

Meet the Redskins Historian (Photos)

Potomac resident Mike Richman is the "Redskins Historian." A volunteer producer at MCM, his award-winning show "Burgundy and Gold Magazine" also appears regularly on Montgomery Channel 21 and Richman was recently honored for his stellar sports coverage with a first place Monty award. I recently asked Richman some questions about *his* history following the Redskins.

### **You are considered the "Redskins Historian." Tell me when you began following the Redskins and how your passion has grown?**

"I began following the Redskins when now-Hall of Fame coach George Allen came to D.C. in 1971. I was 10 at the time. Prior to Allen's arrival, the Redskins had been a perennial pushover since World War II. But I immediately became a Redskins fanatic, for they reached the playoffs five times during the Allen era, including an appearance in Super Bowl VII. Truthfully, I had wild emotional swings based on whether they won or lost. My emotions are more under control now, but my Redskins fanaticism has never waned. I wasn't born in the D.C. area, but I've lived here almost my whole life. I thus consider the Redskins my team, and I'll be a fan of the burgundy & gold for life."

### **What does the "Redskins Historian" do? How did you coin that term?**

"I coined myself the Redskins Historian when I began writing articles regularly about the team's history in the late-1990s. Those articles appeared in Redskins team publications and in *Sports Illustrated* magazine. I applied another convincing stamp on that title when my first book, *The Redskins Encyclopedia*, hit the shelves in 2007. That book is the most comprehensive journalistic account of Redskins history, justifying my tag as the Redskins Historian. My other book is the *Washington Redskins Football Vault*, a combination of text and Redskins memorabilia, including game program covers, press passes and ticket stubs. I've sold thousands of copies of both books. Check out my web site – [redskinhistorian.com](http://redskinhistorian.com) – to learn more."

### **Do you go to every game?**

"The Redskins credential me as a member of the media for every home game. I go under the umbrella of my web site, [redskinhistorian.com](http://redskinhistorian.com), which is mostly a compilation of print and broadcast work that I've done. Almost all of it relates to the Redskins. I have a number of staunch supporters within the organization, including Larry Michael, the "Voice of the Redskins" and the team's Senior Vice President-Executive Producer Media, and fellow Senior Vice President Tony Wyllie. I also work frequently with one of Tony's assistants, Angela Alfano; Brian Tinsman, editor of Redskins.com; and Andrew Walker, the Redskins' top blogger."

### **Have you met many of the players? Have you met RG3? If so, any impressions?**

"I've met many Redskins alumni and present-day Redskins during my years of covering and following the team. The list is so long, but I'll single out a few ex-Redskins who've been so helpful to me by sharing their stories from years back: Dexter Manley, Joe Theismann, Brig Owens, Ron McDole, Pat Fischer, Charley Taylor, Roy Jefferson, George Starke, Brian Mitchell, Mike Nelms, Ken Harvey, Mark Moseley and Neil Olkewicz. My favorite Redskin of the 21st century is Jon Jansen, a Redskins offensive tackle for 10 seasons. I interviewed him many times, and he always came across very classy and professional. This season, Jansen was named one of the "10 for 80," the 10 new names added to the Redskins' 80 greatest list in recognition of the franchise's 80th anniversary this year. I was honored to serve on the "10 for 80" selection committee, which also included Theismann, Mann, Moseley and long-time CNN anchor Bernard Shaw. I also want to extend kudos to Terri Lamb, a Redskins cheerleader from 1979-83 and the long-time president of the Washington Redskins Cheerleaders Alumni Association. She's always been very helpful with my Redskins media work, and she provided photos that I used for *The Redskins Encyclopedia*. I haven't met RG3 personally, but I've sat in on a few of his press conferences. You can easily tell that he's a very mature, confident and likeable person. His composure is incredible for someone only 22 years old. He commands respect from the media and his teammates. The fact that both of his parents served in the military must have in some way shaped his dynamic personality. After Sunday's win over the Cowboys, I asked him a few questions in the post-game press conference. As he exited the room, I tapped him on the arm as a way of saying "thanks" for his answers. He turned toward me with his wide smile, and we did a fist-tap. That was really cool."

