

The Negro Leagues Courier

The newsletter of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

"We are the Ship, all else are the Sea"

October 2001

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**"...and then there was some sad days too,
but there was always sun shining someplace."
- Judy Johnson**

NLRAG Progress Report

As was reported in a previous issue, *The Courier* will be publishing regular reports on the progress of the Negro Leagues Researchers/Authors Group as it goes about the huge job of detailing the history of the Negro leagues for the Hall of Fame. Larry Lester submitted the following report:

As we enter the first phase of the Hall of Fame project here are a few updates:

- Narratives are being assigned to writers.
- Dr. Leslie Heaply has submitted her latest version of the bibliography of related articles, books, etc. This list along with a list of every thesis and dissertation written, on the Leagues, is being passed along to our narrative writers to assist them in their research.
- The Register has added 810 entries since the publication of the Negro Leagues Book. This brings the total count to more than 5,370 Negro Leagues participants. The Negro Leagues Book had about 4,560 entries. Also note, many name corrections and middle names have been added.
- There has been approximately 135 brand new rosters added and we anticipate many more entries when we review the box scores coming in.
- To date we have received 4,275 box scores with less than 3 percent of them entered into the database. We expect this number to double, as many boxes from the 1940s have not been accounted for.
- The biographical database with birth dates, places of deaths, height, weight, burial sites and social security numbers has reached 1,690 entries. This listing exceeds the information in previously published works on Negro League players, but is a far less than the ultimate goal of getting information on all 5,000 players. Our listing of 1,690 players has been passed along to James Riley to await his revised version of the Biographical Encyclopedia scheduled for publication next year.
- Sammy Miller has identified roughly 444 ballparks that hosted black teams. The listing includes information ranging from park location, years played, capacity, facts and trivia. The list is indexed by state, or city so that you can look up your favorite team. Publishers are knocking at his door.

We need to keep those box scores coming in. For everyone involved in this phase of the project, keep those boxes coming. We cannot finish this project without them.

Changes In The Hall of Fame Vote

The National Baseball Hall of Fame recently announced an overhaul of the Veterans Committee and its elections. The changes include the doing away with the fifteen-member committee and replacing it with a 90-member group made up of all living Hall of Famers, J.G. Taylor Spink Award winners (the ones that are alive), living winners of the Ford C. Frick award, and the three Veterans Committee members whose terms have not yet expired.

The newly eligible candidates are all former major leaguers that played in at least 10 major league seasons and are not on Major League Baseball's ineligible list. Managers, umpires, and executives with ten or more years in baseball are also eligible.

Voting on players will occur every other year, beginning in 2003. Also beginning that year, managers, executives, and umpires will be elected every four years.

Under this system, Negro League players are not currently eligible for induction. According to the press release (**2pgs.) "A Hall of Fame sponsored study of African American Baseball, 1860-1960, is underway. The Board will appoint a committee to review the results when they are complete. After this review, a recommendation will be made to the Board concerning how to proceed with respect to Negro League candidates. Various articles are available in addition to the press release. All articles **5pgs.

Contributors

You can't blame all this on me. Others responsible are: Bob Bailey, Carlos Bauer, Todd Bolton, Tim Booker, Adrian Burgos, George Case, Dick Clark, Mike Everett, Tom Hill, Larry Hogan, Signe Knutson, Larry Lester, Jerry Malloy, Gary Maurer, Rick Morris, Jim Overmyer, Bob Peterson, Bob Potts, Jay Sanford, Prior Smith, Wayne Stivers, and Lyle Wilson.

Member and Reader Updates

Adrian Burgos can be reached via e-mail at nycubans1947@aol.com

Adrian Burgos also recently received the Latin Studies Section 2001 Research and Dissertation Award from the Latin American Studies Association. In addition he learned that his latest article "The Latins from Manhattan: Confronting Race and Building Community in Jim Crow Baseball, 1906-1950" (obviously Adrian studied at the Larry Hogan School of Titles) which appears in *MAMBO MONTAGE: THE LATINIZATION OF NEW YORK* (Columbia University Press, 2001) was excerpted in the "Books on New York" section of the August 26th issue of *The New York Times*.

