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Town of Caledon recognizes first Sport Hall of Fame inductee

Written By **JAKE COURTEPATTE**

It is only fitting that the first Caledon Sports Hall of Fame inductee be the man dubbed ?The Commissioner.?

Over a decade since his passing, Jerry Callaghan will become the first to be inducted into the new Hall over the holidays, which will be located in the Caledon East Community Complex.

?We have seen a number of Caledon athletes over the years who have achieved great success at the local, national and international levels, and we're extremely proud of them all.? said Mayor Allan Thompson. ?It's very fitting that we first induct Jerry, as he was someone who exemplified leadership in sports, was widely respected by his peers and known fondly as ?The Commissioner'.?

A retired Toronto firefighter of 29 years, Callaghan passed away from complications following surgery at the age of 63 in 2008. He was instrumental in the establishment of the now-defunct junior A Caledon Canadians in the 1990s, a building block to what would become the North Bay Battalion of the OHL in later years, thanks to Callaghan's partnership with Battalion owner and Trivial Pursuit inventor Scott Abbott.

?Jerry's commitment to hockey, whether at the junior A or OHL level or in minor and men's hockey, was all-encompassing,? said Abbott at the time of Callaghan's passing, add he was a ?tireless volunteer? in terms of community service.

His nickname comes as a result of his participation in, and service to, a number of local hockey organizations. He served three years as the head of the Caledon Senior Hockey League, taking to the ice for it for plenty more.

He also established the Sunday Night Hockey League throughout the Bolton and Mayfield arenas, a recreational league going strong now for 32 seasons, with the motto ?It's not whether you win or lose, it's who you meet along the way that really matters.?

Other groups that were touched by Mr. Callaghan's commitment included the Bolton Minor Hockey Assocation, the Bolton Men's Slow-pitch League, and more.

His work with the Caledon Meals on Wheels, as well as Caledon Community Services, has also not been forgotten.

Mr. Callaghan will be the first inductee into the new space, dubbed by a Town of Caledon press release as ?a place to recognize, memorialize and celebrate the accomplishments of Caledon athletes and teams, living or passed on, who have excelled at the community, provincial, national and international level(s).? Inductees will be split into one of three categories in the future: Athlete, Builder, and Team.

A temporary area for the Hall has been prepared for present artifacts to be displayed, while a permanent setup is in the plans for a future expansion of the Complex in 2021.