

The Negro Leagues Courier

The newsletter of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

We Are The Ship, All Else Are The Sea

February 2003

Copyright 2002 by SABR

Editor: Sammy J. Miller

Send all correspondence, both Committee and newsletter related, to
Committee Co-Chairman Dick Clark, 1080 Hull, Ypsilanti, MI 48198-6472
Home (734) 487-5273; Fax (734) 487-0807; e-mail TSTEARNES@aol.com
** Denotes items available for SASE from Committee Co-Chairman
Dick Clark - Please affix enough postage (usually 1 stamp/4 pages)

NLRAG's Biographical Top 15 Most Wanted List

Recently in the mail I got a list labeled "15 Most Wanted List" and while at first I thought someone had discovered my secret and I was going to have to put together yet another new identity, I soon realized our own Mr. Lester had a bit of a challenge for everyone.

According to Mr. Lester:

"Listed below are Hall of Famers or potential Hall of Famers whose biographical information is either missing or unconfirmed. We challenge anyone and everyone to pick a player and find his correct birthrate (city, state) and death date (city, state).

We are considering some small prizes for the winners."

Biographical Top 15 Most Wanted List

1. Ray Brown

Born: Sunday, 23 February 1908, Alger, OH

Died: ??? 196?, Canada or Dayton, OH

2. Walter "Dobie" Moore

Born: Thursday, 27 February 1890, Atlanta, GA

Died: Detroit, MI

3. James "Cool Papa" Bell

Born: Sunday, 17 May 1901 or 1903, Starkville, MS

Died: Thursday, 7 March 1991, St. Louis, MO

4. George "Mule" Suttles

Born: Saturday, 31 March 1900, Blocton, Alabama

Died: Saturday, 9 July 1966, Newark, NJ

5. Jimmie Lyons

Born: Sunday, 6 November 1881, Chicago, IL

Died: ? October 1963, Chicago, IL

6. Roy Parnell

Born: ?, 17 September 1905, Austin, TX

Died: ?, ? June 1967, Terrell, TX

7. Bruce F. Petway

Born: 1883, Nashville, TN

Died: Friday, 4 July 1941, Chicago, IL

8. George Stovey

Born: 1866, Williamsport, PA

Died: Sunday, 22 March 1936, Williamsport, PA

9. Carlos Torriente

Born: 1893, Cienfuegos, Cuba



Ray Brown: NLRAG's Most Wanted

Died: 1938, New York, NY
10. Dave Brown (1919-1925, American Giants, Lincoln Giants)
Born:
Died:
11. Chaney White
Born: Sunday, 15 April 1894, City unknown
Died: ? February 1967, Philadelphia, PA
12. Solomon White
Born: Friday, 12 June 1868, Bellaire, OH
Died: ? August 1955, New York, NY
13. Thomas "Smiling Tom" Wilson
Born: ? ? 1883, Nashville, TN
Died: Saturday, 17 May 1947, Nashville, TN
14. Alec Radcliffe
Born: Wednesday, 26 July 1905, Mobile, AL
Died: ? November 1981, Chicago, IL
15. Richard "Cannonball" Redding
Born: 1889, Atlanta, GA
Died: Saturday, 30 October 1948, Islip, NY

6th Annual Jerry Malloy Negro League Research Conference

Since our last newsletter a change has taken place in the planning for this year's Jerry Malloy Conference. The new dates are June 26th through the 29th. As of this writing the particulars are as follows. Questions, comments, or suggestions should be sent to Ted Knorr at

Ted Knorr
309 Fox Ridge Court
Harrisburg, PA 17102
717 238 5151
papabell@aol.com

The conference as presently envisioned will consist of the following -
6/26-29, 2003 at the Harrisburg Hilton
\$89 per night per room double occupancy
\$50 Registration
\$35 Banquet
Senator and Oriole games at cost

6/26 4:00 Registration Opens
5:35 Harrisburg Senator Negro League Commemorative Night
6:35 Senators Game

6/27 8:30 Conference Plenary Session
9:00 Research Presentations Commence (11 presentations scheduled)
3:00 Panel Discussion featuring White Players from the Harrisburg Giants of the 1954-55 Harrisburg Giants of the Eastern Colored League
4:00 Negro League Trivia Test
4:00 APBA Baseball Simulation Tourney
6:30 Banquet w Keynoter (Suggestions Welcomed)
---- Entertainment

