



*Dawne Fiegen Owner of Wiltse Creek Studio  
(outlet at Charleston Lake)*



*Front of Roosburg Farms*

# EXPLORE OUR BACK ROADS for a True Treasure Hunt

By Tanya Hammond

This summer take a drive and discover what some of our area has to offer. Local artisans, millers, chocolatiers, dairy producers, farm fresh produce and so much more all await the eager explorer.

People often ask me why I don't travel, but why would I when the area I am from is so rich in what it has to offer? Besides, the farmer in me keeps me close to my roots and I can easily fill my free time with exploring close to home.

Our area is abundant with artisans of all types. Did you know that the Branch Coordinator at one of our local libraries is a multi talented artist who owns Wiltse Creek Studio? Dawne Fiegen (Escott Library) celebrates life by creating paintings on canvas, wood, metal and more. Check out all she and other artists have to offer by visiting the quaint studio in the Outlet at Charleston Lake. For more information phone 613-659-2928 or look online [www.wiltsecreekstudio.ca](http://www.wiltsecreekstudio.ca). You will truly be inspired and don't be surprised if Dawne offers you some tips on creating your own masterpiece.

Next on the list of must see destinations is the Old Stone Mill in Delta, where you can explore 200 years of milling history. Nestled between Upper and Lower Beverly Lakes it is the only stone gristmill in Canada designated as a National Historic Site. The Old Stone Mill is an operating gristmill, milling organic heritage Red Fife wheat. You can view a milling demonstration, purchase some of their pure stone ground flour and if you visit on a Saturday morning during the summer, you can even buy some of their fresh baked

bread. Call 613-928-2584 for details on milling times and their many other events or check online at [www.deltamill.org](http://www.deltamill.org).

If you have a sweet tooth you will love the next stop on the treasure hunt, Ridgway Confections. Located in the heart of Seeley's Bay at 159 Main St., it is conveniently located next to the TD Bank. Chocolatier Derek Ouellet and his wife Cindy Healey sell hand-crafted Belgian chocolates from their charming little store that they've created in their commercial kitchen, using 100% sustainable cultivated cocoa beans. The chocolate melts in your mouth and leaves you wanting more. My personal favourite is the Pecan Butter Crunch Bark, which is a blend of caramel, milk chocolate and toasted pecans, but don't take my word for it - go try some for yourself. Check out Ridgway Confections online at [www.ridgwayconfections.com](http://www.ridgwayconfections.com).

What goes with chocolate? Milk of course! Sitting just behind Athens at #78 Wiltse Town Road is a state-of-the-art dairy barn owned by the Verburg family. Roosburg Farms was started by patriarch Nick Verburg in 1960. Now John, Nick's son, and John's two sons, Cole and Ian operate the dairy farm. The local farm family suffered a great loss in 2013 watching their barn and much of their livestock, including many of their prized Holsteins, lost in a fire. However, in farmer-like spirit, the family rallied and raised the roof on a new barn featuring not only futuristic robotics, but also a barn with a viewing area and a large meeting room accessible to the public. You can call ahead at 613-802-3604 and book a guided tour. You won't get a glass of milk to go

with your chocolate, but you will gain so much more by seeing where your milk comes from. Like them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/roosburgfarm](http://www.facebook.com/roosburgfarm).

Some might say I left the best for last on this treasure hunt through the back roads. I could not write an article like this without mentioning all of the wonderful farm fresh products you can find at Wendy's Country Market located at #408 Fortune Line Road just outside of Lyndhurst. The list of local products she carries is endless, covering everything from artisanal cheese and bison burgers, to vinaigrettes, water buffalo and everything in between. Wendy and her husband Rick host special events on the farm (see [www.wendyscountrymarket.com](http://www.wendyscountrymarket.com) for more details or call 613-928-2477). Join them July 31st when they celebrate with Super Sweet corn grown by my parents at Corn Acre Farms. No summer drive is complete without stocking up on some farm fresh produce from Wendy's to take back home or to the cottage.

A true food and art treasure hunt awaits you the next time you have an afternoon off and you want to take a drive through our country backroads. **LH**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Tanya Hammond is a local writer who has penned various articles under the name: "The Farmer's Daughter". Tanya resides in Lyndhurst and is a member of the Eastern Canada Farm Writers Association.