

# POINT *to* POINT

ARMSTRONG'S POINT COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

## May Your Days Be Merry And Bright!

This year, isolation may make the cold, dark and snowy days of winter tougher than usual. To keep in good spirits, health experts suggest we get outdoors for as much sunlight (Vitamin D) and exercise (endorphins) as possible. Staying positive might mean exploring new things and thinking outside the box.

*Photos clockwise: Darlene Irwin - 1 and 3  
Ash Raichura - 2 and 4*

Looking for opportunities to help others instead of focusing on what the pandemic has taken away increases our own well-being at the same time. Once we pass December 21, the shortest day of the year, each day brings with it a little more light. "It's not just about managing winter, I think you need to enjoy it."  
(Norman Rosenthal, Winter Blues)

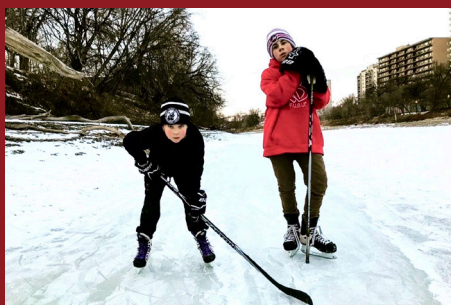


*Armstrong's Point*  
THE HERITAGE REPORT

## Thank You

Our thanks to West Broadway Biz for another faithful season of watering the Middle Gate garden beds and our new tree. All has been tidied up for the winter ahead, ready to take off as soon as warm weather returns. As expected, like most things these days, our joint plans with the City for historic plaques in the neighbourhood are on a "Covid-19" hold! Hopefully our next report will include a date and photo for you, so watch this space. Stay warm, stay safe, see you in the Spring!

*April McDonald-Kassum  
Chair, Heritage Committee*

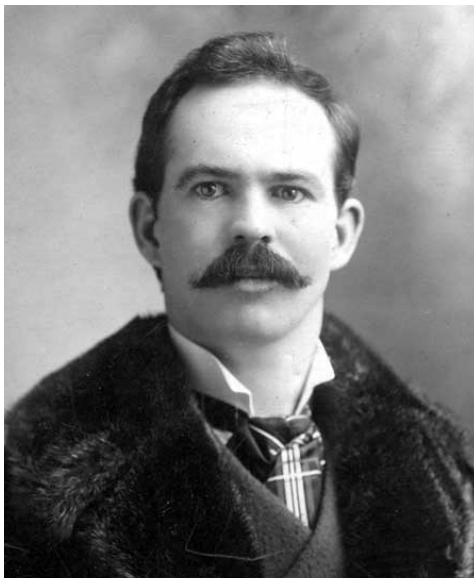


# The “long, winding history” of ice skating in Armstrong’s Point starts with a connection to the river

by Darlene Irwin Sources: CBC.ca December 2019, Skate Guard: A Wonder from Winnipeg, Manitoba Historical Society

“The Zamboni-cleared trail along the Red and Assiniboine rivers has only welcomed skaters since 1990, but in fact, the sound of steel blades carving the ice has echoed between those riverbanks for 148 years.”

**1872:** It’s said that 18 year-old Charles Napier Bell, part of the Wolseley expedition sent west to confront Riel, introduced ice skating to this area. He “captivated onlookers” in skates he brought from Ontario.



**Donald Henderson Bain**  
Photo: University of Manitoba Archive

One thing led to another. In 1886 lawyer Patrick Anderson Macdonald brought the first hockey sticks to Manitoba after a visit to Montreal and soon reports of hockey on the Red River appeared.

Now for the Armstrong’s Point connection...Our city’s first team, the Winnipeg Victorias, was formed three years later and in 1896 became the first Western winners of the Stanley Cup. AP’s role? The second owner of 69 East Gate, Donald Henderson Bain, known as “Dan” or “DH” to his friends, was one of Manitoba’s most talented amateur athletes.