6/28 8:00 Negro League Committee Meeting
8:00 Research Presentations
1:00 Player Panel (Player suggestions and contact info welcomed)

2:00 Youth Event
3:00 Trivia Contest
4:00 Presentation on Clarence Williams
7:30 Philadelphia Phillies at Baltimore Orioles at Camden Yards
---- Entertainment

6/29

A site tour will be available to folks leaving late. In addition, from 6/25-30 the new National Civil War Museum will offer reduced (or free) rates to attendees. Hershey Park discounts will also be available for families.

Due to the fact that we have not been able to find a sponsor for the event a minimum number of attendees and hotel reservations will be required in order for it to go forward. Anyone planning on attending needs to contact Ted as soon as possible at the above list address. Be sure to spread around this information as well to all your baseball loving friends and family members. We need bodies, people!

Dave Chase Named President & GM of Memphis Redbirds

Just after the last issue of *The Courier* went to press and the e-mail version was wafting its way through cyberspace, it came to our attention that the Memphis Redbirds of the Pacific Coast League had named Dave Chase as the team's new president and general manger. Anyone who attended the Jerry Malloy Conference in Memphis last year will remember Dave, who made that convention something special.

While the NLC sent its official congratulations to Dave as soon as we found out about his promotion, we wanted to make sure everyone knew of Dave's new position and to wish him the best of luck.

Contributors

They say a man cannot achieve greatness without the help of others. That's wrong. Some of us can. Nonetheless, I am forced by The Powers That Be to work with others so here are their names: Tim Booker, Dick Clark, Charles U. Farley, Leslie Heaphy, Ted Knorr, Signe Knutson, Larry Lester, Dean Lollis, Jerry Malloy, Gary Maurer, Brad Snyder, Wayne Stivers, and Charles Welsh.

Committee News & Research Requests

The NLC would like to extend birthday greetings and well wishes for the upcoming year, to committee members Bill Cash (2/21) and Monte Irvin (2/25) both of whom will be a young 84. With respect to my Irish ancestors, gentleman, I extend to you a traditional blessing from the Emerald Isle: May the road rise up to meet you, may the sun shine softly on your face, may the wind always be at your back, and until we meet again, may the Lord hold you in the palm of his hand.

A couple of very interesting finds have been reported since our last newsletter, both of them by our Co-Chairman, Larry Lester. The first is that the owner of the New Orleans Eagles in 1951 was none other than Dr. B.B. Martin, one of the Martin brothers of Memphis that owned that city's Red Sox. The second and most enlightening is that the 1948 Chattanooga Choo Chos had a teenager by the names of Willie Mays Jr. playing for them.

Every year a certain number of SABR research committees are required to submit a self-review of the committee. Recently the NLC was called upon to submit such a review. It is available for all those interested. **1pg.

A request has been made for information regarding a photograph of Jackie Robinson and Willie Mays together (in uniform). None of the officers of the NLC have ever seen such a photo but if anyone of our readers had, please forward the place you saw it to either Larry Lester or Dick Clark.

Obituaries

John Ritchey, former catcher for the Chicago American Giants, died in Chula Vista, California on January 14, 2003. Obit available. **2pgs.

The following is a list of Negro Leaguers who passed away during 2002.

