

The Negro Leagues Courier

The newsletter of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

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

June 2002

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** Denotes items available for SASE from Committee Co-Chairman
Dick Clark - Please affix enough postage (usually 1 stamp/4 pages)

The Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues Committee Conference V

Where: Memphis, TN

When: July 18-20, 2002

Hosts: The National Pastime: Museum of Minor League Baseball
The Memphis Redbirds (St. Louis Cardinals, AAA, PCL)
The National Civil Rights Museum

Conference registration fee is \$95.00 with special discounts for students. Fees include all sessions, transportation to and from sites, nightly hospitality suite, lunch on Friday and Saturday, ball game tickets and conference goody bags. Registration can be sent to: Dave Chase, Executive Director, The National Pastime, 175 Toyota Plaza, Suite 300, Memphis, TN 38133

The headquarters hotel will be the Memphis Radisson, located at 185 Union Avenue, across the street from AutoZone Park and a short 2-block walk to Beale Street. The room rate will be \$92 a night and reservations can be made by calling 1-901-528-1800.

Research presentations will be presented on Friday, July 19, and Saturday, July 20. Those interested in presenting should contact Dave Chase at (on weekdays) dchase@memphisredbirds.com or (weekends) dchase@midsouth.rr.com.

They will be vendor space available; no charge for tables, but 15% of gross sales. If interested in a table, contact Dave.

As mentioned in an earlier issue of *The Courier*, there has been, according to the schedule of events currently in our possession, time set aside for seeing the sites of Memphis. The question is, and I can hear you asking yourselves right now, what sites should I see? Well, ponder that question no longer! From the pages of *Tennessee: The Official 2002 Vacation Guide*, a guide to all the sights worth seeing in Memphis is available. **6pgs.

Larry Lester reports Memphis Radisson Hotel at 185 Union Avenue has conference listed under Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference under date of July 17th not 18th but name of event for reservations is important

Contributors

They say a man cannot achieve greatness without the help of others. In this case, those others are: Dave Anderson, Todd Bolton, Dave Chase, Dick Clark, Barry Evans, Larry Hogan, Denver

Howard, Reed Howard, Signe Knutson, Neil Lanctot, Larry Lester, Jerry Malloy, Gary Maurer, Dick Miller, Rick Morris, Bob Peterson, Mike Stivers, Wayne Stivers, Gregg Truitt and Lyle Wislon.

Member and Reader Updates

Larry Lester, our illustrious Co-Chair has been listed in the "Spirit of SABR Salute" that appears in *The SABR Bulletin*. Those listed are recognized as "SABR members who, on their own initiative, or on request, have assisted other members in their research projects". As I mention in our last issue, I found Dick Clark's inclusion in that list very curious. Now with Mr. Lester's appearance in it, all I have to say is things are getting very suspicious.

Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we must report the deaths of a number of Negro League players since our last issue.

Former Baltimore Elite Giant Joe Black died on May 17th in Scottsdale, Arizona, of cancer at the age of 78. It will be remembered that Joe played with the Brooklyn Dodgers in the 1950's where he became the first African American to win a World Series game (1952). He then went on to play for the Cincinnati Reds and the Washington Senators. Obits **1pg THE RECORD (Hackensack, NJ) 5/18/02 & **1pg THE NEW YORK TIMES 5/18/02

Jim "Fireball" Cohen, a pitcher for Indianapolis Clowns from 1948 to 1952 died on April 23rd in Washington, D.C. Funeral program and 2 obits available. **5pgs.

Maurice Wiggins, a shortstop for the 1932 Gilkerson Union Giants, died on March 23rd in Chicago, Illinois, at the age of 92. 4 obits available **4pgs.

Russell Awkard, an outfielder for the Newark Eagles and the New York Black Yankees in 1940-1941, died on April 1st, in Louisville, Kentucky at the age of 85. Funeral program and obits available for **8pgs.

