



Rolling Through Time

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Official Newsletter of:
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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



Our five month feature at the University of Nebraska Art Museum is coming to a close this week. "Things Speak: Storied Objects from Lincoln Collections" opened Sept 16 at the Sheldon Art Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska. The exhibition featured items that present a story. The exhibit was designed to be a diverse and unique presentation that conveys the importance of storytelling while also showcasing the cultural depth of Lincoln's public collections.

Major funding for the "Things Speak" exhibition was provided by Humanities Nebraska and The Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Twelve area museums participated in this event.

We showcased four pieces: two skates (one metal, one wooden), one skate box, and one Skating Vanities program.

Participating in the exhibition is another way that the museum shares our collection with others and expands our scope to other venues to gain addition exposure.

Happy Valentine's Day



Happy Valentine's Day everyone. This is just one example of the holiday cards we have that celebrate our national day of love. If you would like to share others you may have, please email the museum or share them on our Facebook or Twitter pages. Valentine's Day is a great time to go roller skating with those you love.

In Memory of Chuck Kurp

We want to recognize the recent passing of Chuck Kurp. Chuck and his wife Nancy opened their first rink called Mid-Cities Skateland in Irving, and eventually built numerous rinks in Texas. Kurp also coached several kids in speed skating.

The museum received multiple donations in his name. Our sympathy goes out to his wife Nancy and their family in this time of loss.

New and Renewing Members

Michael & Pat Jacques
Marilyn Roberts
Bob Babcock
Ralph Marinelli
Glenn Ramsey
Kathleen Tini

Featured Story The Blaes Brothers

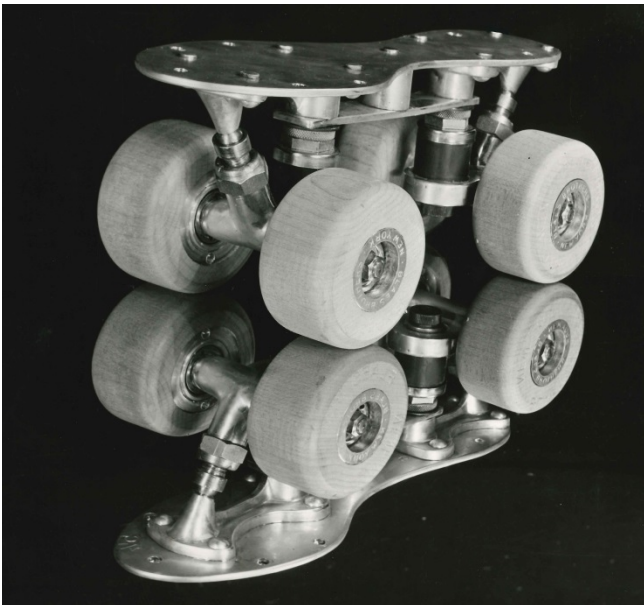
The following text was written for the museum's newsletter in its July 1992 edition by curator Barbara Sorenson. She described the contributions of the Blaes Brothers to the roller skating industry.



Bill and Ed Blaes

In 1940 Ed and Bill Blaes, along with their mother, ran a bicycle repair shop in Woodside, New York. Ed Blaes roller skated for fun and enjoyed free style skating. Like the inventor of the modern roller skating, J.L. Plimpton, Ed Blaes was dissatisfied with the roller skates available to him, so he designed and with his brother, built his own skates. To help with his jumps, he designed a toe stop which he cut and filed to shape by hand. It was quite innovative for the time.

When the Blaes Brothers introduced their skate, the results were so favorable that they were encouraged to continue. The toe stop was patented in the early 1940s.



Blasé Skate, Dance Model

World War II interrupted their skate business, but they resumed it following their discharges from the service. They formed the Blaes Brothers Custom Skate Company. As the name implies, the skates were custom made, designed specifically for the needs and skating style of the individual. The skates were used by well-known skaters of the day such as Norman Latin, Pat Carroll, Gene Borges, William Van Wagner, and Carole Smola. Skaters from Queens Rink, Park Circle, and Wal-Cliffe were their main customers.

The skates were not cheap; each pair cost over \$100. Skates with an excellent custom made boot such as that produced by Jon Telcher (ice skate boot maker from New York City) could run over \$300 a pair.

Again, like Plimpton, the Blaes toe stop generated interest from other skate manufacturers, who proceeded to produce a similar product; however unlike Plimpton, the brothers did not have the funds to pursue patent infringement litigation.



Ed Blaes, 1939

The Blaes Company also made and manufactured their own wooden wheels, mainly from old maple bowling pins that were no longer in used and could be acquired for free to little cost from bowling alleys.

Very few Blaes Brothers skates were manufactured, and the skate never really went into full production. How many were made is not known, but probably not over 150 pairs. Ed Blaes died of a stroke in the late 1940s, and his brother Bill, who was tired of fighting the bigger companies, closed the business.

**Skater Profile:
Jesse Carey**

*This information can be found in a book from the museum store entitled
Skaters History on Ice and Roller Skating.*



Jesse Carey, 1908

Born in Pennsylvania, Jesse Carey began skating at age 16. Later known as "Pop," Carey became a great local skater, winning races regularly in his area for some fifteen years. After winning the county championship, Carey expanded his reach and won the Southeastern Pennsylvania Championship in 1908. After finishing first in a national race, Carey began his international career.

1910 was a successful year for Carey in Paris. He won the 4k race and 50k race that year. Next he competed in and won the 24 hour race held in Paris in December, finishing 280 miles without stopping for a rest!

After winning races in Belgium and France of all distance types, Carey returned home to the U.S. He later became manager of the Luna Park rink in Charleston, WV and Carsonia Park Rink in Reading, PA.

The museum recently received a call from the great-grandson of Jesse Carey. He wanted to know more information on his great-grandfather and possibly donate more of his items in the future.

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 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!