Tim Booker's e-mail address is twbooker@aol.com.

Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we must pass along the news of the deaths of the following players:

Manuel Rivero passed away on Thursday August 23 at the age of 92. He died at the Calvert Manor Health Care Center in Rising Sun, MD.

James "Lefty" Turner, who played first base for the Indianapolis Clowns and the Baltimore Elite Giants in the early 1940's died Sunday morning, August 13, 2000 at Putnam (FL) Community Medical Center following a brief illness. Obit available **2pgs.

Al Fennar, who played shortstop from 1932-34 for the Brooklyn Royal Giants, the Cuban Stars (East) and the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants died on June 15, 2001, apparently in New Jersey. Obit from the 8/10/01 issue of *SCD* **1pg.

Allie Thompkins, who played outfield for the Pittsburgh Crawfords in 1928 and 1929 died on July 6, 2001 at the age of 93.

We also pass along our deepest sympathies to Larry Doby whose wife, Helyn Doby died on July 19, 2001. Obits from *The New York Times* **1pg., *The Record* **1pg., and *The Star-Ledger* **1pg

Final Resting Places –

Bob Bailey supplied us with the following sites:

Henry L. McHenry is buried at Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY (lot 44120, Sec 13).

Albertus A. Fennar is in George Washington Memorial Park, Paramus, NJ

Thomas H. Jackson is in Atlantic City Cemetery, Pleasantville, NJ.

Carl J. Dent is in Rosehill Cemetery, Linden, NJ.

Then there is a three for one. Skinner Belfield, Charles Biot and John Dabney are all in Fairmount Cemetery, Newark, NJ along with Abe Manley

Research Requests –

Jay Sanford has issued a friendly challenge to the rest of the committee. The challenge is to find the earliest mention in a newspaper or periodical where a black team is mentioned AND the players' names are given. Jay submitted a piece from the February 4, 1877 issue of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* listing the players of the all black Tilden Base Ball Club.

SABR Executive Director George Case submitted the following: SABR member Frank Ceresi, former curator of the MCI Gallery in Washington, D.C., who is now heading up his own museum

consulting business, has been hired by Howard University Hospital as curator of the Griffith Stadium exhibit being planned for the hospital, which stands on the exact site of Griffith Stadium, Georgia and Florida Avenues NW in Washington, D.C. Frank is requesting that any SABR members with Griffith Stadium, Washington Senators, and/or Homestead Grays artifacts to contact him for possible loan to the exhibit. He can be contacted at FC Associates, 1703 Belle View Blvd., Suite B-1, Alexandria, VA. Phone: (703) 717-0558 E-mail: fceresi@fcassociates.com

Jay Sanford and Mark Rucker, of SABR's Rocky Mountain Chapter, are beginning work on a new project. This publication is intended to cover completely the Denver Post Tournament, an annual baseball event of considerable historical importance. The tournament continued for decades and included Negro Leaguers, major leaguers, and minor leaguers as well as semi-pro and other teams from all over the country. We would like any NLC members who have information, articles, photos, other pictures, or any kind kinds of materials about or from the tournaments, to contact us. We will be happy to pay any expenses, including photocopies and mailing. Please write or call: Mark Rucker, P.O. Box 3203 Boulder, CO 80307. Phone: 303-494-6715

Negro League Related Articles

"A Willie Wells Story" from the Summer 2001 issue of *The Diamond Angle* **1pg.

"Glory Days At Last" about Double Duty Radcliffe from the 8/31/01 issue of *The Seattle Times*.

**1pg

Web version of "Negro Leaguer To Be Honored" about Jose Figueroa from *HomeNewsTribune.com* **3 pgs

"Honoring The Latinos of Negro Baseball" also about Jose Figueroa from 8/24/01 issue of *The Star Ledger* **2pgs.

"Longtime Fan Chronicles The 'Other Half Of Baseball History', The Negro Leagues" from the 8/26/01 issue of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* **2pgs.

