

Society for American Baseball Research

BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

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Comments from the Chair

Andy McCue

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Let me start off this issue with a little SABR-wide business.

This is the season when SABR searches for candidates to run for its offices. This year we will elect a vice-president, a secretary, and a member of the board of directors. These people will set policy for the organization as a whole and make many decisions that will have a long-term effect on the Society. We can always use good people. If you are interested, please contact Nominating Committee Chair Jim Overmyer (7 Fairview Ave., Lenox, MA 01240-2301; work 518/474-8651 or home 413/637-3306). You may also contact the other members of the committee: Dick Thompson (508/697-9369) and myself.

The deadline for candidates to file with the Nominating Committee is Feb. 15. However, it would be much better to hear from prospective candidates earlier. Candidates will need to send a letter expressing intent to run, and a candidate's statement to be published in *The SABR Bulletin*.

In our Committee, Joe Murphy has come through with the further expansion and update of the index to SABR publications. As you may remember, SABR has not published an index to its works since Phil Bergen of our Committee did one in 1987. That has left nine years worth of *Baseball Research Journal*, *The National Pastime*, convention publications, and other materials to be indexed. Joe has done his usual fine work, and over the next few months I hope he, SABR Publications Director Mark Alvarez, and I can work out the details and set a production schedule for this effort.

We've also made progress in getting more indexes produced for the Putnam team histories series. Bob McConnell has prepared one for Warren Brown's *The Chicago White Sox* (1952) and Bob Boynton has completed one for Frederick G. Lieb's *The St. Louis Cardinals: The Story of a Great Ball Club* (1944). Jim O'Donnell is working on an index for Shirley Povich's *The Washington Senators* (1954).

Rich Arpi (3620 W. 32nd St., #105, Minneapolis, MN 55416) has concluded another fine year of producing *Current Baseball Publications* (CBP) (see enclosed). If you happen to run across the odd or unusual in 1995 or 1996 baseball publications, let Rich know. We all see the stuff from the big New York publishers and publishers such as McFarland; but we also run across books, pamphlets, team publications, and oddities that are produced only for some local market. This is the material Rich is least likely to see and anything we can do to make CBP complete is important.

Skip McAfee reports that Frank Phelps has completed the mammoth task of indexing 8,729 names that appeared in *The Sporting News' Baseball Register* (1940-1994) and John Green (with help from wife Linda) has finished computerizing the database ready for

printing. We hope a published version is imminent.

This newsletter is being sent to significantly fewer persons than it has for the past several years. As you'll remember, I warned last spring that much of the Committee's budget (which goes for copying and mailing the newsletter) was being eaten up by people who weren't furthering the Committee's work in some form. I said that, early this year, I'd be cutting from our mailing list anyone who hadn't participated in the Committee's work in 1995. And then I defined Committee work as being as little as telling me you were still interested in staying on the Committee.

Well, 35 of the 91 members on our list couldn't meet this "rigorous" test and have been cut. I don't intend to enforce the same condition this year, but I think we should all be conscious that membership in a SABR committee is for working on committee projects or projects of related interest. If you are only interested in *Current Baseball Publications*, it can be obtained on a subscription basis from SABR headquarters in Cleveland.

Baseball Online, our Committee's major project, continued to grow. See the table below. And if my fingers could keep up with the cataloging of Bernie Esser, Joe Murphy, Ron Replogle, Steve Milman, and others, it would have grown even more.

As ever, we need volunteers. Once you get a little experience, filling out a form on a book can take as little as five minutes. And there are many forms this can take. If you finished a research project recently, why don't you catalog your bibliography? If you are a huge Tigers fan with a collection of old yearbooks and media guides, why don't you catalog them? If you read *Sport* every month, how about doing it? And when you run across that odd baseball-related article in the *Journal of American Physics* or the *Michigan State Alumni News* or *Arizona Highways*, fill out that form.

If you're interested in helping, contact myself or Ted Hathaway (5645 Fremont Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55419). I handle the books side and Ted the periodicals. I suggest you spend some time with Ted's interesting report elsewhere in this newsletter on Ted's experiment of offering a run through the database for people on the Internet. We had a notice posted on SABR's Web page for much of the end of 1995.

Stay in touch and enjoy the coming of spring training.

