

PALACES OF THE FANS

The Newsletter of the SABR Ballparks Committee

June 2012

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ANNUAL CONVENTION: SABR 42 will be held in Minneapolis from Wednesday, June 27 through July 1, 2012. The Ballparks Committee will have a joint meeting with the Business of Baseball Committee on Wednesday, June 27 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Please note that the time has changed by 30 minutes. This will be a panel discussion focused on the development and financing of Target Field. The panel is scheduled to include: **Dan Kenny**, Minnesota Ballpark Authority Executive Director, **Tom Goldstein**, community activist and lawyer who opposes public subsidies for sports stadiums, **Gary Gillette**, Co-author of *Big League Ballparks* and Editor of the *ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*, and **Stan Meradith**, AIA, Principal of the DLR Group, a national integrated design firm with experience building ballparks. Steve Weingarden will moderate. This promises to a very exciting discussion including two of our cochairmen. After the panel, we will hold the Ballparks Committee meeting. Topics will include potential projects and research, the state of historical preservation of ballparks, what the members want to see from the committee and plans for next year. Please arrange your travel schedule to attend.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS: The following eight potential project were listed in the March newsletter: (1) helping with the ballparks portion of the SABR minor league database, (2) updating the major league ballparks photo index, (3) start a minor league ballparks photo index, (4) help with the Negro Leagues ballparks project, (5) help with the WPA ballparks project, (6) start an ongoing discussion about the future of major league ballparks as well as upgrades to the retro ballparks to improve both the fan experience and the revenue stream, (7) create a national index to historic markers and plaques that have been placed, and (8) identify appropriate ballpark sites that do not currently have markers for potential placement. In addition to these, Mark Armour has suggested that the Ballparks Committee take over the supervision and editing of ballpark biographies. The criteria for these biographies and whether the Committee should undertake this will be discussed at the business meeting.

NEW MEMBERS:

John Corbett, Southern California

MAJOR LEAGUE PARKS:

MARLINS PARK: Cynthia Tan attended the two pre-season exhibition games on April 1 and 2. The park is at the old Orange Bowl site and they have of a museum-style timeline display on the promenade level, recreating old program covers and mentioning such notable events as John F. Kennedy's speech there. Also decorating the place are various art pieces, some original like a

Joan Miro, and some reproductions like Roy Lichtenstein's "The Manager." The park feels open and airy even with the roof closed. The outside of the park is entirely white; however, inside it is a riot of color. Each section of the ballpark has a color theme which is applied aggressively: blue, yellow, green, red. The entire field walls are done in a kind of light lime green.

The park was designed by POPULOUS, formerly known as HOK Sport and many things about the park are reminiscent of the new Yankee Stadium, though how much of that is architecture and how much is management decisions is unknown. Among the immediate commonalities: copious and varied food options, excellent sight lines, large restrooms, visible and active customer service reps throughout the concourses, recycling bins, and a humongous high-definition video board. When it comes to food, this is a city that loves to eat. The concession stands match that enthusiasm with many selections of Cuban, Mexican, and other Caribbean and Latin American offerings, including many kinds of Cuban sandwich, arroz con pollo, gourmet tacos, and tamales. On top of that the park has all the other upscale food choices we've come to expect at ballparks over the past ten years: sushi, barbecue, gluten free food, et cetera, as well as the usual hot dogs, popcorn, ice cream, and pizza.

The Marlins are supposedly introducing an "At the Ballpark" app which will allow fans to order concessions without leaving their seats but it does not appear to be ready yet. The wireless network was so overloaded as to be useless. AT&T and Verizon phone networks were also overloaded to the point of shut down and upgrades are needed. They drove to the park one time but didn't park there, and another time took the Miami-Dade County public transit ballpark bus from the Culmer Metrorail station. The ballpark bus was quick and a great option if you would rather park at a Metrorail station. They departed the park, hopped right on a bus, and were at Metrorail in mere minutes. The actual ballpark has four huge parking garages and a few lots, whose price seems to vary depending on whether you bought your parking in advance or not. These parking lots did sell out prior to the exhibition (the total is only 6000 parking spaces), meaning a lot of other businesses around the area (as well as residents) are jumping into the market. The Walgreens up the street charged \$35 per car. Many residents in the immediate neighborhood charge \$20 a car to park in their driveway and be just a block from the park.

Overall the game experience is quite pleasant, if a little loud when the roof is closed. They kept the roof closed for the day game, but opened it after batting practice for the night game. The field's main quirk is a very curlicue-shaped outfield wall, as it wraps around the "home run sculpture" and makes a notch in right center. A portion of the wall in left field is just netting (not Plexiglas) with fans sitting behind it at the Clevelander bar/swimming pool area. We could see the feet of the fans sitting there protruding, as they propped their feet against the net itself. That'll make for an interesting collision when some fan has one too many margaritas and doesn't take his or her feet down when the left fielder crashes into them. We will have to see how the park plays, roof open or closed, and with full humidity in mid-summer. as well as how the Marlins do in the NL East. But at least the ballpark is highly enjoyable, regardless of what happens on the field.

AT&T PARK: Chuck Nan reported on changes to AT&T Park. On the Promenade Level, the park's main concourse, is accessible to all fans and the only level on which fans can walk completely around the park. Circulation space was added and views to the field have been restored by relocating concession stands away from the field-side of the concourse. New lighting and signage have been designed to create a more open and inviting environment throughout the concourse. Restrooms have been reconfigured throughout the concourse and additional capacity has been added to the restroom in left field. The new men's restroom at Section 132/133 features Northern California's best view from a public bathroom – looking east to the Bay Bridge. The Fan Lot Bridge connecting the Promenade concourse to the Coca-Cola Fan Lot has been replaced by Ghirardelli Square South. This new space spans the full width of the Fan Lot and will feature a new location for Ghirardelli sweets and sundaes. Adjacent to this space will be a full service concession stand featuring burgers and garlic fries and many of the old ballpark favorites can be found in the relocated concession carts.

