

Cobourg Lawn Bowling Club



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



Christmas Newsletter 2023

Editor's Notes

As Christmas approaches and another year comes to an end I recall Christmas 2022 and the terrible storm that swept through Cobourg and changed the landscape of our club as that huge tree blew on to the greens. Let us hope that there are no repeats this year and that we truly have silent nights. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Season's Greetings from the President



Since we moved to Cobourg in the spring of 2021 and I joined the CLBC that summer, Bill Arthur has been quietly encouraging me to give short mat bowling a try. This year, in October, as the notices appeared about short mat beginning once again at the CCC, I finally decided to give it a try. Well, I'm hooked. Thanks Bill, much appreciated! Other than the fact that someone keeps putting a wooden block in my way, I love it. It's great to see so many of our outdoor bowlers continuing to enjoy the fun and friendship of lawn bowling on the short mats through the winter months, twice a week at the Cobourg Community Centre. A great way to stay in touch and hone skills and strategies for the outdoor game. And it turns out that Cobourg is a bit of a powerhouse in short mat. Six of our members are headed to Belfast in March of 2024 to compete in the World Championships after winning multiple medals at the Canadian Championships in St. Catherines last month. Good luck to all. I for one am very excited about competing in Belfast and enjoying some Northern Irish tea and fish and chips!

Safe travels to those of you moving about over the holiday season. Whether you are travelling or staying put, I hope the holidays are full of rest and relaxation for you and find you in good spirits, hopefully enjoying contact with friends, family and loved ones over the next few weeks. By the time you read this it will be close to the winter solstice. Just think, each day will be getting longer, inching closer to the sun, fun and friendship on the greens by the lake when outdoor season starts up in May.

Happy holidays to all and I wish you success and happiness in all your endeavours in 2024. Or, for you short mat group, to use an allusion, may your bowls stay on the mat!

Peter

Property Report

Flood Light Replacement

As many of you will know, one of the sodium flood lights failed this summer and another one is just hanging on. The cost to replace these lights is very expensive as you have to hire a cherry picker truck to access the lights. It was decided to replace these sodium lights with LED lights which give better light coverage of the greens and of course are much less costly to operate. Bobcaygeon and Lyndsay clubs have already replaced their lights with LED lights and are very pleased with them. We have applied for a grant to cover the replacement cost and we hope to hear in the Spring that our bid was successful.

Equipment Shed

We are preparing the information to apply for a grant next year to replace our old equipment shed which is in dire need of replacement. Brent Bayley has a wealth of construction knowledge and has volunteered to manage this project. Plans have been drawn up for the shed and are currently being costed.

Other Plans

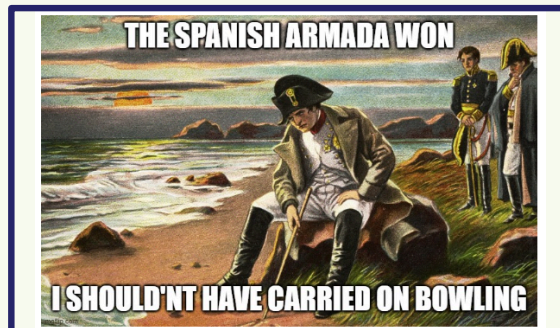
Next year we will need to look into replacing the shingles on our roof which are curling up on the South side of the roof. This of course will depend on the cost and what finances we have available.

We will also need to look into repainting our clubhouse which hopefully can be achieved by using volunteers. We are looking for someone to lead this project. If you are interested then please give me a call.

Further down the road we will look into replacing the clubhouse decking and adding a ramp to improve access.

Terry Dyche

Property Director



Short Mat World Championships

In his remarks Peter mentioned that six Cobourg short mat members will be part of a twenty strong Canada team at the World Championships in Belfast between March 15th and 17th. The Cobourg members are:

Pairs - Peter Stuart-Sheppard will play with Gary Pickering (Niagara Falls)

Triples - Bill Arthur, John MacKenzie and Louisa Arthur

Fours - Martin Foxhall and Bill McCollam will play with Fred Wallbank and David Llewellyn (Port Credit)

The team was selected following the Canadian National Championships and here is a short report on how the members mentioned above qualified. One point to note is that Martin Foxhall did not play in the Nationals because of Covid but the selection committee decided to put him on the team anyway. Perhaps that had something to do with the fact that Martin had won almost every event at the Nationals for the last three years!

