



1111 Echoes

Spring 2003

A newsletter from the R. I. Reds Heritage Society

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Reds Heritage Society's Third Annual Reunion

The R. I. Reds Heritage Society has planned a repeat performance of our first two annual summer reunions, each attended by 230 former fans, ex-players, team executives and employees and their family members. Those who came enjoyed a fabulous cookout, music, spirits, raffles, prizes and reminiscing with old friends and players. To join the fun this year, mark your calendar and mail the enclosed reservation form...still only \$25 per person for a full day of fun; children 6-12 \$10; under 6 free.

The Date: Sunday, July 27, 2003

Time: 12 noon 'till dusk

Location:



**Scenic Goddard State Park
Historic Carousel Building
Warwick, RI**

Join us for fabulous food, friendship and fun!



Bobby Leduc:
Smiling, as always



Aldo Guidolin & Ray Ross:
Reminiscing, as always



MC Tom McDonough:
Laughing, as always

Who you might meet at this year's Reds reunion...

Last year's R. I. Reds Heritage Society's second annual reunion drew 230 persons, including many old and new fans of the Reds. Over two-dozen former players, team employees, executives and their family members enjoyed an afternoon filled with meeting old friends, enjoying a magnificent barbecue and, of course, story telling. The weather also cooperated perfectly, as it did for our first get-together in 2001. The day was warm, sunny and offered a pleasant cool breeze coming off Narragansett Bay.

Many former Reds will attend our third reunion at Goddard State Park on July 27. Who knows? You might meet many of the following members:

"Ready to go..."



Ferny Flaman

"Let's drop the puck!"



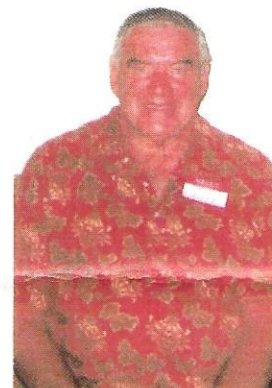
Chuck Scherza

"Party time, again?"



Ray & Judy Clearwater

"Great time, aye?"



Bob Robertson

Former players (63):

Tim Army	Tony Goegan	Harry Pidhirny
Stan Baluik	Aldo Guidolin	Dan Poliziani
Jimmy Bartlett	Ted Hampson	Nick Polano
Bob Beckett	Ivan Irwin	Rich Pumple
John Bednarski	Eddie Kachur	George Ranieri
Curt Bennett	Pete Kapusta	Bob Robertson
Harvey Bennett	George Keeling	Ray Ross
Al Bentley	Adam Keller	Chuck Scherza
Serge Boudreault	Ralph Keller	Allan Soares
Johnny Bower	Ray LaPlante	Ed Staniewski
Pierre Brillant	Paul Larivee	Allan Stanley
Ross Brooks	Bob Leduc	Jack Stoddard
Gordon Buttrey	Ed MacQueen	Billy Warwick
Ray Clearwater	Moe Mantha	
Bruce Cline	Willie Marshall	
Gary Collins	Gil Mayer	
Dave Creighton	Rod McGarry	
Ray Cyr	Jack McGeough	
Buzzy Deschamps	Don McKenney	
Pat Egan	Howie Menard	
Bo Elik	Art Michaluk	
Ferny Flaman	Jim Mikol	
Emile Francis	Rick Middleton	
Marty Gateman	Wayne Muloin	
Eddie Giacomini	Andre Peloffy	

Former executives and employees (26):

Tom Army	Frank McClarnon
Bill Castro	Tom McDonough
Larry Catone	Roy Mlakar
Vin Cimini	John Muckler
Buster Clegg	Mike Pappas
George Patrick Duffy	Bob Paquette
Peter Demers	Bob Paquette, Jr.
George German	Louis A. Pieri
Mike Gilbert	Bob Riendeau
Eddie Ellsworth	George Sage
Les Keats	Bob Tiernan
Jon Lappin	Peter Tiernan
Lucille (Pieri) Martin	Tom Woodcock

Deceased players' spouses and children (14):

