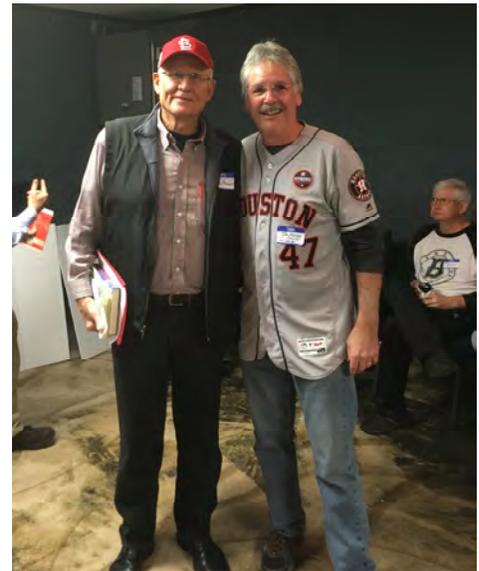




February 3, 2018 Bryant, Arkansas

The Robinson-Kell SABR chapter met at the First Southern Baptist Church of Bryant at 12:00 p.m. There were 23 members and guests were present.

Former St. Louis Cardinal pitcher Dick Hughes was the guest speaker and was accompanied by Ann, his wife of 54 years. He also brought along several photos and plaques from his playing career to display. He began by discussing his early life of how his family moved from his birthplace of Stephens, Arkansas, to Traskwood, Arkansas, where they lived with his grandparents near the railroad tracks and how hobos would mark their house because they knew his grandmother was friendly to them and would feed them as they came through. After they moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, he remembered how he and his brother would get in free to the Texas League games because his father was in charge of turning on the lights for the games and how his childhood hero was Bob Feller.



Mr. Hughes reminisced about leading Byrd High in Shreveport to their only state title and how he once threw 33 innings in one week, something "they would never allow a kid to do today". He told about getting paid to play for the first time when in high school he played in a tournament in Vivian, Louisiana. In addition to \$6 and a tank a gas, he received a gift from the crowd when they passed the hat after he hit two homers, a triple, and a single. He did not recall the amount of the gift but did remember that one of his teammates borrowed his Ted Williams model bat and broke it during the game.



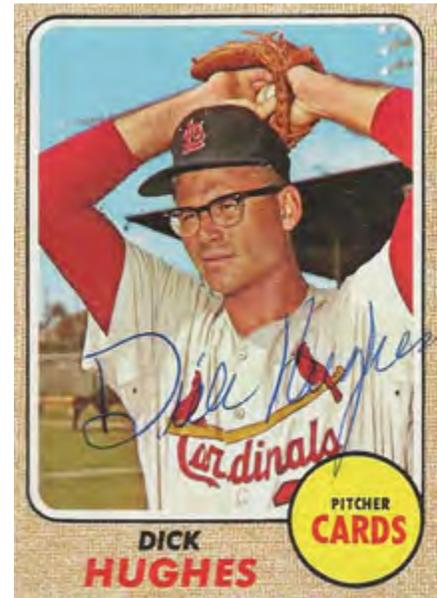
After two years at the University of Arkansas, he signed with the Cardinals and began his career in Keokuk, Iowa, in the D League. Mr. Hughes remembered being there only three weeks but that his first game was against the Iowa State Penitentiary team, which was made up of hardened criminals and that the field was

surrounded by guards with Tommy guns. He joked that he wasn't sure whether to try and strike them out or let them hit the ball and that he hoped it wasn't a home-and-home series. A teammate on that team was Jack Hamilton, who later threw the pitch that shortened the career of Tony Conigliaro.

After time in Winnipeg and Portland, Mr. Hughes said that he "found himself" in 1963 in York, Pennsylvania, when he changed to a no-windup delivery which greatly decreased his walks and increased his strikeouts. He recalled being added to the Cardinals forty-man roster following the season and how he was about to be called up in 1964 when he was struck in the arm by a line drive and how St. Louis called up his friend Gordie Richardson instead.

