

2020 Inductees

GORD BROOKS

Gord Brooks was born in Cobourg on September 11, 1950 and has the distinction of being Cobourg's first National Hockey League player.

He played his minor hockey with the Cobourg Church Hockey League and spent the 1967-68 season with Cobourg's Junior 'B' Cougars where he collected 21 goals, 26 assists and 44 minutes in penalties.

Gord played his major Junior 'A' years with the Hamilton Red Wings and the London Knights. At the end of the 1969-70 season, Gord Brooks was drafted 51st overall by the St. Louis Blues and spent his first professional season with their farm team, the Kansas City Blues.

From 1971 to 1975, Gordie played 70 National Hockey League games with both the St. Louis Blues and the Washington Capitals.

From 1975 to 1980, he played in the North American Hockey League and the American Hockey League where he truly made a name for himself. He played for both the Philadelphia Firebirds and Syracuse Firebirds, averaging 93 points a season for a total of 464. In 1977, his team won the Lockhart Cup as American Hockey League champions.

In 1978, Gord won the John B. Sollenberger trophy as the American Hockey League's scoring champion and was named to the League's first All-star team. In 1980, he played part of a season in Klagenfurt, Austria until a knee injury forced him out. The next year he joined the Saginaw Gears winning an international League championship.

Two years after retiring as a pro, he came back to play Senior hockey for Brantford, winning an Allan Cup.

Today, Gordie Brooks and his wife Beth live in London, Ontario, close to their children and grandchildren.

NEIL CANE

Neil Cane was a much loved and respected member of this area's sporting community.

His athletic career included winning Cobourg Mercantile Hockey League championships in the mid 1960s and being named the most valuable player in 1959. In the summer, Neil was a skilled softball catcher. He was an excellent, well-respected umpire and referee in many leagues throughout our region.

Neil's real calling in life became volunteering and working in the local sporting community.

When Neil Cane started working at the Baltimore Recreation Complex, there was only one ball diamond. He helped acquire the lights from Cobourg's Victoria Park Diamond and had them installed. This allowed for night games to be played in Baltimore. Three more ball diamonds were constructed under his leadership making their park a first-class softball facility.

Over the years, he was the recipient of many awards. These included the Cobourg Church Hockey League's Outstanding Service Award, the Legion Minor Softball's Certificate of Merit, Legion Minor Softball's Pee Wee Coach of the Year, and the Ontario Amateur Softball Association's Outstanding Service award in both 1995 and 1998. Neil was also awarded The Baltimore Arena Committee's "Devotion of Duty" Award, the Cobourg Men's Softball League's "Thanks for the Memories" Award, and The Cobourg Rotary Club's highest award, "The Paul Harris Fellowship". In 2007, Neil was named Hamilton Township's "Senior of the Year".

Neil's legacy of volunteerism is exceptional. His enormous contributions to our sporting circles were truly extraordinary and his memory will be forever etched in the heart of his community.

DR. REVEREND KEVIN FAST

Dr. Reverend Kevin Fast was born in St. Catharines, Ontario, on April 17, 1963. Upon graduation, he served in several congregations before arriving at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cobourg, in 1992. Growing up he was of average athletic ability.

It was in 1994 that he discovered the Cobourg Highland Games. Although Kevin had never seen the events before, he accepted an invitation to compete and surprising himself - He Won! This motivated Kevin to attempt other feats of strength, some that did not seem to be humanly possible. He has pulled everything from fire trucks to trains to houses to planes. As of February 2020, Kevin has recorded 34 world records for feats of strength and appears in the Guinness World Book of Records for setting 31 records.

One of Kevin's incredible feats of strength occurred on September 18, 2009 at the Trenton Air Force Base, where he pulled a 188,830.05 kg (416,299 pound) CCI77 Globemaster III Aircraft a distance of 8.8 metres. Along the way, he was dubbed "The Powerlifting Pastor" by his many fans and supporters.

Kevin Fast has appeared on numerous TV shows that were covering his feats of strength. He has raised thousands of dollars for many charities. For example, by pulling a house and setting a new world record, he helped raise \$70,000 for Habitat for Humanity.

Kevin Fast is 5'9" tall and weighs 300 pounds. His philosophy is simple - "God has given me the gift of strength and, in thanksgiving, I will use it for His Glory as long as I have it."

