

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

## ONTARIO LACROSSE HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

St. Catharines, ON – June 2, 2025 – Since its inception in 1997, the mission of the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame has been to recognize and celebrate the great players and builders of the game in Ontario with the honour of induction into the Hall of Fame.

We are pleased to announce our 2025 inductees who have been nominated by individuals within the Ontario Lacrosse Association community. The Honoured Inductees for 2025 include 2 Players, 3 Builders, 1 Veteran and 1 Special Contributor. For more information about submitting your nominations please visit the OLHOF website ([www.ontariolacrossehalloffame.com](http://www.ontariolacrossehalloffame.com))

### 2025 Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame Inductees

#### Player Category

Ken Colley

Jim Meredith

#### Builder Category

Dan Atkinson

Bob Ellis

Bob Opperman

#### Veteran Category

Cindy Coon

#### Special Contributor

Rad Joseph

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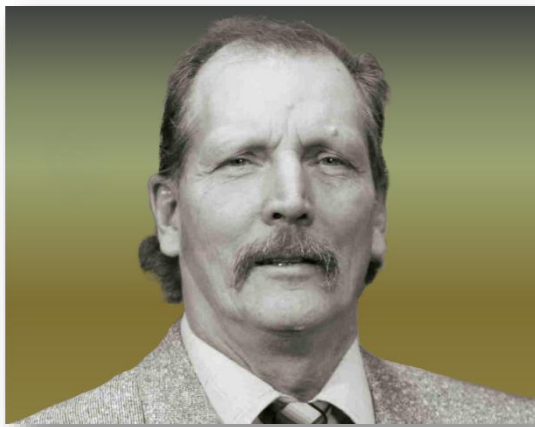
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## Ken Colley

Player Category



Ken Colley's lacrosse journey is a story of excellence, consistency, and championship pedigree. Born in Oshawa, Ontario, Ken rose through the ranks with a fierce determination and a natural scoring touch that would define his career. From his early days with the Oshawa/Whitby programs to his legendary run with the Brooklin Redmen, Ken left an indelible mark on Ontario Lacrosse.

Ken's Junior A career with Whitby from 1975 to 1979 was nothing short of spectacular. He burst onto the scene as the league's Outstanding Rookie, earning the PCO Trophy, and quickly established himself as one of the most prolific scorers in Junior A history—ranking second all-time with an astounding 384 goals.

In 1980, Ken made an immediate impact in the Major Series with the Brooklin Redmen, capturing the Gene Dopp Award as Outstanding Rookie and the Bucko McDonald Award as the league's top scorer. Over the next decade, he became a cornerstone of the Redmen dynasty, helping lead the team to three Mann Cup championships in 1985, 1987, and 1990.

In 127 regular season Major games, Ken tallied 202 goals and 192 assists for 394 points. In the playoffs, he added another 165 points in 85 games—proving time and again that he was a clutch performer when it mattered most.

Beyond the numbers Ken was a complete forward—smart, unselfish, and tenacious. A student of the game, he combined elite scoring ability with a deep understanding of team play, making him a respected leader on and off the floor.

In 2017, Ken was rightfully inducted into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

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## Jim Meredith

### Player Category



From the streets of Huntsville to the national stage, Jim Meredith's lacrosse journey is a story of relentless dedication, elite performance, and enduring impact. A prodigy who first picked up a stick at age four, Jim's early years in Huntsville saw him rise through the ranks of minor lacrosse, capturing seven Ontario championships and a Canadian title with the 1971 Peewee B Hawks.

By age fourteen, Jim launched a remarkable seven-year junior career, earning five scoring titles and amassing an astonishing 1,105 points in 185 games. Whether lighting up the scoreboard for the Huntsville Hawks or the Rexdale Warriors, Jim's combination of vision, grit, and scoring touch made him a force to be reckoned with.

His senior career was equally storied. In Victoria, he became a WLA scoring champion, league MVP, and Mann Cup winner. Returning to Ontario, he led the Brooklin Redmen to back-to-back Mann Cup titles in 1987 and 1988, earning the prestigious Mike Kelley Award as co-MVP in 1987. Across 331 senior games, Jim recorded 1,033 points—420 goals and 613 assists—cementing his place among the game's elite.

But Jim's influence extended beyond box lacrosse. A standout in field lacrosse, he represented Canada at the 1990 World Championships in Australia, bringing home a silver medal. He later served as assistant coach for Team Canada's 1994 World Field team and coached the Huntsville Hawks to a Founders Cup championship in 1991.

