THE AMAZING CULBERSONS... A FAMILY LEGACY

THE AMAZING CULBERSONS

FACTS GET RECORDED, but stories get remembered. For long time residents of the Shannon community, especially those who cherish Brighton Mill's baseball heritage, exploits of the amazing Culberson family comprise stories worth remembering.

IT HAS BEEN SAID family is one of nature's masterpieces an understated truth when considering three generations of Culberson stardom across a landscape of community, college and professional sports. Games requiring running, jumping, toughness, coordination and competitiveness affirmed the Culberson Family's exemplary talents. Baseball, however, connects the most generational dots.

WHEN BRIGHTON MILLS joined the fledgling and soon-to-be legendary Northwest Georgia Textile League in 1932, the Culberson name, starting with Cliff and his sons, dotted the mill's lineup card through 19 seasons and 9 championships. Each one of Cliff and Eva Culberson's sons (Maurice, Leon, J. M., Kenneth, and Dennis) performed for Brighton. Local stardom attracted attention outwardly, resulting in professional baseball contracts for J.M. and Leon, whose career extended to six Major League seasons.

LEON'S ACCOMPLISHMENT notwithstanding, Calvain Sr.'s grandson Charles, Jr. is the dot connecting three generations of extraordinary baseball. His performance under pressure for five Major League teams over nine seasons has earned him the nickname, "Charlie Clutch".

AN IMPRESSIVE ASSORTMENT of college baseball teams became peppered with the Culberson name including four of Cliff and Eva's sons.

FROM THE OTHER BRANCH of the family tree Calvain Jr. became an All-Conference outfielder for Armstrong State followed by a seven year professional career reaching AAA. He later coached baseball at Armstrong State and was inducted into that school's Hall of Fame.

CALVIAN Sr.'s SON, Charles, Jr. was so certain about his own competitive baseball level he walked on at Jacksonville State University and by the end of his stint there achieved All-American honors. A six year career in professional baseball that reached AA plus eventual ownership of a training school for young baseball hopefuls, easily qualified him for induction into the Rome-Floyd Sports Hall of Fame. He was inducted along with his son, Charles, Jr., in 2020. Previous inductions into the same HOF of Leon and J.M. brought the Culberson family total to four.

THE HOF CITED LEON AND J.M. for more than their baseball careers, the latter's football exploits legendary among high school sports enthusiasts. J.M. was granted a football scholarship to University of North Carolina, eventually withdrawing to sign a baseball contract with the N.Y. Giants. Leon was offered a football scholarship to Georgia Tech but the allure of baseball also gained his allegiance.

BEGINNING IN 2021 chroniclers of Shannon's prideful history initiated a presentation of the Culberson athletic legacy. An array of photos, newspaper clips and remembered stories are highlighted in the community's Scout Cabin, across the ages a primary gathering place for recreation, celebration and remembering.

— Lee Walburn

MR. JAMES MARTIN CULBERSON, brother of Charles Burle Culberson, is pictured here in the late 1800's with his twelve children. Standing, left to right: is Carl, Howard, Lucille, Eloise, Doris, Cliff, Esmond, Joyce, Otha and Aileen. Kneeling/seated, left not right is: Avie, Father James Martin and Pauline. Son Cliff, shown standing behind his father, became an accomplished baseball player in the Northwest Georgia Textile League.

MR. CLIFF CULBERSON is pictured here on Christmas of 1968 with his family. Left to right: are: Sons, Leon, J.M, Maurice and Dennis (Bedo) with Eva Mattie Culberson, daughters, Camilla, Avanelle, Patti and son Kenneth.

BRIGHTON'S 1939 TEXTILE LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM

Standing, L to R... Terry Webb, Red Mathis, Charles Sutterfield, Lee Bassett, B. Waddell and Marvin Webb

Second Row, L to R... Babe Perryman, Don Stoyle, Blackie Campbell and J. M. Culberson

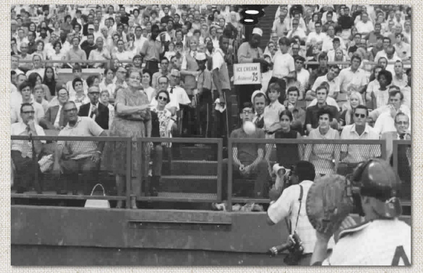
Seated, L to R... Morris "Badeye" Lindsey, Glenn Stewart, Abe Zarzour, Bill Primm and Cowboy Jones.

J. M. CULBERSON from Brighton's 1936 bat boy to the Rome / Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame in 1994.

From the **Brighton WARP and WEFT** – September 1944 issue

Local Athlete Sold To Boston Red Sox

CULBERSON SISTERS... Pattti, Avanelle and Camilla, stalwart members of Elliott Sales' Georgia State Champions Bowling Team.



'MAMA' EVA CULBERSON showcases a strong and accurate throwing arm as she throws out the ball to Atlanta Braves Catcher Bob Didier at the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium in 1970. Sealed immediately to her right are two of her sons, J. M. and Maurice. Notice the ball being shown in this rare photo shot as it's caught in mid-air on its way to the catcher's mitt.

