

1111 Echoes

Winter 2005/06

A newsletter from the R. I. Reds Heritage Society

Important Notice for Members

Paid Members: For those who already have paid their \$20 membership dues for this current 2005/06 season, your new membership card is enclosed. Thank you for your continued support.

Unpaid Members To Date: For those who haven't paid their membership renewal to date, enclosed is another renewal flyer. Please renew as soon as possible. As a non-profit group with limited resources, it is expensive and time consuming for your Society to send out past due reminders. Thank you. We value your membership and appreciate your cooperation.

6th Annual Reunion News A special 50th Anniversary salute to members of our last Calder Cup Championship team (1955-56)

- Sunday, August 6, 2006, 12 noon until dusk
- Goddard State Park, Warwick, RI
- More players and Reds memorabilia
- 300 or more players and fans expected
- Great food, music and laughter
- Dozens of raffle prizes

What's Inside?

- "The Last Auditorium Expedition" (pages 2 and 3)
- New profiles: Milt Schmidt and Eddie MacQueen (page 4)
- "The Chicken Wire" (page 4)
- Passion for "Our Game" starts "On the Pond" (page 5)
- Dave Andrews: "Lunch & Crunch" speaker (page 6)

R.I. Reds Heritage Society's 3rd Annual "Lunch & Crunch"

Lunch followed by a P-Bruins game
Sunday, March 26, 2006

12:15 PM "Lunch": Lancellotta's Restaurant, 1113 Charles St., North Prov., RI. Lunch menu: Family-style, all you can eat—soup, salad, pasta, oven-roasted potatoes, and both roasted chicken and strip sirloin steak, plus coffee. Liquor purchases not included. Featured speaker this year will be David Andrews, the dynamic president of the 27-team American Hockey League. He is profiled on page 6 of your newsletter.

4:05 PM "Crunch": Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, RI. Crunch menu: an AHL game between the Providence Bruins and Hartford Wolf Pack, top farm team of the New York Rangers. This contest will feature two of the best teams in the league in a game that will demonstrate skillful play, fast skating, and some "crunch" hitting by many future NHL stars.

Total cost for the March 26th "Lunch & Crunch" event:

Only \$30 per adult

Just \$15 for children 12 and under

Reservations limited to 120 persons

(Last year's event sold out)

Please complete the enclosed reservation form, make check payable to
R.I. Reds Heritage Society
and mail to P.O. Box 167, Barrington, RI 02806

Deadline for reservations: March 4, 2006

Note: Both Luncheon passes and Game tickets will be distributed at the restaurant. Everyone is responsible for their own transportation to and parking at the game.

For further information call 401-247-2666

or E-mail UNH1959@aol.com



Sample Lunch: Hall of Fame defenseman Ferny Flaman (left) and guest speaker Paul Stewart, legendary NHL referee, enjoyed "chat and chow" at last year's event.



Then Crunch: Wow! This year's P-Bruins vs. Hartford Wolf Pack game promises to be "crushing!" Please order now, as only 120 reservations are available.

The Last Auditorium Expedition

By Arnold Bailey, sports collectibles writer, Providence Journal



R.I. Auditorium: Standing majestically here in the 1960s, the building was also known as the Arena and served as home of the Rhode Island Reds from 1926 through 1972.



The "Day of Infamy": Wednesday, April 5, 1989, brought the wrecking crane and its crew to begin demolition of the 63-year old building, which had stood vacant and deteriorating for years throughout the 1980s.



The "Best of Times": If you went to a Reds game at the old Auditorium on a Sunday night, you could expect to encounter a sell-out crowd. Though billed as only a 5,300 seat arena, many times over 6,000 packed the old barn.



Those old Sunday nights: Willie Marshall (8), owner of the AHL's records for most career goals, assists and points, puts the "biscuit in the basket" past a helpless goalie opponent. Willie gives the Reds a first period lead in 1964.

It certainly couldn't be compared to the Indiana Jones action-filled rush through the Temple of Doom, or Sir Edmund Hillary's climb to the top of Mount Everest. It was probably more like the comedic quest in Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

But for two fans of the old R. I. Reds hockey team and the arena where they played for close to a half century, it was a sentimental journey forced by circumstances to beat both the clock and the wrecker's ball and crane.