"Tribute Or Travesty: Bogus And Borderline Negro Leaguers Redefine Greatness" from the August 2001 issue of *SportDetroit* examines the problem of dishonest individuals who pass them selves off as former Negro League players. It addresses a valid point and contains a couple of great quotes from our fearless leader.

"Give These Guys Some Extra Innings" by John Holway from *Washingtonpost.com* **2pgs.

The opening day issue (Vol. 18, No. 2) of *Elysian Fields Quarterly* contains an excellent article on Martin Dihigo by Peter Bjarkman entitled "Martin Dihigo: Baseball's Least-Known Hall of Famer". Excellent writing and a few great pictures make it well worth the \$5.95 purchase price.

We have several articles regarding Hilton Smith's induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Those interested should request the Hilton Smith package and send a large manila envelope. The articles add up to **17pgs.

"Colored Giants Live" from the 8/23/01 issue of the *Dateline Journal* **2pgs.

"Hard Lesson From Negro Leagues" from the 8/18/01 issue of *The New York Times* **2pgs.

Chicago Sun-Times, 7/8/2001, "Jackie Robinson's Example Inspires Clayton's Philanthropy"

**1pg

A 1999 book, *Sluggers! History's Heaviest Hitters*, has two pages on Josh Gibson. **2pp

On The Web

Larry Lester, our computer and technology editor passed along the following: "Do not open any emails with attachments of WTC.exe or Anti-Terrorist.exe. Also check your PC's for "admin.dll" and delete it if you find it. They contain a virus."

The Marketplace

The Detroit Athletic Co. is offering two new Negro League t-shirts as well as Negro League jerseys. The t-shirts are of the Detroit Cubs and the Detroit Wolves. **3pgs.

SATCHEL SEZ: THE WIT, WISDOM, AND WORLD OF LEROY 'SATCHEL' PAIGE by David Sterry and Arielle Eckstut and published by Three Rivers Press had recently been released. It has 112 pages and sells for \$9.95.

BASEBALL HISTORY FROM OUTSIDE THE LINES, edited by John Driefort and published by University of Nebraska Press contains a piece by our own Jerry Malloy entitled "Sol White and the Origin of African American Baseball".

An authentic 1943 Kansas City Monarchs Negro League Champions warm up jacket will be on the block at the About Time auction on Oct. 11. Also for sale in the auction is a pair of extremely rare, real photo Cuban baseball cards from the 1920's featuring Pop Lloyd and Jose Mendez, and a letter written by C.I. Taylor.

Eugene Robinson passed along a very nice Induction Day cover of Hilton Smith. Anyone interested in obtaining one, contact me.

Recent Events -

On April 5, 2001 the second "Smokey" Joe Williams Scholarship Banquet was at the Seguin-Guadalupe County Coliseum. It is the second one held and we are fortunate to have programs from both of these events. All related materials are available **5pgs.

The first annual Jerry Malloy Memorial Game was held in Geneva, IL on August 12, 2001. This was a celebration of Jerry's birthday and his twin sister Jackie's. With Beloit visiting The Kane County Cougars, it was fitting that we enjoy a minor league game. Jerry loved attending minor league games almost as much as White Sox games (I'm sure glad we didn't have to go to one of those). This is a really nice stadium and Kane County was a winner. Tom and Helen Hill arranged the purchase of tickets and the dinner afterwards. Tom even rode his bike from Rockford to Geneva (this is not a short trip). Jackie's husband Stan Balon and their kids were joined by Signe Knutson, Charles Branham, Stuart and Cheryl Tanaka, and their kids and myself. It was a grand time, wish Jerry was with us.

