



# THE CHRONICLE

BASE BALL PLAYER'S

WINTER 2022

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE VINTAGE BASE BALL ASSOCIATION



VBBA PRESIDENT'S CORNER

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

It is my hope that this newsletter finds everyone enjoying some much needed down time from the grind that many of our base ball seasons can be. My club generally starts practice the first warm weekend of March and play games into November. This year we shut down in October which gives our club a much needed lengthy break. Like



many teams, my club will need to recruit in the off season to replace players that have hung up their cleats. This task is one that the entire team needs to assist with year round. My question to you all is, What does your club do to recruit new players? Please sound off at our VBBA Town Hall Facebook page\* and share your success stories.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

AARON STAAB  
PRESIDENT, VBBA

(\*A PRIVATE GROUP...SIGN UP FIRST.)



# PLAN AHEAD FOR THE 2022 VBBA CONFERENCE

The VBBA has reserved a block of hotel rooms at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Detroit Metro Airport. Get reduced rates of \$119 King or \$129 Double both nonsmoking by mentioning the VBBA. To get the hotel discount ask for the VBBA Conference Code VBB. The hotel's phone number is (734) 728-9200.

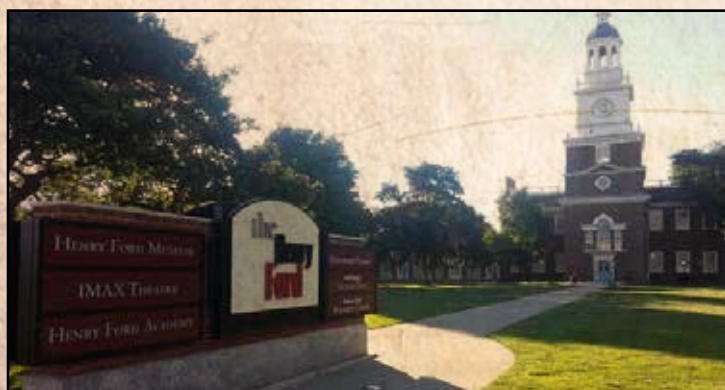
We will meet at the nearby Hilton Garden Inn for our Saturday morning breakout sessions.

We will hold our 2022 VBBA All Comers games, bound and no bound rules, on the site of the World Tournament at Greenfield Village.

Saturday night's dinner will be at Greenfield Village's Eagle Tavern.



TOUR SUGGESTION: Tour The Henry Ford during your free time.



**If you have never been to an in-person**

**VBBA Conference check out our 2019 VBBA Branson Conference:**

<https://www.vbba.org/videos/>

ALL COMERS GAME

BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

- Swimming Up"stream": Navigating the Waters of Digital Presence & Online Engagement with a Salmon
- Prince Honeycutt, Minnesota's first black professional base ball player (1873)
- Umpires as Showmen & Effective Re-enactors
- The story of the 1880's Detroit Wolverines and their 1886 world championship.
- What is a historic base ball bat? How was it swung?
- 21st Century Town Ball
- "Women in 21st Century Vintage Base Ball: Challenges and Experiences"
- Can My Vintage Base Ball Team Be Saved?
- Historic Tennessee VBBA Photographer



REMEMBER AS YOUR CLUB PLANS FOR THE FUTURE THAT THE VBBA IN ADDITION TO LIA- BILITY INSURANCE, OFFERS ITS MEMBER BALL CLUBS UP TO A 15% DISCOUNT ON SEVEN VENDOR'S PRODUCTS. THE MERCHANT CODE FOR VBBA MEMBERS IS VBBA1996. THEY INCLUDE:

**15% Discount  
Phoenix Bats:**  
[www.phoenixbats.com](http://www.phoenixbats.com)

**Stockbridge Sewing Works:**  
[www.stockbridgesewingworks.com](http://www.stockbridgesewingworks.com)

**K&P Weaver, LLC:**  
[www.baseballamericaspastime.com](http://www.baseballamericaspastime.com)

**19cbaseball:**  
[www.19cbaseball.com](http://www.19cbaseball.com)

**James Country Mercantile:**  
[www.jamescountry.com](http://www.jamescountry.com)

**Smacker Bats:**  
[www.smackerbats.com](http://www.smackerbats.com)

**Cooperstown Bats:**  
[www.cooperstownbats.com](http://www.cooperstownbats.com)

**James Country Mercantile:**  
[www.jamescountry.com](http://www.jamescountry.com)

**10% Discount  
K&P Weaver, LLC:**  
[www.baseballamericaspastime.com](http://www.baseballamericaspastime.com)

**GET CONNECTED WITH THE VBBA**  
[www.vbba.org](http://www.vbba.org)

[www.facebook.com/  
vintagebaseballassociation](http://www.facebook.com/vintagebaseballassociation)

[twitter.com/VBBA19C](https://twitter.com/VBBA19C)

[www.instagram.com/  
Vintage\\_Base\\_Ball\\_Assoc](https://www.instagram.com/Vintage_Base_Ball_Assoc)



VBBA Executive  
board  
and trustees

Aaron Staub  
**PRESIDENT**

Gary Schiappacasse  
**VICE PRESIDENT**

Bill Helm  
**SECRETARY**

Paul Zeledon  
**TREASURER**

Bob Sampson  
**HISTORIAN**

Evette  
Griffore-Jacobson  
**TRUSTEE**

Dustyn Dubuque  
**TRUSTEE**

Chuck Ciccarello  
**CO-TRUSTEE**

Collin Miller  
**CO-TRUSTEE**

Rick Brewer  
**TRUSTEE**

Tony Wicker  
**TRUSTEE**

Blaise Lamphier  
**TRUSTEE**



THE BASE BALL  
PLAYER'S CHRONICLE  
LAYOUT BY  
**KIDGARCIA.COM**



# 2022 VBBA CONFERENCE

DEARBORN, MI APRIL 22-24

## FRIDAY, APRIL 22nd

- Registration at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Detroit Metro Airport
- Social at Detroit's Tommy's Bar & Grill

## SATURDAY, APRIL 23rd

- Breakout Sessions at Hilton Garden Inn Metro Detroit
- Katie Flapjack Baer - Swimming Up"stream": Navigating the Waters of Digital Presence & Online Engagement with a Salmon
- Eric Squarehead Berg - Prince Honeycutt, Minnesota's first black professional base ball player (1873)
- Michael Copado - Umpires as Showmen & Effective Re-enactors
- Southern Michigan (Detroit) SABR - The story of the 1880's Detroit Wolverines and their 1886 world championship
- Jeff Pine Tar Kornhaas - What is a historic base ball bat? How is it swung?
- Grant More - 21st Century Town Ball
- Debra Reid - "Women in 21st Century Base Ball: Challenges & Experiences"
- Jim Basala, Todd Eschman, Ryan Pierce, Ryan Peters - Can My Vintage Base Ball Team Be Saved?
- Jamie Wright Images Photographer - Historic Tennessee VBBA Photographer
- Doc Adams Memorial All Comers Matches:

## BOUND AND NO BOUND AT GREENFIELD VILLAGE

- Silent Auction
- Banquet - Eagle Tavern in Greenfield Village at the Henry Ford

## SUNDAY, APRIL 24TH

- Executive Committee and Business Meetings



## Special Conference Room rates:

- King \$119/ night
- Double \$129/ night

## Embassy Suites by Hilton Detroit Metro Airport

8600 Wickhham Rd  
Romulus, MI 48174  
(734) 728-9200

## Booking link for attendees:

[http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/D/DETHSES-VBA-20220421/index.jhtml?WTmc\\_id=POG/](http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/D/DETHSES-VBA-20220421/index.jhtml?WTmc_id=POG/)

## Booking via phone:

Ask for the VBBA Conference rate. Code-VBB.