After reaching the majors September in 1966, Mr. Hughes told how he entered his first game in relief in Pittsburgh. He pitched three scoreless innings to end the game and got the win when Tim McCarver singled in two runs in the eighth. He recalled how nice the Pirate announcers were to him in the post-game interview and how they let him call his wife and his parents.

He recounted how it was exhilarating to pitch in the 1967 World Series, where both of his starts came in Boston and how in 2017 he and Ann had attended the 50th anniversary of the title in St. Louis and were driven around the field in Mustang convertibles behind the Clydesdales. He also spoke of how he would never forget seeing a sportswriter hold up a ball for Bob Gibson following the 1968 season with "1.12" written on it. Mr. Hughes believes that this record will never be broken and went on to speak on how competitive, confident, and smart that Gibson was as a pitcher.



In a tale from a bygone era, Mr. Hughes spoke of how he bought a 7mm rifle from his wife's cousin in Atlanta in 1967 and how he carried it slung over his shoulder in the cab, to the hotel, to the bus, and onto the plane for every stop of a three-city road trip to Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and New York. He said that after that Orlando Cepeda began calling him "Sniper" and that he still owns the rifle and has killed many deer with it over the years.

Mr. Hughes spoke of how Stan Musial twice called him in during the 1967 season and gave him \$1,500 raises to bring his salary to \$13,000 for a season in which he won 16 games and how the following year they doubled his salary but he hurt his arm and won only two games. When asked how hard he threw, he replied that he didn't know because back then "they couldn't fix your arm or tell you how fast you threw". He joked that he was glad to finish runner-up to Tom Seaver for the 1967 Rookie of the Year, because "if I had won I would have a lot more to live up to".

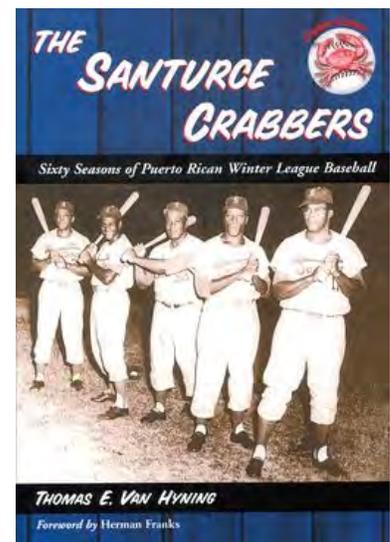
Fred Worth asked what it was like facing Hank Aaron, who Hughes struck out seven times in 15 at-bats. Mr. Hughes said they once heard that Aaron hated facing him and told how he did give up a homer to Aaron on a good slider low and away that Aaron hit out of the park with one arm. He said that later he hung a slider over the plate but that Aaron popped it up. He also told how he liked facing free-swingers like Rico Carty (who was 0 for 14 against him) and how Rusty Staub was tough on him (5 for 9 with two homers, two doubles and two walks).



After spending a couple years scouting in Arkansas, Tennessee, and Mississippi, where he signed “nobody worth anything”, Mr. Hughes worked on his farm, finally retiring in 2000. He said he spends his time now involved at his church where he serves as a deacon and leads the music and leads the Stephens Community Outreach which supplies needy families from the Arkansas Food Bank.

Following his talk, Madison McEntire presented Mr. Hughes with a copy of Paul Dickson’s biography of Leo Durocher and a small donation from the group to help with his travel expenses. Accepting the donation in his Cardinal hat, Mr. Hughes said that the money would be donated to the Stephens Community Outreach. Before leaving, Mr. Hughes, accompanied by Ann on the piano, entertained the group with a wonderful version of the old gospel song “One Day at a Time”.

Tom Van Hying followed Mr. Hughes’ talk with a discussion of Dick Hughes’ time with the Santurce Crabbers of the Puerto Rico Winter League from the Hughes biography that Tom wrote for the SABR bio project which was published in 2017. Tom began by explaining how he came to be a fan of the Crabbers and the Puerto Rico Winter League. His family moved to Puerto Rico in September 1956, when he was two years old when his father accepted a job as an economist. From age 6 to 12, Tom lived in the Santurce section of San Juan and most of his neighborhood friends were Santurce Crabbers fans. He recalled how his dad got to see Roberto Clemente play a mid-December 1956 game for Santurce and face Caguas pitcher Sandy Koufax and how he became a diehard Santurce fan beginning in 1961-62 when Bob Gibson pitched for the Crabbers. Tom recalled that when he was in the fifth and sixth grade that one of Ruben Gomez’s sons was his classmate and that Gomez came to their school and pitched for both teams in their sandlot games.



