



# 1111 Echoes

Spring 2007

A newsletter from the R. I. Reds Heritage Society

## Important Reunion Notice for Players

### Free Hotel Lodging “Host a Hockey Hero” Program

The Society again will provide complimentary hotel housing for out-of-state former Reds players who attend our 7<sup>th</sup> annual reunion. That’s right! Through our generous sponsors, the Society will offer each player traveling to the reunion from outside of Rhode Island three nights of free lodging at the Hilton Garden Inn in Warwick, RI. This 5-star hotel is located 5 minutes from the Providence airport where regular shuttle service is available.

### Bus from Toronto “Leave the Driving to Us”

Johnny Bower, Aldo Guidolin, Bob Robertson and Ray Ross have chartered round-trip bus transportation for our 7<sup>th</sup> reunion, departing Toronto for Providence on August 3 and returning on August 6. The bus seats 55 and the cost per person will be determined as seats are sold. The committee hopes players and their families from Canada will gather in Toronto and enjoy a worry-free, affordable trip. Secure automobile parking in Toronto, free of charge, has also been arranged. For further information call Bob Robertson at 905-851-2675.

### What’s Inside?

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- The “Needle” Makes it Big (p. 4)
- Red Rooster’s Society News (p. 5)
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- “Lunch & Crunch” and other bits (p. 8)

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Reds Reunion: “Hall of Fame” Weekend Goddard State Park, Warwick, RI, Sunday, August 5

The R. I. Reds Heritage Society’s August 5 reunion will be our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual...our Lucky 7<sup>th</sup>. We are billing it as “Hall of Fame Weekend” and have invited our 7 former Reds who have received this distinguished honor. They include Hockey Hall of Fame celebrities Johnny Bower, Ferny Flaman, Ed Giacomin, Milt Schmidt and Alan Stanley, plus AHL HOF greats Willie Marshall and Gil Mayer.

Previous reunions each have been attended by nearly 300 persons, including dozens of former Reds, other ex-pro hockey players, hockey executives and their families.

This year’s event once again will include a fabulous an all-you-can-eat cookout, lively music, spirits, raffle prizes and, of course, reminiscing with old friends. In addition, the 2007-08 “Tops Awards” will be presented to former Reds’ standouts (soon to be announced) in recognition of their combined hockey and public service contributions.

To sign up for this fantastic day of fun and nostalgia, just complete and mail the enclosed reservation form. The price is only \$30 per person and \$15 for children ages 6 to 12. Under age 6 is free.

A list of former Reds and pro players invited to the reunion is on page 6.