In partnership with Virgin America Airlines, the Club Level is now the Virgin America Club Level that features an updated modern paint scheme in red and gray hues and new mood-lighting similar to the signature lighting found on board Virgin America planes. Also found on the Virgin America Club Level is the newly redesigned and fully upgraded Virgin Flight Deck. This hip, outdoor club-like environment is located off the Virgin America Club concourse, behind Sections 229 & 230, elevated above 2nd and King Streets. The Flight Deck includes new seating, the Widmer Brothers Fan Haus bar and two fire pits surrounded by wind screens to create a more protected fan environment. The Flight Deck also features some of the best views available in the ballpark.

The Giants have more than 120 partners in their family of corporate sponsors. Some new features have been added. The Giants have partnered with AMD to update all the PCs in all 67 suites on the Oracle Suite Level. AMD will also provide other technology to be used in the Giants front office. Anchor Brewing Company: This San Francisco brewery's roots date back to the California Gold Rush making it one of America's oldest breweries. As leaders of the craft beer movement, Anchor Brewery is currently located in San Francisco's Potrero Hill neighborhood and will have a new presence at AT&T Park in the Upper Centerfield Court with the creation of Anchor Plaza and Taproom. This pre-game and in-game gathering area will feature a replica of the tap room bar found at the actual brewery and provide fans with the opportunity to experience another San Francisco original within the gates of AT&T Park. The Bullpen Box, located adjacent to the Visitor's Dugouts on the first base side of the park, has been transformed into the Corona Beach Club, providing fans with the opportunity to Find Their Beach right inside AT&T Park. The Corona Beach Club features a small sandy beach, two Adirondack chairs and all the amenities needed for a perfect day at the beach without leaving the comforts of the ballpark.

Fans will find that Centerplate and Bon Appetit, the Giants concessionaire partners, have redesigned and added components of their food and beverage program to enhance the overall fan experience. Some of the changes on the promenade level follow. First Base Carvery and Saag's Deli: The Carvery, located in the Field and Club Levels, makes its debut on the Promenade Level. It will feature its well-known carved turkey, beef brisket and corned beef sandwiches along with a panini sandwich that includes cajun turkey melts and a delectable dessert smore

creation. Assorted salads, fruit plates and San Francisco style chowder in a bread bowl complete the menu. A new, left field location for the Derby Grill will serve a selection of gourmet burgers, including a Tuscan pork burger, lamb burger and All American burger topped with cheese and bacon. While the burgers might be new, the old, ballpark favorite garlic fries can also be found at this location. Orlando's Caribbean BBQ, home of the Cha-Cha Bowll and Baby Bull Sandwich, located off the Promenade Level in Centerfield will add a Cubano sandwich stuffed with pork loin, ham, swiss cheese and pickles to its All-Star menu. In lower center field, McCovey's Forty Four BBQ features barbequed ribs, chicken and pulled pork from McCovey's Restaurant located in Walnut Creek, California. Fans will find homestyle side dishes along with other specialties like fried chicken and catfish.

The Giants have added to their display of memorabilia housed in more than 20 display cases on the Virgin American Club Level. This includes the 2010 World Series trophy and a special display of photos and mementos commemorating the 35th Anniversary of the Wallenda Brothers Tightrope Walk across Candlestick Park.

PETCO PARK: Charlie Merrow reported that there are only a few physical changes this year. Trevor Hoffman's number 51 has been added to the top of the batter's eye next to Jackie Robinson's number 42. Down the right field line, there is a new 37-foot long Budweiser Patio Bar that has a view of the field and is open to anyone. Two local breweries, Karl Strauss and Ballast Point now have their own concession areas. There is a new Western Metal Building Field Suite just behind the left field fence in fair territory with several tables and chairs. During batting practice, the occupants have access to a portion of the warning track.

The big news is that there is substantial support to make Petco more hitter friendly as reported by U-T San Diego. Manager Bud Black, General Manager Josh Byrnes and interim CEO Tom Garfinkel all supported changing the park dimensions. Byrnes said, "I think the way Petco is configured now is too distorted against the hitters, bad for the fans and affects the psyche of our club." Most of the hitters and even some of the pitchers support changes. The main area under consideration is shortening the distances to right and right-center fields.

TARGET FIELD: Rich Arpi described the new Kent Hrbek statue unveiled on April 14 that shows Kent jumping in the air in triumph after recording the final out of the 1987 World Series. Hrbek joins Puckett, Oliva, Killebrew Carew and the Pohlads with statues outside the stadium. Bert Blyleven's retired number 28 joined the other retired Twins number in the left field corner last July 16. The old flagpole from Metropolitan Stadium was erected in the right field plaza. A live mascot race is now held before the top of the fifth inning replacing an animated race on the scoreboard. One of the scoreboards now displays a box score in progress throughout the game.

There have been many additions to the food and beer selections. These include Valentini's mega meatballs, Super Mom's mini donuts, Sloppy Joes, garlic fries, and jumbo baked potatoes. Craft beers from a number of local breweries have been added. The Twins have gone from one of the worst food alternatives in the Metrodome to now one of the best. Convention attendees can now begin salivating.

SAFECO FIELD: The most talked about topic at Safeco is the change that did not occur as reported by Rick Jones. A very vocal and growing portion of the fan base has been lobbying for the fences to be brought in. However, the mariner's brass are quietly putting their foot down on this as they continue to try to build a team around a "pitchers park." The M's have embraced dynamic pricing that will depend on factors such as the opponent, day of the week, promotion and even the projected starter. This may subsidize King Felix's next contract. The prices will also vary depending on the number of seats left unsold. This is likely the wave of the future for many of the MLB teams.

