

*Friends of*

**HINCHLIFFE**

**STADIUM** *PATERSON, NEW JERSEY*

**P.O. BOX 6451**

**PATERSON, NJ 07509**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LARRY DOBY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION PLANNED**

**Friends of Hinchliffe Stadium & Paterson organizations honor the great  
“Silk City Slugger,” first Black ballplayer in the American League**

**PATERSON, N.J.** – The Friends of Hinchliffe Stadium in conjunction with the Paterson Public Schools, the City of Paterson and the New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) are proud to announce that Wednesday, December 13, 2006, will mark the first annual Larry Doby Day celebration throughout the City of Paterson, New Jersey.

Born Lawrence Eugene Doby on December 13, 1924, Doby lettered in four sports at Paterson’s Eastside High School: baseball, basketball, football, and track. It was at Hinchliffe Stadium in 1942 that Doby tried out for the Newark Eagles of the Negro Leagues and was signed to a contract, thus launching his Hall of Fame career.

Doby, who became the American League’s first black baseball player, will be honored with a wreath ceremony at 1pm at Larry Doby Field in Eastside Park. Representatives of the baseball and football teams of Eastside High School, Doby’s alma mater, will participate, along with students from Rosa Parks Academy.

The celebration will culminate with an evening event at NJCDC, 32 Spruce Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, from 6:30-8:30 pm. Among those highlighting the life of one of Paterson’s favorite sons will be Negro League historian Lawrence Hogan, who will frame Doby’s Newark Eagles career both within a unique life-story and as an enduring contribution to American sports and social history.

In addition, an exhibit on the life of the man who became the Silk City Slugger is on display at the Great Falls Cultural Center (corner of Spruce & McBride), tracing Doby from student athlete in the Paterson Public Schools’ system through his enshrinement in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1998. **All events are free and open to the public.**

The Friends of Hinchliffe Stadium, which launched its stadium-history website this past September ([www.hinchliffestadium.org](http://www.hinchliffestadium.org)), is a non-profit organization supporting the revitalization of historic Hinchliffe Stadium through awareness of its stellar national historic significance. Larry Doby Day will kick off their year-long gala celebration, as 2007 marks the 75th anniversary of the stadium's dedication in 1932.

Hinchliffe Stadium was home to both the New York Black Yankees and the New York Cubans of the Negro League, as well as to the Paterson Panthers, Paterson Giants and Silk City Bears in professional football. The stadium also hosted professional racing and boxing events and major celebrity galas that included Abbott & Costello and Duke Ellington. One of only a handful of surviving stadiums in the U.S. significantly associated with Negro League baseball, Hinchliffe Stadium was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. Most recently, it was included in the proposed legislation for the creation of a new Great Falls National Park.

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THE FRIENDS OF HINCHLIFFE STADIUM IS A 501C3 ORGANIZATION  
& AN AWARDEE OF THE KOAR-GEORGE FUND OF THE CITY OF PATERSON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION