



The Wood Pile



Newsletter of the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research

Volume I Issue 4

Winter 2017

Leading Off: A Message from the Chapter President



Hi everyone! Happy holidays to all! We have been a busy chapter this fall, with our October general meeting, chapter breakfasts, and the Strat-O-Matic event. At the fall meeting, we heard presentations about the all-time Phillies team, Wins Above Average (WAA), life with the Royals and

Commissioner's office, and lively discussions. Karl Cicitto convened a spirited group to play Strat-o-matic baseball, with about 10 people there at Russell Library in Middletown. This was a fun occasion. We enjoy regular chapter breakfasts, where people can chat about baseball, over breakfast, with no particular agenda.

By the time you read this, we will have had our annual holiday luncheon, at Angelo's restaurant in West Hartford, featuring Jason Klein and Peter Tucci as speakers. This is always a nice social occasion, with family and friends welcome to be part of this festive event. Thanks to Alan, Karl and Stan for making this event a success!

Karl Cicitto, who coordinates this newsletter, will again host another Strat-o-matic baseball event, Sat, January 21, 2017, in Russell Library in Middletown, with details forthcoming. Please join in for the fun.

Plans are underway for our spring general meeting, and we have moved the date to March 25, instead of the usual February. We have some ideas about speakers for this event, and stay tuned for more info on this. The gathering will again be at Quinnipiac University. Thanks to Larry Levine for helping with the set up for this!

We are also already thinking about getting to some ball games in 2017, be it the New Britain Bees, the Hartford Yard Goats, the Bridgeport Bluefish, or Yanks, Mets, Red Sox.

2017 also features our annual SABR convention, which will be at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City, from June 28 to July 2. Hopefully, many of you will attend, and let's see if we can help in the planning for this. There is also the annual SABR Analytics conference in Arizona in March, so some of you might like that as well.

In summary, we have an active chapter, with many activities to plug into. Hope to see you all soon!

Sincerely, Steve Krevisky, Chapter President.

Upcoming Events

Chapter Events

January 21, 2017 10am
Strat-O-Matic Game Day
Russell Library, Middletown, CT
More Information:
kcicitto@cox.net

March 25, 2017 12pm
Spring Training General Meeting
Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT
More Information:
skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu

Watch for emails from Steve Krevisky for details on our chapter plans.

National Events

March 9 to 11, 2017
SABR Analytics Conference
Phoenix, AZ

Spring 2017
19th Century Baseball
Conference
Cooperstown, NY

Summer 2017
Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues
Conference

June 28 to July 2
SABR National Convention
New York, NY

More information at sabr.org/events

New Chapter Members

Welcome to new members (since August 2016):

Jess Boronico, Middlebury
Samuel Hux, Warren
Ryan Kelly, Monroe

Lewis Kurlantzick, West Hartford
Kevin McCarthy, Orange
Michael Wasta, Bristol

Chapter Treasury Takes A Hit by Karl Cicitto

Winter weather once again took a bite out of attendance at a Connecticut SABR event on December 17. In the hours leading up to a 12 pm start of the Holiday Luncheon in West Hartford, eight inches of snow fell and were followed by a dash of freezing rain. This caused sixteen of the thirty-two attendees to remain safe at home. Given how close the date was to the coming holidays, the chapter leaders decided to stick with the original date of the 17th. Offset by some prepaid reservations, the chapter treasury absorbed a loss of \$442.

On the Web

Society for American Baseball Research: sabr.org
Smoky Joe Wood Chapter: smokyjoewood.com

Smoky Joe Wood Chapter Officers

Stephen Krevisky (President): skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu
Alan Cohen (Vice President/Treasurer): adc0317@comcast.net
Stan Dziurgot (Membership Director): stanyank5@yahoo.com
Karl Cicitto (Communications Director): kcicitto@cox.net

Members are welcome to submit articles, book reviews or other information that might be interesting to other chapter members. Please send information to Karl Cicitto at kcicitto@cox.net.

Amazins at 55

By Stan Dziurgot

I first became interested in baseball during the 1961 season because of the home run race between Roger Maris & Mickey Mantle. The Yankees were the only local team televised in Connecticut at the time with the Giants & Dodgers leaving New York for California after the 1957 season; thus I became a Yankees fan.

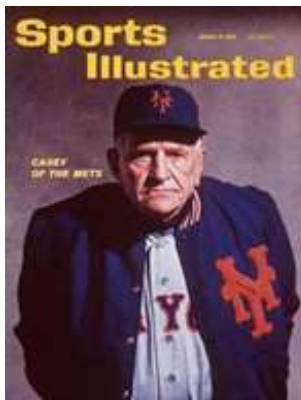
In 1962 the New York Mets came into existence and looking back now I wonder how I didn't become a Mets fan.

You see my father had been a Brooklyn Dodger fan & many fans of the Dodgers & Giants would switch their allegiance to the Mets. You would think that with all the heartbreak Brooklyn fans had suffered at the expense of the Yankees, he would have steered me away from the Yankees & rooted for the Mets, but he didn't. The Yankees were televised on Channel 11 out of New York & the Mets were on Channel 9. One of my earliest memories of the Mets was coming home late on a Saturday night & catching the end of a Sandy Koufax no-hitter against the Mets in 1962. When the Dodgers were in Brooklyn they were televised on the same Channel 9 that the Mets were now on. The Mets announcers, Lindsay Nelson, Bob Murphy & Ralph Kiner were their only announcers on TV & radio from 1962 - 1978. Like most expansion teams, the Mets had growing pains. As a matter of fact they were terrible. In 1962 they went 40 - 120 with one tie. And one rainout not rescheduled. They were managed by former Yankee manager Casey Stengel. Stengel had played for both the New York Giants & managed the Brooklyn Dodgers.

The Mets played their home games in 1962 at the Giants former home; the Polo Grounds. A 1962 program shows images of a new stadium being built for them in Queens where they would move for the 1963 season. The stadium was delayed a year (hello Hartford) & didn't open until 1964. It was originally called Flushing Meadows Stadium, but was changed to Shea Stadium after William Shea, a New York attorney responsible for getting National League Baseball back to New York.

