



Chicken Every Sunday...

John A. Brebner, March 2018

"Chicken Every Sunday"

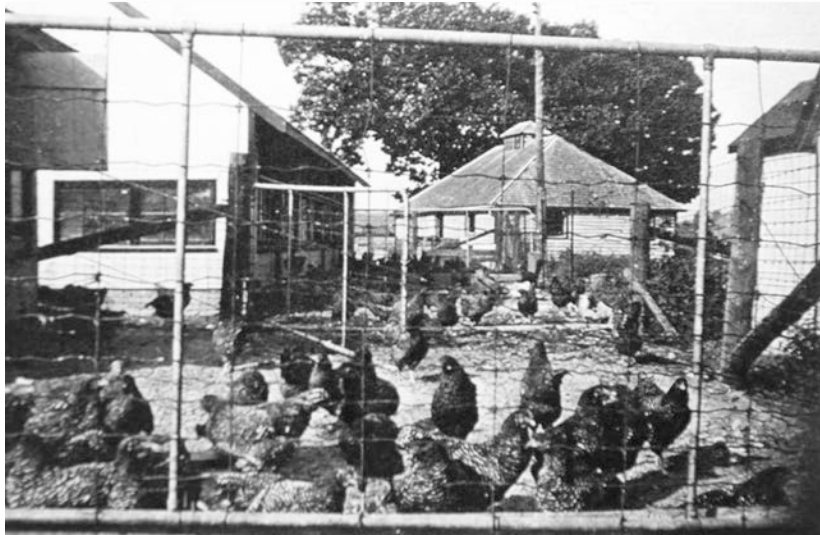
from *The Montreal Standard*, 15 NOV 1941

Extracted from an interview by Kate Aitken, CFRB, Toronto, 18 JUL 1941

"Tiny, gentle Mrs. MacDonald threw another handful of grain to the gabbling flock of Rhode Island Reds.

"They're nice birds," she remarked, "And they give us chicken every Sunday."

"And chicken every Sunday is one lure of the excellent tourist business that this smart woman farmer has taken up."



Above: The henhouse at the Lakeland Lodge; image 17-8686

Below: The Dining Room at Lakeland; image 18-00406



The Dining Room at Lakeland
Picton, Ontario (508G)



Aoda MacDonald feeds her prized chickens; image 17-8687a

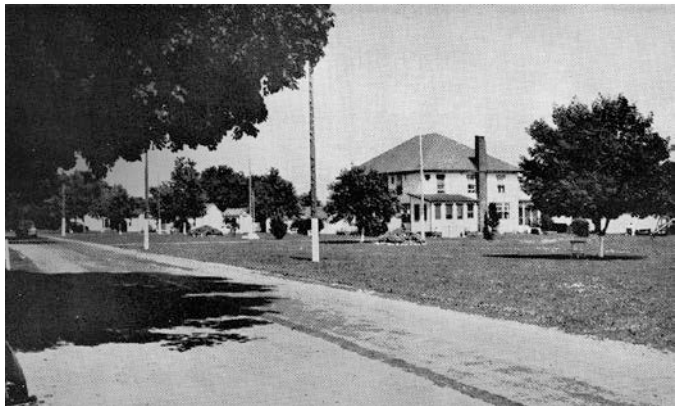
"Lakeland," the MacDonald's tourist farm, lies 10 miles from Picton, Ont., along Lake Ontario. Its 121 acres are farmed to get every ounce of value from each foot of soil. The orchard is sprayed, fertilized and pruned to the nth degree. The herd of T.B.-tested Holstein cows is groomed and curried to spectacular black and white perfection. As well, the tiny summer hotel with its adjacent cottages takes care of some 80 tourists from June until September each year. That sounds like a Horatio Alger story of accomplishment, but it isn't. Heading up all these enterprises is Mrs. Philip McDonald, slender, gray-haired, soft-voiced but as efficient as an adding machine.

"The MacDonald farm was a Crown grant to Scottish immigrants back in the early 1800s. It came eventually to Philip MacDonald and his brother John, a perfect team."

