

THE BALTIMORE CHOP

VOLUME 1: ISSUE 2 SUMMER 2017

“The fast ball that came sailing across the plate received such a slap from Morlock’s ash as to rise gracefully toward the cerulean and finally alight in a cornfield some distance beyond and without the high board enclosure.” (Salisbury Advertiser, August 17, 1895)

From the editor:

Welcome to the second issue of the Baltimore Chop. We are looking for continuing correspondents and contributors to report on recent and scheduled regional baseball events, and provide short regular features and brief historical pieces. The newsletter is intended to reach an audience of both the Babe Ruth and Bob Davids chapters and beyond. It is an opportunity to portray our regions rich baseball present and past. Please submit any articles or proposals to me at martyp4@verizon.net. ~ Martin Payne

Visual trivia: Name This Oriole



Hint: He later became an umpire.

Written Trivia: Name the 3 Hall of Famers born in Baltimore.

Answers on last page.

Baltimore's First American League Opening Day

By Jimmy Keenan

In late January of 1901 American League President Ban Johnson convened a series of organizational meetings at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Chicago. The purpose of these gatherings was to iron out the final details for the upcoming debut of his new major league. Seven years earlier, Johnson, a Cincinnati sportswriter, became president of the Western League, a very competitive minor circuit. In 1900 Johnson changed the name of the loop to the American League. The following year, claiming major-league status, he added teams from Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington.

A few weeks before Johnson's Chicago sessions, the Baltimore contingent elected their own officers and directors while authorizing the construction of a new ballpark. Third baseman John McGraw, one of the club's stockholders, would serve as the player-manager. McGraw's Orioles, named after two previous major-league franchises in Baltimore, held their spring training at Hot Springs, Arkansas. After a few weeks of practice and signing additional players, McGraw's squad came back to Baltimore in early April to take part in a series of exhibition games.

The Orioles opening day opponent, the Boston Americans, led by player-manager Jimmy Collins, held their preseason workouts in Charlottesville, Virginia. After two consecutive rainouts, the Orioles finally crossed bats with the Americans on April 26, 1901. The game was played at American League Park [Oriole Park IV], located at what is now the southwest corner of Greenmount Avenue and 29th Street.

Beginning at 1:00 PM a procession of nearly fifty carriages started out from the Eutaw House Hotel at the northwest corner of Baltimore and Eutaw Streets. American flags were draped from buildings along the parade route as fans of all ages lined the streets. Led by a detail of mounted policemen, the caravan of horse drawn conveyances included team executives, players from both ballclubs in full uniform, sportswriters, politicians, union leaders, and other local baseball enthusiasts. The cavalcade traversed the principle streets of the city, Baltimore, Holliday, Lexington, Calvert, Fayette, Howard, Monument, Charles, Huntingdon Avenue, then finally out to York Road [Greenmount Avenue].

More than ten thousand fans, a good-sized crowd for an early 20th century major-league game, were waiting at the ballpark. Ropes were strung along both foul lines to hold back the overflow of spectators. Lavish floral arrangements, which would be presented to the players at various stages of the game, lined the perimeter of the grandstands

After a short practice session followed by the pregame festivities, American League President Ban Johnson tossed out the ceremonial first pitch. From there the Baltimore Orioles took their positions on the diamond. "Iron Man" Joe McGinnity, recovering from a recent bout of malaria, was the starting pitcher for the Birds. He reportedly earned the nickname due to his previous employment in an iron factory. Starting his third year in the majors, McGinnity was coming off back-to-back 28-win seasons with a little over 700 innings pitched. This durability would be a common thread throughout his career. McGinnity's batterymate was Wilbert Robinson. The reliable backstop for Baltimore's National League Champion Orioles, Robinson once caught 26 innings in one day during a tripleheader sweep of the Louisville Colonels in 1896. It would have been 27 except the third game was called in the eighth inning due to darkness.

Boston's leadoff hitter Tommy Dowd started off the contest with a bouncer back up the middle that McGinnity snagged for the first out. The next batter, Charlie Hemphill, swung down on a ball that landed in

front of home plate before bouncing straight up in the air. McGinnity ran in from the pitcher's box, fielded the ball, then fired to first to catch Hemphill by a step. Hemphill may have been taking a page from the 1890s Orioles playbook by attempting the famous "Baltimore Chop" to get on base.

Baltimore groundskeeper Tom Murphy was known to pack hard clay around the plate at Union Park, the home grounds of the great National League Orioles. When the Oriole batters chopped at the ball it would bounce high off the clay. By the time the opposition could make a play, the runner was usually safe. Whether or not Baltimore groundskeeper Marty Lyston employed the same tactic at American League Park in 1901 has been lost to history.

