

# *The Negro Leagues Courier*

## *The newsletter of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee*

April 2000

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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)

### *"A Victim of the Line" To Premier AT NLC 2000*

After the printed version of the last issue of *The Negro Leagues Courier* had been sent to our printing center in Michigan, it was announced that the play *"A Victim of the Line"* written by NLC member and editor of *The Negro Leagues Courier* Sammy J. Miller will premier at the NLC conference in Harrisburg, PA this August. A dramatic reading of the historical fiction play, which tells the story of the life and career of Negro League pitcher "Crazy" Tony Williams, will be put on as part of the city's annual Negro League Commemorative Day, which this year, will coincide with the NLC conference.

The production will be a staged reading presented by Penn Owl Productions with founder Dorothy King directing. The staged reading, which will be open to the public, will take place on Saturday, August 5th, at the Carousel Pavillion prior to the Senators games.

### *Turkey Stearnes Joins Baseball's Elite*

In a long overdue move, the Veterans Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame selected Tennessee native and long time Detroit Star Norman "Turkey" Stearnes as it's choice for this year's Negro League inductee. Dick Clark, one of Stearnes' most ardent supports, had the following to say:

"It wouldn't be an overstatement to say I was very pleased to hear of the Veterans Committee's selection of Turkey Stearnes to The Hall of Fame. I received the news simultaneously, by phone, from Larry Hogan and John Holway, minutes after it was announced. Obviously, it made my day...my month.....actually my year. I called the Stearnes family later that evening to pass along the NLC's congratulations. They were ecstatic and greatly relieved that it had finally happened. I spoke with newspaper folks who had left messages and was able to assist in the process of educating the media and public on the well deserved selection Stearnes was. A wonderful article had appeared the day before in the DETROIT FREE PRESS.

I am planning on attending the induction ceremony in Cooperstown on July 23rd. I hope to see many of you there that weekend. Every selection since Rube Foster to Stearnes this year, has had a ton of input from our committee and devoted individuals. Our hard work has paid off, slower than we would like but accomplished. I will not be retiring from promoting the other worthy candidates. We must continue to push for extension of the special Negro League vote. Biz Mackey, Mule Suttles and more for 2001 and beyond."

"Stearnes Camp Say Campaign Labor of Love" from the 2/29/00 *The Detroit Free Press* \*\*1pg.

"Hall Honors Anderson, Detroit Stars' Stearnes" from the 3/1/00 issue of *The Detroit News* \*\*2pgs.

"Other Committee Picks" from the 3/1/00 issue of *USA Today* \*\*1pg.

"2000 Inductees" from the Hall of Fame website. \*\*6pgs.

"Sparky To Get Call To Hall of Fame Today" \*\*1pg.

"They're In" from the 3/1/00 issue of *The Detroit Free Press*. \*\*4pgs.

"Unorthodox Stearnes Finally Elected" from the 3/8/00 issue of *USA Today's Baseball Weekly* \*\*1pg.

### *Charlie Tiano Joins Heavenly All Stars*

Former SABR member and long-time friend of the Negro Leagues Committee Charlie Tiano passed on January 15th in Kingston, NY. He was 87. I met Charlie personally at SABR's National in Albany, NY, in 1989, after several years of letter writing. He was the sports editor of the FREEMAN for over 25 years and a sports writer most of his adult life. We continued to communicate until his death. Charlie was a very good baseball player and often played against barnstorming Black teams featuring the likes of Martin Dihigo, Dick Redding, Joe Williams and more. My favorite Charlie Tiano story is when he played WITH the Black team, unnoticed. Because of an injury to one of the players, Charlie, an Italian with a great tan was recruited because of his ability to play firstbase. No one thought he didn't belong on the team. We'll miss you Charlie.

"Tiano, Retired Sports Editor Dies At Age 87" from the 1/16/00 issue of the *Sunday Freeman* \*\*2pgs.

"Living Life To The Brim" from the 1/17/00 *Daily Freeman* \*\*2pgs.

