

ROCK TALK



Newsletter of the London Curling Club

March 2015

Doug Petch retires after guarding LCC house seven years

Retiring this spring as London Curling Club manager, Doug Petch says his proudest moment actually preceded his seven years in the job. A member of the board of directors at the time, he suggested that the club play host to a coaching clinic. It spawned a qualified coaching staff that continues to expand today.

"I don't think we had a certified club coach in the club at that time, but after that first coaching clinic we had 10. They took the course and they began to teach," says Petch. "They would go to Little Rocks and teach, to bantams and juniors and teach and teach at clinics and 'family day.' If an individual wanted help they could go to any of them. They all seem to be willing."

By a recent count, the LCC now has 31 coaches, which is believed to be the most of any club in Ontario. Petch says their work is crucial in bringing new people into curling.

Also important in attracting new members and retaining existing ones was the major renovation to the LCC building on Doug's watch, although he says it was the board that carried the ball on that project. It included renovating the upper lounge and its adjacent women's locker room, as well as the men's and women's locker rooms downstairs. The Pro Shoppe was moved from the top floor to the basement. The main-floor lounge had been renovated earlier. "People want to see attractive surroundings. I think we've gone a long way, especially the men's locker room, which had pipes overhead and wasn't very attractive at all."

This will be the second time Petch has retired. After beginning his career with Canada Trust in the accounting department of the trust end of the business, he was transferred to Calgary as an assistant trust officer for three and a half years. It was there that he started to curl in a trust company league.

When he was transferred back to London, a growing family limited his curling to the annual company bonspiel. He promised himself when he retired he would really get back into curling. The premature death of his father at age 61, prompted Doug to retire from Canada Trust in 1997 at age 60. He remembers his parents making plans for a retirement that his dad never lived to see and vowed not to let that happen to him. However, he accepted the LCC job when the board decided it would be part time. He was curling five days a week at the time anyway and, besides, the job was in a sport he loves.

Curling isn't Doug's only passion. He's a member of the London Fog quartet that entertained the WDS at its Christmas party. Music is part of his life. He started with choir in elementary school and went on to violin lessons and glee club in high school. Later, he sang in the glee club at teachers' college and at minstrel shows in Toronto and at Canada Trust.

Doug's favourite part of being an LCC manager is meeting "all the people who are curling. You get to at least meet them, call lots of them by name. The people in this club are terrific." In researching his 2003 book, *Open House: Canada and the Magic of Curling* (Doubleday Canada), CBC sports reporter Scott Russell visited curling clubs across Canada and discovered they were truly egalitarian – an "open house" welcoming everyone. There were no social divides.

TSN play-by-play curling announcer Vic Rauter, quoted by Russell, said of curling: "I love the people who play it. I love the people who watch it. They are honest-to-goodness down-to-earth folks." Doug Petch would agree.

Burt Dowsett



Music has been a life-long passion for Doug. His "London Fog" quartet entertained members of the WDS at their Christmas party. From left to right are Ken McPhaden, Dave Earle, Jim McDougall and Doug Petch.

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Column

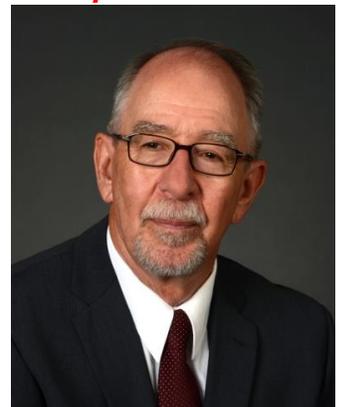
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Fall will see changes in management, volunteer positions

The curling season is winding down and it is time to thank our volunteers. In past issues I've mentioned convenors, coaches and others, but I think it's important to cite some other individuals. They include: Burt Dowsett and Adrian Brown, who produce Rock Talk on a monthly basis; Pam Harrison, who single-handedly puts together the membership roster every year; and Eric Duggan, who has put endless hours into the website. Eric will be leaving the position this year, turning the reins over to Peter Fewster. Thanks Eric for your many years of service.



Another volunteer who is seen everywhere and has taught half the club, convenes Learn to Curl and coaches everywhere is Jack Nichol. Jack and his wife, Shanti, have decided to travel next season. Thank you, Jack. Jack is still planning to curl in between trips so we haven't seen the last of him. He has left Learn to Curl in the capable hands of Dan McInnes for next year.

