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## 2018 ONTARIO LACROSSE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

ST. CATHARINES, ON – July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 – The Ontario Lacrosse Association announces the newest members of the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum, located in St. Catharines, Ontario. Established in 1997 and celebrating its 21<sup>st</sup> class of inductees, the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame recognizes the achievements of those individuals who have made a notable impact to the sport of lacrosse in Ontario as players, builders, veterans, special contributors and/or charter members. The Class of 2018 Inductees are John Reginald “Jack” Ashbee\*\* (Fergus/Brampton), Joe Teiorakwate Curotte (Kahnawake), Eric Perroni (Whitby), Robert Vesey (Brooklin) and Mark Vitarelli (Peterborough). The induction of these five individuals brings the total number of Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame members to 303. The 2018 Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame Induction Dinner will formally recognize these five people in front of friends and family on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at Marriott Gateway on the Falls Hotel (6755 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls, ON).

### **John Reginald “Jack” Ashbee\*\* – Fergus/Brampton – Veteran Category (Box)**

Jack Ashbee was both a competitive lacrosse player and builder of the sport. Jack played his junior lacrosse career for Weston in 1946 and 1947, and was known for his defensive power. As a junior player, he won the Most Valuable Player award before graduating to play Senior “B” lacrosse for Streetsville and West York. By 1953, he had become a respected player/coach with the Streetsville Thistles and led the team to a Senior “B” Ontario Championship title. In 1960, Jack joined the Brampton Senior “A” Excelsiors, retiring as a player in 1965 with two Ontario Championship titles and two Mann Cup Canadian National Championship finalist titles. From 1966 until 1968, Jack coached the Excelsiors before becoming their trainer until 1972. Jack is being honoured posthumously with this induction into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

### **Joe Teiorakwate Curotte – Kahnawake – Player Category (Box)**

Born in Kahnawake, Quebec, Joe Curotte played defense for both the junior (1965 – 1969) and senior (1969 – 1980) Caughnawaga Indians. Joe competed against notable Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame players including Gaylord Powless, Johnny Davis, Bruce Roundpoint, Frank Benedict and Mike Benedict. During his career, he

was named Best Defensive Player in both junior (1966 and 1968) and senior (1976), as well as being named twice to the Junior Allstar Team (1967 and 1969) and receiving the Thorpe Longboat Trophy at the Native North American Lacrosse Championships in Vancouver (1969). Joe's championship titles include a Junior Provincial Championship with the Caughnawaga Indians in 1966 and a finalist title with the senior team in 1969.

#### **Eric Perroni – Whitby – Player Category (Box)**

Eric has dedicated his lifetime of involvement to the Whitby/Brooklin lacrosse programs. He played junior lacrosse for the Whitby Junior "A" Warriors from 1980 until 1985, winning three Minto Cup Canadian National Championship titles (1980, 1984 and 1985). Following his junior career, Eric joined the Brooklin Senior "A" Redmen for the next 15 years, capturing four Mann Cup Canadian National Championship victories (1987, 1988, 1990 and 2000). He finished the 1991 season 4<sup>th</sup> in league scoring, and won the Merv MacKenzie trophy for Most Valuable Defensive Player in 1994. Eric competed against notable lacrosse legends including Paul and Gary Gait, as well as fellow Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame members Tom Wreggitt and Wayne Colley. Eric also played one year in the National Lacrosse League for the Whitby Steelhawks in 1991. Following the conclusion of his playing career, Eric coached minor lacrosse teams in the Durham Region.

#### **Robert "Bob" Vesey – Brooklin – Builder Category (Box)**

Celebrating 57 years of passionate lacrosse involvement in the Brooklin area, Bob Vesey has been a tireless builder of lacrosse. By all accounts, Bob has lived in Brooklin for the majority of his life and not a day goes by that he is not working to serve or support the Brooklin Redmen organization in one function or another. Bob's community volunteer approach to generating business support, advertising and sponsorships has been adopted throughout the lacrosse community. He has held multiple non-playing positions during his tenure with the Redmen Lacrosse Club, including general manager, executive member, president and golf tournament organizer. Although the positions and accolades he has accumulated during nearly six decades of involvement are numerous, his pride rests in the championship teams that has been a part of, including 15 Ontario Lacrosse Association provincial championships, 13 Eastern Canadian Championships and seven Mann Cup National Championship teams. Bob is an integral part of building the loyal fan base of the Brooklin Redmen, and has been a great ambassador for the sport of lacrosse.

#### **Mark Vitarelli – Peterborough – Builder Category (Box)**

Mark's playing career ended with Peterborough following a knee injury in 1976, and he began coaching the following year as the assistant coach of the Peterborough Junior "A" Gray-Munros. Two years later, he assumed the head coach responsibilities and led the team to three consecutive Minto Cup Canadian National Championship wins in 1981, 1982 and 1983. For his efforts, Mark was recognized as Coach of the Year in both 1982 and 1983. The following season, Mark graduated to coaching the Peterborough Senior "A" Lakers lacrosse team and found even more success, winning his first Mann Cup Canadian National Championship title in 1984. He returned to the Junior "A" team in 1989 to capture another Minto Cup while simultaneously coaching a novice-aged team in the Ontario Lacrosse Association to a provincial championship win. By 1992, Mark was coaching four minor lacrosse teams (two in tyke and two in novice); a feat he managed to maintain until the 1995 season. By 1999, Mark had returned to the Senior "A" Lakers organization where he was recognized as the MSL Coach of the Year. Since that time, he has served as part of the coaching staff of the Guelph Power of the Canadian National Lacrosse League, as well as both the Syracuse Smash (2000) and the

Ottawa Rebels (2001) clubs of the National Lacrosse League. In 2015, Mark returned to the game as an executive member of the Peterborough Senior "A" Lakers, who captured the Mann Cup in 2017.

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The Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum is located at Lock 3 of the Welland Canal Parkway in St. Catharines, Ontario. Please contact Chuck Miller ([chuck.miller@bell.net](mailto:chuck.miller@bell.net)) for further information related to the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and its members.