

The Hack & Back



Official newsletter of the Fergus Curling Club, the oldest continuous curling club in Ontario since 1834

January, 2023

Strathcona Cup Highlights

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Laurie Garner

Volunteer Coordinator

Shawna Reeve

Newsletter

Bill Longshaw

blong@sentex.net



Scottish Curlers with their mascot
Bruce Mooooowat



A Quaish Bowl presented to
President Calum

(I'll explain as to what a Quaish Bowl is
in next months edition of the H&B)



All teams

More photos on page 3

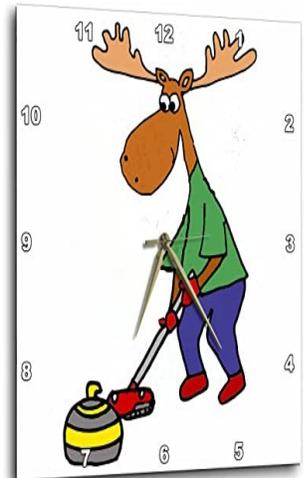
www.ferguscurling.ca

Winners of the 1834 Classic Bonspiel



L to R:

Skip Brian Clark
Second Deb Clark
Lead Linda Baker
Vice-Skip Mike Baker



We went to the 1834 Classic Bonspiel on Jan. 7 which was hosted by Jennifer and Jeff Gleva. This bonspiel replaced the Two Sailors Bonspiel which ran for many years at our club hosted by you guessed it two sailors Gary Waterhouse and John Anderson. And even though it was well run but a little short of players something strange came for the players before their supper was served. FREE CAESARS. That's right Free Ceasars. According to Jennifer there is a new company in Mississauga Called Matt & Steves Caesars. Apparently the club was contacted to see if they wanted some free samples of their product to give away at a bonspiel. Here Mr. Beirnes uses his Smart Serve certificate to pour out the freebies. And so there you have it folks free Ceasars at the 1834 Bonspiel. You never know what may show up at a bonspiel so in order to collect all these strange things it is best to sign up for as many bonspiels as you can to reap these benefits.



More photos about Strathcona Cup



Welcoming
The
Scottish
Curlers



A new way of stacking brooms



Even with
an event
like this
things go
wrong.
Someone
spilled wa-
ter on the
ice



Curlers
at play

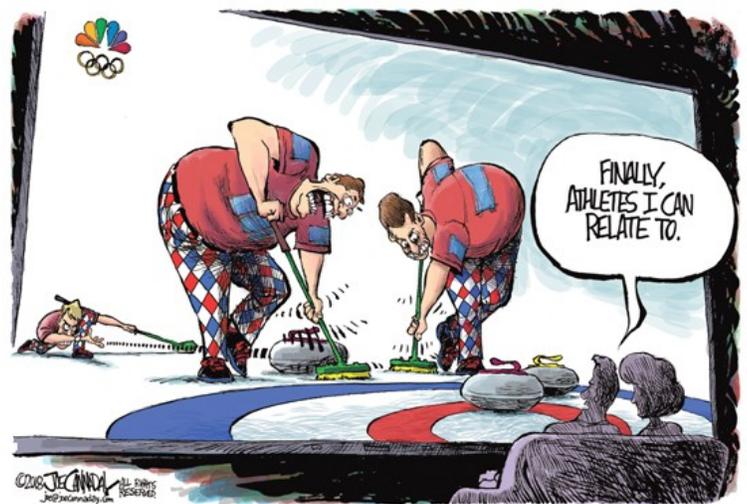
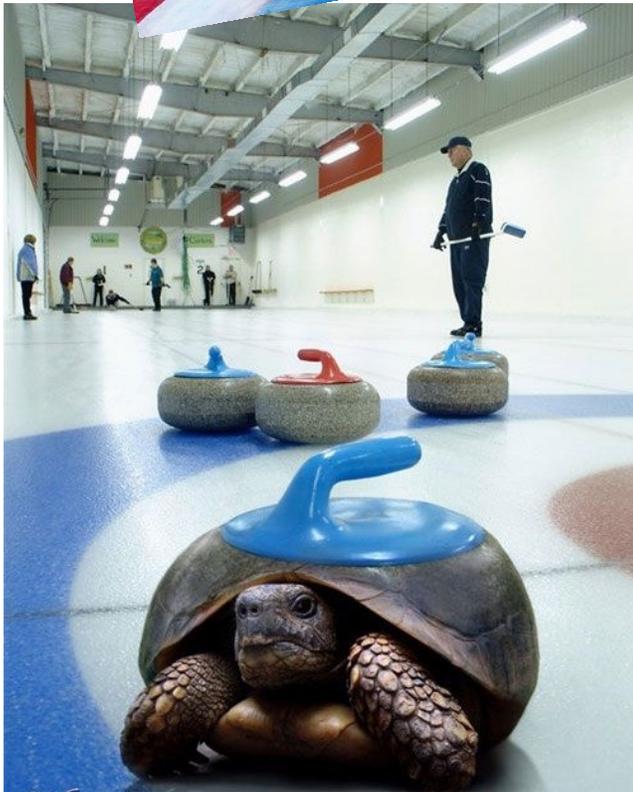


