



Public Relations Communication
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- A Celebration of Historical Significance – “Honoring an Effort and Preserving a Legacy”

Baseball in Living Color presents an original “Legends of the Negro Leagues” Autographed Trading Card Presentation. This unique and limited collection of memorabilia was created to pay tribute to baseball’s many unsung heroes. We celebrate the effort of fifty-nine men whose combined baseball careers saw appearances on twenty team rosters, spanning a period of more than 4 decades. Their passion for our national pastime and aspirations on the segregated baselines of Negro Leagues Baseball, laid the groundwork upon which Jackie Robinson broke Major League Baseball’s color barrier and supported the long arduous integration process that followed. It has been our mission to see that this effort is rightfully honored, and their precious legacy preserved. This team of men are some of the kindest, most respectful, and gracious professionals that I have ever met. Throughout the past twenty-three years, we’ve celebrated some incredible moments together and mourned great losses as well. This is the story behind the relationships that made all of this possible.

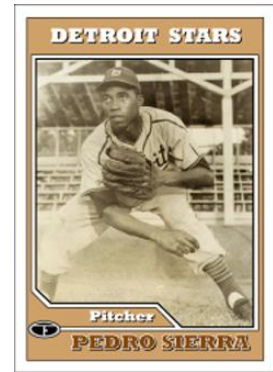


Our story took root in 1996, when a group of family members set out to start a trading card production company. Chris, John, and I developed and executed a plan with the support of Sandy, Debbie, and a small group of investors, to establish Trading Faces and “The Power of Trading Card Marketing!” We were in business for a little more than two years when, in the summer of 1998, we met Pedro Sierra. He sought to have a trading card created to celebrate his long and eventful baseball career. He explained that he had left Cuba in 1954 with intentions to play professional baseball in the United States. Later that same year, Pedro was hurling the pill for the Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League. He spent the ’55 and ’56 season pitching for the Detroit Stars. A young man with his heart set on a career in professional baseball, could not have imagined how these experiences would impact and shape his future. Relationships with his coaches, teammates and competitors grew stronger as the years passed.



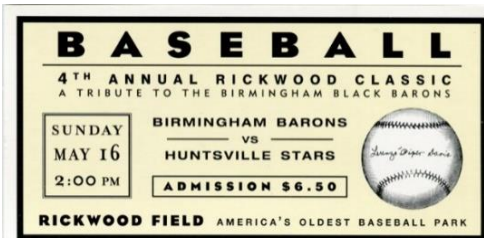
Sierra’s passion for everything baseball propelled him to fulfill his dream. Throughout his multi-decade career, Pedro pitched for many teams. Following his two seasons with the Stars, Pedro, served in the United States Army and proudly pitched for his unit. Upon exiting service, he spent the better part of a decade pitching for minor league organizations in both the United States and Canada. At the age of 33, Pedro got “the call” and appeared with Major League Baseball’s Washington Senators. He took the mound at RFK Stadium to pitch batting practice before what would be the Senators final game of their 1971 season in Washington DC. We were huge Senators fans in those days and couldn’t wait to hear more about his experiences.

Throughout the remainder of 1998, we met with Pedro on many occasions and spent countless hours talking everything baseball. Captivated by his Negro Leagues experiences and reminiscing, we listened to stories of fierce competition, barnstorming, PC-Ball, All-Star games, and interactions with some of the most revered personalities and competitors of that day. He would describe each moment as if he were reliving it in front of us – names, places, background, and circumstances in great detail, clear as day. We also scanned old photos and images and designed several marketing materials for which he had great plans. The trading cards and postcards we created made it easy for Pedro to engage, encourage, and inspire the youth at his community center. At venues where memorabilia were sold, Pedro did well, displaying a variety of trading cards and memorabilia that showcased his career. He loved the



work we were doing for him and eagerly shared it with a group of his old baseball friends and teammates. I was surprised to discover that Mamie “Peanut” Johnson was part of this group. She was one of three women that played in the Negro American League in the early 1950’s. By summer’s end, we had established a wonderful relationship with all of them and were making trading cards for each as well. I knew they were happy with their new trading cards, but I felt that there was more that we could do to highlight one of the most meaningful and cherished moments in their lifetime of accomplishments. The idea of creating a

tribute to honor their contribution to our nation’s past time played on my mind. How this tribute would materialize would soon become clear.



