



## A HISTORY OF THE LEGAL CURING CLUB

The Legal Curling Club originated as the Legal Community Hall Society prior to 1952. In March of that year a newly elected committee was formed to establish a curling club in the community. During the summer months the committee and members hosted a ball tournament and dance to raise funds to build a facility to curl in. In Jan 1953 the committee established annual dues for members and it was based on life memberships of people who donated \$50.00 to the building of the rink. Dues established were \$10 for life member, \$15 for non-life member and \$5 for women and students. Loans with the local bank and accumulation of donations enabled them to build walls and a roof for the building. On Feb 8<sup>th</sup> of 1953 a mixed closed bonspiel was held with entry fee of \$4 per rink.

In March of that year the committee entered into negotiation with the village for the lease of the land that the building was being built on. The lease was established for 25 years at a cost of \$1 per year. The curling club was built with the help of many volunteers with the support and expertise of local contractors. Many payments for vendors, contractors, icemaker and caretakers in the early years were in lieu cost for annual curling dues.

A decision was made for the 1955/56 curling season to join the Alberta Curling Association and the annual membership cost that year was \$8. Over the years many improvements and renovations were completed to the building. In 1962 the club purchased 17 sets of matched rocks with assisted financing from the Alberta Curling Association. The cost at that time was \$1357 for rocks for the two sheets of ice.

Between April and Oct of 1965 the building went through a number of renovations that included new ceilings and insulation in the walls. The natural ice was holding up well for the curlers and membership was strong. Curling had been introduced to students over the past couple of years and it was decide to include this activity as part of the schools physical education program.

Artificial ice was discussed with the town recreation board as early as March 1971 in conjunction with the building of the new arena. A grant was pursued from Local Initiative Program to help offset costs for icemakers wages, repairs and renovations to the club. Three years later the Legal Recreation Board gave a briefing on the proposed new facilities being projected for Legal. The club members took out a loan to build a meeting room in the attic area of the rink.

In March of 1975 Norm Rivard (current member) was instrumental in asking for a vote to join the Recreation Board so as to have a say in the proposed new recreational facilities. A list of priorities for the construction of a new arena facility and an adjoining 4 sheet curling rink were established. It was getting harder every year to keep the old facility renovated and repaired. This was also the first year members saw an increase of membership dues to \$15 to help offset costs for the upkeep of the club.

1977 saw the building of a new four sheet curling rink attached to the arena. The arena building was also given a major overhaul with a new roof, insulation, bleachers and lobby. Local area farmers donated equipment and time to haul sand to the club for the installation of the new cooling system. The curling club helped pay for the new facilities through matching grants and local funding.

Ice rental would now be paid to the town Recreation Board for use of the curling facility. To save on operational costs it was decided that each team would commit to providing caretaker duties for one week on a rotating basis. As in previous years each team also took responsibility to serve as bartenders for the evening during league and bonspiel events. This was a very effective way to save money for the club showing commitment from everyone. The system of volunteer bartenders is still being implemented today with hired bartenders being used for bonspiels.

Some club members were seen to have spent an extraordinary amount of time on the ice in those days so it was not uncommon for some interesting events to go on within the club. The icemaker Claude Maurier and JoAnne were married on sheet three on March 7<sup>th</sup> of 1986. To add to this event two weeks later on March 22 on the same sheet of ice they revelled in their curling glory by getting an 8 ender. They were teamed with Laurent Coulombe and Ann Tralenberg.

The curling rink went through another transformation in 1988 with the installation of insulation under the cooling pipes. Again local volunteers proved their dedication to the club by providing all of the labour to complete this strenuous tasks. Over the past 11 years everyone had forgot how much sand was in the building but with many helping hands the task was completed. This helped improve the efficiency of the cooling plant and significantly increased the efficiency of the curlers. It eliminated the problems with frost heave and inconsistencies between the different sheets of ice. Poor curling could not be blamed on the outside temperature.

