

WOODMERE LODGE, Presqu'ile Point

A private home was built by the Price family around 1923. They had a corral at the back of the property and their children and guests rode the horse through the Park. In the late 1940's the house was purchased by Everett and Helen Disney and Harold and Marg. Armstrong, who converted the cottage into a lodge. Four small cabins purchased from the Atkins' were put in the backyard. Everett Disney named the lodge after a racehorse called 'Woodmere'.

The entrance contained a large screened veranda, a comfortable spot to enjoy the fresh air during the midday sun.

The spacious lounge was 34 feet by 20 feet, with a huge stone fireplace that would hold a four foot log and create a cheery atmosphere for cool evenings. Above was an open balcony. Directly above the fire place was a buffalo head, mounted to the railing along with the bullet that shot him, that belonged to the Armstrong's. There was also a lasso that is believed to have been made from human hair, along with moose and deer heads. There was a grand piano, floor covers and sofas around the fireplace. The dining room was to the east. There were four bedrooms in the lodge, two upstairs and two down. The cabins were well ventilated and attractively decorated in cool pastel colours. Hydro and continuous hot water was provided. Most of the guests were Americans.

The Disney's and Armstrong's had a house across the road on the Bay side that went down to the water presently Kay Craig's. They had a dock with rowboats that the guests could use to tour or to enjoy the excellent fishing in the Bay. Pike, black bass and pickerel were plentiful.

There was an empty field to the east that contained swings, teeter totters and an area where one could set up badminton, croquet, or horseshoes. There were many different walking trails available and a riding stable. For the evening one could go to the Pavilion or the Crackerbarrel at Atkinson store.

Delicious home cooked meals were made each day. Woodmere also had a snack bar, located across from the store and next door to the Lodge that was open late each night. It was built in 1946 and Everett Disney looked after the kitchen. Most of their summer help was from Oshawa, and later, some local people were hired for counter help, chambermaids, and servers. Two helpers were Sheila and Mary Holahand.

The snack bar sold hot dogs and the chefs were famous for their homemade hot dog relish. They baked lemonpies, chocolate cakes, served grilled cheese and ham sandwiches and milk shakes.

During the dances at the Pavilion, when the band took a break at 11:00p.m., a lot of the people would walk from the dance hall to the snack bar for something to eat. It was a mad rush trying to keep up. After closing the snackbar, Mrs. Disney and Mrs. Armstrong would gather the receipts and cash for the day and walk to their cottage down by the water

In 1952 the Disney's and Armstrong's sold the lodge and snack bar to Roy and Irene Spencer. Fred Kelly helped to short order cook then. Mr. Al Vanderwater bought it next, then Harry and Mabel Simpson. The snack bar is now the permanent residence of the Heilingbrunners and the lodge belongs to Isobel White. Mrs. White still has one of the cottages left and the Woodmere sign. Inside is the counter that was used at the Presqu'ile Hotel entrance and behind the counter is a little door with the lodge keys and room numbers still on it.