



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1981

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John Hunter's Bob Douglas Hall of Famers

It was a "Wow" kind'a weekend, that saw June ushered into 1980. And for the 8th consecutive year, the John Hunter Camp Fund, Inc., presented their annual Bob Douglas Hall of Fame Luncheon. Fast becoming an institution, the Hall of Fame gathering signals a beginning of summer.

This past weekend, some 700 faithful appeared at the affair to receive their annual dosage of nostalgia. Everyone was served. And from the electricity that flowed throughout the room for some four hours, the nostalgia that was served proved to be every bit as potent as the nostalgia of past years.

The "Heart 'N' Soul" of the John Hunter Camp Fund committee, Lorraine and Eddie Younger, Joe Maynard, Dave Walker, John Isaacs, Benny Garret, Vernon Scott, and Jim Usry, are armed and extremely dedicated to recognizing each and ever Black sports hero of yesteryear.

Each and every year, the committee turns our heads back to the 20's, 30's and 40's... reminding this generation of Blacks, that indeed, the history of the Black athlete in America is every bit as glorious as those athletes who refused to swim in the same waters, eat at the same table, and sleep in the same hotels with them.

Given the same opportunities and exposure, one can only suppose what might, or could have been. What we are learning is not only Black history, but a lesson in survival. When you read of the accomplishments of men and women like Paul Robeson, Fritz Pollard, Joe Lillard, Alice Davis, George Gregory, Bob Douglas, Howard Dash, Charles Major, Rev. John Johnson, then you quickly realize the burdens and handicaps these people hurdled to pioneer the trail for future generations of Blacks.

And when Jersey Joe Walcott broke down as he accepted his plaque, throats became lumpy, hearts began to beat out of rhythm, and more than a score of hands swept upward to check the flow of tears. Stella Brown, attending her first such affair, wept openly.

The tears might have been of anger. Anger at a nation that has systematically chosen to ignore the people the John Hunter Camp Fund energetically seeks out for recognition. But there was no anger in the misty eyes of Ms. Brown. "It's so beautiful. I could sit here all day listening to what these people have done."

There was Willie Wynne, who according to Sylvester P. Hall, revolutionized basketball at Howard University and the CIAA in the 20's. His dimples still deep enough to hide a quarter. Mr. Wynne appeared to be fit enough to still do the very thing that made him a legend.

And there was talkative Charlie Isles Sr. recalling how Stanley Thomas chased him out of the swimming pool at the Harlem YMCA. Thomas later became a swimmer of great distinction. It was him against the world, but there was no quit in him.

Finally, the fourth inductee into the Bob Douglas Hall of Fame was Jim Herbert, at one time, the world's premier middle distance runner. Said

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Finally, the fourth inductee into the Bob Douglas Hall of Fame was Jim Herbert, at one time, the world's premier middle distance runner. Said Jim: "I feel very proud about this honor because it's coming from my people."

The day ended with a raffle from the Sigma National Authors. By then, the trip home was complete. Again, the John Hunter Camp Fund committee, armed heavily, thanked donors, raised from their charitable efforts, should contribute towards sending some 300 plus inner-city youngsters to summer camps. The figure last year was 179. A truly remarkable organization that it is on track, even though, they turn the calendar back once a year.



The
John Hunter Camp Fund
Inc.

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to its

**Ninth Annual
Hall of Fame Luncheon**

at

Holiday Inn

440 West 57th Street, N.Y.C.

Sunday, June 7, 1981

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[[four images - awards presentations]]

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