

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

By Richard Spinelli

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Rochester Philatelic Association

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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



Little Rich Spinelli, age 5 years, at J. P. Riley Playground, the Home of Champions in Rochester, New York, preparing for one of the great days of his life. (Thanks, Rochester ACE!)

Hand-drawn by a member of the Art Cover Exchange.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

So, you think you know all about America's Past time?

Well, consider this:

- ▶ The earliest reference to a baseball-like game occurred in Russia in the 1300's.
- ▶ The Russian Game, *Lapta*, consisted of two teams (5 to 10 members), with a pitcher and batter. The ball would be thrown to a batter, who would attempt to hit it with a short stick and then run to the opposite field side and back before being hit by the ball. \*
- ▶ The first published terms about baseball appeared in 1744 in a British book entitled "A Little Pretty Pocket Book" written by John Newbury. The book contained some wood cut pictures of boys playing a game very similar to modern baseball, and a rhyme called "Base-ball". This is considered the first known instance of the word "baseball" in print.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ The book was very popular in England and was later published in Colonial America in 1762. [\\*](#)
- ▶ A second reference to "baseball" played in England on Easter Monday in 1755 was contained in a diary by English Lawyer William Bray. [\\*](#)
- ▶ Jane Austin's novel, "Northanger Abbey," written in 1798, described her young heroine as preferring "cricket, baseball, riding on horseback, and running about the country.. to books." [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ A 1791 bylaw in Pittsfield, Mass. prohibited playing “baseball” within 80 feet of the town meeting house because of the potential for breaking windows. [\\*](#)
- ▶ The French book, *Les Jeux des Jeunes Garçons* (Paris, 1810), is the first book known to contain printed rules for a game of two teams of 8 to 10 players, four bases (one called home), a pitcher, a batter and flyball outs. [\\*](#)
- ▶ An 1823 letter in the *National Advocate*, a New York Newspaper, refers to the “manly and athletic game of Base ball” 16 years before its supposed invention by Abner Doubleday. [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ An article published in a Hagerstown, Maryland newspaper in 1828 describes a young girl: "Her longing eyes fixed on a game of baseball at the corner of the green". [\\*](#)
- ▶ In 1845, Alexander Joe Cartwright (1820-1892) of New York invented the modern baseball field. (90 feet base-to-base, 60 feet 6 inches pitchers mound to home plate). [\\*](#)
- ▶ In 1846, the first recorded competitive baseball game took place at Elysian Fields in Hoboken, New Jersey between Cartwright's Knickerbocker Baseball Club (losers) and the New York Baseball Club (winners). [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ In 1858, The National Association of Baseball Players, the first organized baseball league, was formed. \*
- ▶ In 1869, the first professional game was played. The Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first openly salaried team and are considered the first professional team. \*
- ▶ In 1871, the First Professional League, the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, was formed. \*
- ▶ In 1876, the first major league, The National League, was formed. \*
- ▶ In 1947, Rich Spinelli threw his first baseball pitch and swung his first baseball bat.
- ▶ In 2005, Rich Spinelli swung at his last baseball pitch and hung up his gear for the last time. Along the way were many games and many friends.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics





# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

George Herman "Babe"  
Ruth.

February 6, 1895 to  
August 16, 1948

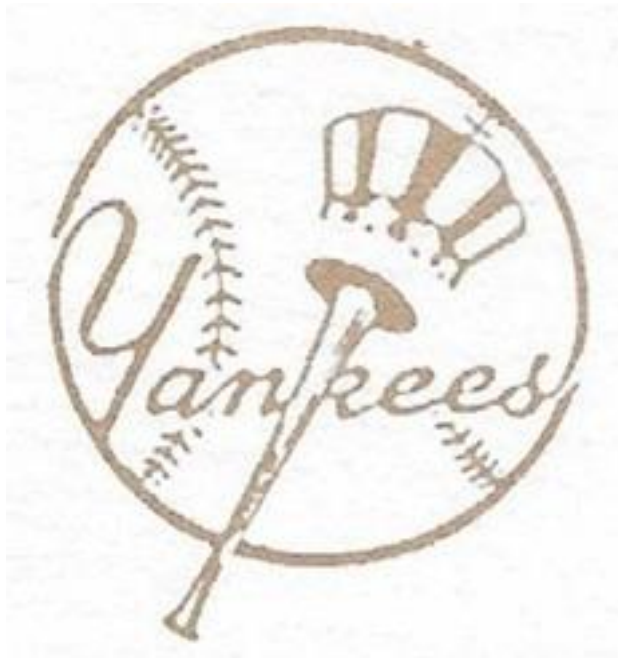


"Never Let the Fear  
of Striking Out Get  
in Your Way".

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ **George Herman "Babe" Ruth Jr.** (February 6, 1895 - August 16, 1948) was an American professional baseball player whose career in Major League baseball (MLB) spanned 22 seasons, from 1914 through 1935. Nicknamed "**The Bambino**" and "**The Sultan of Swat**", he began his **MLB career as a star left-handed pitcher for the Boston Red Sox**, but achieved his greatest fame as a **slugging outfielder for the New York Yankees**. Ruth is regarded as one of the greatest sports heroes in American culture and is considered by many to be the greatest baseball player of all time. In 1936, Ruth was elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame as one of its "First Five" inaugural members.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



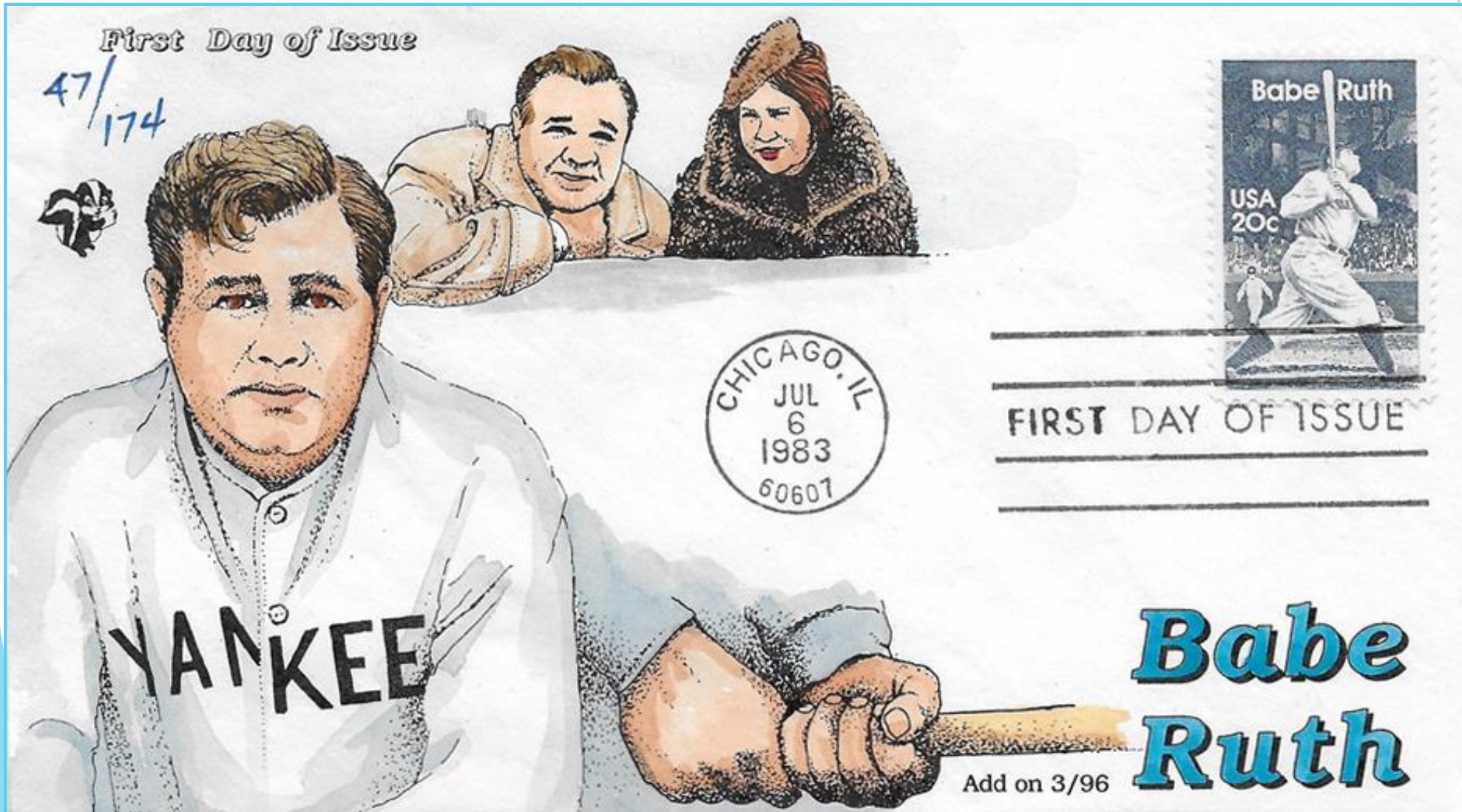
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ As a child, Ruth spoke German. His father had a saloon with an upstairs apartment. Because George Sr. was a saloon owner in Baltimore and had given Ruth little supervision growing up, he became a delinquent. Ruth was sent to St. Mary's Industrial School for Boys because George Sr. ran out of ideas to discipline and mentor his son. **Ruth admitted that as a youth he ran the streets, rarely attended school, and drank beer when his father was not looking.** Ruth entered St. Mary's on June 13, 1902. He was recorded as "incorrigible" and spent much of the next 12 years there.

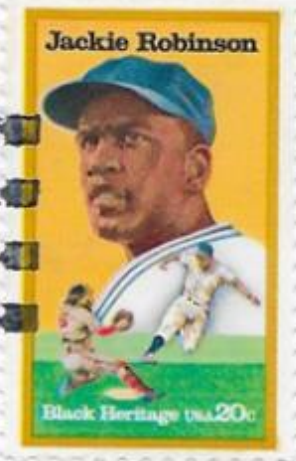
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ Ruth was sent to St. Mary's Industrial School for Boys at age seven, a reformatory where he was mentored by Brother Matthias Boutlier of the Xaverian Brothers, the school's disciplinarian and a capable baseball player. In 1914, Ruth was signed to play minor league baseball for the Baltimore Orioles but was soon sold to the Red Sox.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



BABE RUTH STAMP  
UNVEILED IN  
BALTIMORE, MD.

