



## Rolling Through Time

By James Vannurden

Director and Curator

Official Newsletter of:

**National Museum of Roller Skating**

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### Who We Are

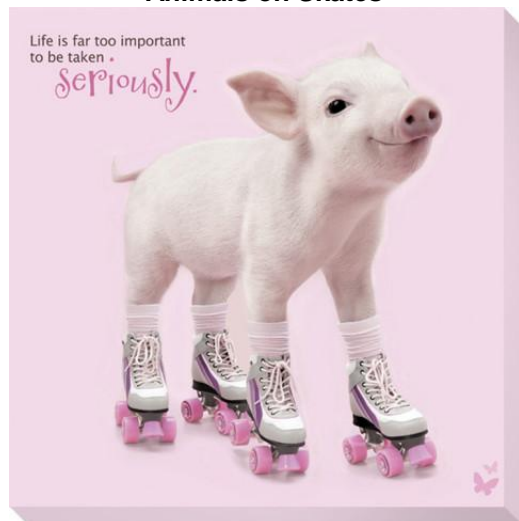
The National Museum of Roller Skating is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Lincoln, Nebraska and the only dedicated roller skating museum in the world. We are committed to the preservation of the history of roller skating. With over 50 display cases, the museum educates the public on all aspects of roller skating, which dates back to the first patented skate from 1819.

### Curator's Corner

#### New Displays

As spring rolls around again the museum will undergo some changes and additions to its exhibition gallery. It is unknown how many new displays will infuse our gallery as the situation remains fluid.

#### Animals on Skates



Part of the museum's collection contains skates constructed specifically for animals. We currently have three such skates on display. First, our largest animal skate was modified for use by a bear. Second, we have a hoof shaped horse skate. Finally on display is a pair of brass skates made for a cockatoo.



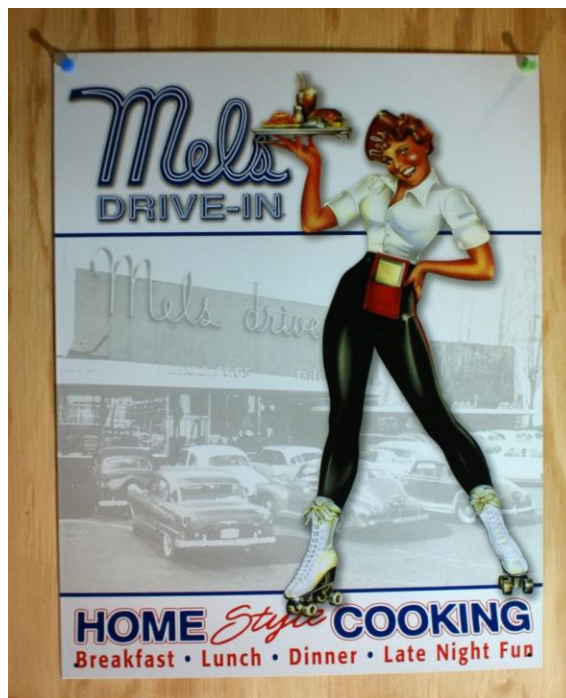
Our new Animals on Skates display depicts more than just these few. Our photograph depictions show monkeys, cows, donkeys, and even an elephant. We also incorporated children's toys of other various skating animals.

#### Roller Skating Carhops

Since the 1950s and the advent of the drive-in restaurant, roller skating goes hand and hand with the drive-in waiter and waitress.



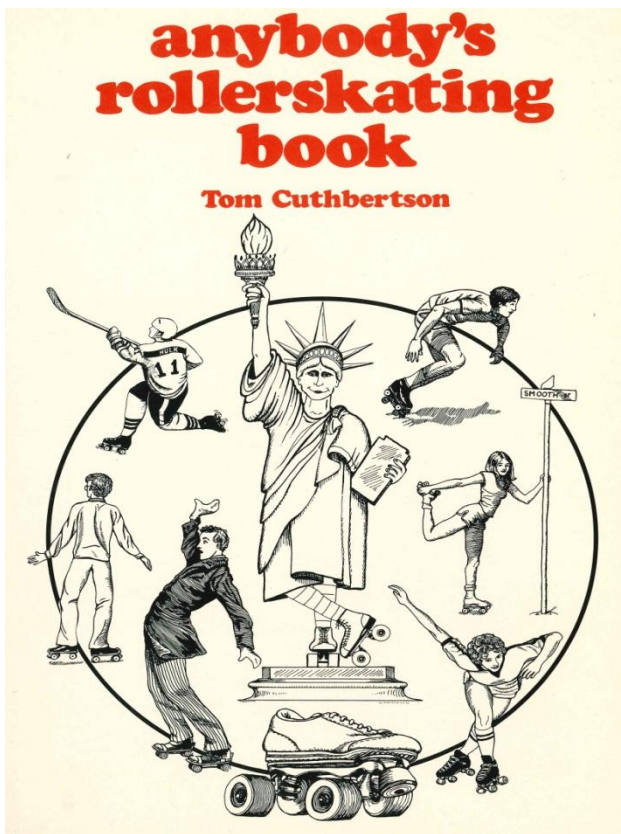
Car service on skates



Drive-In Advertisement

## How an opera advanced early roller skating

In the book *Anybody's Rollerskating Book* by Tom Cuthbertson, one section explains the story of a German composer who added roller skating to his opera. On pages 31 and 32, the author dove into the details.



