

A SUMMARY HISTORY OF THE SKATING CLUB OF BOSTON

The Early Years

The year 2007 marked the 95th Anniversary of The Skating Club of Boston, making it the third oldest skating club in continuous existence in the United States Figure Skating Association (USFSA), after the Philadelphia Skating Club & Humane Society in 1849 and its neighbor across the river, the Cambridge Skating Club in 1898.

The Club has a great figure skating history and heritage, of which every member can be justly proud. The Club was founded by an enthusiastic group of Boston skaters, informally known as the "Back Bay Skating Club", who had shared skating out of doors at various sites in the Boston area. A few years before, in 1908 at the Cambridge Skating Club, under the direction of George H. Browne, the headmaster of the Browne & Nichols School, the first exhibition in the International Style of skating, so called to distinguish it from the then prevailing American Style, was held in the United States.

Mr. Browne, a pioneer judge, amateur teacher and also an active member of the Club, by his extensive writings and research abroad, brought the word about the "New Style", as he called it, back to Boston. Developed in Europe, as part of the legacy left by the American Jackson Haines, the style is, of course, now universally recognized throughout the world. It was in the Boston area that the "New Skating", as it was known locally, was first demonstrated, by the leading skaters from both Boston and New York, and especially Irving Brokaw of the latter city, who were invited to other United States and Canadian cities to give exhibitions and to instruct the local enthusiasts in the new form of skating.

The New Style (which has since been known as the International Style) had great local appeal and it was soon apparent that a club was needed formally to organize the practice of it on indoor ice. The building of the first Boston Arena in 1909, one of the first indoor artificial ice surfaces in the United States, gave skating a great boost and the era of "modern" figure skating began.

With good ice available regardless of weather, Boston skaters under the leadership of George Atkinson, Jr., formed The Skating Club of Boston in 1911 and incorporated it in April 1912. Charter members of the founding group included Mr. Atkinson, who was the first President and A. Winsor Weld, the second President, whose daughter Theresa and her partner Nathaniel W. Niles were the leading local exponents of the New Style. While the Club was actually formed in 1911, the year of incorporation (1912) has been used on its seal and as the starting date for its anniversary milestones.

Charles M. Rotch, who was elected the third President of the Club in 1924, held that office for 25 years until 1949, and thereafter served as Chairman of the Board of Governors until his death in 1964. No history of the Club would be complete without paying tribute to Mr. Rotch's long and meritorious service to skating and to the Club. Mr.

Rotch was always progressive in outlook, skillful in the handling of intricate problems, diplomatic in his dealings with others and always kindly and considerate to everyone with whom he came in contact. Under his leadership and during his presidency, all the dreams of the earlier years, including the building of the Club's own rink, were fulfilled. Mr. Rotch also played a leading role in the promotion of international participation in the sport, as well as in guiding the activities of the USFSA, twice as its President and as a long-time World and Olympic Championship Referee and Judge.

Homes of the Club

Today, having been so long at 1240 Soldiers Field Road in its own rink, it has been forgotten where the Club skated during the prior years.

The Club founders from the "Back Bay Skating Club", had skated chiefly on Hammond's Pond in Chestnut Hill (outdoors, of course).

With the building of the first Boston Arena in 1909, one of the first artificial ice surfaces in the United States, the Back Bay skaters quickly formed the Club to take advantage of the good ice available without regard to weather (indoors, of course).

The Club happily skated on a regular basis at the Arena from its beginning up to World War I, when supplies of fuel (coal) became limited, but it was the destruction by fire of the first Boston Arena in 1918 which caused the first hiatus in the activities of the Club. In an effort to bridge the gap and the loss of the Arena ice, the Club obtained ice at a small (what we would call a studio rink today) rink in Cambridge near MIT on Massachusetts Avenue. The 'Ice Pavilion', as it was called, was created by some of the more affluent members of the Club, and there were even hockey games held there, despite the small size of the surface.

After the absence of indoor ice in 1918-1919 due to the effects of the War and the one short season in the Ice Pavilion (1919-1920), the Arena was rebuilt on the same site and reopened in 1920 as the "New Boston Arena", with the Club returning to it, to remain there until 1938. During the period when there was no ice, the members of the Club had been accorded the courtesies of the outdoor ice at The Country Club in Brookline, Mr. Winsor Weld, the Club President, also being the Secretary and later the President of The Country Club.

In 1938, the Club moved from the second Boston Arena to its own building on Soldiers Field Road in Brighton. This happy event was the result of careful planning during the 1930's, including the very successful carnivals held in that era at the Boston Garden. These successes led to the purchase of land in the spring of 1938 and the immediate construction of the new rink that summer, leading to the official opening on New Year's Day 1939.

In all projects of this kind, there is always one person who is the driving force, and in Gordon Glazier, the Club found that person. Actively involved in the Club as a

result of the participation of his two daughters Dorothy and Leslie in competition, Mr. Glazier saw the project to completion. Another fortuitous circumstance was that the Club persuaded Richard L. Hapgood, a long-time Board member and the Club Treasurer, to serve as the Managing Governor, thereby establishing the operation of the new building on a sound basis at the outset prior to World War II.

Even today, of the many member clubs in the USFSA, very few own their own facilities, a tribute to the farsightedness of the energetic effort to establish the Club's own rink. It is hard to believe that the Club rink is now 63 years old, a priceless asset that must be preserved and protected for the benefit of future members of the Club.

