

Excerpt taken from “Governor Simcoe Slept Here: The Legacy of West Gwillimbury” by the Bradford West Gwillimbury Local Historical Association.

Curling

Curling has been a sporting activity in Bradford and West Gwillimbury for more than a century. Gary Lamb wrote a story about curling for the *Bradford 125th Anniversary* publication that told of the founding of Bradford Curling Club in 1880. Sir William Mulock was the patron of the club and James S. Boddy was elected as the first president. The first curling sheets were on the Holland River and when you came to curl you brought your own pair of curling stones with you. Later the curling moved to the rink that stood on the southeast corner of John Street West and Moore Street, now the town parking lot. This was the Town Arena and the curling sheets on natural ice were on either side of the ice surface under the stands. If the curling game was being played at the same time as a hockey game, the debris from the stands that came through the floor and fell on the curling ice gave a real purpose to the role of the sweepers. When the arena was demolished in the 1940s, the curlers met on Roy Down's pond at Bond Head. From 1951 to 1955, the club curled on ice in the Bradford Co-operative Storage. These were chilly sessions as the freezing pipes were in the ceiling. In 1956, the present Curling Club was built beside the new hockey arena, sharing the ice making facilities. The rink was financed privately through the sale of shares.

One of the main bonspiels in past years was the Onion Skin Bonspiel, which was a weeklong event attracting rinks from far and near. Many residents of West Gwillimbury have been members of this club over the years including: Dunc McArthur, Roy Dixon, Graeme Darling, Chas Cerswell, Paul Placko, Charlie Davis, Clarence Noble, Bus Culbert, Neil Weir, Don Brown, Clarence Baynes, Mike Brinkos, and John Simurda.