

**“The Ruthian News”**  
**BabeRuthCentral’s eNewsletter**  
**BabeRuthCentral.com: The Site That Ruth Built**  
**Babe-Related News: Volume 2, Issue 2 – Fall 2008**

BRC hopes everyone has enjoyed their summer and are ready for Fall Baseball! Welcome to the latest issue of the companion e-newsletter to the BabeRuthCentral.com website. We hope you enjoy this issue. If you like our website or newsletter, we ask that you let your friends know ([www.BabeRuthCentral.com/TellAFriend](http://www.BabeRuthCentral.com/TellAFriend)).

**THIS ISSUE’S FEATURES:**

"Report": 2008 Babe Ruth Home Run Award; Ruth family trip to “The House That Ruth Built.”  
"Report, Part 2": Ruth family also returns to site of Babe’s visit to sick little Johnny Sylvester.  
“Heard From a Fan”: Documentary coming on Babe’s First Professional Team  
“News”: Julia Ruth Stevens co-writes Babe’s newest book, “Babe Ruth”.

**QUICK BRC INFO:**

"Announcements" – Opening the Ruth Family Memorabilia Vault – New Membership Content Coming Soon!  
"What's New Now" – BRC Grandstand now regularly adding Babe Ruth News  
"Coming Up at BRC" – What’s on the horizon at BabeRuthCentral.com.  
“The Ruthian Archives” – Read prior editions of “The Ruthian News."

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**"Report": 2008 Babe Ruth Home Run Award; the Ruth Family trip to “House That Ruth Built.”**

This past summer, three generations of the Ruth family visited the “House That Ruth Built”.

On June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Ruth’s daughter (Julia Ruth Stevens), grandson (Tom Stevens) and two of his great-grand children (Brent and Amanda Stevens) appeared at Yankee Stadium to present Alex Rodriguez with the 2008 Babe Ruth Home Run Award. Alex received the award for hitting the most home runs in the Major Leagues in the 2007 season (54). "It was very nice," Rodriguez said of being presented the award by the Ruth family. "It's one of my favorite awards. It's really something that I treasure."

This was a momentous day for the Ruth family. An opportunity not only to present the great Babe Ruth award to A-Rod, but also an opportunity to pay respects to the Stadium where the Babe made his mark in Baseball and American History. You see, this will be the final year for the “House That Ruth Built.”

A little history on Yankee Stadium: Prior to Yankee Stadium, the Yankees play at the Polo Grounds, which they shared with its owner, the New York Giants. In the early 1920s, the Yankees, thanks in good part to the Babe, were really beginning to attract a lot of attention and interest from New York Baseball fans. In 1920, the Yankees attracted 1.3 million fans to ballpark, outdrawing the New York Giants. This didn't sit well with the Giants and as a result, they threatened to evict their Yankee tenants. Yankees owner, Colonel Rupert, utilizing his newly-found wealth from a large increase in fan attendance at games, decided to build his own ballpark. The average park at that time normally sat 30,000 fans. The plan for Yankee Stadium was 60,000, with a bill of \$2.5 million, an astronomical cost at that time. When asked how they could justify paying that price tag and doubling the size of the park, owners Colonel Huston and Colonel Ruppert answered, "Babe Ruth."

Yankee Stadium opened to the public on April 18, 1923. It was a game between the Yankees and the Boston Red Sox (how fitting!) with an attendance number that established a new one-game record. According to Babe's daughter, Julia, hitting a home run on opening day was one of Babe's biggest goals in his life up to that point – "More than anything he wanted to be the first a home run out of Yankee Stadium." In the third inning, Babe got his wish, driving in "Whitey" Witt and Joe Dugan. The Yanks went on to beat the Red Sox 4-1. Shortly thereafter, Fred Lieb, sportswriter for the New York Evening Telegram referred to the stadium as "The House That Ruth Built" given the great fan-drawing power that Ruth provided to the Yankee organization. The name stuck and Yankee Stadium has also been recognized as "The House That Ruth Built" ever since. With the end of the 2008 season in sight, the doors of the current Yankee Stadium will be closed forever more, with the new Stadium ready to open in 2009.

The Ruth-Stevens family participates annually in giving out the Babe Ruth Home Run Award for the major league home run leader in the previous season. It's only fitting that in this "Final Season" a Yankee is the recipient. The Yankees were pleased to ask Babe's only surviving daughter, Julia Ruth Stevens, her son, Tom, and grandchildren, Brent and Amanda, to join them in recognizing Alex Rodriguez as well as the last year of Ruth's "House". Julia, 92, commented, "I wasn't sure that I'd be able to sit in Yankee Stadium again." Up to this point, Julia has spent half of the year in New Hampshire and the other half in Arizona: "This is my last trip east and I'm just thrilled to be here again to see where Daddy called his second home. He felt like it was his second home. He loved Yankee Stadium and he loved coming here every day to play ball." When asked about how she feels about shutting down Yankee Stadium, Julia responds that she's sad to see the ballpark go, but "Time moves on," she said. "If that's the case, then so be it." Would she like a keepsake from the Stadium when it's torn down: "Well, a seat would be one of them, but I don't know where I would put it in my little place in Arizona," Julia Ruth Stevens said. "If there was any bricks or anything around anywhere, I'd love to have one of those."

