

**“The Ruthian News”**  
**BabeRuthCentral’s eNewsletter**  
**BabeRuthCentral.com: The Site That Ruth Built**  
**Babe-Related News: Volume 3, Issue 1 – Summer 2009**

*Hey BRC Fans! We know it's been awhile since our last newsletter. Life has been crazy, personally, for the BRC staff. Next thing you know, we're at the All Star break for 2009. Where does the time go? The good news is that we've got some good stuff to share that's been saved up over the past months. So, here's the next issue of The Ruthian News! If you like our website or newsletter, we ask that you let your friends know: [Tell a friend.](#)*

**THIS ISSUE’S FEATURES:**

"Report": The Ruth family’s final trip to the “House That Ruth Built.”

"Report, Part 2": Baseball and Babe Ruth author and historian, Bill Jenkinson, shares his thoughts and research on the Babe regarding race relations.

“Heard From a Fan”: A Ruth fan who owns one of Babe’s prized vehicles shares a picture of Babe’s car and his story of meeting Babe’s daughter, Julia Ruth Stevens.

“Heard From a Fan, Part 2”: A Ruth fan shares his story and thoughts of the Babe.

**QUICK BRC INFO:**

"What's New Now" – The Babe Ruth Suitcase – what BRC has shared thus far with its members.

"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": THE LAST VISIT TO HOUSE THAT RUTH BUILT**

2008 was the final season for Yankee Stadium. On September 21, 2008, Yankee fans experienced their last game in the ballpark known by fans the world over as “The House That Ruth Built.”

The final home game for the Yankees was on 9/21 and included a pre-game ceremony that celebrated the history of the great stadium with a focus on many of its greatest players. The ceremony gave a special acknowledgement to the 1923 Yankee team, the first to play in the “new” stadium. The Yankees then proceeded through 85 years of Yankee greats that have played in the stadium, some of which participated in the event by going out to the field to represent the position they played during their career. Some of participants included Ron Guidry, Wade Boggs, Goose Gossage, “Moose” Skowron, Whitey Ford, Willie Randolph, Dave Winfield, Don Larsen, David Wells, Paul O’Neil, Reggie Jackson as well as the relatives of Mickey Mantle,

Roger Maris, Billy Martin, Bobby Murcer, Thurman Munson, Elston Howard and of course, Babe Ruth.

In fact, the Ruth Family had the ultimate tribute. Babe's Daughter, Julia Ruth Stevens, had the opportunity to throw out the last ceremonial first pitch in Yankee Stadium. It's only fitting that Babe's daughter would throw out the last pitch in "his" house. Given that she's 92, she did an excellent job! To view the first pitch ceremony, go to the following URL:

[www.baberuthcentral.com/grandstand/?p=17](http://www.baberuthcentral.com/grandstand/?p=17)

## **"Report, Part 2": *BABE RUTH AND THE ISSUE OF RACE***

Having written a book about Babe Ruth in 2007, I receive many questions about the Bambino and his extraordinary life. One of the greatest areas of interest centers on how the Babe interacted with the African-American community. In this matter, modern fans perceive Ruth inaccurately in two ways. They believe that he did not compete against the best Black players of that era, and they think that he did not enjoy a positive relationship with the general African-American population. Both of those beliefs are false.

Admittedly, it is difficult for any Ruthian scholar to definitively understand the exact evolution of Babe's feelings about race. My personal judgment is that there was none. In keeping with his uncommonly natural persona, I believe that Ruth was simply "color blind" in the matter of race. In other words, I suspect that George Herman Ruth was born with literally no innate biases toward anyone. That's just the way he was. Babe was certainly exposed to racial prejudice. Remember that Ruth was born in a tough waterfront section of Baltimore, Maryland in 1895. That was just three decades after Abraham Lincoln had to travel secretly through the same city on his way to being inaugurated in Washington, D.C. Lincoln's anti-slavery platform was considered too volatile to allow safe passage below the Mason Dixon line. We must assume, therefore, that young Ruth realized that some white folks just didn't like black people. However, it seems to have had no effect on his remarkably free spirit.

