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A LEGEND GONE

KM's Frazier Robinson, Negro Baseball League star and Satchel Paige's catcher, dies after long bout with cancer

By GARY STEWART
Editor of the Herald

Kings Mountain is mourning the loss of a legend today.

Henry Frazier "Slow" Robinson, 87, one of the last Living Legends of the Negro Baseball League, died Monday at Kings Mountain Hospital just one day after the new Life Enrichment Center at Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Shelby was dedicated in his honor.

The funeral will be Sunday at Antioch, with Quiet Hour beginning at 3 p.m. and the service beginning at 4.

Robinson, whose health was deteriorating fast because of a four-year long battle with cancer, was unable to attend the dedication ceremony Sunday but his wife, Winnie, said she believes God kept him alive to hear about it. Although he couldn't talk because of soreness left after a tube was removed from his throat, Mrs. Robinson said he acknowledged people's conversation by nodding his head.

"It's a strange thing," she said. "He told me 'I hope I live to see that day.' He was in a coma when I took him out of here to the hospital, but his nephew, entertainer James Ingram and his wife came down and Ray and Inez Jones from California and some friends from Baltimore came, and he recog-

nized every one of them.

"He had called James and told him not to miss that day," she added. "He had a lot of engagements but flew down for Saturday and Sunday. After the program was over, I went back to the hospital and talked to him about it and shared it with him, and he acknowledged that he knew about it. A tear trickled down out of his eye. It was like God saved him to hear about that day, because the next day he was gone."

Robinson, who moved here in 1989 to be closer to his wife's family, was playing sandlot baseball in Oklahoma when Nute Joseph, a third baseman with the Kansas City Monarchs, saw him and his brother, Nathan, playing and offered them a shot in the pros. Frazier was assigned to a team in Texas and Nathan ended up in Birmingham, Ala. where he was a teammate of Willie Mays.

Robinson's claim to fame was that he later became the catcher of the incomparable Satchel Paige with the Satchel Paige All-Stars and Kansas City Monarchs. The two also became best friends, and Paige nicknamed Robinson "Slow," not because of his lack of speed but because of his slow, Alabama accent.

Robinson played in the

See Legend, 5A



BASEBALL LEGEND DIES - Frazier Robinson of Kings Mountain, who was Satchel Paige's catcher in the Negro Baseball League, died Monday at Kings Mountain Hospital after a lengthy battle with cancer.

Schools okay record budget

The Kings Mountain Board of Education officially approved a \$24,765,256 budget at its monthly meeting Monday night at the Central Office.

Supt. Bob McRae told the Board that the budget is essentially the same one that has been discussed since April and as recently as last week's Board Advance in Boone.

The general fund includes \$4,866,743 from local sources, including \$2,055,746 in county commissioners' appropriations and \$1,690,000 from the 19-cents Kings Mountain District supplemental tax.

McRae said the budget allows the system to implement its classified salary plan and includes \$2 per child for instructional supplies.

The budget includes \$781,551 in the capital outlay fund which includes \$281,551 in local allotment, which McRae said is about the same as it has been for years. With the system considering building another elementary school, he said those figures will have to improve in the future.

"Hopefully we can see improvement in future years," he said. "If we're going to keep up facilities like we've been doing we'll need a little bit more."

The budget includes \$15,672,075 in the State Public School Fund, \$843,130 in the Federal Grant Fund, \$1,057,865 in the Head Start Fund, and

\$1,543,892 in the Child Nutrition Fund.

In another matter Monday, Jean Thrift, Director of Student Support Services, reviewed the state report card results for each of the schools in the system. Grover and Kings Mountain Middle were the only schools not to meet expected growth and East and West schools met exemplary growth.

Thrift said 79.9 percent of the students tested in grades 3-8 (reading and math) and grades four and seven (writing) were proficient (at or above grade level), and in all areas Kings Mountain students were ahead of the state average.

In other action, the Board:
■ Accepted four students from Cleveland County Schools: Tyrone and Nataisha Cannedy, children of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Cannedy; Douglas Kuhn, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Kuhn; and DeAngela Ruffin, daughter of Ms. Delores Littlejohn.

■ Accepted four students from Gaston County Schools: Elizabeth Griffin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robin Griffin; Duane Blanton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roxie Parker; Shannon Dotson, daughter of Mrs. Robin Gunter; and Joshua Penley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ron Penley.

■ Changed the date of the

See School, 7-A

BRIEFLY

Former pro gridder arrested here Sunday

Former University of North Carolina and NFL football player Sean Boyd of Gastonia was charged with driving while impaired and driving while license suspended Sunday on Charles Street in Kings Mountain.

Officer R.S. Costner made the arrest at 2:16 a.m.

Boyd, 24, was a standout defensive back at the University of North Carolina and has played for several professional teams.

He was drafted by the Minnesota Vikings in 1996 but was cut before the start of the season. He played in two games for the Atlanta Falcons last year, and was waived by the World Champion Green Bay Packers prior to the start of this season.