All the members of the board commit to at least a three-year term, although many give us much longer service. This year we are losing Richard Rodgers, our director responsible for the Pro Shoppe. Many thanks, Richard, for a job well done. Last but not least is Gord Sellery, who having been on the board for the last four years in the vice-president, president and past-president roles, will get to return to civilian life.

The club staff has done a great job providing a clean, safe and, despite its age, a quality facility. On behalf of all the board and club members I wish to thank Doug Petch for his seven years of service as club manager. Doug will be leaving the job this year but will remain an avid curler. The new manager is long-time member Greg Lewis.

The board has decided to widen the duties and responsibilities of the club manager. It will now include much more of the office manager's duties, as well as the Pro Shoppe. The position of office manager will be changed to office assistant.

The financial position of the club is good but we are running a small deficit this year. Because of this and a further increase in expenses (electricity in particular), we will have to increase fees next year by at least five per cent. We haven't raised fees for two years so this is close to the rise in the cost of living. The board is currently discussing the introduction of credit and debit cards and if we go forward with this we will have to raise fees by another one to two per cent.

Year-end activities include a convenors meeting on March 31 at 6 p.m. Be sure to relate all your concerns to your convenor. The final and most important event of the season is the LCC's annual general meeting (AGM) on June 9 at 6 p.m. It's important that club members attend as this is when the new board of directors is elected. This is your chance to make your concerns heard, as well as meeting and hearing the reports from all the executive and directors. If unable to attend be sure to send in your proxies. Enjoy the rest of the season and have a great and safe summer.

John Crosby, LCC President

Mann beats host club rinks in winning 56th Tartan Bonspiel

Dave Mann's rink of Dave Ross, Marcus MacRae and Bruce Thom won the 56th Tartan Bonspiel at the Highland on Feb. 20-22. Other LCC rinks competing were team Lindsay, team Witty and team Campeau.

In OCA events, the team of Sue Lawrence, Miolyka Steele, Deanna Dougan and Roxy Petten advanced from their zones for the Tim Horton's Trophy in Chatham on Feb. 14-15. They lost in the regions in Simcoe.

The mixed bantam team of Nathan Torrence, Gabrielle McSloy, Hunter Csetri, Laura George and coach Jennifer Cuddie was eliminated at the regions. LCC will not have a representative in April when we play host to the Junior/Bantam Mixed Ontario Playdowns.

Bruce Thom

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Greg Lewis steps into the hack as LCC manager



GREG LEWIS

Greg Lewis knows the challenge of a curling shot and, on the work front, ensuring employees at London Health Sciences Centre get paid. His next challenge is managing the London Curling Club.

As a curler he plays three nights a week at the LCC – in the Miller and President's leagues on Monday and Wednesday respectively, as well as the Friday mixed league with his wife, Dawn. He is far from a novice, having begun to curl at the Ivanhoe in the early '80s and moving on to the LCC in the early '90s when the Ivanhoe closed. He has also played in the men's league at St. Thomas.

In his 38 years at LHSC he developed a broad background in business applications and functions. In the early '80s he became a Business Systems Analyst, originally looking after purchasing, inventory and accounts payable. Since then his work has involved the Human Resources and Payroll departments. "There are close to 15,000 people to pay every two weeks and it's a lot of stress. I don't work in Payroll but I support the systems."

In spite of his busy work schedule at the hospital, Greg has also found time to do volunteer work for hospital fundraising with London Health Sciences Foundation. He has also volunteered with the Optimist Club and at car shows.

He is retiring in late April from LHSC. During March and into April he will shadow Doug Petch, who is retiring after seven years as LCC manager.

"It will be easier in a lot of ways but I'm expecting there will be some challenges, some new things to work on," Lewis says of the club. "I do a lot of project management now . . . I like to design systems. It's my forte. I hope in time to target the registration system. Even though we went to a more automated process last year online, I understand quite a bit of work is still done behind the scenes."

Lewis expects he will work closely with the new web developer. "I have some thoughts on small tweaks to our website."

In a bid to save money on printing costs he plans to explore the idea of having Rock Talk emailed to all members. Like the website version of this newsletter, it would have the advantage of full colour that is too costly for the print edition. If this plan goes forward the number of hard copies of Rock Talk would be reduced, or the paper version may be eliminated.

He will also look at the Pro Shoppe in terms of marketing in a bid to make it more profitable. One possibility is getting volunteers to help out so regular hours could be offered. Another is using advertising to make it more visible and increase sales. If that doesn't work, adds Lewis, "maybe we should only equip beginning curlers. It has to be profitable, not a loss." He also thinks the club must begin to process payments by credit cards and debit.

