

The Hammonton Gazette

"The Paper of Record"

July 5, 2023
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The Hammonton Gazette · Oct 15, 2021

Perspective: Rollway Skating Rink



For more than 50 years, Rollway Skating Rink served the town of Hammonton and surrounding areas. (Courtesy Photo)

In 1970, Rollway Skating Rink opened its doors for the first time. The rink served as a second home to many that entered. This of course includes the former owners — myself, Rita Bagliani, my sister, MaryLyn Drogo, and my late parents, Sara and Carlo Drogo.

For more than 50 years, Rollway Skating Rink served the town of Hammonton and

For more than 30 years, Rollway Skating Rink served the town of Hammonton and surrounding areas. Over that time we were blessed to have built strong bonds with our patrons and the community. What made our family run business so special was that everyone that walked through our doors became part of the family.

As members of our Rollway family grew up, they made sure to share life's special moments with us. Our office walls were covered in photos of everything from newborns to proms to graduations. Nothing made us smile more than watching the parents that came here as children grow into adults and seeing them introduce their children to skating in the very same rink.

By 2016, both of my parents had passed and I had been presented an offer for the rink. The offer came from someone I had trusted and known through the roller skating community. As a result of this offer the rink transitioned ownership under the agreement that it would remain a skating rink for many years to come. This transition was going to come with exciting renovations to the building and it seemed as though it was going to be really beneficial for the town and all of our patrons. Along with the improvements came the name change to Hammonton Skating Center.

In September of 2021, only five short years later, we received devastating information. The rink would shut its doors permanently and be sold as a warehouse. After making beautiful renovations and serving our community for only five short years, Hammonton Skating Center is no longer. This is not just heartbreaking to our family but to all of those who supported the rink as well as the town as a whole.

My heart is shattered into a million pieces as we watch items that once belonged to us leave the building as part of a liquidation sale. Tears are flowing as I think about all of those who trusted that we had made the right decision. This should not have happened. The rink had so much life left in it. The decision made by the current owner has broken me in a way that words cannot describe.

As I cope with the loss of this huge piece of our lives, I also reflect back to all of the good times and friendly faces that constantly flooded Rollway. Thank you to each and every person who dedicated and donated their time to make the rink run each week. Thank you to the parents and individuals who volunteered and served as referees and coaches in our hockey and learn to skate programs. Thank you to all the families that came back year after year and supported us. I couldn't be more grateful to have spent those years serving our community.

But perhaps, what I am most thankful for is the time I got to spend with my parents. To all the children who grew up with us at Rollway and respected my parents as their own, I thank you immensely.

With much love and sadness,

Rita Bagliani
Parkman, Maine





Summer camp at Hammonton Skating Center



Perspective: Perspective

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