## REGISTRATION

**MEMBERS**  
**\$80**

Welcome Bag, Breakout Sessions, All Comers Match, Banquet, Keynote Speaker

**NON-MEMBERS**  
**\$90**

One Year VBBA Membership, Welcome Bag, Breakout Sessions, All Comers Match, Banquet, Keynote Speaker

**BANQUET ONLY**  
**\$60**

& Keynote Speaker

**ALL COMERS MATCH ONLY \$75**



# THE FOLLOWING ARE THE LIST OF SPEAKERS FOR THE 2022 VBBA CONFERENCE, APRIL 22-24 AT DEARBORN, MICHIGAN

## KATIE FLAPJACK BAER

### SWIMMING UP "STREAM": NAVIGATING THE WATERS OF DIGITAL PRESENCE & ONLINE ENGAGEMENT WITH A SALMON

Join Katie "Flapjack" Baer of the Chicago Salmon for a dive into the vast digital venues available to your VBBA club. Katie will doggy paddle through the basics of social media platforms, generating attention-grabbing content, increasing online engagement, and creating and maintaining a club website. She will also discuss her experience developing the well-received Salmon Spectator newsletter, and the takeaways she's learned this season.



## ERIC SQUAREHEAD BERG

### PRINCE HONEYCUTT, MINNESOTA'S FIRST BLACK

### PROFESSIONAL BASE BALL PLAYER (1873)

They played barehanded. His story is quite compelling. Eric Squarehead Berg was a member of the Springfield Long Nine Vintage Base Ball Club more than ten years. Most recently he was the team's captain.



## MICHAEL COPADO

### UMPIRES AS SHOWMEN & EFFECTIVE RE-ENACTORS

Michael Preacher Copado has umpired at Navin Field and Hamtramck Stadium. He understands and will share what it takes to be both a historically authentic, and an entertaining vintage base ball umpire. He will also share how to be a side line re-enactor at a vintage base ball game.



## SOUTHERN MICHIGAN (DETROIT) SABR

### THE STORY OF THE 1880'S DETROIT WOLVERINES AND THEIR 1886 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



## JEFF PINE TAR KORNHAAS

### WHAT IS A HISTORIC BASE BALL BAT? HOW WAS IT SWUNG?

With about a decade of experience as a vintage base ball player, and having thoroughly reviewed the history of the development of the base ball bat and how it was used over the years,

Pine Tar will confront the issue of what model base ball bats the vintage base ball clubs should be using to be historically accurate. In addition he will share the evolution of the correct batting stance and swing.



## DEVELOPED 21ST CENTURY TOWNBALL - MATH TEACHER, VERITAS HIGH SCHOOL, NEWBERG, OREGON

What is vintage base ball? How far back do we have to go to be really considered vintage? Most vintage base ball clubs only go back as far as the civil war when the New York Game was the dominant bat-and-ball game played in the United States. However, before the war, there were more versions of bat-and-ball than there were daisies under a blue moon. No foul balls? No baselines? One out per inning? Pegging the runners? No obligation to run until the third strike? Five bases instead of four? Each of these rules and many more existed among the myriad of bat-and-ball games all referred to as "town ball" in the nineteenth century and earlier. Townball, as now played in the twenty-first century, borrows elements from all of these variants (especially those of Massachusetts) to make the perfect game that has been played on the West Coast since 2012. Come to our talk and learn about how your vintage base ball club can teach history by partaking in this modern twist on a collection of old ideas.

[www.21ctownball.com](http://www.21ctownball.com)



DANIEL JONES



GRANT MORE

## "WOMEN IN 21ST CENTURY VINTAGE BASE BALL: CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES"

History collides with contemporary life on vintage base ball fields. Ask yourself... Is this a white man's game? It became that in the past. Do women play? They did historically. Do non-white players play? They did historically. Who plays on your team? Do you issue an open call for players? Do you stress the historic game as a vehicle to extend your reach and engage broadly, or do you carry along all that white privilege baggage from the past into the 21st century? This session looks at the game as a public program at public sites, and asks what you and your club/team can do to make it as engaging, inclusive, and different from the past as possible.



DEBRA REID

## JAMIE WRIGHT HISTORIC TENNESSEE VBBA PHOTOGRAPHER

Jamie is one of many photographers that are encouraged to practice their trade at the Tennessee VBBA events. Their matches all take place at historic Tennessee sites.

Jamie is a local Nashvillian and has been shooting for 24 years. You will find him out at Tennessee Vintage Base Ball Association events, photographing all of the action. He photographs special projects, animals, children, weddings, and product.



## CAN MY VINTAGE BASE BALL TEAM BE SAVED?

Vintage base ball sometimes faces problems and challenges of and off the field. Chances are whatever your team might be experiencing, another team has dealt with the same thing.

This panel provides a forum for situations your club might have, be it funding, player recruitment and retention, playing field, team morale or other things.

These experienced team leaders will share their stories and welcome your questions and discussion.



JIM GLACIER  
BASALA

Deep River Grinders



TODD DUTCH  
ESCHMAN

Belleville Stags



RYAN FUZ  
PETERS

Valparaiso Lookouts



RYAN ACE  
PIERCE

Milwaukee Grays



# FINDING THEIR FOOTPRINTS

To paraphrase The X Files' television series, "the past is out there."

But how do we find it or, more specifically, traces of the 19th century game in our communities? Are there ways to learn who brought the game to a particular place and who played it and how?

The answer is "yes."

Internet search engines like Newspapers.com have made things a bit easier. Also, there are microfilmed reels of old newspapers in many libraries, hopefully including the one in your community. The old-fashioned search involved taking reels of newspapers from a year and then scrolling through them, searching for the words "base ball."

I spent nearly a decade doing this trying to reconstruct the early game in Illinois. But with an engine like Newspapers.com, you simply type in "base ball" and search newspapers in your area.

That is just the start. Many of the 19th century weeklies and dailies died un-mourned and unsaved. That is, their files no longer exist. What to do? Chances are newspapers in a larger town or city in your area may have survived to make it onto microfilm or into a modern search engine. If

so, look at them.

In Illinois, for instance, there was a brief period in the mid-1860s when the state went crazy over the game. Lots of stories, though often brief, can help you identify your team.

Another approach comes later in the century. Peter Morris was among the first to discover a treasure trove of old ballplayers' memories of the game as the 19th century neared its end. Sometimes these articles stretch into the early 20th century as old ballplayers were discovered and interviewed by reporters.

Searches may also help identify early playing fields. You may find, as I did, more gaps as often exact locations are missing.

Remember, in small communities all a newspaper had to indicate was the game "will be at their usual grounds." Residents knew these places; we don't. If you are lucky, there will be streets or places "Alstynes Prairie," for instance, that can be traced. Or, a late 19th century or early 20th century reporter, perhaps thinking of us, will have identified the early field by then-extant landmarks.

