

THE SPORTS PAGE

News from the Babe Ruth Birthplace and Sports Legends Museums



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Fall 2014

FEATURE ARTICLE

Sculpting Legends: Football, Figurines, and Baltimore's own Fred Kail

Flames shot up into the early September sky as the Baltimore Ravens unveiled M&T Bank Stadium's newest resident—a 9-foot, 1,200-pound bronze tribute to Baltimore's most beloved linebacker, Ray Lewis. The statue's pose is unmistakable, with one leg raised, head looking up, grasping a handful of grass in the same lifelike detail as its neighboring statue of legendary Baltimore Colts quarterback, Johnny Unitas. It's no surprise that these iconic sculptures, born from years of experience in sports art, are the brainchild of the same local artist.

Frederick Kail grew up in Hagerstown, Maryland, learning early that he had a talent for art and a passion for football. He "played football every day of the year" in the sandlot, and refused to give up when he contracted polio at age 15, which nearly paralyzed his leg. Although the doctor said he would never walk again, Kail kept playing, even while wearing a leg brace. He recovered by his college years.

That determination has always driven his creativity. In 1956, Kail moved to Baltimore as a student at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), dedicating himself to art even in his free

time. On the weekends, he traveled home to make figurines of football players in uniform—what would become the first Joe Jolters. With some convincing from his friends, he made a deal with the Colts to sell. In just one season, Joe Jolter was a hit, not only with the fans but also with the team. Kail started lifelong friendships with Art Donovan, Lenny Moore, and Unitas, among others.

Unfortunately, with the National Football League (NFL) still in its early years, Kail's figurine rights were a coveted investment, one that he lost to merchandisers in a stolen copyright incident. Although the opportunity was taken away, he had already established himself

as a go-to artist for the league, a reputation that has driven his career ever since.

(Continued on page 7)

Over 50 years of Football Art

Baltimore artist Fred Kail stands beside his latest piece: Ray Lewis at M&T Bank Stadium. Kail holds one of his Joe Jolter figurines, his first foray into NFL merchandise.



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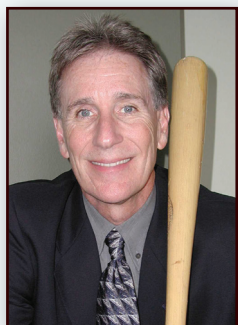
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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Watching Baltimore's Orioles soar past Detroit and then succumb to Kansas City reminded me of the old ABC Wide World of Sports motto: The Thrill of Victory; the Agony of Defeat. For Orioles' fans, that's what October baseball was all about. The euphoria of Oriole Park at Camden Yards for games one and two of the ALDS was perhaps my number one sports experience ever. Growing up rooting for Frank, Brooks, and Johnny U, and there at the '58 and '93 All-Star games, plus the '59 NFL Championship, I think what happened at Oriole Park October 2 and 3 would be tough to parallel.

First off were the games, both so electrifying they almost gave the ballpark a pulse. Even more electrifying, though, were the crowds. Being in the stands was what it must feel like to attend a European soccer match. The fans, perpetually chanting one cheer after another, pre-game to post-game never let up "Let's Go O's!" "O'Day, O'Day, O'Day, O'Day!" and the constant, off-key renditions of "Seven Nation Army!" What an atmosphere.

Sitting along the first-base line near the corner at the first game, I told my 31-year-old son that I thought we were about to witness something special. After a 12-3 beatdown of the Tigers, it was the best sports experience of his life—until the next day—when Delmon Young's base-clearing double in the 8th gave Baltimore a one-run victory. Oriole Park's upper deck seemed to sway under the raucous commotion of our delirious fans.

But then Kansas City brought a screeching halt to Baltimore's magical run, replacing our Thrill, at least for a day or two, with painful, personal Agony.

See you there,

Mike Gibbons, Executive Director

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www.baberuthmuseum.org

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SAVE THE DATE

An Evening with Dan Duquette - Thursday, December 4
Get a sneak peek at the Orioles 2015 season! See our website for details.