Flag presentation

They even
came to sing
Scottish songs
to us.



**razy
urling
ostums**



Brier Time

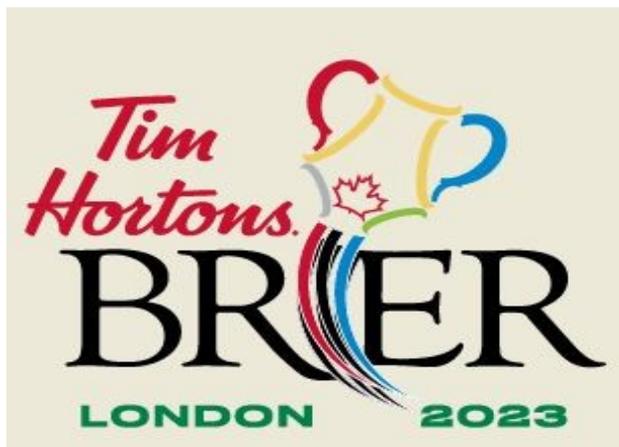
The Canadian men's curling championship, known as the Brier, was first held at the Toronto Granite Club in 1927. Featuring a round-robin competition intended to bring together qualifying representatives from different parts of Canada in a spirit of neighbourly sportsmanship, the event was originally sponsored by the Macdonald tobacco company. The Brier's name was taken from a brand of pipe tobacco that contained a heart-shaped silver plug which was inserted with a purple plastic heart. This inspired the prestigious purple heart patches Brier competitors later wore that was and still is the symbol of a provincial/territorial men's champion. The silver heart plug was symbolic of the silver metal crest applied to the Brier Tankard each year with the name of ever winning team member engraved.

Originally intended to unite Eastern and Western Canada, the first Brier featured only eight teams representing New Brunswick, Northern Ontario, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan and the cities of Toronto and Montreal. The next year Alberta and Manitoba were represented in the championship, followed by British Columbia and Prince Edward Island in 1936. By 1932 the Brier no longer featured teams representing cities, although it continued to be held annually in Toronto until 1939. Beginning in 1940, the Brier became a truly national sporting event, travelling to different host communities across Canada every year. Continuing to work towards uniting Canada from coast to coast, in 1951 Newfoundland achieved provincial representation in the Brier, and by 1975 the event also included a team representing the Yukon and Northwest Territories

Even as competitors vied for the Brier Tankard trophy that would proclaim them national champions, the Brier was from the beginning a lively social event for spectators and participants from across the country. Host communities also seized the Brier to showcase regional attractions. After 1946, advances in communication technology led to increased media coverage that further popularized the event, reaching national audiences first in the crackling air over the radio with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, then on television in a variety of formats from the 1960's onward.

The Tim Hortons Brier will be held in London in 2023 so if you are thinking about going you had better get your tickets and accommodations soon if you are planning on staying over soon. It will probably be a sell out fast.

Gloria and I have been to quite a few Briers, Womens Tournament of Hearts and one Worlds. It was a good experience and a lot of fun.



