



Chuck Guarino

CHUCK GUARINO the CNR LIFEGUARD AT GRAND BEACH 1941 - 1944

Early in May of this year, as my son Larry and I were looking at “what is now left” of the wonderful Grand Beach that I knew and loved. I told him that I had made the biggest decision of my life coming to Grand Beach in 1941 as the Senior Lifeguard.

In 1940, I had been the lifeguard for the CNR at their world famous “MINAKI LODGE” in Ontario. It was a magnificent, log-style structure. I was hired by Mr. Phil Stark, who was the assistant Manager of the CNR Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg, and also the Manager (in the summer) of Minaki Lodge. My salary was \$10.00 per month including room & board.

Patrons of Minaki Lodge were very wealthy Americans and Hollywood celebrities, so I was able to earn additional money by giving swimming lessons. I also earned “tips” for keeping a “special eye” on them, while they swam in the Winnipeg River, off the dock in front of the Lodge. Usually I earned about \$100.00 a month.

The picture in the centre of this page was taken by a young lady (Mary Schmitt) from Minneapolis in July of 1940. It shows Chuck Guarino, the lifeguard at the Minaki Lodge in 1940.



Chuck Guarino



What was it like, Papa?

Mr. Phillip Jones, The Superintendent at Grand Beach offered me \$50.00 per month including room & board plus \$1.00 a night for taking tickets in the Dance Hall. Basically I could make about the same salary at either Resort, so I chose Grand Beach.

This was the biggest decision of my life. While taking tickets in the Dance Hall, I met a lovely young brunette “Verna Baillie”. We married in 1945, and had seven wonderful children. Larry is the youngest of our four boys.

The picture at the top left side of this page is also of Chuck Guarino and George Ingham from Brandon. We were the lifeguards at Grand Beach in 1941. It was the Caterer’s picnic and George and I were fooling around on the pier. We got old bathing suits from the bath-house on the beach and had the Doctor, at his office on the beach, put the words ‘LIFEGUARD’ on them. It was a lot of fun and many people took our pictures. The Caterer’s Picnic usually had crowds of more than 50,000+ people. Our job was to look after people swimming in the water, and the CNR police looked after “patrolling” the beach. Those were wonderful days at Grand Beach.

See you in our next issue of Grand Beach Realty news magazine.

“Papa Chuck” Guarino