

# 1111 Echoes

Winter 2002/03

A newsletter from the R. I. Reds Heritage Society

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **R.I. Reds' All-Time, First-Team All-Stars (Pages 2 and 5)**

17 R. I. Reds' players, including goaltender "**Iron Mike**" Karakas (right), earned recognition as AHL first team all-stars. Let's look back into their history.



- **Three new profiles: Ralph Keller, Willie Marshall and Bill Warwick (Page 3)**
- **Rhode Island's Army takes over Portland, Maine (Pages 4 and 6)**



There's a new boss at the helm of the AHL's Portland Pirates. **FIND OUT MORE!**

- **A final tribute to one of our own (Page 4)**

**Marcel Paille**, talented and popular goaltender with the Reds for 8 seasons, passes on at age 70.



## To our more than 370 members . . .

Dear Society Members:

Welcome to the 2002/03 hockey season, the beginning of the third year for our Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society. This Winter 2002/03 edition of *1111 Echoes* includes your new membership card. It is the first of three newsletters you will receive this year. And because the first two reunions were so successful, we plan to hold our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual at Goddard State Park on Sunday, July 27, 2003.

In three years we have grown to over 370 members and have our sights on reaching 400 this season. Based on last year's growth of 17% over our inaugural season, this figure is attainable.

Over 80% of last year's 331 members have already renewed for 2002/03 and to date we have added 40 new members, including former players **Ted Hampson, George Ranieri, Art Michaulk, Jim Mikol**, plus **Tim Army** and **Curt Bennett**, professional players who never played for the Reds but have strong family ties to the area. A complete list of former players is on page 6.

The Society continues to consider our members as our most valuable asset. The larger we grow the more credibility and strength we have to accomplish our stated goal that has never wavered from the beginning. That goal is to preserve the fabled 51-year heritage of the old Rhode Island Reds by building a permanent exhibit within the soon-to-be Heritage Harbor Museum in Providence, a Smithsonian affiliate.

For those who perhaps have not yet renewed, we ask that you complete and mail in the enclosed membership form. Remember, your annual contribution of \$20, which has never increased, is very important to us. For less than 40 cents per week you are helping us reach our goal.

The Society wishes everyone a wonderfully healthy and happy "New Hockey Season 2002/03." **See you at our 3rd Annual Reunion, Goddard State Park, Warwick, RI, on Sunday, July 27, 2003!**

Sincerely,

Buster Clegg  
President  
R.I. Reds Heritage Society



"Let's shoot for 400"

## 17 All-time, First-team All-stars



**Frank Brimsek: "Mr. Zero," our very first, First-Team All-Star**

The American Hockey League first began choosing all-star teams in 1937-38. From then until the Reds last year in Providence in 1976-77—40 seasons in all—544 players wore the team's red, white and black uniform colors.

Though there were many talented players who deserved more recognition, only 17 among the 544 were ever selected as AHL's first-team all-stars. So why do **Frankie Brimsek** and **Walt Ledingham** stand out among this fabled group?

Brimsek, a brilliant goaltender, was the first Reds' player selected to the *first* all-star team in 1937-38. Ledingham, an obscure journeyman left winger, was chosen as the *last* Reds player to earn selection to the AHL first-team all-star status in 1976-77, the club's final season here.

To step back in time for a moment, here are the all-time, first-team all-stars who wore the Reds uniform:

**1937-38: Frank Brimsek (G).** Team record was 25-16-7, finished first in the AHL East, defeated the Philadelphia Ramblers, 2 games to 0, in the semifinals and won the Calder Cup, besting the Syracuse Stars in the finals, 3 games to 1.

Brimsek led the league with a 1.79 GA average (still a league record) and had five shutouts. He later became an NHL standout as "Mr. Zero" with the Boston Bruins, earning that nickname with 6 shutouts in his first 8 games. He also led them to two Stanley

Cup championships (1938-39 and '40-41).

