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ECHOES

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND REDS HERITAGE SOCIETY

FALL 2026

REDS AND P-BRUINS MARK 100 YEARS OF R.I. HOCKEY

Reds Legends Will Meet Fans Before Game

By Wayne Forrest
Reds Heritage Society President

It took 100 years, but the day is finally here: the centennial anniversary of the Reds' first game on December 3, 1926, against the Springfield Indians.

To commemorate this historic event, the R.I. Reds Heritage Society is collaborating with the Providence Bruins to celebrate the state's first pro team and the birth of pro hockey in the state on Friday, Nov. 13. Coincidentally, the P-Bruins' opponent is the Springfield Thunderbirds. The Reds' weekend continues on Sunday, Nov. 15, against the Toronto Marlies.

The main event on Friday night will feature a "Meet and Greet" with former Reds' goaltender Ross Brooks, forward Bob Leduc, and right-wing Rick "Nifty" Middleton scheduled to attend. Fans also will see a display of artifacts, photos, equipment, and other items from the 51-year history of the Rhode Island Reds and the R.I. Auditorium. It begins at approximately 5:30 p.m. on the lower level of the Amica Mutual Pavillion.

Brooks spent parts of eight seasons with the Reds before moving up to the Boston Bruins for three seasons. He made his NHL debut at age 35 and was unbeaten in his first 14 games, going 11-0-3 and tying the NHL record for the longest undefeated start of a career by a rookie goaltender. He also achieved a 14-game winning



Rick Middleton, left and Bob Leduc and Ross Brooks at past R.I. Reds reunions.

streak in the 1973-74 season to tie another NHL record.

Leduc skated for seven seasons in Providence, scoring 129 goals in 496 games. His best performance was in the 1969-70 season when he scored 32 goals, best on the team. Never one to shy away from physical play, Bob also amassed 429 penalty minutes and more than a few majors. He went on to star in the World Hockey Association as a player with the Ottawa Nationals and as a player and coach with the Toronto Toros.

Middleton made his mark with the Reds in the 1973-74 season after the New York Rangers selected him in the first round (and 14th overall pick) in the 1973 NHL draft. His 36 goals in 63 games with the Reds elevated him to

the NHL the following season. He became a Boston Bruin on May 26, 1976, in the memorable trade for Ken Hodge. In 14 years and 1,005 games in the NHL, the Toronto native tallied 448 goals and 540 assists.

To guarantee your seats for the game and entry into the "Meet and Greet," please order your tickets through this direct link – <https://www.providencebruins.com/groups/riredshs>

A portion of each ticket sold will be donated to the R.I. Reds Heritage Society to continue its mission to research, preserve, and promote the history of the Reds for current and future generations. Our sincere thanks for all your support. Hope to see you all on Nov. 13!

OUR ALL-AROUND HISTORY EXPERT

Society Mourns Archivist Roger Gladu

The Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society lost its long-time archivist in June with the passing of Board of Directors member Roger Gladu.

Over several years, Roger discovered and preserved what is likely the most comprehensive collection of Reds player photos and news clippings anywhere, lacking just a handful of the hundreds who played for the team in its 51-year history in Providence.

He supported the Heritage Society in other ways, too.

During one of the organization's reunion weekends, he and his wife Lorraine opened their beach house to reunion guests for a special luncheon provided by their friends from the Asia Grille in Lincoln.

And during another Heritage Society luncheon, Roger brought as guest speaker Clem Labine, the great Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher from Woonsocket, who was a friend of many years.

Roger was a graduate of Mount St. Charles Academy, where he was a goalie for the school that became so well-known for the sport with its record number of state high school championships and players whose careers led to the National Hockey League.

He also was a member of the school baseball teams and was honored with his Golden Diploma at the 50th-year



Roger Gladu

reunion of his class.

In addition to his family, Roger's passions included not just the Reds and the game of hockey, but also the village of Manville where he was a lifelong resident and devoted historian. He earned a reputation as THE go-to resource about his beloved hometown while amassing a treasure trove of documents and photos. He produced two episodes of the "History Of Manville" and received the Peg Award from Rhode Island Access Television for best full-length documentary.

