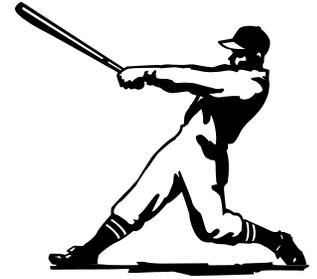




Baseball Lives



Volume IV

Winter

2009—2010

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Words from Mark Armour

In the last newsletter, I wrote that the posting of individual biographies (not part of a book) had slowed in recent months. I am here to report that this is no longer the case--over 60 brand new biographies since the first of August. This is great, and with several dozen recent assignments--not counting all the ongoing team projects -- it is indication that our future is as bright as our past. We posted our 1000th biography in March to some fanfare, but we recently zoomed past 1200 with a bullet.

Looking ahead to 2010, I expect another big year. We have at least one team book that will be published--the 1984 Tigers, led by Mark Pattison and Dave Raglin, due out next summer from McFarland. There are a handful of others that are close to completion, and hopefully to be published in the near future. We have plans for a new members web site--not the place where our biographies reside, but the place where project information (including these newsletters) will reside. Stay tuned.

Before leaving you to the rest of the newsletter, I would like to beat the drum for a couple of other projects. A project like ours, with such a large scope, owes a tremendous debt to two other similarly bold projects, both of which are the work of SABR volunteers. SABR's The Baseball Index (TBI, <http://www.baseballindex.org/>) should be the very first resource you check when you start your biography. Please consider volunteering to help TBI by contacting Andy McCue (agmccue44@earthlink.net). Similarly, most of you rely on Retrosheet every day in doing your research (or just when having fun). If you think you have some time to do some fairly simple data entry, Tom Ruane (tjruane@gmail.com) is heading up an effort to digitize all players' day-by-day records from the 1940s. A very valuable project, and you will feel better helping out.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and will have a rewarding 2010

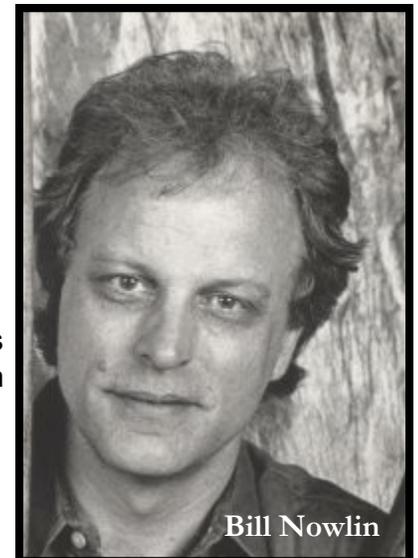
Mark Armour

From the *Baseball Lives* Editor—Mike Cooney

Baseball Lives congratulates Bill Nowlin for completing his 100th biography for the BioProject. (See Bill's article on page 2.) More importantly, **Baseball Lives**, and all members of the BioProject congratulate Bill on his recent Grammy nomination for Best Album Notes - Ed Cray & Bill Nowlin for Woody Guthrie's *My Dusty Road*."

The ceremony for the 52nd annual Grammy Awards will be held on January 31, 2010 at Staples Center in Los Angeles and will be broadcast live on CBS from 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. EST.

Congratulations Bill, and Good Luck.



Bill Nowlin

The Push to 100 and Beyond - - - Bill Nowlin

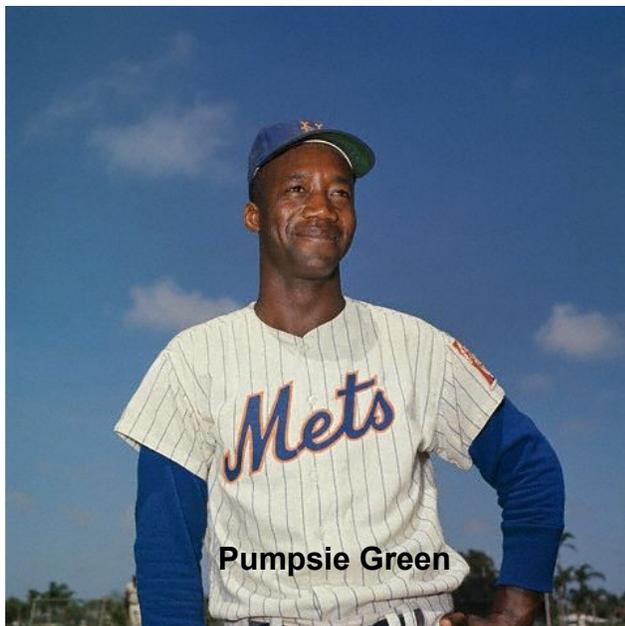
One hundred is a far cry from infinity, but in November I saw how many biographies I had written for BioProject and I saw 100 as a goal. I believe I was at about 72 at the time, and I decided I was going to try and mount a push to get to 100. There was no particular reason for it. I've just always liked to set goals, and reasonably high ones at that. I was never able to knock in 100 runs in a major-league season. I did well in neighborhood ball, but probably couldn't have made my high school baseball team. But I knew I can knock out 100 baseball biographies.