### **How has your passion (for the Redskins) impacted your family?**

"Regarding my family, my wife, Cheryl, and my daughter, Brooke, have both evolved into Redskins fanatics. Cheryl has always been supportive of my Redskins endeavors, which consume a lot of time and complement my full-time job at the Voice of America, where I serve as an International Multimedia Broadcaster. Without her backing and inspiration, I wouldn't be able to do all of my Redskins-related work. Brooke isn't even 13, and she watches the NFL Network and Redskins Nation, and reads [Redskins.com](http://Redskins.com) and [NFL.com](http://NFL.com). I wonder how she acquired that interest!"

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**You've been following the team for decades: how does this ride to the playoffs compare to previous seasons? Are you excited? Okay, how excited are you about this weekend's game?**

"I'm very excited about this playoff appearance. Since Joe Gibbs retired for the first time after the 1992 season, the Redskins have been in the playoffs only three times: 1999, 2005 and 2007. They twice reached the second round before being eliminated. But this playoff season feels much different. Since becoming the Redskins' coach in January 2010, Redskins coach Mike Shanahan has rebuilt a squad that was floundering for so many years and had been crippled by horrible free agent signings and draft choices. Essentially, he inherited a 4-12 team that was a mess. But Shanahan, a two-time Super Bowl winner, has instilled a winning mentality into the squad. He's also created a base for the future by bringing in young, talented players who are hungry to win. And he also has a quarterback for the future in Robert Griffin III. The NFL has become a quarterback-driven league, and the Redskins are armed with an immensely talented player at the most important position. That bodes well for the future."

**Who is your favorite player?**

"My favorite Redskins of all time are two quarterbacks from years past, Hall of Famer Sonny Jurgensen and Billy Kilmer. I grew up watching those guys play and alternate as the Redskins starting quarterback in the early- to mid-1970s. Jurgensen, a long time Redskins radio analyst, is one of the greatest pure passers in NFL history, and it was a treat to watch him. He applied a gorgeous touch and threw the long ball like few other quarterbacks of his era. Kilmer, on the other hand, came nowhere close to Jurgensen's talent. He's known for throwing wobbly passes. But he was a winner with a fierce determination to succeed. He also possessed tremendous leadership qualities. I always admired those traits about him."

**Tell me about your show, "[Burgundy and Gold Magazine](#)," and your appearances on [Redskins Nation](#)?**

"This is my fourth season as the producer and host of "[Burgundy & Gold Magazine](#)," a show that I conceived of and launched. B&G offers an entertaining look at the present and the past of the Washington Redskins. For instance, I've interviewed many ex-Redskins one-on-one about the team's history, and I've hosted shows at restaurants in Montgomery County where a panel discusses the current state of the Redskins. My base restaurant for the past two years has been [Branded '72 Pit Barbecue](#) on East Gude Drive in Rockville. My next show at Branded '72 is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 10 with a start time of 7 or 7:30 p.m. Go onto my web site early next week – [redskinshistorian.com](http://redskinshistorian.com) – to find out for sure. My central TV station is Montgomery Community Media, where B&G Magazine airs on Channel 21, Comcast and Verizon, on Thursday at 11 p.m., Saturday at 4:30 p.m., and Sunday at 12:30 p.m. B&G also airs on Prince George's Community Television on Channel 42, Comcast and Verizon; Fairfax Public Access on Channel 10, Comcast and Verizon; and Arlington Community Media, Comcast Channel 69 and Verizon Channel 38. The air times and dates in Prince George's, Fairfax and Arlington counties vary. In addition, each episode of B&G Magazine is archived on this page on my web site: <http://www.redskinshistorian.com/bg-magazine>. [Redskins Nation](#) is a show produced internally by the Redskins. It's hosted by Larry Michael. I've appeared each week for the past two seasons talking about Redskins history in the context of the upcoming game. For instance, Larry and I discussed the Redskins-Cowboys rivalry in my appearance a few days before Sunday's win over Dallas."

## Finally, any predictions for Sunday's game?

"Redskins 24, Seahawks 17."

**HTTR!**

*Below are a few photos of Mike Richman, the Redskins Historian, at work*



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