

# The National Pastime

## *A Special Report to SABR's Minor League Research Committee*

9/10/2002

(MEMPHIS) It was a pleasure to see so many of you during the SABR Convention in Boston. It was a great opportunity to put names with faces and to make new friends.

During the Minor League Committee Meeting, Chairman Bob McConnell offered me the opportunity to present the preliminary concept design drawings for The National Pastime, the long anticipated national museum celebrating professional baseball with a focus on the minors. ESI Design of New York City (led by Edwin Schlossberg) has been working on conceptual drawings for the better part of 2002; they have now completed this phase of the project. The National Pastime will be a state-of-the-art facility; it will be unlike any other museum you've ever visited. We are confident it will be a long remembered experience for all visitors from the extremely casual fan to diehard SABR members.

The National Pastime will not be a collection of things, but it will be home to the stories of the thousands of players

who have played pro baseball. The participants, their families, and fans will tell the stories. You will be able to search the statistical record by accessing the player database currently under development by The National Pastime. Lloyd Johnson and a solid team of some 35 researchers (we are working on the master list), historians and fans have been working very hard on this effort for three plus years.

A new feature of the project is currently

### **They Also Played**

In 2000 The National Pastime, in association with Minor League Baseball and Major League Baseball FanFest, created an exhibit titled, They Also Played. We featured 10 famous Americans who had career success outside baseball, but had played minor league baseball. The Wall has been displayed at each All-Star Game FanFest since 2000.

2000 Atlanta

2001 Seattle

2002 Milwaukee

The exhibit is also on permanent display in the VIP Lobby of AutoZone Park, Memphis.

Want to know the ten players? See the end of this report.

being referred to as The National Pastime University. It will offer the opportunity to high school and college students and faculty to work in Memphis and learn to identify and use primary source materials to do historical research. The projects will be geared to completing the database, but the principles can be applied to future academic work and genealogical endeavors. Students will be able to spend a weekend, week or several weeks learning the ins and outs of researching history.

Sometime soon, perhaps as early as the first quarter of 2003, The National Pastime will

launch two "Scan Vans." These unique vehicles will visit cities and towns across North America to introduce thousands to The National Pastime; they will also offer individuals the opportunity to contribute to our player database. Fans,



players and player family members will be encouraged to bring photos, videos, home movies, scrapbooks, contracts and game programs to the Scan Van. Our trained staff will scan and/or photocopy

### **The National Pastime Data Box**

**Mailing Address: 175 Toyota Plaza, Suite 300, Memphis, TN 38103.**

Founders: Kristi and Dean Jernigan

Executive Director: Dave Chase

([dchase@memphisredbirds.com](mailto:dchase@memphisredbirds.com))

Project Consultant: Chris Jernigan

Database Project Manager: Lloyd Johnson

([lloydj@msn.com](mailto:lloydj@msn.com)), Kansas City, MO

Database Project Consultant: Ray Nemec

([basebalray@aol.com](mailto:basebalray@aol.com)), Naperville, IL

Design Firm: Edwin Schlossberg, ESI Design  
New York, NY

Fundraising Consultant: Steve Briganti  
New York, NY

Architects: Frank Ricks, Looney, Ricks, Kiss  
Memphis, TN

Building Location: 195 Madison, Memphis  
(Adjacent to AutoZone Park)

Square footage at completion: 65,000

the treasures. We will also be able to video tape interviews with the players so that we can hear their tales from baseball games of the past. Our Scan Van website will be updated daily to share our findings with fans and researchers around the world.

### ***Want to Make a Donation?***

We encourage those interested in making donations, to visit the Memphis Redbirds website, [www.MemphisRedbirds.com](http://www.MemphisRedbirds.com). Once there, follow the Autozone Park button to the Museum link. Please note the drawings currently featured are from an earlier design. The site will explain which items we are looking for and give you some guidelines on how to proceed.

**Financial contributions** are welcome and may be tax deductible as The National Pastime is a non-profit entity as a 501 (c) (3) corporation. Such donations should be addressed to Dave Chase, Executive Director, The National Pastime, 175 Toyota Plaza, Suite 300, Memphis, TN 38103.

If you are interested in helping with the **database project**, contact Lloyd Johnson, (816) 822-2516.

### ***The National Pastime and Memphis Redbirds Host SABR Negro Leagues Committee's Annual Jerry Malloy Conference***

Memphis played host to the annual Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues Committee Conference, July 18-20. AutoZone Park, the National Civil Rights Museum, Beale Street, Ernest Withers Gallery and the sites of Martin Stadium and Russwood Park all were featured during the conference. Committee members and conference attendees were all complimentary to the Redbirds and the City. Buck O'Neil was the star of the show as he made several media appearances and attended each session of the conference. Buck also signed autographs for over 3 hours on Saturday night. The three-day event was capped off with a special promotion as the Redbirds hosted the Tacoma Rainiers. The pregame ceremonies included the presentation of over 50 players from the Negro Leagues. The first 1500 fans entering the gates were given replica Memphis Red Sox caps. The Redbirds dressed out as the Memphis Red Sox and the Rainiers wore the uniform of the Homestead Grays. It proved to be a very special night of history and baseball – the ultimate experience.



If you would like a copy of the program from the Conference, send a self-addressed stamped #10 envelop to Dave Chase at The National Pastime address.