Another new addition that is a big hit this year is "The Pen." It is not designed for baseball traditionalists. The Pen caters to fans that are less interested in the game than they are in the ability to mingle, drink cheap beer and party and has gained a reputation as a singles hang out. The pen features a cozy fire pit just inside the center field gate, a full service cocktail lounge, an open air beer and wine bar, hamburgers and fries, authentic Parisian crepes, New haven-style pizza and authentic Mexican Tortuga sandwiches.

A wonderful new feature is the addition of an interactive Dave Niehaus statue on the main concourse where fans can take a seat next to the beloved, longtime Mariner announcer and member of the Hall of Fame.

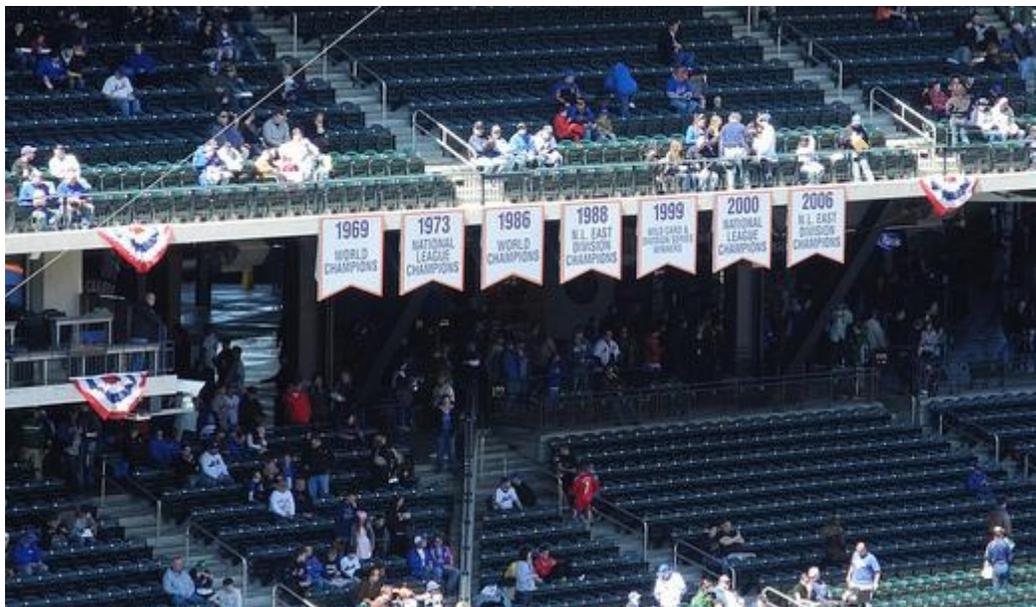


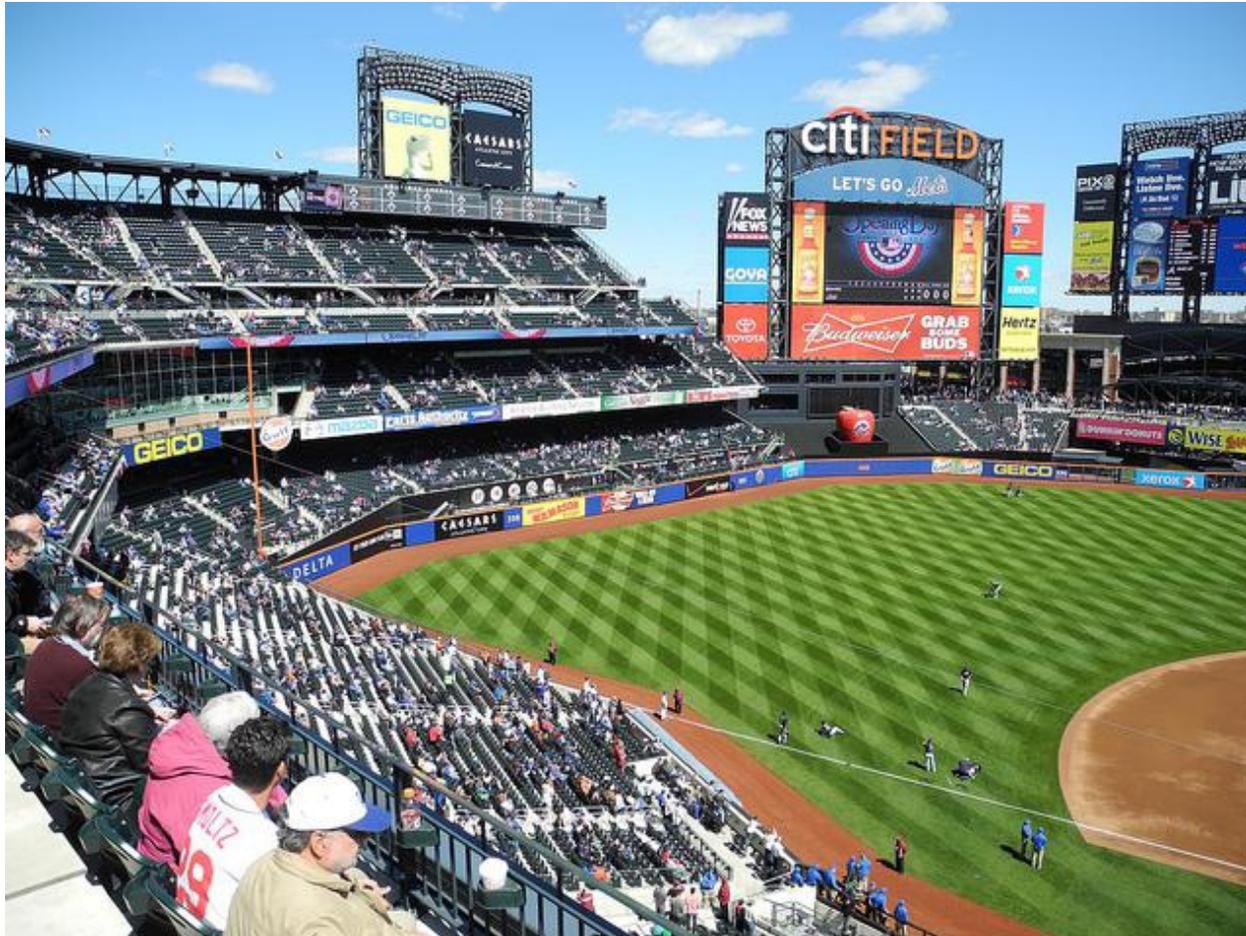
CITI FIELD: Adam Okurowski reported that the Fan Walk Brick areas outside the stadium have been expanded to include markers highlighting Shea Stadium, Citi Field itself, the Home Run Apple, Championship Banners and the Mets fans.