## Our “Silver Seven” Hall of Fame Members



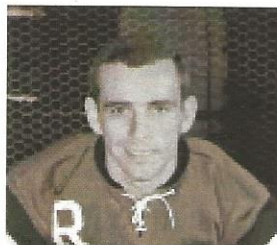
Milt Schmidt  
HHOF 1961



Johnny Bower  
HHOF 1976



Allan Stanley  
HHOF 1981



Ed Giacomin  
HHOF 1987



Ferny Flaman  
HHOF 1990



Willie Marshall  
AHL-HOF 2006



Gil Mayer  
AHL-HOF 2007

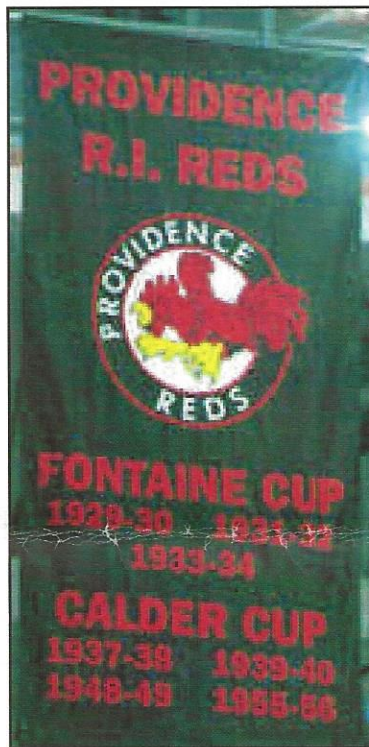


# A NIGHT OF CHEERS AND TEARS

**T**he scene was the Dunkin' Donuts Center, home of the P-Bruins, who February 9 faced one of their arch rivals, the Worcester Sharks, in an American Hockey League contest. Strangely, as it turned out, the hockey game, won 5-4 in overtime by our Bruins, somehow seemed completely overshadowed by the magic of activities that transported hockey fans in attendance -- old and new -- "back to the past."

Folks who attended (and there were nearly 9,000) saw the Bruins honor our Reds in a pre-game ceremony that unveiled a banner that heralded the Reds seven seasons of championship accomplishments: AHL Calder Cups (4) and Can-Am Fontaine Cups (3).

There were goose bumps, lumps in the throats and moisture in the eyes of many (admitted by both guys and gals) when the building's organ bellowed the old Reds entrance song, "Roll the Barrel," as the P-Bruins stormed the ice in authentic throw-back Reds uniforms from the late 1960s.

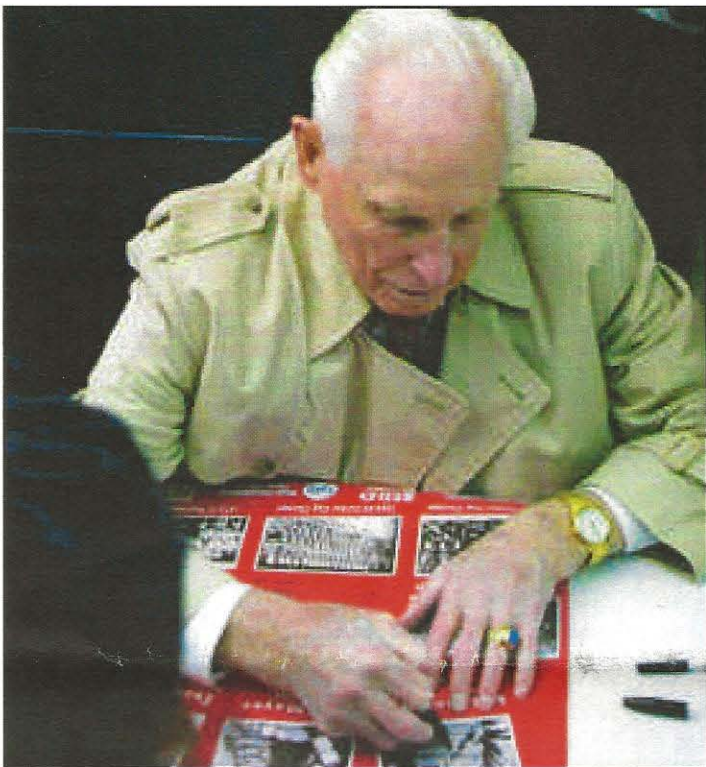


■ *In a pre-game ceremony, former Reds stars were introduced under spotlights, before the Reds banner was unveiled. The P-Bruins wore vintage 1967 Reds uniforms.*

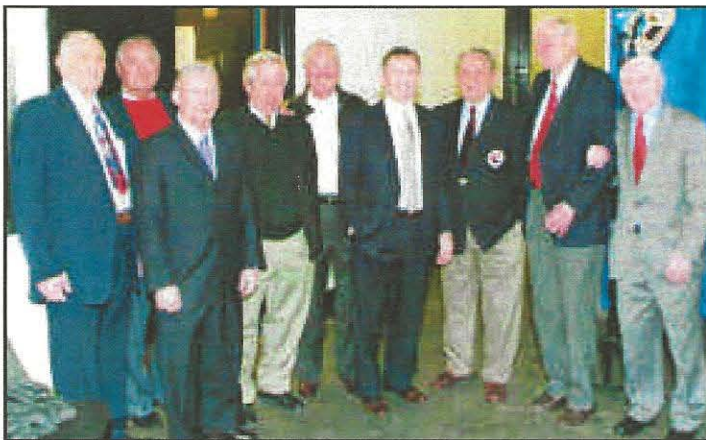
It was just like old times at the 5,300-seat R. I. Auditorium, located at 1111 North Main Street, home of the Reds from 1926-1972. In moving pre-game ceremonies, former Reds stars were introduced under spotlights, before the Reds banner -- now a permanent fixture in the building -- was unveiled.