**1940-41: Mike Karakas (G) and Doug Young (D).** Team was 31-21-4, finished first in the AHL East, but lost to the Cleveland Barons, 3 games to 1, in the semi-finals.

"Iron Mike" that year had a 2.87 average. He also played eight seasons with the NHL Chicago Black Hawks and led them to the Stanley Cup title in 1937-38. In 1935-36 he was chosen NHL Rookie of the Year.

Young joined the Reds for the 1940-41 season after having served nine years in the NHL with Detroit (8) and Montreal. He played on two Red Wings' Stanley Cup winners ('35-36, '36-37). His leadership on defense in '40-41 was immeasurable.

**1947-48: Carl Liscombe (LW).** Team was 41-23-4, finished first in the AHL East but lost to Cleveland 4 games to 1 in the semi-finals. Previous to joining the Reds, he played nine seasons with the Detroit Red Wings and was part of their Stanley Cup win in 1942-43.

Liscombe came to the Reds in 1946-47. Sporting one of the hardest wrist shots in Reds' history, in 1947-48 he led the AHL in goals (50) and total points (118) to earn first all-star team and MVP honors. The following year, 1948-49, he had 55-47-102 to help the Reds win the Calder Cup and once again he was chosen the league's MVP.

**1951-52: Ray Powell (C).** Team was 32-33-5, finished second in the AHL East, upset Cleveland 3 games to 2 after being down 2 games to 0, easily handled Cincinnati 3 games to 1 in the semis, sending them all the way to the finals, only to lose the Calder Cup to the Pittsburgh Hornets, 4 games to 2.

Powell, acknowledged by many as a greatest stick-handling center in Reds history, won the league's scoring title with 97 points and had the AHL's most assists, 62. He was voted the league's MVP.

**1955-56: Zellio Toppazzini (RW), Camille Henry (LW) and Johnny Bower (G).** The team finished in first place with a record of 45-17-2 for 92 points, just two ahead of Pittsburgh. After edging the Buffalo Bisons in the semi finals, 3 games to 2, the Reds swept past Cleveland in the finals, 4 games to 0.

Toppazzini, later to become the Reds all-time leading scorer and "Player of the Century," led the league in both total points (113) and assists (71). Henry (Camille the Eel) teamed with Topper and Paul Larivee on what was perhaps the team's greatest line ever. Deadly around the net, Henry led the AHL in goals with 50.



**Carl Liscombe: awarded two consecutive AHL MVPs ('47/48 and '48/49)**



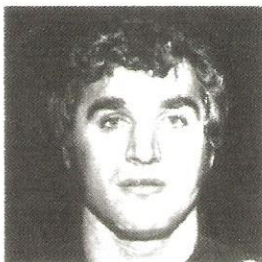
**Those Fabulous '50s: Johnny Bower, Zellio Toppazzini, Paul Larivee and Camille Henry...each an All-Star player and human being**

# Backchecking and Forechecking

“Backchecking and Forechecking” is a regular feature of *1111 Echoes*. It is intended to bring readers up-to-date on the “whereabouts and goings on” of former R.I. Reds players and associates. This edition features profiles of individuals who took a few minutes to fill out and return the questionnaire contained in previous editions. These updates are published as they are received and as space allows. If you have not already submitted yours, please do so.

## Backchecking

**Ralph Keller** was a young N. Y. Ranger farmhand when he played briefly for the Reds back in 1956-57. Ralph went on to greater things in 21 years of pro hockey, spent mostly in the AHL with the Hershey Bears, where he was a stalwart defenseman for 11 seasons ('63-64 -'73-74) and captained the team his last six years. His quiet, steady play earned him first-team AHL all-star selection in '68-69 and second team in '72-73.



