

HISTORY OF EAU CLAIRE BASEBALL

Eau Claire has a long and proud baseball history. The game has been played in the city since the late 1860s, about 30 years after baseball was said to have been invented. In 1886, Eau Claire had its first taste of professional baseball with its entry in the Northwest League. The 1887 team featured an amazing sixteen players with prior or future major league experience, including future star Bobby Lowe, but it wasn't enough to sustain the professional franchise.

In the early 1900s, Eau Claire fielded a team in the professional Minnesota-Wisconsin League. One of Eau Claire's pitchers in 1912, Burleigh Grimes of Clear Lake, Wis., went on to stardom in the major leagues and wound up in baseball's Hall of Fame.

In 1933, the class D Northern League made its debut, and the Eau Claire Cardinals, later known as the Bears, rejoined the ranks of professional baseball for the first time since the "Minnny" League folded in 1912. Their first manager was former Chicago White Sox star Johnny Mostil.

Eau Claire fielded a team each year in the Northern League (which eventually became class C) through 1962, except 1943-45 when the league was inactive because of World War II. Eau Claire won five pennants, 1942, 1949, 1951, 1955 and 1956. The best season for attendance was 1949, when the Bears drew 103,150. That golden era of Eau Claire baseball featured such soon-to-be-baseball stars as Andy Pafko, Henry Aaron, Bill Bruton, Wes Covington, Rico Carty, Joe Torre, Tommie Aaron, Henry Majeski and Bob Uecker. All of them played at least a season with Eau Claire at Carson Park baseball stadium.

The stadium, part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration, opened for play in 1937 and remains today as the home diamond for all Eau Claire teams.

The Eau Claire Bears changed their name to the Eau Claire Braves in 1954, as they became part of the new Milwaukee Braves minor from Boston in 1953.

Since the departure of the minor league team in 1962, Eau Claire has continued to produce top youth, college and amateur baseball teams.

Cover Photo: *Eau Claire's Carson Park baseball stadium, which opened in 1937, remains the home of Eau Claire baseball teams. The stadium is on the National Register of Historic Places. A bust of Henry Aaron, who played for Eau Claire in 1952, was erected in 1994. Eau Claire baseball legends would be honored in an outdoor Hall of Fame on the plaza around the statue.*

Photos courtesy of the Eau Claire Leader-Telegram.

RECOGNITION LEVELS

\$200	4" x 8" Brick with engraved name(s)
\$500	12" x 12" Diamond shape engraved stone, engraved brick
\$5,000	Bench

Engraving: Maximum of 13 characters on each of Three lines, including spaces. (Example: "In memory of" or "in honor of")

For donations over \$500, payment plans can be arranged. Multiple donations welcome.

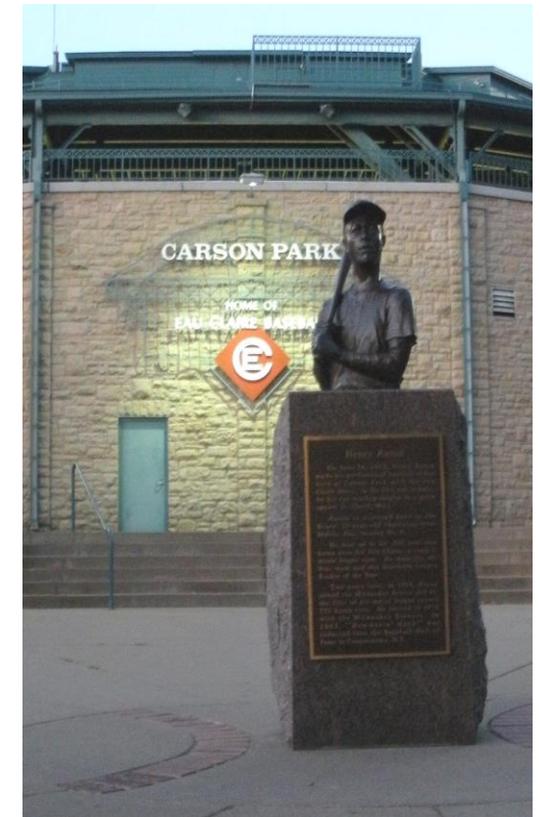
Mail donations to:
Community Parks Association
1040 Forest Street
Eau Claire WI 54703

Make checks payable to:
Community Parks Association
Note: Baseball Hall of Fame Project

The Community Parks Association is a 501c3 tax deductible organization. For additional information contact the Parks Department at 715-839-5039

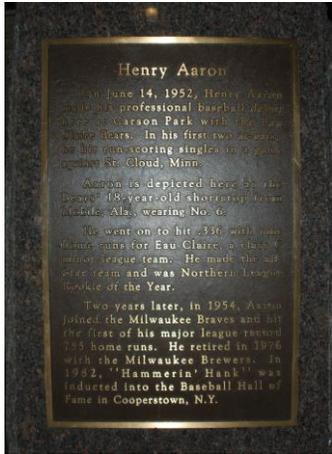
EAU CLAIRE BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

