

Village of Paw Paw

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ANNOUNCING: Paw Paw's Deadball Era Baseball Players, The Killefer Brothers, to be Honored by SABR

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HEADLINE: BASEBALL HISTORIANS TO HONOR PAW PAW'S PRE-1920'S BASEBALL PLAYERS, THE KILLEFER BROTHERS

Baseball historian Peter Morris and two writers for the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), Charles Weatherby and David Stalker, will come to Paw Paw to honor brothers who were a part of the deadball era of baseball – the pre-1920's. The brothers, William "Reindeer" Killefer and Wade "Red" Killefer entered the major leagues in 1907 and 1909 respectively. Their careers were notable. The Killefers will be the 10th and the 11th ballplayers from the era to be honored by SABR as a part of their Baseball Biography Project.

The dedication will be held as part of Paw Paw's Sesquicentennial Celebration – the Village's 150th birthday celebration August 7-8-9, 2009. The formal dedication will be held on Saturday August 8, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. at the Maple Lake Amphitheatre and Park downtown Paw Paw. The public is invited to the dedication.

Between 3:30-5:00 pm and following the dedication, the public may also attend an open house at the Village's Carnegie Center at 129 S. Kalamazoo Street. The historian and writes will be present as well as displays of historic photographs and artifacts of the Killefer brothers' careers, early baseball, and Paw Paw.

As a part of the sesquicentennial and in recognition of vintage baseball, The House of David Echoes will play the Paw Paw Corkers Sunday, August 9th at 6 pm at Tyler Field in Paw Paw. (*See ADD 7 below*).

Paw Paw's Sesquicentennial information may be found on line at www.pawpaw.net or by calling 657-5395.

ADD 1 – WILLIAM “REINDEER” KILLEFER

William Killefer (October 10, 1887 - July 3, 1960), nicknamed "Reindeer Bill", spent 52 years in baseball as a player, coach, manager and scout. His first game was 9-13-1909 and his last was 10-1-1921. He was an American catcher and manager in Major League Baseball who had a 12-year career for the St. Louis Browns, Philadelphia Phillies, and Chicago Cubs. He played for the 1915 Phillies team that lost to the Boston Red Sox in the World Series, and after the 1917 season, he was traded to the Cubs with Grover Cleveland Alexander for two players and \$55,000 in cash. In 1918 he played in another World Series, losing again to the Red Sox. He retired from playing at age 33 in 1921, becoming the manager of the Cubs shortly after. He was fired after 75 games in 1923, and after five years away from managing, he was hired by the Browns in 1930, with little success, never finishing above fifth place. His managerial record was 524-622 (.457) in nine seasons. He died at age 72 at the VA Hospital in Elsmere DE and is buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery in Paw Paw MI. More on line at: <http://bioproj.sabr.org/bioproj.cfm?a=v&v=l&bid=2580&pid=7496>. It is written by Charlie Weatherby.

ADD 2 – WADE “RED” KILLEFER

Red Killefer was born on Monday, April 13, 1885. Killefer was 22 years old when he broke into the big leagues on September 16, 1907, with the Detroit Tigers. He played seven years with the Tigers (1907-1909), the Senators (1909-1910) and the Reds (1914-16) and the Giants (1916). His first game was on 9-16-1907 and his last was on 8-19-1916. He died 9-4-1958 in Los Angeles, California. He attended University of Michigan and Purdue University. His career stats include 467 games, 1537 at bats, getting 381 hits and scoring 181 runs. He had 61 doubles and 16 triples in his career. Best year was with the Tigers (1910) when his batting average was .279. Not a power hitter, Red hit three home runs in his career. He was walked 128 times and struck out 59 times. His career batting average was .248, his On Base Percentage was .328 and his Slugging Percentage was .316. Red Killefer's biography is on line. It was written by Charlie Weatherly and at <http://bioproj.sabr.org/bioproj.cfm?a=v&v=l&bid=2642&pid=7497>

ADD 3 – SABR, BASEBALL BIOGRAPHY PROJECT

SABR's primary goal of the Baseball Biography Project is to enliven the people behind the statistical records that are so readily available. The Baseball Biography Project, writes, edits, and maintains high quality journal-length biographies of players who played in the major leagues, as well as any other person connected with baseball in a significant way. All biographies are written by members of the Society for American Baseball Research. All biographies have been reviewed for style and accuracy. They are still considered works in progress and will be updated as errors are discovered.

