

Ready to Walk the Hall: Colin Skinner 'Pop' Nisbet left behind golf legacy that has now stretched four generations

Colin 'Pop' Nisbet and his wife Beatrice moved to Aurora from Davisville, Ontario, in 1919. At the time, Aurora was the head of the railway, so it was an easy move to the Town. Their three children, Keith, a former mayor of Aurora, Beverley and Douglas, were all born here.

With a family of five, 'Pop' established a florist business in Aurora, continuing the family business which his father Peter Nisbet had began in Toronto.

The Aurora Golf Course was adjacent to Pop's greenhouses on Yonge Street. It was a nine-hole course that Pop felt was being neglected.

In the 1943, when Pop was in his sixties, he and Norman Campbell took over the management of the course and a few years later Pop purchased the course which he renamed The Aurora Highlands.

After revamping the golf course operation, a local newspaper's headline read: 'Aurora's First Place of Beauty and Pleasure' stating 'not only is the course now a credit to its owner, but it is an asset of first importance to the town and the community.'

It was at this point in his life Pop actually took up the sport of golf, this was despite the fact that Pop had incurred a serious injury and walked with an artificial leg.

In 1956, at the age of 74, Nisbet sold the Highlands Golf Course.

He was not ready to retire and proceeded to purchase a farm at Vandorf Side Road and Leslie Street where in the fall of 1957, the first four holes of a brand-new golf course were opened.

Free play was offered to local patrons in exchange for opinions on the course. In 1958, the first nine holes, known as the Homestead, were opened. The next year he opened the second nine.

In 1963, Pop purchased additional farms nearby, redesigning the first nine holes and adding an additional nine, called Lakeview, making Westview the 27-hole course it is today.

Remembered as a hard-working, hands-on man, 'Pop' passed away in December of 1973 at the age of 92.

The family were thrilled to learn Pop had been accepted into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame, feeling he is a fitting recipient representing 75 years of golf in Aurora.

'It is wonderful to see Pop being acknowledged for starting what he started,' they said.

The family has continued to operate Westview golf course to this day. Now his grandchildren and great grandchildren are continuing his legacy.

Westview Golf Club is located at 1563 Vandorf Sideroad.

The Nisbet family will be honouring 'Pop' at the Induction Celebration Dinner this November 10 at the Royal Venetian in Aurora.

By Robert Belardi