

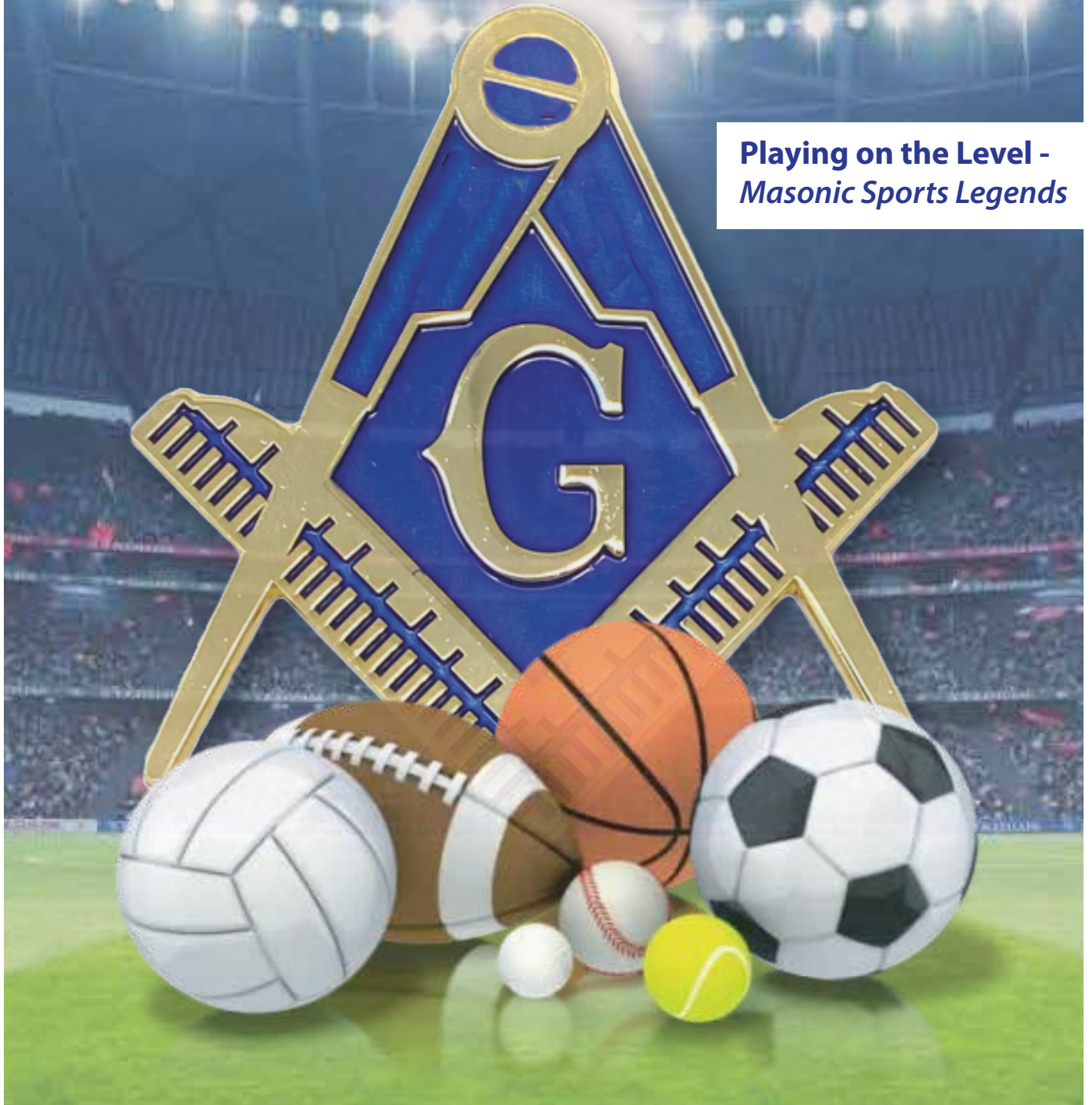
*Grace  
Dee May*

MUSEUM &  
LIBRARY

# ILLUMINATIONS

MARCH / APRIL 2024

**Playing on the Level -  
*Masonic Sports Legends***



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**ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST**

# Grace Dee May

**MUSEUM &  
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In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the **Grace** of God. Audrey's nickname was **Dee** and she had been born in the month of **May**. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the **Grace Dee May**.