THE "ROARING GAME" OF CURLING.



February 17 *Sticks & Stones* 3-6 end games
February 25 *Fergus Curling Club Mixed Doubles* 3-8 end games
April 14 & 15 *Ice Makers Mayhem along with CurlKoob* Fri. night and all day Sat.

COMPLETELY USELESS FACTS

1. Humans have been performing dentistry since 7000BC, which makes dentists one of the oldest professions.
2. The first-ever documented feature film was made in Australia in 1906.
3. Ancient Roman surgeons were trained to block out the screams of human pain.
4. From 1953 to 1957, NBC's *Today Show* had a chimpanzee co-host named J. Fred Muggs. It is estimated he brought in the network around \$100 million.
5. Apples, peaches, and raspberries are all members of the rose family.
6. There is a geocache on the International Space Station placed in 2008. It has since been visited four times by other astronauts.
7. Canada eats more macaroni and cheese than any other nation in the world.
8. Scotland wanted to replicate the Parthenon bigger and cheaper in 1826. It was never completed and is now nicknamed "Scotland's Disgrace".



If you have anything to share with your fellow curlers please send it on to us. We'll consider anything. It is important to send us things that you are doing. Keep up with what your friends are doing. Besides all that we need stories to fill up the pages.

Strathcona Cup



The Strathcona Cup, the world's oldest international curling competition, is returning to the Port Elgin Curling Club. Contested every fifth year between Canada and Scotland, this edition will pit four Scottish teams against four of Port Elgin's best teams.

Twenty Scottish curlers will arrive on Sunday morning, January 15th and, after appropriate ceremony, including piper and a "wee dram", will take to the ice. While twenty Scots will be participating in our segment of the tour, two other groups of twenty will

be touring other parts of Canada, coming together in Ottawa in early February for a final celebration. Each of the tours will visit about twenty-four clubs and the scores of all the games will be accumulated to determine the winner.

The Strathcona Cup has a rich history, commencing in 1903 when Scottish curlers visited Canada. Six years later, a Canadian team was assembled to visit Scotland in 1909. The President of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club (RCCC) in 1909 was Lord Strathcona (Sir Donald Smith). Smith was a Scot who immigrated to Canada in his late teens. He earned his fortune in Canada, was a Commissioner and Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, President of the Bank of Montreal, and twice a Member of Parliament. He was a good friend of Sir John A. Macdonald and was best known for financing the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, a key achievement in Macdonald's political success. Sir Donald Smith is famously pictured hammering "the last spike" of the transcontinental railway at Craigellachie, B.C. on November 7th, 1885. In his later years, he returned to Scotland and in 1909, while President of the RCCC, he commissioned a trophy for competition between Canada and Scotland.

This magnificent trophy, the Strathcona Cup, has scenes etched onto it from both Canada and Scotland. Events will get underway at the Port Elgin Curling Club at 9:30 am on January 15th and all are welcome to come and watch. The link below to a video shows a past Strathcona event and a taste of what is expected at the event in Port Elgin.

Some Club History by Jim Carter

Since the Scottish curlers have come and gone for the Strathcona Cup let's look back to see how curling started here in our town.

The Scots emigrated here because of greater opportunities afforded by Canadian winters to curl than the thin and fickle ice of Scotland's Lochs and Burns. As soon as there was Fergus (1833) there was the Fergus Curling Club. For stones they used blocks of wood sawn off the ends of logs until around the year 1850. Stones of the right kind of wood and money to shape them was scarce. Blocks of curly maple or ironwood were loaded with lead to get the correct weight. There is a great example in the showcase at the club. You can see the bore holes for the lead.

Mr. Perry a keen curler and a very ingenious mechanic thought it would be good to try solid maple to represent curling stones and that succeeded so well that for many years there was nothing else. The stones used to get rather light after a year or two and Perry would load them with lead which kept them steadier. Now and then a poor block would get an awful crack and would be knocked into 2 or 3 pieces.

Let's all appreciate and honor this great historic club we are members of.