Baseball Online Statistics

Level	Number	% change over last year
Books		
5	2,550	32.2%
4	1,285	17.1%
Other	9,678	1.4%
Total	13,513	7.5%
Book Sections		
5	5,112	65.2%
4	832	185.2%
Other	37	428.6%
Total	5,981	75.4%
Magazine/newspaper articles		
5	9,173	73.9%
4	1	0.0%
Other	7,429	19.5%
Total	16,603	44.4%
Total		
5	16,835	63.6%
4	2,118	51.6%
Other	17,144	8.8%
Total	36,097	31.5%

Baseball Online

Ted Hathaway

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With the help of SABR member John Gregory, we were able to establish a "Baseball Online Homepage" on the World Wide Web (http://www.skypoint.com/subscribers/ashbury/_sabrdir/sabrbbonlin.html). This attempts to describe the project, how the database works, and what interested persons can do to help. In addition, we have made an offer to conduct searches of the Baseball Online database for free (until the end of January 1996). Since this offer has been posted on the Web, naturally it is available to anyone, not just SABR members.

On the other hand, some of you may wonder why this offer was not announced on SABR-L (SABR's Internet Listserver). Three reasons: 1) we wanted to gauge the usefulness and popularity of the database with the general public as well as SABR members; 2) we wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to have a Web site, which we believe is the direction Internet access is moving (a Web site is also "permanent"—a Listserv posting is one-shot only); and 3) we could handle only a limited number of search requests. Posting the offer on SABR-L likely would have overtaxed us.

I believe the response has been favorable. During a 10-week period, we received more than 100 requests. Of these, we were able to reply to 79% of them with substantive data. Most of the requests we could not answer were either for statistical data or specific facts (e.g., "what was Lefty Grove's real first name?"—in truth, we actually ended up answering several of these questions because we have the reference sources on hand and we felt it was good public relations to try to answer such non-Baseball Online questions).

Of the questions we were able to answer, the range of topics was enormous: school children writing reports on their fathers' favorite players, academics writing articles on small market clubs, private researchers looking into women in baseball, relatives researching their baseball family (a D. Lajoie wondering about Nap, a P. Sallee looking up his cousin Slim, and a B. Traynor researching Pie), and average fans wanting everything they can find on Lou Gehrig or Sandy Koufax. I even had one request from a young man wanting my opinion on whether he should play college ball or try to get signed to a major league organization (lefty, 90 mph fastball—I said sign!). We have also received nearly 30 comments on the database, all of them positive.

In addition to gaging the public's response, this offer has also been helpful in finding out just how functional the database is. Needless to say, we have found many bugs that need to be worked out. Fortunately, we have found ways to do this without incurring a lot of extra work. I won't go into these changes at this point, but can say that they are mainly about making the database more understandable to users.

I will report on the response to the Web site offer in the next issue of the newsletter.

Reviews of Baseball Books

Bob Boynton

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Reviews of baseball books are scattered about in many publications. To increase awareness of what books are being reviewed, the Bibliography Committee newsletter tentatively plans to publish, as a regular feature in future issues, a list of books that have been reviewed recently, as well as some older reviews that are perceived as having a special interest. Listings will include the name of the pub-

lication in which the review appeared, the name of the reviewer, and possibly a rating (e.g., one to four stars) of the book's perceived value.

To succeed with this venture, we will need volunteers who are willing to submit information on a regular basis about book reviews that have been published in one of the periodicals to which they have regular access.

A list of the periodicals being covered regularly will be published from time to time in the newsletter. It is hoped that the list will encourage the submission of information from anyone on the Committee who spots a book review in an unlisted source.

I have agreed to coordinate this effort. I look forward to hearing from those who are interested in participating.

Book Indexing Project

Here is the status of the Bibliography Committee's project to prepare indexes for books which were published without them (an asterisk * indicates a book in the Putnam series):

<u>Book title, author, and publication date</u>	<u>Indexer</u>
<i>The Boston Braves</i> , by Harold Kaese(*) (1948)	Bob Bailey
<i>The Boston Red Sox</i> , by Fred Lieb(*) (1947)	Jack Carlson
<i>The Boys of Summer</i> , by Roger Kahn (1971)	Bob Boynton
<i>The Brooklyn Dodgers</i> , by Frank Graham(*) (1948)	Rick Johnson
<i>The Chicago White Sox</i> , by Warren Brown(*) (1952)	B. McConnell
<i>The Cincinnati Reds</i> , by Lee Allen(*) (1948)	Bill Hugo
<i>The Cleveland Indians</i> , by Franklin Lewis(*) (1949)	Bob Boynton
<i>Connie Mack</i> , by Fred Lieb(*) (1945)	Bob Boynton
<i>The Detroit Tigers</i> , by Fred Lieb(*) (1946)	Bob Bailey
<i>McGraw of the Giants</i> , by Frank Graham(*) (1944)	Terry Smith
<i>The New York Giants</i> , by Frank Graham(*) (1952)	Terry Smith
<i>Pitching in a Pinch</i> , by Christy Mathewson (1912)	Tom Shieber
<i>The Pittsburgh Pirates</i> , by Fred Lieb(*) (1948)	Jack Carlson
<i>The St. Louis Cardinals</i> , by Fred Lieb(*) (1944)	Bob Boynton
<i>Veeck ... as in Wreck</i> , by Bill Veeck (1962)	Bob Boynton

Copies of these indexes are available from SABR's Research Library. Contact Len Levin, 282 Doyle Ave., Providence, RI 02906 (phone 401/351-3278), who will quote you postage and photocopying costs.