Roger served his country with the 118th Combat Engineers of the R. I. National Guard. And he served his hometown as a first responder with the Manville Fire Department for more than 36 years. He retired as treasurer and a life member with the rank of captain in the town fire association and the R.I. State Firemen's League. He was hailed as an inspiration to young firefighters.

A lifelong communicant of St. James Parish and active with its CYO, he was a member of the Alphonse Yell Post 9 of the American Legion, president of the Manville Little League, and active in the Community Center, the Sportsmen's Club, the Woonsocket B.P., O.E. Lodge #850, and the Museum of Work and Culture.

For 35 years he was with the Manville office of the U.S. Postal Service, and was president of branch #3501 of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

It was often said that if you wanted to know something about the history of Manville, if Roger didn't know about it, it never happened or didn't exist. That also proved to be true about his knowledge of hockey and the R.I. Reds.

The Gladu Family thoughtfully donated Roger's unique collection of Reds photos and memorabilia to the Heritage Society where it will be preserved.



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A GRAND ENTRANCE

Kelly Took Exit 6 Off the Mass Pike to the Reds

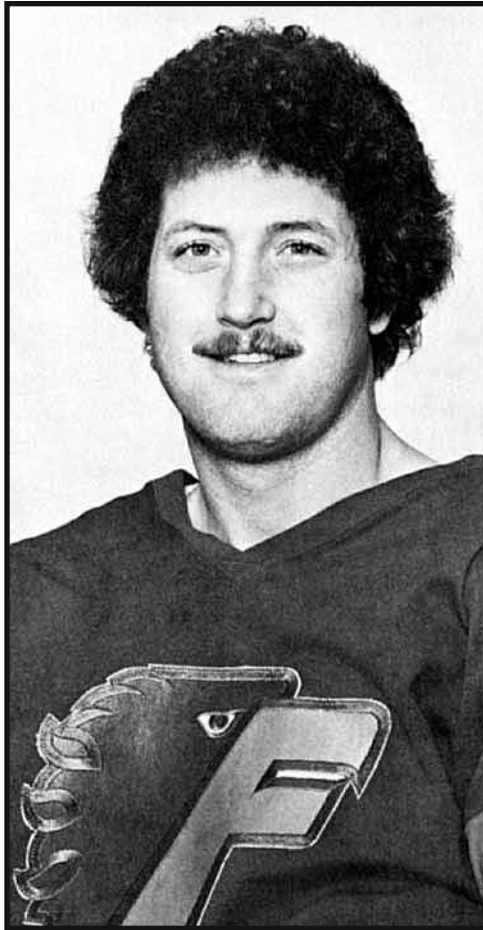
By Wayne Forrest
Reds Heritage Society President

Some players know how to make a memorable first impression with their new team, even if it is unintended. Take former Providence College Friar Dave Kelly. At the start of the 1976-77 season, Reds' coach and general manager John Muckler needed players and swung a deal with the Springfield Indians to acquire the 24-year-old right wing.

Muckler called Dave on a Friday to tell him about the trade and to be ready for the Reds' Sunday night game in Rochester. "He said we will pick you up on exit 6 on the Mass Pike, since I was in Springfield at the time," Kelly recalled. "So, I asked my wife to drive me out to the highway. She said, 'Are you crazy?' I said 'That's what he said to do. I have to wait at exit 6 and the bus is going to come.'"

Dutifully, she dropped off Dave at the designated location with all his gear, hockey stick, and overnight bag. Naturally, it figures that a police officer rolls up and asks, "What the hell are you doing out here?" Dave explained the situation and the officer started laughing and told him to get in the car. "Now I'm in the front seat with the cop, and he pulls into one of those spaces between the highway to watch traffic a couple of miles down the road toward Providence. We are just shooting the breeze, and here comes a bus and, somehow, he knows it is the bus from Providence," Kelly added. As the bus goes by, the officer puts on the flashers and siren and pulls the bus over. The driver opens the door to see what's going on and Dave hops on board.

