

Our Alumni in the News

Torvill and Dean announce final dance on Olympic gold anniversary

By Tom Oakley, Samantha Noble and Verity CowleyBBC News, East Midlands



Figure skaters Torvill and Dean have announced on the 40th anniversary of their gold medal-winning performance that next year will be the last time they dance together.

The duo have returned to Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where they danced the Bolero in the 1984

Winter Olympics.

Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean will skate together for the final time as part of a UK tour in 2025.

Torvill told the BBC: "The tour is the celebration of our careers."

[Click here to read the complete article](#)

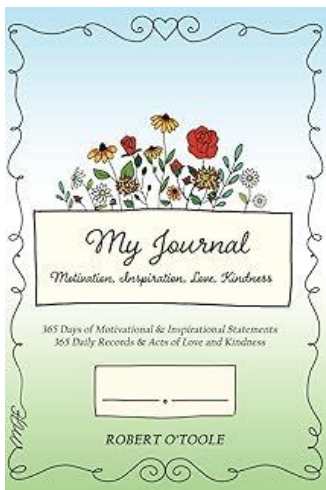
One Last Time

Final season of them skating together

Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean dancing on ice week 2



[Click here to view the video](#)



Robert O'Toole has been an international coach for over 40 years in the greater Toronto area. He skated in **Ice Capades Continental** in 1982- 83. He has always had motivational tools for his students and this book is a collection of these inspirations over the years. His book is now available on Amazon, Indigo, Barnes & Noble.

Take the challenge to spread motivation, inspiration, love, and kindness.

<https://robertotooleauthor.com/>

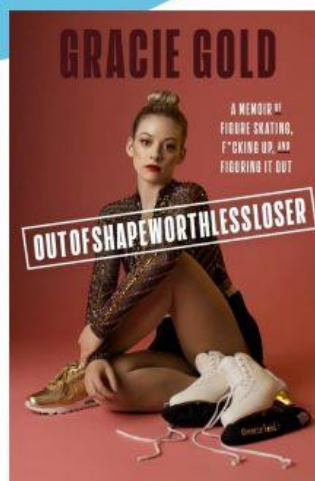
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Zamboni History

Hand Shaping Ice Until The Zamboni ~

The History of Ordinary Things

The Zamboni ice resurfacer was invented by Frank Zamboni, an Italian immigrant born at the turn of the century. In 1920, Frank and his brothers opened an auto repair shop, but soon switched to building and installing large refrigeration units for the dairy industry.



When business was slow, they opened an ice rink in Paramount, CA and named it "Iceland". The technology behind indoor ice rinks and refrigeration systems is the same. The main difference is that refrigerant does not cool the ice directly. Rather it cools brine water, a calcium-chloride solution and antifreeze agent, which is pumped through a system of pipes under the ice, typically embedded in a concrete or sand base.

At the time, clearing and smoothing the ice meant towing a heavy scraper over the ice with a tractor. Walking behind the scraper, 3 to 4 workers scooped up the shavings, sprayed the ice with water, and then squeegeed the surface. This process took more than an hour, much to the unhappiness of skaters.

In the 1940s, with his background in cooling and refrigeration, Frank started to work on a prototype for an ice resurfacing machine. He introduced the Model A Zamboni in 1949. It had four-wheel drive and four-

wheel steering on a hand-built chassis made with war surplus axles and engine parts. The surplus parts included a hydraulic cylinder from a Douglas bomber. The Model A was the largest machine he ever built, measuring 14 ft. 9 inches in length and 9 ft. 6 inches in height.

Today's large model 520 is only slightly larger at 16.5 feet in length and 12.8 feet in height. They remain 7 feet wide.

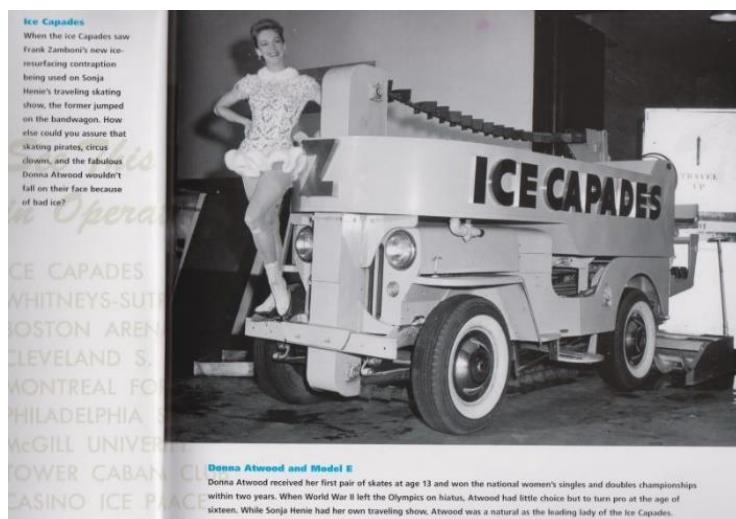
Frank's Zamboni featured a large snow tank to collect ice shavings and two large water tanks. The machine also housed a cutting blade, conditioner, drivetrain, controls, operator seat, engine, and fuel tank (if gas-powered model). Today most Zamboni machines use natural gas, propane, or electric power to supply clean operation preferable for indoor operation.

A Zamboni machine sprays hot water to melt the top layer of ice. The melted water then flows into the small grooves in the ice which helps smooth out the unevenness. The larger models of Zamboni can remove close to 2,500 pounds of compacted snow. At the same time, it leaves behind about 1,500 pounds of water.