Representing our old franchise were former Reds stars and Hockey Hall of Fame members Milt Schmidt and Ferny Flaman. Joining them was AHL Hall of Fame inductee Gil Mayer, along with Marty Gateman, Bobby Leduc, Serge Boudreault, Dan Poliziani and local hockey icon Chuck Scherza, "Mr. Hockey RI." Society representatives on ice included Buster Clegg, president, Tom Army, vice-president, and George Patrick Duffy, director. Joining them were former Reds owner Louis A. Pieri and Jeff Fear, CEO of the P-Bruins.

Schmidt, now 89, played his first pro games here with the Reds as an 18-year old on loan from the Boston Bruins back in 1936-37. "This has brought back wonderful memories," he



■ Hockey legend and former Reds player Milt Schmidt, 89, autographs a poster for a fan.



■ Special guests were Chuck Scherza, Ferny Flaman, Gil Mayer, Serge Boudreault, Dan Poliziani and Bobby Leduc, and Tom Army, Buster Clegg and George Patrick Duffy of the Reds Heritage Society.

said. "It was 71 years ago and look at the fans that have turned out here tonight.

"This is an evening I'll never forget. The Reds were my stepping stone to the National Hockey League and still remain very deep in my heart." After a brilliant career as an all-star center with the Boston Bruins, Schmidt was inducted into the exclusive Hockey Hall of Fame in 1961.

Flaman, Reds player-coach in the early 1960s and now a scout for the New Jersey Devils, was equally



■ Reds stars of yesteryear sign autographs for the hundreds of fans who lined up.

moved: "It's great that the Reds finally have been recognized for being the origin of hockey here in Rhode Island. I remember well the old arena and how the building was always sold out every Sunday night. As you can see, Rhode Island is still a great hockey town." An all-star defenseman with the Boston Bruins, Flaman entered the Hockey Hall of fame in 1990.

Reds players took over a book-signing table and spent over two periods inking their name to a new book, *Hockey in Providence*, written by hockey historian Jim Mancuso, who traveled in from Utica, NY.

"The line of autograph seekers was unbelievable," said Mancuso. "There must have been five-hundred lined up. Many missed a lot of the game. But you know, just like the players, they never complained."

AHL president Dave Andrews also attended Reds Night and said, "Anytime you have an opportunity to pay your respects to the rich history of hockey, and the players who have served it so well, it is something very important that we should honor and preserve. That's what the R. I. Reds Heritage Society is doing."

Oh, yes. There was an AHL hockey game that evening. Garbed in replica Reds uniforms from the late 1960s, the P-Bruins pulled it out over Worcester, 5-4, in overtime.

The winning goal was scored when #9 Ben Walter scored at 2:09 in sudden death. Only regret: Too bad it couldn't have been #15, Zellio Toppazzini.



■ The Topper scores on a break-away, 1963.

## Gil Mayer Enters AHL “Hall of Fame”



Pittsburgh Hornets' "Mr. Zero"

When a young Gil Mayer strapped on his goal pads daily in the 1940s to improve his game in bone-chilling temperatures on the frozen ponds of Ottawa, he never dreamed that 6 decades later he would be honored before over 1000 persons in the warmth of a large reception luncheon to accept induction into the American Hockey League's "Hall of Fame."

