

Glen Alda Seniors

by Doug Field

A friendly, active and open group.

This month, our president Barry Rand suggested that I should outline the initial beginnings of the Glen Alda Seniors Group. So, the following is *a bit of history as told to me by none other than our own Roy Allen.*

The Glen Alda Seniors Club was formed in 1984 to provide an afternoon social time with meetings, and was to be held in the Glen Alda Community Centre in Chandos Township. The first executive consisted of President Mrs. Ilsa Sprung, Vice President Reg Liscum, Secretary Julie Post, and Treasurer Neil Rogers. This initial group met on a monthly basis with programs consisting of games, speakers, once a month bingo, slide shows and travel tips.

During that first year, the club introduced the practice of having a pot luck lunch with members taking turns in the kitchen. At these luncheons, a series of speakers presented topics of interest and concern to the residents of the township. One such speaker was Genny Post, a senior volunteer driver for the Ministry of Community and Social Services. As a direct result of this session, the club gave their support to the formation of Home Support Services in Apsley. This organization has evolved into its current-day form: Community Care, Apsley. Another of our community service projects was when the Club used a *New Horizons for Seniors Grant*

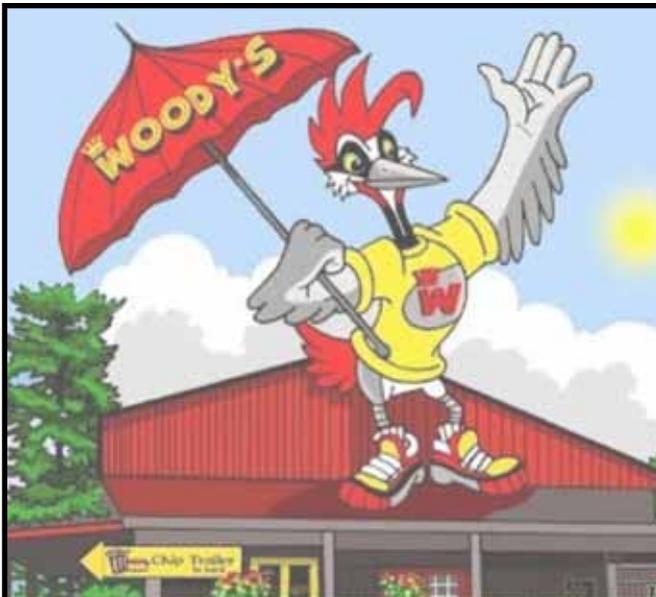
for the preparation and publication of the Chandos History book.

In 1986, Ilsa Sprung was returned as President along with Dan O'Brien, Genny Post and Walter Winter as Executive members. During this term of operation, the group applied for and received membership in the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, and in December of that year officially became known as Club # 1261, Glen Alda Seniors Club. Meetings were scheduled to be held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month except for July and August, and a constitution was accepted by the membership. A file cabinet was then purchased for the growing number of Club records, and elections were scheduled for each year.

In February 1988, the Club became an official Diners Club, sponsored by the Apsley Community Care Office. As a result of the additional work involved in the preparation of meals, the Club was instrumental in the purchase of a dishwasher and microwave oven for use in the Glen Alda Community Centre. In 1989, a television and stereo were purchased, and a cabinet was built by Club member Austin Wease to store the new equipment. All the equipment was being used not only by the Club, but also by all groups using the Community Centre.

Our present membership fluctuates between 40 and 50 members. The Club continues to hold a hot meal prepared by two volunteer members on site, and supported by pot luck salads and desserts brought in by the rest of the members to round out the meal. We also continue to meet the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, with a members cost of \$3.00 for the meal and \$1.00 for the rental of the hall. Not a bad deal for a hot home cooked meal which includes desert choices of great variety! Membership fees for a full member remain at \$5.00 for the year. This group works hard to keep costs down so that the meals are affordable for a wide range of people in this relatively poor rural community. At least semi-annually, the Club subsidizes the cost of outings where we all get to sit down to a hot meal together, and the preparation and clean up duties are left to the establishments where we meet. There is obviously more to this story, but this was only presented to reflect the humble beginnings of this Club.

In the last six years alone, this Club has applied and received grants to invest tens of thousands of dollars into the infrastructure of the Glen Alda Community Centre making it a much more usable space for this corner of the Township. The Township has been a willing partner and mentor in this process and we have worked, guided and funded these joint projects together.



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