BABE RUTH  
(GEORGE HERMAN RUTH)

A "Big" Man With A Colorful Personality Who Thrilled Baseball Fans With His Exciting Home Runs.  
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

A YOUNG PITCHER OF DISTINCTION



THE  
©



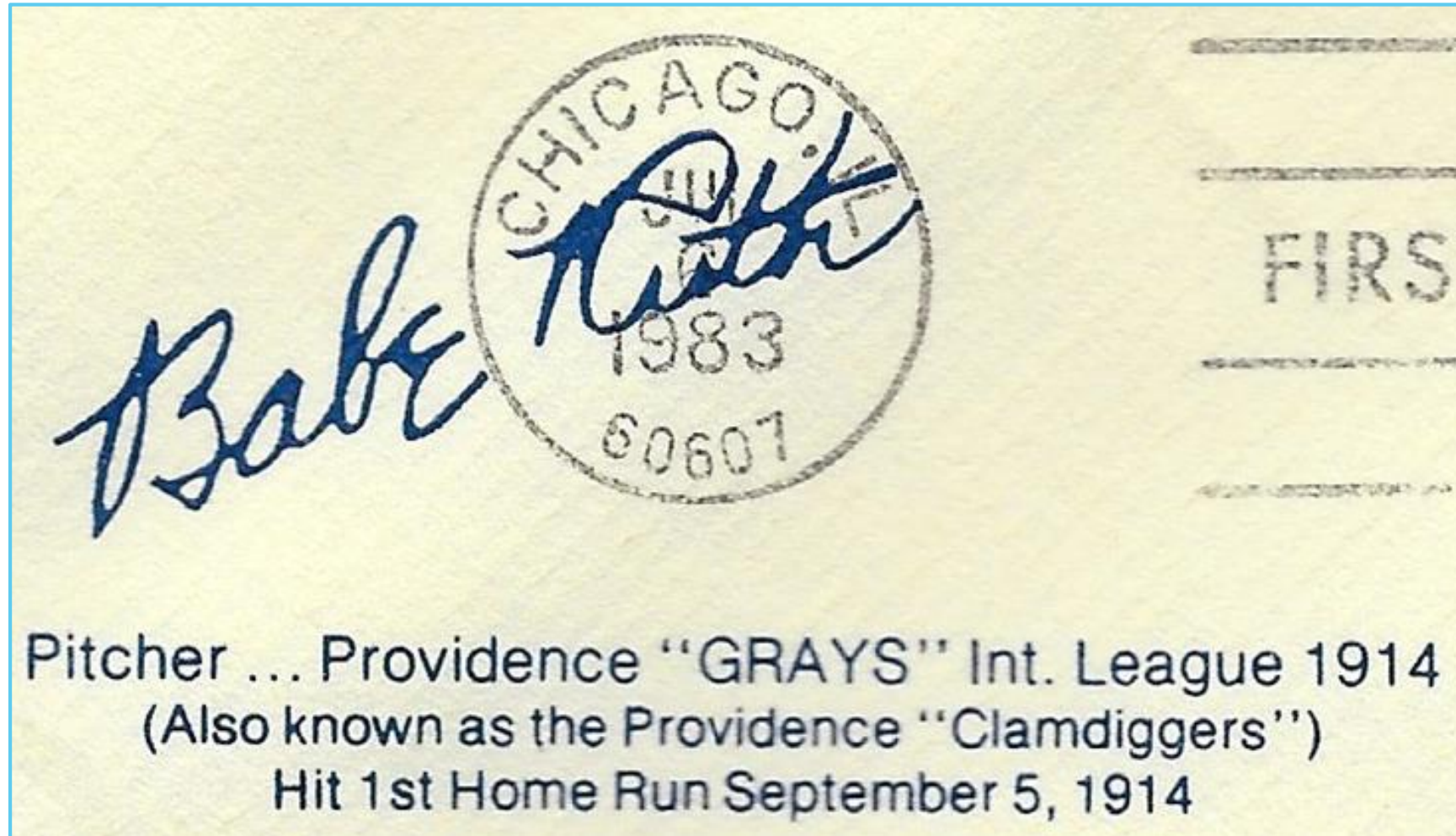
Pitcher ... Providence "GRAYS" Int. League 1914  
(Also known as the Providence "Clamdiggers")  
Hit 1st Home Run September 5, 1914



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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ By 1916, Ruth had built a reputation as an outstanding pitcher who sometimes hit long home runs, a feat unusual for any player in the pre-1920 dead-ball era. Although Ruth twice won 23 games in a season as a pitcher and was a member of three World Series championship teams with the Red Sox, he wanted to play every day and was allowed to convert to an outfielder. With regular playing time, he broke the MLB single-season homerun record in 1919. [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

## BABE RUTH

### BABE RUTH'S PITCHING RECORD

Team	Games	Decisions	Wins	Losses	Pct.
Boston	158	131	87	44	.664
New York	5	5	5	0	1.000
	163	136	92	44	.676

Best left-handed pitcher in the AL during his 5 years with the Boston Red Sox.



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



AL 1920-1934 New York Yankees

AL 1915-1919 Boston Red Sox



NL 1935 Boston Braves

*Babe Ruth liked people, especially children. He shared his talents, time and money for benefits. He left the game he loved so much, in a blaze of glory, hitting three homeruns - the third, "the longest ball hit out of Forbes Field".*

AL February 6, 1895 - August 16, 1948

AMERICAN SPORTING SERIES

16-6



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

## BABE RUTH'S PITCHING RECORD

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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



**Babe Ruth**  
1895-1948

*gm Everett*



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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ Although Ruth twice won 23 games in a season as a pitcher and was a member of three World Series championship teams with the Red Sox, he wanted to play every day and was allowed to convert to an outfielder. With regular playing time, he broke the MLB single-season home run record in 1919. After that season, Red Sox owner Harry Frazee sold Ruth to the Yankees amid controversy. The trade fueled Boston's subsequent 86-year championship drought and popularized the "Curse of the Bambino" superstition. [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ A 20-cent commemorative stamp honoring baseball great Babe Ruth was issued July 6, 1983, in Chicago, Illinois, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary year of the All-Star Game in which Ruth hit the first home run, scoring two runs and winning the game. It was the third stamp in the American Sports Series which begun in 1981 with stamps honoring golfer Bobby Jones and all-around athlete Babe Didrikson Zaharias before Ruth.





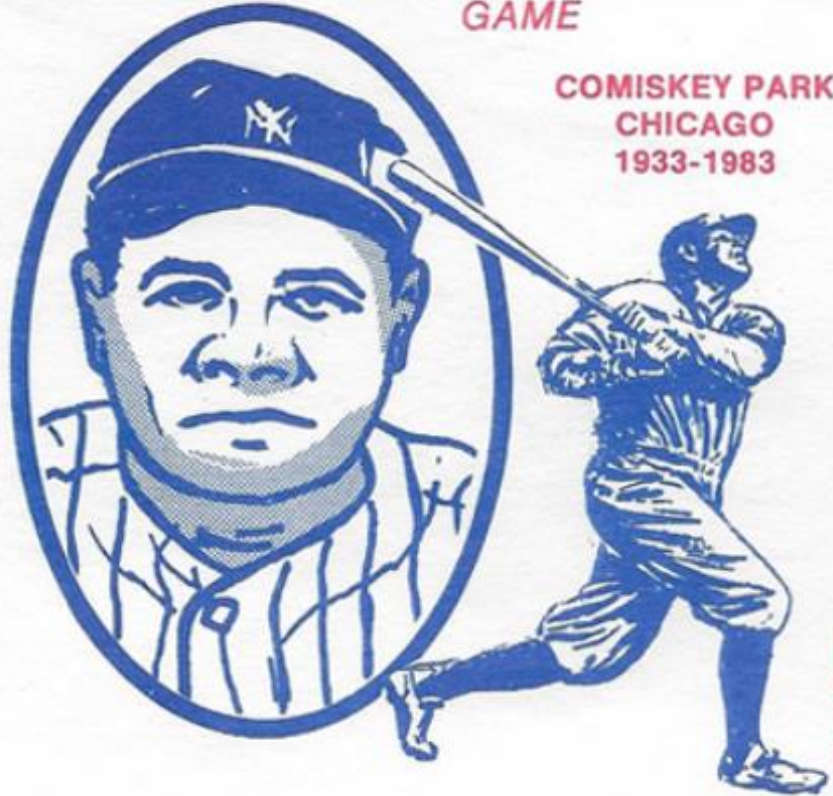
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ The dedication ceremony for the stamp was held on July 5, during the Old Timers Game at Comiskey Park, site of the first All-Star Game in 1933. The Babe Ruth Stamp design, by Richard Gangel of Weston, Connecticut, was based on a classic photograph of Ruth with feet spread apart and bat pointed almost straight up. He is looking toward the fences following a home run swing. Esther Porter modeled the stamp. A total of 184,950,000 stamps were issued at a value of 20¢ each for a total value of \$36,990,000. (Stamp ID# Scott 2046). [\\*](#)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

**50<sup>th</sup>** Anniversary  
BASEBALL'S ALL-STAR  
GAME

COMISKEY PARK  
CHICAGO  
1933-1983



AMERICAN 4 - 9 - 2  
NATIONAL 2 - 8 - 0  
ROCK AIRES #1  
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



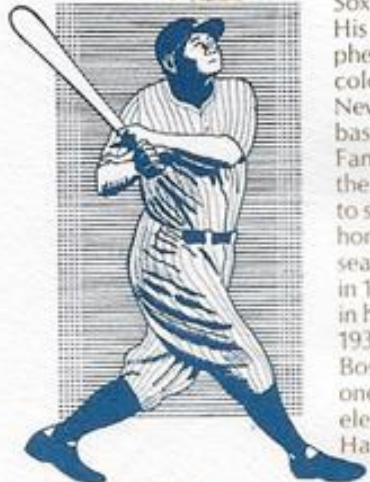
American Sports Series

# Babe Ruth

1895-1948

*The Sultan of Swat*

George Herman Ruth, born in Baltimore, first played with the minor league Baltimore Orioles and the Boston Red Sox (pitching brilliantly). His career as an outfielder, phenomenal home-run hitter and colorful personality with the New York Yankees made 1920's baseball the *Babe Ruth Era*. Fans flocked to Yankee Stadium, the "House That Ruth Built", to see him hit more than 50 homers in four different seasons including a record 60 in 1927. He hit 714 home runs in his career, which ended in 1935 after one season with the Boston Braves. In 1936 Ruth was one of the first five players elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.



