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## The Red Deer Briar in 1994

At the Annual Friars' Briar meeting held in Ottawa during the '93 Briar there, it was decided to ask our Alberta director, Gerry Ward, to attempt to make arrangements for the '94 Briar in Red Deer in association with the Labatt Briar there, March 5-13. Although Gerry was not able to be present at the Ottawa gathering because of a bad fall that he had had from his bicycle the summer before, he had indicated in advance that he was willing to help. We knew also that Hugh Christmas in Calgary would also be willing to help.

The result was that a province-wide team of curlers from Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton was formed who attended several meetings in Red Deer at their own expense to get the show on the road. A special bonus for the committee was that Allan Whitecotton, a semi-retired layman from Red Deer offered his services as the official representative from Red Deer. Although not a curler himself but a friend of Gerry Ward, he proved invaluable in spreading the word of the forthcoming Briar around central Alberta, arranging accommodation at the Gull Lake Baptist Camp, for the lovely lady mayor to throw the first rock and for the M.L.A., Stockwell, to speak at the Awards Dinner, and in making up 80 welcome packages. The only prize that he and his wife Edith received was honorary member status for the future.

Early in the planning Hugh Christmas agreed to be drawmaster for the Briar. He recruited the assistance of Guy Scholz, winner of first place in the Portage la Prairie '90 Briar. When entries exceeded the goal of 16 rinks to 20, additional ice was secured at the Penhold Military Base to supplement that already booked at the Red Deer Civic Centre. Because there were as many rinks entered from Alberta as from the rest of the provinces put together, a shield (called *The Heavenly Hosts' Shield for Inter-Regional Competition*) was solicited from the Calgary Clergy Curlers to be presented annually. This was retained by the Alberta Director of the Friars' Briar Association as the result of 43 games won as against 17 by the other region representing the rest of Canada.

The gold medallions were won by a rink skipped by Ed Oman of Calgary and included Bruce Wiebe, Evan Bottomley and Bob Stanich. Silver went to the Fraser Muldrew rink from Winnipeg which included Ken Innes, Roger Coll and Milt Muldrew. The bronze was claimed by none other than the Hugh Christmas rink of Calgary including Grant Rodgers, George Graffunder and Larry Likness. Eight 8-end draws were squeezed into the four afternoons (Tuesday to Friday). Since only 23 of the 80 who curled in the Friars' Briar chose to buy tickets to see the Labatt Briar playdowns, a second vote in the history of the Association was taken to determine the relative interest of watching or curling. Participation in the Briar seemed to be the bigger interest on the part of the clergy present at Red Deer.

This helped to determine the nature of next year's event, along with the fact that next year's Labatt Brier was to take place in Halifax which would be impractical for most to attend. Accordingly, the decision was made to ask Fraser Muldrew, the Manitoba director, to arrange for the playing of next year's Briar again in Winnipeg, with provision for T.V. viewing of the Halifax games on T.V.

Unfortunately for him the writer was unable to go to the '94 Briar as he had in every previous one because of the need for some by-pass surgery just the week before it began. According to all reports received, it would have been a most enjoyable one to attend. A plus for the Association was its first president and founder, Don Amos was well enough to attend, despite the fact that we feared that we had given our final farewell to him in Ottawa for health reasons. He was able to take on the responsibilities of president at the Awards Banquet and the Association's annual meeting. It was a memorable time for his good wife, Grace, who with her brother, our late Governor General, Roland Michener, had grown up in Red Deer.

The local organizing committee could not say enough of a favorable nature about the cooperation they received from Lynn Anderson the cordial rink manager at the Red Deer Civic Centre and the provision she made for food services, luncheon and banquet, and such extras as the installation of a large T.V. screen for the benefit of those who had not tickets for the Labatt's games. Gerry's committee have been highly praised for the sensitive and humorous speech of M.L.A. Stockwell Day, and the magic of entertainer Steve Harmer and his daughter, Bethany. Greatly appreciated also was Hugh Christmas' ode which he claims gave him something to do during sleepless hours in the preceding month, that took his mind off worrying about whether he'd forgotten anything concerning the draw and arrangements. The words of this composition conclude this chapter and are called, 'In Praise of the (Heavenly) Host'.

