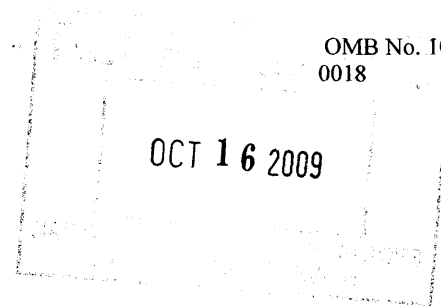


(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

954



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Engel Stadium

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number O'Neal Street and East Third Street

N/A  not for publication

city or town Chattanooga

N/A  vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Hamilton code 065 zip code 37403

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

E. Patrick M. Inty, Jr.

October 8, 2009

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

James A. [Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

11/19/2009

Engel Stadium  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> private                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local            | <input type="checkbox"/> district               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal          | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION: Baseball

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION: Baseball

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century baseball stadium

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick, concrete, steel

roof Steel, wood

other Glass

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Attached Sheets.

Engel Stadium  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1929-1965

**Significant Dates**

1929-1930: Construction of Engel Stadium

1965: Lookouts baseball ceases for 12 year period

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Engel, William Joseph

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Gauntt, James G. - Architect

Rogers & Leventhal - Builders

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library

Engel Stadium  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 6 acres Chattanooga, TN 105 SE

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>656274</u>	<u>3879418</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Paul Archambault/Historic Preservation Planner  
organization Southeast Tennessee Development District date June 2009  
street & number 1000 Riverfront Parkway telephone 423-424-4266  
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37402

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name University of Tennessee c/o Dr. Richard Brown, Vice-Chancellor UTC  
street & number 615 McCallie Avenue (101 Founders Dept 5605) telephone (423) 425-4393  
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37403

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN**VII. Description**

Engel Stadium, built in 1929-1930, is located at the corner of E. Third Street and O'Neal Street in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee. The façade is covered with brick and has green metal roofing along the perimeter of the grandstand and main entrance roof. It is located on a 6 acre parcel, located west of CSX rail lines. Concrete and steel grandstands with wood and plastic seats flank the base paths. Brick and concrete walls enclose the baseball field, which stretches north along O'Neal Street, east along East Third Street (left and centerfield), and south along the CSX property line (right field wall). The roof of the stadium is flat and has a press box that overlooks the field. The surrounding property includes two parking lots with lights and intramural fields for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to the south of the property. The main entrance to the property features a sidewalk, concrete bench, a "Historic Engel Stadium" sign, and mature trees lining O'Neal Street and the primary driveway into the property. Engel Stadium retains the majority of its original materials and has a high level of integrity.

The primary entrance of the stadium faces southwest on O'Neal Street. It is accessed by a sidewalk and a spacious concrete reception area. It features the main wrought iron gated entrance, which is covered by a triangular shaped flat roof with a green metal pent roof, added in the late 1980s. Above the entrance roof are six replacement windows, which are not visible from street level. The entrance roof was originally supported by three brick pillars, with ticket booths in the two side pillars. A set of four ticket windows were added on either side of the main entrance in the late 1980s. An ADA accessible concrete ramp with concrete railing runs flush with the south façade wall of the stadium from the adjacent parking lot.<sup>1</sup>

The south façade of the stadium faces both parking lots. It includes 18 replacement windows that are tinted and covered with green awnings. The windows, originally wood sash windows, were replaced with major renovation work in 1988-1989. The awnings over the windows have changed several times over the stadium's 80 year history. A set of ticket windows is located directly east of the main entrance. The roof above the south façade originally featured a sign that read "Engel Stadium." The sign was removed circa 1975. A concrete belt course runs the length of the façade. Originally small openings were located below the belt course, but these have been filled in. An open space exists between the top of the façade's brick wall and the bottom of the grandstand roof with a metal gate running the length of the facade.

Beyond the south façade grandstand wall, a ten foot brick wall extends to the CSX property line parallel with the right field line. A roll-up metal door, located between two original brick pillars adorned with concrete baseballs on top, is located at the end of the first base line grandstand. Located directly west of the roll-up door is the former player/personnel entrance door. Both entrance doors are replacements, added in the late 1980s.

The west façade of the brick stadium faces O'Neal Street and includes twelve replacement windows, tinted and covered with green canvas awnings and a player/personnel replacement entrance door set in an arched opening. A set of four ticket windows is located west of the main entrance and a vehicle/spectator wrought

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Work to the entrance of the stadium, which included the main gate, concrete bench and railing, and "Historic Engel Stadium Sign," was conducted with major renovations in 1988-1989. See, Wilson, John. "Architects, Engineers Agree with \$2 million Cost of Engel," 7 Sept 1988 *Chattanooga News Free Press*. Chattanooga Stadiums-Engel Stadium Folder 1. Bicentennial Library, Local History Dept., Chattanooga, TN.

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Hamilton County, TN

iron gated entrance is located directly north of the third baseline grandstand. From this point, a 10 foot concrete wall extends parallel with O'Neal Street to E. Third Street. At the corner of O'Neal Street and E. Third Street is the former entrance for African American players and spectators before desegregation in the 1960s. The entrance doors were removed and sealed with renovation work in the 1980s.

The concrete wall's height rises from 10 feet to 20 feet along the north and east property lines. The wall extends east parallel to E. Third Street to the 471 foot mark in centerfield, then turns to the south. It lowers to 10 feet again in foul territory beyond the first base line and connects to the stadium's south wall.

The steel framed grandstands are constructed with concrete and are covered by a wood roof with asphalt shingles, which is supported by steel trusses. The grandstands flank both the first and third base paths. Seating capacity is approximately 7,500. The concrete press box, covered with a green metal pent roof, rests on top of the roof above home plate. The original wood frame press box has been renovated numerous times over the stadium's history. On either side of the press box, resting on the roof, are a set of field lights.<sup>2</sup>

The seats in the grandstands include lower level and upper level seats divided by a concourse. The upper level seats are original wood folding seats, divided into 13 sections. Included in the upper level are a barber stand located at the top behind home plate and the wood framed Woodrow Reid Luxury Box, located at the top behind home plate on the third base side. Steps leading to the roof and press box are located on the top of the upper level on the third base side. Originally, the steps to the roof and press box were accessible on the upper level behind home plate where the barber stand is now located.

