



A PASSION FOR SWEEPING

By Joan Rupert-Barkley

The Prescott Curling Club was formed in 1893, at that time curlers played on the St. Lawrence River with irons.

The current three-rink curling Club was built on Henry Street in Prescott in 1947 after a successful fundraising effort. In the beginning, there was natural ice. It wasn't until 1953 that artificial ice was installed.

According to Club President, Ron Whitehorne, after 62 years the piping was beginning to show its age.

"The piping under the ice had become very old and unreliable.

After it began to leak we decided that an upgrade to the piping equipment needed to be done as it hadn't been upgraded since 1953. We received a Trillium Grant and proceeded with the renovation. We tore up all the sand that was beneath this ice; all the piping and all the old insulation, which was really just Styrofoam (2 inches thick), and replaced it with new smaller piping, higher circulation pump and fresh sand," commented Whitehorne.

There were also upgrades made to the facility. Whitehorne commented that new siding and insulation was put on the outside of the building. The inside of the facility was also painted and new light fixtures were installed.

There are a lot of the curling members who are trades people and they all pitched in to help.

On Saturday, October 24, the Prescott Curling Club had a grand re-opening to showcase all the upgrades that had been done. On hand for this celebration were Prescott Mayor, Brett Todd, Augusta Mayor, Doug Malanka, Edwardsburgh/Cardinal Mayor, Pat Sayeau, MPP, Steve Clark, along with Trillium Representative, Natalie Wood. The Club received an Ontario Trillium Grant of \$75,000.00.

Wood noted it was very impressive to see how involved the members were in the upgrades. When the original grant application was submitted, the volunteer hours was estimated at only 400 hours. However, when the project was completed there were actually 786 volunteer hours recorded.

According to Whitehorne, 3,191 pounds of plastic that came out of the floor was recycled. They also recycled more than 400 sheets of 4-foot by 8-foot by 2 inch Styrofoam sheeting. Some of the Styrofoam went to churches for basement insulation, some went to a group in Mallorytown who were doing a renewable energy project. This group was building a house totally out of recycled materials. There

Left: "Little Rock" curler Ella Scott. Above: Prescott Curling Centre Grand Re-opening Ribbon Cutting (photo by: Helen Mott)

was less than 1 full dumpster sent to the landfill.

There are presently between 150 and 160 members at the Prescott Curling Club. The Little Rocks (ages 6 -11) practice every Sunday at 12:30. The Bantam Group (ages 13 – 17) practice every Sunday at 2:00. Cost for the Little Rocks is \$65.00 per year. Other leagues include Seniors Day League, Monday Morning Stick League, Day Ladies League, Monday Night Competitive, Wednesday Night Mixed, Thursday Night Ladies and Friday Night Mixed. The cost for a full membership is \$350.00 per year. The casual curler can get a lite membership for \$200.00 and this will allow them to curl one night a week only.

"We have 16 new members this year. I think this is largely due to the publicity with the renovations," commented Whitehorne.

A six-week curling school has also recently been introduced. This weekly one-hour course gives new, as well as experienced curlers an opportunity to gain more insight into the sport.

Curling is a very social sport in Prescott and it has no age barrier. This club has curlers from age 6 to 90 and some of the more experienced curlers have been members for more than 50 years. The club also hosts many bonspiels each year. LH

For more information about the Prescott Curling Club, go to www.prescott.ovca.com or visit them on Face Book.