Accommodation at the Baptist Camp just 20 miles north of Red Deer deserve special mention in this chapter. Because the main building was a former hospital, it was built adequately warm for winter sleeping and eating. The meals had a home-made taste and the atmosphere was warm and friendly. Clergy spouses, Marnie Connal and Denise Adams, added a womanly touch by their numerous courtesies. It provided an atmosphere that was more relaxed and conducive to sharing than a hotel facility. This was to be a good sign of what might be the nature of the fellowship at the R.C. St. Benedict's Priory and the Educational Centre in Winnipeg the following year. Thanks is due to Curly Doan, Arch McCurdy, Bob McNaught, Vic Sangwine, Harvey Chute and Allan Whitecotton for the generous use of their cars in transporting participants during the Briar. A token of the appreciation all had for the bound-less energy and perpetual graciousness of Alberta's director and chief host of '94 Briar activities, Gerry Ward, came in the presentation to him at the Association's Annual Meeting of the Wesley Leatherhead Amazing Grace Challenge Shield.

In this chapter nothing has been said of the fine quality of the arrangements that were made for, and the enthusiasm of the spectators that greeted, and the great curling that was part of the Canadian Championship Curling games that was all part of the Briar event. Nor has anything been said of the exciting features of this prairie city which boasted just 8,000 people when the writer served in the nearby city of Wetaskiwin but now numbers in excess of 57,000 souls. This is the city which the mayor describes as, *A Delight to Discover*.

## IN PRAISE OF THE *HEAVENLY* HOST

Red Deer, 1994

This week the folks in proud Red Deer,  
- Bright jewel of the West -  
With eager eyes have seen appear,  
Amidst Canadas's curling best,  
The foursome that will reign supreme,  
And cap their hearts' desire,  
By turning into fact, the dream  
Of winning Labatt's Brier.

But also in this prairie town  
Another group is curling;  
They're not arrayed in clerical gown,  
But their banner is worth unfurling;  
For each is a Prophet, a Priest, or a Pastor,  
Consumed by the impish desire  
To establish himself as a Curling Master,  
And take home The Friars' Briar!

These reverend Skips are saintly men,  
Convinced that they're worthy, and wise  
In reading the ice, and knowing just when  
To spring a strategic surprise.  
Their Thirds, even wiser, know how to control  
Their leader's insane desire  
To try that impossible *wick and roll*  
That might win them the The Friars' Briar.

But doff your tams to the Seconds and Leads,  
Who never carp or complain  
When the Third or the Skipper, like broken reeds,  
Let their chances go down the drain.  
With Christian forgiveness they manage to smile,  
As they puff, and pant, and perspire,  
Sweeping each rock, (though it's short by a mile),  
In pursuit of The Friars' Briar.

Much louder than when they are preaching a *Mission*  
Their shouting of *Sweep* resounds.  
But yet, 'though locked in competition,  
True fellowship abounds!  
No cannier crews from coast to coast  
Could any Skips desire.  
So here's a toast, "To this (*heavenly*) host  
That competes for **THE FRIARS' BRIAR!**"

A second poetic contribution at the time of the Friars' Briar in Red Deer in 1994 by Herbert F.D. Eriksson of Edmonton.

On the ice at Red Deer Curling Rink  
twenty rinks from across the land,  
March eight to eleven, trundled the rocks  
and swept, but understand,  
these rinks were clergy of various faiths.  
Each year with zest and fire,  
they meet to compete with icy skill  
in the annual Friars' Briar.

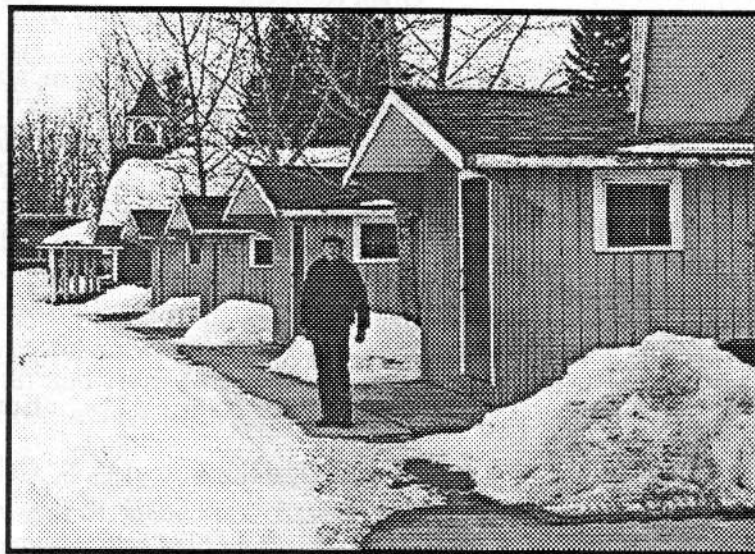
From the Prairie Provinces and B.C.  
and Ontario, their skill they test.  
At the end of the week with 'besom an' stane'  
the medals go to the best.  
With skirling pipes the curlers march  
to a banquet fit for a king.  
To the people preparing the games and the feast  
our unstinting praise we sing.