It is always good to know in whose footprints we walk.

**BOB SAMPSON, VBBA HISTORIAN**





# 2020-2021 REPORT:

## Vintage Base Ball clubs in central and southern Illinois and eastern Missouri



VBBA historian Bob Sampson assembled this report of how COVID-19 has affected vintage Base Ball clubs in central and southern Illinois and eastern Missouri. The report also focuses on problems teams have dealt with resulting from problems existing before or perhaps aggravated by the pandemic. Such challenges include team organization, player recruitment, scheduling and projections for a club's future.

We here at the VBBA would appreciate any member or even non-member vintage teams across the country sending us similar reports.

## S U M M A R Y

This report is based on responses from 12 teams: Murphysboro Clarkes, Belleville Stags, Long Nine of Springfield, Rock Springs Ground Squirrels, McLean County Prairie Chickens and Vermilion Voles — all of Illinois — and the Union Club, the St. Louis Perfectos, Lafayette Square Cyclones, St. Louis Brown Stockings and St. Charles Explorers, all of Missouri.

These teams are all south of Interstate 80, the highway dividing the central and southern portions of Illinois from the more populous regions to the north. Clubs in this area, while not limited to them, most play each other and clubs in the St. Louis area. There are a number of northern (north of I-80) Illinois clubs which were not included in this survey.

Representatives of each club received a series of questions. One set focused on COVID and the impact of the pandemic on the 2020 and 2021 schedules. The second dealt with problems existing before or perhaps aggravated by the pandemic. Such challenges include team organization, player recruitment, scheduling and projections for a club's future.

In general, nearly all clubs reported

significant reductions in schedules due to COVID, especially the 2020 season which, for all but two clubs, was lost. In some cases, these difficulties extended into the 2021 season, though to a lesser degree as most teams were able to play several games. However, it is apparent that the pandemic combined with pre-existing challenges severely affected several clubs.

A number of clubs with "aging" members were particularly challenged. First, many players in this category, being high-risk, exercised caution in 2020 and did not participate. To a lesser extent, which continued in 2021, mostly affecting travel games. Second, the challenge of replacing "aging" players as time forces them from the game, bedevils some clubs, including ones in existence for more than a decade. If COVID was not enough, a few clubs had regulars move away during this period, leaving roster holes proving hard to fill.

Two clubs especially have come through the past two years relatively unscathed. Others, while not necessarily struggling, are challenged and considering options. One option practiced informally by some clubs, particularly those in the St. Louis area, in

the past, involves "mixed" rosters for road games — blending players from two or more clubs to create a travel squad. This practice was also used in central Illinois by the Springfield and Decatur (Rock Springs) clubs this season. Additionally, clubs are exploring options to expand this practice in 2022. There is also a trend to "round-robin" matches involving three (or possibly more) clubs rather than the traditional one-on-one game. These matches serve two purposes: one, giving traveling teams more playing opportunity and, two, making it easier if necessary to "blend" rosters to create full teams.

Another team was not included — the Old State Capitols of Vandalia, IL — as it disbanded around the 2019 season due to apparent lack of player commitment. Its captain, however, continues to play with other clubs as needed. In 2022, there may be a new team at Philo, Illinois, in the Champaign-Urbana area.

The traditional multi-team scheduling meeting for teams in this area is not until mid to late November. Some issues raised in the reports may be addressed at that meeting.



# TEAM REPORTS

## **ILLINOIS** **Murphysboro Clarkes** (Murphysboro, IL)

The Clarkes, whose founding was in the mid-2000s, did not play a game in 2020. The club played two dates in 2021—the St. Louis Cup in July and the Barclay Festival in June. Many of its players have moved out of the area and that combined with COVID has made it difficult to field a full nine.

## **Belleville Stags** (Belleville, IL)

The 2020 season was termed by team founder and captain Todd “Dutch” Eschman as a “near wash.” In 2020, players asked to wear masks on the bench and in social areas. Post-game meals were suspended continuing into 2021. The club played five to six dates in 2020, most against two St. Louis area clubs. Some matches were canceled with local COVID numbers surged. The pandemic has also increased problems in “firming up” player commitment to scheduled games, especially on the road.

Player recruitment has followed a “three strikes and you’re in” rule. Promising individuals are invited to join the team in a game and a second. After the third time, they are formally invited to join by purchasing a uniform. This has been key to attracting and retaining committed players.

Club leadership has presented a different set of challenges. There is a danger of “leadership fatigue” in relying on the same person or persons to handle the chores of running a club over too long a period. A division of responsibility is in use now as younger members take various roles under the existing leadership. NOTE: a similar approach has worked with another club.

## **Long Nine Club** (Springfield, IL)

Long Nine players filled in a lost 2020 schedule by participating in “pick-up” games that sprouted during that period. These were informal meetings between teams (sometimes possibly blended rosters) that played where they could find a field.

Coming out of most COVID restrictions in 2021, the club — dating back 14 years — faced roster problems. Three players moved away and another retired, dropping the “regular” roster (people who would show up for most games) down to about four to five. Each week was a challenge to get a full roster — or close to it — for games.

Long-time team captain Todd “Pig” Daniels says: “The aging out of players is

starring to become an issue. But I don’t feel it is really because of COVID for our club. It is more having a roster largely made up of original players. And it involves just not age but burnout after playing for over a decade.”

## **Rock Springs Ground Squirrels** (Decatur, IL)

Due to COVID restrictions at the club’s home field owned by the Macon County Conservation District (and continued concerns after those eased in the summer of 2020), the club played no games that year. However, some members participated in the “pick-up” games held in the St. Louis area.

In 2021, the club had 12 scheduled dates, however three, including a Field of Dreams trip, were canceled. Of the remainder, a few involved “mixed” rosters. The Douglas Cup, the Ground Squirrels’ multi-team event in September came off but challenged by the fact that of the four participants, one dropped out the day before and two of the remaining teams had short rosters for all or most of the day. The games were reduced the three, the last being a mixed roster of all remaining players.

Established in 1992 (and playing its first “official” season in 1994) the club is facing the aging player challenge plus frustrations in recruitment. One new player came in 2019 and another in 2021. Over the same period, two former mainstays retired from the game and others have been unable to play regularly. Several recruiting efforts — public calls for players, publicity, and “open” games-- have occurred with mixed results. Word of mouth continues to be the best. Among the challenges offered by a small, regular roster is player time limitations, including family obligations and other commitments.

The Ground Squirrels and the Long Nine are discussing potential mutual aid ideas for the 2022 season.

## **Vermilion Voles Club** (Danville, IL)

Founded in 2003, the Voles Club reports itself in “pretty good shape at the moment.” The club played no games in 2020. It also lost its caterer for post-game meals.

In 2021, the Voles had 14 scheduled events and a roster of 24 players. One player was present at all 14 events, five at 13, eight at least 11, and 10 at seven or more. At the five home events, five players made all of them and 13 played in at least three or more. On the road, three players participated in all nine road games with eight at six or more and 11 at four or more. Though the club suffered some injuries during the 2021 season, 18 players are expected to return, including 12

that captain Bert “Pepper” Rawlings terms the team’s core.

During this season, he noted that many opponents had short rosters but with flexibility, the games went on. “In fact, the combo squad situations proved to be great fun.” He will be scheduling three-club round robin events at home in 2022 to ensure there will be enough players on hand if one team is short.