Many former players from the Dodgers, Giants & Yankees were on the Mets roster in the first couple years of existence, unfortunately, most of them were past their prime. Gil Hodges, Duke Snider, Don Zimmer, Roger Craig & Marv Thornberry played under Manager Stengel those first couple of seasons. Later Warren Spahn & Yogi Berra would join the team. One of the early coaches was Roger Hornsby (a former Giant), Craig & Alvin Jackson were two of the Mets better starting pitchers but they both suffered 20 loss seasons. From 1962 - 1968 the Mets finished last five times. In 1966 & 1968 they finished ninth. In 1964 Shea Stadium opened & became the home of the Mets & the football New York Jets.

Coincidentally the late opening of the stadium now coincided with the 1964 World's Fair. I remember going to the Fair & seeing Shea Stadium off in the distance. The 1964 Major League All Star game was played at Shea Stadium. One of the starters for the National League was Mets second baseman Ron Hunt. The NL won the game on a Johnny Callison home run in the bottom of the ninth off of



Dick Radatz. By 1969 the team had accumulated a bevy of young starting pitchers (sounds like the present day team). Behind Tom Seaver, Jerry Koosman, Gary Gentry & Nolan Ryan the team went from ninth place to first & won the World Series under Manager Gil Hodges. After Hodges died suddenly a couple of years later, manager Yogi Berra managed them to the 1973 World Series where they lost in 7 games to Oakland. In 1974 & 1975 the Yankees played their home games at Shea Stadium while the

original Yankee Stadium was being refurbished. In 1975 the Mets, Yankees & the football Jets & Giants would all play their home games at Shea Stadium.

Having my driver's license by that time, I made many a trip to Queens to watch the Yankees play. I & a friend of mine, a St. Louis Cardinals fan, started making yearly visits to Queens whenever the Cardinals were in town. Joe Torre was the Mets manager (also player manager) in the late 1970's. Unfortunately, the Mets fortunes were heading down hill especially when the team traded their pitcher, Tom Seaver, to the Reds. Small crowds were the norm in the late 70's & early 80's. I remember Bob Murphy talking of a huge crowd at a game only to look in the paper the next day to see a paid attendance of 28,000. In the early to mid 1980's with young players Dwight Gooden & Darryl Strawberry the Mets were heading back to being contenders. Trades for Gary Carter & Keith Hernandez culminated with them winning the World Series in 1986 under manager Dave Johnson. The team stayed in contention until 1990 when another down period ensued. The team lost 103 games in 1993. Players on the early to mid 90's teams included Vince Coleman, Bobby Bonilla & Mo Vaughn. A trade for catcher Mike Piazza & a new manager, Bobby Valentine, led the Mets to the post-season in 1999 & 2000. The 2000 team lost to the Yankees in a five game World Series. This was the first Subway Series since 1956.

The 2006 team won the National League East title but lost to St. Louis in the NLCS. The final game featured a great catch by Endy Chavez, a homerun by a then light-hitting catcher (Yadier Molina) & a full-count breaking pitch from Adam Wainwright to Carlos Beltran. The 2007 & 2008 teams had substantial leads late in the season but lost the division titles both years. The 2008 season must have been excruciating for Mets fans, for after losing the final game of the season & being eliminated from the post season there was a post-game ceremony for the closing of Shea Stadium. The Mets, Yankees, Jets & Giants would move into a new stadium for 2009.

The Mets had a way of playing memorable games at Shea Stadium such as Jim Bunning's perfect game on Father's Day of 1964 and a 23 inning game against the Giants in the second game of a double header. Thirty two innings played in one day; talk about free baseball.

Continued on Page 5 (Amazins)

Delayed But Not Defeated: Marjorie Adams, Doc & the Hall of Fame

By Karl Cicitto

Connecticut resident Marjorie Adams has had some extraordinary times since December 2015. Her great grandfather, Daniel "Doc" Adams, author of the *Laws of Baseball*, narrowly missed induction to the HOF. The *Laws* sold for \$3.26 million in April & in the process Marjorie was able to hold & inspect the *Laws* in an emotional meeting with the seller. There have been satisfying & disappointing times in the 5 year effort to have Doc inducted. I interviewed Marjorie on November 2, 2016.



You launched upon the journey to have Doc inducted some time ago. What's been the most satisfying part?

It's two fold: Learning an awful lot about Doc Adams that I never knew before. And more importantly, I've met just the greatest people. I marvel at the wonderful men & women I have met through SABR & vintage Base Ball. Their love of the game is wonderfully contagious. And I'm going to meet some more of them in Cooperstown in March because I am going to the Vintage Base Ball Association's annual conference, & I'm friends on Facebook with a lot of them, where they message me & keep track of my activities.

Was there something truly eye popping that you learned?

Yes, while reading the letters. I have about 150 letters written to Doc by his father. I have read them, re-read them & re-read them. His father counseled him on the state of his soul, how he should be studying harder, how other boys would do better than he if he did not work harder. They are really some of the dullest, driest stuff you've ever read. Except – it helped me to understand the man that Doc Adams became because of those letters. And that's been a tremendous eye opener.

Since I've now been "living" with Doc for 5 years, he's just in my head all the time. I'm really starting to understand him as a person & not just an "ancestor". Reading these letters has been an opportunity that I will not have with anyone else in my family tree.

If you could ask Doc's contemporaries what he was like, what do you think they might say?

They would say they respected him. He was elected President of the Knickerbockers 6 or 7 times. I hope they'd say he had a sense of humor. My father had a great sense of humor so I hope he got that from Doc. I hope they would say he was a good player, maybe not the best, but what he might have lacked in athletic prowess he more than made up for in enthusiasm for the game he helped to pioneer.

After 5 years of working for Induction has anything been particularly disappointing?

Yes. In July of this year the HOF announced that they were changing the intervals for the Pre-Integration ballot. Originally the next ballot would have been in 2018. The vote has been

moved to 2020 for Induction in 2021. That was not a happy weekend for me. I cried, I ranted, Now I have two additional years of educating people about Doc & thereby promoting him & our case for him, and that's tough. If I were younger it would make less difference. By the time of the next vote in 2020 this will be a nine year journey. I was really hoping to get it done sooner than that. That's the way it is: I'm not giving up.

How did you come to learn about the change? Did the HOF call you?

It was on-line on the HOF site. One of my friends on my "Doc Team" might have emailed me. That was during this past induction weekend.

Since Doc just missed by 2 votes & he may be nicely set up for the next vote, has there been any contact between you & the voting committee?

No. And I'm not entirely sure of how it works but it is entirely possible that next time there could be different voters on the committee. So, it could be like starting with a clean slate all over again.

