

JIM BIBBY

For the last 25 years of his life, major league all star and World Series champion Jim Bibby called Amherst County home. His wife, the former Jackie Jordan, was a native of Amherst. This location afforded Jim the opportunity to continue his life in baseball as a pitching coach with minor league affiliates in Lynchburg for 15 years before retirement from the game he had learned in his youth in Franklinton, North Carolina.

Bibby, from a family that excelled in sports, participated in both basketball and baseball. Basketball brought him a scholarship from Fayetteville State, where he also played baseball. His brother, Henry, starred with one of John Wooden's UCLA Bruins national championship teams, and went on to an NBA career, as did Henry's son, Mike.



Signing as a free agent in 1965 with the New York Mets, Bibby interrupted his professional baseball career with service in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, and returned to rise through the minor league system. His major league debut was with the St. Louis Cardinals in the second game of a Labor Day doubleheader in 1972, recording a win over the Montreal Expos.

Bibby's major league career spanned 12 years with 4 teams. After being on the losing end of the first no-hitter in Rangers' history, when Bibby recorded 13 strikeouts, Oakland A's star and future Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson commented on Bibby's pitching: "That's the fastest ball I've ever seen. Actually, I didn't see it, I just heard it." This achievement propelled Bibby in a career that soon featured appearances in the World Series as a member of the championship Pirates team in 1979, followed by selection to the All Star Game the next season.

During the years of Jim Bibby's life in Amherst County, he always showed a willingness to serve the community, as the unofficial ambassador for Amherst County and baseball. He would lend help to players at all levels, speak to civic organizations, or throw out the ceremonial first pitch in big games or tournaments. His gentle approach and cordiality to the citizens of Central Virginia belied the commanding presence of a professional athlete who stood 6'5".

James Blair Bibby – October 29, 1944 - February 16, 2010

Career Highlights

- 12-year major league baseball career
- Major League pitching record 111-101, with 3.76 ERA
- Pitched first no-hitter, featuring 13 strikeouts, in Texas Rangers' history against defending World Series champion Oakland A's, 1973
- Started Game 7 of 1979 World Series with winner Pittsburgh Pirates
- National League All Star selection with Pittsburgh Pirates, 1980
- 1981, allowed a lead-off single before retiring the next 27 batters, hence, an almost-perfect game.
- Minor League Pitching Coach, 15 years: Lynchburg professional affiliates; number 26 retired at City Stadium in Lynchburg, the only player to hold such a distinction.