The lower level seats are green, hard plastic seats, which replaced the original wood seats in the late 1980s. The lower level seats are divided into 15 sections. Dividing the lower and upper level is a concrete concourse that includes five stairwells with concrete steps to access the lower concourse for concessions and access to the exit at the main entrance. Located along the third base line and accessed by the grandstand concourse is a former restaurant, added in the 1980s, with tinted plexi-glass windows.<sup>3</sup>

The lower concourse spans the length of the grandstand and features concession stands, restrooms, ticket booth rooms on the facade side of the grandstands, and locker rooms and additional concession stands on the field side of the grandstands. The main entrance includes four historical plaques, added in 1990, about Engel Stadium along the west wall which was the location of Joe Engel's office. Visible in the lower concourse are tapered metal poles that provide support for the grandstands. The interior walls are constructed of concrete block and are painted red, yellow, and white. The original concession stands in the lower concourse were fully remodeled during the offseason in 1988-1989.

The dimensions of the field are 318 feet from home plate to the right field foul pole, 325 feet to the left field pole, and 471 feet to the centerfield wall, with a 22 foot high outfield wall. The right-centerfield wall is angular and includes a flag pole that was in the original field of play. The centerfield includes an embankment against the wall that originally featured white lettering that read "LOOKOUTS." Designed by local busi-

<sup>2</sup> Note: The stadium's original capacity was 12,000 when the bleacher seats existed along the first and third baselines in the outfield. The latest renovation to the press box was completed in 1988-1989.

<sup>3</sup> Note: Restaurant was added during renovations in the late 1980s when the Lookouts changed their affiliation from the Seattle Mariners to the Cincinnati Reds.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN

nessman Speed Fry, the letters were 8 feet high and 5 feet wide. Above the "LOOKOUTS" embankment, a large Coca Cola sign was attached to the wall. The sign and letters were removed circa 2000 after the Lookouts relocated to the new stadium near the Chattanooga riverfront.

The dugouts are located along the first and third baselines for the home and visiting teams respectively. Each dugout is centered along the base paths below the lower level seating. Each one feature concrete steps, a metal railing, and a wood bat box.

The original scoreboard was hand operated and located on the left field wall near the foul line. The scoreboard featured an arched top and towered approximately 20 feet higher than the 20 foot outfield wall and spanned a width of approximately 40 feet. The scoreboard moved to above the outfield wall in left-centerfield in the late 1970s/early 1980s. The new scoreboard, added when Tennessee Temple University became the primary lessee in 2000, is located directly in front of the wall in left-centerfield.

The outfield includes two sets of lights behind the left field wall, two sets of lights behind the right field wall, and a set on both the first and third base lines. Located beyond the grandstands in foul territory flush with the first and third base lines are the home and visitor's bullpens. In addition, a temporary outfield fence was placed in left field and centerfield when Tennessee Temple University began using the field in 2000. Lights were introduced to Engel Stadium during the 1936 season.<sup>4</sup>

Located down the first base line beyond the grandstand is a two-story, hipped roof building that was used for offices. Lookouts owner Frank Burke (1994-present), had his office on the second story. It is accessed by a metal walkway with railings that extends from the grandstand to the clubhouse. The building, added in 1988-1989, features three sets of glass doors on the second story façade and a set of green metal doors on the first story. Originally, a set of bleachers, removed sometime during the 1960s, sat along the first baseline facing right field. It is now used to store equipment for the Tennessee Temple University Crusaders baseball team (NC).

A one-story, framed gabled building is located on the third base line beyond the grandstands. It was added in the 1980s and used as a concession stand (NC). Originally, a set of bleachers was present at this location and removed before the 1960s. In the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, this area was used as a picnic grove for businesses, birthday parties, and other special events.<sup>5</sup>

Despite its renovations from 1970-2000, Engel Stadium has retained a high degree of its physical integrity. A majority of the stadium's grandstand and wall materials have remained intact, which successfully demonstrates the architecture and design of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century baseball stadium.

<sup>4</sup> "24,639 See Night Game To Break Southern Record," 2 May 1936, *Chattanooga News*, Vol. LXVII No. 138, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Note: A bleacher section, originally located along the third baseline facing right field, was the only section saved from Andrews Field, which preceded Engel Stadium. Home plate at Andrews Field was at the corner of O'Neal and East Third streets.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN**VIII. Statement of Significance**

Engel Stadium, located at the corner of O'Neal and E. Third streets in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its role in entertainment and recreation to the city and county from 1930 until 1965. It is also eligible for the National Register under criterion C for its architecture and representation of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century ball park. Engel Stadium was home to the Chattanooga Lookouts Baseball Club from 1930 to 1965, after which the team disbanded. The Lookouts returned in 1976 and played in Engel Stadium until 1999. Currently the stadium is the home field for the Tennessee Temple University Crusader baseball team. The Lookouts are a minor league team that was affiliated for most of its history with the Washington Senators at the AA level. Through its history, the stadium hosted semi-professional baseball, high school baseball, and little league baseball along with football, music concerts, and speaking events. The stadium is also eligible under criterion B for its association with Joe Engel. Engel was the long-time president and general manager of the Lookouts from 1929 to 1965 and was widely known for his unusual promotions that earned him the nickname, the Barnum of Baseball.

