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Collection 515
Harold N. “Bus” Saidt 1940-1998

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History

Harold Saidt, more commonly known as Bus, was a sports columnist, born and raised in Trenton where he attended Trenton Central High School from 1933 to 1937. During his time in high school, Saidt was part of the school's baseball team which led him to want to pursue a job involving the sport. Although he had not been skilled enough to continue playing the game professionally, he took his talents to sports writing. After graduating from TCHS, he attended Rider College and graduated to become an accountant while simultaneously writing for the *Trenton Times*. He covered all sports while also covering Trenton's professional club in the Interstate League.

He joined the Army Air Corps in 1942, and had been moved to Miami, Florida where he began his basic training. He became a cryptographer and maintained that job through World War II. While stationed in Algiers for about 3 years, the commanding officer encouraged the troops to partake in the North African GI League. They created a team consisting of MPs, medics and the troops to form a team called “The Lids”. His team won the league and created a radio network where he would broadcast the games. He found that many people enjoyed hearing the broadcast of the baseball games and he decided he wanted to become a broadcaster after he had stopped serving.

In 1946 he applied for a job as a sports director for WBUD in the Trenton area, where he gained a 15-minute show at 6 p.m. that lasted for 22 years until 1969. The broadcasting gig was new to the area so Saidt had to run everything on his own, and while admittedly being overworked, he still enjoyed the job. He got the opportunity to go to Florida and did daily interviews covering baseball and the Trenton Giants minor league team.

From 1951, Saidt auditioned for a multitude of broadcasting jobs for major league teams but had no luck. He had gotten very close to landing certain jobs but each company ended up choosing someone else over him. While still doing the radio show for WBUD, he landed a job at the *Trentonian* as a daily sports columnist for two-and-a-half years. In 1967, he got a job with the *Trenton Times* as a writer and columnist covering stories on the Yankees and Phillies and every World Series starting from 1946. In 1985, Saidt became a state winner for the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Awards (NSSA) as a sportswriter for the *Trenton Times*.

Saidt died in April 1989 at the age of 68 due to a heart attack. Columns were written about him and how his work ethic was loved by sports fans. He was known to tell the information as it was, not sugarcoating the performance of the players. He praised the great plays and reported the bad ones, fully capturing each element of the games. In 1992, Bus was inducted into the Trenton Baseball Hall of Fame and was awarded a J.G. Taylor Spink Award from the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1993.

Scope and Content Notes

This collection is a range of newspaper clippings, photographs and memorabilia of Bus Saidt's involvement in baseball and other sports from 1940 to 1993. Some news articles derive from the *Trentonian* or *Trenton Times* written by him and other writers. There are also letters from the Yankees, the Phillies, and the Boston American League either regarding press or responding to Saidt's letters. The collection is comprised of four series, I. Acknowledgments and Awards; II. Career; III. Memorabilia; IV. Photographs; and V. Objects.

The collection embarks on the accomplishments of Bus Saidt, both during his life and after his death. It recounts his work and how it impacted the hearts of the community, sports fans and other sports commentators in the area. This collection may also give insight on baseball topics and how teams and players were doing from the perspective of Saidt and colleagues alike.

Series Description

Series I. Acknowledgment and Awards

Soon after his death, many columnists wrote articles about Saidt and how he would be missed by sports fans. A blue binder entitled "Bus Memorial Articles" contains articles in magnetic scrapbook pages describing his driven work ethic and passion for the game of baseball. Many articles covered his death or included his obituary. His upbringing was described and all the things he managed to accomplish throughout his career. Some recurring names that wrote about Saidt were George King III and Harvey Yavener. They wrote about Saidt's articles and demeanor while at games, but they also how they mourned the loss of a friend. Some articles in the binder are by Saidt, including one about his first Christmas ever celebrated while in the military and in Miami. Other articles spoke about how he believed there was a need for more baseball games in the seasons and the Phillies' sideline problem. Some of the articles are not entirely about Saidt, only briefly mentioning him. [Preservation note: The magnetic pages with the articles were removed from the binder, and the binder discarded.]

Being a successful columnist, Saidt was fortunate to win awards for his work. In 1985 the NSSA listed Saidt as a State Winner for New Jersey sportswriter representing the *Trenton Times*. The award was announced at Salisbury, North Carolina and the award is printed in the NSSA booklet with various sports players drawn on the cover. Saidt saw further acknowledgment in The Trenton City Museum Exhibition and Symposia held on May 7, 1995. The Symposia gathered various excerpts, written by various credited people, about the history of baseball in Trenton. One excerpt by the author Dr. Robert C. Cole in "When Trenton Baseball Roared Like Thunder, The History of Pro Ball in Trenton" listed Saidt as one of the five people who contributed to baseball in Trenton. Saidt was also a co-winner for the J.G. Taylor Spink Award alongside Leonard Koppett. His award was announced in *The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum Memories and Dreams* newsletter, Vol. 15, No. 2, describing his career as an accountant by day and sportswriter by night. Articles from 1993 talk about his induction into the Hall of Fame. Reggie Jackson of the Yankees who was also inducted into the Hall of Fame, spoke at the Ceremony Saidt as a writer he enjoyed being around.

Series II. Career

Being a sports columnist, Saidt got the chance to write for *Baseball Magazine* twice, once in August of 1979 and the second time the following year in April. In first magazine, the article follows Philadelphia Phillies players Pete Rose and Larry Bowa with their hopes to win the World Series. The 1980 article titled "Pete Rose Player of the Decade" entails the reasons why Rose was voted the Player of the Decade for the 1970s and the talents he possessed.

