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## **2019 ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARDS & HALL OF FAME INDUCTION BANQUET RECAP**

TORONTO, ON – November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – On Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) held its Annual Awards Banquet and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at the Marriott on the Falls in Niagara Falls, ON. This ceremony included many of the OLA's key contributors – staff members, the Board of Directors and Board of Governors, volunteers, organizers, partners, top-spirited players, Hall of Fame Alumni and executives – as well as friends and family of those present.

The evening began with cocktails and camaraderie. Master of Ceremonies Mr. Rod Mawhood welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance. The Ontario Lacrosse Association's staff, Board of Directors and Board of Governors were invited to stand and be recognized for their contributions. Hall of Fame Members and Life Members of both the OLA and CLA were also called upon. Following these introductions, Ontario Junior "B" Lacrosse League Commissioner Dave Vernon offered grace.

Following dinner, the awards ceremony took place. Five OLA awards and six Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame inductions were presented.

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTION:

### **Dr. Mark Evans** – Brampton – Builder Category (Box, Men's Field)

Mark Evans was nominated in the Builder Category as a dedicated coach, executive member and historian from Brampton. Mark coached high school field lacrosse in the early 1980's and became the head coach of the Brampton Junior "A" Excelsiors by 1984. By the mid 1990's, Mark was coaching multiple minor teams, and became the first recipient of the Brampton Minor Lacrosse Association's Revis Bennett Coach of the Year Award. He returned to the Junior "A" coaching role in 2005. In recent years, Mark's interests have turned to investigating and writing about the history and heritage of the game in Brampton.

Dr. Evans was introduced by close friend Ziggy Musial, who detailed Mark's accomplishments and accolades throughout the years. Following Mr. Musial's introduction, those in attendance were shown a video of Dr. Evans' Hall of Fame Induction acceptance speech. "This is a very special recognition for me, as this next year will represent the 150<sup>th</sup> year of the Brampton Excelsiors Lacrosse Club," said Dr. Evans of his Hall of Fame Induction.



*Dr. Mark Evans*



## ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARD:

### **Chuck Rowan Award** – Seamus O’Connell – Cornwall Celtics

The OLA's Chuck Rowan Award is presented to the Midget or Intermediate player demonstrating proficiency in box lacrosse combined with outstanding achievement in citizenship and academics. The Award is presented in memory of Chuck Rowan, and nominations are accepted to honour individuals within the box lacrosse community who meet the qualifications. One nomination is selected annually to receive this award, which includes a plaque and a \$1,000 academic bursary.

OLA President Marion Ladouceur was invited to present the 2019 Chuck Rowan Award to Seamus O’Connell of the Cornwall Celtics. Mr. O’Connell thanked his coaching staff, teammates, parents and the Ontario Lacrosse Association for his award.



*Marion Ladouceur, Seamus O’Connell*

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTION:

### **Ken (Scooter) Lotton – Whitby/Brampton – Veteran Category (Box)**

Ken Lotton was known as a strong, rugged and fast defensive player during his time with the Green Gaels (1953 – 1957) before graduating to the Brooklin Redmen Lacrosse Club, where they captured the Ontario title in 1963, 1965 and 1967. Following his playing career, Ken moved behind the bench of the Brampton Excelsiors as a member of the 1972 Presidents Cup champion team and the 1975 Mann Cup finalist team. As a result of his accomplishments, an opportunity to coach the Calgary Legionnaires and, eventually, the Calgary Shamrocks, resulted in Ken relocating to Alberta. In total, Ken has tallied over 60 years of lacrosse involvement.

Mr. Lotton was introduced by his wife Treasure, who reflected on the memories of Ken's glory days. Ken then took the stage to thank his family for travelling to celebrate his induction with him, including extended family members from Alberta and Yukon. "In 1963, the CCM company brought a barrel of plastic sticks to our practice for us to try. Of course, we broke them all that evening," said Mr. Lotton to the delight of the audience.



*Ken Lotton, Treasure Lotton*



## ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARD:

### **E.W. Billy Evans Award** – Jonathan Donville – Mimico Mountaineers, Orangeville Northmen

The OLA's Billy Evans Award is presented to the most outstanding Junior "A" graduating player. This award is presented in memory of Billy Evans, a player who travelled to Canada from Wales in the 1920's to play for the Brampton Excelsiors Lacrosse Club. Eligible candidates must have competed for five years in the Ontario Junior "A" Lacrosse League, and nominations are proposed by each of the 12 teams in the league. One nomination is selected annually to receive this award.

