

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** - Open - 7 days a week - 12pm - midnight
- **The Rosseau** - upscale dining in a beautiful setting. Open 7 days/wk - 12 - 9pm
- **Smokehouse BBQ Packages** - pre-order for pick up at WH
- **Trading Post!** Artisanal goods & produce, charcuterie, souvenirs & more.
- **The New Spa at Windermere House**
spa@windermerehouse.com
- **Windermere Marina** - open now 7 days a week 9am - 5pm. Fridays & Saturdays are 9am - 6pm. Licensed Patio, serving Piano Piano Pizza and Kawartha Dairy Ice Cream
- **Windermere Golf Club** Private golf club until Labour Day, but open to all for lunch and dinner throughout the season.
"Wing Night" - 5pm Thurs- live entertainment
"Euchre Night" every Tuesday @ 5:45pm
\$25 includes dinner.
- **Windermere Garden Centre**
Mon.-Fri. - 8 - 5, Sat - 9 - 5, Sun - Closed.
50% off all potted trees.
- **Taylor Farms** - Mon - Fri, 7am - 6pm. Sat. 9am - 5pm. Closed Sun. Great Cappuccino and Lattes at the cafe!! Pick your own strawberries. Call or check FB page to confirm hours of picking.
- **Farm to Table Summer Produce Box**
Sign up for one week or all summer - 7-10 items - fruit & veggies - local Ontario. Order by 6pm on a Sunday. -More details at taylorfarms.ca/market, or email strawberries@taylorfarms.ca
- **Christ Church Windermere**
-services Sunday at 10:30am
- **Windermere United Church**
-services Sunday at 10:30am. All welcome

Osborne Longhurst was born Dec. 17, 1909 in Windermere. He died Nov 30, 1989.. For fifty years he was the head gardener at Llanllar. He helped create the most spectacular garden in Windermere and perhaps all of Muskoka.

(Excerpt from the following article was taken from the 1987 MLA Yearbook
- by Virginia Peake)

"Miss Sweeney: First Lady of Llanllar"

Considered by many the most picturesque property in the Muskoka Lakes, Llanllar sits on the eastern shore of Lake Rosseau just north of Windermere, a small bay protected by two rocky promontories. What more perfect spot could have been provided for what has become the most spectacular of Muskoka's gardens. It all began many years ago. In 1908 when Joseph Irwin bought the property from the Rev. Harris, the gardens consisted of a rectangular bed on the lawn of the bay planted in the shape and colours of the Union Jack, plus some Hollyhocks and phlox to hide the vegetable garden. There were some large tree stumps hollowed out and filled with annuals that lined the path to the big house. This was pretty much the way it stayed until 1926. In that year, Miss Elsie Sweeney, grand-daughter of Joseph Irwin, decided to create a rock garden.

Growing plants in rocks had long been a form of gardening in England but it did not reach our shores until the mid '20's. Miss Sweeney was indeed in tune with the times. The point she had chosen was the site of the windmill that pumped the water for the cottage. She persuaded her uncle to replace it with a small diesel engine that he was helping to become established (Cummins Engines). The natural crevices in the crevices needed only to be hollowed out, lined with gravel to provide drainage and filled with the right soil for the plants to be used. Rock garden plants can be alpines or simply low growing perennials. But it is important to know their individual growth habits.

It was about this time that Osborne Longhurst arrived on the scene. He was a young man from Windermere in need of a job. He was not a gardener but he had lived on a farm. This was the beginning of a working relationship that lasted for 46 years until Miss Sweeney's death. Mr. Longhurst continued caring for her gardens until his retirement in 1978. His position as head gardener was filled by Ted Donaldson who had worked with him since 1944.

Creating a rock garden is not the easiest of tasks. As any gardening book will tell you, it requires special skills. Miss Sweeney and Mr. Longhurst learned together. For this woman to have achieved what she did is an



absolute miracle. Neither she nor Mr Longhurst had any formal training in horticulture. It was all self taught. Miss Sweeney had an extensive library on all aspects of gardening and the two of them read, studied and experimented. They never stopped trying new methods or acquiring new and different plants. The rock garden was breathtaking. Paths wound among the flowers; sedum and thyme formed thick carpets over the rocks. Bright colours dazzled the eye; the list of plants was endless. Magically, a small stream of water ran from a cleft in the rock and ran gently down to a small pool, where it overflowed into second pool, and finally down to a third. To stand on the little bridge that spans the middle pool and listen to the hum of bees, the gentle sound of water, and see before you such a profusion of growing things, couldn't help but fill you with awe and deep respect for this incredible

woman's talents, along with the hard work of Mr Longhurst.. As her knowledge increased so did her interest in perennials. Her attention turned to the bay, and the small bed that shielded the vegetable garden. She began experimenting and adding more plants. A tall wooden screen was installed to form a backdrop for the tallest perennials. The design was taken from one she saw in France and had copied here. With her innate sense of design and colour and, by now, extensive knowledge, this remarkable woman re-designed the entire bed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

-August 6th - Community Conversation @3:30 pm - Windermere House

-August 10th - 10am - 4pm Windermere Family Fun Day at the Beach and on the Wharf.

