

KAREN'S CORNER



Every space here holds its own legends—a tapestry of family gatherings, shared laughter, and bonds formed through overcoming hardships together. These narratives intertwine, creating a unique sense of community that makes Eagle Bay truly special. I invite you to share your stories with me! Let us celebrate the moments, memories, and experiences that make our community so remarkable. Together, we can continue to embrace the spirit of this wonderful place we proudly call home.

From the Alps to Eagle Bay: The Enduring Legacy of Elisabeth Daburger

Elisabeth Daburger, a long-time summer resident of Eagle Bay for over 60 years, is at the heart of an inspiring story of immigration, family, and entrepreneurship. Born in a Bavarian Alps village, Elisabeth grew up among mountains—an experience that shaped her family's future in Canada.

Elisabeth's journey to Canada started with her husband, Max. Before meeting Elisabeth, Max worked as a carpenter in Bavaria, but job opportunities there became scarce. In 1951, a poster advertising woodcutting jobs in Northern Ontario prompted Max and his friends to leave their hometown of Ruhpolding and move to Canada. After arriving in Montreal, they travelled to the Thunder Bay area and worked at a remote camp accessible only by ice roads. When winter ended, most of Max's friends headed back to Bavaria, but Max stayed behind, eager to explore Canada. Not fluent in English, Max later found out that the logging company had arranged for the crew to become 'landed immigrants,' something he appreciated years later. In spring 1952, Max bought a car, drove to Vancouver, and looked for work. Max mainly spoke Bairisch, a Bavarian dialect, which made communication tough, but he was young and hardworking. Max eventually found work as a carpenter at the Pioneer Gold Mine near Lillooet. He worked on building mine structures, homes, and a school as more immigrants joined the community.

In fall 1954, Max went back to Bavaria for a holiday. There, he met Elisabeth, who lived next door to his sister, Maria. Max's stories about Canada delighted Elisabeth. She thought he was worldly and knowledgeable about many topics. When Max left again for Canada, he sent Elisabeth roses for her 18th birthday, along with travel details so she could join him. Maria also wanted to see Canada and decided to join Elisabeth on her trip. By spring 1956, their departure was planned.

While Elisabeth and Maria made preparations in Bavaria, Max was getting ready for their arrival in Canada. He found a job in Kamloops through a Norwegian friend, bought land in Valleyview, and in May 1956, started building a house to welcome them.

Elisabeth and Maria travelled to Canada on the ship *The Seven Seas*. Upon arrival, they accidentally boarded the wrong train, taking the CN train instead of their planned CPR route. A confused train conductor, unsure what to do with two lost girls, allowed Elisabeth and Maria to stay on the train. The CN train stopped in Jasper, delaying their arrival in Kamloops. Max, waiting at the CPR station with flowers, watched every passenger get off the train in Kamloops, with no sign of Elisabeth and Maria. Without a cell phone or other modern technology, he had no way of knowing about the delay, which made his wait more anxious.

KAREN'S CORNER

From the Alps to Eagle Bay: The Enduring Legacy of Elisabeth Daburger con't

Elisabeth and Maria arrived in Kamloops the next morning, missing Max, who had been at the station the night before. With only an address and limited English skills, they managed to find Max's house on their own. After their tough journey, they finally reunited with Max and began their new life in Canada.

Elisabeth and Max married in May 1956 at a church in Kamloops. Their first home in Valleyview was modest—lacking a furnace, with bagged cement walls and an unfinished basement—but they made it work. While Max built schools and houses, Elisabeth handled their bookkeeping. Their simple home let them dream of more. Max was a successful contractor—hardworking and visionary. Kamloops was a place where you could take risks and develop new ideas.

As an entrepreneur, Max transformed his passion for the Alps into a lasting legacy. Inspired by his roots, he envisioned Harper Mountain as a ski hill. Through determination and teamwork, the Daburgers brought that vision to life in 1973. Harper Mountain became a family-owned resort, reflecting their values and creating a central family legacy.

Max passed away on August 9, 2003, after battling cancer. His legacy endures through Harper Mountain, now managed by their son Norm. Each winter, families ski, tube, and snowshoe, keeping Max's vision and the Daburger family spirit alive.



Family has always been central to Elisabeth. She and Max raised four sons—Martin, Tony, Norm, and Edwin—who, along with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, have remained in the Kamloops area, starting or running businesses. Elisabeth feels proud of these achievements and notices the Daburger determination and warmth in the new generations.



How did the Daburgers end up in Eagle Bay? Much later, in the 1960s, their journey led them to purchase a lease at the Little Shuswaps. After hearing about fishing and swimming in the Shuswap Arms, they looked for alternative property options, buying land in the bay at the bottom of Greaves Road. They subdivided the land into four lots, kept one, and spent many summers there. As their boys grew older and family needs changed, Max and Elisabeth sold the property and travelled. They soon missed the Shuswaps. When their grandchildren arrived, they wanted to share lake memories, so they bought more land—this time, over 20 acres next to the condos on Eagle Bay Road. They built a Bavarian-style cabin at the end of Short Road, where Elisabeth now stays during summer visits.



KAREN'S CORNER

From the Alps to Eagle Bay: The Enduring Legacy of Elisabeth Daburger con't

Over the years, Elisabeth's family has brought laughter and summer fun to Eagle Bay. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren skip stones, dive off docks, go boating, and enjoy water sports there. Family reunions happen throughout the summer. One grandson, born two days before Max Senior's birthday, shares both his name and spirit. Last fall, "Little Max" arrived at the dock by plane—another unforgettable family memory. There is never a dull moment at the Daburger property.



At 89, Elisabeth dedicates her life to her family. She values her roots, maintains close family bonds, and loves sharing stories. She leads by example—swimming in the lake until autumn's chill, hiking from her cabin, and filling each day with laughter and gratitude. In doing so, she creates enduring memories and shared values.