The date was April 5, 1989 – the beginning of the end for the old Rhode Island Auditorium. Actually, the end had begun 17 years earlier when the R.I. Reds moved their hockey games out of the old barn and into the then-new Providence Civic Center in the city's downtown. But on this sunny day in early April, demolition crews were lined up at 1111 North Main Street to officially begin the task of knocking the old arena down to pave the way for a hospital parking lot. Miriam Hospital nearby had bought the two-acre site for \$1.5-million three years earlier.

A call from Buster Clegg alerted me to what was happening. He said he had heard somewhere that the old Auditorium was being demolished that very day. That's the same Buster Clegg who is now the founding president of the heritage society that perpetuates all things Reds and Auditorium. The two of us had been close friends as Burrillville High School hockey teammates under the great coach, Tom Eccleston, and partners in youthful and harmless crime since the mid 1950s.

We agreed to meet at 1111 North Main about noon. What we found when we arrived were crews from Cut Rite Concrete Sawing Corp. of nearby Pawtucket and Pasquazzi Brothers of Cranston. They were already at work preparing for the demolition, sawing the steel-reinforced concrete columns that supported the 63-year-old building.

It was time for their lunch break when the two of us walked up to the Auditorium entrance and asked if we could take a quick trip through the building for old time's sake. The fact that Buster had been a general manager of the Reds helped make our request more credible. That and some wheedling, cajoling and shameless pleading.

We were allowed in but with the stern warning that we'd better be back out in 45 minutes or the building would be knocked down around us. While we both were devoted to the old building, our devotion didn't extend to accepting it as our tomb for all eternity. We accepted the demo crew's time restriction.

After the Reds moved their hockey games across town, the old building had been used, at various times, as a health club, tennis courts, a restaurant, a night club, a discotheque and a topless bar. None of those things ever caught on. Often the building had been empty. By 1989, the Auditorium's welcoming entrance had been transformed into a forbidding facade of ugly metal sheets. A Providence Journal article by John Castellucci described it this way: "In its heyday, the Auditorium was one of the largest sports and performance spaces in New England...In more recent times, it's been an eyesore."

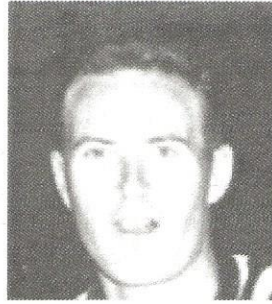
Backchecking and Forechecking

Backchecking

Ed MacQueen was one of the most popular players ever to wear a Reds' uniform. In 18 seasons spent in the AHL, Eddie played eight of them with the Reds, starting in 1958-59, before being traded to Baltimore in '65-66. Originally a defenseman, his coaches used his versatility to move him up front occasionally. As a role player Eddie excelled. He could score goals, set up plays and was never afraid to employ his fists.

* * * *

Milt Schmidt played only briefly with the Reds back in 1936. After only 23 games here the Boston Bruins quickly realized they had a prize in their 18-year-old center. Then it was off to Boston for a brilliant, 16-year NHL career: 253 goals and 371 assists for 624 points. He led the NHL in scoring in 1939, was MVP in 1951 and named 3 times to the NHL All-Star team. Milt was on Stanley Cup championship teams in 1939 and 1941.



Forechecking

Ed lives in Woodstock, Ontario. After hockey he spent years in sales of aluminum storm windows and siding. Today he enjoys retirement. He has two grown children — David and Marcia — and 9 grand kids. Even today he still keeps a close eye on hockey. David, also a former pro player, is head coach of the Erie (PA) Otters of the OHL, a top junior development league. "Sure keeps me interested in hockey," says dad!

* * * *

Retiring, Milt stayed with the Bruins, first as coach, then as general manager where he led the Bruins to two more Stanley Cups in the 1970s. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1991. A resident of Westwood, MA, he also became the 500th member of the Reds Heritage Society in 2004 and received a tremendous standing ovation. Now 88, he has a grown son, Connie, who once played at Brown University.

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



Welcome to back to "The Chicken Wire," the 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.

Tom Army (vice president of our Society), East Providence, RI: Through 51 seasons the R. I. Reds enjoyed the presence of 16 players who wore our team's red, white and black uniform and later were elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. Five goaltenders honored are Johnny Bower, Frank Brimsek, Ed Giacomin, Harry Lumley and Lorne "Gump" Worsley. Four defensemen at their side are Emile "Butch" Bouchard, Ferny Flaman, Harry Sinden (builders' category) and Allan Stanley. Seven HOF forwards also are former Reds: Milt Schmidt, Bobby Bauer and Woody Dumart—the famous Bruins' "Kraut Line" line that got its start here in the 1930s—head the list. They are joined by Marx Bentley, Toe Blake, Fred "Bun" Cook (player-coach) and Billy Mosienko. Defenseman Sprague Cleghorn, who never donned a Reds uniform, nevertheless was coach here in the early 30s and is in the cherished Hockey Hall of Fame.