McGinnity, using the side arm rising curveball he called "Old Sal" to great effect, held the opposition scoreless for the first three frames. On the Boston side, pitcher Win Kellum was making his major-league debut. The southpaw tosser had been a twenty-game winner with Indianapolis in 1900. Baltimore's first batter, John McGraw, received a three-minute ovation as he walked to the plate. After acknowledging the crowd, McGraw greeted Kellum with a double that slammed off the top of the right-field fence. "Turkey" Mike Donlin followed with a three-base hit over center fielder Chick Stahl's head that plated McGraw. Donlin earned the barnyard moniker due to his turkey like gait. After a walk to Jimmy Williams, Bill "Wagon Tongue" Keister smacked a double to right that scored both Donlin and Williams. The true origins of Keister's unusual nickname are up for debate. Was it his use of the Wagon Tongue model bat or his propensity for salty language? It is quite possible it is a combination of the two.

Baltimore added another run in the bottom of the third thanks to Donlin's second triple of the game followed by a sacrifice fly by Williams.

Boston finally broke the ice in their half of the fourth. Jimmy Collins got things started with a liner between short and third that was good for two bases. With Buck Freeman at bat, Wilbert Robinson tried to pick the runner off second but nobody covered the bag, the ball sailing into center field while Collins scampered to third. Freeman then knocked Collins in with a base hit to left. Robinson made amends soon after by throwing out Freeman by ten feet on an attempted steal of second.

In the sixth, Keister drove a triple through the gap in right-center. After a walk to Cy Seymour, the Birds reverted to some inside baseball. Seymour, sensing an opportunity, took off for second as Kellum released his pitch. The batter Jimmy Jackson, playing in his first major-league game, protected the runner with a swing and a miss. Keister, on third, took off for home as Boston catcher Lou Criger unleashed his peg to second. Criger's throw was high, allowing Seymour to slide in safely while Keister crossed the plate a few seconds later. Jackson followed with a double that knocked in Seymour for the Orioles' sixth tally of the game.

After enduring seven innings of one-run ball, the Boston bats began to show signs of life in the eighth. With McGinnity visibly tiring, Criger and Kellum reached base via a double and an infield hit. An RBI single by Dowd, along with a sacrifice fly by Collins, accounted for a pair of Boston runs before McGinnity retired the side.

In the Bird's half of the inning Keister ignited the offense again with a single to center. The next batter, Seymour, bunted for a base hit. Jackson followed with an RBI double. After a walk to Frank Foutz, Robinson swatted a grounder to Collins at third that he missed, allowing two runs to score. A pair of force outs pushed Foutz home with the Orioles' final marker of the game.

In the top of the ninth things got a bit dicey for Baltimore. With one out Hobe Ferris hit a hard ball past first baseman Foutz. Williams, at second, backed up the play, but threw wildly to first, allowing Ferris to advance a base. After a hit by Criger, rookie catcher Larry McClean was sent in to pinch-hit for Kellum. McClean responded with a two-bagger that scored Ferris. Dowd followed with a grounder that Keister fumbled, Criger coming home on the error. McClean eventually scored on a sacrifice fly before Stahl grounded out to end the game. When the dust cleared, Baltimore had won its first American League game by the score of 10-6.

There were a number of defensive standouts that day. The Boston outfield of Dowd, Stahl, and Hemphill played too shallow on several occasions, but otherwise made some stellar grabs. For Baltimore, center fielder Jimmy Jackson hauled in everything in his territory, including a sensational shoestring catch off the bat of Collins in the sixth. The best play however was made by McGraw in the third inning. Dowd sent a towering fly ball along the third base side of the grandstands. McGraw, weaving his way through the blue-coated policemen, who were stationed along the rope line, was able to maintain his concentration and gather in the tough popup.

Although the 1901 season started off on a good note for Baltimore, the relationship between McGraw and Johnson deteriorated rapidly. Due, in part, to his contempt for Johnson's American League umpires, McGraw left the Orioles in July of 1902 to join the National League New York Giants. A mass player exodus soon followed leaving Baltimore unable to put nine men on the field. Johnson was forced to ask other American League clubs to send players to Baltimore so the Orioles could play out the schedule. At the end of the 1902 campaign Baltimore's American League franchise [contrary to Baseball Reference] was transferred to New York. Originally called the Highlanders, this team is now known as the New York Yankees.

The Boston and Baltimore newspapers have varying accounts of this game.