The present building, with its design of structural steel arches and curving roof, sometimes referred to after World War II as a "Quonset hut", is recognized today among architects and engineers as unique, as it was the first building of its kind in which the load on the arches was directed straight downward onto spread footings, with no tie rods being required for obvious reasons. It was built in 1938 at a cost of \$180,000, with the ground breaking in August being carried out by Miss Joan Tozzer, then the National Ladies Champion, who also was the first person on the ice when the rink opened on January 1, 1939.

As originally built, the rink was open only during the normal 'season' (Fall to Spring) and there was no summer skating until 1969. The original 'floor' was a concrete slab, with the pipes for circulating the refrigerant embedded in it. When problems of frost penetration into the ground arose, which were also complicated by an underground spring towards the Western Avenue end of the ice surface, the original surface was taken up and replaced with a second surface in 1967. Other major changes in the plant have included the addition of another compressor, a cooling tower and the replacement of several of the essential heat exchangers in the system. Two of the original slow speed Frick compressors are still operating well after all these years.

With the advent of summer skating, the problems of frost and heaving of the floor became more severe and the second floor did not survive long, being removed in 1973. That year, while the floor was being repaired, the Club rented ice time at the Dexter School in Chestnut Hill. Today the floor is sand, with the pipes resting in it, so that a fairly thick layer of ice must be maintained in order to support the weight of the ice resurfacing machine. The Club actually had one of the earliest Zamboni ice resurfacing machines, but the problems of the exhaust from its gasoline engine and the risk of carbon monoxide accumulation in the rink prompted the decision in 1996 to go to the much heavier and more expensive, but vastly superior machine with a non-polluting electric drive.

Then in 1993 came a major crisis, when it was necessary to replace the roof of the entire building for the first time in its history. Originally of wood, the roof had absorbed moisture for years and essentially had rotted away in many places. It was replaced with a galvanized steel roof, inside which there is now a "low e-ceiling", which is a fabric that looks like parachute silk and which serves as an insulating layer and reduces condensation. With a loan from the Fleet Bank, this task was completely expeditiously

during that summer, with the Club renting temporary ice at the rink of the Metropolitan District Commission in East Cambridge, somewhat reminiscent of its temporary stay near MIT in 1919-1920!

Also inside the roof can be seen many small panels in rows lengthwise, which act as sound baffles, to reduce the reverberation time inside the rink, which greatly improves the quality of the music played constantly through the day for a variety of purposes, including practice and competition. In 2000, banners were installed on each end of the rink listing the many World Olympic and National Senior champions from the Club.

There are still major repair projects which lie ahead, including the replacement of the windows in the building, which are the originals. Happily, the basic systems and plant of the rink are sound and it will certainly be running well into the next century and hopefully will still be there when the Club observes its 100th Anniversary in 2012!

Among those who have served as managers of the rink over the years, following the departure of Dick Hapgood for the Army in 1942, have been Emery Baker and Bob Birks, both of whom “came out of the engine room”, as it were, where they had started as stationary engineers. Probably the longest serving employee, who also ran the first skate shop, was the late Gordon Kendall, who was well known throughout the area as being a “wizard”, both in the making of ice and in the sharpening of skates. Others who have served for many years in running the plant have included Bill Danner, whose son Paul is the manager of the rink today.

There have also been faithful and long-term employees in the office, among them and fondly remembered are Mary Brosnan, Florence Duncan and Marion McIsaac, while Marion Hogan also served as the office manager. Since 1997 the Club has also employed a Club Manager, in the person of Sharon Molino, who completed nine years of service in the position.

The Formation of the USFSA

As the sport grew and expanded Westward from its beginnings along the Eastern seaboard, it was soon apparent that the Club would provide, together with the representatives from New York, a major part of the overall leadership for its development, a leadership which has continued in three major areas of activity ever since: administration, competition and carnival. In all of them, the representatives of the Club have made important contributions over the years down to the present day.

After World War I, the need for a national governing body for the sport soon became obvious, as national and international participation was re-established. In 1921 the USFSA was formed, with Winsor Weld as the first President and George Browne as the first Secretary. Mr. Weld was the key figure in attaining for the Association its rightful place as the national governing body for figure skating in the United States, recognized by all the major sports federations as such, including election as the representative member

of the International Skating Union (ISU), the World governing body in 1923, a position it continues to hold today. The lead taken by Mr. Weld was followed by his successors and other Association officers, including six additional members or former members who have served as USFSA President:: Charles M. Rotch, Sherwin C. Badger, Benjamin T. Wright, Hugh C. Graham, Jr., Franklin S. Nelson, and Charles U. Foster, all of whom are Honorary members of the USFSA. Mr. Weld was the second Honorary President of the Association. Mr. Badger was himself a North American and United States champion and a National Pair champion and Olympic Silver Medalist with Beatrix Loughran in 1932.

Mr. Wright is also the first member of the Club to have served as an Officeholder of the ISU, first as a member from 1973 to 1988 and then as Chairman of the Figure Skating Technical Committee from 1988 to 1992. He is an Honorary member of the ISU and an Honorary World Referee, while his late wife Mary Louise was an Honorary World Judge, a unique pairing ! He also served as Chairman of the USFSA Hall of Fame and Museum Committee for 23 years, ending in 1996.

