



100 YEARS OF HOCKEY

Friends of Poplar Point and District Memorial Rink

For the past ten years a grassroots group of motivated Manitobans, known as the Friends of **Poplar Point and District Memorial Rink**, have been working hard to preserve a piece of Canadian hockey heritage. The small town of Poplar Point (located 40 minutes west of Winnipeg on Hwy 26) has been a hotbed of hockey for the past century. Many Hockey Hall of Fame members got their start on the ice in Poplar Point.

Notable National Hockey League players from Poplar Point include Bryan Hextall Sr, Lin Bend, Bryan Hextall Jr and Dennis Hextall. The town produced hockey builders Addie Bell and Jack Bend; 1942 Memorial Cup Champions the Portage and District Terriers and 1957 Provincial A and B Champions, the Poplar Point Memorials.

The rink had fallen into disrepair and was at risk of being destroyed in 2001, spurring Warren Bend and Perry Dickenson to rally a group of concerned citizens with the goal of stalling the imminent demolition and preserving Poplar Point and District Memorial Rink. They first had the rink declared a Municipal Heritage Site; a number of partners, including Siobhan Richardson Foundation, Community Places Program, Provincial Heritage Sites and Community Foundation of Portage and District, came on board to fund the restoration; then the team set to work—replacing and restoring the building's domed tin roof, refurbishing the rink's boards, remodeling guest facilities and spectator lounge and installing a geothermal energy system.

Today, the restoration project is again a hub for the community offering a free skate venue for families (the volunteers even managed to keep the ice in throughout the decade long restoration). Poplar Point youngsters continue to keep the Canadian hockey dream alive—strolling down to the rink after dinner for a game of shinny with their stick and skates slung over their shoulder.

A series of fundraising and community events will be occurring throughout the next year leading up to the official **100 Years of Hockey Celebration** February 8, 2013. To mark the historic sport occasion Dennis Hextall and a team of Detroit Red Wing Alumni will be in town for the weekend to face off against local hockey heroes. For a complete list of 100 Years of Hockey events visit **100yearsofhockey.com**.

For further information, contact:

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