Aristocrat Cachets



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Aristocrat cachet

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

1895-1948

## *The Sultan of Swat*

George Herman Ruth, born in Baltimore, first played with the minor league Baltimore Orioles and the Boston Red Sox (pitching brilliantly). His career as an outfielder, phenomenal home-run hitter and colorful personality with the New York Yankees made 1920's baseball the *Babe Ruth Era*. Fans flocked to Yankee Stadium, the "House That Ruth Built", to see him hit more than 50 homers in four different seasons including a record 60 in 1927. He hit 714 home runs in his career, which ended in 1935 after one season with the Boston Braves. In 1936 Ruth was one of the first five players elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

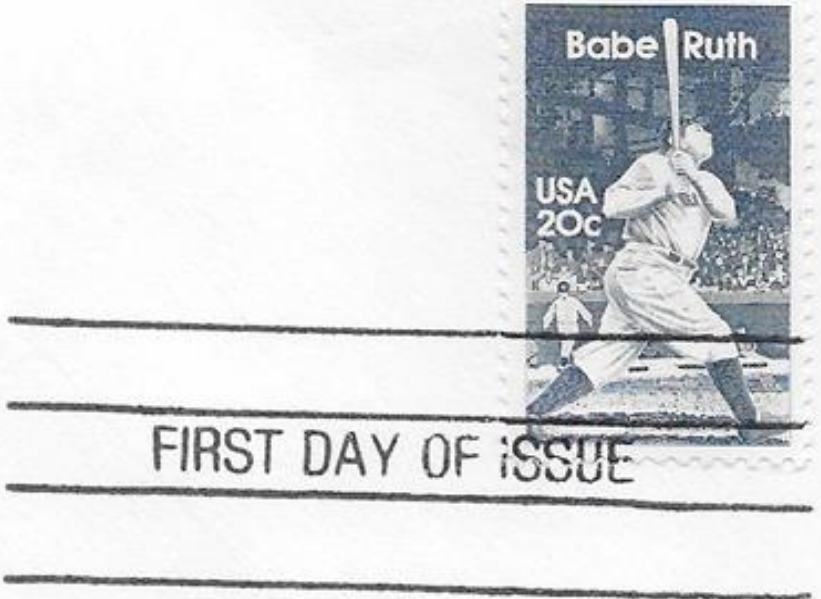
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

GEORGE "BABE" RUTH  
(1895-1948)



B Branton #1 1983

AMERICAN SPORTING SERIES



*Ruth's Batting and Pitching Records*

G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.		
2503	8399	2174	2873	506	136	714	2204	.342		
G	IP	W	L	Pct.	H	R	ER	SO	BB	ERA
163	1221	94	46	.671	974	400	309	488	441	2.28

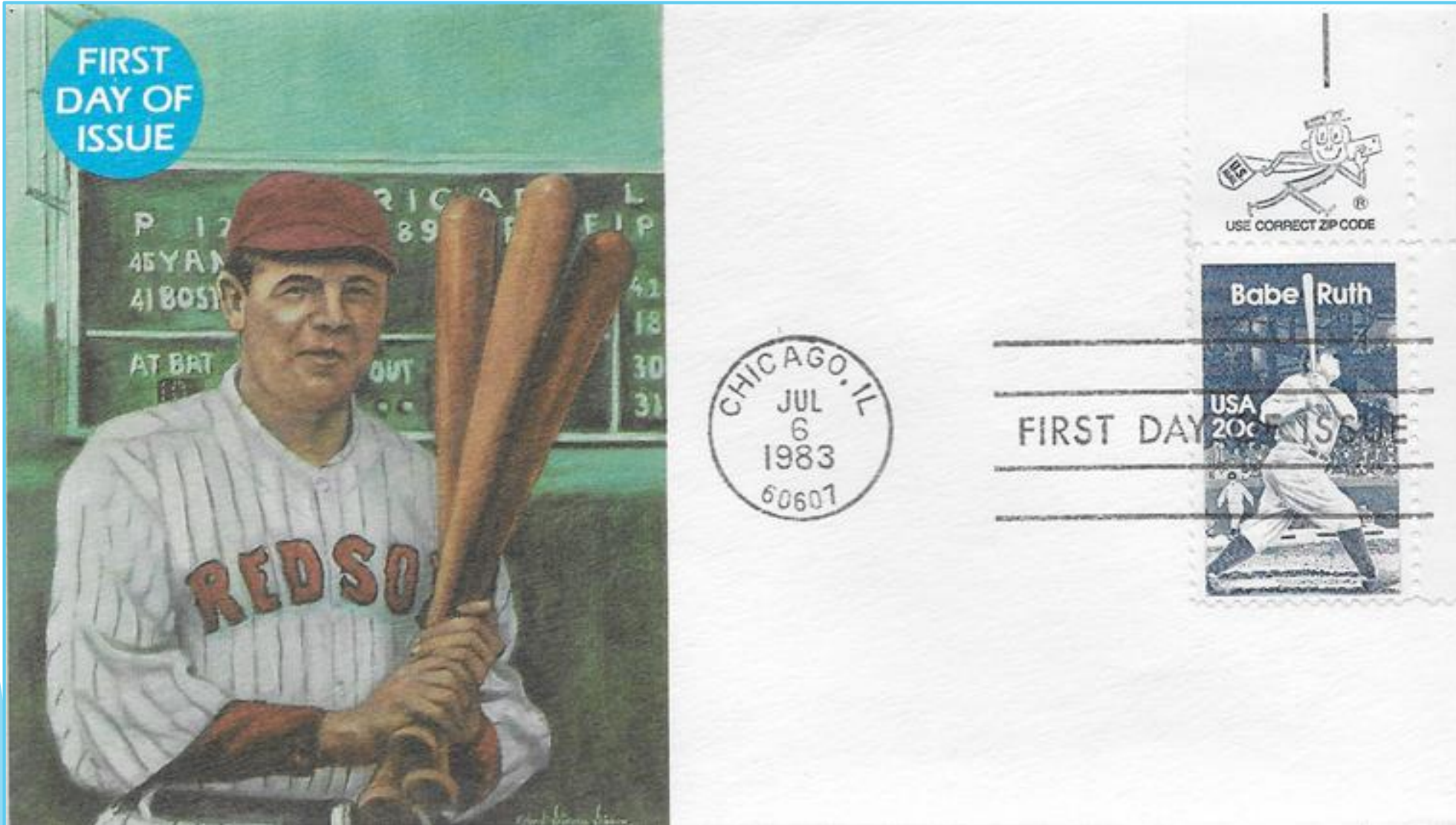


# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



Zaso cachet

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



TCMA Ltd Robert  
Steven Simon  
painting cachet

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

FIRST DAY  
OF ISSUE



GEORGE HERMAN (BABE) RUTH  
BOSTON-NEW YORK, A.L.  
BOSTON, N.L. 1915-1935

GREATEST DRAWING CARD IN  
HISTORY OF BASEBALL. HOLDER OF  
MANY HOME RUN AND OTHER  
BATTING RECORDS. GATHERED 714  
HOME RUNS IN ADDITION TO FIFTEEN  
IN WORLD SERIES.

**"BABE" RUTH**

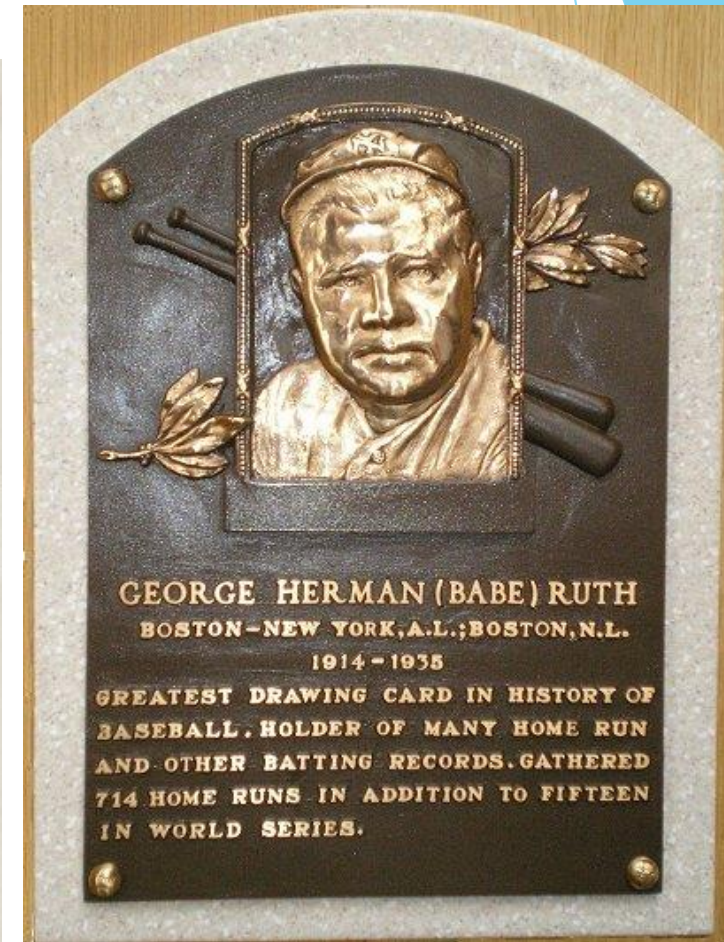
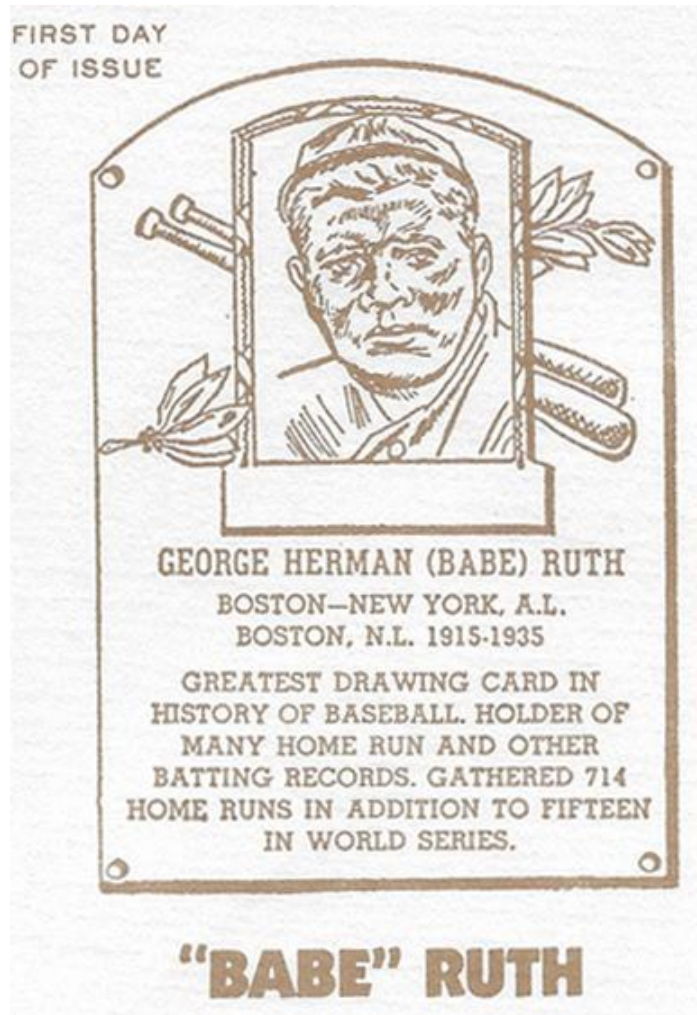