The Mets Hall of Fame has added a number of items with the theme of the Mets 50th Anniversary. These include Casey Stengel’s jacket, first game tickets and scorecards, Gil Hodges’ jersey, the original Shea Stadium dedication plaque and a display of all fifty yearbook covers.

The changes to the field dimensions and wall height were completed for opening. The new dimensions, from left to right are: 335’, 358’, 385’, 408’, 398’, 375’, and 330’. The old dimensions, although not precisely in the same spots were: 335’, 371’, 384’, 408’, 415’, 378’, 330’. The wall color has been changed for the previous “soot” color to the royal blue of Shea Stadium. Dimension changes have allowed for the expansion of the Modells seating area in right field, as well as the addition of seats above the leftfield wall that has been named “Party City Deck.” The capacity is now 42,080. The championship banners have been relocated to the third base side of the field from their previous position on the left field wall.





NATIONALS PARK: David Newman reports that the main change inside Nationals Park this year is a new slogan – “Ignite Your Natitude”. This must be having a tremendous effect as the Nats are cruising in the NL East so far. The conference rooms on the third base side of the club level have been renamed. Instead of numbers, the rooms now bear the name of former United States Presidents: Reagan, Taft, Eisenhower, and Kennedy. Fans will not have any problem spotting vendors in the stands this year. They have donned bright yellow/green shirts. There are several new menu items at the ballpark. The highlight includes the Red Porch’s eight pound Strasburger cheeseburger. Unfortunately for capital cardiologists, the delicacy said to be offered only at select games. The Taste of the Majors stand will serve dishes which represent the visiting team.

Several construction projects have started around the park, including buildings on Half Street across from the “Fairgrounds” and on Capital Street across from the ballpark. The concrete plant between the ballpark and the Anacostia River was demolished and fans can access the Anacostia Riverwalk trail from the first base side of the stadium. There is a new bridge to the multipurpose Yards Park in which stands the Foundry Loft building with several restaurants either open or planned. Finally, the ticket booth to the right of the stadium appears to be undergoing renovation and a temporary structure serves the ticket buyers. The Half Street “Bullpen” beer garden was

converted into the “Fairgrounds.” It is an outdoor market featuring food and craft stalls that will be open throughout the baseball season.

ORIOLE PARK AT CAMDEN YARDS: The Orioles are celebrating their 20th season at Camden Yards and conducting a year-long celebration of their remarkable home which they call “The Ballpark that Forever Changed Baseball.” The O’s ballpark started a trend of new “old-style” ballparks situated in the heart of downtown. The corner stone of the celebration will be the erecting of six statues commemorating the Orioles Hall of Famers whose numbers are retired: Earl Weaver, Jim Palmer, Brooks Robinson, Frank Robinson, Eddie Murray, and Cal Ripken, Jr. The statues will be placed in a redesigned bullpen picnic grove over the course of the season. A new eating area has been built over the batters-eye. It contains casual seating, a bar and deck seating.

One of the most significant improvements is the change to the wall over the out-of-town scoreboard in the area called the Flag Court. The wall is described as being lowered. A better description is that the wall where the fans stand was replaced by fencing that allows people of all heights with a completely open view of the field; a great improvement for the spectators



The final improvements have been to the concession stands and lower concourse. There is new flooring that brightens up and opens the concourse. The concession stands have been modernized with new signs and the vendor booths have been updated with a new design. David Newman summarizes that the changes made to celebrate Oriole Park’s 20th birthday enhance the fans’ experience at the ball park while maintaining the look and feel that made this stadium a trendsetter.

FENWAY PARK: Less than two months into its historic and heavily marketed centennial season, Fenway Park has made history and bid farewell to one of its most distinctive voices. In December, the Massachusetts Historical Commission nominated Fenway for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, an honor that the ballpark received in March reports Mark Sternman. Some of the new changes in this year include 18,5000 newly laid bricks inside entrance Gates B and C that bear messages from fans, and the new 6,000-square-foot Royal Rooters Club & Home of the Nation’s Archives which features more than 100 historical items from the team collection and from fans.

One of the joys of Fenway is walking to the park. The anticipation and excitement outside the park heightens the pleasure of emerging from the runway and seeing the green field unfold in front of you. The crowd really picks up at Kenmore Square, the closest MTA stop to Fenway.

You encounter street vendors, a Neil Diamond imitator singing Sweet Caroline, Popeyes restaurant that infamously served fried chicken to the Red Sox starters in 2011, the bricks at the Gate C bleacher entrance and multiple signs both under the stands and just to the left of the flagpole on the Green Monster reading FENWAY PARK 100 YEARS. One memorable brick reads PATRICK SHEA CHEERING FROM HEAVEN.

