

Eighty-six years ago there were very few service clubs in Lindsay—No Rotary, Kiwanis, Kinsmen or Lions organizations, no Canadian Club, Progress or Twenty Club, the latter two being literary groups, but there was an organization born that year which has lived through each succeeding decade and still maintains a truly fine stature and that organization is the Lindsay Curling Club. There was a time when the first frame rink was located on Victoria Park, when the ice maker used a small piece of hose and when water for flooding flowed gently from a never ceasing natural source, one of two ever-flowing streams which many years later were turned into the town waterworks system. Winters were long and cold and spring thaws were as natural as the sun which at times melted the curling ice when the game ceased until the atmospheric temperature changed to zero.

Skating was held on the same rink and a gentleman named Fee was ice maker and caretaker.

In early years enthusiasts of the game became adventurous and erected a two sheet rink at the south-east corner of William and Russell Streets, where the bowling alleys are now located. It was a long frame building with heavy girders and a peak roof with a waiting room at the north

end. It was a grand rink compared to the one on the park.

Later an enthusiastic group of curlers decided to expand and a large area of land was purchased on Peel Street, and the frame of the old rink was transported to Peel Street and for many years remained in use. Later extra sheets of ice were built and the building enlarged to accommodate Ices 1, 2, 5 and 6. The Club House which originally fronted the two centre sheets was extended across the six sheets of ice.

The Club quarters were adequate but far from being luxurious. Heat was furnished from a pot bellied railway stove in the main room and small wood burning box type stoves in the rooms behind Ices 2 and 5. Onlookers and curlers were more numerous than today and at times the

order to see the games. The windows consisted of small panes of glass, about 6 by 10 inches.

The furniture consisted of a long wooden table and the room was lighted by small electric bulbs, the lights in the three rooms hanging on long cords from the high ceiling. Coal for the big stove was carried up from an earthen excavation by scuttlefulls and the coal cellar was reached through a trap door.

Wood was used for fuel in the two box stoves and the caretaker chopped the hardwood on the floor outside the waiting rooms.

Ice-making was an art in the old days as it is today and the ice maker at one time carried hot water in a sprinkling can and the manner in which he manoeuvred the sprinkler was artistic and skilful. The main flooding was performed with a long line of hose. The ice was wont to heave and there were many inclines and at times bumps but the ice-maker was adept at reducing these bumps and ice cracks to a minimum. At times the frost heaved the ice to such an extent that the skip, in holding

the broom for an out turn, made the gestures as he stood on the rings on a sheet twelve feet away. It was very much the "roaring game" and the rink was filled with the hollering of "sweep", "woa", "hurry" and "easy". At one time the best curler in the club was J. D. Flavelle, the Dean of Curlers, and although he was not a tall and husky man he had a strong stentorian yell.

Several years ago there were many more curlers than today, that is males. In the years gone by there was considerably more competitions than today and there appeared to be more leisure time to participate. However the thrill of the game with its skill and the incentive to "play the game" for sports sake is still uppermost and the game of curling is still said to be "the greatest leveller" and elimination of class distinction of all the sporting games.