ACTIVITY REPORT #1: SABR's Babe Ruth Chapter Day at the Orioles

On May 20, 2017, more than twenty members and guests of the Baltimore / Babe Ruth Chapter of SABR met in the Designated Hitters Lounge in the Warehouse at Oriole Park at Camden Yards for the second annual "SABR Day at the Orioles".

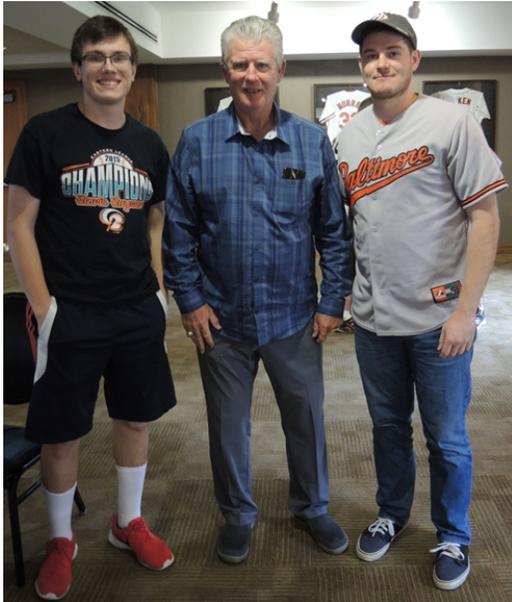
Current SABR member and Orioles Alumni Director Bill Stetka addressed the group briefly and introduced Scott McGregor, the former pitcher and Orioles Hall of Famer. Scott spoke of his time in the Yankees minor league system, his trade to Baltimore, and his complete game shutout win in Game 5 of the 1983 World Series at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia. He took questions from the audience at the end of his talk.

Next up was longtime SABR member Ted Patterson who spoke of his days in broadcasting and meeting some interesting characters over the years. With an audio assist by David Stinson, a Babe Ruth Chapter board member, Ted was able to play old audio records of interviews from his personal archives.

The group was treated to a buffet provided by Delaware North Corporation that included pit beef, pulled pork, hot dogs, salad, deserts, fruit and soft drinks.

It just happened to be "Celebrate Maryland Pride" Day at the ballpark that afternoon, and the Preakness was going on just a few miles away. The crowds that evening were immense, with long lines appearing at the gates long before they even opening. The hot giveaway item that evening was a Maryland flag script jersey which was given to all fans entering the ballpark.

The Orioles took on the Blue Jays that night and proved triumphant by the final score of 7-5. The difference in the game was a later inning home run by catcher Welington Castillo. The group had excellent seats in Section 64, down the third base line on the lower level.



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Calvin & Carter Stinson with Scott McGregor



<= View from section 6

[ACTIVITY REPORT #2: 2017 Annual Chapter Minor League Outing—Held jointly this year with the Bob Davids Chapter](#)

[Aberdeen Ironbirds of the New York-Penn League](#)

On Saturday, July 29, we gathered 3:45 P.M. at Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. Thirty-two SABR stalwarts received our tickets and a warm welcome from Ironbirds personnel who seemed very pleased to be working with SABR.

Seated in air-conditioned comfort we heard from our speaker from the Ironbirds; staff. The professionalism of the organization was evident as we heard from -

[Matt Slatus](#), the Ironbirds' General Manager, [[Click on the names for photos.](#)]

[Jack Graham](#), Team Operations Manager (also a [former player](#)) and

[Daniel Kurish](#), the team's announcer, broadcaster and media coordinator.

They addressed us together and were generous with their time and easily answered every question we put to them. They left in time to continue their duties for the game that day.

We were then privileged to enjoy an all-you-can-eat ballpark buffet that included black bean & corn roasted salad, green salad, mashed potatoes, rice pilaf, baked ham, glazed salmon, seasonal vegetables, fresh fruit and assorted baked goods, most popular of which were the mini cheesecakes. (Several members were observed going back more than once!)

We then took advantage of the scheduled free time at the park to watch batting practice, examine the facility and socialize, trading baseball stories and SABR experiences.

The first pitch of the game was at 6:05 P.M. We watched this Class A Short-Season New-York Penn League battle between the visiting Hudson Valley Renegades and the Ironbirds from our double-luxury box! The 4-1 hometown victory featured a home run by the Ironbirds' third baseman, [Kervin Mosequit](#), his first of the season.

The fireworks after the game made for a very nice end of the day.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY: SABR Day at the Nationals—It's not too late!