"We have a Facebook page but it's never updated. I wouldn't mind taking over that to make a push to the outside. We're not doing social media at all."

Greg also thinks introducing wireless access to the internet in the club is worth looking at. "It's in McDonald's and Tim Hortons. People have their I-phones. Our members would appreciate it. As a manager I would like to have wireless, too. It's all about improving what we're doing. That's kind of my very basic strategy."

Lewis plans to make his hours flexible. "I want to do what I can to make myself available to all members regardless of the day and time that they curl."

The biggest challenge facing curling clubs everywhere is not news to Lewis. He is aware of the ongoing challenges of getting new people into the sport, as well as retaining existing membership and hopefully growing it further. "We are seeing more curling on TV and still the numbers go down," he says. There are so many competing options today. Club growth "clearly is not easy to do."

Burt Dowsett

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Prostate cancer bonspiel raises \$18,000 for cause

For years, Ken Walmsley had pondered launching a bonspiel that would both honour an old friend who had died at age 42 and combat a cancer that is so common in men. It all came together on March 4 at the London Curling Club with the inaugural Curl for Prostate Cancer bonspiel that raised \$18,000 for the cause.

Walmsley called it “a total success . . . way above any expectations that I might have had at the start of it all. Almost half of it came from the silent auction, more than \$7,000 from pledges and donations and the remainder from entry fees.” It also had a bonus Ken had not foreseen. His wife, Jean, also an LCC member, had sent Ethyle, the widow of Ken’s friend, Dan Gushe, a copy of Rock Talk that featured a story on the bonspiel.

She was “totally blown away when she read the article. She shared it with her children and they, too, were overwhelmed with an event dedicated to their father,” says Ken. As a result, the family decided to contribute \$1,000 as a sponsor of the event.

Ken and Dan had shared the same birthday, both worked at 3M and became good friends. Almost 35 years ago Dan died. Three of the Gushe siblings, Susan, Robert and Emily, live on the West Coast. Leonard is a doctor in Mattawa, Ontario. Ethyle moved to British Columbia and remarried.

“The new awareness of this silent disease throughout our club has met our primary objective. Early diagnosis is the best defence,” says Walmsley. “The generosity of many silent auction donors and the LCC membership are major contributors to raising \$18,000 for prostate cancer research here in London. The effort and dedication of our committee members was outstanding.”

Midway through the bonspiel, Dr. David D’Souza, a radiation oncologist at London Health Sciences Centre, addressed curlers on some of the work being done on prostate cancer. One of the subjects he touched on was “brachy therapy,” a minimally invasive procedure that involves inserting radioactive seeds into the prostate gland to destroy the cancer cells. The hope is to reduce complications from damage to healthy tissues. This is just one of the less invasive therapies that are available. The purpose of the funding is to conduct clinical trials that will measure the effectiveness of various treatments.

Out on the ice, when the granite came to a rest, Chuck Townsend and Paul Pergau had skipped their rinks to victories in the first and second draws, respectively. But the real winners will be prostate cancer victims whose lives are spared by research and awareness that 80 curlers, sponsors and donors helped to fund.

Burt Dowsett



Ken Walmsley throws the first rock to open the spiel.



(Above left), first-draw winners Chuck Townsend, John Rudell, Ron Riehl and Bob Wakefield and, (above right), second-draw winners Paul Pergau, Doug Wilson, Jim Diehl and Jim Nother will be the first names on the bonspiel trophy.



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Curl for a Cause raises record \$3,304 for Soup Kitchen

When Bill Payne graduated from Western with a sociology degree in 1993 the job market was not good. Working at St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre's Soup Kitchen, which feeds London's hungry, was not the vocation he had envisaged.

Now as executive director, his job is not one that can be outsourced to a Third World country. The need is right here in London. It is a job that has its challenges, but also is rewarding when one succeeds in making a difference. The need fluctuates but it does not go away. Two decades later Payne is still there and the Soup Kitchen has never been more needed.

"In 2008 it (the need) started increasing again and ever since then we've been very busy," says Payne, adding that they serve 400 or more people every day. The Soup Kitchen, at 707 Dundas St., serves breakfast and lunch every weekday, as well as breakfast one Saturday a month and offers a social evening on another Saturday, also once a month.

