

Baseball Lives

Volume II
Issue One
Fall 2006

2005 Deaths

- ◆ **Elrod Hendricks**
- ◆ **Vic Power**
- ◆ **Sandy Consuegra**
- ◆ **Al Lopez**
- ◆ **Bob Broeg**
- ◆ **Harry Dalton**
- ◆ **Hal Lebovitz**
- ◆ **Bill King**
- ◆ **Tom Cheek**
- ◆ **Mario Encarnacion**
- ◆ **Pat Kelly**
- ◆ **Joe Bauman**
- ◆ **Marv Grissom**
- ◆ **Donn Clendenon**
- ◆ **Charlie Williams**
- ◆ **Ted "Double Duty" Radcliff**
- ◆ **Gene Mauch**
- ◆ **Ray Cunningham**
- ◆ **Dick Sipek**
- ◆ **Mickey Owen**
- ◆ **Dick Dietz**
- ◆ **Bob Lennon**
- ◆ **Pedro "J.P." Villaman**
- ◆ **Alfonso "Chico" Carrasquel**
- ◆ **Charlie Muse**
- ◆ **Earl Wilson**
- ◆ **Bob Zuk**
- ◆ **Bob Kennedy**

Words from Mark Armour

One of the more exciting developments in the past year for this project was the release of the book of '75—*The Red Sox Team That Saved Baseball*, edited by Bill Nowlin and Cecillia Tan. It is a collection of biographies on the men who played or coached for the 1975 Red Sox, and was written by members of SABR's Boston Chapter. All the bios conform to the guidelines set down by the Biography projects, so they have been posted on our site this summer. Better yet, SABR Boston is hard at work on a sequel covering the 1967 Red Sox (due out in 2007), to be followed by one on the 1918 Red Sox.

One of the inspirations for this project was *Green Mountain Boys of Summer*, biographies of Vermont born players written by SABR's Gardner-Waterman Chapter in 2000. That outstanding book, ably shepherded by Tom Simon, set the standard that all our biographies aim to match. When our project was formed, I hoped it would provide the support and framework for future chapter projects. And now it has!

For those of you involved in your local chapter, I urge you to pick up a copy of '75, pass it around a chapter meeting and talk about writing your own. A group project is a great way to unify a chapter.

Mark Armour



The Baseball Hall of Fame Class of 2006 included 17 inductees from the Negro Leagues. "Buck" O'Neil was not one of them. He should have been, but he came up one vote short.

In spite of not receiving the necessary votes for induction, 94-year-old "Buck" O'Neil was at the Hall of Fame induction of former Negro League players and executives. He participated with pride and enthusiasm. As always he stood with dignity. He was Baseball's as well as Black Baseball's Ambassador.

If ever a person deserved to be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame "for the good of Baseball," it was "Buck" O'Neil.

Someday soon "Buck" O'Neil will receive enough votes to enshrine him along side baseball's greats.

On October 8, 2006 "Buck" O'Neil got a higher calling. When his name is finally called for induction in Baseball's Hall of Fame, "Buck" O'Neil will not be there.

He will be looking down on the induction festivities—with a smile.

From the Indianapolis Star: John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil lived in the inner city of Kansas City, Mo., about two miles from where he played for and managed the Kansas City Monarchs baseball team in the Negro Leagues. Others in the neighborhood saw faded dreams and knew the sound of thunder. Mr. O'Neil saw rainbows. He always heard the bells of the ice cream truck.

Note: John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil is still available for an author who wants to write about a great American, a good ball player, and Baseball's Ambassador.

Steve Steinberg - BioProject Author



Research
can be fun!

What are your
favorite—fun
ways to
research?

Email the
editor for the
next
Baseball Lives

Challenges of Research

Ray Caldwell, one of my Bio Project subjects, was a great example of a challenge of research: **Finding missing links in a story.** Caldwell helped solve a mystery in my Urban Shocker work. Gaps of knowledge and questions often exist, tantalizing us with the missing pieces. The answers are out there, waiting to be uncovered, but often take time to be surfaced.

