

# The Courier

A Publication of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

"We are the Ship, All Else the Sea"

Editor, Larry Lester

Labor Day Weekend, 2019

## In the News

### Going to a Go-Go!: The Detroit Stars Centennial Conference

Historians, fans and family traveled to Motown for three days of addictive baseball. Many attendees from the Jerry Malloy Negro League Conferences came, as we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the **1919 Detroit Stars**. Organized by **Gary Gillette**, **Ted Knorr** and **Lisa Doris Alexander**, the conference started on Thursday, August 8th with **Mike "Tiger" Price** talking about the history of the Afro-American Sports Hall of Fame and Gallery. He was followed by award-winning author **Mitch Lutzke's** presentation on the **Page Fence Giants** from Adrian, Michigan. After Lutzke's book signing, stats guru for **Seamheads**, Kevin Johnson gave a statistical analysis of whether **Mack Park** was home-run friendly or not? With a 12-foot high fence in right field, 265 feet away from home plate, the verdict was a ground-rule double conclusion?!?!?



Following the break **Ted Knorr** gave the top 10 reasons why the Negro Leagues should be designated as a "Major" league. Sorry, but I missed that presentation. Soon after, **Dr. Lisa Alexander** from Wayne State University, had attendees "Dancing in the Streets" with her perspective on the "Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars & Motor Kings" movie by Berry Gordy. Meanwhile, there was much to learn about **Hamtramck Stadium** from **Melanie Markowicz** on how a site gets historic preservation status and grant funding. Additional information was provided by architect **Brian Powers** on the task ahead of rehabbing Hamtramck, once the home of the Detroit Stars.

We closed out Thursday's events with an excellent program from Turkey Stearnes' granddaughter **Vanessa**

**Ivy Rose**, on "Combining Forces: Restorative Options for Baseball Integration and the Inclusion of the Negro Leagues." Oh my, Sister Rose can dribble a basketball and provide some insight on Blackball history, all at the same time.

That evening we were entertained by the Stearnes's daughters **Joyce** and **Rosilyn** with a slide show of their father's relationship with the Detroit Tigers and their efforts to get a well-deserved statue of their slugging father at Comerica Park. The classically trained sisters closed out the evening singing "**Peace on Earth.**"

Walt Owens



### FRIDAY

#### Dr. James Brunson III

from Chi-town kicked off the morning with an incredible informative visual presentation on how his 30 years of research created the three-volume work, *Black Baseball: 1858-1900*. I had to step away to attend a downtown luncheon at **Comerica Park** to honor Fox Sports TV analysts and former Tiger outfielder **Craig Monroe** accepting the **Willie Horton African-American Legacy Award**. In the process I missed presentations by **Dr. Geri Strecker** (Home Field Advantage in the Negro Leagues), **Dr. Leslie Heaphy** (An Historian's Journey: Beyond Just the Facts) and **Gary Gillette** (Retrospective Tributes: The History of Negro League Baseball Cards).

Upon returning to the Delta Hotel at DTW, Gary Gillette provided his selections for the all-time all-star Detroit Stars team. A job well done. Later, **Lizz Wilkinson** provided insight into "The Importance of Negro League Photography". I can see a future collaborative effort for a visual imagery presentation by the Wilkinson and Brunson duo! Following Lizz, **Paul**

**Healey** talked about locations of various ballparks in the region.

After a brief break, we had a pizza party to view two documentaries by renowned author of *Invisible Men* and producer **Donn Rogosin**, "There Was Always Sun Shining Someplace" and "Pitching Man: Satchel Paige Defying Time."

### SATURDAY

This was tour day. First stop - the **Motown Museum**. For *Once in My Life*, I was on *Cloud Nine*. There I was *Standings in the Shadow of Love* and gonna' *Get Ready Here I Come* to get on the *Friendship Train*. *It's A Shame* we couldn't stay longer as *This Old Heart of Mine* wanted to see *What's Going On!*

From the West Grand site, we traveled to the **Detroit Historical Museum** to see their new Negro League exhibit and a presentation by award-winning artist **Phillip Dewey** as he showcased some of this latest masterpieces. After lunch, we did ball park visits of old **Tiger Stadium** (now a Detroit PAL Headquarters), Hamtramck Stadium and the former site of fire-destroyed **Mack Park**. We also stopped at **Ossian Sweet's** home, an African-American doctor who was besieged by an angry white mob, in 1925, as 17 local policemen watched, and took no action to stop the violence by white neighbors demanding they leave. A historic marker is now on the corner lot.



We made a few more notable stops before venturing on to Comerica Park for the pregame Negro Leagues Players Panel. The Tigers asked me to moderate eight great Star legends; first lady **Minnie Forbes, Bill Hill, Walt Owens, Jake Sanders, Dick Scruggs, Pedro Sierra, Ron Teasley and Johnny Walker**. And we had a ball! The Tigers gave away vintage **Detroit Stars** jerseys

to the first 10,000 in attendances. Facing the Kansas City Royals in **Monarch** uniforms, before 26,000 plus fans, my Royals shutout the toothless Tigers 7-0, on a four hitter and 12 strikeouts by Mike Montgomery.



**The Jackson 5:** Don Conway, Phil Ross, James Brunson, a ringer & Jay Hurd

### Stop in the Name of Love!

At the **Detroit Stars Centennial Conference I** received this custom made jersey from **Ebbets Field Flannels**. It included a gift card stating, "*This is with the thanks from the attendees of the Jerry Malloy Conferences. Your tireless efforts to have the BEST conferences anywhere is appreciated more than words can express.*"



The jersey from **Ebbets Field Flannels** is especially dear to me, as in the early 1990s I provided Ebbets with colors and designs of jerseys and caps from newspaper accounts and player interviews to create their Negro League apparel. Today the clothing line is known as the "**Authentic Black Diamond Collection**" label. Thanks to all who contributed to this incredible gift of kindness, that I will always cherish. With much appreciation and love. Thank You!

