



## Rolling Through Time

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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

#### National Championships Increased Visitation



Rose family

Lincoln hosting the annual Indoor Roller Skating National Championships greatly increased the visitation to the museum during the month of July. Individuals from rink hockey, speed skating, and artistic skating all came by to visit and support the museum. Many of them donated to the museum, either monetarily or through artifacts.

A highly accurate count of museum visitors was kept during this time. During a normal summer month the museum receives a couple hundred visitors. For the month of July during the national championships, the museum hosted over 1,200 guests.

Many guests had their pictures taken with various museum items or our sign; one such family was the Roses shown above who posted this photograph to our Facebook page.

Special thanks to all of you who visited the museum during this month of competitions. We especially like sharing the history of roller skating with those currently adding to that history by competing and keeping the sports alive.

### Social Media

The museum remains active in social media maintaining accounts with both Twitter and Facebook. Our numbers continue to grow in each. Posting pictures continues to be the best way to reach out to our follows and sharing those items from our archives as its grabs our audience's attention more than just words.

Our Twitter handle @rollersk8museum currently has 53 followers. Many of them are roller derby teams from across the country and even a few from Europe. Not only is Twitter a great way for the museum to communicate with those interested in our mission and collections, the museum also reads news from the different organizations and teams that we follow as well. We also sometimes share this news by re-tweeting any pertinent information we want our followers to know.

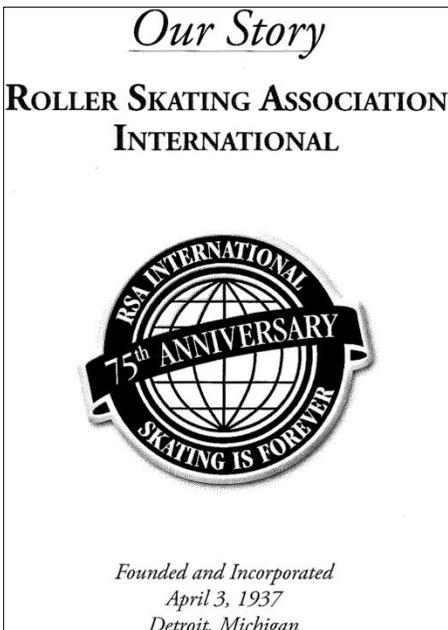
Our following on Facebook remains strong at over 3,700 people interested in the museum. New people join weekly as our message spreads to a wider audience. As with Twitter posting pictures from the museum collection gets the most responses from our followers. One recent post became our most shared and liked photo of the year; shown below, this photo of Robin Williams shows him skating in 1979 during one of Cher's skating parties.



Please consider joining the museum on social media to remain updated on museum hours, special events, new donations, and pictures from our archives.

## Story of the RSA

Museum bookstore profile: *Our Story*



The museum announced the addition of this book during the 2012 RSA convention, available only in its store. *Our Story: Roller Skating Association International* celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the RSA. It tells the story from conception to its present success and explores the different decisions involved with the growth of the organization.

Many individuals helped with the development of this story. Tina Robertson, former RSA president, Annelle Anderson, museum board president, and George Pickard, museum co-founder, all assisted in the execution of the book. The group searched through endless museum photos, uncovered each existing RSA logo, and wrote the text for the story. The museum assisted in their efforts with use of its archival collection.

The book begins with a flash back to past presidents. In its seventy-five years of existence, the RSA (previously the RSROA) elected thirty-six different presidents; Victor Brown and Gordon Van Roekel each served two, non-consecutive terms. The book features a photograph of each president with his/her term years underneath.

With each past president represented, the book delves into the history of roller skating itself and the story of the Roller Skating Association. The history begins with James Plimpton and his sport changing “rocking action skate” of 1863. Because of this innovation, roller skating erupted into a national sport and obsession, slowly expanded into the rest of the world. This brought up the formation of small organizations to create jurisdictions. The International Skating Union of American formed in 1907. The Western Skating Association, a branch of the ISU, then dominated the sport during the 1920s. Other skating associations included: the National Skating

Association of America, the National League of Roller Skaters of the United States, and the United States Roller Skating Association. Each left its mark on the sport and became a segue into the newest association: the Roller Skating Rink Operators Association. In 1937, seventeen rink operators came together to promote the sport of roller skating and to carve a clear path for its future. There existed a need for such an organization. As one of the founders and first secretary/treasurer Fred Martin wrote:

*In 1937 roller skating in America was considered by the majority of the population as a disreputable sport, and rinks were not well attended and few parents would allow their children to visit such places of amusement.*

The founders then expanded the association by soliciting reputable rink owners to join the cause. The RSROA set operational standards to create a better atmosphere. By 1941 the RSROA established itself as a premiere sports organization.

Following the story of the RSA, the book delves into past award winners of the association. The existing list of award winners includes the following: the Vernon Fowlkes Memorial Award, the RSROA/RSA Roller Skating Hall of Fame, RSA Life Members, RSM Lifetime Achievement Award, SRSTA Life Members, and SCA Life Members.

For those interested in this new book, please contact the museum at (402)483-7551 or [www.rollerskatingmuseum.com](http://www.rollerskatingmuseum.com). It is also available through internet orders. The cost is \$7. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to the National Museum of Roller Skating. **Thanks in advance for your support.**



## Skate of the Month:



This parlor skate was patented on July 25, 1865. Purchased by the museum, this skate patented by Washington Parker Gregg has a wheel at either end of the wooden plate with an additional wheel on either side. The heel rests in a brace while the leather straps at the front keep the toe secure. As you can see, there is also no brake system. This is one of our only skates with this design.

According to his patent papers, Gregg claims his skates, *“thus constructed, run with ease and rapidity, and do not injuriously sprain the feet nor weary the limbs, and they will not easily tip backward or forward, and they impart from the first an unusual feeling of security to the skater in all possible movements. This skate is well adapted to hard sidewalks, large halls, gymnasiums, and skating schools, and in suitable places for traveling purposes.”*

This statement addresses the most common failings with early roller skates. While claiming to solve all of these problems, this skate did not go on and become the most popular skate as hoped. It is, however, one of the oldest variations of the modern quad skate, post-Plimpton production.

## October: National Roller Skating Month

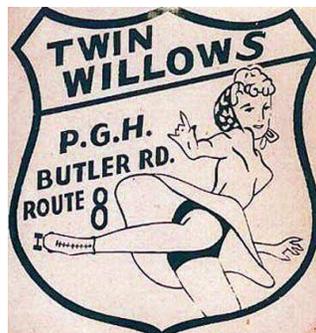
The month of October is known as National Roller Skating Month. While normally pushed aside for Breast Cancer Awareness month, also a great cause, we want to make sure everyone is aware October is a great month to remember roller skating and all the wonderful memories associated with our sport.

During the month of October the museum will host an online fund raiser. All of the proceeds will benefit our museum, the only museum in the **world** dedicated to the history and education of roller skating.

More information will come next issue on how to become involved in our month-long fundraiser and how to donate to the museum. Of course you do not need to wait until October to donate and may always contact the museum with a contribution. Thank you.

## 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!