Another grand showman started the first real roller skating craze during the 1850s. Giacomo Meyerbeer (the pen name for Jakob Liebmann) was born in 1791 in Berlin and studied music there, in Vienna, and in Italy, where he began to compose operas in the dramatic, lively style of Rossini. He moved to Paris and became famous for heavier, moodier operas in the French style, but he still wanted to have lots of razzle-dazzle for the crowd when he began to compose *Le Profete*, based on the grim story of a Protestant religious revolt in Germany that happened during the 1590s.

Meyerbeer went in for a loose interpretation of that stuffy Puritan history. When the plot of his opera seemed to drag, he decided to throw a big production number, on skates no less! He had seen a French inventor, Louis Legrand, at a demonstration of his roller skates, and he knew a good thing when he saw it.



The Legrand Skate

*The composer designed an entire scene for the third act around those skaters; in the middle of the revolution, Meyerbeer decided the Westphalian Anabaptists would throw an impromptu ice carnival. Sure, with lots of fake snow and sleigh bells! And the new roller skates would look just like ice skates from up in the box seats. The whole cast would wear them, and the men would be in black tux, set off by white gloves, and the ladies in white fur, and all of it under silver lighting, just imagine!*

*Ah, such is the magic that happens when people get into roller skating. And the crowds loved it. There was standing room only, all over Europe. They couldn't have cared less about the Anabaptists' sacred cause; the thing that packed 'em in was the suspense, the gripping drama of watching to see which of the performers would fly off the stage into the orchestra pit! In London the scene was a smash in every detail, including the landing of one actress in the bass drum.*

- Louis Legrand made skates for the individual actors and also gave lessons on proper use.
- This patent 1849 model glided over paved streets, marble, and parquet floors.
- The front, metal hook acted as a braking system.
- This was one of the last early inline roller skate models.
- The success of the play vaulted roller skating into the social scene again, especially in Paris.

## Rink Photo

Montebello Roller Drome-Montebello, California

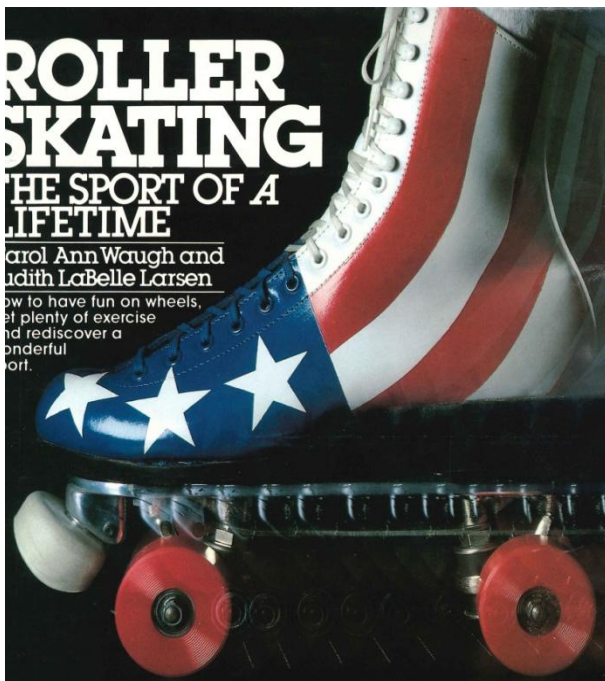


## New and Renewing Members

Linda Miner  
Linda Katz  
Irene Ballard

## Wish List

## Fancy Skates:

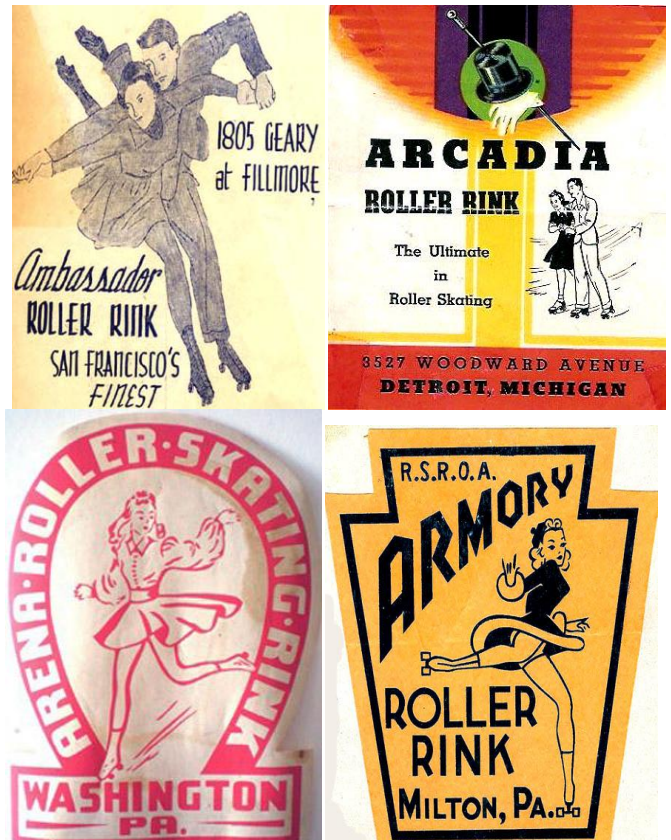


In our quest for unusual skates, boot patterns are also a priority. Some patterns display animals prints, some cartoon characters, and still others odd patterns. The example above demonstrates patriotism through an American flag decorated boot.

Skates like these would be a welcomed addition to our collection. Riedell makes a Hello Kitty skate, for example. These types of skate boots can show our visitors the fun ways skaters can express themselves through boot choice.

## 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 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!

