



Museum Newsletter

By James Vannurden
Director and Curator

National Museum of Roller Skating
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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 40 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

Sign Update

The museum has received final approval from the city government to start construction on its new outdoor sign. Both the city site plan and building permit were approved. The sign is now under construction by Nebraska Sign Company. Next week begins the brick foundation laying on site. Then when the sign is finished, it can be attached to its foundation.

New Display

The museum has a new display up for the summer to help promote physical activity. Entitled "For Health's Sake, Roller Skate!", this new exhibit shares all of the health benefits that roller skating provides. The American Heart Association study said that running, swimming, and roller skating are the three best activities for a healthy heart. During WWII, 50% of American men drafted into the army did not meet the physical fitness standards of the army. It was in 1942 that the RSROA decided to help promote skating as an activity to get American into shape. The display also explains the RSA's new campaign called "Skate a Million Miles". Finally, the White House campaign titled "Move it!" is currently helping fight childhood obesity.

Rotating Costumes

To get ready for Lincoln hosting the indoor national championships in July, the museum has begun rotating costumes from storage out onto the gallery floor. Some artistic costumes now on display include Jane Puracchio during her 1970s title runs, Gregg Smith's 1988 World's outfit, and even last year's winner of Youth International Kayla Rodriguez.

The museum continually accepts skating costumes for its collection. Right now the museum would like to expand its pairs, fours, and precision costume collection

as well as speed uniforms. Please contact the museum if you are interested in donating. Thanks in advance!

Renewing Museum Memberships

Annelle and Bob Anderson
Roller Skating Association
Midwest Skate Company

Skater Profile: Willie Blackburn

Eastern Champion

*This information can be found in the book from the museum store entitled **Skaters History on Ice and Roller Skating**. For more information like this, consider purchasing the book. Thanks.*



Willie Blackburn won his fair share of speed races in the Eastern United States during his reign as champion. In 1907 Blackburn won the Eastern Amateur Championship of New York, for both the one and five mile races. The following year Blackburn finished first in the six hour professional race in Trenton, New Jersey by skating 114 miles.

Victories continued. By 1909 he won the one mile championship in Cincinnati at the New Music Hall rink. Blackburn followed up this victory with another win at the Indianapolis one mile championships.

By 1910 Blackburn was the Greater New York Champion. He also won title in Detroit and Akron. Blackburn finished his career with flat track records in one mile, three mile, and five miles.

Rink Profile

Lowe's Traveling Roller Rink

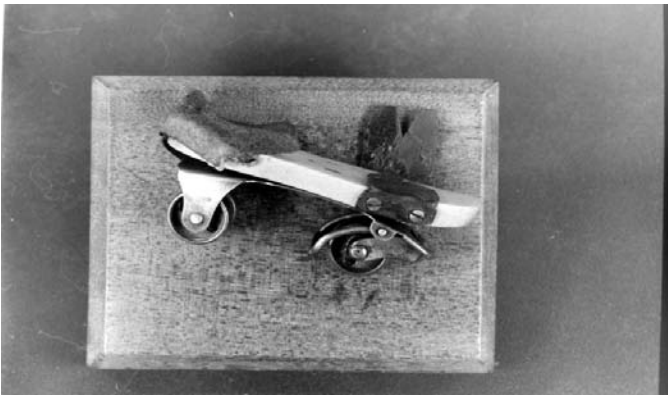


In 1914, the CW Lowe family opened its first portable roller skating rink. At the first location in Craig, Missouri Lowe erected his skating rink like a circus troop. Everything needed to foster a rink was located on the beds of trucks and driven to the planned location. Here, rental skates, the floor, concessions, ticket booth, tents, and even an organ were unloaded and then assembled properly to house skaters. The floor extended 60x120 feet, having a capacity of 500 skaters. Stoves helped heat those resting. A Wurlitzer organ bellowed skating tunes.

This portable skating rink idea helped draw people to the sport. In rural communities, roller rinks were inaccessible to many. Permanent roller rinks generally occupied larger cities, making it difficult for those in the country to experience roller skating. Lowe's rink stayed in one location for up to four months and left before business got stale. The rink visited rural communities, mainly in the south and Midwest.

