11**
 - **The Trading Post** - Artisanal goods & produce, charcuterie, souvenirs and more.
 - **Spa at Windermere** - Daily 9am - 6pm
- **Windermere Marina** - Thurs. - Sat. 9-5 Sunday 10 - 5. Hiring for next year!! Will train now for next year. Great summer jobs!
- **Windermere Golf Club** - Open to all for golf, as well as lunch and dinner at **Iron and Strings Restaurant**. - Sunday 11 - 7,
- **Windermere Garden Centre** Mon.-Fri. - 8 - 5, Sat & Sun - CLOSED Call for delivery
- **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

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

- **Lagree by the Lake** - Fitness Studio right in Windermere. Friday - Sunday. Open until Thanksgiving. lagreebythelake.com for exact hours and classes.
- **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.

Happy Thanksgiving All!

As we gear up to celebrate a weekend of "thanks" with family and friends, we are reminded of our wonderful Windermere community, and the many individuals past and present who have helped to shape and preserve it!

With that in mind, we have a lovely article by Patrick Boyer, who pays tribute to the Windermere Women's Institute.

Windermere Women's Institute Plays Unique Community Role

by J. Patrick Boyer

On a May evening in 2019, when Brenda Stanbury of the Windermere Women's Institute introduced Orillia's Lori Oschefskie, CEO of the British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association to address a public meeting about Home Children, the guest speaker was astounded by the throng crowding the village's community centre and lining its side and back walls, a galvanized audience keen to learn more and share ancestral stories.

It was another sign that the Windermere Women's Institute remains deeply connected with its community. I have interacted with a number of its members, and am grateful for being able to draw on the Institute's rich archive for information and photographs in researching my books on Muskoka's Modern History. The Home Children event showed that W.I. members not only know local families descendent from those children, but acted on that knowledge.

During her remarks, which led to many questions to clarify the context for stories passed down about British Home Children working on Muskoka farms and in households, Oschefskie said some 129,000 children reached Canada during the child export program, adding that Canadians believed them orphans although only two percent really were.

Most were children who'd been abandoned, who'd run away to escape beatings and worse, who'd been put out of cramped housing to earn their way in the world, street urchins doing low-paying piece work in factories, living in gangs, trying to survive. A number of refuge homes sprang up to take them in, then ship them away to British colonies for a fresh-start in life. Rather than solving its social problems, Britain expediently dispatched the victims - out of sight, out of mind. Child labourers began arriving around 1870, continuing to the 1930s Great Depression - decades coinciding exactly with Muskoka's pioneering and settlement era. So many homesteaders applied a boy or two to help clear land and work the farm that Muskoka, especially our northern townships, had the highest per capita number of child labourers in Canada.

Most did not get the schooling meant to be part of the program. Their scattered locations meant inspections by the Home's staff in Canada handling the allocations seldom got around to see how things were working out. The children lived in separate primitive quarters (a former chicken coop, perhaps, or pig sty). They did not eat with the families. When World War I erupted in 1914, many boys now fighting age volunteered, seeking to salvage some connection with the country that disowned them.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Muskoka Arts and Crafts at the Village Hall!

Thanksgiving weekend is your last chance to come by.

• October 8th @7:30pm

Windermere United Church is holding *Mindfulness Meditation in the Zen Buddhism tradition.*

• October 11th - Thanksgiving at Windermere House - @ The Rosseau Brunch - 11am - 3pm Dinner - 5pm - 9pm

At "The Rosseau"

A la Carte featuring seasonal favourites, fall flavours and sushi selection

Reserve now on OpenTable

Email fbmanager@windermerehouse.com

Call (705)769-3611

• October 17th, 9 - 11am - @ Raymond Hall. (2013 HWY 141).

Children's Clothing Exchange

• Saturday November 14th 2026 30th annual Christmas Craft

Sale,

Ullswater Hall

9am - 3pm

Call Darlene to become a vendor @

705-380-3588 or email @

jdpoirier@live.com

When Home Children completed their years of indentured service, many stayed around, married, raised families, found better work, often starting businesses of their own. These resilient individuals overcame bitter hardships to become some of the strongest citizens in their Canadian communities, Muskoka most notably.

Windermere Women's Institute, in one of its many invaluable services, brought this story out, burnishing the importance of Home Children in Muskoka's human mosaic and ensuring more researched information was shared with those who care.

J. Patrick Boyer, a fifth-generation Muskoka, shows district heritage through history's long lens to provide context and deeper understand of contemporary life. He can be reached at 705-645-2225, or patrick@muskokabooks.ca

Are you closing for the season?

Drop off your canned goods or packaged food for the

West Muskoka Food Bank

@ **Windermere United Church**

Open on October 12th from 10am - 12noon to receive these donations!

The Windermere United Church will be holding a

"children's clothing exchange."

Oct. 17, 9-11am @ the Raymond Hall.

Bring gently used clothing for children and youth. Add them to the labeled tables.

Leave with "new to you" clothing!

**Also, same day, you can join

"Youth Unplugged" at the Rosseau Community Hall - **1pm** - for a song circle, with **Whispering River**, followed by the clothing exchange (3 - 6pm) at **Frost Hall - Church of the Redeemer** - 15 Oak Street, Rosseau.

Happy Thanksgiving
from the Gazette!



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 - windermereclubmuskoka@gmail.com



For all you "islanders" out there, the 3rd edition of **Treasured Islands** will be coming out next year.

They are looking for stories, pictures and drawings from

"The Next Generation"

of Island Cottagers. Submissions are requested by January 2027 for July publication.

Contact Kathy Varley for more information or to submit your story.

boatkathyv@gmail.com

Traditions, History, Comedy, Mystery, Making Memories.