- 1) January 3 – Al Smith, former Cleveland Buckeye and twice an American League All Star dies in Chicago at the age of 73.
- 2) January 18 – Quincy O. Smith dies in Terre Haute Indiana at the age of 83.
- 3) January 24 – Tommy "Toots" Sampson dies in Elizabeth City, NC. He was 89.
- 4) February 25 – Ed Martin, former pitcher for the Philadelphia Stars dies in Nashville, Tennessee at the age of 72.
- 5) February 28 – Rosell Sails dies in Tampa, Florida at the age of 80.
- 6) March 22 – Rufus McNeal dies in Kinston, North Carolina.
- 7) March 23 – Maurice Wiggins dies in Chicago at the age of 92.
- 8) April 1 – Russell Awkard dies in Louisville, Kentucky at the age of 84.
- 9) April 9 – Harvey Epps dies in Suffolk, Virginia at the age of 84.
- 10) April 24 – James "Pee Wee" Jenkins dies in Farmville, Virginia at the age of 79.
- 11) April 24 – Jim "Fireball" Cohen dies in Washington, D.C. at the age of 84.
- 12) April 26 – Eugene "Stank" White dies in Jacksonville, Florida at the age of 75.
- 13) May 17 – William "Bobby" Robinson dies in Chicago, Illinois at the age of 98.
- 14) May 20 – Willie Simms dies in Perris, California at the age of 93.
- 15) May 24 – James McCurine dies in Chicago, Illinois at the age of 81.
- 16) May 31 – Frank Thompson dies in Shelbyville, Tennessee at the age of 79.
- 17) May 31 – Ervin Lee Ford dies in Deerfield Beach, Florida.
- 18) July 14 – Alfonso "Piggy" Gerard dies in St. Croix, Virgin Islands at the age of 86.
- 19) July 25 – Isidoro Leon dies in Miami, Florida at the age of 91.
- 20) August 8 – Willie C. Young dies in Birmingham, Al at the age of 90.
- 21) October 11 – Howard "Toots" Ferrell, Jr. dies in Wilmington, Delaware at the age of 73.
- 22) November 17 – Ulysses Redd dies in Baton Rouge, Louisiana at the age of 88.
- 23) December 2 – Frank E. Bradley dies in Benton, Louisiana at the age of 84.
- 24) Date unknown – Cecil Coles dies in Connellsville Penneslyvania at the age of 82.

Two obits are available for "Toots Ferrell". **1pg.

Negro League Related Articles

From Chicago Sun-Times 7/2/2003, ** 1pg "Singular life means double celebration" (Radcliffe)

10/02/2002 Sun-Times, books in Brief **1pg, on Jackie Robinson and the Integration of Baseball"

Sun-Times, 10/23/2002 **1pg "Overlooked Negro Leaguers deserve Better"

Chicago Tribune. 9/29/2002, **1pg "Double-Barreled Hero" Robinson book

"Pride Against Prejudice" from *The (Hackensack) Record* above a new Negro League wing named after Larry Doby at the Yogi Berra Museum is available. **2pgs.

"Seeing Black History Firsthand: Local Students get to meet sport pioneers" from *The (Largo, MD) Gazette* ** 2 pgs.

The latest issue of *Out of the Park*, the newsletter put out by the Friends of Rickwood is available. ** 4pgs.

A new brochure for becoming a member of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum is available. A lot of very nice benefits are available this time around. **2pgs.

"Thanks, We'd Rather Lose", a short article about scouting recommendations Larry Doby made in 1949 to the Cleveland Indians. They should have listened to him. **1pg.

Upcoming Events

All members are invited to make a research-based oral or poster presentation at SABR 33 in Denver, Colorado. Oral presentations should be limited to twenty minutes, followed by five-minutes of questions and answers. Subjects on all aspects of baseball are welcome, especially those related to Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. Abstracts should be no more than two hundred and fifty-words and should have attached a brief biographical sketch and an indication of audio-visual needs, if any. Each abstract should also indicate the researcher's preference on how his or her presentation should be judged, i.e., oral only, oral preferred, no preference, poster preferred, or poster only. All submissions will be evaluated by blind review. Though it is not mandatory, we prefer that you submit abstracts electronically, either as plain text e-mail or standard word processor. Submission deadline is March 15, 2003. Those submitting abstracts will be notified of the judges' decision by May 1. All submissions should be directed to Gail Rowe, 7205 Poudre River Rd., #6, Greeley, CO 80634, or growes36@attbi.com.

John Miles will be inducted into the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame, on February 7th. An article on Mr. Miles from the *Express News* is available. *1pg.

On February 12 at the Main Library, 325 Michigan Street in Toledo, Ohio at 6:30 pm, John Husman, historian for the Toledo Mud Hens will be speaking on Moses Fleetwood Walker and Pro Baseball in Toledo. This presentation is free and open to the public.