Accommodation at the Briar...  
this chapter. Because the main building...  
winter sleeping and eating. The interior...  
friendly. Clergy spouses...  
numerous courtesies. It provided an atmosphere that was more relaxed and conducive to sharing than a hotel facility. This was to be...  
R.C. St. Benedict's Priory and the...  
due to Curly Doan, Alvin McCurdy, Bob...  
Whitecotton for the generous...  
of the appreciation all had for the...  
and chief host of '94 Briar activities...  
Annual Meeting of the...  
in pursuit of the Friars' Briar.

In this chapter nothing has been said of the fine...  
the enthusiasm of the spectators...  
Championship Curling games that...  
the exciting features of this prairie city...  
the nearby city of Wetaskiwin but now...  
the mayor describes as, *A Delight*...  
So here's a toast, "To this (heavenly) host  
That competes for THE FRIARS' BRIAR!"



Don Amos' last appearance along with some of the early  
Directors at Red Deer '94



The Baptist Campsite at Gull Lake where several curlers  
stayed during Briar '94

Friars' Briar , Red Deer 1994

Don Amos	Willowdale	Kutch Imayoshi	Vancouver
Basil & Denise Adams	Burlington	Ken Innes	Winnipeg
Don Anderson	Edmonton		
Len Anderson	Edmonton	Garry Jenkins	Edmonton
Arno Bablitz	Saskatoon	Murv Kentel	Calgary
Hugh Bayne	Rimby, Alta	Bill & Veronika Kiesman	Asquith, Sask.
Don Brown	Edmonton		
George Budd	Okotoks, Alta	Norman MacDonald	Edmonton
		Arch & Phyl McCurdy	Mississauga
Jim Chapman	Osler, Sask	Bob McLaren	Pincher Creek, Alta
Hugh Christmas	Calgary	Rob & Edith McLaren	Red Deer
Harvey & Ruby Chute	Calgary	Wayne McLaren	Jasper
David Cline	White Rock, BC	Len McLellan	Vancouver
Fred Cline	White Rock, BC	Bob & Beulah McNaught	Oshawa
Phil Cline	St. Catharines	Fraser Muldrew	Winnipeg
Steve Cline	Acme, Alta	Milt Muldrew	Winnipeg
Roger Coll	Winnipeg	David Mueller	Bentley, Alta
Ross Connal	Vancouver		
Jack Colclough	Edmonton	Orie Oldfield	Calgary
Ivan Cumming	Vancouver	Perry Olson	Hepburn, Sask.
Jack & Willie Cox	Haliburton, Ont.	Ed Oman	Calgary
Doug Cooney	Red Deer		
		Bob Quick	Red Deer
Curly Doan	Edmonton		
		Cameron Reid	Powell River, BC
Herb Ericksson	Edmonton	Grant Rodgers	Calgary
Stan Ewanovich	Calgary		
		Vic Sangwine	Oshawa
Bill Fennell	Toronto	Guy & Carla Scholz	Calgary
Gerry Foster	Midway, BC	Herb Scholz	Langenburg, Sask.
Nancy Fraser	Mississauga	Glen Simmonds	Rimby, Alta.
George Friedrich	Edmonton	Doug Spinney	Edmonton
		Bob Stanich	Calgary
Bob Geelen	Eckville, Alta		
Glen Gerbrandt	Mont Nebo, Sk.	Bill Taylor	Saskatoon
George Graffunder	Calgary		
Gene Grant	Saskatoon	Bruce Wiebe	Didsbury
Jim Glanville	Grand Forks, BC	Harold Witte	Edmonton
Allan & Janice Grundahl	Saskatoon		
		Harold Ziprick	Calgary
Harold Hesje	Saskatoon		
Sid & Kathy Haugen	Calgary		
Dave Herrig	Lethbridge		
Irvin Holm	Jasper		
Helge Hongisto	Oakville		
Gordon Hyde	Vancouver		