In the early part of 1999 I began working on a few trading cards for Willie Lee and James “Jake” Sanders, Negro League Veterans that lived in Birmingham, Alabama. Mr. Lee had begun his baseball career with the Birmingham Black Barons in 1956 and throughout the many years that followed remained close and active with fellow Black Barons that settled down in Birmingham. He was excited about the trading

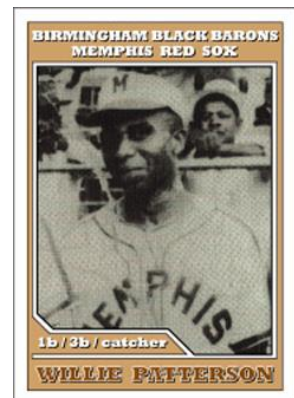
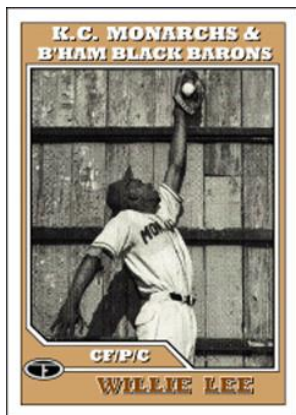
cards that we were creating for him and believed some of his friends in town would be interested in having trading cards made for them as well, so he invited me and Pedro to meet with them. As it would turn out, the 4th Annual Rickwood Classic, a tribute to surviving Negro American League Birmingham Black Barons, was set to take place on May 16. The MiLB Birmingham Barons, wearing throw-back Birmingham Black Barons uniforms, were scheduled to play the Huntsville Stars at a venue steeped in baseball history like none other, “Rickwood Field,” the oldest active ballpark in America. Pedro was quite familiar with this venue, and although I had never heard of Rickwood, the thought of attending this celebration was very exciting. So, we went!

We arrived in Birmingham, Alabama in the early hours of Saturday, May 15 and headed straight for the ballpark located on the corner of 12th St. W. and Second Ave. W. As we approached this vintage, early 20th century structure I felt its aura of historical significance and greatness. We headed for the main entrance, passed through the turnstiles, walked up the access ramp and into the stands. Eyes wide open, we scanned the bleachers, the infield, and the outfield. A grand scoreboard set high above the fence, just beyond the left-center field warning track. Groundskeepers were preparing the field for the coming celebration as Pedro, and I moved to explore the park. We entered the playing field through the gate on the first-base side behind home plate. Pedro made a beeline to the pitcher's mound, and I reached for my 35mm camera to document this memorable return to his workplace of more than forty plus years prior. He gazed towards home-plate, as if a signal were being sent, looked into the stands to acknowledge his cheering fans, turned to me, and smiled... that said it all. We continued exploring the park, capturing its beauty on film.



We returned to Rickwood on Sunday, a few hours before the start of the game to mingle with the Black Barons veterans on hand to be acknowledged and celebrated. Country music icon and Memphis Red Sox/Birmingham Black Barons pitcher Charley Pride was front and center to kick off the festivities with the singing of our national anthem. The entire affair was a sight to behold. Teams of young men in their early twenties, engaged in an effort to establish a professional baseball career were visibly inspired by the honorees in attendance; men that occupied positions upon this historic venue nearly half a century earlier.

After the game, Pedro and I sat and spoke with several of the honored attendees. We showed them some of the trading cards that we had been making. It became apparent really quickly that they were interested in ordering trading cards for themselves. Every professional baseball player, dreams of having his career recognized, his glory days, athletic prowess and achievements memorialized on a professional trading card. Before parting ways, I shared our intentions of creating a unique tribute to Negro Leagues Veterans. A plan to assemble a team and create a trading card presentation that would showcase their collective experiences. These former Black Barons responded favorably, prompting me to schedule a return trip to Birmingham. Throughout the remainder of 1999 and the start of 2000, I worked with a several of these men to fill their trading cards orders.



The first members to join our official team roster included my friend Pedro Sierra, Gordon Hopkins, and Al Burrows. Not long after, Jim Robinson from New York, Robert Scott from New Jersey, and Jimmy Dean from Philadelphia, PA joined the team. With a small team of six committed, it was time to hit the road, share the plan, and complete the roster.

Throughout the next two years, we traveled many thousands of miles and put together an awesome team.



In early June of 2000, I made that return trip to Birmingham to pitch the “Legends of the Negro Leagues” tribute to a much larger group of Birmingham Black Barons Alumni. Donnie Harris, one of the younger more ambitious members of the group, was particularly excited about this opportunity, and kindly secured the conference room at the local public library. I explained that this tribute would have an official website dedicated to honoring each of them, and their historic significance as a team. Each team member would be showcased in an all-inclusive presentation of personally autographed trading cards, packaged, and made available to the public. Our end game was to preserve their legacy, and in doing so, generate revenue needed to finance our effort and reward participating team members.

A couple hours later, we emerged teammates, with the next chapter of the story to be written. I felt a great sense of purpose in that moment, part of something extremely special and couldn’t wait to get started. Most of our founding members were in their 60’s to early 70’s, many were already well into their 80’s and there was no time to waste. I planned to return to Birmingham again in August to record personal interviews and take photographs.



I departed Birmingham with a map by my side and some 640 miles between me and my next destination, Great Western Press, located in Dallas, Texas. Some say that everything is bigger in Texas and in this case, I would certainly have to agree. This facility was huge. I was given the grand tour, shown product that was regularly produced for the big trading card companies like Topps, Fleer, and Upper Deck, and discussed a list of options that might work well to create our product. I left impressed, confident that we had established a viable consideration for our trading card production.