The present site of Engel Stadium was once the site of a baseball venue known as Andrews Field. In December 1922, Strang Nicklin, President of the Chattanooga Baseball Club purchased Andrews Field at the corner of O'Neal and E. Third streets from O.B. Andrews for \$8,000. The field underwent some renovations and continued to host the Chattanooga Lookouts until an offer from the Washington Senators professional baseball organization began a new legacy in Chattanooga's baseball history.<sup>6</sup>

In 1928, Clark "Ol' Silver Fox" Griffith, owner of the Washington Senators, chose Chattanooga to land his AA affiliate team. Construction on a new 12,000 seat stadium began late in 1929 at the site of Andrews Field on the corner of O'Neal and East Third streets. The architect chosen to design the stadium was James Gauntt and the builders selected were Rogers and Leventhal, both of Chattanooga.<sup>7</sup>

William Joseph "Joe" Engel, chosen as the president of the Chattanooga Lookouts in 1929, quickly became established in the city. Born in 1893 and son of a German immigrant, Joe Engel served as a Senators batboy as a youth. As a player, Engel floated between the minor and major leagues from 1912-1920, playing for the Washington Senators organization for 5 years.<sup>8</sup>

Determined to have the new stadium built before the 1930 season, structural and steel framework began on the stadium in November and December of 1929. By January, a roof covered the steel framed grandstands and work on the field and outfield wall was underway. Concrete pouring for the grandstands was completed in Jan-Feb 1930 with the total construction taking only 63 working days. The total cost for the stadium was approximately \$250,000, and upon its completion, became the most modern and well designed ballpark in the Southern League.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Nicklin Buys Park and Will Build Stand," 28 Dec 1922, *Chattanooga Times*. Chattanooga Stadiums-Engel Stadium, Folder 1. Bicentennial Library, Local History Dept, Chattanooga, TN.

<sup>7</sup> Martini, Stephen. *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*. Dry Ice Publishing: Cleveland, TN, 2005, p. 2. Note: Corresponding page number is derived from a PDF document that gives excerpts from the full book. This applies for every citation from the book.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> "Joe Engel's Christmas Present to Chattanooga Baseball Fans," 25 Dec 1929, *Chattanooga Times*, "New Home of Lookouts



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Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN

The new baseball stadium, named for its president, was the premier ballpark of its day. The dimensions of the field were 318 feet to the right field wall, 325 feet to the left field wall, and a daunting 471 feet to the centerfield wall, which made it the deepest centerfield in baseball. The outfield wall towered at twenty feet. The press box sat atop the wide roof of the stadium. In fact, Engel Stadium was one of the first stadiums in the country to include a press box.<sup>10</sup>

An embankment in the centerfield featured lettering spelling 'LOOKOUTs' below a sign advertising Coca-Cola. The highly visible letters were 8 feet high and 5 feet wide and were designed by Speed Fry, president of the Vesta Gas Range Company. The ballpark featured a brick façade with windows on either side of the main entrance. Ticket booths were located inside two brick pillars that supported the main entrance roof.<sup>11</sup>

During the beginnings of the Great Depression, Engel quickly faced many challenges before the Lookouts opened the field in March 1930. Engel fed the poor and jobless at the stadium during the winter of 1929-1930 and distributed board games to less fortunate children during Christmas.<sup>12</sup>

The stadium and grounds were near completion in early March, as the Lookouts practiced and played some exhibition games at nearby Buster Brown Park while the newly planted grass at Engel Stadium had time to mature for the season.

Plans made for opening day included a grand parade and ceremony at the stadium. Engel and others expected an opening day crowd of 12,000 people. Mayor Bass proclaimed a half-day holiday for the closure of city schools, courthouse, and factories/businesses if possible.<sup>13</sup>

Joe Engel invested approximately \$400,000 to bring Chattanooga a state-of-the-art baseball facility with a competitive team. In reference to Engel Stadium's celebrated opening day, Raleigh Chambliss, a prominent sportsman, made the following statement:

The huge expenditure of Joe Engel has caused the transformation of Andrews Field to a great modern baseball park and the money he has spent in getting together a winning team indicates on his part a real faith in the future of Chattanooga, and the city could very well afford to show its appreciation in a fitting manner.<sup>14</sup>

The first exhibition game at Engel Stadium between the Chattanooga Lookouts and Washington Senators took place on March 22, 1930 with the Lookouts losing the game 3-0 before 2,500 fans. The Lookouts continued their competition against the Senators two more times on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, losing both games. Four

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Goes Up With Amazing Speed," 21 Jan 1930, *Chattanooga Times*, p. 8, and Engel Stadium Advertisements and Photos, 15 Apr 1930, *Chattanooga Times*, pp. 13, 18, Vol. LXI.

<sup>10</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> "Speed Fry Shows "Lookout" Sign to Club Owners, 2 Mar 1930, p. 15, *Chattanooga Times*.

<sup>12</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> "Chamber Plans Long Ceremony for First Day," 22 Mar 1930, p. 11, *Chattanooga Times*.

<sup>14</sup> "Impressive Dedication of Ball Park Suggested by Prominent Sportsman," 9 Feb 1930, *Chattanooga Times*, p. 14, Vol. LXI No. 58.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN

days before the Lookouts opening day, the New York Yankees, featuring Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, came to town for one exhibition game. The Lookouts played the Yankees tough, losing 8-6, with the "Babe" and Gehrig recording one run and one hit each. Ruth's only hit of the game blasted off the deep centerfield wall.<sup>15</sup>

Opening day at Engel Stadium occurred on April 15, 1930 between the Lookouts and the Atlanta Crackers. Bobby Jones, the legendary golfer, served as a president of the Atlanta Crackers, and witnessed a 6-5 Lookouts win in front of 16,000 spectators. The Lookouts won in dramatic fashion rallying from 3 runs down in the bottom of the ninth making the celebration of the stadium complete.<sup>16</sup>

The excitement over Engel Stadium and a semi-professional baseball team in Chattanooga created extraordinary attendance numbers the first two years. In 1930 and 1931, approximately 146,000 and 172,000 people, respectively, attended the ball games. Joe Engel was not only the president of the Chattanooga Lookouts, but a master of promotion as well. One event in particular became one of the most notable sporting events in Chattanooga sports history.<sup>17</sup>

On April 2, 1931, the New York Yankees visited Engel Stadium for an exhibition game. Yankee greats Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth attracted a large crowd to the stadium. However, the story of that day revolved around seventeen-year-old Lookout pitcher Virnett "Jackie" Mitchell. Engel spotted the left-handed pitcher at a baseball camp across the state line in Georgia. After signing Mitchell, Engel promoted the Lookouts as having the only female player in the minors.<sup>18</sup>

The game was supposed to take place on April 1 but was postponed due to rain. This gave Jackie Mitchell an extra day to prepare for the "Bronx Bombers." Eddie Kenna, the Lookouts catcher, said Mitchell was "twice as good as I imagined.... Of course she isn't ready for the Southern League, but her signing with the Lookouts certainly isn't a joke, as some people think. Many pitchers have had a tryout with the Lookouts who couldn't hurl as well as Jackie. Her control is remarkable, and if she is coached along properly has a chance to make good in professional baseball."<sup>19</sup>

