

STE ROSE CURLING CLUB HISTORY

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In the mid nineteen thirties, the citizens of the Village of Ste. Rose sensed a need for more fun and recreation in the community. People were feeling "down" because of dealing with hard times so to give themselves a lift, some of the families of the time decided to work together. With the help of the Delveaux's, Hopfner's, MacCarthy's, Pelletier's Thurston's and others, the Ste. Rose Curling Club was born and the first curling rink was completed in 1937.

The site chosen was northwest of town, across the tracks from the railroad station, fairly close to the river. It was a long shed-style of building, enclosing a waiting room and two sheets of ice separated by a walkway, built of boards placed side by side. The beams, rafters and roof support posts gave the visual feeling of operating in two side by side tunnels. Lights were suspended from the rafters, creating pools of light down the length of the ice surface.

Curling fees were very modest in early years, but equipment could be costly. Seeing curlers coming to the rink with a broom under their arm and a rock in each hand, was not unusual. People often brought their own rocks, selecting sizes and weights they liked.

For the first year of the club, membership numbers ranged from twenty to thirty. Teams for schedules were "mixed", ie. So that men and ladies curled together.

By 1946, the ladies had gained sufficient expertise to become skips and so, both a men and a ladies schedule were organized. With further practice some of the ladies (namely - Liz Menec, Denise Pineau, Jeannine Delveaux and Yvonne Debeuckelaere) became skillful enough to score an eight ender!

In 1953, the annual schedule curling fees were \$8.00 for men, \$5.00 for ladies and \$3.00 for students. The mixed bonspiel entry fee was \$1.00 for local members, outside rinks paid \$2.00. Everyone was always pleased with the quality of the prizes and enjoyed the complimentary lunch included in the fees. However, ice conditions were closely tied to weather conditions.

Club Memberships increased in the late forties and early fifties. Although the old rink was packed with wonderful memories of great times, there was a need for a larger facility. So, the members of the club worked very hard and on January 5th, 1956, the "new" curling rink was officially opened. It was located on the northeast side of Main Street, adjacent to the south side of the railway tracks. This site made it handy to the business area. It was built in the style that combined walls and roof in an arc. Everyone was proud of the big bright three-sheet expansion of open space; no more rafters and light puddles!

The stairs leading to the space above the waiting room were not quite an architect's dream, but they did the job. Three large upstairs windows gave an excellent view of all the games. In later years, a mini bar was opened to provide refreshments.

For the first fourteen years, bonspiel games were sometimes scheduled "around the clock" because of weather and natural ice. This ended when the club was able to install artificial ice facilities in 1969.

The Ste. Rose Curling Club was very active in the years from 1955 to 1982. In the early seventies, in particular, the Collegiate was very supportive of curling. A noon-hour schedule allowed bus students to curl at noon and town students participated in after school schedules, both were popular.

In the late seventies and early eighties the Turtle River School Division started a program of inter-Collegiate competition in gymnasium sports (volleyball, basketball, etc.) This, plus an increase in minor hockey participation eventually led to the end of student curling schedules.

On the average, there were about twenty rinks curling in the schedules during the years of the late seventies and early eighties. Fees varied from \$40.00 to \$60.00 per year.

The "new" 1956 rink had begun to show it's age by the early 1980's. Slowly, with the support of the Village Council, the Rural Municipality, the business community and the service organizations, plans to build a new rink adjacent to the Skating Arena and the Community Centre began to take shape. It was to be part of a total recreation complex for the community.

After three years of intense lobbying by the Village Council, the R.M. and the service clubs, some government grants became available. The monies combined with support from the community and tremendous effort from volunteers and service clubs made the construction of a modern cement and steel four-sheet curling rink possible.

Curling in the new four-sheet rink began in early November of 1990 with 12 ladies rinks in the ladies schedule, 22 rinks in the mixed schedule and 8 rinks in the men's schedule. Four bonspiels were held in 1990-91 with a total of 136 rinks participating.

The Official Opening ceremonies took place on November 16, 1991. It was a very proud moment for the whole community.

Although few have been mentioned by name, hundreds of dedicated people have been involved in the planning and construction of all three rinks and in the year-to-year operation of the club over the past fifty-six years.

Each era has had talented leaders to inspire everyone to work together for the good of all.

The benefits of the sport of curling, good fellowship, good health and good times have provided a positive social dimension to the lives of all the citizens in the community of Ste. Rose and the surrounding area.

With a beautiful new facility, the STE. ROSE CURLING CLUB can look forward with confidence to many years of "GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP, GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD TIMES!"