Pairs

28 teams competed. Nan Hendren and Laura Mounce were in the same group as Louisa and Bill Arthur but neither of those teams progressed from the group. Terry Bradshaw and Al Bell qualified for the quarter finals but were knocked out in that round. Bill McCollam played pairs with Travis Anderson (Guelph) and won the silver award. John MacKenzie and Peter Stuart-Sheppard won bronze, Something that would become very familiar for Peter.



Triples

18 teams competed. Bill and Louisa Arthur played with John MacKenzie; Terry Bradshaw, Al Bell and Laura Mounce played together; Nan Hendren teamed up with Wayne Harding (Ottawa) and Fred Gundel (Burlington); finally Peter Stuart-Sheppard and Bill McCollam played with Gary Pickering (Niagara). The Arthur and Hendren teams were in the same group and Nan's team beat Bill's in the round robin. However both teams qualified for the quarter finals with a 4-1 record. Terry's team did not qualify but the team of Gary, Bill and Peter did. In fact they were seeded number one for the quarter finals. As fate would have it Nan and Bill's teams were drawn against one another as the 4th and 5th seeds. On this occasion Bill's team reversed the result from the round robin and moved into the semi final where they played the number one seeds, Gary Pickering, Bill McCollam and Peter Stuart-Sheppard. So, five of the six players were from Cobourg and the all Cobourg team of Bill, John and Louisa prevailed to book a place in the final against the Burlington team of Tom Gwinnet, Peter Andersen and Don Rush. Four down going into the last end they could not make a comeback and had to settle for a very creditable silver. And Peter added another bronze to his collection with Bill and Gary.



Fours

Ten teams competed but the only Cobourg interest was with Peter and Bill. Gary Pickering was with them again and the fourth member was Patrick Cote (Port Credit). Peter got his third bronze award of the week and Bill also picked up his third award.



A Christmas (Bowls) Carol

It was a crisp Christmas Eve on the venerable frozen greens of the Dickens Cobourg Lawn Bowls Club, where the spirit of camaraderie echoed through the chilled air of Victoria Park. In the heart of this ancient club, there lived a curmudgeonly bowler named Ebenezer Bowlsby.

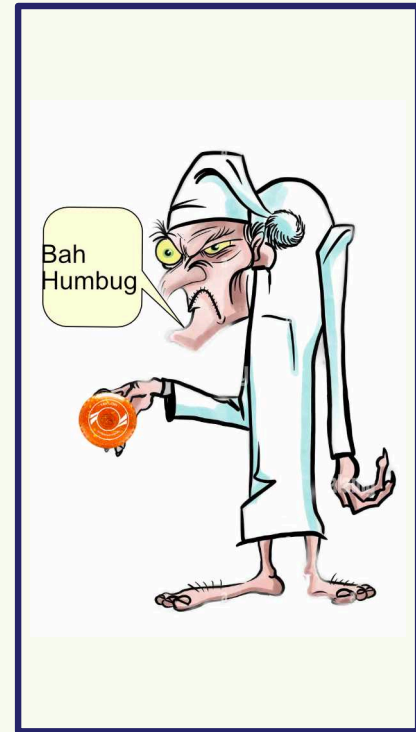
Ebenezer was known for his stinginess with compliments and his reluctance to join in the festive cheer that surrounded the holiday season. On this particular evening, as the clock struck six, he trudged onto the frosty well-manicured green for a solitary practice session, utterly unimpressed by the twinkling lights that adorned the clubhouse and the trees in the park.

As he prepared to release his bowl, a spectral figure appeared before him, draped in a green cloak that seemed to shimmer with the essence of Christmas past. It was the ghostly visage of Jacob Marley, his former bowls partner.

"Ebenezer," Marley intoned, "you're headed for a lonely end, with no one to share the joy of the season. You must change your ways before it's too late."

With a heavy heart, Ebenezer nodded, and in an instant, he found himself transported to a Christmas long ago. The green and the park were alive with laughter, and he saw himself surrounded by friends, clinking glasses in celebration. But the joyous scene soon turned to sorrow as he witnessed the gradual isolation he had imposed upon himself over the years.