Indeed, that "no dream" came true when Gil, who finished an illustrious 14-year goaltending career with the Rhode Island Reds back in 1963, was added to the prestigious AHL shrine of accomplishments at ceremonies in Toronto during the league's All-Star Classic Jan. 27-29.

In the company of his wife of 55 years, Marielle, and his son Andre and granddaughter Danielle, Gil voiced sentiments during his acceptance speech about his "non-dream come true." He later added, "It is humbling and a special honor to join greats like Johnny Bower and my wonderful teammates of the past — Willie Marshall, Mike Nykoluk and the late Frank Mathers and Fred Glover — who have been similarly recognized."

Born in Ottawa, Ontario, Gil was nicknamed "The Needle" because of his 5-foot-6, 135-pound frame, making him just about the smallest player in the league at the time. But he made up for his diminutive stature with quickness and agility, and would be credited with winning 346 games over 14 seasons with the Pittsburgh Hornets, Hershey Bears, Cleveland Barons and Reds from 1949-63.

Mayer posted 30 wins in a season seven different times, including a memorable 46-19-3 campaign in 1951-52. He led the Hornets to Calder Cup championships in 1952 and 1955, and along the way, was recalled to see action in nine games in the National Hockey League with the Toronto Maple Leafs.

When the Hornets folded following the 1955-56 season, Gil joined future AHL "Hall of Famers" Mathers and Marshall in making the move from Pittsburgh to Hershey. He spent three seasons with the Bears, playing on teams that went on to win the Calder Cup in 1958 and 1959.

Mayer played for Cleveland the next two years (1959-61) and the following two campaigns for the Reds in Providence before retiring in 1963, trailing only Johnny Bower in all-time AHL wins and shutouts (41). So great was his shutout record that early on Pittsburgh's management insisted Gil wear the number "0" on his uniform.

His career saw him capture many individual honors as well, earning three first-team AHL All-Star nods along with two second-team berths. Five times in a six-year span, beginning in 1950-51 at the age of 20, Mayer won the Harry "Hap" Holmes Award, presented at the time to the goaltender who led the league in goals against average.

Gil, now 76, and Marielle live in Lincoln, RI. Their grandson Christopher, 20, who could not accompany them to Toronto, is a member of the U. S. Marine Corps, in a tour of duty in Iraq.



A deserving man with his Hall of Fame award



Gil delivers his AHL "Hall of Fame" acceptance speech

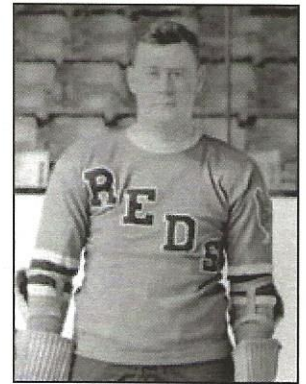


With his proud family: Granddaughter Danielle, wife Marielle and son Andre

## Red Rooster's Update News from Your Society



Fred "Bun" Cook, former player-coach of the Rhode Island Reds in the late 1930s, was inducted posthumously to the Class of 2007 AHL's "Hall of Fame" in Toronto in late January. He joins **Johnny Bower**, **Willie Marshall** and **Gil Mayer** as former Reds holding this honor. Following a storied playing career with the N. Y. Rangers in the National Hockey League that earned him an honored place in the Hockey Hall of Fame, Cook carved a legacy in the American Hockey League as the most prolific coach ever to work an AHL bench. He won two Calder Cup championships with the Reds and five more with the Cleveland Barons. His seven Calder Cup titles have never been equaled. Bun also had three regular season championships with the Reds and seven more with the Barons. Those ten are also an AHL record.



