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Negro Leagues Baseball History in Falls City Discussed

(KLZA)-- Baseball fans, especially fans of the Kansas City Royals hear quite often about the Negro Leagues and the Kansas City Monarchs. Last week Phil Dixon, from Kansas City presented a program at the Falls City Library and Arts Center entitled Our Town & The Kansas City Monarchs. The program was sponsored by the Falls City Rotary Club.

Dixon talked about a couple of times the Monarchs played games in Falls City, August 14th, 1929 against the Falls City Elks and again on August 5, 1930, in what was probably the first night baseball games played in Falls City.

Dixon said most people don't think about places like Falls City as places the Monarch's played, or black history being made through baseball. Dixon has been doing research for 35 years and said he is having a great time meeting people and going to the old ballparks.

A couple of the players in the Falls City lineup in 1930 were Jug Brown and Burr Shields. Those names were picked out by the crowd at the library. Falls City lost both games against the Monarchs but so did just about everyone else that played them. The Monarchs won more than 800 games while barnstorming in the 20's and 30's in addition to the games they won in the Negro Leagues which included the championship in 1924.

Dixon noted the Monarchs were innovators of the game of baseball. They were the first team to travel by bus instead of train, which made it possible for them to "barnstorm" and play team like Falls City and Omaha and many more. They were also the first team to play night baseball, hauling their own set of portable lights so they could play against teams after work during the week and then play their Negro League games on the weekends.

Phil Dixon is a Co-Founder of the Negro Leagues Museum at 18th and Vine in Kansas City. He said this year is the 25th anniversary of the Museum in Kansas City. He said the Museum is open every day except Monday.

Dixon has authored a number of books. You can find out more about Phil Dixon, the Kansas City Monarchs and the Negro Leagues History by visiting his Facebook page.

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