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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



Note the starting year in each

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

My voice may be loud above the crowd,  
And my words just a bit uncouth,  
But I'll stand and shout 'till the last man's out  
There was never a guy like Ruth!

*John Kieran*

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

**George Herman "Babe" Ruth**

Born Baltimore, MD. 2-6-95

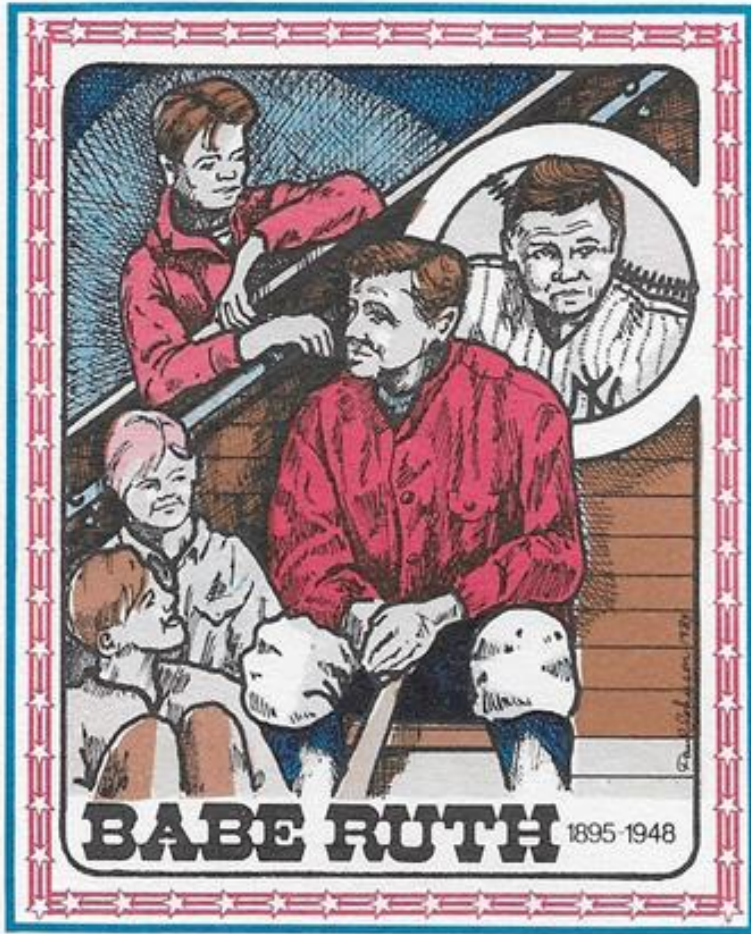
Died New York, NY. 8-13-48

The Bambino, Wazir of Wham

Behemoth of Bust, Colossus

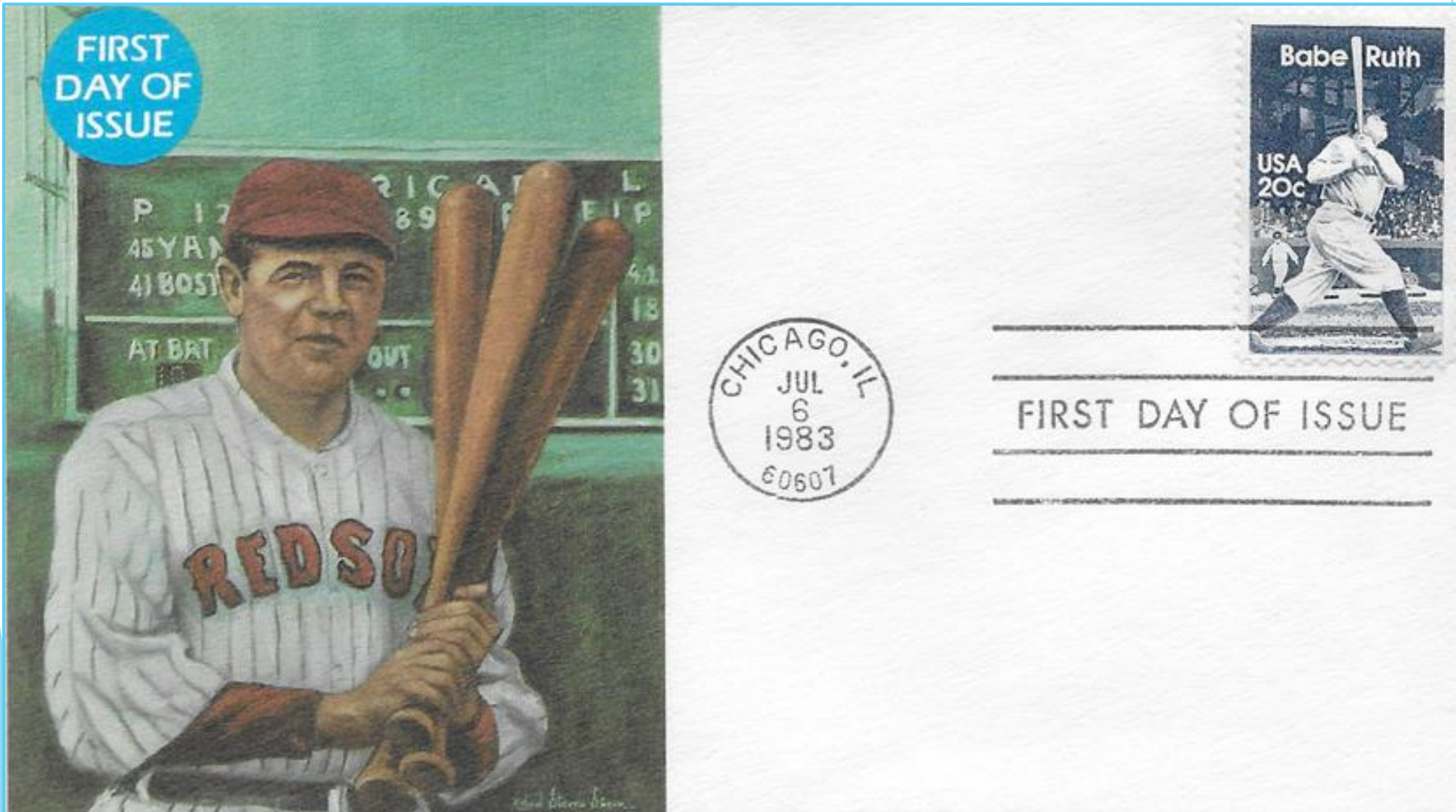
of Clout, Sultan of Swat.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



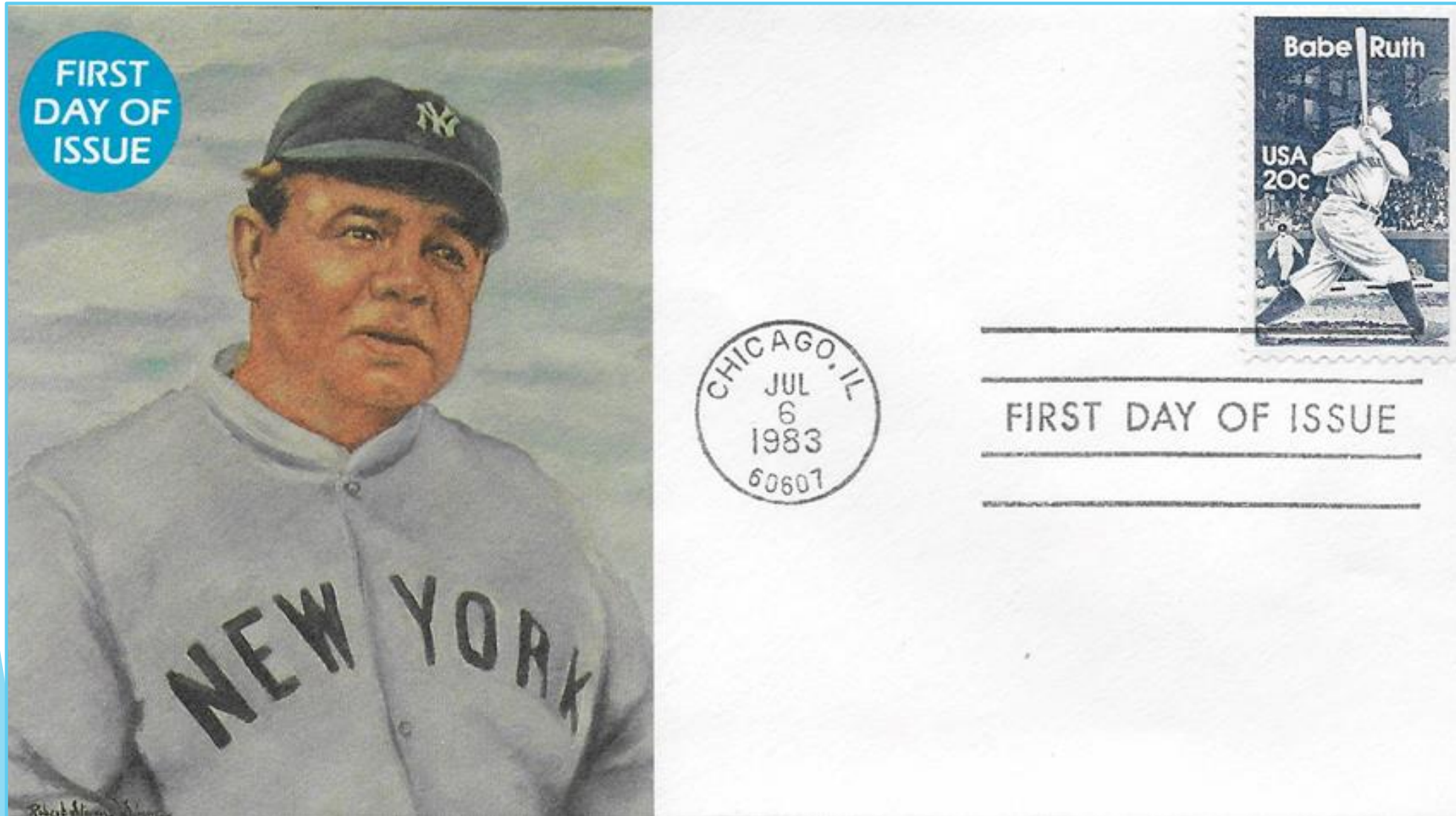
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