In terms of organization, the club made changes in 2019 with founder and former captain Jim “Weedeater” Knoblauch, who had been carrying the bulk of the load, shifting much of the duties to a management team. Rawlings took over the bulk of the administrative duties, assisted by another player. Two more players now serve as field captains. Other players take on duties related to equipment, funding, public relations and social media. The group functions as a team and meets to discuss most team matters.

During COVID, Rawlings personally checked in with club members by phone or email and will continue those contacts over the winter. Most of their new players have come through word of mouth or invitations from existing club members. Potential players are encouraged to play with the team at events, try out the game, and determine if they can make the commitment. If they do decide to join, they are asked to purchase a uniform.

In the future, Rawlings believes vintage clubs are “going to have to cooperate and coordinate more in putting seasons together. We need to find ways to bridge North and South and East and West.” He noted that an Indianapolis club is trying to get Illinois and Ohio clubs to play in Indiana, for example.

## **McLean County Prairie Chickens** (Bloomington and Normal, IL)

Founded in 2017, the Prairie Chicken Club is unique in having little to no schedule disruptions in 2020 due to COVID. The only impacts reported by team captain and founder Brian Thede were a slower start to the season and loss of the St. Louis Cup. The team was able to play at Field of Dreams on May 30, 2020. When Illinois eased some of the COVID protocols, the club resumed its season at the end of June (The Prairie Chickens end their season at the end of July). The team had 11 vintage (1860 era) matches and four “Golden Age” games. The latter are played under the 1922 rules. “We did have some teams cancel their scheduled games due to not having a field, but we were able to fill most dates with games,” Thede said.

In 2021, his club played 20 vintage matches with only one cancellation. The club also formed “The Route 66 Golden Age Base Ball League” with teams from Pontiac,



Normal, Bloomington and Lincoln, playing 10 games under the 1922 rules, including a tournament. "Overall, I think we played during all but one available weekend during 2020 and 2021," he said. Additionally, many on the Prairie Chickens participate in a "modern" baseball league for older players, necessitating the vintage season's end in July.

Thede said the biggest challenge is putting together a team each week. He used 49 different players in 2018, 47 in 2019, 55 in 2020, and 38 this past season. "I never worry about not having enough, but sometimes it takes all week. But other times, we have too many," he said.

He hopes to play either vintage or Golden Age games every weekend in 2021 from April through the end of July.

## MISSOURI

### Lafayette Square Cyclones (St. Louis)

The Cyclones, part of the Greater St. Louis Base Ball Historical Society, played no organized games in 2020, though some players were in pick-up games. The GSBHHS (which also includes the Perfectos Club) did not buy field permits or insurance for any games in 2020.

Though lacking field permits from the St. Louis Parks Department — due to COVID — in April and May, the club was able to host the Shepard Barclay Festival in early June after preparing a detailed set of COVID procedures and gaining approval from the St. Louis Health Department. "From that point forth, we were able to do a pretty typical season," said Chris Duggan, team captain.

He noted that in 2021 many area clubs were struggling to get enough players for specific games. He indicated that for one area club, COVID-related concerns on the part of older players, led to roster difficulties.

Duggan reports that his club's "core has held together" and two young players, both sons of a player, have joined the team.

### St. Louis Perfectos (St. Louis)

The 2020 season proved similar to that

of other clubs, reported Shaun Kennedy, team captain. "We've had a few regular players shy away from playing last year and this year, which definitely hurt, since we didn't have the best margins to begin with," he said. The Perfecto club was founded in the early 2000s. "We could always get seven of our own to lay, and halfway through the week I had to send out emails to other clubs' players, looking for enough fill-ins to make a full nine."

He reports that recruiting has been "hit or miss" the past few years. Some individuals express interest and enjoy the game but don't stick. A couple of players moved, others showed up for a game or two and dropped out, and some have greater obligations on weekends as their children get older.

Kennedy plans on surveying the team to determine who can be a full-time player, compare that to available part-timers and how many recruits are likely before approaching the 2022 schedule.

He believes 2022 is likely to bring more team "combinations" for road games in the area and more three-way matches. Kennedy believes his club may simply schedule fewer matches. "I also think if other teams cut back, it could be worthwhile to do our 'Goodwill' style match more frequently," he said, referring to traditional events starting and ending a season in the area involving players from all teams randomly assigned to nines. His club has had some success with one or two Wednesday night games in Lafayette Square Park. "More unique matches like those might spark some interest, or at least get the part-time players to come out for something different."

### St. Louis Brown Stockings (St. Louis)

Club founder Tony "Lightning" Wicker reports his club played 11 games in 2020. Field were an issue in 2020 due to COVID restrictions but not in 2021 when his club played 24 games — still down from its normal 30. "I think we were the only team in our area that could field a full roster for every game the last two years," he said.

In its 12 years of existence, the club has been able to field a full roster in an estimated

98 percent of its games. His club, too, is aging and tries to recruit at least one new player each year. A few years ago, the club changed its scheduling model to games every other week, no longer playing back-to-back weekends unless dictated by special events.

Wicker says he emphasizes a "family" approach with the club. "Treat the team as one big family and the players do stick around," he said.

### St. Charles Explorers (St. Charles, MO)

Launched in 2019, the club has had a "rough run" the past two years, said founder Joe "Red" Flaughter. The Explorers got in one match toward the end of the 2020 season.

In 2021, the club played most of its schedule though a couple were canceled either due to weather, not having enough players, or inability to gain a field permit from either the City of St. Louis or St. Louis County. Total games played were around 20.

"Overall, we have had some issues in getting a full club most of the time. We will definitely be trying to recruit a few more players for the upcoming season," he added.

### St. Louis Unions (St. Louis)

Team captain Matt "Scoops" Lurk reported that his club was experiencing roster problems before COVID struck. These combined with finding a player or players willing to step up and take over administrative duties placed the team in a "holding pattern," he said, awaiting some resolution. Past team leaders have work commitment challenges and others have various reasons for not stepping up.

In the meantime, "we just play a few games a year and see what happens," he said.

On the other hand, the club's hosting of games under the St. Louis Arch (The Jefferson National Westward Expansion Memorial) has paid off and is working well, he added.

The club is likely to remain in the "holding pattern" until its administrative challenges are solved.

## CONCLUSION

### What is the state of vintage base ball in this area in the wake of COVID and other challenges? What directions might it be tending toward?

1. It is clear COVID had a greater impact on some teams than others. Two clubs have experienced little difficulty with the issue and, perhaps, exercised a different approach to various guidelines and protocols than others. Age of players may have played a role in these reactions.

2. Team administration and player recruitment are major issues

for clubs in the selected area. In some cases, they pose significant challenges to continuance in the game.

3. Many of these clubs have been playing for a decade or more. Original players are aging. Club leaders in some cases may face fatigue and pressures of other commitments. No one has a clear, replicable answer to these questions.

4. In this region, shared or "blended" teams constitute an idea many clubs are considering. This offers the attraction of keeping a team in the field and, therefore, increasing the likelihood of games.

5. The "Goodwill Game" model offers another alternative that may become common as teams fold and players, who want to continue in the game, find exercise, fun and

friendship in these communal events.

6. Further examination of the "state" of vintage base ball in other areas and states will offer greater insights about the game in the wake of COVID and, possibly, ideas to address the problems mentioned above.



