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An exclusive magazine for the neighbours of Edgemont

NEIGHBOURS OF EDGEMONT

Linda Chu

A Tribute to Family
& Community



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A Tribute to Family & Community

By Patricia Barnes
Photos by Fariba Mirzaee

When interviewing the residents of Edgemont, and writing their stories, one of the abiding themes is family and community. It feels like the phrase “It takes a village to raise a child” was written for this beautiful village, and few stories exemplify this theme, like that of Linda Chu.

“The Village has always been very family-oriented and like extended family,” Linda tells me, “Individuals and businesses take care of each other.”

And Linda would know this better than most. She grew up in Edgemont Village, where her father, Harold, ran an iconic Edgemont eatery.

“When my Dad operated The Woodbine Inn, you could walk into the restaurant any day and see our regulars at “their” tables. Every out-of-town guest had to visit “Harold’s,” where every child received a free Shirley Temple or Rob Roy and left with a bag of fortune cookies.”

But the extra love wasn’t reserved for the out-of-town visitors. “Regular clientele receive a birthday cake during their celebration dinner. And then there was my Dad’s homemade Irish Cream Liqueur... so many great memories!”

If you aren’t lucky enough to have memories of The Woodbine Inn, Linda paints a beautiful picture: “Just imagine, Robbie Burns Night, every January 25th, a Chinese, Western food restaurant turning out Haggis to a sold-out crowd. The room is full of Highland dancers and singers; my Dad is in his element, dressed in his kilt because we all know him as Hamish McChu of the McChu clan!”

“Seen here is a precious memory in honour of our Dad. A loyal customer from the Woodbine made this bagpipe player in her pottery class and Sharpie’d in the bushy mustache that was my Dad’s in the 80s.

They cut out of construction paper the black-rimmed glasses that he always sported and dubbed him Hamish McChu.”

This creative endeavour stands as a tangible reminder of the lasting impact Linda’s father had on the Woodbine Inn and the lives of those in Edgemont Village.



“To this day, when I work with elder clients on the North Shore, I always ask if they remember The Woodbine Inn, and they would always have stories of “Harold!” and the legacy he left.”

But “Harold McChu” is not the only member of the “Clan McChu” whose history is entwined with that of Edgemont. Linda’s path into the hospitality industry began when she spent her teenage years working at The Woodbine Inn.

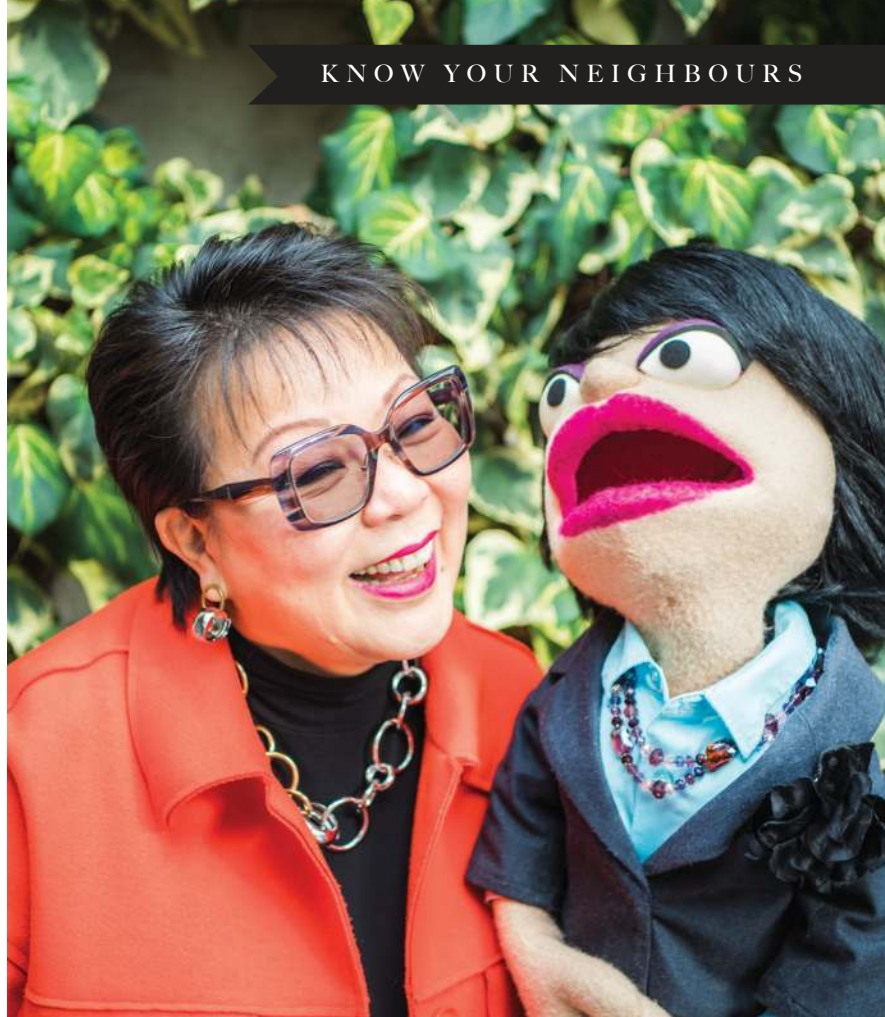
“My Dad’s extensive hospitality career took him from working at Trader Vics at the Westin Bayshore to owning his restaurant, The Woodbine Inn, a fixture in Edgemont Village from 1977 to 1987 when he passed away,” Linda says, “Following in my father’s footsteps of working in the hospitality industry, I attended BCIT to receive my diploma in Hotel & Restaurant Management.”