The second specter, a jolly figure adorned with a festive wreath, appeared. The Ghost of Christmas Present took Ebenezer on a journey through the club grounds, where he witnessed the warmth and fellowship of his fellow bowlers. He saw the joy of shared victories and the comfort of consoling losses as the spirit whispered, "Time is precious, and the company of friends is a gift."



Finally, the third specter, a hooded figure bearing a jack in one hand and a bowl in the other, emerged. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come revealed a bleak future where Ebenezer's name was absent from the jitney board, and the greens were eerily silent.

Shaken to his very core, Ebenezer pleaded for redemption. The specters, in their wisdom, granted him a chance to change his destiny. With newfound humility, Ebenezer embraced the festive spirit, inviting his fellow bowlers to join him in merriment and goodwill.

And so, on that magical Christmas morning, the greens of Dickens Cobourg echoed with laughter, the clatter of bowls on the frozen surface, and the joy of newfound friendship. Ebenezer Bowlsby, once a solitary figure, found himself surrounded by the warmth of the season and the true meaning of lawn bowling camaraderie.

God bless us, every bowler!

It's not too late to bake your Christmas Cookies

Since it is the festive season a few ladies (*Ed...what no male bakers?*) have provided some Christmas Cookie recipes for you to try out.

Laura Mounce's Scottish Empire Cookies

Cookie

1 cup butter
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla
2 cups flour
1 tsp baking powder

Preheat oven to 350 F

Cream butter, add sugar, beat in egg and vanilla.

In a seperate bowl: add flour, baking powder

Gradually add to to creamed mixture

On a floured surface (lots of flour) roll out dough to less than 3/8 thick. Use round cookie cutter to cut out rounds.

On an ungreased cookie sheet bake for 10 minutes until lightly browned.

Cool completely. Put jam on one half and top with another cookies. Top with icing, adding a small piece of candied on the top of the icing.

Cookies freeze well.

Servings: 24 Cookies

Filling: Raspberry jam

Icing: 1 cup sifted icing sugar
1 tsp almond extract
hot water or milk
candied cherries (green and red)

Donna Longman's Butter tarts

Donna says:

Buttertarts - not from the internet. Known to me and my siblings as 'mom's buttertarts'. Lesser known but an integral part is the pastry. This I learned from my Dad. He was a 'Master Baker', and worked at Canada Bread Company (now extinct).



Like the way of life when the 'breadman' came by horse and carriage and delivered your bread, cakes and tarts personally. The horse would eat the flowers in my mother's rockery while mom chatted with the breadman - then grumbled like heck after they left. But sometimes we kids got given a free package of broken cookies if we waited patiently.

These tarts are a tradition in my house every Christmas - never fail. I would suggest you read the HINTS before starting. (mind you, I do make them periodically over the whole year)

Please don't tell my siblings I have given out this recipe, they may disown me forever.



DONNA'S VERY SECRET RECIPE FOR CHRISTMAS TIME



Buttertarts – Mom's

1 cup corn syrup
¾ cup packed brown sugar

Cook syrup and sugar gently for 5 minutes, cool
very gently at a low temperature, or else you will have candy

2 eggs slightly beaten

In a large mixing bowl, pour *cooled* syrup over eggs, beating continuously.

¼ cup margarine or butter
¼ tsp salt

Add margarine or soft butter and beat some more.
then add salt – stir in

¾ cup each nuts and/or raisins

I use walnut pieces, but pecans are as good. Raisins – your preference – all are good. The amount is lots, so use less if you want a more syrupy tart.

½ tsp vanilla

Stir in nuts, raisins, and vanilla with spatula

Make 2 recipes of 'Donna's Dad's' pastry. Line tart tins and fill ¾ full.

Bake at 400° F for 20 minutes, OR,
At 450° F for 10 minutes, then reduce to 350° F for 15 minutes (my preference)

HINTS:

- Prepare your pastry and place in tins ahead of preparing the mix. (the mix tends to form a skin on top if left too long)
- For mincemeat, 1 jar makes about 48 tarts (my recipe is ½ mincemeat and ½ chopped apples)
- Recipe for 'Donna's Dad's pie pastry below.

