



1111 ECHOES

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND REDS HERITAGE SOCIETY

SPRING 2025

A GREAT 25

Heritage Society Looks Back on its Founding

By Wayne Forrest
Heritage Society President

Twenty-five years ago, six guys walked into a bar. No, that's not the start of a joke, but an introduction into how the Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society came to be a quarter-century ago.

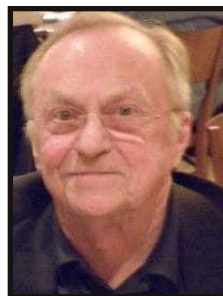
The get-together occurred in the winter of 2000. The Reds had been gone from the local hockey landscape for 23 years, and former Reds' general manager Sylvester "Buster" Clegg "wanted to do something," recalled Arnie Bailey, sports memorabilia maven and one of the men at the brainstorming session that night. "Buster thought that it would be a shame to let the history of the Reds disappear. So, he brought this group of people, who like to meet in bars, together to see if there was any way it could be preserved. At the time, we thought it would be a different kind of fan club for a team that did not exist anymore."

Also quaffing a brew or two were Tom Army, son of former Reds' trainer George Army; former Reds' stick boy and hockey fanatic Tom McDonough; former Reds' business manager Ed Ellsworth; and former East Providence State Rep. Bill Castro, who had also been director of sales for Reds hockey. The group soon crafted by-laws to create a nonprofit organization and the Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society was born.

"Buster and his relationship with



Buster Clegg



Arnie Bailey



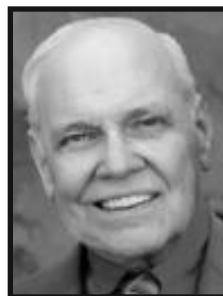
Tom Army



Tom McDonough



Ed Ellsworth



Bill Castro

the players became the nucleus of the group," Bailey added. "When we first sent out membership information, the players' response was amazing. Over the years some 120 players became members of the Reds Heritage Society." At its height, total membership – fans, families, and

players – reached more than 700 members.

