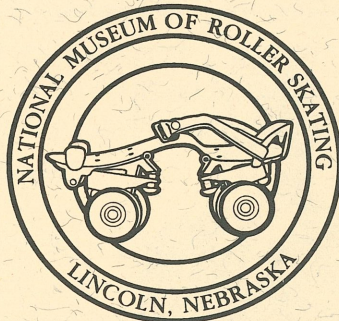

HISTORICAL ROLLER SKATING OVERVIEW

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROLLER SKATING



4730 South Street
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Lincoln, Nebraska 68506
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E-mail: rllrsktmus@aol.com
Museum hours: 9-5, M-F

April 1996

A Publication of the National Museum of Roller Skating

Issue No. 51



*Performers at the White City Amusement Park & Roller Rink, circa 1930
(Gift of Richard McLaughlen).*

C u r a t o r ' s C o r n e r

It's Raffle time!

Only a month away from the Museum's annual raffle. The drawing will be held May 8, at the RSA Presidential Dinner in Reno, NV. Don't miss this opportunity to win big! \$10,000 in prizes and \$5000 goes to the grand prize winner. You need not be present to win. The revenue from the raffle will be used to support the museum's programs and activities. The raffle form is on page 6.

The past couple of months have been busy ones. I want to thank all the new members who have decided to join and I would also like to thank all those you have renewed their support. Along with the numerous members contributing, many have chosen to donate historical artifacts to the museum, and I thank them too. Please check page 7 for the membership listing and page 6 for recent donations.

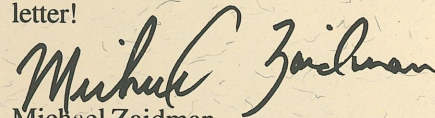
For those of you that will be adventuring to Lincoln this summer for either the Regional or National competitions, you will be pleased to know that the museum will be open on both Saturdays and Sundays. Museum hours have not been established, but the museum will be available for your viewing pleasure.

This issue of the "OVERVIEW" features Vaudeville skating. Over the past couple of years "aggressive skating" or "freestyle skating" have become a profession for many young skaters today. Hopefully this article will shed some light on the history of the "freestyle movement" that has once again taken notice of today's younger skaters.

I would like to wish the best of luck to Scott Wilhite, the former director of the museum. Scott is Manager of Archives and Programs at the Western Folklife Center in Elko, NV.

Finally, a bit of sad news from the roller skating world. Al Kish, of Toledo, OH, the last remaining founder of RSROA (Roller Skating Rink Operators Association of America) has passed. Al was active in the operation of roller rinks since 1924. He served on many committees and was a significant member of the roller skating community. He will be missed.

Thanks for your continued support. Enjoy the newsletter!



Michael Zaidman
Director & Curator

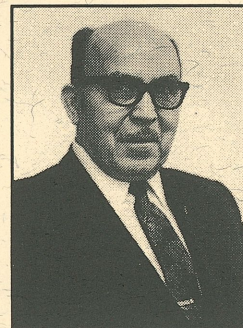


Photo of Al Kish, RSROA founder.

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Historical Roller Skating Overview is published bimonthly for members of the National Museum of Roller Skating. It is available only through honorary membership in the museum. Minimum annual contribution is \$25.00. Send correspondence to: Museum Director, 4730 South Street, P.O. Box 6579, Lincoln, NE 68506

VAUDEVILLE SKATING

(Today's "Aggressive Skating")

Many of today's skaters are performing on ramps, half-pipes or on railings to showcase their talents similar to the vaudeville skaters of the past who performed a vast array of stunts and maneuvers. Here is a look back at "Vaudeville Skating" by Fred Carpenter, from the 1952 Annual Roller Skating Almanac.