Tragedy struck one of the Fenway faithful when longtime Red Sox public address announcer Carl Beane died of a heart attack. It was reported that “Beane sounds remarkably like Sherm Feller, who served as the ballpark’s Voice of God when Baby Boomers came of age at Fenway in the 1960s and ’70s”. Early in his days at Fenway, Beane confessed that he would pause an extra beat before introducing Derek Jeter in order to give Sox fans more time to boo the Yankee captain.

The National baseball Hall of Fame opened an exhibit in April honoring the 100th year of Fenway Park.

GREAT AMERICA BALL PARK: Several minor changes have taken place in Great America Ball Park, but a spectacular revitalization in the surrounding neighborhood has given the experience of attending a Reds game a new feel reports Michael Winland. Several new food options have been introduced, most notably at the *Food Network* sponsored stand featuring what the club refers to as upscale ballpark food. Bacon Sloppy Joes, Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese and unique variations on the traditional hot dog are sold on an ever-changing basis. The *Machine Room* grill has been redone as a baseball themed gastropub and has gone over quite well with patrons who’ve dined there. In addition to the new food options several cosmetic changes have been made, most notably a new HD video board featuring lineups and information immediately inside the Crosley Terrace gates.

One controversial change has been the organization’s experiment with dynamic pricing. While the Reds have not introduced a full dynamic pricing model for tickets, they have added a \$2 surcharge to day of game ticket purchases. “Select” games (Friday and Saturday) from May-August cost \$5 more than weekday tickets.

The Reds Hall of Fame & Museum, already one of the best in baseball, has an excellent exhibit featuring the Big Red Machine and one featuring 2012 Hall of Fame Inductee Barry Larkin. Both exhibits are chock full of unique artifacts and information. The museum provides a wonderful place for fans to cool off from the Cincinnati heat and humidity while feeding their love for baseball history.

The area around Great American Ballpark has seen a surge in game day population because of the neighboring Banks project. The Holy Grail Bar and Grill has been joined by the much larger Christian Moerlein Lager House, a restaurant and microbrewery celebrating Cincinnati’s brewing heritage. Both the Lager House and Holy Grail are packed on game days and help to create a festival atmosphere in the neighborhood around Great American Ball Park. Several other dining establishments have opened at The Banks for the 2012 season including Toby Keith’s I Love This Bar & Grill and Orange Leaf Frozen Yogurt. New businesses are set to join the existing mixed-use residential district throughout the coming year. The recently completed first phase of

Smale Riverfront Park has given game attendees another place to congregate and relax around Great American Ballpark.

ANGEL STADIUM: There have been no significant changes to Angel Stadium this year but Ron Selter has identified what are apparently stealth seats. The seating capacity in 2005 was 45,037 as specified in Green Cathedrals. The capacity in the opening day box score in 2010 was 45,285. This year it was 45,957. Twenty-four seats were added a few years ago but where the additional capacity comes from is a mystery.

DODGER STADIUM: Los Angeles is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Dodger Stadium sponsored by State Farm. Everything in Dodger Stadium is sponsored by someone. Almost every inch of space is covered with advertising. They have added signs to the first row of the bleacher seats. While these likely do not affect the sight lines for adults, they appear to restrict the view of the field for children. There are a number of bobblehead promotions associated with the anniversary. Tickets for the most popular ones can only be obtained by purchasing a 10-game mini-plan. Pennants honoring the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers' six World Championships have been hung below the Club Level in right field.

The concessions have continued to degrade. Name brand stands such as Cantor's Deli and CPK have been replaced by no name vendors at lower quality. Prices are high and the lines long and slow. Early in the season, the concession staff was poorly trained and sparse making the waits even longer. The concessions are now close to the worst in baseball. The new owners have promised major upgrades to the Stadium to improve the fan experience and we need to give them a chance to make this happen. They did immediately lower parking from \$15 to \$10.

BALLPARK DIMENSIONS: Stan Meredith found an interesting article on ESPN.com on ballpark dimensions and the arguments over park size among hitters and pitchers. The link is: http://espn.go.com/mlb/story/_/page/keown-120510/giancarlo-stanton-angst-marlins-park-fences-illustrates-ongoing-discord-ballpark-dimensions. The Padre situation is discussed, the new Citi Field dimensions are given and the cavernous area of Marlins park is analyzed.

COLLEGE PARKS: Indiana University named its new baseball facility Bart Kaufman Field in honor of a major gift to IU Athletics from Bart Kaufman, a former IU baseball student-athlete and chairman and CEO of Indianapolis-area Kaufman Financial Corp. Highlights of the new stadium include new locker rooms and dugouts, indoor/outdoor hitting cages, a turf field, a press box, a scoreboard, a lighting and sound system, and hospitality suites. The complex will also feature ample parking, an entry plaza, a picnic area, concessions and restrooms for fans. Construction is expected to begin in the spring with completion scheduled in time for the 2013 season. The new \$19.8 million complex will replace Sembower Field and the IU Softball Field, which are on Fee Lane adjacent to Foster Residence Center.

HOT SPRINGS HISTORICAL BASEBALL TRAIL: On March 29, a one-of-a-kind "baseball trail" documenting Hot Springs' status as "The Birthplace of Spring Baseball" was opened to the public. A series of 26 historical markers linked to the very latest digital technology allows visitors to tour the city and visit places where America's baseball legends came to play, train and visit during baseball's golden age. More than 45 percent of the people in the Hall of

Fame either played baseball or were in some way associated with baseball training in Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas. Five pre-eminent baseball historians have painstakingly documented the Hot Springs connection to what became known as the sport's spring training. Twenty-six cast-aluminum plaques have been installed all over the city at locations that range from the spot where Babe Ruth in 1918 smacked a home run that traveled 573 feet and landed in an alligator pit at the Arkansas Alligator Farm to the site of the hotel where Ruth flipped a coin with his manager to determine Ruth's salary for the next year.