With the change in voting intervals, Doc will miss going in with two prominent New York players: Mariano Rivera & Derek Jeter.

I'm sure Jeter will be unanimous. And that's what I want for Doc. That's what I'm working on. I'm not going for a majority of the votes: I'm going for all of them.

How can you work at that?

I just chip away at it every day. I've made contacts on Facebook. People know people. It's a matter of who knows who. It's building the network. It's contacts. I'm looking for a path to reach the secretary of the BBWAA. I'm looking for someone who could allow me to go to the Pre-Integration voters and plead the case. Whatever it takes.

You never know who knows who. Maybe a newspaper article catches somebody's eye and they reach out to me. I have met a lot of people who have reached out to me through the internet wanting to help. That's also been one of the most satisfying parts of this. To learn how many people already know about Doc & want to help has been an extraordinary revelation to me.

Was John Thorn at the top of the list of those that already knew about Doc?

This started in June of 2011 when my sister sent me John Thorn's book, *Baseball In The Garden Of Eden*. Right there on the inside flap of the dust jacket is Doc Adams name. I was flabbergasted: I had no idea that Doc would figure so prominently in a history of the game. And, I had never seen the *Sporting News* Interview before & it was better than finding a treasure chest of gold. I learned more about Doc in a hour with John Thorn's book than in a lifetime with the family.

Adams (continued from Page 3)

You told me at one time that there was a portrait of Doc hanging in your childhood home in Manhattan where he was referred to as the “The Baseball Guy”.

We had the 1862 Knickerbocker team photo. (Doc is in the first row, 2nd from the left). You see my father’s name was Daniel & Doc’s father’s name was Daniel. So when any conversation came up about a Daniel Adams, we referred to Doc as the “Baseball Guy”. That’s how we differentiated him.

But as a family we didn’t know a great deal beyond that. We knew about the Knickerbockers & that he had been President of the club. I’m sure we knew about him creating the shortstop position. Since I’m the least athletic person of all time, I didn’t always pay attention. How I wish I had!

I had met Fred Ivor-Campbell at a vintage game in the mid 90’s. He knew everything about Doc. Fred said to me, “Well you know Doc saved Base Ball.”. And I laughed, I’m sorry to say.

I’m sorry Fred is gone because I owe him such an apology. He did so much terrific research on the early years of the game. Slowly, because of the information shared with me, I’ve come to understand, acknowledge & appreciate the role that Doc played. It was a hell of a realization. He really was a big deal in early BB.

It’s got to be a tremendous source of pride for you.

Yes, well, that’s not a family trait. We’re old Puritans. We go back to the Mayflower. Pride isn’t considered an attractive trait in our family. If somebody says you did something wonderful you say “thank you” graciously, & then you’re supposed to feel slightly embarrassed by it.

Have you met Fred Ivor-Campbell’s wife, Alma?

Yes I met her at the very first SABR 19th Century Committee gathering in Cooperstown in 2014. Alma is delightful & we are friends on Facebook.

Were you a bit of a celebrity at that Conference?

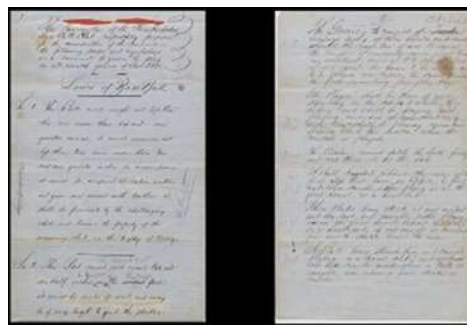
I kind of ended up that way. And occasionally when I go to some of these vintage events I am made to feel that way although I’m not comfortable with it. Doc is the celebrity, not me. However, if that’s what it takes to achieve my goal then as my mother would say, “Put up & Shut Up.”. I’m doing this for my father & my grandfather & for the Game.

Are there other family members involved in the effort?

I’m the most involved. I’m it. My sister & brother-in-law help me promote Doc...I have my Doc cards that I hand out & my sister’s & brother-in-law’s wallets always carry them. So do my nieces & nephews. We all hand them out to anyone who will listen. But I suspect I’m the most aggressive about it! It has taken over my life, which is not a bad thing. Someday I’ll have a tidier home – when this project is done. Til then I should just throw in a hand grenade & run.

How did it come to pass that you got to actually hold the Laws of Base Ball & examine them?

I was contacted by John Thorn. He said I was going to get an



email from a person who has something very interesting he’d like to talk about & that I could trust him. I got an email about an hour later from this gentleman. We arranged to meet at his office, at an undisclosed location. I had to sign a confidentiality agreement

which I consider to be still in effect. I will not say who he is or where he is. I walked into his office & there spread out on the table...well...it was a jaw dropping moment. I looked at the papers & I said, “That’s Doc’s handwriting.”.

And you know very well what Doc’s hand writing looks like.

Yes, I do. And now in retrospect since I have had the opportunity to read them, digest them, chew on them because this gentleman gave me copies, I would love to have another chance to look at them. Now that I know more & understand them better, I would love to have the opportunity to sit down & really study them. I was in a state of shock the first time. I am sorry that my sister didn’t get a chance to see them. She has seen my copies. You see I had a copy of it all along because the previous owner gave it to me, but because of the confidentiality I couldn’t show it to anybody. I couldn’t tell anybody about it until after they sold for that monumental amount of money last April.

This sounds like a very well capitalized & possibly well-known collector who made the purchase.

Yes...or a former major league player who happens to appreciate the history...I do not know who bought them.

It had to be awe inspiring to actually see the Laws of Base Ball in person.

I cried. I had tears coming out of my eyes. I cried because the publicity around these papers did not come in time for last year’s vote. And here I was holding an incredibly important Base Ball document, but the timing was off for the vote. Very bittersweet. We knew that nothing would be public until April of this year, well after the balloting.

You felt more closely connected to Doc by holding the Laws but it came too late to help the vote. Would it have definitely affected the vote?

Oh, yes, I think so. Absolutely. The Laws are primary source proof. Right there in Doc’s hand writing is 90 feet, (30 yards which is how Doc expressed it) between bases. And no gambling. And 9 men, 9 innings.

