

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

The following is an excerpt from an interview in 2019 with Donald Grant. Born in 1928, he came to Windermere with his family in 1929. He shares his memories of growing up as a summer resident in Windermere. Don Grant passed away in the fall of 2024, having spent every summer here.

"You know, the thing that I realized - when I started to think about it - It was the settlers - the people that came another generation before, that were really the important ones, because we depended on them for everything when we got here. They owned the farms, they had the milk. They had all the provisions. They saw the opportunity to look after us - build our cottages, build our docks - which they did. And the Longhurst family were especially close to us because that's where our cottage was located - practically on their property. I suppose we learned quite quickly that, if we wanted to—have a glass of milk, we had to depend on the Longhurst cows for that milk, because they had their own separators set up in their home. I would just walk up to their place to get a can or whatever it was, a bottle, of milk to bring back to the cottage. -And then later on, when Freddy Aitken started his dairy, that was the end of the Longhursts for our milk. Because, he of course (Aitken), pasteurized the milk at the dairy. But otherwise we depended on the Longhursts for many things - putting additions on our cottage!.....The fact was that, building in this part of the world, was done by the seat of your pants. There was never even a second thought given to an architect of any kind. If we had to, or needed to,... close in the veranda to have a dining room, (which we did)..... we would just ask the Longhursts to come down and cover the veranda and put doors on the dining area. The job, for building boathouses, and homes, or for changing them, were the Goltz and Longhursts. They were both the principal builders in Windermere. Anyway, our family bought a cottage in the 1920's, called Ambleside. It was aptly named Ambleside because in England, Ambleside was a town on Lake Windermere. The year I was born in 1928 was the first year we really came to the cottage. But there wasn't much to see when they got here because the cottage was pretty bare. There was the usual "two holer" outhouse, and the ice house - because we had no refrigeration. We depended on an ice house for our ice to keep things cold.



But we had good neighbours. The Whitesides on one side of us and Dr Leslie King and his wife Maud on the other side. And the Wilsons were beside the Kings. Windermere House - that was one of the big features - it was very well run by Mr. Aiken and then eventually Les Aiken, his son, and then his daughter, Mary Elizabeth.

She was fabulous. And in the meantime, the Fife House, right across the road where Art Fife was - they had the best tennis court in Windermere. And Willie Aitken, who ran the store - that was the other focus of our life - the post office and the general store.

That store was a marvelous place to go to meet and see people. In those days, there was a problem getting to Port Carling to get food. So most of your food you bought from Willie Aitken and Freddie Aitken - he was a terrific guy and he started the Windermere Dairy. He also had a little transport company on the side that was very active.

The principal use of the post office was not to get the mail but to see one another, and for bringing ourselves up to date. After the Sagamo got in, about 45 minutes later, you could collect your mail.

And when Willie Aitken's store closed, luckily for us, a fellow by name, Murray, started Murray's Meat Market just down the street.

Which also reminds me - the United Church was the centre of our activities there, as far as the church is concerned.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **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 and District Lions Club.

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

I grew up with Fraser Fell and John Duncan, who are no longer is with us, but Fraser and I were buddies and he had a younger brother, Albert, who was a good friend too. The Duncan family was the Anderson family before it was the Duncan family.

They were related to the Patons on Paton Point. They go back, I guess over a hundred years now. Elsie Sweeney, from Llanlar. She was a wonderful person and she made sure that Llanlar Gardens were in fit repair for people to come and visit - because the donations went to the church. And Elsie would also invite, young people, like I was at the time, to go over there, and they had servants, all beautifully dressed - one man at the top of the slide with the toboggan, and the other one across the water. From where the toboggan landed, there was a little landing with a couple of steps.

Alice and Barbara Hincks, I think, were the ones that got the original Windermere Gazette idea in their head. We were probably 12 to 14 old, and we helped deliver it and I did many of the illustrations.

There was also a regatta, with swimming races, and the rowboat races which they had right there at Windermere. I can't think of any other communities on these lakes, that would have anything with quite the same kind of history, at all. Because, if you think about the other villages like this, around the lakes, there's probably only Minet, where Cleveland's house is, that would be similar to Windermere.

It's where the big



boats stopped.

Everything about it was important. Windermere House was, after Beaumaris burned down and Royal Muskoka burned down, clearly the best hotel on the lakes. It was the focus of a lot of important things. I mentioned the families. You couldn't look around the lakes and find a similar situation that I could think of.

The Sag would come in every morning at the same time. The Cherokee would come down the lakes at the same time every morning, and they would cross paths, usually in Port Carling, and then they would reverse that in the evening. So that set the time schedule that everything worked on - when those two boats arrived at the Windermere dock. The location was the perfect location because of the big boats. And as I said, that determined what we all did every day - it was when those boats went back and forth, because that's how the mail got there. Without mail, we didn't know what was going on in the world. We didn't have newspapers delivered or anything of that nature. We didn't have television. We just had a radio to listen to. So it was a fairly singular kind of life.

The Windermere Family Fun Day was a resounding success! Thanks to the Chautauqua Festival and all the wonderful volunteers who helped pull this great day together!!

And Congratulations to the winners
of the

GREAT WINDERMERE CANOE RACE!!

This year's winners were

**Dougie Basadur & Lily Sewell of the
Windermere Golf Club**

Thanks to all the village businesses that
participated in this annual event!