Grace Dee May Inc. (EIN: 03-0591428) is a qualified tax exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

MARCH / APRIL 2024 **ILLUMINATIONS**



*"When you're in championships, it's never about what you do. It's always about what other people do."*

— Shaquille O'Neal, Freemason & Basketball Legend

## Playing on the Level: Masonic Sports Legends

Like many kids, my heroes were sports stars who could, with the swing of a bat, hit a ball into the center field bleachers.

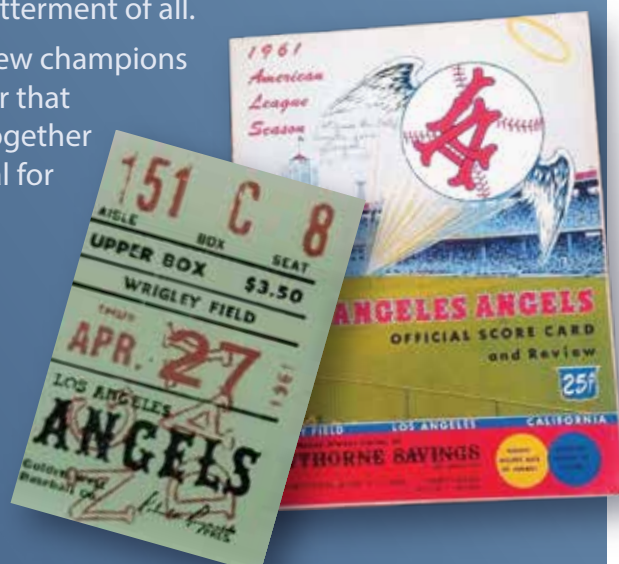
One of my biggest thrills was sitting along the third base line waiting for the ceremonial ball to be thrown out by none other than the legendary Ty Cobb at the very first home game of the LA Angels in 1961. Thanks to my father's show business connections, I was lucky enough to be sitting in box seats close to where the 72-year old Cobb was sitting. Accompanying my father and me at the game was actor and baseball fan, Buster Keaton. Mr. Keaton, knowing my love for the game, walked me down to meet the legendary slugger who signed my program. Little did I know that day, the first American League game in LA, would also be Ty Cobb's last appearance at a ballpark. Cobb, a member of Royston Masonic Lodge No. 426, Royston, Georgia, passed away just three months after that game at the old Wrigley Field in Los Angeles.

Our March-April issue of Illuminations is a "home run" not only for fans of "America's National Pastime" – but for fans of a spectrum of sports where Freemasons have made their mark. Inside this issue, you will discover fascinating stats and some uncovered history on Masons who have become sports legends. You'll also learn about Masons who have elevated amateur games played on sand lots to super star stadium status.

The lessons of Freemasonry are guideposts that help to ensure a level playing field in life. We strive to play by the rules in both our attitudes and actions to contribute to the betterment of all.

While rules may change and new champions are crowned, let's all remember that sportsmanship and working together as part of a team – are essential for a winning season both on and off the field.

Sean Foran  
*Curator & Board President*



# Masonic Influence in Baseball

**“Father of Modern Base Ball”** — Alexander Joy Cartwright, Jr.,  
member and Past Master of Hawaiian Masonic Lodge No. 21, Honolulu, HI

Abner Doubleday may get the credit but it was Alexander Joy Cartwright who really got the game of baseball from “out of left field” to “at the plate” by creating a new set of rules that would form the basis for modern baseball.

He incorporated the diamond-shaped infield, foul lines and the three-strike rule.

By abolishing the practice of tagging runners by throwing balls at them, he changed the game from life-threatening to the challenging past-faced game we know today.

In 1846, the Knickerbockers using Cartwright’s rules played the first official game of baseball against a team of cricket players, beginning a new, uniquely American tradition.