Mitchell made history on that day by striking out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig back-to-back on seven pitches. After striking out Ruth reportedly "kicked the dirt" and "gave his bat a wild heave."<sup>20</sup> She stayed in the game to face one more batter, Tony Lazzeri, whom she walked. The Yankees eventually won the game 14-4, but the focus and attention all went to Jackie Mitchell. Reaction to Mitchell's achievement was mixed. It

<sup>15</sup> "Yanks beat Lookouts 8-6," 11 Apr 1930, *Chattanooga News*, Vol. LXL No. 119, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> "Record-Breaking Crowd Goes Wild As Lookouts Stage Magic Comeback," 16 April 1930, *Chattanooga News*, p. 13, Vol. LXI No. 124. Note: A May 2, 1936 article states that the opening day attendance was 17,043 which contradicts the April 16, 1930 article. The official count of the opening game at Engel Stadium may have increased after the April 16, 1930 article was written. See "24,639 See Night Game To Break Southern Record," 2 May 1936, *Chattanooga News*, Vol. LXVII No. 138, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-10.

<sup>19</sup> "Girl Tosser Pronounced in Top Shape to Face Ruth and NY Yanks Today," 2 April 1931, *Chattanooga News*, Vol. LXII, No. 109, p. 9.

<sup>20</sup> Dan Holmes, "When Jackie Mitchell Struck Out Ruth, Gehrig" Available at [www.baseballhalloffame.org](http://www.baseballhalloffame.org). Web site accessed 6/30/2009.

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 7Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN

was portrayed alternately as a serious event and as a sideshow stunt. The New York newspapers particularly showed differing points of view on the game.

Perhaps Miss Jackie hasn't quite enough on the ball yet to bewilder Ruth and Gehrig in a serious game. But there are no such sluggers in the Southern Association, and she may win laurels this season which cannot be ascribed to mere gallantry. The prospect grows gloomier for misogynists.<sup>21</sup>

The Yankees will meet a club here that has a girl pitcher named Jackie Mitchell, who has a swell change of pace and swings a mean lipstick. I suppose that in the next town the Yankees enter they will find a squad that has a female impersonator in left field, a sword swallower at short, and a trained seal behind the plate. Times in the South are not only tough but silly.<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately Jackie didn't have the opportunity to continue her professional career. A few days after the game, Jackie Mitchell's contract was voided by Major League Baseball Commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis because he felt the game was "too strenuous" for women to play.<sup>23</sup> She went on to pitch for a few years in various independent leagues and for the House of David barnstorming team. She retired from baseball in 1937 at the age of 23. In 1982 she returned to Engel Stadium to throw the ceremonial first pitch on opening day.

By 1936, Engel introduced lights to the stadium, set Southern League attendance records, and brought a championship to Chattanooga. On May 1, 1936, the Lookouts hosted their second night game versus the Memphis Chicks. Engel promoted the game heavily and attracted 24,639 fans to the ballpark. Temporary bleachers were set up in left field and right field with standing room only fans along the first and third base-line leaving no room for play in foul territory. The Lookouts defeated the Chicks 6-2.<sup>24</sup>

Engel was known for his crazy promotions and creating a circus like atmosphere to draw fans to the stadium. In the 1930s, the Lookouts and the Chattanooga Times co-sponsored a house give away at a baseball game. During bleak economic times, it was a great way to promote the Lookouts and the recently established *Chattanooga Times*. Local retailers even benefited, giving customers one raffle ticket for every half-dollar of merchandise they purchased. The winner, Charlie Mills, a twenty-six year old, became the lucky winner of the dream home located on Rivermont Road in Chattanooga.<sup>25</sup>

While the Washington Senators struggled in the major leagues, Griffith focused his attention on the farm system to build a strong organization. In January 1937, Griffith hired his adopted son to replace Joe Engel as president of the Lookouts. As a result, Engel took the position as the general manager of the Washington

<sup>21</sup> *New York Times*, April 4, 1931.

<sup>22</sup> *New York Daily News*, April 2, 1931.

<sup>23</sup> Martini, pp. 4-10.

<sup>24</sup> "24,639 See Night Game To Break Southern Record," 2 May 1936, *Chattanooga News*, Vol.LXVII No. 138, pp. 1, 9.

<sup>25</sup> Martini, pp. 14-16. See also, Rawlins, Wade. "Baseball's Past, Future join for Engel Stadium Rededication Ceremony," 13 Apr 1990, *Chattanooga Times*, p. A1. Chattanooga Stadiums-Engel Stadium, Folder 2. Bicentennial Library, Local History Dept., Chattanooga, TN.)

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Senators farm system, which included Chattanooga, Trenton, NJ, and Sanford, FL. By mid-season, Griffith decided to sell the Lookouts for \$150,000 to another city. With the help of local businessmen and a large Lookout fan base, Engel gathered funds for the purchase and shared ownership of the baseball club. Griffith was pleased to see Engel's efforts and the excitement he created in Chattanooga, so he dropped his price on the team and asked that only \$50,000 be paid in 1937 with the remaining \$75,000 to be paid over ten years.<sup>26</sup>

After resolving the turmoil with ownership, Engel continued to promote the team in innovative ways. On opening day in 1938, Joe Engel brought an elephant to the stadium. He attracted fans by spreading the word about a wild elephant hunt at Engel Stadium. The fans did not go home disappointed as they viewed a re-enactment of a hunt on the savannah.

