

## Chapter Five

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### *The St. Croix Courier*

**A**FTER THE DEMISE of the *Beacon*, St. Andrews pretty much disappears from the news, except for the odd gossip column and occasional major news item. It comes back to life again in the early 1930s in an unpretentiously titled little column in the *St. Croix Courier* called “Shiretown Items.” The author is Dr. Frederick Worrell, the local dentist, and “Shiretown Items” continues faithfully to report on the local scene until the death of Mr. Worrell in 1952 of complications from a stomach ulcer.

Like Armstrong, Worrell was a politically and socially active citizen of the town. As Alderman, he sat on the Committee that helped bring running water to the town. As Mayor, he was responsible for the first paved street in St. Andrews—Water Street, which was paved with concrete in 1937. In some ways he wore more hats than Armstrong. As a young man he was a prize-winning track and field athlete, a star of the St. Andrews Shamrocks basketball team, a gymnast and avid golfer; in later years local chess champion, ornithologist and amateur astronomer, dedicated member of the St. Andrews Brass Band and President of the Men’s Club.

Unlike the *Beacon* “Shiretown Items” was devoted entirely to local news, but Mr. Worrell brought to this task qualities similar to those which animated the pages of Armstrong’s paper—an intelligent and gossipy interest in local events and characters, graceful prose and a knack for drawing a portrait or dramatizing an event. Like Armstrong Worrell was a man on the street, with a nose for news and an affection for local people. With the passage of years, he took a particular interest in “old-timers,” liked to tell their stories, and as a man who first came to St. Andrews in 1889, had a few to tell himself. He was an avid hockey fan; his columns reported regularly on the progress of the St. Andrews Senators and other items of sporting interest. Many people and events which animated the lives of the old Shiretown in his day and before come alive again in his affectionate and humorous columns. Those written during the war years are especially interesting for the light they shed on the ordinary trials of rationing. Worrell had a special affection for children. With his death St. Andrews lost a keen observer and very human commentator. ❧



**Barbara Ann Scott's First Visit to St. Andrews, 1949**

*Left to Right:* Mrs. Clyde Scott, William C. O'Neill, Barbara Ann Scott, Dr. J. F. Worrell, and Mrs. Windsor Dewar Willtown

**Charlotte County Archives**

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## Plucky Bill

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THE HISTORY OF skating rinks in St. Andrews during the past few years is really the history of the dreams and schemes, discouragements and successes of one young man. From the time of the inauguration of hockey in a small building on Water Street where the ice surface was probably less than half regulation size and where room for only a few spectators could be provided, on through the succession of outdoor rinks adding improvements from year to year, up until the present, when he sees his hopes realized, this young man has persisted in the idea that a real rink could be built by the people of St. Andrews, and that some day it would be built. A quiet, unassuming chap he is, who will accept no credit for what has been done, but says it was just his idea, that was all—that the rest of the boys did as much as he. At college he was called “Lucky Bill.” A more appropriate pseudonym would be “Plucky Bill.” When he announced that the time was now propitious for the building of a covered rink, practically every person whose advice should be worth most tried to discourage him. It meant tearing down the appurtenances of the open-air rink upon which \$1,000 had been spent last year, but this meant nothing to Bill. He had no convincing argument to use to prove the project would be successful. He simply felt it must succeed. And herein lies the solution of the whole proposition. This young man had his finger on the public pulse and he knew it.

In making an estimate of the cost, he allowed practically nothing for labor and here is where he knew his public as his advisers did not. When Bill began the work his position resembled that of Napoleon on his return from Elba—just himself and a handful of the most faithful. But ere he reached his “Paris,” the completion and opening of the rink on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1933, he had an army behind him, an army whose spirit was sufficient to overcome any amount of labor, expense or inclemency of weather.

Great credit is due to Frank Gilman, who constructed and erected the framework, and Gus Rigby who took charge of the finishing and whose advice and labor were invaluable.

Many names might be mentioned of those whose unsolicited assistance contributed so greatly towards the success of the enterprise, of those who donated liberally in cash, or of those who toiled there day after day in the muck and dirt with no further hope of reward than that of a sense of duty well done. But after all it is Bill’s rink. And the people of St. Andrews and of the surrounding districts, who also had their share in the work, feel that as long as there is a stick of this building standing, it will stand as a monument to the pluck and enterprise and public spirit of one of our native sons.

The building is 200 x 86 feet outside and has an ice surface 175 x 76 feet. Heated seating spaces will accommodate about one hundred and there is standing room on the sidelines sufficient for six hundred more.—Frederick Worrell, *Courier*, January 5, 1933

### Opposite Top

The Volunteer Construction Crew,  
1932

### Opposite Bottom

A Pictorial History of the Arena,  
burned Christmas Night, 1939.  
All Photographs Archie Shirley  
Mr. Shirley assumed the mantle  
from D. Will McKay as local  
photographer.

### Charlotte County Archives

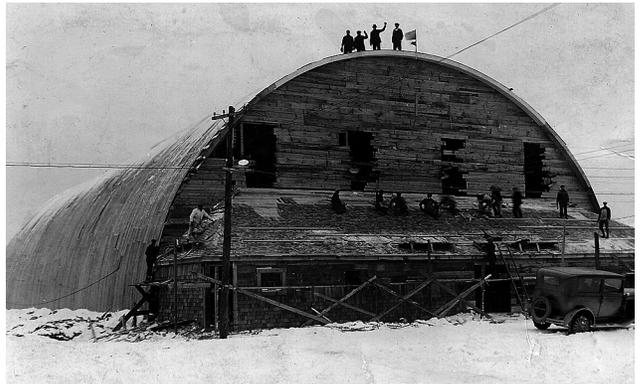
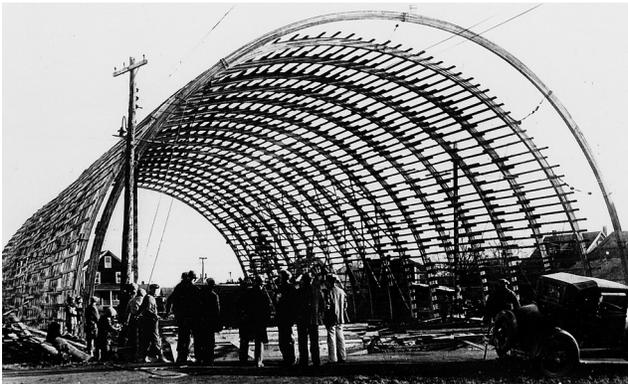
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**P218.22**

**P114.71**

**P218.25**





**St. Andrews Senators, Intermediate New Brunswick Champions, 1933**  
*Front Left to Right:* Gerald Stinson, John O'Neill, Bill O'Neill, Leigh Williamson, Jake Johnston  
*Rear Left to Right:* Frank McMullan, Frank Haughn, Hope McQuoid  
Jim Graham, Cecil Williamson, Loren McQuoid, Augustus Rigby  
**Charlotte County Archives**  
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