Late in 1917, there was a charity game in Boston for the family of the late sports-writer Tim Murnane. Similar to the Addie Joss Benefit game of 1911, a group of all-stars played an exhibition game against the Boston Red Sox and their pitcher Babe Ruth. The all-stars included Ty Cobb, Joe Jackson, Tris Speaker, Walter Johnson... and Urban Shocker. Urban Shocker? What was he doing in this heady company? In 1917 he was a pitcher of some promise, but not in the league of the marquee names, at least yet.

For more than two years, I wondered what Shocker was doing in that game. And then finally, in my Ray Caldwell research, the answer emerged. Ray was the Yankees' star representative to that game, yet he had once again disappeared ("gone AWOL" was what the newspapers called it), perhaps on one of his "benders." The all-stars needed another pitcher, and the Yankees supplied the young Shocker.

Del Pratt, another one of my Bio Project guys, was a great example of another challenge of research: **Maintaining balanced and accurate portrayals** on subjects you care about and have gotten close to. Sometimes the accurate story bears a painful price, the loss of sources of information when family members decide not to provide access.

Del's relatives helped me flesh out his story, providing anecdotes and even a scrapbook.

The story of his meddlesome and litigious nature was exemplified in a distasteful 1920 incident. *The New York Times'* John Kieran, in his "Sports of the Times" column, later called Del "the greatest clubhouse lawyer baseball ever knew."

Del's family probably would rather not read these unflattering portrayals, yet this was a story that had to be told. It was an integral part of the personality of Pratt, of understanding who he was.

Steve Steinberg

From USA Today:

"I hope . . . [those who did not vote for O'Neil] never forgive themselves for the injustice of not inducting O'Neil into the Hall of Fame. I won't. But I know Buck will."

Rest Well, Buck"

Fred Pitts



From the Editor: This is the first newsletter in almost a year. Much has happened since the last newsletter. We have had a very successful SABR 36 and plans are beginning to form for SABR 37 in St. Louis. We have had many new additions to our library of outstanding biographies, with several others waiting for the edit process to be completed. Mark has canvassed both writers and editors to determine status and intent. Several bios have been returned to Jan to re-start the edit process. To the authors involved, we apologize for the delay. Several names that had been assigned to authors have been returned and are available. Many other names are still assigned—some for years—with the authors fully intending to complete the bios.

I would like to re-establish a quarterly newsletter, but I need your help. What do you want to see? What can you contribute? I'm open for suggestions and help.— *Mike*

2005 Deaths

- ◆ **Bob Casey**
- ◆ **Marius Russo**
- ◆ **Dick Radatz**
- ◆ **Chuck Thompson**
- ◆ **Danny Gardella**
- ◆ **Rick Mahler**
- ◆ **Paul C. Smith**
- ◆ **Nick Colosi**
- ◆ **Nelson Briles**
- ◆ **Bill Voiselle**
- ◆ **Cesar "Cocoa" Gutierrez**
- ◆ **Bob Allen**
- ◆ **Monty Basgall**
- ◆ **Don Blasin-game**
- ◆ **Ted Bonda**
- ◆ **Lyman Bostock Sr.**
- ◆ **William "Bud" Black**
- ◆ **Bob Carpenter**
- ◆ **Brandy Davis**
- ◆ **Pete Gebrian**
- ◆ **Al Gettel**
- ◆ **Louis "Sea Boy" Gillis**
- ◆ **Milt Graff**
- ◆ **Hal Griggs**
- ◆ **Kent Hadley**
- ◆ **Eli Hodkey**
- ◆ **Cal Hogue**
- ◆ **Frank "pig" House**
- ◆ **Bennie Huffman**
- ◆ **Byron "Mex" Johnson**
- ◆ **Vick Johnson**
- ◆ **Don "Ducky" LeJohn**

From the Editor in Chief

Henry James observed that the writer had only two tasks—to be honest and to be interesting. That doesn't sound like much. If you think about it, though, it turns out to be quite a lot, maybe everything.