"Charles J. Tiano, Former Sports Editor" (obit) from the 1/17/00 \*\*2pgs.

"A Gentleman of the Old School" from the 1/20/00 issue of the *Woodstock Times* \*\*2pgs.

### Contributors

Many people have made this newsletter possible. They are: Todd Bolton, Bob Bailey, Dick Clark, Marianne DiMatteo, Jeff Eastland, Eric Enders, Rich Gibson, Larry Hogan, John Holway, Ted Knorr, Larry Lester, Jim Overmyer, Bob Peterson, Ray Schmidt, Jay Sanford, John Schwartz, David Skinner, Prior Smith, Lisa Tiano, and Lyle Wilson.

### Committee News & Member Updates

An article from *The Free Lance Star* (Fredericksburg, VA) of 2/23/00 entitled "Baseball Buff Goes To Bat for Some of the Sport's Best" is about our very Jeff "Mr. Picture" Eastland. \*\*2pgs.

"Negro League Tribute: University Exhibit Celebrates Glory Days of Baseball In N.J." from the 2/6/00 issue of *The Record* (Hackensack, NJ) contains the latest rambling of our very own mad professor, Larry Hogan. \*\*2pgs.

### Obituaries

Jesse Askew of the 1936 St. Louis Stars died on Jan. 4, 2000 in St. Louis Missouri of kidney cancer. He was 85 years old.

Charlie Biot died March 10, 2000 in East Orange, New Jersey. Biot played outfield for the Newark Eagles, the New York Black Yankees, the Baltimore Elite Giants and other teams from 1939 to 1941. He was 82 years old.

Sanford Barnes passed away on March 6 in Yakima, Washington. Sanford was a star at Alcorn College in the mid Thirties, and in 1936 he toured with the St. Louis Blues, an all star team comprised primarily of players from the Piney Woods School, Piney Woods Mississippi. The Blues became the Washington Browns in '37 and played out of Yakima in '37 and '38. Willie Foster was the manager of that team in late '38.

Olympian Mack Robinson, Jackie's brother, passed away on March 12 in Pasadena, California. Mack had been bedridden since suffering a stroke in 1990 on Christmas day. He was 88 years old.

Robert Gaston passed away on Feb. 11, 2000 in a Pittsburgh nursing home at the age of 89. Gaston was a catcher for the Homestead Grays and the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers of the USL.

A one page obit for Gilbert H. Jackson, Jr. who died on Jan. 21, 2000 at the age of 77, is available. \*\*1pg.

We have a funeral program for James "Lefty" La Marque who died on Jan. 15. \*\*4pgs. Also available is an obit on LaMarque from SCD \*\*1pg.

### Resting Places Found

A listing of resting places that have already been found or were known to the NLC before the Internment Sites Subcommittee was formed is available. \*\*3pgs.

Please remember that each member of the NLC is REQUIRED to supply at least one previously unknown burial site each year.

David Skinner found John Ford Smith in Greenwood Memory Lawn and Cemetery in Phoenix, Arizona.  
Todd Bolton found two of the Bankhead brothers. Fred Bankhead is at New Park Cemetery in Memphis, TN and Joe Bankhead is buried in Empire Cemetery, Empire, AL  
Todd Bolton also supplied us with the following sites:  
Luis Tiant, Sr is buried in Milton Cemetery in Milton, MA.  
George Fiall is buried in Beverly Hills Cemetery in New York, NY.  
Juan Guilbe is buried in Cementerio Civil in Ponce, PR.  
Tomas Quinones is buried in Cementerio Civil in Ponce, PR.  
Doc Sykes was cremated and his ashes spread over Morehouse College campus in Atlanta, GA.  
Frank Warfield is buried in an unmarked grave in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Baltimore, MD.  
Tetelo Vargas is buried in Guayama Cemetery in Guayama, PR.  
Roy Noble is buried in Cypress Hills Cemetery in New York, NY.  
SABR member Bob Bailey was kind enough to supply the following sites that we did not have:  
Ed Bolden is buried in Eden Cemetery in Collingdale, PA.  
Jake Stephens is buried in Mt. Zion Cemetery in Delta, PA.  
Buster Clarkson is buried in Brush Creek Cemetery in Irwin, PA.  
Welday Walker is buried in Union Cemetery in Stuebenville, OH.  
Abe Harrison is buried in Ewing Church Cemetery in Ewing, NJ.