Thanks Jim

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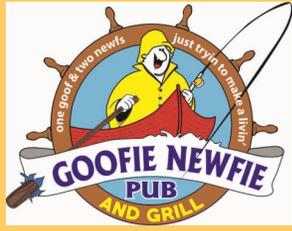
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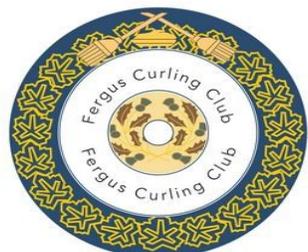
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Season Opener Fun Spiel 2022



On November 26th 8 teams made up of 2 rookies (under 4 years experience) and 2 experienced curlers were piped on the ice by 2 Pipers from the Fergus Pipe Band for the opening Club Bonspiel of this season. That Brier/Scottie like experience was truly enjoyed by all.

The main objective of this spiel is to encourage new curlers in our club to get out and enjoy a bonspiel experience, an objective that indeed was met this year. Of the 32 curlers participating 15 were from this year's Curling 101 program and 9 were from last year's group. Needless to say, many of the 24 relatively new curlers were playing positions they were not familiar with but they managed the challenge very well. Thanks to all our rookies and "oldies" who made the day a great success.

Format for the day was two 6-end games with morning coffee and muffins (thanks Chris M) and a great meal in between games provided by Linda C, Gerry, Ann, Deb, Matilda, Betty and Linda V in the kitchen. Our bartenders Shawn and Bob and our Icemakers Andy and Jim took good care of us.

Once again, I was amazed at how much the 101'ers from this year and last had improved. Winners of the 2022 Season Opener were Gord MacLeod, Merle Carlton, Mark Sohm and Edith Galloway. Congratulations!!!

Huge thanks to my assistant Draw Master Brenda Skeoch who took on a new role and absolutely excelled. Our new system of payment on line meant few last minute fees to collect but she took care of that, made up and collected score sheets and assisted in tallying up scores and took pictures of everyone that were forwarded to all the curlers for a souvenir. Watch out Brenda- you will be in demand!!!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of this day.

Always a fun day!

Thanks Chris

Chris Taylor



In Memory of Mary Aitchison

By Chris Taylor



VICTORY GRINS - Mr. and Mrs. Bill Aitchison deserve to be happy. In the same week, he won the championship of the men's section of the Fergus Curling Club and his wife took the ladies' title. No one remembers when a man and wife skipped the winning rinks in the same year and it isn't likely to happen again. *The Fergus News-Record*

1928

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2022



A longtime member of the Fergus Curling Club Mary joined the Fergus Ladies Club in its second year of existence 1955-56 and continued to curl into 2014-15. In 1964 she and her husband Bill made history when they won the Ladies and Men's Club Championships- a first and unrepeated honor to date. Mary's name can be found frequently on the Beattie and Belwood Trophies for Ladies Monday Afternoon and Wednesday Evening Curling Leagues as well as the Ladies Championship Trophy. Other curling honors include being a proud member of the 8 Ender Club and being inducted as an Honorary Member of the Fergus Curling Club in 2000. In 1978 Mary donated the Aitchison Trophy awarded at the Ladies Local Bonspiel. It provided many a good time for our lady members often being the first bonspiel experience for many of our ladies.

Mary and Bill frequently were part of the FCC contingent that attended Briers, Scotties and World Curling Events across Canada, USA and Europe as well on several occasions. Scotland was a favorite although fellow travelers indicated Mary had concerns over the hours the pubs were closed and always joked that she needed to pack her largest Tupperware pitcher to accommodate the beer she needed to cover the 2-5PM closed hours! I also remember tales of beer going missing from their second-floor hotel windowsill (fridge) in Scotland, a ladder conveniently leaning on the wall close by. There was no end of fun when these folks were around.

Mary was also the first person to take advantage of the recently purchased defibrillator at the club on the last Monday afternoon of November 2011. Mary collapsed and her fellow curlers sprang into action performing CPR and hooking her up to the defibrillator and shocking her back to life just as the paramedics arrived to take over. Mary was forever grateful to her fellow curlers for the 11 extra years of life their actions gave her- a day many of us will never forget.