During the 1930s and 1940s, Engel Stadium and the Lookouts organization featured notable players on the field and a legendary voice in the press box. Before the start of the 1932 season, Engel contacted a local radio station to inquire about broadcasting the Lookouts ballgames. The voice that took over the radio broadcast was that of broadcaster Arch McDonald. The 31-year old broadcasted the Lookouts for two years before receiving the call to broadcast for the Washington Senators and the New York Yankees until the mid-1950s.<sup>27</sup> McDonald enjoyed a stellar career as a broadcaster and was posthumously awarded the Ford C. Frick Award by the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1999. The Ford C. Frick Award is awarded annually to a broadcaster who has made great contributions to the sport of baseball.<sup>28</sup>

In 1938, Engel hired Rogers Hornsby to manage the club for the latter half of the season. By this time his Hall of Fame major league playing career was over. For much of the latter half of his major league career he had served as player-manager for various teams including the St. Louis Cardinals, New York Giants, Boston Braves, Chicago Cubs, and St. Louis Browns. His stint as the Lookouts manager was brief, lasting only until the end of the 1938 season. Hornsby went on to manage major league ball clubs but proved to be unsuccessful as a manager.<sup>29</sup>

Ivoria Hillis "Hilly" Layne, a native of nearby Whitwell, TN in Marion County, began his career with the Lookouts in 1940. Layne enjoyed the deep centerfield hitting four inside the park homeruns in one season. Hillis made it to the major leagues playing for the Washington Senators. His career was cut short along with many other ballplayers because of their commitment to their country during World War II. Shortly after his return from the war, Hillis developed typhus fever in his left leg, which debilitated him and made his return to baseball impossible.<sup>30</sup>

Willie Mays graced Engel Stadium with his presence in the mid-1940s to try out for Chattanooga's semi-professional Negro League team. The Chattanooga Choo Choo were established in 1940 under the direction

<sup>26</sup>Gammon, Wirt. "Engel is Given Option to Buy Baseball Club," 16 July 1937, *Chattanooga Times*, Vol. LXVIII No.207, p. 1.  
See also, Gammon, Wirt. "Civic Leaders To Head Sale of Ball Stock," 25 July 1937, *Chattanooga Times*, Vol. LXVIII No. 216.

<sup>27</sup>Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup>Ford C. Frick Honorees. Baseball Hall of Fame web site. [www.baseballhalloffame.org](http://www.baseballhalloffame.org). Web site accessed 6/18/2009.

<sup>29</sup>Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 18

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 19-25

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of Beck Shepherd, owner of the East Ninth Street (MLK Blvd) Shoe Parlor. The team lasted only six years in Chattanooga.

Willie Mays aspired to play for the Choo Chos in high school when he saw them play at Lincoln Park and Engel Stadium. The Choo Chos were not affiliated with the Negro Southern League, but drew attention because they played at Engel Stadium. During Mays's freshman and sophomore years, his dad drove him to Chattanooga from Fairfield, AL so he could have an opportunity to practice with the team. He promised his mom that he would not sign a contract until he graduated high school, and thus, never became a member of the Choo Chos because the team went bankrupt due to financial difficulties in 1946.<sup>31</sup>

Before desegregation, African American players entered the stadium at a separate entrance near the left field corner wall at the intersection of E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and O'Neal streets. Visiting players often stayed at the Martin Hotel, located on the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and Central Avenue.

The Choo Chos were preceded by the Chattanooga Black Lookouts who played in the Negro Southern League in 1920, 1926-1927 at Andrews Field and Lincoln Park. Legendary Negro League pitcher, LeRoy "Satchell" Paige, played for the Black Lookouts for one year in 1926 before being traded to the Birmingham Black Barons in 1927. Owned by local businessmen Bo Carter, Bud Haley, and W.C. Hixson the Black Lookouts disbanded because of a lack of revenue.<sup>32</sup>

The color barrier was broken in major league baseball by Jackie Robinson in 1947, but racial relations in minor league baseball, particularly in the South, were still difficult and tense. The Lookouts first incident with racial relations occurred in the mid-1950s. In 1954, the Lookouts traveled to Winter Garden, FL for spring training. Along with the team, were seven recently signed black Cuban players. The police chief in Winter Garden would not allow the black players on the field, so the seven players were sent to Orlando to practice with the Washington Senators.

Word about this incident quickly reached Washington D.C. and Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr. used this incident as an example of the bad race relations in the U.S. The F.B.I. investigated the incident, and as a result, the Winter Garden City Council issued an apology to the Lookouts. This was significant because it was the only time that the U.S. Government intervened with race relations in organized baseball in the South. The Chattanooga Lookouts did not field a fully integrated team with African American players until 1963.<sup>33</sup>

In April 1952, Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella, and the Brooklyn Dodgers played the Boston Braves in an exhibition at Engel Stadium. It was the first time a crowd at Engel Stadium experienced an integrated baseball game. White fans were seated in the grandstands while the African Americans sat in the bleachers in left and right field. The Braves, with pitcher Warren Spahn, fielded three African American players, Sam Jeth-

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26. Note: Lincoln Park was located two blocks north of Engel Stadium near the present-day Erlanger Medical Center.

<sup>32</sup> Jenkins, David. *Baseball in Chattanooga: Images of Baseball*. Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, SC, 2005, p. 62. See also, "Black Lookouts to Meet Barons: Satchell, Ex-Local Ace, to Hurl for Invading Big Leaguers in Today's Game," 9 Jul 1927, *Chattanooga Times*, Chattanooga Sports-Baseball Folder. Bicentennial Library, Local History Dept, Chattanooga, TN.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

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roe, George Crow, and Bill Bruton. In front of 9,098 fans, Spahn and Ernie Johnson added to this historic sporting event with a no-hit performance over the Dodgers in a 1-0 victory.<sup>34</sup>

Another, non-sporting event, brought a fully integrated crowd to the stadium. Billy Graham, the well known American evangelist, packed the Warner Park Fieldhouse and Engel Stadium during his crusade stop in Chattanooga for four weeks in 1953. Before the beginning of the Civil Rights movement and one year before the *Brown v. Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Reverend Billy Graham instructed ushers to let African-Americans sit where they chose.<sup>35</sup>

Minor League Baseball reached its peak during the 1949 season, in which a record 59 leagues with 448 teams played ball. Overall attendance that year reached 39.6 million, a record that would stand until 2004. A precipitous decline followed as the expansion of the Major Leagues and the advent of television lowered minor league attendance numbers. Leagues disappeared across the country, sometimes in mid-season. By 1964 only 20 leagues and 132 teams were still in existence and overall attendance had dwindled to 10 million.

