



Museum Newsletter

By James Vannurden
Director and Curator

National Museum of Roller Skating
4730 South Street, Lincoln, NE 68506
(402)483-7551 ex. 16
www.rollerskatingmuseum.com

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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 50 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

New Display



Our new display called "RSA's Kind Heart" details the involvement with charitable functions that the roller skating industry participated in throughout the last 75 years. In 1943 the RSROA adopted as its personal charity the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, which fought polio. With the eradication of polio in the 1950s, RSROA shifted its focus to other causes.

In 1957 the RSROA joined up with the Easter Seals. This organizations worked with children and families with physical disabilities to improve their way of life. The following year Easter Seals became an official charity of the RSROA along with the NFIP.



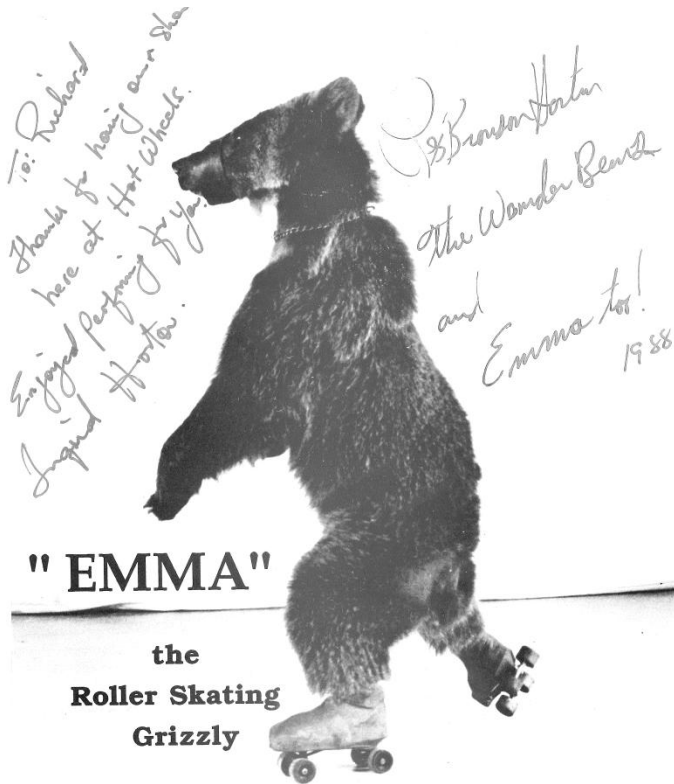
In the 1970s RSROA become involved with the Muscular Dystrophy Association. It began with one rink owner named John Sheen of the Louisville Rollatorium. Mr. Sheen held a twenty-four hour rollation over the Thanksgiving weekend of 1971 in conjunction with his local MDA office. This event was so large that the rink had to turn people away because they ran out of skate rentals. The affair raised \$845. The national MDA office was then contacted to encourage a more permanent connection with the RSROA.



The following year the RSROA adopted MDA as an official charity. RSROA president Burt Anselmi pledged \$50,000 for its first year's contribution; a total of 70 rinks raised \$72,000 through skate-a-thons and other fundraisers. In 1976 RSROA contributed \$1.5 million. The Jerry Lewis telethon booked skaters for the annual show. Mr. Lewis himself even attended a few RSROA national conventions to show his appreciation.

Featured Photo
Roller Skating Bear

Library Feature
Roller Skating Business



Pictured above is Emma the roller skating grizzly bear. She performed at various venues in the late 1980s. This photo was given to Richard Hawkins after Emma skated an exhibition at Hot Wheels in Florida in 1988.

Many other animals appear on roller skates from time to time. The museum has photographs of animals such as a dog, cat, bird, chimpanzee, horse, and even an elephant all on roller skates.

Special Memorial

The museum received a memorial donation in the memory of Susan Wynne Carter. Susan was the wife of former RSA president Walter Carter. They were both great supporters of the museum.

Roller Skating Firsts

- First museum dedicated to roller skating founded, Nov 1980.
- First days of operation for the new National Museum of Roller Skating, Apr 1982.

Renewing/New Members

Dan and Kim Brown
Tom Bense
Brendan Murray
Cecelia Kelley



Roller Skating Business, the official magazine of the Roller Skating Association is one of the publications that allows the museum to contribute articles. The most recent issue, Jan/Feb 2013, publicizes the museum's newest large acquisition, the Gloria Nord collection.

National Museum of Roller Skating

National Roller Skating Museum Houses Largest Collection of Gloria Nord Items

In the 1940s, the United States experienced a very famous traveling roller skating troupe known as the Skating Vanties. These ladies and gentlemen performed various exhibitions on roller skates to packed auditoriums while dressed in vibrant and elaborate costumes. Showcasing their talents at all the largest venues, the Skating Vanties became the world's greatest roller skating show of their time. In addition to domestic performances, the Skating Vanties participated in European and South American tours. They skated in front of crowds, which later included the Pope and the Queen of England.

matching arm length gloves. Small, two-piece outfits were worn along with their robes. Simple, custom dresses juxtaposed the very ornate gowns. The dresses covered the various types of dances in the performance.



