

Park named after former mayor

By Bill Rea

Although he no longer lives in Caledon, there are many in the community who remember John Clarkson.

Many more are going to get the chance to remember him, as Town council recently agreed to rename a park in SouthFields Village after Caledon's second mayor.

The park is currently known as Village Blue, and is at 415 Dougall Ave.

Clarkson became a Chinguacousy Township councillor in 1972, and was elected a member of the first Caledon council in 1974, representing Ward 2 at the Regional level. He became mayor in 1976 and served several terms, declining to seek re-election in 1985. He made an unsuccessful attempt to return as mayor in 1988.

The staff report to council stated that "Clarkson was responsible for getting many of the rural roads in town paved, as well as developing a Caledon-wide recreation vision.

"The use of his name for a local park would further commemorate the tremendous leadership he demonstrated while serving in office, and also his role in the community," the report stated.

It added Clarkson's family was consulted, and they are enthused at the prospect.

Council received a letter from his daughter Sara, writing on behalf of the family.

"This would be a perfect for Dad!" she wrote.

She said her father grew up on the family fruit farm in Dixie.

"John spent a lot of his childhood skating outdoors in Dixie, where he learned to skate on the family farm pond," she stated.

She also wrote that Caledon has been home for the family for generations. His mother, Beatrice Wanless, came from a family farm on Highway 10, just north of Olde Base Line Road.

"Many of our family roots are in Caledon," she wrote.

"John worked very hard during his time with the Town and Region, and was extremely proud of what was accomplished," she added.

Clarkson currently lives on Vancouver Island. Ms. Clarkson, in her letter, stated health issues prevent him from coming here.

"He talks about getting back here all the time, because Caledon will always be his home," she wrote.

