



Museum Newsletter

By James Vannurden
Director and Curator

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Who We Are

The National Museum of Roller Skating is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Lincoln, Nebraska and the only dedicated roller skating museum in the world. We are committed to the preservation of the history of roller skating. With over 40 display cases, the museum educates the public on all aspects of roller skating, which dates back to the first patented skate from 1819.

Curator's Corner

Museum Receives State Recognition

Heritage Nebraska, a department of the Nebraska tourism industry, has recognized the museum as one of a handful of recipients of the 2012 Hidden Treasure award.

Hidden Treasures' recognition is awarded annually by Heritage Nebraska, the state's non-profit preservation advocacy organization.

The museum received the following certificate from the organization. We are proud that the state recognized our museum as a great destination in Nebraska.

Skater Profile: Harry A. Gilman Rink Manager/Speed Skater



*This information can be found in the book from the museum store entitled **Skaters History on Ice and Roller Skating**. For more information like this, consider purchasing the book. Thanks.*

Harry Gilman entered the roller skating industry just prior to 1905. He began his skating career at the Coliseum Rink in Chicago. By the next year Gilman won the Middle West championship while also managing the Wonderland Rink in Indianapolis. In addition, he finished second in the two six-day races there.

His career then took him away from the Midwest. For three years beginning in 1908 Gilman managed the Casino Rink of Houston, Texas; while in Texas took the championship of the South title from Dusty McLaughlin of Austin. Gilman then moved on to Washington where he managed the Fairyland Rink of Bellingham while also winning a best-of-three contest with coast champion Pete Clark.

Rounding out his career Gilman continued his traveling. He toured the continent giving exhibitions in the United States and Canada while also accepting challenges. He eventually took a job managing the Rainbow Rink in Kansas City, Kansas. His success at both managing and competing helped the skating industry grow.



Poster Donation

The Roller Skating Association donated many posters to the museum from its campaigns promoting the sport. Poster subject stretch from skating as a healthy activity to promoting October as National Roller Skating Month.

Skate of the Week:
Mt. Desert Roller Skates

Library Feature:
National Roller Skating Guide '56



Donated by Sylvia Haffke for the museum opening in 1982, these skates by Nait Company depict the type of skates used during the latter portion of the nineteenth century.

The Mt. Desert Roller Skate of 1882 possesses many of the typical characteristics of roller skates of that day. Wooden plates with leather straps attached the skaters shoe to the skate. These parlor skates, as they were known, had wooden wheels for indoor skating; keeping the wheels secure on the axels were pins.

Many small companies opened during the roller skating boom period between 1870 and 1890 to manufacture skates. Most found small success before closing or selling to a larger company. This example of the Mt. Desert Roller Skate illustrates one of those companies.

Each year National Sports Publications of New York issued a *National Roller Skating Guide* for its readers. These guides discussed the current climate of the sport of roller skating, introduced new rules and regulations, informed readers on new skating stories, and listed official skating professionals and rinks.

Roller Skating Firsts

- First roller hockey league formed in Dayton, Ohio in 1882, known as National Polo League.
- The first speed skating road race occurred in Belgium, covering a distance of over 40 kilometers in 1910.
- First recorded marriage on roller skates took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin between Hattie Baldwin and W. McGrath in 1912.


- Here is an example of new dress rules announced by the RSROA for the 1955 national championships:
- 1) No shorts, levis, or overalls.
 - 2) No bare midriffs.
 - 3) No skating costumes on street, unless suitably covered.

Thirteen pages are dedicated to listing the many professional skating instructors throughout the country. Listed alphebetically, these instructors range from new teachers to nationally reknowned professionals. One instructor is pictured below:

Rink Profile:
Rainbow Roller Rink



RAINBOW R.R.
Honolulu, Hawaii



One of America's Leading
Roller Instructors
JOHNNY JOHNSTON
RAINBO ROLLER RINK
NOBLESVILLE, INDIANIA

"In reviewing our files, we find that you have surpassed all records in producing test skaters who have successfully passed".
GEORGE APDALE.
Pres., U.S.A.R.S.A.

For those wishing to renew their memberships, we included the following form. Thanks in advance!

MEMBERSHIP FORM		
Name:	_____	
Address:	_____	
City/State/Zip:	_____	
Membership Level	1 year	2 years
Benefactor	___ \$500	___ \$950
Patron	___ \$250	___ \$475
Assoc Patron	___ \$100	___ \$185
Donor	___ \$50	___ \$90
Individual/Family	___ \$35	___ \$65
Additional Contribution	\$ _____	
Total Enclosed \$	_____	
Method of Payment		
___	Check to National Museum of Roller Skating	
___	___	MasterCard
Credit Card	_____	
Number	_____	
Exp.	_____	
Signature	_____	
Mail to: National Museum of Roller Skating, 4730 South Street, Lincoln, NE 68506 Fax to: 402-483-1465		

Wish List

1.) **Rink Files:** The museum seeks to expand its roller rink files. In the archives, the museum houses files upon files of individual roller rinks from across the country. These files are used for research purposes. *We recently helped a gentleman find photos from the Bal-A-Roue Rink in Medford, MA from our archives.*

The more rinks we have on file, the greater chance we have to help those searching for information. We are looking for photos, programs, ticket stubs, newspaper articles, and any other primary information about roller rinks.

2.) **Regional programs:** We need modern issues of all regional programs. For example, we need Great Lakes regionals from 2002 through the present but also 1992-97. We need Southern regionals from the past five years.

The museum's goal is to have two copies of each issue for its permanent archives. With regionals now over, **please send copies of your regional programs** to the museum. Thanks in advance.

3.) The museum needs items from **jam skating**. DVDs, skates, programs, t-shirts, magazines, and anything associated with the sport are needed for the museum. Please contact us to see what you can donate.