You can read the 1896 interview with Doc that appeared in *The Sporting News* at this link: www.docadamsbaseball.org/the-sporting-news-february-29-1896-issue/

Marjorie is a member of the Smoky Joe Wood (CT) Chapter of SABR. Learn more about Doc at Marjorie’s web-site, which is docadamsbaseball.org



Joe Nunziata: From Sandlot Stardom to a Staged Suicide

By Alan Cohen

In my research into the Hearst Sandlot Classic, I had the opportunity to speak with two players who were on the New York team in the 1950 game. John Keenan never played professionally. He went on to become a lawyer & is still practicing in Holyoke, Massachusetts. He had written to me, asking about Sal Aprea. Aprea, the MVP in 1950, had played minor league ball in the Yankee organization before leaving baseball to take care of his ailing father. Aprea worked as a banker & as a phone company employee before retiring to Arizona. I tracked him down earlier this year. Both men shared a story about their 1950 Hearst teammate, Joe Nunziata.

Joe Nunziata, who had walked ahead of Aprea's eighth inning triple in the 1950 game, went on to sign with the New York Giants and played during the 1951 season at Oshkosh in the Class-D Wisconsin State League. The following season, he was to be back with Oshkosh, but he did not recover well from off-season groin surgery, & he was released by the Giants in April 1952. In 1953, he signed on with Green Bay, another team in the Wisconsin State League.ⁱ However, he never got to play with Green Bay as he was drafted & entered the Army in early April, 1953, & for a time, was stationed in Korea.

He joined the New York Police Department in 1957, & served for a time on a mounted patrol. His name popped up in one of the more interesting stories in the annals of local history, & his story was included in *Prince of the City* Robert Daley's tale of the New York Police Department in the early 1970s. In the film directed by Sidney Lumet, which was part fact & part fiction, the character Gino Mascone was based on Nunziata, & the role was portrayed by character actor Carmine Caridi.

In 1964, Nunziata joined the Narcotics Division, and became friendly with Detective Edward Walter "Eddie" Egan of "French Connection" fame. Gene Hackman's "Popeye" Doyle character was based on Egan and both Egan and Nunziata appeared briefly in the award-winning motion picture about the case. They both had worked with the Special Investigating Unit (SIU).

In 1971 Nunziata was amongst the first of the officers to be assigned to the Joint New York Narcotics Task Force. His death, ruled a suicide, in March 27, 1972 came during an investigation into corruption & the taking of bribes by members of his unit. Indeed, he was scheduled to meet with Nicholas Scopetta of the Knapp Commission on the day on which he died. His wife Anna contended that he had been murdered.

After his death, his name became connected, inaccurately, to the theft of several bags of heroin & cocaine (398 pounds in all) from the Police Department's Property Clerk's Office.ⁱⁱ Much of this heroin & cocaine had originally been seized during the case on which the "French Connection" film had been made. After Nunziata's death, the investigations into the theft of the heroin, said to have taken place between 1969 & 1972 linked his name to that of Mafia Kingpin Vincent Papa. Nunziata's signature, likely forged, appeared in the records of the property clerk's office. The stolen drugs had a street value estimated to be as high as \$70 million. Did Nunziata sign out the heroin & upon returning the

pouches substitute flour for drugs? There was no conclusive evidence condemning or exonerating Nunziata, who had died before the scope of the thefts had been determined. Did someone forge Nunziata's signature? Was he murdered or did he commit suicide? The investigation into the matter lasted into 1974.

On March 8, 1974, federal indictments did come down against 12 individuals in the police department. Nunziata, who had died almost two years before the indictments were issued, was not indicted posthumously. It was not determined conclusively if he ever took a bribe, but it was determined that his signature had been forged on several occasions. The indictments involved five overlapping cases & the Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District, who first gained a degree of notoriety for his prosecution of these cases, was Rudolph Giuliani who later became Mayor of New York.ⁱⁱⁱ It eventually came to light that Nunziata's only misdeed had been splitting, with his partner, a \$4,000 bribe from a Federal informant only known as "Carlo Dandolo" to conceal the "fact" that Dandolo, who was "supposedly" facing charges himself, was fleeing the United States. Who was this Carlo Dandolo? It appears he was a federal undercover informant of dubious character posing as a criminal seeking a favor.^{iv} This bribe was a sting operation orchestrated by a less than honorable Federal Narcotics official named Andrew Tartaglino. Investigators were looking to question Nunziata about the "bribe" when he allegedly took his own life in 1972. Nunziata's partner was eventually placed on probation for two years.^v

i *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, February 17, 1953: 45.

ii James M. Markham. "One Name on 5 Slips in Police Drug Theft," *New York Times*, February 2, 1973: 1.

iii Paul L. Montgomery. "12 on Drug Squad are Indicted Here," *New York Times*, March 9, 1974: 1.

iv Daley, Robert. *Prince of the City: The True Story of a Cop Who Knew Too Much*, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1978): 127-141.

v "Detective Here gets Two Years on Probation for Taking Bribe," *New York Times*, October 2, 1973: 15.

Amazins (continued from Page 2)

The Mets opened their new ball park, Citi Field in 2009 but winning there took a couple of years. The new park was built in the parking lot of Shea Stadium which then became a parking lot when it was knocked down. The Mets were rumored to be experiencing money problems at this time because of owner Fred Wilpon's investments with Bernie Madoff. A new influx of young pitching (history repeats itself) made the Mets contenders and the team would get to the 2015 World Series, losing to Kansas City in five games. A wild card playoff berth followed in 2016. The 2017 SABR Convention in New York will feature a trip to a Mets game at Citi Field. The stadium has a Brooklyn Dodger feel to it. When you enter it you walk through the Jackie Robinson Rotunda. A trip to the Mets Hall of Fame & Museum is a must see as you will walk through over 50 years of Mets' artifacts & signature moments. Home plate & the pitcher's mound of Shea Stadium are marked off in the parking lot. Just around the bend you may also be able to see the World Globe still standing from the 1964 World's Fair.

Book Review: The Ted Williams' Hit List

By Steve Krevisky

The Ted Williams' Hit List: The Ultimate Ranking of Baseball's Greatest Hitters
By Ted Williams & Jim Prime
Masters Press, 1996

Who are the greatest hitters of all time? What constitutes a great hitter? This book sheds some light on the subject, given that Ted Williams is one of the great hitters of all time, so he knows a lot about this subject! Ted views intelligence as a key attribute of a hitter, involving knowing what the pitcher is throwing & what the pitcher is trying to do. He considers power a key factor in ranking his top batters along with combining power & average. By his criteria, important batters such as Honus Wagner, George Brett, Roberto Clemente, Tony Gwynn, Rod Carew, Wade Boggs & others don't make his list. He also feels that Red Sox hitters whom he worked with or saw, such as Boggs, Rice & Yaz, all could have been better.

