



# Past Times

FREE

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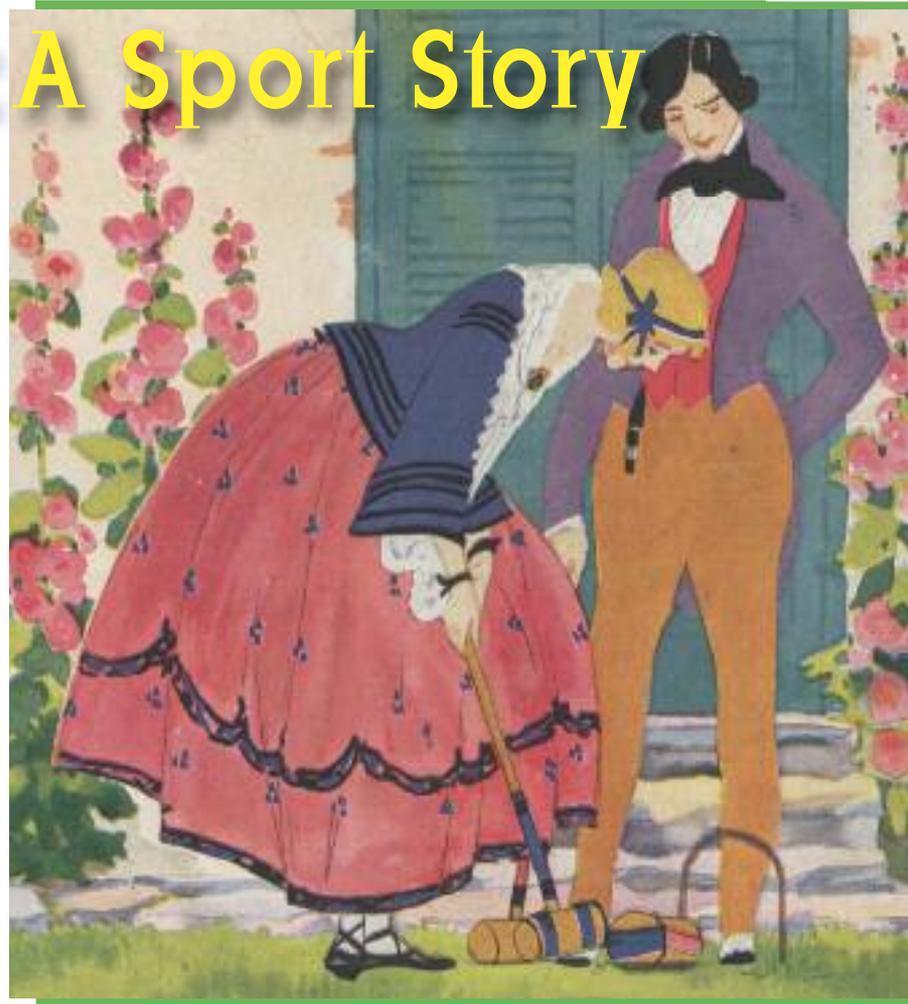
The Hayes Presidential Center is affiliated with the Ohio Historical Society.

## Croquet: A Sport Story

The Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center's new exhibit deals with a lawn game you probably have heard of, but likely don't know the history of. Made possible by Diversified Insurance and Auto-Owners Insurance, *Croquet: A Sport Story* tells the tale of a time when croquet was so popular it changed the way people acted, what they wore, and what they considered acceptable behavior in public. The exhibit - on display February 9 through August 1, 2010 - features items from the Center's Rendell Rhoades Croquet Collection - the largest collection of printed croquet materials in the nation.

Croquet seems like a really old game, and it is! However, nobody is quite sure when it started. Based on historical evidence, many think croquet had its start in the 1200s (or 13th century). Poor people in the southern part of France played an outdoor game that involved using mallets or sticks to knock balls through hoops in order to hit a peg on the other side. The game was called "paille maille," which means "ball and mallet" in English.

