

## Sad News

### Gordon Sanden – December 13, 2016



**Unfortunately as The Blade went to press, did not have any further information on funeral arrangements. Once received, will update.**

*RIP [Gordon Sanden](#). I am shocked and saddened by your sudden departure. You were a kind, interesting and funny soul. Thank you again for all your generosity of spirit. You will be missed. May you Rest In Peace knowing you were loved by many. Stephanie Perom*

### Pat (Pinky) Forbes – December 11, 2016



**It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Pat (Pinky) Forbes. Here is a note from her daughter Kim Walter as there is no formal funeral scheduled.**

*Last night, I was going through thousands of old pictures and letters and came across a quote that mom had written down in the back of an address book. It said: "Sic Transit Gloria" - You are here, you make your little mark and you are forgotten.*

*Interesting quote for someone who never forgot a friend, a story, a face or a name!*

*To all of you who were unaware of her condition and shocked at her passing, just know that it was not because you were forgotten. Not at all.*

*She kept you all so close in spirit...loved you deeply in her heart and mind. Oh, the stories I've heard!! While the ALS might have gotten her body, it failed miserably at destroying her beautiful essence!*

*I'm planning a memorial...stay tuned.*

**Here is just one story that Pinky had submitted to Doug Martin's book about antics that happened when they were partners. It will give you an idea about Pinky's sense of humor that she managed to hide from almost everyone.**

Pinky was Doug Martin's second adagio partner. With her unmatched sense of humor – most of the time, Pinky titled her story 'A Day in the Life of a Little Show Girl'. She writes it this way:

The year was 1964 – gad, that seems so long ago – and we were in Atlantic City. The show was "Masquerade," "Circus", "Cole Porter," "Annapolettes," "Viva Italia," and the beloved "Hallelujah Finale", which was our exit march. We were waiting backstage at the top of a stairway, which was part of the set. We were to make our entrance by descending the

stairs through billowing clouds of fog. We'd get to the bottom, then rush backstage and hurry up the steps again to make another entrance, so it looked like a million girls coming down those steps doing what we called the "{Hallelujah hand pump}" – down with the hands covered in show white gloves, up with the hands way over our heads, cross our hands over our heads, and all the time the spot lights are ballyhooing all over the place. The short girls were back by the set, we were down on our left knee with our right toe pick planted firmly in the ice in showgirl fashion, and the fog keeps rolling and rolling and rolling. The stagehands were rocking it that night, because as we descended the stairs and moved toward the front, we'd drag the fog with us and it would dissipate too quickly. Sooooo, "More Fog, George!" Peanuts leaned over to me just before the big "Ta da!" as we were doing the Hallelujah hand pump, and said, 'If we can't see the audience, you *know* they can't see us.'" So we crawled backstage on our hands and knees, grabbed our skate guards, and flew into the dressing room. We were out of costume and into street clothes in a flash, and trucking out of the dressing room while everyone else was just coming off the ice. Who knows where we were going in such a big fat hurry. Probably darting off for a good seat at the "Church".

That went on for a couple of nights, until one evening, while crawling off the ice, we crawled right up onto a pair of shoes, and one of those shoes was tap, tap, tapping. We both looked up to see who it was, and oh my stars, it was none other than Shirley Costello, the head program director. Oh, oh, we were caught like two mice in a trap. She didn't say a word, she just raised her arm and pointed back to the set. Ever see a crawdad scurry? That's exactly what we did, a backwards crawl, onto the ice, into the fog, to finish the number. No question, we got the Morse Code message her show was tapping out. "Get back there and don't ever do that again!"

Someone had to have told her. There's no way she saw us scooting off the ice through all that fog. We couldn't even see our own stark white gloves in the air above our heads. Dang it, we had a good thing going there for awhile. Ha, Ha Ha.

## Our Alumni in the News

### A Little Look at Lifts

**Did you know that our very own Dench and Stewart helped to create the lifts that we see today. Read on.**



Although we have certainly explored a wide range of topics in figure skating history to this point, it seems like pairs skating often gets the short end of the stick. I wanted to rectify that today by taking a little look into the early history of lifts in pairs skating.

