

SABR PICTORIAL HISTORY COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

Bill Hickman, Chair

Cary Smith, Vice Chair

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TOM SHIEBER TO MAKE PRESENTATION AT COMMITTEE MEETING

Tom Shieber, who founded the Pictorial History Committee, will make a presentation on virtual reality techniques for portraying Boston's South End Grounds as the ballpark looked in 1888. The Committee meeting will be held at 5 pm on Friday at SABR 35 in Toronto. We look forward to seeing many of you there at the meeting. It's only a short walk to Rogers Centre, so you'll have plenty of time to get to the Yankees-Blue Jays game following the committee meeting.

PLAYER IMAGE INDEX GROWS AND IMPROVES IN ACCESSIBILITY

Our Missing Players List now stands at slightly fewer than 870 players. Our rate of finding missing players has slowed down, but we continue to make progress.

The Player Image Index is now available in Word, as well as in Excel Spreadsheet format. As before, go to the Pictorial History Committee portion of the SABR website to download the Player Image Index in either format. We expect the Player Image Index to become available as part of the SABR Encyclopedia within the next couple of months. To visit the SABR Encyclopedia, log onto the members-only section of the SABR website. Then click on "Research Tools." You'll find the SABR Encyclopedia among the tabs on the Research Tools webpage.

NEW CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PLAYER IMAGE INDEX

The following new contributors have found at least one image for the Player Image Index project since participation was last reported:

John Freyer
Cathy Bowman Parrella
Jamie Selko
Bob Tholkes

Thank you to all of those who have helped us make so much progress in this project. There are now 89 people who have made contributions.

THREE FOR ONE

Every once in a while we are able to find images of multiple missing players in one place. Cathy

Bowman Parrella responded to a request for a photo of her grandfather, pitcher Sumner Bowman. Her response was so generous that she sent background clippings which included images of Sumner's University of Pennsylvania teammates James "Jack" Darragh and Ellwood "Woody" Wagenhorst. All three of these former major leaguers had been on our Missing Players List.

LEWIS "BULL" SMITH

Bull Smith was an outfielder with the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1904. The Chicago Daily News section of the Library of Congress website supposedly has a photo of Bull Smith. If you search the Library of Congress website, you'll find the photo using the code SDN-002561. Frank Russo has reported that one his website users has questioned whether this photo really portrays Bull Smith, or instead represents his 1904 Pirate teammate catcher Harry Smith. I must admit that it looks a bit like Harry Smith, given other photos I've seen of the latter. Unfortunately, we don't have other references to an image of Bull Smith, so there's no means of comparison for him. I've initiated contact with the library at West Virginia University, which Bull Smith attended, in hopes of obtaining their version of his image. In the meantime, if any of you possess images of Lewis "Bull" Smith, I'd appreciate your sharing them with me, so that we can get this identification resolved.

BALLPARK PHOTO INDEX

Paul Healey continues to work on the Ballpark Photo project. We are still cataloguing images of major league parks. After that phase is completed, we will move on to minor league parks. We thank Ron Selter for his participation with Paul on this project. If you would like to contribute to the cataloguing of ballpark photos, please contact Paul at paulhealey@yahoo.com. Paul would welcome more participants.

PHOTO WEBSITES

The New York Public Library now has a digital gallery on its website. The address is:
<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>

The digital gallery has several baseball related categories, including players, managers, fields, cards, training, and umpire. Some rare Negro League photos can be found under the category Players.

VIDEO TAPES

From time to time, the committee will receive an inquiry about baseball video tapes. We have not initiated any projects in this area. If any of you have video tape collections or are interested in starting to catalogue video tapes, please let me know and we'll see what project might be feasible to undertake.

OTHER PROJECTS

This is just a reminder that Paul Healey continues to lead the development of the Ballpark Photo Index and Dave Davis the development of the Manager Image Index. Paul can be reached at paulhealey@yahoo.com. Dave can be reached at dfastpitch5@yahoo.com.

EARLIEST BASEBALL CARD

It was reported in Sports Collectors Digest that Hank Thomas, grandson of Walter “Big Train” Johnson, may have discovered the earliest baseball card. SCD columnist Frank Ceresi believes that the card dates from the 1830’s. The card seems to show some boys playing a bat and ball game. Whether that game was actually what today we call baseball seems to be an open question.

SPRING ROSTER PLAYERS

SABR’s Spring Training Committee has developed a Spring Player Inventory, which is a database listing those players who appeared on spring training rosters, but never made it into a regular season game with a major league team. The springs currently covered by the data base are 1927 through 2000. I’ve acquired images showing many of these spring roster players. If anyone is interested in the pictorial aspects of the spring roster players, please let me know.