Here is Teddy Ballgame's top 10, based upon using the Stat: Production, which = OBA + SLA. While I prefer other criteria, this is an attempt to combine the features of getting on base & moving runners along via slugging average.

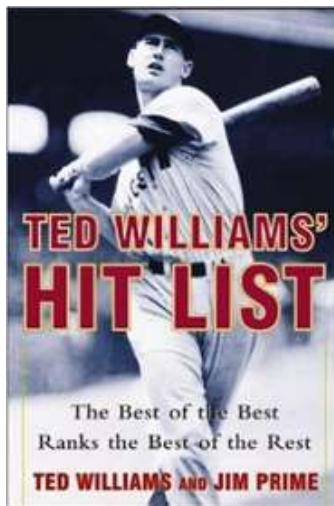
Teddy's Top 10 List of Top Hitters:

Ruth
Gehrig
Foxx
Hornsby
DiMaggio
Cobb
Musial
J. Jackson
Aaron
Mays

Greenberg, Mantle & others just missed being in the top 10. With Williams preferring power, he thus includes players such as Killebrew, Schmidt & others, who might not be considered strong overall hitters. Williams also recognizes the greatness of the Negro League players, given the discrimination that they faced, & that their stats are incomplete.

There is also recognition that the ballpark plays a big role in how well a hitter does. The extreme cases include how the Baker Bowl helped Chuck Klein of the Phillies & how Yankee Stadium was Death Valley for right-handed hitters. Someone like Eddie Mathews was hurt by Milwaukee County Stadium, as evidenced by comments by Phillies' manager Eddie Sawyer in the 1950's. Another factor to take into account would be lineup protection, which can hurt a batter with little help around them.

At the time that this book was written, younger hitters like Frank Thomas, Ken Griffey Jr, & others, were still making their mark. It would be interesting to see how they would fit into the scheme of



things, subject to how one views the steroid era situation.

If one used a different formula, such as Total bases + Walks, divided by At bats + Walks, the rankings could be different. You could also use Standard Deviation to see how many SD's above the mean a batter was. You could apply this to Slugging Average or Home Runs. Also, if you were to consider how many batting titles were won by such luminaries such as Gwynn & Wagner, they might rank higher, even though modern sabermetricians tend to discount BA as a meaningful measure of production.

One great year does not qualify someone for this list, so that Hack Wilson, who had a big 1930 in a hitters' era, doesn't make the list. Roger Maris also fits in that category.

On the other hand, sluggers such as Ruth, Foxx & Gehrig had big years so consistently that they would have to rate as highly as they do. Williams especially admired Foxx, whom he felt was a highly intelligent hitter, one who knew what the pitcher was trying to do. Teddy also shows a lot of respect for Musial, a contemporary, who was so consistent every year.

I would also prefer to see acknowledgement of hitters such as Paul Waner, Eddie Collins or Nap Lajoie, who might not have hit a lot of homers but who did hit doubles & triples & were also very consistent.

For the readers out there, how would you rank the hitters & what would your criteria be? And where would Williams himself rate?

Classified Ads

"CLEARING THE BASES: A Veteran Sportswriter on the National Pastime" by Jim Kaplan (www.levellerspress.com).
"Great baseball writing" —Garry Brown, Springfield Republican
Kaplan can be reached at jkaplan105@gmail.com.



Baseball cards:

- Topps sets, 1977 - 1994, including update sets
- Donruss sets, 1981 - 1994
- Fleer sets, 1981 - 1994
- Upper Deck, 1989 - 1994
- Various error cards and other specialty sets available.

Call or text Paul Hensler 860.558.5977



2017 Red Sox Tickets at less than cost. Two on the aisle in the centerfield bleachers (Sec 41, Row 35, Seats 1 & 2)

- Mon., May 1, 7:10 PM, vs. Baltimore: \$36 for the pair.
- Mon., June 26, 7:10 PM, vs. Minnesota: \$50 for the pair.
- Wed., Sept. 6, 7:10 PM, vs. Toronto: \$36 for the pair.

If interested please email Karl at kcicitto@cox.net.

Upcoming Baseball Book Releases

Compiled By Karl Ciccio (Source: amazon.com)



Fly the W

(Dec. 1, 2016) by *The Daily Herald*

Curse broken. For the first time since 1908, the Chicago Cubs are champions of the baseball world! Following a dominant regular season & a thrilling playoff performance, the Cubs captured their long-anticipated World Series title in dramatic fashion & fulfilled the dreams of generations of Cubs faithful. *Fly the W: The Chicago Cubs' Historic 2016 Championship Season* is packed with vivid, insightful stories from the *Herald* as well as dynamic photographs of the Cubs' entire star-studded roster. Relive each key moment of this brilliant year with nearly 100 full-color images printed on museum-quality paper, including exclusive photography from the Cubs' championship celebration. Also featuring in-depth profiles of Bryant, Anthony Rizzo, Addison Russell, & other favorites, this commemorative coffee table book takes fans on an unforgettable journey & is an essential keepsake for all Cubs aficionados.

Teammate: My Life in Baseball

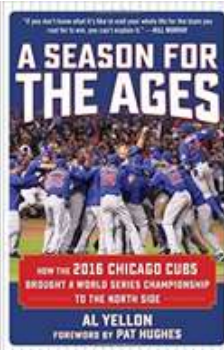
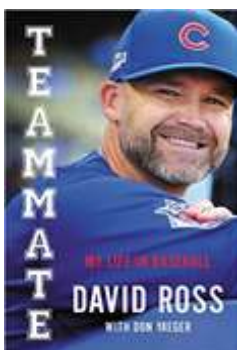
(Dec. 26, 2016) by *David Ross & Don Yaeger*

An inspiring memoir from David Ross, the veteran catcher dubbed "Grandpa Rossy," who became the heart & soul of the Chicago Cubs 2016 World Series championship team. Beyond Ross's remarkably strong play, he became the ultimate positive force in the Cubs locker room, mentoring & motivating his fellow players, some of them nearly twenty years his junior. Thanks to Cubs Kris Bryant & Anthony Rizzo, "Grandpa Rossy" became a social media sensation. No one, however, could have predicted that Ross's home run in his final career at bat would help seal the Cubs championship. Now, in *Teammate*, Ross shares the inspiring story of his life in baseball, framed by the events of that unforgettable November night.

