



Photo by James Paddle-Grant

Quinte Skating Club's Emma Jianopoulos competes in the Novice Women free program division of Skate Canada's National skating championship held at the K-Rock Centre in Kingston earlier this week. Jianopoulos finished in 12th place with a score of 89.98.

Belleville native competes at Skate Canada

By James Paddle-Grant

Dedicated and disciplined – two words to describe Emma Jianopoulos and her journey on ice as she pushes herself to the limits in her first ever national event.

Tuesday night, Jianopoulos was one of 18 competitors in the novice women free program, at the Skate Canada National figure-skating championship at the Rogers K-Rock Centre in Kingston, Ont.

Jianopoulos, a Belleville native, was representing eastern Ontario and the Quinte figure skating club at the national event.

As Jianopoulos' first national event, she said she found it different from anything she has ever experienced.

The event consisted of a two-to three-minute performance in which the skater performed a routine of her own. There were a series of judges rating the skills and technique of each skater. Jianopoulos received a rating of 89.98 placing her in 12th.

Jianopoulos qualified for the national event with a strong performance at the Eastern Canadian figure skating championship in Quebec City.

At the age of five, Jianopoulos was very young when she made the commitment to become a figure skater. Skating for the

Quinte Skating Club, Jianopoulos has achieved numerous objectives, including a bronze medal at the 2012 All-Ontario skating championship, and her appearance at this year's national event at the Rogers K-Rock Centre in Kingston.

"It was neat to actually be one of the skaters," said Jianopoulos.

With the event being only 75 kilometres away, Jianopoulos had lots of support from friends and family attending her performance.

"I had a lot of friends and family who were able to come and watch me. I had so much support from everyone," said Jianopoulos.

Jianopoulos added that the event was

much different than anything else when it comes to preparation.

"You always push yourself to the limits. But you've got to keep in mind to pace yourself for the season and not doing too much and then burning out," she said.

Jianopoulos, who began skating at the age of four, has always had the sport involved in her life. Being a third generation skater after her mother and grandmother, skating is something, which seems to run in the Jianopoulos family.

Jianopoulos noted that her coach, Myke Gillman played a major role in her recent success.

"He's so inspirational and positive and

he's really brought out the best of me in my skating," said Jianopoulos.

She added that the faculty at Moira Secondary School has been very supportive with her figure skating career.

"The teachers are very supportive with helping me get the extra work that I might miss if I'm at physiotherapy appointments or if I have to leave early some days."

Attending high school and dealing with exams, while competing at a national figure skating event is a difficult task, although Jianopoulos seems to find a way to balance everything by worrying about one thing at a time.

...See Skating, page 3

An evening with Sir John A. and the missus

By Hannah Eden

Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, was honoured on Tuesday with a celebration hosted by Hastings County Historical Society, which celebrated his 200th birthday.

A staggering 225 people attended the event – a huge leap from the usual 90 at the historical society's presentations, according to Sharon White, Hastings County Historical Society's chief archivist.

Complete with a birthday cake in Sir John's honour, those in attendance could also enjoy the information boards provided by the historical society, to brush-up on their knowledge of his life.

The occasion was narrated by Brian and Renee Porter, actors from Brockville, who greeted guests as Sir John A. and his wife Lady Agnes, upon entering the Maranatha Centre where the presentation was held.

"This is our first presentation in a new space," said Richard Hughes, Hastings County Historical Society president.

"We spent many happy years in the Quinte Living Centre, but we have simply outgrown it. And the Maranatha Centre offers us audio and visual technologies for our monthly gatherings."

Bill Hunt, one of the historical society directors, started the evening's festivities with a glimpse back in time to 1876, where he set the scene of Sir John A's arrival in Belleville.

"Fifteen thousand people turned out for Sir John A," remarked Hunt.

"The Intelligencer newspaper, at the time, wrote an article describing how the streets were masses of flags and bunting."

After transforming the captivated audience back in time, Hunt made way for actor Brian Porter, who was dressed head to toe as the famous prime minister. Complete with pocket watch and top hat,



Photo by Hannah Eden

Actor Brian Porter tells tales of Sir John A. Macdonald's life in a bicentennial celebration at the Maranatha Centre, hosted by Hastings County Historical Society.

Porter graced the floor as he addressed the audience as Sir John A, presenting a speech in his style.

"The life of Sir John A. Macdonald is the history of Canada," Brian Porter later remarked, as she gave closing speeches no longer in character.

"He had a fighting spirit and was a critical piece of our national narrative."

As a travelling duo for 15 years, Brian

and Renee Porter conduct historical reenactments and 'meet and greets' all over the province from London to Ottawa, enthralling older and younger audiences.

"When I present to school children, I often get in real close and sit on the floor," shared Brian.

"Of course, they are always interested in the top hat!"

The tantalizing presentation sparked

conversation all over the centre and education of Canadian history was the main topic of conversation amongst the history buffs in attendance.

Peter Lockyer, broadcast journalist and founder of 'History Lives Here,' discussed the importance of education with local historians Shawn Ellis, president of Trent Port Historical Society and Sharon White, Hastings County Historical Soci-

ety's very own chief archivist.

"We are all, in our own way, awakening the communities," said Lockyer.

"There is a huge appetite for the stories. But how do we engage several generations so that they take on this work?"

Preserving history is one of the main aspects of Hastings County Historical Society's work in the local community and a lack of interest in history could mean generations to come will never know the stories of a former Canada and its rise to modern greatness.

"We do a bad job of teaching our history, because Canadians do not know our history very well," shared Porter in his closing remarks.

"At least this time, Sir John A. is coming to the forefront now, in this 200th anniversary year, before he goes back on the shelf and we can forget about him again."

However, setting history aside is not something the Hastings County Historical Society takes lightly. The move to the downtown core in the fall of 2015 will hopefully prove a positive influence in the community as people of all ages will be able to access history regardless of travel or financial circumstances.

Porter's closing remarks reminded the audience of the leaps and bounds the country has taken to ensure freedom and democracy since the earlier years.

"He had a very clear vision of what he wanted Canada to become," said Porter.

"But he realized it could never happen without compromise and tolerance."

However, Porter's words were also met with a simple warning. Although Canada has progressed in some ways since the days of Sir John A. Macdonald, he said, the work is far from over.

"There was huge number of divides at the time – still are – racial, linguistic, religious, regional."