Many members and former members of the Club have served as officers and committee chairmen of the USFSA. As Vice President, there have been Nathaniel W. Niles, Arthur M. Goodridge, Roger F. Turner, Theodore G. Patterson, Carl W. Gram, Jr., E.Newbold Black, IV, Charles U. Foster and Theodore G. Clarke. Messrs Rotch, Badger, Wright, Graham and Nelson also held that office. As Secretary, in addition to Mr. Browne and Mr. Wright, there have served Richard L. Hapgood, Lyman E. Wakefield,Jr., Theodore G. Patterson, Harold G. Storke, John F. Groden and Patricia K. Hagedorn, while those who have served as Treasurer have been Messrs. Patterson, Gram and Groden. Many members have served as chairmen of the major permanent committees of the USFSA, and it is worthy of note that Maribel Y. Vinson was just the second woman chairman of a committee (Dance) in 1936.

An important contribution to the growth of the sport under the direction of the USFSA has been **Skating** magazine, founded in 1923 by Theresa Weld Blanchard and her partner Nathaniel W. Niles, as the first editors, a position Mrs. Blanchard held until 1963. "Tee", as she was known was elected an Honorary member of the USFSA in 1962.

The Club in Competition

Of all the areas of the sport, the greatest activity and contribution of the Club has been in competition, although it has also always been a family club as well. While a list of the past champions shows that the Club skaters have held their fair share of the major National titles, especially in the earlier years, and have won some impressive international titles as well, that is but a part of the story. The champions from the Club were also pioneers along the way and did much to bring the competitive art to its present high state of development in the United States.

Active participation in international competition began almost immediately after the Club was founded, when a team consisting Edward M. Howland, Charles M. Rotch and his two sisters, Edith E. Rotch and Clara Rotch Frothingham, journeyed to Ottawa in 1913 to

compete against the Minto Skating Club of Ottawa in Fours in the competition for the cup presented by the then Governor General of Canada, H.R.H., the Duke of Connaught. This was the first international competition in figure skating held in North America. A return match was held in Boston in 1914 for the Ellis Memorial Trophy, won by the skaters from the Club over those from the Minto Skating Club, which had been the winner in the prior year. Among those with the Minto team was Joachim von Ribbentrop, later Hitler's foreign minister, who was on a diplomatic assignment in Canada. The trophy can be seen in the Club's trophy case today.

Interchanges between the American and Canadian skating clubs in both competitions and carnivals continued after World War I and ultimately led to the creation of the North American Championships in 1923, competed for on a biennial basis between the two countries until discontinued in 1971. This championship was comparable to the European Championships in status and importance. Theresa Weld, later Mrs. Charles B. Blanchard, had been the first Lady Champion of the United States in 1914, and was also the first North American Ladies champion in 1923. With her partner, Nathaniel W. Niles, she was North American Pair champion in 1925 and together they won the United States Pair title a total of nine times.

Mrs. Blanchard was a very versatile skater, winning National titles also in dancing and in fours, in addition to singles and pairs. In 1920, Blanchard and Niles were the entire United States Figure Skating Team at the Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium, where Mrs. Blanchard was the Bronze Medalist in the ladies event, the first ever Olympic medal in figure skating for the United States. Thus was established the tradition of both U.S. and Club participation in the Games. There have been one or more representatives of the Club in a majority of the Games since that auspicious beginning. In 1924, Charles M. Rotch served as a referee and Mrs. Blanchard and Mr. Niles were on the team, as they were again in 1928, when they were joined by Maribel Vinson, Roger Turner and Sherwin Badger. In 1932, Boston skaters on the team included Maribel Vinson, Suzanne Davis, Roger Turner and James Madden, with Charles Rotch as a judge. The team manager was Dick Hapgood and the chaperone was Mrs. Blanchard.

In 1936, Maribel and her partner George Hill, Grace and Jim Madden were all on the team, with Mr. Rotch again serving as a judge. In 1948 Dick Button and Gretchen Merrill were part of the team, with Bernard Fox as a judge. In 1952, Dick was again a member of the team, as was Tenley Albright, with Harold Storke as a judge. In both 1952 and 1956, Ted Patterson was one of the team managers, while Tenley was also a member of the 1956 team. In 1960, Laurence Owen, her sister Maribel and Dudley Richards all represented the Club, as did Ron Ludington. In 1964, Tina Noyes was on her first team, repeating in 1968, while Mary Louise Wright was a judge in 1964 and again in 1992!

In 1972 Chuck Foster was a team leader and Suna Murray was a member of the team. Chuck was also a referee in 2002. Chuck has also served as Secretary of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and as a Winter Games chef de mission and is now the USFSA President. In 1976 Susan Kelley and Andy Stroukoff were members of

the team and starting in that year Ben Wright was a referee at every Olympics through 1992 and was also an administrative delegate in 1994. Paul George was a team leader in 1980 and later a chef de mission. He also has served as a Vice president of the USOC. Also on the 1980 team were Sheryl Franks and Michael Botticelli. Nancy Kerrigan was on the teams of 1992 and 1994, while Paul Wylie was a member of the 1992 team and brought home a silver medal .