A Season for the Ages

(Dec. 6, 2016) by *Al Yellon*

No doubt, you've heard about the Cubs' decades-long run of futility. They hadn't won a pennant in seventy-one years or a World Series in a record 108 years. The team often missed chances with soul-crushing defeats. But after a complete teardown that resulted in a 100-loss season in 2012, Theo Epstein & his baseball staff reversed that with the Cubs of 2016, a team that was not only supremely talented, but cared nothing for all the media narratives of losing. They did things during the regular season that no Cubs club had done in more than a century, including earning the most wins for the franchise since 1910.



The Plan

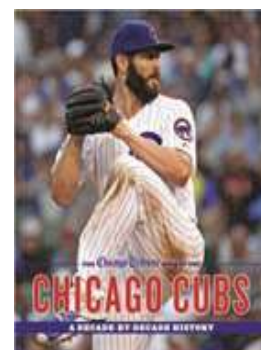
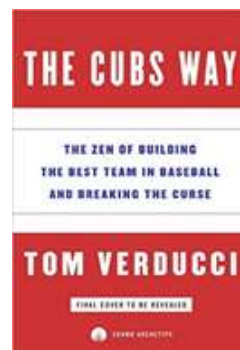
(May 1, 2017) by *David Kaplan*

On October 12, 2011, Theo Epstein became the new Chicago Cubs president of baseball operations, flipping a switch on the lovable-loser franchise & initiating a plan to accomplish in Chicago what he'd succeeded in as general manager of the Boston Red Sox: ending a World Series drought. It would require a complete team tear-down & turnover, a new farm system foundation of young talent which Epstein & Cubs GM Jed Hoyer gradually added to with gutsy trades & timely signings. In *The Plan*, David Kaplan goes behind the scenes with the Cubs & their front office, walking the steps of their captivating rise. Featuring interviews with Epstein, Tom Ricketts other team insiders. This is the definitive account of a new era on the North Side.

The Cubs Way

(Mar. 28, 2017) by *Tom Verducci*

It took 108 years, but it really happened. The Chicago Cubs are once again World Series champions. Tom Verducci, two-time National Sportswriter of the Year, tells the story of the Cubs' transformation from perennial underachievers to the best team in baseball. Beginning with Epstein's first year with the team in 2011, Verducci shows how Epstein went beyond "Moneyball" thinking to turn around the franchise. Leading the organization with a manual called "The Cubs Way," he focused on the mental side of the game as much as the physical, emphasizing chemistry as well as statistics. To accomplish his goal, Epstein needed manager Joe Maddon, an eccentric innovator, as his counterweight. The Cubs Way chronicles how key players like Rizzo, Russell, Lester, & Arrieta were deftly brought into the organization by Epstein & coached by Maddon to outperform expectations.



The Chicago Tribune Book of the Chicago Cubs

(Apr. 11, 2017) by *Chicago Tribune Staff*

The Chicago Tribune Book of the Chicago Cubs is a decade-by-decade look at one of baseball's most beloved if hard-luck teams, starting with the franchise's beginnings in 1876 as the Chicago White Stockings & ending with the newfound success of Joe Maddon's present-day team. For more than a century, the *Chicago Tribune* has documented every Cubs season through original reporting, photography, & box scores. Each era in Cubs history includes its own timeline, profiles of key players & coaches, & feature stories that highlight it all, from the heavy hitters to the no-hitters to the one-hit wonders.

Frank Observations

By Michael Frank

There are four Hall of Famers (mostly 19th Century figures) buried in Connecticut & a few other baseball figures of interest.

Orator James O'Rourke is in St. Michael's in Stratford, section 2. This is a wide open cemetery. O'Rourke has a tall stone listing only his date of death (1919), a stone he shares with other O'Rourke's. That was a common practice 100 years ago. He was a versatile performer, then a minor league executive, always dignified.

19th Century executive Morgan Bulkeley is in section I of Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford. He has a very tall monument, also shared with family members. Besides being first president of the National League, he was Governor, US senator, Mayor of Hartford & President of Aetna-Life.

19th Century slugger Roger Connor is in section D of Old St. Joseph's in Waterbury (the clock city). Connor was in an unmarked grave from death in 1931 till 2001, when citizens raised money for a fine stone. It says "baseball Hall of Fame 1976" & includes his wife & a grandson who died young. Connor hit 138 home runs which was a record till Babe Ruth came along. Later he was involved in minor leagues in Connecticut.

Yankee executive George M. Weiss is at Evergreen Cemetery in New Haven, on the Davenport Avenue side. He served as farm director of the Yankees, was general manager during their most successful years, & finally first president of the Mets. Look for a long dark stone that says "Weiss".

Not a regular Hall of Famer but a figure more familiar to many of us is Mel Allen (Israel). He's at Temple Beth-el Cemetery in Stamford, off the Den Road exit. Look for a long stone with columns that says "Israel-Allen" in the rear right. Mel has one of the short individual stones in front of it. He may have been the Voice of the Yankees, but there's nothing baseball on his stone.



Angelo Bartlett (Bart) Giamatti is in Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven. This is an old walkable cemetery with no roads. He's on Holly Walk on the Asylum Avenue side. The long stone says he was president of Yale University, but nothing about being commissioner of baseball. This cemetery is rich in famous people from other fields, e.g. Walter Camp, Eli Whitney & Noah Webster.

I haven't been there yet, but centenarian Mike Sandlock is listed at Saint John cemetery in Darien.

Note 1: www.stewthornley.net shows the GPS locations for most of these, if you want to visit or pictures if you don't.

Note 2: For all burials in Connecticut, go to www.findagrave.com and search for location: Connecticut.

In Memoriam



Mike Sandlock, the oldest living major-league baseball player & last surviving ball player to have worn Dodger blue in Brooklyn, died April 4, 2016, at age 100, at his home in Cos Cob. Sandlock played catcher for the Boston Braves (1942 & 1944), the Brooklyn Dodgers (1945 – 1946) & the Pittsburgh Pirates (1953).