Tom went on to talk about the Santurce lineup which included notable major leaguers Orlando Cepeda, Tony Perez, Paul Blair and Dave May. The team was managed by Earl Weaver and would win the Puerto Rico Winter League title by sweeping Arecibo and then besting Ponce in six games as Paul Blair's three run homer off John Boozer gave the Crabbers the title. Dick Hughes won one game against Ponce and split two decisions in the finals. Tom also discussed his Santurce Crabber "Dream Team", many of which he saw play during this time in Puerto Rico.

DICK HUGHES: SANTURCE CRABBERS

- 1966-67 Santurce Cangrejeros (Crabbers) (45-26), Puerto Rico (PR) Winter League. Hughes: 11-2, 17 starts, 126 innings, 79 strikeouts-to-26 walks, three shutouts—third best in league. Earl Weaver managed Santurce to the league championship.
- 1966-67 Santurce starters: Juan Pizarro (12-3, 2.08 ERA); Hughes (11-2, 1.79); Ruben Gomez (6-7, 2.11); Darrell Osteen (5-7, 1.83). Spot Starters: William de Jesus (2-4, 1.76); Jose Geigel (2-0, 2.45). Relief specialist: Ted Davidson (7-3, 1.52). Israel Torres pitched two games.

DICK HUGHES: PRO BASEBALL CAREER PITCHING STATISTICS, 1958-to-1969

- MLB, 1966-1968: 20-9, .690, 2.79 ERA, 68 games, 34 starts, 13 complete games (CG), 4 SHO, 8 saves, 307 innings, 221 hits, 29 homers, 230 strikeouts, 76 walks
- Minors, 1958-66, 1969: 77-63, .550, 3.63, 257 games, 183 starts, 61 CG, 16 SHO, two saves, 1,328 innings, 1,147 hits, 98 homers, 1,055 strikeouts, 697 walks
- Winter ball, 1963-64/1966-67: 16-9, .640, 2.35, 36 games, 34 starts, 9 CG, 3 SHO, 232.2 innings, 174 strikeouts, 70 walks

SANTURCE CRABBERS DREAM TEAM

- **Manager: Earl Weaver. Coaches: Vern Benson, Herman Franks, Mako Oliveras, Frank Robinson**
- **Catchers: Roy Campanella, Josh Gibson, Elrod Hendricks, Jerry Willard**
- **Infielders: Orlando Cepeda, Ron Cey, Buster Clarkson, Jim Gilliam, Tony Perez, Bill White, Robin Yount and Don Zimmer**
- **Outfielders: Don Baylor, Paul Blair, Roberto Clemente, Willie Mays, Ruben Sierra and Bob Thurman**
- **DH: Willard Brown or Reggie Jackson**
- **Utility infield/outfield: Juan Beniquez**
- **Pinch-runner: Billy Hamilton**

Blue denotes Hall of Famer

SANTURCE CRABBERS DREAM TEAM

- **Starters: Luis Cabrera, Bob Gibson, Ruben Gomez, Alva "Bobo" Holloman, Dick Hughes, Sam Jones, Sam McDowell, Jim Palmer, Juan Pizarro and Luis Tiant**
- **Middle Relievers: Roger Moret, Darrell Osteen, Satchel Paige and Turk Wendell**
- **Lefty Specialists: Ramon Hernandez and J.C. Romero**
- **Middle Relief-to-Closer Option: Willie Hernandez (1984 AL Cy Young and MVP)**
- **Nasty Boys: Tom Henke, Troy Percival, Lee Smith, Billy Wagner, John Wetteland**

Blue denotes Hall of Famer

Terry Turner then gave a brief presentation on George Kell entitled *The Glove and the Voice*. He started with how at the suggestion of member Jim Rasco we added Kell to the chapter name to go with that of Brooks Robinson. Jim had pointed out that both were Arkansas third basemen and both entered the Hall of Fame in 1983.