Sherwin Badger was the first North American Men's champion, five times a National champion in Men's singles and three times a National Pair champion with Beatrix Loughran of New York, with whom he was the Silver Medalist at the 1932 Olympic Winter Games at Lake Placid, the first Olympic medal in that discipline for the U.S. It is interesting to note that Sherwin was at the time in 1932 also the President of the USFSA, the only competing President to achieve such a distinguished record while serving in that office.

Maribel Vinson was United States Lady champion nine times, a record that will probably never be approached, much less equaled today. She won a silver medal at the 1928 World Championships and was Bronze Medalist at the 1932 Olympic Winter Games, at a time when the international scene was largely dominated by skaters from Europe. She was also the North American Ladies champion in 1937. Maribel also continued the tradition of Club dominance in pairs with her partners Thornton L. Coolidge and with George E.B. Hill, with whom she won a North American Pair title in 1935 and six National Pair titles overall.

Another leading skater in Men's singles was Roger F. Turner, who followed the five titles of Badger and three of Niles with seven of his own, a mark which stood until tied by Dick Button in 1952. Roger was also twice a silver medalist in the World Championships in 1930 and 1931, the first American man to achieve that level in singles competition.

In the 1930's and early 1940's, the Club's success continued with Suzanne Davis, a National Ladies champion in 1934 and Grace E. Madden and James L. Madden the winners of the National Pair title in the same year. It was in 1934 that the skaters from the Club won seven out of the total of 11 titles contested.

Joan Tozzer succeeded Maribel as Lady champion in 1938 and held the title through 1940, while at the same time she was also a North American Pair champion in 1939 and a three time National Pair champion from 1938 to 1940 with Bernard Fox. Bridging the War years and the first post-War international competition was Gretchen Merrill, six times United States Lady champion, who represented the United States in the World and Olympic Competitions in 1947 and 1948 and was second in the European Championships of 1947 (then open to non-Europeans who were members of a European skating club) and third in the first post-war World Championships the same year.

The post-War skater who first broke through the long European domination for the United States was Richard T. Button. Dick first represented Philadelphia, but from 1950 while at Harvard represented the Club, winning prior to his retirement in 1952 five World, two North American and seven National titles, as well as being the Olympic Gold

medalist twice in 1948 and 1952. Dick also won the European men's championship in 1948, at a time when non-Europeans were able to enter. Immediately thereafter, the "door" was closed to them! Dick's presence at the Club during his college years had a great deal to do with the generation of skaters who scaled the heights in 1961, inspired as they were by his outstanding example and competitive spirit. Dick, who is an Honorary member of the Club and a member of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame, is an honored and integral part of the "Boston story".

In 1952, the Club's own Tenley Albright was a Silver Medalist at the Olympic Winter Games at Oslo, Norway, and won the first of five National Ladies' titles, as a forecast of the heights that she would soon attain by winning the World title (the first for the United States) in 1953 and again in 1955, two North American titles in the same years, topped by her win of the Olympic Gold Medal at Cortina, again a first for the United States. Tenley is a member of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame.

The post World War II era was also notable for the continued achievements of Maribel Vinson Owen as a reporter, author and teacher, especially of her daughters Maribel and Laurence and Tenley Albright. Her two daughters accomplished the unusual achievement of winning almost all of the same major titles that their mother had won before them. In 1961, Laurence won the North American and National Ladies' titles, while Maribel ("young Maribel") won both the National Junior Pair title with Charles U. Foster and the Senior title with Dudley Richards. The competitors from the Club won the Harned Trophy, which was emblematic of the National team title at the National Championships of that year for the seventh time. Through the courtesy of Henrietta Dane, the Club was fortunate, following the death of Maribel's mother, Gertrude Vinson, to receive in 1969 the collection of trophies and medals of Maribel and her daughters, which are now permanently displayed in the Club lounge as a memorial to that remarkable skating family.

The Brussels air tragedy in 1961 sadly ended the lives of the World Team of that year and accompanying family members and officials. There were actually no less than ten Club members involved: Walter S. Powell of St. Louis, a former USFSA President and ISU Council member, Bradley Lord, the National champion, Maribel, Laurence, the North American and National Ladies champion, young Maribel and Dudley Richards, the National Pair champions, Gregory and Nathalie Kelley, and Edward LeMaire of Rye, New York and his young son Richard.

What had clearly been the beginning of resurgence in the Club's success in competition in its finest tradition had been abruptly snuffed out by the accident. However, beginning in 1962, the youthful successors to the members of the 1961 World Team quickly demonstrated their intention to regain the heights achieved by their distinguished predecessors, with Elizabeth and Paul George winning the National Junior Pair title, the winning of two other place medals and with the Club placing second in the race for the Harned Trophy.

The Nationals of 1962 were held at the Club and McHugh Forum of Boston College, the first Nationals hosted by the Club since 1941. The Club also hosted the North

American Championship of 1925, 1929 and 1937 and the Nationals of 1922, the first under the USFSA, 1926, 1931, as well as the Junior and Novice events in 1936, a unique "split" championship, with the Senior events being held in New York in December 1935 and serving as the trials for the 1936 Olympic Winter Games.

The competitions sponsored by the Club prior to 1939 were held at the Boston Arena, now Matthews Arena of Northeastern University and the home of Ice Chips once again starting in 1996. which was again a venue for the Junior and Novice events of the 2001 Nationals.

