



PALACES OF THE FANS

The Newsletter of the SABR Ballparks Committee
December 2023

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CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: Ballpark Committee members are welcome to provide comments on what you have seen and want to see in the newsletter. Please forward on to Richard articles or links to articles on ballparks for inclusion in future newsletters as well as short research articles. Longer research articles can be accommodated via links on the SABR web site. Photos of ballparks or ballpark features not subject to copyright restrictions are also accepted and encouraged. The next issue is scheduled to come out in May of 2024.

FUTURE SABR BALLPARKS COMMITTEE PROJECTS: If you have ideas for group research or projects, please send them to the co-chairmen, Ron Selter (rselter@att.net) and Kevin Johnson (kjokbaseball@yahoo.com). Members are always encouraged to do a ballpark 'bio' for the SABR BioProject. Some other ideas would be a committee produced ballparks book of some kind, a joint research effort with other committees (Pictorial Committee for example), etc.

CALL FOR INFORMATION – 19th CENTURY MAJOR LEAGUE BALLPARKS: There are four 19th century Major League ballparks whose exact location and/or diamond orientation is uncertain.

Those parks are:

Monumental Park - Baltimore, MD

Ludlow Park - Ludlow, KY

West New York Field - West New York, NJ

Fireworks Park - Gloucester City, NJ

Any specific location information for these parks is appreciated. Please contact Kevin Johnson (kjokbaseball@yahoo.com) if you have something to share.

Thanks,

SABR Ballparks Committee
Co-Chair Kevin Johnson, Co-Chair Ron Selter

PRESENTATION ON RENOVATION OF HINCHLIFFE STADIUM: SABR's Ken Keltner (Milwaukee) Chapter hosted a presentation by Donna Muscarella on the \$100 million renovation of Hinchliffe Stadium in Patterson, NJ. that transformed the historic park into a minor league ballpark and a Negro leagues museum. A link to a recording of that meeting is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXwU2HPWwAE&t=4716s>



Left: Aerial photo of Hinchliffe Stadium with Great Falls in foreground; Right: Stadium entryway

McFARLAND BOOK ON CANDELSTICK PARK: James Forr is seeking out memories of Candlestick Park and has sent out the following communication:

I am the editor of a new book about Candlestick Park. It will be part of McFarland's Historic Ballparks series.

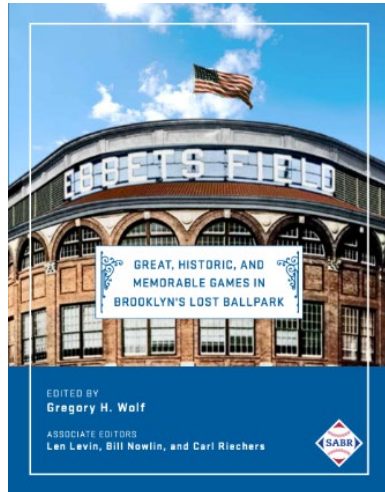
We are eliciting personal memories of the park from fans, media, team employees, etc. We would love to have your contribution. You can submit a memory for consideration at the website below:
<https://www.candlestickparkmemories.com/>

Those memories can be as long or as short as you like. The more specific, colorful, or personal, the better. Your prose need not move heaven and earth. That is of secondary importance. We will edit for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Simply write the memories as if you are sharing them with a friend or family member.

If you have any questions, please email James Forr directly at jff110@HOTMAIL.COM



SABR'S BRING IT HOME CAMPAIGN: All donors joining SABR's Bring it Home Campaign with a gift of \$150 or more will receive a paperback copy of the SABR book on Ebbets Field titled *Great, Historic, and Memorable Games in Brooklyn's Lost Ballpark*. More information on the campaign can be found here: <https://sabr.org/donate/2023>



SMOKIE LINKS – MLB TEAMS STAYING PUT

BALTIMORE: Maryland officials approved a lease extension for the Baltimore Orioles at Camden Yards. The deal extends the lease for 30 years, with an option to end it after 15 if the team does not receive approval from state officials for development plans next to the stadium. The lease was set to expire on December 31.

<https://www.mlb.com/orioles/news/orioles-will-remain-in-baltimore-new-lease>
https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/39119055/governor-says-orioles-lease-camden-yards-headed-vote
https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/39140310/baltimore-orioles-lease-extension-camden-yards-approved

TAMPA BAY: A new ballpark for the Tampa Bay Rays will be built near the current one as part of a massive redevelopment project that also includes affordable housing, office space and retail in what was once a thriving Black neighborhood.

Mayor Ken Welch, of St. Petersburg, Florida, chose a partnership between the Rays and the Houston-based Hines development company to transform an 86-acre (34-hectare) downtown site where Tropicana Field now sits. The proposed park would seat 30,000.

Please note that some of these links are behind a firewall.

<https://apnews.com/article/mlb-sports-baseball-tampa-bay-rays-houston-3c17844b61817ac14055c9b56585337b>
https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/38439232/tampa-bay-rays-reach-deal-new-ballpark-tying-team-st-petersburg
<https://www.mlb.com/rays/news/rays-st-petersburg-ballpark-agreement>
<https://theathletic.com/4873875/2023/09/18/rays-stadium-deal-tropicana-field/>



Renderings of the new ballpark and redeveloped Tropicana Field site in St. Petersburg proposed by the Tampa Bay Rays and Hines development company. (Credit: Gensler)

SMOKIE LINKS – MLB TEAMS CONTEMPAYING STAYING

MILWAUKEE: The Milwaukee Brewers are looking to secure public funds for renovations and repairs at American Family Field. Various proposals by lawmakers have suggested that up to \$500 million may be approved in exchange for extending the team’s lease on the stadium. The current lease runs through 2030.

<https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2023/08/14/milwaukee-brewers-continue-push-for-stadium-funding-as-lawmakers-work-out-deal/>

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/38682624/wisconsin-assembly-ok-public-funding-package-brewers-stadium-repairs

SMOKIE LINKS – MLB TEAMS LEAVING

OAKLAND/LAS VEGAS: Major League Baseball owners voted unanimously to allow the Oakland Athletics to move to Las Vegas, paving the way for the second relocation of a baseball team in the past half-century. The potential move, which comes after more than two decades of failed efforts to secure a new stadium in the city to replace the aging Oakland Coliseum, received unanimous support despite unanswered questions about the team's near-term future and stadium plans. The Athletics will most likely still play the 2024 season in the Oakland Coliseum.

Oakland/Las Vegas

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/38911419/mlb-owners-approve-athletics-planned-move-las-vegas-sources-say

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/38913160/owners-vote-shows-oakland-move-money-not-fans

SMOKIE LINKS – MLB PARK RENOVATIONS

NEW YORK: New York Mets owner Steve Cohen and Queens community leaders unveiled Metropolitan Park, a vision to transform the 50 acres of asphalt around Citi Field into a revolutionary sports and entertainment park. This reimagined space would be designed to bring together fans, neighbors, and visitors with 20 acres of new public park space, world class entertainment, and authentic global cuisine from local restaurateurs.

<https://empirereportnewyork.com/new-york-mets-owner-steve-cohen-introduces-metropolitan-park/>



TORONTO: The following article discusses the ongoing renovation of Toronto’s Rogers Centre and its relationship to changes made to other 1980’s and 1990’s ballparks. Led by the architecture firm Populous, the team trimmed capacity by 7% by removing about 8,000 seats, reconfigured the dimensions of the field, and added a host of gathering spaces to the 34-year-old facility.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2023-09-23/design-tweaks-help-old-mlb-ballparks-make-pitch-for-new-fans>