St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre is funded by the Sisters of St. Joseph's, but also receives donations from other groups in the city, including the London Curling Club. On Feb. 11, the Curl for a Cause bonspiel run by the Women's Daytime Section raised \$3,304 for the Soup Kitchen, a total that co-convenor Linda Round described as "definitely the best" in the history of the event. Big contributors to that total were book sales at \$591, as well as \$830 from the silent auction, \$730 in donations, \$600 from raffle tickets and entry fees of \$960. Costs were \$407.

Contributions to the Soup Kitchen such as that raised by the WDS are welcomed because the needs are great. Patrons bring more than an appetite to the Soup Kitchen. Also tagging along are the lingering problems they have acquired over a lifetime. "Those who have had mental health issues would be very high, about 75 per cent (of clients)," says Payne. "Those suffering through mental issues at the moment would be about 20 per cent." These are people who are in a severe state. They are referred to the Intercommunity Health Centre. A patron disturbing other people is asked to leave but always gets an explanation of why this had to be done. "You don't want to turn them away. You want them to know they are valued here. Most come back with an apology."

Payne has seen the source of substance abuse among Soup Kitchen patrons evolve during his years on the job. "When I started 20 years ago it was 50-to-60- year-old alcoholic males. Now, it's 30-year-old drug addicts, male or female.

"We try to make a light atmosphere, with laughter. We try to know everybody's name. I am lucky to do something I enjoy," says Payne. "Our volunteers and I love the kitchen for relationships."

Along with 120 volunteers there are also university students pitching in to help.

Payne is struck by their social awareness. "I think they have an awareness that my age cohort did not have."

Burt Dowsett



Winners of the Curl for a Cause bonspiel are, from left to right, Doug Petch, Donna Millar, Sharon Sivak and Steve O'Neil.



BILL PAYNE

Bailey rink wins WDS Marshall's Pasta Mill Event

Linda Bailey's rink of Mardi McLachlan Lynda Reesor and Mary Lucas won the seven-week Marshall's Pasta Mill Event that ended on Jan. 29. The runner-up was Sharon Sivak's rink of Linda Round, Cheryl Adams and Judi Sofalvi. Penny Brown, Karen Shearer, Janice Elloway and Karen Jacobsen finished third. Forty curlers participated in this event, with some sharing positions. Lunch included assorted sandwiches and caesar salad from Marshall's. Punch was donated by Fay Weiler from the Tuesday event and squares were donated by Karen Lowry from the card party. Thanks to convenors Dianne McKenna and Jean Cameron, as well as Joyce Hetherington, Sylvia Leuszler and Mardi McLachlan for helping to clean up after the luncheon. It was a great event!

The Jan. 28, the WDS Card Party generated a profit of \$405. With a theme of "balloons," 54 women enjoyed lunch and an afternoon of cards. The guests were treated to sandwiches and desserts, all donated by WDS members. There were many door prizes drawn, also donated by WDS members. Thanks to convenors Karen Lowry and Katie Ungar and all the kitchen helpers. It was a successful afternoon.

Upcoming events include the final game for the Nash Jewelers-sponsored event on March 24, convened by Marilynne Van Buskirk and Lise Tranmer. The Subway event on March 26 will be convened by Darlene ten Haaf and Pat Boothe.

Several WDS social members attended some events throughout the curling season. Their continuing support and their willingness to assist with many events is appreciated.

The WDS closing meeting and luncheon will be held on April 1. The executive committee encourages WDS members to attend, as important decisions will be made regarding events for the 2015-16 curling season. A new executive will also be elected. A catered luncheon will precede the meeting. Tickets can be purchased from members of the WDS executive committee for \$15.

We hope that all members enjoyed a great year of curling, fun and fellowship. We look forward to seeing everyone again in October.

Pam Harrison, WDS vice-chair



The winners of the Marshall's Pasta event, are, from left to right, Mary Lucas, Lynda Reesor, Mardi McLachlan and skip Linda Bailey.

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LCC Little Rocks team wins its second bonspiel of season

The Maltman/Daley team won its second bonspiel of the season at the Highland Country Club on Feb. 8. The team also came in first at the Forest Little Brier bonspiel in January. Scotia Maltman and Graeme Daley shared the duty of skip/vice, while Avery Sinasac and Emma Barron provided solid front-end support. The team hopes to continue its unbeaten streak at the LCC Little Rocks Bonspiel on Saturday, March 28.

Pete Daley, Little Rocks convenor



The LCC Little Rocks team are, from left to right, Graeme Daley, Scotia Maltman, Avery Sinasac and Emma Barron.