To be honest? That seems easy enough. Double-check all the facts (place and date of birth, parents' names, education, marriage and children, teams, hitting and pitching figures, and so on) for accuracy. Applying and interpreting the facts, however, can be a bit trickier. Do the facts support the point we want to make? Are we ignoring or dismissing facts that might undercut our point? Are we treating our subject fairly, neither deifying nor demonizing him? Are we being honest? Suddenly, it's not so easy, is it?

To be interesting? Now that's a challenge, and there's no single or simple answer. The writing must at least be fluent. That is, the writer doesn't have to be elegant but should use the sentence and the paragraph to good effect. Equally important, the writer must have a point, a thesis, a focus, a reason for writing. Too much writing, in all fields, is a mere recitation or report of facts in chronological, Erector-set fashion that leaves the reader wondering, "Why are you telling me all this?" It's better if the reader asks at the beginning, "What's really important about this person's life? What distinguishes this person from everybody else?" Anticipating and answering like these increases the odds of finding a friendly (and interested) audience *Jan Finkel*

2005 Deaths

- ◆ **Mal Mallette**
- ◆ **Bob Mavis**
- ◆ **Eddie Miksis**
- ◆ **Al Milnar**
- ◆ **Herb Moford**
- ◆ **Ron Mrozinski**
- ◆ **Jim Pearce**
- ◆ **Don Rowe**
- ◆ **Luis Sanchez**
- ◆ **Carroll Sembera**
- ◆ **Frank Smith**
- ◆ **Lee Stine**
- ◆ **Mike "Slugs" Ulisney**
- ◆ **Harold "Corky" Valentine**
- ◆ **Walter Ward**
- ◆ **Ken Weaver**
- ◆ **Al Widmar**
- ◆ **Clyde "Lefty" Noodles**
- ◆ **Frank "Noodles" Zupo**

On Research

For any person who has played in the past 50 years, you need to spend some time going through their career with **Retrosheet**, the best baseball research resource on the web. **Retrosheet** can not make your subject come alive, that is your job, but it can provide you with some important framework. How did he do in his first game? When in 1957 did he first take over the second base job?

An hour or two with **Retrosheet** for your player can answer a lot of questions and can help lead you to research in new areas as well.

Fact checking by editors can be easily done by reading the player's biography side-by-side with **Retrosheet**.

Reminder

ProQuest is terminating its agreement with SABR at the end of this year.

For SABR authors and potential authors it would behoove us all to spend some time in the next couple of months using **ProQuest** to research our players. It might be years before such a tool is available to us in our homes.

Use it now. We are going to lose it soon.

To access **ProQuest** go to SABR's **ProQuest** portal via the member's only area of SABR's website. Go to **ProQuest**'s main page. Type in your player's name. The result is History..

"Yet when you look back, what people didn't realize, and still don't is that we got the ball rolling on integration in our whole society. Remember this was before Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka. When Branch Rickey signed Jackie, Martin Luther King was a student at Morris College. We showed the way it had to be done by just keeping on and being the best we could."

"Buck" O'Neil

More on Research

The first place a baseball researcher should put his hard-earned money to use is on a subscription to **The Paper of Record**. Website : www.paperofrecord.com

"It's like I said at Satchel [Paige]'s funeral in 1982: People say it is a shame he never pitched against the best. But who's to say he didn't?"

"Buck" O'Neil

Contacts

For those interested in 19th and early 20th century baseball, here's an offer you can't refuse. The son of pitcher Jack Suthoff, whose career ran from 1898-1905, is willing to help with a biography of his dad. The son is 90 years old. He does do email. For contact information write Warren Corbett at wpcorbett@hotmail.com

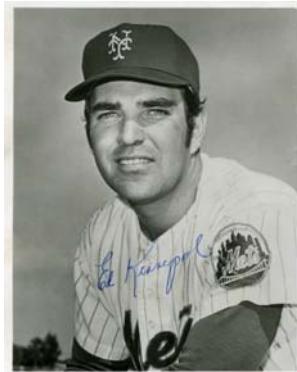
From “A Stones Throw” by Mike Cooney



This page will be dedicated to material written by our SABR BioProject members

A Stones Throw is a weekly newspaper column written by Mike Cooney.