Frances Branigan
Barry Crawford
Doreen McAvoy
Kelly McAvoy
Lance Reardon
Mike Reardon
Marlene Sleaver
Johna (Sleaver) Fernald
Shirley Toppazzini
Hugh Toppazzini
Mike Toppazzini
Kathy Toppazzini
Patty (Toppazzini) Butler
Nancy (Toppazzini) Milano



Search for more former Reds players

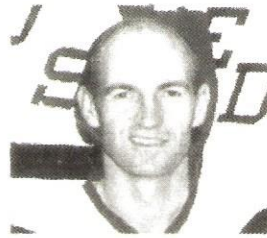
To date, 103 former Reds players, spouses, children, executives and employees are enrolled in the Society. They are listed above. In the last year we have added 35 to our list. But, we would like to include more. If anyone knows the whereabouts of an ex-player or employee, please call. You Canadian friends up north could really help. Thanks!

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 you can be featured in a future newsletter.

Backchecking

Dave Creighton spent 21 seasons in the AHL and NHL. In the “big time” the rangy center played for Boston, Toronto, Chicago and New York. In 1965-66 he was traded to the Reds from Baltimore for Eddie MacQueen. As player-coach in '67-68 he led the Reds to their first playoff appearance in five years. Centering Eddie Kachur and Brian Perry, Dave scored 22 goals, 53 assists and 75 points, and he was chosen the AHL’s MVP.



Forechecking

Dave and his wife Iris have been married 41 years and have three children: David, Adam and Carolyn. Adam, a 15-year NHL veteran himself with 5 different teams, has given them three grandsons. Since retiring from hockey Dave has been deeply involved in golf. Today he is owner or manager of 5 courses, three in Florida and two in Canada. His hobbies are golf, of course, plus following hockey (NHL mostly). *No AHL, Dave?*



Paul Larivee served 10 wonderful seasons with the Reds as a creative, playmaking center, scoring 217 goals, 322 assists and 539 points. Popular with teammates and fans alike, he centered wingers Zellio Toppazzini and Camille Henry to the team’s regular-season and Calder Cup championships in 1955-56. That season he was voted to the AHL’s second All-Star team and the next year received first team honors.



Paul and his wife of 48 years, Denise, have two sons and two daughters, plus 9 grandchildren. After his playing days, Paul served 22 years as analyst for the French-speaking versions of television broadcasts for “Hockey Night in Canada.” His hobbies are golf and farming. Today he works for his daughter and son-in law as collector of overdue accounts for their business in Bury, Quebec. *He’s called “Knuckles Larivee.”*



Nick Polano undoubtedly was one of the most popular players ever to wear a Reds’ uniform. A tough, hard-nosed defenseman, he played parts of 5 seasons in Providence, earning the respect of his teammates, fans and opponents as well. A reliable defender, he never backed down from a visiting player. In all, Nick played 16 seasons of pro hockey, toiling with such AHL teams as Hershey (4 years), Baltimore (3) as well as the Reds.



After playing, Nick stayed in hockey. He was head coach for 5 years with Erie in the NAHL and three seasons as top man with the NHL’s Red Wings. Today he works for John Muckler as a scout for the Ottawa Senators. Nick and his wife Elva have been married for 39 years and live in a Detroit suburb. They have two grown children. His hobbies: golf, fishing and power walking. *Nick, try a power walk to our reunion July 27.*

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,” introduced in this 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.

Next Issue

The next issue of *1111 Echoes* will come out in September or October 2003. It will include a review and plenty of pictures of our 3rd annual reunion. Also, look forward to more “Backchecking and Forechecking” features; and “The Chicken Wire” column, whose contributors are members of the Society. If you have a story or questions to submit to the “The Chicken Wire,” please send them along to the address on page 6.

"The Chicken Wire"...with "Red Rooster"



Welcome to "The Chicken Wire," a new column in your *1111 Echoes* newsletter that invites questions and recollections about the old Rhode Island Reds from our members. Please submit your queries or memories and "Red Rooster" will try to fill in some details.

Remember the old chicken wire around the boards at R. I. Auditorium? We hope this column will bring back memories. Fact is, the old **Red Rooster** hates Plexiglas, but is in this 21st century with television and Internet cable "wire" service we have to keep up with the times. So "wire" us.