In his 1959 book "Ice-Skating: A History", figure skating historian Nigel Brown noted that "pair-skating which had been originally recognized by the International Skating Union in 1908 when the first World Championships in that event was staged in St. Petersburg, continued to be practiced for the next fifteen years along the classic lines of its inception. Three schools of influence combined in designing the classic expression of pair-skating at the beginning of the century. The English school which very early furnished world champions in this branch emphasized a pleasing choreographic structure of programme executed with a certain technical precision. The Viennese school which introduced spirals and spins into pair programmes concentrated on dance steps, speedily and gracefully executed. The German school whose representatives captured the first world pair title gave full expression to the movement of limbs producing a theatrical effect." The introductions of 'field figures' (each partner performing the same school figures far apart) and

[shadow skating](#) by T.D. and Mildred Richardson, were both first met with opposition but became important components of early pairs skating programs. Early forays in adding lifts to programs by [The Brunet's](#) and [Lily Scholz and Otto Kaiser](#) (a weightlifter) were met with the same controversy shadow skating once received. Brown noted that "lifts were received with mixed feelings and regarded with distaste by many. Some looked upon lifts as acrobatics which did not belong to pure skating. There certainly was a crudity about them when first introduced, but no medium could be more adapted

for expressing aerial grace than skating."

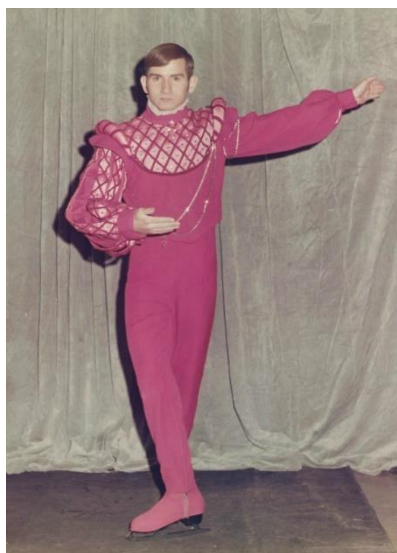


1936 Olympian Rosemarie Stewart and her husband [Robert Dench](#), who emigrated from Great Britain to California in 1940 and became stars of the Ice Capades, penned a 1943 book called "Pair Skating And Dancing On Ice". It is one of the earliest books that offers any sort of concise glimpse into which elements pairs teams were including in their programs during this era. Stewart and Dench offer a clear distinction between lifts and carries: "For a lift, the man raises his partner from the ice, turning her with a continuous movement in the air, and places her back on the ice; for a carry, he picks up his partner from the ice and holds her in the air as long as he wishes before setting her down. The former is a continuous movement; the latter is sustained... Carries are not allowed in competition, as they are considered 'strong-man stuff.' You should therefore reserve them for exhibitions, and only use lifts in your competitive program."

[Click here](#) to read the rest of the article.

## Where Are They Now?

### Bob Strong – IC East Company 1969



Weather was predictable and consistently below freezing through winters when I was a boy, in Holyoke MA. All the local playgrounds had outdoor ice rinks, flooded with water hoses, and naturally frozen. All the locals, kids through young adults, crowded these outdoor ice rinks. I was a fixture at Mackenzie Field, (Holyoke High School's foot-ball field) skating every free moment I had—I loved figure skating!

Fulfilling your dream: That winter (1957), my grandmother took me to see The Ice Capades, playing in the next city, Springfield MA. I was overwhelmingly awed and completely smitten with the splendor of this show. I informed Grandma, "I'm going to be in the Ice Capades!" *I told everybody: family, school, church, neighbors.* Nobody had to ask me what I thought I would do "when I grew up. In my young mind at age 7, this was a done deal!

Who was your inspiration? I joined the area's only USFSA club in my teens. In 1967, Miss Shawn Barry joined the club as a new coach. I took private lessons from Shawn, a former Ice Capet. Aware of my goal, she prepared me for my planned audition that year when Ice Capades played Springfield. My audition secured a place with Ice Capades' Corps de Ballet (East Co.). My father had to sign my contract, as I was just 17. I graduated high school, and immediately reported to Atlantic City.

Ice Capades was my first employment ever. I was quite naïve, the youngest of the show's entire cast. I heard constant griping about living out of suitcases, being always on the road, train travel; and heard that much better pay was outside show business. I heard this so often and from so many I believed it! Now older and wiser, I realize employees everywhere gripe, and "the grass is always greener." Had I known, I would have ignored their whining! Unfortunately I only stayed with the show for one season.

