



1111 Echoes

Winter 2006/07

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 2006/07 season, your new membership card is enclosed. Please fill in your name and enjoy. 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 reminder. Please renew as soon as possible. Your Society is a non-profit group with limited resources and it is expensive and time consuming for us to send out past due reminders. Thank you. We value your membership and appreciate your cooperation.

7th Annual Reunion

A Salute to our "Hall of Famers"

- Sunday, August 5, 2007, 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?

- Greatest Goaltenders of the 1950s Finally Meet (pgs 2 & 3)
- In Memoriam: George M. Sage (p 3)
- Red Rooster's Society Updates (p 4)
 - Reds Merchandise Gifts (p 5)
- 4th Annual "Lunch & Crunch" (p 6)
- My Amazing Hockey Sojourns (p 6)

R. I. Reds to be Honored by the P-Bruins at "The Dunk" on Feb. 9th

The Providence Bruins will pay special tribute the old Rhode Island Reds hockey team when they face off against the Worcester Sharks at the Dunkin' Donuts Center on Friday, February 9 at 7:05 p.m.

Prior to the game, a ceremony will take place where former Reds "Hall of Fame" members Ferny Flaman, Milt Schmidt and Gil Mayer will be raising a R. I. Reds championship banner to the rafters of the arena. The banner will honor all Calder and Fontaine Cup championships won by the old Reds team during its 51-year history in pro hockey from 1926 through 1977.

A video of R. I. Reds highlights will also be shown on the new state-of-the-art video board prior to the ceremony.

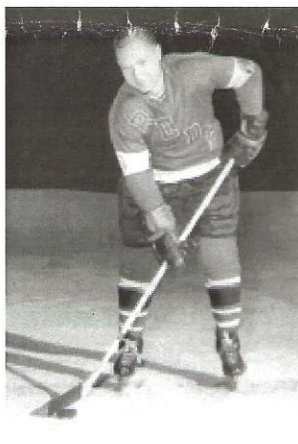
The P-Bruins will wear 1968 throwback R. I. Reds' jerseys, several of which will be put up for auction after the game. Other festivities on the evening include free commemorative R. I. Reds posters for the first 4,000 fans and a book signing of *Hockey in Providence* by author Jim Mancuso and former Reds players.

Some of the other former Reds expected to be in attendance that evening include Ross Brooks, Chuck Scherza, Bobby Leduc, Serge Boudreault, Don McKenney, Marty Gateman and George Patrick Duffy, radio "Voice of the Reds."

The R. I. Reds were a huge part of a rich hockey history in Rhode Island and were reborn when the R. I. Reds Heritage Society was formed by 7 founders in 2000. Today, our historical organization has over 600 members, including more than 100 former players.

In announcing the event, the Providence Bruins said, "We are proud to be able to honor the Reds, the team that started hockey here in Rhode Island."

We urge Reds' society members to attend this historic event. Those interested should call 401-273-5000 or visit providencebruins.com.



Ferny Flaman, 1964



Gil Mayer, 1952



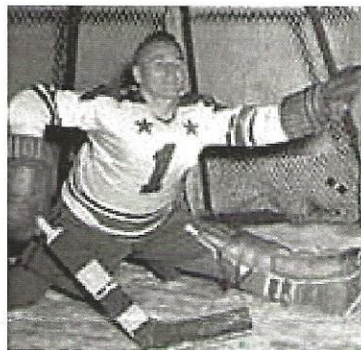
Milt Schmidt, 1936

Bower and Mayer Finally Meet Off the Ice

By Arnold Bailey

Two hall of fame goaltenders, who faced each other from 200 feet away for about a decade in the American Hockey League a half century ago, finally met face to face for the first time at the R.I. Reds Heritage Society's sixth-annual reunion last summer.

Johnny Bower and Gil Mayer played against each other on the ice many times, especially when the former was with the Cleveland Barons and the latter with the Pittsburgh Hornets, including a memorable seven-game Calder Cup playoff in 1951. But, until they got together during two days of society reunion events, they really hadn't spent time together off the ice.



Johnny as a Baron in the 50s

"Back then, after games, it was pretty much back to the dressing room," recalled Mayer, "and then the visiting team would leave the arena and head for home."

"We played against each other very often in the AHL," said Bower during a phone interview from his home in Canada, "especially when I was with Cleveland and he was with Pittsburgh. That was a big rivalry back then, sort of like the AHL version of Montreal against Toronto in the NHL."