The typical Zamboni driving pattern is concentric overlapping ovals that measure about one-half the width of the rink. Today's models typically have a 15-16 foot turning radius. Most Zamboni drivers work clockwise, but the direction is optional. The Zamboni typically needs 15 passes down in an average (17,000 sq. ft.) ice rink.

Approximately 200 custom Zambonis are manufactured each year. They are hand assembled and the lead time can be over 8 months. Zamboni machines are not street legal as they are not considered motor vehicles. Driving about 2,000 miles/year, they can run for decades with proper maintenance.

A few fun facts:



The first Zamboni was sold for \$5,000 in 1950 to the Pasadena Wintergarden Ice Rink. Later ones were sold to the **Ice Capades**, popular traveling entertainment shows featuring theatrical ice-skating performances.

In 1954 the Boston Bruins became the first National Hockey League team to use a Zamboni.

There were 20 Zamboni machines on hand at the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Games to resurface the various ice sheets.

Over 12,000 Zamboni name-brand machines

have been built to date.

Each tire on the Zamboni machine is hand-studded with about 400 Tungsten Carbide studs on each full set of tires.

The cost of a full-sized Zamboni machine today starts in the low six figures.

Video of the Month

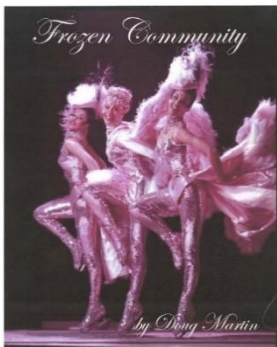
Who remembers Aja Zanova's Bic commercial?



This was probably the most famous Bic Pen commercial of the early 1960s where famed ice skater, Aja Zanova, attaches a BIC to her skate proving that "Bic writes first time, every time!"

[Click here](#)

RELIVING FOND MEMORIES



Doug Martin had published two books called 'Frozen Community' where he wanted to have skaters tell funny stories about their time on the road. Stories were posted before but worth sharing again.

In the early days, we travelled by train. Here's Doug Martin's recollection.

Speaking of trains, one thing everyone in the cast was conscious of was what time our next train left the station. Very few cast members, Principal or Chorus, traveled apart from the transportation that was provided by Ice Capades. If the trip was going to be an especially long, tough one, lasting, say, more than three days, a few of the Principals who could afford it would be given permission to fly ahead to the next city.

That was a privilege only they were granted and one they were quite willing to use, as it would give them a day or two of real rest before the next shows.

But for the average Chorus member, those train rides were a chance to relax, read, party or do what every they wished to do. It was amazing to see what some of them cooked up to make the trip seem shorter. One of the favorite activities was playing poker, and a number of games were set up in each of the cars we occupied. Sometimes, the women were invited to play, but not often. I was a guy thing, I guess.



One of the things I remember about those long train trips was that, on the last night of a journey, some of the cast would put their luggage at the front of the door we were scheduled to depart through, and go to bed thinking that as we pulled into the station the next morning, they'd be first in line to get their luggage, step off the train, and be on their way. Problem was, some of us guys, myself included, would wait until they'd gone to bed, then we'd quietly move their luggage toward the back of the line, and put ours up front where theirs should have been. Next morning, by the time they realized that their hopes for a quick departure had been dashed, we had already snatched up our luggage, grabbed a taxi, and were the first ones to arrive and check in at the hotel. Of course, we wisely made ourselves scarce for the next couple of hours, but it was a brilliant plan, don't you think?

Let's keep Doug's legacy going. I'm sure there are more 'interesting' stories out there from your time in the show. If you would like to share, please send them to me.

Pictures from Past Reunions

[All Skater's Reunion – May 1-3, 2023 Las Vegas](#)

[Ice Capades 2022 Reunion pictures](#)

Reunion News

Ice Capades 2025 Reunion Cruise Announcement

'Escapades 2025 Cruise'.... We'll have a good time! 🎵🎵



Please click below to join the [Escapades 2025 Cruise – events page](#) and get all updates relating to the cruise.

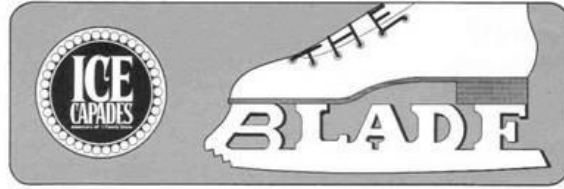
<https://facebook.com/events/s/ice-capades-escapades-cruise-a/746073810575573/>

THIS EVENT IS BEING CREATED AND COORDINATED BY Johnna "J" Bates...

NOTE: PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED!

[Click here for more Reunion information](#)

Questions: Contact 'J' directly - dabatej@bellsouth.net



The website, www.icecapadestheblade.com has been revamped and more information has been added. If you have something to add, please send them.

Look here for **2022 Ice Capades Reunion** information, including reunion pictures

Cast, Precision & Production Pictures – Relive some memories.

Past reunion Pictures – Check them out for some you may have missed.

Rosters – Looking for someone or remembering who you skated with in the show?

Video links – have been collecting skating 'You Tube' links from the early years.

Program Covers – we had the most beautiful covers

Past Issues of The Blade – just in case you missed an issue

Past Reunion Pictures – relive the times you attended the reunions

In Memorium – remembering those who have left us too soon

Check it out!

Upcoming Events



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