

The Negro Leagues Courier

The newsletter of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

FEB. 2000

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Send all correspondence, both Committee and newsletter related, to
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** Denotes items available for SASE from Committee Co-Chairman
Dick Clark - Please affix enough postage (usually 1 stamp/4 pages)

Chairman's Comments

Time is running out for everyone to get their pleas to the Veterans Committee for the Hall of Fame selections. Let us hope Buck O'Neil and friends can again select a most deserving Negro Leaguer to The Hall. Let us start getting our money into the Harrisburg group for the August Negro League Committee Conference. This is truly a great time.

Remember folks February is Black History Month, look for and participate in the monthly events and pass along articles to us.

Contributors

Many people have made this newsletter possible. They are: Luis Alvelo, Eddie Bedford, Bob Bailey, Todd Bolton, Rich Bozzone, David Brewer, Dick Clark, Rory Costello, Paul Debono, Jeff Eastland, Larry Hogan, Ted Knorr, Larry Lester, Joe Marren, Cristian Mendoza, Lou Parrotta, Bob Peterson, Jay Sanford, Nelson Garcia Santos, Steve Schott, Pedro Sierra, Lucky Smith, Wayne Stivers, Tony Techko, Gregg Truitt, and Lyle Wilson

Committee News & Member Updates

Happy Birthday wishes to Bill Cash (Feb. 21) and Monte Irvin (Feb. 25). Both will be turning 81. If you would like to send them a card, check your Committee Address list for their addresses.

Get well wishes to NLC member Tom Garrett who suffered a stroke last month. Latest word is that Tom is improving. Check the NLC address list to send Tom your best wishes. Get well soon, Tom. The conferences won't be the same without you.

Cristian Mendoza's address is now 801 Caslon Way #205, Landover, MD 20785. Phone is (301) 333-4391. E-mail is cris468@yahoo.com.

Scot Mondore is the new Manager of Programs at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. He can still be reached at the same e-mail address. (smondore@baseballhalloffame.org)

Eddie Bedford had a new address. It is: 318Q Porter Building, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Office Phone (734) 478-7120 ext. 2702. Fax (734) 478-2024. Home Phone (630) 355-9535. E-mail: eddie.bedford@emich.edu

Steve Schott has a new address. It is 867 Mingo Mtn. Rd., Kettle Falls, WA, 99141.

Hall of Fame News

The Michigan State Senate recently passed Senate Resolution 108 which urged the Veteran's Committee to induct Norman "Turkey" Stearnes into the Hall of Fame.

Obituaries

It is with much sadness that *The Negro Leagues Courier* must start this new year by announcing the deaths of several former Negro League players. They are:

Nathan Bussy Jr., former Birmingham Black Baron, died August 27, 1999, age 77 in Grosse Pointe, Mich.

Former Birmingham Black Baron and Baltimore Oriole Jehosie "Jay" Heard died Nov. 18, 1999. He was 78. A funeral program is available for **2pgs. Obit from the *Birmingham News* of 11/27/99 is available **1pg. A web obit is also available **1pg.

Former Kansas City Monarch, Chicago Cub, and Pittsburgh Pirate Gene Baker died Dec. 1 in his home in Davenport, Iowa, of a heart attack. He was 74. Obits available are from the *Chicago Sun Times* of 12/3/99 "Cub Pioneer Baker Dead at Age 74" **1pg., from the *Chicago Tribune* of 12/3/99 "Baker Dies; Helped Integrate Cubs in '53" **1pg., obit from the *Quad City Times* of 12/3/99 **1pg., obit from *New York Times* of 12/11/99 **1pg., undated obit form *SCD* **1pg., undated obit from unnamed publication **1pg. If you wish you can simply request the Baker obits (**6pgs) and you will receive them all.

Former Birmingham Black Baron Freddie D. Shepard, Sr., age 83, died on Dec. 5, 1999. Obit from *Birmingham News* of 12/10/99 is available **1pg. A web obit is also available **1pg.

Rufus Lewis, a pitcher for the Newark Eagles and the Houston Eagles died December 17, 1999 in Detroit, MI. He was 80 years old. **1pg. funeral program.

