



Preserving, promoting, and developing Wellington North's unique cultural resources to build a vibrant community and a prosperous economy.

CULTURAL MOMENT FOR NOVEMBER 20TH CELEBRATES CURLING

Curling is a sport which may date back to the 1500's. Two curling stones with the dates 1511 and 1551 were located in Dunblane, Scotland when an old pond was drained. The first written reference to a contest using stones on ice is from Paisley Abbey, Renfrewshire in Feb 1541. The name curling comes from the Scots verb curl, describing the motion of the stone.



"Winter Landscape with a Bird Trap".
Flemish peasants but not using brooms. By
Pieter Bruegel the Elder 1565.

The Kilsyth Curling Club in Scotland claims to be the first formally constituted club in 1716. Still in existence today, it also claims the oldest purpose-built curling pond in the world at Colzium. The International Olympic Committee recognizes the Royal Caledonian Curling Club (1838) as developing the first official rules for the sport and Curling became an official Olympic Sport at the 1998 Nagano Olympics.

In the early years, the curling stones or rocks were simply flat-bottomed stones from rivers or fields. There were no handles, and brushes weren't used. Some had holes for a finger and thumb, much like 10-pin bowling and winning depended more on luck than skill to maneuver the rocks. Frozen rivers were used prior to groomed ice.

Curling has been in **Mount Forest** since 1880. The first curling club was the Ellis Rink on Elgin St., and it had natural ice. Over the years there have been several other venues however the current one is located at 144 Egremont St. and has been there since 1965. Constructed by H. Bye Construction for a cost of \$60,000, it has an innovative suspended ice surface. Mount Forest tombstone maker John Nicol created the plaque from Barre Vermont granite for the entranceway. This past year the club was successful in obtaining a \$146,000 trillium grant and have installed a new ice making system.



Curling in Arthur first began about 1910 on a private rink on Frederick Street near the present site of the home of Maurice Douglass. Curlers used wooden rocks as opposed to present-day granite rocks. In about 1937 curling was done on ice made beside the hockey surface on natural ice. Each player owned his own stones which were all the same weight although the styles and shapes differed. Construction of the new building began in October 1976. Since 1978, the Arthur Curling Club has been located on the corner of Domville Street and Tucker Street and like Mount Forest, the club is operated by a group of volunteers.

Submitted by Councillor Penny Renken, Wellington North Cultural Roundtable