Babe Ruth's Birthday Bash 2015 - Friday, February 6

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Marty Abrahams
Wade Blair
Bobbi Carroll
Scott Evans
Doug Golonka
Hobert Green

James Ribley
Richard Sadloch
Lauren Stahl
Derrick Vaughan
Bill Wolf
Stan Zelaskowski



Our Curator of Collections gives us a special look into the museum vault.

Amanda's Pick

OBJECT: Ticket Stubs **DATE OF USE:** November 27, 1930

WHY DO WE HAVE IT? Part of our collecting mission is to preserve local Maryland sports history. In the early 1900s, these two Maryland institutions played one another almost yearly. By 1930, University of Maryland had dominated the series, defeating Johns Hopkins 21-0 during the November 27th game.

WHY IN THIS ISSUE? With University of Maryland joining the Big Ten Conference, I thought it would be interesting to look back at some of the early days of UMD football history. Plus, I'm a Hopkins Blue Jay and found it fascinating that JHU and UMD played one another in the early days!

A Big Breakfast for a Bigger Basketball Season

Amidst the day-in-day-out frenzy of playoff baseball, on October 13, the museum hosted a University of Maryland basketball event at the university's Baltimore campus. Newsletter editor Doug Roberts played the role of stealth reporter, and came away having interviewed the school's women's basketball coach Brenda Frese, who took last year's team to the NCAA Final Four tournament, and men's coach Mark Turgeon, whose revamped program features a top eight recruiting class.

Our Mister Roberts first caught up with Coach Frese and asked her what it was like recruiting as a Big Ten university. "It's been huge," the 12-year Maryland sage eagerly responded. "I mean, obviously we've been able to recruit at the highest level, so if anything it's

just opened up a lot more doors in the Midwest for us to be able to expand our recruiting. We're excited."

Doug wondered if team travel would be affected by the new conference affiliation. "Now we're going two hours in a different direction, it isn't much of a change," Frese replied. Coach Turgeon chimed in that "It'll all be new to us, the travel will be new and exciting and it's a great league, and if we perform well it should make us one of the better teams in the country."

Turgeon called the Big Ten "a

tremendous basketball league, arguably the best in the country the past four or five years. Seven teams [from the conference] made the NCAA tournament last year. There's really good coaching and the league's really recruiting well."

All of which points to an exciting 2014-15 season for both Terrapin squads, maybe something that can parallel the kind of excitement Baltimore's Orioles have provided local fans...if our hearts can take it!