We have no clear data on the matter for the first twenty-three years of Babe's life. But, in 1918, when Ruth was rapidly rising to the top of the baseball world, there was an event that contributed to the eventual desegregation of the National Pastime. Prior to that year, Ruth had been "merely" a great pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. However, due to the man-power shortage caused by World War One, Babe started playing in the field on days when he wasn't pitching. The result was an American League lead-tying total of eleven home runs, which instantly set Ruth apart from all other players. Babe then led the Red Sox to the World Series championship, which concluded early because of the shortened schedule.

At that same time, the Cuban Stars from Havana were completing a successful tour of the United States. They had won thirty of thirty-two contests against mostly white semi-pro and Minor League teams. Owner George Weiss of the Eastern League New Haven Colonials arranged for them to come to Lighthouse Field in the Elm City on Sunday, September 14, 1918. Weiss was even more familiar with Ruth than most Americans, since he had lured Babe and the Red Sox into a Sunday "off day" appearance in New Haven on August 18, 1918. On that occasion, Ruth

had smashed the stadium's longest-ever home run with an epic blow over the woman's bath house in distant right centerfield.

So, when Weiss realized that his team was outclassed by the soon-to-arrive Cubans, he put in a call to Babe Ruth, who was resting in Boston after the just-ended World Series. The *New Haven Register* said this about Ruth's status at that time: "He is truly the miracle player of baseball." It added that Ruth was: "unquestionably the biggest baseball sensation of the year." When Weiss extended the invitation for Ruth to return to New Haven to play the "ebony skinned" Cubans, Babe "jumped at the opportunity." Predictably, the Stars whipped the Colonials handily, but Ruth provided the only bright light in the 5-1 defeat with a mammoth homer beyond the flagpole in left centerfield. I believe, however, that the day's events transcended sports.

At that moment, Babe Ruth was in the process of supplanting Ty Cobb (a well-known racist) as the preeminent baseball player in America. When he unhesitatingly agreed to take the field against performers of African descent, he sent a powerful signal that could not be ignored. As was usually the case in whatever he did, Ruth kept moving forward in the matter of race relations. After being sold to the New York Yankees in 1920, Babe took the final step in becoming baseball's unquestioned kingpin by walloping fifty-four homers. That was an astounding accomplishment for that era. When the season ended, Ruth received hundreds of invitations to barnstorm anywhere he wanted to go. Of the approximately fifteen games that Babe selected, five were against so-called Negro League teams. Ruth then sailed to Cuba, where he joined John McGraw's Giants to play nine more contests versus a combination of Latino and Negro ballplayers. Again, the message was clear: if the sports' transcendent figure played without reservation against Black ballplayers, why shouldn't everyone else?

To read the full, in-depth article by Bill Jenkinson, please visit the BRC Grandstand (link: [www.baberuthcentral.com/grandstand](http://www.baberuthcentral.com/grandstand))

### **Heard From a Fan: A Babe Ruth fan that owns Babe's car!**

The vehicle, once owned by Babe Ruth was a Pierce Arrow, one of the more luxurious vehicles made during the 1910s and 20s. In fact, it was official car of the White House for most presidents during this time.

Here's a note from car owner, Stan:

*"I met Julia Ruth Stevens in Jamestown NY. I don't know what year she was here, but it probably had to do with the 13 year old Babe Ruth League World Series. My uncle Les Ostrander owned the car that once belonged to Babe Ruth, and he was their greatest supporter in that area. I now have the car and want to carry on his legacy of making it known and used by baseball fans everywhere.*

*"Here's a picture of Julia (Babe's daughter) with the Pierce."*



Thanks for sharing Stan. Great to know such an important piece of Babe memorabilia still exists!

**“Heard From a Fan, Part 2”: A Ruth fan shares his story and thoughts of the Babe.**

Here’s a note from Babe fan, Bill:

*“I was 6 years old and lived in White Plains, NY. One of my friends in the neighborhood gave me a major league baseball, but at that time I didn’t realize what a big deal a Major League ball was, especially since my Dad had just returned from the war. My aunt lived with us as she had recently separated from the USN. She was a lieutenant and had received her nursing certification from the French Hospital in New York City, where she continued to work after the war.*

She attended to Babe Ruth during his hospital stay at "French" during which time she took my new MLB baseball to the "Babe" for his autograph. I’ve treasured this ball for 62 years and finally passed it along to my son. Often were the days that I, as a Little League coach in New York, brought the ball to games so my students of the "Great American Pastime" could partake of good luck from the Babe. It was always exciting to me to know that the kids, generations removed from the Babe, are still very much attuned to this great American sports legend, and it always brings me back to my youth and my love of the game. My son approaches his 30th year and loves the game more than anyone I know. His Babe Ruth ball is his living legend!”

