

# SPRING FLINGS

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## The Official Newsletter of the Spring Training Committee Of the Society for American Baseball Research

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Kevin M Saldana, Chairman and Editor  
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### Spring Training History

The following article is reprinted from the Deming (NM) Headlight August 19, 1992, page 5.

Deming historical marker by Frank X. Estrada

T.C. McDermott eyed it as a source of bottled water to cure stomach problems. For centuries it had attracted health seekers, weary travelers, and land developers. Through the ages it has been known by several names: Ojo Torro, Ojo Caliente, Hudson Hot Springs, Casa de Consuelo, and Faywood Hot Springs.

At the turn of the century, the hot springs (Average temperature 142 degrees) and the warm southwestern climate were the main attractions many easterners suffering from crippling diseases. But in the spring of 1899 a man had a different vision for it that never quite materialized.

Albert Goodwill Spalding sought to make the area spring training camp for his baseball team, the Chicago White Stockings, and urged Graham, the owner of Casa de Consuelo, to level off an area for a baseball diamond.

Spalding, often known as the "Father of Professional Baseball", had been a sensational pitcher for the Boston and Chicago teams in the early stages of the game, 1871-78. He had helped organize the National League, compiled the first baseball guidebook, and with his younger brother founded the sporting goods empire that still bears his name.

James Kellogg, a Silver City businessman recorded his observations during 1898-99 while a guest at the Casa de Consuelo, the newly rebuilt hotel at the springs. About the preparations for the arrival of the Chicago White Stockings he wrote:

"Mr. Graham hired a couple of Mexicans and set them to work with scrapers to level off a suitable area for a diamond. After about a week's work, the hollows were pronounced filled and a day or two was spent in going back and forth with drags. The fill in the hollows was rather soft, but without a lot of water, it just had to stay soft."

A makeshift grandstand completed the preparations.

According to Gustafson, fifteen players (the normal complement for that era) and their manager checked into the hotel. The roster included Griffith ("The Old Fox," and outstanding pitcher who later became owner of the Washington Senators in the American League), Callahan, Katoll, Taylor, Nichols, Conner, Ryan, McCormick, Wolverton, Green, Everett, Woodruff, Bradery, Fullerton, and Chivington. Burns was the manager.

A sidelight on how the game was played in that early era. Spiking was a common and intentional practice. First basemen often grabbed a baserunner by the belt and held him for a split second. Runners were frequently tripped, leading to fist fights and brouhahas.

Umpires qualified for hazardous duty pay as they were often shoved, spat on, and made the target of insults, beer bottles and rotten eggs. They were lucky to escape the ballpark without physical harm.

The White Stockings' spring training seemed to be affected by the "Land of Manana", or as Kellogg observes, "Perhaps they lost interest due to the general condition of the field. An occasional stone can upset

a fielder following a high one or divert the direction of a fast liner. A two-bagger from first to third raised a smokescreen which made it a guess where either the pitcher or the catcher might be inside the diamond.”

The ballplayers preferred to sit on the veranda and watch for the stage to come.

Before the team returned to Chicago, they staged a practice game for the guests and cowboys from the nearby Diamond A Ranch at Cowboy Springs. The cowboys staged, in return, a rodeo for the ballplayers. “Neither was demonstration was very impressive”, wrote Kellogg.

That was the first and last time a professional baseball team trained at Hudson Hot Springs. But the dream did not die there; it was reborn in Phoenix and Casa Grande.

## **Another Historical Article**

This Article is courtesy of Bill Hickman. It is from The Sporting News March 16, 1944 issue, page 5.

### **First Training Camp Held in 1886**

It's the fifty-eighth year of spring training camps!! Young men working out for the first time, this spring in a major league conditioning center, may suspect things haven't been improved much since athletes first “Went South” to loosen up their muscles, but there have been changes made! And how.

The spring training camp idea originated with Adrian C. (Cap) Anson, who took his Chicago White Stockings to Hot Springs, Ark., in 1886, to “Boil out.” And in those days, the Athletic cream of the diamond world really had to go through some strenuous exercises to offset the effects of a winter of loafing. Beer was not unknown to them.

Ned Hanlon, who led the Brooklyn Superbas, has been credited with starting the spring condition camp idea, but it was ten years after Anson went to Hot Springs that Hanlon held his Superbas to Macon, GA.

There have been many embellishments in the intervening years. John McGraw was the first to establish a permanent training site, Marlin Springs, Tex, where the Giants trained from 1903-1919.

The Yankees set the style of leaving the country by going to Bermuda in 1911. They had to import steaks from New York to go with the native onions.

Since then, the Cardinals and others have been in Cuba, the reds in Puerto Rico, the Athletics in Mexico City.

And there will be happy days under the sun in Florida and California again when the war's over.

## **The Committee Calendar**

The 35<sup>th</sup> annual SABR National will be held at Toronto from August 4-7, 2005. The committee meeting date and time will be announced at a later time. At this time, I do not know who will be chairing the meeting, I do not know if I will be able to do so. Please do not panic if I am not there. I wish to thank R.J. Lesch for stepping in at the very last minute. I was able to catch him just hours before he left for the convention, after receiving an e-mail that the person I had lined up for the meeting had to cancel the trip at the very last minute.

Committee member Bill Kirwin will be hosting his annual Nine- Spring Training Conference from March 17-20, 2005 in Tucson, AZ. Please contact Bill for more information.

