

The Courier

A Publication of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

"We are the Ship, All Else the Sea"

Editor, Larry Lester

December, 2010

In the News

Pete Hill's Gravesite Found . . .

The Krock Watch Rocks Again.

Sherlock Holmes couldn't find it, Perry Mason couldn't solve it, and not even the Undercover Brothers could solve the mystery of where Hall of Famer Pete Hill was buried.

This past summer, the award-winning PBS TV show "History Detectives," devoted to exploring the complexities of historical mysteries, searching out the truths, myths and conundrums that connect local folklore and family legends failed in their valiant efforts. Moreover, City, County, State records in Pittsburgh, New York, Chicago, and Indiana revealed nothing. Massive searches of newspaper obituaries revealed little. Funeral homes, cemeteries and interviews with family members yielded some leads. The best genealogist in the free world came up empty. However one man stands tall in his relentless pursuit of justice and the truth.

Not since Josh Gibson appeared on the *X-Files*, have Negro League genealogists been more baffled. Along comes our very own Sam Spade with the detective skills of super sleuth Easy Rawlins, disguised as Jeremy Krock.

Taking the theme from the *X-Files*, "*The truth is out there somewhere*," Krock succeeded where others failed. In his own words this is how he solved our greatest gravesite challenge.

"Saturday night (November 6th) after watching 'Cadillac Record,' the story of Chicago's Chess



Records, I started searching the internet to see where these great blues performers were buried. Most of them are in places we (NL researchers) have been – Burr Oak, Restvale, Lincoln, Mt. Glenwood, etc. One of the main characters, 'Little Walter,' was buried in a Roman Catholic Cemetery. I decided to refocus our attention on some other less obvious cemeteries. I found Pete Hill in the second south-side Catholic cemetery I inquired at.

John P. Hill is buried in an unmarked grave at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois, in Grave 3, Lot 20, Block 10, Section 36. He was buried on December 28, 1951, after his body was received from Albany, New York, by a Charles Jackson. Pete's son, Kenneth P. Hill, purchased three plots at this time. Kenneth was living at 54th and Michigan in the city. The other two plots have not been used and we know Kenneth is buried in Gary, Indiana. Pete Hill's wife Gertrude is not buried at this cemetery as far as I could tell.

Thanks to all that have worked on this project. I am glad we finally been able to local Pete Hill's final resting place. The shadow of the tragic events at Burr Oak has been hanging over us as we have all hoped and prayed his grave was not among the ones violated."

This year Krock's team has discovered burial sites for three Hall of Famers; **Frank Grant**, **Sol White** and now Pete Hill. With your donations we hope to honor and pay our respect to these immortals in 2011.

To date, we have funded the purchases for 19 gravesites, and expect installation of a headstone for **Carroll 'Dink' Mothell**, in Topeka, Kansas, next spring. To download a list of Krock's detective work go to:

<http://www.larrylester42.com/assets/Krock-Gravemarker-Project.pdf>

We welcome your tax-deductible donations in any amount to support this endeavor. You can send your contributions to the SABR office at:
Society for American Baseball Research
Attn: **Negro Leagues Headstone Restoration Program**

812 Huron Road Suite 719
Cleveland, OH 44115
Phone: (216) 575-0500 or (800) 969-7227

Or you can make an online donation at:
<http://store.sabr.org/sabrstore.cfm?a=dnt>

Here you can earmark your donation to the general fund; "Negro Leagues Headstone Restoration Program" or for a specific player. A list of players in unmarked graves can be found at:
<http://www.larrylester42.com/the-krock-watch/>

The committee would like to **THANK** close to 100 donors for their contributions.

The Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues Conference Committee of Wayne Stivers, Tom Garrett, Ted Knorr, Leslie Heaphy, Stephanie Liscio, Michael Garvey, and Dick Clark welcome your additional support in this final tribute to the Legends of Negro League baseball. As Dr. Krock has said, "*They played in anonymity, and now they're anonymous in death.*" Let's correct this omission!

Gone, but not forgotten . . .