"I remember one very special game in the playoffs for the Calder Cup. We won the cup on sort of a fluke goal, but I remember that Gil was phenomenal in that game. Believe me, I went to church to pray before every time we played against him. He was a top-notch goaltender. So many shutouts they even gave him the jersey with a 'zero' on it to symbolize his shutouts, which pretty much sums up how good he was. He wasn't a big guy, but he was tough, and a great team man, too."

The two legendary goaltenders had long careers that were very similar in many ways, but also very different in others, a study of both commonalities and contrasts.

They were the first two goaltenders elected to the relatively new AHL Hall of Fame, Bower with the first group of seven last year and Mayer with the second group of four a year later. (Bower's induction class also included Jack Butterfield, Jody Gage, Fred Glover, Willie Marshall, Frank Mathers and Eddie Shore; Mayer's class includes Dick Gamble, Fred "Bun" Cook and Mike Nykoluk.)

Scores of great goaltenders have starred in the AHL since the league began in 1936 when the Canadian-American and International leagues were merged. But it's fitting that Bower and Mayer were the first two into the league's hall of fame. They are ranked first and second in wins and shutouts, Bower first in both

categories with Mayer close behind. And Bower ranks second and Mayer third in AHL history in most games played in goal (former Reds Marcel Paille and Harvey Bennett are first and fourth, respectively).

For a span of eight consecutive years, beginning in 1951, Bower and Mayer had a lock hold on the Harry (Hap) Holmes Memorial Award given to the AHL goalie with the best goals-against average. Mayer won the prestigious trophy in 1951, Bower in '52, then Mayer four straight years from '53 through '56, then Bower again in '57 and '58. That's called domination.

Bower's 11 years in the AHL include three with the Reds, and Mayer spent the final two of his 14 league seasons with the Roosters. Bower's tenure in Providence was highlighted 1955-56 by the Calder Cup season, the final championship won by the storied franchise. But his first time protecting the Reds' goal requires some explanation.

It was in 1946 and Bower was a goalie on the Cleveland roster when the Barons came into Providence to play the Reds at the Auditorium at the end of the season. "The Reds goalie was injured and many teams carried only one goalie back then, so the Barons' general manager asked me to suit up for the Reds so we could get the game played," Bower recalls. "I can't remember who won, but golly boy I remember it was very close. After the game, Mr. Pieri (Reds owner Lou Pieri) came over to thank me. He shook my hand and left a \$50 bill in it. That was a nice gesture and a lot of money then."

Looking back, the two great goaltenders talked about their strengths and weaknesses.

Mayer said his strength was his ability to "play the angles, which was something I taught myself. I used to play out on the edge of the crease to limit the shooters' angle on the net. I also was fast and my light weight probably helped with that. I was only 128 pounds as a junior at Lake Placid and usually played at around 135 pounds through my career. But my small size also could be a problem because the pads were so heavy back then, especially when they were wet after several games in just a few days. And my stick side was probably my weakest. The blocker gloves weren't as light and efficient as today."

Bower said he had "a good glove, and played the angles well. And I learned to poke check (he was one of the few goalies adept at this move). It was something I had to learn and it was



Gil with Pittsburgh in the 50s

(Continued to next page)

Bower and Mayer *(continued)*

frustrating at first. Today, of course, goalies use the butterfly which we didn't. Shots low or on the ice to my stick side that always were my weakness."

Bower ranks Maurice Richard, the great "Rocket" of the Canadiens, as his toughest opponent. "He always had that fire in his eyes," Bower recalled. Mayer remembers former Reds coach and defenseman Pat Egan as a tough opponent: "He always kept his show low and it was one of those very heavy shots."

Looking back at great teams, Bower ranks his first Toronto Stanley Cup winners as the best he played for, although his final championship Maple Leafs team was interesting, too, "because we were older and nobody figured we'd win." Mayer ranks his five Calder Cup winning teams in Pittsburgh as about equal as the best he played for.

Bower played 15 seasons in the NHL, while Mayer was with Toronto only briefly, during parts of four different seasons. Eventually, Bower's great NHL career led him to election to the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, of which he is justly proud.

Among many honors that have come to Mayer, one that has special meaning is the Dapper Dan Award which goes annually to



**Johnny and Gil finally meet off the ice
August 5, 2006**

Added Bower: "It was so nice to see Gil and the other guys... so many old friends. We talked a lot about the games we played against each other. And we got such a great reception (from the fans) after all this time. The fans were really great back then, and they're still great as they showed at the reunion. My wife really enjoyed it, too. It was nice to see the guys from the Calder Cup team (and mark the 50th anniversary of that championship). The hospitality was just great. We hope to have a bus bring more former players back again for the next summer reunion."

Editor's Note: Arnold Bailey is a Society Director.

the top athlete in Pittsburgh. The prestigious list of winners includes the likes of Arnold Palmer, along with Mayer.