CARSON PARK HANK AARON PLAZA

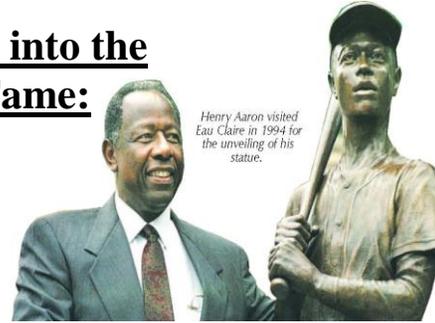


The Eau Claire Baseball History Committee, an informal group of baseball enthusiasts, organized in 2003 to save historical local baseball memorabilia, has developed a plan to recognize contributors to the city's rich baseball tradition. The committee has developed a plan to add to the plaza around the Hank Aaron statue, at the Carson Park Baseball Stadium, to recognize three groups of people in a "Hall of Fame" manner. The 1) first group in the proposed Hall of Fame would be, "Individuals or groups of people who made significant contributions to Eau Claire Baseball". 2) The second group of people we propose to recognize are "Individuals who played on Eau Claire teams, as regular season roster players, and made it to a Major League Baseball roster as a player or bench coach". 3) The third group to be recognized will be "Eau Claire natives who played for minor league pro baseball teams".

The following have been inducted into the Eau Claire Baseball Hall of Fame:



Henry Aaron visited Eau Claire in 1994 for the unveiling of his statue.



- Tom Poquette**
- Vic Johnson**
- Harvey Tomter**
- Herman White**
- Randall "Ran" Benzanson**
- Eilert "Cy" Berg**
- Glenn St. Arnault**
- Andy Pafko**
- Dave Johnson**

Eau Claire Team Champions

Little League Founders – Diz Kronenberg/Howie Bullock/Andy Green

Eau Claire Natives in the Minor Leagues



Former Eau Claire Players, Managers in the Major Leagues

<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>YEAR(S) IN EAU CLAIRE</u>		
Aaron, Henry	1952	Johnson, Vic	1942
Aaron, Tommie	1958, 1959	Kading, Jack	1909, 1910, 1911
Adair, Marion "Bill" M	1951, 1952	Lafata, Joe	1941
Anderson, Arnold	1933	Lemaster, Denver	1958
Asmussen, Tom	1906	Levis, Charles	1887
Bain, Loren	1941	Lindbeck, Emerit	1956, 1957
Behel, Stephen	1887	Linden, Walt	1946
Bishop, Frank	1887	Littrell, Jack	1962
Botz, Bob	1955	Lowe, Robert	1887
Braun, John	1961	Majeski, Hank	1935, 1936
Brubaker, Bruce	1960	Maranda, Georges	1954, 1955
Bruton, Bill	1950	Maxie, Larry	1958
Butland, Bill	1937	Masi, Phil	1936
Burdick, William	1886	Maye, Lee	1955
Cahill, John	1887	McKeever, James	1887
Callahan, Dave	1910	Mostil, John	1933-1937
Cantillion, Joe (Pongo) M	1886	Nagle, Tom	1886
Carty, Rico	1961	Peak, Elias	1887
Castino, Vince	1937, 1938, 1939	Pafko, Andy	1940
Chappell, Larry	1910	Phillips, Dick	1955
Clark, Otis	1941	Piche, Ron	1956
Cloninger, Tony	1958	Queen, Bill	1951
Covington, Wes	1952	Quest, Joseph	1887
Crothers, Douglas	1887	Rearдон, Jeremiah	1887
Daniels, Jack	1947	Reilly, Charles	1887
Deising, Jim	1946	Robinson, Bill	1962
Dexter, Charles	1909	Royer, Stan	1985, 1986
Dillion, Packard Andrew "Packy"	1887	Rudolph, Ernest	1941
Dougherty, Charles	1887	Ryan, John	1906
Eilers, Dave	1962	Ryan, Wilfred "Rosy"	1941, 1942
Epperty, Al	1936	Samuel, Amado	1958
Fischer, Hank	1959	Sanford, Jack	1953
Fiske, Max	1906, 1907	Skopec, John	1906
Fanning, Jim	1961	Spence, Stan	1935
Garcia, Dave M	1941, 1942	Sperry, Stan	1933, 1934
Gharrity, Ed "Patsy"	1938	Sproull, Charles	1939, 1940
Goryl, John	1952, 1954	Sullivan, Pat	1886
Gregory, Frank	1912	Tanner, Chuck	1947, 1948
Griffin, Ivy	1939, 1940	Torre, Joe	1960
Grimes, Burleigh	1912	Thiel, Bert	1947
Handiboe, James	1887	Trowbridge, Bob	1950
Handrahan, Vem	1960, 1961	Uecker, Bob	1956, 1957
Hanebrink, Harry	1948	Umbach, Arnold	1962
Hardy, Frank "Red"	1942	Vaura, Joe, M	1981, 1982
Harrington, Andrew "Frank"	1911	Varsho, Gary	1981
Hartung, Clint	1942	Weckbecker, Peter	1887
Hemphill, Frank	1911	Westrum, Wes	1941
Hriniak, Walt	1961	Wheeler, Don	1941, 1942
Ingraham, Charles	1887	Whisenartt, Pete	1947
Jimenez, Manuel	1958		

M=manager or coach in major leagues.