### **Current and Future Individual Projects**

Anyone interested in doing a presentation at SABR 30 in West Palm Beach this year needs to immediately get in contact with Douglas Lehman @dlehman@mdcc.edu

Dick Clark has a list of players whose obits state that they played in the Negro Leagues but as of yet the NLC has not verified these statements. People are needed to research these players and find boxscores bearing their names so the the Committee can add their names to both the Register and the Team Rosters. A list bearing the names and the teams and times the men are said to have played is available. \*\*2pgs.

Paul Bauer, co-author of CATCHING DREAMS: MY LIFE IN THE NEGRO LEAGUES by Frazier "Slow" Robinson was a special guest at the Feb. 12, meeting of the Jack Graney Chapter meeting at Jacobs Field in Cleveland.

Sammy J. Miller was recently named to the Negro Leagues Sub Committee of the Cincinnati Chapter of RBI (Reviving Baseball in the Inner City). Current plans are that all games will have some connection to the Negro Leagues, including the regional playoffs to be held in the city in July. The regional championship games will be played at Cinergy Field on July 24.

### **Negro League Related Articles**

"Fields Fights to Preserve Leagues' Memory" about Wilmer Fields from the 2/9/00 issue of *USA Today's Baseball Weekly* \*\*1pg.

"It's Showtime for Negro Leagues Museum" from the 2/4/00 issue of *The Kansas City Star*. \*\*1pg.

"Historic YMCA Might Reopen: Plans Taking Shape to Revive Paseo Site" from the 2/13/00 issue of *The Kansas City Star*. \*\*1pg.

"A Kind And Caring Man For The Ages" concerning Josh Johnson and from the 12/19/99 issue of *The State Journal Register*. \*\*1pg.

"Negro League Stars Deserve Their Due" from the 2/24/00 issue of the *Toronto Star*. \*\*1pg.

"Legendary Coach Buck O'Neil Swings Through Tri-Cities" from the website of *Tri-City Herald*. \*\*5pgs.

"Shoeless Joe Tops All Vote Getters In Our Unofficial SCD Hall of Fame Ballot" from the 3/31/00 issue

of *Sports Collectors Digest*. \*\*3pgs.

"The Colored Athlete In Professional Baseball" is a great piece from the May 1929 issue of *Baseball magazine*. \*\*3pgs.

"The Boys and Girls of Summer: Baseball Theme Programming Tips To Catch Young Readers" from the Fall 1999 issue of *Illinois Libraries*. \*\*4pgs.

A page showing the logos from the Venezuela Winter Leagues teams is available. \*\*1pg.

### **On The Web**

Jim Overmyer, one of our much valued researchers here at *The Negro Leagues Courier*, supplied the following information.

"Thought you might like to know that the Ohio History website with the Cleveland Gazette articles mentioned in the last newsletter is linked to American Memory, a searchable site run by the Library of Congress which is a giant repository of written material, photos, maps, etc., on American history.

By going to the American Memory page (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amhome.html>) you can click on "search" to get the site's search engine. Entering the search terms "Sol White" and specifying "Match all of these word" and "Match words exactly" will produce a list of 15 Sol White columns from the gazette in the year 1919. Fun reading. I have prints of the columns and will send them to anyone who asks who isn't able to search them out on the web."

### **The Marketplace**

The Winter 2000 issue of *Chicago History*, the magazine of the Chicago Historical Society, contains an article entitled "The Golden Age of Baseball" by Ray Schmidt. It is an excellent article.

