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First for Toronto – Friars' Briar in 1998

In the first letter that came out to former participants in a Friars' Briar event inviting us to consider coming to Toronto for the 1998 Briar, Andy Denholm had a cute opening line. It went like this, *At some time or other, people come to Toronto, leave Toronto, or pass through Toronto. This is the first chance for clergy to come to Toronto to curl.*

When some of us from the prairies, and particularly from Saskatchewan, who knew all about the *curling Campbells from Avonlea*, heard that our games were to be played in a rink built and first managed by the Campbells and bearing the name of their home town of Avonlea, our interest in the 1998 Briar grew in intensity. Names like Werenich, Savage and Kawaja also came to mind.

However, when Cam Reid, Ross Connal and myself from B.C. were greeted at the airport by an employee of the Toronto funeral trade and offered a ride to our hotel in a funeral car, we wondered if this was an omen of what was in store for us westerners in the first draw which decides who will be alive to receive the coveted Heavenly Host Challenge Shield. Thanks to a little help of some eastern curlers to even up the numbers, the West stayed alive to win!

Having great memories of past eastern-located Briars ... at London in '81, at Kitchener-Waterloo in '86, at Hamilton in '91 and Ottawa in '93, we were sure that the announced Organizing Committee of Andy Denholm, Doug McKenzie, Ernie Skujins, Dennis Landry, Janet Denholm, Annette Skujins, Ralph Taylor, Donna Landry, Arch McCurdy, Bob McNaught and Doug Sloan (of all Ontario) would do a fine job...which they did! Although most of the work was done by members of the East Metro and St. Georges Clubs, background help came from the other All Ontario clubs as well.

Local funeral homes, sports and media organizations and individuals gave generous financial support so that many of the costs not possible from the curlers' fees were underwritten. Travel grants were given to out-of-province curlers, and the residue shared between the parent Association and the two Toronto clubs.

Most of the non-Toronto curlers stayed at the Travelodge Hotel at Victoria Park and Highway 401. Prior to and following the games of the Friars' Briar, and in the evenings, we gathered in the rooms to view the Labatt games being broadcast from Winnipeg and drank the hotel's free tea, coffee and hot chocolate. This made for some great viewing and camaraderie! Transportation was provided for us by local curlers to our Briar games at the Avonlea Curling Rink.

The 1998 Friars' Briar began Monday evening, March 9th at the Avonlea Rink with coffee and dessert and introductions of some of the members of the coordinating committee. Brochures with information about Toronto plus a mug bearing a Toronto ensignia were available for each curler. Alex Munro was recruited to pipe us out onto the ice at 9 p.m. to play the traditional East/West game. We were off to good start!

Ernie Skujins of Brampton was both Registrar and Drawmaster. When all names were in, there was a total of twenty rinks – thirteen from Ontario, one from Manitoba, two from Saskatchewan, two from Alberta and two from British Columbia. The rinks were divided into two groups of six and one of eight. In true Lutheran style, Ernie gave each grouping a liturgical name (Creator, Sanctifier and Redeemer). The draw proceeded smoothly with five Round Robin games being played from within each group. The top eight teams then went to Tier One. From these teams was determined the winners of the Gold and Silver medallions and one of the competitors for the Bronze. Tier Two was made up of the teams in 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th places. The last eight teams following the Round Robin played off in Tier Three. The top four winners made up Tier Four and the remaining four made up Tier Five.

When the medallions were awarded following the Friday morning game and lunch, the Ernie Skujins rink claimed the Gold, the Guy Scholz team of Calgary the Silver and the Ed Oman rink of Calgary the Bronze. Others with significant wins were awarded prizes gathered by the hard working Coordinating Committee. As at a Chinese funeral service, the mourners (losers) were given a package of sweets.

One of the great delights of this Toronto Briar for the writer was the joy of meeting again my former Winnipeg Roman Catholic neighbor, Bert Foliot and to curl against him. I had the pleasure of introducing him to the game in Winnipeg. His usual gracious spirit would not allow him to express the pleasure he must have had in defeating his mentor at the Toronto Briar!

Much credit for the smooth way in which the curling proceeded is due to Ernie Skujins who not only posted the draws with clarity and originality, but also showed us on the ice how a gold medal skip should perform. For the record, you might like to be reminded of the titles he gave to draws 1 – 8: East versus West, The Red Eye Draw, Time to Get Serious, There is Still a Chance, Oh For The Perfect Draw, Time to Fight, The Penultimate Draw and The Champions Draw.

