



This Is Week That Was in Wrigley Field History

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Seventy-five years ago this week, Wrigley Field began an epic facelift that would turn it into one of the most famous sports venues in the country if not the world.

As Paul Dickson detailed in his recent book *Bill Veeck: Baseball's Greatest Maverick*, in 1936, Cubs owner Phil Wrigley sought a more fan-friendly ballpark. The challenge was given to Veeck, 22, who was the first customer relations manager in major league history at the time.

One year later, Veeck's vision was in bloom. This date in 1937 marked the debut of the revamped outfield configuration, which featured expanded concrete bleachers and improved site lines. Two nights later, Veeck instructed the grounds crew to plant bitter-sweet and Boston ivy on its distinctive red bricks.

On Oct. 1, the manually operated, \$100,000 scoreboard was unveiled atop the bleachers in center field. More subtle changes would come later, but the Friendly Confines as we know them were here to stay.

Dickson will discuss the historic makeover at our Veeck symposium at the Chicago History Museum next month. Tickets to the fundraiser can be purchased at www.ChicagoBaseballMuseum.org.