### Sam Allen Goes into the Tidewater Baseball Shrine

This month, the Tidewater Baseball Shrine recognized, "Players and executives who have significantly contributed to the game of baseball in the Tidewater area." **Sam Allen** was joined by seven-time National League All-Star, winner of two Gold Gloves and a pair of Silver Slugger Awards, **Mr. David Wright**, and former Major League pitcher **Wayne Gomes** and former Old Dominion baseball coach **Tony Guzzo**.



The 83-year old Allen, a Norfolk native, starred in baseball and football at the local Booker T. Washington High School. Sudden Sam played for the **K.C. Monarchs, Raleigh Tigers and Memphis Red Sox** before being drafted into the Army in 1960.

Allen is also a member of the **Hampton Roads African-American Sports Hall of Fame** and a regular attendee at the Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference.

## Who was Walter M. Farmer?

While doing some research on the **Colored National Base Ball League of the United States of America**, I came across its Article of Incorporation. The Chicago-based league would consist of teams from Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore, Cleveland and St. Louis. The *New York Times* and the *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the league was capitalized at \$50,000.

The incorporation papers were signed on November 12, 1913 by **Tom C. McNamee** of Pierre, South Dakota, and **Frank L. Hamilton, George W. Holt, Julius F. Taylor, William R. Cowan** and **Walter M. Farmer**.

The Farmer name looked familiar. Where had I seen that name before? So I checked the articles of incorporation for the 1920 Negro National League. **Farmer**, along with **Rube Foster, J.L. Wilkinson** and other officers were listed. In fact, the addresses listed for Farmer in 1913 and 1920 were identical.

So who was this guy and the answer to a new trivia question? And so I reached out to super sleuth **Dr. James Brunson III**, author of the fabulous three-volume *Black Baseball, 1858-1900: A Comprehensive Record of the Teams, Players, Managers, Owners and Umpires* by McFarland & Company Publishers.

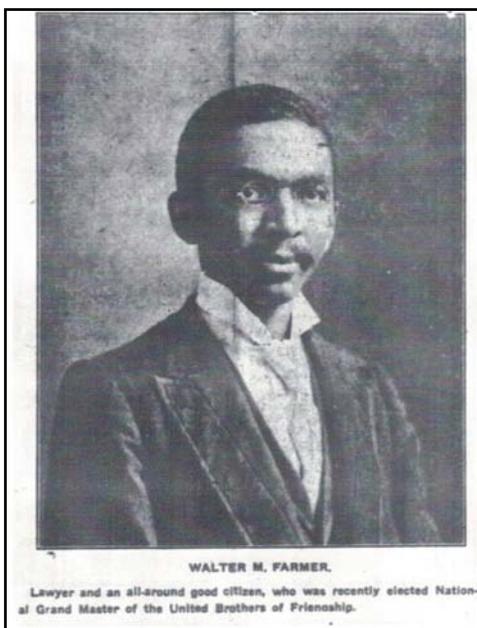
<https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/black-baseball-1858-1900/>

His findings reveal according to *The State Republican* (Jefferson City, MO) of 4 May 1893, that Farmer was a graduate of Lincoln Institute in 1883 and in the law department of Washington University in 1889. The paper claimed he was the first colored man enrolled as an attorney in the Supreme Court of Missouri.

Earlier on 8 May 1892, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* wrote that he was one of five Negroes appointed "to organize a **Negro Day of Prayer** for relief from the blood-thirstiness of the white race." In an interview, Farmer voiced his views on **Black Lives Matter**, stating, "I agree with Mr. [Frederick] Douglass in his belief that this failure of the American Government to protect its Negro citizens

under the law will drive the Negro race to lawlessness and anarchy. For twenty-nine years now the Negro has looked to the Federal Government for protection, and for the rights guaranteed him under the Constitution, but he has looked in vain. It is folly to deny the fact that the Negroes of this country are not protected by its Government.

Outrages against them, which would be summarily punished were the victims white men, are almost invariably allowed to go unpunished. Negroes charged with crimes are not given an opportunity for proving their innocent of the charge, nor allowed if guilty, to be punished according to the law."



Farmer continues to write at great length of the patience by the Negro being exhausted and perhaps imminent danger is near. He adds, that the "**Negro Day of Prayer**" movement should not develop into a hostile or anarchistic movement.

Another chapter of Farmer's life found by Brunson was an article in the *Chicago Broad Ax*, 8 August 1914, entitled "Attorney Walter M. Farmer Ran Down by a Fast Speeding Automobile, Breaking his Right Arm."

It was written, "Tuesday evening shortly after Attorney Farmer, 184 W. Washington Street, alighted from a State Street car at 56th and South State Street, which was headed south and just as he was in the act of crossing to the east side of the same street, a fast speeding auto darted out from behind a street car going north, striking him without a moments warning, running him down, breaking his right arm and otherwise injuring him."

Farmer added, "That the pain in connection with the accident has been something awful. But after all it might have been worse and he is glad that he is still on earth and able to look after his law business."

More research to be done on this unheralded figure in the business of Black Baseball History. Stay tuned . . .

## Lawmakers seek to honor Negro Leagues Baseball with commemorative coin

By Judy Kurtz - 07/30/19 via The Hill.com

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is introducing legislation to have the U.S. Mint produce a Negro Leagues baseball commemorative coin.

The bill, called the **Negro Leagues Baseball Centennial Commemorative Coin Act**, was introduced by Sens. **Roy Blunt** (R-Mo.) and **Tim Kaine** (D-Va.) and Reps. **Emanuel Cleaver** (D-Mo.) and **Steve Stivers** (R-Ohio) on Tuesday.