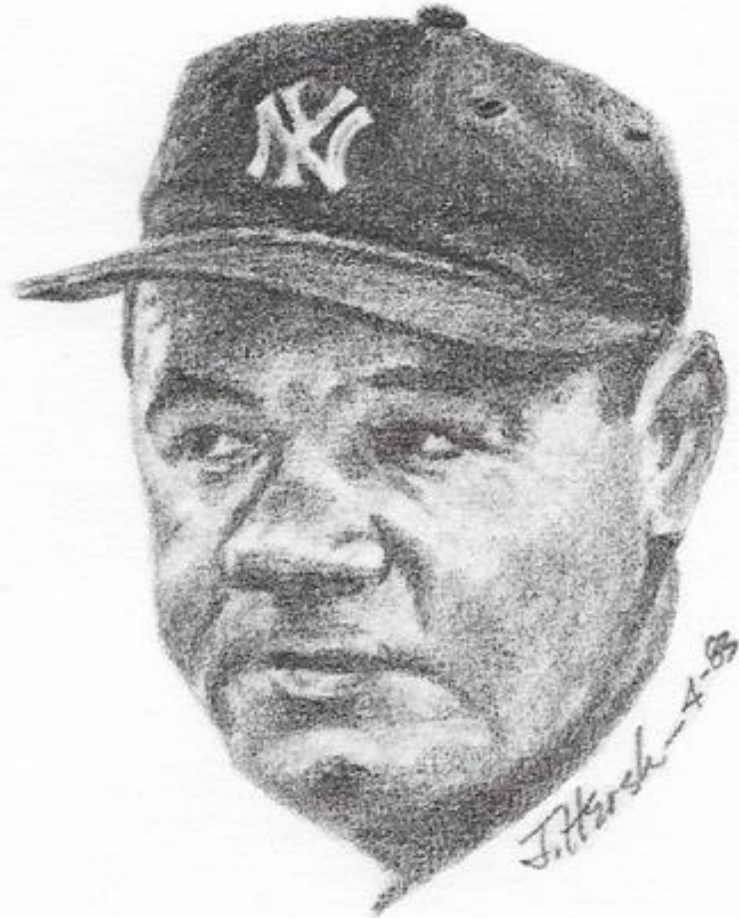
TCMA Ltd Robert  
Steven Simon  
painting cachet

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



TCMA Ltd Robert  
Steven Simon  
painting cachet

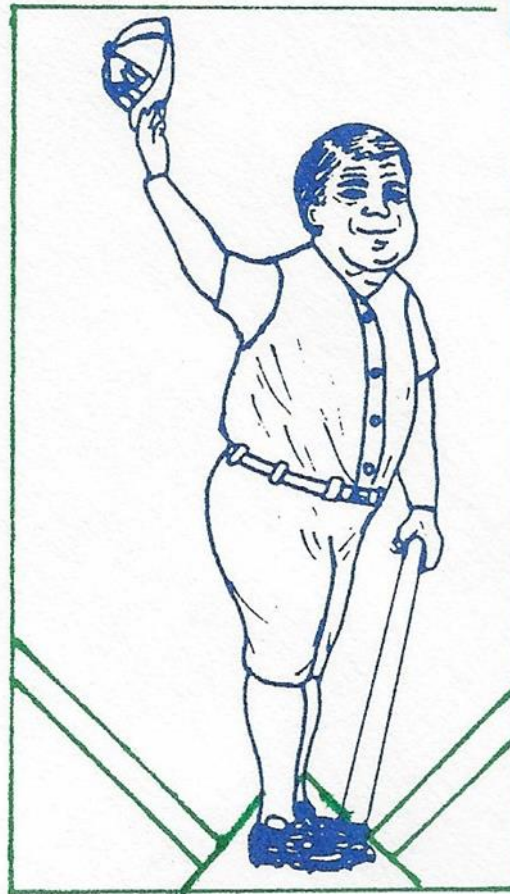
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

GEORGE "BABE" RUTH  
(1895-1948)



B Branton #1 1983

No one told George Herman "Babe" Ruth he had cancer, but his death changed the way cancer is fought. It all started with a searing pain behind his left eye. Then he could not swallow. Then the pain seeped down his body. He was treated at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital, just a short train ride from Yankee Stadium.

A tumor had grown from behind his nose to the base of his skull. Ruth lived at a time when Cancer rates were increasing markedly from smoking and pollution. But no one really knew what caused it or how to treat it. Because Ruth was Ruth, he received many trial and error radiation and chemotherapy applications in hopes of finding a cure.



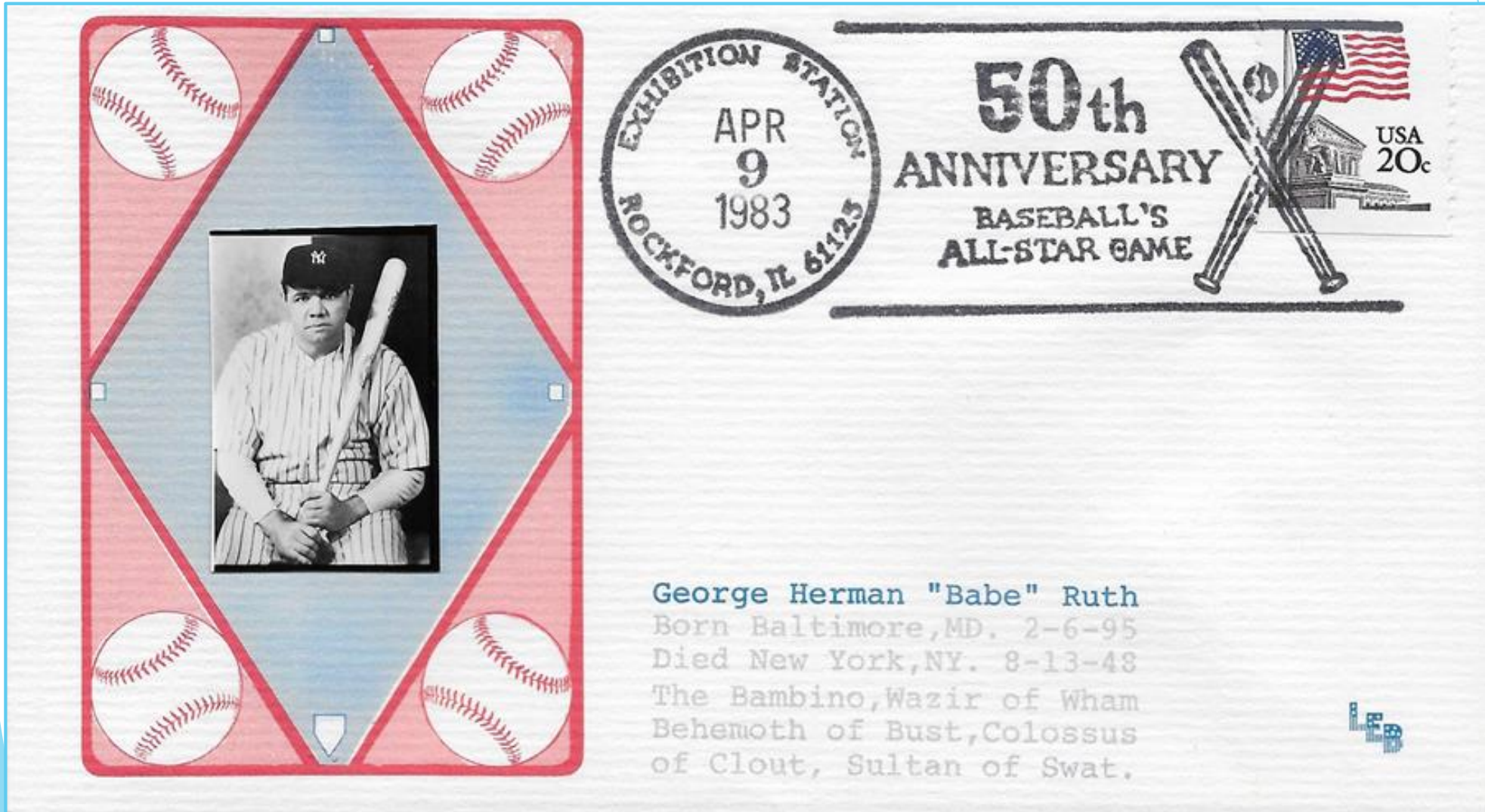
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

Ruth was the first to receive a "Chemo Beamo" combination at Sloan. Doctor's confirmed this coordinated effort extended Ruth's life so that he could say goodbye to Yankee Stadium on June 13, 1948, just two months before his death.