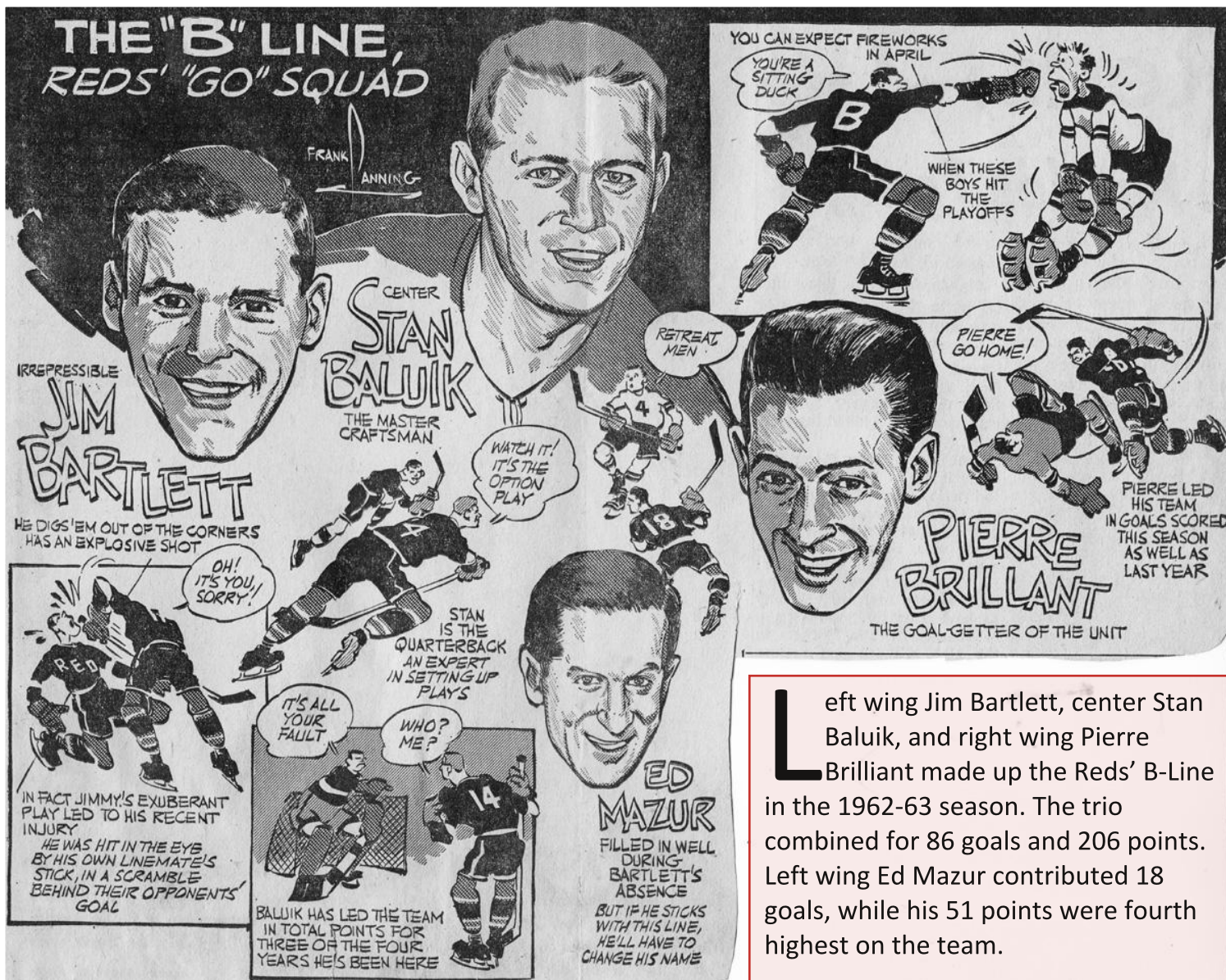
Annual player reunions at Goddard State Park in East Greenwich became a joyous event for the Reds' extended hockey family. The first reunion, held on July 29, 2001, attracted 230 attendees. By early 2002, the Reds Heritage Society had grown to more than 370 members, 68 of whom were former Reds and other professional hockey players. In 2004, the Reds Heritage Society feted its 500th member – former Red, Boston Bruin, and National Hockey League Hall of Fame forward Milt Schmidt.

"The former Reds players were the ones who drew fans to the reunions," Bailey said. Many of those players happily made the trek from Canada, thanks in part to Johnny Bower, the Reds' All-Star goalie with the 1955-56 Calder Cup championship team. The "Bower Bus" picked up as many as 40 passengers in Toronto and more fellow former Reds along the way to complete the 11-hour ride to Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society is now part of the Rhode Island Hockey Hall of Fame and still going strong, recounting the history of the state's first professional hockey to current and future generations.

"If you talked to those six guys in that bar 25 years ago and asked if we would be celebrating the Reds Heritage Society 25 years later, we would've said 'Let's order another beer and we'll be happy,'" Bailey reflected proudly.

Cartoon Memories: The Reds "B" Line



Left wing Jim Bartlett, center Stan Baluik, and right wing Pierre Brillant made up the Reds' B-Line in the 1962-63 season. The trio combined for 86 goals and 206 points. Left wing Ed Mazur contributed 18 goals, while his 51 points were fourth highest on the team.



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Get Your Reds-Hot Swag!

The Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society now has two options for you to buy apparel to show your Reds spirit, both accessible through the Heritage Shop on our website.

Shopify offers high-quality embroidered shirts, hoodies and caps. Cafe Press, meanwhile, offers screen-printed sweatshirts and T-shirts with the Raging Rooster and Rhody logos.
 Click here to visit The Heritage Shop on the web.

Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society

Heritage Shop

Shopify
Embroidered logo Hats, Hoodies, Polos, Vests, Collector Cards, etc.

Cafe Press
Imprinted logo Sweatshirts, T-Shirts, Hoodies, and more!

HISTORIC MEMORIES

Lifelong Friends Recall Reds' 1946 and 1949 Playoffs

By Wayne Forrest
Heritage Society President

It is not often – if ever – that one has the great fortune to speak with someone who attended Reds' Calder Cup playoff games in 1946 and 1949. Charley Steedman and Dorothy Sturges, current members of the Reds Heritage Society, were there as childhood friends and recently shared their vivid memories from almost 80 years ago.



