

New Orleans Zephyrs

AAA Affiliate of the Washington Nationals



Press Release

Zephyrs Induct First Class of Greater New Orleans Professional Baseball Hall of Fame

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The inaugural class includes the following New Orleans baseball figures: Mel Ott, Larry Gilbert, Henry “Zeke” Bonura, Alexander Julius Heinemann and **Mel Parnell (left)**, the only surviving member of the class who was in attendance to accept his induction. Representatives of the families of the other inductees were on hand to accept their inductions.

At the dinner, a gathering of roughly 200 fans was addressed by Zephyrs General Manager Mike Schline, Zephyrs Owner Don Beaver, Washington Nationals Director of Player Development Adam Wogan, new Zephyrs coaches Mike Hart and Charlie Corbell, minority owner/VP Walter Leger and baseball historian S. Derby Gisclair, who performed

the induction ceremony. The evening also included an autograph session with Parnell, former Zephyrs reliever Kirk Bullinger and former LSU Tiger and potential 2005 Zephyr Roy Corcoran.

Mel Ott (1909-1958) was born in Gretna, Louisiana, and spent 22 seasons in the major leagues, all with the New York Giants. Ott led the National League in home runs in 1932, 1934, 1936, 1937, 1938, and 1942 – hitting 30 or more home runs in a season eight times. Ott was elected to the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame in 1951.

Larry Gilbert (1891-1965) was born in New Orleans and made his major league debut in 1914 with the Boston Braves, helping that franchise win its first World Series of the 20th Century. In 1917 Gilbert joined the New Orleans Pelicans, where he played for nine seasons (1917-1925). Before the end of his playing career, Gilbert took over as the Pelicans manager, a job he held for 15 seasons. As manager, Gilbert went 1,307-968 (.575) with four pennants.

Henry “Zeke” Bonura (1908-1987) was born in New Orleans and attended Loyola University. Bonura played three seasons with the Pelicans before making his major league debut with the Chicago White Sox in 1934, hitting 27 home runs as a rookie. Bonura enjoyed seven seasons in the majors with the White Sox, Washington Senators, New York Giants and Chicago Cubs. He compiled a .307 career batting average.

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Alexander Julius Heinemann (1878-1930) was born in New Orleans, and advanced in the Pelicans organization from concessionaire to Vice President. In 1914, Heinemann successfully orchestrated the construction of a new ballpark at the corner of Tulane and South Carrollton Avenue – moving the team from their location across from present-day Jesuit High School. With Heinemann's guidance, the Pelicans captured five pennants.

Mel Parnell was born in New Orleans in 1922 and attended S.K. Peters High School. After playing for six years in the minor leagues including three years of military service, Parnell made his major league debut with the Boston Red Sox in 1947. Over 10 seasons with the Red Sox, the pitcher compiled a record of 123-75 with a 3.50 ERA. In 1956 Parnell pitched the first no-hitter in over 33 years for the Red Sox, and is still the winningest left-hander in Red Sox history. He returned to New Orleans in 1958 and managed Tulane for one season and the Pelicans in their final season in 1959.



(From left) Kirk Bullinger, Mel Parnell and Roy Corcoran signed autographs for fans.

The class was chosen by a five-member selection committee, which used the following criteria for its choices: entrants must have been a citizen of the greater New Orleans area through birth or re-location, have had outstanding baseball achievement as a player, coach or administrator that has brought recognition to the Greater New Orleans area, and be of good character and reputation.