

NAVY PIER *celebrates* BLACK HISTORY *month*

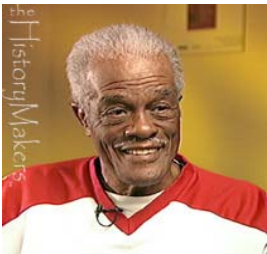
Navy Pier launches a celebration of Black History entitled, *“Perseverance & Persistence – An Exhibition of Pride.”*

Join us at our *Opening Ceremony, Thursday, February 7, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., in Navy Pier’s Crystal Gardens* as we honor legendary Negro League Baseball Players *Henry “Hank” Presswood and Johnny “Lefty” Washington.*

The opening ceremony will include:

- *“Perseverance & Persistence: An Exhibition of Pride”*. A walk-through gallery highlighting the achievements of 28 notable African-Americans in math, science, film, literature, diplomacy, education, sports and more (daily).
- The *Chicago Sun-Times Learning Laboratory* featuring articles on milestones in African-American history.
- *MPEA Board Member acknowledges two Former Negro League Baseball Players, Henry “Hank” Presswood and Johnny “Lefty” Washington* for their perseverance and persistence. Autographed photos and baseball cards will be available in limited quantity after the opening ceremony.
- *Remarks by Honorable Bobbie Steele, Former Cook County Board President*
- *Remarks by Orbert Davis, Jazz Trumpeter and Co-Founder and Executive Director of MusicAlive!* (a comprehensive music curriculum for at-risk youth of Chicago Public Schools)
- The *Choir Academy of Chicago* elite touring ensemble will sing a cappella spirituals.
- Award-winning Orator *Gloria M. Jackson* will recite “I’ve Been to the Mountain Top,” by Dr. Martin L. King Jr.
- The *Najwa Dance Corps* will perform traditional African dance and drumming.
- Renowned local artist *Terisa Griffin* will present in song.
- *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* - a memorable work of art captured in the beauty of stained glass. This is part of a standing collection of stained glass at Navy Pier’s Smith Museum of Stained Glass Windows (daily).
- *Celebrate Black History in Washington, D.C.* - Register to win main air transportation for two on American Airlines to Washington D.C. and a VIP tour of the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum. Registration forms are available at the Navy Pier Guest Services desk, February 7 – 22, 2008.

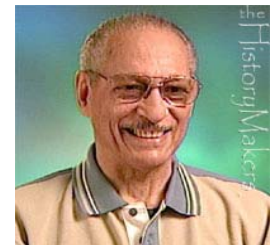
Navy Pier Honors Former Negro League Baseball Legends



Henry Presswood, born on October 7, 1921, in Electric Mills, Mississippi. From 1948 to 1952 Presswood played shortstop and third baseman in the Negro Leagues. During his time in the Negro Leagues, Presswood starred for both the Cleveland Buckeyes and the Kansas City Monarchs.

After leaving professional baseball, Presswood went to work at Inland Steel, where he played fast-pitch softball. He won several trophies and also a good sportsmanship award. Presswood retired from Inland Steel after more than thirty years of employment.

Chicago native **Johnny Washington** was born on April 20, 1930. Upon graduating from Morgan Park High School in 1949, he tried out for the Negro League's Chicago American Giants and made the team. Washington played for the Giants until 1950. He then played for the Houston Eagles. A versatile player, Washington was a pitcher, first baseman and outfielder with the Negro Leagues until 1951, when he joined the U.S. Marines, serving in the Korean War.



His semipro baseball career in the Chicago and Midwest League lasted through 1963. During this time, Washington led the league in hitting seven times and in pitching with the most wins eight times. Washington has directed Little League teams for the past twenty-five years. Presently, Washington resides in Chicago. He is the proud parent of five children and has thirteen grandchildren.

For more info on the honored legends visit: www.navypier.com



Negro League Baseball Players

Brief History

The first organized Negro League was established on February 13, 1920, at a YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri. Andrew "Rube" Foster was the driving force behind the organization of this league and served as its president.

As a result of his leadership role the Negro National League operated successfully until 1931.

Three years after the founding of the NNL, the Eastern Colored League was formed on December 16, 1923, with Edward H. Bolden serving as chairman. In 1924, the very first Negro World Series was played between the ECL and the NNL champions. The ECL collapsed in the spring of 1928 but the member teams reemerged in 1929 as the American Negro League.

The depression years were especially difficult times for black baseball. In 1932, the East-West League was formed, but folded before the season ended. The Negro Southern League was the only black professional league to survive the 1932 season. The NSL was a minor league before and after the 1932 season.

In 1933, a second Negro National League was formed, and was the only black professional league operating until 1937. The league included teams from the East and the Midwest through 1935. By 1936, the NNL was operating exclusively in the East.

In 1937, teams in the South and the Midwest formed the Negro American League. The NAL and the NNL coexisted through the 1948 season. In 1949, the NNL was absorbed in the NAL, which operated as the last black major league through 1960.

As in the white major leagues, the Negro leagues had their own World Series. Over the years, eleven inter-league Black World Series were held. The NNL and ECL played from 1924 through 1927. Champions from the second NNL and the NAL competed from 1942 through 1948. Also in 1933, the black teams began all-star game competition. The game was known as the East-West game and was played each summer at Chicago's Comiskey Park annually attracting between 20,000 and 50,000 fans.

For more information visit: <http://nlbpa.com/history.html>