Once I resolved to go for it, I saw Thanksgiving weekend coming up. Everything seems to shut down for most of five days – Wednesday through Sunday – and I wasn't planning on doing any holiday shopping that weekend, so I figured I'd see how many I could write over the weekend. I started cranking out one a day, and then I decided to keep the ball rolling (that's not a baseball metaphor – I don't even know where it comes from).

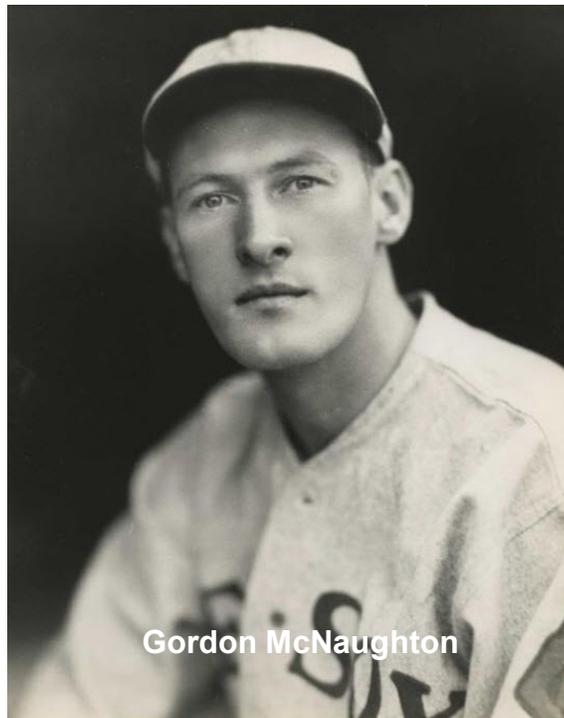
So, starting in late November, I started working at a one bio a day pace. A bio a day keeps the doctor away, apparently. I haven't had to go to the doctor since! I had fun scheduling which biographies I took on. Number 93 was **Skinny Graham** and #94 was **Fats Fothergill**. When esteemed chair Mark Armour announced the posting of this pair, he declared, "They truly represent the big and small of our project."

Number 95 was **Max "Camera Eye" Bishop** and #96 was **Moose Solters**, who was struck in the left temple by a baseball during pregame practice at Griffith Stadium. His eyesight began to deteriorate and several years later he was completely blind. Solters never saw his youngest son.

Number 98 was **Andrea Ettore Spognardi**, one of only 16 Red Sox players who were actually born in the City of Boston. He played in 17 games in 1932, but then decided to become a doctor. Number 99 was another Italian, **Joe Giannini**, who had a career .500 average but only appeared in one game - for the 1911 Red Sox. As far as we can tell, despite working in a San Francisco bank, Joe was not related to Bank of America founder Amadeo Giannini.



Pumpsie Green



Gordon McNaughton

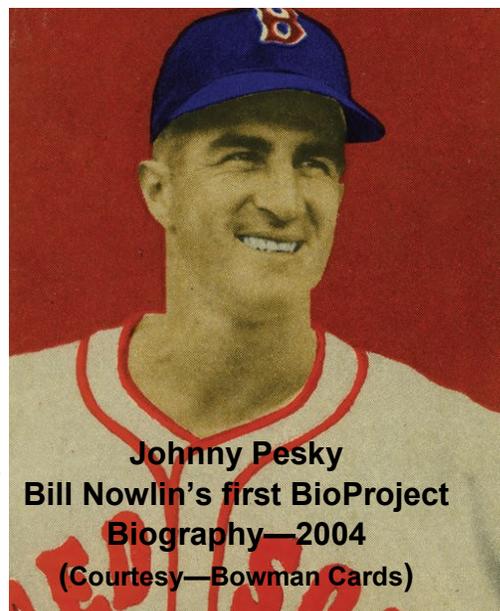
Bio #100 was submitted on December 15. It featured **Gordon McNaughton**, who threw 21 innings for the Boston Red Sox in 1932 (0-1, despite giving up 21 hits in those 21 innings and walking 22 batters as well, hitting three more). McNaughton's biggest claim to fame was being shot to death in a Chicago hotel room in 1942 by "dice girl" Eleanor Williams, who had used a pistol she'd taken from the policeman named Barney (Towey, not Fife) she had spent the night with. The policeman was dismissed from the force and committed suicide.

It's not like I was going to stop once I hit 100. I sent in #101 the next day: **Pumpsie Green**, whittled down of a far longer 21,777-word biography I had written for a projected book. **Earl Webb** was #102 and that went in on the 17th. It was like a day off not to feel compelled to do one a day any more.