Tom also adds that five additional former Reds are enshrined in the United States Hockey Hall of Fame: Goaltender Mike Karakas, defenseman Johnny Mariucci, Pete Bessone and Amo

Bessone (coaches' category) and forward Ken Yackel.

Red Rooster: Thank for the info, Tom. Hard to believe so many greats played for our team at the old R. I. Auditorium. Speaking of that, the Society is deeply grateful to Tom for providing his own original artwork creation that became the visual of our newest ornament for 2005-06: "*The Rink, Inside the Auditorium.*"

Ken Bell (sports director for ABC6), Providence, RI: What does the R. I. Reds Heritage Society think of the new rules adopted by the National Hockey League?

Red Rooster: It appears to be unanimous among our 12 board members that the new rule changes employed by the NHL have definitely made the game more interesting and enjoyable not only for us, but for all spectators. Essentially, the league has finally negated the red line to allow a two-zone pass, much like college and high school hockey, thereby considerably opening up center ice. Also, goaltenders are now permitted to play the puck only from a restricted area, thereby enabling the offensive team to better fore check. Goaltenders equipment has been reduce in size to benefit opposing shooters. And in the event of a tie game even after overtime, a special "shootout" has been inaugurated so that one team eventually gets a victory and two points and the loser gets one point for its effort. The bottom line is that scoring is up 30 percent in the NHL over recent seasons and that's what hockey fans come to see—plenty of goals!

The Last Auditorium Expedition *continued*

How important had the Auditorium been as a major venue? Measure it by this yardstick – in 1969, a year before his death, rock legend Jimi Hendrix performed there during a world tour that featured all the important arenas, placing the Auditorium in company with the likes of New York’s Madison Square Garden, Toronto’s Maple Leaf Garden, the Forum in Los Angeles, Royal Albert Hall in London and, eventually, Woodstock in upstate New York state.

What greeted us as we entered the front lobby were damp darkness, hollow emptiness and echoing silence. Buster had had the foresight to bring along a flashlight and, following its beam, we made our way to the innards of the old barn.

Little was left that offered the slightest hint that a great American Hockey League franchise had once played there, that the Ice Follies and Ice Capades had performed there, that boxers like Rocky Manciano and homegrown Joey Archibald had battled there, that crowds had been entertained by the likes of the Rolling

seats, to their beer and hotdogs, to wherever else they needed to go. Maybe there was still the faint odor of stale beer and cigarette smoke, but that was all.

All our flashlight’s beam could illuminate was emptiness. And the motion of rats scurrying off to avoid our light.

We did bump into a few old metal filing cabinets deep in the catacombs, rusting in the dampness and an open, near-empty safe for a few folders holding what appeared to be long outdated records and reports about people who long ago had abandoned the place.

And Buster found what once had been an “exit” sign and whose metal and plastic construction had somehow survived the ravages of time and the sharp eyes of souvenir hunters. Perhaps the “exit” sign reminded us that time was passing. We made tracks back to the front lobby and out the door just as the demo crew’s lunch ended and their attack on the building resumed.



The Auditorium marquee: Under brilliant lights, an early start for eager hockey fans. It must have been against the Quebec Aces. Hope we won!

Stones, the Grateful Dead, James Brown, Bob Hope, Guy Lombardo, Duke Ellington and Rudy Vallee there, that kids had once laughed at the clowns and held their breath during the high-wire acts when circuses came to town there, that high school hockey games once filled their air with now-silenced cheers there, that all levels of basketball teams exchanged hoops there, that tennis matches including a classic between Don Budge and Ellsworth Vines had been played there, that wrestlers and rodeos had stirred emotions of their fans there, that people had enjoyed activities as diverse as public skating and flower shows there, that hawkers had sold their wares with sounds of “Ice cream, get your chocolate covered ice cream” there.

All the oversize player photos that once adorned the lobby walls were long since gone. The scoreboard and clock were history. So were most of signs that had directed fans to their



Crowded outer lobby: Folks lining up for tickets, others making sure they have them. Some others hearing, “Program, scorecard, line-up. Get your line-up for tonight’s game.”

We did find a section or two of Auditorium seats in a pile of debris outside. With permission, we salvaged a couple of seats each as our souvenirs: those and a supply of red bricks that had once been part of the building exterior walls.