-August 10th - 2pm- The Great Windermere Canoe Race -at the Beach

- Windermere Bridge Group
Monday evenings @ the Diamond In The Ruff Golf Club starting June 16th.

-Wing night Thursdays @ WGCC 5-9pm

-Butcher Block Chef's Choice @
WGCC - Fridays starting June 27th

-Euchre Night @ WGCC Tuesdays @ 5:45pm starting July 8 - \$25 includes dinner

-Live music - Fridays and Saturdays @ Windermere House - from 7-10pm

-Every Friday for the summer, a lunchtime BBQ at the Windermere Wharf - in support of the Windermere

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**
windermereandareaarchive@gmail.com
- **Lions Club**
windermere@ar2lions.ca

Osborne Longhurst drew it on paper to her specifications. Every plant was named with its botanical name. The garden was divided into four colour bays, two yellow and two pastel. The bays were repeated to form a border over 120 feet long and more than 12 feet deep. The perennials ranged in size from over six feet down to about one foot. The garden was planned so that it appeared to be in full bloom all summer. Miss Sweeney's plan was installed on a green wooden bulletin board ready for easy reference.



Miss Sweeney's last major undertaking was the "Japanese Garden", complete with Torii (Gateway to Heaven), a small curved bridge, goldfish and a tea-house. Elsie Sweeney died in 1972. Osborne Longhurst was one of her pall bearers. He continued to work at Llanllar for another 6 years and upon his retirement in 1978, he was presented with a silver tray thanking him for his 50 years of service for the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Family.

Upcoming Chautauqua Events

- Aug 6 - 10 - 12pm** - Visual Note Taking - Theatre
10 - 4pm - Pop-Up Book Store @ Village Hall, Gallery open
12 - 1pm - Heritage Walking Tour - FREE
1 - 3pm - Clay Workshop - Theatre
3:30 - 5pm - Community Conversation @ Windermere House FREE
- Aug 7 - 9:30 - 10:30** - Flow Wellness Workshop - Windermere Beach
10 am - Intro to Ukulele - Theatre
12 - 1pm - Heritage Walking Tour - FREE
7:30pm - Toronto All-Star Big Band - Theatre
- Aug 8 - 9:30 - 10:30** - Flow Wellness Workshop - Windermere Beach
10 - 3pm - Plein aire. Acrylic painting - Gallery
10 - 4pm - Pop-Up Book Store @ Village Hall, Gallery open - FREE
12 - 1pm - Heritage Walking Tour - FREE
4 - 5:30 - Phillipa Cranston-Baran - Theatre - FREE
7:30 - 9pm - Her Romance - Theatre
- Aug 9 10:00 - 3pm** - En Pleine Air - Oil Painting - Theatre
10 - 4pm - Pop-Up Book Store @ Village Hall, Gallery open
12:00 - 1pm - Heritage Walking Tour - Theatre - FREE
7:30 - 9pm - Sultans of String - Theatre
- Aug 10 10:00 - 4:00pm** - **Windermere Family Fun Day** - Beach & Wharf - FREE
2:00 - The Great Windermere Canoe Race! - Beach & Wharf

Don't miss the **Community Conversation** at Windermere House Wednesday August 6 @ 3:30
 An interesting meeting & discussion about our Village of Windermere, its achievements and its future.

THE GREAT WINDERMERE CANOE RACE!

The idea for "The Great Windermere Canoe Race" bloomed in 2024. What fun to have our businesses involved in the day!
 Welcome back!

- The Great Competitors are—
1. Windermere House
 2. Windermere Golf & Country Club
 3. Trsys Specialized Vehicles (Sean Beane)
 4. Windermere Marina
 5. Team Chautauqua

The trophy designed and created by our neighbour Dean Bender, proudly sits at Windermere Marina...won in 2024 by their paddlers Katie Beane & Trevor Yull.

Will the trophy change hands?

Race time will be approximately 2pm Sunday, August 10th. Come cheer on your favourite team!

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!