



## Rolling Through Time

By James Vannurden

Director and Curator

Official Newsletter of:

**National Museum of Roller Skating**

4730 South Street, Lincoln, NE 68506

(402)483-7551 ex. 16

[@rollersk8museum](https://twitter.com/rollersk8museum)

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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

#### Derby Donation



Geraldine Murray of Des Moines, IA recently contacted the museum to gauge our interest in accepting items from her skating past. Beginning in 1938, Gerry participated in women's roller derby. After discussing with her the extent of her collection, the museum accepted her donation with great anticipation. Skating until 1975, Murray amassed quite a collection of roller derby items. She now feels our museum is the best place to preserve and showcase her unique collection. We are very excited to display her items from early roller derby.

During her many years of service to roller derby, Gerry skated for multiple teams. Her green derby uniform above came from her time with the San Diego Clippers. However, the majority of her skating career revolved

around her association with the New York Chiefs. She was even a female captain for their championship teams.



Gerry pictured in her New York Chiefs uniform, 1950.

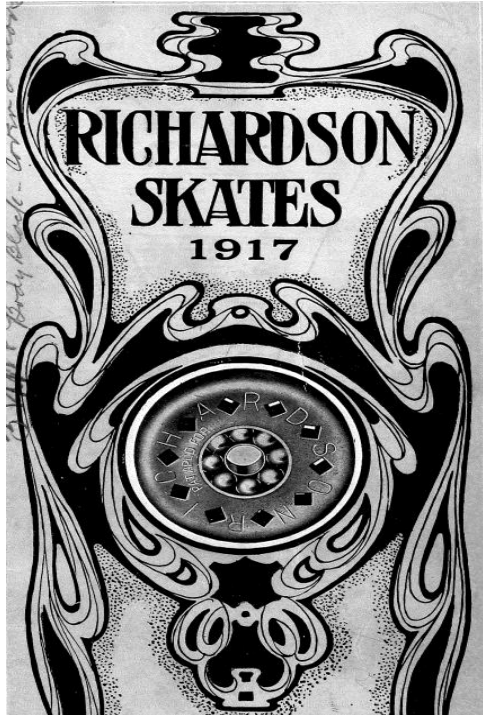
Ms Murray shared a story with me about ways skaters helped support each other during injuries. To help assist with medical care expenditures for skaters injured during competition, derby members held an extra benefit night referred to as a jamboree.

This extra show would include roller derby members showcasing another of his/her talents for the audience. Many skaters would highlight their voices by singing songs; others played musical instruments; some performed dances. Murray would showcase her tap dancing skills. All of the proceeds benefited the injured skaters.

So far only half of her donation has arrived at the museum. Murray has pledged much more to come. As she organized everything, more items are added to her donation pile. Pledged are items such as original programs, yearbooks, more uniforms, skates, and other paraphernalia; some date as far back as original derby in 1935. We are very lucky to acquire this great collection. Special thanks to Gerry Murray!!

**Featured Story**

Richardson Skate catalog



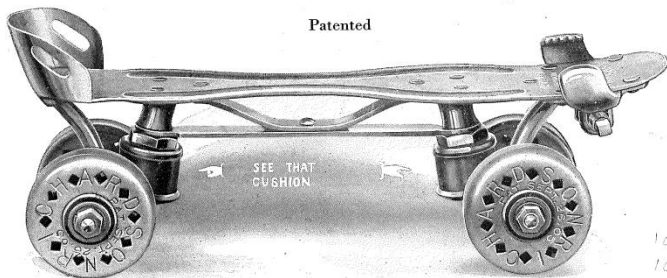
After over twenty-six years of active work and practical experience with roller skates, covering thoroughly the old days before your ball bearing skates were placed on the market down to the present time, both as rink manager, speed and fancy skater, I am certainly qualified to judge the merits of the various makes of skates on the market at the present time, and that have been on the market during the past decade, and I can say without hesitancy that the Richardson skate has always been and is at the present time the foremost skate, in my opinion, on the market, embodying the essential elements necessary in a simple and thoroughly practical skate, and summing up the merits of the same it is with pleasure that I can refer to it only as the acme of perfection in skate manufacture, and I attributed my success in holding the World's Championship since the year 1904 down to the present to the genuine excellence of your skate, using as I do your regular stock make, and not one of special manufacture. The ease and security I feel while performing the most difficult feats makes my work a pleasure and has placed me in the foremost rank of exhibition skaters.

Harley Davidson

The Richardson Ball Bearing Company helped revolutionize the roller skating industry in 1884 when they added the ball bearing to the roller skating wheel. This reduced friction and allowed for a smoother roll, forever changing the ease of skating.

Richardson Skating then entered the market of manufacturing roller skates. Their 1917 catalog promotes "when the cost for repairs is taken into consideration Richardson skates are the cheapest on the market."

**Richardson Truss Frame Anti-Jar Ball-Bearing Rink Skates**



Patented  
Beauty of Design, Simplified Construction and Durability

"Our foot plates are produced from the finest quality of 15-gauge cold rolled steel, strengthened by corrugations and steel connecting truss brace between roller carriers." Their skates cost between \$5 and \$10 in this 1917 catalog.

To not focus their business solely on selling just roller skates, Richardson expanded its product base into other roller skating related areas. Parts, clothing, and music also grace the pages of their catalog.

**Caps**



Managers' Caps, black silk, best quality with embroidered gold letters. 300  
Each.....\$1.75 Net

Floor Managers' Caps, dark blue, best quality silk with embroidered gold letters. 300  
Each.....\$1.75 Net



Instructors' Caps, dark blue silk, best quality, with embroidered gold letters. 300  
Each.....\$1.75 Net

Clothing included racing suits, rink coats, and employee caps.



Recommended for skating surfaces up to 4000 sq feet



## Rink Photo

Paramus Skating Rink  
Paramus, NJ



## New and Renewing Members

June Bickmeyer  
Kellie Reynolds  
Gail Rushing

## Wish List

## Hockey Equipment:

We dedicate much space in our gallery and our archives to roller hockey. Most of our information is via programs and photographs, items easily stored and preserved. What we would like to enlarge is our hockey equipment collection.

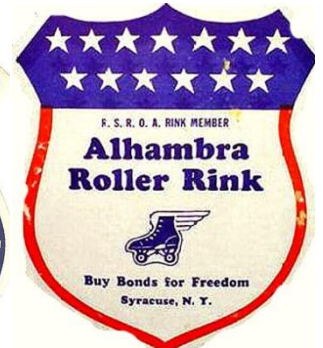
While sticks and skates are great and make up the majority of our equipment collection, we hope for some other types as well. Especially sought after is equipment from the goalie, namely his/her padding. We would like a variety of modern and historical safety equipment. Large leather shin guards and gloves would be excellent. A variety of masks worn by the goalie would also accentuate our collection.



Example of equipment

## 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!



Happy   
St. Patrick's Day