"Now there are 20 guys on the bus looking around like – what the [bleep] is going on? They see me and now everybody is dying, laughing their



Dave Kelly wears his Philadelphia Firebirds jersey during his 1977-78 season.

asses off," Dave chuckled. "That was a very funny way to get introduced to the team." And, if that wasn't enough of a grand entrance, Dave scored two goals that Sunday night in the Reds' 7-3 win over the Americans.

From Friar to Red

Born and raised in Wallaceburg, Ontario, Dave played junior hockey with the Chatham Maroons before he was recruited as a freshman for the 1971-72 Friars' season by coach Lou Lamoriello who already had four players from the Maroons on the roster. Lamoriello visited Dave in his hometown of Chatham and invited him to see the school. "Lou gave me an

airplane ticket to Providence, so I could tour the campus, meet a few guys, and stay overnight. When it was done, Lou offered me a scholarship and all I had to do was pay for the books," he said.

Kelly skated in all four years at P.C., registering a total of 46 goals (21 goals in his senior year) and 55 assists in 97 games. After graduation, he signed as a free agent with the Philadelphia Flyers and started the 1975-76 season with the American Hockey League's Richmond Robins whose coach happened to be Larry Wilson, the dad of Dave's former Friar teammates Ron and Brad Wilson and former Reds' coach from 1970-1972. Dave was a durable contributor, playing in 74 of Richmond's 76 games, netting 21 goals and earning 156 penalty minutes.

"I was an up-and-down kind of winger, picking up my man, dumping the puck in, and banging the defenseman in the corner," he said. "Lou [Lamoriello] taught me to be more of a defensive player than an offensive player. I always made sure to get back and help out defensively." Dave played 45 games in Providence, with 16 goals and 19 assists before he was traded in a six-player deal to Detroit in February 1977. He skated in 16 games for the Red Wings and scored two goals, the first one against future NHL Hall of Fame goalie Tony Esposito of the Chicago Black Hawks.

Dave retired after spending the 1977-78 season with the AHL's Philadelphia Firebirds during which time he scored 15 goals and 13 assists in 74 games. Since then, he has spent almost 50 years as a sales rep. "It was Lou who got me the job selling hockey equipment for CCM," Dave said. "I've been a rep ever since and have had a very good life." And he made lasting impressions on all the people and fans who knew him in Providence.

AMATEUR POWERHOUSE

Almost from the Beginning, the Reds and the Scarlets were Inseparable

By Mike Bailey
Reds Heritage Society Board

If you want to understand how hockey took root in Rhode Island, look beyond the Providence Reds.

The Reds were the big show: pro hockey, packed nights at the Rhode Island Auditorium, and championships. But alongside them — and sometimes remarkably close to them — was another team, the Rhode Island Scarlets.

The Scarlets were an amateur team that drew from some of the best local players in the state and competed against strong teams throughout New England. And they shared the Arena, equipment, and an intriguing cast of characters with the Reds.

Origins

The story starts with Hubert C. Milot, the Providence businessman and hockey fan who spearheaded the effort to build the Rhode Island Auditorium.

Milot was educated at LaSalle Academy in Providence and, later, St. Mary's College in Montreal. At St. Mary's, he befriended classmate Leo Dandurand, who would later come to own, manage and coach the Montreal Canadiens. As the NHL sought to expand in 1924, Hubert visited Montreal to investigate establishing an NHL franchise in Providence. He returned to Providence and set about gathering support to build a premiere sports arena. The Rhode Island Auditorium opened in February 1926.

With Milot serving as the Auditorium's general manager, ice skating exhibitions and amateur, high

school and collegiate hockey were regular attractions.

What the Auditorium needed was a pro team. Enter Judge James E. Dooley, a lawyer, politician, sportsman, and promoter. Dooley was part owner of the Providence Steam Roller, an NFL team founded in 1916 that was playing at the nearby Cycledrome. But in 1926, he was focused on hockey. When the NHL franchises went to New York and Boston in 1924, Dooley, Milot and George Brown of Boston led the charge to found the Canadian-American Hockey League. Dooley went on to serve as president, and he became sole owner of the new Providence Reds of the Can-Am League.

