

1111 Echoes

Spring 2006

A newsletter from the R. I. Reds Heritage Society

Important Notice to Unpaid Members

For those who have not paid their membership dues for 2005/06, enclosed is another renewal flyer. **Please renew by May 31.** 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.

Celebrate with us!

To properly observe the 50th Anniversary of the R. I. Reds last Calder Cup championship, *1111Echoes* has been expanded from 6 to 8 pages for this newsletter. It is an historic year for the R. I. Reds Heritage Society -- one that will never occur again. So, we look forward to having you celebrate with us at our 6th annual reunion at Goddard State Park on Sunday, August 6th.

"Host a Hockey Hero"

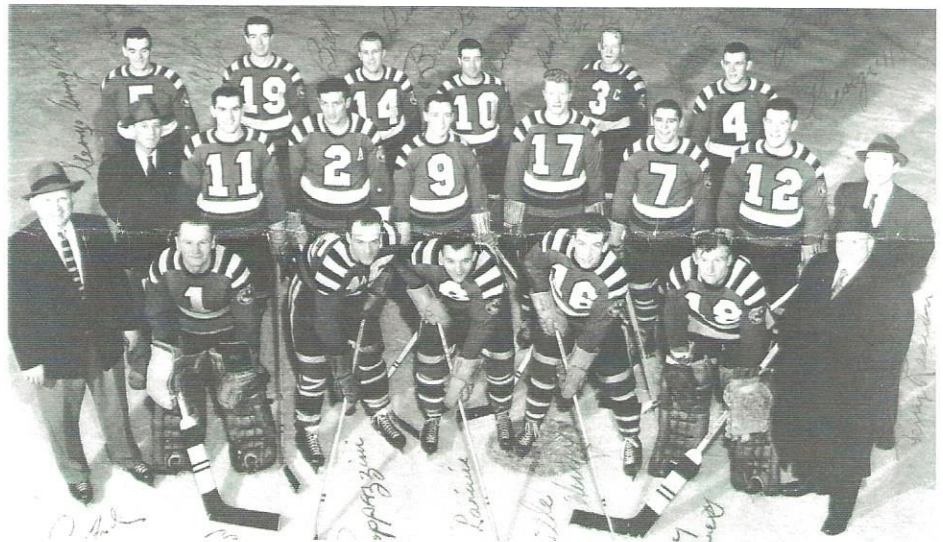
The Society has implemented a new plan to provide complimentary hotel housing for out-of-state former Reds players who attend reunions. Called "Host a Hockey Hero," the sponsorship program has been enthusiastically endorsed by local corporations and individuals who have made tax-deductible donations between \$100 and \$300. To become a sponsor or learn more about the program and its benefits, please call 401-247-2666.

Rhode Island Reds 6th Annual Reunion Goddard State Park, Warwick, RI Sunday, August 6, Noon 'till Dusk



Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Reds Last Calder Cup Title

Champions expected to show: [Johnny Bower](#), [Jimmy Bartlett](#), [Bruce Cline](#), [Aldo Guidolin](#), [Ivan Irwin](#), [Ray Ross](#), [Bob Robertson](#), [Dusty Blair](#) and maybe even more.



R.I. Reds 1955-56

Front row (l-r): Coach Johnny Crawford, Johnny Bower, Zellio Toppazzini, Paul Larivee, Camille Henry, Harvey Bennett and President Louis A. R. Pieri. Middle row: Trainer George Army, Aldo Guidolin, Bill Folk, Bruce Cline, Red Johnsen, Jimmy Bartlett, George McAvoy and General Manager Terry Reardon. Back row: Bob Robertson, Ray Ross, Dusty Blair, Buck Davies, Captain Andy Branigan and Ron Attwell. Not shown: Camille Bedard, Ivan Irwin and Don Raleigh.

1955-56: The Making of Calder Cup Champions

The Rhode Island Reds' 1955-56 hockey season is recognized as one of the most historic campaigns in the team's 51-year history.

