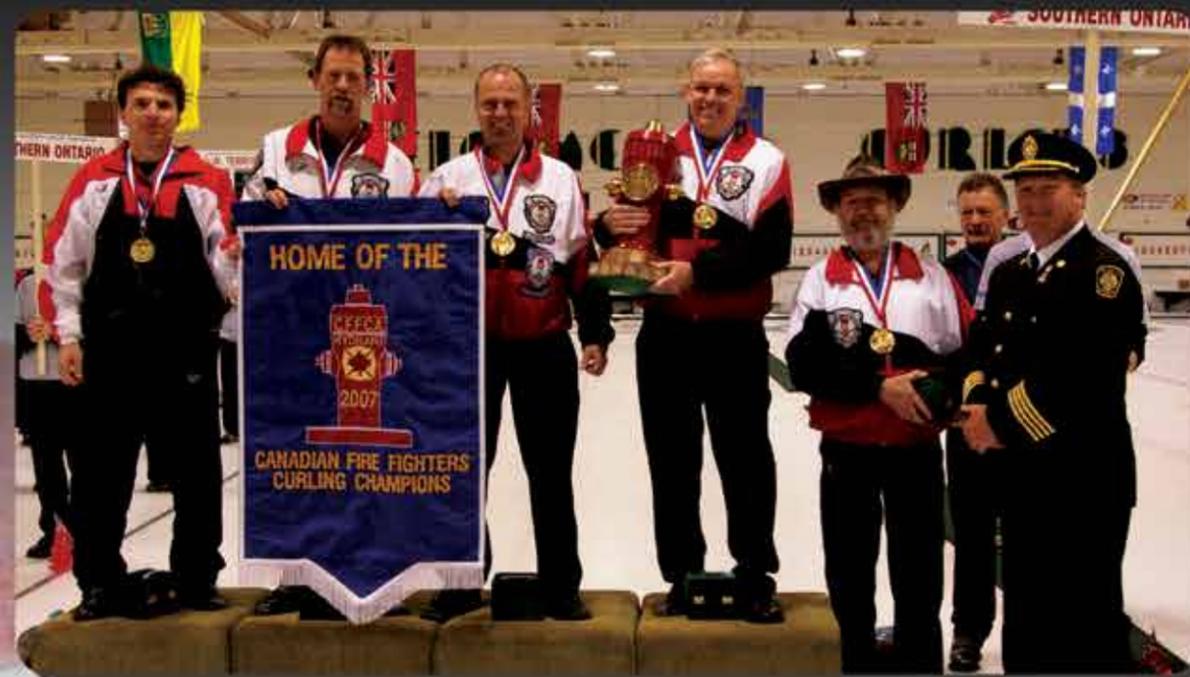


FIRE AND ICE

2007 Canadian Fire Fighters Curling Champions

Toronto Fire Paul Mogavero, Barry Acton, Frank McCourt, Neil Harrison



BY ROSS HAMMILL, L288, SOFFCA PRESIDENT

The Southern Ontario Fire Fighters Curling Association celebrated our 50th Championship Bonspiel in 2010 and as we now begin our 55th year we hope you might join us. The result of British Columbia firefighter Aubrey Neff, who in 1958 set out to create a national firefighter's curling competition, second only to Canada's curling Brier. Our purpose is to promote good fellowship amongst firefighters through the medium of curling.

Our members gather early each year at our provincial bonspiel, the Southern, which draws curlers of all skill levels, from club curlers to novice beginners and even past world champions who are or were members of the Ontario Fire Service. The Southern boundaries spread from Ottawa to Windsor and north to Wawa. Our numbers over the years have been declining steadily as demographics of local curling clubs and fire departments change. We are aware that many Ontario firefighters have never heard of our association and national competition.

Formed in 1960, we first competed in Regina at a five province Dominion Championship. The Championship grew over the years until, finally, in 1983 Newfoundland competed for the first time making Aubrey's quest complete as a truly national

firefighters championship was hosted in Brampton. In 1999 the Canadian Fire Fighters Curling Association, partnered with Muscular Dystrophy Canada, to bring better awareness to our causes and to help raise funds for both associations. To date, our National and Provincial Associations have helped to raise thousands for MD research in Canada, with over \$130,000 donated in 2014.

Further to our association, a group of Etobicoke firefighters formed a curling house league in 1962 which today hosts fifteen teams weekly at the Brampton Curling Club. These curlers are active and retired members from Toronto, Brampton, Vaughan, Mississauga and Hamilton. Several bonspiels are also contested annually including the Brass Helmet in Brampton which celebrated its 50th year in 2014 and the Mississauga Firefighters Skins game for MD curled in Milton.

The Southern bonspiel allows for great competition and fun where each team finds their level of enjoyment. Based on a double knockout format, teams drop into a bonspiel of similarly skilled curlers as they are eliminated from the championship sides. The competitive teams curl on towards the nationals while many of the fun teams enjoy their level

of curling and camaraderie. Many of the friendships built on one weekend of curling have lasted long after the last rock, some until their last alarm.

This past November, we hosted the 55th Southern at the Simcoe Curling Club. Team Lowe representing Ottawa will compete in Valleyfield Quebec in March at the 56th Canadian Fire Fighters Curling Championship. Their progress can be followed by selecting the link from the Canadian's web page, www.CFFCA.ca. Over our history, the Canadian Fire Fighters Muscular Dystrophy Hydrant Trophy has returned to Southern Ontario on twelve occasions, the last being 2007. In 2017, Southern Ontario will host the 58th Canadian Fire Fighters Curling Championship. The location has yet to be finalized but will most likely be hosted in the Greater Toronto area.

Inclosing, we hope that you will consider joining our association or Southern Bonspiel by contacting us through our web page, www.SOFFCA.com, try curling by joining the house league or sign up for a bonspiel in your region. There is always room for more teams or join as an individual. Until then, stay safe and good curling! 🧊