The annual Friars' Briar Banquet and Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday evening, March 11th at Donminster United Church. The program began with what was called The President's Reception. Punch, Hors d'oeuvres and handshakes were the order of the day. Words of welcome and introduction were made by Andy Denholm, Coordinating Chair and grace said by Bert Foliot of East Metro club. A wonderful dinner consisting of bonspiel roast beef, rock potatoes and gravy, brushed carrots, sweep peas and mushrooms, green ice coleslaw, relish tray and hit-n-rolls, hot shot coffee, tee line tea, take out mints, was served by the men and women of a special catering group from the church. Janet Denholm expressed appreciation for the meal and accommodations of the church.

Some raucus singing of improvised curling songs was led by Joyce Bullock, introduced by Douglas McKenzie who was in charge of entertainment. Ora Marwick accompanied Joyce on the piano. It was then our pleasure to hear Joyce sing: *Don't Cry for Me Argentina*, from *Evita*; *Can't Help Lovin' That Man*, from *Show Boat*; and *Wouldn't It Be Lovely*, from *My Fair Lady*. Following these selections, Ora Marwick played from *Arabesque #2* by Debussy on the piano. Prodigator Paul Barker then entertained us on stage. Arch McCurdy of the St. Georges Club expressed appreciation to our entertainment guests.

President Fraser Muldrew presided over the Annual Friars' Briar Association Meeting. Eighty-two persons were present. Minutes of the 1997 meeting were read by Arch McCurdy, Secretary, and a summary given of the discussions of the Board meeting held at the hotel on March 10th.

Some special presentations were made. Kutch Imayoshi, our Vice President, presented the Heavenly Host trophy, won by the West this year, to Ed Oman of Calgary for safekeeping. Cliff McMurtry, Past President, made the presentation of the Wood Lake Books trophy called the Wesley Leatherhead Amazing Grace Trophy to Beulah McNaught for her substantial help with the Ottawa Briar and yearly support of her husband in helping other teams win. A presentation of a Friar Teddy Bear was made by Fraser and Marion Muldrew to Cliff McMurtry, honouring his nine years as president and his work in the preparation, writing and publication of the 20 Year History of Canadian Clergy Curling called *The Friars' Briar*. Andy conveyed thanks to York Family Funeral Home and Rosar-Morrison Funeral Home, represented respectively by Bill Baxter and Alex Munro for sponsoring the banquet and providing the memento curling mugs to all participants of this year's Briar.

The membership approved the nominations of the Board as follows:

Directors	Province		
	British Columbia	Kutch Imayoshi	To 1999
	Alberta	Guy Scholz	To 2001
	Saskatchewan	Alan Grundahl	To 2003
	Manitoba	Roger Coll	To 2002
	Ontario	Jan Huntjens	To 2000
		Doug Sloan	To 2003
Board Officers	President	Fraser Muldrew	To 2000
	Vice President	Kutch Imayoshi	To 2000
	Secretary	Jan Huntjens	To 2000
	Treasurer	Ken Innes	To 2000
	Historian	Cliff McMurtry	No time limit

Discussions arose concerning the number of lay persons that could play on a rink and the position played, also the number of family members allowed to curl with a clergy person. Arch McCurdy served a notice of motion, to be voted on at the 1999 Annual Meeting.

That the policy regarding the number of lay curlers be as follows:

A son or daughter of an eligible member of the Friars' Briar Association could play in a position other than lead provided they are 18 years of age or younger.

President Fraser offered a memorial prayer for curlers who had died during the year, namely: Nelson Hampton, Janice Grundahl, Graham Holmes, Lola McNaught and Joe Hinan. Doug Sloan, President of the All Ontario Clergy Curling Clubs pronounced the benediction.

At a meeting of the Board held at the rink following the final games and award presentations, there was discussion regarding the policy for use of lay people as spares. There was unanimous agreement that the rule established for this purpose should be enforced. This rule states that only one person may be added to a team of professional church workers and that person will play in the lead position. In the case where a team is short one player, the local organizing committee of the event will be charged with the responsibility of securing one.

George Friedrich advised the Directors that a committee headed by Don Brown and Harold Witte was preparing to host next year's Briar in Edmonton.