The Reds played their inaugural game on Dec. 3, 1926, with players supplied by Leo Dandurand, Milot's longtime friend, and the Montreal Canadiens.

After losses in their first three games, Reds head coach Jimmy Gardner and general manager Jean Dubuc began looking for more talent. One of the athletes who drew their attention was Curley Oden, a local sports legend. Oden had captained the ice hockey team at Providence's Classical High School and played football and baseball at Brown University. By 1926, he was a star running back and receiver for Dooley's NFL team.

In December of that year, Oden became the first Rhode Islander to receive a tryout with the Reds. And while he never played for the team, he did go on to star on the ice with the Newports of the Blackstone Valley Amateur Hockey League. In 1930, Oden organized an all-star team of the



Curley Oden, the football star who tried out for the Reds and ended up founding the Scarlets.

state's best amateur players as the Rhode Island Amateur Hockey Club.

The next year, Milot took control of that club and renamed it the Rhode Island Scarlets for better association with the Reds. They played against teams from Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York.

The Scarlets, with Milot as coach, went on to win the 1932 New England Amateur Athletic Union championship in a tournament played at the Auditorium. Later that season, the Scarlets became the first Rhode Island team to compete for the Senior National Championship. Stars included Jimmy "Ace" Hart and

Continued on Next Page

The Scarlets Were Rhode Island's Amateur Powerhouse

From Previous Page

George "Pud" Quirk of Hope High School, Howie Crins of Technical High and Clem Harnedy of LaSalle.

Now, the Rhode Island Auditorium was truly home to the state's professional team, its premiere amateur team, and college and schoolboy hockey. And through the 1930s, the Scarlets' association with the Reds would grow stronger.

The Reds' Influence

Goalie Paddy Byrne joined the Reds for the 1932-33 season, and he also took over management of the Scarlets. This coincided with the birth of the Rhode Island Inter-City Amateur Hockey League. The Scarlets roster was meticulously handpicked from the top-performing players across the entire Inter-City league to represent Rhode Island in regional and national tournaments.

Byrne was the first of many Reds players and associates who would manage the team.

Fred "Bun" Cook was already a hockey legend when he arrived in Providence. As a player, he had been part of the New York Rangers' famous Bread Line. He retired after the 1936-37 season, and he came to Providence to coach the Reds – and the Scarlets. He quickly delivered results with the Reds, guiding them to Calder Cup championships in 1938 and 1940. His record with the Scarlets was less stellar. But he was scouting talent and developing the strategies that would take the Scarlets to success a few years later. For example, Cook introduced the team to the drop pass, which he invented during his Hall of Fame playing days with the Rangers.

While Cook was building teams on the ice, Louis A. R. Pieri was becoming the man who could make the entire operation work. Pieri joined the Rhode Island Auditorium as general manager in 1929. A decade later, after the Depression put the Auditorium into dire financial straits, Pieri emerged as owner of both the Arena and the Reds.

Under Pieri's leadership, the Reds became one of the great minor-league



The Scarlets in 1960, wearing the familiar Reds uniform of the era.

franchises in hockey history, winning four Calder Cups. And the Scarlets continued to benefit from his interest and sponsorship. The Scarlets continued to play at the Auditorium, often in donated Reds uniforms. Pieri steered more experts to lead the team.

Ahead of the 1939-40 season, Jim O'Rourke took over as coach, and the season proved to be a masterful showcase of Rhode Island talent. The Scarlets finished the regular season in a tie for first place and vanquished the Boston Junior Olympics to claim the league championship.

Amateur Powerhouse

In 1947, the Scarlets joined the Atlantic Amateur Hockey League. Their coach was Johnny "Black Cat" Gagnon, who played for the Reds in the late 1920s before moving to the Montreal Canadiens, where he won the Stanley Cup in 1931. He later played for the Boston Bruins and New York Americans before returning to Providence to finish his playing career in 1945. Gagnon's roster for the Scarlets included, among others, Gerry Kilmartin, Bill Thayer, Ralph Warburton, Al Bentley, Don Mellor, and Ted Dooley.