In three previous American Hockey League seasons, the Reds progressively had gone from bad to worse. With some very good veteran players getting long in the tooth and losing a step each season, the Reds finished out of the playoffs in 1952-53, '53-54 and '54-55. Fandom at the old R. I. Auditorium had grown both restless and apathetic. Support for the Reds plummeted.

Partway through 1954-55, Lou Pieri, the Reds shrewd owner, and Terry Reardon, his fiery general manager, began what was to become a three-pronged rebuilding program. When the Ottawa Senators of the Quebec Hockey League folded after 27 games, the Reds were able to acquire the contracts of two quality veteran players – defenseman Bob Robertson and center Bill “Red” Johansen.

This first step of three gave Reds' fans encouragement. Though improved, the team still finished a dismal last of six AHL teams, 19 points out of the playoffs. In fact, the Reds were the only team in the league with a losing record in '54-55.

Step two followed in the summer off-season. Having operated independently of NHL help for a number of seasons, the Reds formed a working agreement with the minor-league, talent-rich New York Rangers.

The Pieri-Reardon deal resulted in an infusion of new young blood led by the great veteran goaltender Johnny Bower, Camille “The Eel” Henry (LW), Aldo Guidolin(D-RW), Bruce Cline (RW)

Jimmy Bartlett (LW) and Ron Attwell (C). The Reds also received for short-term service from the Rangers in Ivan Irwin (D) and Don “Bones” Raleigh (C).

In step three, added to the mix by GM Reardon were George “Dusty” Blair and George McAvoy (D). The new faces joined nine talented holdovers from the 1954-55 season: Robertson, and Johansen, goaltender Harvey Bennett, defensemen Andy Branigan, the team captain, and Bill Folk and Camille Bedard, plus forwards Zellio Toppazzini, Paul Larivee and Ken “Buck” Davies.

Coach Johnny Crawford quickly assembled a powerful first line consisting of Toppazzini, Larivee and Camille “The Eel” Henry. Backed by the sensational goaltending of Johnny Bower and stalwart work of defensemen Branigan, Robertson, Folk and McAvoy, the club finished first in the six-team league with a regular season record of 45 wins, 17 losses and 2 ties for 92 points. However, the Reds' margin was slim, just two points ahead of the talented Pittsburgh Hornets, who finished with 90 points.

The Calder Cup playoffs provided some unusual surprises. The stubborn Buffalo Bisons, third-place finishers, stretched the Reds to 5 games before the locals prevailed in the semi-finals, 3 games to two. In the other semis, fourth-place Cleveland completed an astonishing upset over Pittsburgh, 3 games to one. With that, the Barons moved to the finals against the Reds.

But 1955-56 was the Reds season to excel. The Roosters

(continued on page 6)

Our 100 former Reds and other ex-pro players who you might meet at the reunion:

Marked in **RED** are champions from our last Calder Cup team, 1955-56

Ian Anderson	Johnny Bower	Eddie Giacomin	Yves Locas	Wayne Muloin	Al Simmons
Bill Armstrong	Pierre Brillant	Tony Goegan	Parker	Don O'Donoghue	Allan Soares
Bill Army	Ross Brooks	Hilliard Graves	MacDonald	Andre Peloffy	Ed Stanowski
Tim Army	Gordon Buttrey	Aldo Guidolin	Ed MacQueen	Harry Pidhirny	Allan Stanley
Joe Augustine	Ray Clearwater	Ted Hampson	J. P. Mallette	Nick Polano	Paul Stewart
Stan Baluik	Bruce Cline	Dave Hrechkosy	Moe Mantha	Dan Poliziani	Jack Stoddard
Jimmy Bartlett	Gary Collins	Ivan Irwin	Willie Marshall	Larry Popein	Harry Taylor
Bob Beckett	Henry Coupe	Eddie Kachur	Gil Mayer	Rich Pumple	Jerry Toppazzini
John Bednarski	Dave Creighton	Pete Kapusta	Rod McGarry	Don Raleigh	Ralph Warburton
Bill Bennett	Ray Cyr	George Keeling	Jack McGeough	George Ranieri	Billy Warwick
Curt Bennett	Buzzy Deschamps	Adam Keller	Don McKenney	Matt Ravlich	Brad Wilson
Jim Bennett	Pat Egan	Ralph Keller	Don Mellor	Curt Ridley	Ron Wilson
Harvey Bennett, Jr.	Bo Elik	Orland Kurtenbach	Tom Mellor	Bob Robertson	Alton White
Al Bentley	Ferny Flaman	Ray LaPlante	Howie Menard	Ray Ross	Gary Williamson
Dusty Blair	Emile Francis	Bob Leduc	Rick Middleton	Chuck Scherza	Jim Wiste
Al Blanchard	Marty Gateman	Eddie Lee	Jim Mikol	Milt Schmidt	Tom Woodcock
Serge Boudreault	Rob Gaudreau	Randy Legge	John Muckler	Eddie Shack	