Over the next couple of decades the curling club saw good growth in memberships, and they applied to Alberta Gaming to host casinos to help pay for renovations and ice maintenance cost. The volunteer help in the club has been instrumental over the years to the survival of the facilities. In the early 90's plans were made and engineering designs completed to expand the club to include meeting rooms, storage facilities, handicapped washrooms, a new bar and change rooms. The club members worked many casinos and applied for numerous grants to try and reach the goals that everyone had aspired to achieve. When it was established that cost increases for labour and materials had skyrocketed over the years it looked like our plans had to be revised. Costs had escalated to the point of no return without the availability of a government grant.

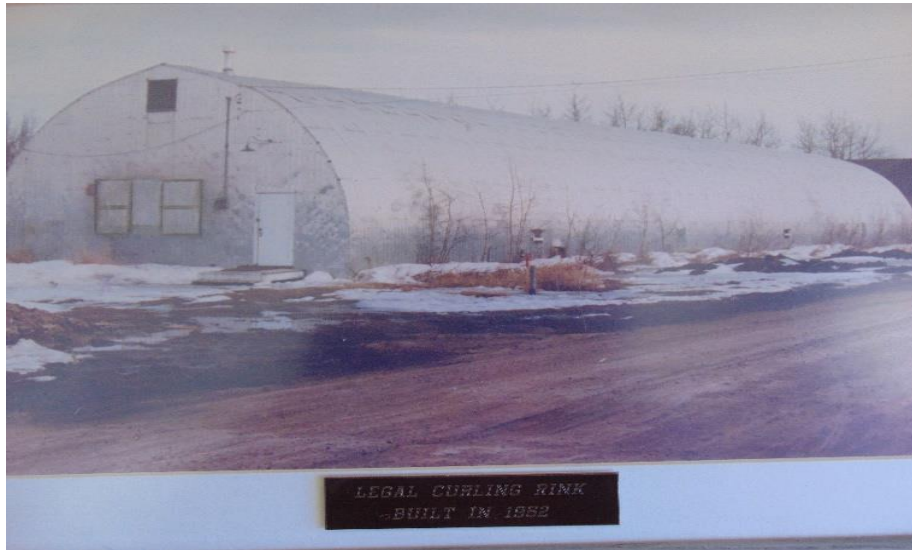
1997 was a stellar year for the Legal Curling Club. Our local boy had achieved greatness in the world of curling. Skip Ryan Keane, third Scott Pfeifer, second Blayne Iskiw, and lead Peter Heck had won the Canadian Junior Curling Championship held in Selkirk Manitoba in an extra end over skip John Morris from Ontario. Coach Pat Keane from Legal would take the team to Karuizwa Japan for the world championship. Team Canada would go on to win the bronze medal round over team Japan.

The Legal Curling Club experienced a new growth within the club especially in the junior programs and over the next few years the interest in curling increased the membership to 60 kids. Many of these junior curlers are still in Legal today and enjoy curling in their new leagues. Junior curling has seen the addition of Learn to Curl as part of the local schools physical education programs.