Rink Sticker Collection

The museum has an extensive collection of roller skating rink stickers. Many skating rinks used to produce stickers as both an advertisement and fun way to for skaters to interact with one another, comparing the different location in which they skated. These were even traded as collectibles both informally and formally, under the Universal Roller Skating Sticker Exchange founded in 1948. Each newsletter, we will feature four different rink stickers. Here are a few examples of the numerous stickers in the collection and on display at the National Museum of Roller Skating.



Thanks for supporting the museum!



★
Broadway
at
Fifth Avenue
★



★
MEMBER
Roller Skating
Rink Operators
Assn. of the
United States
★

Vol. 1

Denver, Colorado, April, 1940

Number 2

Johnson and Norcross to Go Scouting for New Ideas

Carl C. Johnson, Manager of the Mile Hi Roller Rink and J. W. Norcross, Vice-President of the Mile Hi and owner of Woronoco Park Rink in Greeley will leave for the East on April 13th. Their itinerary will include Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and New York City. They will return by way of Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Kansas City.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Norcross plan on visiting all the Roller Rinks in these cities, getting different ideas on what is going on along these lines outside Denver. This is all a part of a program for the ultimate improvement of the Mile Hi Roller Rink.

Some of the improvements to be given special study will be the acoustics best suited for a roller rink. This is a very important feature. Along these lines will be the investigation of the best floor, both from the standpoint of surface, and free from noise. The lighting affects will also be gone into thoroughly, with the view in mind of combining beauty with entertainment. And of course with all these interior alterations, the exterior of the building will be remodeled to conform with the general scheme of a beautiful Roller Rink.

These gentlemen will arrive in Cleveland in time to attend the National Convention of the Roller Skating Rink Owners of America, and will witness the National Graceful and Figure Skating Contest to be held in the Cleveland Auditorium. This building will also be the scene of the National Roller Skating Races.

Carl, if you and Mr. Norcross don't return to Denver with your respective heads just crammed with new roller skating ideas, many of the Mile Hi patrons will be sorely disappointed.

Skating Contest Finals, Wednesday, April 3. Added attraction: "Sonja Henie" of the rollers will perform.

Skating Contests

Every Wednesday night of March, Waltz, Two-step and Graceful skating contests were held. These were the preliminaries. The finals will be held on the night of April 3rd. There are so many real good roller skaters who enter these contests, that it is a real job for the judges in picking the winners. However, we tried our best to be fair to all, and if you didn't win in the preliminaries, you came mighty close to winning. We can say truthfully, there were no poor skaters in the contests. The contests were as follows:

Ladies Singles (two step and waltz).

Mens Singles (two step and waltz).

Couples (waltz).

Couples (two step).

Following were the results of the preliminaries:

March 6—Ladies singles: Snooks Schrader, Dora Bashum. Mens singles: Chuck Skinner, Harold Newberry. Couples (waltz): Snooks Schrader and Frank Porter, Betty Jane Agrelius and Jim McFarland. Couples (two step): Audrey Curran and Chuck Skinner, Dora Bashum and Joe Hill.

March 13—Ladies singles: Audrey Curran, Olive Pelham. Mens singles: Joe Hill, Frank Porter. Couples (waltz): Dora Bashum and Joe Hill, Audrey Curran and Chuck Skinner. Couples (two step): Betty Jane Agrelius and Jim McFarland, Snooks Schrader and Frank Porter.

March 20—Ladies singles: Fay Carmichael, Margie Mortier. Mens singles: Roblin Smith, Harold Hart. Couples (waltz): Olive Pelham and Dale Thomas, Margie Mortier and Roblin Smith. Couples (two step): Cecile Huskins and Jack Dwyer, Margie Mortier and Roblin Smith.

Judges—Red Winland, Virginia Parks, Tom Sandusky Jr., Pop Ginsburg.

March 27—Ladies singles: Zeldia Welborn and Flora Newberry. Mens singles: Dale Thomas and Harold Waite. Couples (waltz): Myra Conway, Harold Hart, Virginia and Jahn Parks. Couples (two step): Margie Surface and Jim Chadwick; Pat Sissick and Harry Powell.

St. Patrick's Party

The Irish were out in full force at the Mile Hi on the night of March 17th. The O'Mallys, the O'Ginsburgs, the Murphys, and the O'Garcias were all there. It was a big skating party, and there was something doing every minute. Organist Roy Churchill did his bit by playing those lilting Irish waltzes intermingled with a few snappy two steps. Sure and Roy must have some Irish in his blood, for none other could have transplanted the Mile Hi Roller Rink from Denver to Dublin by merely manipulating the ivory keys of the Hammond.

Then there were games and novelty races. The Numbers game is lots of fun. Numbers are painted on the floor of the Rink. The skater who is standing over the number that is drawn from the box when the music stops, wins a prize. Many prizes were presented in this game. The balloon race was never meant for sissies. Balloons were fastened to the ankles of the contestants, who were paired and legs fastened as in a three legged race. The object was to break the other fellows balloon, the one remaining intact after all others were broken, being the winners. Jerry B. Otero and Albert Canacart were the winners of this race.

The hurdle race was an exciting and laughable affair. Boxes were placed on the skating surface and the racers had to hurdle them to the tune of ten laps. There were spills galore, but no one was hurt. Joe Hill came in winner of this race.

The evening was all too short, and every one went home singing praises of the Mile Hi entertainments.

Mrs. Johnson Has Been Ill

Mrs. W. L. Johnson, Pres. Treas. of the Mile Hi, was missing from her usual station, the ticket window, for a few days last month, and we were beginning to worry about her. However, she has regained her health, and is back on the job. The regular patrons of the rink and the employes, are mighty glad to see you with us again, Mrs. Johnson.