James "lefty" LaMarque, former Kansas City Monarch and teammate of Jackie Robinson, passed away on January 15, 2000.

Funeral programs are now available for deaths covered in previous issues. Hudson Andrew Baker's program **6pgs. James Benton's program **2pgs.

Resting Places Found

Our Internment Sites subcommittee is rolling along. Rich Puff is working on New York State, Rich Bozzone on Connecticut, Lyle Wilson in the Northwest, John Russell all over as is Dick Clark, Larry Lester, Sammy Miller, and Todd Bolton. David Skinner is checking in the Southwest. Bob Bailey has provided several new cemetery locations for players and is a welcomed addition. Larry Lester is working very hard to finish the program that will include all the accumulated data.

The sites Bailey supplied us with that we did not previously have were:

Abe Saperstein who is buried in Westlawn Cemetery in Chicago.

Robert "Tiny" Baldwin who is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Rainey Bibbs who is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Bob Bissant who is buried in Providence Memorial Park in Metairie, LA.

Charles Evans who is buried in Arbutus Memorial Park in Baltimore.

Crush Holloway who is buried in Mt. Calvary Cemetery in Baltimore.

Bob Harvey who is buried in Rosedale Cemetery in Orange, NJ.

Willie Wynn who is buried in New Camden Cemetery in Camden, NJ.

This list also came with the promise from Bailey that he will be sending more sites to us.

Lyle Wilson found Jim Claxton, a pitcher with the Cuban Stars in 1932, in Oakwood Hill Cemetery in Tacoma, Washington.

Current and Future Individual Projects

Larry Lester, Dick Clark, and Sammy J. Miller recently collaborated on two books, the titles of which (as of this writing) are: *Whistlestops: Black Baseball In Detroit* and *Whistlestops: Black Baseball In Chicago*. The books are being published by Arcadia and the tentative release dates are set for mid-spring.

Larry Lester has put together his latest lists: Negro Baseball League Reference Books, 4**pgs. Black

Stars on The Silver Screen 3**pgs. Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations on Negro League Baseball 3**pgs.

In a previous issue we discussed putting together a list of significant Negro League related sights. NLC member Todd Bolton has suggested that these include team offices/buildings, etc.; sites of former ballparks, prominent black hotels used by players, and birthplaces and death locations. Anyone with additional ideas should forward them to Dick Clark.

Todd Bolton was interviewed by TNT Video Productions, Inc. on the video THE MAN NAMED JUDY: The Story of William Judy Johnson. October, 2000 is scheduled release date.

Eddie Bedford informs us his Negro League history college course at Eastern Michigan University is moving through the approval process so that the class can be classified as a cross-cultural studies course.

Lauren Bassi, (ABassi@compuserve.com) a high school study is currently undertaking an independent study of the Negro Leagues. She is looking for information concerning Rube Foster and Chicago area teams. Anyone that can help please do so.

SABR member Paul Greenberg (paul-greenberg@home.com) is doing research on Fred "Chick" Meade, a white player that passed as a black man.

Negro League Related Articles

"Often-Overlooked Stars Sparkle; Negro League Players Greet Fans At Shop" from the *Washington Post* of 11/18/99 **1pg.

"Out and About" concerning John Joseph Evans from the June 1995 issue of *Canadian Living* **1pg.

"Detroit's Horseshoe Club To Die With Paradise Valley Memories" from the 11/21/99 issue of the *Detroit Free Press* **1pg. The Horseshoe Club, one of the last Negro League related landmarks still standing in the Motor City, was a popular night spot for Negro League players. Pictures exist showing Satchel Paige patronizing the club.

"Black Had Yankees Seeing Red in Game 1 of '52 Series" from the 1/21/00 issue of *SCD*. **2pgs. (That's Joe Black.)

Judy Johnson has been named one of the Delawareans of the Century! **2pg article "A Reflection of His Times".

NLC member Ted Knorr had an article in the 12/20/99 issue of *The APBA Journal* entitled "Evaluating APBA's Twenty Negro League Great teams." **4pgs.