Captain of the Victorias when they won two more Stanley Cups in 1901 and 1902, he also placed second in the 1930 Canadian Figure Skating Championships in the waltz contest, at the age of 56.

AP’s skaters kept distinguishing themselves on the ice. 112 West Gate was owned in the 1950s by Rupert Whitehead, renowned as a national champion figure skater and teacher. “On April 16, 2010, accompanied by three of his former students, he skated two laps around the ice at the Winnipeg Winter Club to celebrate his 100th birthday.”



**Rupert Whitehead**  
Photo: City of Toronto Archives

He was inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame in 2004.

**Today:** Families like the Zifarellis on West Gate love playing pick-up hockey and practicing their shot on the backyard rink they build each winter. Aidan, 13, and Livia, 11, play Winnipeg Minor Hockey and to bring us full circle we have the fun fact that Aidan’s good friend and fellow hockey player, Ben Bernhardt, is the son of Darren, whose CBC article inspired our tale.



**Skaters on Assiniboine River, 1918.** Photo: Winnipeg Public Library



**A game of hockey on the Assiniboine**  
Photo: Dawn Zifarelli

AP will always have its bond with the river, and future generations of skaters are sure to be out there on the winter ice, just as they’ve been for the past 148 years.



# Look Up: Winter is in the Stars

by Sean Ceaser

Our Middle Gate neighbour Sean Ceaser is a naturopathic physician with wide-ranging interests that include historical writing, photography and astronomy. "It's a big sky!" says Sean, and he is the one to show us what to look for as we gaze to the stars this winter.



*The constellation Orion in our night sky signals winter is coming.*

*Planet Guide Images*



The sky is always in motion, constellations are always spinning. The summer stars are setting and winter's stars are coming up.

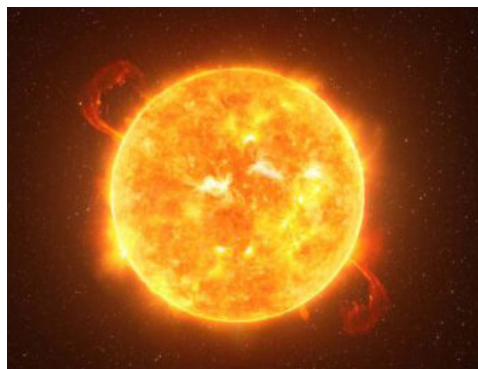
We can see the Big Dipper in the constellation Ursa Major changing positions in the night sky all year, but other constellations and stars aren't circumpolar and don't appear year round. The Summer Triangle with its bright star Vega that we saw up high all summer

and fall has now slipped out of view. Get ready for the spectacular constellations of winter that include the fighter Orion with his three distinctive belt stars, visible in the southern sky all winter, even from the city. Dark skies in the country will allow you to see even more stars.

Hanging from the belt of Orion is his sword with three dimmer stars, the middle of which isn't a star at all, but actually the birthplace of thousands of stars called the Orion Nebula, visible to the naked eye and stunning through a telescope in a dark sky. Even wisps of the nebula's gasses can be glimpsed with a big enough telescope if you're hardy enough to brave the cold on a winter night.

On the right shoulder of Orion sits Betelgeuse, or "Beetlejuice" as it's affectionately known, a massive red giant. It's 600 light years from earth, so the light that left this star headed out 200 years before Galileo looked up through his scope for the first time. If Betelgeuse were our sun it would envelop the earth as this star is at the end of its life and massively expanding.

Our sun is a young star, so it will take another five billion years for it to become a red giant and take us over. We've got a long while before we have to worry about that! In the meantime, have a glimpse at the night sky, wherever you are, and enjoy the splendours of nature during each of our seasons.



*Betelgeuse*

## Bird Crazy

by Karen Roblin

Karen Roblin on West Gate has always enjoyed writing and we're lucky she lends her talent to this issue, plus her extra sense of fun to go with it.