Quincy O. Smith, an outfielder for the Cleveland Buckeyes and the Birmingham Black Barons from 1943-1946 died January 18th in Terre Haute, Indiana. 2 obits available **4pgs.

Tom L. Tombleston, formerly with the Atlanta Black Crackers, died on March 17th at the age of 85. Obit available **2pgs.

Rufus McNeal, a pitcher and outfielder for the Indianapolis Clowns from 1953-1955, died March 22nd at the age of 69. Obit available *1pg.

James "Pee Wee" Jenkins, a pitcher who played for the Cincinnati-Indianapolis Clowns, New York Cubans, Birmingham Black Barons, and the Indianapolis Clowns in career that lasted from 1944 until 1954 died on April 23rd.

William "Bobby" Robinson, a third baseman and shortstop from 1925-1942 for such teams as the Detroit Stars, the Memphis Red Sox, the Chicago American Giants, and a host of other, passed away on May 17th.

We have just recently learned that George Gray, who played with Chicago American Giants and Kansas City Monarchs in the 1950's, passed away last year.

Negro League Related Articles

"Pioneer With A Pen A Fighter For Equality" about Sam Lacy from the *New York Post* of 2/24/02 is available **1pg.

"Negro League Star's Grave Found Unmarked: Clinton Township to Mark Stearnes' Grave With Hall of Fame Plaque" from *The Detroit News* website is available **2pgs. Just for the record, the fact that Stearnes grave was unmarked was reported two years ago in BLACK BASEBALL IN DETROIT by a group of individuals named Lester, Clark, and Miller. Stew Thornley informed the reporter that wrote the article that he had first received the information from Mr. Clark but no mention of it appeared in the article. An official *Courier* hats off to Stew Thornley for that truly grand gesture.

"Diamond Kings", a series of short bios of various Negro League players (and teams) is something we have been offering in the past few newsletters. I have no idea where they come from but we have a few more. Each one is available *1pg. The offerings this time around are: Pop Lloyd, Cool Papa Bell, Bullet Rogan, the Kansas City Monarchs, and Judy Johnson.

"An Eternal Gesture Will Get An Enduring Honor" from the *Austin American*, which talks of plans for a Jackie Robinson and Pee Wee Reese statue that will stand next to the Brooklyn Cyclones ballpark, is available. *1pg.

The latest happenings in the life of Buck O'Neil are available in three different articles. **3pgs.

Denver Howard passed along his article from The Waynedale News, 5/15/2002 **1pg "That's The Way I Saw It!"

"Foul Ball" on Cuban Historian Severo Nieto by Matt Welch from reasonline web site **8pp.

"League Park Fans Have Dreams for Famed Field" from the Cleveland Plain Dealer of 2/10/02. **3pgs.

Recent Events

The 2002 Smokey Joe Williams Scholarship Banquet took place at the Seguin-Guadalupe County Coliseum on April 6 with Buck O'Neil as the guest speaker. We have several items including a program from the event and several articles. The whole group is available for **6pgs.

On April 24, Jackie Robinson was enshrined in the Ford Freedom Rotunda in the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit. *1pg.

On June 1, the city of Paterson, New Jersey honored Larry Doby. More info as it becomes available.

On April 13, Sprint renamed some of the buildings in their World Headquarters Campus in Kansas after prominent individuals from Missouri and Kansas. One of the individuals chosen was Satchel Paige. **2pgs.

The Milwaukee Brewers held their annual Walls of Honor inductions March 16 with Gordon Hopkins and Jessie Mitchell being inducted.

Upcoming Events

SABR32, 26-30 June 2002

Just a few last minute notes for those of you that will be making their way to Beantown for the upcoming SABR convention. It appears that Mr. Clark and Mr. Lester will both be in attendance. In addition the Negro Leagues Committee meeting will be held on the morning of Friday, June 28 at 9:00am.