Recently, on October 20, 2010, family, friends and dignitaries from the city of Portsmouth, Virginia gathered to dedicate a headstone for **Leon Ruffin**. Mayor Bernard D. Griffin, Sr., proclaimed the day as "**CHARLES LEON RUFFIN DAY**" as committee members **Thomas Garrett** and **Sam Allen** (K.C. Monarchs) landscaped the site for this former All-Star who played for the Brooklyn Eagles, Newark Eagles, Pittsburgh Crawfords, Philadelphia Stars and the Houston Eagles. Garrett and Allen were instrumental in rising funds for this local legend.

The marker was original installed in March, but was later found underwater. Garrett and Allen wanted to make sure it didn't happen again. So they picked up their shovels and rakes and with some elbow grease and bags of topsoil made the foundation solid.

Garrett, a retired teacher and school principal hosted the highly attended and successful Jerry

Malloy Negro League Conference in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 2007.



Allen, a former Kansas City Monarch cried out, "*If we don't recognize them, nobody will.*" Thus the reason for the Krock Watch.

Dedication of Sam Hairston Park

Spearheaded by Mayor Robert Smith, Glenn Lautzenhiser and James Tsismanakis of the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau, an empty field in Lowndes County, MS was dedicated to honor the memory of Sam Hairston, the first African American player for the Chicago White Sox in 1951.



Weyerhaeuser, a pulp and paper company donated 10 acres of land and \$15,000 toward the completion of the ballpark. The estimated final cost of the complex is \$116,000 and the committee is soliciting funds from other major organizations such as General Mills and Applebee's.

Jerry Hairston, Sr., was touched by the recognition of his father. "*I'm honored to be here,*" he said. "*This is my first time in Columbus, and I'm humbled by the work that's being done here. My dad would be proud of the use of baseball for the development of the youth in this community.*"

The dedication was attended by several members of the Hairston baseball family besides Jerry Senior; **Jerry, Jr.**, and **Scott Hairston** of the Padres, their uncles **Sam J. Hairston** and **John Hairston**. More than three dozen members of the Hairston family traveled afar to attend the event.

Call for Papers

14th Annual Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference

July 21-24, 2011

[The JW Marriott](#)

Indianapolis, IN

Theme: “Black Baseball in Indiana”



Black baseball has deep roots in Indiana. During the late 1800s, African American players were emerging from communities across the state. After the turn of the century, some businesses began forming semi-professional teams. The most notable of these were the **West Baden Sprudels**, **French Lick Plutos**, and original **Indianapolis ABCs**. In 1914, **C. I. Taylor** took the Sprudels to Indianapolis and transformed the ABCs into a fully professional team. Taylor was then instrumental in forming the Negro National League, which played its first game in 1920 at **Washington Park**. Through the history of the Negro Leagues, Indianapolis hosted other teams, including the Crawfords (1940) and the Clowns (1942-1962). Among all its sports legends, Indiana’s greatest athlete was **Oscar Charleston**, who was born in Indianapolis in 1896, played for the ABCs, and managed the 1940 Crawfords and 1954 Clowns.

The 14th Annual Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference will celebrate Indiana’s rich baseball history. In addition to two days of research presentations and player panels, attendees will also enjoy a public screening of a new documentary film, the dedication of a new state historical marker at Washington Park, and a Negro Leagues tribute game with the Indianapolis Indians (Triple-A affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates). On Sunday, attendees can participate in services at **Bethel A.M.E. Church** (where C.I. Taylor’s funeral was held) and a grave marker installation for **Olivia Taylor**, who owned the ABCs after her husband passed away. At the end of the conference, we will also offer an optional overnight trip to the [West Baden Springs Hotel](#), which has been fully restored to the way it was when C. I. Taylor’s Sprudels played there. Several MLB teams also trained at West Baden during the early 1900s.

Presentation Proposals: due March 18th, 2011

Presentations may focus on any topic related to the theme, black baseball in the Midwest, or other Negro Leagues issues. Some possibilities: Indiana teams and players (including town clubs, early semi-pro teams, and professional teams), Indianapolis involvement in the first and second formations of the Negro National League, Indiana ballparks, **Indianapolis Freeman** sports writing, baseball as part of Indianapolis’s black community, the KKK’s influence on baseball, barnstorming, or anything else that captures your interest.

Proposals should include a 250-word abstract, plus a brief biographical note with contact information. For oral presentations, please indicate whether you will require any AV equipment. For poster presentations, please indicate the number and size of posters you wish to display.

