

HERDER MEMORIAL TROPHY HISTORY

The following was penned by former *Telegram* publisher Stephen R. Herder in May, 1980. Mr. Herder passed away in 1993 at age 65.

By S.R Herder

Being the younger son of the man whose idea the Herder Memorial Trophy was, I take pleasure in presenting the following outline of its history.

There were seven Herder brothers, sons of W.J. Herder who started *The Evening Telegram* in 1879. All seven were hockey "stars" (if you don't mind my saying so), though the only one I really remember was my own father, Ralph, who taught me to skate on Rennie's River in St. John's in the mid-1930s. I recall that no matter what my elder brother, Rex, and I did, we couldn't get the puck away from him - and it was always disappearing through a hole in the ice anyway - signaling the end of the "game." Perhaps Quidi Vidi Lake today is the repository of the lost shinny pucks - frequently sliced from the end of a birch "junk." These, at least, would float.

At any rate, my father in 1935, a few months after two of his older brothers died only a couple of months apart, and wishing to remember them and three other brothers who had died, decided on the Herder Memorial Trophy. All of the brothers had played for club and St. John's teams from as early as 1900. My father was then 45-years-old.

I do not know today, and cannot find out exactly, how he contrived the detail of the trophy. But I do know that the figure on the top is fashioned after the late Edward "Key" Kennedy of St. John's, who played for, or had something to do with, St. Bon's teams, rivals of my dad's Guards organization. So I don't know how Mr. Kennedy came to be picked. Anyway, dad brought a picture of Mr. Kennedy in playing pose to New York, I believe, where he had someone make a model then cast it in silver. Later that same year, he presented the trophy for the first time to Corner Brook which beat the Guards Club of St. John's. It was 27 years before Corner Brook took the trophy home again.

The Guards coach - then called manager - in that first series was my uncle, Jim Herder, one of the seven brothers.

The original five Herder brothers after whom the trophy is named were often called (I am sure unfairly!) "The Dirty Herders." Perhaps it was because their grandmother, who attended all of their games, would react in a certain way when someone called one of "her" boys a "Dirty Herder." Her reaction took the form of striking the offending commentator in the head with her umbrella. Ultimately, she decided not to attend any more games. Further, she banned all "hockey talk" from the dining room table. Today, she would be called a "vociferous fan."

Then there was Hubert - not one of the sons of W.J. Herder, but a grandson of the man who started *The Telegram* - who enhanced this most undeserved reputation. Urban

legend has it that during one game, becoming somewhat irritated by a fan, leaped over the boards at Prince's Rink, and, skates and all, chased him all the way to King's Bridge Road. I do not know if he caught him.

But, after that 1935 presentation, so it has been every year since, except for the war years of 1942 and '43. (*Editor's note: There was no competition in 1990-91 as the Newfoundland Senior Hockey League folded. In 1992, the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association made the trophy available to senior leagues as a year-end prize.*) Some member of the Herder family has always gone on the trophy trail - my father from 1935 until the early '50s, then his younger brother, the late Jim and his son, Jim Jr., who traveled to CeeBees country, Buchan's, Grand Falls-Windsor and Gander during the heyday of the 1960s and early 1970s. Then it was myself, with my son, Dan, filling in when I could not be around, or my wife and daughter helping out. None of us played hockey, so I guess the family talent was all used up from prior to the turn of the century.

At least we made the school teams. My own claim to fame is that, as a southpaw, I shot right, so I got to play right wing for 60 minutes a game. Anyway, the history. The Herder Memorial Trophy is in memory of (in order of age) Arthur, William, Douglas, Augustus and Hubert Herder. All were dead when my father got his idea. Captain Arthur died of wounds in 1917, having joined the Army three years earlier. He was a lawyer. William was vice-president of *The Evening Telegram* when he died suddenly in 1934. Douglas was in business in Montreal when he became very ill with typhoid and came home to die in 1908. Augustus (or Herbert Augustus) was also a vice-president of *The Evening Telegram* when he died, shortly after William, in 1934. His son was Hubert, also known as Gus, was briefly publisher of *The Evening Telegram*. He died in 1980. Hubert was named after my Uncle Hubert, the fifth brother, who as a Lieutenant, was killed at infamous Beaumont Hamel, July 1, 1916. My own father, dead since 1955, must have felt particular sentiment over the two brothers he lost in the First World War, as he also did front-line service in that conflict as a lieutenant, and was badly wounded on the same day that his brother, Hubert, was killed.

And those are the five reasons why the Herder Memorial Trophy was given to be emblematic of senior hockey supremacy in Newfoundland.

I won't give the detail here of the playing careers of the seven brothers who appeared, four at a time usually, on a number of St. John's championship teams over the period from 1900 and for 30 or more years thereafter. But, their careers were, and are, undoubtedly the base for the Memorial Trophy which has been played for since 1935.

Since the inception of the trophy, the remaining two Herder brothers have died - Ralph and Jim - the latter, the last of the seven sons, died in 1970. Their names have been added to the names of the original five brothers whose memory the trophy honors.