# Arizona vintage baseballer meets his idol

FORMER DODGER  
MAURY WILLS PLAYS  
VINTAGE BASE BALL



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Former Los Angeles Dodgers great Maury Wills poses with members of the Fort Verde Excelsiors after a game in November 2018.







COURTESY PHOTO

**Former Los Angeles Dodgers great Maury Wills poses with Zach Storey and Travis Storey, from left, at the Jan. 6 Vintage Base Ball game at Fort Verde State Historic Park.**

BY BILL HELM – VBBA SECRETARY

Travis Storey grew up a big baseball fan.

When he would play ball, Storey wore in his cap a baseball card of his favorite player – for good luck.

That was in the mid-1960s in Florida, a place and time when segregation was the norm – and most Anglo Americans were proud of it.

Which is why his teammates asked Storey why his favorite baseball player was an African American.

His team went 18-2 with Maury Wills in his cap, Storey proudly says.

“I won the batting title,” Storey says. “And I attribute that to carrying his card. It was very exciting. He was my baseball idol.”

Imagine how Storey felt when he met his idol a few years ago.

#### HOW THEY MET

A resident of Camp Verde, Arizona, Storey and his son Zach run

their own construction business.

In Sedona on a job, they got drift that Wills lived near a job they were working.

It took Storey a lot to introduce himself to Wills one day.

“I knocked on his door,” Storey says. “His wife came to the door. Talked to her for a bit. Then Maury came to the door.”

Storey, a grown man in the shadows of 60, says he “melted” at the sight of his favorite ball player.

“He stepped outside onto his front porch, then I told him the story about the card in the hat,” Storey said. “He just looked at me and said, ‘are you kidding me?’”

Next thing you know, Wills invited Storey into his home, showed Storey some of his memorabilia, then autographed a photograph – and they continued to talk.

It’s been more than three years, and it’s like they’ve known each other their whole lives.

#### GOING BACK IN TIME

Though Wills retired following the 1972 season after stealing 586 bases and amassing 2,134 hits, Storey still plays baseball.

Two Saturdays each month, Storey is a first baseman for the Prescott Champions of the Arizona Territories Vintage Base Ball League. Recently, Storey told Wills about his own diamond escapades, and invited his famous friend out to watch the Champions take on the Fort Verde Excelsiors.

On Jan. 6, 2018, Wills attended his first vintage base ball game, at Verde State Historic Park in Camp Verde. He even took a turn at bat.

“In my wildest dreams as a kid, I never once imagined any major leaguer ever batting for me,” says Mike ‘Ace’ Adrian, coach and pitcher for the Prescott Champions. “Yet in this first match I asked Mr. Wills if he’d like to have an at-bat, and he ended up batting for me in the third inning.”



A few swings at the ball, and Wills, then 85, hit the ball and made it safely to first base.

“When he came up to bat, I was wondering whether the experience from a lifetime of at bats would win out over his advanced age, and after a few swings and misses, he got it,” says Josh Freeman, center fielder for the Excelsiors.

James Clarke, third baseman for the Excelsiors, calls Wills a “very high spirited and high energy guy.”

“What impressed most about Maury was his knowledge of the game and his never-ending desire to talk about the game of baseball,” Clarke says. “I love that. The man has a great sense of humor. I loved him being around us and he made me play better. I ended up having a great game. I don’t know what gets many people out of bed in the morning, but I am certainly glad that he got out of bed this day and joined us for a game over at the Fort.”

#### **MOST VALUABLE PLAYER**

One of 13 children in the Wills household, Wills says his older brothers were his heroes.

“I wanted to be like them when I grew up,” says Wills, a Washington, D. C. native.

At 14 years of age, Wills attended a Washington Senators clinic with some of his friends, older children he played ball with on a local team.

“I knew that’s where I wanted to play,” Wills recalls.

Though he wanted to play ball at Griffith Stadium, Wills heard about Jackie Robinson and decided he wanted to be a Dodger.

In 1962, Wills did play ball at Griffith Stadium – as a member of the National League All-Stars. He almost didn’t get into the game – or the ballpark.

A man slight of build at 5-foot 11-inches, 170 pounds, Wills says he couldn’t convince the security guard at the ballpark’s gate that he played for the Dodgers – Jackie Robinson’s old team.

Staying the night with family rather than with the team apparently was not a good idea at the time, Wills says, because he didn’t get to ride on the team bus.

“I told the security guard to take me to the clubhouse and the players would identify me,” Wills says.

But his all-star teammates played a joke on Wills, he recalls.

“Do you know this guy?” Wills recalls the security guard shouting into the clubhouse.

“Nope!” Wills says they responded.

They were joking, but the security guard wouldn’t believe Wills.

Wills eventually made it into the clubhouse ... and the joke was not only on the security guard, but on his all-star teammates.

Wills won the Most Valuable Player award for the all-star game.

#### **ONCE A WINNER, ALWAYS A WINNER**

Though Wills took but one at bat for the Champions, his friend’s team beat the Excelsiors in both games of their Jan. 6 doubleheader.

“It was really an honor to meet Mr. Wills and actually play a little ball with him,” says Brian Lane of the Fort Verde Excelsiors. “Mr. Wills was kind enough to sign autographed photos for all our vintage base ball players.”

Good thing that one of the Champions had his wife on speed dial. Stacie Kee brought her husband Phil his Maury Wills card.

“I had a 1969 Topps baseball card he signed for me,” says Phil Kee, third baseman for the Champions. “I was like a kid in the candy store when he handed me that card back.”

Kee says that Wills was “one of the nicest people I ever met.”

#### **POSTSCRIPT**

This year, Doc Adams was not included in the 2021 Historical Oversight Committee’s ballots for induction in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Wills was on this year’s Hall of Fame Historical Oversight Committee ballot. With 16 members on the committee, candidates for induction need 12 votes (75%) to be elected. Wills did not receive a single vote.

Wills was a shortstop for the bulk of his 14-year career. He played with the Los Angeles Dodgers from 1959-1966, was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates where he played for two seasons, then 47 games for the Montreal Expos in their inaugural season of 1969 before returning to the Dodgers.



*Some people are just so special, you could have known them your entire life and it still wouldn't have been enough time. For me, **Mike Adrian** has been one of those people.*

# MIKE ADRIAN

# A real Ace







The evening of Dec. 11, VBBA Vice President Gary Schippacasse called to tell me Mike had lost his battle with cancer. Mike had been fighting it since earlier in the year, and although it was a real struggle, he seemingly beat the disease. But his 75-year-old body finally gave out.

Now, we are the ones who struggle. Because our friend is no longer with us.

I remember the first time I met the man we call Ace. Fort Verde State Historic Park, home of the Fort Verde Excelsiors, hosted a recruiting event for our upcoming season. This was back in 2016.

Mike was relatively new to the state, having arrived earlier in the year from Illinois where he had founded and played on the Somonauk Blue Stockings Vintage Base Ball Club.

In his short time in Arizona, Mike founded the Champions Base Ball Club of Prescott, Arizona and was looking for players.

To find players, and to make friends, Mike visited Fort Verde that day.

Lo and behold, at Fort Verde, in Camp Verde, Mike found a slew of prospective vintage base ball players for his team. Such a friendly, kind, funny and generous man, Mike and I quickly became friends.