Kilmartin, Thayer, and Warburton would join the U.S. National Team. Bentley would eventually play goal for the Reds. Mellor would become a pioneer of youth hockey in Cranston, R.I. And Dooley, son of the Reds' founder, would go on to coach the Scarlets in 1948-1949.

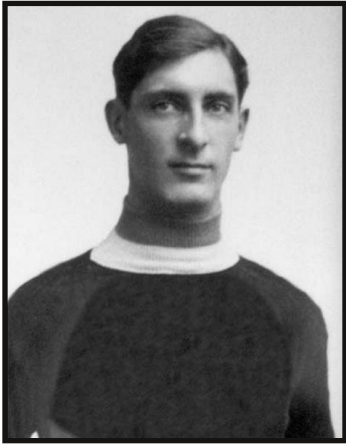
After that season, however, the

Scarlets dropped out of the Atlantic loop because Pieri opposed the league rule of permitting players over 21 years old to participate. Pieri believed the senior amateur league should focus on developing young players for professional hockey. The Scarlets adapted by cementing their role as an all-star squad. Coordinated by Reds Coach Terry Reardon and Auditorium general manager John C. Martin, the all-star squad was regularly sent to compete in the New England AHA Senior Tournament.

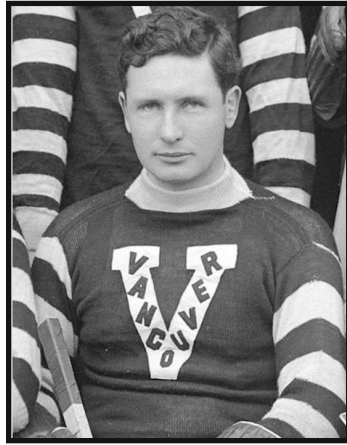
The year 1956 brought one of the highlights in the team's later history. The Scarlets took the ice at the Rhode Island Auditorium for a high-profile exhibition game against the United States National Team, giving fans a thrilling chance to see their neighborhood heroes play against world-class Olympic bound talent. The Scarlets continued to compete into the 1960s, notably winning the 1961-62 Massachusetts Senior Class A Fall Hockey Championship. They put together a stellar run, winning nine games and tying one, including a decisive 6-3 victory over Burrillville's Fairbanks Electric in the final game.

But the landscape for amateur hockey was changing. The NHL amateur draft began in 1963 and slowly dissolved the sponsorship system that had nurtured the Scarlets and other senior amateur teams. The Scarlets played their final game on Jan. 12, 1966, ending in a 3-3 tie with St. George's School of Middletown, R.I.

Did You Know?



Brothers Lester and Frank Patrick



Hockey in Two Halves

Before 1910 and the visionary suggestions of the Patrick brothers, Lester and Frank, were implemented, hockey was played in two 30-minute halves. Unfortunately, the lengthy periods led to poor ice, sloppy play, and serious player injury. The brothers championed the idea of changing to three 20-minute periods to replenish and produce a better sheet of ice to play on over 60 minutes. A byproduct was increased revenue for the team owners with two intermissions between play providing an additional opportunity for fans to buy more refreshments.

Here Come the Swedes

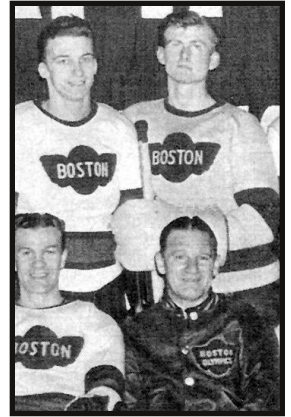
Former Reds forward Howie Menard famously scouted Borje Salming in Sweden, bringing the future NHL Hall of Fame defenseman to Toronto and paving the way for more Europeans to follow. Howie was skating with the AHL's Baltimore Clippers – three years after his time in Providence and one year before returning – when Salming joined the Maple Leafs for the 1973-74 season. Salming wore the blue-and-white for 16 seasons before closing out his career after one season with the Detroit Red Wings. He played 1,148 games in the NHL, scored 150 goals, and recorded 1,344 penalty minutes.



