

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. Upcoming Evening Taize Services - Aug. 27 and Sept 24.

The following article is a fascinating account of an early tourist's summers on Lake Rosseau, but also an early account of Francis Forge's (original Windermere settler) role in accommodating both tourists and settlers to the area.

In April of 1946, Miss Josephine A Plaskett presented the history of her family's arrival in Muskoka in the summer of 1877, to the meeting of the Sanford Women's Institute. Her family had purchased Bohemia Island - between Windermere and Port Carling, having visited it the year prior in 1876. This is an excerpt from the Bracebridge Gazette of June 1946, as written by Miss Plaskett.

"Father and Mr Scadding left Toronto for Muskoka in the summer of 1876.

They changed trains in Orillia, having to travel by stage from Orillia to Gravenhurst. The following year the train ran to Gravenhurst. The island (Bohemia) was purchased from the crown in 1877. It was midnight when they (my family) arrived in Port Carling and it was blowing a gale. The only boat that could be hired was a very small rowboat. With two children seated at the bottom of the boat, they rowed the two miles out to Scadding's Island, Vacuna (meaning God of Idleness). Vacuna was next to Bohemia. They stayed at Vacuna for a few days until their own tent was pitched and a crude shelter built made with brush and boards to provide a place to have their meals. They ate from tin plates, tin cups and saucers and tin spoons. Lights were made from the pitch of pine trees. Fish were plentiful in those days. One could see them swimming in the water.

Most of the surrounding islands including Bohemia, and been recently burned and had quite a young growth growing. The first growth after a fire is poplar, birch, wild or pigeon cherries, and the blueberries were quite prolific. Later, when those trees die off, the evergreen begin to appear - pine, cedar, hemlock and the hardwoods - oak, maple and low-growth juniper. On Bohemia the growth was very young and many of the burnt pine stumps were standing - large and no doubt hundreds of years old before being burned. The place had a very unkempt and desolate appearance.

Our cottage was to be built on the highest point of the island, facing east, two hundred from the boathouse. Oxen were brought to the island to draw the lumber as there were no horses in those days, the land being too rough. There were a few little clearings around the lakes on the mainland with small log cabins - the settlers that were trying to eke out an existence. There were few tourists then, our family being one of the first in these parts.

At that time there were two steamers on the lakes - the Wennonah and the Nippissing. One went to Port Cockburn at the head of Lake Joe, and the other went to the head of Lake Rosseau. As the lumber and logging business was the main source of income, often the logs would jam the rivers for hours, and it would delay the arrival of the steamers. Birch bark canoes, rowboats and dugouts were the only means of navigation. There was lots of wildlife and bears were often seen and killed. The shoreline was littered with five to ten feet of dead trees, drift logs and debris.

For many years there was no way of purchasing meat or much produce of any kind. We brought smoked hams up with us and ate the fish we caught. Blueberries were plentiful. Our diet was quite simple. We also ate "hard tack", a four inch round, 3/4 inch thick exceptionally hard biscuit. A large box of those where among the good supplies and we gnawed on those when we were hungry.

Our cottage was constructed of rough pine boards 10 or 12 inches wide, built straight up and down and battened over the cracks. There were wooden pegs to hang our clothes. There were no locks on the doors, just sliding latches. In the early days practically all our utensils were taken up and brought back to the city at the end of the holiday. We couldn't risk being broken into. We had a load of luggage - 14 pieces - tub, axe, saws, trunks, and nail kegs packed with utensils. On arrival each year, I can remember helping to put hay into the ticking for our beds.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Windermere Garden Centre

Event - August 18th-24th at our Port Carling location for Fun In The Sun! BIG SAVINGS, free kids activities and much more. Follow us on social media for more details."

- Evening Taize Services Aug. 27 & Sept 24 - Windermere United Church

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

Tourists gradually came to this part of the country and all the changes were very gradual. In the early days there was no bank, no meat storage, no doctor and it was most difficult to secure supplies. Later on Mr Frank Forge, a Yorkshire man who settled near Windermere had a farm and he at one time used to carry his flour, etc on his back from Orillia. He told us that when he married he was making \$10 a month. Mr Forge began to call on us, and he used to bring lambs, eggs, vegetables, butter, milk and ice twice a week. He used to come in a leaky rowboat laden down with food.

Twice a week he would row up to Lake Joseph and return, a distance of about forty miles. We would hear him rowing home past Bohemia late at night. He would nearly always be singing and he said he always sang when nearing home in order that his wife Lizzie, who was always anxious about him, could hear him and know he was coming. Mr Forge called on us for a great many years. He spoke with a broad Yorkshire dialect and we always enjoyed a little chat with him. He used to rise a 4:00am, kill his lambs, get his boat ready, and come all that distance, yet he lived to be 92 years, which proves work does not kill anyone.

Windermere Village Playground Update

We are grateful for all the businesses and families that have very already very generously donated to the children's playground!

Installation will begin this fall!!

We will be creating a sponsor and donation recognition feature for the grand opening, which will happen next June!

If you haven't already contributed, please do. We are grateful for any donation. This is a community project!

(Charitable receipts are given for any donation over \$20)

There are still more things on our list that we will need funds for! This will be a meeting place for children and families - both residents and visitors.

Swings, creative climbing structure, slide, natural play areas, a small basketball court, benches and open grass. And the landscaping will be beautiful too - all surrounding the historic Village Hall - part of Windermere's unique heritage.

✳ Donations can be made by cheque, payable to the: Township of Muskoka Lakes - Attn: Property Taxes
P.O. Box 129

1 Bailey Street, Port Carling, P0B1J0

(make a note that your donation is for the Playground).

✳ You can also make a donation through your bank: **Payee**

Name Available As: Muskoka Lakes Township Other. Please use PLAYG001 as the account reference.

✳ Questions? Email ar@muskokalak.es.ca

Christ Church Windermere is seeking a new musician to play hymns on a great keyboard every Sunday at 10:30 am.

We need someone who can play at a very good, but not necessarily professional level, and who will practice and then play hymns chosen each week by our Priest. Remuneration is negotiable but in the area of \$ 75 - \$100 per week with mileage assistance for anyone living relatively near by. Please just come on out to Church any Sunday morning, and speak with Rev. Judie Cooper and our Wardens for further information or to apply. We are a fun group of people and will make you very welcome!