### ***How about a Special Minor League Committee Meeting?***

If you would be interested in participating in an annual roving Minor League Committee Conference, similar to the Negro Leagues Committee event, please contact Dave Chase. Dave's email address is

[dchase@MemphisRedbirds.com](mailto:dchase@MemphisRedbirds.com),

mailing address is 175 Toyota Plaza,

Suite 300, Memphis, TN 38103.

telephone (901) 722-0207.

### **An Update**

#### ***The Minor League Encyclopedia***

Lloyd Johnson and Miles Wolff are looking at issuing a third edition of The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball. The earlier editions were published by Baseball America in Durham, North Carolina. Currently, The National Pastime is considering the opportunity to serve as publisher of the next edition. Please send corrections, updates and additions to Dave Chase (at The National Pastime), Lloyd Johnson (P. O. Box 22481, KC, MO 64113) or Miles Wolff (P.O. Box 1128, Durham, NC 27702). An announcement could come early next year. Stay tuned.

### ***TNP Project Updates***

- ☐ *The Swales Collection*
- ☐ *Statistician Lists*
- ☐ *Front Office Who's Who*
- ☐ *Reserve List Mini-Project*

About 18 months ago Lloyd Johnson was doing research in the New York Public Library (Rare Books Collection)

and he came upon a series of notebooks and file cards with detailed minor league player information. The collection was the work of Bradshaw Hall Swales. It includes information from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup>. The National Pastime paid the Library to microfilm the notebooks; we now have copies available for researchers. Lloyd has also created a couple of league notebooks from the microfilm. Contact Dave or Lloyd for details. Several members are using the results of Mr. Swales work and have found it helpful. It is another tool for doing baseball research.

Ray Nemec and Dave Chase have been compiling a list of **League Statisticians** by using guides, Bluebooks and Official League Statistics Reports. Committee member John Pardon has also provided information. Many may not realize the number of people who did official league stats before Howe Sportsdata/SportsTicker arrived on the scene.

Chase has traveled to Blytheville, Arkansas in search of the papers of J. P. Friend, a long-time statistician who did many mid-south leagues. Much of his work has been lost, but a couple of Blytheville residents have saved some of Friend's records and memorabilia and they have promised to compile lists to share with The National Pastime.

Also of note, with the assistance of Texas League President Tom Kayser, we have found the William Ruggles files; the Texas Sports Hall of Fame in Waco, Texas holds them. Do you know of other such collections? Please share the information with us.



In addition to the player database, The National Pastime is compiling the **database of League Presidents, Team Presidents and General Manager.**

Bluebooks and the mid-season supplements are very helpful. We have a few wholes in our Bluebook collection and we would appreciate your help in completing this project. Contact Dave.

Lloyd Johnson and a dedicated team of volunteers (list below) recently completed a mini-project of

computerizing a few decades of Minor League Baseball **Reserve Lists**. This resource is available on CD by contacting Lloyd.

### ***In Appreciation***

The National Pastime would like to take this opportunity to salute the following for recent contributions:

**John and Rip Montague, Baseball Bluebook** for several boxes of Bluebook publications including a mint 1914 edition.

**Tom Kayser, President, Texas League:** for a complete run of 2002 Texas League team programs and for a great collection of photos from the soon to be history Shreveport franchise. Tom has provided many programs, record books, newspaper stories and historic notes to us. If each League President was as interested, this would be a bit simpler process.

**To SABR Members Across America:** for team rosters, statistics, advice and

comments. You are very important to the success not only of the database project, but also to the promise of The National Pastime. Keep up the great work!

### **They Also Played List**

Danny Ainge  
Chuck Connors  
Mario Cuomo  
Dave DeBusschere  
Pete Domenici  
John Elway  
Zane Grey  
Michael Jordan  
Kurt Russell  
Ron Shelton

### **The Reserve List Volunteers:**

Bob Bailey, Newtown, PA  
Davis Barker, Jacksonville, TX  
John Bell, Carrollton, GA  
Will Christensen, Columbus, OH  
Amy Essington, Long Beach, CA  
David Hallstrom, Evanston, IL  
Ron Henry, Minneapolis, MN  
J. Atticus Ryan, Hillegom, Netherlands  
Tom Stillman, San Francisco, CA

Alain Usereau, Brossard, Quebec  
Mike Webber, Ottawa, KS

**The Baseball Hall of Fame** has sent a number of research requests to us recently. We have been able to help several people. The Hall has also suggested to potential donors of minor league material that they contact us to find a home for their items. We cannot fully express our appreciation to our friends in Cooperstown.

**Dave Rosenfield**, General Manager of the Norfolk Tides has loaned us a copy of the 1962 Minor League Digest. We are in need of additional years, 1946-1961. Contact Dave Chase.

### **Upcoming TNP Calendar**

**Oct. 16-19** IASMHF Annual Conference, Narragansett, Rhode Island.

**Dec. 6-8** NHSBCA Annual Conference, St. Louis, Missouri

**Dec. 12-16** Baseball Winter Meetings, Nashville, Tennessee

**Jan. 2-5** ABCA Annual Convention, San Diego, CA

**Mar. 22** Tennessee History Day, West Regional AutoZone Park, Memphis