Next stop was Graphic Conversions, another trading card production facility located in Chicago, IL. Before I was too far down the road, I altered my course, added another destination and was heading to Kansas City, MO. Only 575 miles laid between me and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. Just had to go.



The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, founded by a group of former Negro Leaguers, led by the legendary John “Buck” O’Neil had relocated its treasure to this 10,000 square foot. Structure at 18th and Vine in 1997, just three years prior to my visit. I was really excited to tour the museum. Every picture, sculpture, and piece of memorabilia on display revealed a beautiful story of its own; all together they revealed the wondrous nature of the Negro Leagues. This was an educational experience for me to say the least. I was inspired and excited to speak with museum leadership about our tribute plans. We had a nice meeting and as I left the room, much to my surprise, I met Mr. John “Buck” O’Neil. He had been standing in the hallway and had overheard our conversation. He was delighted by our plans and gave me a kind endorsement, a pat on the back, and words of encouragement. I can’t

explain how much that meant to me in that moment. As it would turn out, Mr. O’Neil and I, over the course of the years that followed, crossed paths on several occasions. Of course, I remembered him, who wouldn’t. He was always the centerpiece of any gathering. What always amazed me is that he remembered me, by name. He always greeted me with a kindred spirit and sincerity reminiscent of the day we first met. “Buck” O’Neil was indeed a class act.

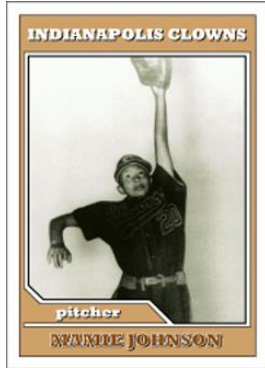
Before daybreak, I was on the road to Chicago, IL. 530 miles to the north to make that planned stop at Graphic Conversions (GC). They also worked for the big trading card companies, producing product and point of purchase displays as well. Greeted with open arms, I was given the grand tour of their facility. Impressed with their product and their operation, I left confident that GC was another option for us.

Before returning home, a quick stop in Grand Rapids, Michigan was on my agenda. I was able to reach out to Mr. Ted Rasberry, a Negro Leagues Baseball veteran and owner/manager of two Negro American League teams, the Detroit Stars, and the Kansas City Monarchs and he agreed to meet with me the following day. At that time, Ted was 86 years old, still working, and quite active in the community. We had a brief and meaningful meeting/interview. He kindly joined our tribute team that afternoon, and before parting ways, agreed that I could return later for a more thorough interview and photo session. As I loaded the car, I looked back to see him standing there on his porch – a big smile on his face. I reached into the back seat for my camera, raised it up and shot a picture to document the moment. We waived and we parted ways. Just a few weeks after I left Grand Rapids, his hometown dedicated a baseball field in his honor; Ted Rasberry Field. To this day, I am grateful for having met Ted and for taking that picture before I drove away. It was the only time I would ever meet with him. Mr. Rasberry died several months later at the age of 87.



During the first week of August, I made a spontaneous trip back to Birmingham, Alabama to rehearse my interview process on location. My ten-year-old daughter Cara convinced me that she needed to go with me, to be my copilot and assistant. I brought her along and it turned out that this experience was one she

would always treasure. She made friends with Willie “Pat” Patterson on that trip and to this day remembers him well. We interviewed a few of our team members, took pictures, and after a few days, felt established a decent protocol. It was now time to return home and prepare for the big trip. Cara was also tired, homesick, and wanted to get home to play with her friends.



Preparing for the big trip, I took a ride to Landover, just outside of Washington DC, to visit our friend Mamie “Peanut” Johnson. She had a little store that sold Negro Leagues jackets and throwback Jerseys and I was looking to buy a jersey to carry along on the trip. While I was there, I told her all about our plans to build a tribute to “Legends of the Negro Leagues,” and then invited her to be a member of those that we would honor by simply joining our team. Having her onboard would showcase a special moment in history when she, and teammate Connie Morgan, two of three women to play baseball in the Negro American League, made their debut as Indianapolis Clowns for the 1954 season. Toni Stone, the first woman signed by Indianapolis

in 1953, left the Clowns to cover second base for the Kansas City Monarchs in 1954. Mamie explained that she was interested in the work we were doing, however she was already working on a book deal and was unsure if this would cause any conflict. I told her she had an open invitation. I bought a really nice wool Birmingham Black Baron Jersey from her and was on my way.



In the days that followed, I picked up a few major league baseballs, and a couple of Louisville Sluggers and a box of mini bats to carry along. Throughout the trip, many of our “Legends” would need to wear the BBB jersey and hold these Louisville Slugger bats for their trading card photos. The jersey and the bats were autographed during the trip and today occupy a special place in our storied memorabilia collection.

On August 25, I rolled out of Silver Spring, MD. heading south with my old friend Jacob for what turned out to be an 18-day adventure. We would be on the road for 18 days, drove more than 5400 miles, used rest areas for power naps between stops, and ate more fast food than anybody should. We acquired enough participants to bring our team total to fifty-nine members. At each member’s home, we performed written and video interviews, and shot enough 35mm pictures to adequately document the trip and to provide photo images for our trading cards.