Please email your proposal as a Word or RTF attachment to gstrecker@bsu.edu.

Or, send it via traditional mail to Geri Strecker, Dept. of English, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306.

Notifications will go out by Jackie Robinson Day—April 15.

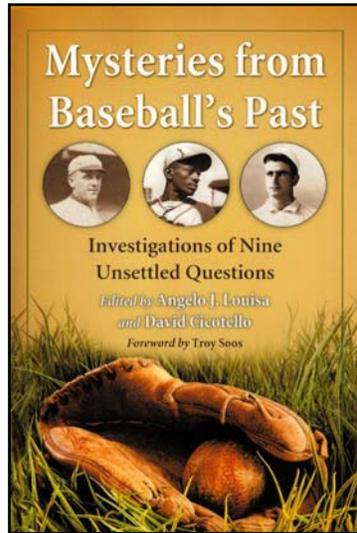
To register at the brand new **Five-Star J.W. Marriott** go to: <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/indjw-jw-marriott-indianapolis/?toDate=7/24/11&groupCode=JERJERA&fromDate=7/20/11&app=resvlink>

Room rates are currently at \$139 per night. Book early to avoid rate increase.

For conference updates visit: <http://www.larrylester42.com/jerry-malloy-negro-leagues-conference/>

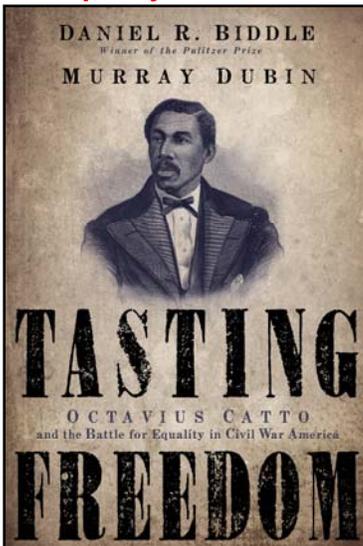
Mysteries from Baseball's Past: Investigations of Nine Unsettled Questions by **Angelo J. Louisa and David Cicotello**.

This is a collection of nine essays which examine some of baseball's most elusive mysteries. The topics include the suicide of Harry Pulliam, three gambling scandals and the facts concerning the legendary matchup of Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson in the 1942 World Series. Did Gibson take a third strike from Paige with the bases loaded? Read chapter 8 for the details.



Mysteries is published by McFarland.

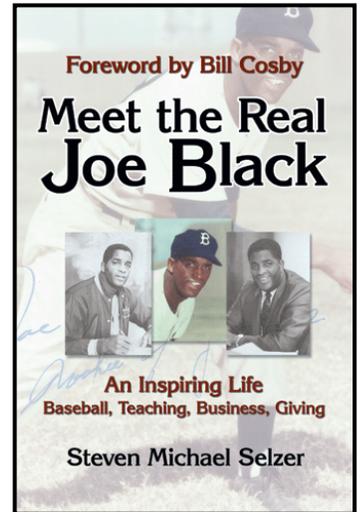
Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America by **Daniel R. Biddle and Murray Dubin**.



Catto was a second baseman on Philadelphia's best black baseball team, a teacher at the city's finest black school, an activist who fought in the state capitol and on the streets for equal rights, and an orator who shared the stage with Frederick Douglass. *Tasting Freedom* chronicles the life of this

charismatic black leader – a “free” black man whose freedom was in name only. Read about Catto and the men and women who struggled to change America. This book will change your understanding of civil rights history. Be sure to read Chapter 13 for detailed information about the nation's first black team, the **Philadelphia Pythians**. Published by Temple University Press.

Meet the Real Joe Black: An Inspiring Life – Baseball, Teaching, Business, Giving by **Steven Selzer**. Many of Black's friends, acquaintances, and former colleagues contributed stories for this book, among them are Bill Cosby, Sandy Koufax, Bob Costas, Joe Garagiola, Dusty Baker, Jerry Reinsdorf, and Jerry Colangelo. John Teets, former CEO of the Greyhound Corporation, talked of Joe Black's progress in advancing to become the first African American executive in the transportation industry. While in this position, Joe Black wrote an inspiring and motivational nationally syndicated column and had a radio talk show, both called “*By the Way*.” Several of these thought provoking columns appear in this book. It is published by iUniverse in both soft and hard cover.

