

Veridian debate charged

by Rik Davie,
CLARINGTON PROMOTER

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The makeup of the Veridian board continues to be a contentious issue at Clarington council with the public being heard on the matter.

Council has been at odds for some time over the membership on the board of Regional Councillor Mary Novak. Novak initially served a two year term on the board which traditionally has two political and one citizen seat on the board from Clarington.

At the end of that two-year-term Clarington Councillor Joe Neal was appointed by council to fill the political seat on the Veridian board.

However, another member of the board filling the citizens seat, Erin O'Toole, resigned the seat in order to run (successfully) for the federal seat for Durham Riding in the recent by-election. Mr. O'toole, according to several reports, suggested Regional Councillor Novak to fill the seat and the Veridian board agreed with the recommendations and there the problems began.

A number of citizens as well as a number of members of Clarington Council disagreed strenuously with the so-called 'citizens seat' being filled by a sitting elected official and a motion was passed asking Novak to resign in fa-

vour of a "citizen" member.

Novak declined. Since then a number of citizens as well as council members have been vocal in their opposition. Among them was community activist Jim

Richards who spoke before council on March 25.

Mayor Adrian Foster, who earlier declined to ask for Novak's resignation, and the councillor in question, Mary Novak, did not attend

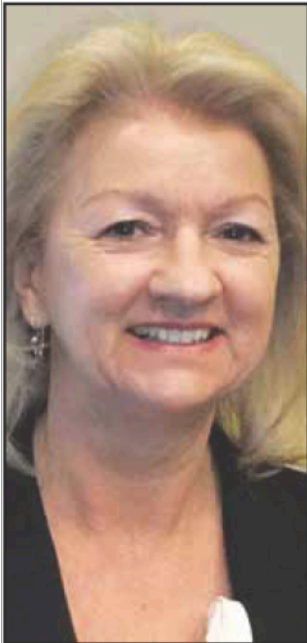
the council meeting leaving Deputy Mayor Willie Woo to conduct the meeting.

Mr. Richards was to the point. "In what I perceive as a 'back-room deal', Veridian

Veridian debate continues

Continued from Page 1

Connections (not Council) appointed Councillor Novak to fill the vacancy. This was a vacancy for a member of the public, not a third politician. However, the appointment was endorsed by Mayor Foster," Mr. Richard's read from a prepared statement he later



MARY NOVACK
REG. COUN.

sent to The Promoter.

Richards went on to call for the removal of Novak and cited from his own research that Novak had received around \$95,000 in her time on the board.

If correct the amount would equal to remuneration for all members of the Veridian board.

Board members are paid in excess of \$20,000 for their time on the board according to figures released by the Municipality of Clarington.

Another presenter, well-known community volunteer Mark Canning also voiced concern over how the matter was followed.

The process was not followed," Canning told council, "that's my concern."

Later in the meeting Councillor Corrina Trail asked that rules of procedure to be suspended and then moved forward a motion to send a letter to Veridian asking that payments for board members be restructured to only allow for expenses and mileage payments for membership

on the board that consists of politicians and some experts in various fields who advise Veridian on a number of matters annually.

Trail noted in her comments, "politicians are already well compensated."

Clarington ward councillors currently make in the range of \$40,000. Some council members including Trail, Hooper and Mayor Foster, donate a portion of their total payments. As recently as 2006 councillors base pay was about \$17,000 per year making current remuneration a 57% pay hike in a six year period.

In a dissenting statement veteran Councillor Ron Hooper reminded the council members present that the municipality had no authority over how Veridian conducts board appointments or remuneration.

The motion failed.

However the battle is far from over as Councillor Novak has stated previously she does not intend to give up the appointment.

Never too late to help!



by **Jim Abernethy**, Publisher
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Spring has arrived - our rivers and streams are full of spawning fish, and the Valleys2000 Fish Ladder project is set to get underway in late June.

Our Federal Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries has the final say on the start date which now depends on completion of the annual testing of the notorious Lamprey eel.

The Bowmanville dam is one of a few locations on the Great Lakes which provide this valuable information.

Our fund raising committee continues to accept donations towards this and other related Valleys2000 projects.

A huge thank you goes out to Dr. Lily T-Hinton and her staff at Tim Hortons Bowmanville for a generous \$5,000 donation to the Valleys2000 project.

It is not too late to make a donation to this very important community project. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to donate. No donation is too small. My cell is 905-261-7788 or email jimabernethy@royalservice.ca

Speaking of donations..... it appears that there is a debate brewing over the appointment of politicians to the Veridian Board of Directors who receive \$3,000 each time they attend a Veridian Board meeting.