**It doesn’t take a great deal of imagination to envision the baseball field as a Masonic emblem.**

The homeplate as the top of a compass with the points extending down the base lines. The square touches the first, second, and third bases. The pitching mound is in the position of the letter “G.” In the game, players advance to the first, second, and third base just as Masons progress through first, second, and third degrees.

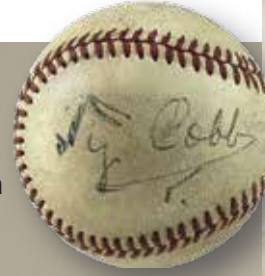
Significant numbers in baseball also mirror some key numbers in Masonry. The number nine is important since it is “three times three.” Multiplying the number nine by 3 equals 27, or by nine results in 81. Now think of the numbers used in baseball: 3 strikes; 3 outs; 9 innings; 9 field positions; 27 outs; 81 home games; and 81 games on the road. *Coincidence? Possibly.*



# Masonic Baseball Legends

***"The crowd makes the ballgame."***

— Tyrus Raymond "Ty" Cobb, Center Fielder  
member of Royston Masonic Lodge No. 426, Royston, Georgia



***"Success is not about how many strikeouts you have, but how you bounce back from a home run."***

— Denton T. "Cy" Young, Pitcher  
member of Mystic Tie Masonic Lodge No. 194, Dennison, Ohio

***"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."***

— Johannes Peter "Honus" Wagner, Shortstop  
member of Centennial Masonic Lodge No. 544 Carnegie, PA.



***"A good hitter isn't born, he's made. He's made out of practice, perseverance, and determination."***

— Rogers Hornsby, Infielder, Manager, and Coach  
member of Beacon Masonic Lodge No. 3, St. Louis, Missouri

***"The oldest pitcher acquires confidence in his ball club - he doesn't try to do it all himself."***

— Burleigh Arland Grimes, Pitcher and Manager  
member of Trenton Lodge No. 111, Trenton, Missouri.



***"In order to excel, you must be completely dedicated."***

— Willie Howard Mays, Center Fielder  
member of Prince Hall Boyer Masonic Lodge No. 1, New York City, NY

## **Masons4Mitts is a Home Run for Kids in California**

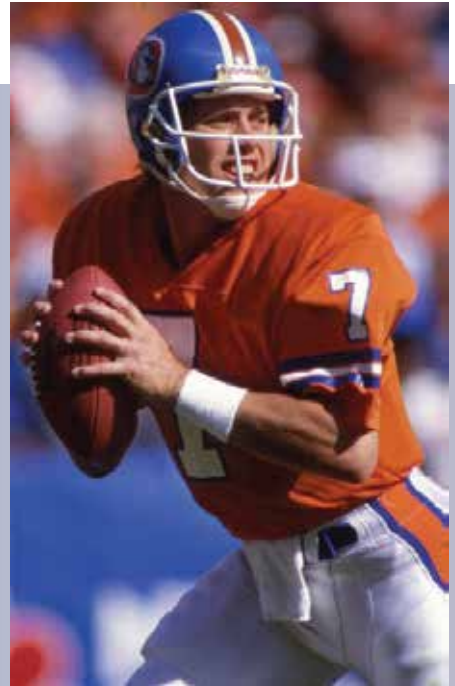
For more than a decade, Freemasons in California have been raising funds to provide free leather gloves to boys and girls in junior baseball and softball programs. Coordinating with MLB LA Dodgers, San Diego Padres, San Francisco Giants, and the LA Angels, the Masons4 Mitts programs has raised nearly \$2.7 million thanks to the generosity of countless members of the California Grand Lodge and Prince Hall Grand Lodge.