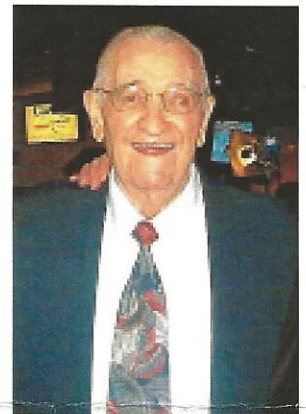
**Sara Bailey**, 16, a native of Norwich, CT, and 17-year-old **Kyle Herring** of Middletown, Del., took the silver medal in the novice ice dance competition at the State Farm U.S. Figure Skating championships in Spokane, Wash., in January. "We're extremely happy," said Bailey, who is the daughter of **Mike Bailey**, a Society director and our webmaster. "We came in with no expectations, hoping to be in the middle of the pack, but we were first after the compulsories and ended second after the free dance. We're working our way up. We would like to compete at the junior level next year and with these results, it makes our ultimate goal — the Olympics — much closer to reality if we continue to work hard." You can visit Sara and Kyle's website at [www.bailey-herring.com](http://www.bailey-herring.com).



**George "Dusty" Blair**, an important member of the Reds' last Calder Cup champion team of 1955-56, was not able to make last year's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of that accomplishment. But he is seen here at his home in Port Erie, Ontario, sporting the commemorative plaque, bearing his name, which was sent along to him by the R. I. Reds Heritage Society. Dusty, a center and left wing, had 1 goal and 12 assists in 9 playoff games against Buffalo and Cleveland that season. He was second only in playoff assists in 1956 to our **Zellio Toppazzini**.



**Tom McDonough** and **Dick Bartlett**, both Society directors, made the trip to Toronto to honor **Gil Mayer** at his induction as a member of the Class of 2007 into the AHL's "Hall of Fame." While there, they visited the renowned Hockey Hall of Fame museum. At the shrine Tom posed next to the number "9" worn by the great Maurice "Rocket" Richard of the Montreal Canadiens. "For just one moment I wanted to be a rocket scientist," he later quipped.



**Chuck Scherza**, second on the all-time list of games played for the R. I. Reds (649), was one of eight former Roosters who attended "Reds Night" courtesy of the Providence Bruins on February 9. **Dean Scherza**, grandson of the 84-year-old Chuck, wrote us about the evening: "I just wanted to give a big thanks to the Society and the P-Bruins for the tribute. I was proud of Chuck (Gramp). For the first time at one of your Reds events I got chills when he was introduced and applauded by the large crowd."

**Tom Army**, the Society's vice-president, and his wife **Betty** had the unusual enjoyment this past season of watching three of their grandsons play on the same high school team, Moses Brown, of Providence. Shown from left are **Jeff Church**, **Derek Army** and **Matt Church**. Jeff will be off to college next fall, but will be replaced by his cousin, **Travis Army**, soon to be a freshman. So it looks like a pleasant encore for Tom and Betty in 2007-08.



## Our Hero in the Sand: Christopher Mayer, Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class, USMC



*(Editor's note: Chris Mayer, 20-year-old grandson of Gil and Marielle, arrived in Iraq last month for a tour of duty with his unit. Chris turned 20 in February and is trained in infantry tactics. Following is a profile written by his dad, Andre, and sister, Danielle. The Society's 600-plus members pray for Chris and other service men and women in harms way.)*

Chris has always been an individualist and a perfectionist. He was an active, happy baby with wide eyes that wanted to see and know about everything around him. He was not into team sports such as soccer or hockey, but loved to challenge himself athletically. During his early elementary school years, he would climb over 10 foot fences just to prove to himself that he could do it. As he got older he started to enjoy karate lessons but never felt that the work outs and discipline were hard enough. He always wanted to challenge himself more.

During his early teenage years he became quite adept at both skateboarding and in line skating. He was among a select group of athletes able to "drop-in" 10 foot ramps and perform tricks on the ramps on either in line skates or a skateboard.

Chris was always trying to be or have the best. In high school he got interested in carpentry. When he handed his parents his Christmas wish list, it specified DeWalt tools because he believed them to be the best.

During summers he would spend time with his uncle in Florida, a self described computer geek. Upon his return to RI he ordered computer components on line and built his own computer and installed Linux himself. He wanted to challenge himself and to build the best.