The effort would honor the Negro National League, formed for black baseball players in 1920 when they were shut out from the segregated big leagues.

"It's difficult to overstate the significance that sports played in the civil rights movement. As America's pastime, baseball and the Negro Leagues were at the very forefront of the fight for equality," Cleaver said in a statement.

"As the representative of Kansas City, the birthplace of the Negro Leagues and home of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, I couldn't be more proud to sponsor this legislation. I would urge all of my colleagues to support this bill and honor the legacy of every player that participated in such a pivotal organization in American history," he added.

"From **Jackie Robinson** to **Satchel Paige** to **Buck O'Neil**, several of baseball's most iconic players began their professional careers in the Negro Leagues," Blunt said in a statement touting the legislation. "The talent, excitement, and sportsmanship they brought to the game helped break down the barriers of segregation.

Kaine said the creation of a commemorative coin would not only honor the players and teams, but would "ensure their legacy is carried on," while Stivers called the minting of a coin "undeniably worthwhile."

Editor's note: If passed, a target date for the coin is set for 2021.



## Fats Jenkins Inducted into the Capital Area Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.

Chartered in 1967, the Capital Area Chapter is one of 30 community-based chapters of the **Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame**.

Geographically, our chapter encompasses Harrisburg and its east shore, primarily Dauphin County. The purpose of the Chapter is to recognize athletes, coaches and administrators who have brought lasting fame and recognition to the Greater Harrisburg area.

Recently on June 15, **Clarence "Fats" Jenkins**, along with Marcus Colston, Carl Scheib and six other stellar athletes and coaches were inducted at a ceremony at the Red Lion Hotel in Swatara Township.

Jenkins enjoyed a 20-year career as an outfielder in the Negro Leagues for several teams; Harrisburg Giants, Baltimore Black Sox, NY Black Yankees, Philadelphia Stars, Brooklyn Eagles, Brooklyn Royal Giants, Lincoln Giants, et al. His batting average was more than .330, with an OPS of around .840.

In addition, he was captain of the World Championship Basketball **Renaissance Five**, which was inducted as a team, in 1963, to the **Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame**. Lastly, Clarence Jenkins went all the way to the U.S. Olympic Finals in 1920 before losing a close decision to three-time U.S. Amateur Champion **Sam Lagonia**.

The Jenkins' honor was accepted by SABR and Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues Conference committee member and **Fay Vincent Most Valuable Partner Award** recipient **Ted Knorr**. Knorr also stood in to accept induction honors for **Rap Dixon** in 1978, **Spottswood Poles** in 2007 and **Oscar Charleston** in 2016.



## Stars of the Negro League featured in paintings at CHS Field

*Insight News*, July 8, 2019

**D**r. **Charles Crutchfield III's** works are on display at CHS Field in an exhibition of paintings of Negro League baseball stars.

The collection includes the likes of **Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, Buck O'Neil, Newt Allen, James Bell, Ray Dandridge, Larry Doby, Monte Irvin, Jose Mendez, Ted Radcliffe, Dick Redding, Quincy Troupe** and more. Author and historian Nel Yomtov was commissioned to write a detailed biography that accompanies and enriches every painting. The exhibit will run at CHS Field, home of the **St. Paul Saints**, through July 18.

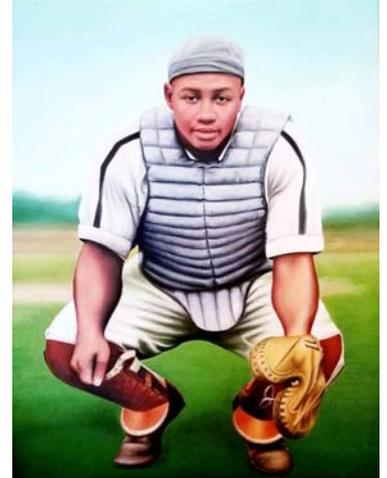
The collection has received high praise.

"This exhibit is a spectacular display of American History in the heart of downtown St. Paul. I applaud the Saint Paul Saints for once again giving our residents and all of Minnesota something to be extremely proud of," said **St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter**.

"When I was growing up, I idolized many of these players. This gorgeous exhibit is like taking a walk down memory lane and visiting old friends," said former Minnesota Twin **Tony Olivia**.

"The paintings shine a bright light on many of the unsung heroes of America's pastime. It is a marvelous tribute to anyone who loves baseball and its full History," said baseball historian and author **Frank M. White**.

"It was our original goal to bring these little-celebrated yet exceptional stars to life and to tell their fascinating stories to all, far and wide," said artist, Dr. Charles Crutchfield III. I hope everyone gets a chance to enjoy this extraordinary exhibition of professional baseball stars and American heroes."



Crutchfield says there has been extreme interest in the collection, and the number of paintings in the exhibit may expand from 40 to include 125. The aspiration and design are to have the exhibition travel to select sites around the United States, including the annual Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference and the new Jackie Robinson Museum in New York.

Crutchfield was awarded the **Fay Vincent Most Valuable Partner Award** by the SABR's Negro League Research Committee for significant contributions having an impact on recognizing the Negro Leagues and its impact on the socialization of American culture.

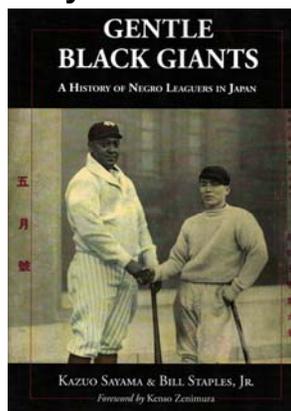


## Dugout Reading:

### **Gentle Black Giants: A History of Negro Leaguers in Japan** by **Kazuo Sayama & Bill Staples, Jr.**

Because of trips across the Pacific, to Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines and the Hawaiian Territories by the **Philadelphia Royal Giants** between 1927 and 1934, the game today has been blessed with more than 70 Japanese imports. Players like, MVP & ROY **Ichiro Suzuki**, ROY forkballer **Hideo Nomo**, Yu **Darvish**, **Daisuke "Dice-K" Matsuzaka**, **Hideki "Godzilla" Matsui**, and now two-way player **Shohei Ohtani** have brought a richness to the game.