Yes, it was great being a part of the Toronto '98 Briar. The invitation was a long time coming, but we knew that the old Western adage, *What good can come out of Ontario?* was only said in jest. Many long and creative hours were put into the planning by Andy's coordinating committee to make the total event one long to be remembered. I'm sure that we all felt that it was good to be there.

Addendum

Later in March of 1998, at the All Ontario Clergy Curlers Annual Meeting, one of our best known and loved Friars was presented with the Don Amos Award. A lovely engraved plaque hangs in his Oshawa study making him the second recipient of this prestigious award.

Courtesy of Andy Denholm, I received a copy of the presentation made. Rather than wait until one of those Ontario undertakers get hold of our friend, I thought you might like to hear about him while he is still around for a rebuttal. Congratulations from us all Bob!

The Reverend Robert John Ball McNaught

About fifteen years ago, at Ontario Clergy Bonspiels, there were a number of unforgettable "characters". Among these was a genial curler, dressed in Scottish plaid and wearing a huge flat, floppy hat. Modelled after the traditional Scot's tam, its edges drooped down on all sides, like a spaniel's ears. It brought great amusement to the curlers and, we suspect, a certain satisfaction to that genial curler. His name is Bob McNaught, for whom this brief introduction has been written.

Robert John Ball McNaught grew up in the area of the Ottawa Valley, having been born near Harwood, where his father was a minister in a number of communities. After studies at Queen's University and Queen's Theological College, Bob graduated and was ordained to the Ministry of the United Church of Canada.

He has served in pastorates at Pangman in Saskatchewan, and in Ontario, at Lanark, Sharon, Erindale, Queensville, Newtonbrook, and Scarborough Heights. After retirement on January 1st, 1984, he has continued in retirement ministries at Brooklyn, Kedron, Kingsview and in Oshawa. He and his wife Beulah, have been hosts to a number of overseas tours.

He has been involved in Clergy Curling for about 40 years, being an early member of the East Metro Clergy Curling Club when it started at the former Tam O'Shanter Rink. He has worked on various Committees over these years.

Bob has been involved in the Friars' Briar since its first competition in Winnipeg in 1978. He has played in all but two or three of the nineteen Friars' Briar annual Spiels. This included the "disastrous" trip to Chicoutimi. He has just ended a long period as a Trustee of the Friars' Briar.

The various Ontario Bonspiels became accustomed to Bob and his "cow pancake hat" and the fun that attended it. Bob and Beulah, working from Toronto, planned and hosted the Friars' Briar in Ottawa in 1994. Bob has been of great assistance to the Toronto Committee, which sponsored this year's F.B.

For a number of years, Bob has been Chaplain to the Ontario Curling Association, and now wishes to turn it over to someone else. He succeeded Don Amos in this position.

On a personal note, twenty years ago, Bob married Beulah after the death from cancer of his first wife, Gwenneth. They have seven children. Bob has been involved in Kiwanis, Odd Fellows, Masons and the Children's Aid Society and remains surprisingly active and involved.

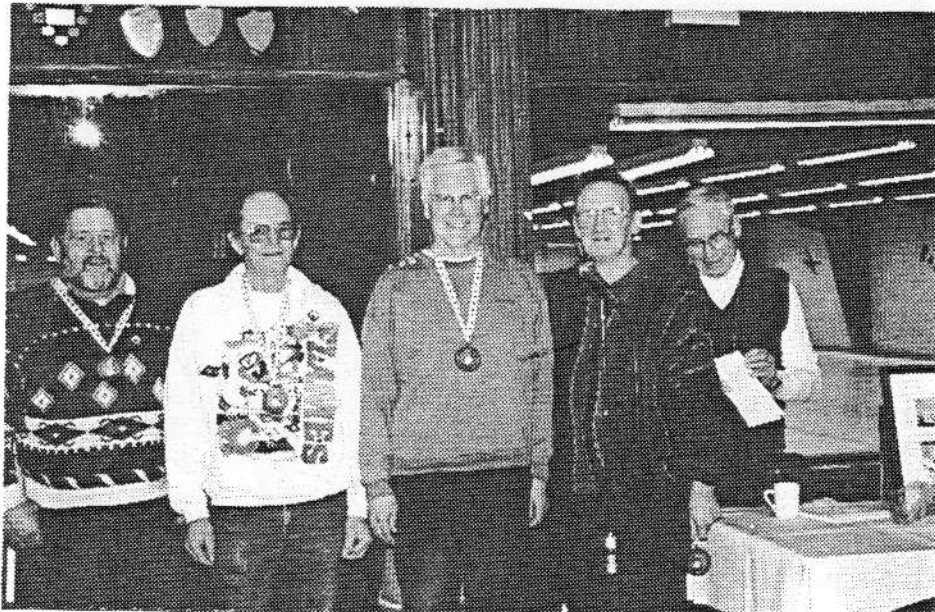
When asked what he considers to be his chief contribution to Clergy Curling, he answered: *I have contributed to more winning teams than any other curler!* Translated, it means he is a very good sport!