Our first stop was Roanoke, VA., where we signed on Larry LeGrande. From there we crisscrossed Tennessee – met with Eugene Williams in Oak Ridge, TN., Sam Thompson in Knoxville, TN., Jim Zapp, Clinton “Butch” McCord, and Sidney Bunch in Nashville, Frank “Hoss” Thompson, in Shelbyville, TN., and Joe B. Scott in Memphis, TN. We then crossed the Mississippi River to St. Louis, MO. and signed Cowan Hyde. From there it was due south to Pine Bluff, AR. to add Ollie Brantley to our growing roster.





Jake and I met Ray Haggins and Carl Holden in Huntsville, AL., and continued south to sign up Laymon Ramsey, William Powell, Jake Sanders, James Bolden, William Greason, Eligah Gilliam, Louis Gillis, Lyman Bostock, Acie Griggs, Willie Young and Willie Patterson at locations all across Birmingham and its neighboring cities and towns. We returned to Rickwood Field to meet with Donnie Harris, Tony Lloyd, Jessie Mitchell, John Mitchell, Cleophus Brown, Clifford DuBose, Henry Elmore, Willie Lee, Eugene Scruggs, and Archie Young.

Frank Evans was waiting for us in Loachapoka, AL. We made a stop in Mobile, AL. to pitch the tribute to Frank Marsh, on our way to visit Herb Simpson and Curtis Johnson in New Orleans, LA., and Ulysses Redd a little west of there in Baton Rouge. We had a long way to go to cover the leads we had across Florida. Bob Mitchell's place was the first stop in Tampa, FL., Willie Williams in Sarasota, Jim Colzie in Key Biscayne, Juan Armenteros, Paul Casanova, Francisco Herrera, Leroy Cromartie, and Eli Williams, in and around Miami, and on our way north we picked up Eugene White in Jacksonville, FL. We caught up with Carl Long outside Durham, NC., Tommy Sampson in Elizabeth City, NC., Sam Allan and Walter Lundy on the outskirts of Norfolk, VA. Before packing it in and returning home.



Sorting through all that we had gathered during this trip, processing, and using it to create our tribute. Throughout the fall of 2000, our days were spent developing film, identifying, and assigning photos, processing interviews, writing mini biographies, building databases, designing our website, and with the help of friends and a few private contractors, creating the html code needed to build our website and establish our presence on the internet.

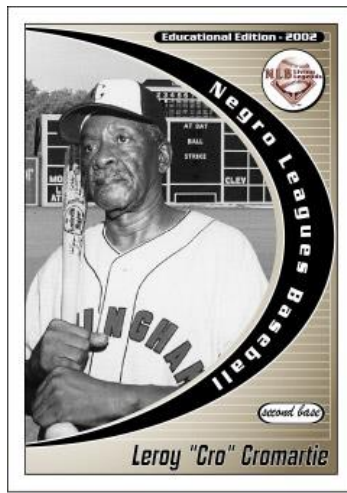
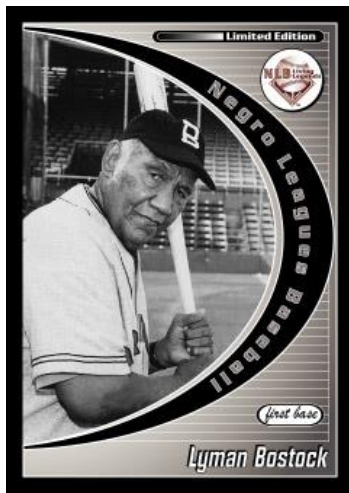
Utilizing the magically powerful tools of Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, we designed our trading card templates, edited, cropped, and combined images and photos to create a professional trading card for every team member. Many of the pictures look as if they had been taken on location at our favorite historic baseball field.

My friend, the amazing Gary Cangemi, of Gary Cangemi Graphic Art Studio, provided caricature art representation for each team member, adding a little flare and comic character to each trading card. He captured the hearts and souls of many throughout the country in 2001 with his pre-natal comic strip character "Umbert the Unborn." We lost Gary on March 18, 2017. His love of life and passionate dedication to advocacy for the unborn has been greatly missed.



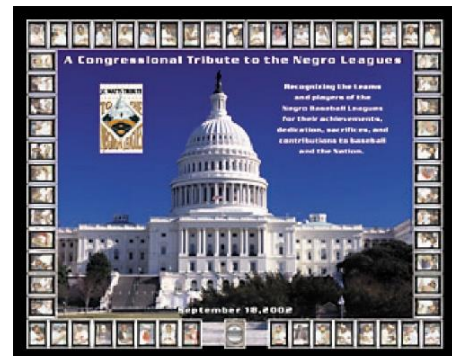
Our strategy was to create three trading cards for every team member. The first, Limited Edition (LE) Card and the second, Educational Edition (EE) Card, look similar and share the same content, offered in random five card pack as part of a complete set that would consist of approximately one hundred cards. One for each of our team of fifty-nine, a roster, Negro Leagues teams, personalities, history, and notable events. Where they would differ was the LE set would be limited to one press run and made available to the general public, whereas the EE set would be used to educate school age children and be reprinted each year as a centerpiece to a recurring curriculum.