*Above - Slate-coloured Junco  
Right - Black-capped chickadee*

About 4 years ago our family dog, Mike, succumbed to old age. He had been the ruler of our backyard, patrolling for bunny rabbits and keeping the local bird community at bay.

After two summers without Mike, we were getting restless. We needed to breathe new life into our yard. So we put up a bird feeder (which ultimately became a squirrel feeder).

Happily, the squirrel feeder was quickly reclaimed by the birds. In no time, we were inundated with many different species, big and small, and every colour under the sun.



*Rose-breasted Grosbeak- "What are you looking at?" All photos: Karen Roblin*

The higher we piled the seeds, the more birds showed up, until we had a virtual avian riot on our hands. It has been fascinating to see which of our feathered friends are aggressive and which are more timid. The blue jays dominate when they're in the neighbourhood, but we never suspected how belligerent the white-breasted nuthatches can be!

It's fun to watch the regulars vie for position...but you never know when some exotic visitor will liven things up. We've had everything from bald eagles to ruby-throated hummingbirds in our yard and you just never know when some new visitor will turn up.

But we still miss Mike.

## Shared Health Manitoba

From a Middle Gate neighbour and former health care professional - "As you may know, we often have people wandering the neighbourhood who can feel threatening to us, or may be just looking for some help. I have encountered the latter more often than the former.

Being quite out of touch with resources since retirement, I wish I had been better informed at these moments, and recently I have been looking up information regarding mental health services.

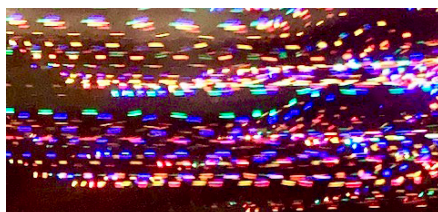
I am sending a link to what is available in Winnipeg in the hope that sharing this with the neighbourhood would be helpful to others as well." - Lesley Mowat

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/services/mental-health/crisis-response-centre/>

Shared Health Manitoba is a crisis response centre that delivers a full range of mental health services for Winnipeg adults in an environment that promotes recovery.

## Walking your dog is good for the dog and good for you!

Jennifer Pilgrim on East Gate writes, "I always enjoy walking through our neighbourhood with my dog Ollie," and she shares some of the cheery sights we might be missing by skipping an evening walk in AP.



*Photos by Jennifer Pilgrim*

## APA Board Members:

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April Kassum

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### Maintenance and Repairs:

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### Zoning Committee:

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### Newsletter:

**Editor:** Darlene Irwin

**Design:** Randy Butterfield

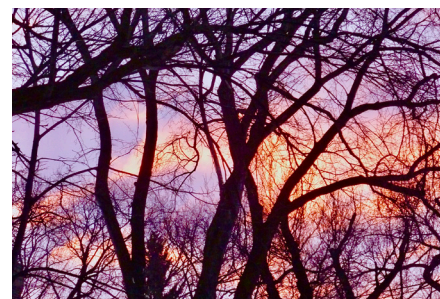
### Social Committee:

Sandy Butterfield

### Tree Committee:

Ivan Sabesky

*Point to Point: Armstrong's Point Community Newsletter Send contributions, suggestions to: d.irwin@mymts.net*



Thanks to all of you in the neighbourhood who have contributed to Point to Point over the past year, and especially for making this issue a real community effort.

## The Gallery ...



*Sky Farm by Pauline Conley  
acrylic on board, 24" x 24"*

*What do you see? Geometry, blocks of colour? A horizon line, a landscape? What do you feel? The pull of gravity, weightlessness? What is the temperature?*

**Artist's statement:** "The images are evocative in a way that figural and literal images cannot be. The narrative quality of the work is delivered not through recognizable signs, but rather through carefully retrieved impressions - wilfully rescued from the space between awake and asleep, thought and dreaming."

*- Pauline Conley, East Gate*