From there, Linda landed her first hotel job as a server at the once Mandarin Oriental Hotel Vancouver and into front desk operations. Then she moved to Delta Place, Hotel Vancouver, Pacific Palisades, YWCA Hotel/Residence, and Hyatt Regency and came full circle back to the Metropolitan - once the Mandarin Oriental!

However, after almost 20 years in hospitality, Linda’s life took a turn. The September 11th, 2001, events significantly impacted the demand for tours and travel, and Linda felt she needed to reinvent herself. This reinvention came in the form of a career in the Professional Organizing & Move Management Industry, and Linda’s company, “Out of Chaos,” was born.

“My team and I work with busy homeowners needing assistance clearing out the volume of possessions in their homes and creating organizing systems that help maintain organization. Our move management services provide door-to-door services for people who are moving, whether it’s downsizing to a small home or senior residence or upgrading to a larger home as your family grows. We handle all the logistics, from packing to hiring movers/removal services/cleaners, unpacking and home setup.”

This is where Linda’s sidekick and her cover co-star, Lil’ Chu, comes in. “Lil’ Chu was a collaborative effort with one of my team members, who is a puppet maker,” Linda says, “When I saw Dusty of Color Sound Labs’ puppet creation for a country music video, I was hooked, “I need a puppet!” I said.” That started the collaboration and creation of Lil’ Chu, my sassy sidekick. Lil’ Chu is a little tongue in cheek and could poke fun at the more serious and overwhelming sides of home organizing and move management. “Dusty had fun creating my ‘alter ego,’ trying to match my lipstick and eye shadow! The plan is to work with Lil’ Chu in creating some easy-to-digest videos on Organizing & Move Management Tips.”



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Linda also uses her professional knowledge and experience to give back to the community. “Through my work in move management and home organization, particularly senior downsizing, I provide information sessions on how to downsize and where to donate & re-home unwanted possessions at the various neighbourhood senior community centres and senior residences.”

During her occasional downtime, Linda and her husband, David, enjoy getting away and being out of reach in Hawaii. “It gives us the ability to wind down, recharge, and reconnect,” says Linda, “Maui feels like our second home. The moment we land, we feel we are in familiar territory. It’s easy and comfortable. Returning to old friends, familiar eateries, and calm beaches. Low key, with just the right amount of excitement, should we need it. And the daily sunny court time doesn’t hurt!

Which brings us to tennis!

“My husband Dave is a tennis professional who has played tennis for over 55 years. Tennis is so much a part of his life that this theme even snuck into our wedding plans!”

However, despite hearing couples argue on the tennis court, Linda tells me, “They say if you can’t beat them, join them, which is what I did with tennis! Learning to play tennis has been such a fun activity. Okay... maybe play is not the exact word to use... When you are married to the human ball machine who never misses the center of my rack – you kind of get spoiled...LOL!”

The couple met during a chance encounter when David was walking his dog, Herbie. “We collided during a walk along a neighbourhood path!” Linda laughs.

“Herbie was our Lakeland Terrier for 17 years. He was our fur baby. Our little



‘terrior’ liked to rule the roost and was very protective. He had this uncanny ability to push open the zipper to Dave’s tennis bag, pull out all his tennis gear and sit inside the bag as if to say, “You aren’t leaving without me.”

Linda and David share many beautiful memories, but one of the best is their wedding day.

“To avoid becoming a bridezilla, I declared to everyone that if anyone told me I ‘had’ to do something and it would stress me out, it would be crossed off our list of things to do. So, chair covers - Have people come at 2am to strip down the chairs? - Nope, no chair covers; Receiving line? - boring - so we visited each table instead. First dance? - How about an ‘everyone dance’ and that they did! Then all that was left was to enjoy some amazing food and drink.”

Wrapping up our interview, I asked Linda what she would like to say to everyone in Edgemont. “The neighbourhood and friends of Edgemont Village hold a special place in my heart for welcoming my father, Harold, and the Woodbine Inn into their lives. To this day, when I speak to a North Shore resident, many will recount wonderful stories of their memories of meals spent with family and friends at “Harold’s.” I am grateful to have been part of these special times.”

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