Chris was never a loud or boisterous kid but had a quiet calm sense of wisdom about him. Answers to life's problems seemed to come to him naturally. During his last year of high school, he had to cope with the unexpected death of his best friend. Although this was a very difficult time for him, he was able to pick up and go on with his life. He graduated from Smithfield High School and moved to Florida with relatives to start life anew in a new environment.

While in Florida, he was working for Sam's Club when he decided to make the most courageous decision a young man can make, to join the US Marine Corps. When asked, "Why the Marines?" His calm, wisely thought-out answer was, "They're the best."

When he entered Boot Camp at Paris Island last March he was having difficulty completing the running requirements. This was probably due in part to his having inherited his grandfather's "needle" stature. Twelve months later, he is the second fastest runner in his platoon. He's approaching becoming the best runner in the platoon.

Today (March 7, 2007) he's off to Iraq as a well-trained and disciplined Marine. We bet he continues to do his best while serving his country.

We'll also feel best when he returns home safely.

Andre and Danielle Mayer

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

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

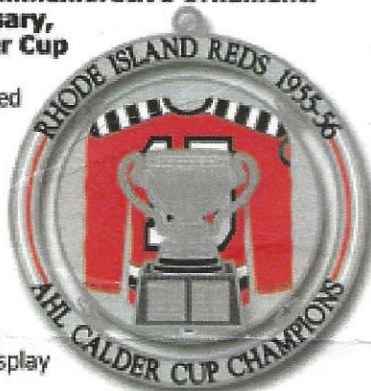
# RED PRIDE



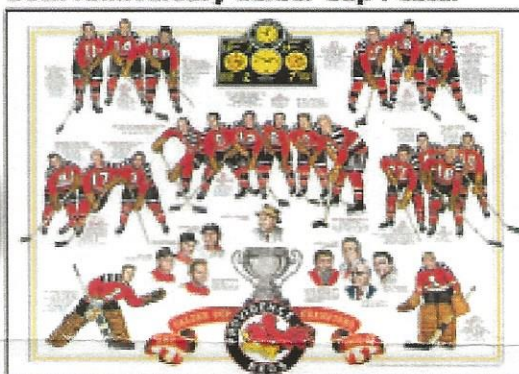
Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society gifts for special occasions

### 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



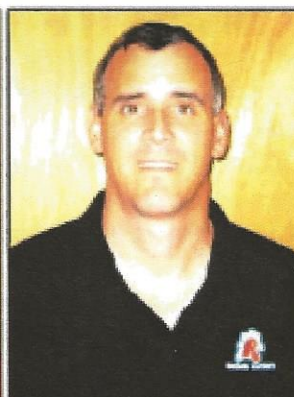
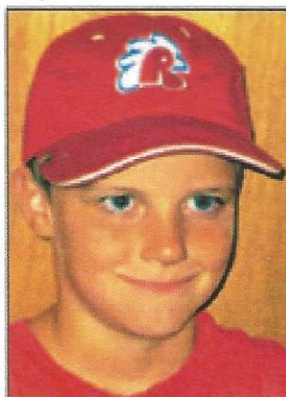
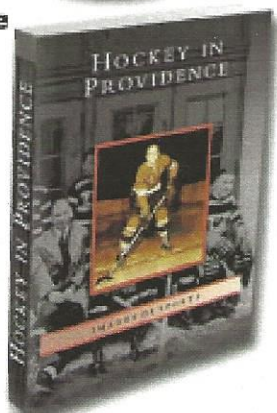
### 50th Anniversary Calder Cup Poster



- By RI illustrators Chil Mott and Gail Greenwood
- 36" by 24"
- Stars include Johnny Bower, Zello 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

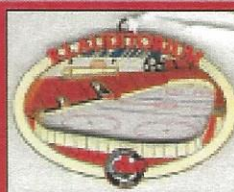
- Highlighted by the official Reds logo in red, white and blue
- Cap in red with adjustable head band to fit any size
- Shirt in black, 100 % cotton, machine washable
- Sizes: M, L, XL, 2XL

