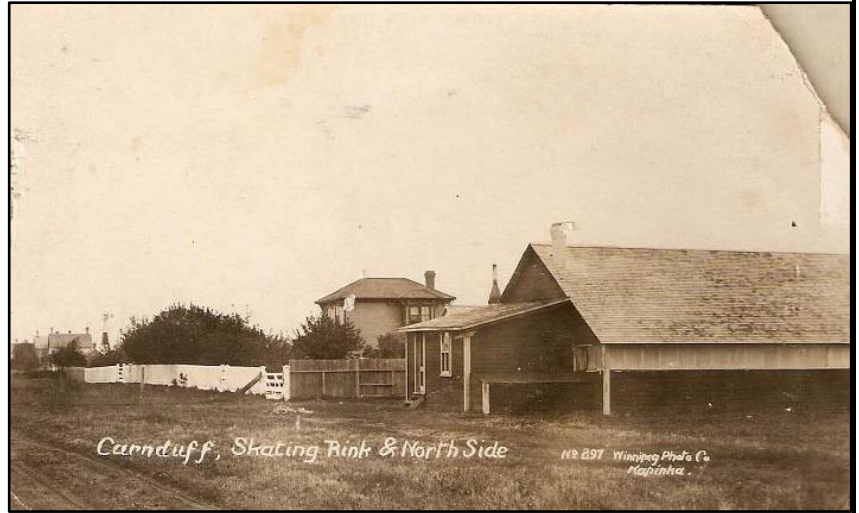


A Walk to Remember...

The Skating Rink

Sports have been an integral part of the community of Carnduff since its earliest days with a diverse range of facilities that have included gun and archery ranges, horserace tracks, ball diamonds and even a cricket field in the earliest days. With winter being what it is on the prairies, the obvious frontrunners and persistent activities have been those completed on ice.

The first skating rink in the community was more of an outdoor pond. When the town was in its early days in the mid-1890s, the water tank for trains was situated toward the west end of the CPR right of way. When winter arrived, the section man ran water from the tank down the passage between the main line and side track, and the first outdoor rink in Carnduff was born!



Rink Pre-Split (c. 1914)

When the tank location moved to something more suitable for the passenger trains to take on water, the community decided it was time for an actual rink to be built on the east corner of Railway and Connell Street (1st Street East) where Redpath Funeral is situated. It was an open-air rink with a small enclosure added as a waiting room. J W Connell introduced Carnduff to curling on this bumpy outdoor ice surface as well.

After using this location for a few years, the community was without a rink for a period. A group of citizens banded together and a new rink was built at the north end of town. Situated just west of where the creamery and Dr. Thompson's home were later to be built, the new rink was enclosed and would have seemed a luxury to people familiar with the outdoor rinks of the past. Unfortunately, its flat roof design became compromised and it collapsed from the weight of a heavy snow a couple of years later.



Rink (c. 1920)

It was now 1901 and facing a future with no rink once more, Tom and Jack Elliott were contracted to rebuild the rink. Under the agreement struck, the rink would be utilized by the community for 5 years and then be turned over to them. As a safeguard against the collapse of its predecessor this rink was constructed with a series of posts running down the centre of the ice to support the roof. Neighboring communities claimed it provided an advantage to the home hockey team, familiar with dodging the obstacles as they skated, but the design provided for some interesting maneuvering by all skaters.

After the 5 years of use the rink was deemed unsafe and as per the agreement was turned over to the Elliott brothers. It was torn down and the lumber used to build a barn on a farm about 8 miles north of town. This left Carnduff without a

rink and after a couple of years, the community once again established an open-air rink. It operated for several years before it was shut down and the community was without a public skating surface again.

Several years later, the community convinced William Elliott, who operated the lumber yard, to build a new community rink. The rink was located on the north side of Spencer Street. The new design, with a sloped roof was believed to be more suitable to our winters. Originally consisting of a skating rink only, the building was split and a new central portion added for skating. The split portions became a single sheet of curling ice bordering each side. Unfortunately, after a few years it succumbed to the weight of heavy winter snow as well.

Mr. William Defoe, an avid curler in the community, with the help of other citizens rebuilt the rink on the same location with lumber salvaged from the original structure. Saskatchewan's elements proved too much once again. Within a couple of years, a summer wind demolished the structure.

In 1926, the Town of Carnduff decided to construct a new rink on the edge of the community park, adjacent to the new Ag Society grounds. Seeking funding to assist with rink construction, an agreement was struck with the Ag Society. In return for a contribution of \$1,500 toward construction the Ag Society was granted free access to the arena for agricultural purposes, including their summer fair. The Agricultural Society raised this money by selling lifetime memberships to their organization.

The new rink, located where the Centennial Arena skating ice surface now sits, has become the final permanent home of skating and hockey in Carnduff. Originally it also included 2 sheets of curling ice. In 1954, the building was lengthened to include a waiting room and a furnace was added to the basement to warm skaters and curlers.



Rink (c. 1955)

In 1962, the separate 4-sheet curling rink was erected and in 1967 Carnduff Centennial Arena replaced the skating rink. Both facilities have continued to be maintained and upgraded through the years including the addition of artificial ice to both rinks in 1971.

In 2012, in recognition of a substantial donation by a local business, naming rights to the arena were granted and Carnduff Centennial Arena was rebranded Fast Centennial Arena. This contribution permitted additional improvements on the facility to be made. Most recently, 50 years after it was built the Carnduff Centennial Arena is undergoing a major renovation to the skating facility, anticipated to be completed in time for the 2017-18 hockey and skating season.

The Centennial arena serves the community for more than just hockey and figure skating, the building houses auction sales, trade shows, craft shows, weddings, dances and other local events and has served as a base for the Homecomings and community celebrations held through the years. Active skating, hockey and curling organizations throughout the years have left a legacy of talent and memories that will continue to accumulate in the future.