

@ SABR - NEGRO LEAGUES COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER
February 1996

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CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Happy New Year to everyone. With February being Black History Month please pay extra attention to your local area's events and newspaper articles for sharing with other newsletter readers.

Special birthday wishes to Bill Cash on February 21st and Monte Irvin on the 25th. Both will celebrate their 77th.

March 5, 1996 is an important date for the NLC as we see if our candidate Smokey Joe Williams is selected for The Hall of Fame. Williams was voted upon by the readers of this newsletter as the overwhelming choice for the next selection to the Hall. We wish Monte Irvin and Buck O'Neil the best in convincing their fellow Veterans Committee members to add another deserving Negro Leaguer to the rolls.

We have the following address changes, etc. (should have a new NLC address list next time)

Luis Alvelo's new address is Calle Comerio #10, Bonneville Heights, Caguas, PR 00725.

David Kemp's address is 1214 S. Norton, Sioux Falls, SD 57105.

Email for Adrian Burgos is aburgos@umich.com

Paul Bauer of Archer's Used & Rare Books is archers@genie.com

SABR office is sabrjohn@aol.com

Todd Bolton is tphbolton@aol.com His Fax is (301) 824-4721.

Steve Bennett can be reached at either orestesm@aol.com or crosgriff@aol.com

Paul Debono has a Fax (317) 266-8705

This newsletter reflects the worthy contributions of the following: Luis Alvelo, Davis Barker, Carlos Bauer, Mark Bernstein, Todd Bolton, Paul Debono, James Floto, Larry Gerlach, John Haddock, Leslie Heaphy, Larry Hogan, John Holway, Monte Irvin, Merl Kleinknecht, Neil Lanctot, Joe Lee, Larry Lester, Jerry Malloy, Gary Maurer, Andy McCue, Barry Mednick, Nicki Nielsen, Tom Owens, Patricia Palmer, Jim Passannante, Bob Peterson, Thomas Pfundstein, Bob Potts, Dave Riggs, Jim Riley, Jay Sanford, Ray Schmidt, Stephen Schott, Joe Simenic, Brad Sullivan, Dean Sullivan, Gregg Truitt, Eduardo Valero, Lyle Wilson, and John Zajc.

NEGRO LEAGUERS AND THE HALL OF FAME

We'll await the decision made on March 5, 1996 in Florida and pray we will fill one of the four remaining slots currently available for Negro Leaguers. If the NLC choice, Joe Williams, joins we will have another election among all readers for next year's pick. We may also start the campaign to lengthen the 5 year period to elect Negro Leaguers.

NEGRO LEAGUES COMMITTEE PUBLICATION

Robert Peterson and James Passannante passed along an obit on a Skinner Belfield. Another mystery player? This time Larry Lester was able to get with relatives and find that this person is the ? Skinner the NLC book has as a 5' 2" catcher for the 1948 Newark Eagles. So always pass along any obit you see perhaps it is a true player and not a pretender. We also had contact with James Carter whom we had as Bill Carter and ? Mincey turns out to be Purnell Mincey, still going strong in New Jersey. We are looking for info on a Major Nelson a player? with the Newark Eagles. Also, remember the league standings we still help with.

SPECIAL EVENTS

On December 1, 1995 the 2nd Annual Negro Baseball League Celebrations were held, in New York City. Awards were presented to Joe Black for Lifetime Achievement; Satchel Paige Award to Benjamin Wagner; Cool Papa Bell to Monte Irvin; Rube Foster to Willie Randolph; Josh Gibson to Ozzie Smith; Cum Posey to Mal Goode (his daughter accepted). Finally, the Chairman's Appreciation Award as Keeper of The Flame to Larry Lester, a well deserved topper to the evening. We have a **2pp All Star Line-up listing and **20pp copy of the program.

Among upcoming Special Events: The Western Heritage Museum in Los Angeles will be having a PCL Exhibit and during February will highlight Black participation on the West Coast. Call (213) 667-2000 for more details.

A Press Conference on February 13, 1996 at the All-Star Cafe in New York City to announce the commemorative Wheaties Box on the Negro Leagues. Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige and Cool Papa Bell are featured, on the front with write-ups on the back and a \$7.95 hat offer. Thanks to Larry Lester for the work in supplying the information. My sincere thanks to Jim Passannanate, who lives in New Jersey where the boxes have already shown up and has sent me one.

March 15-17, 1996 Daytona Beach, FL; Breaking Baseball's Color Line: Jackie Robinson and fifty years of integration; keynote speaker Jules Tygiel.

Gregg Truitt reports that the Wilmington Blue Rocks will have a Negro Leagues Night, probably in July or August.

John Holway is spearheading efforts to have a major Negro Leagues presence at the SABR Convention, June 6 to 9, 1996 in Kansas City. He is working to have a large role in the publication, presentations and panels. Plan to get your research presented in some venue.