For years, doctors thought Ruth died from cancer in his larynx. Years later it was determined that Ruth died from nasopharyngeal cancer, a rare illness that starts behind the nose, and the "Chemo Beamo" treatment he received was the beginning of today's approach to nasopharyngeal cancer.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



YANKEE STADIUM IN 1928

**BOSTON, MASS. - 1914 - Babe Ruth Begins Career As A Pitcher For The Boston Red Sox, Winning 87 Games In 6 Years And Setting A World Series Scoreless Innings Record. Then Switching To The Outfield In 1919 He Hit 29 Home Runs In One Season.**

**FIRST DAY OF ISSUE**



**YANKEE STADIUM, BRONX, NY: - 1920 - Traded To The Yankees In 1920, Ruth Hit 59 Home Runs In 1921 And 60 in 1927, While Batting .378 & .356.**


**CHICAGO, ILL. - 1933 - Babe Ruth Home Run Wins The First All Star Game.**

**COOPERSTOWN, NY - 1936 - Babe Ruth Is Elected With First Group To Enter The Hall Of Fame, Having Achieved A Life-Time Record Of 714 Home Runs.**



FIRST DAY

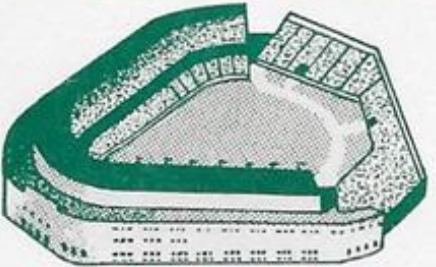
# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



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FIRST  
DAY OF  
ISSUE

YANKEE STADIUM IN 1928



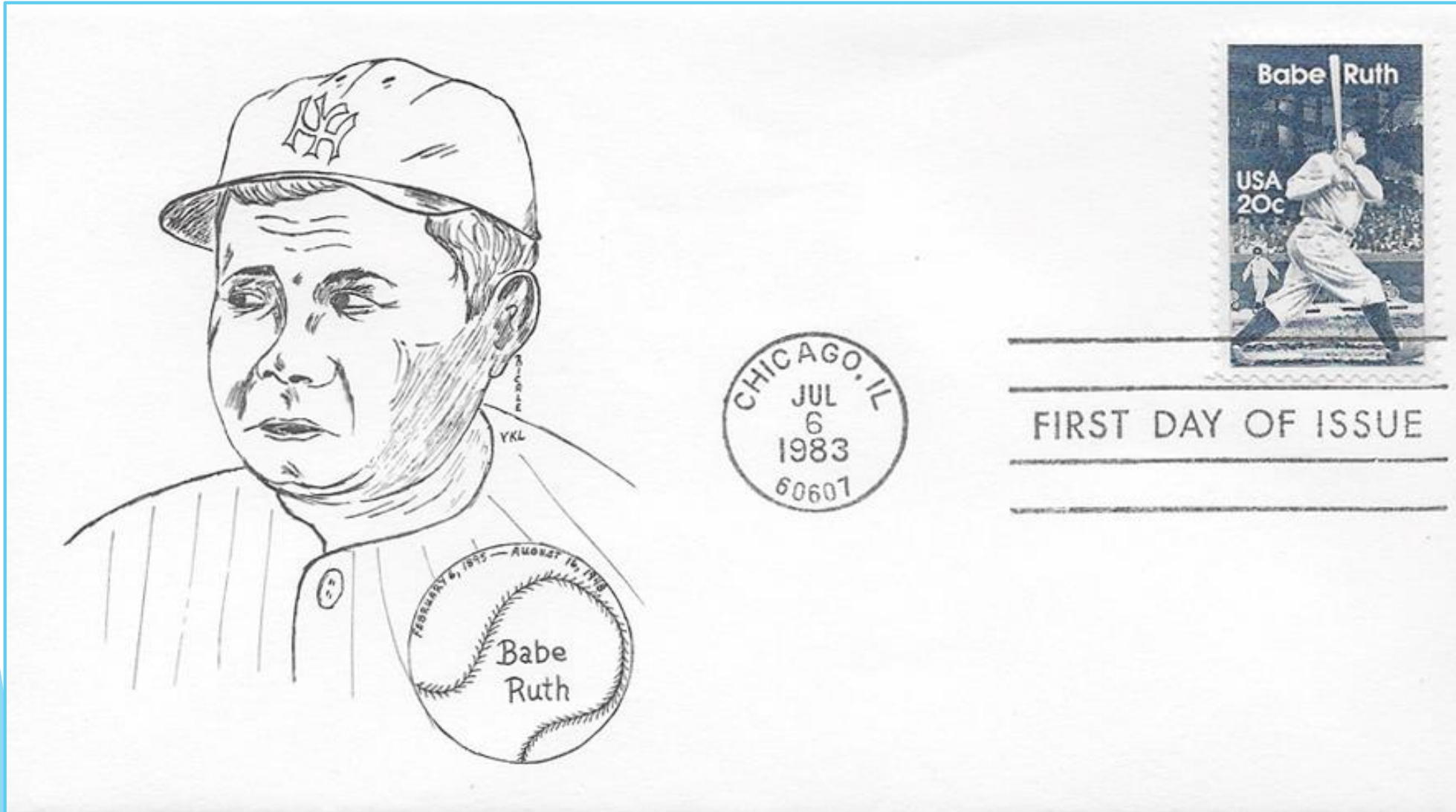
☆☆☆☆☆☆

YANKEE STADIUM, BRONX, NY: - 1920 -  
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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



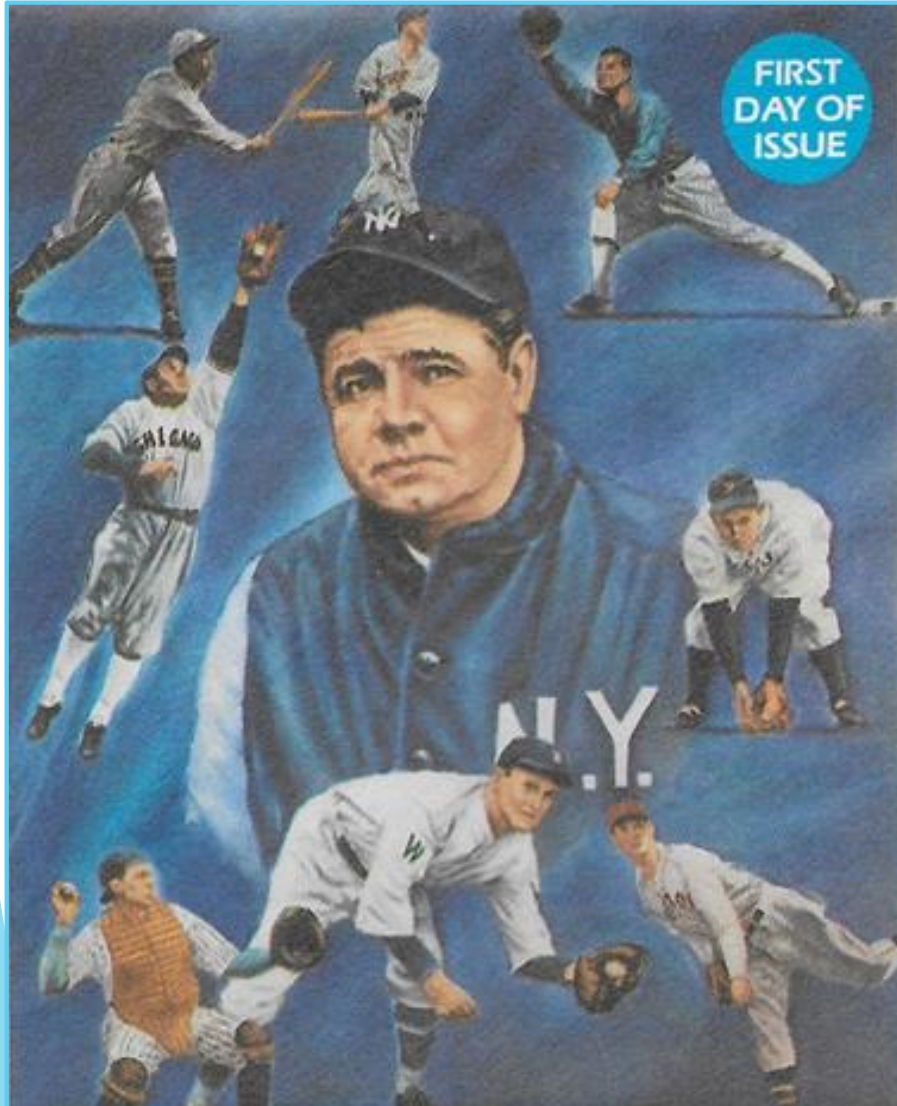
**Babe Ruth**  
1895-1948

*gm Everett*



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# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

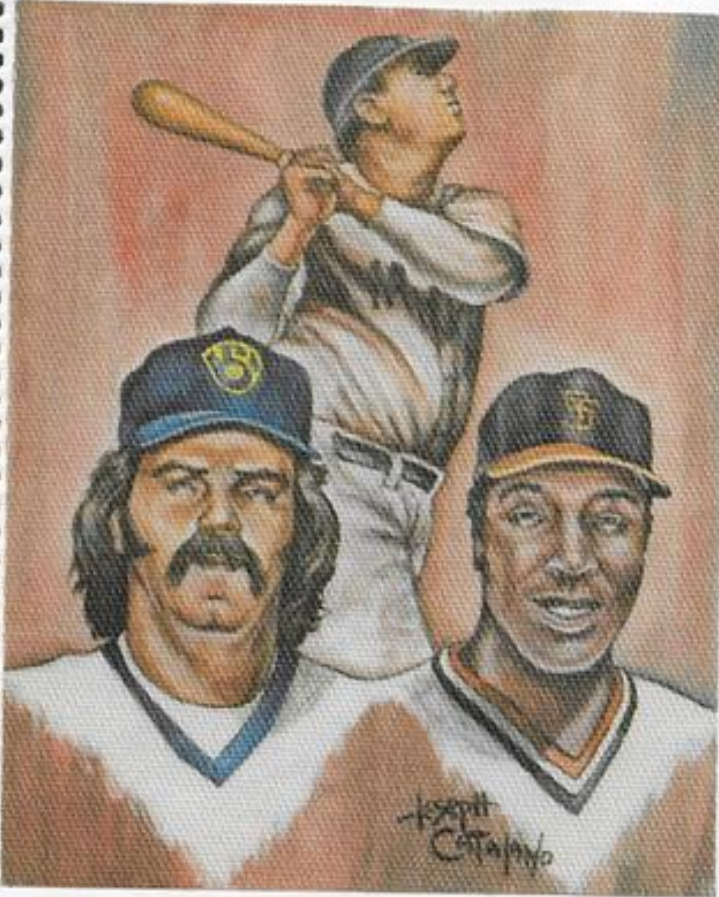


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TCMA Ltd Robert  
Steven Simon  
painting cachet