The book SOUTHERN YANKEES: THE STORY OF THE ATLANTA CRACKERS by Tim Darnell contains a chapter entitled "When Only The Ball Was White". It is a fourteen page chapter and discusses the Atlanta Black Crackers. Information on ordering the book can be found in recent issues of the SABR Bulletin.

One of Josh Gibson's Puerto Rican Winter League contracts recently sold at auction for \$29,065.

An excellent new book is William McNeil's latest BASEBALL'S OTHER ALL-STARS. This book covers all the "Other" professional leagues outside the Majors. The Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Japanese, and the Negro Leagues. The Negro League section is three chapters, pages 43-90 which cover The Negro Leagues All-Star Team 1900-1925 and then 1926-1950. Another chapter is The all-time Negro League All-Star Team and the Negro Leagues Hall of Fame. At least eight of the numerous tables are related to the Negro Leagues. It is a McFarland Publication and the cost is \$29.95 retail and \$33.95 post paid and can be ordered at your local bookstore or any of the major on line bookstores.. The book has 240 pages, 27 tables, and 86 photos. Highly recommended.

### **Recent Events**

Max Manning was inducted into the New Jersey Sports Writers hall of fame at the annual dinner at Pines Manor in Edison, New Jersey on Feb. 6, of this year. Our congratulations to Mr. Manning.

On March 8, Mamie "Peanuts" Johnson spoke as part of the Race and Gender Speaker Series at Miami (OH) University. *The Negro Leagues Courier's* roving reporter Rich Gibson was on the scene and submitted this report.

Oxford, Ohio - As a part of the Race and Gender Speaker Series, Mamie "Peanut" Johnson spoke at Miami University's College of Arts & Sciences, Departments of Black World and Women's Studies. Ms. Johnson, one of three women to play in the Negro Baseball Leagues, discussed her experiences within professional men's sports.

Ms. Johnson was a 105 pound right-handed pitcher who was taught to throw a curveball by Hall of Fame Pitcher, Leroy "Satchel" Paige, and played two of her three professional seasons (1953 ? 1955) with Henry "Hank" Aaron for the Indianapolis Clowns. Her small size led to her being nicknamed "Peanut." When not pitching, she

spent some time playing second base. During her three years, she collected a 33 - 8 record and maintained batting averages of .262 to .284.

During her talk, Ms. Johnson spent a brief amount of time discussing the path that led her into playing baseball on a men's team. She recalled being refused a tryout for a white, women's team from Alexandria, Virginia because "my skin was a different color." She went on, "I'm glad they turned me down. Otherwise, I would have been just another woman who played woman's baseball." She also showed the audience a short excerpt from a show called P.S., that discussed her career and life after baseball. Following the video, she fielded questions from the enthusiastic audience.

A groundbreaker in other areas as well, Ms. Johnson had studied medicine and engineering at New York University before joining the Clowns. After retiring from baseball, she worked nearly 30 years as a licensed practical nurse. She currently travels most of the time making autograph and speaking appearances. When home, she works at the Negro Leagues Baseball Shop in Bowie, Maryland.

The following comes from the head of *The Negro Leagues Courier's* Latin American desk, Senor Todd Bolton.

"Beisbol Behind the Veil: Latin Americans in the Negro Leagues opened Sunday, March 19th in Perth Amboy, NJ. The opening ceremony was at 1:00 PM. I gave a talk then moderated a panel discussion with Armando Vazquez and Felix Delgado. Following the panel discussion there was a wonderful reception (almost a sit-down dinner). The Mayor's staff at Perth Amboy took Armando, Felix, my lovely wife Judy and me out for a wonderful dinner and an evening of bar hopping in Latino bars and clubs (Perth Amboy is 70% Hispanic) on Saturday evening. Armando was cutting the carpet at every stop! All in all, a very nice weekend.

The exhibit runs through April 30 at the Naval Reserve Center, Front Street, Perth Amboy, NJ.