## Forechecking

Ralph is the older brother by three years of Adam, who starred with the Reds for 5 seasons. Ralph and his wife Dorothy have been married for 18 years and enjoy their four children and 5 grandchildren. He is an avid golfer and for the past 34 years has owned a renowned hair-cutting salon in nearby Hummelstown, Pennsylvania. That's why they say in his parts, “*There's never a bad hair day in Hershey.*”



**Willie Marshall** is the all-time AHL leader in career goals (523), assists (852) and points (1,375). A classy playmaking center, Willie spent three years with the Reds in the mid-60s and did stints with Pittsburgh, Rochester and Baltimore. But in Hershey he had his finest years. With the Bears he won the AHL scoring title (40-64-104) in 1956-57, was twice chosen first-team all-star and played on two Calder Cup title teams.



Willie and his wife Barbara have been married for 41 years and live in Georgia. They have four children (three daughters and a son) and, yes, 17 grandchildren. Willie likes to play golf. A self-admitted “party guy” in hockey, Willie has turned to writing inspirational, spiritual poetry, published in CD form (see back page to order). Rightfully, today he calls himself, “*The new and improved Willie Marshall.*”



**Billy Warwick** was a left-winger for two seasons with the Reds. A former line mate and still close friend of our own Chuck Scherza, Billy came up through the Rangers' farm system in the early 1940s. In 1946-47 he scored 25 goals and had 27 assists with the Reds and Philadelphia. Billy later played on the same line with brothers Dick and Grant “Nobby” Warwick on the World Champion Penticton V's in 1955.



Billy and his wife Jacqueline have been married for 40 years. They enjoy their family of six children and two grandchildren. Since leaving hockey he became a businessman, once owning a restaurant and since 1974 publishing of *Billy's Guide* magazine, a comprehensive tour guide of the Edmonton, Alberta, area. *Billy, think you can guide your way to Rhode Island to attend our third annual reunion on July 27<sup>th</sup>?*

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## Wanted: Correspondents for *1111 Echoes*

*1111 Echoes* is looking for contributing correspondents to submit story ideas for our newsletter's new column “The Chicken Wire,” to be introduced in the next edition. If you are interested, please feel welcome to contact us.

All ideas will be considered. Just jot down some factual notes, we'll review and if your story idea is approved, we'll do the final editing. There is no compensation, but author contributions will be acknowledged.

## Rhode Island's Army Takes Over Portland, Maine



**Tim Army**, a native Rhode Islander, is now head coach of the Portland (Maine) Pirates of the American Hockey League, the top development team of the NHL's Washington Capitals.

Army, 39, is the grandson of the late **George Army**, famous and longtime trainer of the R. I. Reds during the 1930s through the mid-1960s. He is also the son of **Tom and Betty Army** of East Providence, where he grew up with two older brothers and a younger sister.

This is Tim's first season as a head coach in professional hockey. At press time he has his Pirates rolling with a respectable record of 20 wins, 13 losses and 4 ties, good for third place in the powerful North Division of the AHL.

Appointed to his new post last July, Tim was welcomed to Portland with accolades from his new boss, **Brian Petrovek**, the Pirates' president and chief executive officer.

"I've been fortunate enough to know Tim through my years spent with USA Hockey and I couldn't be more excited," Petrovek said. "He has proven himself to be an excellent teacher of the game and those skills are so important to our many young, developing players."

Prior to taking over the Pirates, Army served a 15-year apprenticeship as an assistant coach, first in the Hockey East Conference with Providence College under **Mike McShane** (6 years), then with Anaheim Mighty Ducks (4) and Washington Capitals (5) of the National Hockey League, both under head coach **Ron Wilson**, another Rhode Islander.

"This is an exciting time to be taking over as the head coach of the Pirates," said Army upon his appointment. "Washington is in a great situation with so many young players coming along.

(continued on page 6)

## Marcel Paille: In Memoriam

The Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society recently lost one of its own.

Former Reds goaltender **Marcel Paille** died from cancer of the esophagus in mid-October in his hometown of Quebec City. He was 70. Marcel suffered a stroke two years ago while playing golf. He had been battling back when he was diagnosed with cancer in September. He died just six weeks later.

Marcel leaves his wife Carmen of Quebec City. Other survivors include his former wife, Yolanda, and their daughter, Johanne, both of Pompano Beach, Florida.