## Football, Basketball, Hockey, and Golf Legends

***"I've experienced the highest of highs and lowest of lows. I think to really appreciate anything you have to be at both ends of the spectrum."***

– John Elway, Super Bowl Winning Quarterback  
member of South Denver Masonic Lodge No. 93

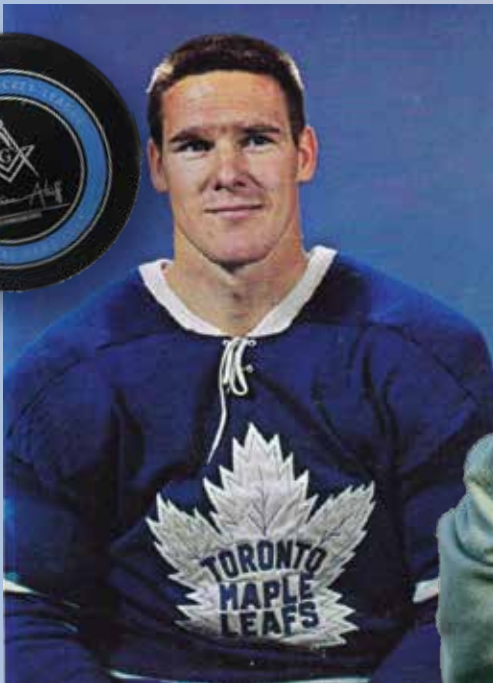


***"I'd like to be known as 'The Big Aristotle' because Aristotle once said, 'Excellence is not a singular act; it's a habit. You are what you repeatedly do.'"***

– Shaquille O'Neal, NBA Star and Sports Analyst  
member of Widow's Son Lodge No. 28, PHA, Boston, Mass.

***"I get paid for the practices. I'd play the games for nothing."***

– Tim Horton, Canadian Hockey Defenseman, member of Kroy Masonic Lodge No. 676, Toronto, Ontario,



***"The most rewarding things you do in life are often the ones that look like they cannot be done."***

– Arnold Palmer, PGA Golfer, World Golf Hall of Famer  
member of Loyalhanna Lodge No. 275, Latrobe, Pennsylvania.



# Masonic Boxing Legend



## Jeffries vs. Johnson – July 4th, 1910

It was called the “Fight of the Century,” a match between the first African American World Heavyweight Champion, Jack Johnson and the previously undefeated Heavyweight Champ, Jim Jeffries.

The purse was an astronomical \$101,000 – a lot of money back in 1910 but the stakes became even higher when the press elevated it into a battle of Black vs. White.

Johnson defeated Jeffries in the 15th round. This triggered both celebration and, unfortunately, race riots across the United States.



**Jack Johnson**, the son of former slaves, was born in Texas in 1878.

After winning the “Fight of the Century” Johnson was charged for traveling with a white woman with whom he was having a consensual relationship.

Johnson was convicted by an all-white jury of taking a woman across state lines for “immoral purposes.” After charges had been brought against him, he fled to Europe but returned in 1920 and spent a year in prison.

During Johnson’s European boxing events he met another boxer, Army officer Sydney McLaglen, who told Johnson about his Masonic Lodge in Dundee. The heavyweight champion traveled up to Dundee, Scotland on October 13, 1911 and became a Freemason in Forfar and Kincardine Lodge, No. 225.

A telegram may have been sent in an attempt to halt the initiation because of Johnson’s legal troubles in America but was not received due to the Lodge being tiled with the doors locked. Jack Johnson proudly became a Mason and was warmly welcomed by his Scottish Brethren. Past Master of the Lodge, Graham Letford said: “This cost the master at the time a two-year suspension. Two other past masters received one-year suspensions and the lodge had its charter lifted for 18 months.”

Johnson left by train for Newcastle after the ceremony. In reference to the incident a reporter asked him, “You have a high opinion of Freemasonry then?” Johnson replied to the reporter: “It’s the greatest thing in the world, it’s wonderful. I have always wanted to be a member and I chose the Dundee Lodge because it is one of the oldest and one of the most substantial. I am proud I can tell you. I am a Freemason and as long as I live I shall be one.”

Following his return to America, Johnson spent a year in prison. Johnson tragically died in a car crash in 1946 at the age of 68.

In 2018, Dundee Freemasons celebrated President Donald Trump’s decision to posthumously pardon heavyweight boxing Champion Jack Johnson.

