

# ROCKtalk

The newsletter of the  
London Curling Club

January 2019



## PAGE 2

The island where curling  
stone granite comes from

## PAGE 6

When the Fab Four  
became curlers on screen

## PAGE 7

Your New Year's curling  
resolutions

## London Curling Club member shares her unique curling experience in Scotland

Two years ago The London Curling Club was one of the stops for 20 Scottish Rotarian Curlers touring Ontario. The Rotary Clubs of London South and Woodstock hosted them for a competitive curling game and dinner.

In November 2018, London Curling Club member Brenda Rouse, joined 21 other Rotarians from Ontario in a month-long curling tour of Scotland. They played 19 games in 13 different ice rinks ranging from eight sheets in a shopping mall, arenas shared with ice hockey and skating, a converted potato storage shed, a curling rink contained within a hotel and a transformed barn to curling club called Greenacres. As a note of interest, Greenacres Curling is the home club of 2002 Olympic curling champion Rhona Martin.

This friendship curling exchange of like-minded Rotarians has been going back and forth across the Atlantic for 62 years. Participants are billeted by Rotarians in each town/city and Brenda found the home hosting second to none.

Besides great curling, team members visited local castles, museums, whisky distilleries and tourist attractions including the Andrew Kay & Co. (Curling Stones) Ltd. factory in Ayrshire where over two-thirds of all curling stone granite is harvested from Ailsa Craig (see page 2). Andrew Kay & Co. is the same factory that made the curling stones lost in the sinking of the ship Athenia, detailed in the last two issues of Rocktalk.

During the tour, competitors were piped on to the ice before every game and the one new tradition Brenda (second from left in the photo) would like to

see incorporated in Canadian bonspiels is “stacking the brooms” where after four ends, teams stand up their brooms using an elastic or glove and each player takes a shot of whisky - any excuse for an extra drink!



Although this surprise tradition caught the Canadian curlers off guard and they lost a few points that day, the team rallied and were victorious over the Scots by a cumulative month-long score of +85 points and brought home the Quaich trophy.

Brenda is so grateful for this unexpected opportunity that her membership in Rotary has provided. Rotary is an international service club that supports many local community projects (i.e., school breakfasts and literacy) as well as internationally focusing on eradicating polio, providing clean water, and improving health in third-world countries. For information on joining a local Rotary Club, please contact Brenda at [curlerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:curlerbrenda@gmail.com).

## Ailsa Craig: where the best curling stone granite comes from

Sitting in the Firth of Clyde the profile of Ailsa Craig is easily recognised when viewed from the Ayrshire coast. It's nearly two miles in circumference and rises to 1,110 feet. The island was formed as a result of intense volcanic activity 60 million years ago.



As a result of being a strategic landmark in the channel between Ireland and Scotland, the island has a long history going back to the late 1500s when a castle was built to protect the island from Spanish invaders. The island was also used as a prison during the 18th and 19th centuries.

From the mid-19th centuries, the island was quarried for its rare type of granites: Ailsa Craig Common Green, Ailsa Craig Blue Hone and Ailsa Craig Red Hone.

Andrew Kay & Co. (Curling Stones) Ltd. have the sole lease to remove these granites which allow them to provide the world's best curling stones.

Harvesting between 1600 tons of Ailsa Craig Common Green granite and 400 tons of Ailsa Craig Blue Hone granite is an operation that takes place as required. The granite is then transported to the mainland by boat to be stored in their secure facility until they transform the granite boulders into finished curling stones.

Ailsa Craig is now uninhabited and a bird sanctuary, home to large numbers of various species of birds including gannets, razorbills, kittiwakes, herring gulls, shags, fulmars, puffins and black-backed gulls.

## Imagine yourself playing better and maybe you will

Curling great Kevin Martin provides this tip. "The use of visualization and imagery is a key to making us better as a team. I visualize every shot I play before I play it. This has been part of my pre-shot procedure for years and it has helped me with the confidence that I require to throw last rocks under pressure."

"When I visualize a takeout, I try to picture my release and then the rock's path divided into two segments. I first try to visualize how the rock will travel the first few feet and then how it will react from the far hogline in. If you are able to correctly visualize the last 20 feet of the stone's path, you'll be confident on calling the sweep on delicate shots like a hit-and-roll or a fine double."

"I probably use imagery on draw shots more than visualization. On draw shots it is essential to understand the rock's line of delivery and how the rock is going to finish. This is similar to a takeout, but I think it's probably more important to have the ability to use your imagination to feel the stone release from your fingertips. If, in your mind, you can feel how the stone should leave your hand (rotation and speed), you have a better chance of making the shot."

"I often attempt to visualize my next shot when the opponent is playing his shot. This process gives me more time to understand exactly what I'm attempting to accomplish with my next throw. If the opponent's shot is completed as such that my next throw is changed, I use the time it takes me to travel to the other end of the ice to visualize the shot. It's a little more difficult because it cuts down the time you have to think through the process, but with practice it works very well."

