

BASEBALL UNDER GLASS

The world has turned many times since 1945

*By George Castle, CBM Historian
Posted Saturday, October 22, 2016*

The eons have progressed since 1945, the last time the Cubs played in a World Series.

The Baby Boom had not officially started. Now many Baby Boomers are retired and are on Social Security and Medicare.

Branch Rickey was hatching his plot to integrate baseball with Jackie Robinson tendered a contract in Oct. 1945. Rickey was the first American in charge of an institution to really rise above himself to do the right thing since Abe Lincoln. As the Cubs prepare to play in the 2016 World Series, Barack Obama is finishing his second term as president, a status that can be traced back to Rickey and Robinson.

Women were encouraged to leave, if not outright get laid off, from their “Rosie the Riveter” war work in Oct. 1945. Now a woman stands a good chance to be elected president in two weeks.

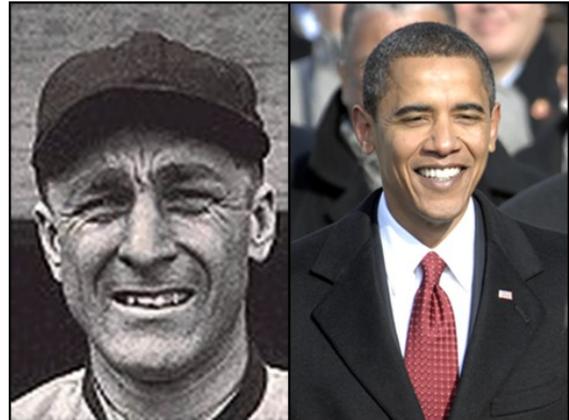
TV, which made baseball players as well-paid as top Hollywood stars, was limited to a handful of stations in a few big cities in Oct. 1945. A Cubs game had not yet been televised.

Eight teams in the northeastern quadrant of the country have turned into 30 teams from corner to corner of the U.S.

Americans walked on the moon from 1969-72, but have not been back since. I thought we’d be on Mars, maybe more, by now.

You lost many loved ones by age 60 in 1945 due to disease. Now 60 could be the new 40, and projected lifespans cross into the 80s.

Polio was a scourge in 1945. No one gives out polio vaccines anymore or talks about the disease.



Branch Rickey's (left) actions in 1945 had a lot to do with two terms for Barack Obama starting in 2008.

Cancer was a death sentence in 1945, the only option desperate surgery. Many cancers are now under control.

Communicators were projected for the 23rd Century in 1966 on “Star Trek.” Fifty years later, smart-phones outperform communicators. They include the “picturephone” aspect projected for the 1980s on 1966’s “Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea.”

A long-distance call a few hundred miles away cost a mint in the decades after 1945. Now you can instantly communicate at virtually no cost with anyone in the world via phone, text and internet.

Cars were bulky and bulbous, and without safety devices for years after 1945. Now compactly-designed cars are driverless.

Strangely, it takes the same time to fly to the West Coast as it did in 1959.

Afternoon newspapers were predominant in 1945, boosted by readership from factory workers going home. Almost all the PM papers are gone and so are many of the factories. The morning papers are on shaky ground.

You had to wait until the next day for a box score in 1945. Now you get it moments after game’s end online.

In Theo Epstein, Cubs finally got the smartest, most successful executive in charge since William L. Veeck running the team now. In Oct. 1945, the baseball boss was former sportswriter Jim Gallagher, no William L. Veeck. And the team almost immediately declined into its Dark Ages.

Some other things stay the same. Wrigley Field, its ivy, green scoreboard and welcoming marquee still stand.

And the Cubs are back in the World Series.