In the 2/00 issue of *The Sports Source* the publication picked its 25 Greatest Athletes of the Century. Josh Gibson placed 9th and Satchel Paige at 23rd. Gibson and Paige articles available. **4pgs.

"All Century Team Another Injustice to Negro Leaguers", a letter to the editors of the *New York Post* from the 10/31/99 issue of that publication is available. **1pg.

"Williams Clarence Matthews: brief Life of a Baseball Pioneer: 1878-1928" from an unknown publication. **1pg.

"Two Pitchers, Four Thrillers: Matchups had All Hartford Watching" from the 12/26/99 *Hartford (CT) Courant* on Johnny Taylor. **2pgs.

Baseball America has put out their 100 greatest baseball players list. On the list was (2) Willie Mays, (3) Hank Aaron, (28) Jackie Robinson, (29) Josh Gibson, (38) Satchel Paige, (41) Ernie Banks, (64) Cool Papa Bell, (69) Roy Campanella, (98) Buck Leonard. As is obvious, yet again two of the Negro Leagues and all baseball's greatest players were ignored, those two of course being Oscar Charleston and Pop Lloyd.

SCD 2-4-2000 **1pg "Josh Gibson, Jim Thorpe items now being displayed".

This web site has some articles concerning early black baseball reports from the *Cleveland Gazette*. <http://dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/nwspaper/gazette5.cfm>

The Marketplace

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY: THE STORY OF THE BIRMINGHAM BLACK BARONS, which was mentioned in a previous newsletter can be ordered by sending \$25.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling to Friends of Rickwood 2100 Morris Avenue, Birmingham, AL 35203. Each copy includes a CD with excerpts from BBB

interviews.

Stats Fantasy Sports has put out the 2000 Players Catalog for the Bill James Classic Baseball game. It includes stats for 56 Negro League players and pitchers.

Dick Clark reports that the book mentioned in the latest SABR BULLETIN, SOUTHERN YANKEES by Tim Darnell, has a chapter on black ball in Atlanta (14pages).

The summer/fall 1999 issue of *Silhouettes: The Official Newsletter of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum* was a fifteen page double issue featuring a picture of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Buck O'Neil on the cover. (A quick note here on that issue of *Silhouettes*, just to be a help to a fellow editor. Harry Belafonte (not Belefonte) gained his fame as a singer not an actor. I would suggest the following CD's, all put out by RCA. "Belafonte At Carnegie Hall", "Harry Belafonte: Calypso", and "Harry Belafonte: All Time Greatest Hits Vol. 1". Everybody sing! Down the way, where the nights are gay, and the sun shines daily on a mountain top, I took a trip on a sailing ship, and when I reached Jamacia, I made a stop, But I'm sad to say, I'm on my way, won't be back for many a day, my heart is down, my head is turning around, I had to leave a little girl in Kingston town.)

The Cooperstown Ball Cap Co. has a number of Negro League caps available. **2pgs.

A new book (written in Spanish) about Francisco "Pancho" Coimbre is available. It is \$10.00 (includes shipping and handling.) It can be ordered from Sr. Nelson Garcia, Estancias del Golf Club, calle Enrique Laguerre #733, Ponce, PR 00731-0545.

GLORY DAYS OF SUMMER: THE HISTORY OF BASEBALL IN OKLAHOMA by Bob Burke, Kenny A. Franks, and Royse Parr contains a chapter entitled "Blackball: Oklahomans in the Negro Leagues." The chapters is thirteen pages long.

Hunt Auctions in having its next baseball memorabilia auction on Feb. 18th and 19th. Some Negro League related items are expected to go for as little as \$125.00. If you always wanted a one of a kind Negro League item, here is your chance. The listing of Negro League related items is available for **4pgs.

The following web site is one members with online capabilities might want to check out <http://www.communicue.net/%7Ecomput21/MyStore6/catalog.html> It offers Negro League clothing.

Upcoming Events

Frank Ceresi, head of the National Sports Gallery, located at 601 F Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 2004, (Phone (202) 661-5259; E-mail - fceresi@washsports.com) was kind enough to stop by our editorial offices, located in that thriving metropolis of Florence, KY to give us some information on what their special "History of the Negro Leagues" display case. Why don't you tell us about the display case, Mr. Ceresi. What? Okay, Frank.