Charley Steedman



Dorothy Sturges

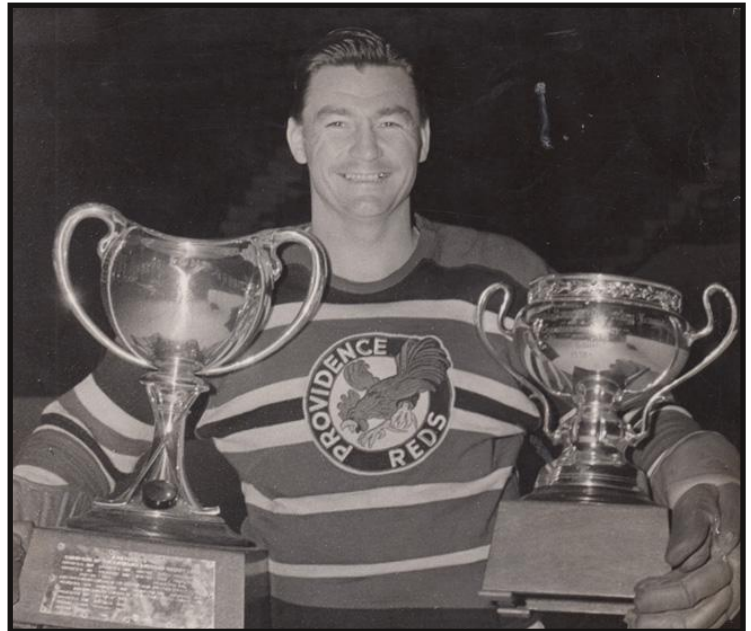
They grew up on the east side of Providence a few streets apart and were ten years old in March 1946 when together they saw the Cleveland Barons shut out the Reds, 2-0, in game one of their opening-round playoff series. Despite the loss, the excitement of their first Reds' game made lifelong impressions. "We were sitting fairly close to the ice, and it was magical to watch the blades cutting into the ice and see the action right in front of us," Dorothy said. "It became an immediate love for the Reds, and I thought hockey was just the greatest game."

Like so many young fans, Charley collected Reds' programs and cut out the players' photos to tack to his bedroom wall. "Then I got more sophisticated and rather than cut up the program, I would find sources of other pictures of Reds players. Some of them were in Bruins uniforms," he said. "I would arrange the photos by lines and defense pairs and the goalie, Harvey Bennett, had his own

spot [on the wall]."

The youngsters' biggest thrill came on March 31, 1949, in game five of the Reds' playoff series against the St. Louis Flyers. There were 6,622 fans crammed into the Auditorium that Thursday night. "I think we were there about two hours before they dropped the puck," Charley recalled. "When we got there, there were no more seats available, but way up in the corner of the Auditorium beyond the last row of seats were some folding chairs. That is where we sat."

The Reds and Flyers went into overtime tied, 3-3. In



Terry Reardon holds the Fontaine Cup (left) and Calder Cup (right). The 1949 championship was the Reds' third Calder Cup victory after having won three Fontaine Cups.

those days, a 10-minute overtime period was played in its entirety. St. Louis scored first at 5:24 before Reds' defenseman Danny Summers knotted the game at 4-4 with only 11 seconds left in the first overtime. If a playoff game were still tied after that period, the teams played sudden death.

Finally, at 18:30 of the second overtime period, after more than 88 minutes of hockey, Summers fed a pass to player-coach Terry Reardon who fired the puck past Flyers' goalie Red Almas for the winning tally. "There was bedlam!" Charley said. "Fans began throwing folding chairs on the ice! They were going crazy."

Reardon's game-winning goal also gave him a hat trick that night. "Terry Reardon was our hero. He was always scrappy and fighting for the puck," Charley added. "Of course, that overtime goal against St. Louis was a gem." Dorothy was equally awestruck. "I got to know so many of the players, and I adored Terry Reardon."

The Reds won that series in seven games from St. Louis and went on to win their third Calder Cup, besting the Hershey Bears in seven games.