Both Bower and Mayer enjoyed the Reds Heritage Society's reunion weekend.

Said Mayer: "I've been to every one of the (six) reunions of the society, and I get to go to many of the monthly luncheons, too, since I live fairly close by (in Lincoln, R.I.). We (Bower and Mayer) talked a lot, not just about hockey but about a lot of things. It was so great to see him, and all the other guys."

In Memoriam: George M. Sage

Sadly, the Society recently lost one of its most dedicated members and supporters, and also one of the finest persons ever to walk the face of the earth.

George M. Sage, 75, who was owner and president of our Reds from 1969 through 1976, died suddenly and peacefully at R. I. Hospital on Monday evening, December 4. A dedicated tennis player, he passed away while playing his favorite game during a doubles match earlier that afternoon.

Though noted by hockey people for his love of our game, George is remembered even more for being the founding president and owner of Bonanza Bus Lines, a giant transportation company that serviced this region's area.

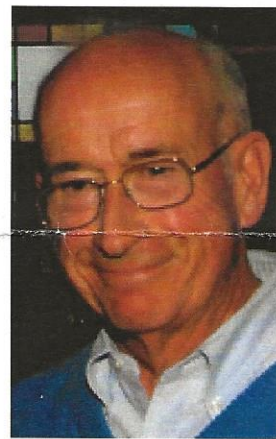
A humble and dedicated philanthropist, George was a trustee of St. Andrews School in Barrington. He chaired two major capital fund drives for the school, which now has a gymnasium named in his honor. His other contributions to the community are too numerous to recount in this publication.

However, one in particular must be noted here. He was presented in 2004 with the prestigious R. I. Reds Heritage Society's "Tops Award," a tribute that recognizes distinguished service to both the Reds and larger community. Enough said.

In 1969 George purchased the Reds' AHL franchise from the Pieri family. It was his promise to move the team from the old, deteriorating 5,300-seat R. I. Auditorium that led to the building and opening of the 10,000-seat Providence Civic Center in 1971.

A memorial service in his honor was held on Saturday, December 9 at the St. John's Episcopal Church in Barrington, a town in which he lived for years. The service was attended by nearly 500 of his family and friends.

He is survived by his wife Barbara (Boo) and his son Jim, a daughter Anne and two grandchildren.



Red Rooster's Update News from Your Society



Oooops! First, a correction to the Fall 2006 edition of 1111

Echoes: Red Rooster "goofed big." Two photos identified the late Terry Reardon's son as Lance, his older son. In fact, it was Terry's younger son, **Mike Reardon**, who attended the reunion and throughout the weekend

represented his dad, "T. R." Sorry for the double goof. If I were a hen I'd of laid a pretty big egg.

Gil Mayer, one of the greatest goaltenders ever to strap on the pads, recently was elected to the Class of 2007 AHL "Hall of Fame." Gil will be inducted at the league's All-Star Classic in Toronto on January 28-29. A delegation from the Society will travel there to honor Gil and meet with AHL officials and former Reds who are members. Kudos, Gil.

Sara Bailey, daughter of Heritage Society webmaster Mike Bailey, and her partner, Kyle Herring, are headed to the U.S. Figure Skating National Championships in Spokane, Washington, in January. The ice dance team won the Eastern Sectional Championship in November. Earlier this year, they also won the Lake Placid Ice

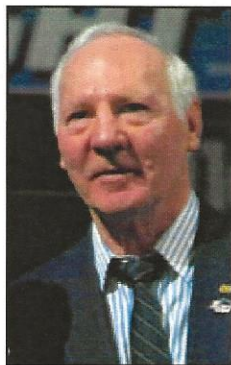


Sara Bailey and partner

Dance Championship and represented the United States at the North American Challenge Skate, where they captured the bronze.

Richard Crocker, of Amherst, NH, was part of "Team Fitchburg, USA" that traveled to Ireland in November and played four old-timers games against "The Green" at the DunDonald Ice bowl in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Good news: The Yanks swept all for games. Bad news: The "Old Sod" was desperately short of suds when the Yanks left. America-Irish relations will never be the same. Richard is a son-in-law of former Reds' owner Lou Pieri.

Willie Marshall, the AHL's all-time leader scorer, a former Red and a member of the league's "Hall of Fame," has for years been a student of the Bible and recently wrote and had published his book named "*From Christ to the Antichrist.*" It is a challenging read for open-minded people. His book brings out both traditional and unconventional views of Christianity that Willie presents after his 7 years of intense research. To purchase the book contact the R. I. Reds Heritage Society. Cost is just \$15



Author Willie "The Whip" Marshall

and that includes shipping. R. I. residents please add 7% sales tax (\$1.05).