The Push to 100 and Beyond - - - Bill Nowlin (Continued)

I don't know where I will be by the time this newsletter hits the In Boxes of committee members. Before I hit #100, I'd already decided on my next goal. I may slack off on the pace a bit, but I'm going to target sometime in 2011 for my next major goal. The new target is 168 biographies. Why I picked that number is a secret for now, but maybe in the next newsletter I will let that secret be revealed. If I can write something close to one a week (I know, I know – slacking off...), I will be within striking distance by the end of 2010. I might actually take a few weeks off, though, here and there.

What's the secret regarding my next goal, biography #168? Here is a contest. The first person who guesses the reason I've selected 168 will win a swell prize. Everyone is eligible, except Maury Bouchard. Write me with your guesses (bnowlin@rounder.com). (Just to keep it on the up-and-up, copy newsletter editor Mike Cooney, (mwc2002@hotmail.com) too, - after all, you might want to make sure I'm playing by my own rules.)



Johnny Pesky
Bill Nowlin's first BioProject
Biography—2004
(Courtesy—Bowman Cards)



Roland Hemond
Bill Nowlin's Second
BioProject Biography—2006

Most of these I wrote either because I enjoyed them, or needed to complete an extra biography or two for one of our "team books." There are many volunteers within SABR who have done far more work than I at one project or another. I don't know how many bios Jan Finkel or Mark Armour may have written, but I do know that one of our more active editors in the last couple of years has been Len Levin. He has edited well over 100 biographies for BioProject. Len has **also** served as associate editor on several of the Red Sox team books (reading every biography in some of the books), as well as the 1969 Mets book, and is hard at work editing all the bios for the forthcoming 1947 Brooklyn Dodgers book.

Bill Nowlin

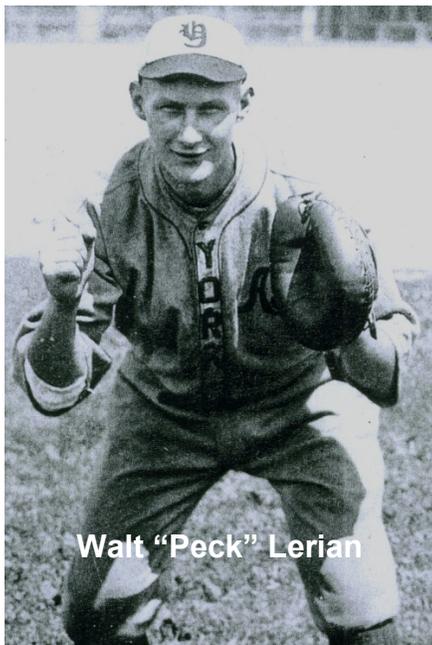
BioProject Editors

BioProject Editors spend hours and hours reading and editing biographies submitted for the BioProject. While we salute the author of each biography, we also need to recognize the selfless efforts of the following editors. (Note: Apologies in advance for anyone I missed.) - Editor's names are in alphabetical order.

Mark Armour	Stan Bard	Charlie Bevis	Jim Charlton	Paul Colbert
Lenore Collins	Warren Corbett	Rory Costello	Josh Davlin	Dan Desrochers
Merrie Fidler	Jan Finkel	Barbara Flanagan	Irv Goldfarb	Tom Hawthorn
Tom Heinlein	John Herson	Chuck Hilty	Fred Ivor-Campbell	Douglas Jacobs
David Jones	Tom Kern	Tara Krieger	Craig Lammers	Len Levin
David Lippman	Dean Lollis	Norman Macht	Jeanne Mallett	Rod Nelson
Bill Nowlin	Mark Pattison	Joe Pryweller	Tom Rowe	Jim Sandoval
Tom Simon	Trey Strecker	Andy Sturgill	Cecilia Tan	
Megan Tichinel	Jack Zerby	Andrew Zinner	Don Zminda	

Walt “Peck” Lerian by T. Scott Brandon

In 1996, I began researching the lives and careers of players whose career ended “Through No Fault Of Their Own.” Bob Davids Chapter president Bruce Brown suggested the acronym “TNFOTO” to help me quickly describe my research project. I began my TNFOTO hunt by searching the Web, ordering papers on microfilm, contacting the Hall of Fame, and consulting my personal research library. Of the 100+ players, managers, coaches and umpires I identified, one stood out: Walt “Peck” Lerian. Where several of my subject files included hundreds of pages of material, Lerian’s file had only an obituary, his statistical page, four photocopied articles from his Hall of Fame file, and a picture photocopied from an old Sporting News guide.