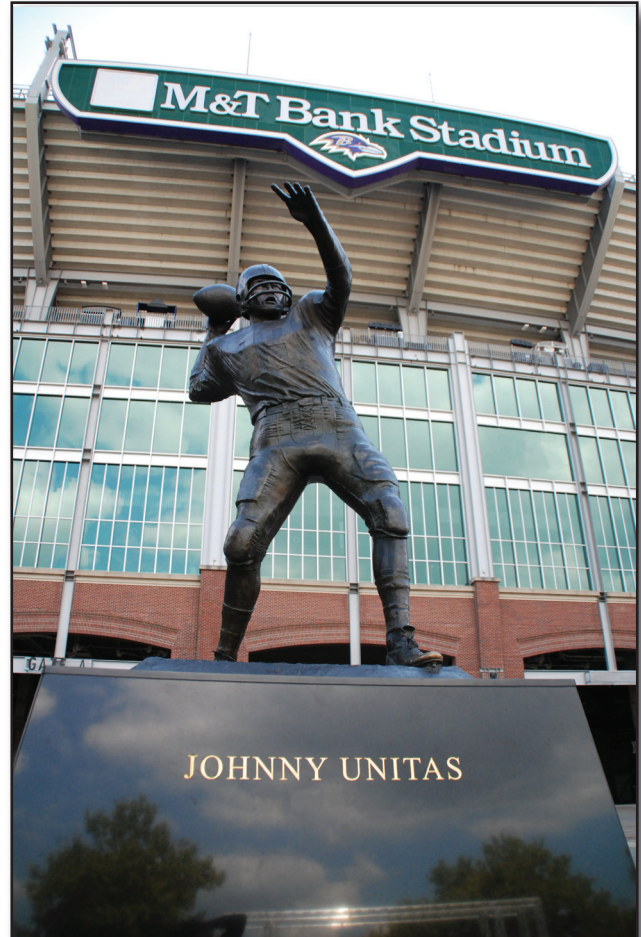
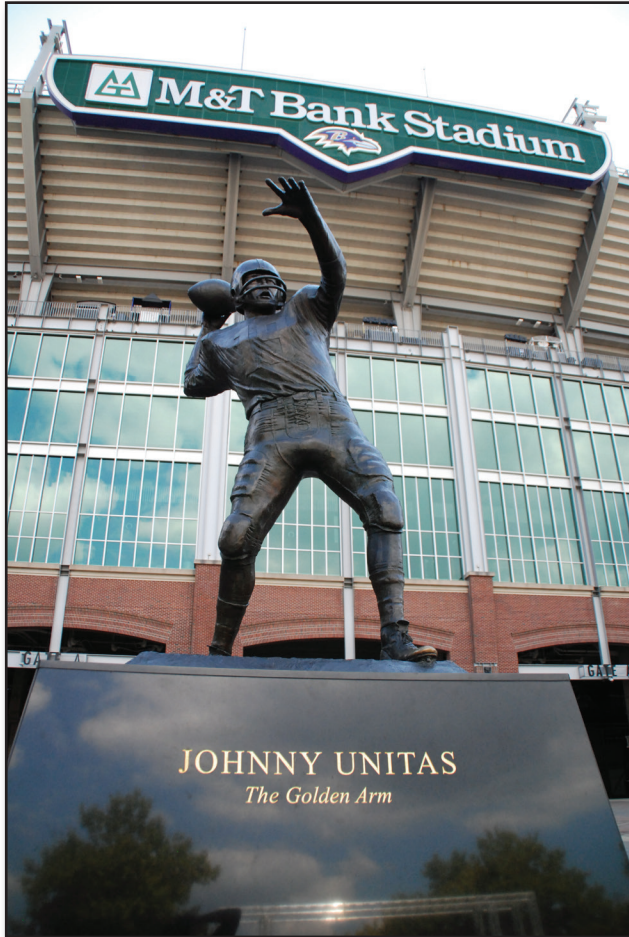
Maryland Coaches Paint the Picture for the 2014-2015 Season

(From left to right) Emcee Bruce Posner, Athletic Director Kevin Anderson, Coach Brenda Frese, and Coach Mark Turgeon answer questions about University of Maryland Basketball at our Big Basketball Breakfast in Baltimore.



WHAT'S MISSING?

Johnny Unitas of the Baltimore Colts is said to be one of the greatest quarterbacks of all time. You can see his statue next to Ray Lewis at the Baltimore Ravens' M&T Bank Stadium. One of these pictures is missing some parts. Can you find them all? Circle 7 differences in each picture.



There's still time!



Holiday parties are a hit at the Sports Legends Museum, and they're going fast! Look no further for the most competitive rental prices downtown, plus easy parking for companies of all sizes.

Call NOW to book your rental today!

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LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS





Were the O's snake bit?

All last season I kept hearing O's fans groaning, "Why do the Orioles have so many injuries?"

Or, "Are these players being coached correctly? Seems like we lose a player every week."

And, "Dang, not another Oriole on the DL. Are we snake bit or what?"

After Wieters and Machado went down, loads of talk show listeners were sure that the O's had to be "the most injured team in the majors."

I heard this kind of stuff so much I wondered if we really were.

So I ran some numbers.

I wasn't interested in the hundreds of minor injuries that put players on the DL, but I wanted to see how many Out For The Season (OFS) injuries other major league teams endured this season.