As we got back to our cars, Buster even managed to find some humor in the demolition of the building that had been his place of business and pleasure for so many years, complaining, “I’ll bet my old office is the first thing they knock down.”

It took about three months to complete the demolition. The Auditorium was a tough, old building. But there came a day when Buster’s office and almost all traces of the building were gone and the old Auditorium was only a great and colorful memory.

Passion for “Our Game” starts “On the Pond”

By Roger Grillo, men’s head hockey coach, Brown University



Coach Grillo

The most important gift that hockey coaches and parents can give their players is to help them develop a true and strong passion for the game. The way the game of hockey is set-up today, especially at the younger levels, it is extremely difficult for players to develop a passion for hockey.

Everything is over-coached or too structured. The players are not able to learn the game with their own creativity or ability to be themselves.

They are always being scrutinized by coaches and parents.

In previous generations hockey players learned and developed their passion and their skills on “The Pond.” For numerous reasons this type of development no longer occurs for many of today’s young players. The excitement of playing a ten-on-ten game with your friends—where you are not only a player, but a referee, a general manger and the scorekeeper—seem to have vanished.

In bygone days the only limits a player had were in the youngster’s imagination, along with the help of Mother Nature and the player’s buddies. Today, unfortunately, we have taken the game away from the young players and we need to help give it back.

How do we give the game back to the kids? It is really quite simple. We take the spirit of “The Pond” and move it indoors. We, as adults, need to take a step back and allow our young players to teach themselves and each other. Most importantly, we need to help create that passion that is needed to grow our game.

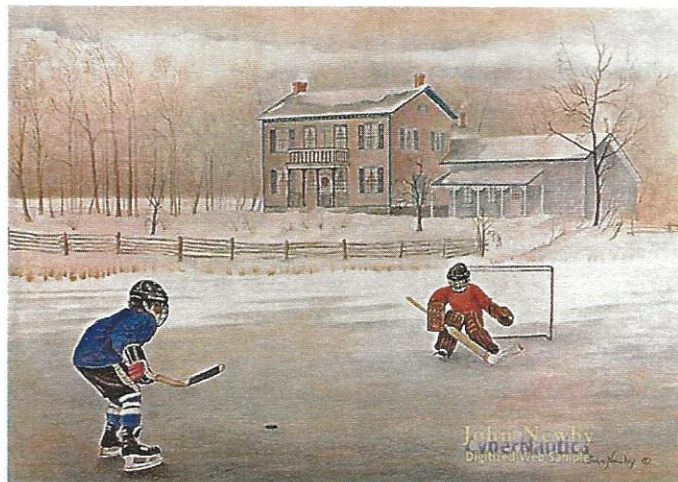
We cannot expect youth hockey players to have fun if they play by our rules all the time. Let’s give them a chance and the time to create their own games and experience the joy of playing without fear of consequences from the bench or the stands. We are in a pattern of thinking that more analysis is better, however, in reality we need to have more balance.

What is the goal of youth hockey? Is it to create professionals? Or is it to create an avenue where young people can experience the joy of playing our great game?

Young players today play too many organized games and adults structure most all of their hockey experiences. There are more kids playing today, yet fewer great players being developed. Not only are the young players getting burned out, but whole families are becoming increasingly frustrated by the commitment they feel is necessary for their youngsters to be successful.

Here are a few examples of how we can bring “The Pond” indoors:

- Small games or cross-ice hockey is one way. Let the players learn the game through playing the game without a referee or the feeling of an organized game.
- Let’s have coaches and parents take a step back and allow the players to experience the game without the feeling that everything they do will be criticized.
- Cut back on the number of games and double the number of practices. In a game, kids play one-third of the time allotted; the other two-thirds of time they sit on the bench. Every practice gives them full time on the ice for every session.
- Lastly, encourage kids to play other sports. By taking a break from the ice they will become hungry for the next season and learn that quality, not quantity, is the key. Using “The Pond” concept, when the ice melts, the season is over. At least until it freezes over again.



Let’s bring this fun inside!

In the short time I have lived here, I am constantly disappointed by the lack of media coverage and recognition for Rhode Island’s biggest and best sport. I would encourage you to spread the word about the great youth, high school, college and professional hockey this state has to offer.

In closing, I believe that in hockey we have a great game; however it needs a little fine tuning. I urge everyone out there to help get “Our Game” into the minds and hearts of all Rhode Islanders who understand the rich tradition of hockey in this state.

