

# THE WINDERMERE GAZETTE

## WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE VILLAGE?

- **Windermere celebrates 100 years since incorporation.** It was founded in 1870, but in 1924, under the leadership of Henry Longhurst, the village applied for independent village status with the government of Ontario. Longhurst became the first Reeve (Mayor) of Windermere. **Celebration of 100 years - at The Village Hall - July 5th, 11-4pm**
- **Windermere House** - Lots of things happening at WH this summer. Check out all the changes that have been made over the winter. Stop in for a drink or meal at one of their lovely dining options.
- **Windermere Pub & Patio** - Lunch & Dinner served 7 days/wk. Enjoy the entertainment - Fri.&Sat. 7-10pm
- **The Rosseau** - upscale dining in a beautiful setting. Open 7 days/week - noon to 9pm - starting June 22nd
- **High Tea** - starting Sundays in summer, 2-4pm
- **The Trading Post** opens June 22 - artisanal goods and produce, charcuterie, souvenirs and more.
- **Windermere Marina** - open Thurs.- Sun. - 9am - 5pm until June 27th - then Sun.- Thur. 9am - 5pm, Fri, Sat. 9am - 6pm.
- **Windermere Golf Club** - open to the public for golf until June 29th and after Labour Day. Open for lunch and dinner throughout the season for all.
- **"Wing Night"** - every Thursday with live entertainment.
- **"Euchre Night"** every Tuesday @ 5:45pm - \$25 includes dinner.
- **"Birdies & Bites"** Mon-Thurs, 12-3pm - All of June, 9 holes + 3 course meal - \$99+tax and tip - open to all.
- **"Brunch"** - every Sunday 10am - 1pm - open to all
- **Windermere Garden Centre** Mon.-Fri. - 8 - 5, Sat - 9 - 5, Sun 10 - 4
- **Taylor Farms** - Mon - Fri, 7am - 6pm. Sat. 9am - 5pm. Closed Sun. Pick your own strawberries! Until July 10th.
- **Christ Church Windermere** - services Sunday at 10:30am
- **Windermere United Church** - services Sunday at 10:30am

## Early Tourism in Windermere

*Excerpt from The Muskoka Sun, Thursday, June 28th, 1990, by Silvia Du Vernet\*.*

The earliest tourists in Windermere were sportsmen who came for fishing or hunting. At this time, the word tourist was unknown in the area. The visiting "sportsmen" would spend the night in the homes of the settlers. They were perhaps most graciously received by the Fife family and the Aitken family, each of who would expand their facilities into hotels eventually. The sportsmen would also camp on the shores of the lakes or on the islands. Sometimes they built small houses. Col. D. H. C. Mason says, in his book "The First Islanders" that the first settlers on the islands adjacent to Windermere as well as elsewhere on the lakes were in many cases descendants of these early campers and sportsmen. University students, a group of botanists in particular, are recorded by Mason as having camped and done research throughout the Muskoka Lakes region in 1862, 1863 and 1864. It was in 1871 that Windermere House became a functioning reality as a hotel. It was built and maintained over the years by the Aitken family, notably Thomas Aitken and his descendants. Once the railway reached the steamboat port of Gravenhurst in 1875, restorative wilderness holidays became extremely popular. Food for the hotel(s) was obtained locally from the farmers and included milk, meat, potatoes, carrots, beets, tomatoes as well as the very special Muskoka corn (at a slightly later date). The Forge family would collect produce from the farmers by rowboat and deliver it to the hotels.

In or around the late 1800's and early 1900's, there was said to be at least 7 or 8 hotels in the Windermere area.

**Windermere House**

**Fife House**

**Maple Leaf House**

**The Newtonia Inn**

**The Ingleside House**

**Rostrevor Lodge**

**King's Park House**

**The Waskada Inn (Tobin's Island)**

Waskada was later to become the Epworth Inn (home to the Muskoka Assembly (Muskoka Chautauqua)), and then the Wigwassan Inn.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **June 20th** - Wing night with entertainment @ WGCC.
- **June 21st** - Mitch Beube @ Windermere House
- **June 22nd** - James Gray @ Windermere House
- **June 22nd** - 10am - The Windermere Lions's Club is hosting a **Horseshoe Tournament** - \$50/team, Milford Bay - Call 705-641-1790 to register.
- **June 28th (and every Friday for the summer)**, a lunchtime BBQ at the Windermere Wharf - in support of the Windermere and District Lions Club.
- **June 29th** - Strawberry Social - Christ Church 1 - 4pm
- **June 30th** - Christ Church - Canada Day Service & Concert with Neil Barlow & Trumpet and Lunch 10:30am - 1:30pm
- **July 2nd @ 5:45pm** - Euchre Night @ WGCC - \$25 - includes dinner
- **July 4th** - Taryn Rose performing @ WGCC
- **July 5th** - Windermere Anniversary Celebration - Village Hall 11am - 4pm
- **August 10th** - Christ Church @ 7pm in the Garden- 120 years Anniversary Celebration! - Concert with Neil Barlow & his quintet.

Submissions, content, or to subscribe  
[windermeregazette@icloud.com](mailto: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**  
[windermereandareaarchive@gmail.com](mailto:windermereandareaarchive@gmail.com)
- **Lions Club**  
[windermere@ar2lions.ca](mailto:windermere@ar2lions.ca)

According to Patrick Boyer, noted author and Muskoka historian, the area of Watt township east of Windermere had always been the location of some of the best farms in Muskoka.

**\*Sylvia Du Vernet (nee Neimeir)** - was a life-long summer resident of Windermere. She was a lecturer, author, poet and literary critic. She wrote numerous newspaper articles about Windermere and Muskoka history, as well as The history of the Muskoka Chautauqua. She summered in Maple Leaf Bay.

**For those who did not make the Community Conversation, held at Windermere House last Thursday, June 13th, here are a few updates: There was a good turnout (about 60) and lots of conversation and ideas! Very briefly, highlights included:**

- Need for safety - speed control, signage (stop sign at Golf Ave)
  - Cleanliness of parks and beaches - township & community working together?
  - Education and arts ongoing - connecting outside community with Windermere history, arts continuing beyond Chautauqua
  - Water quality testing (MLA is doing this!), Save Your Ash program for the village for tree health.
  - By-law information - what are the laws?
  - Support local businesses, inclusivity of the community for all.
  - Connecting the archives of the community with other communities for great accessibility and sharing of information
  - Facebook group for the community?
  - SLOW movement - slow down - in every way - enjoy why we are all part of this community, and why we come!
- Stay turned! - the next Community Conversation is August 7th during the Chautauqua Festival.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT THE FIRE HALLS IN WINDERMERE AND RAYMOND

TML has been looking into a **"Fire Master Plan"** in order to develop a strategy to ensure that fire fighting capabilities match the changing needs of the community over the next 25 years or more. There is a public information/feedback session scheduled for the Community Centre in Port Carling on Wednesday, June 19, at 6:00 pm.

More information here:

<https://engagemuskokalakes.ca/fire-location-study>

**Congratulations to Linda and Allen Edwards - celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on June 20th!**

Allen is our Township and District Ward B councillor and they are both long time residents of Windermere!