The Shawinigan Falls native played eight seasons with the Reds and was popular with both his teammates and local fans. "He was a great, great stand-up goalie, says **Tom Army**, an old friend and admirer. "He didn't flop like they do today. If he beat you 1-0 or lost 10-0, his attitude was the same...always even. He was a great guy to talk with."

Paille won three consecutive Calder Cup Championships with the Springfield Indians from 1960 through 1962. He remains tied for fourth in AHL career shutouts with 36 and holds the league playoff record of minutes without allowing a goal at 207:27, a mark set in 1962. One of the last goalies to play without a mask, he was honored five times as an AHL All-Star (3 first team and 2 second team selections).

At a time when there were only six teams in the NHL, he played 107 games with the New York Rangers. Along with the Reds and Springfield, he played with four other AHL teams: the Baltimore Clippers, Buffalo Bisons, Cleveland Barons and Richmond Robins. He retired in 1974 at age 40 after 20 years in pro hockey.

This wonderful gentleman—talented, popular, kind and always even-tempered—will be greatly missed. God bless.



In every way, "a stand-up guy!"

## What's New, What's Not?

**Nov. 5, 2002:** The State of Rhode Island Bond Referendum #2 passed. As a result, the Heritage Harbor Museum receives \$5-million in bond revenues to continue its goal of opening a Smithsonian-affiliated historic museum within which the R. I. Reds Heritage Society plans to construct a permanent exhibit honoring the old Reds.

**Dec. 15, 2002:** Plans for the R. I. Reds Heritage Society to help sponsor a late March-early April youth hockey tournament were put on hold until this Spring, with a look at participating in a similar event during the holiday school break in December 2003. Assisting youth in hockey here in Rhode Island is an important part of our stated mission.

**Jan. 30, 2003:** The Society is in the second phase of acquiring 501(c) 3 approval from the IRS. When we gain that status, the federal government will have approved us as a non-profit corporation. That ruling will enable us to apply for all types of federal, state, corporate and philanthropic grants to help us build the Reds exhibit at the Heritage Harbor Museum. Gifts will be tax deductible for donors.

**Jan. 30, 2003:** Our Internet website, [www.rireds.org](http://www.rireds.org), is still under construction. We apologize for the delay, but this is a significant project for our website designer, who is serving the Society without charge. Hopefully, we'll be up and running by the end of March.

## AHL, First Team All-Stars (continued from page 2)

Bower, for many years a standout with Cleveland, was loaned to the Reds by the Rangers and became backbone of the club. A sparkling 2.85 GA average and 3 shutouts earned him the first of his three consecutive AHL MVP awards.

**1956-57: Paul Larivee (C) and Johnny Bower (G).** The Reds finished first again with a record of 34-22-8, but were eliminated in the semi-finals by the upstart Rochester Americans, 4 games to 1.

Larivee, overlooked for all-star recognition the year before, was selected as first team center in a tie with the Springfield Indians' Bronco Horvath. In '56-57 Larivee led the AHL in goals with 46 and finished third overall in total points with 89.

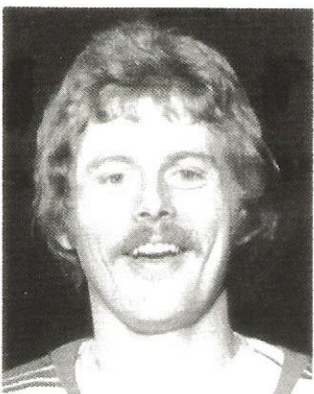
Bower was top goalie in the AHL with a 2.42 GA average and had 4 shutouts.

It was his second consecutive year being chosen to both the first all-star team and voted MVP. In a strange twist of player exchange, the next season he returned to Cleveland where he duplicated his '56-57 league awards.



**Eddie Kachur: led AHL with 47 goals in 1967-68**

Middleton scored 36-48-84 in 63 games and was awarded the Dudley "Red" Garrett trophy as the AHL's choice for "Rookie-of-the-Year." Traded to the Bruins, he went on to a brilliant NHL career where his crafty play and 493 goals deservedly earned him the nickname, "Nifty."