What began as our curiosity about why there are so many photos of Babe Ruth at various locations in Hot Springs wound up unearthing a treasure trove of historic associations between the world's most famous baseball players and Hot Springs, Arkansas. Bill Jenkinson, one of the pre-eminent baseball historians in the world, came to Hot Springs and helped authenticate Babe's legendary 573-foot shot that zoomed over Whittington Park's fence, across Whittington Avenue and into the Arkansas Alligator Farm. Jenkinson collaborated with Tim Reid from Florida, Don Duren from Dallas, Mark Blaeuer from Hot Springs, and Mike Dugan of Hot Springs to study spring baseball in Hot Springs. They determined that A. G. Spalding and Cap Anson brought the Chicago White Stockings (AKA Colts; now called the Cubs) to train and play spring games in Hot Springs in 1886. The field where they played, known as The Hot Springs Baseball Field and The Hot Springs Baseball Grounds, was located on Ouachita Avenue behind the current site of the Garland County Courthouse. Other famous names from that original group included are Mike "King" Kelly, John Clarkson and Billy Sunday. Anson's exploits at this locale on March 28, 1887, included hitting three home runs playing against a team from Des Moines, Iowa. More information can be obtained at <http://www.hotsprings.org>.

BURNETT PARK: Recalling Our Field of Dreams – This was abridged from an article by Chuck Cox of People Newspapers. He can be reached at chuck.cox@peoplenewspapers.com.

Other than its spectacular view of the Dallas skyline, the lush plot of land at Colorado and Jefferson Boulevards near Interstate 35 is a pretty ambiguous hunk of real estate. But between 1924 and 1964, that land was where minor league baseball players cut their teeth, wide-eyed kids scarfed food and Inez Tedley tickled the ivories on the organ during many a steamy Texas night. During its lifetime, Burnett Field had five different names and four different teams. And like most any ballpark, it provided memories that are still held close to the hearts of those who spent time drinking in America's pastime in Oak Cliff.

Burnett Field was built after Gardner Park, which opened in 1919 at Jefferson and Comal Street burned down July 19, 1924. Originally Burnett Field, which had a capacity of 10,500, was also called Gardner Park and was home to the Dallas Steers of the Texas League. The stadium officially became Burnett Field in 1951 to honor owner Dick Barnett. The home team was also the Dallas Rebels (1939-42, 1946-47), the Dallas Eagles (1948-57), the Dallas Rangers (1958-59, 1964), and the Dallas/Fort Worth Rangers (1960-63). In addition to the Texas League, those teams also spent time in the American Association and the Pacific Coast League. The ballpark was easily reachable by streetcar from all over Oak Cliff and all over Dallas so it was very easy to go.

In addition to seeing major League Stars such as Hank Aaron, Ernie Banks, Don Drysdale, Sandy Koufax and Willie Mays play at Burnett Field primarily during exhibition games, it provided a view of the social structure of the times. The park was segregated and the far bleachers down the left field line were colored only. When home run balls were hit to right, they belonged to the whites. You didn't go hunt a baseball in left field; that was the colored field. Bill Melton, later an announcer for the ABA Dallas Chaparrals, remembers the wonder of experiencing pro baseball as a kid. "The first game I ever saw was at Burnett Field," Melton said. "Frankly, I could not believe it. I walked out onto the concourse and saw these bright lights. I had never seen anything like it. You've got a raised field and an infield of dirt and grass. I was probably 8 years old at the time." One of the signs on the outfield wall was for Dave's Pawn Shop, where good old Dave would give whoever hit it a shotgun.

The Dallas Rangers merged with Fort Worth in 1960 and played half their games at LaGrave Field, which is still used today by the Fort Worth Cats. After two seasons away from the Texas League, the team was revived in 1965 as the Dallas/Fort Worth Spurs, who played their games at Turnpike Stadium. That eventually became known as Arlington Stadium, the original home of the Texas Rangers in 1971. Burnett Field is still remembered by many as the place I watched baseball.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION: What to do with the Eighth Wonder of the World? Bob Bluthart has sent in several articles discussing what will become of the Astrodome. The Harris County Sports & Convention Corporation which oversees the entire Reliant complex is discussing for the future of the Astrodome. These range from blowing it up at a cost of about \$80M and an Astrodome Renaissance that would completely refurbish the dome and add a substantial number of new features at a total cost of \$1.35B based on a 2010 study. There are additional options with more modest upgrades but are still in the \$1B range. The argument centers on the historic and sentimental value of the facility versus the cost. Eventually this would have to go to the voters for bond approval.

J. Hornberg in the Victoria Advocate argues to blow it up and asserts that it should cost less than \$78M. Like most unused stadiums, it has not aged gracefully. Like an old ship mothballed in harbor, it looks like it has been ransacked and rusted out. Touring the Astrodome is a depressing afternoon. However, last year the Astrodome ranked twelfth on a list of 100 sites nominated for recognition in the national Trust for Historic Preservation. It still carries the significance as being more than a baseball or football stadium. It was the first domed stadium and holds a special place in people's hearts as the first place they went to see a baseball game. The Astrodome was a revolutionary design at its time. It does have historical significance. However, it is less than 50 years old and its significance is certainly less than Yankee Stadium, Tiger Stadium, Comiskey Park and the Boston Garden, all of which have been destroyed.