Pastry for Pies – Dad’s

2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour

½ tsp salt

¾ cup cold shortening

½ to ¾ cup **ice** cold water

Cut shortening into flour, add water a little at a time and stir with spatula very quickly, adding water into dry flour etc.

Form into a ball - **DO NOT OVER-MIX – THE LESS HANDLING - THE BETTER IT WILL TURN OUT.**

Always roll out pastry from the centre out to form a circle. Never start from the outside. And under no circumstance do you pull or stretch to fit. IT WILL SHRINK BACK WHEN BAKED. Just keep on rolling till it fits. Keep lots of extra flour handy if it sticks.

HINT:

For pastries such as sausage rolls, or turnovers.

Roll out pastry, with butter knife dot margarine or soft butter on top. Then fold pastry by thirds, dot butter again, and fold again in the opposite direction. Then roll out to specified size.

Nan Hendren’s “No Bake Haystack Cookies”

Ingredients

1 cup butterscotch chips

1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips□

2 tablespoons peanut butter (crunchy or smooth)□

1 6-ounce package chow mein noodles (3 ½ cups)□

1 cup cocktail peanuts (unsalted or lightly salted, lightly crushed)

Instructions

Line two baking sheets with parchment or wax paper.

Melt the butterscotch and chocolate chips in the microwave or in a double boiler. (If you don’t have a double boiler, you can make one by nestling a metal or heatproof glass bowl over a pot with a bit of water in the bottom — bring the water to a boil, and stir the chips frequently until they melt).

If using the microwave, heat for 30 seconds, then stop and give the chips a stir, and stop and stir every 15 seconds until they are melted. Stir in the peanut butter until well combined.

Combine the noodles and the cocktail peanuts in a large bowl. Pour the butterscotch-peanut butter mixture over and stir to combine.

Drop the mixture by tablespoons onto the prepared baking sheet. Allow to set; in warmer months or when the kitchen is warm, this is best done in the fridge. Do let them sit at room temperature for several minutes before serving.

Notes

If the kitchen is warm, let the cookies firm up in the fridge. Let them sit at room temp for 5 to 10 minutes before serving for the best flavor and texture.

This recipe makes about 24 cookies but is easily doubled.

If packing them in a box for gifting, separate the layers with parchment or wax paper.

Variations

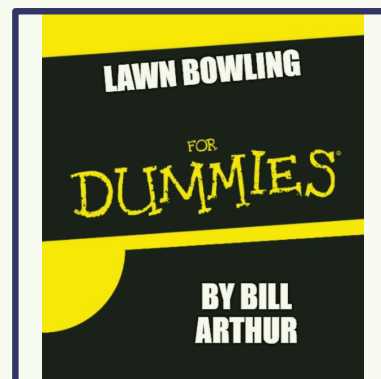
Haystack recipes are pretty flexible and a fun way to customize a cookie.

Try peanut butter chips instead of the butterscotch for even MORE peanutty flavor. (Have you seen the bag of chips that comes mixed, chocolate and peanut butter? Genius.)

You could also try these with all chocolate (chocolate haystacks!) or all butterscotch (butterscotch haystacks!) for a different flavor twist.

And you could also use crushed pretzels along with or instead of the cocktail peanuts. Coconut, mini marshmallows, other nuts, and various cereals are other possible add-ins.

I added crushed candy canes to make them festive!



World Indoor Bowls Championships

It is always a highlight of the bowls calendar to watch the world indoor bowls championships from the Potters Resort in England. The event runs from January 5th to January 21st. You can catch all the matches either live or recorded on YouTube. There is added interest this time with Jake Masterson and Rick Lyons representing Canada in Pairs. Jake and Rick were members of the fours team that, with John MacKenzie and me competed so well at the Ontario fours last year. I also had the pleasure of playing with Jake in the Ontario Pairs. Jake was also Baylee van Steijn's partner in winning Canadian Mixed Pairs bronze a couple of years ago. Jake used to be a member at Peterborough but now bowls at Heritage Greens. Rick is a member at Oshawa.

For more details go to the [world bowls tour website](#)

Bill Arthur

Club History

At the short mat Christmas party there was a quiz organised by Donna Longman. Questions were given to each table about bowling and Cobourg. (Google was banned!). Given that there were many new bowlers there it is not surprising that a lot of people were stumped by questions about the club. Might I suggest that you find out more about the interesting history of the club. [Click here to check out the history article on the website](#) [Also the history of short mat](#)

It is some time since those articles were written and over the winter months the web pages will be updated.

