

Halsey Hall Research Committee

Tuesday January 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Attendees (13): Stew Thornley, Dave Lande, Bob Komoroski, Art Mugalian, Jacob Sayward, Gene Gomes, Rich Arpi, Brenda Himrich, Glenn Renick, Mike Hauptert, Dan Levitt, John Seals, John Buckeye

Pre-meeting talk: Stew said he keeps track of games with HOF-ers he's seen live. Bob said a Pirates-Cubs game he saw had plenty; Bob Uecker's death this week.

1. SABR Day plans

- a. Bob Komoroski lined up author Zac Ford for a Zoom event. Zac authored a book entitled "Called Up" about various minor leaguer's personal experiences regarding being first called up to the major leagues. Included in this group of minor leaguers are six who were called up by the Twins.
- b. The Zoom call will be held on Thursday, January 30 starting at 7:00 p.m. Ed Edmonds will host the call. Gene will send out a chapter-wide reminder.

2. Spring Chapter Meeting

- a. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 19, 2025.
- b. Two research presentations have been unanimously approved by the Research Committee.
 - i. Ben Ernst from Aberdeen, South Dakota will give a presentation on the "Aberdeen Pheasants". He'll talk about securing a SABR grant to erect a historical marker commemorating the history of the Aberdeen Pheasants on the site of Aberdeen Municipal Stadium, now on the site of Northern State University. His talk will include the process of getting a marker installed and cover the great 1964 Pheasants team and their exhibition game against the parent Baltimore Orioles. He'll cover some of the big names in the Orioles organization at the time when the Pheasants were a Baltimore farm team. Ben will bring a book on Philbert, the team mascot. The book includes pictures of what the stadium looked like and he might be able to arrange with the publisher to have copies on hand for members to purchase. The Research Committee unanimously approved Ben's proposed presentation via voice vote.
 - ii. Rich Arpi will give a presentation on the 1908 pennant races in the National and American Leagues and how they were covered by the Duluth News-Tribune whose baseball coverage focused on local baseball teams from northern Minnesota, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. As a part of his presentation, Rich will call for more research from chapter members. One of his goals is to create a Web site that records all of this information. Rich's proposed presentation was unanimously approved earlier by the Research Committee via e-mail. We also discussed two books on the 1908 season including "The Unforgettable Season", by G. H. Fleming, and "Crazy '08" by Cait Murphy, which won an award.

- c. Dan Evans will be the guest speaker at the chapter meeting. Dan, recruited as guest speaker by Dan Levitt, will talk about his career as a major league executive which included time with the White Sox, Dodgers, and Blue Jays.
3. Five-Chapter American League Central Division Preview Zoom Meeting
 - a. This is the third season of this Zoom call.
 - b. Gene contacted John Bonnes and he agreed to be our Twins expert if the date doesn't conflict with opening day on March 27.
 - c. Gary Gillette from the Detroit chapter is the organizer for this event and will send out an e-mail announcing the event.
 - d. Committee consensus is that Monday, March 24 is our first choice for this event and Wednesday, March 26 is our second choice.
4. Twitter and Bluesky
 - a. Per Bob Komoroski, the chapter has 41 followers on Bluesky and 313 followers on Facebook.
 - b. Per Gene Gomes, Tom Flynn wants to step down as chapter representative for Twitter. John Buckeye replaced Tom's email and will follow-up on this change.
5. Other agenda items #1
 - a. The Frank Viola SABR Zoom event took place on December 17. Bob Komoroski, Stew Thornley, and Rich Arpi from the chapter attended this event.
 - b. Bob Komoroski recommended that chapter members watch a Facebook video on Bruce Springsteen and his baseball-themed song "Glory Days".
6. Other chapter items #2
 - a. The chapter held its Fred Souba Hot Stove League Saturday morning breakfast for the first time at a new location, Stanley's, in northeast Minneapolis on January 11. Eight chapter members attended this breakfast. The next breakfast is scheduled on Saturday, March 1.
 - b. TwinsFest update: Doug Skipper received word that our chapter will have to pay \$350 for a table at the 2025 TwinsFest. There are no exceptions to this requirement for a non-profit organization. Chapter consensus is to not participate in Twins Fest due to this fee requirement.
7. Research Roundtable – Around the Horn
 - a. Per Stew Thornley, an enhanced proposal for the Pillbox commemorative marker was submitted to the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board in early January. The revised proposal was approved and has moved onto the next step in this process.
 - b. Rich Arpi will be at the Minnesota History Center on most Fridays to continue research into the Spread of Baseball in Minnesota.

