

J.J. MCCAFFERY AND THE TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS: THE STORY OF A CANADIAN BASEBALL ENTREPRENEUR

PRESENTATION TO:
CANADIAN BASEBALL HISTORY CONFERENCE
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JAMES JOHNSTON MCCAFFERY

President, Toronto Baseball Club
and Amusement Company,
Limited, 1905 or 1906-1922

Adapted from: “J.J. McCaffrey and the
Toronto Maple Leafs: The Story of a
Canadian Baseball Entrepreneur.” *Journal
of Canadian Baseball*, 2025.



MY QUESTION FOR YOU:

**Should J.J. McCaffery Be in the
Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame?**

JAMES 'JIM' MCCAFFERY

- Born in Toronto in 1872
- Not wealthy, but well connected
- Hotelier - Bay Tree Hotel (1898)
- Member of L.O.L. and Masonic Lodge
- 1900 - Purchased an interest in the team
- 1904 - Elected to Board of Directors

TORONTO BASEBALL TEAM IN THE EASTERN LEAGUE

- 1895-1899 - Played every year, but unstable
- 1900-1902 - Ed Barrow takes over; stability reigns
- 1903-1904 - Instability returns

TORONTO BASEBALL CLUB AND AMUSEMENT COMPANY, LIMITED (JANUARY 6, 1905)

- Organized by McCaffery
- Directors
 - Lol Solman, involved in numerous businesses
 - J.J. McCaffery, owner of Bay Tree Hotel
 - H.W. Brick, local man, Wampole & Co. (vitamins and supplements)
 - J.J. Seitz, GM, United Typewriter Co.
 - Jess Applegath, tailor, former president of team
- Described by *Globe* as AA11 group

MCCAFFERY'S RECORD AS PRESIDENT

Year	Standing	W-L Record	Manager
1905	8	48-89	Dick Harley
1906	8	46-88	Ed Barrow
1907	1	83-51	Joe Kelley
1908	6	60-77	Mike Kelley/Larry Schlafly
1909	4	79-72	Joe Kelley
1910	4	80-72	Joe Kelley
1911	3	94-59	Joe Kelley
1912	1	91-62	Joe Kelley
1913	7	70-83	Joe Kelley
1914	4	74-70	Joe Kelley
1915	3	72-67	Bill Clymer
1916	5	72-66	Joe Birmingham
1917	1	93-61	Napoleon Lajoie
1918	1	88-39	Dan Howley
1919	2	93-57	George Gibson
1920	2	108-46	Hugh Duffy
1921	4	89-77	Larry Doyle/Lena Blackburne
1922	5	76-88	Eddie Onslow

MCCAFFERY'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN 18 SEASONS

- 4 pennants
- 2 second-place finishes, both during Orioles' dynasty
- 12 seasons in first division
- Total W-L record - 1416-1224 (.536)
- How did he do it?