Saidt received many letters replying to messages he had sent out, including some from Mel Allen at the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Yankees Vice President, George M. Weiss. The letter from Weiss rejected the possibility of their organization operating the Trenton Club and making any Minor League commitments. Another letter from the Boston American League Baseball Company also rejected the addition of any farm clubs due to having a military situation that was making it impossible for the company to do so. Two programs from the 1957 Escit reception for coaches and sports directors can be found in the flat box [letters in flat box are adhered to oversized scrapbook pages].

In an unpublished book titled *Baseball Lives* by Mike Bryan, Saidt wrote about how he got into sports broadcasting and became a sports writer for the *Trenton Times*, seeing 180 baseball games for the Yankees, Mets, and Phillies. He also described how the job of a columnist revealed the "men from the boys" and whether they were "a good columnist or just a columnist working at a job." He called out the problems he saw within the world of baseball regarding George Steinbrenner, old columnists and young writers.

Having to attend so many baseball games as a sports columnist, he acquired many press passes and press kits for these games. He was issued news and cameraman's vehicle cards by the State of New Jersey's Police Department in 1988 to represent the *Trenton Times* to gather details for his stories. In the same year, Bus obtained an official parking pass for lot #14 for a Yankees game. Another pass Bus received was a working media pass granting him access to the press box, field interview room and the clubhouse for the 1986 World Series, attending games three, four and five. He also gathered a sum of letters from Robert Rolfe and Bowie K. Kuhn, the Baseball Commissioner, complimenting Saidt's work. There is also a *Major League Baseball*

Newsletter, Vol. 7, No. 5, from July, 1993 issuing all of the major stories involving baseball, the players and the schedule for future games. He also had kept a Trenton Packers official score card from 1943, that was set to track the game between Trenton Thunder and the Phillies. He also had a Phillies' press kit for the 47th All Star Classic.

Although Saidt mostly stuck to writing columns for baseball and football, he had received a letter from Mable Cooper in October of 1981 writing about basketball. The letter explains that information was sent to the executive of the Boston Celtics team from her father, Fred Cooper. Two reproduction photos of the Trenton basketball team from the years 1896-1897 and 1898-1899 when they were the National League champions. There is also a drawing of Fred Cooper and Al Bratton, two professional basketball players for Trenton with the history of the team, 1896-1946 and some of those who played in the Masonic Temple Hall.

Throughout his career, Saidt wrote many articles about sports ranging from the MLB, NFL or smaller leagues in the New Jersey area. His earliest articles are from 1972 and go as late as 1975. Some articles recount stories from when he was serving in the military with one about the time he was wounded. He also wrote about trades that baseball teams may or may not have been interested in, speaking of players such as Reggie Jackson, Dick Allen, and Roy White in his article for December 1st, 1974. All the articles are in a yellow envelope from *The Times* labeled "Various Articles."

Series III. Memorabilia

This series contains three Chicago Cubs 1989 scorecards for games between the Cubs and the Phillies. Saidt wrote out the players and the scoring for all nine innings for each game, also writing the temperature for that day at the top left corner of each scorecard along with the wind speed and direction.

With Saidt having gotten the chance to visit Florida to follow the Trenton Giants' training, a caricature was made of him running in a baseball uniform with a notepad and pencil in hand, and a baseball cap that read "spring training." There is also a larger portrait painted of him from Hamilton Elks with "To Bus Saidt with many thanks and Best Wishes" that was gifted to him on February 18, 1973. The painting is located in the flat box.

Series IV. Photographs

This series contains photographs that were captured of Saidt through his career, him speaking to a variety of baseball players, at conferences or speaking at games, and with people such as Bowie Kuhn, Ted Williams, Edwin Moses, Robert Clemente, and Bill Bradley. Two smaller photos are of Saidt playing baseball for "The Lids " and another is of him in a folding chair on a baseball field. Most are in black and white, but a few are in color. There is also a photograph from *The Plain Dealer* of Ohio of the 1929 Standard Fire baseball team with the names of the players written on the back and a photo of a Yankees player from 1936 from Red Rolfe.

Mounted photographs include the Spink Award exhibit in 1992, with Bowie Kuhn at a banquet where he spoke about the politics and economics of sports, a portrait taken when he was working for the *Trenton State Gazette*, and a billboard with his name on it while working at the *Trenton Times*. These are located in the flat box.

Series V. Objects

In 1993 Saidt was inducted posthumously into the Trenton Baseball Hall of Fame, and a plaque was presented on June 18, 1994 by the Trenton Thunder Baseball Club.

Container List

Box/ Folder/ Title

Series I. Acknowledgment and Awards

1/ 1 / Memorial Articles

1/ 2 / Hall of Fame

Series II. Career

1/ 3 / Baseball Magazine Articles

1/ 4 / Baseball Lives Chapter

1/ 5 / Baseball Ephemera

1/ 6 / Trenton Pro Basketball

1/ 7 / Trenton Times Articles

Flat box, Letters [from scrapbook]

Series III. Memorabilia

1/ 8 / Scorecards

1/ 9 / Drawings

Series IV. Photographs

1/ 10 / Photographs

Flat box, Mounted Photographs

Series V. Objects

Flat box, Trenton Hall of Fame Plaque

Flat box, Painting