THE BRIGHTON TEAM 1943, L- R: Kneeling Cliff Culberson, Nevin Jones, Tom Cullum, Unknown, Morris "Badeye" Lindsey and Unknown.
Standing , L- R: Dennis "Bedo" Culberson, Parks Shelhud, Unknown, Luke Nuworthy, Unknown, Terry Webb and Lee Mason.
Note: This rare picture features Mr. Cliff Culberson and the youngest of his five sons, Dennis "Bedo" Culberson at 17 years-old.

CHARLES BURLE CULBERSON, brother of James Martin Culberson with wife Addie Greene Culberson, parents of Calvin Culberson, Sr.

CALVIAN CULBERSON, JR. from West Rome High School to Armstrong State's Hall of Fame.

CALVIAN CULBERSON, Jr. spring training in 1995 with Pawtucket Red Sox of the AAA International League.

CALVIAN CULBERSON, Sr. and Geneva Louise Crowe Culberson with children L to R: Leonard, Vicky, Charles... Calvain Jr. yet-to-be born.

1983 CHARLES CULBERSON, SR. a walk-on at Jacksonville State University from Coosa High School to All-American and Florida State League batting champion.

CHARLES CULBERSON, SR. in 1992 with his future Major League player son, Charles, Jr. who became known as "Charlie Clutch".

CHARLES CULBERSON JR. "Charlie Clutch" from Rec. Ball behind the fence in Rome Georgia to the Big Leagues.

2020... PROUD WIFE AND MOTHER, Kimberly Olson Culberson with husband Charles and Charles (Left of their induction into the Rome-Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame.

2021... CHARLES CULBERSON, JR. Family... wife, Sarah and children L to R Collins, Ace and Everly.

ACE CAMDEN CULBERSON... six-year-old son of Charles Culberson, Jr.... Forth generation of "The Amazing Culbersons".

Rome / Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame

J. M. Culberson — 1994 Inducted

CULBERSON STOOD 5' TALL, weighed 150 pounds and was lightning quick. Nicknamed "Bullet" Culberson was a phenomenon in the Rome baseball district. He is member of one of Ga. Baseball Association Statistics and was known as "Long Ron" on the football field. J. M. Culberson grew up in Brighton Mill community in Floyd County.

IT WAS AT GARLAND'S bus yard, Brighton's sports center, that, in a football player, Culberson saw a baseball. He now known as the best kicker in Floyd County and was a sought after baseball player. Brighton Mill was one of the textile leagues, and talents legend has Calvin Grimes, after intercepting a pass, in his own end zone, J. M. did 105 yards for a touchdown. Later that night, Grimes was in a Rome hospital with a broken ankle. Calvin Grimes was one of the leading players in the Georgia Interscholastic Athletic Association and was named to the GI All-South Football Team where he quickly became known as "Bullet" Culberson.

AFTER FOOTBALL, it was on to the baseball diamond. J. M. was recruited for the Darlington Tigers. You had to be 40 Ga. Tournament Team by the Charlie Grimes, Brighton Mill Superintendent, and Coach Ed Hamilton. J. M. was recruited to a Tiger in Tight Pants (uniform). He finished third among the top 10 tournament players with 11 points. There were three who put that baseball very far. Charlie Grimes was the Brighton Mill Baseball Team, when at Darlington and later became the backing fellow for the Brighton Mills Company.

HE PLAYED MOST of his baseball for the Brighton team, playing every position except catcher. One newspaper was quoted as saying, "Culberson could hit and was a good fielding second baseman." Brighton was a "Cotton Mill" and was sponsored by its owner the Textile Baseball Club. Out far ballers in the Brighton Baseball Club, he was the only one who was a Brighton Mill employee.

WHILE AT UNC-CHAPEL HILL, J. M. was named to the All Southern Conference Freshmen Football Team. He helped the Tar Heels to a 9-1 record and was a member of the Southern Conference Champions. He was also a member of the Tar Heels for 3 years. In about 10 games he was severely sidelined. He played between the weeks and the holidays (per Ed Hamilton) a friend of Brighton Hamilton. Called and said the manager of the Tiger Club wanted him to work out with the team. J.M. played with the Tigers and was a member of the Tiger Club for 3 years.

J. M. CONTINUED his successful playing career after Brighton Mill and the Tigers and was drafted by the Giants in 1939 to players that were outfielder. From the 40's to the 70's he played other jobs shifted and in 1980, at the age of 65, he was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame. He was also a football referee for the Georgia High School Football and was managed the Brighton Mill's League team for the years.

Rome / Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame

Leon Culberson — 1973 Inductee

IF YOUR NAME WAS CULBERSON, you just naturally played baseball and the product would "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" in the scrapbook. The Rome area had plenty of artists on the baseball diamond and if you went up there to play, you had to go against the tough Culberson brothers. Leon and his brothers, Maurice, J. M., Kenneth and Dennis, made their mark on the football field and the baseball courts, but baseball was their love. As high school players they excelled in all sports. Leon was named Mid-South and All State at Darlington in football and baseball his senior year. Leon listed in semi-pro baseball with Brighton Mills.

