



EARLY CURLING RINK—With fall fast approaching there is already talk of curling in the area. Most of those from this district who participate in "the roaring game" today belong to Glencoe Curling Club. But at one time curling was a popular sport played here in a rink which stood on Mary Street near where the swimming pool is now located. One of the winning rinks years ago was the one shown here which consists of, from the left, William Saunders, Clarence (Jobey) Curtis, Jack Graham and R. P. Reekie. Present day curlers will be particularly interested in the brooms used at that time which appear to be the household variety instead of the special type now used.

*The rink is on the corner of MARY and Queen Sts.*



*This is a SNAP taken in 1948 to the left is the RINK and behind the white fence is the bowling green, well kept, and well patronized. The girl is Mary Malcolm.*

DUTTON'S  <sup>FIRST</sup> HALL

---

On Friday evening, Feb. 15th, 1897, the first new public hall was opened in Dutton and Dutton became the proud owner of a building in which the citizens felt more than ordinary pride. It was regarded as an architectural ornament to the village and reflected the enterprising spirit of the people.

For several years the erection of a public hall had been agitated, but it was not until 1896 that matters assumed a definite shape. The Council of 1896, after mature deliberation, decided to submit a by-law to the people for an appropriation for the erection of a hall, and at the same time SINK A WELL FOR WATER. The result of the vote showed the ratepayers to be in favour of these improvements.

A number of plans were submitted, and those submitted by L. Busby of London were accepted. Tenders were called and almost the last work of the 1896 Council was to award the contracts for the hall's erection.

The new council of 1897 were immediately faced with a problem. The 1896 by-law was found to be defective. The debentures had been extended over twenty-five years instead of twenty. Another by-law was then submitted to the people and carried by a large majority, in fact larger than the first one. From then on great progress was made.

The contractors were J. Murison, masonry; Walter Cavers, carpentry work; N. McMillan, plastering; Wm. Love, painting and glazing; J. Biddle, slating; J.B. Crawford, tin and iron. The contracts were regarded as exceptionally cheap, and the village for an outlay of about \$3,000 had a building worth at least \$3500.

The building itself was 32x 60 feet, and on the lower floor was a commodious room which was set aside specifically for a library and reading-room. There were also two smaller rooms and a lock-up with three uninviting cells.

The second floor was the hall proper, and its auditorium could seat 400 people. It presented an attractive appearance with its elevated seats, lofty ceiling and stage. At the rear of the building was another apartment which would, it was hoped, house in the future the fire equipment of the village.

DUTTON FIRST HALL  
-----

The Citizens Band was in charge of the opening and every seat was occupied in spite of the inclement weather. There were even visitors from other places. The chair was occupied by James Pool, who made an excellent chairman. In his opening remarks, Mr. Pool stated that he occupied an enviable position in presiding over such a large, intelligent, and good-looking audience, assembled for the first time in the new town hall, of which the citizens of Dutton felt justly proud.

The program was very interesting and every number was thoroughly appreciated and heartily applauded. Those taking part were:

- Misses Edith James and Birdie Cavers, sopranos; William Hollingshead, comic vocalist, all of Dutton. H. Ruthven McDonald, baritone and elocutionist, London; and Miss Birdie Buchanan, whistling soloist, Largie.

*Near the front of this book is a picture of Dutton's first municipal building, at the front of the Hall is the fire equipments, a hand powered pump, and buckets piled three high for use, by the bucket Brigade. This building was only partly dismantled prior to building the new memorial Hall. Some walls were so thick and strong, they are being used to-day (1979) covered up with the sewer bricks. (Chap. from ALEX LAW REPORT)*

*B. Malcolm.*

*ALEC LAW WAS CONTRACTOR FOR DISMANTLING NECESSARY WALLS AND ELECTRICAL WIRING IN PRESENT HALL. HE INSTALLED*

## First Caledonian Society Formed in 1890.

The desire to encourage piping, dancing, and Scottish sports brought about the organization of the Dutton Caledonian Society in 1890.

Duncan McMillan, an accomplished piper, was the first chief, and held that office for a number of years. Other members of the first executive were, James Duncanson, first chief, Hugh McMillan, 2nd chief, John McKay, 3rd chief, A.M. McIntyre, treasurer, and John D. Blue secretary.

The first games were held in August 1890. A feature was a competition between a Dunwich tug-o-war team and one from Aldborough, and Southwold. Members of the Dunwich team were, - T. Kerr, James Bennett, A. Mitchell, Dan Graham, J. Sifton, S. Mateer, J. Galbraith, Alex Gordon, James French, and Alex McDougald.

At the 1893 games one of the closest tug-o-war pulls ever recorded, was when Dutton and Dunwich teams captained by Colin St. Clair Leitch defeated Glencoe. two out of three. Only one inch separated the two teams in the final pull. The local team on that occasion consisted of A.C. Gordon, Dan Graham, T.E. Lilly, T. Kerr, Alex McDougald, James Bennett, Dave Bennet, Jas. Duncanson, and D. Black.

The year 1893 games was one of the most important in the history of the Society, since in that year Dutton Caledonian Society carried off the World's Fair medal at Chicago. It was considered to be the finest trophy ever put up for competition among Caledonians. The medal set with a large diamond with gold mountings cost \$250.00 and was donated by the San Francisco Society to the Chicago Caledonian Society for competition at the World's Fair Caledonian Games.

The following were the athletes who brought the coveted medal to West Elgin society.-- Gideon Berry, Brussels, J.D. McColl, Parkhill, M.O'Neil, Ridgetown, George Matheson, Hamilton, Frank Wilson, London, Chas. Curry, Parkhill, J.P. Watson, Toronto.

Some of the best athletes in Western Ontario were members of the local society although they lived a distance from here. This was because an athlete must belong to such an organization in order to compete in the games in the United States, and West Elgin was the only Society in Western Ontario.

#### Scottish Paper Publicizes Games.

Just how widely publicized are the Caledonian Games of 1952 was noticed in a Scottish paper by Miss Alice Blue of Toronto, former Wallacetown resident, who has been holidaying in the land of the heather which read "The Scottish Pioneers who treked 1500 miles by ox-cart to Elgin County, Ontario, will be honored in a great historical pageant to be presented as part of the Centennial Celebration of Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas from Aug, 4th to aug 10th.

The Selkirk Settlers were Scottish men, who travelled to Canada via Hudson's Bay and were settled in Selkirk and Red River district of Manitoba. In 1817 harassed by hostile Indians and competing fur traders they packed their belongings and food supplies and treked the 1500 miles to the Talbot Settlement.

The Earl and Countess of Elgin will be among the guests at the centennial. Elgin County was named after the present Earl's Grandfather in 1852 when he was Governor General Of Canada.

*Mrs. Effie Ross*