Years of political stammering and lip service have doomed it. It has fallen into such a state of disrepair over the last decade and allowed to decay to a point where it would cost too much to save. The fact of the matter is, what was a modern marvel decades ago is now an eye sore. It had its occupancy permit stripped in 2008 for being unsafe, and has only gone downhill since then. Hornberg cynically states that the Astrodome is like a family member on life support. We can't let it go even when we know the decision is inevitable.

What do the Ballpark Committee members think? Send in your opinion and we will conduct a very unscientific straw poll.

LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM: There was an excellent article by Frank Jackson in Hardball Times on April 19 giving some of the history of baseball in the Coliseum, used from 1958 through 1961, with emphasis on the last game played there pitched by Sandy Koufax. It is titled "Sandy Koufax and the Coliseum: An end and a beginning." It is well worth reading. The link is: <http://www.hardballtimes.com/main/koufax-and-the-coliseum-an-end-and-a-beginning/>

THE BALLPARKS BULLETIN: Ira Drucker has donated a complete set of The Ballparks Bulletin to the Committee. This newsletter, published from March 1986 to November 1988 by Ray Madeiros included 17 issues. It has a lot of information of ballparks with emphasis on baseball postcards. Issue 1 had a retrospective piece on my first baseball game that took place in the Los Angeles Coliseum. It presented some little known facts that the field was first used by USC before the Dodgers arrived and the first home run over the short left field screen was hit by future Dodger Johnny Werhas. Ira also included a four-part index of these newsletters compiled by Tom Crabtree. If anyone has questions on this material, please ask.

PALACES OF THE FANS NEWSLETTER: Ballpark Committee members, please provide comments on what you have seen and want to see in the newsletter. We are planning for the next issue to be during the post season. Please forward 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. Please also suggest research projects for the Committee and volunteer to lead a research activity.

BALLPARK AUTHOR NEEDED: Bill Nowlin is looking for a person to write a biography on the South End Grounds in Boston. This will be included in the book on the 1914 Miracle Braves. If anyone is interested please contact Bill at BNowlin@rounder.com.

AT&T PARK: Chuck Nan has compiled an extensive data base on the history and of AT&T Parks and facts associated with the Giants Stadium. In this issue we will present facts on the parks statues, portwalk plaques and the Eddie Grant Memorial Plaque. There are four player statues located outside the park. These are: Willie Mays (Dedicated March 31, 2000), Willie McCovey (Dedicated May 4, 2003), Juan Marichal (Dedicated May 21, 2005) and Orlando Cepeda (Dedicated September 6, 2008)

There are 18 plaques along the portwalk. In chronological order, these are as follows.

Opening Day, April 11, 2000: The then-named Pacific Bell Park opened as the first privately financed Major League ballpark to be built in 38 years with the Giants losing to the Dodgers 6-5.

2000 National League West Division Champions: The Giants won the National League West championship with a Major League-best 97-65 record.

Barry Bonds' 500th Home Run: Bonds joined the 500-home run club with a two-run, eighth-inning game-winning clout off Los Angeles' Terry Adams April 17, 2001.

Barry Bonds - All-Time Single Season Home Run Champion: Bonds set the Major League Baseball single-season record for home runs with 73 in 2001.

Barry Bonds' 600th Home Run: Bonds became just the fourth player to hit 600 home runs when he connected off Pittsburgh's Kip Wells August 9, 2002.

2002 National League Champions: The Giants won their 18th National League pennant and made their 17th World Series appearance.

2003 National League West Division Champions: The Giants became only the second team in franchise history and ninth in Major League history to go wire-to-wire in winning the National League West with a 100-61 mark.

Barry Bonds Ties Willie Mays: Bonds hit his 660th career home run to tie his godfather Willie Mays for third on the all-time home run list, with a shot off Milwaukee's Matt Kinney April 12, 2004.

Barry Bonds' 700th Home Run: Bonds ascended to the 700-home run club, becoming the third member, with his solo clout off San Diego's Jake Peavy September 17, 2004.

Robb Nen's 300th Career Save: Relief pitcher Robb Nen became the youngest pitcher to save 300 games with his rescue August 6, 2002 vs. Chicago.

Barry Bonds' 715th Home Run: The number says it all. Barry Bonds ascended into second-place all-time in career home run Bonds passed the immortal Babe Ruth when he connected off Colorado's Byung-Hyun Kim May 8, 2006.

Jason Schmidt's 16 Strikeout Game: On June 6, 2006, Giant's ace Jason Schmidt struck-out 16 against the Florida Marlins. The Giants won 2-1 and Schmidt issued only one walk and seven hits.

2007 MLB All-Star Game: In 2007, the Mid-Summer Classic returned to the city of San Francisco for the third time in its 78-year incarnation. The American League defeated the National League by a score of 5-4. Ichiro Suzuki won the MVP award for the game.

Bonds Become the All-Time King: In addition to the marker inside the park (756), a plaque was dedicated to Barry Bonds and his record-breaking 756th career home run hit on August 7, 2007. Bonds connected against the Washington Nationals and pitcher Mike Bacsik.

Jonathan Sanchez No-Hitter: On July 10, 2009, Sanchez threw the first no-hitter at AT&T Park. It was the 13th in Giants franchise history and the fifth since relocating to San Francisco. Sanchez is only the fourth player to have a plaque on the portwalk. He joins Barry Bonds (7), Robb Nen and Jason Schmidt.

Brian Wilson Ties Season Save Mark: On October 3, 2010, Wilson closed out the final game of the regular season versus the San Diego Padres. His save won the Giants the National League West. In the process, he tied the Giants' single season save record of 48, held by former Giants closer Rod Beck, and gave him the most number of saves in the Major Leagues for the 2010 season.