In *Gentle Black Giants*, the authors chronicle the tours of the Royal Giants and demonstrate that without the skill and humanity displayed by the Negro Leaguers, Japanese ballplayers might have become discouraged and lost their love for the game. Instead, the experience of sharing the field with these "gentle, black giants" kept their spirits high and nurtured the seeds for professional baseball to flourish in Japan.



The original version in Japanese was published in 1986 by **Kazuo Sayama**. It was called by SABR founder **Bob Davids**, "a new dimension to baseball research" and said that the Philadelphia Royal Giants' tour "undoubtedly contributed

to the decision in 1936 to launch the Japanese Professional League."

**Bill Staples, Jr.**, chairman of SABR's Asian Baseball Research Committee agreed to have the original book translated into English and back into Japanese to insure the integrity of the written word and its message. A challenging task in that some Japanese words do not have a one-to-one English translation.

Without a doubt, one of the best baseball books ever! *Period!* Learn about the bullet arms possessed by **Biz Mackey**, **Rap Dixon**, **Neal Pullen** who could throw a ball over the center field fence, out of Gaijen Stadium. Let's not forget the performance by future Hall of Fame pitcher **Andy Cooper**. The appendices include biographies about owner **Lonnie Goodwin**, team captain **William "Nacogdoches" Ross**, Japan's first African American **Jimmy Bonner**, and letters to **Kazuo Sayama** from **Monte Irvin** and **Leon Day**.

Richly illustrated with vintage photographs, maps, advertisements, and tables, this book is a must for any sports library to appreciate the international flavor and appeal of baseball worldwide. Get your English version copy at: <https://www.amazon.com/Gentle-Black-Giants-History-Leaguers/dp/0578501333>

Sale proceeds go to help support the **Nisei Baseball Research Project** and the Arizona chapter of the **Japanese American Citizens League**.

### **Let's Play Two: The Legend of Mr. Cub, the Life of Ernie Banks**

by **Ron Rapoport**

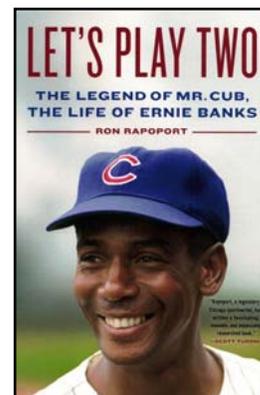
I don't have to explain the delight and significance of Ernie Banks to the readers, but I assure you that you will gain new insight regarding the man -- and his life and times - when you read Rapoport's book.

The foundation of this book is comprised of the many taped conversations between Rapoport and Banks as they tried for a number of years to fashion what they hoped might be an "as told to" autobiography. But following Banks' death in 2015, Rapoport decided to carry one and, he writes, "I made a fascinating discovery. Nearly everyone I spoke with was not only willing to tell me about their experiences with Ernie but eager to do so."

Ron interviewed more than 100 people, including family members, former teammates and friends. In the process he filled in some many gaps in Banks' glorious baseball career, troubled marriages, and personal tragedies with his siblings.

Do you know how Banks is related to **O.J. Simpson**? That Banks played for the **Harlem Globetrotters**, part time while in the Army? Did you know that his Dallas high school Booker T. Washington produced such musical legends as **Erykah Badu**, **Edie Brickell** and the late jazzman **Roy Hargrove**? Or Banks' total earnings over his 19-year career was about \$800,000. Lots of juicy stuff here.

Get your copy today. Published by Hachette Books, <https://www.hachettebooks.com/titles/ron-raपोport/lets-play-two/9780316318648/>

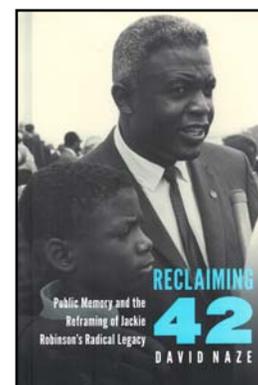


### **Reclaiming 42: Public Memory and the Reframing of Jackie Robinson's Radical Legacy**

by **David Naze**

Who needs another book on Jackie Robinson? I have a bookcase full of Robinson stories, including three autobiographies. Somehow, somehow, Professor Naze from Joliet Junior College, offers new insight in the marriage between sports and politics. Naze explores America's most respected cultural icon with explosive narratives of racial reconciliation with his controversial political activity with both parties, his public clashes with **Dr. King** and **Malcolm X**, and his criticism of Major League Baseball.

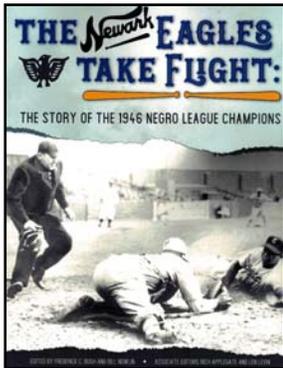
*Reclaiming 42* illuminates how public memory of Robinson has undergone changes over the last 60+ years and moves his story beyond the baseball legend. Well written and richly footnoted, *Reclaiming 42* is published by the University of Nebraska Press. <https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/university-of-nebraska-press/9780803290822/>



## The Newark Eagles Take Flight: The Story of the 1946 Negro League Champions

by **Frederick C. Bush** and **Bill Nowlin**

Inspired by **Rich Puerzer**, a Malloy Conference trivia champion and member of the **Elysian Fields** chapter, provided the genesis for this project. The **Newark Eagles** won only one Negro National League (NNL) pennant during its 15-year tenure in the Garden State. In 1946 the Eagles ran away from the NNL and then triumphed over the powerful **Kansas City Monarchs** in a thrilling seven-game series.



