

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Maybelle Blair

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Sports Stories - Baseball Oral History project

Interview # SSB-V-L-2017-068

Maybelle Blair, who played baseball in 1948 in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories - Baseball* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Aug 1, 2017 Location: Midway Village Museum, Rockford, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Technical Support (videographer): David Phyfer, Stage Fright Productions

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:52 / 1.87 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on November 14, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Maybelle Blair, *Sports Stories - Baseball*, SSB-V-L-2017-068

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Maybelle Blair was born on January 16, 1927 in Redondo Beach, California, where her parents had settled after moving from Texas. Maybelle grew up during the height of the Great Depression. Her father found work on odd jobs and her mother stayed at home, but the family scraped by and Maybelle always found time for baseball, one of her passions. Both of her parents were superb athletes. She often played with her older brother and neighborhood kids in pickup games, and her father even constructed a small baseball diamond across from their house. She also played sports in high school, including softball, but opportunities were limited. (Maybelle always preferred baseball.) Following graduation from high school in 1944, she worked for Northrop Aircraft and also started college. In 1948 a scout for the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League saw her playing softball. She impressed the scout as a potential pitcher, and he offered her \$55 per week, more than her father was making. That sealed the deal as far as Maybelle's parents were concerned.

Maybelle was assigned by the league to pitcher for the Peoria Redwings, but due to a leg pull injury, she only played one game for the team. The manager kept her on the roster for the entire season hoping she would recover. In the following season, she played professional softball for the Chicago Cardinals, and later for the New Orleans Jax (although not in New Orleans). When her injury persisted, Maybelle left the league and moved back to California and attended college. In 1949 she was hired by the Northrop Corporation and worked her way up in the company, eventually becoming one of its few women managers, overseeing highway transportation for parts and aircraft. She is especially proud of her work with the F-17 fighter (eventually purchased by the U.S. Navy as the F-18), and on the B-2 bomber. She retired in 1986 after thirty-seven years. Maybelle has been a strong supporter and promoter of the AAGPBL, active in its association and for the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum's 1988 exhibit on the AAGPBL. As she tours the country, she is often asked about the 1992 film *A League of Their Own*. She travels extensively making public appearances promoting the AAGPBL, and advocating for the creation of a new women's baseball league.

Subject Headings/Key Words: All American Girls Professional Baseball League; Peoria Redwings; pitching in the AAGPBL; Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum; AAGPBL Player's Association; *A League of Their Own*; Northrop Corporation; F-17/F-18 fighter; B-2 bomber; Inglewood, California; Chicago Cubs;

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