The Signature Series Trading Cards are the trading card designated to for the autographs. A sixty-card set containing fifty-nine personally autographed trading cards and a roster card, offered in a presentation format, for memorabilia collectors would generate revenue allocated for surviving team members, the widows of perished members, and the Baseball in Living Color tribute.



As late spring of 2001 became early summer, we were invited to participant in an effort led by Dave Trimble's Partners with Youth Sports Foundation in support of a mission to bring baseball into the lives of inner-city youngsters. In doing so, they would introduce and promote their "Right Decisions – Right Now" campaign, aimed at curbing drug and alcohol abuse plaguing minors in the inner-city communities. Didn't take Dave long to convince me that this was a worthy cause, and soon after reaching out to Pedro Sierra, Gordon Hopkins, Al Burrows, Jim Robinson, and Bob

Mitchell, we were committed to supporting the programs inner-city baseball camps. We offered our services, training, instruction, and encouragement. On September 9, 2001, we participated in an introductory program in Washington DC. We worked alongside Dave's team, greeting attendees, and passing out his "Right Decisions Right Now" information. Pedro, Gordon, and Al signed autographs joined the festivities to promote our "Legends of the Negro Leagues' tribute. As the afternoon event ended, we were introduced to representatives from the office of Oklahoma Congressman JC Watts. They expressed interest in the work we





were doing to create our tribute and before long, we were talking about coordinating a Congressional Resolution at the United States Capitol to honor these men and their historic contribution to our nation and the game of baseball. Excited by the potential opportunity, I called some of the team members to share the news. The buzz was only two days old when on the morning of September 11, 2001, our nation came under attack. In mere moments, life was changed forever.

I had begun working on the digital files and continued to do so through the fall. In nearing completion, I made a trip to PBM Graphics in Durham, NC to see if their facility could offer a cost-effective solution to our printing needs. Although the production cost was reduced substantially, it was still well beyond my ability to proceed, and the reality was that until we had the financial resources to proceed, the trading card acknowledgement portion of the tribute would have to be delayed.



About this time, I had been doing some digital imaging work for our friends Mike and Hilary Yoder at Lighting Maintenance. They had become familiar with our tribute, including the financial challenges we were facing. Committing to help our cause, they blessed the tribute by covering the printing costs. Their

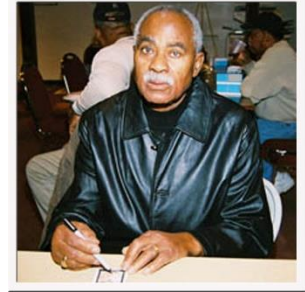


kindness and generosity gave the tribute a much-needed boost of adrenalin and newfound momentum. By late November, all of the digital files had been completed, hand delivered to PBM Graphics, laid out in press sheet format and ready for the press. This press sheet was dedicated to James Bolden, Leroy Cromartie, Jimmy Dean, and Ted Rasberry; four of our team members that had perished before their cards were produced. For this reason, I utilized signatures from our original contract agreements, to prepare digital autographs that were used to etch brass plates capable of embossing foil autographs into a dedicated lot of trading cards. These cards could then be used where personal autographs of team-members could not be collected. This would include instances where a member had either perished, become ill, or due to conditions beyond his control, was unable to autograph all of his cards.

Printing took place sometime around mid-December, and the finished product was delivered in mid-January of 2002. Preparation for the autograph tour was underway when word that Tommy Sampson, another member of our team, had passed on. To create the most inclusive collection of autographed memorabilia to celebrate our team of men and their legacy, we had to move quickly. These men had waited patiently for more than half a century for this appropriate recognition. I was excited to be part of making these trading card honors a reality for every one of them.



Once again, I called on my friend Jake to accompany me on this follow-up road trip. The Suburban was loaded down with trading card inventory, a bundle of uncut press sheets, and a set of bases before we departed that Saturday morning, February 2, 2002. Our “Autograph Tour” was underway and would last for all of twelve days.



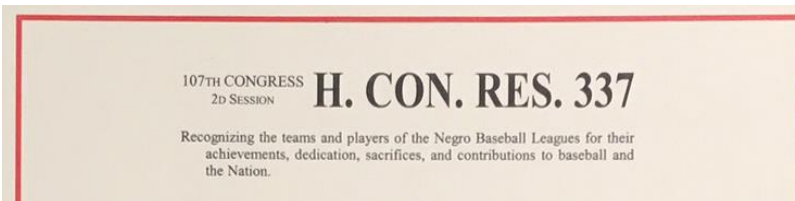
We retraced the path of previous trips, traversing the countryside, bound and determined to collect personal autographs on the face of these Signature Series Trading Cards. Several days had passed and we had crisscrossed Virginia, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and northern Alabama, before rolling into Birmingham. Fourteen men, most of whom once Birmingham Black Barons, were waiting our arrival in the conference room at Rickwood Field. This group was truly special, the essence of the entire tribute. They believed early on that we were serious about building this tribute and by stepping out in faith, they gave us the support we needed to make it happen. We showed up with food and drink and celebrated the better part of that incredible day together. We were all on top of the world.