### **Upcoming Events**

The Pop Lloyd Committee will be holding its annual Awards Presentation and Lecture the weekend of October 6-8 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The Awards will be handed out at a gala dinner at the Convention Center on October 7. Dr. Joseph Dorinson, Professor of History at Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus, will give the lecture this year at the dinner. The topic is "Black Athletes As Heroes In American Culture: From Jack Johnson to Michael Jordan."

### **NLC CON 2000**

The following is the most up to date information we have on the NLC Conference at press time.

#### ***Tentative Conference Schedule:***

Friday, August 4, 2000

8:00 a.m.	Welcome & Keynote
8:45-10:15	Presentations
10:15	Refreshment Break
10:30 -12 noon	Presentations
12 noon	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-3:00	Presentations
3:00	Refreshment Break
3:15-4:00	Presentations
4:00-5:00	Simulation Tourney/Playoffs/Trivia Contest
6:30	Banquet
After hours	Music at the Pep Grille

Saturday, August 5, 2000

8:00 a.m.	NLC Meeting
9:00-10:15	Presentations

10:15 Refreshment Break  
 10:30-11:15 Presentations  
 11:15 Preview of upcoming events at City Island  
 2:00 p.m. Post-session activities at Harrisburg's City Island Pavilion (Free and open to the public)  
 Dramatic Reading of "A Victim of the Line" by Sammy Miller  
 Public Presentation of Research Paper  
 Player Panel  
 Simulation Tourney/Final  
 Trivia Final  
 The Fourth Annual Negro League Night at the Harrisburg Senator's  
 Evening baseball game including a ceremony honoring Oscar Hamilton  
 After hours Music at the Harrisburg Hilton and Tower

Sunday, August 6, 2000

10:00 a.m. Informal Tours of local baseball fields and other sites

### ***The Third Annual SABR Negro Leagues Committee Conference Call For Presentations***

The Planning Committee invites you to submit a proposal for presentation at the Third Annual SABR Negro League Committee Conference to be held August 4-6, 2000, at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The conference provides a great opportunity for those interested in the Negro League to share their research.

#### **Presentation Requirements:**

Consecutive sessions are limited to 25 minutes for presenters and 15 minutes for questions. To be considered, please submit along with this cover page, a 200-500 word description/abstract of the presentation explaining the topic, content, and format; a list of objectives indicating what the audience can learn from this presentation; a brief biographical sketch for each presenter.

This information must be submitted on diskette in either Word or WordPerfect format or emailed to Marianne DiMatteo, at the address below. In order to be considered, a presentation description/abstract and a biographical sketch of the presenter **MUST** accompany each proposal form. Proposals missing either item will not be reviewed.

Proposal form follows on next page.

### ***Registration Information***

The conference registration fee is \$80 for SABR members and \$96 for non SABR members. These prices include the cost of conference sessions, materials, the 8/5 banquet, refreshment breaks, and one ticket to the Harrisburg Senators baseball game on Saturday night, 8/6. Persons interested in registering for the conference should contact [pshcweb@psu.edu](mailto:pshcweb@psu.edu) after May 1, requesting SABR NLC Conference registration information or contact Ted Knorr at (717) 238-5151 or [papabell@aol.com](mailto:papabell@aol.com). You can also visit a website for info. The site is [www.hbg.psu.edu](http://www.hbg.psu.edu)

Individual tickets may be purchased for the banquet for \$40 each and to the Senators for \$6 each. Registration for the conference only (without tickets to the banquet and game) is available for \$50.

### ***Hotel Registration***

The hotel which will be hosting the conference is the Harrisburg Hilton & Towers located at One North Second Street. The Hilton has received a Four Diamond rating from AAA and is attached to the city's Strawberry Square, a retail complex with over fifty specialty stores. The room rate is \$75 per night if registered by July 1, 2000. \$5 per night parking. 8% tax. Call Harrisburg Hilton & Towers at (800)-445-8667.

