

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Henry Presswood

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Presswood, Henry, 1921-2014
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Henry Presswood,
Dates:	November 6, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:27:50).
Abstract:	Baseball player Henry Presswood (1921 - 2014) was a shortstop and third baseman for the Negro Leagues. Presswood was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 6, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2001_059
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Henry Presswood was born on October 7, 1921, in Electric Mills, Mississippi. From 1948-52 Presswood played shortstop and third baseman in the Negro Leagues. During his time in the 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.

Presswood passed away on December 27, 2014 at the age of 93.

Henry Presswood was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 6, 2003.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Henry Presswood was conducted by Ray Parr Moore on November 6, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Baseball player Henry Presswood (1921 - 2014) was a shortstop and third baseman for the Negro Leagues.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Presswood, Henry, 1921-2014

Moore, Ray Parr (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Presswood, Henry, 1921-2014--Interviews

African American baseball players.

Negro leagues.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Kansas City Monarchs (Baseball team)

Occupations:

Baseball Player

HistoryMakers® Category:

SportsMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Henry Presswood, November 6, 2003. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Henry Presswood, Section A2001_059_001_001, TRT: 0:28:05
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Henry Presswood reflects on his family background, childhood, and introduction to baseball. Presswood, born on October 7, 1921, was the last of four children born to Josephine (Matthews) and Dee Presswood in Electric Mills, Mississippi. Presswood recalls spending time in the Provident Baptist Church, where his father was a deacon. Hendon's father also worked at the saw mill in town; his mother cooked for several boarders. One of the boarders, Jimmy Faison played for the local baseball team, the Mills City Jitterbugs and taught Presswood how to catch a baseball. Also talks about schooling experiences; he was good student who loved to learn. After Presswood completed 10th grade, he left school to work in the saw mill. Presswood later moved to Birmingham, Alabama after he was discharged from the army, where he played baseball in the city league

Electric Mills (Miss.)

Sawmills--Mississippi--Electric Mills.

Baseball--Mississippi--Electric Mills--1930-1940.

African American families--Religious life.

Video Oral History Interview with Henry Presswood, Section A2001_059_001_002, TRT: 0:29:55
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Henry Presswood reminisces about his childhood community in Electric Mills, Mississippi, service in the United States Army and early baseball career. Presswood enlisted in the Army in 1945. During wartime, Presswood, like some other athletes were exempted from fighting overseas. After playing baseball in the Army, Presswood moved back to Mississippi where he began to work in the saw mill in Canton, Mississippi. While he was in Canton, Willie Gray, a player with the Negro Baseball League team, the Cleveland Monarchs recruited him to the team. Presswood shares stories about playing with other Negro League players such as Satchel Paige, Willie Mays, and Othello Renfro.

Electric Mills (Miss.)

United States. Army--Sports.

Cleveland Buckeyes (Baseball team)

Negro leagues--1940-1950.

Paige, Satchel, 1906-1982.

Video Oral History Interview with Henry Presswood, Section A2001_059_001_003, TRT: 0:29:50
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Henry Presswood reflects on his career in the Negro Baseball League and life after he retired from the game. In 1948, Presswood approached the manager of the Kansas City Monarchs, John Buck O'Neil to ask for an opportunity to play alongside one of his idols, Satchel Paige. O'Neil welcomed Presswood to Kansas City, Missouri and began to mentor him and teach him important fundamentals of the game. After Jackie Robinson broke the colorlines in the Major Baseball League, the Negro League began to slowly phase out. Presswood sensed his age was beginning to slow him down, so he rejected offers to play baseball in Mexico and decided to return to the saw mill to earn a living to support his family. Presswood also reflects on his legacy and shares his hopes and concerns for the African American community.

Negro leagues--1950-1960.

Kansas City Monarchs (Baseball team)

Robinson, Jackie, 1919-1972

Inland Steel Company.