Vaudeville Skating in the past several years has been almost strictly confined to spinning and lifting acts, many of which have been most successful, even though most of these acts have very similar routines. The fact that this type of act can work on a very small space necessitating the carrying of small and compact skating mats, or platforms, is no doubt one of the reasons why so many skaters have gone in for this type of act. These same acts of course are very adaptable for showing in night clubs; theater stages; and in fact most any place where performers are confined to very limited space. There is no denying that due to the space factor this type of act is more likely to fill many engagements outside of the theater. Transportation is also a big factor since a small skating mat, or platform, can be carried, and loaded, in the compact space of a station wagon, or small trailer.

For the past several years there has been an absence of free stylist type of skating acts, and it is upon this subject that I hope I may be of some service to the young competitive skaters who may have in mind the



*Jeanette LaBenth and her girl "swingers" professional skating act, circa, 1930-5
(Gift of Richard McLaughlen).*

taking up of show skating, professionally.

It is my belief that Vaudeville-Fairs-Circuses-as well as several of the skating rinks offer a wide range, for engagements to well staged freestyle skating acts.



Rose Kress and a male partner, professional skaters, circa 1919 (Gift of Rose L. Martin).

One crop of young competitive roller skating free-stylist champions certainly have reached the attainment of skating ability that presents a beautiful sight, as well as bordering on the sensational, thereby furnishing the requirements needed to hold audience interest.

To the young skaters intent on becoming show skaters, they must first learn to execute their routines in the smallest space possible with the utmost speed and continuity-in arranging the routine, the aim should be to put together such footwork, spins and jumps that have the most appeal to the audience, the aim is to keep audience interest high right from the start to finish.

The music should be lively, especially during all free style skating numbers. If dances are included in the routine, they too should be lively and include quick footwork. Keep your audience in a receptive mood, don't have any lagging moments. If you do include dances in your act, you may have to devise or invent such dances for stage purposes, as you have a limited dancing surface.

Costuming should conform to the type of routine, and wherever possible, there should be one or more changes during each performance. You have a choice of sportswear, fancy and elaborate costumes, or evening wear.

The inclusion of a comedy skater or a team of comedy skaters, either male or female, is another important feature which should not be overlooked. There is also the factor of using novelty and trick skating-using stilts, unicycle skates, in fact any contraption that may be devised and attached to the feet, and will roll.

The possibilities of skating acts, of the type I write of, has a practically unlimited choice, as to the make-up of routines, such as the free stylists with as many combinations of steps; footwork, jumps, novelties, trick and comedy. It is such that no two acts in this category of skating should bear too much resemblance, each act can be a distinct act apart from any other-Always keep originality in mind when constructing and laying out routine and ideas.

The present crop of young skaters of top-flight is such that several acts can be produced, teams, trios, fours, and other combinations besides free style skating.

To those skaters planning on the adventure of becoming Vaudeville or show skaters my advice is to first map out a plan, using whatever category and combination of those already mentioned, and keep rehearsing until such time as you believe you have attained a fast moving and as near perfect act as possible.