I must be honest with you, as a former politician and member of both Veridian Boards, I felt guilty receiving \$3,000 each time I attended the Veridian board meetings.

My understanding was that I was elected to serve the people of our community and to manage Clarington assets including a 13% stake in the ownership of the Veridian Corporation.

So, I donated my Veridian Board earnings to a charitable

foundation. This allowed me to focus on the job I promised I would do..... serve the people.

Perhaps Council should consider putting an end to the controversy surrounding this issue..... remove the \$3,000 financial incentive now paid to ANY politician who represents Clarington's interests in the Veridian Corporation, including its subsidiary Veridian Connections.

Let's then see which of them is here to serve the people or collect the money..... enough said.

On a more personal note, this past February during Family Day weekend our family's world was turned upside down as a result of my father slipping and fracturing his left hip.

Our initial thoughts were it was just a fall, however as we waited for the ambulance to arrive we realized we had a serious situation.

Dad was transferred to Lakeridge Health Oshawa where the attending surgeon Dr. Gharsaa , diagnosed his fracture and explained the surgical procedure, including the possible life threatening complications that could result from total hip replacement surgery.

Fortunately and but for only a few minor complications, the surgery and ongoing rehab was a success.

Dad, who just celebrated his 88th birthday this past January was a medic during WWII where he saw more than his share of pain and suffering.

He has always been a very determined and mobile individual, and the provider for my mother, his bride of 67 years.

So it was nice to see him this past Easter Sunday up and about, walking with a cane, and once again caring for his bride.

All of that thanks to the quick response of Durham Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS), the many health professionals who make up the Lakeridge Health organization, and the guidance of Community Care Durham..... so on behalf of my entire family.... thank you to everyone who had a part in helping him and us thru his ordeal !

The Leskard football trophy, Cup of Controversy

by Charles Taws

Research assistance by
Doris Falls and Lois Whitfield

CLARINGTON MUSEUMS
AND ARCHIVES
www.claringtonmuseums.com

Within the Museum's collection are many treasures. Not only are they valuable items but many have quite remarkable stories behind them. One artefact of note is a beautiful silver trophy made by the Middleton Plate Company of Middletown Connecticut. It was awarded to the Leskard Football Team (we call it soccer today). This cup has many stories and historical

traditions related to it, but we've gone right back to the original Orono newspapers to find out its story.

Clarington has a long history of soccer. In fact some of the earliest recorded games in Canada took place here and the Darlington Soccer Club may be the oldest in the country. It is believed that soccer was introduced to Canada by settlers from Cornwall. Both Darlington and Clarke can boast sizeable numbers of early settlers from Cornwall. Sid Rutherford and Helen Schmid write in their book "Out of the Mists: A History of Clarke Township, "While Orono, Newcastle,

Newtonville and Kendal were enjoying their baseball, other smaller centres provided competitive sport with their football games. Football...provided the rural youth with a diversion. Conditioned by long hours of hard work in the fields and bush, these teenagers were happy to set up goal posts in a pasture field and practise football in the long summer evenings. Their plough boots were the only equipment required."

In Clarke Township an informal league of sorts had formed in the last years of the 19th Century. In April of 1901 a letter appeared in the Orono News asking the com-

munity to support the formation of a proper soccer league. Oliver D. Austin wrote the letter and in it he stated, "This is the time of the year to organize summer sports and as all the villages have, or are going to organize football clubs, it has been suggested that it would be well for these clubs to organize a League and play off a regular series of games for a cup which will represent the championships of the district." It is clear from the letter that soccer was already a familiar sport in Clarke Township. Mr. Austin had been a teacher in Leskard where he promoted the game, but by the time of this letter he was teaching in Orono.

A league was formed by June with O.D. Austin as secretary. Teams from Orono, Newcastle, Kirby and Leskard participated. Leskard already had an enviable reputation with championship wins in 1899 and 1900. A Leskard school teacher by the name of John McArthur, described as a "big husky Scotchman", organized the team that was reputed to have never lost a game! This was before the formal League was formed so they played any team that would take them on. Some of these early players included Jim and Andy Simpson, Jim Lawson, Willis Davidson,

Fred Robbins, Jack Tucker, Joe Towns, Fred Griffin and Charlie Kivell. It is important to realize that when the League was formed Leskard already had the reputation of being the team to beat.

