



Rolling Through Time

By James Vannurden, Director

Official Newsletter of:

National Museum of Roller Skating

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 **@rollersk8museum**

Bi-Monthly

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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

October: National Roller Skating Month



The month of October is known as National Roller Skating Month. While normally pushed aside for Breast Cancer Awareness month, also a great cause, we want to make sure everyone is aware October is a great month to remember roller skating and all the wonderful memories associated with our sport.

During the month of October the museum will host an online fundraiser. All of the proceeds will benefit our museum, the only museum in the **world** dedicated to the history and education of roller skating.

To donate to the cause, simply visit our website at www.rollerskatingmuseum.com/donate.html. At the bottom of the page click "donate" to finish the process.

We look to surpass our total raised from last October of just under \$1,500. Please help us achieve that goal. You are helping us in the preservation of our great sport.



This October we have added a new wrinkle. One of our board of trustee members, Dominic Cangelosi, has pledged a **10% MATCH** for all donations received this month during our fundraiser. This very generous promise should springboard our fundraiser and help encourage others to give more as their donation will now go even further.

All the money raised will go towards funding the museum's general operating expenses. It helps pay for the electricity, heat, and air conditioning to keep our collections climate controlled. The collections insurance, small advertising budget and curator's salary all depend on these fundraisers.

These fundraisers are very important to the museum's bottom line. We only have two online fundraisers per year: October and May. Please consider donating to the museum this month; your contribution is tax deductible. While this is an online fundraiser, we will happily accept any donations through the mail. Tell a friend! Thank you.

New and Renewing Members

John and Jeri Fahrni

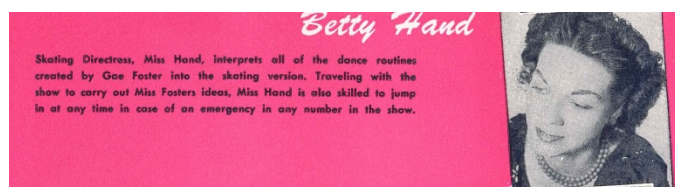
Tina Robertson

Featured Story Betty Hand and the Skating Vanities



On Friday, September 25 the museum welcomed visitor Betty Hand. She then began sharing her story as part of the nationally known roller skating troupe The Skating Vanities during the early 1950s.

Ms. Hand worked as the skating director for the show for a few seasons. Reporting to director Gae Foster, Hand told us her job was to "convert the dance moves onto roller skates."



The above written excerpt on Betty Hand from one of the Skating Vanities programs reads as follows:

Skating Directress, Miss Hand, interprets all of the dance routines created by Gae Foster into the skating version. Traveling with the show to carry out Miss Foster's ideas, Miss Hand is also skilled to jump in at any time in case of an emergency in any number in the show.

Hand recalled one such instance of herself participating in the show. One scene called for a horse character; two skaters were to combine their talents to represent the horse. Hand ended up playing the rear-end of the horse for that number.

While the troupe toured the various cities, Hand helped host auditions for new skaters. She judged the skating skill and physical build of the potential skaters. Hand mentioned how difficult it was to find men to audition and

participate as many said it was a feminine show that men need not contribute.



SKATING VANITIES of 1950

PRODUCTION STAFF

Staged and Directed byGae Foster
 Lighting by.....Gae Foster
 Costumes Designed byJoan Personette
 Assistant to Miss Foster, Choreography.....Flo Kelly
 N. Y. Executive Secretary.....Dorothy Lyons
 Musical Arranger and Director.....Benjamin Schwartz
 Additional ArrangementsFrank L. Ventre
 Skating DirectorBetty Hand
 West Coast Representative.....Sam Shayon
 European RepresentativeNorton Wais

COSTUMES executed by Brooks Costume Company. Sequin Hearts executed by Brooks Costume Company, New York. Gaiters by Georges, New York. Hosiery by Jessie Zimmer, New York. Puppets executed by Ygo Ita, New York. Feathers by Larry Sittenberg and Hayslich, New York. Ball Covers executed by Dorothy Arlen, New York.