The Ontario Junior "A" Lacrosse League was represented by Bob Clevely, who spoke to the legacy and impact of Billy Evans' involvement with lacrosse in Ontario. Mr. Clevely then introduced Mimico Mountaineers Lacrosse Association representative Sean O'Callaghan who detailed the on-floor and off-floor accomplishments of Jonathan Donville, as well as the influence and effect his playing had on the Mimico Mountaineers in their pursuit of the Minto Cup. Mr. O'Callaghan then introduced Jonathan Donville, who thanked his teammates, the staff of the Mimico Mountaineers and the Orangeville Northmen, the Ontario Lacrosse Junior "A" League and the Ontario Lacrosse Association for his award.



*Sean O'Callaghan, Jonathan Donville, Bob Clevely*

## HALL INDUCTION:

### **Bob (Slip) McMahon – Brampton/Orangeville – Builder Category (Box)**

Following his playing career, Bob McMahon has established himself as a fixture in the coaching world at the minor, junior, senior and professional levels since 1988. He was a member of the Brampton Excelsiors of the MSL from 1994 until 2000, as well as various Orangeville Northmen minor lacrosse teams from 1990-1993, 1998, 2001-2006 and again in 2011. Outside of the OLA, he assumed a coaching with Team Canada at the 2003 World Indoor Lacrosse Championships, establishing the Canadians as an undefeated national team which continues until present day. He is also a founding member of the Team Ontario program since its reestablishment, serving as the Director of Scouting / Player Development from 2004 until 2018. This season marks Bob's 51<sup>st</sup> year of lacrosse involvement, since his first playing days with the Erindale Minor Lacrosse Association.

His eldest son Jamie, himself a dedicated lacrosse player, paid homage to his father with a moving introduction about what it meant to be the son of Bob McMahon. When reflecting on what the sport means to him, Bob remarked "I think it's the people that I've met [through lacrosse] that mean the most. Championships are just a bonus, but I've made some lifelong connections. A lot of the kids that I've coached have moved on to the NCAA and the NLL, and it's nice to think that I've had a small part in making that happen for them."