With faith, prayer and the love of his family - Kevin Fast continues to compete.

MARGARET ANNE MATTHEWS

Margaret Anne Matthews was born on May 15, 1960, in Cobourg. From a very young age, Margie was an abundantly talented, multi-sport athlete who consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership. Her enthusiasm was contagious. She was very skilled, was the ultimate team leader, and always gave 100%.

Margie burst onto the provincial softball stage at the age of 12 when she played for David and Clarke Sommerville's "Sinclair Mustangs". They captured the Ontario Novice Championship in 1972.

At 14, Margie Matthews joined Paul Currelly's Cobourg Angels softball Juvenile team and competed against players that were 18 and 19 years of age. While playing with the Angels, she won 2 more Ontario titles at the Junior 'B' level in 1975 and 1976. Paul Currelly remarked that, "When you are talking about Margie, you are talking about one of the best juvenile ball players, anywhere. Her desire and hustle keep the entire team moving." Margie Matthews won 7 Ontario Softball Championships in her career.

While attending high school at CDCI West, from 1974-79, Margie was a multi-sport outstanding athlete. In 1978, she was voted Most Valuable Player of both the basketball and volleyball teams, received a coaching award and was selected as Cobourg District Collegiate Institute West's Athlete of the Year. Margie was also named Cobourg's Athlete of the Year. In 1979, the West dedicated an award in recognition to her contributions - the "Matthews Award" for performance and leadership.

Margie continues to display exceptional athletic skills as a golfer. She has won 18 club championships, 16 championships at the Stratford Country Club and 2 championships at Woodstock's Craigowan Golf Club. As a member of the Ontario Women's Amateur golf team in 2004, Margie won the Canadian Championship. In 2009, she won the Golf Ontario Women's Mid-Am title with scores of 73-75-69.

Margaret Anne Matthews, one of Cobourg's best-ever all-round athletes.

DANIEL ROSS MILUGAN

Daniel Ross Milligan was born August 26, 1953, in London, Ontario and he arrived in Cobourg in 1980.

Dan first got involved in the sport of lawn bowling at about the age of 13 when he, and his sister Sharyl Ann, would tag along with their dad to the Agincourt Lawn Bowling Club.

Over the years, Dan has represented Canada 5 times internationally. In 1981, he was the Provincial and International Singles Champion and was a bowls medalist numerous times. In 1985, at the Pacific Games, he placed first in the pairs event at Tweed Heads, Australia. Dan was a pairs champion in 1986 at the Hong Kong Classic. That same year, he won a silver medal in 4's at the Commonwealth Games held in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was awarded Canada's Confederation Medal in 1992 for contributions to the sport of lawn bowls.

Dan was the National Coaching Chairperson from 1983-1987 and was the National Team Coach at the Commonwealth Games at Victoria, British Columbia, in 1994.

He is the highest ranked bowls coach in Canada. He was invited back to the National Program 4 years ago to lead a team of coaches to develop the High-Performance Coaching Program. Currently, he is the only Master Evaluator and Master Learning Facilitator in Canada.

Dan spends hundreds of hours each year teaching bowlers the art of delivery and fundamental elements of the game.

He was inducted into the Ontario Bowls Hall of Fame in 2018. Dan Milligan is, and continues to be, an exceptional local athlete and outstanding builder in the sport of lawn bowling locally, nationally, and beyond.

FRED SIMPSON

Fred Simpson, known as the Ojibway Thunderbolt, was born in Alderville, in 1878, to James and Mary Simpson. By 1891, he had lost both of his parents and was raised by his maternal grandmother. In adulthood, Fred stood at 5'11" and weighed 145 pounds, possessing great strength and stamina. That stature would lead him to become one of the best runners in Canada.

Around 1899, Fred moved to the Hiawatha Reserve on the north shore of Rice Lake and married Susan Muskrat. During 1906, Fred started long-distance running and participated in the 10-mile Peterborough Examiner road race. His third-place finish caught the eye of Dick Baker, Coach of the YMCA harrier track team, who began to work with the young runner.

In the Autumn of 1907, Fred finished second in the premier Hamilton Herald road race. This put him in the limelight. Over the next 8 months he improved to the point where he was considered a legitimate hopeful to qualify for the Canadian Team which would compete at the 1908 Olympics in London, England. At the Canadian Olympic finals, he secured his place on the team.

