



“InTheDitch”

2017 NOTL Lawn Bowling Season - Canada’s 150th Birthday and 140th anniversary of NOTL Lawn Bowling Club

The official opening of the 2017 season occurs on Saturday, May 13th, with a piper and Lord Mayor Pat Darte to roll out the ‘First Bowl’ of the season. To help celebrate the 140th anniversary of one of Canada’s oldest lawn bowling clubs, President Paul McHoull provided Penny Coles of the *Niagara Advance* with information about the history of our club and the Frontier Trophy, that now sits in the trophy case at the NOTL Community Centre.



President Paul McHoull holding trophy

For those of you that missed the Niagara Advance story by Penny Coles on April 19th, the following is the major portion of the article.

As the Niagara-on-the-Lake Lawn Bowling Club celebrates its 140th anniversary, president Paul McHoull is looking for information on a piece of its history. Last May, *The Advance* had a front page picture of the club's official season opening, always a spectacle with a piper leading a parade of the bowlers, all dressed in their whites, around the green. That drew the attention of a local resident, said McHoull, who had found an old trophy when cleaning out his shed. He brought it to the club the next Saturday, and just handed it over the fence to one of the members. McHoull didn't get the name of the man who had the trophy, and would like to thank him and find out more about how he came to have it. "It turns out that there is quite a bit of history in this trophy," said McHoull, who did some research to find out just how old it was.

The inscription on the front is faded, but identifies it as The Frontier Trophy of the Niagara Bowling Club. On the base of the trophy is a jeweller's mark: "P. W. Ellis Co. Toronto Ont. 1877"

"Presumably, this cup was presented to a prizewinning team in a lawn bowling tournament held in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1877, the year that the Lawn Bowling Club was founded," said McHoull. "Bowlers would have come by train or by boat from as far away as Toronto or New York State. Sporting events in this area would often have a Frontier Trophy as one of the prizes."

The tournament, McHoull believes, would have been played on the club's first green on the grounds of the Queen's Royal Hotel, now the site of Queen's Royal Park. Built in 1868, the hotel was one of the finest in North America and attracted wealthy tourists from Canada, the U.S. and overseas. In 1901 the future King George V and Queen Mary were guests. When tourism declined the hotel fell on hard times and was demolished in 1930, said McHoull. The town council had the foresight to buy the property and preserve it as a park. "Fast forward to 2017 and the town council is in the process of converting the second site of the lawn bowling club to a park," he said. The club had moved in 1922 to a property owned by the town at the corner of Regent and Johnson Streets, where it remained until 2011 when it moved to the new community centre on Anderson Lane.

The P. W. Ellis Jewellery Company, which made the Frontier Trophy, was founded in 1872 by Philip W. Ellis and his twin brother Matthew C. Ellis in Toronto, McHoull discovered. "At one time this was the largest jewellery business in Canada. By 1928 it had merged with two other firms to become Birks Ellis Ryrie, which later became Birks."

Philip W. Ellis had many interests, said McHoull. "He was the developer of the Bedford Park area in Toronto with his brothers Matthew and William. In 1905 he became a member of the Ontario Hydro- Electric Commission and the Niagara Falls Park Commission. He was named as the first chairman of the Toronto City Hydro-Electric Commission (now Toronto Hydro) in 1911. Ellis was instrumental in the installations of 110-watt streetlights every 80 to 100 feet in the city, making Toronto the envy of other large cities. In 1921 he became the first chairman of what is now the TTC, a position he held until he died in 1929."

This year, said McHoull, as we celebrate Canada's 150th birthday and the 140th anniversary of one of Canada's oldest lawn bowling clubs, anyone interested in viewing historic photos from all three of the greens where the club has played can see them on the club website, notlbowls.ca.

Courtesy *Niagara Advance*, Penny Coles

2017 Registration and Membership

Registration began on Saturday, April 15 at 1:00 PM. It was a cool and damp start to the afternoon, but by 2:45 the sun was out and the carpet was dry enough for two lanes of triples.

We registered a total of 26 members, most of whom stayed to enjoy Tea while we waited for the weather to improve. Thank you to Joan Klooz and Cathy MacCon for providing the tea. Thank you to all those who helped with the cleanup.

There were sign up sheets ready for social duties, Open Pairs competition that commences on May 12th, and coaching for prospective new members. It was good to see that most people were signing up for the various activities.

There are still sign up sheets available for being a spare in the Ladies Frontier League on Thursdays or the Men's League on Wednesdays. These leagues play at different clubs throughout Niagara.

Over the course of the last two weeks we have had 17 prospective new members attend jitney days with all receiving varying amounts of coaching. As of April 29th, we now have 57 members, 2 social members and 3 lifetime members. Of those 57, 7 are new members. Other prospective members have had some coaching or are waiting to arrange dates with other coaches.

Thank you to all of you who have volunteered to coach and those who have already coached during jitney days, including Brenda Cooper, Wayne Jones, Brad Dalgliesh, David Taylor, Jim Stewart, Paul McHoull and Joan Klooz. Also thank you to Wayne Jones for providing new information sheets for new bowlers. They are very informative and nicely complement the longer 16 page information sheets. As you always do, please introduce yourself to new bowlers and make them feel welcome.

During the past two weeks, the weather has been a mixed bag, with some days very pleasant and other days being cool, damp and windy. Nevertheless, we've had no jitney days cancelled and have managed to get in triples, doubles and complete coaching for most new members.

Also, thank you to Carol and Donna Williams for providing the Tea on April 22 and Brenda and David Cooper for providing the Tea on April 29. As always, thank you to those who stayed to help with the cleanup on all three Saturday teas!

4-3-2-1

Although a bit damp and cool, 6 brave individuals turned out for the opening session of 4-3-2-1 on Tuesday, April 25th. No scores were kept for the first session and scoring will officially be recorded starting with the next session on May 2nd.

Photos from April 15 - April 29





Finally

There was once a bus conductor, and he had really bad anger management problems, One day a woman on the bus refused to pay the fare. Well, the bus conductor got so angry he killed her. He was tried and sentenced to death by the electric chair.

The day for his execution came, and they took him out of his cell and brought him to the chair. The guard said, "Have you any last requests?"

The man replied, "Yes, I'd like an unripe green banana, please."

So they got him an unripe green banana, and he peeled it, ate it, and threw the skin away, and they strapped him to the chair.

"Are you ready?" they asked.

"Yes," he said.

And they hit the switch. And nothing happened. So he was taken back to his cell.

The guards rewired the chair and tested it a few times, and it worked perfectly. They brought the man back and said, "Have you any last requests?"

The man replied, "Yes, I'd like an unripe green banana, please."

So they got him an unripe green banana, and he peeled it, ate it, and threw the skin away, and they strapped him to the chair.

"Are you ready?" they asked.

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And they hit the switch. And nothing happened. So he was taken back to his cell.

Well, the guards bought a brand new electric chair. This one was amazing: leather seats, gold-plated armrests studded with rubies, the works. It was an incredible sight.

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So they got him an unripe green banana, and he peeled it, ate it, and threw the skin away, and they strapped him to the chair.

"Are you ready?" they asked.

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And they hit the switch. And nothing happened.

Now, in this particular state, there was a law that if someone survived the electric chair three times, he must be set free. So the man was released, and as soon as he stepped out of the prison, the press was all over him. He walked through the crowd and the flashing cameras until he saw a small man who asked, "Have you discovered some miraculous phenomenon of unripe green bananas?"

"No," he replied, "I've just always been a bad conductor."