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

BABE RUTH  
"SULTAN OF SWAT"



PUBLISHED FOR H&M COVERS

25th ANNUAL AWARDS  
JANUARY 14, 1983



BABE RUTH "SULTAN OF SWAT" AWARDS  
GORMAN THOMAS — 1982 AWARD  
WILLIE McCOVEY — RETROACTIVE AWARD



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

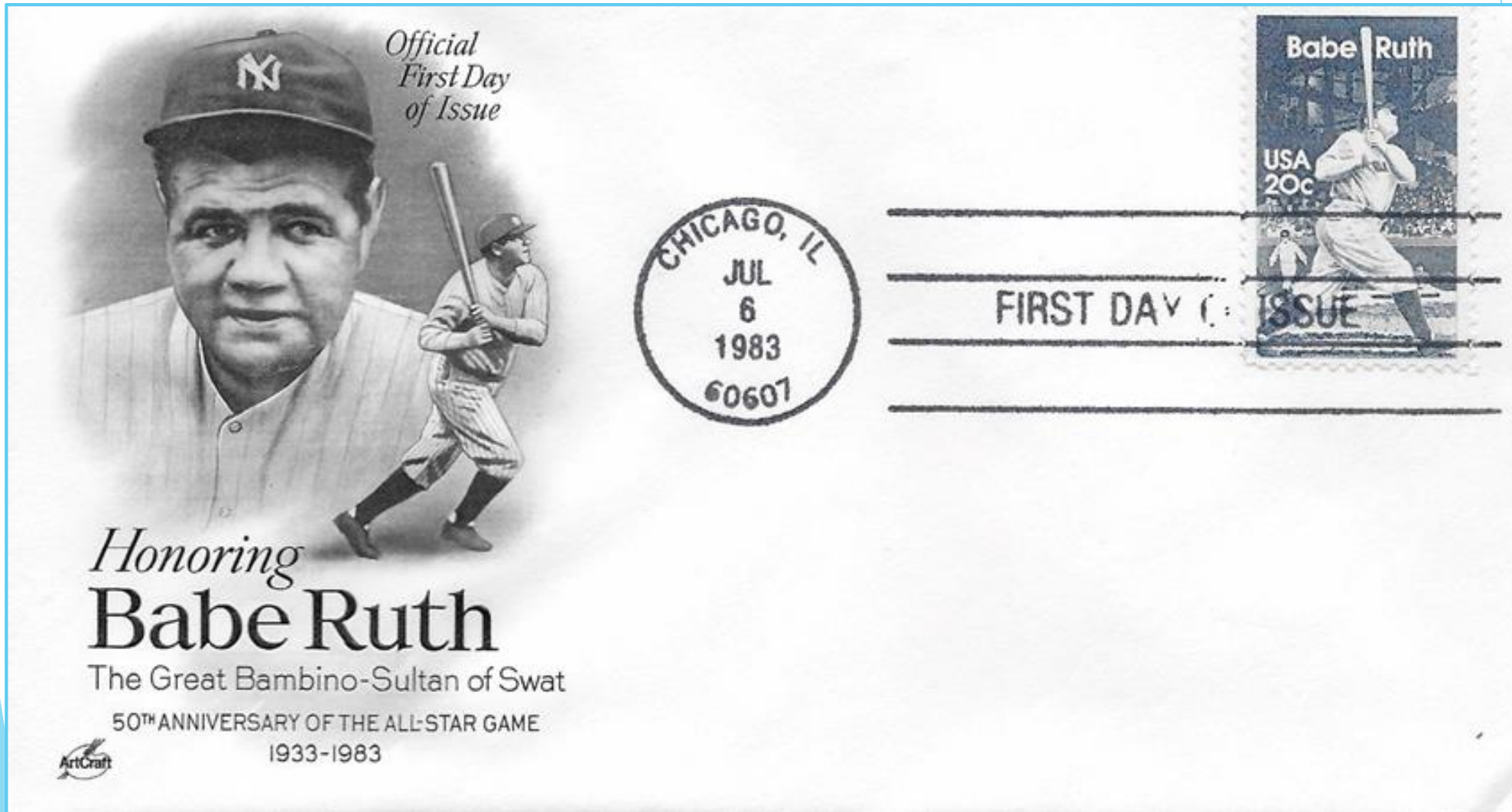


BABE RUTH "SULTAN OF SWAT" AWARDS

GORMAN THOMAS — 1982 AWARD

WILLIE McCOVEY — RETROACTIVE AWARD

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

## COOPERSTOWN NY 13326

*LAKE OTSEGO BOAT TOURS* depart the southern tip of Lake Otsego at the foot of Fair St. Narrated tours lasting 1 hour are conducted aboard a 55-foot yacht built in 1912 for the Busch family of brewing fame. Cruises leave daily on the hour 10-6, late May-Columbus Day. Adults \$7.50; ages 3-12, \$4.50. **Discount;** one per membership card. Phone (607) 547-8238.



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### The GREEDY "G"

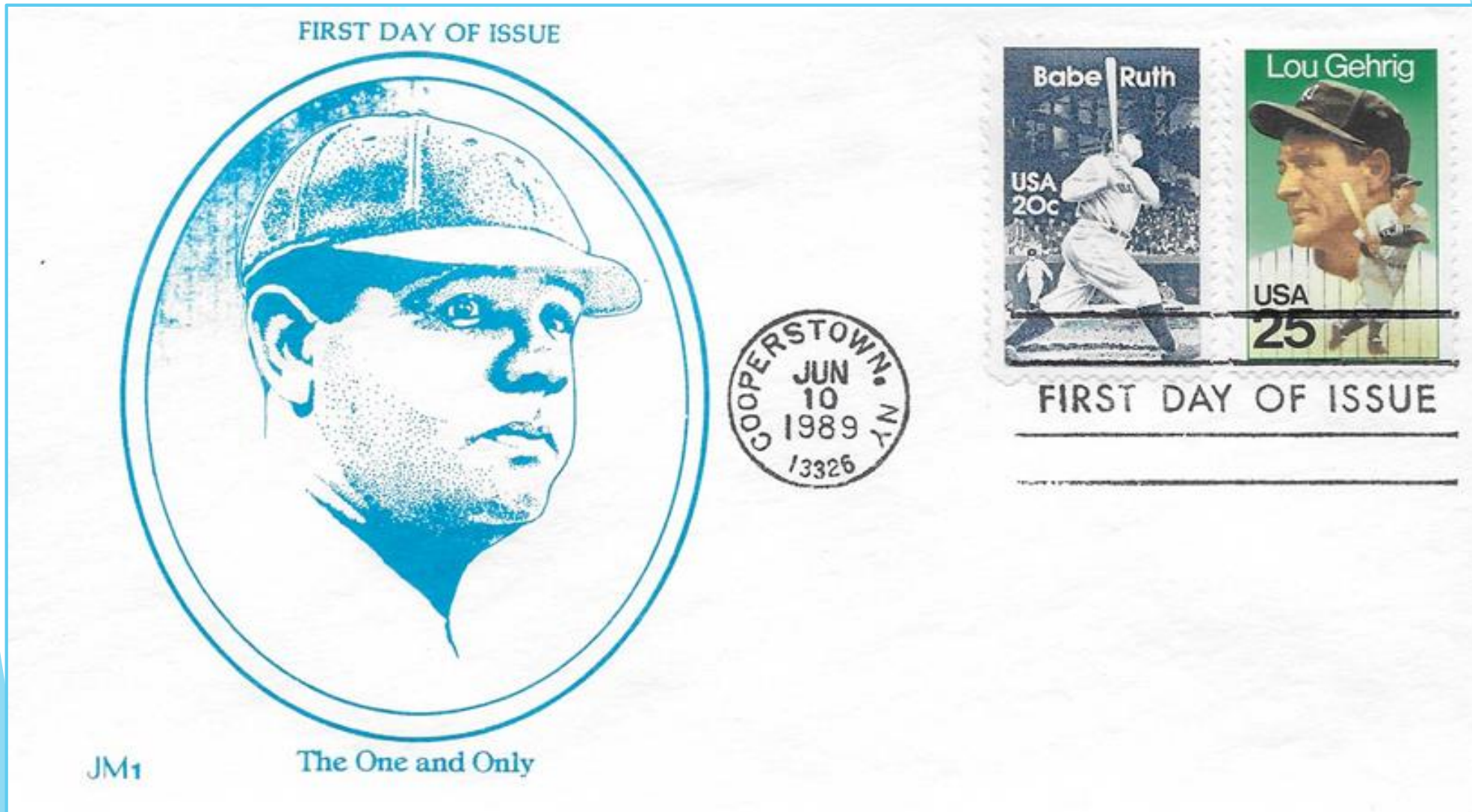
Cachet line has not and will not pay a tribute for the use of this stamp!

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

## **The GREEDY "G"**

Cachet line has not and will not pay a tribute for the use of this stamp!