The Club sponsored the 2001 Nationals at the Fleet Center which were an outstanding success. Especially notable was the support of the City of Boston, which provided police escorts for the busses traveling back and forth between the competition venues and the official hotel. An outstanding souvenir program was created which featured the Club's long history of success in the Nationals.

In 1963, Lorraine Hanlon became the Club's eighth National Ladies' champion; Tina Noyes won the National Junior Ladies' title the same year to go with her Novice title of 1961, and was later four times a silver medalist in the Senior Ladies' championship, as well as a member of two Olympic Teams in 1964 and 1968. The tradition of Club representation on the Olympic Team continued in 1976 with Susan Kelley and partner Andy Stroukoff participating in the first ice dancing championship in the Games, and in 1980 with Michael Botticelli placing seventh in Pairs at Lake Placid with partner Sheryl Franks.

The strong tradition of Men's skating must also be mentioned, starting with Nathaniel Niles, a three times National Men's champion, Sherwin C. Badger, five times the champion, Roger Turner, seven times, Dick Button, also seven times, and Bradley Lord and John Misha Petkevich. There were many other outstanding men competitors, such as Frederick Goodridge, George Hill, Jimmy Madden, Gregory Kelley, Paul Wylie, the Olympic Silver Medalist in 1992 and also a member of the 1998 Olympic Team, and Mark Mitchell, a National bronze medalist who is now a member of the teaching staff at the Club.

In the Nationals since 1961, the Club won the Harned Trophy , symbolic of team supremacy, two more times in 1963 and 1964, for a total of nine. It should also be noted that the Club won the comparable team trophies in the Eastern Sectionals eight times and in the New England Regionals eleven times. The New England trophy had been originally donated by Charles M. Rotch. All three trophies were retired in 1975 and there is no team event today. As can be seen in the lists of winners of the championships, the Club's competitors have won many Eastern and New England titles over the years, since 1938 for the Easterns and 1943 for the New Englands. Actually, the first Eastern champions in 1938 included Roger Turner in Senior Men and Grace and Jimmy Madden in Senior Pairs.

With the inauguration of the World Junior Championships in 1978, the Club has been represented there as well, with the first medals earned being the bronze in 1983

and silver in 1984 in ice dancing by Christina and Keith Yatsunami. Most notable are the gold medal in ladies won by Jennifer Kirk in 2000, the first World Junior title ever for the Club and the gold medal won by Stephen Carriere in 2007, the first for men. Jenny's accomplishment was recognized in 2000 by her election as an Honorary member of the Club, while Stephen was also recognized in 2007 by his election as an Honorary member, with both of them being the youngest to receive that honor. Paul Wylie was also the World Junior champion in men in 1981, while Shepherd Clark was silver medalist in men in 1989, with both of them representing other clubs in those years.

In newer events, such as the National Collegiate Championships, established in 1986, and the United States Juvenile-Intermediate Championships, established in 1991, the Club's representatives have won their fair share of the titles. Paul Wylie was the first National Intercollegiate Men's champion in 1986, representing Harvard. Nancy Kerrigan (Emmanuel College) and Kathaleen Kelly Cutone (Northeastern) were also National Collegiate Ladies champions while representing the Club.

Another new championship created by the ISU starting in 1999 was the Four Continents Championships for skaters from outside Europe from North and South America, Asia and Oceania. It is a Senior ISU championship equivalent to the long-time European Championships. In 2002 the ladies title was won by Jennifer Kirk, who added a major senior title to her accomplishments following her World Junior title of 2000.

The representatives of the Club have won eighteen more National titles since 1961. To these can be added six titles in the United States Junior Championships (formerly the Juvenile-Intermediate and Junior Olympic Championships), inaugurated in 1991, clear evidence of the continued success of its young skaters and a bright promise for the future in the great tradition of the past. Karen Ferrara and Brandon Forsyth won the Intermediate Dance "A" title in 1993. In 2002 for the first time, the Club won two titles in the Junior Nationals, with Melanie Drogseth taking the Juvenile Girls and Kylie Gleason, the daughter of Suna Murray Gleason winning the Juvenile Pairs with her partner Taylor Toth from Pittsburgh. Also in 2002, Louann Donovan won the first National Junior ladies title for the Club since 1982, while Loren Galler-Rabinowitz and David Mitchell won the National Junior title in ice dancing for the first time since 1994. In 2003 Erica Archambault won the National Junior Ladies title, while Melanie Drogseth won the Intermediate Ladies title and Kylie Gleason with Taylor Toth the Intermediate Pairs, for a repeat of their success of the prior year. In 2006 Ross Miner was the Intermediate Men's winner, while Kate McDermott and Colin McManus won the Juvenile Dance title. In 2007 Una Donegan and Andrew Korda won the Intermediate Dance title.

With the establishment of the United States Adult Nationals in 1995, the representatives of the Club have already won six titles in that rapidly expanding event. The first winners from the Club of an Adult National title were John Patrick Hull, who won the Gold Men's event in 1995 and Nancy Hargreaves and Robert McGuirk, who won the Silver Dance in the same year. Patricia Berger has now won five gold medals in her age class in the Adult Nationals since 2000 ! Added in 2001 were separate Adult Sectional

Championships and the Club's own Marc Pepin won the Championship Adult Gold Men's event in the first Adult Easterns.

