



The Preston Lawn Bowling Club on Queen Street (now Queenston Road) was bustling with activity in the 1930s.

## Lawn bowling club reborn

Group in the process of resuscitating old lawn bowling club on Queenston Rd. in Cambridge

Janet Kelly  
CAMBRIDGE REPORTER

CAMBRIDGE — Long-time Preston residents will give their heads a shake when they pass the old lawn bowling club on Queenston Road.

After sitting dormant for years, the Preston Lawn Bowling Club has been reborn, looking just as it did more than 60 years ago.

"I grew up around here," said Mark Clare, vice-president of the club. "We'd ride by on our bicycles and stop and watch. It was a very social time."

Rather than watch the club deteriorate or become a parking lot, he decided to look into the status of the property. Others in the area had the same idea.

The group discovered that the club was held under a 99-year lease with the Town of Preston for a fee of \$1.

All the property needed — or so they thought — was a little muscle.

Instead, they were in for a grueling year of weed pulling ("champion-sized weeds," site manager Ian Scott pointed out), seeding, lawn maintenance, cleaning and renovations, with more work still ahead of them.

"We don't expect the club will be completely restored this year," said Ann Clare, secretary.

"We never realized how big a project it would be."

They did, however, receive a lot of support and would like to thank the

City of Cambridge and many other friends of the club.

Most with full-time jobs, the neighbours have spent most of their free time at the club — although none have had time to bowl.

But alas the hard work has paid off and the neighbours have breathed new life into the run-down facility.

Coincidentally, the revived club and an archive is ready just in time for Preston's 100th birthday.

"We didn't plan for the centennial. That's how it worked out," Mr. Clare said.

Fittingly, the club has changed little from its early days.

"Our plan is to keep it the way it was . . . a nice neighbourhood place to come," Mr. Clare said.

The Preston Lawn Bowling Club has a long and proud history as one of the fine old facilities in Ontario.

"It's the prettiest," said Mr. Clare.

"He's biased," Mr. Scott, replied.

"It's the best preserved club."

As an original member, current president Bill Blake can tell it like it is.

The club originated from a lawn bowling green, located on tennis courts on the Savage Shoe grounds on Queen Street (now Queenston Road). In 1936, the club located at its current location and signed the lease with the town.

"The club lasted longer than the Town of Preston," Mr. Blake said.



Janet Kelly/Cambridge Reporter

Members of the executive put down their gardening tools and paint brushes and had a little expertise. recently. Bill Blake, president, takes his best shot, while novices Ann and Mark Clare admire

## Lawn bowling suited to people of all ages, abilities

CAMBRIDGE — Come on. Give it a try.

In an effort to shake the common belief that lawn bowling is for seniors only, the Preston Lawn Bowling Club invites young and old to come out and try the game for free on any Sunday.

"It's for anyone interested in a relaxing summer-time sport," said Mark Clare, vice-president of the club.

"We don't want to be exclusive. Our only request is that you wear soft shoes."

The gentle recreational activity —

similar to shuffleboard, curling and bocce — is suited to people of all ages and abilities.

But don't be fooled into thinking it's as easy as it looks.

"There's more skill than just tossing a ball down the green," said Ann Clare, club secretary.

Families, singles or large groups are encouraged and can arrange to bowl just about anytime. The greens are brightly lit for nighttime games.

The club is hoping to eventually increase its membership to keep the club alive and thriving.

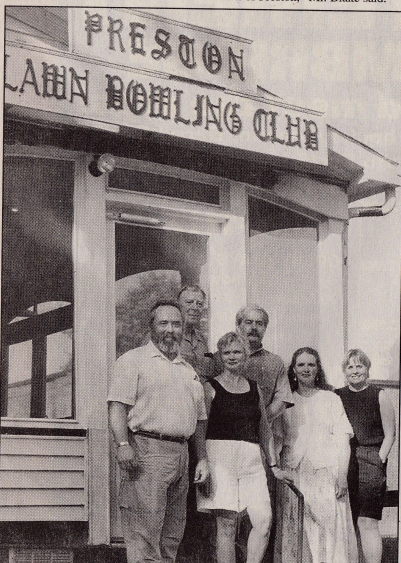
"It takes a lot of enthusiasm to keep the club going," Mrs. Clare said.

They even encourage non-bowlers to enjoy the screened-in porch of quiet recreational facility.

"You don't have to be playing to part of it," Mr. Clare said.

The club is also looking for people to recruit new members, raise money for the greens, refurbish the clubhouse and beautify the property as of course, play lawn bowling.

For a free introduction to lawn bowling, call Bill Blake at 653-3444 Mark or Ann Clare at 653-7960.



Being a member of the executive of the Preston Lawn Bowling Club isn't a glamorous job. It has taken a more than a year of blood, sweat and tears to make the club operable once again. Shown in front of the almost-restored club are (front, from left) Ian Scott, treasurer; Sharon Brown, member; Ann Clare, secretary; Sue McLelland, director; (back) Bill Blake, president; and Mark Clare, vice-president.



The original members of the Preston Lawn Bowling Club pose for a photo in the 1930s.