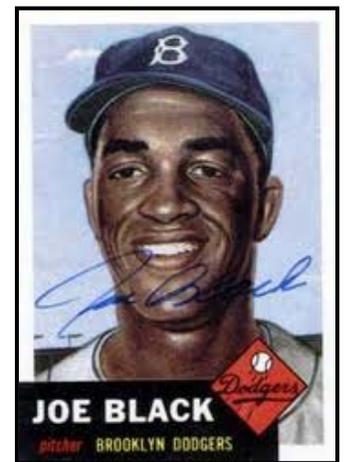


Joe Black Baseball Field Dedicated.

On September 25, 2010, in Plainfield, New Jersey, the Board of Education dedicated a baseball field in honor of the legendary Brooklyn Dodger pitcher at the Hub Stine Sports Complex.

Black graduated from Plainfield High School in 1942, where he is listed as the school's best athlete. He graduated from Morgan State College and received his master's degree from Rutgers University.

In 1952, he became the first African American pitcher to win a World Series game. That year's Rookie of the Year winner would spend six years in Major League baseball and retired as the first African American pitcher on the Washington Senators' staff in 1957.



Sunrises!

SEND YOUR FAVORITE NEGRO LEAGUER A **BIRTHDAY CARD**.

DECEMBER

2ND - HENRY ELMORE - 69
3RD - BILL HAYDEN - 86
4TH - TED TOLES - 85
6TH - BILL LITTLE - 76
7TH - ENRIQUE MAROTO - 78
9TH - QUACK BROWN - 80
14TH - HENRY SAVERSON - 81
16TH - FRANK EVANS - 89, JOE MARBURY - 72
20TH - MAL DUCKETT - 88
21ST - CHARLES WELLS - 79, PAUL CASANOVA - 69
23RD - MAYNARD JORDAN - 82
25TH - JOHN MITCHELL - 73
26TH - ORLANDO O'FARRILL - 88
27TH - JIM COBBIN - 76

JANUARY

8TH - DAVEY WHITNEY - 81
9TH - FRANK MARSH - 80
21ST - PORTER REED - 88, JIM ROBINSON - 81
26TH - RON TEASLEY - 84
27TH - SAM TAYLOR - 82
28TH - TOMMY TAYLOR - 73
30TH - LONNIE HARRIS - 80
31ST - ERNIE BANKS - 80

FEBRUARY

4TH - ERNIE NIMMONS - 81
5TH - HANK AARON - 77
9TH - MIKE HOULEMARD - 78
12TH - BILL DUMPSON - 81
14TH - JOE CAFFIE - 80
20TH - WALTER MCCOY - 88
21ST - **BILL CASH - 92**
23RD - WILLIE SHEELOR - 83
25TH - **MONTE IRVIN - 92**
26TH - MICKEY STUBBLEFIELD - 85



NOTE: Congratulations to Nonagenarians: **BILL "READY" CASH & MONTE IRVIN.**

\$\$\$ When you RENEW your SABR membership for 2011, please consider earmarking extra funds for the **JERRY MALLOY NEGRO LEAGUE CONFERENCE** and/or **Jeremy Krock's HEADSTONE RESTORATION PROJECT** for unmarked graves. Go to: <http://store.sabr.org> and enter your tax-deductible gift, along with a brief description for allocation of your funds.

We welcome donations in any amount to support our efforts in providing scholarships, library grants and honoring black baseball history. **\$\$\$**

Sunsets

JESSIE JAMES MITCHELL, SR., 76, died September 12, 2010, in Birmingham, Alabama. Mitchell played outfield from 1954-60 for the Birmingham Black Barons, Louisville Clippers and the Kansas City Monarchs. He was very active in his local community and co-founder of the American Negro League Players Association of Birmingham. A premier hitter, Jessie Mitchell has been credited with winning the 1957 Negro American League batting title.