The team he built, his Champions, were a pleasure to play against. From time to time, I also had the

pleasure of playing on his team. So often, Mike and I would talk about the modern and the vintage game of baseball, and about life. It didn't take long to figure out how much of a treasure Mike Adrian was.

You know, using that word, was, really hurts. Because I still cannot believe my friend is gone.

Since I moved to Washington state in May, I'd call Mike pretty regularly. Rarely, however, he was able to take calls. A 15-minute telephone conversation generally meant he'd need a good long nap afterward. Although we'd text more often, Mike and I actually talked maybe 3 or 4 times after my wife and I left Arizona.

Last time we spoke, in November, he gave me some advice on how to stain and finish the bat a friend had made me. He was so excited to see it, so excited to play ball again, was so excited to live life to its fullest.

As I and so many people miss our dear friend Mike, we can be happy that he is playing ball right now, with Buck O'Neill, Ernie Banks, Minnie Mino-so, Doc Adams, and so many other ball players from the past.

Sure would love to play ball with that group. Sure would love to play ball again with Mike.

Man, I miss my friend.



OBITUARY:

# Michael Rodne “Mike” Adrian

SEP 20, 1946 - DEC 11, 2021



Michael Rodne “Mike” Adrian, 75, of Dewey, Arizona, formerly of Somonauk, Illinois, passed away on December 11, 2021 surrounded by a wave of love and support from his loving wife of 53 years, sons, and cherished extended family. A United States Army Veteran who served his country honorably in The Vietnam War, Mike had been diagnosed with lung cancer earlier in the year and battled through a most tumultuous and punishing year with unwavering strength and optimism, one that has culminated in his getting off the bench and taking his rightful position on the grand baseball field in his hereafter.

Born on September 20, 1946, Mike was the oldest of four children of Myrtle and Joseph Adrian of Somonauk. As a young boy, he spent his time playing with his siblings, sisters Ann and Bette and

his younger brother Jerry, on the family farm. He enjoyed television shows of the time, such as The Howdy Doody Show, Garfield Goose and Friends, and Chicago White Sox and Cubs broadcasts on WGN — the latter of which sowed fertile ground for his later years.

He attended public schools in town and graduated Somonauk High School in 1964. His classmates voted him “Best All Around” in his senior-class school yearbook, a fun little fact that did not go unspoken in the decades ahead.

With the country embroiled in The Vietnam War, Mike enlisted in the United States Army. Around this time, a cousin introduced him to a nursing student from Plano named Sue Foli, the woman who would eventually serve as his lifelong partner in their shared adventure. After a brief courtship, Mike proposed to Sue and on October 5, 1968 they were married

at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Plano, Illinois. After assignments in Baltimore and Honolulu, orders followed for Mike to report to Vietnam where he served with the 525th Military Intelligence Group.

After Mike’s tour in Vietnam, he finished his degree at Northern Illinois University and worked as the head of the sheltered workshop at the Open Door in Sandwich, Illinois, helping adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In 1982, he and Dave “Oz” Osman purchased a concrete/construction company, Mid-Valley Concrete, which he would run until 2010. He prided himself on doing business with integrity — making contracts with just a handshake — and treating his employees with the dignity and respect they deserved, like family. Mid-Valley Concrete was the backbone of Mike’s own family, providing for Sue; his older



two sons, Matt and Jason; and eventually a third son, Bob, who was joyfully welcomed to the family through Catholic Charities at the start of the 1990s.

A devoted Chicago White Sox fan, Mike attended countless White Sox games, including the last night and day games at Comiskey Park in 1990 and the opening of the new White Sox park in 1991. His patience and dedication to the team was finally rewarded with a White Sox World Series title in 2005. The man breathed a well-earned sigh of relief.

Mike's love for baseball and an ability to make friends anywhere he was — he had the sort of personality people gravitate toward — eventually culminated in the pursuit of his own team. He was the driving force behind the creation of the Somonauk Blue Stockings Vintage Base Ball Club. "Ace," as he was known, played a variety of positions, scheduled games, recruited players (anywhere), and gave the town a positive piece of history and entertainment to rally behind.

After retiring from the concrete game, Mike worked as a substitute teacher and as an instructor at IAG in Oswego, Illinois, where he taught woodworking and baseball for developmentally disabled adults. He continued to spend time woodworking in his shop and scouring antique stores and flea markets for vintage baseball bats to add to his growing collection. In 2012 Mike was nominated to serve as Somonauk Summer-Fest Grand Marshall for, according to the nominating committee, "not only [his] many years of dedication to our community, but also the inspiration and encouragement [he has] given to so many people throughout the years and still continue to do so today."

Retirement was not the end for Mike. He and Sue had one more adventure

in store. A healthy sense of wanderlust and an itch to see what their next chapter had in store for them gave them the push they needed to pull up stakes and hit the road. They headed west on U.S. Route 66 until they found a new community in Dewey, Arizona, where they have been laughing, woodworking, relaxing, and adventuring since early 2016.

Mike leaves behind his wife of 53 years and his life partner on this amazing journey, Susan Theresa "Sue" Adrian (nee Foli); three sons, Matthew "Matt" (married to Kim Bagwill), Jason "Byrrd" (married to Elizabeth Volker), and Robert "Bob"; three siblings, sisters Ann Back (married to Jim) and Bette Reynolds (married to Winston) and brother Jerry Adrian (married to Ginny); brother-in-law Steve Foli (married to Chris); sister-in-law Rebecca "Becky" Daniels; and nine nieces and nephews. Mike is preceded in death by his mother, Myrtle; his father, Joseph; and his treasured in-laws, Floy and Caesar Foli.

Just as importantly, he leaves behind myriad people whose lives he touched through his kindness, his overall joyfulness in his approach to life, his genuine interest in their lives, his infectious laugh, and his resolute and untiring love for baseball. Batter up, Mike.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Open Door Rehabilitation Center in Sandwich. The family would like to thank Dr. Iyad Hamarneh, M.D., and the staff at Arizona Oncology for their tireless and compassionate care and easing his pain through a most tumultuous year.

For more information or to sign the online guestbook please go to [www.Eighner-FuneralHomes.com](http://www.Eighner-FuneralHomes.com).





# PHOENIX'S FIRST ONE-HIT WONDERS: THE BEE HIVE NINE OF 1890.

TENNEY, JOHN DARRIN  
SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH – 19TH CENTURY COMMITTEE

The crackling of the first electric lights in the young western town of Phoenix welcomed more than just illuminating dark streets and trolley ways. Residents in the rapidly growing town saw the community come of age in an effort to transform from western outpost into modern metropolis. Amongst those changes, the national pastime was starting to take root. The introduction of the game a decade before, most residents in the early days of Maricopa County were a wide assortment of hardy souls doing their best to scratch out a living in the harsh Arizona desert in an era that preceded in-door air conditioning. Local baseball struggled to take hold amongst a transient population that was accustomed to using any open ground and equipment for a game. The introduction of developments like electric lighting, and a trolley car system that helped townsfolk build early Phoenix and support the game of baseball.