- c. Terry Bohn is working with a group to establish a marker commemorating Satchell Paige in Bismarck, North Dakota where Paige spent some time playing for local teams.
- d. Daniel Dorff completed his second SABR biography, awaiting posting.
- e. Dan Levitt talked about his long-term objective to write a biography on John McGraw. On-going bribery attempts during a pennant race will be included.
- f. Art Mugalian stated that the next book club will be held on Saturday, February 8 at Barnes and Noble in the Har-Mar Mall.
- g. Jacob Hayward has started work on a project regarding involvement of lawyers and state legislators in testifying about organized baseball.
- h. John Buckeye is reading "One Shot at Forever" by Chris Ballard, a book about a small-town high school baseball team in Illinois that reached the finals of the state baseball tournament in 1971.
- i. Glenn Renick's proposed article on gum and candy baseball cards was deemed not suitable for the Baseball Research Journal. Therefore, he parsed the article into two parts for posting on the SABR baseball card blog. Fantastic article!
- j. Mike Haupert is working on an article regarding the two 19th century pillars of modern-day baseball: Hulbert and Von der Ahe.
- k. The first phase of Stew Thornley's project to document and summarize changes in baseball playing and scoring rules is complete and on-line in various locations, including History of Playing and Scoring Rules on Retrosheet (<https://www.retrosheet.org/rules/rules.htm>).
- l. Stew Thornley said that a Research Roundtable section will be included in the chapter newsletter from now on.

8. **Trivia Time Quiz**, courtesy of Stew Thornley: "Hard Times Quiz"

1-Hall of Famer who played for St. Cloud and Minneapolis in the minors. **Orlando Cepeda**, who went to prison for marijuana.

2-Played for only one team, from 1963 to 1975, hit a pinch home run in his first time up, and became known for his pinch-hitting skills to a point that he told his team, perhaps apocryphally, "Bench Me or Trade Me." **Gates Brown**, went to Ohio State Reformatory -burglary as a teen.

3-Nickname of "Jungle" to go with the first name he used (even though it wasn't his real name), he was a daring baserunner in the 1950s and led his league, at various times, in triples, stolen bases, and times caught stealing. He played in one World Series and was hitless in 14 times up. He died when he was 96. **Jim Rivera**, sentenced to life for attempted rape, but was paroled after five years, all before his baseball career.

4-His major-league career consisted of one game, on July 4, 1886, giving up eight runs in eight innings and taking the loss against Cincinnati. He later managed and umpired in the minor leagues. He served in the Spanish-American War and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. **Ed Clark**, while working as the foreman of mule transport team in South Africa early in the 20th

century, tried to join the Boer army and wound up in a British prison, escaping after six weeks.

5-He made a running catch of a short fly ball to end the game in Scott Erickson's no-hitter. **Alex Cole**, later in prison for conspiracy to possess heroin with the intent to distribute.

6-The son of a jockey, this first baseman twice led the American League in batting average in the post-World War II years. In a nine-year major-league career, he walked more than 100 times in five seasons. His lowest single-season on-base percentage (not that they tracked that then) was .399. **Ferris Fain**, spent 18 months in prison for growing marijuana.

7-Last American League switch-hitter to be named Most Valuable Player.

Vida Blue, who did time along with Willie Aikens, Jerry Martin, and Willie Wilson for attempted possession of cocaine. Some knee-jerk people harumphed and said they would have been received a more severe sentence if they hadn't been celebrities, but the opposite was true. Almost no one served time for this on a first offense, but a grandstanding magistrate, J. Milton Sullivan, made it clear he was punishing the players because they were role models and had let down the youth of America. He even cited Wilson leading the American League in batting average in 1982. By that logic, perhaps the arse-hat should have reduced Wilson's sentence because he had set a record for striking out the most times in a six-game World Series in 1980.

8-Cy Young Award recipient and winning pitcher of an All-Star Game played in Minnesota. **LaMarr Hoyt**, who did time for drug charges.

9-Twice had more than 100 RBIs in a season in the 1930s, later managed this same team for parts of eight seasons and served as its general manager in the mid-1960s. Died of a heart attack at 59. **Pinky Higgins**, after his baseball career ended, served two months in a Louisiana prison for negligent homicide. While driving under the influence of alcohol, he killed a highway worker, and he was later sentenced to four years in jail. Higgins died of a heart attack at age 59, days after being paroled.

10-Despite what Kramer claimed on Seinfeld, this former Yankee did not design Central Park in New York. **Joe Pepitone**, who spent time on Rikers Island for drug possession (among other things he was found possessing).

9. Next meetings: February 17, 2025 and March 17, 2025. Darryl Sannes is the February quizzer and John Sparky Seals is the March quizzer.

10. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.