The picture below shows three generations of the Ruth family with Alex Rodriguez during the awards ceremony (Julia Ruth, Babe's grandson Tom and great grandchildren Brent and Amanda):



The family had the opportunity to meet a few other Yankee stars including catcher Jorge Posada and outfielder Johnny Damon (click here to view pictures of the event: [baberruthcentral.com/photos/slideshow\\_sitebraward2008.html](http://baberruthcentral.com/photos/slideshow_sitebraward2008.html)). They also met manager Joe Girardi who commented, “My son is 6 years old and he’s a HUGE Babe Ruth fan. He’s got 3 pictures of 4 Yankees on the walls of his bedroom: Alex Rodriguez, a picture of David Cone and I hugging after Cone’s perfect game and then a picture of Babe Ruth.” Then he asked Julia, “After you give Alex the award do you mind going over to the seats next to the dugout and saying hello to my son?” Of course, Julia happily fulfilled the request for the young Ruth fan. Babe would have been pleased!

To view articles of the event visit the BabeRuthCentral “Grandstand”: [baberruthgrandstand.com](http://baberruthgrandstand.com).

To learn more about the history of the “House That Ruth Built” visit the “Legacies” section of BabeRuthCentral: [baberruthcentral.com/legacies](http://baberruthcentral.com/legacies)

This was initially expected to be Julia’s final visit to the Stadium; however, since this trip, the Ruth family has been asked to return for the Yankee’s final home game. More on this to come in the next Ruthian News!

### **"Report, Part 2": Ruth family also returns to site of Babe’s visit to sick little Johnny Sylvester.**

The Ruth Family trip to New York in June was a busy one. They also were also invited to Essex Fells, NJ for a special plaque commemoration. The plaque, which is located at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Essex Fells, marks the site of where the Sylvester home once stood. This was the home of a sick 11-year old boy, named Johnny, who lay in bed terminally ill during the 1926 baseball season. During the 1926 World Series against the St. Louis Cardinals, Babe

promised, through his signature on a ball for the boy, that he would hit a home run for him in the next game of the World Series. Babe ended up hitting 3 home runs in the next game. After the Yankees lost the series, Babe surprised Johnny by appearing at his home in Essex Fells to try and cheer up his little friend. The visit ended up making national news (see a sample article from the visit). Most significantly, Johnny, who was not expected to live, did recover and found his own successes in life. Johnny strongly attributed his amazing recovery to the Babe's visit.

The plaque recognizing this very special event was conceptualized by Charlie Poekel Jr, Esq., author of "Babe and The Kid", a book that details and reflects on the Babe's visit to Johnny Sylvester and the special relationship these two shared (click here if interested in learning more or purchasing the book [LINK](#)). The ceremony had close to 100 spectators from the area and included presentations from Charles Poekel, Julia Ruth Stevens, Johnny's son Johnny Sylvester Jr., Ed Abbot, mayor of Essex Fells, as well as the reading of a letter of recognition from the Governor of New Jersey, Jon Corzine (View the letter here: [baberruthcentral.com/newsletter/JSylvester Letter.pdf](http://baberruthcentral.com/newsletter/JSylvester%20Letter.pdf)).

INSERT PICTURE

Julia commented, "It's a pleasure to be here with everyone to commemorate this plaque that recognized a special day for Daddy." You can tell from the faces of the spectators that they were very pleased to have the Ruth Family in town for their special event. The day was concluded with dinner at a local restaurant where Babe had actually frequented and stayed many times while in town for golf matches.

Purchase Charlie Poekel's book, "Babe and The Kid." ([baberruthcentral.com/stuff](http://baberruthcentral.com/stuff))

To learn more about this story, you can listen to BRC's interview with Charlie Poekel. ([baberruthcentral.com/voices](http://baberruthcentral.com/voices))

### **Heard From a Fan: Documentary Coming Soon on Babe's First Team**

Here's a note from BRC fan, Stephen from Baltimore:

*Hi from Baltimore,*

*Enjoy the newsletter that you send out.*

*Could you post some news about Babe's first pro team he played on? The team was the International League Baltimore Orioles, where Babe went in 1914 out of St. Mary's Industrial school. Coming later this summer 2008 the story of the minor league Orioles, "The Forgotten Birds." Go to the documentary movie website at [www.forgottenbirds.com](http://www.forgottenbirds.com). Appreciate it!*

*Stephen*

*FYI, Jack Dunn the 4th lives in East Baltimore.*

Thanks for letter Stephen, although we reference Jack Dunn and the Orioles in BabeRuthCentral's Bio section ([baberuthcentral.com/bio](http://baberuthcentral.com/bio)), we don't have a ton of detail. Perhaps we can get some new info to add from the upcoming documentary movie. Thanks for the note on Jack Dunn's ancestor – at some point we'll find a way to connect with him!