**Walt Ledingham: our last, First-Team All-Star ('76/77)**

**1959-60: Larry Hillman (D).** The Reds finished third with a record of 38-32-2 but were eliminated in the semi-finals by Springfield, 4 games to 1. However, Hillman had a giant season, scoring 12 goals and 31 assists for 43 points, to that date the highest number of points for a defenseman in Reds' history. Besides first-team all-star selection, he was awarded the Eddie Shore trophy as the AHL's best defenseman.

**1967-68: Eddie Kachur (RW).** The Reds finished third in the East with a record of 30-33-9. It was the first time in four years the team made the playoffs. In post-season play they upset the Springfield Kings in the quarterfinals, 3 games to 1, but then lost in the semis to the Quebec Aces, 3 games to 1. Teaming with center Dave Creighton, who was voted the league's MVP, Kachur led the AHL with 47 goals (a career high) and added 29 assists for 76 points.

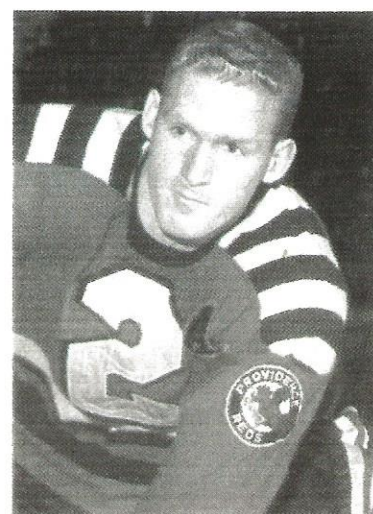
**1973-74: Rick Middleton (RW).** The Reds, then a farm team of the Rangers, were in the new Civic Center and finished with a record of 38-26-12, good enough for second place in the AHL's North. After beating the Nova Scotia Voyageurs 4-2 in the quarters and blanking the New Haven Nighthawks 4-0 in the semis, the Reds dropped the finals to the Hershey Bears, 4 games to 1.

**1974-75: Joe Zanussi (D), Pierre Laganriere (RW) and Jerry Holland (LW).** For only the second time in team history, the Reds placed three players on the first all-star team. The club finished first in the North with a slate of 43-21-12, but lost abruptly in the quarterfinals to Springfield, 4 games to 2.

Laganriere (25-61-86) ended fourth in total points and Holland (44-35-79) was sixth. Holland's 44 goals tied him with three others for most scores in the league that season and earned him "Rookie-of-the-Year" honors.

Zanussi, a great puck-handling defenseman, finished the season with 22 goals, 36 assists and 58 points. His goal and point totals top all defensemen in Reds' annals. Besides first-team all-star recognition he won the prestigious Eddie Shore award as the league's best defenseman.

**1976-77: Walt Ledingham (LW).** Sadly, it was the Reds last of 51 consecutive seasons in the AHL and its predecessor, the Can-Am League. The team's record was a dismal 25-51-4, leading to a last-place position. Ledingham, however, was one of the few bright spots for the team. A career journeyman, he experienced his best-ever season in pro hockey. With 29 goals, 57 assists and 86 points he finished 7<sup>th</sup> in points in the league and was selected our final, AHL first-team all-star award recipient.

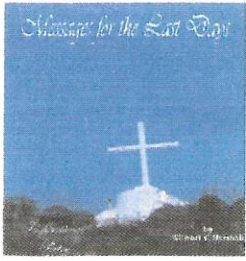


**Larry Hillman: AHL's best defenseman in '59-60**



**Rick Middleton: always "Nifty" and "Rookie-of-the-Year" in '73-74**

## Willie Marshall's Poetry



**Willie Marshall**, a former R. I. Reds center and the AHL's all-time leading scorer, has become a literary man in the form of writing poetry dedicated to delivering spiritual, inspirational messages to his readers.