After thirty years of serving rural America, Lowe and his family opened up a permanent rink in the late 1940s in Birmingham, AL. In all, the rink reached over 200 cities and opened in towns in twenty-eight states.

Skate of the Week: Robinson



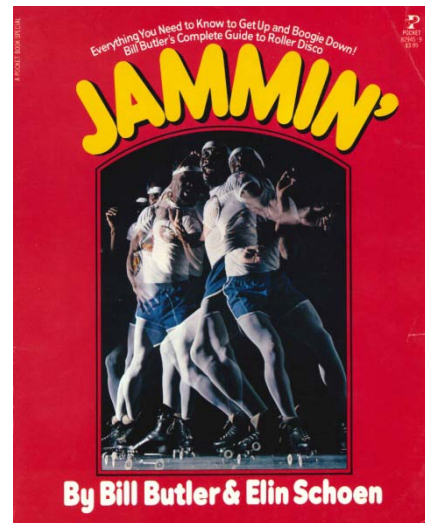
Edward Robinson patented this skate on January 29, 1878. His inline skate had the capabilities of traveling over uneven or nontraditional surfaces. This patent model in our collection showcases a few interesting concepts not found on contemporary pieces.

First, the wheels are attached to a curved, metal plate. It acts as a spring with its rubber pads attached to either end to absorb any shock. Also, the metal plate behind the front wheel can be lowered, which prevents the skater from rolling backwards while skating uphill.

Library Feature:

Jammin'

By Bill Butler & Elin Schoen



With a copyright of 1979, the book *Jammin'* hit the shelves at the beginning of the disco era in American history. Roller skating became swept up in the fad and roller disco exploded in popularity. And as this book describes, roller disco was not just skating to modern music with colorful and flashing lights, roller disco became an art form on wheels; specific and sometimes intricate moves were involved to properly skate roller disco.

In six sections the authors attempt to portray the nature of roller disco. The first two sections explain proper skating techniques and rink etiquette. Then in section three, the book delves into the fundamentals of jammin'; balance, hockey stops, backswing, falling free, and even abdominal breathing. The final three sections explain the more intricate aspects of jammin'. Couples and triples skating can include the broken field runner and the whip. Steps include pivots, turns, lateral heel and toe, Jacob's ladder, and the scissor jump. Geography of jammin' incorporates styles from Cincinnati, Chicago, East St. Louis, Brooklyn, and Jersey Bounce style. Finally, the book discusses the latest disco moves and how to better improvise your own styles.

For those wishing to renew their memberships, we included the following form. Thanks in advance!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Membership Level 1 year 2 years

Benefactor _____ \$500 _____ \$950

Patron _____ \$250 _____ \$475

Assoc Patron _____ \$100 _____ \$185

Donor _____ \$50 _____ \$90

Individual/Family _____ \$35 _____ \$65

Additional Contribution \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Method of Payment

____ Check to National Museum of Roller Skating

____ Visa _____ MasterCard

Credit Card

Number _____

Exp. _____

Signature _____

Mail to: National Museum of Roller Skating,

4730 South Street, Lincoln, NE 68506

Fax to: 402-483-1465

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.) **Regional programs:** We need modern issues of all regional programs. For example, we need Great Lakes regionals from 2002 through the present but also 1992-97. We need Southern regionals from the past five years. The museum's goal is to have two copies of each issue for its permanent archives.

3.) The museum has only a few copies of **Jam Skating Magazine** and would like to complete its collection. The dates on magazines we have are from June of 2004 and March 2005. Please contact the museum if you would like to donate any issues of the magazine.

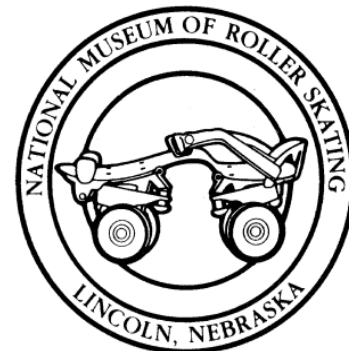
Thanks in advance for your considerations.

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 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!





Today's Disco-Styled Winners in Roller Skating Fashions Look to Leo's

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Advertisement for skating fashion, 1979.