Today Charley makes his home in Maine, while Dorothy resides in Arizona. As they approach their 90th birthdays this year, they remain the best of friends and steadfastly support the Reds Heritage Society.

Did You Know?

Bower's Best Year was with the Reds

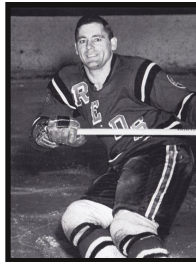
Johnny Bower won four NHL Stanley Cups and four AHL Calder Cups over his historic 24-year pro career. His greatest campaign, however, took place with our Reds during their 1956 Calder Cup season, when he recorded the most regular season wins (45) in his best overall season record of 52-16-2 through the team's championship run.



Johnny Bower

A Bartlett Hat Trick was Against Bower

Jim Bartlett scored a "natural" hat trick with the NY Rangers in 1959, the only one recorded in the NHL that year, in an 8-0 win over the Toronto Maple Leafs. The Toronto goalie was none other than Johnny Bower, his teammate with the Reds in their 1955-56 Calder Cup season. The Rangers goalie who recorded the shutout was another former Reds' teammate, Marcel Paille, the goalie Bartlett scored the most goals against in his career.



Jim Bartlett

First Reds to Play at Auditorium were Canadiens

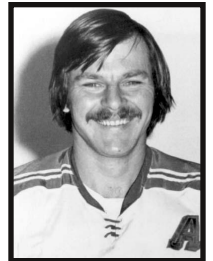
The first pro hockey games played at the R.I. Auditorium occurred in March 1926, nine months before the Reds' debut in December. The Boston Bruins, New York Americans, and Montreal Canadiens played a three-game round robin after their NHL seasons ended. The Americans lost their games to Boston and Montréal, so when the Bruins and Canadiens skated to a 3-3 tie, the two teams split the \$1,000 prize money with a win and a tie each. Interestingly, two future Reds were in the lineup for the Canadiens that night – defenseman Roland Paulhus and right-wing Hector Lepine, who scored the Reds' first goal ever on the team's actual opening night against the Springfield Indians.



Hector Lepine

'Crazy Legs' Made his Name with the Reds

Joe Zanussi – nicknamed "Crazy Legs" by his teammates – won the Eddie Shore Award as the American Hockey League's top defenseman for the 1974-75 season. It was the first of two seasons with the Reds, which saw the rugged defenseman score an impressive 22 goals and 58 points from the blueline. The following season Joe was traded to Boston as part of the now-famous five-player deal that sent Bruins Phil Esposito and Carol Vadnais to the Rangers for Jean Ratelle and Brad Park.



Joe Zanussi

After Years of Searching, Aime Renaud Found

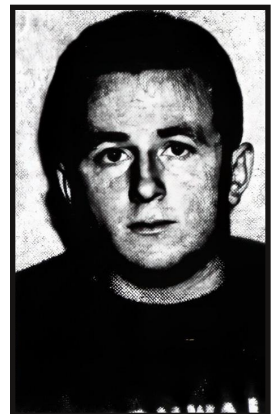
Nearly two years ago, when the Reds Heritage Society took on the formidable task of assembling a photo gallery of every player who wore a Reds' sweater over the team's 51-year history, 16 images were missing from our collection. The research was exhaustive, but by the time our new website was launched in 2024, only one photo had not yet been found.

The elusive image was of defenseman Aime Renaud, who played just one game for the Reds in the 1943-44 season. Family was never found despite detailed searches of his hometown

records. The photo search included scouring the archives of his former teams, the newspapers from those regions, his obituary, the funeral parlor where he was waked, and many more potential sources.

In early March, with the help of Society of International Hockey Research, a photo was finally discovered in the archives of an obscure old newspaper in Cornwall, Ontario, where Aime played 21 games for the Cornwall Cookies in the 1944-45 season. Yet there it was.

And now it's on our website at www.rireds.org – our players gallery complete – because we never give up!