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## Curling is much more than just a sport

### A message from Paul Pergau, president, London Curling Club

I went to university (Mt. Allison) in the Maritimes for five wonderful years and played on the intercollegiate circuit every year. There was this skip from Acadia University that we played against many times and whom I got to know pretty well. To



make a long story short, London Life invited me to a job interview at head office in my final year. I took them up on it as long as I could stop off in Montreal to play with my team in a bonspiel (that's another story). Anyway, when I got to my interview who is there to do the interview but Bob Flecknell, that same skip from Acadia. Needless to say, I got the job.

The curling world lost a great member in December. Jim Fitzpatrick passed away unexpectedly and far too early. Jim served a term as London Curling Club president in 1988/89 and also worked at London Life. In 1968, Jim saw the light, got us to join London Curling Club and formed a team of Fitzpatrick, Flecknell, Pergau and Hamilton, all London Life employees. Who would have thought that 50 years later I'd be serving my third term as London Curling Club. We miss Jim but are very glad he got us started on the right foot at the right club in London.

I'm sharing these stories to help illustrate that curling is much more than just a sport. You never know when people you meet, curl against and sit and share a drink with after the game will play an important part in your life journey. Curling equalizes everyone when it comes to careers, religion, race, etc. I've met many curlers in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes and you never know when and where you're going to run into them again and sometimes, they're able to help you out. So, the bottom line is, be good to me next time we play against each other!

The London Curling Club board of directors wishes you a fantastic 2019 and all the best on and off the ice. So hurry hard!

## Teams still needed for Spring Thaw Bonspiel


If you're thinking of participating in the Spring Thaw Mixed Bonspiel at London Curling Club on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019. With sponsorship from AMJ Campbell, we hope to make this a great fundraiser for the new building fund.

The Spring Thaw is a fun event that any team can enter. It includes two, eight-end games, lunch and prizes for all. For a \$140 entry fee, teams can't lose.

Teams can sign up on the form posted in the club or online at [londoncurling.ca](http://londoncurling.ca).


## Got a story for Rock Talk?


Please send any story ideas or club happenings for the next issue to Brian Arnold ([barnold439@gmail.com](mailto:barnold439@gmail.com)). Deadline for the February issue is Jan. 29.






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# Women's daytime section skills, thrills and winners

## Skills and thrills

On Thursday, Nov. 29 the WDS held their annual fun game, which has been renamed the Skills and Thrills Game. We had 22 participants come to play and enjoy the fun. This event is designed to give those who normally play lead or second a chance to vice and skip. As well, the rules and the scoring were changed throughout the game, which gave new and experienced curlers lots to think about. Afterwards, all were invited to have coffee and homemade baked goods provided by convenors Joan Crosby and Marilynne Van Buskirk.



In third place (below, left to right) was the team of skip Cindy Thom, vice Jeanette Walker, second Gwen Steffler and lead Cathy Townsend.

## Friday league winners

The Women's Daytime Friday League has successfully completed its first 11-game round robin event. In first place was Janet Legue's team. Second place went to Joanne Laws team. Tied for third place were the teams of Marj Dudley and Marlene Benny. Congratulations to the winners. Please note, there's no curling on Jan. 11.



## Event one winners

We had 63 curlers compete in this seven week event, in two draws 10:30 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Thanks to Wanda Mara and Mary Cross who helped on the last day lunch. Dianne McKenna convened.

In first place (below, left to right) was the team of skip Sandy Ronson, vice Cheryl Adams, second Sue Turner and lead Donna Millar.



In second place (top photo, next column, left to right) was the team of skip Janet Legue, vice Nancy Fader (absent), second-Guiti Massoumi, and lead Pam Browne.

## Event two winners

Event two, convened by Pam Browne and Nancy Balcarras, took place between Oct. 11 and Nov. 22. The winners were (below, left to right) Janice Elloway, Nancy Balcarras, Gwen Steffler and Linda Bailey.



## Ron McLennan a fan of curling and old cars

London Curling Club member Ron McLennan is a “people person” who enjoys talking to curling opponents and teammates. But when the ice goes out in the spring, his summer hobby also has a social element that fills the void.

McLennan is an old-car enthusiast who has no shortage of friends on the ice or on the road with his 1963 Ford Thunderbird. In the summer months, you’ll find him participating in cruise nights, driving his car to shows, or with his head under the car’s hood. Ron always fixed his own cars. He had a 1967 Ford Mustang at one time and when he retired from teaching in 1997 he started looking for another one to restore.

He discovered a Mustang but it would have been a major rebuilding job. Nearby, he found a 1963 Thunderbird. It was in much better shape than the Mustang, which was torn apart. There were similarities. The Thunderbird had a Mustang interior. Its 390 cubic-inch engine generated 300 horsepower. There was considerable work to be done to restore the Thunderbird. Ron started taking things apart. The windows would not roll down so he fixed them. The push rods that push the valves down bent. He redid the valves. Then he decided to “strip it all down.” He took the seats out, built a tray and placed it under the engine bay so it could be hosed down. He had the transmission and engine rebuilt.



“Over the years I had always fixed my own cars — brakes, mufflers, shocks, those kinds of things. I replaced starters and painted cars.”