ARE YOU NEXT?



Frank Mills is not in the Baseball Hall of Fame. He never will be. He was banned from baseball for life in 1915. His crime. He played baseball against players Baseball considered ineligible..

Joe Jackson may have been the best baseball player to ever play the game. Joe Jackson is not in the Baseball Hall of Fame. He probably never will be. He was banned from baseball for life in 1921. His crime. He was part of the infamous “Black Sox” team that took bribes to throw the 1919 World Series to the Cincinnati Redlegs.

In a court trial Joe Jackson was found innocent of the charges of receiving a bribe. It didn’t matter. He was still banished for life. Still is.

And of course, the most prolific hitter of all time, Pete Rose is not in the Hall of Fame. Pete was banned from baseball for life on August 24, 1989 for gambling on baseball games. He denied it.

It is obvious the Baseball Hall of Fame has high standards when it comes to enshrinement in the hallowed halls of Cooperstown. As long as they are banned from baseball, the Baseball Hall of Fame will not allow the names of Frank Mills, Joe Jackson, Pete Rose, and many others to be placed on the ballot.

As a result, Joe Jackson, who played almost flawless ball in the 1919 World Series will never be in the Hall of Fame because the baseball Commissioner at the time, Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis decided being found innocent in a court of law wasn’t good enough.

At the same time, Orlando Cepeda was allowed on the ballot and elected to the Hall of Fame even after he was arrested, convicted and spent time in prison for possession with the intent to distribute over 160 grams of marijuana. That was okay. He is in the

Hall of Fame.

Maybe the argument is Cepeda got caught after his playing days were over. I can accept that argument. But if it is valid – didn’t Pete Rose get caught after his playing days were over?

Ferguson Jenkins has always been one of my favorite baseball players. He is in the Hall of Fame. He deserves it. Unless of course you consider he was caught and arrested for possession of marijuana while getting off a plane – while he was still playing in the major leagues.

Maybe gambling impugns the integrity of the game more than drugs. Maybe violation of the rules of baseball is more important than the violation of the law.

And maybe baseball’s integrity is no better than the players that are banned.

For years Pete Rose allegedly was told if he would only be honest and admit he had bet on baseball, he could then be re-instated and be eligible for the Hall of Fame. After many years of denial, Rose finally admitted, “Yes, I gambled on baseball.”

With this admission Pete Rose is finally eligible for the Hall of Fame. The ban has been lifted. Right?

Wrong! The same commissioner that told him he needed to “come clean” is now saying since he has admitted he bet on baseball he should never be re-instated.

Of course Baseball has always had a double standard. Until 1947 (with the exception of a couple of years in the 1800s) African Americans were not allowed in the major leagues. That wrong was righted (not really - but it was a start) when Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

That wrong was righted even more this year with the election of 17 Negro League players and executives to the Baseball Hall of Fame. The integrity of baseball, or at least the Baseball Hall of Fame, remains strong.

Or does it? Negro League historian Karl Hoffman asks why two of the former Negro League executives were elected. Effa Manley is the first

More “A Stones Throw”

woman to be elected to the Hall of Fame. Manley was the president of the Newark Eagles. The team was owned, and subsidized by her husband Abe who was a Newark gangster. Mrs. Manley acknowledged that gambling revenues and other illegal monies backed the team.

Alex Pompez was a “numbers racketeer” who bought his way into the Negro Leagues with gambling money. His underworld background was well noted in the press at that time. He will be inducted in the Hall of Fame this summer.

Maybe gambling in the 1990s is worse than gambling the 1920s. Maybe gambling in the 1910s and 1920s was okay.

Maybe not. If it was, Joe Jackson would be in the Hall of fame.

Maybe it is a black – white thing. Wrong again. Baseball history shows many incidents where white baseball players have been accused of gambling or of taking bribes. Some of the earliest incidents involved the greatest players in the history of baseball. While the events were well documented, Baseball chose not to follow-up on them for fear of destroying the integrity of the game.