Somewhere between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mary Esther, Florida I received a call from Congressman Watts office. We were informed that the congressional resolution that we had discussed several months prior had been written and was set to be passed. The celebration honoring Negro Leagues Baseball Veterans and the history they made was scheduled to take place at the U.S. Capitol on September 18, 2002. This news was icing on the



cake, and I just couldn’t wait to share it with the entire team. We continued our travels through Florida, visiting our team-members in Tampa, Sarasota, Key Biscayne, Miami, and Jacksonville. We were making pretty good time, but we still had many team-mates to see and many miles ahead of us. Inspecting and sorting an inventory of more than 32,000 autographed trading cards would have to be done alongside the added responsibilities of supporting Congressman Watts resolution effort.

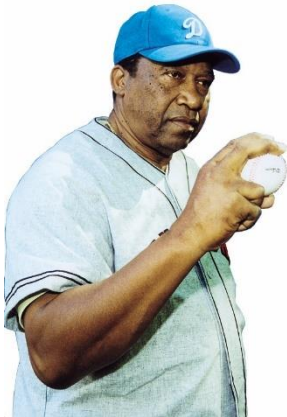


September 18th arrived, and everything went on just as planned. It was a wonderful occasion top to bottom. Greyhound Bus delivered honorees to the event. Smiles were contagious. Ceremony was surreal.

Standing amongst Congressman Watts, Senators, guest speakers “Buck” O’Neil, Willie Mays, Blair Underwood, MC Hammer, and a room full of honored guests was truly special.

Trading Faces had been spread pretty thin for better part of the spring and summer, and with a great deal of our attention and resources directed towards the resolution, we struggled to stay afloat. We held onto hope that things would turn around, but before too long, mounting debt had taken its toll. Trading Faces was dissolved. Our “Legends of the Negro Leagues” tribute was still relatively young, and its future was a great concern. In the weeks that followed, I established “Baseball in Living Color,”

accepted the obligations and responsibilities associated with the “Legends of the Negro Leagues” tribute and planned to fulfill the mission.



In February of 2003, Pedro Sierra and Jim Robinson joined me, my son Jayme, and Philip Lyons, the Georgia Chapter President of the Marty Lyons Foundation, in showing our support for the foundations golf tournament and fund-raising effort on Jekyll Island. Marty Lyons, an accomplished 11-year NFL defensive lineman for the New York Jets had established this foundation in 1982 to fulfill the wishes of children ages three to seventeen years old who have been diagnosed with a terminal or life-threatening illness. The work this foundation does is truly remarkable, the love they share with wish recipients and their families is priceless. This was an incredible experience for all of us.

In the fall of 2002 through the spring of 2003, I attended the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN) in Upper Manhattan, New York City seeking a certification in holistic health counseling. In early spring, while practicing counseling skills, I was partnered with Rita Borst. Rita was enrolled in the same program as I but typically attended the alternate class. It just so happened that this day, due to a schedule conflict that she joined our class. While executing our counselling protocol, I shared my work with the “Legends of the Negro Leagues” and how it was impacting on my life. Before the class was dismissed, Rita told me that as soon as it was possible, she would like to introduce me to her husband. She explained that he was a huge baseball fan, and that he would surely like to talk about covering this effort in a documentary film. I had never imagined that a film might be part of our tribute, but if it were, it would certainly add a great deal of value to our content. I thanked her, appreciated her willingness to help, and thanked God we had met.



In late May of 2003, at the conclusion of the IIN Graduation ceremony, Rita found me and just as she promised and introduced me to her husband John. John Borst is the owner of GrandVue Productions, an accomplished independent documentary filmmaker of many years. We tossed around a few ideas and the rest was history. In 2004, we loaded up a couple of movie cameras and hit the road. We retraced earlier routes traveled once again and recorded awesome material. Over a period of approximately two years, we accumulated many hours of raw footage. He believed that we had what we needed and took the project to production.

It took a great deal of time to inventory all of this footage, categorize and piece together a variety of segments to shape the narrative and tell the story. None the less, he put it all together and delivered the amazing documentary film entitled “Striking Out Jim Crow.” I couldn’t be prouder of John and the work he did. Grateful for the entire Borst family, for the friendship I share with John and his wife Rita, the leadership and professionalism he demonstrates, and his desire to selflessly share his talents with me and the men of Baseball in Living Color. “Striking Out Jim Crow” is now linked to the official Baseball in Living Color website, available 24/7 for all to view. It documents our journey to celebrate the effort of some amazing individuals.