Pop Lloyd Committee Announces Humanitarian Award Recipients

ATLANTIC CITY - The *Tenth Annual Pop Lloyd Weekend Celebration* is scheduled for September 13-15, in Atlantic City. The celebration will honor golf's African American pioneers and pay tribute to Earl Woods, father of Tiger Woods, legendary jazz pianist Dr. Billy Taylor, Negro League star "Buck O'Neil, the New York Mets and local Fire Chief, Marvin Beatty.

The John Henry "Pop" Lloyd Committee plans the weekend's event as part of its mission to perpetuate the legacy of National Baseball Hall of Fame great, John Henry "Pop" Lloyd, all those who played Negro League baseball, and the culture in which the game was played.

Pete McDaniel, Senior Editor of *Golf Digest* will deliver the keynote remarks at the September 14th dinner event to be held at the Taj Mahal Hotel Casino. McDaniel is the author of *Uneven Lies: the Heroic story of African Americans in Golf*.

In addition to the awards dinner, the weekend events include honoring Negro League veterans during *Turn Back The Clock Night* at the Surf Sandcastle on September 13th and *Atlantic City Salutes Pop Lloyd* at Pop Lloyd Stadium on September 15th.

Award Recipients Vary In Distinction

Earl Woods joined his famous son in establishing the Tiger Woods Foundation in 1996, and today serves as its president. To date the Foundation with \$500,00 of seed money from his son has raised more than \$2 million to carry out its mission. "To empower young people to reach their highest potential by initiating and supporting community based programs to promote the health, education and welfare of all of American children."

Dr. Billy Taylor, jazz pianist, composer, arranger, conductor, author and educator, hosts National Public Radio's 26 part series *Billy Taylor's Jazz at the Kennedy Center*. His distinguished achievements include serving as arts correspondent for CBS News *Sunday Morning*, hosting several television and radio programs, touring extensively with his own group. Dr. Taylor founded the *Jazzmobile* to bring free performances to thousands of people across American. His honors include appointment as one of three jazz musicians to the National Council of the Arts.

John "Buck" O'Neil, who played for several Negro League teams in the course of a long career, led the Negro National League in batting in 1946, managed the Kansas City Monarchs from 1948 to 1955, winning five pennants and two Negro league World Series. In 1962 he became the Major League's first black coach with the Chicago Cubs. Millions of Americans enjoyed his fatherly reminiscence in Ken Burns' popular television documentary on baseball.

In 1962 Willie Mays signs baseball's richest contract for \$90,000. Jackie Robinson is inducted to the Baseball Hall of Fame, Wilt Chamberlain scores 100 points in a game and the New York Mets join the National League bringing baseball back to New York after the departure of the NY Giants and Brooklyn Dodgers in 1957. They were the "Miracle Mets" in 1969 winning their first World Series and again in 1986. Throughout the club's history, the Mets organization has been a strong supporter in recognizing veteran Negro Leaguers for their contribution to our National Pastime.

Marvin Beatty, a native of Atlantic City, served as a Naval Officer during World War II and later as the first African American Deputy Chief of the Atlantic City Fire Department. Among his many accomplishments, Beatty has assisted children from other countries by providing them much needed educational material and supplies. His humanitarian efforts have served to bring light where there is darkness and hope where people are low in spirits.

Previous Award Recipients

In receiving the *Lloyd Humanitarian Award*, this year's honorees join a distinguished list of previous recipients headed by tennis star Arthur Ashe who garnished the inaugural award in 1993. Past award recipients include baseball greats Willie Mays, Max Manning, Larry Doby, and Monte Irvin. In addition: Olympian Larry James, Rev. Floyd Flake, U.S. Congressman John Lewis, Mayor James Usry, journalists Sam Lacy and Jerry Izenberg, Rens basketball star John Isaacs, photographer/filmmaker Gordon Parks, legendary blues musician David "Honeyboy" Edwards and recording star Dionne Warwick.