Walt “Peck” Lerian

In 2003 I placed my other research on hold and began to conduct a more thorough search for information on this mysterious ballplayer. I located his name in an early census record, giving me his mother’s name, along with his two brothers. I knew that he was born in, and died in Baltimore, so I contacted the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore—a resource available via phone at (410) 396-5430 that **every** researcher hunting for Maryland-based information should take advantage of—where I learned about the details of Lerian’s minor league career and death.

Ron Henry had provided me with information about Lerian’s minor league career—something that was not available on the Web at the time, so I started calling small, rural libraries near some of his minor league stops (Waynesboro, Ephrata, and York, PA). Each graciously offered data, in some cases sending hard-to-find local books through Inter-Library Loan (ILL).

At this point I had a rather complete career log (including semi-pro and industrial league data), but still knew very little about Lerian the man. From what I had learned of him, he was a good player, but an even better person, and I wanted to be able to paint a full picture of my chosen sub-

ject. Because Lerian is a relatively uncommon family name, I decided to search for any living Lerians, using the Switchboard website (www.switchboard.com), hoping that at least one living Lerian may be related to “my” Lerian. My search yielded many results scattered across the country, the most promising of which was a Walter Lerian living in Florida.

I called the number provided and spoke with Mrs. Lerian, who informed me that her husband, Walter, was out, but was indeed related to my subject. Within hours, Walter returned my call and regaled me with family tales about his uncle Walt. He also directed me to Dr. Jack Lerian, in California, who is the family historian. Dr. Lerian and his wife were more than gracious, providing me with recorded family interviews, and a full copy of a scrapbook detailing Lerian’s career. The interviews and scrapbook contained information on Lerian’s professional basketball career, his catching innovations, and his status in the community as an exemplary Catholic gentleman, none of which I would have discovered were it not for the family.

After collaborating with the Lerians for nearly five years, including countless telephone conversations, email and even a wonderful visit in Puerto Vallarta, Dr. Lerian published his family history (available at www.henrylerian.com), and I published a condensed version of Walt Lerian’s biography for The National Pastime and Bio Project. Perhaps even more importantly, I now have dear friends who I would not have met, were it not for picking up the phone to research my player.

T Scott Brandon

Researching players whose career ended "Through No Fault Of Their Own" (TNFOTO) since 1996

From the Notebook of Jan Finkel

What an extraordinary year it's been—plenty of highs and one horrendous low.

The low, of course, was the tragic death of Fred Ivor-Campbell and the excruciating injuries inflicted on his wife Alma, whose courage and grace are nothing less than inspirational. I think of Alma and Fred as the slightly older sister and brother I never had. Their good sense, good will, and good humor always make me smile and keep me from doing something rash. And they knew how to enjoy a ballgame!



Oddly, as much of an inspiration and influence as Fred was to so many of us, we have only one bio from him on the website. It's of F. C. Lane, and it's wonderful reading, so typical of Fred's clean, lucid, flowing prose.

A highlight for Judy and me was the world cruise we took between January and May. I'd had misgivings about missing a chapter meeting, Spring Training, and the like, but I found that baseball's never too far away. In Papeete, Tahiti, we met a transplanted Brit named Lionel Kennedy, who manages a hotel and restaurant on the island. He's a fan of the Dodgers, but his favorite guest is Stan Musial, who stayed there with his family in 1986. Lionel e-mailed me a picture of himself standing beside *The Man* as he demonstrated his unforgettable stance. A few days later I bought the *Athlon* preview in Hong Kong.

The BioProject flourished this year, passing the 1200-mark a week or so ago; it doesn't seem very long ago that I congratulated one of our writers on completing our 500th biography.

We couldn't have reached 12 bios, let alone 1200, without the help of a lot of people. Our writers keep submitting interesting, high-quality work. Our editors strive to get the best work from every writer. Warren Corbett covered ably and willingly for me when we were gone—while completing his outstanding book on Paul Richards. Mike Cooney puts together *Baseball Lives*, always a joy to read. Lyle Spatz coordinates writing assignments. Trey Strecker keeps us current on the nineteenth century; Geri Strecker does the same thing with the Negro leagues. Bill Nowlin coordinates the proceedings and progress of the team and collective biography projects. Mark Armour's vision made the BioProject a possibility and a success. Finally, there are the thousands of men and women who have made baseball the great game that it is; to borrow from Yogi, we should thank them for making the BioProject necessary. Thanks to them all.

All good wishes for 2010.