ADD 4 – PETER MORRIS

Peter Morris was born in Birmingham, England, but grew up in Toronto. Morris earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Toronto and a master's degree in English at Michigan State University, spending several years teaching writing and literature courses. Along the way he

became obsessed with competitive Scrabble, was runner-up in the 1988 National Scrabble championship, and then won the 1989 National Scrabble championship in New York City and then the first World Scrabble championship, which was held in London, England, in 1991. Academia lost its hold on Morris and he became fascinated by the history of early baseball, in the 1860s, '70s and '80s, when baseball went from a boy's diversion to a professional sport. His first book, Baseball Fever, was a detailed study of baseball in Michigan from the 1840s until 1875. His second book, the two-volume A Game of Inches, is an attempt to answer, one by one, how and why every element of baseball (from foul territory to the catcher's mask to free agency and the exploding scoreboard) originated. The next book, Level Playing Fields, came out of his conviction that groundskeepers were the unsung heroes of baseball history. His most recent book, But Didn't We Have Fun? returns to the period in *Baseball Fever*, but covers the whole country. His latest book, entitled Catcher: How the Man Behind the Plate Became an American Folk Hero, scheduled for publication in the spring of 2009. He does book signings and share my passion for baseball history. Morris has been a speaker at two annual conventions of the Vintage Base Ball Association, including giving the keynote address at the 2009 convention. **He spoke at a vintage baseball game at the Mary's City of David in Benton Harbor, Michigan, home of the barnstorming House of David baseball teams.** He has spoken at the past five annual conventions of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR).

ADD 5 – CHARLES WEATHERBY

Charles Weatherby: Is a writer with the SABR Biography project. He is a native of Delaware. Charlie Weatherby now lives in Novato, California with his wife Sara and their cat "Panther." He is a semi-retired social worker (going back to work ½ time for an adoption agency) who learned to write biographies by conducting adoption home studies. A lifelong Phillies fan who used to emulate Robin Roberts' delivery in front of a mirror, he spends his spare time following the San Francisco Giants and playing on four softball teams. He has a Masters Degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. As for his work as a baseball historian, he is a SABR member and has completed six biographies so far including Oscar Dungey, Bill Killefer, Red Killefer, Pat Paige, Bud Sharp, and one recently been completed.

ADD 6 – DAVID STALKER



Typical monument

The idea for the monuments came from David Stalker, a baseball historian from Watertown, Wis. Stalker, 48, has already been a part of creating numerous monuments to honor players from the dead-ball era (pre-1920). Stalker considers the Deadball Era the most exciting time of the National Pastime. Most are familiar with the names of Ty Cobb, Honus Wagner, Shoeless Joe Jackson, and Cy Young playing during this time, and Babe Ruth starting his career in this era. Stalker's goal with this monument project is to teach the public about the lesser known stars and players as well. Starting in the communities where, or near, the player was born, or where he played *Typical monument* prior to his major league career. Eliminate numbers, Stalker says, and all the players from this era are equal. They all played with, and against each other. Each one

has an interesting life and story, worth recording and remembering. This is a non-profit series. The monument company and Stalker donate their time. Funding comes from those that share my interest, often from the player's families. Stalker said the monuments are a way to commemorate some of the original American League teams as well as players of the era. "I find this information and, as an historian, it's my job to get it out to the public," Stalker said. "I putting up these monuments is a real good way to get the word out about this era."

ADD 7 - HOUSE OF DAVID ECHOES VS. PAW PAW CORKERS

The House of David "Echoes" vintage base ball club nine will play the Paw Paw "Corkers" in a Sunday late afternoon game at 6:00 p.m. at Tyler Field in Paw Paw. The Casco Band will provide period music before the game and period refreshments will be available. The Echoes are captained by Ron Taylor while the Corkers will be managed by former Detroit Tigers star and Paw Paw legend, Charlie "Two-Paws" Maxwell. Robert "Undertaker" Myers, curator at the History Center at Courthouse Square in Berrien Springs will serve as umpire. The 1858 rules base ball matches were played for fun and exercise. Under these rules, there are no gloves, balls may be caught on the first bounce, the pitcher cannot throw 'deceptive' pitches and the umpire may fine players and spectators for scratching, spitting or cursing.

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