*Bob McMahon, Jamie McMahon*

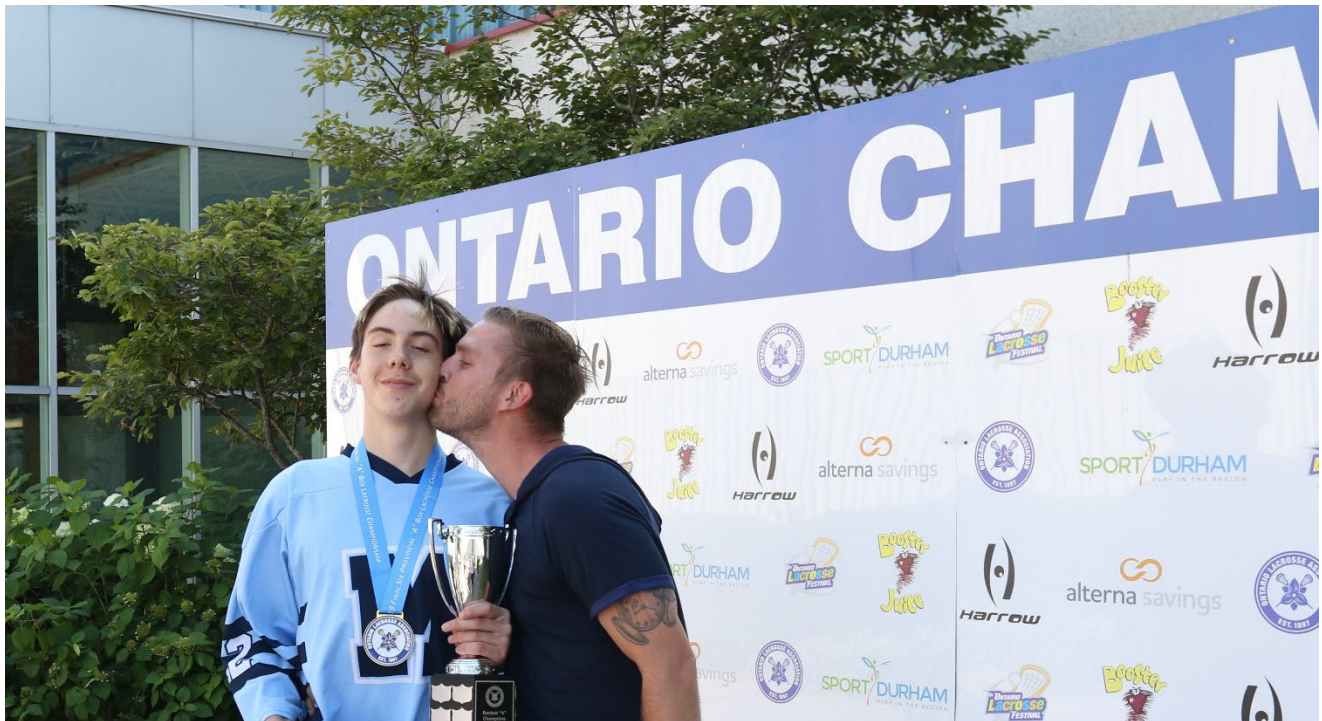


## ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARD:

### **Jamieson Kuhlmann Award – Finlay Thomson – Mimico Mountaineers**

The OLA's Jamieson Kuhlmann Award is presented to the Midget or Intermediate player demonstrating proficiency in field lacrosse combined with outstanding achievement in citizenship and academics. The Award is presented in memory of Jamieson Kuhlmann, and nominations are accepted to honour individuals within the field lacrosse community who meet the qualifications. One nomination is selected annually to receive this award, which includes a plaque and a \$1,000 academic bursary.

Jamieson's parents Sharon and Mark Kuhlmann, and 2019 Award Winner Finlay Thomson were all unable to be in attendance, but Linda Blogg spoke about the gratitude that the Kuhlmann family felt as the Ontario Lacrosse community continues to honour Jamieson's memory. Mimico Mountaineers VP Colleen Grimes was introduced to read from prepared remarks on behalf of Finlay, who thanked his coaching staff, teammates, parents and the Ontario Lacrosse Association for his award.



*Finlay Thomson, 2019 Ontario Lacrosse Festival*

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTION:

### **Lewis (Louie) Mitchell – Akwesasne – Player Category (Box)**

There is little appreciation for how good Lewis Mitchell was playing at both ends of the floor. Despite being the youngest member of the Akwesasne Junior Lacrosse club at just seventeen years old, he was voted team captain, a title which he held for all four years before graduating to play for the Akwesasne Senior Warriors and capturing the Presidents' Cup in his first year with the club. Lewis also participated as part of the Iroquois Nationals Team in Vancouver in 1980. Off the floor, Lewis demonstrates his leadership abilities as the Chief of the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Force and his love of the game as a wooden stick maker to keep the tradition of hand-crafted sticks in the game.

Lewis was honoured by his daughter Rhonda, who spoke about the undeniable impact her father has had within the lacrosse community. "At a young age, you pick up a wooden stick, and you know that that's the stick you're going to play with, it's just how you feel. When I craft a stick today, I look for that same feeling," said Mitchell in his Hall of Fame Induction video which was dedicated to his friend Peter Garrow.



*Rhonda Aldrich, Lewis Mitchell*



## ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARD:

### **Merv MacKenzie Award – Shelly Nobile – Senior Series Lacrosse**

The OLA's Merv MacKenzie Award is presented to the person selected as having done the most for the promotion of the game of lacrosse in Ontario. One nomination is selected annually to receive this award, which includes a plaque.

OLA Vice President of Promotion Sonya Crossey presented the 2019 Merv MacKenzie Award to Shelly Nobile, Commissioner of the newly established Senior Series Lacrosse League. Shelly's long list of lacrosse contributions began as an executive member of the Huntsville Hawks Minor Lacrosse Association, including stints as treasurer, tournament director, coaching selection committee chairperson and President. From there, she served as Zone 4 Director, overseeing the introduction of field lacrosse programs, in-school promotions and fundraising initiatives that have encouraged participation throughout the region.

In 2018, Shelly took on a massive challenge: founding a brand new senior lacrosse league where graduating junior players could continue to participate in the sport they love. She worked to establish rules, regulations and policies that detailed the operation of the league, recruited franchise governors and players, repeatedly pitched the concept to the OLA's Board of Directors for approval, planned schedules and promoted the league as a place where players could continue to play in a competitive environment. As commissioner of Senior Series Lacrosse, Shelly is recognized with the Merv MacKenzie Award for promoting lacrosse in Ontario.