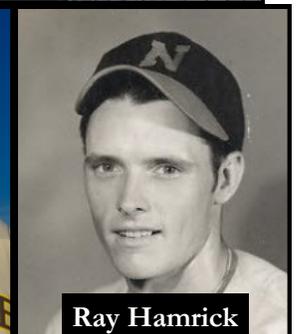
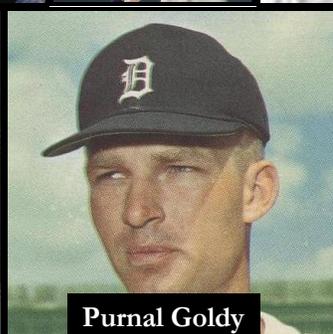
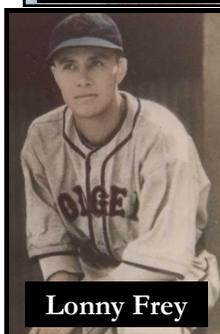
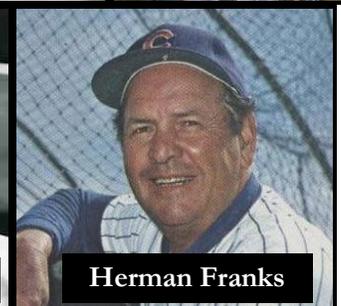
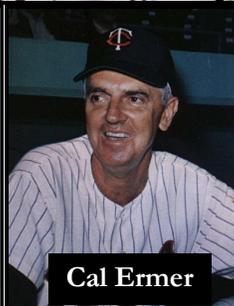
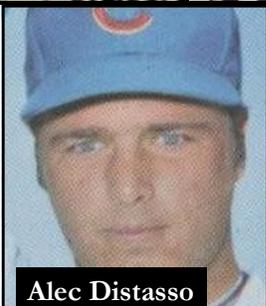
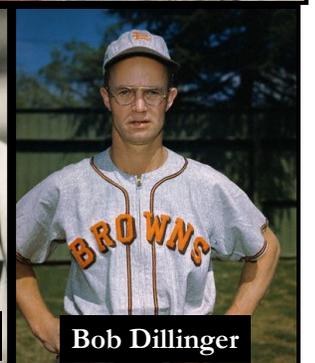
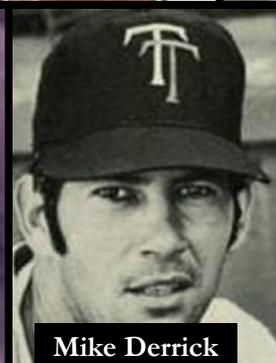
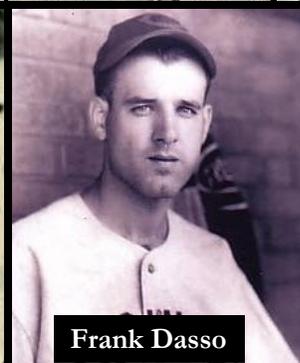
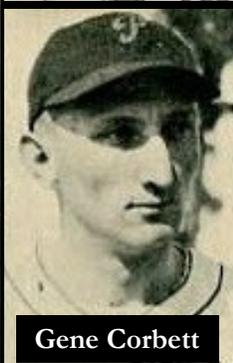
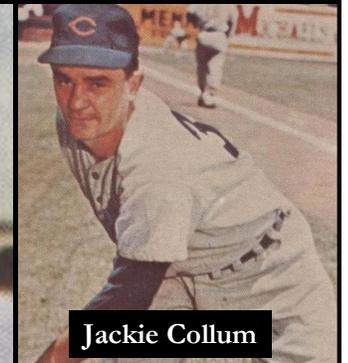
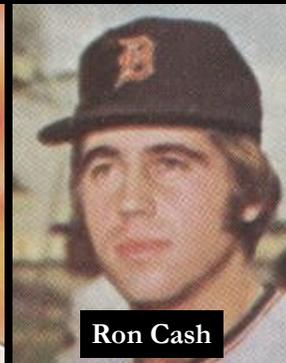
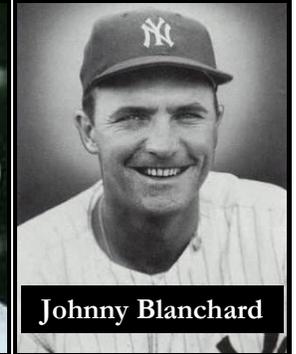
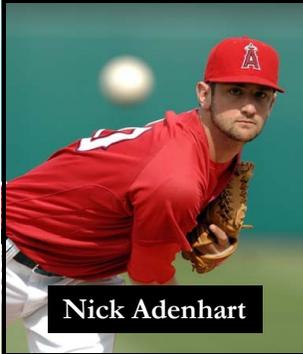
Jan Finkel

Baseball Lives - - Volume 4, Winter Contest

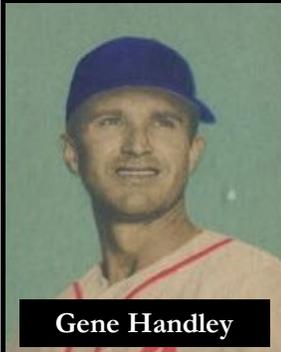
Andre Dawson played for four teams during his major league baseball career - The Montreal Expos, Chicago Cubs, Boston Red Sox, and Florida Marlins. The first person who gives me the uniform numbers Andre Dawson wore while playing in the Major Leagues for these four teams wins a special Andre Dawson prize. (mwc2002@hotmail.com)

Also - Why did Bill Nowlin pick the number 168 for his next target for finished biographies? Read his article beginning on page 2 - think about it - and submit your guess for a really special prize from Bill.

