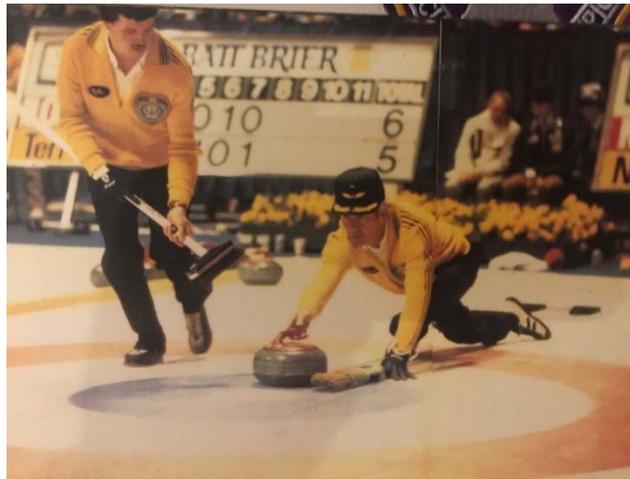


“Arnie’s Army” Continues the CHARGE through Four Generations

Arnold “Arnie” Dobson had a passion for curling from the time he threw his first rock at the age of 30 right up to his passing at the young age of 62. His skillful shot-making has inspired three more generations of his family to “Hurry Hard” on the ice achieving success at the Provincial & National levels. Arnie’s most triumphant moment was representing New Brunswick at the Labatt’s Brier in 1984 with his sons, Mike throwing 2nd & Brian as fifth player. Not only did they end with an amazing 7-4 record... even beating hometown favourite B.C. Champion, Bernie Sparkes, but charismatic Arnie became the media favourite. Team New Brunswick received so many telegrams from well - wishers that the label “Arnie’s Army” evolved and stuck throughout his curling career. When asked by the press about his first impressions of the Brier and being the oldest curler in the field at 50 yrs., He joked, “It’s so much fun. I don’t understand why I wasn’t invited here before this!”



Arnie, an all-round sports enthusiast, played goaltender in hockey before getting the CURLING BUG. He was a strong competitor and a force to be reckoned with on the ice yet very respectful of his opponents & the rules of the game. Always the voice of reason, he reminded his players before pressure games, “Don’t panic, they (opponents) put their boots on the same way & throw the same number of rocks as we do”. Off the ice, he was extremely well-liked as his friendly smile radiated a positive attitude. He even received his pilot’s licence later in life and purchased a plane with other friends. Instead of going on a Sunday drive, Arnie would entertain his children & grandchildren by taking them soaring over the Fundy coast.

Arnie’s 3 sons, Mike, Brian & Gary, followed in their father’s footsteps beginning to curl on high school teams. The boys have been on various competitive foursomes sometimes together with their Dad or separately leading to a succession of local and provincial championships. Their first huge success as a family was in 1979 when they won \$2500 at the inaugural Moosehead Super League event in Saint John, as seen in photo below.



During the 1984 N.B. Men's play-downs, there were two Dobson teams in the final 4: Arnie with Mike on his team and Brian with Gary, which illustrates their high skill level and commitment to the game. You can be sure that the excitement during this event led to **Arnie's Army** coming out in full force behind the glass with head cheerleader being his wife, Teresa, along with their 4 daughters: Arlene, Janet, Karen & Kathy. Now that the boys have all just qualified for Master's curling, their goal is to reunite for a crack at representing N.B. in the 2020 Nationals to be held in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Practice time was essential to maintain the Dobson competitive spirit. While Mike, Brian, & Gary were throwing rocks at Thistle with their father, the grandchildren happily tagged along. Whether they were delivering junior rocks, sliding for balance or just watching their heroes, several of this 3rd generation became outstanding curlers in their own right. Trips to the Brier, as well as, Junior Championships have been earned by Peter Case, Mark/Paul Dobson, & Geoff/Ryan Porter.



1996 New Brunswick Junior Championship

L-R: Peter Case, Mark Dobson, Paul Dobson, Geoff Porter

Coach: Charlie Sullivan Jr.



2007 N.B. Champions, Tim Horton's Brier

L-R: Paul Dobson, Scott Jones, Ryan Porter, Pierre Fraser

Coach: Nick LeBlanc & fifth player, Mark Dobson

It seems the 4th generation of curlers is being led by seven of the Dobson females, ages 7-13. Four of these girls, Arnie's great granddaughters, were thrilled to play in the Fredericton arena during the 2019 Little Rock Jamboree being coached by Dad / Uncle Paul. They even finished as finalists which reinforces the fact that the Dobson curling genes are alive and well.



Even though life or health can sometimes get in the way, the Dobson Family has always been part of the culture at Thistle. Although Arnie himself may have left us far too soon and before he could witness the curling accomplishments of his grandchildren & great grandchildren, his legacy still lives on. "Arnie's Army" is a proud addition to Thistle St. Andrews Curling Dynasties.

Submitted by Doreen Tait, TSA Board Secretary