I soon found work coaching skating in South Florida. I heard from my students about an Ice show in the Sheraton Hotel on Ft Lauderdale beach. I auditioned and was hired on the spot! They were astonished I fit all my double jumps on their tiny rink! Their stars were all good spinners, but only dared single jumps. Audiences literally gasped, followed by loud applause, for these impressive feats on small ice.



What was the highlight of your career? Word of the skater who was now landing the triple flip on 20 X 30 ice reached the ears of Ron Urban, who did cabaret Ice Shows. He called, and asked if I would perform for President Jimmy Carter—AT THE WHITE HOUSE. Of course I agreed! Peggy Fleming was the only female soloist; I was the only male soloist. The show also had a pair team, and 4 line girls. A 20 X 30 real ice stage was set up on the lawn, directly in front of the White House.

Peggy was then doing virtually only lyrical ballet and spins with her perfect postures. I was in my prime! There was no competition. We both dazzled the audience in different ways. Peggy was gorgeous, with her grace, and the respect all have for her past, excellence and Olympic Fame. I thrilled them with full skating repertoire: Arabians, all spins, Russian splits, ALL DOUBLES and my signature triple flip. We both received standing ovations! This prestigious show identified me with famous champions by association.

What have you been doing lately? I met my wife at a rink where I coached and she took private lessons. We were married for 23 years, and have one daughter (who never liked skating). My skating work was self-employment. To better plan for approaching retirement, I needed retirement benefits for our small family. I became a rural letter carrier with The US Postal Service for the 24 years after I quit doing shows—but I have never hung up my skates. I still skate at the few rinks in the NW Florida Panhandle, where I have resided since 1984 to the present.

I do occasional “Piano Bar” entertainment gigs locally (Piano, organ & keyboards). Otherwise, I am enjoying retirement. I have developed a severe allergy to work!

I keep in shape on my small, synthetic practice surface. [Click here](#) to see Bob in action today.

To get in touch with Bob, you can contact him on his [Facebook page](#)

## Videos of the Month

Check out our very own Bob Turk  
when he produced the Lido de Paris show in 1994.



**The making of C'est Magique 1994 - [Click here](#) to view Part 1**

**The making of C'est Magique 1994- [Click here](#) to view Part 2**

**C'est Magique Finale! - [Click here](#) to view 1994 Finale**

## Remembering....



**Ice Capades first Rat Pack**

Punky Beale, Leonard Perry, Linda Reese, Henry Seguin, Pinky, Hans Leiter and Jack Mattison

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## Comments from December Blade

*I just received The Blade and HAD TO LET YOU KNOW that you REALLY OUT DID YOURSELF WITH THIS ISSUE!!! It's FANTASTIC. I think EVERYONE that receives The Blade should realize how much work you go to for all of our enjoyment. I had tears in my eyes watching Ludmila and Oleg skating and reading their interview. You have brought an entire world of Ice Capades to all of us.*

*THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND HARD WORK IT IS SO APPRECIATED.*

Fondly, Newman Stare

*I so appreciate The Blade newsletter, specifically this time, the remarkable Protopopovs, and exciting Torvill and Dean performances as they progressed. – Sherry Cook*

*It was a delight to be in your publication.. What an informative newsy monthly you send out. I read every word.. I have a feeling we skaters & lovers of figure skating are looking forward to this year's events & competitions.. We need this now more than ever. Something so refreshing to view with art & beauty combined with good sportsmanship. Personally I think the quality of skating has leaped up in the past 2 years. I was getting worried about the quality verses quantity but it seems to be getting back on track or should I say back on Ice. The pairing of "Tara & Johnny" looked odd at the beginning but it turns out they are doing a great job in the broadcasting Biz! I give NBC a lot of credit for the guts to go ahead with it... It proves people want the colorful that is also intelligent... They are very precise in there commentary & also amusing... Gloria, Keep up the fine work you are doing in the grandest of all sports.. The "Blade" is terrific... Have a glorious holiday season... Warmest, Friendly wishes... Mark G. Richard*

*You really continue to outdo yourself, great reading. We are so very thankful for YOU!! – Jennifer Custer*

# Upcoming Events



The Randy Gardner School of Skating at ICE At Santa Monica

[Click here](#) for more information



# Website Update

The reunion website – [www.icecapadesreunion2015.com](http://www.icecapadesreunion2015.com) is still there. Even though the reunion is over, the plan is to continue to use this site for alumni updates so please keep checking back from time to time as news will be added periodically. Don't forget, there are also show rosters for your reference, updated obits, reunion pictures and upcoming events.

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