The Bee Hive Nine were the brain-child of local proprietor E.H. Winters. A long time and early settler of Phoenix, Winters ran the Bee Hive Store downtown. There he aimed to import the finest in clothing, furniture and other assorted goods aimed at Phoenicians who wanted better. As a devoted fan of baseball, Winters specifically went out and recruited a ball club apprised of the best athletes he could find (or

buy) in the outlying rural areas of the county. The longed-for showdown with the long-established Phoenix Base Ball Club was just too good to pass up, especially for \$100 per side. On the nation's birthday, the entire community turned out to see the match, an event never seen before in the pages of the Arizona Republican. The game and several rare photographs tell a tale full of intrigue that involve fireworks, competing rival business owners and a photographer-turned state senator that reveal a glimpse into the early days of organized baseball in Phoenix, Arizona.

The following is a brief Q&A with John Tenney, author of an abstract on the early days of baseball in Phoenix, Arizona, titled: Phoenix's First One-Hit Wonders: The Bee Hive Nine of 1890. Tenney's great-uncle Fred Tenney was on the 1908 New York Giants team that missed out on going to the World Series because of what we know as the Merkle Boner. Fred Merkle was in the lineup that September day as a replacement for Fred Tenney, out with an attack of lumbago. It was the only game Tenney missed that season.

Vintage Base Ball Association: When and why did you decide to write the abstract? How did you narrow the abstract down to such a concise focus point? How much more information is out there about this subject? How much more could you have

written?

John Tenney: First, I am a member of SABR, so I got an email from the 19th Century Committee about the upcoming Fred presentation in April of 2022. At first glance, I dismissed the notion of writing an abstract or even sticking my neck out to do a presentation of this magnitude. Then, I saw a framed photo I have of the famous Bee Hive Nine and I started thinking about the men in the photograph and the circumstances that brought them together. The joy of the game. I thought writing an abstract would prove a good way to start writing and researching things further. I kept the abstract short to create curiosity. Sure, there is plenty more to dive into, but it seems that this one game signaled an effort to grow up through the effort of baseball. I saw a trend emerging with the two ball fields that were among the first to be reliably called home grounds for baseball in Phoenix. I thought that was a good enough starting point, as others have demonstrated that microhistories do quite well and they're far easier to research. Consider the book '59 in 1984 by Ed Achorn. A perfect example of only looking at one season, which was enough. I'd like to think that's a great approach to history. So with that in mind, I am going to expand on what we know of the photo. Maybe even a few things we don't know, too.



# Challenges a-plenty for Thames Base Ball Club

BY MIKE 'DRY' DREIMILLER

The Thames Base Ball Club of New London, CT had a somewhat challenging season in 2021 because of roster issues. We expected some problems after not having played at all last season but it was worse than expected.

We had two regulars move out of state before the season started, two more regulars who had been on the team at least 15 years retire, and two other regulars whose work commitments kept them from playing in any matches.

As a result, we only had eight players who appeared in at least

one match and only three who played in every match.

Chuck Ciccarello was instrumental in helping us field a team by arranging for substitute players from his Hartford Bulldogs team, as well as from the Wethersfield Red Onion team as needed. As a result, we only had one match early in the season canceled because of a lack of players.

We closed out our regular season with our first-ever match against the Westerly (Rhode Island) Quarrymen. Their first season was in 2019 and they are

still trying to build their roster. (See attached photo.) Their proximity to New London, about 20 miles, has our teams planning to hold some practices together next season and lend each other players as needed.

We have two players, Jake Neutz and Mike Neville, who were selected as Northeast All-Stars in the 4th John Martin Memorial Series at Muzzy Field (Bristol, CT) on Sunday Sept. 26.

Our off-season will be spent trying to recruit some new players and working on some new promotion plans.

THAMES BBC <http://thamesbbc.org>  
FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/ThamesBBC>  
TWITTER <https://twitter.com/thamesbbc>  
CT VBBA <http://ctvbba.org>

PICTURED, THE THAMES BASE BALL CLUB OF NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT, AND THE WESTERLY QUARRYMEN OF RHODE ISLAND. (COURTESY PHOTO)

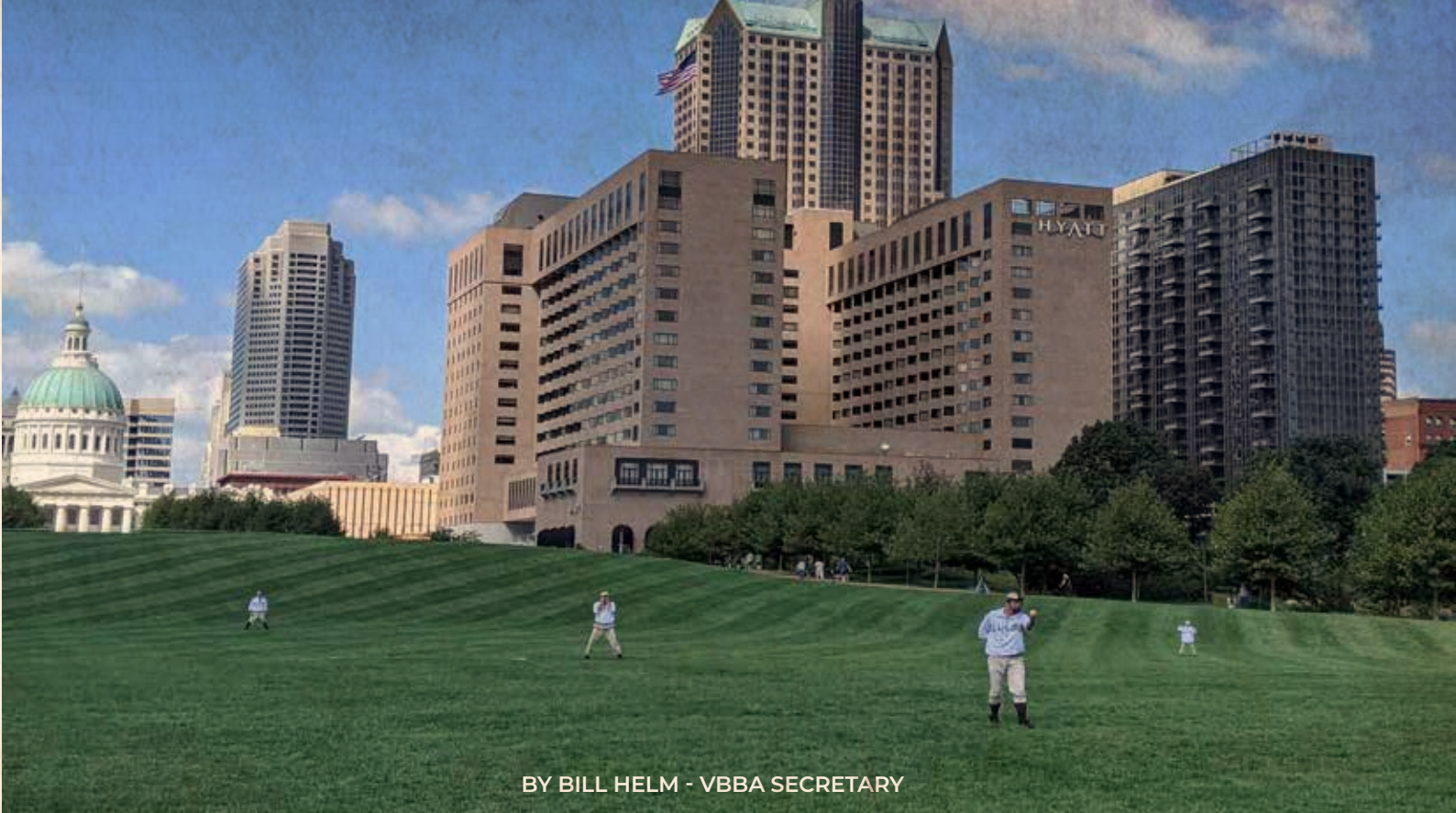




# Gateway Arch makes backdrop for vintage games







BY BILL HELM - VBBA SECRETARY

It's officially called the Gateway Arch, as St. Louis is known as the Gateway to the West.