STAGE SETTING AND PROPS constructed and painted by Kaj-Velden Studios, New York. Skates by Cleveland Skate Company, Cleveland,

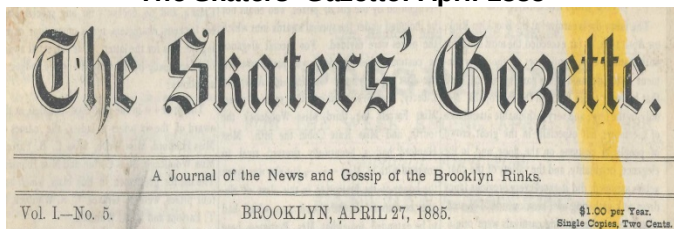
The above section lists the production staff of the Skating Vanities during the 1950 season. Hand is listed as the Skating Director and pictured on the bottom left.

Hand noted the great work ethic and discipline displayed by Skating Vanities headliner Ms. Gloria Nord. Nord kept a tight regiment while performing. She rarely went out with the cast after performances, but chose to get adequate sleep and eat healthy. Her mother traveled with her to keep her focused.



Hand enjoyed her time with the Skating Vanities. She enjoyed utilizing her talents of skating to teach others. Hand also mentioned numerous times how being a part of this troupe was a great way to see the world. During the 1950 season she accompanied the cast on their European tour. From April 15 through July 15 the Skating Vanities performed in Zurich, Paris, and London.

Now 90 years old, Betty Hand enjoyed visiting the museum, seeing our Vanities collection, and remembering her days as part of the grandest roller skating troupe in American history.



The Reverend T. DeWitt Talmage commented on roller skating as a recreation exercise from the pulpit in early April of 1885. He had visited roller rinks previously in New York City and found the greatest example to be Brooklyn Rink. He even allowed his Sunday-school children to visit and participate in skating. Talmage stated the following about roller skating as reported by *The Skaters' Gazette*:

Roller skating exercise, with proper precautions, seems to me the most graceful and most healthful of all amusements and all recreations. It eclipses coasting, croquets, and lawn tennis, skating under moonlight over frozen ponds and all the other like amusements that I know of. It is good for the muscles, for the nerves, for the lungs, for the limbs and for the circulation, and it is good for the spirits, but under proper precautions.

It has all the advantages of the gymnasium, with more exhilaration of spirit; it has all the advantages of the skating which our fathers and mothers used to enjoy without any of the danger of breaking through the ice; it has all the excitement of outdoor sport without being dependent on the condition of the atmosphere.

It would be well if our young men almost every night or afternoon of the secular week would take one hour for this healthful recreation and come back to their duties again. It would be well if the women of America who decline the brisk walk called the "constitutional," which keeps the English women roseate and strong, would one hour of the secular afternoon or evening, turn back on darning and mending and bread making and housekeeping and try this exhilarating sport.

It would bring health to some of these hollow cheeks; it would bring to the lack luster eye the lost light; it would give strength to the worn-out body; it would straighten the stoop shoulders and drive away consumption and merciless neuralgia, and nervous prostration would be gone forever.

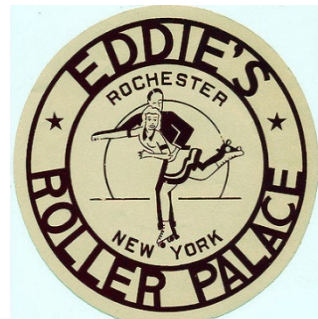
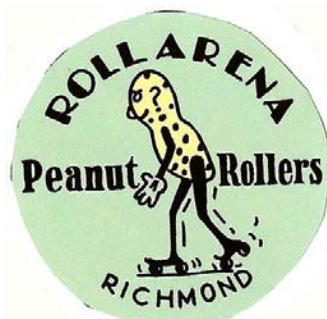
This ringing endorsement from a religious figure only proliferated the participation of the sport of roller skating as a safe way to exercise.

Other NYC area rinks reached by this newsletter included: Cosmopolitan Rink, Metropolitan Rink, East Orange Rink, Brooklyn Heights Rink, Coney Island Rink, and Palace Skating Rink.

This *Skaters' Gazette* issue is part of the Chester Fried collection.

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!