Through the centuries, the sport went through many changes and spread to many countries until in 1850 (the 19th century) the game as we know it today came into being. It was British toymaker Isaac Spratt who came up with the name "croquet," published rules for play, and began mass production of equipment. His efforts introduced croquet to the world



where it was an instant favorite with people from all walks of life.

Croquet hit the peak of popularity in the 19th century. It was the perfect sport for everyone! It could be played anywhere, by anyone of any age, and needed no special skills. Women were a big reason croquet became successful. In the 19th century, women had few opportunities to be independent. Few women had jobs, freely voiced their

opinions, or dared to compete in anything - especially sports.

So when the popular magazine *Godey's Lady's Book* featured a story recommending croquet as a healthy outdoor family activity, there was an explosion of interest. Women began hosting croquet parties instead of garden parties, and everyone enjoyed the novelty of an activity where entire families could take part.

The croquet craze also changed clothing styles. Women still were wearing long dresses with wide skirts. Such an outfit not only made it hard to see a croquet ball, but also to swing the mallet. These skirts also led to questions of cheating. Men, who found themselves out-played, accused women of using their long skirts to hide or move balls during play. As a result women's fashion became more form fitting, and skirt lengths became shorter - for the first time allowing a lady's ankle and foot to be revealed.

Many people did not approve of the changes brought about by croquet. When clergymen began preaching against croquet because they felt it was a source of gambling, cheating, and open flirting between men and women, the game quickly lost its popularity. However devoted players kept it alive, introducing croquet at the 1900 Olympics in Paris and again at the 1904 Olympics in St. Louis, Missouri, where an all-American version of croquet called "roque" was played.

Today croquet again is becoming popular. Golf courses and resorts sponsor croquet clubs and offer croquet as an activity for their visitors. Professional tournaments take place around the world throughout the year. Professionals play a version of the sport called "Golf Croquet," while amateurs are finding delight in "SuperSize Croquet" (where soccer balls replace traditional balls).

You can watch and try these modern types of croquet at a new event called *Wine, Wickets & Wheels*. It is will take place July 2-4, 2010, at the Rutherford Hayes Presidential Center.

# Come try it yourself!

The Hayes Presidential Center introduces a new family event centered around croquet. Titled Wine, Wickets & Wheels, it takes place Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 2, 3 & 4.

All weekend, you can watch professional croquet players from the U.S. and Canada compete in a Golf Croquet Tournament, or you can try your hand at SuperSize Croquet or a brand new version of croquet called Toequet. Soccer balls and giant wickets are used in SuperSize and Toequet. In SuperSize you hit the ball with a mallet, while in Toequet you kick the ball (with the *toe* of your shoe). Your family also can come into the Museum to see the exhibit *Croquet: A Sport Story*.

On Saturday and Sunday, your parents can compete, and you can cheer them on, in the first ever SuperSize Croquet Tournament on July 2 & 3. Cost is \$2.00. The game is easy to learn, so anybody will be able to play after getting a quick lesson. All of you also can try Wicket Shoot, a game where you pay \$1 to try to take one try at kicking a SuperSize Croquet ball through a wicket. If you make the shot, you get double your money back as a prize.

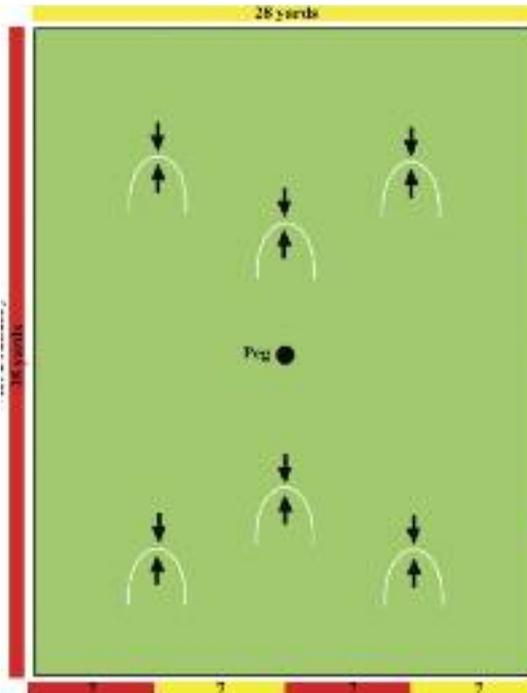
On Saturday, in addition to all the croquet activities, you can learn about how automobiles have changed through the years by attending the free Collectible Car Show. Adults can try some Ohio made wines at the Wine Tasting from 3-5 p.m. (Cost is \$10 for 3 samples) or can sign up to be part of the Wine Auction from 3-10 p.m. Most of the \$100 per person ticket price is a donation to help the Hayes Presidential Center to be able to continue its many programs and events for people of all ages.