Here's a snapshot of 2014 MLB OFS injuries: Rangers 12, Rockies 7, Blue Jays 6, Marlins 6, Padres 6, Dodgers 6, Yankees 5, Nationals 5, Angels 5, Astros 5, Tigers 4, Orioles 3 (I had forgotten Santana). Mets 2, Royals 2, White Sox 2, Pirates 1, Twins 1, Red Sox 1, Cleveland 0.

Okay, there it is. Snake bit? Not by a long shot. Just terribly 'unlucky' with both Matt and Manny going down the tubes.

And while I'm on the subject of baseball injuries, here plucked from ESPN, Page 2 are six really funny baseball boo boo's from **Ron Holloman's** "All Bizarre Injury Team."

1. **Mark Smith** (Orioles) stuck his hand in an air conditioner to see why it wasn't working.
2. **Wade Boggs** (Red Sox) pulled a muscle pulling up his cowboy boots.
3. **Kevin Mitchel** (Mets, Giants) injured himself eating a cupcake.
4. **Nolan Ryan** (Astros) missed a start after being bitten on the hand...by a coyote.
5. **Vince Coleman** (Cardinals) Missed the 1985 World Series after getting rolled up in the tarp machine.
- Finally,
6. **Roger Craig** (Giants) cut his hand on a bra strap.

For #6, write your own joke here _____.

—Doug Roberts, Editor

Gloves

By Jim Henneman

MLB 2014 Season OFS Injuries

TEXAS RANGERS	12
COLORADO ROCKIES	7
TORONTO BLUE JAYS	6
MIAMI MARLINS	6
SAN DIEGO PADRES	6
LOS ANGELES DODGERS	6
NEW YORK YANKEES	5
WASHINGTON NATIONALS	5
LOS ANGELES ANGELS	5
HOUSTON ASTROS	5
DETROIT TIGERS	4
BALTIMORE ORIOLES	3
NEW YORK METS	2
KANSAS CITY ROYALS	2
CHICAGO WHITE SOX	2
PITTSBURGH PIRATES	1
MINNESOTA TWINS	1
BOSTON RED SOX	1
CLEVELAND INDIANS	0

To borrow a favorite phrase of the late, great John Steadman, you qualify as a "young old timer" if you remember an obscure but somewhat controversial rule that was put in place before the start of the 1954 season, the year the Orioles returned to the major leagues.

Recommended by Hall of Famer Hank Greenberg, a member of the Playing Rules Committee, rule 3:14 stated simply: "Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and their equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory."

"Say what?" you ask. Well, prior to that rule being put into place on Nov. 3, 1953, players routinely left their gloves on the field, a practice that was in force from the major leagues all the way to the sandlots. Judging by the reaction of most players, it was the natural thing to do if for no other reason than it had been that way ever since gloves were introduced to the game—and besides, they weren't really needed in the dugout!

"It was unpopular and controversial," former Yankees' player, coach, manager and General Manager Ralph Houk recalled much later in his career. "Nobody thought it would work."

Oddly enough, neither the rule nor the controversy had anything to do with how the practice affected the game. Greenberg pushed for adoption because he felt discarded gloves lying on the field "looked sloppy." The main contention of the players who opposed the change is especially humorous today—they felt the necessity of having to retrieve gloves from the dugout each inning would "slow up play." In the modern day era of three-plus minute commercial breaks, some might consider tracking down a misplaced glove a welcome diversion.

It took over 100 years for gloves to be banned from the playing field, except when being worn by the defense, but the irony is there are many more stories of pranks that were played than there are about games being affected—but that, perhaps, is a story for another time.

— **Jim Henneman** is a long-time Baltimore sports writer, author of "Upon Further Review" on www.pressboxonline.com.

The Ballpark Food Review

I can't prove it, but legend says that Babe Ruth and his father, while walking to work on tiny Washington Boulevard, would pass a bar and pick up a couple of pickles for lunch.