Past Master Graham Letford wrote to the U.S. President to praise him for “this great gesture” on behalf of “the whole of Scotland.” Mr Letford said: “Johnson’s pardon is great news for the Lodge and great news for the Masons of Scotland. Jack Johnson will always be a Freemason and remains the most famous member of No. 225 Lodge.”



*“I am a Freemason and as long as I live I shall be one”*

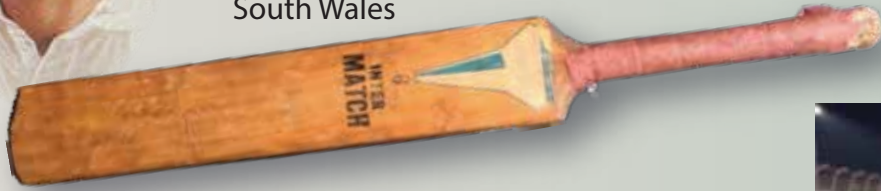
— Jack Johnson, World Heavyweight Champion, member of Forfar & Kincardine Masonic Lodge, Dundee, Scotland

# Cricket, Rugby, Auto Racing, and Cycling



*“Reading poetry and watching cricket were the sum of my world, and the two are not so far apart as many aesthetes might believe.”*

– Sir Donald George Bradman, International Cricketer, widely acclaimed as the greatest batsman of all time member of Masonic Lodge Arcadia No. 177, Sydney, New South Wales



*“You need to say and do the right things and good things happen to good people.”*

–David Lee Ragan, NASCAR driver and Racing Commentator member of Williams Masonic Lodge No. 176, Cornelius, NC.



*“I think life is full of challenges and problems. I don't believe that anyone is perfect. We all make mistakes. It's not a bed of roses, and you have to work real hard at it.”*

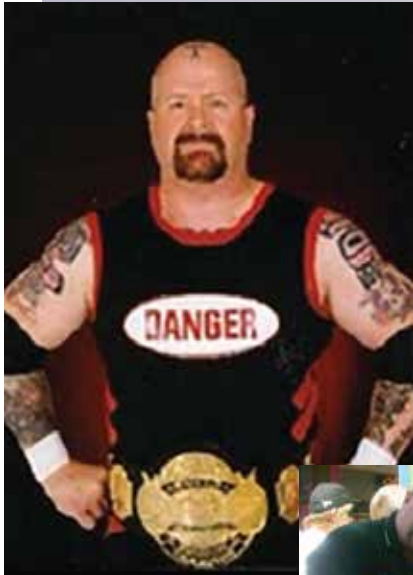
– Nigel Mansell, Formula One and Indy driver. World Champion and American Motorsport Hall of Famer member of Hope and Charity Lodge No. 377, Devon, UK

*“Think positively and masterfully, with confidence and faith, and life becomes more secure, more fraught with action, richer in experience and achievement.”*

– Eddie Rickenbacker, Race Car Driver, Medal of Honor Fighter pilot, Automobile Designer, and Owner of Indianapolis Speedway member of Kilwinning Lodge No. 297, Detroit, Michigan



# Legends in YOUR Lodge



**Nick Danger**  
 Actor, Pyrotechnician for the film industry, Alaska Safety Advisory Council, Special Olympics supporter, and WWF Pro Wrestler member of Burbank Masonic Lodge No. 406, Burbank, CA, and Aurora Masonic Lodge No. 15, Anchorage, AK



*Nick Danger entertaining at Special Olympics*



**Doyle Nave**  
 USC Football star known for throwing the game-winning touchdown in the 1939 Rose Bowl game, Football Coach, and Rose Bowl Hall of Famer member of Burbank Masonic Lodge No. 406, Burbank, CA

### Our Vision:

The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

### Our Mission:

The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

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In future issues, we'd like to illuminate the lives and accomplishments of Masons from your Lodge. Please share their stories by contacting Ron Cooper at 818-383-9265 or email: [info@gracedeemay.org](mailto:info@gracedeemay.org)

*Grace Dee May*  
**MUSEUM & LIBRARY**  
 located at the historic Shrine Auditorium  
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