Included with her costumes and jewelry, the donation of Gloria Nord came with some artwork. First, a painting of Gloria wearing a fur-like outfit on a blue background stands four feet high. The artist, Bennett, depicts Gloria standing on her toes with great form. Secondly, the donation included a colored drawing of Gloria in costume.

While every skater added to the lore of the show, the main attraction and headliner of the show was Ms. Gloria Nord. A former baller dancer turned skater, Nord performed her shows with precise timing and grace that captivated the audience. She was the featured skater in many acts.

A real treasure of the donation was the box of photographs. These original photos, as noted by photographer stamps and dates on the backs, showcased Gloria in multiple poses and costumes. Over two hundred of the photos were 8x10 sizes. The rest included smaller sizes like 5x7, 4x6, 3x5, and down to wallet size. Group poses, like the one pictured, also captured others of the show. With over three hundred photographs in all, this addition to the museum collection gives our archives a better look inside the Skating Vanties.

Mike Nordskog, the great-nephew of former roller skating great Gloria Nord of the Skating Vanties, called the museum a few months ago to gauge our interest in accepting a donation from his great-uncle's skating days. He tantalized our imaginations with thoughts of great skating gowns, photographs, skates, and other effects. After the passing of Gloria, he remained entranced with her skating items and wanted a better home for them, perhaps at a place where they could be given the proper respect and admiration.



After receiving photographs of the items by email, the museum anxiously awaited their arrival. A large crate, measuring almost 6 feet high, 4 feet wide, by 4 feet deep arrived at the museum on October 16. The main item that took up most of the space was the original travel trunk of Gloria during her Skating Vanties days. The trunk contained items Gloria needed during her shows. These items included makeup, jewelry, head dresses, skates, accessories, and of course her dresses.

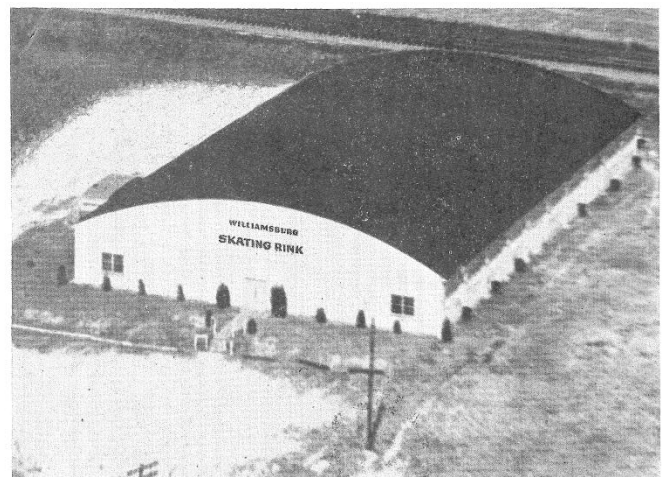
Gloria Nord had been a supporter of the museum for quite some time. She previously had donated many items from her Skating Vanties days. These included costumes, skates, scrapbooks, and photographs. This newest addition just enhances our collection of her. The National Museum of Roller Skating now houses the largest collection of Gloria Nord items from her days in the Skating Vanties. Please consider visiting the museum to enjoy our newest collection.

James Vannurden
Director/Curator

Several dresses accompanied the donation. There were gold dresses with matching headresses. A teal dress with glass beads accompanied

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Rink Photo:
Williamsburg Skating Rink, Williamsburg, VA



Friendliest Crowd on Wheels Williamsburg Skating Rink Williamsburg, Va.

Skate of the Week
Motorized skate



Located in our "Odd and Unusual Skates" display, this motorized skate is fan favorite among our visitors. Created by local Nebraskan Vernon Quoy of Fremont, NE this skate is powered by its attached chainsaw motor. Affixed to the toe of the left skate, this motor powers the skate through a pulley system. When operational, the skate can travel at a safe speed of a few miles per hour up to the maximum range of about 30mph.

Along with the skate, our museum received photos of Vernon wearing the skates, newspaper articles, and a video of him on the Tonight Show demonstrating his contraption to Johnny Carson himself. This piece is currently on permanent display in our gallery.

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.

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.) **Roller Derby Items:** We are looking to enhance our roller derby collection. Our main focus is to improve our assortment of original derby uniforms. Both older and modern, the museum needs game used jerseys with official team logos. Both male and female please consider. We would also like a referee uniform, provided a derby name is stitched on the back.

Besides uniforms, we are also accepting most any derby items. We hope to collect a logo from each competing team, whether through patches, stickers, buttons, or other items. Please contact the museum with any donation questions. 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 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!



Happy Valentine's Day!

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