Mary was very supportive of all club activities. She served as Ladies Club President on 2 different occasions. She served on the Ladies Executive often taking on the Kitchen role with her good friends Mary Clarke and Doreen Howatt. They provided many a good meal in their day, always paying great respect to their budget. Mary was always available to provide help where needed. Even after she stopped curling herself, she remained a Social Member and continued to help convene the Wednesday Afternoon Senior Mixed League. She attended our opening days, Christmas Pot Lucks and our closing Pizza Parties and was often seen at Euchre Parties and other events keeping in touch with club members.

Mary was a valued member of our FCC Family and will be missed.

Rest in Peace Mary. Thank you for everything you did for the FCC.

Fergus Curling Club New Floor Committee

FCC is the Longest Continuously Curling Club and we want to remain this way for the next 100 years. This will take investment into our facilities, continuously looking for ways to keep curling affordable for our current members and to attract new curlers to our club. All of this starts by listening to you, our club members.

In the 2020 survey, FCC members told us that they want continuously improving ice playing conditions (fast and lots of curl - just like on TV). In order to deliver improved ice conditions (and to cut costs so curling is affordable), we are announcing a plan to invest in a new floor to support our ice.

The current refrigerated floor was installed in the 1950's and it's not level. Back then low or high spots (6" variances) just weren't a big deal (see picture below of our floor during ice installation and note the dry spots or high spots). Today's rinks are level to within 1/8" or less across the entire surface - which allows the ice maker to better control the playing surface temperature (i.e.: faster, more curl). This surface fluctuation means thicker and thinner patches of ice all over which has led to increased operating costs (energy & water) and increased labour efforts in order to provide the club with the best ice possible.

New technology (ie a new floor) would use significantly less electricity, water and other operating costs. It would also allow our Ice Maker to fine tune playing conditions to compete with the best Curling Clubs in Ontario and across Canada.



The new floor will be a multi-year initiative. The plan is to deliver the changes in steps and make improvements each year until we can finish the work.

We have assembled a small committee to research and explore available grants and sponsorships to meet this capital cost. In addition to the floor, our ice plant is nearing the end of its useful life. We estimate this project at \$450,000 (floor, ice plant and construction). The project will only go forward if we can secure 100% of the required funding outside of normal club fees and without saddling FCC with any kind of loan obligations. Please feel free to reach out to FCC Vice President, John Ferguson, if you would like more technical information, have ideas or would like to participate.



A message from our chief ice maker

Andy Maine

Your chief ice tech Andy Maine would like to thank all players and club members for the way they are respecting the ice for us and I put forward a big thank you to all and every member that continuously help me on the ice to provide the best conditions we can for the curlers.

We always consider any feedback that is given to us whether it is positive or negative and try and improve ice conditions at Fergus Curling Club.

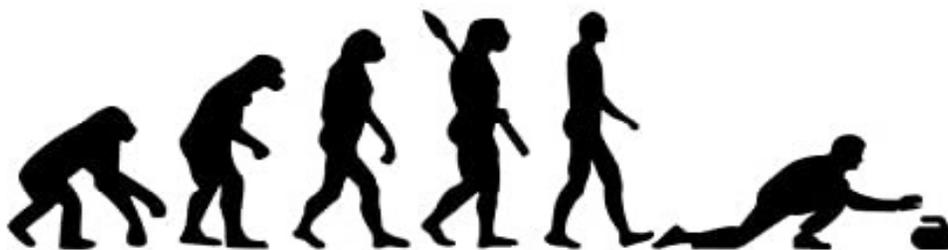
So please, if you do have any comments, make sure they reach me so I can deal with it in person. Thanks again.



We would also like to remind you about the Ice Makers Mayhem Bonspiel coming up on April 14 & 15. My men and I are thinking of some crazy things to include in the CurlKoop part of the spiel. Last year was a hoot and a success. Everyone had a great time. So sign up early.



The birth of curling!!!
How curling evolved in the world



The previous page 10 is something we don't usually do but Mary Aitchison was such an integral part of our club that we thought it was appropriate to let everyone know why she was held in such esteem by members of our club. Especially the older ones.