Well, the pickles are still there in a huge 25-year-old sports bar called PICKLES PUB.

Where is Pickles? Think of Oriole Park, and it's on the other side of the left field wall. Pickles reign here. Fried pickles? Sure. Even their terrific Bloody Mary is garnished with pickles.

Why not? This ain't the "Celery Stalk Tavern," it's PICKLES Pub.

There are two menus at PP, the everyday menu which has 16 sandwiches, 12 appetizers, and...fried pickles? Ya think? Pizza, crab soup, and my favorite, Earl's Chili. 4 star chili, Mr Earl!

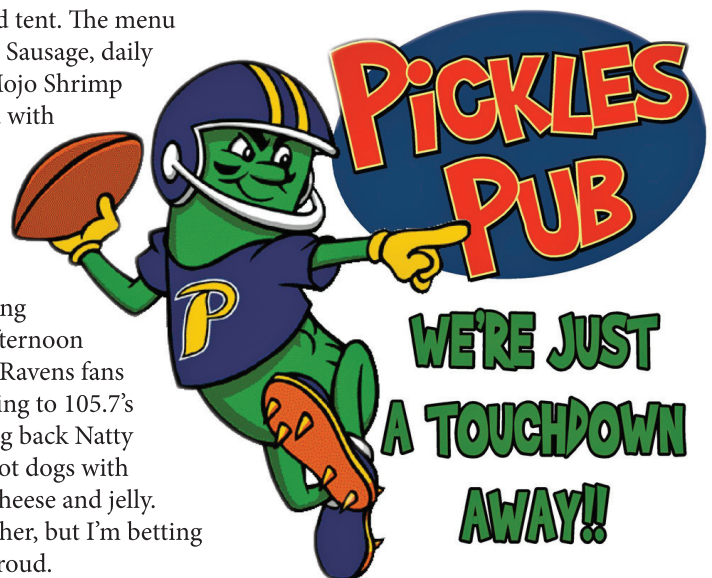
On Game Day, Pickles adds three

outside bars and a food tent. The menu features Grilled Italian Sausage, daily made Shrimp Salad, Mojo Shrimp Salad (BBQ Pork piled with shrimp salad), Home Cooked Turkey and Whiskey Island Pulled Pork Sandwiches.

Now for the atmosphere. Think along with me. It's Sunday afternoon and over 1,000 crazed Ravens fans are rocking and jamming to 105.7's pre-game show, kicking back Natty Boh's and munching hot dogs with peanut butter, cream cheese and jelly.

I can't prove this either, but I'm betting Babe Ruth would be proud.

— *Museum member Doug Roberts is a volunteer writer and editor who for 23 years reviewed restaurants for WBAL Radio.*



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WHAT ARE THE PROS SAYING...

about Referees Protecting Quarterbacks?

Bruce Laird, Former Defensive Back

The concern is for the average fan that they may not know that NFL referees are NFL employees. They are employees of the league.

Everything is mandated by the NFL Rules committee. If the owners are stating and the Rules Committee people are stating that if anybody touches the quarterback above the shoulder pads—you don't have to see it, you don't have to believe you actually saw it but you must throw the flag.

The 'good' hits that you see on a quarterback that have been called, is just because, quite frankly, they are being over protective. Because that's what they're told to do, and if you're not going to do the job that we want you to do you will no longer be employed.

Unfortunately, that's my take on it.

Bruce Laird was a Pro-Bowl Defensive Back, primarily a strong safety with the Baltimore Colts from 1972-1981, then for the San Diego Chargers for two seasons. Over Bruce's 12 year NFL career he started in 127 games and played in a total of 164 games.

Drew Forrester, Sports Writer

I think a big part of it is the concussion issue. It has really changed the way the owners and the Commissioner want the way the league to run because they are afraid of litigation. And rightly so when you're talking about seven hundred million dollar lawsuits.

As to the referees, I think, to borrow an old phrase, "They're doing the best they can."