Tim Lincecum Registers 14 Strikeouts in Post-Season: On October 7, 2010, in his first post-season game, Lincecum pitched a complete game two-hit shutout, striking out 14, against the Atlanta Braves in Game No. 1 of the National League Divisional Series, breaking the all time record for strikeouts in Giants post-season history.

Giants Win 2010 World Championship: In their 54th-year of competing in San Francisco, the Giants achieved the ultimate prize by winning the 2010 World Series Championship.

Additionally, there is an Orange and black plaque on brick wall in straight-away center field marking the spot that Barry Bonds hit his career home run No. 756 on August 7, 2007.

The Eddie Grant Memorial Plaque has an interesting story. “Harvard Eddie” Grant as he was known was the most prominent Major League Baseball player to be killed in action in the First World War. He had been deployed to France as a Captain with the 307th Infantry of the 77th Division. On October 5, 1918 during an effort to relieve the famous “Lost Battalion,” he was severely wounded by enemy artillery fire. He died on October 9 and was subsequently buried at the American Cemetery at Romagne-sous-Montfaucon in the Argonne Forest. Edward Grant owns the Harvard record for longevity in the pros. As a collegian, law student, and practicing lawyer, Grant played in 992 big league games as an infielder and utility man (including the 1913 World's Series) from 1905 to 1915. He played with the Indians, Phillies, Reds, and Giants.

On Memorial Day, May 29, 1921, representatives from the armed forces, baseball, and sisters of the slain Grant, unveiled a monument in deep center field of the Polo Grounds to the memory Captain Edward L. Grant, a professional both on and off the field. In ensuing years, the plaque became the focal of annual Memorial Day events. After the Giant's last game at that stadium in 1957, the plaque was stolen by someone and disappeared forever. It had never been replaced.

In December 2001, the Great War Society and the Western Front Association – U.S. Branch approached the San Francisco Giants Baseball Club with an offer to help defray costs of installing a replacement for Eddie Grant’s plaque at the new Giant’s ballpark. The team's President and Managing General Partner declined the offer. In the subsequent seasons, the Giants blew a sixth-game lead and ultimately the 2002 World Series, and were eliminated early in the 2003 playoffs. Their previous World Series appearances following the loss of Eddie's plaque were notably odd. In the 1962 rain-plagued series, the last out of the seventh game was a crushing line drive with the Series' winning runs in scoring position that went as if guided by radar to the Yankees second baseman. The 1989 earthquake-plagued series ended with a four-game sweep by the Oakland Athletics. The Giants last won a championship in 1954, three years before Captain Eddie's plaque disappeared. Could there be a jinx or a curse associated with the plaque? Well, it is forty-nine years and counting since a pinch hitter named Dusty Rhodes, a

utility man like Eddie Grant, led the Giants to their last championship. A local sportswriter wrote a story documenting all the “jinxes” the Giants have incurred. Quietly and almost anomalously, the Giants relented and just before the start of the 2006 season they erected a replica plaque that now hangs near an elevator at the Lefty O'Doul Gate entrance.

RESEARCH PAPER: UNION PARK by Ron Selter - Union Park (listed as Oriole Park III in Green Cathedrals 2006 edition) was a wooden ballpark and was the home park of the NL Baltimore Orioles for 1892-1899. In addition the park was previously used by the American Association Baltimore Orioles for the 1891 season. The park was located in Baltimore at the SW corner of Barclay and 25th Streets, across the street from the site of Oriole Park I. Recent research by SABR member Bruce Orser has turned up two new sources of information about this 19th Century ballpark: (1) a Sanborn fire insurance map (Baltimore 1901-1902, Volume 3, Sheet 341), and (2) an article in the Anaconda Standard-a little known newspaper published in Anaconda Montana.

The Sanborn map provided the location of the ballpark and showed the stands, ticket office, and outfield fences. An interesting feature of the ballpark was that on the Sanborn, the CF fence intruded into the alignment of the street on the south (24th St). From the Sanborn a scale was derived and was used to estimate the park's dimensions. As is typical with Sanborn maps neither the foul lines or the location of home plate were shown. The key factor in placing home plate and the foul lines on the Sanborn was the 1897 photo in Green Cathedrals (p. 14). In this photo, the LF foul pole can be seen (in the upper right portion of the photo) at the kink in the third base-LF bleachers. Home plate was placed in an estimated position 70 feet from the backstop and roughly centered in the foul area behind home plate. The grandstand was located in the northern part of the park site and home plate was in the middle (east to west) of the site. Another unusual feature of the park was the location and extent of the grandstand-the first base wing of the grandstand extended past first base while (as is clear in the 1897 photo) the third base portion of the grandstand went less than halfway towards third base.

The article in the Anaconda Standard of August 9, 1891 listed some of the dimensions of what was then a less than one-year-old ballpark: RF 368 and CF 425. The RF dimension was referred to as from home plate to the fence at the RF foul line, whereas the CF dimension was to the CF fence. It is unclear from the article if the CF dimension referred to dead CF or just some point in CF. According to the Sanborn, a dead CF distance of 425 could not have been correct. If home plate was moved back 35 additional feet (to make CF increase from 390 to the reported 425), the LF foul line would not have hit the fence at the kink in the bleachers as shown in the 1897 photo. If the CF fence had been move 35 feet further south it would have blocked the entire width of the perimeter street on the south (24th St). Using the estimated location of home plate, the following dimensions were developed: LF 318; SLF 381; LC 405; CF 390; RC 367; SRF 356; RF 368. SLF/SRF are straight-away LF/RF at 15 degrees off the foul lines. By comparison the 2006 edition of Green Cathedrals had LF at 300 and RF at 350. The average outfield distances were: LF 371; CF 388; RF 363. From the above research, the dimensions have a moderately high level of confidence.