There is no proof Mills, Jackson, or Rose ever did anything that changed the outcome of a baseball game. Yet for the integrity of baseball, each was banned for life.

Today Baseball has another dilemma. There is no doubt that the use of steroids has changed the outcome of baseball games. There is no doubt that many records have been set by baseball players who use steroids.

Baseball is under a microscope. Should the records of suspected steroid users be removed from the record books? (The key word is suspected.)

If the records are taken away from the players, should every game they played in during the time of their suspected usage be forfeited? (In many cases both teams would have to forfeit.) How far will Baseball go to recover the integrity of the sport?

By Mike Cooney

.Remember – this is baseball. The current stand is that the use of steroids was not against the rules of baseball until 2002. The fact that most steroids were illegal to use without a prescription is immaterial. Their usage was not against the rules of baseball.

So Barry Bonds (did he or didn’t he?) will be eligible for the Baseball Hall of Fame. Orlando Cepeda and Ferguson Jenkins are in the Hall of Fame. So are Emma Manley and Alex Pompez.

Frank Mills, Pete Rose, and Joe Jackson are not in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Probably never will be. It is that integrity thing.

Joe Jackson should be in the Hall of Fame. His only crime was his ignorance. He was a great baseball player. He did the game proud – most of the time.

Pete Rose should be in the Hall of Fame. He is perhaps the greatest hitter in the history of baseball. I never liked him. I thought he was arrogant – and worse. But there is no question that he belongs in the hall of fame – as a player.

Then there is Frank Mills. His crime was playing baseball with “ineligible” participants. Should he be banned from baseball? No! Should he be in the Hall of Fame? Again, No!

After all, he only played in four games in the major leagues. He got one hit. – *Mike*

“He came in the front door [of the Hall of Fame], but the original plan was for him to go in the back door—into a special wing for Negro-leaguers. A lot of people, black and white, were angry when that plan was announced, and I think Satchel shook them up when he said, “the only change is that baseball has turned Satchel from a second-class citizen into a second-class immortal.”

The outcry was such that Commissioner Bowie Kuhn reversed the decision and put Satchel in the same room with Ruth and Mathewson and Jackie Robinson.”

“Buck” O’Neil

News from Mark: Trey Strecker is assuming a new position as Vice Chair of the BioProject Committee, with a specific focus on the 19th century.

Warren Corbett has accepted the role of contacts co-coordinator. If anyone knows family or friends who are willing to share information about players—let Warren know.

Thanks to Daniel Levine we now have pages for writers and editors off of the main project front page. **Writers and Editors - submit your personal blurb.**

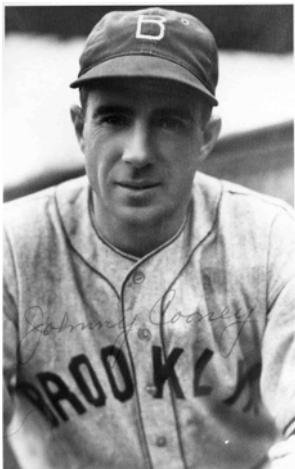
Jeff Bower has agreed to help organize the biographies into categories to allow for more interesting browsing.

SABR BioProject
Committee



*Baseball Lives
with
Baseball Lives*

Bioproject.sabr.org



The Baseball Biography Project (TBBP) is an ongoing effort to produce comprehensive biographical articles on every person who ever played or managed in the major leagues, as well as any other person who touched baseball in a significant way. The project is run by the BioProject Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research. (SABR)

Mark Armour—Director
markjane@comcast.net

Trey Strecker—Vice Chairman
tstrecker@bsu.edu

Jan Finkel - Editor in Chief
jfinkel@mindspring.com
Lyle Spatz - Assignment Editor
spatzl@bellsouth.net

Tom Ruane - Egroup Owner
truane@vnet.ibm.com

Warren Corbett—Contacts Co-coordinator
wpcorbett@hotmail.com

Mike Cooney - Newsletter Editor
mwc2002@hotmail.com