

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carl Long

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Long, Carl, 1935-2015
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carl Long,
Dates:	November 21, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:12:20).
Abstract:	Police officer and baseball player Carl Long (1935 - 2015) played for the Negro Leagues and later became the first African American police detective in the history of Kinston, North Carolina. Long was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 21, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_246
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Negro League veteran and African American law enforcement pioneer Carl Russell Long was born May 9, 1935, in Rock Hill, South Carolina. His father William Long was a catcher for the black Rock Hill Blue Jays and his mother Ella Griffin Long operated a laundry business. Long graduated from West End School in Rockville where he excelled at sports. In 1951, at age sixteen, Long was recruited by John William Parker of the Nashville Stars of the Negro Baseball League (NBL). In Nashville, Long was taught to play center field by NBL legend and Hall of Famer, Oscar Charleston. He played for the NBL Black Barons in 1952, where he competed on the field with Willie Mays, Charlie Pride, Ernie Banks and Frank Robinson.

In 1953, Long was signed by the Pittsburgh Pirates organization and hit twenty home runs for Class A team, St. Johns, Quebec. In 1955, he was chosen as the first African American to play for the Kinston, North Carolina Eagles, also of the Pirates organization. Joined by other black players, Curt Flood and Leon Wagner, Long hit 111 runs and made the All Star Team. In 1956, Long married and hoped to be called up to the big leagues. However, he badly injured his shoulder in the Mexican League and never played major league baseball again. Starting as a truck driver, Long worked a succession of jobs including being named the first African American Deputy Sheriff in Lenoir County, North Carolina. In the 1970s, Long was appointed as the first black police detective in the history of Kinston.

The Kinston Indians started celebrating Carl Long Day in 1999. Carl Long Day is a three day celebration of Long and other Negro League veterans. Long, a member of the Negro Leagues Players Association, honored for his youth work and his baseball knowledge, lived in Kinston with Ella, his wife of fifty-two years. He passed away on January 12, 2015, at age 79.

Carl Long was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 21, 2005.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carl Long was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 21, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Police officer and baseball player Carl Long (1935 - 2015) played for the Negro Leagues and later became the first African American police detective in the history of Kinston, North Carolina.

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:

Long, Carl, 1935-2015

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Long, Carl, 1935-2015 --Interviews

African American baseball players--Interviews.

Detectives--North Carolina--Kinston--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Negro National League

Occupations:

Police Officer

Baseball Player

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers|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 Carl Long, November 21, 2005. 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 Carl Long, Section A2005_246_001_001, TRT: 0:30:30 ?

Carl Long was born on May 9, 1935 in Rock Hill, South Carolina to Ella Griffin Long and William Long. His maternal grandparents had African American and Cherokee roots, and his grandfather worked at the nearby Winthrop Training School. Long's paternal grandfather, Nora Long, emigrated to the South from Haiti. Both sides of the family were sharecroppers, and his parents met at school in Rock Hill. Long started playing baseball with his brothers by using a broomstick to swing at pebbles. At West End Elementary School in Rock Hill, he enjoyed playing softball at recess because there was a real ball. Long's father insisted that he get an education, but allowed him to play over the summers with the Nashville Stars, who were managed by Oscar Charleston. He was sold in 1951 to the Birmingham Black Barons, where his teammates included Lloyd "Pepper" Bassett and Henry Kimbro. He played exhibitions against the Roy Campanella All-Stars, which included major league stars like HistoryMaker Minnie Minoso and Mudcat Grant.

African American baseball players--Interviews.

Detectives--North Carolina--Kinston--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Carl Long, Section A2005_246_001_002, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Carl Long recalls growing up without indoor plumbing in his family's fivebedroom home in Rock Hill, South Carolina. His father, William Long, was a bootlegger, ran a café, and played catcher for the semipro Rock Hill Blue Jays. In 1951, Long began his professional baseball career with the Nashville Stars. The team's owner, Dr. R.B. Jackson, cheated him out of part of his salary. While on the Birmingham Black Barons, Long played against the Roy Campanella All-Stars in a 1954 exhibition game, where his father watched him play for the first time. Long remembers befriending Willie Mays. In 1954, he was signed by the Pittsburgh Pirates and their general manager, Branch Rickey. Long recalls how he and his fellow black players, including Donn Clendenon, had to stay in different boarding houses than their white teammates. In 1955, Long played for the Billings Mustangs, where he was managed by Jack Paepke and started in the outfield with future Pirates star Dick Stuart.

Video Oral History Interview with Carl Long, Section A2005_246_001_003, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Carl Long batted fourth for the Billings Mustangs, behind future Pittsburgh Pirates star Dick Stuart. He experienced racial violence in Billings, Montana as he was frequently beamed by opposing pitchers and his friend, DeWitt "Woody" Smallwood, nearly fought a white man at a pro wrestling show. In 1956, Long was promoted to the Kinston Eagles, where he was managed by Jack Paepke, integrated the Carolina League along with Frank Washington, and was named a league All-Star alongside Curt Flood and Leon Wagner. He recalls hitting two home runs in a game in Greensboro, North Carolina after being angered by a heckler's racial slurs. After the season, Long married his wife, Ella Long, who had been a high school student in Kinston, North Carolina. He then was promoted to the Mexican League, where he played with his friend Mike Sotello, the namesake for his son. Long tore his rotator cuff while playing for a Pirates farm team in Beaumont, Texas, so he retired and got a job at the Kinston Shirt Factory.

Video Oral History Interview with Carl Long, Section A2005_246_001_004, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Carl Long's rotator cuff injury kept him from throwing, and he chose to retire from baseball in 1958 rather than have surgery. Although Negro League officials like William "Sou" Bridgeforth urged him to return to the game, he refused. In

1968, Long was hired as the first black deputy sheriff in the State of North Carolina under Sheriff Fred Boyd. After the assassination of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Long was stationed on Highway 70 to try to intercept James Earl Ray's car. Later, he convinced black teenagers who were beginning to riot in Kinston, North Carolina to stop. The local white police chief criticized Long for not making more arrests, but the sheriff supported him. His son, Sotello Long, played basketball at North Carolina State University and was assistant pastor at Memphis' Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church. Long describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community. He reflects upon the debates over the accuracy of Negro League history, as well as his life and legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Carl Long, Section A2005_246_001_005, TRT: 0:13:20 ?

Carl Long played for the Birmingham Black Barons against the Kansas City Monarchs on opening day in 1952. He recalls playing in front of fifty-two thousand spectators in Kansas City, Missouri and going up against the Monarch's star player, Buck O'Neil. He concludes the interview by reflecting upon movies that have been made about the Negro Leagues, and describing how he would like to be remembered.