Don O'Hanley, *Middletown, RI*: An oddity involving the old R. I. Auditorium occurred with the Newark Bulldogs club of 1928-29. The team never had an arena in the New Jersey city. All home games were played "on the road," including eight in Providence, nine at Springfield and three in Philadelphia. The Newark club had been "orphaned" when it quit Quebec City after a third place finish in the Can/Am League in 1927/28. The switch to Newark didn't help. The Bulldogs ended its only season there with a record of 14-26-0 for fifth place in the six-team circuit.

Red Rooster Recalls: Two Bulldog players went on to play with the Reds — forward **Leo Murray** (five seasons) and defenseman **Jack McVicar** (three).

Sprague Cleghorn, a veteran defenseman with Newark that year, coached the Reds in 1930/31 to a second place finish with a record of 23-11-6. However, the Boston Cubs eliminated the Reds in the semi-final, total goal series, 7 goals to 6.

Curt Bennett, *Maui, Hawaii*: I've enclosed a check for the R. I. Reds Heritage Society membership, so keep me in the loop.

I'm light years away here in Maui, but Rhode Island hockey will always stay with me. I still remember being a stick boy for the Reds in the 1960s...**Pierre Brilliant**, etc.

Red Rooster Recalls: Curt Bennett is a prize Rhode Island hockey player who has joined our membership ranks. He starred as a center for Cranston high school, Brown University and in the NHL with the St. Louis Blues, New York Rangers and Atlanta Flames. He posted an impressive NHL career record of 152-182-334.

Today Curt is a land developer in Hawaii. Of course, his dad, **Harvey**, was an outstanding goaltender for the Reds and is a recipient of the Society's "Tops Award" for 2003. Like Curt, his four brothers all graduated college, played pro hockey, and today are successful businessmen.

Incidentally, Pierre Brilliant has been found in his native town of Rimouski, Quebec. The "Rimouski Rifle" is one of our newest

members, joining his old "B-Line" partners, **Stan Baluik** and **Jimmy Bartlett**.

Al Sanderson, *Danielson, CT*: Why is no mention ever made of how the Reds broke Cleveland's unbeaten streak of 30 games in 1947-48? Also, how about that remarkable playoff season against those same Cleveland Barons in 1951-52?

Red Rooster Recalls: Great questions, Alan. Yes, the Reds ended Cleveland's 30-game undefeated streak at 24-0-6 (still an AHL record) during the 1948 playoffs. Cleveland began its streak on Wednesday, January 28, 1948 with a 6-4 victory at Springfield and finished the rest of the season at 21-0-6. Then the Barons added three more wins in the first three games of the semi-final playoffs against the Reds. But the Reds ended it with an 8-3 drubbing of the Barons in game #4 at R. I. Auditorium on Tuesday, March 30, 1948.

In that game player-coach **Terry Reardon** replaced **Ed "Whitey" Prokop** as right wing on the line with center **Ray LaPlante** and left wing **Pete Kapusta**. The fiery Reardon went on to lead the team with a pair of goals. Trailing 3-2, the Reds countered with two goals in the second by **Carl Liscombe** and Reardon to take a 4-3 lead. In the third the Reds added four more by **Harvey Fraser**, **Art Michaluk**, **Jack Stoddard** and LaPlante—all within a space of 5 minutes and 18 seconds—to end the Barons' spectacular unbeaten streak at 30 games.

No, **Johnny Bower** was not in the Barons' net. It was **Roger Bessette**. The Barons eliminated the Reds in game #5 and moved on to sweep Buffalo in the finals, 4-0, to capture the Calder Cup championship.

As to your second question, 1951-52 was one of the old Rooster's proudest and most memorable moments. It deserves a lot of space, so we'll recap that wonderful playoff series in a future issue of *1111 Echoes*.

Art Michaluk, *Innisfail, Alberta*: I wish to thank you for the *1111 Echoes* newsletter and the invitation to enroll as a member of the Society. *Echoes* was like receiving a letter from home and brought back so many pleasant memories. It was wonderful to hear from **Chuck** (Scherza). I remember those long, warm Fall days and all that delicious seafood in Rhode Island.