"That case is part of a permanent exhibit in our museum and I have constructed it in such a way that I am able to revolve significant Negro League related vintage artifacts two or three times a year within the case so that patrons will always be able to view some fresh and new items."

What do new items do you have for visitors to see, Frank?

"Here are some highlights of the winter/spring exhibit:

The only known single signed "Pop" Lloyd baseball, the only known single signed Josh Gibson baseball, Josh Gibson's 1932 Homestead Grays contract, which interestingly, he broke shortly after signing it when he jumped to the Crawfords, Judy Johnson's Hilldale Daisies jersey from 1923, and a large original panorama of Satchel Paige pitching against the Homestead Grays from the early 1940's. This piece was signed by Satch, Josh Gibson, and about 20 other ballplayers."

Sounds like quite an exhibit.

"None of these items have ever been displayed publicly before!"

Anything else you would like to add, Frank?

"If any of your readers want to have their Negro League "treasures" on display at our museum (on loan for a short time) they can contact me via email, phone or letter. I am always searching for new ideas regarding the special case because I firmly believe it is important to preserve the history of the Negro Leagues and inform the public about those great players. In fact, I have joined with the Smithsonian Institution for a special jointly sponsored educational tour and we highlight the Negro League area to thousands of school age children each year."

Thanks for the info, Frank. Readers should remember when they go to see this exhibit that the first Negro League exhibit shown at the National Sports Gallery was put designed by the NLC's very Jeff Eastland.

NLC member Larry Hogan's exhibit "Before You Can Say Jackie Robinson" was part of the grand opening of the International Scholar-Athlete Hall of Fame at The Feinstein Building located at 3045 Kingston Road, Kingston, RI 02881, on Jan. 13, 2000. The exhibit will be there for several months.

NLC CON 2000

As was reported in a previous issue of *The Negro Leagues Courier*, NLC conference this will once again be held in Harrisburg, PA. The conference dates are August 3-6 and will be held at the Harrisburg Hilton & Towers with a room price of \$75 a night. Penn State University has signed as a partner. Marianne DiMatteo will be coordinating while Simon Bronner will provide academic guidance.

Research presentations will be held on the 4th and 5th.

Watch this space for more information in the future.

Deaths In 1999

Last year saw the deaths of 30 (known of at press time) former Negro League players and owners. They were: Alan Pollock, son of Indianapolis Clowns owner Syd Pollock, January 10 at 56; Earl Thomas McMillan in Chicago on January 28 at the age of 98; George Brown on February, 3; John W. Brown in Detroit on March 5; Gene Benson on April 5 in Philadelphia at the age of 85; Wallace Guthrie in Paris, Tennessee on April 7 at the age of 77; Sam Barber in Birmingham on April 18 at the age of 79; Bill Owens in Indianapolis on May 5 at the age of 98; Robert Taylor in Binghamton, NY on May 16 at the age of 82; Hudson Baker in Philadelphia on May 21; George Wilson on June 19; George Smith on June 25; Henry Kimbro in Nashville on July 11 at the age of 87; Josh Johnson in Springfield, IL on August 12 at the age of 86; Bob Bissant in New Orleans on August 17; Albert Frazier in Jacksonville, FL on August 18 at the age of 84; Nap Gulley in Skokie, IL on August 21; Fran Mathews in Los Angeles on August 24; Lonnie Summers in Los Angeles on August 24; Dave Pope in Cleveland on August 28; Edward Charles Dimes, the last surviving member of the Dayton Marcos and Akron Black Tyrites, in Cleveland, OH on September 28 at the age of 95; Frank Duncan III in Detroit on October 2 at the age of 78; James Benton in Renton, WA on October 17; Jehosie Heard in Birmingham on November 18; Gene Baker in Davenport, IA on December 1 at the age of 74; Freddie D. Shepard, SR. in Birmingham on December 5 at the age of 83; Rufus Lewis in Detroit on December 17 at the age of 80. Those that passed but we have no date on were Lorenzo Cabrera, Jose Piloto, who died in a homeless shelter in Washington, D.C., and Johnny Washington who died in Chicago.