Greenwich Times: Notable Connecticut Passings in 2016

2017 Hall of Fame Straw Vote Results

In October, 2016, the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter conducted a straw vote for the 2017 Hall of Fame. Just one candidate, born in Boston, MA and raised in Killingworth, CT, received the enough votes for induction. Here are the results:

Jeff Bagwell 15 votes 83.3%	Manny Ramirez 5 votes 27.7%
Tim Lincecum 12 votes 66.6%	Larry Walker 4 votes 22.2%
Curt Schilling 10 votes 55.5%	Jeff Kent 3 votes 16.6%
Roger Clemens 9 votes 50%	Lee Smith 3 votes 16.6%
Ivan Rodriguez 9 votes 50%	Jorge Posada 3 votes 16.6%
Trevor Hoffman 7 votes 38.8%	Gary Sheffield 2 votes 11.1%
Barry Bonds 7 votes 38.8%	Sammy Sosa 2 votes 11.1%
Edgar Martinez 7 votes 38.8%	Billy Wagner 1 vote 5.5%
Fred McGriff 7 votes 38.8%	Tim Wakefield 1 vote 5.5%
Vladimir Guerrero 7 votes 38.8%	Edgar Renteria 1 vote 5.5%
Mike Mussina 5 votes 27.7%	Jason Varitek 1 vote 5.5%

Speakers Shine at Holiday Luncheon

By Karl Ciccitto

Slowed by snow & freezing rain, attendance was the only curtailed aspect of the Holiday Luncheon on December 17 at Angelo's on Main in West Hartford.

There was a robust buffet. Ticket Vouchers for the Yard Goats, Bees & Defenders were given away. There were free books. Speakers included our own Marjorie Adams, Pete Tucci of Tucci Lumber (Norwalk, CT) & Jason Klein of Force3 Pro Gear (Derby, CT).

Klein is a baseball lifer & businessman with the proverbial tiger by the tail. He is a veteran minor league umpire & trainer of "Men In Blue". Klein is the creator of a revolutionary catcher's mask that reduces the severity index of a concussion by up to 50%.

Mr. Klein's mask is currently used by Kurt Suzuki, Matt Wieters, Tucker Barnhart, Anthony Recker & Francisco Cervelli, all of whom began to use it in 2016.

Klein explained how his first MLB customer, Mr. Flowers of the Braves, agreed to meet before an April interleague game in Boston. The two men met in the visitor's bullpen, where the mask maker explained how the unique design offered a higher level of protection. Flowers did not give the mask back to Klein, who soon noticed that Flowers was spouting to other players in the bullpen what he had just been told about the mask's attributes.

Klein realized that his business had taken an important step forward when he subsequently noticed that Flowers went through his bullpen while using the new mask. Flowers' acceptance of the Force 3 Defender mask led to a cover story in Baseball America & to other new player-customers on the Twins, O's, Reds & Pirates.

Although no mention of it was made at the gathering, Mr. Klein survived a small plane crash in New York State this past July. Three others perished in the crash. Now recovered & going about his business, Klein is aiming to revolutionize safety for baseball, softball & hockey players across the globe.

Klein was well prepped for his appearance before Connecticut SABR. He pitched a trivia shut out, asking several questions about catching gear with answers rooted in the 19th Century.

Pete Tucci of The Tucci Lumber Company makes game bats for 160+ current major leaguers including Bryce Harper, Xander Bogaerts & Troy Tulowitzki. Although Mr. Tucci's firm is the fourth most popular among the 36 MLB approved bat makers, his start in bat crafting was anything but lofty.

After six seasons playing the outfield for minor league affiliates of the Blue Jays, Padres & Mets, Pete Tucci retired from professional baseball with a Baseball Reference file that included a .318 season with 30 home runs in 1998.

After Baseball, Pete worked in HVAC for a few years until his wife gifted him a wood carving machine & 60 pieces of wood. Tucci made his first bat in his garage & was happy to find that said bat met his expectations of what a good piece of lumber should be.



Making bats in his garage became Pete's hobby until his life was transformed by the passing of a loved one. He decided to pivot from his HVAC business into that of a professional bat maker. The transformation took one year. Pete made the bats. His wife painted & finished them.

Former minor league team mates who were in the big leagues helped Pete establish a small base of customers but the turning point came in 2011 when Nick Swisher bought Pete's bats. Eleven other Yankees followed. By the end of 2012, Tucci Lumber was being swung by 55 MLB players including 5 who played in the 2012 World Series.

Tucci shared one joyous story about a pre-game meeting at Fenway with Miguel Cabrera & Prince Fielder, a meeting that was necessarily arranged out of the view of the Tigers officious clubhouse man. Fielder & Cabrera gave no indication that they would use Mr. Tucci's bats after the presentation. Later, after seeing Cabrera in the on deck circle with his bat & having been blocked from the box seats closest to the field by a young Fenway employee, Tucci told the young man, "Believe it or not, kid, that's my bat that Miguel Cabrera is swinging down there."

Mr. Tucci & a friend were then given free access to seats close to the playing field to watch the Tigers & Sox play. Fenway faithful seated near Tucci soon decoded what was going on as Tucci & his friend cheered hits by Cabrera and Fielder. The Red Sox fans join in with vigor. In the end, Fielder hit a home run over the 420 mark with a Tucci bat & Cabrera put one over the Sports Authority sign with his.

A red letter day for Pete Tucci – for sure.

Batting in the third spot was Marjorie Adams, great granddaughter of Doc Adams, the 19th Century Knickerbocker who chaired Base Ball's early efforts to organize the game. Marjorie displayed a photo copy of the Laws of Base Ball, authored in 1856 by her great grandfather, & reviewed its elements. The original Laws of Base Ball sold at auction (not by the Adams family, but buy a collector) this past April for \$3.26 million.



1916 World Series

By Steve Krevisky

Note: This article was originally a presentation for the Southern New England SABR Chapter on November 26, 2016.

1916 marked the only year where the Red Sox repeated as World Series champions. They reached the Series as a result of winning a close pennant race, finishing 2 games ahead of the White Sox & 4 games ahead of the Tigers. The Brooklyn Robins finished 2.5 games ahead of the Phillies (the NL champs of 1915) & 4 games ahead of the 1914 Miracle Braves.

The series opened in Braves Field, which had a bigger capacity than Fenway Park. Game 1 featured Rube Marquard against Ernie Shore, with the Sox prevailing, 6 to 5. However, the BoSox almost blew a 6-1 lead in the 9th & Carl Mays had to enter to finish the game.

