

115-year-old Victoria lawn bowling club officially adds croquet

Large white letters stripped from Beacon Hill Park clubhouse with official name change



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Chris Jones, left, and Pierre Pomerleau bowl a few in front of the Victoria Bowls and Croquet Club where the big white words will be replaced during a spring paint job. (Christine van Reeuyk/News Staff)

Spring rejuvenation at the lawn bowling club near Beacon Hill Park includes rebranding with the oldest club in the region's new name.

Since 1909, folks have bowled the greens at the newly renamed Victoria Bowls and Croquet Club not far from Cook Street Village.

Seven or eight years ago, croquet players started sticking wickets in the greens – with permission of course.

“It was a trial,” club president Anita McCaw said.

Not long after, croquet players started joining the club, even if they weren't lawn bowlers.

“It's a good fit for bowlers when they get older,” said McCaw, who took croquet lessons herself this winter, despite remaining an active lawn bowler. That comes first for now, but she's enjoying the availability of the second sport. Quite a few members now play both.



Jim Crawford gets air hitting his yellow ball into the black during a Thursday afternoon game of croquet at the Victoria Bowls And Croquet Club in Victoria. (Christine van Reeuwijk/News Staff)

With the sports alternating equally on the two greens, a couple years ago leadership started reviewing the club's governance documents and investigating a potential name change for the 115-year-old Victoria Lawn Bowling Club.

There was little to no push back, McCaw said.

The name officially changed in November 2023 and now they're in the process of procuring new logos and signage. With a new paint job on the horizon for the clubhouse, it's an opportune time to change the large white words that have stood out there for decades.

"It's a new beginning. Some people worried about the history ... we're making new history," McCaw said.

The newly minted official members are more invested in the club, involved in planning, membership recruitment and moving forward, she said.

"They've come to life now that they're members."

Guests can enjoy treats and try both sports when the club at 160 Nursery Rd. hosts its annual open house April 20 and 21 from noon to 4 p.m. each day.



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I'm dedicated to serving the community of Oak Bay as a senior journalist with the Greater Victoria news team.