#1 Johnny Bower (G)

GP: 61, GA: 174, SO: 3, GAPG: 2.85
AHL First All-Star Team
Voted AHL's MVP
GP: 9, GA: 23, SO: 0, GAPG: 2.56



#15 Zellio Toppazzini (RW)

GP: 64, G: 42, A: 71*, PTS: 113*
* League's most points and assists
AHL First All-Star Team
GP: 9, G: 7, A: 13, PTS: 20



#8 Paul Larivee (C)

GP: 54, G: 27, A: 53, PTS: 80
GP: 8, G: 2, A: 8, PTS: 10



#16 Camille Henry (LW)

GP: 59, G: 50*, A: 41, PTS: 91
*League's most goals
AHL First All-Star Team
GP: 9, G: 10, A: 6, PTS: 16



#3 Andy Branigan (D)

GP: 64, G: 5, A: 17, PTS: 22
Team captain
AHL Second All-Star Team
GP: 9, G: 2, A: 5, PTS: 7



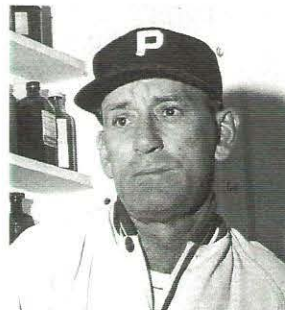
Louis A. R. Pieri
President



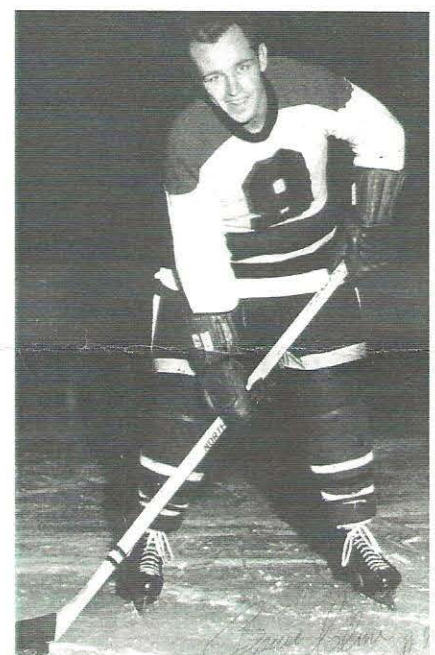
Terry Reardon
General Manager



Johnny Crawford
Coach

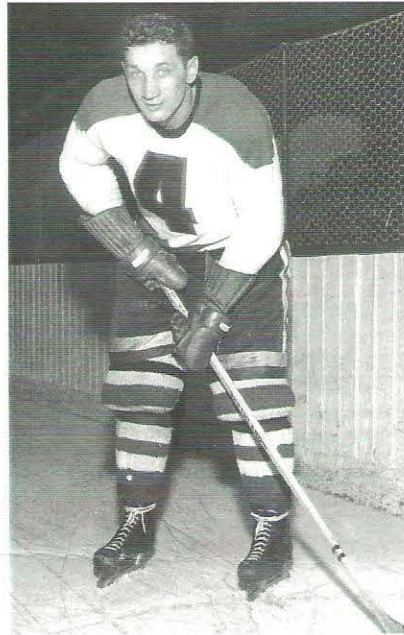