Thanks to Stan and Bill for sharing their Babe Ruth stories with BRC. We love getting and sharing these stories with other BRC/Babe Ruth fans, so please keep them coming!

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**"What's New Now"**

***Babe Ruth Inspirations Tshirts now selling at Babe Ruth Museum and Sports Legends at Camden Station in Baltimore, MD.***

BRGoods now has a Brick and Mortar partner for the Babe Ruth Inspirations Tshirt line and sales are good! The Babe Ruth Inspirations Tshirt line is based on Babe Ruth's most popular and motivational quotes, including: "Never Let The Fear Of Striking Out Get In Your Way", "Every Strike Brings Me Closer To My Next Home Run", "I Swing Big With Everything I Got. I Hit Big Or I Miss Big. I Like To Live As Big As I Can".



BRGoods is happy to offer the Babe Ruth Inspirations Tshirt line, which captures this famous quote on the front of the shirt. On the back is an image of a signed photo of the Babe, which is a part of the Ruth Family Collection to this day. Get your own Babe Ruth Inspirations Shirt today at [www.BRGoods.com](http://www.BRGoods.com)!

### **The Babe Ruth Suitcase – what BRC has shared thus far with its members.**

A small treasure trove of Babe Ruth memorabilia was discovered in the attic of the Ruth-Stevens family home last year. 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! The pieces are being released to the site on a periodic basis.

Here's what we've shared thus far:

- **Babe's Agreement Document With The Braves:** This is a very rare and interesting piece of family-owned memorabilia. It's an agreement between Babe Ruth and Emil Fuchs, President and owner of the National League Boston Braves. The agreement lists the terms upon which Babe Ruth will join the Boston Braves for the 1935 baseball season. The contract was dated February 28th, 1935 and signed by both Babe (with his formal name, "George Herman Ruth") and Emil Fuchs.
- **Ball Club Western Union Telegrams to Claire:** This is a 2-part feature of Western Union telegrams to Babe's widow Claire from various ball clubs throughout the country. The occasion was the first Babe Ruth Day in baseball after Babe's passing and owners and managers payed their respects to the Babe through messages to Claire.

- Settlement Statement For Helen's Estate: For BRC members only, we are also sharing the settlement statement from the estate of Helen Woodford, Babe's first wife. Helen tragically passed away in a house fire in 1929.
- Family Collection of News Clippings: We also offer a collection of great, rare news clippings related to some of the Babe's most significant home runs - #700, the game where he hit his last 3 home runs, 20th anniversary event of Babe's first Major League home run, as well as one that acknowledges Babe setting the Major League home run record with 31.
- Bank Statements and Cancelled checks from Babe's bank accounts: A couple small, hidden gems that the Ruth family found were cancelled checks from 2 separate banks - Chase National Bank (1947) and Chemical Bank & Trust Company (1934). In addition, the family discovered one of Babe's account statements from Chase National Bank.
- Letter of Agreement for Spalding Radio Spot: Babe did a lot of sports radio shows. The shows were usually endorsed by a particular company and Spalding was a regular sponsor that Babe worked with. Attached is one of those letters of agreement between Ruth and Spalding.
- And more to come!

The unique opportunity to view this special content and memorabilia is only available to subscribers to BabeRuthCentral's membership section, Fans' Dugout LINK. 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! LINK  
Another release of members-only items will be coming later this fall!

### **"Coming Up at BRC"**

The "Interviews" section of BRC includes interviews from sportswriters, authors and even baseball players that knew the Babe personally. There are additional interview clips that we have shared with BRC fans, and we're getting ready to release them! New clips include interviews with Julia Ruth Stevens, Babe's daughter, notable sports announcer, Ernie Harwell and others. Expect the new interview clips sometime this fall!

### **"The Ruthian Archives"**

Don't forget that prior editions of "The Ruthian News" are available on BabeRuthCentral.com. You can read past stories here: [LINK](#)