Borje Salming wears the Tre Kronor, or Three Crowns, jersey of the Swedish Men's national ice hockey team.

A Family Tradition

Harvey Bennett, Sr. was the first former NHLer to sire three future NHLers – Curt, Harvey Jr., and Bill. He has since been joined by Bill Dineen (sons Gord, Kevin, and Peter) and Paul Reinhart (sons Griffin, Max, and Sam). In 1946, Harvey also was notably the first 'goalie' to score a pro goal out of the pads when he played forward while wearing his goalie skates in two games for the Boston Olympics against Washington and Baltimore. He scored one goal and assisted on another one out of the crease.



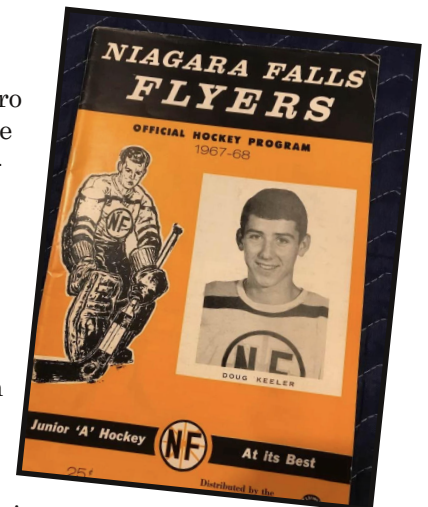
Harvey Bennett Sr. (upper right) with the 1940 Olympics.

A Sunday Night Tradition Begins

The Reds played their first Sunday night game on Dec. 16, 1928. The next day's Providence Journal described the Reds' come-from-behind 4-3 overtime win over the Philadelphia Arrows as "the most spectacular victory in professional hockey's three-year career in this city," delighting a "howling mob of more than 4,000" fans. Reds' captain and defenseman Charley Langlois scored the game winner unassisted midway through the 10-minute extra period. That evening would become part of the state's sports fabric in the decades to come and create a veritable mandatory pilgrimage to the R.I. Auditorium to cap off the weekend at 1111 North Main St.

Butter Beep Keeler

Before he played pro and skated for the Reds in the 1972-73 season, Doug Keeler served as team captain for the Toronto Butter Beeps (yes, that was the name) that captured the Canadian National Midget Championship in 1967. One season later, the 17-year-old played with the Niagara Falls Flyers in the Ontario Juniors on their way to winning the prestigious Memorial Cup.



This 1967-68 Flyers' program featured Doug Keeler.

HALL OF FAME HONORS

Duffy, Sage Named to RI Hall

By Vin Cimini

Reds Heritage Society Vice President

The historic Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet was the site of the enshrinement of the R.I. Hockey Hall of Fame's heralded "Class of 2026." More than 300 family members, friends, and fans were on hand to pay tribute to the class, which included the 12th and 13th members of the Reds' family to be inducted into the Hall: former public relations director and radio voice George Patrick Duffy and former Reds owner George Sage.

For more than 30 years, Duffy performed his tasks as Publicity Director and radio voice of the Reds with generous doses of his Irish wit and "gift of gab" at the R.I. Auditorium, at the AMP, and at rinks throughout the AHL. A civic leader in his native city of Pawtucket, he previously earned recognition as an inductee of both the Pawtucket and R.I. Heritage Halls of Fame.

Sage purchased the Reds team in 1969, while they still played in their original and decaying venue, the R.I. Auditorium. He rejuvenated the franchise with a new logo and more



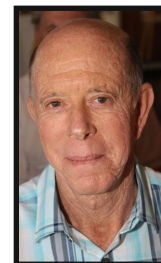
Banners for George M. Sage and George Patrick Duffy at the Hall of Fame Induction.

investment in talent, but with the knowledge that the team's home rink had long since seen its best days. Sage then became instrumental in paving the way and championing the construction of the Providence Civic Center, now the Amica Mutual Pavilion, home of the Reds before they departed the city in 1977 and now home of the AHL Providence Bruins.