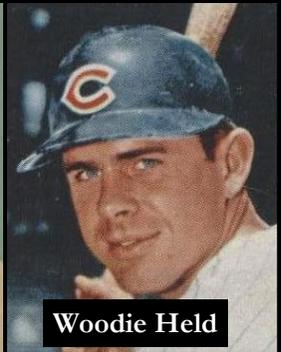
Baseball Deaths (January 1, 2009 to December 1, 2009)



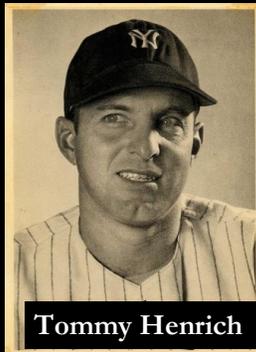
Baseball Deaths (January 1, 2009 to December 1, 2009)



Gene Handley



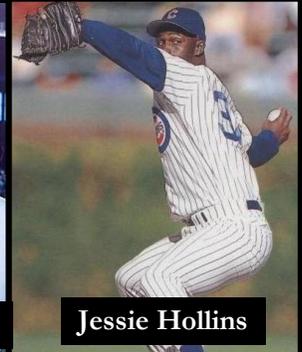
Woodie Held



Tommy Henrich



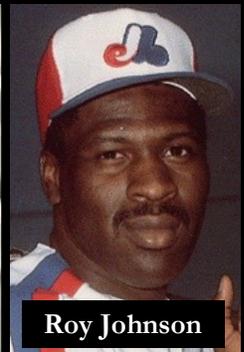
Ramon Hernandez



Jessie Hollins



Larry Jansen



Roy Johnson



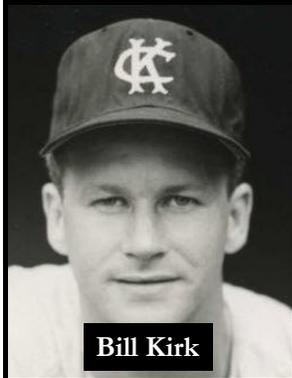
George Kell



Bill Kelso



Jim Kirby



Bill Kirk



Jay Klevin



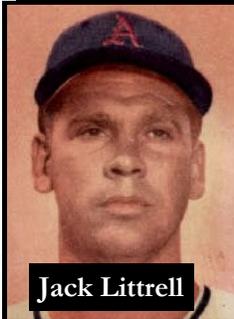
Ron Klimkowski



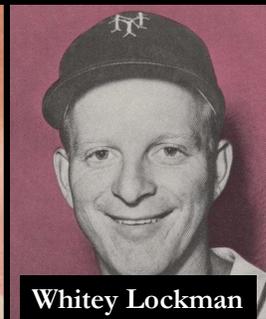
Barry Lersch



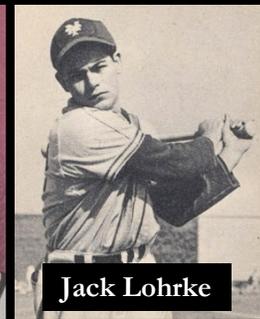
Bill Lillard



Jack Littrell



Whitey Lockman



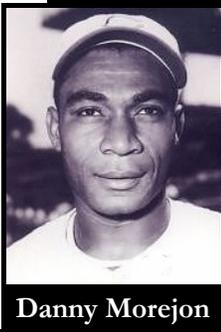
Jack Lohrke



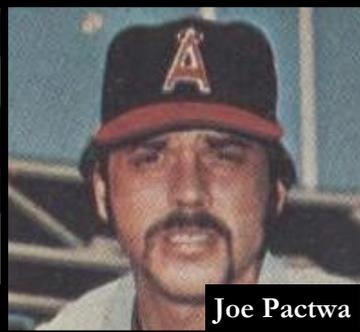
Eddie Lyons



Ron Moeller



Danny Morejon



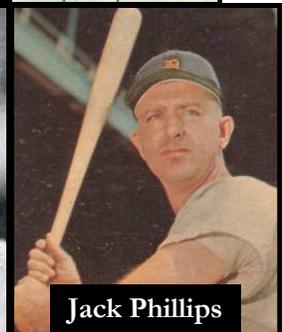
Joe Pactwa



Gene Patton

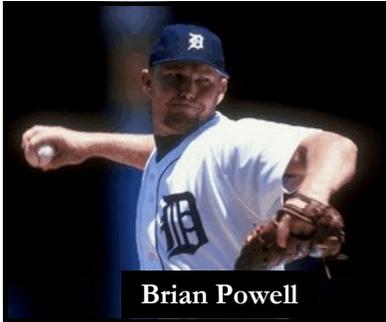


Len Perme

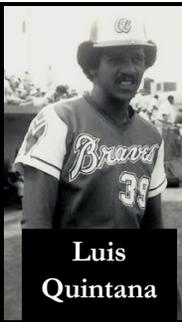


Jack Phillips

Baseball Deaths (January 1, 2009 to December 1, 2009)