Members urged to check lost-and-found at club

Our lost and found has grown considerably this year – shoes, gloves, water bottles, clothing, brooms and other items.

If you have lost anything, please check the lost-and-found area (downstairs beside the record storage area towards the back), and claim anything that is yours. Anything left over at season's end will be thrown out or sent for recycling.

Management

LCC needs volunteers for provincials in bantam/junior mixed divisions

Again this year, our club will be hosting the playdowns to declare Ontario champions in both the bantam and junior mixed categories. We did such an excellent job last year, we were asked to do it again.

The event takes place April 8 -11 inclusive and we will need lots of volunteers. Jobs will include timers, clean-up crews, sellers of pop and snacks, and will usually be in three-hour shifts, from 8:30 a.m. until 10 p.m.

Last year the volunteers had a great time and we hope many of you will volunteer again. If you didn't have the opportunity last year, sign up this year. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the main lounge on the easel board early in March. Please help our club, which receives about \$3,000 for this event, so there is a good incentive.

Committee members Jennifer Cuddie, Tony Francolini, Paul Pergau, Bruce Thom and Doug Petch

Family Day attracts 50 children, parents

Family Day was a success, attended by approximately 50 children accompanied by parents, who also either took part on the ice or behind the glass. After on-ice instruction, everyone was eager to play an actual game.

Roger Moyer's team of Wendy Foster and Gwen Crossman served hot chocolate and home-made treats.

Special thanks are extended to head coach Ron McLennan and eight of the Club Coaches, who make these days so special for our guests. Comments from the coaches indicated that the children enjoyed themselves. Family Day at LCC has become a tradition we shall continue.

Sandy Ronson, Skills Development Committee

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Mad Hatters take to curling ice in women's Two-Day spiel

Eighty curlers from Aylmer, Chatham, Highland, Ilderton, Ingersoll, Peterborough, Sarnia, Tillsonburg and the LCC competed in the WDS 63rd Two-Day Bonspiel on March 2 and 3.

Jean Walmsley and her crew, with help from Karen Lowry, turned the club into a Mad Hatter-themed event. It was complete with Alice's Looking Glass, a table set with tea cups and the Red Queen's tarts (those stolen by the Knave of Hearts), a visit from the Cheshire Cat, Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum and the Dormouse. HATS GALORE decorated various areas around the club.

An "Alice" quiz was conducted by Pat Bell. A short entertainment was provided by Marg Fliss's Curling Parody by her team – In Our Curling Bonnets. Jokes were provided by Carolyn Sheppard.

Monday's Tea Party Dinner was catered by Linda Arthur, Village Catering and the lunches were provided by Mykonos Restaurant, Linda Arthur and Subway. Committee members Pat Bell, Sherry Chambers, Joan Dickie, Pam Harrison, Marianne La Rose, Liz Oehm, Marnie Sherritt, Sharon Sivak, Leslie Smith and Fay Weiler kept things moving along.



Sylvia Leuszler's LCC rink won the First Event Scotiabank Trophy. From left to right, are Leuszler, Mardi McLachlan, Mary Ellen Duggan and Sandra Fox.

Women's Two-Day Bonspiel Results

First Event (Scotiabank Trophy): London Curling Club team of skip Sylvia Leuszler, third Mardi McLachlan, second Mary Ellen Duggan and lead Sandra Fox.

First Event Runner Up (London Honda Trophy): LCC team of skip Jinx Findlay, third Jan Murray, second Cheryl Adams and lead Sandy Ronson.

Second Event (Constellation Brands): Aylmer Curling Club team of skip Jeanette Pesall, third Bozena Boadway, second Kathi Vandermeer and lead Bertha Strickland.

Third Event (Krown Rust Control): Ilderton Curling Club rink of skip Dallyce Southern, third Karen Grealis, second Ami Southern and lead Marguerite Zavitz.

Fourth Event (Mykonos Restaurant): Tillsonburg Curling Club Team of skip Tina vanderWallen-Howey, third Diane Burgess, second Yonna Dilella and lead Sandy Buchner.

Fifth Event (Can-Am RV Centre): Tillsonburg Curling Club Team of skip Wendy Young, third Shirley Ireland, second Tracy Beattie and lead Wendy Manson.

Pam Harrison, WDS Vice-Chair

Curlers form new friendships in mixed afternoon league

The Wednesday afternoon mixed league has featured fun and laughter with some good curling. New friendships have been formed. There will be curling for the next three weeks with a social "Happy Hour" on March 25.

Darlene ten Haaf



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