The Olympic marathon was run on July 24, 1908, from Windsor Castle to Shepherd's Bush in east London. Only 14 of 32 runners were able to finish. Fred Simpson finished 6th in a time of 3:04:28. After London, Simpson would again finish second in the 1908 Hamilton Herald road race.

In 1909, he turned professional to race on a circuit that would take him to Savannah, Chicago, New York City, Newark, Buffalo, Fort William, Montreal and Toronto.

After the 1911-12 racing season was complete, Fred Simpson retired to Hiawatha to continue raising his family with Susan. In 1923, he moved his family back to Alderville where he lived out his life. He passed away on May 19, 1945.

In 2011, a stone was placed at Simpson's unmarked grave in the Alderville First Nation cemetery commemorating his life and his feats as a long-distance runner.

KENNETH WAYNE JAMES PETRIE

Kenneth Wayne James Petrie was born in Stratford, Ontario, July 11, 1946. He moved to Cobourg in 1957, with his family.

Ken unselfishly devoted much of his adult life to minor sports in Cobourg. These included the Cobourg Church Hockey League, the Legion Minor Softball Association and the Cobourg Baseball Association.

At the age of 19, he was recruited by Layton Dodge to volunteer with the Cobourg Church Hockey League (CCHL) as an assistant coach. This began a lifelong tenure with the organization until they moved to the Cobourg Community Centre, in 2011. Ken was a tireless worker acting as a coach, manager, trainer, fund raiser, bingo volunteer, executive member, committee member or just helping out wherever he could. Ken Petrie was the President of the Cobourg Church Hockey League a record 11 times and was named a life Member. It is on record that Layton Dodge called Ken, "The driving force behind the CCHL". Ken Petrie lived the CCHL motto, "Dedicated to our Youth".

Since the mid 1960's, Ken's teams had an amazing list of championships, claiming 10 provincial titles in minor sports. In 1967, Ken, along with Tom Savage, coached the legion squirt Red Wings team to a provincial championship. It was Cobourg Legion Minor Softball's first ever Provincial title.

Over Ken Petrie's 50 plus years of volunteerism in Cobourg's minor sports community, he was recognized with many certificates, citations, plaques and awards for service to his community. One of Ken's associates noted that you didn't mind helping him as he never asked anyone to do anything he wouldn't do himself.

Ken was a quiet man who did his talking through his actions and no one did it better. Ken Petrie was a very special volunteer and a true sportsman.

ROBERT CLARKE SOMMERVILLE

Robert Clarke Sommerville was born in Toronto, on December 5, 1930. Playing hockey in his early life, he worked his way up to the Junior A ranks, spending 4 years as a goaltender for the Galt Black Hawks. The following two years were spent in the American Hockey League, playing with Philadelphia and Washington.

In 1952, Clarke purchased a small retail business in Cobourg that evolved into Sommerville's Sporting Goods. Upon arrival, he got involved in the local sports community. He played for the Intermediate hockey team, joined the golf club, pitched in the Town Softball League and joined the executive of the Cobourg Church Hockey League. Quietly, and with a small group of other local sport-minded men, a lacrosse League for kids was formed, which operated out of Cobourg's Memorial Arena.

In the mid 1960's, Clarke, Dick Robinson, Jeff Rolph and Layton Dodge were instrumental in starting and funding a local Junior "B" hockey team, the Cobourg Cougars. Clarke was a Cobourg Cougars' lifetime executive member. He served in many roles with the team, including General Manager.

Clarke was also involved with minor softball. In 1972, Clarke and his son David coached their "Sinclair Mustangs" to an Ontario Softball Championship.

The sporting goods store was a gathering spot for people to discuss current issues. Many important decisions about local sports were made around the store's famous pop cooler. Clarke was proud and humbled to be involved in the successes of the Cobourg Cougars, the Cold Springs Cats and countless other local teams and organizations. Throughout the decades, Sommerville's Sporting Goods has been a staunch supporter of many sports and athletes in various ways behind the scenes. His support of athletes was truly profound.

Clarke Sommerville was a good athlete but his true legacy is as a builder of sport. His contributions will have an everlasting impact on our community.