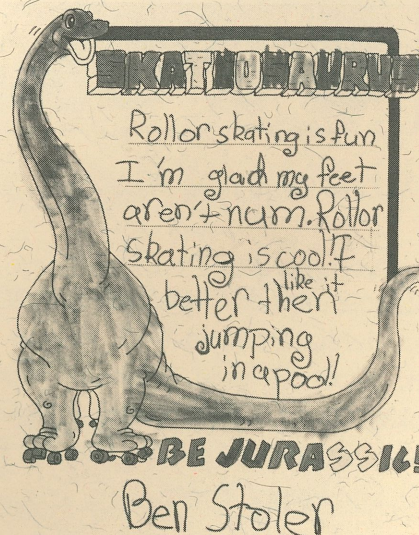
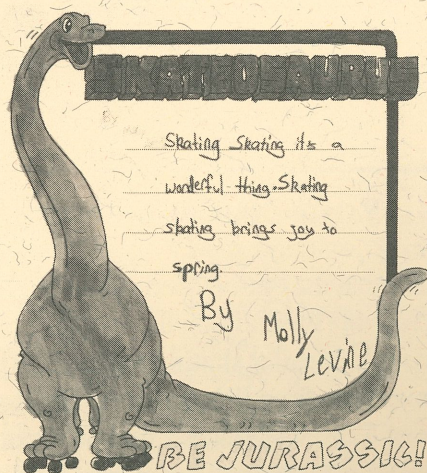
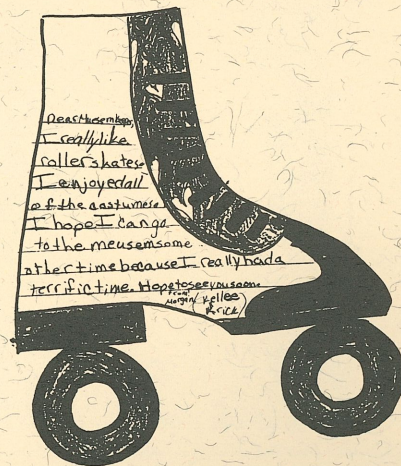
Since free style skaters are regularly attached to some rink I have no doubt that your rink operator would be happy to cooperate with skaters embarking on the adventure of becoming show skaters, and granting them the use of the rink for rehearsal purposes. A small space should be marked off, let us say an area of 20 x 20 feet, as the acts are in progress it is well to bear in mind that the cutting down of the area I mention is important as this will save on the size of skating mats to be carried on the road.

Acts at first should have showings and try-outs at local and nearby theaters for comments and audience reaction, and this will guide the act to make changes if any are required before taking to the road.

The next step in getting established, is having the act seen by booking agents. Once the agents and theater managers pronounce the act has merit, the act will soon be on the road to success.

M A I L B A G

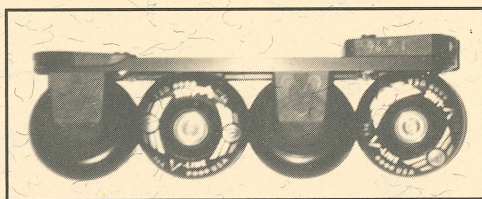
The museum recently received some student poems and drawings about roller skating. Over the past three months the museum has had twelve school/ group tours visit. Here are some of their interpretations of roller skating.



DONATIONS

There have many donations made to the museum over the past few months. Highlighted here are some of those items. Thank you to all who have aided the museum in strengthening the collection.

Dee Bonewicz donated several skating outfits belonging to Penny Schaffner who competed in the mid 1960's. Below is a yellow sequin outfit.



V-Line Skate from the V-Line Skate Co.

Other donors include: Joel Lau , C.W. Lowe, John Chrien, Marcia DeSarro-Witt, Alison & Tammy Gretsuk, Scott Kleiman, Nicholas Viscuso, Thomas Zukas, David Bickel, Nadine E. Pokorny-Meis, Magdalen & Stanley Brekne, Chester Fried, John J. Petell, and Peggy Young.

RAFFLE

Donations from various individuals have helped to fund the museum, but these are not enough. The annual museum raffle was created to provide a major source of funding for the museum's activities. We hold the raffle at our national convention every year. Tickets are sold in advance and at the convention. These tickets are sold to members, rink operators, coaches, athletes, family, and friends.

The National Museum of Roller Skating provides an invaluable service to all by preserving and documenting our history for future generations and our generation to enjoy.

RAFFLE TICKET

\$10,000 in prizes will be drawn during the convention. The grand prize of \$5000 will go to some lucky individual. You need not be present to win.

YES! I would like to order a 1996 raffle ticket:

Send me _____ tickets @ \$50 each

Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Mail to: National Museum of Roller Skating

4730 South Street

P.O. Box 6579

Lincoln, NE 68506

PATRON MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Remember that the Patron Memorial Plaque still has spaces available for individuals who have made contributions to our roller skating heritage. This could include everyone from rink owners to athletes. A one-time fee of \$250 will place a person's name on the memorial which is permanently displayed at the National Museum of Roller Skating.