A collection of 74 original poems written by Willie is produced on a CD called "*Messages for the Last Days*." The poems are not in audio form but can be read and enjoyed by printing them out from your personal computer.

To order your copy, please mail a money order of \$7.00 (USA) addressed to: e-Treasures Publishing, P. O. Box 71813, Newnan, GA 30271.

## When in Edmonton...

Since 1974, Billy's Guide Magazine has been your "Key to Where It's At in Edmonton." You can pick it up free of charge at over 400 locations across the city and surrounding areas or even have it delivered to your door.

Published every month by former R. I. Reds' star **Billy Warwick** and his son, **Bill**, this handy, pocket-sized guide supplies up-to-date information about what's going on in the Greater Edmonton Area. Dining, attractions, sports, theatre, shopping, maps and articles provide readers with a comprehensive guide to living in and visiting Edmonton, Alberta.

You can also go to the Internet and visit [Billysguide.com](http://Billysguide.com) where you'll find more detailed information about restaurants, arts events, sporting venues, shopping centers, nightlife and much more!



## Next Issue

The next issue of *IIII Echoes* will come out in late April or early May. It will include info and a reservation form the Society's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Reunion at Goddard State Park in Warwick on Sunday, July 27, 2003; more "Backchecking and Forechecking" features; and a *new column* called "The Chicken Wire," whose contributors will be members of the Society. If you have a story or question to submit to the "The Chicken Wire," please send to the address below.



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## 65 former Reds and other pro players who are members of our Society

Tim Army, Stan Baluik, Jimmy Bartlett, Bob Beckett, John Bednarski, Curt Bennett, Harvey Bennett, Al Bentley, Serge Boudreault, Johnny Bower, Ross Brooks, Ray Clearwater, Bruce Cline, Dave Creighton, Ray Cyr, Buzzy Deschamps, Pat Egan, Bo Elik, Ferny Flaman, Marty Gateman, Eddie Giacomini, Tony Goegan, Aldo Guidolin, Ted Hampson, Ivan Irwin, Eddie Kachur, Pete Kapusta, George Keeling, Adam Keller, Ralph Keller, Ray LaPlante, Paul Larivee, Bob Leduc, Ed MacQueen, Moe Mantha, Willie Marshall, Gil Mayer, Rod McGarry, Jack McGeough, Don McKenney, Howie Menard, Art Michaluk, Jim Mikol, Rick Middleton, John Muckler, Wayne Muloin, Harry Pidhirny, Dan Poliziani, Nick Polano, Rich Pumple, George Ranieri, Bob Robertson, Ray Ross, Chuck Scherza, Allan Soares, Allan Stanley, Jack Stoddard and Billy Warwick. Deceased, represented by their families: Andy Branigan, Johnny Crawford, George McAvoy, Marcel Paille, Terry Reardon, John Sleaver and Zellio Toppazzini.

## Rhode Island's Army (cont. from page 4)

I'm looking forward to integrating them into our system and developing them into players who can one day play in the NHL."

Twice an All-Stater at East Providence High School, Army, a classy play-making center, went on to play for Providence College where in 151 games he scored 71 goals, 108 assists and 179 points.

In 1984-85, his senior year, Tim captained the Friars, earned All-America honors and was winner of the Walter Brown Award, presented annually to New England's outstanding American-born Division One college hockey player. He was also a finalist for the Hobie Baker Award. After college Tim played with the Maine Mariners in the AHL, moved on to play pro hockey in Finland and then completed his playing career in Switzerland's Elite League.

His dad, Tom, once served in the R. I. Reds publicity department and today is vice president and a member of the board of directors of the R. I. Reds Heritage Society's. The elder Army was Tim's youth hockey coach from mites through bantams. Also a center, Tom was captain at Providence College in 1952-53, making the Armys the only father-son hockey captains in the school's history.

Tim and his wife **Sue** reside in the Portland area with their two sons, **Derek** (age 11) and **Travis** (9). Naturally, both boys play competitive youth hockey.