Bill Arthur

In case you missed it (click the link)

[Interview with Baylee van Steijn on YouTube.](#)



[Short mat Christmas Party](#)



Car Park Passes 2024

As most members know we have been receiving 40 Parking Passes for use during the summer only when there is activity at the club (bowling, working on the greens and other volunteer jobs at the club)

We have received passes ever since the Town installed meter parking on the adjoining streets. Our passes are good for parking on Church Street & Queen Street.

Since 2017 we have had to apply for a Community Grant every year to obtain these passes. As well as submitting our application to the Town we make a presentation in person at a Council Meeting which hears from delegations of several organizations requesting Grants. In the last couple of years about 50% of the applicants have been successful in obtaining their Grants.

As part of our Grant application we have to give the Town an estimate of the parking revenue they would lose in giving us the passes. In our application we advise the Town that they only lose parking revenue from the general public on weekends & holidays. During week days when we make use of our passes there are still plenty of parking spaces left for the public to use.

For 2023 we estimated that the Town would lose approximately \$4,000 in parking revenue due to the 'free' passes. Note - Our application asks for an "In-Kind" grant of 40 passes, not the \$4,000 cash. If we did not have the passes it would cost club members & other users (Tournament bowlers) in total much more than the \$4k.

Actual passes used in 2023 was less than in the previous year as many members purchased their own \$40 Residential Parking Pass & did not use the club passes.

We are confident that the Council will approve our request, but it is not guaranteed until we get the approval early next year.

I note that when the 2023 Community Grants were being discussed the mayor made a motion to eliminate all Community Grants but his motion was defeated. For the 2024 Budget the mayor declined to attend the council meeting discussing Community Grants. In a general council meeting that followed the Grant meeting he was asked why he didn't attend.

He explained his reasons which I didn't fully understand but if interested you can see a replay of the 6pm Dec 4 council meeting on the town's website where he explains his position at the 1hr 5 minute mark.

- [Click here](#)

- Click on 'Access to escribe is at this link'
- Go to Dec 4 in the calendar & click on "Dec 4 6pm regular council"

Bob Bates



What is another name for Lawn Bowls?

Well, everyone who was at the short mat Christmas Party knows that. They were (and still are in some parts of England) called "Woods". Why? Donna Longman explains.

1400 - 1510: EARLY BOWLS

From the early 15th century, bowls were made of wood, usually yew, ash, oak, holly or boxwood. Nobody knows exactly when the era of wooden lignum-vitae bowls began in England, but the island of San Domingo in the West Indies (where lignum-

vitae comes from) was discovered by Columbus on December 3rd, 1492, so we know that there were no lignum-vitae bowls in England at that time. One particular variety of lignum-vitae, the blue flowering Guaiacum Officinale, is said to be the hardest and densest wood in the world. With a density of three-and-a-half ounces to the cubic inch, it sinks in water.

Lignum-vitae was introduced in Europe by the Spaniards in 1508 and likely found its way to England via Sir Frances Drake. Drake had equipped his ship, The Pasha, with bowls and quoits. Most probably, the bowls were made of lignum-vitae and crafted by his ship's carpenters while waiting in the harbour at Plymouth. Shavings obtained from turning the wood into bowls were carefully gathered and sold to druggists. The essential oils from the wood supposedly had health benefits and so lignum-vitae was known as the Tree of Life.

Don't plan on planting one in your back yard, unless you are patient, as the tree takes hundreds of years to mature.

You can read more about Lignum Vitae by [clicking here](#).



These three bowls, believed to be circa 1935, each from a different set, are made of wood and have an ivory centre insert.

Editor's End Notes

I hope you enjoyed this final Newsletter of 2023. I think it had a bit of everything from baking to horticulture and history lessons about wood and we didn't even have time or space to dig into the archives this time.

One last thing to mention is that the Newsletters have been moved from the member pages of the website to the public area. This will make them accessible to anyone interested in our club. Links will also be placed on social media in future.

See you in 2024 when we will do it all again.

Bill Arthur