Brian Powell



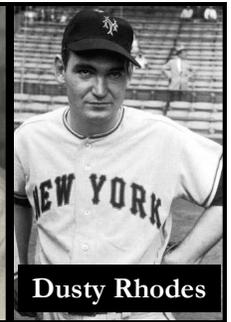
Luis Quintana



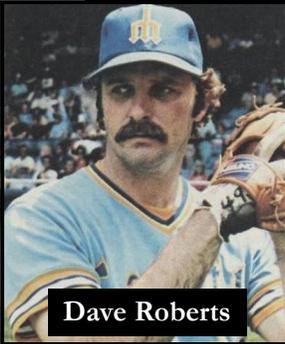
Herman Reich



Tommy Reis



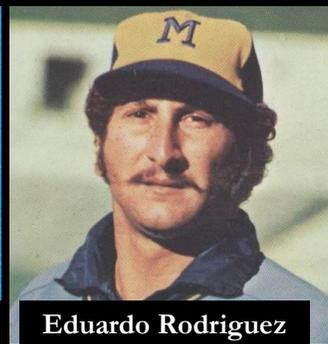
Dusty Rhodes



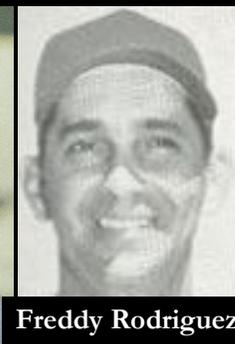
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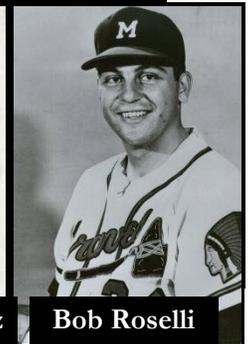
Humberto Robinson