Everybody out there will not agree with me, but in my mind it is time to learn from the past and make a few adjustments so the passion for “Our Game” becomes even stronger.

“Our Game” has taken a hit in many different ways over the past couple of years, yet it still remains a great game with many positive things to offer to all of us.

David Andrews, President of the AHL, to be this year's "Lunch & Crunch" guest speaker

Now in his 12th season as President and CEO of the American Hockey League in 2005-06, David Andrews continues to solidify a position as one of the sport's most influential executives.

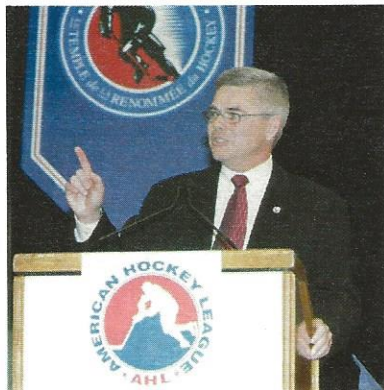
He has guided the AHL into unequaled times of prosperity, directing the league to record levels of attendance and exposure, while expanding its geography across the United States and Canada.

In 2001, Andrews led the complex enterprise of bringing the AHL into nine new cities, setting the stage for the largest expansion effort in league history. During his tenure, Andrews has guided the AHL's expansion into major North American markets such as Philadelphia, Chicago, Winnipeg, Houston, Milwaukee and Cleveland, and in 2005-06, the AHL has welcomed teams in Toronto, Des Moines, Omaha and Peoria.

League attendance has climbed dramatically under Andrews' leadership, rising more than 135 percent since 1994. The AHL set all-time attendance marks during the 2004-05 season, averaging 5,960 fans per game in the regular season and surpassing the 7-million mark overall for the first time in its 69-year history (7,102,909). Attendance during the 2005 Calder Cup Playoffs was up a dramatic 35 percent from the previous postseason.

Andrews was instrumental in the revitalization of the AHL All-Star Classic, re-introduced in 1995 after a 35-year hiatus. The annual event has grown to become an international showcase for the AHL, and the 2005 Dodge AHL All-Star Classic in Manchester, N.H., was another great success, with the league's brightest stars shining before international television audiences on ESPN2 and Rogers Sportsnet.

A native of Nova Scotia, Andrews assumed his duties as AHL President in July of 1994. He came to the league office



with a firsthand knowledge of the AHL, having served as the Edmonton Oilers' director of AHL operations for seven years, building the Cape Breton Oilers franchise into one of the most successful AHL clubs both on and off the ice. The Oilers captured the 1993 Calder Cup championship and missed the playoffs only once in six seasons. The Oilers set a league record (since broken) with 36 sellouts during the 1990-91 season, and they sold out 118 games in a four-year span from 1989-93. Andrews was awarded the 1990 James C. Hendy Award as the AHL's outstanding executive.

Prior to joining the Oilers, Andrews was employed by the government of Canada as a senior consultant with SportCanada. In that position, he was responsible for providing direction to five national Winter Olympic sport organizations in the development of the national team for the 1988 Winter Olympic Games in Calgary.

Andrews' hockey background includes serving as head coach and director of hockey operations for the Victoria Cougars of the Western Hockey League from 1982-84, and he served as an assistant coach for the Cougars when they represented the WHL in the 1981 Memorial Cup. He has also served as head coach of the 1982 Canadian National Under-18 Team and as an assistant coach at the 1985 Canadian Olympic Hockey Team training camp.

Andrews was the Hockey Development Coordinator for the Province of British Columbia from 1975-80. He served 10 years on the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association's Developmental Council and was chairman of the coaching committee for CAHA during that time. For his contributions to hockey in the province of British Columbia, Andrews was honored in 2005 as an inductee into the B.C. Hockey Hall of Fame.

During his playing days as a goaltender, Andrews was a conference all-star and MVP at both Dalhousie University and the University of British Columbia. He played four years professionally for RAAK in the Dutch first division. Dave and his wife, Marleen, reside in Wilbraham, Mass. They have three children: Chrissy, Brad and Jeff.

Next Issue: Very Special

The next issue of *IIII Echoes* will be published in mid-to-late April, 2006. It will be a very special edition to announce plans to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Reds last Calder Cup title in 1955-56 at our 6th Annual Reunion. The reunion will be held again at Goddard State Park in Warwick, RI, on Sunday, August 6, 2006.



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