On Friday, January 31, the Public Museum of Grand Rapids held a reception marking the opening of their exhibit "Leagues of Their Own" which explores "the history of the Negro Leagues, the All American Girls Professional Baseball League, and Michigan's connection to these fascinating stories." The exhibit will run February 1 to September 1 of this year at the Van Andel Museum Center at 272 Pearl Street NW in Grand Rapids.

We Make The Call

This time around we are reviewing Leslie's Heaphy's *THE NEGRO LEAGUES, 1869-1960*, from McFarland and Company, \$45.

The book contains 230 pages of text with 19 pictures, many of which are new and footnotes on all 14 chapters. There are also appendices on African-American teams competing before 1920; African-American players whose careers began before 1920; Negro League teams and opponents; Negro League standings 1920-1955; Latin American players in the Negro Leagues; Negro League players in Latin America. There is also a bibliographic essay of eight pages, plus an 82 page Bibliography (arranged by name and subject). Finally, she has included an eleven-page index, for 375 total pages. This book takes the lead in capturing the history of the Negro Leagues. An outstanding book covering the length and breadth of the history of Black Baseball. This is the culmination to the long publishing process and truly worth the wait. It is absolutely a must-have book.

Our Call: a Home Run.

We have received an advanced copy of Brad Snyder's forthcoming book, *BEYOND THE SHADOW OF THE SENATORS*. We have a press release available **1pg on the book with a very good overview of the nine chapters and epilogue. 418 pages, 47 photos (many of which have never been seen before), large bibliography, complete notes on all chapters. Put out by McGraw-Hill and only \$24.95. Look for it in bookstores or check out the website (after February 15th) at www.beyondtheshadow.com for more details.

In receiving the book just a few days before *The Courier's* February newsletter deadline a complete review could not be done. However, a complete review will appear in the April Newsletter. It certainly looks like this book will be an excellent edition to Negro Leagues history.

CUBAN BASEBALL, A STATISTICAL HISTORY 1828-1961
BY JORGE FIGUEROA IS ALSO OUT. BY MCFARLAND \$45
LOOKS TELLIC

The Marketplace

In the last newsletter we mentioned that a copy of Sol White's "History of Colored Baseball" sold on eBay for \$8,456. A lot of money but mere peanuts compared to the \$21,656 a copy went for in a telephone auction on December 5. Just for the record, that is roughly \$169.19 a page for the 128-page book. If anyone is interested, I have five or six copies I would be willing to part with for 15K per.

Other notable auction sales of Negro League items from the past year include a Homestead Grays team photo (\$39,704), a 1952 Satchel Paige All Stars bat (\$29,832), a Josh Gibson Winter League contract (\$29,065), a 1930's Newt Allen Monarchs uniform (\$25,530), Monte Irvin's 1954 World Series Ring (\$21,333), two more copies of Sol White's guide (\$19,861 & the \$8,456 mentioned above), Jose Mendez's 1924 Monarchs Championship Trophy (\$16,413), an oversized Josh Gibson studio photo (\$12,806), a 1932 Crawfords photo with Gibson and Paige (\$12,788), a 1942 Satchel Paige broadside (\$7,679), and a Satchel Paige life size wax figure (\$7,589) for a grand total of \$252,712.

Recently *Sports Illustrated* put together its list of the "Top 100 Sports Books" and coming in at number 74 was our own Robert Peterson's "Only The Ball Was White". Congratulations to Bob on this impressive recognition of his landmark work. Also on the list, coming in at number 98 was William Brashler's "The Bingo Long Traveling All Stars and Motor Kings".

On The Web

Signe Knutson, webmaster of the NLRAG website, www.outoftheshadows.net, reports that several updates have been made to the site, the most notable of which is the section on landmarks and Negro League related sites. Signe wants it known that anyone willing to share photos of any of the sites on the list should get in contact with her. In addition, Signe will be making a presentation to the Ken Keltner chapter of SABR about the NLRAG project on March 1.

Dean Lollis has a web site at historicbaseball.com with some Negro League related stuff.

The following sites both have a great deal of information regarding the Negro Leagues on them and are worth the time it will take to check them out. They are: www.cubanball.com and www.delaware.com. Just in! You might also want to check out www.theyplayedbaseball.com.

The Final Pitch

With February being African American history, be sure to keep on eye out for Negro League related articles in your local papers as well as in any other magazines that you might read.

Sammy J. Miller