

Former junior hockey operator dead at 88

Howard Pallett put the sting into the Beehives

Peel Biog.

By GARY MCCARTHY

Special

Oct. 9/02 MN

A funeral service will be held tomorrow afternoon in Mississauga for Howard Pallett, former owner of the Dixie Beehives junior hockey team.

Pallett died Saturday night at the William Osler Health Centre in Brampton. He was 88.

Pallett was owner of the Beehives Junior clubs for more than 30 years — from 1954 until the time the team folded in 1986.

Under Pallett, the Beehives won the Metro League, as the junior league was known, as well as two all-Ontario championships in successive years — 1969-70 and 1970-71.

"He was great to play for," said his son Keith, who was the Beehives netminder when they won the Metro and all-Ontario titles in 1969-70.

"Everybody loved playing for him. He treated everybody fairly, win or lose. He loved the game, no question about it. Ask anybody who played for him and they'll tell you the same thing."

Dave Burrows, Mike Liut, Rick Dudley, Larry Patey, Jack Stanfield, Fred Stanfield, Ken Hodge, Vic Hadfield and Denis DeJordy are among those who played for Pallett and went on to become big names in the National Hockey League.

He was also a founder of the Dixie Arena Gardens, which was built in 1949 as one of the first indoor rinks in the Toronto area.

The arena became the recreational hub of the community and home of the Beehives, who, through their affiliation with the St. Catharines Black Hawks, were a farm team of the Chicago Black Hawks.

"Their sweaters were hand-me-downs," said Pallett's son-in-law, Bryan Lewis, a former NHL referee who once played for the Beehives. "Chicago used to send their old sweaters to St. Catharines and the old sweaters in St. Catharines wound up with the Beehives. He loved his Dixie Beehives, I'll tell you."



Howard Pallett and his wife Doris got married on Nov. 16, 1940.

The arena, just off Dundas St. and a block west of Dixie Rd., was sold and demolished in 1996. Townhouses now occupy the land.

Pallett and his wife Doris had recently moved from Guelph to a seniors home in Brampton.

"I guess three pneumonia attacks took its toll," said Lewis. "His resistance was just worn down."

Lewis spoke of his visits with Pallett and how the two would recall the names of players who went through the Beehives organization.

"He was usually responsive and we'd laugh, but when I saw him last week I didn't get the response," said Lewis, the emcee at an event Saturday night when he and other family members were notified of Pallett's death.

"It was a time of grief, but we all had a toast in Howard's honour."

"He was a great man and he always had a smile on his face," recalled Lloyd Stockley, owner of the Mississauga Chargers of the Provincial Junior 'A' Hockey League. "He was a bubbly kind of guy, always joking around. He built a pretty good hockey team in those days."

Pallett was born in Dixie, Ont. April 24, 1914. He and Doris were married Nov. 16, 1940 and had four children — three daughters and a son.

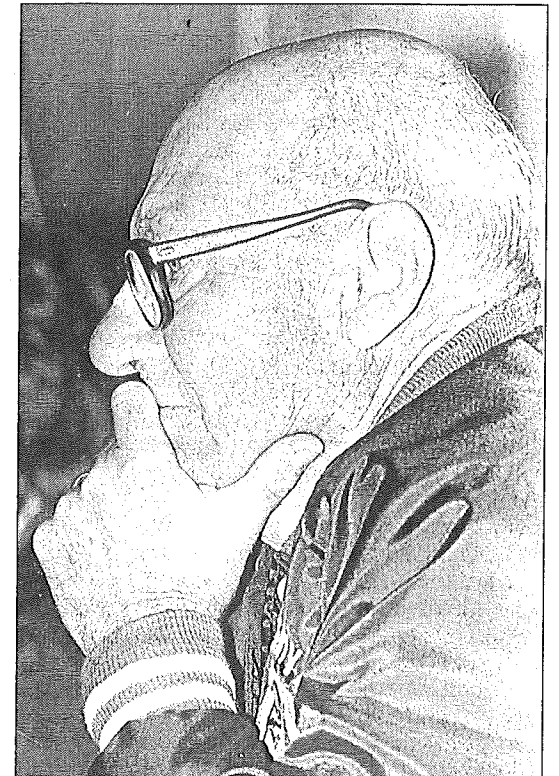
Pallett was elected to the Mississauga Sports Hall of Fame and was awarded the Ontario Hockey Association Gold Stick for dedicated service to minor hockey.

He was a former member of the Dixie Curling Club, as well as the Credit Valley and Brampton golf clubs and was president of Dixie Cold Storage. He was also a life member of the Mississauga Masonic Lodge 524.

In addition to his wife Doris, Pallett is survived by daughters Gayle Rutledge, Elaine Lewis, Marilyn Pallett and son Keith. He is also survived by seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The body is resting at the Skinner and Middlebrook Funeral Home, 128 Lakeshore Rd. East in Port Credit.

The funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. tomorrow at St. John's Anglican Church, 719 Dundas St. E. in Mississauga — the same church where he and



Howard Pallett was always a study in concentration poring over the play of his Dixie Beehive players. That genuine concern in their development and maturity helped players like Vic Hadfield, Dennis DeJordy, Rick Dudley and Mike Liut make it to the National Hockey League.

his wife were married.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations be made on Pallett's behalf to Community Living, the Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills and the Alzheimer's Society.