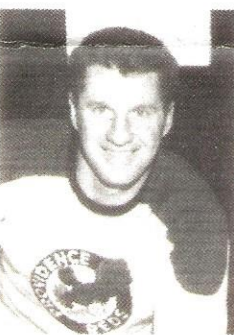
Two former hockey players — **Ray Barry** (Hershey) and Father **Ray Hannigan** (Pittsburgh)—graced us with their company on our Thanksgiving Day. There was a lot of old



Terry Reardon



Ray LaPlante



Pete Kapusta



Art Michaluk

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"On Frozen Pond" Premiers

"On Frozen Pond," a film documentary chronicling the history of Burrillville High School hockey and Tom Eccleston, the legendary founder and coach of hockey in that town, made its public debut on WSBE-TV channel 36, Rhode Island's PBS station, the evening of Wednesday, April 2.

Beginning in the woods and on the frozen ponds of northern Rhode Island and reaching into the upper echelons of the National Hockey League, Eccleston made his mark as New England's legendary educator, coach and unsung innovator of American hockey.

This documentary features his achievements at Burrillville High School, Providence College and Pennsylvania's Hill School over a span of 60 years, told by the people whose lives he inspired.

Produced and directed by Kathi Wheater, a Burrillville native, the film

incorporates vintage film, excellent narration, penetrating interviews, superb camera work and special effects that make this a "must see" video.



Eighty minutes in all, "On Frozen Pond" has received accolades from the Rhode Island Hockey community, including the R. I. Reds Heritage Society, the R. I. Interscholastic League, the R. I. High School Coaches Association and the R. I. Hockey Officials Association.

The old R. I. Auditorium, home of both schoolboy hockey and the Rhode Island Reds hockey team, plays an important role in the film's content.

"This is as greatest presentation of the history of Rhode Island hockey ever made," praised Dick Lynch, executive director of the R. I. Interscholastic League.

Before public airing April 2, the film appropriately was premiered free of charge in the student auditorium at Burrillville High School in Harrisville on Friday and Saturday evenings, March 28 and 29.

Wheater, a documentary producer who lives in San Francisco, is working to have her creation syndicated throughout the country's network of PBS television stations.

To order your copy, send a check for \$32 (which includes shipping) to Kathi Wheater, Video Free America, 442 Shotwell Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Hockey--A Beer Drinker's Game *By Curt Bennett*



I don't want the play-offs to end. You see, I'm a health nut. I get in good shape watching the play-offs. I have to.... I drink

too many beers during the games.

Hockey is difficult to watch on TV, but it's easier to get a beer. I just have to wait for a whistle, then sprint to the refrigerator. They cost one-tenth the price, of a beer at a game and are much colder. I try to sip my beer, but I start to chug when I see a good play, a good check, or a stupid remark by one of the announcers. "That guy, don't know diddly," I'll say, and drink to my wisdom. The more I drink, the wiser I get. You know that magical power of beer. **Johnny Arbour** (not Al), a hard-nosed defenseman I played with in St. Louis, used to say, "We're the toughest team in the league in the bars after the game." Beer makes you smart and tough. Tell me one health food that will do that.

They stop selling beer after the second period of a hockey game. At home I can drink deep into overtime. They have a lot of overtimes in hockey. I really have to be a good husband for my wife to let me watch past the first rounds of the play-offs. Wives will humor you by watching the first part of the game, but they get bored as the game wears on and often go to sleep. They wouldn't if they drank more beer.

Buffalo and Dallas were in the finals in June 1999. They went to overtime in Game #1. You have to be in exceptional condition to drink into overtime. Getting something to eat and going to the bathroom complicate the whole experience. As soon as you leave something happens. I missed Buffalo's go-ahead goal by **Wayne Primeau** because my wife called me to do something. Ever notice how wives have that knack to pull you away at the exact wrong time?

Just like the players, a beer-drinking fan has to have composure and good timing. The latter becomes a factor as the game progresses, as the number of

bathroom breaks increase, proportional to the length of the game. If you were ever curious why hockey has two intermissions (between the 3 periods), whereas other sports have just one you now know the answer. Hockey fans quaff more beer than any other sport. Every notice how often they play that 'Bud Light' commercial with the hockey-game guys. I think whoever writes those ads is drinking too much beer.

Today will be tough because I owe my body some exercising to make up for last night's overtime game. "What time did you come to bed last night?" my wife asked. I couldn't remember because I fell asleep and missed Buffalo's overtime goal by **Jason Wholley**.