In about 1965, the then three Herders at *The Evening Telegram* decided that we were sort of resting on our laurels by simply having given a trophy, kept it in repair, and expanding the size of it to accommodate additional teams as the years wore on.

So, we put our money where our mouth was, so to speak, giving an annual grant to the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association without any strings attached, but just as cash input to a sport we all wished to support. The cheques, of course, come from *The Telegram*.

When the first cheque was handed over, someone - I believe it was Hubert Herder - suggested that the money be used by the winning team to purchase Herder Trophy replicas so that each player could have his own remembrance rather than just looking at the trophy for a year before it disappeared to the hometown of the next winner. The idea caught on and has been, I believe, the practice ever since.

Hockey started in Newfoundland in 1896 when they played with "walking canes" and a ball. The canes were undoubtedly the forerunner of today's curved blades. I could not find a Herder in the scanty records of that year, but I did come across one in 1900 when there was a visiting team from Nova Scotia. We beat the heck out of them in three games, I am glad to report.

The Newfoundland Hockey Association, then all St. John's teams, was formed in 1899, so the players and officials of today are part of a very long Newfoundland sports tradition.

So much for the past. As to the future, I assure you that *The Telegram* and the Herder family will continue their support; and I hope the Trophy lasts forever.

The following appeared in the Saturday, Feb. 9, 1985 edition of *The Evening Telegram*, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Herder Memorial Trophy.

When referee Herb Coultas dropped the puck to start the game at 8:15 p.m. at the Prince's Rink on Thursday, March 21, 1935, it marked the start of the greatest athletic competition ever known in Newfoundland. Corner Brook, the western champions, squared off against Guards, the St. John's Boyle Trophy champions and winners of the Avalon playoffs, in the first game of a two-game, total goal series for the new Herder Memorial Trophy.

Guards, incidentally, were coached by Jim Herder, the youngest of the seven sons of W.J. Herder, founder of *The Evening Telegram*. The trophy was named in honor of the seven Herders.

With no artificial ice plants around in those days, the first game of the first Herder final at the Prince's Rink (located at the rear of Hotel Newfoundland) was played on poor ice, caused by mild weather. Despite the conditions, it was reported that both teams played exceptionally well. Corner Brook was badly outplayed as Guards outshot their guests 42-21 and it was only the work of goaltender Will Fitzpatrick that saved them. Corner Brook won the first game 1-0 on a goal by Hal Cross at 13:30 of the third period.

The very first goal in Herder Memorial Trophy competition was scored on what was described by *The Evening Telegram* as a "fluky shot" that was deflected past goaltender Bill Quick. The following night, Corner Brook got two goals and an assist from Frank Byrne as the team defeated Guards 4-2 to win the total-goal series 5-2.

The series was broadcast live by Jack Tobin on radio station VONF.

Members of the first Herder Memorial Trophy championship team were Will Fitzpatrick, goal; Tony Ledrew and Hal Cross, defense; Frank Power and Frank Byrne, centre; Ron Taafe and Frank Marks, right wing; Jack Downey and Hal Power, left wing; Gerry Edens, utility.

After winning the St. John's Senior Hockey League championship by defeating St. Bon's 6-4 in a two-game, total-goal final, Guards had to play Bay Roberts Rovers, the Conception Bay champions, for the right to represent the east coast in the Herder final.

Guards won the first-game 7-4, but Bay Roberts won the second contest 4-3, giving Guards the total goal series 10-8.

Members of that first Guards' team were: Bill Quick, Hib Saunders, Hunter Chislett, Hec Meadus, Harry Drover, Hughie Barnes, Bob Badcock, Derry Clark, Sib Quick and Colin Storey. Jim Herder was coach.

"Guards first winners of Herder Memorial Trophy" was the headline carried in *The Telegram* the following day. That's what most were led to believe as a challenge from the west coast seemed unlikely because travel by train and the cost of accommodations apparently couldn't be arranged in time with the spring thaw coming on.

However, a few days later, the problems were solved and the challenge to Guards came from Corner Brook, the west coast winners over Grand Falls and Buchan's.

Ironically, Corner Brook was declared the first Herder Memorial Trophy champions even before the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association was officially established.

The initial steps were taken during the Corner Brook-Guards series in March of 1935 when a committee was formed to look into what was considered to be a necessity - the formation of a provincial governing body for hockey.

The first annual meeting of the NAHA was held Dec. 20 of that year in the Duckworth Street office of St. John's lawyer, Robert S. Furlong, who later served as Chief Justice of Newfoundland from 1959-79.

Mr. Furlong was elected the first president. Also elected to the founding executive were W. Ronald Martin of Corner Brook, vice-president; Arthur Johnson, secretary; and Gordon Halley, chairman of the St. John's branch. Elected to serve on a constitution and "judicial" committee were Hon. Mr. Justice W.J. Higgins, Ralph Herder and Edgar

Ewing.