Drew Forrester is the former General Manager of the Baltimore Blast and spent the last twelve years as a Baltimore sports talk show host. He has a daily sports blog that provides analysis and opinion on local and national sports, www.drewsmorningdish.blogspot.com.

Interviews for "What are the pros saying..." are conducted by Doug Roberts.



Sculpting Legends

(Continued from page 1)

Kail spent the next several decades working in graphic design, while making more figurines on the side (he was the first artist to sculpt Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* characters). Even as the Colts were long gone from Baltimore, their legacy returned to his work in 1998, when he created a bronze statue of Unitas for Papa John's Cardinal Stadium at the University of Louisville, Kentucky. Kail was honored to sculpt his old friend, and wanted to try the project again in the city where Unitas became a legend. Once the Ravens returned the NFL to Baltimore, he had the perfect chance to connect the old dynasty to the new by making a bigger, better statue at M&T Bank Stadium.

Funding the project was no easy

task, but with help from the Babe Ruth Birthplace Museum, Kail was able to begin with Unitas's blessing, using photos from the storied 1950s Colts seasons, including the stunning shot taken from the sidelines by current Director of Community Relations John Ziemann. Kail finished the Unitas statue in 2002, just after the quarterback's death.

In 2013, Kail was at it again to do the same for Ray Lewis. To start, he made several small figure molds of Lewis in classic linebacker poses, and another "fun" one of Lewis's trademark "squirrel dance." On one of his visits to Kail's studio, Lewis chose to use the dance mold, at no surprise. He also reminded Kail to add the extra 1/16-inch he always had on his cleats.

With hard work and an experienced eye, Kail completed the statue just in time for the 2014 season.

"Making these [two] statues has


Joe Jolter

Frederick Kail began creating this classic figurine while in college during the late 1950s. This particular figurine was made especially for the Baltimore Colts' defensive tackle, Art Donovan.



been the aspiration of my career," Kail says. To spend a lifetime combining his love for art and football is the culmination of his passion. Using that passion to commemorate the sports legends he loves makes the experience all the better.

– **Patrick Dickerson**, Membership and Group Sales Coordinator

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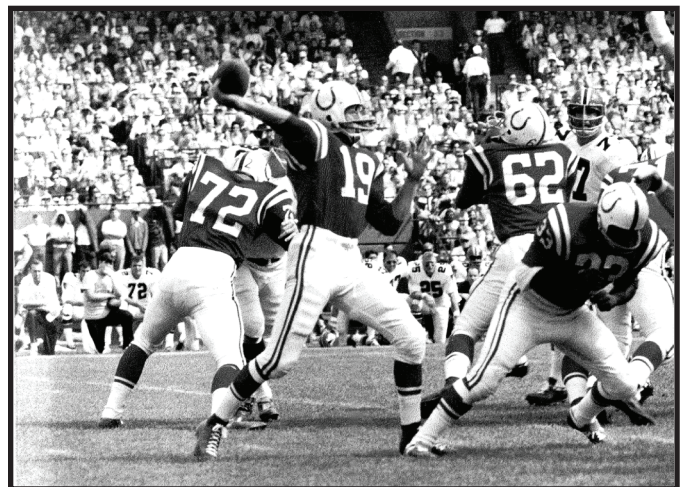
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Johnny Unitas, the Golden Arm

Museum Director of Community Relations John Ziemann took this photograph at the 1958 NFL Championship Game held at Yankee Stadium in New York. It was later used for inspiration as Fred Kail designed the Unitas statue at M&T Bank Stadium.



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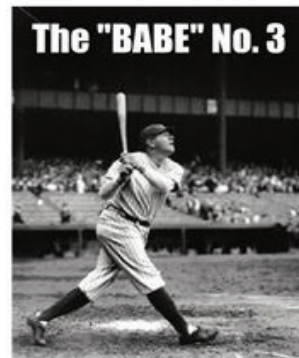
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