Packaging the presentation was now the task at hand. I had to design and handmade a single prototype box that would elegantly present our autographed trading cards and accompaniments. When all was said and done, more than half a dozen prototype boxes had been made before I finally had “the box.” I had originally thought that I would mass produce these boxes for the entire collection. Using veneered plywood, I made about thirty of these boxes by hand. It was taking way too long, and I had to find another solution. I began looking for a company that could utilize my prototype box and specifications to build what we needed. In 2012, I found this shop in Minnesota and outsourced the production. Two hundred ash boxes in a natural finish and twenty-five ash boxes in a dark walnut finish were ordered. It was an expensive option, but when they were completed and delivered, I couldn’t have been happier. Although I was never able to have the remaining wood boxes manufactured to complete the collection, I was able to fashion an affordable cardboard box arrangement to complete the memorabilia collection.

A thirty-page storybook included with every presentation, acknowledges the story behind the tribute’s creation and highlights the entire journey. I hope that everyone that chooses to own a piece of this collection will also accept an affiliation with this Baseball in Living Color Team, understanding that it is with their support that we will achieve mission accomplished.



A Certificate of Authenticity bearing our BLC hologram, distinctly identifies each piece of memorabilia in the entire collection. Personally autographed trading cards and foil stamped signatures are clearly spelled out in each presentation.



A post card rendition of our Senior Line-up presentation, comprised of more than seventy-five separate photos and images, is included in every presentation. The men that appear in the foreground are some of the eldest men in our tribute. The remaining fifty look on from the skyline above. All combined, their careers span the mid 1920's through the early 1960's. Playing alongside the likes of Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, Willie Mays, and Jackie Robinson, they played a significant role in the integration of Major League Baseball's rosters, thus providing for generations that followed, an opportunity to achieve and prosper according to athletic ability. Rickwood Field is the setting and today remains the oldest active ballpark in the country; A "Field of Dreams" for a few generations of men whose dreams of playing professional baseball were ultimately fulfilled by reaching the roster of segregated clubs that played there.



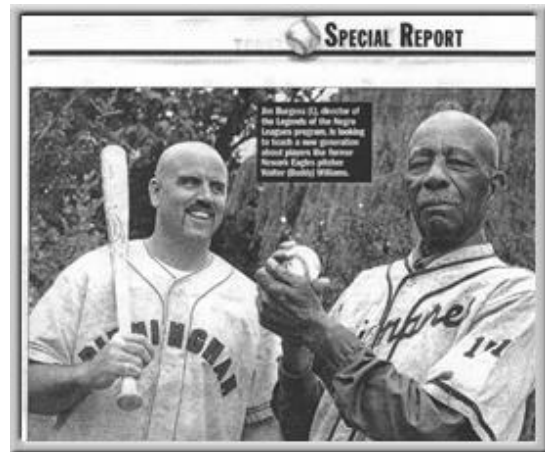


As a kid growing up just outside of Washington DC, my friends and I were die-hard fans of the Washington Senators. Paul Casanova was my favorite player; the Senators catcher from 1965 through '71. While putting our tribute team together back in 2000, I discovered that before he was signed by the Senators, Paul had played baseball with the Indianapolis Clowns of Negro Leagues fame. Pedro Sierra, called up by the Senators for the final game of their existence in DC, made his Negro Leagues Baseball debut with the Clowns back in 1954. Although they never played in the postseason in those days, all of us kids had our favorite players and we cheered them on win or lose. Fast forward nearly fifty years and history had been made. Throughout the 2019 MLB Season, we held out hope that the Washington Nationals could make it to the postseason, and when they did, their “never say die” attitude was rewarded with a World Series Championship!



On February 28, 2020, I made a special trip to the Washington Nationals spring training facility in West Palm Beach, Florida, and on behalf of Paul, Pedro, and the rest of our history making Baseball in Living Color Team, presented Mike Rizzo, the General Manager of the Washington Nationals 2019 World Series Champions, the only “Baseball in Living Color Legacy Award” to ever be awarded. Sharing this moment with Mr. Rizzo was surreal, a once in a lifetime experience.

Throughout the years there were moments when Baseball in Living Color stood in the light, alongside our team members, acknowledged for the work we were doing. We captured the attention of a few sports columnists; Michael O’Keefe of the New York Post and Dick Heller of the Washington Times. They wrote fine pieces describing our early years, the relationships we had established, and the passion we shared in creating something unique, something original, and it turned out to be much bigger and harder to accomplish than I could ever have imagined. It has been more than twenty years in the making, but that’s what it took to build this tribute and to create the finest collection of autographed memorabilia to honor my friends and celebrate the historic Negro Leagues.



Branding and marketing this body of work myself would be an overwhelmingly daunting proposition. With that in mind, I met with Danielle Chylinski of Chylinski Media. We discussed some of the challenges before us and plans to move ahead. In short order, I had found someone that was up to this challenge.