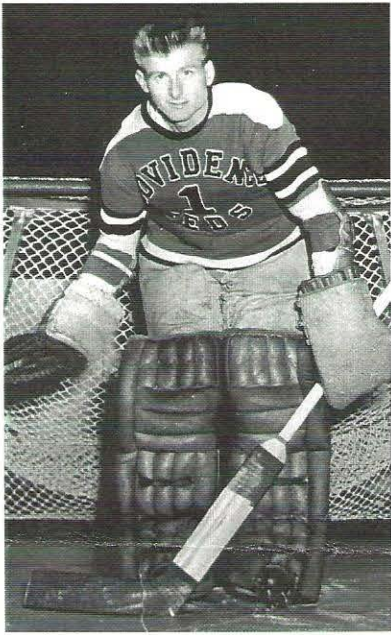


George Army
Trainer



#9 Bruce Cline (RW)

GP: 64, G: 27, A: 30, PTS: 57
AHL Rookie-of-the-Year
GP: 9, G: 3, A: 3, PTS: 6

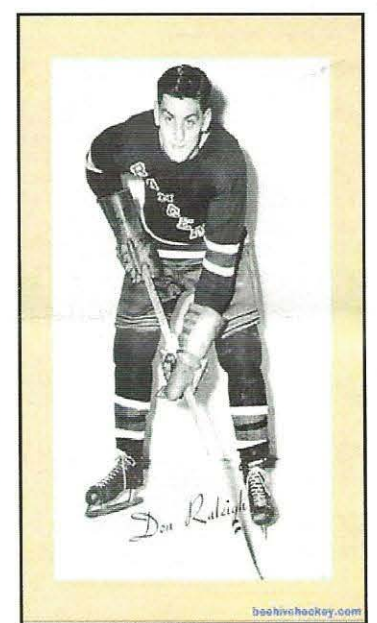


#1 Harvey Bennett (G)
GP: 3, GA: 17, SO: 0, GAPG: 5.67

#2 Bill Folk (D)
GP: 15, G: 1, A: 8, PTS: 9
GP: 9, G: 2, A: 3, PTS: 5

#2 Ivan Irwin (D)
GP: 19, G: 0, A: 5, PTS: 5

#4 Ron Attwell (C)
GP: 44, G: 7, A: 14, PTS: 21
GP: 1, G: 0, A: 0, PTS: 0



#5 Bob Robertson (D)
GP: 57, G: 3, A: 18, PTS: 21
GP: 9, G: 0, A: 0, PTS: 0

#6 Camille Bedard (D)
GP: 39, G: 2, A: 5, PTS: 7

#7 Jimmy Bartlett (LW)
GP: 50, G: 28, A: 19, PTS: 47
GP: 9, G: 3, A: 5, PTS: 8

#7 Don "Bones" Raleigh (C)
GP: 13, G: 4, A: 20, PTS: 24



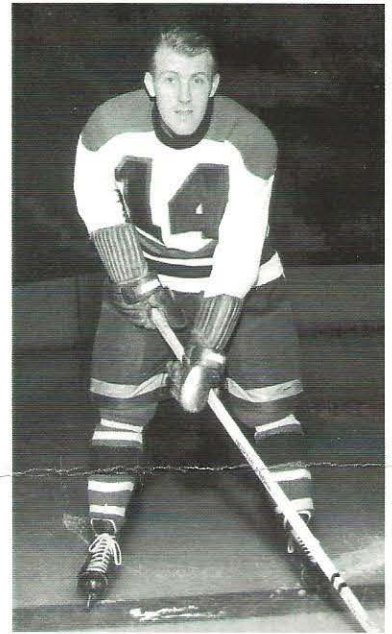
#10 Ken "Buck" Davies
(C-LW)
GP: 34, G: 12, A: 14, PTS: 26
GP: 9, G: 2, A: 1, PTS: 3