MEMBERSHIP

The National Museum of Roller Skating would like to thank these members who have recently contributed to the ongoing success of the museum through their continued support.

Benefactor:

Bert & Lynn Anselmi

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Mr. & Mrs. Edward Bolton

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Katelyn Giovanmucci

Susan Raehn

Jack Walker

Bernadette Williams

Pat Prozzillo, Warrington S.R.

BE A PART OF HISTORY

The history of roller skating is fragile. Once it is lost, it may never be regained. Help the National Museum of Roller Skating preserve our rich history by joining one of our special membership categories. Future roller skaters will thank you.

Contributors of \$25 or more become Honorary Members of the museum and receive a subscription to the *Historical Roller Skating OVERVIEW*, 10% off in the museum store, and a museum membership card.

Membership Categories

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New | <input type="checkbox"/> Renew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Family | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Patron | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$500 |

Name _____

Address _____

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Mail to: National Museum of Roller Skating
P.O. Box 6579
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Contributions are tax-deductible up to the amount permitted by law.

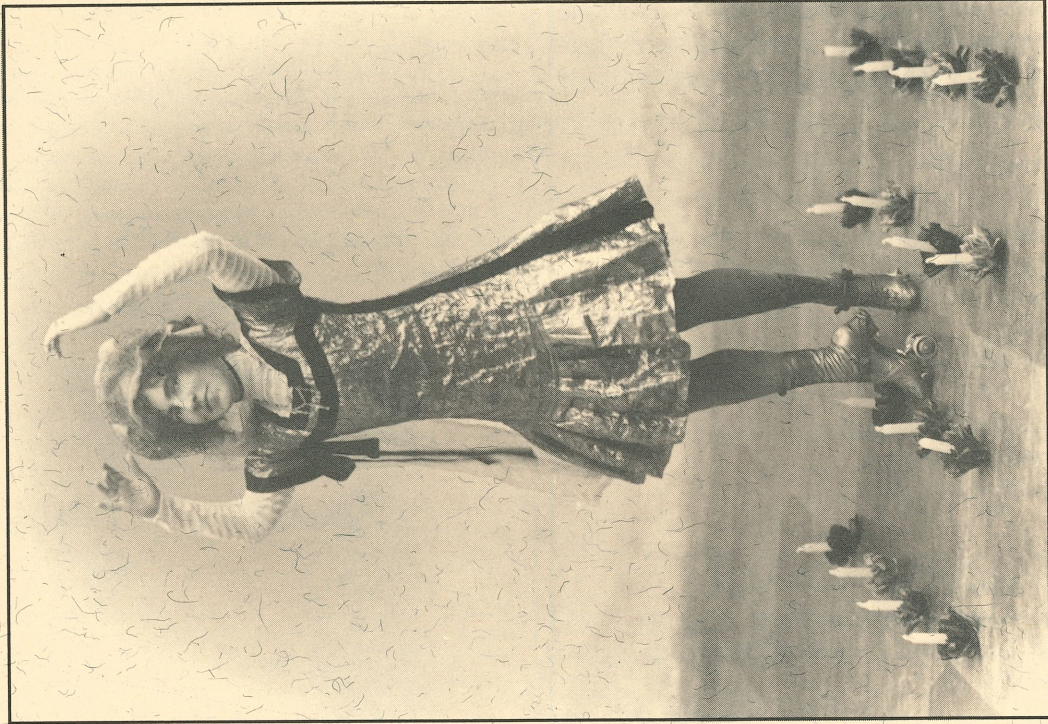
Method of payment

- Check enclosed payable to the National Museum of Roller Skating
- VISA Exp. date: _____
- MasterCard

Card #: _____

Authorized Signature _____

Happy Mother's Day, May 12



Jessie Darling skating through candles placed on the floor (Gift of Mr. Armand Champa).

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