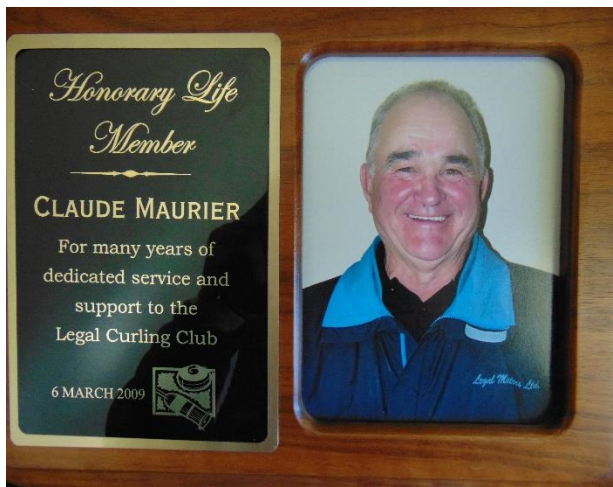
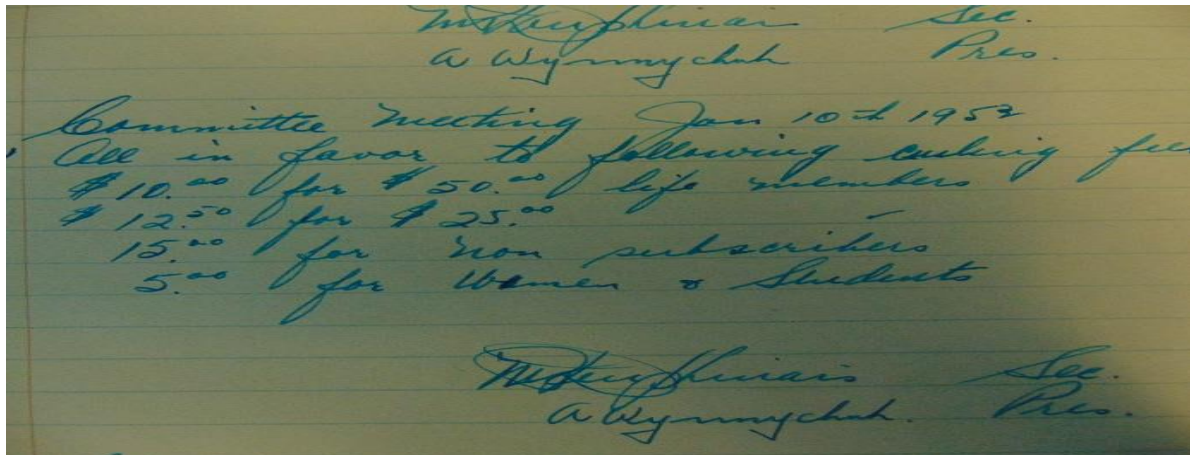
Unable to secure a grant the original plans for renovations were revamped to meet the requirements of what was really need needed and what we could afford. With the 2012-2013 curling season quickly approaching renovations started at the beginning of Oct of the year. Farmers finished harvesting early that year and had nothing better to do so renovations began in earnest. It was a struggle to get contractors, and volunteers working together to complete the work while not interfering with the curling schedules. By Christmas the dust had settled and the majority of the work had been completed. It proved to be interesting serving from a temporary bar for the past few months. Everyone remained in good spirits as the changes progressed and by the time the Spring Bonspiel started in April 2013 the lounge renovations were completed and we were in full swing. The washrooms were renovated that summer to complete the transition.

The Legal Curling Cub today still has a strong membership who are willing to do volunteer work to make our facility viable and active. Faced with the closing of other clubs around Alberta we know that no matter what happens in the future we will survive, we will be strong and we will have fun. "CURL ON LEGAL"

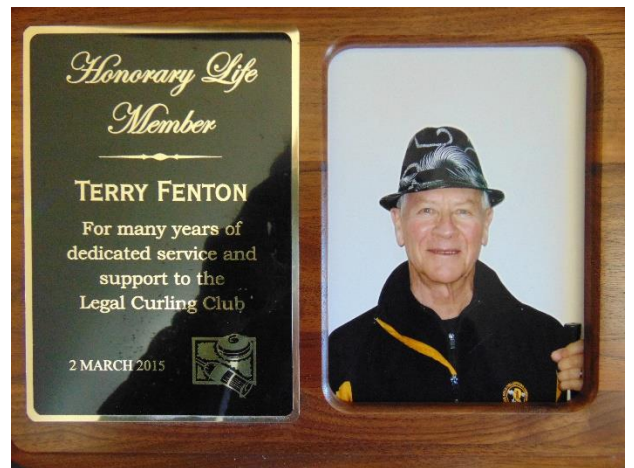
Text by: Fred Malott



Original Curling Club built in 1952



Honorary Life Member Claude Maurier



Honorary Life Member Terry Fenton



Skip Ryan Keane, third Scott Pfeifer, second Blayne Iskiw, lead Peter Heck  
Coach Pat Keane

1997 Canadian Junior Champions and World's Bronze Medallists



1997 Ryan's banner presented in Legal Curling Club





New curling club built by the Town of Legal 1977



2013 newly renovated



Claude and JoAnne Maurier

Married on Mar 7 1986 on sheet 3



Claude and JoAnne Maurier, Laurent Coulombe and Ann Tralenberg

8 ender 22 Mar, 1986 on sheet 3.