#11 Aldo Guidolin (D-F)
GP: 51, G: 5, A: 26, PTS: 31
GP: 8, G: 4, A: 3, PTS: 7



#12 George McAvoy (D)
GP: 60, G: 4, A: 19, PTS: 23
GP: 9, G: 1, A: 7, PTS: 8



#14 George "Dusty" Blair
(C-LW)
GP: 55, G: 18, A: 16, PTS: 34
GP: 9, G: 1, A: 12, PTS: 13



#17 Bill "Red" Johansen (C)
GP: 53, G: 8, A: 27, PTS: 35
GP: 9, G: 3, A: 4, PTS: 7



#18 Bill McCreary (LW)
GP: 37, G: 8, A: 13, PTS: 21



#19 Ray Ross (RW)
GP: 61, G: 11, A: 20, PTS: 31
GP: 9, G: 4, A: 4, PTS: 8

Key to Symbols:

GP = Games played
G = Goals
A = Assists
PTS = Points

Black type = Regular Season

Blue type = Playoffs

Note: Numbers on uniforms shown in photos may not match numbers actually worn. In the text we used numbers published in '55-56 game program.

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. In five years we have already published 42 profiles. 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 will be featured in a future newsletter.

Backchecking

Mart Gateman spent five seasons playing pro hockey, parts of four here with the Rhode Island Reds. A native of Ontario, he was picked by the N.Y. Ranger #79 overall in the 1972 NHL draft. As a Ranger farmhand, Marty started his tour of duty as a tough-nosed defenseman with the Reds in 1972-73. Standing 6-feet and weighing 185, Marty helped the Reds to three successive playoff births (1973 through 1975).



Forechecking

Marty married a Rhode Island girl in 1975. He and Ann Marie settled locally in Greenville, RI, where they have raised two grown children, Gina Marie and Chris. Marty is a supervisor at Coca-Cola Bottling in Providence and also does part-time research for legislators at the State Capitol. His hobbies include hunting, reading and travel. In his own words, though, his favorite pastime is, “Spending time with my family.”

.....

Randy Legge played 10 seasons of professional hockey, six of which were spent as a N. Y. Rangers’ farmhand. A right-handed shooting defenseman, he played three years (1971-72 through ‘73-74) in Providence as a member of the Reds. Randy earlier had served with Buffalo in ‘69-70 when the Bisons captured the Calder Cup. With the creation of the WHA, he spent three seasons there with the Baltimore, Winnipeg, Cleveland and San Diego.



Married 35 years, Randy and his wife Ellie have two grown children, a son Dallas and daughter Devin. The Newmarket, Ontario, couple has two grandsons, McLeod (age 5) and Denver (1). After his 10-year pro career, Randy owned and operated an insurance company for 15 years. He then spent another 17 years as a sales/leasing consultant for Nissan and Infiniti. His hobbies are cottage life with the family and golf.

1955-56: The Making of Calder Cups Champions *(continued from page 2)*

took the first two games in Providence easily by scores of 6-1 and 7-2. Moving on to Cleveland, the Reds sustained their dominating momentum, winning 4-2 and 6-3 to sweep the championship finals, 4 games to 0. Wingers Ray Ross and Camille Henry each registered 2 game-winning goals to help take the Calder Cup back to Providence for the first time since 1948-49.

The line of Toppazzini, Larivee and Henry scoured the AHL that season. Topper won the scoring title with 42 goals 71 assists and 113 points. Henry led the league in with 50 goals and added 41 assists for 91 points, third best in the circuit. Larivee finished sixth in scoring with 27-53-80.