Despite COVID-19, The Arch was the site one weekend in 2021 for two vintage base ball matches.

The first match pitted the St. Louis Brown Stockings and the St. Louis Unions, with the Unions coming out on top, 17-15. In game two, the Lafayette Square Cyclones faced the Unions, with the Square Cyclones beating the Unions 9-6.

Peg Leg was arbiter for the first game and a few volunteers were arbiters for second game.

In photographs sent to the Vintage Base Ball Association, Vincent 'Van Gogh' Riti of the St. Louis Brown Stockings talked of "the Arch above, with the Mississippi River to our backs and facing the skyline of downtown St. Louis with the Old Court House, there left center."

"Admittedly, The Arch was built about 100 years after our era of base ball," Van Gogh said.

"But it was exciting and yes, I would like to use that as an excuse why I had difficulties catching anything hit toward me, the sun too, maybe sweat, maybe tears."

As is common with the vintage game, folks from other teams oftentimes will fill in to help a team field its nine.

Van Gogh said that it was the same at The Arch that day, as "there were a few teams from other ball clubs represented, the Ground Squirrels out of Decatur, the Stags out of Belleville and maybe another few that I couldn't catch cause I'm hard of hearing and, well, unfamiliar with it all."

Tony Wicker, Midwest/southwest region trustee for the VBBA, was one of the Brown Stockings to play that day at The Arch. Wicker explained that although his team had a complete team that day, the Unions were made up of players from the Rock Springs Ground Squirrels, Belleville Stags and Summit

Station Singlemen. The Lafayette Square Cyclone, he said, included players from the Singlemen, as well as the St. Louis Perfectos.

"As some teams are struggling for players, there were several other players from different clubs present as they all just wanted to play the game of base ball under the Gateway Arch," Wicker said.

The players were not the only ones adorned in their finest vintage wear. Wicker explained how the two park rangers "were dressed in vintage clothing and had an exhibit of bats, jerseys, balls, (and) fliers all from the glory days of base ball."

"They talked to many tourists that stopped by to see the historical exhibit and learn more about the game of base ball in the early days," Wicker said.

Van Gogh added that "many engaged with conversation about the version of base ball, photo ops with anyone interested and it was a good day to share past time



# VBBA vendor spotlight



## COOPERSTOWN BAT COMPANY

Since 1981, Cooperstown Bat Company has specialized in game bats for play, custom personalized engravings and autographed bats. Their pro model bats are available for players of all levels from the beginner through to the Major Leagues. Cooperstown bat is being used in several MLB organizations, American Legion, Babe Ruth, travel team, and high school players.

Cooperstown Bat Company also makes various vintage base ball bats, including acorn, knobless, bottle bat and split grip (double knob). You can see their bats being turned at the company's factory location in Hartwick, just 15 minutes from Cooperstown. Don't forget when ordering to use your VBBA Member Code vbba1996 to get your 15% discount. Visit cooperstownbat.com for more information.



## JAMES COUNTRY MERCANTILE

James Country Mercantile started life in 1985 as James Country Muzzleloading, right in the heart of the area which bred and nurtured Frank and Jesse James. James Country Mercantile is now one of the largest sutleries in existence, offering a full line of historically accurate goods, custom sewing, research, consultation, and associated services. Don't forget when ordering to use your VBBA Member Code vbba1996 to get your 15% discount. Visit jamescountry.com for more information.



## K&P WEAVER

Since 1994, K & P Weaver, LLC features reproductions of historic vintage base ball uniforms of the 19th Century and early-20th Century, equipment and more. K & P uniforms, clothing and accessories can be found across the ballfields of America to historical landmarks and museums such as the

National Baseball Hall of Fame, Smithsonian Institution, MLB All-Star FanFest, and they've been seen in the HBO Documentaries "The Curse of the Bambino," "Hitler's Pawn," and films such as "Dummy Hoy" and "Cop Out."

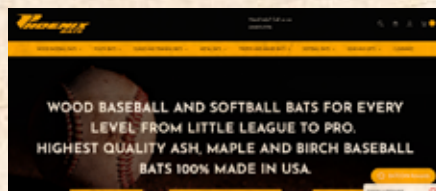
Member Code vbba1996 to get your 10% discount due to rising material costs for the purchase of team shirts, and knickers and trousers. Visit baseballamericaspastime.com for more information.



## STOCKBRIDGE SEWING WORKS

Stockbridge Sewing Works has all of your 19th century needs for hats and other sewing projects. Contact Norma Hildebrand to discuss hats, banners, and any other items she may be able to make for you. No head too big or too small. Fit and quality guaranteed. Hand crafted one at a time in the USA.

Don't forget when ordering to use your VBBA Member Code vbba1996 to get your 15% discount. Visit stockbridgesewingworks.com for more information.



## PHOENIX BAT COMPANY

Phoenix Bat Company has been crafting wood bats outside of Columbus, Ohio since 1996. Phoenix Bats starts by purchasing only pro-grade wood to deliver a quality bat to you and pros alike. Their bats are only made from American top-grade woods like rock maple, yellow birch and northern white ash. History and Background of Phoenix Bat Co. Founder and former owner Lefty Trudeau started playing 19th Century baseball for the Ohio Historical Society in 1991. In 1996, he was restoring old houses for a living and had a small wood shop. "The Historical Society knew my shop included an old lathe and they asked if I could make some bats typical of the 1860s," Trudeau recalled. "I agreed. Little did I expect how much I would have to learn or how much fun I would have. Not only did my team like the bats but the teams we were playing started asking me to make bats for them as well."

Don't forget when ordering to use your VBBA Member Code vbba1996 to get your 15% discount. Visit phoenixbats.com/vintage-bats for more information.



## 19TH CENTURY BASE BALL

19th Century Base Ball If you want to get the ball that started it all, then you want 19th Century Base Ball. Call Eric Miklich at 631-796-5200 or e-mail info@19cbaseball.com.

Said Ron Swoboda, star of the 1969 New York Mets, 19cBaseball.com is "truly a one-of-a-kind resource for in-depth information related to the history of our great sport. I encourage all baseball enthusiasts to visit the site to learn more about how the game really began. Don't forget when ordering to use your VBBA Member Code vbba1996 to get your 15% discount. Visit 19cBaseball.com for more information.



## USA SMACKER BATS

USA Smacker Bats makes all its bats by hand, not by machine.

"If a vintage ballist wants to be true to the time period of play, we are the company to use," proprietor Brian Carter says. Smacker Bats are handmade by craftsmen (including Carter) behind a lathe ... shaping, sanding, staining/ painting and striping the bats just like the originals back in the 1800s. With a quick turnaround between 1-2 weeks, these bats are all American, with all American tools and materials.

"We believe in quality of quantity," Carter says. Their pricing is competitive as well.