Engel believed this would come true for the Southern League and Lookouts baseball as well, but he continued to prosper fielding competitive teams with the longest serving manager in Lookouts history. Calvin Coolidge Ermer led the team from 1952-1957 and led the Lookouts to a 1952 Southern Association title. As a player-manager, Ermer played first base and went on to coach the Southern Association All-Star teams in 1953, 1955, and 1957.<sup>36</sup>

The Washington Senators, by the mid-1950s, were struggling as a team and lacked consistent fan support. To complicate matters, Clark Griffith, the team's owner, passed away. Calvin Griffith, Clark's adopted son, took over the ownership of an organization that was quickly sinking. From 1955 to 1960, the Senators finished in the cellar four years. Griffith considered a move to Minnesota to help the ailing ball club. In an effort to raise money for the move, Griffith decided to put Engel Stadium up for sale for \$500,000 in 1957.

In reaction to this news, Chattanooga Mayor P.R. Olgiati and Hamilton County Judge Wilkes T. Thrasher signed a proclamation that declared opening day at Engel Stadium a city holiday. It allowed all workers in the city to work a half day to attend the game and boost the profits for the Lookouts.<sup>37</sup>

That same year, fans were privileged to see third baseman Harmon Killebrew play for the Chattanooga Lookouts. After experiencing a hitting slump with the Washington Senators, Killebrew was sent to the Single A Charlotte, North Carolina club in 1956 before arriving in Chattanooga in 1957. Once in Chattanooga, Killebrew found his hitting groove and hit one of the most memorable homeruns in Engel Stadium history, clearing the 471-foot centerfield wall with a blast that was never repeated. By the end of the 1958 season, Kille-

<sup>34</sup> Shearer, John. "Jackie Robinson Starred at Chattanooga's Engel Stadium," 22 Apr 2007, *The Chattanooga.Com*.  
See also, Gammon, Wirt. "Boston Twirlers Tame Brooks, 1-0," 7 Apr 1952, *Chattanooga Times*, Vol.LXXXIII, No. 115, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> Ruth and Billy Graham: What Grace Provides. Available at UNC TV website:  
<http://www.uncvtv.org/ruthandbillygraham/timelinetext.html>

<sup>36</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-32.

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brew moved to Triple A Indianapolis and eventually re-joined the Senators. The rest of his career is well known as Killebrew was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1984.<sup>38</sup>

In 1960, Minneapolis, Minnesota was granted a Major League Baseball Club. Calvin Griffith opted to move the Washington Senators team to Minnesota where the team was renamed the Twins after the twin cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In addition, Washington was granted an expansion team. As a result of the organizational changes, Calvin gave Joe Engel immediate notice about discontinuing the Lookouts organization by September and sent him to Winter Garden, FL as head of the Washington Senators Baseball School. His visit to Florida with the Senators organization was brief as he once again managed to keep the Lookout baseball team in Chattanooga.

In 1960, Engel broke his four decade relationship with the Senators-Twins organization when he affiliated the Lookouts with the Philadelphia Phillies organization. The Lookout Boosters, a local non-profit civic organization assisted Engel with the daily operations of the team and maintenance of the stadium. Attendance levels continued to decrease at many ballparks across the nation and at Engel Stadium. By December of 1961, the Southern Association disbanded leaving the Lookouts without a league and no season in Chattanooga for the first time in more than 50 years.<sup>39</sup>

In 1962, during the year without Lookouts baseball, 711 amateur baseball games and 38 football games took place at Engel Stadium. The baseball league involved 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade boys (2400 total) with 39,000 spectators. The stadium was also used by civic organizations to host events and raise funds.<sup>40</sup>

After a few years of negotiations, the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County purchased Engel Stadium from the Minnesota Twins Baseball Organization in November 1962 for a cost of \$250,000. The purchase of the stadium guaranteed the city a team in the South Atlantic AA League for the 1963 season and the continuation of the Lookout Youth Foundation recreational program. As part of the purchase agreement, the Lookout Boosters became the primary lessee of the stadium.<sup>41</sup>

For the 1963 season, the Lookouts joined the South Atlantic League and were again affiliated with the Philadelphia organization. The 1963 season was a historic one for the Lookouts as it marked the first season African American players took to the field at Engel Stadium. Charley Fields, Adolfo Phillips, Bob Sanders, and Harold "Hank" Allen broke Chattanooga's color line as the Lookouts defeated the Knoxville Smokies 5-4 in front of 8,215 spectators on opening night.<sup>42</sup>

Before the 1964 season, the South Atlantic League gathered some teams from the old Southern Association to form the Southern League. Despite the great news about joining this new league, the Chattanooga Loo-

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-41. See also, Young, Harry. "Return to Baseball Certain As City, County Buy Park," 27 Nov 1962, *Chattanooga Times*, Vol. XCIII, No. 347, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Young, Harry. "Return to Baseball Certain As City, County Buy Park," 27 Nov 1962, *Chattanooga Times*. Chattanooga Stadiums-Engel Stadium, Folder 1.

<sup>41</sup> Short, George. "8,215 See Stirring Lookout Rally Beat Smokies, 5-4, in 10 innings," 23 Apr 1963, *Chattanooga Daily Times*, Vol. XCIV, No. 129, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball* pp. 38-41.

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kouts organization suffered from a non-competitive team and dismal attendance numbers for a couple of seasons. As a result the Philadelphia Phillies ended their affiliation with Chattanooga following the 1965 season. The Chicago White Sox organization considered Chattanooga as an affiliate for two years, but nothing surfaced. A long period of semi-professional baseball dormancy in Chattanooga began in 1966.<sup>43</sup>

The Lookouts Boosters Club managed Engel Stadium under a lease with the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County. However, on July 1, 1968, the Lookouts Boosters Club disbanded and gave full management duties to the city and county for the park and surrounding property. At this time, Joe Engel was in declining health and confined to his bed at home. After a few years of attempting to land a team once again in Chattanooga, Joe Engel, the face of Chattanooga Lookouts baseball, passed away on June 12, 1969. During Engel's 35 year reign, he set Southern League attendance records in 28 seasons because of his passion for the game and his joy for entertainment.<sup>44</sup>

In July 1970, the County Council and the City Commission agreed to give Engel Stadium to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). UTC envisioned a \$3.6 million 30,000 seat football stadium and athletic complex at the site of Engel Stadium. The student body nearly doubled from 1,900 to 3,700 with steady growth anticipated the next ten years. According to the agreement between the local government and the university if the stadium was not constructed by 1975, the ownership of the property would revert back to the city and county.<sup>45</sup>

Between 1970-1974, UTC agreed to the lease the stadium to the Atlanta Braves or another professional baseball club if they wished to have a farm club in Chattanooga. No teams expressed interest, so UTC agreed to lease the stadium to Chattanooga and Hamilton County for various recreational programs.<sup>46</sup>

The vision of a 30,000 seat football stadium and athletic complex at the Engel Stadium site never came to fruition, and the city and county once again took ownership in 1975. The long period of no semi-professional baseball play at the ballpark, and lack of significant attendance for intermediary events, required the stadium to undergo rehabilitation. Renovations for the stadium cost approximately \$75,000.