IN THE EARLY 40'S the Boston Red Sox's organization sent scouts to the various farm systems, moving to Fenway Park with the Sox in 1943. He played outfield and third base. Set the outfield assist record in the minor leagues, a record that stood in 1946 and 1948-1950. Topped 300 in 1946 and 1950 in 1950. Hit 21 home runs in 77 games.

HIS GREATEST THRILL had to be being a member of the League Champion Red Sox where he played right field and was one of the leading hitters in the series. Ted Williams was the leading hitter in the series. Leon played in the starting lineup in Boston with such starters as Rudy York, Bobby Doerr, Dom DiMaggio, Frank Higgins and Ted Williams. He was known in Beantown as the fleet Sox Sever on the squad and his timely, late inning hitting clinched him a spot in Boston's line-up.

IN THE STRETCH FOR THE AMERICAN LEAGUE pennant in 1948, Cronin sent in the Boston Red Sox to Cleveland for a three game series. Leon was the leading hitter in the series with 3 hits in 10 games. He blasted the hits as Lane Culberson (Shannon, GA), Don Kolbendge (Pittsburg, KS), and Joe Dobbin (Decatur, OK). A present Top League on the baseball diamond, Lane Culberson brought much prestige to his community as a member of the Boston Red Sox.

Rome / Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame

Charles Culberson, Jr. — 2020 Inductee

FROM BEHIND THE LEVEE at the way to Sam Trust Park, with many stops in between, Charlie Culberson has spent half of all levels of baseball. Culberson began his playing days behind the Levee in Rome and quickly transitioned to trips of ball. Several of those travel teams experienced great success.

CULBERSON MOVED TO CALHOUN for high school and played a key role the "Yellow Jackets" baseball program helping the team to a state title in 2005 and a state runner-up finish in 2007. Shortly after his senior year ended, the San Francisco Giants selected Culberson in the first round of the MLB draft.

CULBERSON ROSE THROUGH THE MINOR LEAGUE RANKS before making his major league debut with the Giants in 2012. Since then, Culberson has played for the Colorado Rockies, Los Angeles Dodgers and now plays for the home-state Atlanta Braves. Culberson's versatility in the field along with his clutch hitting ability has been key reason for his longevity in the majors.

AWAY FROM THE FIELD, Culberson donates time and money to numerous charity organizations and visits children at local hospitals. Culberson was the Atlanta Braves nominee for the Roberto Clemente Award in 2019 for the way he helps give back to the community.

Rome / Floyd County Sports Hall of Fame

Charles Culberson, Sr. — 2020 Inductee

A LACK OF OFFERS to play collegiate baseball didn't deter Charles Culberson, Sr. from chasing his dream.

CULBERSON JOURNEYS FROM COOSA HIGH SCHOOL in 1983 without any offers to play college ball. Culberson walked successfully into coach Rudy Abbott for a tryout. Coach Abbott was impressed with what he saw and offered scholarship money and only one uniform left, but the uniform fitted when a tryout and the move paid off. Who said he would take a look at him. Culberson was awarded using his time at the school.

CHARLES TURNED OUT TO A BIG A GREAT ADDITION to the Gamecocks baseball program including overcoming the hitch with his team and leading their in batting average with .332 and finished in the top 10 in the Florida State League in home runs with 11. Culberson earned All-America honors for his season and was drafted in the 10th round by the San Francisco Giants in the1984 MLB draft.

CULBERSON PLAYED FIVE YEARS IN THE MINORS, rising as high as Class AA. In 1987, he was the batting championship with a .320 average while playing for the Fort Myers Miracle in the Florida state League.

AFTER HIS MINOR LEAGUE CAREER ENDED, Culberson worked as a minor league hitting instructor for the Chicago White Sox before returning to Rome and opening a Baseball training facility now named Charlie Culberson Baseball.

Armstrong Atlantic Hall of Fame

Calvain Culberson — 2011 Inductee

A FOUR-YEAR STANDOUT on the Armstrong Atlantic Drive baseball squad, Culberson helped the Pirates to a 2-year stint in the Peach Belt Conference and a 2-year stint in the Gulf South Conference. Culberson earned honorable mention all-conference honors in 1987 and was a second team all-conference selection in 1988.

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CULBERSON PLAYED FOR THE ARMSTRONG ATLANTIC Pirates in the Peach Belt Conference and the Gulf South Conference. He was a member of the team for four years, playing in 2 years in the Peach Belt Conference and 2 years in the Gulf South Conference. Culberson was named to the Peach Belt Conference Second Team in 1988 and was a second team all-conference selection in the Gulf South Conference in 1989.

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HE PRACTICED MEDICINE in Atlanta, Georgia, practicing a three-sphere research 12-game hitting streak, including 3 hits in a game against Mississippi College, finishing the season with a .300 average, including 3 hits in a game against Mississippi College, finishing the season with a .300 average, including 3 hits in a game against Mississippi College, finishing the season with a .300 average