I'm a health nut who is trying to get in good enough shape to drink into overtime.

Editor's note: Curt Bennett is a native Rhode Islander and a member of the state's famous hockey-playing Bennett family. He spent 10 seasons in the NHL as a star center for St. Louis, New York and Atlanta. Today he is a real estate developer in Hawaii and a very funny guy!

Bennett and Clegg named "Tops Award" winners for 2003

A long-time Rhode Island Reds goaltender who played more games in the net than anyone else in the team's 51-year history and a former general manager who is the founder and president of the organization that preserves the memory of the franchise are the recipients of the 2003 "Tops Awards."

The goalie is Harvey Bennett who spent a dozen seasons with Providence's American League Hockey team and played in a team-record 480 games in the net.



Harvey Bennett

The former general manager is Buster Clegg who was a member of the Reds' front office for nine years, including the last two as general manager. He was the driving force in the founding of the R. I. Reds Heritage Society three years ago. The organization has grown to more than 400 members from throughout the United States and Canada.

Dedicated in honor of the late Zello Toppazzini, the Tops Award was established by the heritage society to recognize persons who contributed outstanding service to the Rhode Island Reds hockey club and to the community. Toppazzini, the Reds all-time leading scorer, was named the team's "Player of the Century" and honored by the society in special ceremonies at the Dunkin Donuts Center shortly before his untimely death.

Bennett joined the Reds for the 1947-48 season and helped lead the team to the AHL's Eastern Division championship that year. A year later, his goaltending was a major factor in the Reds Eastern Division and Calder Cup championships. His goals-against average that season was a sparkling 3.16. With Bennett in goal, the Reds also made the playoffs in 1949-50 and 1951-52, and again won the Calder Cup in 1955-56 as his long career in goal was winding down. It was with the Boston Bruins franchise that Bennett started his pro career in 1945-46, as he split the season between the National Hockey League and the Boston Olympics of the Eastern Hockey League.

After his career with the Reds, Bennett worked extensively in youth hockey in Rhode Island, helping to develop a new generation of young players. Five of those players were his sons, all of whom went on to play professional hockey with four making it to the NHL. Now age 77, Bennett resides in Sun City Centre, Fla.

Clegg played high school hockey at Burrillville and captained the University of New Hampshire team in 1958-59. He was named general manager of the Reds in 1966-67 following several front-

office assignments after joining the Reds for the 1959-60 season. Since his service with the Reds, Clegg has been deeply involved with youth hockey as a coach and as a member of the board of directors for more than 30 years.

Today, at age 66, he still coaches youth hockey kids and is president of the East Bay (RI) Ice Arena Foundation. Three years ago, he was the catalyst in the formation of the R.I. Reds Heritage Society, which he now serves as its founding president. He resides in Barrington, R.I.



Buster Clegg

Bennett and Clegg will receive their awards on July 27 during the society's third annual reunion to be held at Goddard State Park in Warwick.

Past recipients of the "Tops Award" are former players Ferny Flaman, the defenseman whose career led him to the NHL and election to the Hockey Hall of Fame; Chuck Scherza, a star center for a decade with the Reds and one of the team's most popular players; George Patrick Duffy, who had a long career as the team's radio voice and publicity director, and Eddie Ellsworth, who served as business manager and comptroller for 31 years.

Welcome, State Legislators

The R. I. Reds Heritage Society has four new members from the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. We are pleased to welcome the following:

- **Senator David E. Bates** (R), District 9 (Barrington and Bristol)
- **Senator John A. Celona** (D), District 7 (North Providence and Lincoln)
- **Senator Frank A. Ciccone, III** (D), District 3 (Providence)
- **Representative John B. Harwood** (D), District 59 (Pawtucket)

The Society is grateful for your support.

(continued from page 4)

American Hockey League played that day!

Red Rooster Recalls: Art Michaluk was one tough defenseman for the Reds in the late 1940s and early '50s. His bruising hip checks were feared by opponents and were the talk of the league. Art was instrumental in the Reds winning the AHL's Eastern Division championship for the Reds in both 1947-48 and 1948-49 and for their conquest of the Calder Cup in '48-49. Art, thanks for the kind note. We appreciate your support.

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