World War II had ended and numerous players who had served in the military now returned to resume their careers with the flying Eagles. The returning veterans included **Leon Day**, **Larry Doby**, **Monte Irvin** and **Max Manning**. The team chemistry also included Hall of Fame manager **Biz Mackey**, as well as Hall of Fame co-owner **Effa Manley**.

The book is the combined efforts of 30 SABR members. It includes biographies for each Eagle, along with a seasonal timeline of games played and not played, the two East-West all-star games and, of course, highlights from the 1946 World Series.

Check out this journey through the 1946 season. You will enjoy this flight back in time!

## Black Baseball's Last Team Standing: The Birmingham Black Barons, 1919-1962

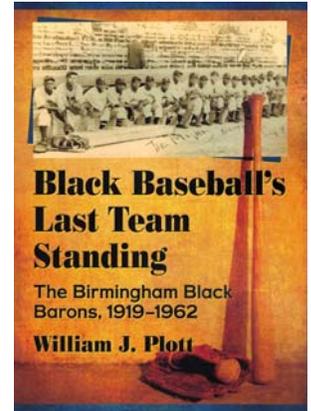
by **William J. "Bill" Plott**

The **Birmingham Black Barons** were a nationally known team in baseball's Negro Leagues from 1920 through 1962. Among its storied players were Hall of Famers **Satchel Paige**, **Willie Mays**, **Willie Foster**, **Mule Suttles** and **Willie "the Devil" Wells**.

The Black Barons played in the final sanctioned Negro League World Series in 1948 and were a major drawing card when barnstorming across the United States and parts of Canada. This book chronicles the team's history and presents the only comprehensive roster of the hundreds of men who wore the Black Barons uniform.

Plott has included several bonus sections; a list of administrators, executives and managers, opening day attendances, no-hitters by Baron pitchers, and complete league standings of their play in the Negro American & National Leagues, plus the Negro Southern League.

Published by **McFarland**, get your copy here: <https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/black-baseballs-last-team-standing/> Bill Plott also authored *The Negro Southern League: A Baseball History, 1920-1951*.



## SABR is seeking authors to contribute to a planned future book on Jackie Robinson.

Later in 2019, we will be publishing a book on Babe Ruth. Some 56 members contributed items for the book, ranging from essays to game accounts. The idea for the book was conceived by Glen Sparks, and edited by Bill Nowlin and Glen Sparks. To follow up the Babe Ruth book, we have now turned to Jackie Robinson as the second book in what may unfold as a new series based on people who have been very influential in the game.

We have a number of ideas for articles on **Jackie Robinson's life and have developed an initial list of a number of key games in which he played, which can be the basis for Games Project writeups**. There are, without a doubt, other games and other ideas for articles. We would welcome hearing your ideas.

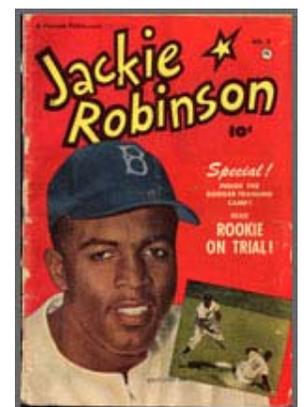
This note is first being sent to members of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee, to give you all first crack at the various games or essays. Please do let us know if you have other ideas that you would like to suggest.

We are going to suggest a **deadline of June 30, 2020**, so that everyone has plenty of time to work on any articles we mutually agree could be included in the book.

CONTACT:

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## Foundations Acquire African-American Photographic Archive

July 29, 2019

A consortium of four foundations — the **Andrew W. Mellon**, **Ford**, and **MacArthur** foundations and the **J. Paul Getty Trust** — has announced the acquisition of an historic African-American photographic archive, pending court approval and the closing of the sale.

Acquired for \$30 million as part of an auction of the assets of Johnson Publishing Company, publisher of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines, the archive includes more than four million prints and negatives and is considered to be the most significant collection of photographs cataloguing African-American life in the twentieth century. The consortium will donate the archive to the **Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture**, the **Getty Research Institute**, and other institutions to ensure broad access for the general public as well as its use by scholars, researchers, journalists, and others.



"This archive is a national treasure and one of tremendous importance to the telling of black history in America," said Ford Foundation president **Darren Walker**. "We felt it was imperative to preserve these images, to give them the exposure they deserve, and make them readily available to the public."

"It's a privilege for the Getty Research Institute to participate in making the archive accessible to scholars everywhere and to have the opportunity to work with other institutions, particularly the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, to secure and share this central American narrative," said **Mary Miller**, director of the Getty Research Institute (GRI), which houses one of the largest public libraries of art archives in the world. "Perhaps the greatest archive of African-American life and culture, the Johnson Publishing archive is a unique resource for the interdisciplinary work that grows from visual inquiry at the heart of research at GRI."

["Foundation Consortium Acquires Historic African American Photographic Archive."](#) Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Press Release 07/25/2019.

Editor's note: The *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines have housed a rich collection of vintage photographs of African Americans in sports for several years. Perhaps, in the near future, the Negro League research community will have access to new images for their next publications.

## MLB, MLBPA, Cuba strike historic pact for players to sign without defecting

ESPN News Services - December 19, 2018

**H**AVANA -- Major League Baseball, its players' association and the Cuban Baseball Federation reached an agreement that will allow players from the island to sign big league contracts without defecting, an effort to eliminate the dangerous trafficking that had gone on for decades.