Jim was far more than just a prolific scorer—he was a dynamic playmaker, a relentless loose ball specialist, and a natural leader. His impact extended well beyond the stat sheet, as he helped shape the future of the sport through his mentorship of countless players during his coaching and executive roles.

Jim was inducted into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame in 2005, and the Huntsville Sports Hall of Fame in 2013.

## Dan Atkinson

### Builder Category



For over five decades, Dan Atkinson has been a cornerstone of Ontario lacrosse, a tireless advocate for youth, and a guiding light in the Alexandra Park community. From humble beginnings in Toronto's low-income housing, Dan discovered lacrosse through St. Christopher House—a game that would become his lifelong passion and purpose.

Dan's playing career as a goaltender laid the foundation for a remarkable journey in coaching, mentorship, and community leadership. As Head Coach of the novice and peeWee teams at St. Christopher House, Dan became more than a coach—he was a mentor, a father figure, and a fierce advocate for inclusion. His ability to connect with youth and parents alike helped break down cultural and language barriers, introducing the Creator's Game to generations of children who might otherwise never have had the chance to play.

Dan's leadership extended far beyond the field. He secured corporate sponsorships, managed equipment and uniforms, and ensured that registration fees remained affordable—just \$20 for a full season, including gear and transportation. He organized the program's first cross-country trip to British Columbia in 1976, giving inner-city youth their first glimpse of life beyond Toronto. Through every challenge—racism, financial hardship, and social adversity—Dan stood firm, teaching his players the values of dignity, respect, and resilience.

When St. Christopher House transitioned to West Metro Lacrosse in 1986, Dan carried the torch, mentoring new coaches and keeping the program alive until 1992. His influence continued through his work with the Mimico Lacrosse Club and, even in retirement with the Barrie House League program. His innovations in goalie equipment, his dedication to player development, and his unwavering commitment to community have left an indelible mark on the sport.

Dan's accolades are many—the OLA Ken Murray Award (1981), Zone 10 Coach of the Year (1998), and the Ontario Volunteer Service Award (2011), to name a few. But his greatest legacy lies in the lives he's touched, the players he's inspired, and the community he's uplifted.

We celebrate Dan Atkinson not just for his achievements, but for his heart, his vision, and his enduring impact on the game and the people it brings together.

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## Bob Ellis

Builder Category



Few names resonate through the halls of community sports and service like that of Bob Ellis. A pillar of the Alexandra Park community in Toronto, Bob's life was a testament to the power of sport as a vehicle for unity, mentorship, and transformation. Born and raised in the Trinity-Bellwoods area, Bob's roots ran deep. From his early days at Central Technical High School and St. Michael's College to earning a BA in Political Science from the University of Windsor, Bob's journey was grounded in service and leadership.

Bob's most enduring legacy lies in his tireless work with St. Christopher House, where he was instrumental in relocating the organization to Augusta Avenue and expanding its athletic and social programs. As Athletic and Social Director, Bob became a trusted bridge between diverse cultural communities, personally visiting families to introduce them to the sport of lacrosse and assure them their children were in good hands. His efforts helped shape the lives of countless youth, including future stars like John "Shorty" Barbosa and NLL Hall of Famer John Tavares.

Under Bob's guidance, the St. Christopher House Lacrosse Program flourished. He secured the vital sponsorships that ensured financial barriers never stood in the way of participation. For just \$20, players received full equipment, uniforms, and transportation—an extraordinary achievement that opened doors for hundreds of young athletes. Bob didn't just build teams; he built a movement, cultivating a new generation of coaches and referees who would carry the torch into the future.

Bob's influence extends far beyond the field. He has been a mentor, a second father, and a lifelong friend to many. His wisdom, compassion, and unwavering belief in the potential of every child have left an indelible mark from Halifax to Vancouver. His accolades—including the Alexandra Park Lifetime Community Service Award (2000) and the St. Christopher House Lifetime Achievement Award (2002)—only begin to capture the depth of his contributions.

We celebrate Bob Ellis as a champion of youth, a builder of community, and a true legend.

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## Bob Opperman

Builder Category



Few individuals have shaped the landscape of community lacrosse in Ontario as profoundly as Bob Opperman. A residential school survivor who found strength and purpose through sport, Bob turned adversity into action, dedicating his life to introducing and nurturing the game of lacrosse in Toronto's Alexandra Park and Kensington Market communities.

In 1963, Bob founded the St. Christopher House Lacrosse Program—an initiative that would become a beacon of opportunity for generations of youth. At a time when lacrosse was virtually unknown in the downtown core, Bob built a grassroots program from the ground up, offering not just a sport, but a lifeline. With no financial support from families, he secured provincial funding, partnered with the University of Toronto for donated gear, and even hand-crafted equipment—designing kidney pads, goalie chest protectors, and goal nets that became staples of the program.

