

***Today in Black History -February 9 ***

1906 - Never fully recovering from a bout of pneumonia in 1899, poet and author Paul Laurence Dunbar joins the ancestors in Dayton, Ohio, at the age of 33. He nonetheless produced three novels (including "The Sport of the Gods"), three books of verse, three collections of short stories, two unpublished plays, and lyric pieces set to music by Will Marion Cook.

1944 - Alice Walker is born in Eatonton, Georgia. Best known for "The Color Purple," which will win the American Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize, she will also write a variety of other critically praised and award-winning works including poetry and children's books and edit a book on Zora Neale Hurston, whom she will credit as her role model.

1944 - John Rozelle is born in St. Louis, Missouri. He will become an artist and professor at the Art Institute of Chicago. His work reflects his self identification as an "African American sentinel," or visual historian, guide, and advocate of contemporary African American culture.

1951 - Dennis "DT" Thomas is born in Jersey City, New Jersey. He will become a rhythm and blues musician with the group, 'Kool & the Gang.'

1953 - Gary Franks is born in Waterbury, Connecticut. In 1990, he will be elected to Congress from Connecticut's 5th District and become the first African American Republican congressman since Oscar De Priest left office in 1934.

1962 - Jamaica signs an agreement with Great Britain to become independent.

1964 - Arthur Ashe, Jr. becomes the first African American on a United States Davis Cup Team.

1964 - A speech by U.S. Representative Martha Griffiths in Congress, on sex discrimination, results in civil rights protection for women being added to the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

1971 - Satchel Paige becomes the first African American elected to professional baseball's Hall of Fame for his career in the Negro Leagues.