This former owner of the Bonanza Bus Lines left a legacy of generous contributions to the R.I. hockey community and to local schools and charities during his lifetime.

Demers Joins LA Sportswalk

Former Reds' trainer Pete Demers was inducted into the LA Sportswalk of Fame on October 12. The latest well-deserved honor follows Pete's earlier inductions into the Los Angeles Kings Hall of Fame, the Trainer's Wing of the NHL Hockey Hall of Fame, and the R.I. Hockey Hall of Fame.



Pete Demers

Pete grew up in the shadow of the R.I. Auditorium in the early 1950s and became a self-described rink rat, cleaning the stands and the ice so he could skate there. At age 12, he was an assistant stick boy for the Reds.

After leaving military service in the late 1960s, Pete honed his skills as protégé of Reds' trainer George Army for three years. He became head trainer of the AHL's Springfield Kings in 1969 and head trainer of the NHL's Los Angeles Kings from 1972 to 2006, where he did not miss one of the Kings' 2,632 games – a consecutive-game record for trainers.

Rhode Island Approves 'Cradle of U.S. Hockey' Plate

The "Cradle of U.S. Hockey" license plate has been authorized by the State of Rhode Island, giving our community a new way to proudly show our love for the sport of hockey.

The Rhode Island Hockey Hall of Fame is coordinating pre-orders for the charity plate, which will bear the same number and will replace your current plate.

The initial cost is \$43.50, of which \$20 supports the Hall of Fame mission. After your plate is issued, \$10 will be charged at each renewal

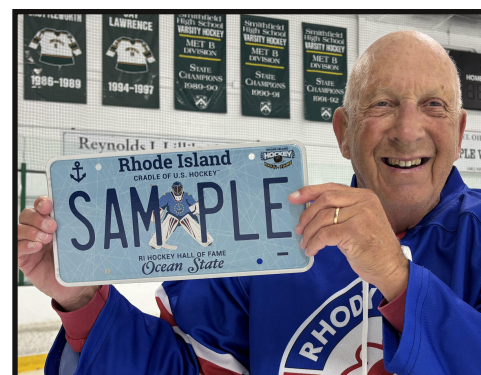
period.

The state Department of Motor Vehicles requires a minimum of 600 pre-orders to begin printing the plates. Plates will be given out at a special distribution event.

For people who cannot attend the event, plates will be mailed.

To pre-order the plates, visit the Hall of Fame website at www.RIHHOF.com.

At this time, only Passenger Vehicle plates are being offered. Plates for Combination and Commercial vehicles will be offered later.



R.I. Hockey Hall of Fame Vice President Mal Goldenberg shows the 'Cradle of U.S. Hockey' license plate.

Rhode Island Reds

Heritage Society Store



You can always spot true Rhode Island Reds fans. They have that certain something ... an air of confidence, intelligence, and exceptionally good taste. Not to mention a superior knowledge of the sport of hockey and its history! And they wear their affinity for their Rhode Island Reds proudly.

With that in mind, the Rhode Island Reds Heritage Society has revamped our "Heritage Shop" and restocked our inventory of high-quality embroidered and screen-printed hats, hoodies, and toques for this hockey and winter season.

We have added a new grey hoodie with the classic "PROVIDENCE REDS" logo and a grey hoodie and grey T-shirt with the newly designed "Property of R.I. Reds Est. 1926" to commemorate this year's 100th anniversary of the Reds' first game to our list of items. And not to worry – we have an ample supply of our popular Reds' hats and pom pom toques with the Reds' logo on the front.

Visit our "Heritage Shop" at www.rireds.org beginning November 1 to order Reds' wear for yourself and the quintessential hockey fan in your family!



Raging Rooster Logo Hoodie \$59



Property of RI Reds Hoodie \$59



Property of RI Reds T-Shirt \$19



Slapshot Rooster Cap \$29



Reds "Kellogg" Logo Cap \$29



Reds Pom Pom Toque \$34