Among the items that Terry mentioned.....

- When Kell was a junior at Swifton High School his English teacher was Margaret Terry, who eventually became Jim Rasco's mother.

- When Kell was 14 he played in two tournaments in one weekend in northeast Arkansas. In the kid's tournament, Swifton won with Kell playing shortstop and winning a new glove for being named MVP. Later that same weekend, he played shortstop for the men's team and won another glove as the MVP of the second-place Swifton team.
- Kell signed with the Dodgers in 1940 and played two seasons in Newport, Arkansas, in Class D. In 1943, at the age of 20, Kell hit .396 for Lancaster of the B League to lead all of organized baseball.



- After three seasons with the Philadelphia A's, where he never hit over .300, Kell was traded by Connie Mack to the Detroit Tigers. Kell then hit over .300 for seven straight years and won the 1949 batting title by edging out Ted Williams, .3429 to .3427.
- Kell's last two seasons were with Baltimore in 1956 and 1957 where he was a teammate of a young Brooks Robinson.

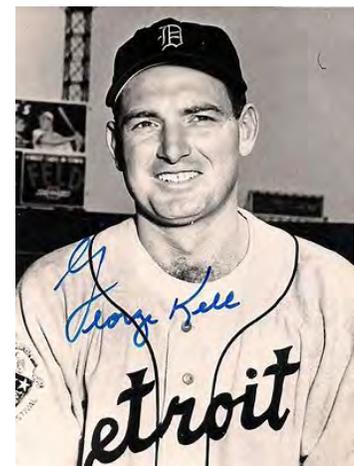
- In his career, Kell led the American League in putouts and assists four times and in fielding percentage seven times. Unfortunately, the Gold Glove Award was not given out until his final season.



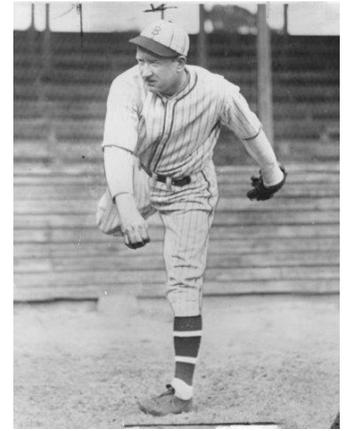
- Kell signed with CBS in 1958 to do the pre-game show for the Game of the Week. It was the only national broadcast and had Dizzy Dean as the star broadcaster. In 1959, Kell signed a five-year contract to do radio for the Tigers and the following year when they needed a new play-by-play announcer they asked Kell to pick his new partner. He suggested Ernie Harwell, who would work for the Tigers for 42 years and be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

- In 1965, Kell agreed to serve as the color guy for 45 Tiger home TV games per season, a schedule he would keep until he retired in 1996.

- George Kell died in his sleep on March 24, 2009 and the age of 86.



Fred Worth followed with a two-part presentation that he entitled *Strikeouts and Sepulchers*. In the first part, he explored the career of pitcher Dazzy Vance. Fred focused on Vance's dominance in the years 1922 (Vance's first full season) thru 1928 when Vance led the majors in strikeouts five times (and also lead the NL the other two seasons). Fred illustrated that Vance often far outpaced the second-best strikeout pitcher despite pitching fewer innings. Vance struck out 1,338 batters in these years, far ahead of second place Burleigh Grimes (689 strikeouts). As a percentage of league average, Vance has three of the top seven strikeouts per nine innings in MLB history.