Chylinski Media Danielle Chylinski has taken the lead role in developing and implementing our social media marketing campaign. She will seek to establish a strong presence and a fan base of followers that will generate the interest needed to take Baseball in Living Color from being a best kept secret to becoming a destination that baseball fans will love. We’ll be introducing our teammates, our autographed memorabilia, the story behind its existence, and an opportunity for fans to join the team, support the mission, and own a piece of it.



- HIGHLIGHTING OUR TEAM RESUME -

In total, these fifty-nine men appeared on the rosters of twenty different Negro Leagues Baseball teams. At some point in their illustrious careers, thirty-one played for the Birmingham Black Barons, sixteen for the Kansas City Monarchs, twelve for the Memphis Red Sox, nine for the Chicago American Giants, eight for the Indianapolis Clowns, seven for the Detroit Stars, five for the Raleigh Tigers, and the New York Cubans, four played for the Baltimore Elite Giants, Philadelphia Stars, New York Black Yankees, and Louisville Clippers, three for the Cleveland Buckeyes, two for the Atlanta Black Crackers, Cincinnati Crescents, and Detroit - New Orleans Stars, and one for Pittsburg Crawfords, Newark Eagles, Harrisburg-St. Louis Stars, and the Houston Eagles. Cowan "Bubba" Hyde, the eldest man on our roster, started his career with the Memphis Red Sox in the mid to late 1920's. Throughout the years that followed, our "Legends" played on the Leagues segregated fields through the 1930's, 40's, 50's and early 1960's.

Many patriots answered the call in the early 1940's to defend our nation in WWII and again in the early 1950's to oppose communism in Korea. It is important to note that throughout these years and beyond, thirty-two of our fine "Legends" answered the call, and served within the ranks of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines in capacities that included General Patton's Red Ballers, Buffalo Soldiers, Infantrymen, Airborne, Anti-Aircraft Gunners, Engineers, Field Artillery, Armored, and Aviation assignments.

Throughout live after baseball, they made a living as lawmen, carpenters, painters, teachers, preachers, factory workers, longshoremen, coal miners, sharecroppers, chemists, entrepreneurs, medical technicians, postal workers, administrators, coaches, artists and so much more.

Note: The Negro National League, founded on February 14, 1920, consisted of eight teams: The Chicago American Giants, Chicago Giants, Dayton Marcos, Detroit Stars, Indianapolis ABC's, Kansas City Monarchs, St. Louis Giants, and Cuban Stars.

The Negro American League disbanded after the 1963 season with four teams remaining: the Birmingham Black Barons, Raleigh Tigers, Detroit-New Orleans Stars, and the Grand Rapids Monarchs.



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BASEBALL in LIVING COLOR
presents
“Legends of the Negro Leagues”

————— Signature Series Trading Card Collection —————

Each contains 60 cards: 1 roster and 59 “Negro Leagues Veterans”



*Some Negro Leagues Veterans appearing in the trading card collections had either perished or had become physically incapable of personally autographing their cards. In these instances, a foil stamped version of the Legends autograph, created during the printing process, was inserted in its place. Therefore, the total number of personal autographs, contained within presentations throughout the entire collection, range from a high of 54 to a low of 48.

LEGENDS, LEGACY, and TRIBUTE PRESENTATIONS

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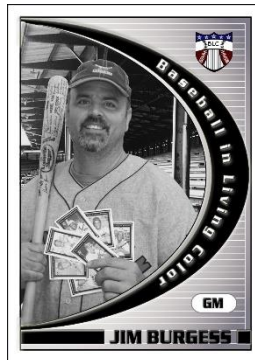
- All correspondence, questions, and/or comments should be directed to Jim Burgess –

Email: ContactUs@BaseballinLivingColor.com



Sincerely,

Jim Burgess, President & GM
Baseball in Living Color



On Behalf Of: Sam Allen, Juan Armenteros, James Bolden, Lyman Bostock, Ollie Brantley, Cleophus Brown, Sidney Bunch, Al Burrows, Paul Casanova, Jim Colzie, Leroy Cromartie, Jimmy Dean, Clifford DuBose, Henry Elmore, Frank Evans, Elijah Gilliam, Louis Gillis, William Greason, Acie Griggs, Raymond Haggins, Donnie Harris, Willie Harris, Francisco Herrera, Carl Holden, Gordon Hopkins, Cowan Hyde, Curtis Johnson, Willie Lee, Larry LeGrande, Tony Lloyd, Carl Long, Walter Lundy, Frank Marsh, Butch McCord, Jessie Mitchell, John Mitchell, Bob Mitchell, Willie Patterson, William Powell, Laymon Ramsey, Ted Rasberry, Ulysses Redd, Jim Robinson, Tommy Sampson, Jake Sanders, Joe B. Scott, Robert Scott, Eugene Scruggs, Pedro Sierra, Herb Simpson, Frank Thompson, Sam Thompson, Eugene White, Eli Williams, Eugene Williams, Willie Williams, Archie Young, Willie Young, Jim Zapp.

- NOTHING FOLLOWS -