The Club has sponsored and organized many of the qualifying competitions, including the Eastern Sectionals in 1945, 1949, 1954, 1965, 1971 and 1977 and the New England Regionals in 1959-1960, 1966, 1981, 1984, 1988 and 1993. The Club also hosted the 1999 New England as a "warm-up" for the 2001 Nationals. In recent times, the Club has also held its own very successful non-qualifying competition, the Boston Open, started in 1976 by Ted Clarke, which has been held since its inception in September, as a regular stop on the local circuit of such competitions leading up to the Regionals.

The New England Championships were originally created in 1943 as a "non-qualifying" competition comparable to the long-time Middle Atlantic Championships in New York as a means of providing continuing competition during the War years. There was, however, actually an earlier New England Championship held in 1915 under the auspices of the New England Skating Association, with all the titles being won by representatives of the Club. The Club held the New England Championships every year from 1943 to 1952 and in 1955. In 1959, the championships became 'Sub-Sectional' (qualifying) later Regional Championships leading to the Sectionals.

Halls of Fame

Recognition of the pre-eminent position of the Club in the skating world and also of the contributions of its representatives to the sport, both in competition as well as in administrative positions has been made by the election of no less than six members to the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame since its founding in 1976: Dick Button (1976), Tenley Albright (1976), Bud Wilson (1976), Cecilia Colledge (1980), Willie Frick (1981) and Benjamin Wright (1997). Elected to the United States Figure Skating Hall of Fame have been fifteen members or former members: A. Winsor Weld (1976), Theresa Weld Blanchard (1976), Sherwin C. Badger (1976), Maribel Vinson Owen (1976), Nathaniel W. Niles (1978), George H. Browne (1983), Walter S. Powell (1993), Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner (1992), Roger F. Turner (1994), George E.B. Hill (1994), Joan Tozzer Cave (1997), John Misha Petkevich (1999), Gretchen Merrill (2000), Hugh Graham, Jr. (2004) and Mary Louise Wright, (2005). All U.S. members elected to the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame are also automatically members of the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame (Button, Albright and Benjamin Wright).

The Carnivals

No activity of the Club has been more important through the years or has done more to preserve the unity and homogeneity of the Club membership than the annual carnival. The Club was the first to present a complete ice carnival in the new style to the public, doing so initially in 1911 before the Club was formally incorporated, with the beginning of its long line of charity-related shows was presented.

The Club also presented the first USFSA joint carnival in 1924, and repeated in 1925 and 1926, in co-operation with the New York and Philadelphia clubs. These shows

helped establish public recognition of figure skating in exhibition as organized public entertainment.

In 1934, the Club's carnival "The Cruise of the S.S. Arena", became a major production, starring Sonja Henie and Karl Schäfer, then the reigning World and Olympic champions. The next few years saw more carnival 'spectaculars' on the same grand scale, culminating in the shows of 1937, 1938 and 1939, which played before capacity houses at Boston Garden. In fact, when Sonja Henie made her professional debut in Boston in 1936, the Club "revived" the carnival for that year, which had already been held and put on one more performance as a backdrop for Sonja.

A feature of these carnivals in the late 1930's was the extension of invitations to the established foreign stars, with the expenses being shared among the major East Coast clubs, so that a modest "tour" was created. Included among them were Karl Schäfer again, making his professional debut in 1937, his successor as World champion, Felix Kaspar of Austria in 1938, and Freddy Tomlins and Daphne Walker of Great Britain in 1939. Freddy and Daphne were then World Championship silver medalists for that year. The revenues from these carnivals greatly enlarged the Club treasury and provided the basis for proceeding with the building of the Club's own rink in 1938.

Competition from the big professional touring shows, first the Ice Follies in 1936 and later the Ice Capades in 1940, which were largely modeled upon the ideas developed by the Boston, New York and Toronto club carnivals, began to be seriously felt in the years just before World War II. For several years during the War years, the Club held smaller and simpler shows at its own rink, although the 1947 show there was an outstanding one, featuring Dick Button, then the World Silver medalist and the brother comedy act of Gil and Tuffy McKellen (the latter the father of Gordy McKellen, a National champion).

In 1948, the Club once more ventured into the field of large carnivals with a production again at the Boston Arena, returning to Boston Garden the next year. However, a huge budget and tremendous ticket sales were necessary to present a show in a major arena, and the last carnival at Boston Garden (now torn down) was held in 1960, except for the special performance in 1961 for the benefit of the World Team Memorial Fund.

In more recent years, the carnival has been held at the Walter Brown Arena of Boston University, until 1996 when the carnival was returned to Matthews Arena of Northeastern University, which is in fact the former New Boston Arena, the home of the Club between 1920 and 1938. The carnival returned once again to the Brown Arena in 2004. In 2006 the Club was invited by Harvard University to hold Ice Chips at Bright Arena, a venue familiar to the Club through its sponsorship of "Skatefest" for the Salvation Army.

Today, the carnival, which has been known as "Ice Chips" since just after World War II, 1946 is probably the only major 'amateur' carnival in the country which still competes with the touring professional shows and the more recent phenomenon of the

touring shows (really a series of exhibitions) of the World and Olympic champions, run by Tom Collins. The 2006 show was in fact the 94th since the beginning.