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The winter months have not been kind to our veterans as 8 have passed on. Hipolito Arenas (Torrento) died 12/29/95 in Tampa, FL at 88 TAMPA TRIBUNE 12/30/95 **1pg; Skinner Belfield in Newark, NJ at 75 **1pg; Garnett Blair January 12th in Richmond, VA at 74. SCD **1pg & RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH 1/14/96 **1pg; William Lee Brisker 84 in Tampa, FL on 1/12/96. THE PLAIN DEALER 1/14/96 **1pg; Billy Bruton died 12/5/95 in Marshalltown, DE. WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL 12/6/95 **1pg, NEW YORK TIMES 12/8/95 **1pg, SCD **1pg. Carl J. Dent on January 22, 1996 at 58; Rick Laurent died 11/21/95 in New Orleans at 93, SCD **1pg. Taylor Smith also passed.

"Ted Williams HOF adds five sluggers to its roster Feb. 27th," **1pg Josh Gibson joins the ranks.

Larry Lester's latest list of Negro Baseball League Reference Books. **3pp.

Major League Baseball Photo Rates (wow) **8pp.

Carlos Bauer (Minor League Committee Chair) informs me that a third edition of the Mexican Encyclopedia is coming this spring. He hopes to have a correct address and price for us later.

Anyone who would like a copy of the October 8, 1995 Pop Lloyd Program please write to Larry Hogan 20 Rainier Rd. Fanwood, NJ 07023.

Please see the excellent wording in the January, 1996 SABR BULLETIN on the Ribowsky book **1pg.

I saw a recent ad for a Rube Foster typed letter signed by the man for \$12,000 (not a misprint).

SABRite Richard Miller of SCD writing on the Total Baseball segment of Interchange: on the NLC and Robowsky books. **1pg.

Sam Hairston is a member of the Colorado Springs Sky Sox Hall of Fame.

Neil Lancot will have a larger review of Ribowsky's book in an upcoming JOURNAL OF SPORT HISTORY.

The 1996 RBI Tournament will be in Cleveland.

**1pg listing of Web Sites.

Buck Leonard is now the oldest living Hall of Famer at 88 years of age.

Thanks to Brad Sullivan for passing along a copy of RECORDS IN THE SAND on the 1945 Cleveland Buckeyes, done by Classic Teleproductions. It is a very well done video blending together limited film footage with some new stuff, making it seem like actual games. Many players are featured as speakers along with our own Todd Bolton, Merl Kleinknecht and Larry Lester. This copy is available for loan (until we find out how to get copies for the public) from me. Call (313) 487-5273 5:30-10:30 PM EST.

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS, continued

Millito Navarro recently celebrated his 90th birthday.

Call for papers....Eighth Cooperstown Symposium in Baseball and American Culture, June 12-14, 1996 in Cooperstown, NY. Call Alvin Hall at (334) 983-6556 EX 390 for more details or myself.

The December, 1995 issue of THE DIAMOND ANGLE is one all NLC members should get. Jim Floto's 6 page profile of Leon Day; also Negro Leaguers in the Caribbean; Sam Lacy; Season in Paradise (1937 Trujillo). Write to THE DIAMOND ANGLE PO Box 409 Kaunakakai, HI 96748, 32 page issue \$3.

Our sincere congratulations to Jim Riley for accepting the job as Research Director for the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. Let's hope Jim can be a positive influence in revitalizing interest in the NLBM.

NEGRO LEAGUE RELATED ARTICLES

"African-American Baseballists and the Denver Post Tournament," by Jay Sanford from COLORADO HERITAGE MAGAZINE **15pp.

"The sound of the bat is always the same," MARLIN (TX) DEMOCRAT, **1pg.

"When Black Ball Reigned Supreme." 2/15/95 THE PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY, profiles of the Philly Star 7 **4pp

**1pg FLORIDA SENTINAL-BULLETIN 1/9/96 "Former Negro Leaguer makes plea for return of papers" Ralph Johnson.

CHOICE, January, 1996 **1pg short reviews of Sol White. & Fleet Walker.... books.

"A salute to Artie," (Artie Wilson) **2pp.

CHICAGO SUN TIMES 11/19/95 travel section "Kansas City hits a home run with visitors," **2pp.

SCD 2/2/96 "Joe Spencer" **1pg

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE **1pg "Author's deal: buy a book and be in movie," (Double Duty book).

PITCH WEEKLY (KC) Nov. 2-8, 1995, "The ship's still sailing," **1pg.

JET, 11/20/95, "Surviving Negro Leaguers Celebrate, Black Baseball's 75th Anniversary," **1pg.

SCD 1/19/96 John Bissant **1pg

SCD 12/29/95 Rudolfo Fernandez **2pp.

SCD 1/5/96 "A line-up of Hofers wows San Mateo" **1pg

and "Rhode Island's Hall of Fame Classic" **1pg (Radcliffe & Lockett)

SUNDAY STAR-LEDGER 11/12/95, "Pitching the flashy side of baseball," **2pp.

USA TODAY BASEBALL WEEKLY 12/27/95 to 1/2/96 "A diamond life" (Buck O'Neil) **1pg. Also, **1pg perspective, "Barnstorming teams had few name players." and **1pg response by Larry Lester.