Dazzy Vance Strikeouts

- 1924
- Led MLB
- 65.82% more than AL #1 in 30-2/3 more IP - 2nd greatest % margin ever
- 94.07% more than NL #2 in 2-2/3 fewer IP - 2nd greatest % margin ever
- 204.65% more than NL #3 (262-86) in 89-1/3 more IP - greatest % margin ever

Dazzy Vance Strikeouts

- Strikeouts per 9 IP - as % of league average

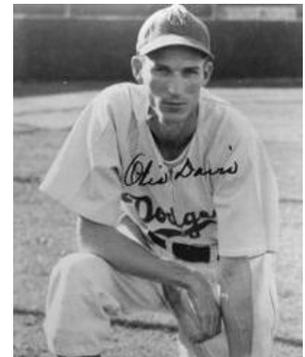
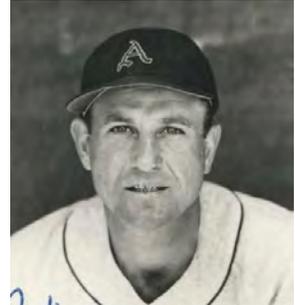
Rube Waddell	1902	269.29%
Dazzy Vance	1925	263.16%
Dazzy Vance	1926	259.03%
Cy Seymour	1898	251.25%
Bob Feller	1937	249.59%
Johnny Vander Meer	1941	245.12%
Dazzy Vance	1924	239.06%

In the second part, Fred gave an update on his most recent grave-hunting trip. On a trip thru Texas, Nevada, Arizona, and California, Fred visited the final resting place of 149 former major league players (bringing his total to 5,728), which included six Hall of Famers (giving him a total of 140).



The final presentation was given by Jim Yeager, who continued his series *Backroads and Ballplayers: Baseball in Rural Arkansas*. This segment was entitled *A Cup of Coffee* and focused on rural Arkansans who appeared briefly in the majors. Jim identified 13 Arkansans whose major league career consisted of just one game. Among them were:

- Sidney Wright Benton, who faced two batters in relief for the Cardinals on April 18, 1922, and walked them both.
- William D. Bradford, who faced nine batters for the Kansas City A's on April 24, 1956, two of whom got hits. He allowed a homer to each of them and is the only pitcher in MLB history to allow more than one hit with all career hits against him being homers.
- Joseph Henry Brown, who pitched one game for the White Sox on May 17, 1927. He gave up one walk, surrounded by two doubles, and failed to get anyone out. All three scored.
- Charles Edward Daniels, who relieved Jim Bunning of the Tigers on September 21, 1957. He entered in the third inning and pitched well until he allowed a double followed by a home run in the fifth.
- Otis Alan Davis, who pinch-ran (and later scored) for Eddie Stanky of the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 22, 1946.



During the discussion of one player on the list (who will not be identified here), Mark Blaeuer asked, "Didn't he have a brother who was a serial killer?". Sure enough, someone looked it up and it was true. It's amazing the things you learn at a SABR meeting!



Jim also noted four Arkansans who appeared in just two major league games and Orville Armbrust, who pitched in three games for the 1934 Washington Senators. Armbrust pitched seven innings and was the winning pitcher against New York on September 30 in what turned out to be Babe Ruth's final game with the Yankees. In the second inning, he gave up Lou Gehrig's 49th and final homer of the 1934 season, the 348th of Gehrig's career.

ARMBRUST TAMES YANKS
WASHINGTON, Sept. 30.—Orville
Armbrust, rookie hurler from Chat-
tanoooga, checked the Yanks, 5-3 in
the final contest of the 1934 season
today, with 10,000 in attendance.
NEW YORK WASHINGTON

Following Jim’s presentation, Mike Dugan gave a quick review of the events scheduled for March 23 and 24 in Hot Springs, which included the dedication of two Baseball Trail Plaques honoring Bill Dickey and Lefty Grove, a panel discussion featuring Al “The Mad Hungarian” Hrabosky and Fergie Jenkins, a ceremony honoring the 100th anniversary of Babe Ruth’s prolific spring training home run at Whittington Park, and panel discussions *Baseball in Hot Springs* (featuring five historians who created the Hot Springs Historic Baseball Trail) and *The Life of the Sultan of Swat* (featuring three generations of the Babe Ruth family and Babe Ruth historians Bill Jenkinson and Tim Reid).

Mike Anderson won the drawing for the door prize, a Durham Bulls hat donated by Jim Yeager.