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEAM

- Properly funded
- Good management
- Positive environment for players and fans

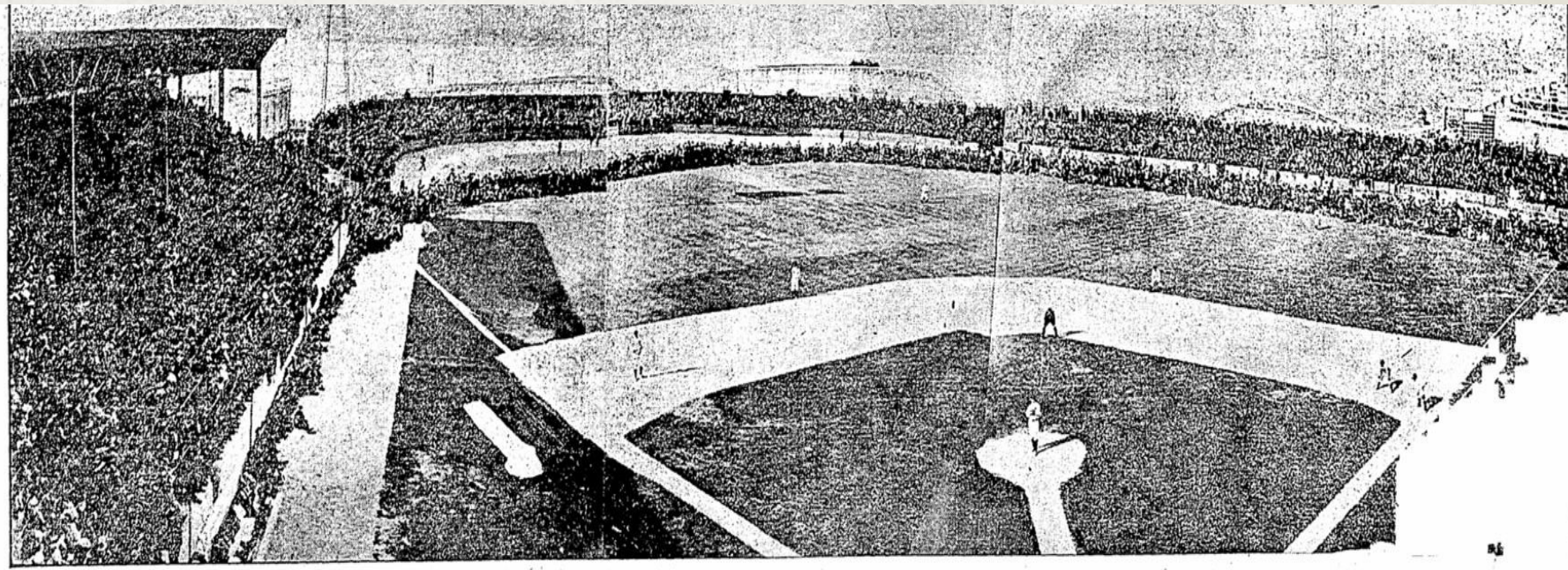
MANAGERS

- 14 managers
- One in Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame - George Gibson
- Four in National Baseball Hall of Fame - Ed Barrow, Hugh Duffy, Joe Kelley, Nap Lajoie
- HoF managers for 11 of 18 years

PLAYERS

- Wee Willie Keeler - “Hit ‘em they ain’t”
- Dick Rudolph
- Frank O’Rourke - Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame
- Urban Shocker

VENUES



- Diamond Park - until 1907
- Hanlan's Point - 1908-1909
- Diamond Park - 1909
- Rebuilt Island Stadium - 1910-25

SUMMARY: WHAT DID MCCAFFERY DO?

- Produced successful teams, with
- Good managers and players
- In a pleasant venue
- Steadily increasing attendance
- Well-respected in the International League and in baseball generally
- Groomed highly-qualified successor - Solman
- Brought stability and a positive environment to the franchise

CANADIAN BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

QUALIFICATIONS

- “All nominees must be either Canadian or have done something significant in baseball in Canada.”
- Builder - “Major impact in the growth of baseball in Canada or internationally”

OTHER BUILDERS

- Charles Bronfman, Gerry Snyder, John McHale
- Paul Beeston, Paul Godfrey, Howard Starkman, Gord Ash

BOB BROWN (1876-1962)

- Owner/playing manager of the Vancouver Beavers
- Captured three pennants
- Initiated the building of Capilano Stadium
- Organized the first game played in Canada under lights
- President of the Western International League from 1938 to 1953

GEORGE “KNOTTY” LEE (1877-1940S)

- Zelig or Forrest Gump of early Canadian baseball
- Architect of the Canadian League, the first professional baseball circuit in Canada
- Organized the Michigan-Ontario League
- Manager/business manager/general manager of many teams
- Business manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs - 1921-2

JACK KENT COOKE (1912-1997)

- Owned Maple Leafs 1951-63
- Won four pennants
- Attracted 3.3 million fans
- Named minor league executive of the year by *The Sporting News* in 1952

Should McCaffery Be in the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame?