

SPORTS & LEISURE

The first-ever entrants into the Halton Hills Sports Museum's Hall of Fame gathered for a photograph after the gala induction ceremony Thursday night at the John Elliott Theatre. Approximately 200 people attended the event and the museum will welcome in a new set of inductees next June. Pictured above are 2007 inductees (from left): Hal Pells, Bruce Andrews, Jim Hall, Mary Ann Lapointe, Paul Howard (representing his late father, Bob) and Blaine McCauley (receiving the award on behalf of his dad John).



Photo by Ted Brown

Sports Museum welcomes original six

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Staff Writer

For someone who's already been inducted into a hall of fame or two before, amateur golfer Mary Ann Lapointe says that becoming a venerated member in the Halton Hills Sports Museum will hold a special place in comparison to the many awards she's received through her still-going-strong career.

"I've received accolades through the golf community, but to be acknowledged for just being an athlete is quite special and I guess my first thanks will go out to Tiger Woods for getting golfers recognized as athletes in the first place," quipped the 47-year-old Lapointe, who has been selected into the Canadian and Ontario golf halls of fame over the past two years and has won several provincial and national championships.

The first half-dozen inductees were welcomed into the Halton Hills Sports Museum Hall of Fame by about 200 spectators at the John Elliott Theatre Thursday evening at its inaugural gala ceremony. Four people were inducted into the builders' category, while Lapointe and middle-distance runner Bruce Andrews have a place as athletes.

For the 65-year-old Andrews, a longtime teacher and coach at Acton District High School, induction into the hall of fame has meant that a glorious period in his life more than four decades ago will be documented

for future generations in the museum and resource centre, which is located upstairs in the Mold-Masters SportsPlex.

"I count myself very fortunate to be among the first inductees," said Andrews, captain of the Seton Hall University two-mile relay teams that won U.S. national indoor championships in 1964 and 1965. "I have a feeling that with me being a little older, a lot of people don't know me or what we accomplished, so this is nice."

The inductees were selected based on nominations submitted to the Sports Museum's Hall of Fame selection committee. Another induction ceremony will take place next June and nominations will be accepted beginning in September for the 2008 event.

Two of the builders were inducted posthumously and it was an emotional evening for many of the family members who attended.

Bob Howard volunteered for the executive of the Georgetown Skating Club in the early 1970s when two of his children, Ed and Colleen, took up figure skating and he soon rose through the ranks from the Central Ontario Section to become Skate Canada president in 1986. Three generations of the Howard family were on hand to witness Thursday's ceremony. Howard passed suddenly just prior to the World Figure Skating Championships in Vancouver in March 2001, having contributed greatly to the sport

in Canada and as a delegate to the International Skating Union.

"In a way we're lucky he's not here because accepting awards was not my father's strong suit," said his son Paul, who made the acceptance speech. "He believed very strongly that it was his obligation to give back to his community."

John McCauley died at age 44 while serving as Director of Officiating for the National Hockey League and his involvement in lacrosse was just as extensive, having coached the 1980 Brampton team that captured the Mann Cup over New Westminster, B.C. A video clip of McCauley appearing as a guest on Don Cherry's *Grapevine* television program 20 years ago was shown, with 'Grapes' saluting 'Gus' for the respect earned during the decade spent as a first-choice NHL referee.

"I have never got along with referees but this guy, for some reason, all of the players (respected him) and if there's such a thing as a player's referee, it was (McCauley)," Cherry said.

"Thank you for keeping my dad's legacy alive. I know he'd be very honoured to be a part of this hall of fame," said McCauley's son Blaine.

While Thursday's proceedings were mostly about celebrating past successes, there was some news to report. Current Georgetown Minor Hockey Association

president Hal Pells hinted that he plans on stepping down when his latest two-year term expires in 2009 after 17 years in that role, although he added his three-decades plus involvement as an off-ice volunteer will continue as long as his grandsons, Zack and Gauge, maintain their interest in the sport.

"Seeing this display tonight and watching the program, I sure am proud of (the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association) and the Halton Hills Sports Hall of Fame," Pells said.

Jim Ford received the Georgetown Hockey Heritage Award in 1993 for his dedication to local minor hockey from 1950-67, but with four daughters playing in the Kinsmen Girls' Softball leagues, his volunteer focus switched to the ball diamond and he remains head of the association over 40 years after he began as an umpire. More than 8,000 girls have played in one of the Kin leagues during Ford's tenure, including one, Kara McGaw, who went on to represent Canada at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Ga.

"A woman asked me why I've been running the Kinsmen Girls' Softball for so long and I told her I keep doing it because I'm a fool. Maybe I am a fool. Maybe I'm just used to doing it," said the 74-year-old Ford.

The gala ceremony will be broadcast on the local COGECO community channel beginning some time within the next couple of weeks.

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