The agreement, which runs through Oct. 31, 2021, allows Cubans to sign under rules similar to those for players under contract to clubs in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

"For years, Major League Baseball has been seeking to end the trafficking of baseball players from Cuba by criminal organizations by creating a safe and legal alternative for those players to sign with major league clubs," baseball Commissioner **Rob Manfred** said in a statement Wednesday. "We believe that this agreement accomplishes that objective and will allow the next generation of Cuban players to pursue their dream without enduring many of the hardships experienced by current and former Cuban players who have played Major League Baseball."

Depending on the quality of future players, the agreement could mean millions of dollars in future income for the cash-poor Cuban federation, which has seen the quality of players and facilities decline in recent years as talent went overseas.

The agreement marks a step forward in U.S.-Cuba relations during a time of tensions between Cuba and the Trump administration, which has pledged to undo President Barack Obama's 2014 opening with the island.

MLB said the deal was allowed by amendments to the Cuban Asset Control Regulations of March 16, 2016, that established the provisions of a general license from the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. The league said OFAC confirmed to Major League Baseball in a letter dated Sept. 20, 2016, that an agreement with the Cuban federation would be valid.

"Baseball has always been a bridge between our two nations, facilitating people-to-people connections and larger agreements that have brought our countries closer together," said Sen. Patrick Leahy, a Vermont Democrat.

"Establishing a safe, legal process for entry to our system is the most important step we can take to ending the exploitation and endangerment of Cuban players who pursue careers in Major League Baseball," union head **Tony Clark** said in a statement. "The safety and well-being of these young men remains our primary concern."

## Donald Trump Cancels Deal Allowing MLB Teams to Sign Cuban Players

Rob Goldberg, April 08, 2019

**P**resident Donald Trump and his administration have decided to cancel a December deal that would have allowed MLB teams to sign Cuban players, according to the *Washington Post*.

**The White House argued that the Cuban Baseball Federation was part of the Cuban government, which caused the deal to be nullified because trade with Cuba is currently banned.**

The initial deal, which was expected to run through October 2021, allowed Cuban players to sign with clubs under similar rules as other international players from Japan and South Korea.

Players who were over 25 years old would be free to sign with organizations that paid a "release fee" to the Cuban club. Other players could sign minor league deals.

**Tony Clark**, executive director for the MLB Players Association, said in December the goal was to create a "safe, legal process for entry to our system" instead of defecting to the country while potentially using traffickers, per David K. Li and Mary Murray of NBC Sports.



The U.S. Department of Treasury signed off on the deal at the time.

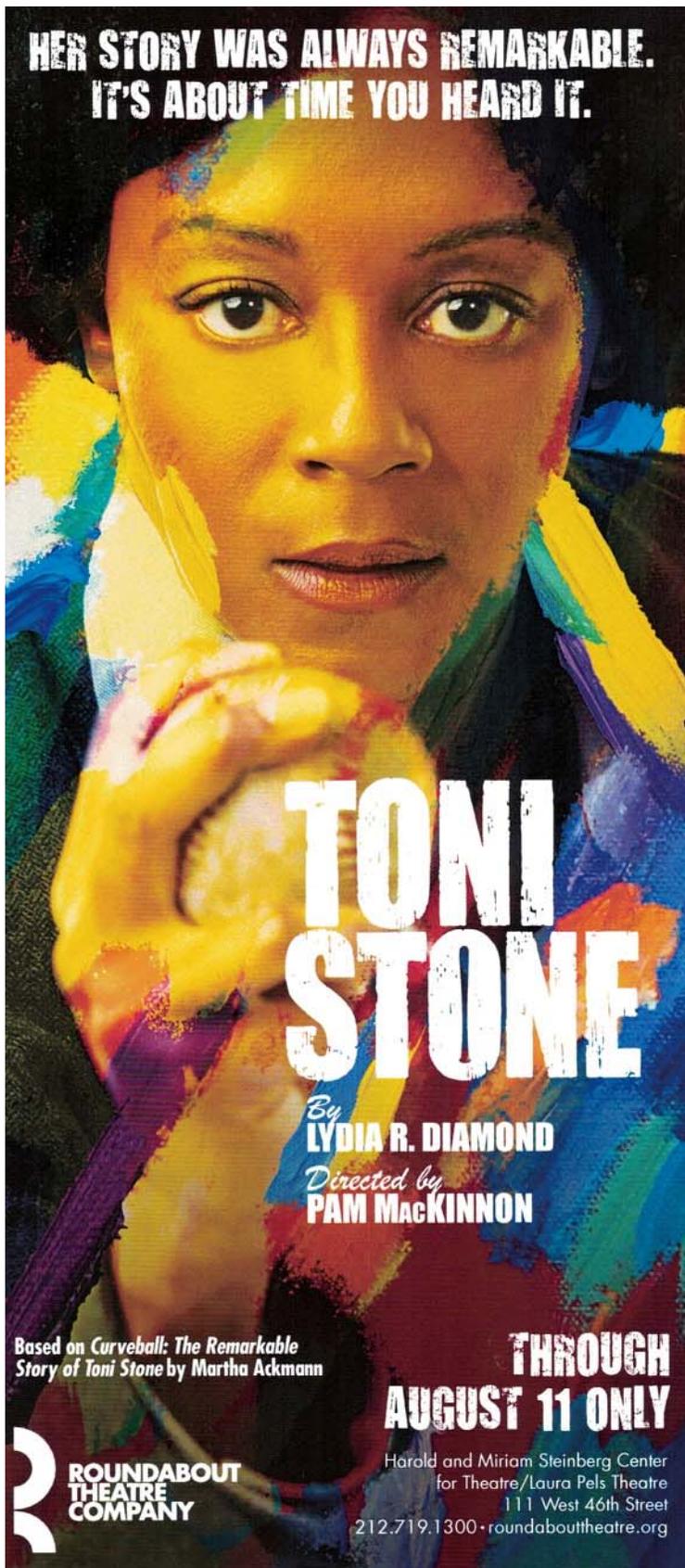
However, the Trump administration has now decided that the baseball federation is too closely aligned with the Cuban sports ministry. This is a change from the Barack Obama-era policy that decided the two were separate.