Dedication of Jerry Malloy Memorial Bench took place on Saturday, September 8, 2001 at Rockford College. We gathered together at 5:00 PM to honor Jerry's life. It is located in a wonderful spot, overlooking many Rockford College buildings and nestled in a wooded area. An excellent place to sit and enjoy life. The plaque was written by Helen Hill, who did a great job. It reads: "In Memory of Jerry Malloy, Class of 1968. Our Beloved Friend and Classmate. You Have Enriched Our Lives Forever. Play Ball." Barry Evans, Signe Knutson and myself represented SABR and The Negro Leagues Committee. Friends and family filled the area for a short program. Jackie and Stan Balon and their kids and grandchildren were joined by sister Becki and husband Wayne Taylor, plus many of their family, all from Alabama. Tom and Helen Hill, Dutch and Bev Hill, Charles Branham, Day Waterman, Cheryl Tanaka (Stuart was in California on business), Stephen and Kathleen Lacey and others I know I have missed, sang Take Me Out To The Ball Game. We then adjourned to the Hill's home for a picnic and a lot of stimulating conversation and fun. Jerry's son Brandon and fiancée Cindy couldn't make it from Florida as Brandon was on a business trip in Brazil. A **2pg copy of the program is available. I greatly appreciate all the work put into the event by Tom and Helen Hill. It was very heartening to be able to participate. I wish Jerry was there to enjoy it, but maybe he was.

Toni Stone was inducted into the African American Ethnic Sports Hall of Fame in Oakland, California on July 7, 2001. **1pg.

Fellow NLC members Michael Everett, Larry Hogan, Rick Morris, Sam Abady, Todd Bolton, Bob Peterson, Rob Ruck, and myself had a great time in Atlantic City for the Ninth Annual John Henry "Pop" Lloyd Lecture and Humanitarian Awards. A Turn Back The Clock Night was also held the weekend of August 24-26, 2001. Three days and nights of exciting activities made even better by the appearance of over 18 former players.

On Friday, while Larry Hogan was caught up in a traffic jam coming down from New York City with several players, I was having fun getting through Philadelphia. I was able to make it to Mike Everett's home and change clothes and get to the Clarion Hotel, headquarters for the players. In town was a terrific group of veterans including Hall of Famer and NLC member Monte Irvin, Max Manning, Wilmer Harris, Stan Glenn, Pee Wee Jenkins, Carlos Santiago, Armando Vasquez, Mahlon Duckett, Bob Scott, Gordon Hopkins, Pedro Sierra, Charley Rivera, Jose Pereira, John Isaacs, Jose Figueroa, Emilio Navarro, and Geraldine Day.

Wilmer joined me for the trip to The Sandcastle for the pre-game ceremony in front of the Negro Leagues Sculpture. Monte Irvin pictures were passed out to all fans attending the game (somehow I came up with several extras.) I met up with Todd and Judy Bolton and Michael's wife Cathy and "gambling man" Rick Morris. The Atlantic City Surf put on a first-class program. All the players were on the field for individual introductions. Dr. Larry finally arrived and assisted Mike Everett with finishing up the pre-game greetings. Max and Monte threw out the first pitches. A private box was provided for the entire group with great bantering and joyful remembrances. Fireworks, after the game, made it quite a night. Afterward, Rick Morris and I contributed to the local economy at The Trump Casino.

Saturday was a "busy" day. Errands to be run, the usual convention hall problems made for extra efforts by many. Michael Everett and Belinda Manning especially had a LOT of extra work to perform. Getting everyone to the Everett's house was fun. A grand luncheon gathering enjoyed great hospitality and plenty of food and beverages. This was really an exciting time for all. Sitting and chatting and laughing and listening too some tall tales and many true experiences.

Off that night to the annual awards celebration. As always the cocktail hour was a joy. Todd had set up a terrific exhibit/display on the career of honoree Emilio Navarro. Millito is a 95 year old wonder going on 60. His wonderful family was also there. I can't believe any other people could possibly have as much fun as the Navarro clan does. What a great time! During this period, the Pop Lloyd Committee was able to sell a bunch of books and collectibles.