SCD 12/22/95 Milfred "Rick" Laurent **2pp

SCD 1/12/96 Warren Peace (my favorite name for a Negro Leaguer) **2pp.

"Meet Walter Johnson, Berea man caught in Negro Leagues" **2pp.

CURRENT AND FUTURE INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Frank Keetz of 1556 Lexington Pky. Niskayuna, NY 12309 (518) 377-5058 is seeking the whereabouts of George "Chappie" Johnson for the following years; 1915, 1916, 1918, and 1920. He is also researching his birthdate. Current records show Johnson was born between 1870 and 1875 in Bellaire, Ohio. Frank would appreciate any information on this great catcher, especially the early years.

Barry Mednick is doing a bio of Barney Serrell. If you have any pertinent info call him at (415) 579-4874 or email barrym@informix.com

There are some players who seek collaborations for their bios. Contact me if you might want to get together with a player.

"Baseball film to step up to bat _____ with major star hitter," THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL 1/18/96 about Blue City Baseball long awaited film about the Memphis Red Sox. **1pg Samuel L. Jackson will narrate.

Tom Owens is finishing work on a book GREAT CATCHERS with Negro Leaguers included.

CURRENT AND FUTURE INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS, continued

Thomas Pfundstein is a graduate student at John Carroll University. He is writing his MA Thesis on The Negro Baseball League in Cleveland.

Mark Bernstein, of Hoyle, Morris & Kerr One Liberty Place 1650 Market St. Suite 4900 Philadelphia, PA 19103 is seeking advice/info on exact locations of Penmar Park and Passon Field. He wants to petition authorities to erect a marker at the sites.

Lyle Wilson is finishing up a short book on the African-American teams that played in and around Seattle 1911-51. He also seeks any info with regard to games played by the Chicago American Giants in the states of Washington or Oregon between 1910-16. Please contact Lyle at 15704 Millcreek Blvd. #7 Mill Creek, WA 98012 (206) 742-9100.

Nicki Nielsen plans to research Satchel Paige's trip to Alaska in the Summer of 1965. If you have anything contact her at 4938 Mills Dr. Anchorage, AK 99508.

Troy Soos 93 Jackson St. Cambridge, MA 02140 (617) 868-7169, email troysoos@aol.com seeks info on any Black Baseball in New England prior to 1920 and the Boston Resolute team.

Larry Gerlach, email larry.gerlach@m.cc.utah.edu is collecting data on Eddie Klep, anyone with anything beyond the norm please contact Larry or me.

Jeffrey Anderson 11 Sequoia Court Marlton, NJ 08053 seeks info on the Riverton-Palmyra Athletics of New Jersey.

Seamus Kearney recently finished his research on Bill Thompson, a Negro who played in the 1911 Twin State League of Vermont & New Hampshire. (organized baseball).

Ray Schmidt and Jerry Malloy are working on early Black Baseball in Chicago up to 1920. When everything is gathered this should be fabulous work coming from these two experts.

THE MARKETPLACE

I'm pleased to announce that Monte Irvin's autobiography in collaboration with Jim Riley NICE GUYS FINISH FIRST is available, now. 268 pages 23 pictures, indexed, for \$22. There is no doubt this will be a winner.

Long-time columnist Charlie Tiano has written 120 YEARS OF BASEBALL IN NEW YORK'S HUDSON VALLEY. 136 pages, indexed, many pictures. Charlie's observations and experiences are wonderful including playing WITH and against Negro League teams. It's just \$11.95 from Charlie Tiano 116 Ohayo Mt. Rd. Woodstock, NY 12498.

African-American Sports Greats: A Biographical Dictionary by David L. Porter, 480pp 27 photos, index \$59.95 by Greenwood Press. 42 Bios (many Negro Leaguers) on Baseball out of 168 total athletes in 11 sports.

You can write to Friends of Rickwood Field 2100 Morris Ave. Birmingham, AL 35203 (205) 458-8161 to receive a catalog of available merchandise designed to raise funds to save the field.

Dean Sullivan will soon have out his second in a series called MIDDLE INNINGS: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF BASEBALL 1900-1948. A terrific companion to EARLY INNINGS. Currently 15 documents directly deal with Black players or teams. Some examples are Negro National League is Chartered Philadelphia Giants win Black Championship; No-Hitter in Negro World Series and many more. Contact Dean at 3508 Queen Anne Dr. Fairfax, VA 22030 (703) 273-4285 to get a copy of the Table of Contents for a SASE with appropriate postage.

I recently purchased SERIES DEL CARIBE; records and stats of the Caribbean Series since 1949 to 1995. It is \$8 postpaid from Alfonso Araujo Ninos Heroes 412 Poniente, Ciudad Obregon, Sonora MEXICO. \$46 stamp, I received very fast service.

FINAL REMARKS

The last day to file to run for a SABR office is February 15, 1996. Contact Jim Overmyer at (413) 637-3306. evenings. Remember to vote in the election for your favorite candidate.

Our next newsletter will be April's. Please get all material to me before the last week of March.

Dick Clark & Larry Lester
NLC Co-Chairpeople