## BEST SELLERS

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



Reds Logo  
Watch



Inside The Auditorium  
Ornament



Zello Toppazzini  
Ornament

### Order Form

Item	Price	Qty/Size	SH	Item Total**	Tax***
Calder Cup Ornament	\$15	_____	\$3*	_____	_____
Poster (unsigned)	\$12	_____	\$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

## Brooksie: Not Only a Puck Stopper, But Also a Show Stopper!

An enthusiastic crowd of nearly 100 adults and kids warmly greeted guest speaker Ross Brooks at the R. I. Reds Heritage Society's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual "Lunch & Crunch" event at Lancelotta's restaurant in North Providence on Sunday, March 11.

Brooks, the popular former goaltender of the Reds and later the NHL's Boston Bruins, sprinkled his talk with humorous tales of his hockey ups and downs, then combined it with a serious message that sports are not everything, and that folks should recognize the more important aspects of life — establishing kind and loving relationships.

"By far, Ross' message was the most motivating that we've heard at this event," said Buster Clegg, president of the Society. "He hit a home run with every person in the audience as he voiced his personal feelings about relationships with friends and loved ones."

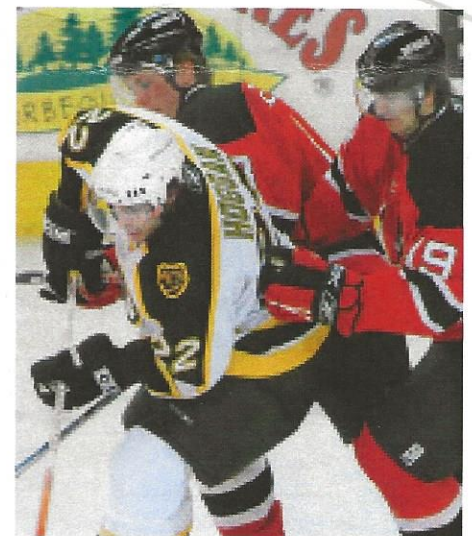
The ex-Reds goaltender told of his good fortune of hooking on with the NHL's Bruins at age 35 after leaving the Reds in 1971. He also spoke of his own personal tragedy in life — the loss of his young son Chris — and how that sad day in his life has, somehow and ironically, made him a better person.

"If you have kids playing a sport or bringing home a report card, take time to pat them on the back for their successes," he advised. "Try not to criticize. Be positive and supportive, not negative." He also said, "Cherish your friendships. Good friends are so important in everyone's life."

After consuming a delicious all-you-can-eat lunch at the restaurant, folks were treated to an autograph session as Brooks took time to sign pictures of himself in a 1970 Reds' uniform.

From there the L & C members departed for the Dunkin' Donuts Center in Providence, where they soon enjoyed a fast-skating, hard-hitting American Hockey League game between the hometown P-Bruins against the Lowell Devils.

Though the locals lost, 5-2, our group had a great time watching the spirited group of young players on both teams — all aspiring to make the NHL shortly. The P-Bruins, of course, are the top farm team of the Boston Bruins, and Lowell is the development club for the New Jersey Devils.



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## The New Official Society Logo



The Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society is proud to introduce its new official logo. The logo focuses on the old "Raging Rooster" illustration created by the late Frank Lanning, Providence Journal cartoonist for many years. Replacing the original copy "Providence Reds" in the outer circle, the new rendering uses the more conventional name of the team, "Rhode Island Reds" and our organization's identity, "Heritage Society." Mike Bailey, the Society's webmaster, put together the new look.



**R. I. Reds Heritage Society**

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**website: www.rireds.org**

### Next Issue

The next issue of 1111 Echoes will come out in October 2007. The newsletter will feature a recap and loads of pictures of the 7th annual reunion. Also, please look forward to the restoration of Forechecking and Backchecking, and more "Chicken Wire" news.