The 2002 Judy Johnson Celebration in Wilmington, Delaware is scheduled for August 17th. This year the honoree will be Jackie Robinson.

The Marketplace

Larry Lester was generous enough to make the following offer to anyone who will be at either the SABR Con in Boston, or the NLC conference in Memphis. HyVee stores announced that they will issue 10,000 Buck O'Neil bobble heads at \$10 each. Let me know if anyone is interested in buying them and I will bring them to Boston or Memphis. A one page article about the bobble heads is available **1pg.

SABR/committee members might be interested that fellow members Mark Rucker and Frank Ceresi co authored a book entitled "Baseball in Washington D.C." Recently published by Arcadia Publishing, it is an illustrated history of the National Pastime in the Nation's Capital and contains many images and photos that have never been published before. It is \$19.99 plus shipping. It can be purchased on line through the Arcadia website, through Amazon.com and through Franks website at www.fcassociates.com.

SEASON IN THE SUN: THE STORY OF BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL IN MISSOURI by Roger D. Launius is out and does contain some information on the Kansas City Monarchs.

An Upcoming Auction by Barry Sloate has 11 Negro League items available. Auction is June 6th. Call (718) 855-7513 for details.

Another auction, that ends June 6th, is from Mike Gutierrez (602) 971-8060 for info. It will have a signed Paige/Gibson baseball. Bidding starts at \$5000.

In recent auction sales, a baseball signed by Oscar Charleston sold for \$1659.00 while one signed by Martin Dihigo went for \$991.00.

The latest issue of NINE is out and contains "A Legacy of What Ifs: Horace Stoneham and the Integration of the Giants".

We Make The Call

Book Review from Dick Clark

I recently finished reading another Robert C. Cottrell book and highly recommend it to everyone. BLACKBALL, THE BLACK SOX AND THE BABE: Baseball's Crucial 1920 Season. It is \$29.95 from McFarland Publishing. 331 pages, with index, photos, and extensive notes on each chapter. I really like the way that Cottrell has done his research and put it out for all to see. He does an excellent job weaving together the big events of that year. Separate chapters on "Jim Crow Baseball", "In The Eye Of The Storm" and "A Season Of Courage: Rube Foster And A League Of His Own," are highlights for Negro Leagues enthusiast. These chapters are very well done but so is the entire book as it brings this critical year to light.

Since it is not exclusively on the Negro Leagues it receives a Triple on our rating scale.

On The Web

Go to (www.pitchblackbaseball.com) for information on Double Duty Radcliffe's big birthday bash in Chicago, which is planned for Saturday, July 6th. He will be 100 years young.(God willing)

John Holway has joined baseballguru.com His latest piece "Hats Off To Bill James' Negro Leaguers 100 Best List" and a short bio are available. **7pgs.

The Final Pitch

It seems that Signe Knutson has decided to play along with Dick Clark and me in our version of Name That Tune. For those of you that do not remember Dick and I are seeing who can find the funniest or most out of the ordinary mistake in the box scores we are using as part of the NLRAG project. The loser, as was mentioned in the last issue of *The Courier*, has to sing "I am a Little Teapot" at the first NLC conference after the end of the project. Since Signe has joined our little competition it appears that at some future NLC conference, there will be a duet sung. Signe reported that she had found a game from 1921 that pitted the Chicago American Giants against the Kansas City Monarchs that might be a winner. Sam Crawford is credited with seven and two thirds innings pitched in that game but does not appear in the line-up.

I have to admit I was a little worried there for a while but since the game was to go on until the end of the stats project, I figured I still had a chance to find a winner in the other years I would be working on. Little did I know it would be so soon.

According to the Chicago Defender of 26 June 1937, Clarence Lamar, in the 2nd game of a doubleheader against the Kansas City Monarchs, came to bat 63 times.

If Signe and Dick would like to go ahead and admit defeat, Memphis would be a great place for a sing along.

Sammy J. Miller