Ice Chips continues to serve a vital role of introducing the rising stars on the international scene to the American public, while at the same time demonstrating that figure skating can be a family sport, participated in by all ages. The names of the great stars that have appeared in the carnival are legion! Among them have been, before the War, Gillis Grafström, Sonja Henie, Karl Schäfer, Andrée and Pierre Brunet, Maxi Herber and Ernst Baier, Olympic champions all, and Cecilia Colledge in 1932 and Felix Kaspar, World champions.

Since the War, among those that have appeared include Dick Button, Barbara Ann Scott, Tenley Albright, Hayes and David Jenkins, Carol Heiss, Sjoukje Dijkstra, Donald Jackson, Peggy Fleming, Dorothy Hamill, Charles Tickner, Elaine Zayak, Scott Hamilton, Brian Boitano, Yuka Sato, Alexei Yagudin, Stephane Lambiel, Frances Dafoe and Norris Bowden, Barbara Wagner and Robert Paul, and Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner, with all of them being World or Olympic champions or both, plus Jennifer Kirk and Miki Ando, both World Junior Ladies champions. The Club has also been fortunate to have Paul Wylie, the Olympic Silver Medalist in 1992 and Sasha Cohen, the Olympic Silver Medalist in ladies in 2006 as featured performers. The show today has also included national stars, such as Tim Goebel and Renee Inoue and John Baldwin Jr. For their services to the Club, through their participation in Ice Chips, Tai Babilonia, Randy Gardner and Charles Tickner were awarded Regular Memberships for Meritorious Service in 1980.

Skaters from the Club have also appeared over the years in "An Evening with Champions" for the benefit of the Jimmy Fund, sponsored by Eliot House of Harvard University.

The Club also sponsors "Skatefest", a series of exhibitions for the benefit of the Salvation Army at Bright Arena of Harvard University. Amanda Farkas of the Club's coaching staff has directed the show for the past eleven years.

The Teachers

From its earliest years, a succession of distinguished teachers of skating have served at the Club and have been largely responsible for the long list of champions who have compiled the remarkable competitive records reported herein. The first official teacher (as a professional) was Fritz Schmidt of Germany, followed soon after by Georg and Elspeth Müller, brother and sister also from Germany, who came about 1912 and stayed until 1917. Georg Müller is well known as the inventor of many of the compulsory dances which are now standard in the repertoire, including the Dutch Waltz, Fiesta Tango, Willow Waltz and Ten Fox. After World War I, Mr. Müller returned with his wife Leah Croger, for several more years and in 1926 Elspeth Müller returned to stay until 1938. She was one of the first among the ladies to wear beige boots!

Willie Frick, known as the “Boy Wonder of Berlin”, came to the Club in 1920 and was soon joined thereafter by his accomplished American wife Cathleen Pope. They were both excellent teachers, as well as exhibition skaters, with Willie being well remembered for his unique “candle dance”, skated around and through a grouping of lighted candles placed in holders on the ice. It was a superb exhibition form of “special figures”. In recognition of their devoted service to the Club, Willie and Cathleen were elected Honorary members in 1946. The Frick’s taught at the Club for more than 40 years, with Willie being the teacher of virtually all of the champions and near champions from the Club during his tenure. Willie passed away in 1964 and was posthumously elected a member of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame in 1981.

Montgomery S. (“Bud”) Wilson came to Club in 1946, fresh from service in the United States Army during World War II, although a Canadian. He earned a Bronze Star medal in Europe in the field artillery. During his competitive career he was the leading skater from North America, as evidenced by the fact that he was six times champion of North America between 1929 and 1939 and nine times a Canadian champion. He was also three times North American and five times Canadian champion in pairs with his sister Constance Wilson Samuel. He was a member of three Canadian Olympic Teams in 1928, 1932 and 1936 and was a Bronze Medalist at the 1932 Games and a silver medalist in the World Championships of the same year. Bud taught at the Club for eighteen years until his early and untimely death in 1964. He was also the Director of the annual carnival, “Ice Chips” during much of his tenure. Bud was posthumously elected a member of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame in 1976.

Cecilia Colledge of England joined the Club staff in 1952. Her competitive record was a most notable one: World Ladies champion in 1937, three times European Ladies champion 1937-1939 and six times British Ladies champion. She was the youngest competitor at eleven in the 1932 Olympic Games and was the Silver Medalist in 1936. Like many European skaters, her career was shortened by the War, although she returned in 1946 to win her sixth and last British Ladies title. After turning professional, she twice won the British Open Professional championship in 1947 and 1948. She is the holder of the British First Class (Gold) Figure Skating medal, First Class (Gold) Dance medal and even more rare, the First Class (Gold) Instructors’ certificate, the highest award of its kind anywhere for teachers of skating. Among the “firsts” credited to Cecilia are the first double jump performed by a woman in competition, the one foot Axel Paulsen jump, and the layback and parallel (Camel) spins. Cecilia was elected an Honorary member of the Club in 1977 and a member of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame in 1980.

There have been many other distinguished members of the Club’s coaching staff over the years, although some of them were not with the Club for very long. Certainly the present longest serving member of the staff is Thomas J. (“Tommy”) McGinnis, who is past the 40 year mark! Himself both a singles skater and ice dancer in Sectional and National competition, Tom, after turning professional, completed his Gold Dance Test and also passed his Gold Pair Test with another Club member, Jo Barnum Wallace. An all around coach but an especially talented teacher of dance and pairs, Tom has served as well as a most creative and innovative Director of Ice Chips. He has also, together with

Linda Blount, run the very successful “Learn to Skate” program of the Club. He has also been active in and has served as an officer and director for many years in the Professional Skaters Association, in which he holds every Master rating available!