Johnny Bower was immense in goal, kicking out shot-after-shot during crucial games throughout the season. His 2.85 goal-against average and three shutouts were second only to Pittsburgh’s great Gil Mayer. However, because of his part in the Reds success, Bower was awarded first-team all-star honors, along with Toppazzini and Henry. And the club’s leader, captain Andy Branigan, was selected to the AHL’s second team. So many other teammates made the Reds’ triumphs happen that season. A look at the photos and stats of our ‘55-56 heroes posted in this newsletter is evidence.

1955-56 was a last-place to first-place scenario. To succeed, the locals had to put together three significant winning streaks: 5

in a row in October, 10 during mid-December through mid-January, then a marvelous 8-victory finish to the regular season schedule—4 wins at home and another 4 on the road.

Those eight wins were badly needed down the stretch. Were it not for a decisive 4-1 win over Pittsburgh at the old R. I. Auditorium just four days before the end of the season, the Reds would have finished two points behind Pittsburgh, instead two points ahead. Who knows how differently that switch may have changed history?

1955-56 was a year of glorious accomplishments for the Rhode Island Reds. The campaign earned them a regular season first-place finish, capped by a triumphant Calder Cup championship. Sad to look back on now, it was the last-ever hurrah for our beloved R. I. Reds. Yes, it was 50 years ago. And no, they don’t make teams like those champions anymore.

Editor’s Note: *It must be mentioned that in that memorable 1955-56 season, Gil Mayer, the always-brilliant Pittsburgh Hornet foe, earned his fifth award as the AHL’s top goaltender by posting the lowest goals-against average (2.70) in the league, along with a league-high 5 shutouts. Mayer, who later finished his career in Providence, still holds that distinguished record of earning 5 leading AHL goaltender trophies.*

RED PRIDE



Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society gifts for the holidays and other special occasions



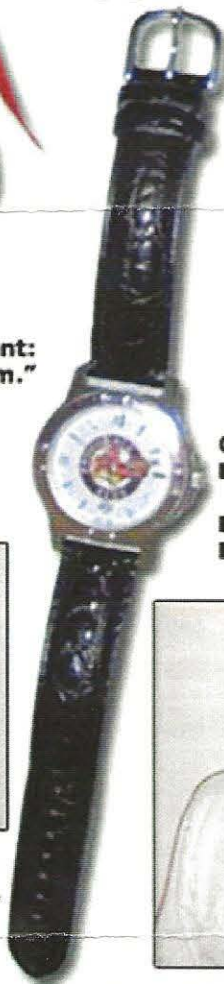
**2005/2006 Commemorative Ornament:
"The Rink, Inside the R. I. Auditorium."**

- Delicately etched in solid brass
- Actual size: 3-1/4" wide
- Finished in sparkling 24kt gold
- Silk screened with authentic colors
- Comes with stand for year-round display



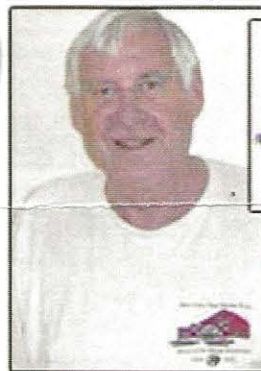
Official Heritage Society Cap

- Highlighted by the official Reds logo
- Imprinted in back with "Heritage Society"
- Adjustable head band to fit size
- Manufactured by Headgear®



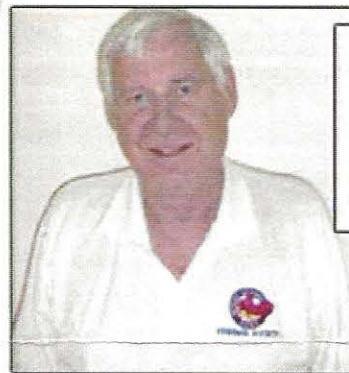
Colorful Men's Watch

- Faced with official Reds logo in full color
- 3-hand display and date
- Stainless steel case back
- High accuracy Japanese quartz movement
- Genuine leather strap
- Water resistant



Reds Relaxation Tee Shirt

- Depicts the old R. I. Auditorium
- Plus, the most famous Reds' logo
- Heavy cotton, machine washable
- Sizes: M, L and XL
- Manufactured by Fruit of the Loom®