Marge Baluik, loving wife of Stan for 49 years, passed away on October 10 after a long but courageous battle with cancer. Hundreds of family and friends attended her memorial service. She leaves her husband, and three children – Karen, David and Darren — along with 3 grand daughters, a grandson and a great grand daughter. The R. I. Reds Heritage Society offers its sincere condolences to her family. She will be sorely missed, but her spirit will always be alive.

Why 1111 Echoes?

Younger readers may ask why we named our newsletter **1111 Echoes**. Fact is the Reds played all their home games from 1926 through 1972 at the old R. I. Auditorium



The Auditorium at 1111

located at 1111 North Main Street in Providence. Its ambiances included great site lines for patrons of its 5,300 seats, a small ice surface (192' x 85') always favorable to the Reds, chicken wire protection where Plexiglas shields spectators in today's rinks, smoke-filled third periods in the building's sparse ventilation, and on some occasions a very leaky roof. But in all, this cozy ice wonder was priceless, worth remembering forever.

Why "**Roll out the Barrel?**" The "**Beer Barrel Polka**" was a famous and inspiring drinking song in Great Britain during World War II. Its popularity quickly spread to the USA. When the Reds introduced its musical organ to the Auditorium in the late-40s, owner Louis A. R. Pieri adopted it as the team's official theme song. For that time on, "Roll out the Barrel" welcomed our team as they took the ice before each of the three periods of a game at 1111 North Main Street.

Old-time film now on the Internet: Visitors to www.rireds.org will be in for a new treat when they log in. Vintage film showing the Reds in action in the 1940s, 50s and 60s is now available for viewing.

Hockey Sojourns *(continued from page 6)*

hockey but for the scenery and the people I meet along the way. I have branched out to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the States of Washington and Oregon and eventually will complete the entire W.H.L. with other stops along the way. One-hundred twenty cities and counting, it is a great way to see the world through our game.

In subsequent newsletters, look for my short blurbs about individual cities and their arenas.

Editor's Note: Jim Clegg is a member of the R. I. Reds Heritage Society's Board of Directors.

RED PRIDE



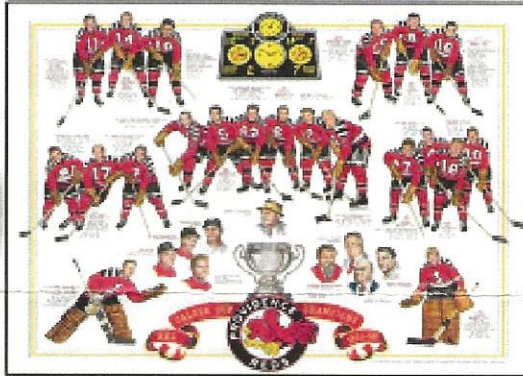
Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society gifts for special occasions

2006/2007 Commemorative Ornament: "50th Anniversary, 1955-56 Calder Cup Champions."

- Delicately etched in solid brass
- 3" wide
- Finished in sparkling palladium
- Silk screened with authentic Reds colors
- Includes stand for year-round display



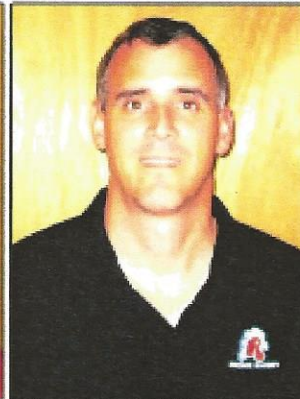
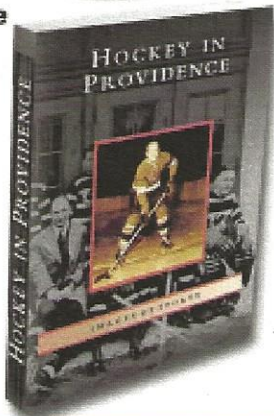
50th Anniversary Calder Cup Poster



- By RI Illustrators Chil Mott and Gail Greenwood
- 36" by 24"
- Stars include Johnny Bower, Zellio Toppazzini, Camille Henry, Paul Laivee and Andy Branigan
- Autographed version has actual signatures of Johnny Bower, Jimmy Bartlett, Bruce Cline, Aldo Guidolin, Don "Bones" Raleigh, Bob Robertson and Ray Ross

Hockey in Providence by Jim Mancuso

- Chronicles Rhode Island's rich tradition of hockey, from the Reds, one of the first professional hockey teams in the United States, through the Providence Bruins.
- Jam-packed with historical notes
- Over 200 photos, past and present
- 128 pages

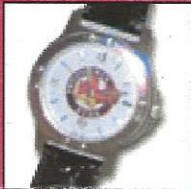


Reds 1970s Logo Cap and Golf Shirt

- Highlighted by the official Reds logo in red, white and blue
- Cap in red with adjustable head band to fit any size
- Shirt in black, 100 % cotton, machine washable
- Sizes: M, L, XL, 2XL

BEST SELLERS

They're Going Fast
and Won't Be Restocked --
So Order Them While You Can!