1/2 million offered in Loomis Fargo case

The nationwide search for David Scott Ghattt, 27, a Kings Mountain man alleged to have pulled off one of the largest heists in U. S. history was still underway this week.

Meantime, Loomis, Fargo & Company has posted a \$500,000 reward for information leading to Ghattt's arrest and conviction in connection with last weekend's theft of up to \$15 million from its Charlotte warehouse.

Ghattt, 104 Maggie Dr., is under federal indictment on a charge of bank larceny.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation said the Persian Gulf Army veteran should be considered armed and dangerous.

Law enforcement agencies from across the country have joined the search for Ghattt who was reported missing by his wife when he didn't return home from work Sunday morning. A white Ford Econoline was recovered in Mecklenburg County last Monday less than 10 miles from the Loomis Fargo warehouse where the money was stolen.



MICHELLE WARREN

Miss N.C. to speak at KM Middle School

Miss North Carolina and first runner-up in the Miss America competition, Michelle Warren of Gastonia, will speak to students at Kings Mountain Middle School Monday, Oct. 20 at 2 p.m.

Miss Warren is being brought here by the KMMS Healthful Living Department to talk to students about "Responsibility," which is this month's character trait in the school system's Character Education emphasis.

"She will talk about attaining a goal - that it takes hard work, that you have to have a dream and work toward it," said P.E. teacher Candy Albergine who lined up the program.

"She gave a very uplifting talk at Ashbrook High School a couple of weeks ago," Albergine said. "She was really well received by the students there, and we hope to get the same reaction. We're really looking forward to this program."

Haunted Trail spooks Grover October 17-31

Visit the Haunted Trail in Grover from October 17 through 31, beginning at dusk and into the night. The trail is located at Judson Court, across from Clearview Baptist Church, just follow signs. Adult admission is \$5, \$3 for children. Concessions will be available.

Karen's crafts reflect her faith

Karen Bess believes in angels and that's why her Christmas wreaths feature them.

"I put a lot of love in each of them," says the Kings Mountain woman who said she had a special angel watching over after a life-threatening illness which also turned her life around.

The home of Karen and Robert Bess is beginning to look like the holidays this week with Christmas wreaths, crystal gift items and decorations filling every room.

Karen's husband cuts the logs and she fashions beautiful fire-place holders using natural pine cones and velvet bows. Crystal sleighs with gold runners and transparent gold ribbon and gold fiddles over the mantel are just a few of the ideas she incorporates and shares with the public. She took some of her crafts to last Saturday's Mountaineer Day festivities and will start displaying them at Kings Mountain Used Furniture downtown.

One of those crafts that took her 48 hours to complete is a



ANGEL WREATHS - Karen Bess fashions her Christmas angel wreaths "with love." Angels have special meaning for the Kings Mountain woman.

Christmas Carrousel, a horse she found in an attic, sculpted it, sanded and polished it with about 30 coats of ivory, set the stones and painted every detail of the beauty which won for her a blue ribbon at both the

Bethware and Cleveland County Fairs.

"I became so engrossed in that project that I got a bronchial infection by smelling all the paints," she said. Bess has advertised her Carrousel for sale

for \$350 but she says it's worth much more.

A multi-talented homemaker, Karen is well known for cake baking. When she bakes a wedding or anniversary cake or a birthday cake she personalizes, decorates with an item that can be kept as a memento of the occasion. For a child, that might be a block or train. For a grownup that might be an angel holding a song book, a musical note or something that would pertain to the person's hobby.

Battery-operated lights are used in her wreaths as well as music boxes and some of her prettiest handiwork are white frosted poinsettias.

Karen's mother, the late Nellie Hall, used to tell her daughter that she could make something pretty out of the ugliest item.

"Just tell me what you want and I try to do it," said Karen, who says her lighted wreaths are the most popular.

"God let me see the beauty in making these wreaths and I

See Angel, 5-A

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE



MOUNTAINEER FAN - Major Loftin's heyday on the gridiron is over but he's always at home in the stands where he cheers every Mountaineer victory. He's also a winner at woodworking.

Major loves Mountaineers, creating cedar masterpieces

By ELIZABETH STEWART
of The Herald Staff

Family comes first with Major Loftin, 66, but his love of football for a half century ranks a close second.

The Kings Mountain man is in the stands for every Kings Mountain High football game and he's the No. 1 cheerleader for the home team for American Legion baseball or for kid sports his grandchildren play.

"I guess I haven't missed a football game in 50 years, no kidding," said Loftin, taking a chew of tobacco and reminiscing of his football playing days when he was a 127-pound running back for the Mountaineers in 1947-48.

"We didn't win many games but they called us running backs and wing backs then and I played for John Rudisill in 1947, Shu Carlton in 1948 and for Max Beam in Mount Holly in 1949," he recalled.

"Back then you didn't have to have top grades to play football and I loved it but I dropped out of school at least eight times, then returned to play sports and finally got my GED diploma in 1980," said the retired 25 year employee of PPG.

Drafted by Uncle Sam's Army in World War II, Major got a medical discharge because of a knee injury he sustained playing football.

See Loftin, 5-A