Ernie Skujins and children (standing in for their mother, Anette) and other members of their St. George's Toronto rink, John Perkins and Dan Huntjens receive first place honours from President Fraser Muldrew and local chair, Andy Denholm.



Second place went to the Calgary rink of Guy and Carla Scholz, Andy Jones and Ken McBey



Third place went to the Calgary rink of Ed Oman, Orie Oldfield and Roy Busse. (Missing: Frank Littel)



Fourth place, just short of the medals, went to Doug Sloan, Bob Matton, George Speers and Paul Webb.



B.C. guys, Cliff McMurtry, Cameron Reid and Ross Connal are met at the Toronto airport by a gracious lady from the Peoples Church, driving a funeral van.



Beulah McNaught is recognized at the banquet for her graciousness and support of past Friars' Briars.





Welcome to the...
THE FRIARS' BRIAR



Toronto Briar 1998

Alberta

Guy Scholz	Calgary	Gerry Hofstetter	Guelph
Carla Scholz	Calgary	Don Johns	Guelph
Andy Jones	Calgary	Linda Bell	Guelph
Ken McBey	Calgary	Zander Dunn	Guelph

Ed Oman	Calgary	Murray Rounding	Guelph
Frank Littel	Calgary	Jenny Stephens	Guelph
Orie Oldfield	Calgary	Joy Sloan	Guelph
Roy Busse	Calgary	Sherlee McGregor-McCuaig	Guelph

British Columbia

		Hank Petkau	Niagara
		Phil Cline	Niagara
Cliff McMurtry	Delta	John Sallman	Niagara
Cameron Reid	Delta	Harold Canning	Niagara

		Bert Foliot	East Metro
		Andy Denholm	East Metro

Ivan Cumming	Vancouver	Stan Yokota	East Metro
Kutch Imayoshi	Vancouver	Barry Klinck	East Metro

George Friedrich	Vancouver	Maurice Martin	Kitchener-Waterloo
Emmitt Holmes	Vancouver	Al Isaac	Kitchener-Waterloo

Manitoba

		David Martin	Kitchener-Waterloo
		Wilmer Minke	Kitchener-Waterloo

Fraser Muldrew	Winnipeg		
Ken Innes	Winnipeg	Helge Hongisto	St. George's
Roger Coll	Winnipeg	Doug Herron	St. George's
Milt Muldrew	Winnipeg	Don Parr	St. George's
		Ralph Taylor	St. George's

Ontario

		Bob Binhammer	St. George's
Ernie Skujins	St. George's	Ken Showers	St. George's
John Perkins	St. George's	Jennifer Williams	St. George's
Jan Huntjens	St. George's	Jim Townley-Smith	St. George's
Annette Skujins	St. George's		

		Vince Goring	East Metro
Doug Sloan	Guelph	Doug McKenzie	East Metro
Bob Matton	Guelph	Jack Cummins	East Metro
George Speers	Guelph	Duncan White	East Metro
Paul Webb	Guelph		

Bill Service	Oshawa
Bob McNaught	Oshawa
Russell Hall	Oshawa
Beulah McNaught	Oshawa

Arch McCurdy	St. George's
Bill Fennell	St. George's
Ken Beckett	St. George's
Phyllis McCurdy	St. George's

Ralph Garbe	East Metro
Gord Hastings	East Metro
Russell Wilson	East Metro
George Wilson	East Metro

Saskatchewan

Bill Kiesman	Asquith
Bob McAdam	Asquith
Jeremy Kiesman	Asquith
Jonathan Kiesman	Asquith

Harold Hesje	Saskatoon
Ken Peterson	Saskatoon
Arno Bablitz	Saskatoon
Vernon Begalke	Saskatoon

Spares

Herb McNaught
Janet Denholm
Leila MacInnes