The second annual Hot Stove Baseball Symposium will be held February 19, 2005 at 1 P.M. in Fishers, IN. For more information please contact Bill Madden at (317) 842-9856.

The Sixth annual Seymour Medal Conference will be held in Cleveland from May 13-15, 2005, for more information please contact the SABR office.

The Seventeenth Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture will held June 8-10, 2005 in Cooperstown. Please contact Dr. Alfred Lubell at (607) 436-2522.

Dates for the 2005 Jerry Malloy Conference and the Ted Williams Symposium have not yet been announced.

## .... And now the Notes from the Chair

As expected 2004 has been a very exciting year for the committee. From the spirited discussion on the discussion list about the correlation between Spring Training records and regular season performance to Proquest and the launch of the Spring Training Players Inventory. There is no doubt that 2004 has been our best year ever, of our three years

Has it really been three years since our committee started, Wow!! As I looked over the roster I saw the names of many of you that I have become good friends with and five chairmen from other committees. I also see the names of people I barely know. We now have 65 members of our committee, it is increasing hard to get to know everyone. I know most of you, like myself are very busy people. I would love to thank each and everyone of you for your participation on the committee. I was fortunate enough to meet with a couple of you in Phoenix during the several business trips I took there this year.

I sometimes get notes from committee members who feel that they are not contributing to the committee. If you are one of these members do not worry about it. If you need to, drop me a line and I will suggest areas where you can contribute. What I need most of all are people in the different committees who are making the members of that committee aware of what we are doing here as well as folks who are active in their regional chapters. Most of us can at least do that. We do need more members to get involved in the Spring Training Players Index, please contact me or Rod Nelson if you have an afternoon or two available.

I know that the two articles published at the top of the newsletter have some inaccuracies in them. We all know that the first baseball guides were put out by William Chadwick. I do not believe the White Stockings roster is complete. We all know the Giants trained at Marlin and not Marlin Springs. I ask you to read these articles for the good information that they present.

Have Christmas and a Great and Wonderful New Year!!!

## Our Complete Roster

Kevin M Saldana/ Wildomar, CA (Chairman)  
R J Lesch/Adel, IA (Co-Moderator, Discussion List)  
Jeffery Georges/ McKinney, TX (Vice Chairman, Texas)  
John Pastier/ Seattle, WA (Vice Chairman, Ballparks)  
E Michael McCardel/ Danville, OH (Chairman, 19<sup>th</sup> century Spring subcommittee)  
Mark Rappaport/ Kent, OH (Vice Chairman, Statistics)  
Dave Raglin/ McLean, VA (Vice Chairman, National Meeting)  
Stephen Able/Indianapolis, IN  
Evelyn Begley/ New York, NY  
Duane Behm/ Tempe, AZ  
David Black/Highlands, CO  
Bob Bluthardt/San Angelo, TX (Chairman, Ballparks Committee)  
Zita Carno/Tampa, FL  
Scott Cowen/Tacoma, WA  
Herb Crehan/Natick, MA  
Jon Daniels/Chicago, IL  
Joel Dinda/Mulliken, MI  
James Forr/State College, PA  
Susan Graham/San Diego, CA  
Howard Garson/Miami, FL  
James Hannon/Natick, MA  
Ed Hartig/Bolingbrook, IL  
Carl Henry/Hamersville, OH  
Ron Henry/ Minneapolis, MN (Chairman, Baseball and the Armed Forces Committee)  
Bill Hickman/Rockville, MD (Chairman, Pictorial Committee)  
Dean Hoke/Louisville, KY  
Michael Holden/Phoenix, AZ  
Mike Hunssinger/Coral Gables, FL  
Rodney Johnson/Tempe, AZ

Maxwell Kates/Toronto, ONT  
Bill Kirwin/Edmonton, ALB  
Karl Knickrehm/Garden Grove, CA  
Kent Krejci/Frisco, TX  
Beth Kwon/New York, NY  
Corky Lahey/Bronx, NY  
Brian MacMillan/East Meadow, NY  
Richard Malatzky/Bronx, NY  
Alan Mandell/Surprise, AZ  
Paul Maritato/Northbrook, IL  
Les Masterson/Malden, MA  
Liesl McCool/Richland, WA  
Brian Mohr/Cape Coral, FL  
Kent Morgan/Lincoln, NE  
Jack Morris/Pottstown, PA  
Joe Naiman/Lakeside, CA  
Rod Nelson/Denver, CO (Chairman, Scouts Committee)  
Dave Nemetz/Herndon, VA  
David Nieporent/Fanwood, NJ  
John Pardon/ Crugers, NY  
Chuck Partington/Rio Rico, AZ  
Mark Pattison/Washington, DC  
Melvyn Poplock/Naples, FL  
Richard Puff/Hillsborough, NC  
Kevin Reichard/Minnetonka, MN  
Ron Selter/El Segundo, CA  
Andrew Singer/Scotch Plains, NJ  
Steve Steinberg/Seattle, WA  
Michael Trabert/Parma, OH  
Vincent Vaillancourt/Plano, TX  
David Warner/Evanston, IL  
Paul Wendt/Watertown, MA (Chairman, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Committee)  
Kent Whitaker/Newcastle, ME  
Robert Wilson/Gainesville, FL  
Scott Yaeger/Cleveland, OH  
Al Yellon/ Chicago, IL  
Andrew Zinner/Phoenix, AZ