

Arthur O. Schott

His Legacy and Career

by
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Born on July 9, 1918 in New Orleans, LA, Arthur Schott's intense interest in baseball began when one of his friends allowed him to look through a scrapbook of complete box scores of the 1930 Southern Association. Almost overnight he was hooked and for the last 76 years he has been one of baseball's most fascinating and interesting observers. He purchased his first A.G. Spalding Baseball Guide in 1932 and has amassed a collection of baseball guides that dates back to the 19th century.

Schott calls his library "Cooperstown, Jr." as it contains rare baseball books, programs, guides, box scores, newspaper clippings, microfilm, Photostats, photographs, every *Sporting News* ever published and on and on. Four bedrooms of his New Orleans home are covered from floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall with baseball books and memorabilia.

But the true treasure trove is Schott himself. Anyone who has ever wanted information about baseball in New Orleans has found their way to the large circular table in Schott's den. There he will patiently scan his memory for the answers to your questions. Every so often he will retreat into one of his binders of reference material or filing cabinets of research to provide the necessary information to satisfy even the most obtuse inquiry. He is, after all, Louisiana's Official Baseball Historian, a title conferred upon him by the Governor of Louisiana in 1973. Schott has been honored with induction into the Diamond Club's Hall of Fame and with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Greater New Orleans Baseball Hall of Fame.

For years he wrote a column appropriately titled "A Schott From The Bleachers" that appeared in the local newspapers – the Times-Picayune and the States-Item – and his work still appears in *The Bleacher Creature*, a local newsletter for New Orleans baseball fans. He also contributes articles to NewOrleansBaseball.com (www.NewOrleansBaseball.com) and to *Between the Lines*, an annual compendium of baseball writing from the members of the Schott-Pelican Chapter of SABR.

He was one of the very first members of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and the Louisiana chapter is named the Schott-Pelican Chapter in his honor. At the tender age of 87 Schott still organizes the semi-annual meetings of the New Orleans branch of SABR and he never fails to impress and amaze our members with his recall of information. During one of my very first meetings with the group, Schott was asked for the location of

Pelican Park, the field where Shoeless Joe Jackson and the 1910 New Orleans Pelicans played – Heinemann Park, which later was renamed Pelican Stadium, was built in 1914 using the wooden grandstand from Pelican Park. As we drew a crude city map on an available white-board, Schott rattled off the location of every major baseball facility in the New Orleans area since 1859!

Yet it is the history of the New Orleans Pelicans of the Southern Association that have captivated Schott for the past seven decades. He has researched the history of the Pelicans from their humble beginnings in the aftermath of the Civil War through their last appearance in 1977 as a member of the American Association. Schott is the *keeper of the flame*, inspiring baseball researchers and writers alike. In an era before the Internet, baseball research was a painstaking, disciplined process. And Arthur Schott did his research better than most. He has filing cabinets chock full of hand-written research and articles banged out on an old-fashioned typewriter.

And like so many of us who have researched the Pelicans and the Southern Association, Schott's favorite Pelicans is Larry Gilbert. A native of New Orleans, Gilbert was a member of the 1914 Miracle Braves and the first New Orleanian to appear in the World Series. He returned to New Orleans as a player in 1917 and became the club's manager in 1923. Schott refers to Gilbert as *Mr. Baseball* and had the good fortune to know him both professionally and personally.

It has been my great privilege to have been able to know Arthur Schott, to transcribe his work for SABR and the National Baseball Hall of Fame, and to enjoy his company at least once a month at the baseball luncheons that he organizes for players like Mel Parnell, Gene Freese, George Strickland, Lenny Yochim, Putsy Caballero, Ron Swoboda and a host of former professional, semi-pro, and college baseball players, coaches, sportswriters.

His willingness to share his research and his knowledge of the game is an inspiration to all who have had come under his tutelage. His is a legacy that will last a lifetime.