The League Report at the end of June 1901 shows the Leskard team won the season with 4 games, Newcastle won 2, and Orono had 1 win. Historical tradition says that Leskard did not have a goal scored against them throughout the entire 1901 season. However, the Orono News of July 4th 1901 shows that Leskard won 4 games; lost 1 and 1 was a tie. On Dominion Day, July 1st, an extremely hot day, the silver cup was presented to the Leskard team by club president Mr. E.H. McLean. "Mr. McLean spoke of the manly sportsmanlike way in which the battles had been fought, and the growing interest in all healthful sports now manifest in every part of the Township." The Orono News reported, "Leskard has the cup having made nine points. The League series has finished without any blood being shed in anger. We have yet to hear of another such record. It speaks well for Clarke sports." This is the cup now in the possession of the museum.

In 1902 everyone predicted Leskard would duplicate their success of 1901. The League now included a team from Kendal. Interest in football was at an all time high. On May 1st the Orono News reported changes to the League constitution and by-laws. Of note was the fact that a vote to purchase and present a new trophy every year was turned down. The Leskard Team must not have liked the changes for on May 8th they left the League. I think it's clear they wanted to hang onto their trophy. However, on May 22nd they decided to stay in the League and "defend the cup." Leskard did play for the 1902 season, soundly defeating the Pontypool and Tyrone teams, but the cup issue was not resolved.

By early June a lawyer was involved and Mr. Austin, as League Secretary, had notified the Leskard Team that the cup was overdue to be in the hands of the Trustees. The team told them that the cup was "lost in the wood", but had actually been sent to Toronto for engraving. It now read, "The Clarke Football League/ Championship/ Won by/ Leskard Team/ 1901". In early July Leskard was play-

Continued on Page 8 **FF**

When soccer was football

Continued from Page 4

ing against Pontypool. Both teams had excellent reputations and the match was billed as the "Struggle of the Giants." Spectators came as far away as Port Perry and Peterborough. And the cup controversy seemed to reach a crisis. A meeting between the Clarke Football Association and the Leskard team was called. They may have met, but it wasn't recorded in the newspaper.

We have to jump to May 21st 1903 of the Orono News to find another mention of the cup. In the Local Sports Column we see the headline "Cup Dispute Settled". Not only was the cup given to the League executive but the games played in 1902 were ruled out and a fresh start would begin for the 1903 season. But, a fresh start didn't happen. The Orono News reported at the time,

"...it is now up to the clubs who propose playing to get down to work to play out the schedule for this season. It is general public opinion that Kirby will not enter the series while it is certain Newcastle and Orono are out. Hence it looks as if Leskard would win again by default unless Kirby pulls together and get into the game."

This league collapsed but it was not the end of soccer in Leskard or Clarke Township. The Leskard Football Club is known to have met in 1905 and 1908. Practices were Tuesday and Friday evenings in John Davey's field. They asked for exhibition games at anytime and played against Darlington League teams. Leskard's reputation was such that if Bowmanville was having an exhibition game they would ask some of the Leskard members to join their team. A revival took place

after the First World War and in the 1930's a "Clarke United" team played in the Darlington League. They won the championship in 1935 and 1936, but lost to Claremont in 1937. Another revival took place after the Second World War.

It is curious to note that the Clarke Football League secretary, O.D. Austin, is shown as part of the Leskard Team in the accom-

panying photo. He would certainly have been right in the middle of the conflict. An unenviable place to be, but the photo raises many questions. I've recorded the names from the back of the photograph but there are discrepancies with other sources. Could this be a slightly earlier photo of the team from 1899 or 1900?

In August 1968 a Football reunion was held at the Oro-

no Oddfellows Hall. It was held to commemorate Leskard's glory days when, as far as soccer was concerned, Leskard was the envy of the Township. Mr. Cecil Carveth gave an historical account of those days and Fred Trull, the only surviving member of the Leskard Team, attended. Today soccer is still an important part of growing up and everyday life in Clarington. The silver

cup at Clarington Museums is a reminder of soccer's long history in our community.

If you have questions about local history or are interested in searching your local family roots contact Charles Taws, Archivist at 905-623-2734 or e-mail at claringtonmuseums.archives@rogers.com



The 1901 Championship Leskard Football (soccer) Team
 Back Row: (Left to Right): Walter Cornish, Manager; A. Tennant; O.D. Austin, Goal; Joe Adams; unidentified.
 Middle Row: Fred Adams; Lorne Robbins; M. Bradley
 Front Row: Fred Trull; Al Adams; Ed Davey; Ed Robbins; A. Robbins
 Missing: Billy Inch
 (Names from back of original photo)