



Rolling Through Time

Official Newsletter of:

The National Museum of Roller Skating

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 @rollersk8museum

Prepared by Peggy Young

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The National Museum of Roller Skating is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization located in Lincoln, Nebraska. It is the only dedicated roller skating museum in the world. We are committed to the preservation of the history of roller skating. With over 50 display cases, the museum educates the public on all aspects of roller skating, which dates back to the first patented skate from 1819.

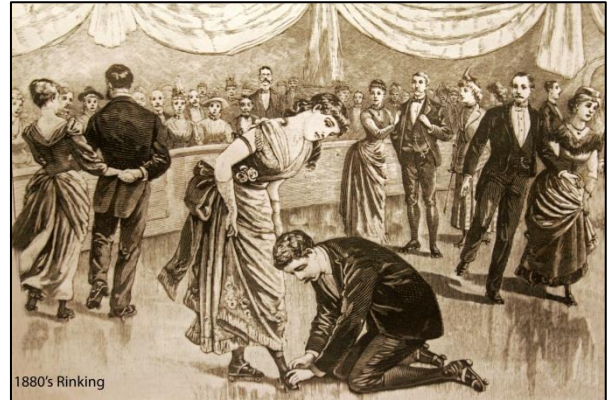
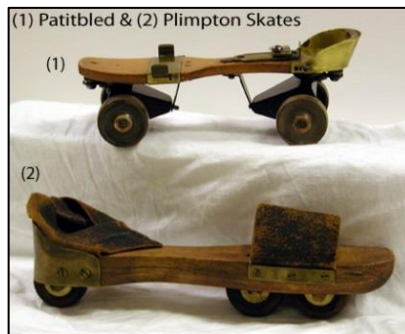
Congratulations to James Vannurden

In December James left the National Museum of Roller Skating to take a position as Curator of the Old Cowtown Museum in Wichita, Kansas. This move will take him and his young family closer to home. A part-time curator will be hired to cover his responsibilities at our Museum, with support from local volunteers.

Interesting *Firsts* in Roller Skating

As reported in the *first* Museum Newsletter, April 1982, written by Michael W. Brooslin, the *first* Director/Curator of the National Museum of Roller Skating

- First roller skate was made sometime around 1700 by a Dutchman who attached wooden spools to his pair of ice skates.
- First roller skate with a proven existence was invented by the Belgian Joseph Merlin in 1760.
- First appearance of roller skating in ballet was in Berlin, Germany in 1818 during an act from "The Artist or Winter Pleasures".
- First patent issued for a roller skate was to the French inventor M. Petibled during 1819.
- First known performance of artistic roller skating was by Mr. & Mrs. Dumas at the Port Saint Martin Theatre in Paris, France during 1840.
- First appearance of roller skating in an opera was in 1848, when Giacomo Meyerbeer's "Le Profete" was performed in Paris.



- First rubber wheels on a roller skate were in 1852 - the English "Woodward" skate.
- First public roller skating rink was opened in 1857 in the Floral Hall of Covent Garden, London, England.
- First roller skating in Australia took place in 1860 during a tour by Miss Nellie Jackson.
- First modern style roller skate (with action) was invented in 1863 by James Leonard Plimpton of Medford, Massachusetts and New York City.
- First roller skating organization, the New York Skating Association, was formed by James L. Plimpton in 1863.
- First building built specifically for roller skating was the Plimpton Building, erected by James L. Plimpton in New York City during 1863.
- First clamp-on roller skate was patented by Everett H. Barney in 1864.
- First person to "skate around the world" was William Fuller, who accomplished this feat from 1865 through 1870.
- First public roller skating rink in America was the Atlantic House in Newport, Rhode Island. This rink was operated by James L. Plimpton
- First game of roller ball hockey (then called roller polo) was played during 1878 at the Denmark Rink in London, England.
- First roller skate which could be easily converted to an ice skate was patented by Everett H. Barney in 1882.
- First national organization governing skating (speed, hockey and artistic) was the National Skating Association of Great Britain, which was formed in 1879-80.

