

Welcome to Summer 2025!

As many of you know, Winter 2024-25 was long and challenging. Bookended with two metres of snow which fell over several days in November, and two days of accumulated freezing rain, it often felt like a continuous cycle of shovelling, plowing, sanding, and salting.

With this I would note, **our residents are a resilient group**. Checking in and helping neighbours, friends and the properties of those who had gone away for the season was the norm. I'm also proud to say that every member of our Township staff tackled emergency conditions head-on. From staying on top of snow removal to rendering assistance to neighbouring communities, I offer my gratitude to each of them for the professional manner with which they responded to countless challenges.

More than once over the past five months I was told the winter weather was "just like the good old days". Well, if that's the case, I say it's time to **bring on a summer "just like the good old days"**.

The **Township of Muskoka Lakes** flourishes as a vibrant four-season destination, with a community defined by its rich natural landscape, welcoming spirit and 80 lakes that shape its character. With a water's edge never too far away, the summer has always sparked a natural draw to the lake inviting moments of joy and adventure.

Looking back, annual regattas have been held in many locations around the Township since the late 1800s. The program for the 1926 Port Carling Regatta identifies 24 different opportunities for participants to display their skills at swimming, canoeing, and rowing. Rather than the thrill of victory, regatta events then, and now, are focused on building friendships and strong family ties.

Another popular summer pastime is taking a boat cruise on one or more of Muskoka's lakes. From 1955 to 1958, the *Sagamo* and the *Segwun* both operated on the "big three" lakes, once offering a scenic 10-hour, 100 Mile Cruise. While the *Sagamo* no longer travels the lakes of Muskoka, the *Segwun*, built in 1887, still maintains an active cruising schedule every summer and is perhaps the most identifiable icon for Muskoka tourism.

Additionally, the water has been featured prominently in promotional material for the Muskoka Lakes. One notable illustration was the cover of the 1928 brochure for Elgin House, a resort hotel on Lake Joseph, where it detailed a busy waterfront with canoeing, rowing, and touring in a fine wooden launch among the many boating activities available to guests. Though these historical vessels including Elgin House and *Sagamo* are no more, the same recreational opportunities such as boating, swimming, wading, hiking, and simply relaxing by the water remain available through numerous local businesses and artisans helping to bring the region's vibrant community to life, offering visitors an authentic Muskoka experience.

However you choose to spend your summer in Muskoka, I hope at least part of it is near the water. **Stay safe, be respectful of those around you, and take full advantage of everything our beautiful Township has to offer.**

Here's to making memories that feel **just like the good old days**.



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