Other teachers from the early years included William Jaycock, and after the War, Marion Barstow Proctor, who became a member of the staff in 1957, continuing to serve until her death in 1990 . Marion pioneered in the promoting of group classes and was recognized nationally for her work with the USFSA Memorial Fund in providing group instruction to skaters at the basic level, which were the forerunner of the major national programs such as that of the USFSA: “Skate With US”. She also served as Director of Ice Chips. Marion was elected an Honorary member of the Club in 1980.

Another completely new discipline known as Theater on Ice has taken hold, with two teams Act 1 of Boston and Imagica. Act 1 has actually competed internationally in France in 2006 with success, while an international seminar in the discipline was hosted by the Club in October 2006, with representatives of France taking part.

Among others who have served on the coaching staff in the recent past have been the late Bobby Black, the late Paul McGrath, both former National champions, Ronna Goldblatt Gladstone, a long-time staff member, Suna Murray, a former Olympic and World Team member, Julie Graham Eavzan, Keith Lichtman, and Mark Hominuke from Canada. Among those with a briefer tenure at the Club have included former World champion Felix Kaspar, Arthur Bourque, Evy and Mary Scotvold, with Evy also serving as Club Manager, Barbara Kossowska and Zdenek Pienkowski.

With the addition to the coaching staff in 2001 of Rebecca Stump, a leading synchronized skating team coach, the club revived after 20 years, a team in that discipline with her initial efforts resulting in an Intermediate Team which competed in the 2002 Eastern Sectional. It is no doubt long forgotten that at the beginning of formal Sectional and National competition in precision team skating, as it was called then, the Club’s Adult team, the Bostonians, were the Silver medalists in the adult division of the first Nationals in 1984. In six years under Becky’s leadership, there are now three teams with favorable results already being seen, leading to successful participation in the Sectionals and Nationals.

As the Club moves forward in the early years of the 21st century, it is fortunate to have a strong young coaching staff, including Mark Mitchell, a former National Senior Men’s competitor and Bronze Medalist, Peter Johansson of Sweden, a former Swedish National champion and Olympic Team member and Sheryl Franks-Pellegrini, a former World and Olympic Team member in pairs. Mark has served as an athlete member of the USFSA Board of Directors and of its Executive Committee, and as Chairman of the USFSA Athletes Advisory Committee.

Also among those currently serving on the coaching staff on the figure skating side are Christie Allan-Piper, Elaine Asanaki, Jennifer Blount, Linda Blount, Lisa Coppola, Jacki Crugnola, Amanda Farkas, Christine Hough-Sweeney, a former Canadian pair champion, John Lee, Robert Martin, Liane Moscato, Suna Murray, Frank Muckian,

Connie Nakamura and Deidre Williams. On the Dance side, Barret Brown, who has been a fixture for many years, heads the staff in the Ice Dance Training Center, in association with Tom Lescinski and Ron Kravette, as well as with other dance coaches including Peter Breen, an Olympian and National Senior medalist in ice dancing with Rachel Mayer, Dawn Ponte, Hilary Gibbons, a Midwestern Sectional Senior dance champion, Catherine Nutter, and Justin Pekarek, a former World Junior Dance Champion, and Stephen Smith.

Barret Brown has served as a coach member of the USFSA Board of Directors and Tom Lescinski has also served in that capacity.

It is also worthy of note that during the 1990's, several of the eligible competitors from the Club began their teaching careers while still active competitors. Among them have been Jennifer Blount, many times Eastern and New England Ladies champion in figures, Amanda Farkas, an International and National competitor, Amy Webster Berg and Ron Kravette, many times Eastern Dance champions and National Bronze Medalists, and Christina Oleson, all of whom are or have been members of the coaching staff.

Another new discipline has also appeared on the scene in "Theatre on Ice", in which mixed teams of men and ladies perform in costume to music a pantomime or review to a specific theme. Coaches assisting with the program include Tasney Massarino and Justin Pekarek. The Club teams Act I and Imagica have enjoyed considerable success in the competitions that are available to them, winning several, both international and domestic, as the discipline moves forward towards formal recognition by the ISU and the national governing bodies.

It should also be noted that Gerry Lane, a long-time competitor from the Club, and a former National Junior Dance Champion in 1970 with Mary Bonacci from Rye NY, has served as the President of the Professional Skaters Association (PSA), continuing a tradition of involvement by Club representatives and teachers in that organization, going back to Tee Blanchard, Willie Frick, Maribel Vinson, Bud Wilson, and especially in more recent times, Tom McGinnis. The PSA was originally founded in 1938 as the Association of Professional Figure Skaters, later the Professional Skaters Guild of America (PSGA), as the national association for the teaching professionals. Today, the PSA includes the competing and exhibiting professionals and has conducted an Open Professional Championship of the United States in the past. Its rating system and educational programs for coaches are officially recognized by both the USOC and the USFSA.

As the Club moves forward in the 21st century towards the celebration of its 100th Anniversary in 2012, it can be said that it is on a solid footing and thriving as one of the leading clubs in the country.

Benjamin T. Wright
Historian

2007