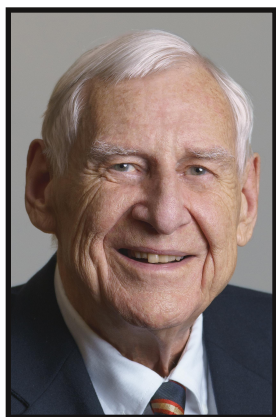
Aime Renaud



CLASS OF '25



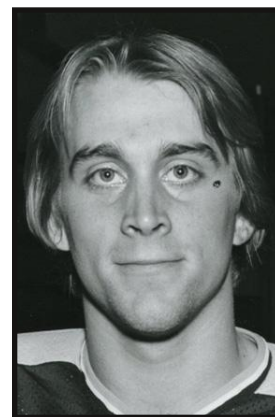
Ross Brooks



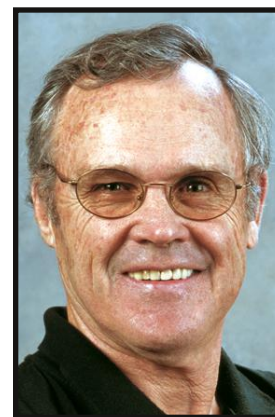
Buster Clegg



Tom Woodcock



Bill Army



Bob O'Connor

Five RI Hockey Legends to Join Hall of Fame

By Vin Cimini
Heritage Society Board

The R.I. Reds and their extended family of players and team officials have had a profound influence on the growth and popularity of hockey both in Rhode Island and around the globe.

Fourteen players, team officials, and family members related to the legendary team are now enshrined in the RI Hockey Hall of Fame. That number will swell to 18 this August when Ross Brooks, Buster Clegg, Tom Woodcock, and Bill Army will join the 52 hockey greats already enshrined in the Hall.

Ross Brooks played seven seasons with the Reds and three seasons with the Boston Bruins during his 23-year playing career. He followed up with several decades of coaching and executive positions at the youth, high

school, college, and professional levels.

Buster Clegg, founder of the R.I. Reds Heritage Society, was previously honored by the HOF with the Malcolm Greene Chace Trophy for "Lifetime Contributions to the Game of Ice Hockey." A former college star, Buster also served as one of the state's most influential youth hockey coaches and organizers.

Tom Woodcock, a protégé of the legendary trainer George Army, spent 40 years caring for the injuries, ailments, and the rehabilitation of NHLers in St Louis, Hartford, and San Jose. He previously was enshrined in the Trainers' Wing of the National Hockey League's Hall of Fame in Toronto.

Bill Army, a former NCAA All-American and American College Player-of-the-Year at Boston College, is the fourth member of the Army family to be honored for both their

achievements on the ice. Bill also gave back to the game as a mentor and coach of future generations.

Bob O'Connor, the fifth member of the Class of 2025, might also be considered part of the Reds family, if you consider "Rink Rat" as a qualifying category. The former R.I. high school "Player of the Year" grew up in the shadow of the R.I. Auditorium doing odd jobs at the arena for "ice" time. After a playing career at Providence College, he became one of the winningest high school coaches in Minnesota history and a USA Hockey icon as the organization's National Coach-in-Chief and coach of seven USA National Men's and Women's Teams.

The Hall's annual Enshrinement Celebration & Dinner will be held on Saturday, Aug. 23, at Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet in Cranston. Tickets now available at RIHHOF.com.