What: The annual summer major league game meeting of the Bob Davids Chapter. The Nats take on division-rival Mets in the New Yorkers' last visit to Washington in 2017.

When: Saturday, August 26, 2017, 1:30 event, 4:05 game time

Guests: We are finalizing our guest list, but past guests for this event include people like Barry Svrluga, Phil Wood, and George Will.

How much: Only \$49 this year. Our seats are in the 400s and the costs include the program, tickets to the game and the buffet lunch. The menu includes Burger bar (veggie burgers on request), hot dogs with condiments and sauerkraut, BBQ baked beans, field greens salad, grilled vegetable pasta salad, watermelon wedges, kettle-style potato chips, assorted soft drinks and water.

Who: SABR members and visitors ... but only if you are among the first 70 attendees to register for this exciting event. The room we will be meeting in is limited to 70 dedicated fans.

Why: Because we love baseball!

Questions: Contact David Raglin at darags@ymail.com or 703-835-1198

How: Contact Dave Paulson by sending an email message to d2244p@yahoo.com to check availability of seating. Be sure to include:

Name: _____ (Cont. =>)

Phone:

E-mail address:

Other attendees:

Regional baseball museums:

The Babe Ruth Birthplace/Sports Legends Museum is located on 216 Emory St., Baltimore Md. 21230, and is the host of our chapter's Called Shot. The museum's regular hours are Monday thru Sunday, 10-5. See their website for more details.

<http://baberuthmuseum.org/>

The Leon Day Foundation is located on 723 N. Rosedale Ave., Baltimore 21216. Foundation information is available on face book:

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Leon-Day-Foundation-Inc-576794845683514/>

Eastern Shore Museum and Hall of Fame is located at Perdue Stadium on 6400 Hobbs rd., Salisbury, Md. 21804. They are open for all Shorebirds home games and by appointment. See the Eastern Shore Baseball Foundation website for more information.

<http://www.esbhalloffame.org/>

Hubert V. Simmons Museum of Negro Leagues Baseball is now located at the Owings Mills Metro Complex, 10302 Grand Central Ave., Owings Mills, Md. 21117. Their stated goal is to "administer projects designed to educate, advocate, and generate wide-spread interest in the Negro Leagues, and create awareness of the cultural, social, and economical impact they made." <http://www.smnlbinc.org/>

Jimmie Foxx/Sudlersville Train Museum is located at the corner of E. Main and S. Linden Streets in Sudlersville, Md. 21668. <http://sudlersvillemuseum.org>.

Monthly regional SABR events:

The Hot Stove (Bob David Chapter) at the Taste Diner 8601 Cameron St. Silver Spring, Md. West of Georgia Ave. (Rt. 97) on every 3rd Thursday. Look for Mark Pattison's announcements.

Talkin Baseball (Bob David Chapter) at Brighton Gardens, 7110 Minstrel Way in Columbia, Md. Look for Dave Paulson's announcements

The Called Shot is the third Wednesday of every month at noon at the Babe Ruth Birthplace, 216 Emory St. in Baltimore. Bring your own lunch and beverage.

New Chapter Members:

<u>Member</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Joined in</u>
Jonah Bergstein.....	Silver Spring	February
Bill Stetka.....	Columbia	February
John Laycock.....	Sykesville.....	February
Mike Kail.....	Chevy Chase.....	April
Randal Livingston.....	Jefferson.....	June

Suzie Scott.....Forest Hill.....July
Bill Moeller.....TowsonJuly
Avi Fields.....Clarksville.....July

SAVE THE DATE...

Lots happening at the Babe Ruth Birthplace & Museum for our Museum Members, SABR Members, Friends of each and even Fri3ends to be!!

Road Trip to Yankee Stadium

Saturday, September 16th – Orioles vs Yankees – 1st Pitch – 4:05 P.M.



Trip Includes Round-Trip Motor Coach & Reserved Grandstand Seats (section 417). Two pick up locations--UMBC & White Marsh Park & Rides. There will be time before the game to wander the Stadium area or take in a visit to Heritage Field (site of the old Yankee Stadium) and hear a talk by Nick Trotta, Director, Library Licensing at Major League Baseball Productions.

Tickets: \$90 per person. Call Cathy Z. @ (410) 727-1539 ext. 3051

Trivia answers:

- Picture is of [Bob Emslie](#) who pitched for the American Association Orioles from 1883-85, winning 44 games over that span. He later became a respected major league umpire.

- Hall of Famers born in Baltimore:

[Babe Ruth 1895](#), [Al Kaline 1934](#) & [John Schuerholz 1940](#)