His experience with cars paid off on this project. Also, a friend and fellow member of the Southern Ontario Thunderbird Club was helpful in getting the car back together again. The club is a valuable

source for Thunderbird owners. “You can get resource information, ideas and products that help you restore your car.”



McLennan paid \$4,830 for the car in 1991 and finished the project in April of 2008. His Thunderbird is now valued at \$26,000. While he likes the challenge of restoring old cars Ron said if he had to do it over again he would have bought a car that was rebuilt. It’s not much more expensive than rebuilding a car yourself.

A “build sheet” that is specific to the owner’s car is available. One piece of information it had was welcome news for Ron. His car had come from San Jose, California. “That’s important because California cars don’t rust. There is no winter there.”

The old cars of the 1950s, ‘60s and ‘70s had distinctive looks. Every year manufacturers made minor changes on body shape and every three or four years they made major changes. The uniqueness of these cars sets them apart from the look-alike cars of today. That is what makes them valuable. Also a factor is how many are available for sale. For instance the two-seat version of the Thunderbird was only produced for three years (1955 to 1957). It could easily sell for \$50,000.

In summer Ron joins other car enthusiasts in bringing their cars to Southwestern Ontario towns. Making friends is part of the hobby. In 2010 the McLennans visited Dearborn, Michigan, for the 55th anniversary of the Ford Thunderbird. Ron McLennan probably met some old friends there and maybe added a few new friends, as well.

BY BURT DOWSETT

# And then there was that time John, Paul, George and Ringo went...curling?

Almost fifty-four years ago (1965), the Beatles released their movie Help!. Who knows what it was about, however it starred the Beatles and was sure to be a box office success.

The important part of the movie for curlers is the curling scene. More accurately, the Beatles goof around with curling stones and brooms. George slides a curling stone towards John and Ringo who comically chase after it and sweep. Paul meanwhile appears to be more interested in tidying up the ice.

Nearby, a mad scientist is preparing a bomb inside a curling stone and sets a timer. He offers the ticking and smoking curling stone to George who delivers it toward Ringo. As Ringo sweeps, George realizes it's a bomb – “A fiendish thingy!” He, John and Paul drag Ringo away from the bomb and run. The bomb explodes leaving a gaping hole in the ice and a swimmer appears – asking for directions to the White Cliffs of Dover.

Courtesy of <http://detroitcurling.blogspot.com/>



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# Did you make your 2019 curling resolutions?

Ring in a new year is a great time to commit to decisions you know will benefit you. These curling resolutions are in no particular order and you can choose the two, three or four you feel will have the greatest impact on your game.

- Ask your teammates how you can be a better teammate. Don't assume you know.
- Arrive at every game with a positive attitude as it's your most important piece of equipment.
- If you want your curling delivery to be better, get one of our club coaches to assess it.
- Be aware of the number of rotations you apply to the stone from release to stop and work at making it more consistent.
- If your grippers are in their second season (or more) of use, discard them and purchase new ones.
- Develop a consistent pre-shot routine.
- Arrange for someone with visual recording equipment to record your delivery so what you believe you're doing is actually happening.

- If you have a brush with a synthetic head, keep it clean (warm water, mild soap and an old finger nail brush or tooth brush work well).
- Stop focusing on the outcome and begin to focus on the execution of a shot.
- Stop trying to be perfect! Instead, think about the "execution tolerance" for each shot (short or long, wide or narrow).
- Have positive thoughts in the hack. Instead of thinking "don't be light" or "don't be wide", think "throw good guard weight", or "hit the broom".
- You began curling because it was fun so make sure that's the primary reason you're still playing!
- Use the club boot cleaners every time you enter the club and before you step on the ice.
- Concentrate on trying to keep your hands, knees and other body parts off the ice.
- Resolve to play a full eight-end game more often by making your skipping decisions faster and having all team members in the hack and ready to throw when the skip calls the shot.
- Promise yourself you're going to take five or 10 minutes before each game to do a proper warm-up, and a few minutes after each game to stretch. Your body will thank you.




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# Who's who in your curling club

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**Bar manager:** Les Sonier  
**Bar staff:** Lesley Murphy, Missie Gosse  
**Housekeeper:** Nilah Woodcock

## Website

Peter Fewster

## ROCKtalk newsletter

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## League convenors 2018-2019

Contact information available on londoncurling.ca

**Miller:** Ken McRae and Roger Moyer  
**Winexpert:** Stan Smith  
**Thompson Social:** John Crosby  
**Learn to Curl:** Dan Neeb, Melissa Neeb  
**Tuesday Evening Mixed:** Peter Fewster  
**Wednesday Open:** Stan Smith  
**Rolling Stones:** Kirk George  
**Teasdale:** Bob Kerwin  
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**Friday Mixed:** Dawn Lewis  
**Women's Daytime Teams:** Sharon Sivak  
**Women's Daytime Social:** Darlene Ten Haaf  
**Men's Daytime Social:** Michael Leisinger  
**Thames Valley:** Mike Ernewein, Mike Ramsay  
**Sunday Mixed Social:** Nancy King, Dave King  
**Bantam/Juniors:** Tony Francolini  
**Little Rocks:** Heather Bugler, Scott Bugler  
**Western Mixed:** Aaron Wyville



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