- First organized roller hockey league, the National Polo League, was formed in Dayton, Ohio, on October 11, 1882.
- First recorded roller skating race was a six day endurance marathon which was held in Madison Square Garden, New York City, during March of 1884.
- First roller skate wheel with ball bearings was patented by Levant M. Richardson on December 9, 1884.
- First roller skating tests were given in 1894 by the National Skating Association in England.
- First professional roller skating championship was a speed skating meet, held in England during 1906.
- First roller skating organization governing the sport in the Americas came into being with the formation of the International Skating Union of America in 1907.
- First international roller hockey match was played between the Royal Rink Hockey Club de Bruxelles (Belgium), and the Centaur Roller Club de Paris (France) during 1910. The Belgian team won the match, 3 - 1.
- First speed skating road race was from Ostend to Wenduyn in Belgium, a distance of over 40 kilometers. It was held during 1910.
- First roller skate dance tests were given in 1912 at the Welcome Club in England.
- First recorded marriage on roller skates took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, between Miss Hattie Baldwin and Mr. W. McGrath during 1912.
- First roller hockey organization was the National Rink Hockey Association of Great Britain, formed in 1913.
- First roller skating film was "The Rink", a 1916 movie starring Charlie Chaplin.
- First international organization for roller skating came into being in 1924 with the founding of the Federation Internationale de Patinage a Roulettes.
- First amateur roller skating speed tournaments were organized in Central Park by the New York City Parks & Recreation Department, during 1925.
- First European roller skating championships were held in England during 1926, consisting solely of roller hockey.
- First Roller Derby competition was held at the Chicago Coliseum in August of 1935.
- First World Roller Skating Championships (artistic, speed and hockey) were organized by the Federation Internationale de Patinage a Roulettes in 1936.
- First U.S. Amateur Roller Skating Speed Championships were held at the Arena Gardens Rink in Detroit, Michigan, during 1937.

- First introduction of roller dance skating to America was in 1938 when Joan Lidstone and Billy Watson of Great Britain were brought over

to



the United States for an exhibition tour by Perry B. Rawson.

- First standardized National roller skating rules were published by the Roller Skating Rink Operators Association of America in 1938.
- First U.S. Amateur Artistic Roller Skating Championships (dance) were held in 1939 at the Mineola Skating Rink on Long Island, New York.
- First jump in a roller skating competition was the single Lutz, done by Bruce Towle in 1940.
- First regular roller skating column in a newspaper appeared during 1940 in the New York Journal-American, and was written by Bill Love.
- First double jump performed by a roller skater was done in 1940 by Skippy Baxter. The jump was a double Salcow.
- First National roller skating championship in Europe was held in Belgium during 1941.
- First roller skating show produced professionally was the "Skating Vanities of 1942".
- First novel about roller skating appeared in 1943. The "Portrait of Laurel" was authored by Ken Thomas.
- First roller skating show to benefit medical research took place in 1943. Held at Madison Square Garden in New York City, this exhibition presented by the Roller Skating Rink Operators Association raised over \$10,000 for the March of Dimes Foundation.

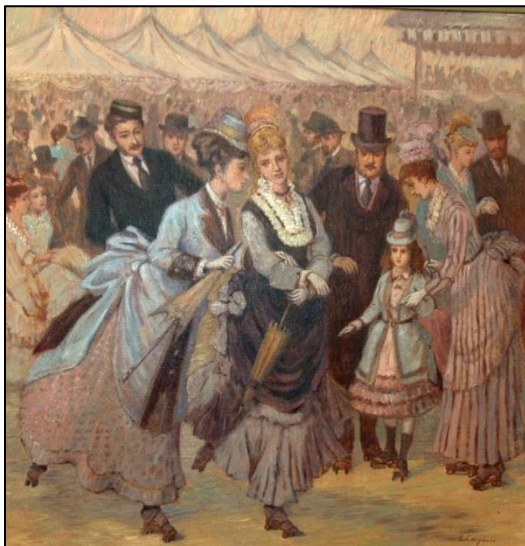


- First commercially made toe stops went on the market in 1946.
- First plastic coated roller skating surfaces made their appearance in rinks during 1946.
- First American Gold Medal roller skating figure test took place at the Arena Gardens rink in Detroit on December 11, 1946. Six out of 23 skaters passed.
- First triple jump performed by a roller skater was a triple toe-loop, done by Gene Harless in 1959.
- First American Ball Hockey roller championships was won by the Galloping Ghosts team from Lubbock, Texas in 1963.
- First polyurethane roller skate wheels were manufactured in 1965.
- First American puck roller hockey championships was capture by a team from Windsor, Ontario, (Canada) in 1966.
- First appearance of roller skating in the Pan American Games was in Puerto Rico during 1979.

Featured Sport Photo



One thing you will see if you visit the National Museum of Roller Skating



Original Oil Painting done by L. Campbell

As a Member of the National Museum of Roller Skating, your support is essential. Thank you for enabling us to preserve roller skating's rich history on behalf of the sport, business and recreation.

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