

A Tour Poem  
by Caroline Preston

As fall to winter turns with longer nights  
So turn our thoughts to curling's cheerful rites:  
To shouts of "sweep" and "hurry hard" we play  
Shake hands and raise a glass to end the day.  
But now our band was restless to explore  
And curl with friends beyond our BC shore.  
So setting off upon the Friendship Tour  
Minnesota, North Dakota now allure.  
Our merry band of sixteen minus one  
Lorraine, Elaine, Pam, Penny, June, Jay, Joan  
With Mallory, Kathleen, Caroline, Sandy, Pat  
And Laura, Karen, Darcy, off we set  
To Minneapolis where Mollie, Anne  
Took charge of us with mighty welcoming hand  
And guiding us along our merry way  
Assured the unfolding of each memorable day.

Or piped out at the venerable St. Paul  
Or sweeping at Four Season's newest hall  
Then sliding over four sheets at Grand Forks  
Where Midwest potluck absolutely rocks!  
Along the road the scenery unfolds  
Lakes, rivers, forests, wetlands and rich fields  
Or crystal-sugar plants with rising steam  
Whence glucose-fructose syrups sweetly stream!

Itasca next, near Mississippi's rise  
Again with welcome warm and sunny skies;  
The Land of Oz and Dorothy are near  
And yellow brick roads wondrously appear.  
To Chisholm now the great John Shuster's home  
Good curling, great pulled pork and pics with mom!  
Then Hibbing next, where earth's rich iron heart  
Its treasures yielded up to Vulcan's art  
As school they raised a temple to the Muses  
Where learning flourishes and arts amuse us!

We swept hard over Hibbing's icy sward  
The finest turkey dinner our reward!

We saw the iron man by Chisholm town  
Now iron range and Eveleth beckon on  
with Curl Mesabi's lovely coffee break  
A buffet of patica, squares and cake  
With shopping opportunities to boot  
To tide us out to luncheon at Duluth  
Out on the ice the games were won or lost  
By who best dealt with early season frost!

Then off to gitchee gumis splendid hall  
Our evening full of elegance and style.  
Whom did we play - where are they in this room?  
We all clean up so nicely on the town!  
We hope we're getting better at our song  
Feel free to "shove this rock" and sing along:  
This singing for our supper's lot's of fun!  
Next day we made our fashion show debut  
so many ways a buff can help you out  
(Especially if you can't make up a skit)  
This handy tube you use in many ways  
Neckwarmer, sports bra, headband or knee brace!  
John Shuster made us welcome to his home  
And posed with Olympic medal, kids and mom!

We leave Duluth the mighty Great Lakes port  
Whence riches pour out from the nations heart  
The produce of rich soil and iron ore  
Sent down the Great Lakes from Superior's shore  
From lift bridge standing grandly at the start  
For ports nearby and far the ships depart  
So many mariners the Great Lakes brave  
So many taken fiercely to their grave  
This day we think upon the thirty nine  
Souls from th' Edmund Fitzgerald rudely torn  
This very month we mark full forty years  
That they're remembered still with many tears.

So wheeling back full circle to St. Paul  
The curling club now feels like coming home!  
Our last game played and last performance done  
thus as our tour started so it ends  
good food, beer, curling, memories, and good friends  
My poem like our tour now is done