On Sunday, your whole family can watch the finals of the Golf Croquet Tournament and stay for the free *Independence Day Concert* from 2-3:30 p.m. Crown Battery in Fremont is funding a performance by the Toledo Symphony Concert Band.

The Fremont Exchange Club concession stand will be selling snacks and drinks on Saturday and Sunday.



Taking a 'stroke' in SuperSize Croquet.



Golf Croquet Standard Court



A girl gives 'Wicket Shoot' a try.

## How to play Golf Croquet:

**Equipment:** six wickets, one peg, four balls, and a mallet for each player (these can be shared).

**Players:** Croquet can be played *doubles* (four players) or *singles* (two players). In *doubles*, one side of two players uses the black and blue balls, the other side uses red and yellow. Each player is assigned a color to play with during the game. In *singles* each player plays both balls of the side.

**Object:** To be the first side to score seven points.

**Points:** A point is scored when a player's ball is the first to pass through the current wicket. Once a ball goes through a wicket, play moves on to the next wicket.

- If two balls go through the wicket on the same stroke, the point is scored by the ball that was nearest to the wicket before the stroke.

- Each time a point is scored, the side scoring the point announces the score.

- If after scoring 12 points the game is tied, wicket #3 is played again to break the tie.

**Out of Bounds:** A ball is out-of-bounds when it goes past the boundaries or its center lies directly over the boundary. When a ball goes *out*, it is placed just inside the boundary close to where it went out.

**Halfway Rule:** When a point is scored, any ball more than halfway to the next wicket is *offside*, and the opposing team can require that it be moved to the outer edge of the court. (This does not apply if the ball was knocked into the halfway spot by another ball during the stroke just played.)





## HIDDEN WORDS

Some terms used in the sport of croquet are hidden in this 19th-century illustration of children playing croquet. See if you can find them.

**JAWS**

**WICKET**

**STROKE**

**MALLET**

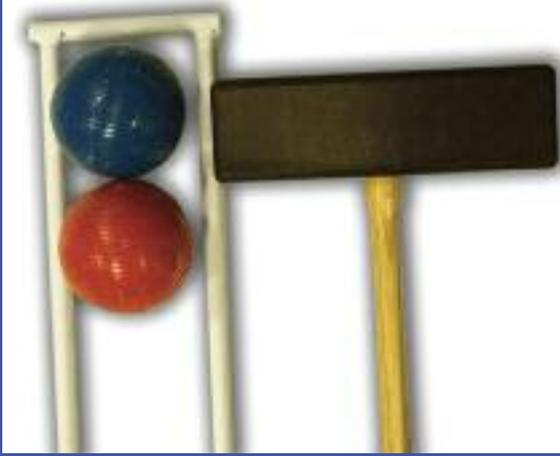
**STRIKE**

**PUSH**

**CROQUET**

*Businesses like the Union Pacific Tea Company took advantage of croquet's popularity in the 19th century, featuring scenes of croquet play on trading cards, advertisements, and other items.*

Today, the most popular type of croquet is Golf Croquet. The rules and equipment are very different from "backyard croquet." Notice that the wickets (below) are not thin metal arches and the mallets are square not round. Synthetic materials, rather than wood, are used to make today's equipment.