Your Friends at BRC

**“News”: Julia Ruth Stevens co-writes Babe's newest book, “Babe Ruth”.**

Julia Ruth Stevens is teaming up with author Bill Gilbert for another book on the Babe. Bill Gilbert, a former report for the Washington Post, is the bestselling author of 19 books, including six on baseball. Julia and Bill previously teamed up to write, “Major League Dad: A Daughter's Cherished Memories” (see the book description in Section 13: Books).

Bill and Julia have brought it to a new level with this most recent release, “Babe Ruth”. The book goes into some interesting details regarding the life and times of the Babe. What really makes this book unique are the less-seen photos of the Babe and the cool concept of inserting envelopes that include reproductions of memorabilia and mementos that tell additional aspects of Babe's story. Reproductions include souvenir programs, World Series tickets, articles and more. Here's the description on Amazon:

*The Bambino . . . The Sultan of Swat . . . The Colossus of Clout . . . Babe Ruth is widely regarded as the #1 baseball player of all time. His contribution to the sport simply can't be overstated: Largely responsible for bringing baseball to its current level of popularity, Ruth changed the game from a low-scoring, speed-dominated sport to the high-scoring, power-hitting baseball we see today. Larger than life in his own time, the Babe continues to be a legendary figure in ours.*

*Babe Ruth is the ultimate book for any true baseball fan, telling the story of his groundbreaking career as well as memorable tales from his often-colorful life off the field. Featuring a winning line-up of rare and never-before-published photographs, the book also includes pull-out facsimile reproductions of memorabilia such as World Series tickets from 1916 to 1932; newspaper articles chronicling the Babe's record-breaking achievements; the official souvenir program from opening day at Yankee Stadium in 1923; and Babe Ruth's first professional baseball contract.*

*A glorious memento of an incredible career, Babe Ruth is a fitting tribute to one of the 20th century's towering personalities.*

“Babe Ruth” will be available nationally in late September, but you can pre-order your copy now. [www.baberuthcentral.com/stuff](http://www.baberuthcentral.com/stuff)

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"Announcements" - Opening the Ruth Family Memorabilia Vault – New Membership Content Coming Soon!

A small treasure trove of Babe Ruth memorabilia has recently been discovered in the attic of the Ruth-Stevens family home. A suitcase containing items from the home of Babe and wife Claire's home on Riverside Drive in New York City was opened for the first time since it was packed up after Claire's passing in 1976. With special agreement from the family, BabeRuthCentral has been granted the opportunity to exclusively display select pieces of memorabilia from this collection, to be shown to the public for the first time through our site! They will be released to the site on a periodic basis over the course of the next year. Items include business agreements, a player agreement, artifacts from Babe's trip to Japan, some very special telegrams to Claire regarding Babe Ruth Day in 1949, a year after Babe's passing and a lot more interesting stuff!

But, this unique opportunity is only available to subscribers to BabeRuthCentral's membership section, Fans' Dugout ([www.baberuthcentral.com/members](http://www.baberuthcentral.com/members)). A BabeRuthCentral membership requires a one-time fee of \$24.95 and includes the following: an exclusive Fans' Dugout t-shirt with a full-color design screenprinted on a 100% cotton Hanes Beefy-T; 4"x6" automotive-grade "BRC" oval bumper sticker, with the site's web address and tagline ("The Site That Ruth Built"); specially-created BabeRuthCentral Bic WideBody pen; and, a durable Fans' Dugout refrigerator magnet.

It's hard to pass up this unique opportunity to obtain exclusive access to this museum-style content and show your pride in being a big Babe Ruth fan. Join the Fans' Dugout today! ([www.baberuthcentral.com/members](http://www.baberuthcentral.com/members)) Members-only items will start being released later this month.

#### "What's New Now"

To ensure BRC fans are getting regular updates and current news related to Babe Ruth, we've decided to repurpose our Community section ([www.baberuthgrandstand.com](http://www.baberuthgrandstand.com)). We'll be regularly posting news clips, articles and general updates so you'll have the latest news and information related to the Babe. We'd love your contributions as well. Feel free to post your own research or discovered news on the Babe ([www.baberuthgrandstand.com](http://www.baberuthgrandstand.com)).

#### "Coming Up at BRC"

We've received a good share of letters with comments, questions and stories from Babe and BRC fans. We'll also begin posting those contributions and feedback to Community ([baberuthgrandstand.com](http://www.baberuthgrandstand.com)) in the near future.

#### "The Ruthian Archives"

Don't forget that prior editions of "The Ruthian News" are available on BabeRuthCentral.com. You can read past stories here: <http://baberuthcentral.com/Newsletter.asp#Archives>.