"Major League Baseball has been informed of the dangers of dealing with Cuba," a senior administration official said, per Carol E. Lee and Josh Lederman of NBC Sports.

Cuba has produced several notable players in recent years, including **Aroldis Chapman**, **Yasiel Puig** and **Yoenis Cespedes**. However, the new policy would have created more opportunities for younger players and allowed them to avoid the sometimes dangerous and costly process of defecting.

**Editor's note:** Currently Cubans **Tony Perez**, **Martin Dihigo**, **Jose Mendez** and **Cristobal Torriente** are in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

## Toni Stone is an Off-Broadway Hit



HER STORY WAS ALWAYS REMARKABLE.  
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU HEARD IT.

**TONI  
STONE**

By  
**LYDIA R. DIAMOND**

Directed by  
**PAM MacKINNON**

Based on *Curveball: The Remarkable Story of Toni Stone* by Martha Ackmann

**THROUGH  
AUGUST 11 ONLY**

ROUNDABOUT  
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**T**oni Stone is an encyclopedia of baseball stats. She's got a great arm. And she doesn't understand why she can't play with the boys. **Lydia Diamond's** new play knocks it out of the park with an intensely theatrical glimpse into the world of the first woman to go pro in the Negro Leagues. Obie Award winner **April Matthis** leads a bullpen of players crossing age, race and gender in this vibrant look at how we stay in the game and play our own way. **Pam McKinnon** directs, with movement by choreographer **Camille A. Brown**.

The play is based on *Curveball: The Remarkable Story of Toni Stone* by author **Martha Ackmann**, a journalist and Jerry Malloy NL Conference attendee. It debuted at off-Broadway's **Lauren Pels Theatre**.

The cast included Eric Berryman who played Stretch, Harvy Blanks (as Alberga, Toni's husband), Phillip James Brannon (King Tut), Daniel J. Bryant (Spec Bebop), Jonathan Burke (Elzie, Dance Captain), Toney Goins (Jimmy), Kenn E. Head (Millie), Ezra Knight (Woody) and **April Matthis** (Toni Stone).

"We enjoyed it. It was well written. **April Matthis** did a fine job as Toni Stone," claimed **Philip Ross** of Jamaica, New York. **Lee Lowenfish** added, "The star **April Matthis** (pictured below) is a great performer and the cast of eight men playing multiple roles (some of them women) are excellent."

**Branch Rickey** biographer Lee Low shared that the play has legs -- going to **Arena Theatre** in Washington, DC, this Fall, and to San Francisco's **Conservatory Theater** sometime next year.



For a 10-question interview with star performer Ms. Matthis go to: <https://www.broadwaybox.com/daily-scoop/introduce-yourselfie-toni-stone-star-april-matthis/>

A fixture of the off-Broadway scene, **April Matthis** recently was awarded the **Obie Award** for *Sustained Excellence of Performance*.

## Sunrises!

SEND YOUR FAVORITE NEGRO LEAGUER A BIRTHDAY CARD.

### SEPTEMBER

3rd – BILL GREASON – 95

5TH – BILLY RAY HAGGINS – 90

7th – RICKY MAROTO – 87

9th – JIM PROCTOR – 84

16th – OLLIE BRANTLEY – 88

21st – LOUIS CLARIZIO – 88

22nd – SWEET LOU JOHNSON – 87



### OCTOBER

7th – RAY MADDIX – 91

20TH – CLIFF LAYTON – 90

### NOVEMBER

4th – ERNIE

“SCHOOLBOY” JOHNSON  
→  
– 91

16th – RICHARD

“SKEETER” BANKS – 99

20th – BUDDY OWENS – 92

23rd – WILLIAM “BABA” RICHARDSON – 85

30th – ERNIE WESTFIELD – 80



## SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

Larry Lester - chair, [LarryLester42@gmail.com](mailto:LarryLester42@gmail.com)

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## Sunsets!

Sometimes players pass away without fanfare and recognition in the *Courier* newsletter. Thanks to Paul Turner from [ridgedasnak@aol.com](mailto:ridgedasnak@aol.com), the players listed below have gone on to the diamond in the sky. We welcome any updates or corrections. Thanks.

**JEREMIAH H. (JERRY) BENNETT**—1951—p, **Kansas City Monarchs**

Born: April 25, 1921 in Laurinburg, NC -- Died: August 16, **2012** in Kansas City, MO.

**ALFRED FRANKLIN (AL) CARTMILL, JR.**—1948-51, 1955—2b, **Kansas City Monarchs**

Born June 20, 1930 in Fort Madison, IA -- Died: July 13, **2016** in Lansing, MI.

**CLIFFORD JOE (POP) DuBOSE, SR.**—1958—utility, **Memphis Red Sox**

Born: July 16, 1937 in Montevallo, AL -- Died: October 2, **2013** in Montevallo, AL.

**WILLIAM (WEEDY) EDWARDS**—1944, 1947—p, **Kansas City Monarchs, Newark Eagles**

Born in St. Louis -- Died: date and place unknown.

**NEALE (BOBO) HENDERSON, III**—1949—of, ss, **Kansas City Monarchs**

Born: June 24, 1930 in Fort Smith, AR -- Died: December 27, **2018** in San Diego, CA.

**MAURICE (BABY FACE, LEFTY) PEATROS**—1944-47—1b, **Homestead Grays, Pittsburgh Crawfords (USL), Brooklyn Brown Dodgers (USL)**

Born: May 22, 1927 in Pittsburgh, PA -- Died: June 25, **2017** in San Jacinto, CA.