A "full round" was scheduled to be played in St. John's. That round consisted of four games, involving three teams - Corner Brook repeated as western winners, Bay Roberts Rovers were in for the first time as Conception Bay champions again and St. Bon's dethroned Guards as Boyle Trophy champions for the right to represent St. John's for the first time.

Secretary Johnson's minutes from the inaugural meeting read: "Three games will be played between the three teams, making a full round. The two leading towns after the round will play off in a championship match, making a fourth game. The score from their previous meeting in the round will count with their number of goals in the final match, the total score of both games deciding the championship."

St. Bon's won their first provincial championship, the start of a five-year reign on the Herder Memorial Trophy.

The stars of the St. Bon's team in those days were Art Hamlyn in goal, Dick Furlong and Gerry Hanley on defense, centers Gordon Halley, who also played defense, Andy Cahill and Bob Godden, left-wingers Basil Hutton, Charlie Godden and J. "Shawny" Maher, and right-wingers Ed Brophy and Bernard Maher. Jim Norris was the backup goaltender.

The Herder Memorial Trophy playoffs were held in St. John's for the first six years of competition, one of the stipulations with which the trophy was donated.

In 1941, the late J.M. Herder, then director of *The Evening Telegram*, requested the NAHA to lift that stipulation so the playoffs could be held in other areas of the province.

"The trophy has been donated with the one purpose of fostering hockey all over the island and we trust that it shall achieve the purpose for which it is intended," stated Mr. Herder, who coached Guards in the first Herder final.

Bell Island was the first winner of the Herder outside St. John's when the islanders defeated Corner Brook in 1941 in the west coast city.

Only a spreading world conflict, the Second World War, could prevent competition for the Herder memorial and the playoffs were cancelled in 1942 and '43.

Bell Island repeated as champions with the resumption of competition in 1944 when they again defeated Corner Brook. Then St. Bon's took over for another five-year reign.

Other centers decided the only way to dethrone the powerful St. Bon's contingent was to bring players in from the mainland, mostly from the Maritimes.

Buchan's started importing talent in 1949. Some of the first "imports" to play in Buchan's were player-coach Frank Bowman, Jimmy Hornell, Dan (Fox) McNeil, Hugh

(Red) Wadden and Frank Walker.

Grand Falls quickly followed suit and the importing business was on.

Winning the Herder now became so prestigious that provincial hockey was getting to be big business. Stacked with mainland players, the Herder playoffs virtually became a competition between Grand Falls and Buchan's through the 1950s with the Andcos winning it six times and the Miners taking four titles.

A section B division was established for the 1954-55 season to accommodate teams with no imports. *The Evening Telegram* Trophy was the prize for the provincial B champions, while the Herder was for the A champions and their imports.

That situation lasted into the 1958-59 season but with St. John's deciding not to compete for the Herder, it wasn't the same.

President Vince Rossiter and his executive decided something had to be done to rejuvenate hockey on the provincial level.

Section B was eliminated in 1959-60 and the schedule was revamped so that it would look more like a league. A round-robin schedule was set up for both the east and the west with the two winners to meet in the Herder final.

The construction of the S.W. Moores Memorial Stadium in Harbour Grace brought on the birth of the Conception Bay CeeBees. Frank Moores, the man behind the construction of both the stadium and the team, brought in the Faulkner brothers - George, Alex and Jack - to build a winner with local talent.

The CeeBees played in the east against St. John's and Bell Island, while Gander, Grand Falls, Buchan's and Corner Brook competed in the west.

Conception Bay dominated the east and Corner Brook the west through the 1960s as they each won four Herder Memorial titles.

The east-west concept continued to 1964-65 with limited success. St. John's did not want to compete until after their local league was finished in February and the 1965 annual minutes noted the Capitals didn't enter competition the previous season.

With the arrival of Don Johnson as the new president of the Newfoundland hockey association in 1965-66, all teams involved competed in a full double round-robin schedule and *The Evening Telegram* Trophy was revived to be claimed by the first-place finisher in the round. An island-wide league was established for the first time, and even included Labrador City for a few years during the 1970s.

Up to then, the NAHA had been concerned primarily with senior hockey, but in May of 1966, the association became a branch of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association. In

June of that year, there were organizational changes along CAHA lines with vice-presidents elected for minor, junior and intermediate divisions, while the president continued to look after the senior division.

The senior division had its own vice-president for the first time in 1973 and officially became the Newfoundland Senior Hockey League.

* The Herder Memorial Trophy was the idea of Ralph Herder, named in memory of five Herder brothers who had passed away by 1935 - Arthur, William, Douglas, Augustus and Hubert. The names of Ralph and Jim Herder were added to the list of Herder brothers to which the trophy is named in the 1970s.

* Captain Arthur Herder and Hubert died during the First World War

* The seven Herder brothers were the sons of W.J. (William), founder of *The Evening Telegram* in 1879, and Elizabeth Herder.

* The figure on top of the trophy is fashioned after Edward 'Key' Kennedy of St. John's, a former St. Bon's player.