Shelly thanked her family and lacrosse friends for continually supporting her passion for the game.



*Shelly Nobile, Sonya Crossey*

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTION:

### **Evan (Leven) Thomas** – Fort Erie/Ohsweken – Player Category (Box)

Evan's playing career spanned an incredible 21 years, and that's only counting his senior lacrosse involvement. Beginning in 1968, he suited up with the Fort Erie Hawks before moving on to the Six Nations Braves (two championships), the Six Nations Chiefs (three championships) and the Six Nations Warriors (four championships). His final team was the Caledonia Chiefs, who won the 1988 CanAm Championship, capping off a legendary career as an eight-time captain and seven-time MVP.

Jay Smith introduced Mr. Thomas with a story of how he looked up to Evan as a young player. According to Mr. Smith, whenever Evan was on the floor, "it was like he had gifts that none of us could even dream of. You couldn't take your eyes off him. He is undoubtedly one of the best players to ever pick up a stick." Following Mr. Smith's introduction, Evan's induction video was shown.



*Evan Thomas, Jay Smith*



## ONTARIO LACROSSE AWARD:

### **“Mr. Lacrosse” Award – Bob Clevely – Orangeville**

The OLA's “Mr. Lacrosse” Award is presented in memory of Thomas “Tip” Teather to the person selected as having made an outstanding contribution to the game of lacrosse in Ontario. One nomination is selected annually to receive this award, which includes a plaque. The “Mr. Lacrosse” Award is the Ontario Lacrosse Association's most prestigious service award.

With his family in attendance, Mr. Bob Clevely was presented with the 2019 Mr. Lacrosse Award for his sustained contribution of leadership and governance. His driving philosophy is simple: to ensure that all current players understand the importance of giving back to future generations in order to keep the game vibrant and moving forward. His success is attributed to both his simple message of respect for the game and his encouragement of those who play for his teams to become active ambassadors of lacrosse. It's a simple formula that anyone can replicate within their own organization; an inspiring message of dedication and love for the game.



*Colleen Grimes, Bob Clevely, Fiona Clevely, Cara Burleigh*

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTION:

### **Jim (Scoop) Veltman** – Brampton – Player Category (Box)

The origins of Jim's illustrious career can be traced to the Ontario Junior "A" Lacrosse League, where he played all five of his eligible seasons for the Brampton Junior "A" Excelsiors, winning the MVP in 1987. His junior-aged years were immediately followed by seven seasons with the Brampton Excelsiors of the MSL, winning three Mann Cup championships as an Excelsior and a fourth and final Mann Cup as part of the 2003 Victoria Shamrocks Lacrosse Club. Another four seasons of senior lacrosse followed as a member of the Senior "B" Ajax-Pickering Rock, where Veltman picked up his first Presidents Cup championship in 2007. The nickname Scoop was derived from his proficiency for defensive loose balls, although he is known more today for his ambassadorship of lacrosse throughout the world than his record-breaking loose ball skills.

Mr. Veltman was introduced by his friend Glenn Clark. Glenn spoke of the pride that the Veltman family felt when hearing that Jim was to be inducted into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame. "When I look at this Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame Induction ring, it will remind me of all the incredible players that I played with and against during my career, and I'm going to wear it proudly," Jim with a smile.



*Glenn Clark, Jim Veltman*



The Ontario Lacrosse Association's Annual Awards Banquet and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony concluded with Master of Ceremonies Rod Mawhood calling the six inductees to the stage to be formally recognized. A standing ovation was delivered by the 175 guests in attendance to celebrate the 2019 Class of the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame inductees and Ontario Lacrosse Association award winners.

Special credit to Mike Pollington of Pollington Productions for contributing the Hall of Fame Induction videos to the presentation.



*Evan Thomas, Lewis Mitchell, Dr. Mark Evans, Ken Lotton, Bob McMahon, Jim Veltman*

#### About the Ontario Lacrosse Association:

Since 1897, the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) has been recognized as the administrative governing body which exists to improve, foster, perpetuate and govern of all levels (youth, junior and senior) and disciplines (box, field and women's field) of lacrosse in the province of Ontario.

In addition to coordinating the operation of the sport, the OLA provides informative resources, technical development programs and additional supplies for those interested in the "fastest game on two feet." For more information, contact the Ontario Lacrosse Association at (416) 426-7066 or email [info@ontariolacrosse.com](mailto:info@ontariolacrosse.com).