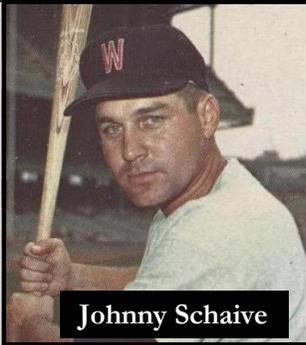
Eduardo Rodriguez



Freddy Rodriguez



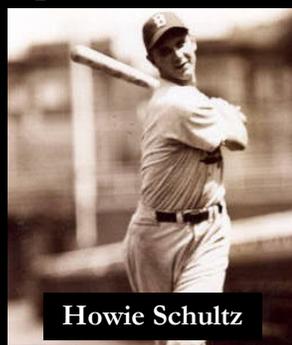
Bob Roselli



Johnny Schaive



Bob Scherbarth



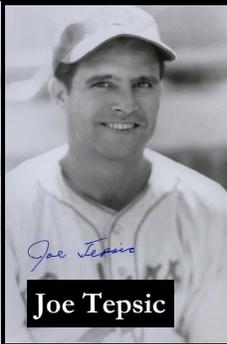
Howie Schultz



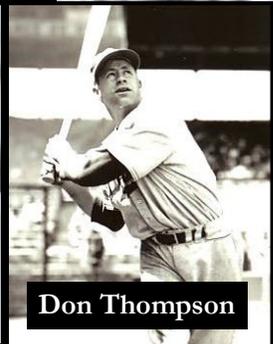
Craig Stimac



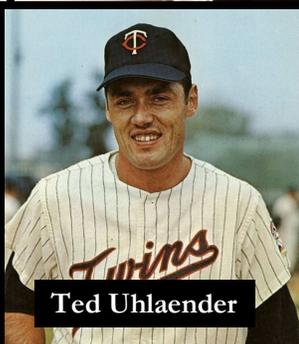
Tom Sturdivant



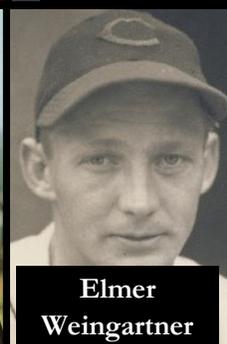
Joe Tepsic



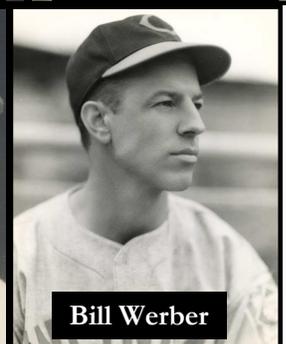
Don Thompson



Ted Uhlaender



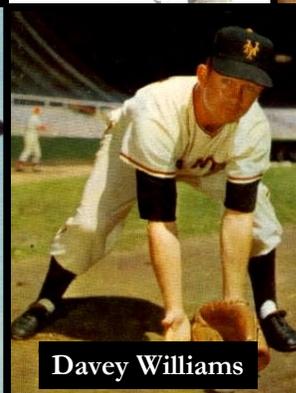
Elmer Weingartner



Bill Werber



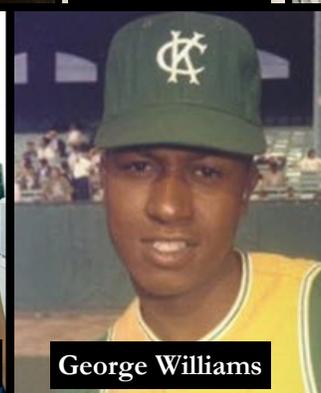
Carl Willey



Davey Williams



Frank Williams



George Williams



Ed Wolfe

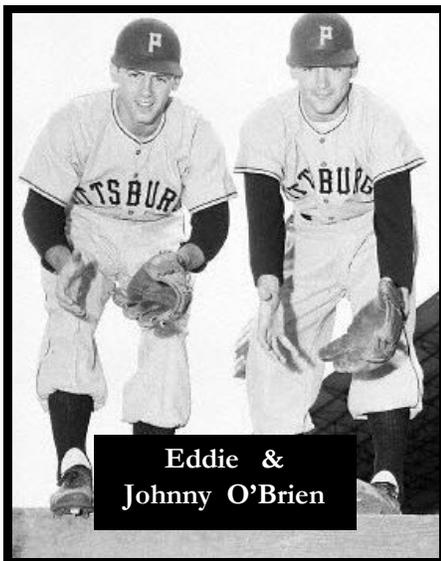
Baseball Deaths (January 1, 2009 to December 1, 2009)



Hal Woodeshick

Baseball Lives thanks Topps for the preceding images of Ron Cash, Jackie Collum, Alex Distaso, Herman Franks, Purnal Goldy, George Kell, Whitey Lockman, Ron Moeller, Joe Pactwa, Jack Phillips, Dave Roberts, Humberto Robinson, Eduardo Rodriguez, Johnny Schaive, Craig Stimac, Tom Sturdivant, and Carl Willey. In addition, thanks to Bowman for the preceding images of Gene Handley, Jack Lohrke, and Davey Williams; Leaf for the image of Johnny Blanchard; Upper Deck for the image of Jessie Hollins; Rodeo Meats for the image of Jack Littrell, and to Post Cereal for the image of Woodie Held.

Identical Twins from John Thorn (via J.W. Mariott)



Eddie &
Johnny O'Brien

Before the identical O'Brien twins played for Pittsburgh in the 1950's, before the identical Shannon twins played for the Braves in 1915, Emerson and Elmer Hawley formed a battery. Nicknamed respectively Pink and Blue by their mother to tell them apart in the cradle, Pink became a pitcher and Blue a catcher. The formidable duo did not enter the big leagues in tandem, for Elmer died young. Emerson (Pink) of course went on to a notable career.



"Pink" Hawley

Final Thoughts - - - Mike Cooney

This edition of *Baseball Lives* was difficult to put together. Not because of the time and effort involved, but because with each picture and each name posted of players who died during the first eleven months of 2009, I realized a little bit of baseball history, and its legacy, died with them. When I looked at each picture, each name, I realized even more how important the BioProject is to both fans and historians - present and future.

As Mark Armour said in his column, the BioProject has passed the 1200 mark in biographies. An astounding number, but still less than ten percent of those who have played the game, or have been involved with baseball in a significant way. I hope everyone who reads this issue of *Baseball Lives* takes a few minutes to read some of the posted biographies. And - take several minutes, or hours (whatever it takes.) to start, work on, and complete a biography for the BioProject. I know several members have long-standing projects that need to be completed. (I know because I have one that is several years old.) When the next issue of *Baseball Lives* comes out I will tell you about my project and let you know the number for my finished biography.

Don't forget to enter the two contests from this issue. In the next issue I plan to write about Andre Dawson. I will begin with "**Recently elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.**" - - - *Mike*

SABR BioProject
Committee



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Bioproject.sabr.org



Tex Pruiett

Wanted: Information about Tex Pruiett. If you have background, or career information, email Mike Cooney

The Baseball Biography Project is an ongoing effort to produce comprehensive biographical articles on every person who ever played or managed in the major leagues, as well as any other person who touched baseball in a significant way. The project is run by the BioProject Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research. (SABR)

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