Another of the honorees was Dionne Warwick. Many of her signature songs were performed fabulously by Millie Gonzalez. Byron Motley, son of former umpire, Bob Motley put on a terrific cabaret/review style show "A Celebration of Jazz and Negro League Baseball". Monte Irvin received a Special Award from the Lloyd Committee. What a wonderful evening! The fun wasn't over. Many of the players were able to stay over for the Sunday events at Pop Lloyd Field. Bob Rothhouse was able to get together a slew of musical groups, bands, and performers for after the ball game. Charley Rivera, Jose Figueroa, and Jose Pereira signed several dozen autographs. Later that day Larry Hogan headed back to New York City with the players. I joined Michael Everett, Cathy Whitmore (Mike's wife), Julianna Skluzacek (author of MIXED SIGNALS, the play on Effa Manley) Gordon Ross (who played against many of the Negro League veterans in exhibition games, in the '40's) and his many, many years younger wife Kay. Gordon treated us to an excellent Italian repast. I was up early Monday and on the road home, savoring the outstanding memories of another Pop Lloyd Weekend. I sincerely recommend to everyone to attend next year's event, you will have a great time. The following articles and programs are available:

John Henry "Pop" Lloyd Lecture and Humanitarian Awards Program **22pgs

Atlantic City Salutes Pop Lloyd Day Program**2pgs

"Turn Back The Clock, Turn On The Memories" from the 8/25/01 issue of the *Atlantic City Press* **3pgs.

Monte Irvin picture from the Surf game **1pg. (Extras on a first come, first served basis, others will get photocopy.)

I wanted to advise all SABR members that a very successful Griffith Stadium symposium and exhibit was held at Howard University and Howard University Hospital on 9/25/01 - there is an article from the Washington Times available on the Washington Times website <www.washtimes.com> 9/25/01 Griffith Stadium lives again in memory - SABR member Frank Ceresi was the curator for the exhibit and assisted in the symposium along with fellow SABR members Gordon Thomas, Emmett Lanier, John Holway, Jim Roberts, Jim Riley and Phil Wood. Bob Savitt had a number of "volunteers" from the Bob Davids SABR chapter working the SABR table at the main entrance to the symposium and a SABR banner was prominently displayed in the symposium room at the Blackburn Center of Howard University.

I was very pleased with the cooperation of Howard University and Howard University Hospital - Howard University Hospital advertised the Griffith Stadium symposium on their website www.huhosp.org in collaboration with SABR and I wanted to personally thank all SABR members who were involved in this effort. - George W. Case III, SABR Executive Director

Upcoming Events

Author Quincy Troupe, son of Negro League legend Quincy Trouppe will present "An Invisible Ball of Dreams: Celebrating Negro League Baseball Through Literature, Poetry, and Film" at the Pasadena (CA) Central Library on October 7. Info available **2pgs.

The Final Pitch

An interesting item found its way onto my desk the other day. I can't say how it got there instead of onto the large pile of "stuff to do" that seems to be growing ever larger despite my best efforts to conquer it, but this particular item did wind up on my desk nonetheless. The item was the latest copy of the SABR Membership Directory. What made this directory interesting was that at the end of it there is a section entitled "Interest Codes List". It lists all the codes people can list as their interest when they join SABR or pay their annual dues and then lists all the people who indicated an interest in that category. The interesting part was that under the heading of "Negro Leagues" there were roughly 425 names listed. It should have been longer because I noticed some names were missing from the list, including mine. Perhaps I have been relegated to Soviet style non-person status for some past transgression but that isn't the point here. I happened to know for a fact that the committee has nowhere near that many members and *The Courier* subscription list has nowhere near that many names. Something needs to be done about this. I have enough work to do so it is up to you the readers and committee members to correct this. Go through this list and if you see the name or names of people you know, the next time you talk to them find out if they are on the committee list or receive *The Courier*. If their answer is no, berate them soundly, and then point out the benefits of being a member of the NLC (there has to be some). If they are not interested in joining, remind them they can still receive *The Courier* without joining Clark's merry band. We depend on our readers for the news and articles we offer here and so more readers could only result in a better *Courier*. That would have to be a good thing because Mr. Clark keeps telling me I need help. Now that I think about it though, maybe he doesn't mean that in a good way.

Sammy J. Mill