Game 2 was an extra inning classic with someone named Babe Ruth facing off against Sherry Smith. The visiting Robins struck first as Hy Myers drilled an inside the park HR in the top of the first against the Babe. In the bottom of the 3rd the Beantowners tied it on an Everett Scott triple & a ground out by Ruth. The game went on with no more runs scoring until much later. In the bottom of the 10th Scott singled & was sacrificed to 2nd. With 2 outs Hooper singled (to 3rd) but Scott rounded the third base bag too far & was thrown out at home. In the bottom of the 14th Hoblitzell walked & was sacrificed to 2nd. McNally, making his MLB debut, ran for him. Gainer pinch-hit for Gardner, & singled in McNally with the winning run! Both pitchers went the distance & it was a tough loss for Smith.

Game 3, back in Brooklyn, was the first one ever at Ebbets Field. Former A's hurler Jack Coombs faced off against Carl Mays. The Robins built up a 4-0 lead, only to see the Sox close it to 4-3 by the 7th. Jeff Pfeffer, a 25 game winner, relieved to give the Robins the win. Gardner homered for the Sox in the 7th.



In game 4, Dutch Leonard went the distance, defeating Rube Marquard, 6 to 2. Brooklyn got two runs in the first but Boston quickly stormed back. Gardner homered once again.

Game 5, back in Boston, featured Ernie Shore against Jeff Pfeffer. The Robins again tallied first, getting one in the top of the 2nd, but the BoSox grabbed a three run lead by the 3rd and pulled away to win, 4 to 1. Wheeler Dell relieved Pfeffer in the 8th. This gave Boston the World Series triumph, and thus repeated as Series champs. Larry Gardner paced the Sox with 6 RBI's in the series, with 2 HR's. Hooper was 7 for 21 and Lewis went 6 for 17. Ernie Shore paced the moundsmen, winning 2 games. On the Brooklyn side, Smith and Pfeffer hurled well in a losing cause and Myers belted the only Brooklyn HR.

Both teams would return to the World Series in the near future. Boston won the 1918 series against the Cubs, while the Robins would lose the 1920 Series to the Indians.

References:

1. SABR Retrosheet
2. The Baseball Almanac
3. Wikipedia: 1916 in Baseball
4. Baseball-reference.com
5. The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia, 4th Edition, By Gillette & Palmer
6. Photobucket Images

Major League Players with Connecticut Connections (2016 Regular Season)

Player	Team	Conn. Connection	POS	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SAC	GIDP	AVG	OBP	SLG
Ahmed, Nick	ARZ	UConn	SS	90	284	26	62	9	1	4	20	15	58	5	9	0.218	0.265	0.299
Campbell, Eric	NYM	Norwich	3B	40	75	9	13	1	0	1	9	10	24	1	2	0.173	0.284	0.227
Davis, Rajai	CLE	New London	OF	134	495	74	113	23	2	12	48	33	106	3	9	0.249	0.306	0.388
Springer, George	HOU	New Britain	OF	162	644	116	168	29	5	29	82	88	178	1	12	0.261	0.359	0.457

Player	Team	Conn. Connection	POS	G	W	L	ERA	CG	SHO	SV	HLD	IP	H	ER	R	HR	BB	SO
Barnes, Matt	BOS	Bethel	P	62	4	3	4.05	0	0	1	0	66.2	62	30	32	6	31	71
Breslow, Craig	MIA	Trumbull	P	15	0	2	4.50	0	0	0	0	14.0	21	7	9	1	4	7
Dean, Pat	MIN	Naugatuck	P	19	1	6	6.28	0	0	0	0	67.1	88	47	47	13	23	50
Hahn, Jesse	OAK	Groton	P	9	2	4	6.02	0	0	0	0	46.1	57	31	32	8	19	23
Harvey, Matt	NYM	Mystic	P	17	4	10	4.86	0	0	0	0	92.2	111	50	55	8	25	76
Hughes, Jared	PGH	Stamford	P	67	1	1	3.03	0	0	1	0	59.1	62	20	24	6	22	34
Leone, Dominic	ARZ	Norwich	P	25	0	1	6.33	0	0	0	0	27.0	45	19	21	7	12	23
Oberg, Scott	COL	UConn	P	24	1	1	5.19	0	0	1	0	26.0	26	15	15	3	11	20



Opportunity Knocks for Writing Projects

Compiled by Karl Ciccitto

SABR has published dozens of books and thousands of biographies and will continue to add to the canon of baseball history through the efforts of SABR members. Writing opportunities are abundant. First Timers are welcome. Here is some information on 5 writing projects and how to become involved.

Team Ownership Histories Project

The SABR Baseball Biography Project and the SABR Business of Baseball Committee are teaming up to create a collection of the ownership histories of major league franchises. As they are completed, the histories will appear in the Business of Baseball newsletter and be posted permanently in a separate section on the BioProject web-site. If you are interested in doing a team's history, please contact Andy McCue (agmccue44@earthlink.net), who will be coordinating the project.

Baseball Biography Project

The lofty goal is to write a high-quality journal-length biography of every player who ever played in the major leagues. 3,949 biographies have been written by 500+ SABR members as of Dec. 14, 2016. Your subject can be anyone who ever played in the major leagues & has been retired for at least 5 years, or any manager, executive, umpire, scout, or broadcaster. In fact, we welcome your ideas for any subject who impacted the history of the game — someone from the Negro Leagues, the minor leagues, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, and even Japan.

Web-site: sabr.org/bioproject

Things you should know: sabr.org/content/bioproject-resources

Request an assignment: Lyle Spatz at bioassign@sabr.org

SABR Games Project

The SABR Baseball Games Project is a new initiative to research and write articles on major-league and Negro League regular, postseason and All-Star Games. These game accounts will complement Retrosheet and Baseball-Reference box scores as well as BioProject essays on the players involved. All games, regardless of their historical significance, are eligible to be written up.

Web-site: sabr.org/gamesproject

Things you should know: sabr.org/content/sabr-games-project

Request an assignment: Bruce Slutsky at bruce@bruceslutsky.com

SABR Baseball Ballparks Project

We love ballparks and feel that each one deserves its own biography. Ballparks have a life of their own. Your job, as the ballpark's biographer, is to cover that life in detail, from birth to death.

Web-site: sabr.org/bioproj/parks

Request an assignment: Scott Ferkovich at scottferk@gmail.com

SABR Book Projects

Biographers are needed for several books, as listed below. Status of assignment availabilities changes daily. Please contact Bill Nowlin (bnowlin@rounder.com) to confirm availability and request an assignment.

THE WOOD PILE

Newsletter of the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter
of the Society for American Baseball Research



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Next Issue: August 1, 2017