Reds Logo Watch



Inside The Auditorium Ornament



Zellio Toppazzini Ornament

Order Form

Item	Price	Qty/Size	SH	Item Total**	Tax***
Calder Cup Ornament	\$15		\$3*		
Poster (unsigned)	\$20		\$6*		
Poster (signed)	\$50		\$6*		
Book	\$20		\$5*		
Cap	\$15		\$3*		na
Golf Shirt	\$30		\$3*		na
Watch	\$25		\$3*		
Auditorium Ornament	\$15		\$3*		
Toppazzini Ornament	\$15		\$3*		

*Add \$1 for each additional item

**Quantity times Price plus SH

***Rhode Island residents add 7% sales tax. (Item Total multiplied by .07)

TOTAL _____ + _____ = _____

Shipping Information

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

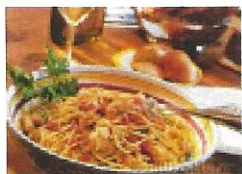
Please make checks payable to:

R. I. Reds Heritage Society
P.O. Box 167, Barrington, RI 02806

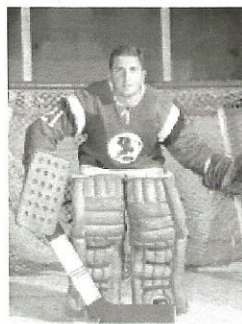
4th Annual "Lunch & Crunch" Lunch followed by a P-Bruins game, Sunday, March 11, 2007

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 Ross Brooks, former great Reds' goaltender now affiliated with Providence College hockey.

4:05 PM "Crunch": Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, RI. *Crunch menu:* an AHL game between the Providence Bruins and the Lowell Devils, top farm team of the NHL's New Jersey Devils. 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.



First "Lunch"



Followed by "Ross"



Then "Crunch"



**Total cost for the March 11th
"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 the R. I. Reds Heritage Society, and mail to P. O. Box 167, Barrington, RI 02806

**Deadline for reservations:
March 1, 2007**

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

R. I. Reds Heritage Society
P. O. Box 167
Barrington, RI 02806
(401) 247-2666
E-mail: UNH1959@aol.com
Website: www.rireds.org

My Amazing Hockey Sojourns

By Jim Clegg

The following is a continuing, real-life story about my travels through hockey.

I started this journey as a traveler during the early 1960s, first with a trip to the Reds' playoffs in Hershey, followed by a trip to the Big-E Coliseum in Springfield for a Reds' regular season game.

That, coupled with access by radio to hockey broadcasts as far away as Chicago and Fort Wayne, turned a curiosity into a passion.

Travels continued during the 70s, following the Reds to New Haven. Also added to the mix were the Eastern League cities of Long Island and Cape Cod and to Hartford for the W.H.A. Whalers.

When the Reds ceased operations, my thirst for hockey continued to such places as Portland, Binghamton and Syracuse, as well as Halifax, Nova Scotia through my interest in the Maine Mariners. Visits to N.H.L. cities like Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Washington followed.

Decades of watching, listening to and following hockey and its players served to deepen my interest in further travels. I then set out to visit Major Junior cities as well as more N.H.L. and A.H.L. cities. Additionally, I added the East Coast League, and United League, visiting new cities and those that hosted former Eastern and International League teams.

Part of these travels is similar to an immersion into hockey as it was to relive its history. Part of it is present day. Many cities have new arenas where new teams play. When I arrive I will always look for or inquire of the whereabouts of the "Old Barn." Whether old or new, many are adorned with hockey history in lobby's and concourses.

From Newfoundland and Cape Breton through Rimouski and Quebec City, through Ottawa, Toronto, The Soo and the U.S., this journey continues to be one of great pleasure, not only for the

(Continued to page 4)



Hershey Sports Arena, circa 1962

Next Issue: Very Special

The next issue of *IIII Echoes* will be published in mid-to-late April, 2007. It will be a very special edition to announce plans to celebrate our 7th Annual Reunion. The reunion will be held again at Goddard State Park in Warwick, RI, on Sunday, August 5, 2007, starting at noon.