SHOWCASING THE FUTURE

Society Assists Hall of Fame's All-Star Tournament

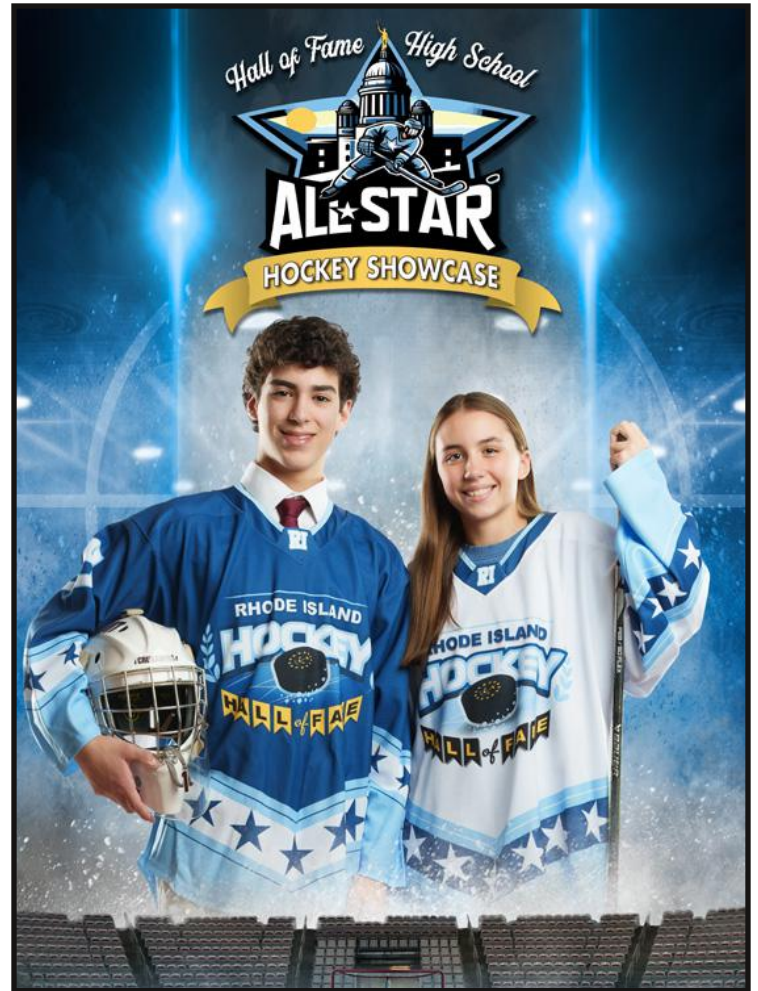
By Wayne Forrest
Heritage Society President

In 2016, the Reds Heritage Society collaborated with RI Hockey, the local affiliate of USA Hockey, to form the RI Hockey Hall of Fame. We couldn't be more gratified by the popularity and positive impact the Hall's initiatives and programs have had on our hockey community.

This year the Heritage Society again assisted in the production of the Hall's now annually televised High School All-Star Hockey Showcase games at Providence College's beautiful Schneider Arena. Several thousand viewers enjoyed the peer-vs-peer games (one for girls, one for boys) in person, online streaming, on TV replay or YouTube as RI's best high school players displayed their exceptional talents for college coaches and recruiters.

All proceeds from the Showcase, along with contributions from RI Hockey and the Reds Heritage Society, fund the Hall of Fame's new Scholarship Program. This year we will award up to ten \$1,000 scholarships to seniors (five girls and five boys) on RI Interscholastic League rosters who enroll in college or trade school this year.

"Hockey is more than a game. It teaches us what dedication, communication and teamwork can achieve," Vin Cimini, founding Chairman of the HOF and Vice President of the Heritage Society explained. "Those attributes, combined with a formal education, are a pathway to a successful life. We pass the baton and entrust each new generation to coach, mentor, and inspire the next generation to grow the game and continue the Reds' legacy of passing it forward."



Heritage Society Family Loses Cherry, Soares

The R.I. Reds Heritage Society recently lost two of our family members. Former defenseman Dick Cherry passed away at age 87 on March 6, and Allan Soares did at age 86 on Nov. 19.

Cherry played in 204 games over three seasons in Providence from 1958 to 1961 after a brief stint with the Boston Bruins in the 1956-57 season. The rough-and-tumble blueliner made sure the defensive zone was well-guarded, amassing 184 penalty minutes during his time here. Dick also showed his durability with the Philadelphia Flyers from 1968 to 1970, skating in 139 games over two full seasons. Dick was the younger brother



Dick Cherry



Allan Soares

of Don Cherry, former AHL defenseman and head coach for the AHL Rochester Americans and NHL Boston Bruins.

Soares was a standout athlete at Brown University in hockey and track before coming to the Reds in the 1960-61 season. He later coached the Roger Williams University hockey team, player/coach of the Rhody Oldies hockey club, and served as a scout for the NHL's St. Louis Blues.

Allan's athletic accomplishments earned him entry into the Cranston Schools Athletic Hall of Fame and Brown University Athletic Hall of Fame.

Their contributions to Rhode Island hockey and the local community will always be remembered.