Subject: 3rd annual SABR Negro League Committee Research Conference

Date: 00-04-05 22:44:14 EDT

From: Papa Bell

To: Buletrogan, baberuth@fls.infi.net, Billyed  
To: DEADBALL, DMDAMERICA, eddie.bedford@emich.edu  
To: gregg.truitt@phwilm.zeneca.com, Hbgnews  
To: hogan@hawk.ucc.edu, Irvin.J.Goldfarb@abc.com  
To: jfinkel@mindspring.com, jholway@erols.com  
To: JimOvermyer, KCBBFan, RodericNelson  
To: lheaphy@stark.kent.edu, malloyj@ix.netcom.com  
To: Meveret, MILTLOPUSO, NerkEagles  
To: nlanctot@juno.com, OrestesM  
To: pdebono@earthlink.net, poplloyd@juno.com  
To: PSIERRA17, RBEVERAGE  
To: research@baseballhalloffame.org  
To: rick.morris@demgroup.com  
To: robinson@majorleaguebaseball.com, Rockdog59  
To: rpuff@ccgateway.amc.edu, Seabop  
To: smondore@baseballhalloffame.org, TKPublish  
To: TPHBOLTON, tshieber@baseballhalloffame.org  
To: TSTEARNES, TurkeyStern, wptgrays@csrlink.net  
To: Robtpeterson@cs.com, wmcneil@vgernet.net  
To: LLLevin@uri.edu, loisph@dmv.com  
To: spatz@annapolis.net, Bbxpert, DougP001  
To: gagnon2@nd.edu, evalero@worldnet.att.net  
To: john.husman@sylvania.sev.org, baseball@ttic.net  
To: phyllotto@ari.net, Jaykhill, JHeiselman

Just a clarification on the 3rd annual SABR Negro League Committee Research Conference being held this summer at the Harrisburg Hilton & Towers August 4-5, 2000.

Registration information has been a little slow in developing. I expect firm direction available after May 1st. In the meantime, to request conference information e-mail pshce.web@psu.edu and provide your full name, address, e-mail address and conference title, or call the Office of Continuing Education at (717) 948-6505. Alternatively, I am always available at papabell@aol.com or (717) 238-5151.

Price is firm at \$96 for complete package. \$80 for SABR members. Individual events have the following costs: Conference Registration \$50, Banquet \$40, Game \$6.

Conference will consist of 14 research presentations; player panel; staged and directed reading of "A Victim of the Line" by Sammy J. Miller; a special primer on Negro League ball for youth; a trivia tournament; an APBA baseball tournament featuring Negro League teams; a banquet; a Harrisburg Senators game; a Negro League Committee meeting; a sites tour; and more.

NOTE: While I was unable, largely due to banquet costs, to keep the conference cost at last year's rate, I am very pleased with the hotel rates. It is a world class Hilton and the \$75 nightly rate is less expensive than Atlantic City in '99 and Harrisburg in '98 at lesser facilities. PLEASE RESERVE SPACE EARLY!!! Call 1-800-HILTONS and ask for the special SABR Negro League Conference rate. Tax is 8% and parking is \$5 nite.

## **Proposal Form**

Title of Presentation:

Name (Solo Presenter or Co-Presenter-Please circle)

Title

Social Security #

Organization

Address

City

State

ZIP Code

Daytime Telephone

FAX

Email

Format of Presentation:

☐ Individual Presentation ☐ Panel Discussion

☐ Poster Session

☐ Exhibit

Scheduling Information:

Preferred Presentation Time: ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon  
☐ 8/5

Date: ☐ 8/4

Can you present at City Island on 8/5? ☐ Yes

☐ No

Additional details regarding timelines, and copying services will be provided in the speaker confirmation letter.

Please complete this form and send by mail or email, along with other required information to:

Marianne DiMatteo- SABR Conference Presentations

Penn State Capital College

777 West Harrisburg Pike

Middletown, PA 17057-4898

Fax: 717-948-6276

Email: mxd18@psu.edu

**FIRM DEADLINE** for submission is April 20, 2000.

Presenters will be notified on or before May 5, 2000, if their proposal has been accepted.

Presenters will be responsible for conference fees and travel expenses.