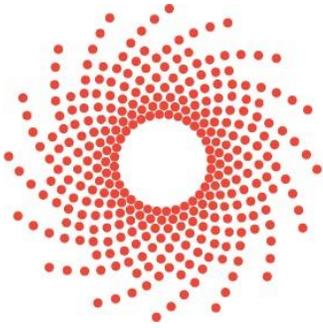


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BROOKLYN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
150 YEARS

August 20, 2015

BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS EXHIBITION ON BROOKLYN'S FIRST PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY TEAM, *BROOKLYN AMERICANS: HOCKEY'S FORGOTTEN PROMISE*

Exhibition features NHL® programs from the 1920s and 30s, team photos, scrapbooks and other original paraphernalia, including goalie sticks and skates

As the New York Islanders® relocate to the Barclays Center in Brooklyn this fall, it may come as a surprise to hockey fanatics and history buffs alike that the Islanders are not the first professional hockey team to skate into the borough. That honor goes to a little known team called the Brooklyn Americans more than seven decades ago. On **September 23**, Brooklyn Historical Society reveals the forgotten tale of one of the earliest and most fascinating chapters of professional hockey in America with *Brooklyn Americans: Hockey's Forgotten Promise*, an exhibition highlighting the origins, hopeful dreams, and later misfortunes of Brooklyn's first professional hockey team. The exhibition will remain on view through **March 27, 2016**. Gallery hours are Wednesday to Sunday, noon – 5:00 PM.

The riveting story begins in 1925 with the creation of New York's first National Hockey League franchise, the New York Americans™ or "Amerks." Owned by bootlegger "Big Bill" Dwyer – who was arrested two weeks before the home opener – the Amerks played at the brand-new Madison Square Garden to such large crowds that the Garden's owners were inspired to create a team of their own: The New York Rangers®. The Rangers quickly stole the fan base – and the trophies – while the Amerks floundered with a criminal owner and a pitiful record. In 1936, the NHL cut ties with Big Bill Dwyer, turning the franchise over to Red Dutton, an Amerks player-coach. Dutton looked to start afresh by transforming the New York Americans into the Brooklyn Americans, promising a new beginning across the river. But a history of dubious finances, commercial pressures and World War II all led to the team's eventual collapse. Visitors to the exhibition can relive the days of the Amerks; they will be treated to stories about Prohibition and bootlegging; the opening of Madison Square Garden and hockey's instant popularity; the legendary rivalry with the New York Rangers; the impact of WWII; and the growth of ice sports in the borough and the city.

"With the imminent arrival of the New York Islanders in the borough, we are thrilled to be uncovering the history of hockey in Brooklyn," said Deborah Schwartz, President of Brooklyn Historical Society. "We hope that visitors not only walk away with a new understanding of hockey history, but also a better appreciation of how far Brooklyn has come."

The exhibition features a number of multimedia elements including ongoing vintage footage of the Americans on the ice and recorded interviews with a number of former Brooklynites who played or were fans of hockey in

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Brooklyn, including Larry King. In addition, the exhibition will feature original team equipment and objects such as a goalie stick used by Chuck Rayner, a pair of skates worn by Roy Worters, a sweater worn by manager Red Dutton and a warm-up jacket worn by Pat Egan. There will also be numerous NHL and amateur league programs from the 1920s and 30s, team photos and scrapbooks from both the Brooklyn Americans and the New York Americans. Public programs in connection with the exhibition will be announced in October 2015. More information, tickets and registration for public programs can be found at www.brooklynhistory.org.

About Brooklyn Historical Society

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach.

Funding for *Brooklyn American: Hockey's Forgotten Promise* is provided by Nardello & Co., Hudson Companies, Sweet'N Low, Forest City Ratner Companies, Barclays, Aviator Sports and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

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