Classic Reds Golf Shirt

- R. I. Reds Heritage Society logo
- 100 % cotton, machine washable
- Sizes: S, M and L
- Manufactured by Head Authentics®

Order Form

Item	Price	Qty/Size	S/H	Item Total
Ornament	\$15	_____	\$3*	_____
Men's Watch	\$25	_____	\$3*	_____
Golf Shirt	\$30	_____	\$3*	_____
Tee Shirt	\$12	_____	\$3*	_____
Cap	\$15	_____	\$3*	_____

*Add \$1 for each additional item

TOTAL

Shipping Information

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

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

3rd “Lunch & Crunch” another Winner!

Nearly 100 members and guests of the Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society gathered at Lancellotta’s Restaurant in North Providence on Sunday, March 26, to celebrate the Society’s 3rd Annual “Lunch & Crunch” event.

Appetites well filled with the all-you-can eat luncheon, the attending hockey boosters were then entertained by Dave Andrews, president of the American Hockey League. Dave provided a humorous and insightful look into today’s world of hockey and how it operates—especially the role the AHL has as a player development arm for the National Hockey League.

Well versed in the history of major-minor hockey league relationships, he drew contrasts between the 1950s and the structure of the game today. Back 50 years ago, six AHL teams (some independents), along with numerous other teams in separate minor league operations, served the six-team NHL for its player development requirements. Today, 28 AHL teams work with the 30 NHL teams, nearly matching those needs. Andrews said that at least two new franchises are being considered for

the next AHL next season.

After lunch the group moved on to the Dunkin’ Donuts Center to watch the Providence Bruins host the Hartford Wolf Pack, top farm team of the New York Rangers. In a rough and tumble game, followed by sudden-death overtime, the two clubs finished deadlocked, 2-2. In the game-winning shootout—skater versus goalie, one-on-one—Hartford was able to pocket the win, 3-2.

“Lunch & Crunch” patrons were then treated to an exclusive post-game analysis by the affable coach and general manager of the Wolf Pack, Jim Schoenfeld. Though coming out a winner, Jim said he is not really an advocate of the shootout.

“After 65 minutes of play, both teams work too hard to lose that way,” he said frankly. “Today was a great win for us, but other nights it hasn’t been so great.” But with equal candor he admitted that fans everywhere seem to look forward to the excitement of a shootout. “So what our hockey fans want is most important for our game.”



Vintage jerseys proudly displayed



George Patrick and Helen Duffy enjoy the festivities



Dave Andrews and Tom Army, Society Vice President, talk hockey



MC Tom McDonough, in 1934 Reds garb, with our guest

In Memoriam

Art Michaluk, former defense great with the Rhode Island Reds during the late 1940s and early 1950s, died of prostate cancer at age 82 in Innisfail, Alberta, on March 14.

Michaluk is remembered as a tough-nosed defenseman who dealt out clean, but body-bruising checks to opposing players in open ice areas at the old R. I. Auditorium. He was an important part of the Reds’ Calder Cup championship in 1948-49 and also helped the Reds to the cup series finals in 1951-52.

At age 17 he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940. After World War II service, he pursued a career in pro hockey with the Rhode Island Reds (AHL), Chicago Blackhawks

(NHL) and the Calgary Stampeders (WHL). While playing for Calgary he was voted to the Western Hockey League all-star team five straight seasons.

After retiring from the game, Art became a member of the Calgary Police Force where he served for twenty-three years, retiring with the rank of sergeant in 1977. He was an active member of the R. I. Reds Heritage Society and attended our annual reunion here in Rhode Island back in 2003.

He is survived by his wife Josephine, six children, three stepchildren, 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



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

Next Issue

The next issue of *1111 Echoes* will come out in October 2006. The newsletter will include a recap and pictures of the 6th annual reunion. Also, please look forward to more Forechecking and Backchecking, plus the restoration of “The Chicken Wire,” which was bumped this issue for lack of space. Tune in!