Bob's innovation was matched only by his leadership. He coached every level from Novice to Midget, mentored future coaches and officials, and coordinated every practice, game, and tournament. His efforts gave hundreds of kids—many from low-income and immigrant families—the chance to play, compete, and grow. There were no tryouts at St. Chris: if you showed up, you played. And under Bob's guidance, you learned not just the game, but the values of courage, dignity, and sportsmanship.

His legacy includes the development of future lacrosse leaders like Bob Ellis, Dan Atkinson, the late Gary Martin, and the creation of a program that thrived for over 40 years. Even after stepping back from coaching, Bob remained a driving force through alumni committees, reunions, and as a consultant during the transition to West Metro Lacrosse.

We honour Bob Opperman as a builder of programs, and a builder of people. His life's work embodies the spirit of the Creator's Game—resilient, inclusive, and deeply rooted in community.

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## Cindy Coon

### Veteran Category



Before women's lacrosse had a national spotlight, Cindy Coon was already lighting up the floor and field with unmatched intensity, skill, and leadership. A fierce competitor and fearless pioneer, Cindy helped shape the early era of women's lacrosse in Ontario and across Canada, setting a standard of excellence that continues to inspire generations.

From 1974 to 1977, Cindy was the heart and soul of the dominant West Mall/Etobicoke Tomahawks, leading her team to four consecutive provincial championships. As captain and top playmaker, she recorded 129 goals and 113 assists in 129 games—directly contributing to a third of her team's 756 goals. Her relentless style of play earned her comparisons to hockey legend Bobby Clarke, and her 233 penalty minutes were a testament to her fearless, full-throttle approach to the game.

Cindy's impact extended beyond the box. She was one of the first Canadian women to transition to field lacrosse, representing Ontario from 1979 to 1982 and playing in historic international matches against U.S. and U.K. teams. As a player-coach, she helped launch the first Ontario women's field lacrosse club league and co-authored the CLA's first women's field lacrosse manual in 1981—laying the foundation for the sport's future in Canada.

Her leadership, both on and off the field, was unmatched. Cindy welcomed and mentored new players, built team unity, and led by example. Even after a career-ending injury in 1982, she remained a respected figure in the lacrosse community, remembered by coaches and teammates alike for her passion, resilience, and unforgettable presence.

We celebrate Cindy Coon as one of the sport's earliest stars and a pioneer who helped carve a path for women in lacrosse. Her legacy is one of courage, commitment, and trailblazing spirit—a true champion in every sense of the word.

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## Rad Joseph

### Special Contributor Category



Lacrosse is more than a sport—it's a tradition, a community, and a passion that connects generations. Few embody this spirit better than Rad Joseph.

Joseph's journey in lacrosse began in 1969 as a minor league player with the Kingston & District Minor Lacrosse Association. From there, his love for the game propelled him through junior lacrosse levels, culminating in two seasons with the storied Oshawa Green Gaels Junior "A" team. Yet, his greatest contributions came not on the field, but in shaping the sport behind the scenes.

Spanning decades, Joseph's impact has been felt at the minor, provincial, and national levels. He played an essential role in coaching, mentoring, and managing teams, helping cultivate talent and opportunities for young players. Most notably, he was the driving force behind introducing Junior "A" lacrosse to Zone 5 with the creation of the Ottawa Titans in 2005. His leadership built a foundation for lacrosse players in Eastern Ontario, ensuring their talents were recognized throughout the province. The legacy he established continues as players from Zone 5 now compete in the OLA Junior "A" league, proof of the doors he opened.

Beyond his leadership in local and provincial leagues, Joseph played a significant role in preserving and honouring the sport's history. His years of service on the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame Selection Committee and the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame's Eastern Canada committee show his commitment to celebrating those who shaped the game. His influence extended to the Ontario Major Series Lacrosse Media team, where he helped promote and amplify the sport's reach.

Rad Joseph's induction into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame honors a lifetime of dedication, hard work and vision. His contributions have strengthened the sport's foundation, expanded opportunities for players, and helped ensure lacrosse's enduring legacy. Now recognized alongside his father, Bob Joseph—inducted in 2000 as a Builder—it is a lasting reminder of his impact not just on the teams and leagues he touched, but on the very fabric of the game itself.

Rad is currently co-creator and writer for "Think Lacrosse", a weekly blog which seeks to promote the game's athletes, builders and contributors.

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