



A Sentimental Journey

by Gerald Belanger

On March 5, 1925 over 50 concerned citizens gathered to discuss the feasibility of erecting an indoor arena in Marmora. The project cost was estimated at \$5,000.

On October 14, 1929 the rink committee members, chaired by Dr. Crawford, met to discuss their options. At that meeting it was decided not to build an indoor arena due to the uncertain financial conditions existing in the village and the surrounding country. However, they did decide that the proposed site of the indoor arena should be on the south east corner of North Hastings Avenue and Matthew Street right across from the Marmora Public School. It should be pointed out that in December 1928, Madoc built their indoor arena on Baldwin Street, just west of the public school.

At the time the Marmora Agricultural Society desperately needed a new and larger building for their fair displays and other functions. The Agricultural Society proposed that the lot where their old fair building was located would be an ideal location for a new indoor arena. The projected cost for the new arena was estimated at \$8,000.

In the middle of May, 1946, the rink committee met to discuss their favourite subject - the Marmora Indoor Arena. Due to the many strikes and the scarcity of building materials caused by the effects of World War II, it was decided by the rink committee that the erection of the proposed arena be allowed to stand in abeyance until such time that building materials were again available.

On April 25, 1948 the rink committee, consisting of Bernard Hughes (chairman); William Shannon (vice-chairman); Robert E. Neal, (Secretary) and Alex Fraser (treasurer), stated that a new indoor arena would be built that year. The arena would be built just inside the north gate of the fairgrounds at an estimated cost of \$25,000.

By May 25, 1948, over \$22,500 had been raised/pledged for the construction of the new arena. On October 15, 1948, at 8 p.m. the new indoor arena was officially opened for the citizens of Marmora and Deloro.

MARMORA

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30 Jan 1999

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HISTORICAL MARMORA FOUNDATION

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On the evening of October 15, 1948 over 2000 local citizens of the Marmora District and 150 invited guests to take part in the official opening ceremonies at the new Dr. Crawford Arena. Ten members of Dr. Crawford's family were present for the occasion. Missing was Mrs. Crawford who was ill at the time.

Some of the prominent county and local guests were; Warden G. West of Hastings County (Madoc), Reeve Vincent Michael Lynch (Marmora Village), Reeve John A. Bell (Marmora and Lake Township), Reeve Charles Henry Buskard (Deloro Village), Reeve John Morrison (Rawdon Township) and John Alfred Paquet (Deloro Smelting & Refining Co. Ltd.)

Before the evenings' entertainment started, Miss Grace Crawford, a registered nurse from Albany, New York and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Crawford declared the new arena officially opened to the public and citizens of Marmora and Deloro.

In its first full year of operation, The Dr. Crawford Arena had a net profit of \$1,957.23. In February, 1951, Reeve Vincent Lynch announced that the

arena debt was over \$3,000 and he felt that action had to be taken to solve the problem. By December, 1952, the arena was almost debt free so the committee decided to install an artificial ice making plant. In June, 1954, a concrete floor was laid in the new arena. The original ice making equipment lasted until the 1972/73 season and then was completely replaced. The Financial Statement ending April 23, 1955, showed a deficit of \$2,620.60.

On August 7, 1977, the Capkey Development Ltd. of Trenton, added a two-storey structure measuring 50 feet by 90 feet to the original 1948 arena. It was felt that if ever the old arena was condemned, the most expensive part of a new Community Centre would have already been erected. It would be a relatively simple matter to erect a new steel shell over the existing ice surface.

By September, 1980, the Lions Club had paid off their \$73,800 mortgage which has been needed for the renovations and once again the arena was debt free. On November 28, 1988, the Marmora Village Council was told by a consulting firm that the arena was condemned and would be

closed until further notice.

Again a new fund-raising committee headed by Cecil Courneyea sprang into action and the process started all over again.

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