

**Augustana Endowment Society**  
**Historical Reflections from October 2023**  
**by Janet Moline**

**Augustana and the Chicago Cubs**

I think everyone here may know that when Augustana was founded, the Augustana Seminary was an important part. Some may even refer to Founder's Hill as Seminary Hill. The Augustana Seminary began in Chicago, before moving to Paxton and then Rock Island and returned to Chicago along with Maywood Seminary and ten other seminaries and theological schools in 1967 to form the Lutheran School of Theology. Now located on the South Side near the University of Chicago, the Seminary once was located on the site of Wrigley Field. Let me explain.

At one time the property bounded by Clark, Waveland, Sheffield and Addison was the home of the Seminary. Joseph Sheffield of the street name bought this sandy land, prone to flooding in 1851. By the late 1860's Lutheran minister William Passavant owned the land. In 1874 St. Mark Lutheran Church had a small chapel on the site that served as the birthplace of the seminary until the official school opened on Oct. 1, 1891 in the home of Rev. Revere Franklin Weidner. By 1893 Eliza Hall opened with classrooms and a dormitory. By 1899 two double houses were built for professors. By 1900 the EL or Elevated was extended to the neighborhood which encouraged urban growth. By 1909 the seminary bought some adjacent land as a buffer from the encroaching dirty, busy and noisy neighborhood. Alas! The situation didn't improve and the seminary sold the land in 1910 for \$175,000 and moved to Maywood.

So what about baseball? The White Sox were on the South Side and the Cubs on the West Side. Charles Havenor with the minor league American Association in Milwaukee thought the vacant property with the closed seminary would be a good location to have a baseball club. Some considered it the best vacant location in Chicago for a baseball park. Initially the White Sox and Cubs refused to grant permission for a new team to locate there. Discouraged Havenor sold his share in the property, with its small houses, businesses and seminary buildings. His partners leased the land to Charles Weeghman in 1913, owner of a restaurant business and the Chicago Whales of the Federal League, not affiliated with the American or National Leagues. He built Weeghman Park, later renamed Wrigley Field, and the Whales played its first game on April 23, 1914. In December 1915, Weeghman bought the Cubs for \$500,000 and moved the team to the site. Just beyond left field were some of the seminary buildings. Eventually the Seminary President's house location would become the score board and center field, Eliza Hall the left field bleachers, and the professors' houses the grandstand and the left field line.

And so, Augustana College through the Maywood Seminary has a connection with the Cubs.

Cub fans who already think that they are in God's country when at Wrigley Field actually are!