

2017 Hall of Fame

Lynn Smith



Lynn was inducted into the Women's Bowls Hall of Fame on 23rd November 2017, at the Bankstown Sports Club.

Lynn Smith is a very familiar name amongst the bowling fraternity. Lynn hails from a bowling family synonymous with success beginning her own bowling career in 1980 at the Western Suburbs BC. Just 5 years later Lynn won the grand slam at that club before moving to Roselands. Lynn continued to dominate and won numerous club and district championships and became a permanent fixture in the NSW team for over 10 years, playing 88 games for her state in the days when the open team was the only representative team selected in NSW.

Cruelly, Lynn was struck down with an epidural abscess in 2005 and spent 6 months in hospital and as a result became an "incomplete paraplegic" however unable to keep a good woman down, in 2008 Lynn won the Sue Fear Award for courage and achievement in sport. Lynn joined Wheelchair Sports NSW the same year and again she was a regular visitor to the winner's circle. In addition to that, she was a visionary and pioneer of the sport, initiating the first Over 60s Pairs Tournament for women, an event that bears her name and has been running annually now for the past 11 years.

It is still a premier event for players and as such it has just been announced as a Selector-Eye tournament for Womens Bowls NSW. Even with her disabilities, being a stubborn-minded individual has stood her in good stead, as she continued to compete in able-bodied events at her club and district, winning the club pairs, triples, and singles at various times between 2012 and 2015.

In 2015, Lynn's heroics were recognised winning the Sportsperson of the Year at the Bankstown Australia Day Awards. Lynn is an exceptional human being who is deserved of being the 2017 Inductee into the Women's Bowls NSW Hall of Fame. We congratulate Lynn and her family and thank her for her many years of service to the sport.

Merle Richardson

Merle was inducted into the Women's Bowls Hall of Fame on 22nd February 2017, at the Kirribilli Club. Merle Richardson was introduced to lawn bowls in 1959, when she was invited by her husband to roll the first bowl under new lights at New South Wales' Bulli Club. Within a year, Merle had recorded her first win, defeating the club champion at the president's singles competition. She would go on to win more than two hundred and fifty games over the next thirty years.

Named the New South Wales Champion of Champions in 1970, Richardson has represented Australia three times in international competitions. She won the world singles and the world pairs competitions held in Melbourne in 1985. The following year she defeated New Zealander Peter Belliss, also a world champion, in 'the Battle of the Sexes' held in Victoria and was awarded the OAM for services to lawn bowls.

Daphne Shaw

Daphne was inducted into the Women's Bowls Hall of Fame on 22nd February 2017, at the Kirribilli Club. Daphne took up the sport when recurring problems with her knee curtailed her participation in other sports. And as they say, lawn bowls was the winner. She had only been playing bowls for four years when she won her first State Title. She went on to win every State Title at least once between 1985 and 1994 including the Champion of Club Champions Singles in 1991. She was a regular in our State Side between 1986 and 1997, playing over 53 Test Matches for the Blues.

At a National Level she was a Silver Medallist in the Australian Pairs before taking Gold in that same event in 1991 and 1997. She also won Gold in the National Singles and Fours events. At an International level, this lady represented Australia twice in the Commonwealth Games achieving a Gold medal in the Fours in 1990.

Daphne represented Australia in the World Bowls Championships twice and Asia-Pacific Championships and the Trans-Tasman Series. Later in her illustrious career she spent many hours as a TV broadcaster, commentating on the game, and her expert knowledge was much appreciated by the many bowlers and non-bowlers who watched the game on TV every Saturday afternoon.

Willow Fong

Willow was inducted into the Women's Bowls Hall of Fame on 22nd February 2017, at the Kirribilli Club. Willow had a glittering career in her homeland Fiji, where she represented at 13 different International events including the South Pacific Games, Asia Pacific Games, World Bowls and Commonwealth Games. In those events she brought home 9 gold medals, 3 silver medals and 7 bronze medals.

At the South Pacific Games in 1983 she won gold in the singles, pairs and fours, the first person, male or female, to win three titles at these championships in the same year. And in 1985 she was named Fiji Sportswoman of the Year. In November 1989, she migrated to Australia and luckily for us, she landed in NSW and took up residence in Merrylands. Between 1990 and 2016 she won numerous club, district and state titles. She played in our NSW State Open team for 18 years but that was not enough for her and she followed that up with another 2 years in our Over 60's Senior State Side.

Between 1996 and 2005 she represented Australia in the Commonwealth Games, winning a bronze medal, the World Championships twice, the Asia Pacific Games twice and the Trans-Tasman Series, 8 times.