**ANSWER KEY:** DOUBLE PUZZLE: Hayes, croquet, strike, stroke, push golf; Secret Phrase = Croquet; A Sport Story. WORD MATCH: Mouth-like opening=jaws; Hitting the ball=stroke; Swinging the mallet=stroke; Wooden hammer=mallet; Mallet pushes the ball=push; Name of arch=wicket; Stake in middle of court=peg; England's word for the arch=hoop; Fastest growing style of croquet=Golf Croquet

## Alice found croquet 'through the looking glass'

In the book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, one of Alice's many adventures finds her challenged to a game of croquet by the bossy Queen of Hearts. Although the pair uses flamingoes as mallets and hedgehogs as balls, the scene has deep roots in the sport of croquet.

Author Lewis Carroll was an expert croquet player. He also was related to a man named John Jaques II. Mr. Jaques owned a company that made croquet equipment. In 1851, he set up a display at London's Great Exhibition Hall. So many people visited his exhibit and bought his equipment that croquet became the top leisure activity. Mr. Jaques is given credit for introducing the sport to Great Britain. Today, his business is called *Jaques London* and still makes croquet equipment.

The illustration at right is from the book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. It was drawn by John Tenniel, a famous 19th-century illustrator and political cartoonist. Tenniel drew all the pictures for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. His illustrations are some of the most famous ever produced. When Walt Disney made an animated movie based on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, he modeled the look of his *Alice in Wonderland* characters on Tenniel's illustrations.



Alice tries to get her flamingo 'mallet' to cooperate, while putting her foot on a hedgehog 'ball' to keep it from running away.

**Double Puzzle:** Unscramble the words below, then write the numbered letters in the red boxes at the bottom to reveal a secret phrase.

SYHAE	<input type="text"/>						
		8	18	6			
RUQCOET	<input type="text"/>						
	1	12	16	4			7
TIKSER	<input type="text"/>						
	14	13	2				
SEOTRK	<input type="text"/>						
		15	17	3			
SUHP	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>			
	10	5	9				
LOFG	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>			
		11					



Winslow Homer was one of the top painters of 19th century America. He was considered one of the best "painters of modern life." His painting "Croquet Scene" (above) was one of five created on the subject of croquet. Homer painted his female subjects in scenes that showed the changing roles of women. In the late 1800s, women were starting to break out of the role of housekeepers and mothers, dependent on their husbands. The women Homer painted were self-assured, active, fashionable, independent and, most importantly, on equal footing with men.

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**Croquet Terms:** Match the croquet term with its definition by using a pencil to draw a line between the two.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Push</b>         | Word for the "mouthlike" opening between the uprights of the wicket.             |
| <b>Peg</b>          | Act of "hitting" the ball.   |
| <b>Mallet</b>       | The motion of swinging the mallet in order to move the ball.                     |
| <b>Jaws</b>         | The wooden hammer used to strike the ball in the sport of croquet.               |
| <b>Strike</b>       | When a player's mallet pushes the ball rather than making a clean hit.           |
| <b>Wicket</b>       | Name given to the arch through which a player's ball must pass to earn points.   |
| <b>Stroke</b>       | The stake located in the middle of the croquet court.                            |
| <b>Golf Croquet</b> | Name used in England for the arch through which a ball must pass to earn points. |
| <b>Hoop</b>         | Fastest growing style of croquet.  |



This 1876 illustration shows then Ohio governor Rutherford B. Hayes and his family spending the day outside. A croquet mallet and wicket can be seen on the left, reflecting the family's interest in the sport. Below is a letter written by Lucy Hayes to her husband during a trip to Fayetteville, Vermont, on July 15, 1871:

My Darling:  
 The village is the perfection of a quiet retreat for families of children in the hot weather. The square is better shaded than formerly. I can see in my imagination little Fan dancing across it. Gentlemen and ladies play croquet wherever they please ...  
 Affectionately,  
 Mrs. Hayes