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



JM cachet  
(first design)

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

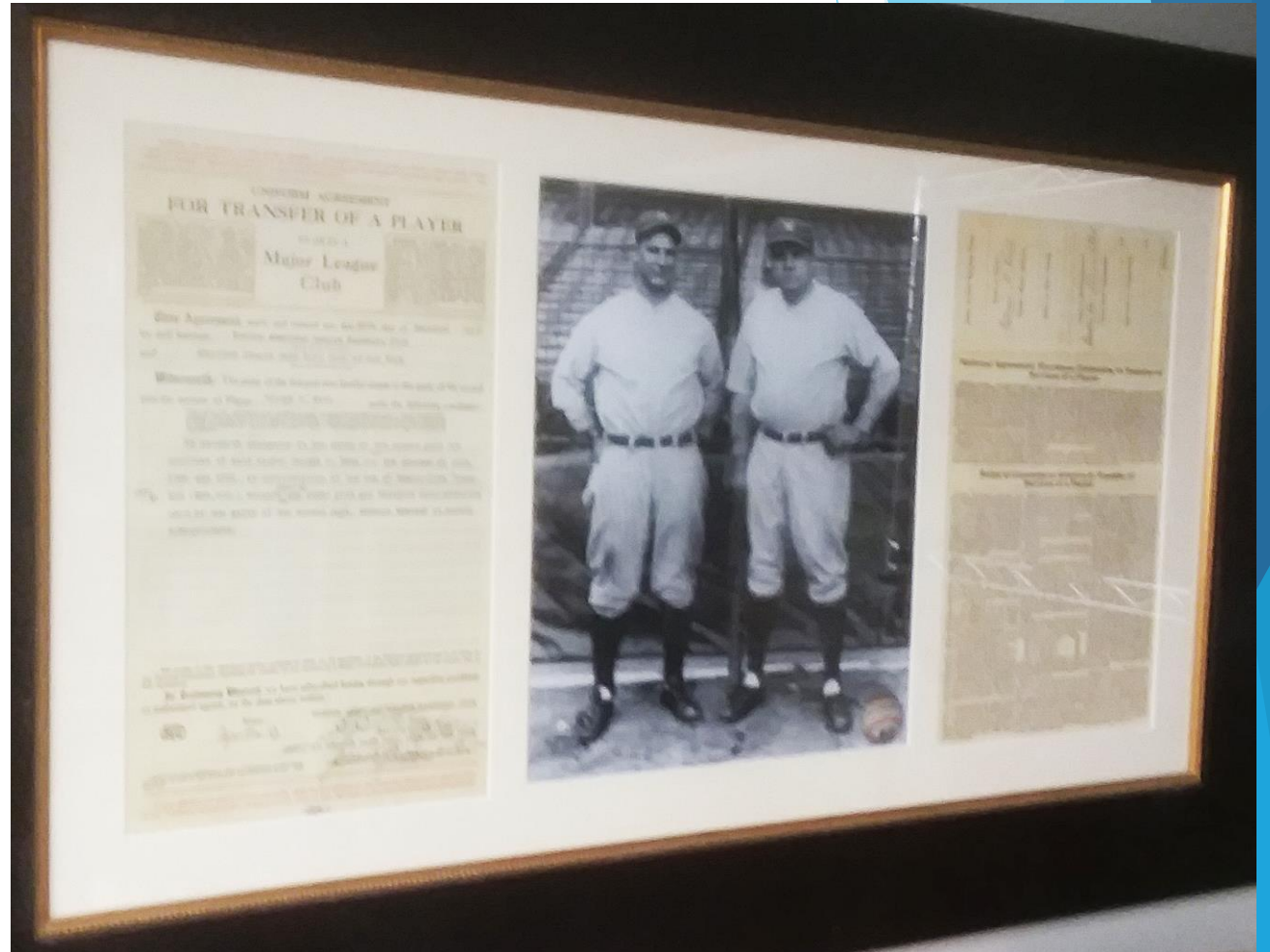


*servicing*  
**"HOMER"**  
*township*

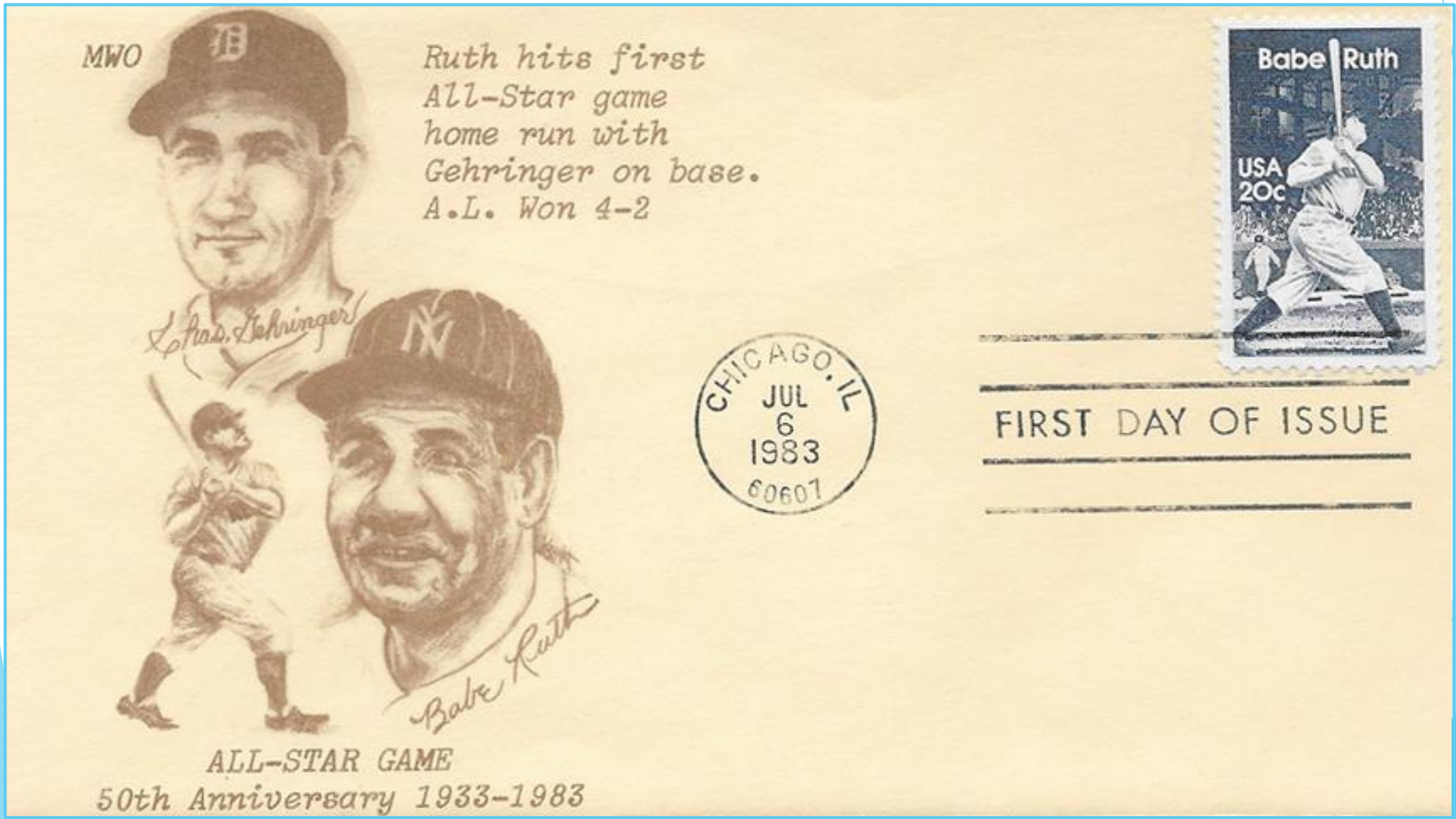


# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

- ▶ Babe Ruth's Original 1919 transfer contract from the Boston Red Sox to the New York Yankees sold at auction in 2005 for \$996,000. \* \* \_ \_
- ▶ It is reputed to be again on the auction block in 2022.
- ▶ My framed, authenticated copy of the contract, which I purchased about six or seven years ago at a Ronald MacDonald House Fund Raiser and which you see here now, is not for sale at any price.

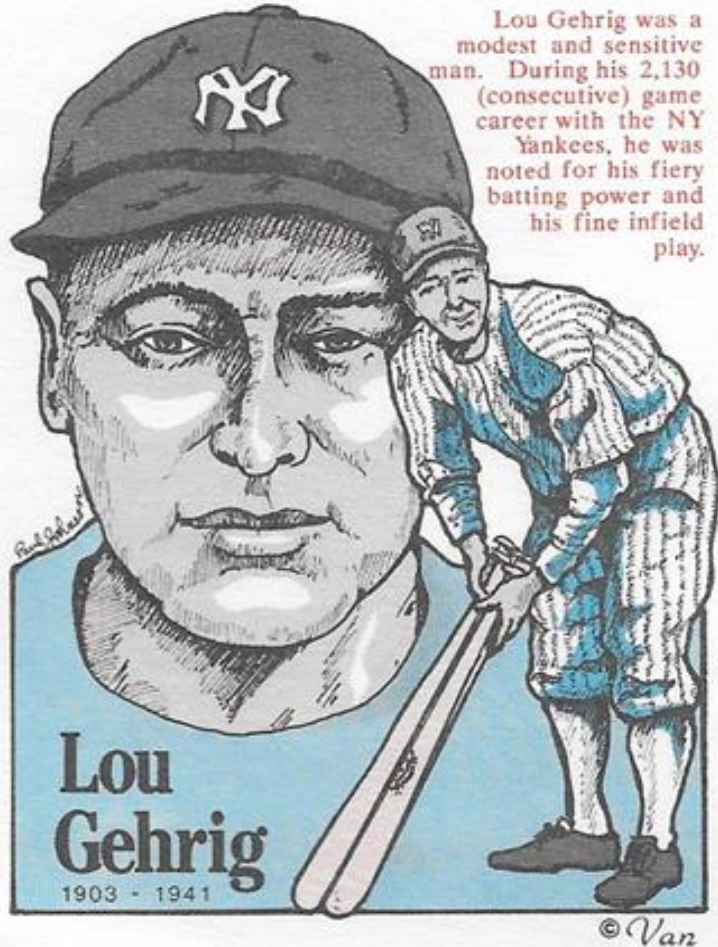


# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics





# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics



Lou Gehrig was a modest and sensitive man. During his 2,130 (consecutive) game career with the NY Yankees, he was noted for his fiery batting power and his fine infield play.



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Lou Gehrig, another MLB Hall of Famer, who died at age 37, is a story for another time.

# Baseball, The Babe and Philatelics

The End