Howard Pollack is working on the index to Fred Lieb & Stan Baumgartner's *The Philadelphia Phillies* (1953). Jim O'Donnell is indexing *The Washington Senators*, by Shirley Povich (1954).

The following books in the Putnam series need to be indexed: *The New York Yankees*, by Frank Graham (rev. 1948); *The Baltimore Orioles*, by Fred Lieb (1955); *The Chicago Cubs*, by Warren Brown (1946); *The Milwaukee Braves* (an update of Bob Bailey's index to *The Boston Braves*), by Harold Kaese & R.G. Lynch (1954); *The Umpire Story*, by James Kahn (1953); and *The Story of the World Series*, by Fred Lieb (1949). Suggestions of other books that require indexing—as well as volunteers willing to index—are welcome; contact Skip McAfee, 5533 Colts Foot Court, Columbia, MD 21045 (phone 410/730-5847).

Annual Report of the Bibliography Committee, 1994-95

Andy McCue

This report—written May 15, 1995 and included in the program for the June 1995 SABR National Convention in Pittsburgh, Pa.—should have been published two newsletters ago. It is included here for the benefit of those Committee members who were unable to attend the convention.

The Bibliography Committee, founded in 1983, has 93 members and is responsible for locating, identifying, evaluating, classifying, and describing materials that could be of interest to baseball researchers. The Committee's co-chairs are Frank Phelps and Andy McCue. Committee members worked on three major projects during the year.

The first is Baseball Online, an annotated bibliography of baseball research materials. As of last year's annual report, Baseball Online contained just over 21,000 items. As I write this in early May 1995, the database has just over 32,000 entries. Just over 40% of these entries have been fully cataloged.

The improvement of Baseball Online is the direct result of hard work by an unfortunately small number of volunteers. The project has been divided between two directors—one overseeing periodicals and the other books.

Ted Hathaway has charge of the periodicals world. He and volunteers such as Jody Ackerman, Bob Boynton, Ron Kaplan, Garnet Maley, Skip McAfee, John McMurray, Dick Williams, and Suzanne Wise have made considerable progress. We now have approximately 24% more magazine and newspaper articles cataloged than a year ago.

Ted also has begun the process of finding a source of funding to help us make the project more complete. We believe the bibliography could be self-sustaining, and perhaps a commercial venture for SABR, if we can build it up to sufficient bulk to interest a database operator or publisher. To aid in that, we are seeking a foundation that is willing to fund a researcher for a year or two to concentrate on cataloging recent periodicals. The idea was approved by the SABR board late last year. Ted has produced the necessary materials and begun initial approaches to several possible donors.

Andy McCue has charge of the books side of the project and has received considerable help from Bernie Esser, Joe Murphy, Ron Replogle, and Steve Milman (especially Bernie and Joe). The number of books in the database has grown only 2.5%, but the quality of the entries has surged. Many books containing multiple entries, including SABR publications, have been fully cataloged.

The second Committee project is an update of the index to The Sporting News' (TSN) *Baseball Register*. TSN has not published an index since the early 1970s and thus it is harder for researchers to find quickly the last appearance of a player, manager, umpire, or coach.

Frank Phelps began the project and has received some help from Pete Palmer, Rick Benner, Dick Clark, Jack Dougherty, John Duxbury, Tom Eckel, Ralph Horton, Steve Milman, Bob Hoie, and Jim Weigand. The index had been completed late last year, but fact-checking continues.

The current need is to complete the entry into electronic form, so that a publication can be designed and produced (it would be the Committee's 15th Research Guide). Skip McAfee has volunteered to help with the computerization of Frank's work and aid is coming from Guy Stanley and John Green. With luck, this publication could see the light by the end of the year.

The third project is *Current Baseball Publications*, a quarterly and annual compendium of baseball books, magazines, and other materials. It is distributed with the Committee newsletter and is available to non-Committee members through the SABR office. Rich Arpi continues to produce *CBP*. In the past year, *CBP* has been listed in the basic directory of periodicals published in the United States in an attempt to sell subscriptions to non-SABR members, mostly libraries. A handful of subscriptions has been sold so far.