WILLIE FORDHAM, 83, died August 23, 2010, in Harrisburg, PA. He would become the fourth black player for the Harrisburg Senators, which was a class B affiliate of the Philadelphia Athletics. The lefty ace spent one season (1952) with the Senators and then played for the Harrisburg Giants of the Eastern Negro League in 1954 and 1955. In 1996, he published his autobiography, "*I Gave It My Best Shot*"

ELIJAH DANIEL "LUCKY" MILLER, 104, died October 12, 2010, in Pittsburgh, PA. Miller was the batboy for the Homestead Grays from roughly 1926 to 1945. He also organized a team of integrated millworkers called the Homestead Red Legs. Miller will be the primary character for a children's book written by *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* writer Kevin Kirtland.



ARTHUR LEE "ARTIE, SNOOP" WILSON, 90, died October 31, 2010, in Portland, Oregon. Wilson played five years at shortstop, 1944-48, for the Birmingham Black Barons and the New

York Black Yankees. In 1951, at age 30, he appeared in 19 games for the New York Giants. Wilson spent 10 years in the minor leagues playing for various teams where he batted .312 in 1331 games. Wilson's successful decade on the west coast earned him membership to the Pacific Coast League Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame and the Puerto Rican Hall of Fame. In 1948, Wilson's batting average was .402 with the Barons, becoming the last major league professional to break the .400 barrier.

Davey Whitney Inducted to NCBHOF

From the Monarchs to the Braves, Dave Whitney, former KC Monarch shortstop and coach of the Alcorn Braves was inducted to the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame on November 21, 2010, in Kansas City, Missouri. The inductee class included



players Jerry West, David Thompson, Sidney Wicks, Christian Laettner, along with executive/coaches Tex Winter, Tom Jernstedt and Wayne Duke.

After leaving the Monarchs, Whitney went on to win 12 SWAC regular-season titles and seven post-season tournaments. He was voted SWAC Coach of

the Year 10 times and is the winningest coach in SWAC history, with 551 victories with the Alcorn State Braves and the Texas Southern Tigers.

Whitney is the first coach of a historically black institution to record wins in the NIT (1979) and the NCAA (1980) tournaments. He later served as coach on Bobby Knight's 1984 gold-medal Olympic basketball team.

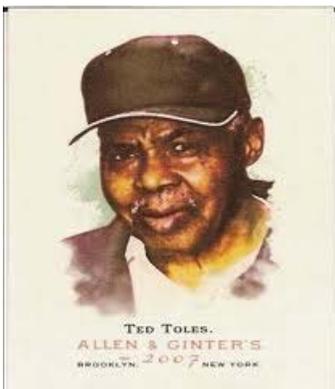
He credits baseball legends **John "Buck" O'Neil** and **Willie Foster** as two of his mentors. Congratulations to the "Wiz" for another deserving honor.

Ted Toles, Jr., is a Hall of Famer

In October, the 84-year old Newton Falls, Ohio native and former Negro League star was inducted into the **Trumbull County Sports Hall of Fame**, located in Warren, Ohio.

The left-handed Toles pitched in 1946-47 and 1949 for the Pittsburgh Crawfords of the United States League and the Newark Eagles, Cleveland Buckeyes and the Jacksonville Eagles.

Congratulations Mr. Toles.



Research Request

In an ongoing effort to compile records for the 1936 Negro Southern League, I need help on the **Cincinnati Tigers**. What I need is for someone to take 2-3 hours to look at microfilm of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, March through September of 1936, and make photocopies of articles and game reports. I will pay for the photocopies, of course. I am also quite willing to do a research trade-out or perhaps negotiate some other compensation. My local library is very good with interlibrary loans but has been unable to find a library that will lend microfilm of Cincinnati papers. **Contact Bill Plott** at: wjplott@aol.com



Two \$2,500 scholarships for the best Essay

If you are a High School Senior go to:

<http://www.larrylester42.com/assets/Images/Events/2011-Scholarship-App.pdf>

and download your application.

The deadline is **February 21, 2011**, so hurry!

Two \$1,000 Library Grants available.

Go to:

<http://www.larrylester42.com/assets/Images/Events/2011-Library-Grant-App.pdf>

and download your application.

The deadline is **March 18, 2011**.

SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

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The Courier is a quarterly newsletter published by the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR); in March, June, September and December. Inquiries, submissions and research requests can be sent to Larry Lester.

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