"Twelve years ago John MacDonald died and his brother Philip followed, four years later. Mrs. MacDonald was left to run the farm and her growing tourist business without help.

"The tourist hotel venture was given impetus by a call for help from brother-in-law Amos MacDonald, who had an established tourist resort up the shore road. One night 23 years ago he called on Mrs. MacDonald to take in overflow guests. That night's accommodation led to a regular assignment and presently Mrs. MacDonald decided to start her own business.

"It's odd," she chuckled, "You know, at first I started this business so that I could have a little money that would be my own - you know how women are. Then, before I knew it, I was right in over my head and having a wonderful time."



View looking east along West Point; Image 18-00411



At the front porch overlooking lake Ontario; Image 18-00410

"The MacDonalds built the cottages for Mrs. MacDonald along the lake shore. Those overflowed, so in 1930 they built a small hotel with a main dining room. Now the project includes 12 cottages, the hotel, a pavilion for guests, boats and fishing tackle; there's a tennis court, a bowling green and a sandy beach.

"The season starts in the middle of June and runs through the middle of September. It means that as well as 80 tourists to be fed all the time, the farm haying, harvesting, milking and other work must go on (un)interrupted. Son Norman MacDonald and four other men handle the farm work; daughter-in-law Evelyn and Mrs. MacDonald swing in on the tourist business.

"With the exception of an imported chef, all the help is local. Daughters from neighborhood farms home from high school for the holidays wait on tables and help keep the cottages tidy. Guests make their own beds in both the cottages and the hotel rooms, but the girls mop and dust daily.

"Guests who have been coming to the farm for 20 years have only two complaints, Mrs. MacDonald says. They don't want both pie and pudding at one meal because they like both and don't want to choose.

"Make it meal and meal about, Mrs. Mac," they beg, "don't make it hard for us."

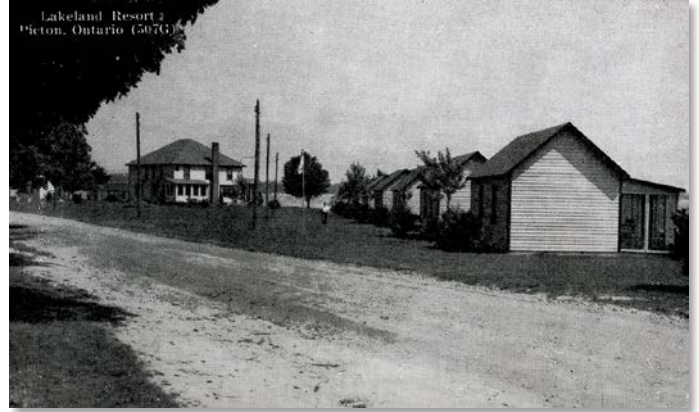
"The second request comes from the women guests.

"Don't ever have a menu," they ask. "We must choose food all the rest of the year - for those two weeks just put it front of us."

So that is the pattern - meals are arranged with no choice and no menu".



Lakeland Lodge cottages; Image 18-00408



Lakeland Lodge looking east; Image 18-00416

"Most of the food comes fresh off the farm. Milk, chicken, eggs, vegetables - all are home grown and fresh in the morning.

"Summers the canning goes on too, for one tradition of the MacDonald table is the wonderful pickle tray. During the year Mrs. MacDonald does down more than 1,000 quarts of pickles, jams and relishes. Local fruits are canned for her at the cannery the same day as they are picked.

"Married more than 52 years ago, Mrs. MacDonald is not a young woman. And yet she moves around this domain of hers like a girl. calm, unflurried and completely happy.

"I guess I like work," she explained. "It all seems like fun to me."

Right: Aoda (Ostrander) MacDonald (1897 - 1953) and daughter-in-law Margaret (McCoy) MacDonald (1929-1984); Image 17-8688a



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Photo Acknowledgements:

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Above: Lakeland Lodge in winter; Image 17-8788a