In the fall of 1975, Woody and Mark Reid (father-son) of Reid House Salads Inc. in Chattanooga made an offer to city and county officials to obtain a five year lease and invest into Engel Stadium's maintenance for the preparation of hosting a Southern League ball club once again. In addition, a percentage of their profits paid taxes to the city and county. Shortly after finalizing a lease deal with the city, Woody and Mark Reid announced a deal with the Oakland Athletics for a Class AA farm team to play at Engel Stadium starting with the 1976 season.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> "Disbandment Voted By Lookout Boosters," Feb 28, 1968, *Chattanooga News-Free Press*. See also, Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 45. Note: Engel Stadium lost another familiar face in 1968, upon the disbandment of the Lookouts Booster Club. Eleanor Rike Sandlin began her secretarial duties for Joe Engel in 1931. She remained working with Engel until 1968 after 37 memorable years. Johnson, Buck. "Baseball Employment Record Set As Mrs. Sandlin Leaves Stadium," 30 Jun 1968, *Chattanooga Times*

<sup>45</sup> Loftin, Michael. "City and County Agree to Give Engel Stadium for UTC Football Plant," 14 Jul 1970, *Chattanooga Times*, and "30,000- Seat UTC Stadium Due To Be Ready By 1975; To Have Artificial Turf," May 14, 1971, *Chattanooga Times*.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Morris, Allan. "Group Bids To Lease Ball Park: Franchise In Southern Available," 26 Oct 1975, *Chattanooga News-Free Press*,



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The Engel Stadium Corporation (ESC) formed in December 1975, which included the Reid Family, Jim Crittenden (optometrist), and local attorney, Arvin Reingold. During the winter and early spring months of 1975-1976, Reid introduced "Sparkle Days" for citywide participation to clean up and repair/paint Engel Stadium. During the Reid Family's principal ownership, the family invested \$75,000 into stadium renovations, set a Southern League attendance record in 1977, and brought the Atlanta Braves with Hank Aaron to town to play the Southern League All-Stars. In addition, they affiliated the Lookouts with the Cleveland Indians beginning in 1978.<sup>48</sup>

Woodrow Reid, due to failing health, gave up his share of ownership in 1980 and Jim Crittenden took over as the principal owner of the Lookouts organization. Sarah Reid, wife of Woody Reid, made an offer of \$150,000 to purchase the stadium from the city and county, which was appraised at \$232,760. However, no deal was ever completed.

In November 1980, the Hamilton County Commissioners, by a 9-1 vote, decided to spend between \$68,000 and \$78,000 for repairs and maintenance of Engel Stadium with the city accepting the plan a month later. The city and county funded a total of \$39,000 in 1981, and planned for the same amount for the 1982 season. Work included ladies restroom renovation, ADA accessibility improvements, and painting.<sup>49</sup>

Under the new ownership of Bill Yuill in the mid-1980s, efforts for further rehabilitation of the stadium were organized by local preservation organization, Landmarks Chattanooga, Inc. The organization offered assistance to Lookouts GM Bill Lee to assist with the renovation of Engel Stadium. Landmarks Chattanooga accepted tax deductible donations to Project RBI (Renovate Ballpark Immediately) that went towards the renovation of the stadium. Some suggestions that assisted the group for promotional events included the following: flea market, home run derby, and baseball bat lapel pins that read "Go to bat for Engel Stadium"

Architect and Landmarks Chattanooga board member, Andy Smith, sought funds to pave the parking lot, landscape outside the stadium, and add adequate lighting for the parking lot to make the exterior appearance more aesthetically pleasing. In addition, Engel Stadium Corp. invested \$50,000/yr in capital improvements, \$12,500/yr from both the city and county, and a matching \$25,000 from the stadium corporation.

Richard Holtzman, a Chicago businessman and owner of multiple semi-professional baseball teams, took over operations of the Chattanooga Lookouts in 1987. In addition, the Lookouts changed their affiliation from the Seattle Mariners (1983-1987) to the Cincinnati Reds that same year. One of Holtzman's first requests was a red and white paint job of the seats to match the colors of the Cincinnati Reds.<sup>50</sup>

Success came quickly for Holtzman as he landed a Southern League championship in 1988. It was the Lookouts first Southern League championship in 27 years. Many players on the 1988 Lookouts championship

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and Short, George. "Oakland Athletics Club to Chattanooga," 20 Nov 1975, *Chattanooga Times*.

<sup>48</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, pp. 44-45. Note: The Chattanooga Lookouts were affiliated with the Cleveland Indians from 1978-1982.

<sup>49</sup> Fleming, Larry. "County Approves Plan to Support Stadium," 20 Nov 1980, *Chattanooga Times*, and Hardin, Helen. "Engel Stadium Facelift Completed for First Game," 9 Apr 1981, *Chattanooga Times*.

<sup>50</sup> Rawlins, Wade. "City, county officials looking at cost estimates of Engel renovation," 6 Nov 1987, *Chattanooga Times*.