**SAMMIE T. (BAY) TAYLOR, JR.**—1953-54—c, **Kansas City Monarchs, Indianapolis Clowns**

Born: August 15, 1929 in East St. Louis, IL -- Died: March 9, **1963**, or April 8, **2019**, place unknown.

**ROBERT ROSEL WILLIAMS, SR.**—1954—ss, **Birmingham Black Barons**

Born: November 17, 1932 in 96, SC -- Died: June 28, **2018** in 96, SC.

**WILLIAM EPHRIAM (BILL, WILLIE) WHITE, SR.**—1952, 1957-59—of, **Kansas City Monarchs, Memphis Red Sox.**

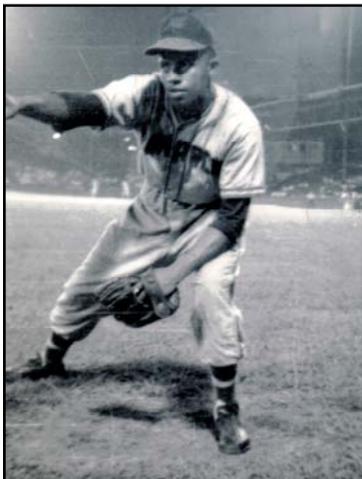
Born: June 8, 1934 in St. Louis, MO -- Died: date unknown in St. Louis, MO

## ROBERT "BOB, PEACHEAD" MITCHELL, 86,

died June 12, 2019 in Tampa, Florida.

An advocate for retroactive pensions for Negro League veterans Mitchell was born and raised in West Palm Beach, Florida.

After graduating from **Roosevelt High School** in 1951, he made a bid to play in the Florida Negro League, pitching for the **Florida Cubans**.



Mitchell joined the **Kansas City Monarchs** in 1954 and made his first mound appearance against the **Indianapolis Clowns**. He pitched four years for the Monarchs under managers; **Buck O'Neil, Jelly Taylor** and **Dizzy Dismukes**.

Upon retirement from baseball he got married and worked for **Pratt & Whitney Aircraft United Technologies**. In the interim, he never forgot his former teammates and in 1993, Mitchell successfully lobbied Major League Baseball for a pension plan for Black players who were excluded after 1947, the year of Jackie Robinson's debut. In the process, about 85 former players were granted an annual pension.

According to *Wikipedia*, Mitchell persevered and continued the fight for those who continued playing in the Negro Leagues after 1947. As a result, additional Black players became eligible to receive supplementary financial assistance from the MLB in 2004, including survivor benefits for widows and supplementary financial assistance. As of late 2003, forty-one Negro League veterans were drawing the annual \$10,000 pension while supplying health insurance for an additional 34 N.L. players and spouses, included in the separate 1993 deal.

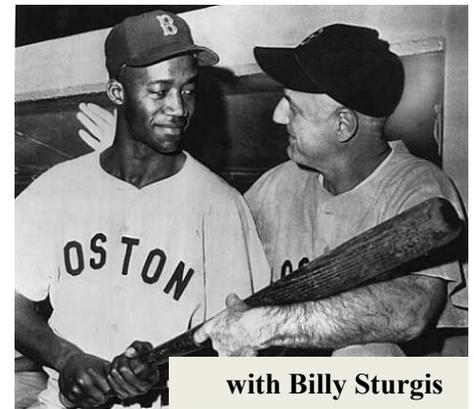
Mitchell received his due recognition in 2008, when he was selected by the **Arizona Diamondbacks** in the MLB Special Draft of surviving Negro League players. Hall of Famer and **San Diego Padres** and **New York Yankee** outfielder **Dave Winfield** hatched the idea to have this draft in San Diego, while MLB clubs each selected a former Negro League veteran.

In the final chapter of his life, Mitchell settled in Tampa Bay, Florida, and took an active role in teaching our youth the essentials of reading, writing and arithmetic as well as moral values and the importance of a Christian faith.

## ELIJAH JERRY "PUMPSIE" GREEN, 85,

died July 17, 2019 in San Leandro, CA.

In 1959, Major League Baseball completed its TWELVE-STEP PROGRAM, as it recovered from behavioral challenges of signing players of color, when the Boston Red Sox signed Pumpsie



Green. Since the signing of Jackie Robinson twelve years earlier, Green became the first Black player to play for the Red Sox, the last pre-expansion Major League club to integrate. Although Green never played in the Negro Leagues, we want to pay tribute to him for his contributions as a barrier breaker.

Green was born in Boley, Oklahoma, the eldest of five children. One brother, **Cornell Green**, played safety for the **Dallas Cowboys**, while another brother **Credell**, played football at the University of Washington and was drafted by the **Green Bay Packers**.

Green made his MLB debut on July 21, 1959, against the **Chicago White Sox** at Comiskey Park, entering the game in the top of the eighth as a pinch runner for **Vic Wertz** and played shortstop in the bottom of the eighth. He started the next day at second base, batting second and going 0-for-3. His first MLB hit came in his fourth game, on July 28 in Cleveland when he singled off of **Jim Perry**. That same day, **Earl Wilson** made his MLB debut becoming the Red Sox's second Black player. Pumpsie Green played 50 games for the 1959 Red Sox, batting .233.

The following year, 1960, he played in 133 games, 69 games at second base and 41 at shortstop; while batting .242. His best season was probably 1961, posting career highs in home runs (6), RBIs (27) doubles (12) and stolen bases (4).

After the 1962 season, Green was traded to the **N.Y. Mets**. He played his final MLB game on September 26, 1963. In a five-season Major League career, Green was a .246 hitter with 13 home runs and 74 RBIs in 344 games.

In April, 2012, he threw out the ceremonial first pitch before **Jackie Robinson Day** at **Fenway Park**, and also attended Fenway's 100th anniversary celebrations later that month. In May of 2018, Green was inducted into the **Boston Red Sox Hall of Fame**.