Skip McAfee continues to edit the Committee newsletter, with considerable production from demon book reviewer Terry Smith.

One major project has remained dormant during the year for lack of volunteers. That is the creation of indexes for major baseball works that were printed without them. In the past, the Committee has produced indexes for works such as *Veeck ... as in Wreck*. Much effort has been spent on the Putnam team histories and indexes have been produced for five of them.

However, no new indexes have been produced in the past two years. This was one indication that the Committee seems to have a significant percentage of inactive members. As a result, the co-chairs have asked Committee members to participate in at least one of the Committee's projects during 1995 or their names will be stricken from the Committee rolls.

Book Review

Leverett T. (Terry) Smith

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DIAMONDS ARE A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND: Women Writers on Baseball

Elinor Nauen, ed. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994. 295p. \$22.95

My first impression is that this book (a paperback edition was published in 1995) is one of the essential books; no collection of baseball books should be without it. It did for me what anthologies are supposed to do: it sent me out looking for more writing by the writers it included. And there's a two-page "Bibliography" that might be more accurately described as suggestions for further reading.

In her introduction, Elinor Nauen promises that *Diamonds* will bring together "poems, essays, and fiction that tell of women's experiences in and around baseball, from consuming longing to distaste, from a lifetime as sister, daughter, or wife to short stops at a ballpark". Nauen suggests three ways that baseball inspires "writers, in particular women" (p.xii-xiii):

"First, there are all the reasons any writer chooses baseball as a subject: It's beautiful, absorbing, a soap opera that gets more interesting the more attention you pay. Second, a baseball work can be about baseball and 'about' anything else. The leisurely pace of a game allows writers the space to deal with any issue, big or small: birth or death or politics. Third, and probably most relevant to *Diamonds*, baseball is played on the fields of the imagination as much as on the diamond, and these fields don't require physical strength or grace. Anyone who pays attention may write brilliantly or accurately, may have a terrific insight or theory."

Naturally, the selections are divided into three sections: "Coming to the Plate", "Why We Love It", and "Analysis of Baseball". I found three kinds of treasures in this anthology: a selection of women writers from the earlier years of the 20th century, a collection of insights about the game, and some absolutely first-rate pieces of writing.

I am happy to have been acquainted or reacquainted with such writings on baseball as those of Edna Ferber, Lucy Kennedy (a selection from *The Sunlit Field*), and S.W.M. Humason. Then there are the writings that Nauen refers to as "three selections from *Baseball* magazine" (I wished for more specific references): Mabel Hite's "On Just Being a Fan", Lulu Glaser's "The Lady Fan", and Ina Eloise Young's "Petticoats and the Press Box". Hite writes words we can all identify with (p.74): "... the more I come to know about the game, the less I find I know."

Here are a few of the specific insights that particularly struck me. Jean Hastings Ardell remarks (p.76-77) of baseball in New York City prior to 1957 that "New York's crosstown baseball rivalries had given the city a sense of intimacy. Now that was gone." Of Red Barber, Barbara Grizzuti Harrison says (p.104): "He never said a careless word." Carol Tavris writes (p.124): "There is no artificial nonsense of fake time, time-outs, overtime, and the like. ... Baseball lasts as long as it takes. Like life, like love, baseball exists in real time." In the same vein, Eve Babitz writes (p.146): "The tension in baseball comes in spurts between long waits where everyone can forget about it, a perfectly lifelike rhythm." Finally, there is this from Lulu Glaser, that women "have the high nervous temperament and the quickness of perception that go to make up a

good ballplayer" (p.172).

My favorite selections were those of Nancy Lemann, Ann Bauleke, and Gail Mazur. I was so enthusiastic about the selection from Lemann's novel *Sportsman's Paradise* that I immediately got the novel and read it right through. It's a fascinating study of three subjects I'm interested in: New York City, the South, and baseball. I found Bauleke's account of Kent Hrbek's father's and her own father's deaths extraordinarily moving. Mazur has three poems in the anthology. The one that moved me most is called just "Baseball" and ends like this (p.242):

the ball park is an artifact,
manicured, safe, "scene in an Easter egg",
and the order of the ball game,
the firm structure with the mystery
of accidents always contained,
not the wild field we wander in,
where I'm trying to recite the rules,
to repeat the statistics of the game,
and the wind keeps carrying my words away.

Others will have their own favorites. Like all good anthologies, this is just the tip of an iceberg.

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