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team quickly moved to Cincinnati Reds and helped ignite a World Series title over the Oakland Athletics in 1990. Notable former Lookouts players on the championship team included Keith Brown, Ron Oester, Joe Oliver, Chris Hammond, and Scott Scudder.<sup>51</sup>

The offseason at Engel Stadium was a busy one with an estimated \$2 million price tag on the proposed renovations. Architect, Pat Neuhoff and David Barlew, structural engineer, made several suggestions for improvements to Engel Stadium. Laborers worked tirelessly in the offseason (1988-1989) to perform the following activities and repairs: field resurfacing and drainage; addition of new plastic seats in the lower section; organ rewiring; press box remodeling; new roof; new ticket booths, concessions stands, and locker rooms; repainting the ballpark; ADA improvements; storage building; addition of wrought iron entrance gates and signage. C&R Construction, a local company, performed the work.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the renovated ballpark, attendance suffered in 1989 and 1990, causing Rick Holtzman to file for bankruptcy. A cloud of uncertainty over the future of the Lookouts was lifted when businessman Frank Burke arrived from Maine in 1994 and assumed ownership of the team. In his first couple years at the helm, he once again put the Lookouts on the top for Southern League attendance.<sup>53</sup>

Near the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with continued flooding problems and high annual maintenance costs to the stadium, it was not economically feasible for Frank Burke to keep the Lookouts at Engel Stadium. Their last full season at the stadium occurred in 1999 with the new Bell South Park awaiting its opening on the newly developed riverfront in Chattanooga in the spring of 2000.<sup>54</sup>

Tennessee Temple University, the primary lessee, used the stadium for its baseball team beginning in 2000. Several local high school teams and regional high school teams used the stadium for regular season games and tournaments until 2005. That same year, the city, county, and Cornerstones, Inc., a local preservation non-profit organization, contributed \$120,000 to pay for a new roof.<sup>55</sup>

At the present time, the city and county are in the process of transferring the property to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Before the transfer, the city and county addressed the stormwater and sewer issues at and around Engel Stadium and Warner Park, located southeast of Engel Stadium across the railroad tracks.<sup>56</sup>

Once in their possession, UTC will include Tennessee Temple University as the primary lessee and plans to rehabilitate the structure for continued collegiate baseball use as well as high school and youth baseball tour-

<sup>51</sup> Martini, *The Chattanooga Lookouts and 100 Seasons of Scenic City Baseball*, p. 49.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51. See also, Wilson, John. "Architects, Engineers Agree with \$2 million Cost at Engel," 7 Sept 1988, *Chattanooga News Free Press*, and Morgan, Barney. "Bid for Renovating Engel Approved," 27 Jan 1989, *Chattanooga Times*. Chattanooga Stadiums-Engel Stadium Folder 1, Bicentennial Library, Chattanooga, TN.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>55</sup> Baydala, Kathleen. "Preservation Group Offers to Help Pay for New Engel Roof," 3 Apr 2005, *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, p. B1. Chattanooga Stadiums - Engel Stadium Folder 2. Bicentennial Library, Local History Dept., Chattanooga, TN

<sup>56</sup> "City, County to Transfer Engel Stadium to UTC," 11 Dec 2008, *Chattanooga.com*.

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naments and programs. In addition, UTC plans to construct a track and athletic fields on the adjacent 18 acre tract of land and is developing a plan to implement a Lookouts Baseball history museum at the stadium.

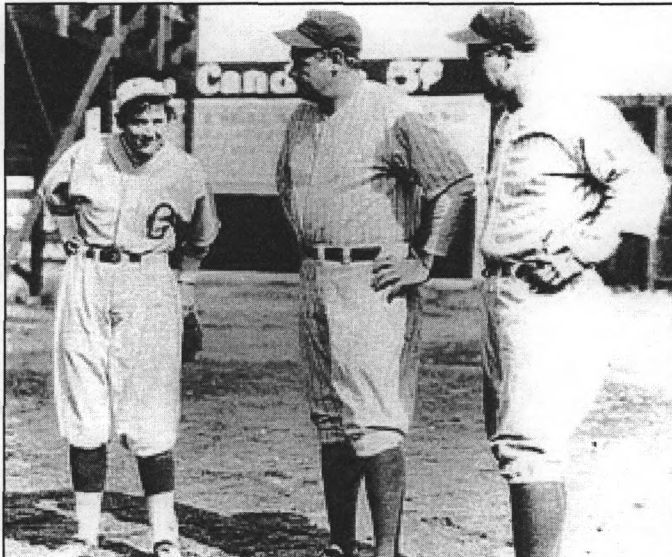
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**Figures**



From left: Jackie Mitchell, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig

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View of the Stadium from the 1970s.

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal boundary description and Justification:**

Engel Stadium is located at the intersection of E. Third Street and O'Neal Street in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee. The nominated property is defined as parcel 012 on tax map 146B. The nominated boundaries include Engel Stadium, which includes the grandstands, walls, baseball field, and other structures inside the stadium. In addition, the nominated property includes the concrete area in front of the main entrance as well as the concrete ramp that extends toward the parking lot located along the stadium's south elevation. This represents the property that is historically and currently associated with Engel Stadium.



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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photographs by: Paul Archambault  
Southeast Tennessee Development District  
Chattanooga, TN 37402  
Date: February, 2008 and June, 2009  
Digital Files: Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, TN

Main Entrance, photographer facing northeast.

1 of 19

South facade of grandstand, photographer facing northeast.

2 of 19

South facade, photographer facing northeast.

3 of 19

Entrance gate on first base line, photographer facing north.

4 of 19

West facade of grandstand, photographer facing northeast.

5 of 19

West facade of grandstand, photographer facing northeast.

6 of 19

West facade, photographer facing northeast.

7 of 19

Entrance area of lower concourse, photographer facing northeast.

8 of 19

Lower concourse, photographer facing north.

9 of 19

View of field from seats behind home plate, photographer facing northeast.

10 of 19

Grandstand on third base side of home plate, photographer facing northwest.

11 of 19

Grandstand on first base side, photographer facing east.

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Engel Stadium  
Hamilton County, TN

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Stadium seats in upper level, photographer facing south.  
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Corner seat.  
14 of 19

Bat box in dugout, photographer facing east.  
15 of 19

View of field from grandstand roof, photographer facing northeast.  
16 of 19

View of field from grandstand roof, photographer facing east.  
17 of 19


View of field from grandstand seat, photographer facing east.  
18 of 19

View of grandstand from centerfield, photographer facing southwest.  
19 of 19

# Bing Maps

## Chattanooga, TN

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