

SABR BALLPARKS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

September/October Issue, 1990

Robert F. Bluthardt Committee Chairman
244 No. Oxford Drive Home: (915) 942-0635
San Angelo, TX 76901 Work: (915) 657-4441

I NEW MEMBERS We have five new members to the committee:

Corey Seeman, 532 Sheridan Rd, #2A, Evanston, IL 60202

All leagues and eras; Comiskey (old & new), Toronto parks, Tiger Stadium, Midwest League; analyzing attendance re winning %; works with Chicago Historical Society; wants to examine other team moves from old parks to new facilities. (Corey-see next entry)

Evan Meyer, 8253 Brecksville Road, Brecksville, OH 44141

AL & NL; modern era, Shea Stadium, Jarry Park; expansion teams' first year in new parks; teams moving from old parks to new, like Montreal (Jarry to Olympic) and Mets (Polo Grounds to Shea).

John Holway, 6 Kennedy, Alexandria, VA 22305

General interest in all parks; desires to design park that is "aesthetically pleasing and competitively fair."

John Misner, 59 Woodland Dr., W. Patterson, NJ 07424

1920-today's parks in majors; Yankee Stadium, Polo Grounds and Forbes Field; maybe a model of Yankee Stadium or Forbes Field.

Bill Watterson, 1900 Franklin Ave East, Seattle, WA 98102

All parks and leagues/eras; new park design; urban development and its relationship to the building of new parks; Sportsmans, Shibe, Forbes Field, Crosley, Sicks Stadium, & Mun. Std (KC).

Welcome to the Committee! If any of our readers see a common interest, I hope that he/she contacts you.

II COMISKEY FAREWELL The oldest ballpark in the game, Comiskey Park, saw its last game with a flurry of publicity and attention. Our committee assisted with both special sections done by the Chicago Sun-Times and Tribune. USA Today quoted three committee members (Bluthardt, Pastier & Bess) in a story that was quite supportive of the urban ballpark ideal. We thank all members who sent clips, photos, special paper sections, and other material marking the end of Comiskey Park.

III FUTURE OF COMISKEY Will any of America's oldest ballpark be saved? The "Save Our Sox Field of Dreams" Committee (see # XI in July/Aug newsletter) made the attempt, but I have not heard of any success. On behalf of the committee, I have contacted the Illinois State Historical Society to lend our support and assistance for a marker.

- (2) SABR Ballparks Committee
September-October, 1990
- III (cont.) If you agree with this effort, send a letter to Michael Devine, Director, Old State Capitol, Springfield, IL 62701. If you know of the status of Comiskey, let me know!
- IV NEW PARK FOR RANGERS The Texas Rangers will stay in Arlington and build a park 1/4 mile southeast of the present place. Seating 45-50 thousand, the open, real grass facility will be part of a development featuring a Little League field, picnic areas, jogging paths, restaurants & shops. For all the details, send a 25¢ SASE for some local stories. This might be as close as Texas can get to the "urban" concept. Several members of the committee advised the Rangers as they research all the factors for a new park.
- V MARKER FOR SHIBE PARK Still no response at this end in our attempt to have a marker for Shibe Park. The empty lot will house a new church and its pastor was a bleacher fan at the ballpark. Committee member Bruce Kuklick hopes that a marker can be achieved, perhaps by next spring when his history of the park will be published. We will send another round of letters and hope that the Rev. Smith sees the light and agrees.
- VI A BOOK ON BASEBALL IN THE 1900-1909 ERA is the project of Marc Okkonen, but he is not having success in attracting a publisher. Any suggestions? Contact him at 3080 Maple Grove, #184, Muskegon, MI 49441. The book would include substantial info on the ballparks of that era. Mark is also working on a model of Muskegon's old Marsh Field.
- VII MODELS AND THEIR MAKERS Over the past two months the request for info on ballpark model making has picked up. Our committee has at least six model makers. Brad Merilla, fresh from his triumph with Yankee Stadium, is now finishing up the Ebbets Field of 1957. He reports that the Polo Grounds is next for its 1963 version. Contact Brad if you have suggestions at Box 993, Shelter Island, NY 11964. Harvey Mayo at 6353 Teesdale Ave., No. Hollywood, CA 91607, is considering a model of Yankee Stadium. Jay Montanari of 2812 Kirkleigh Rd., Baltimore, MD, is also interested in a Yankee Stadium model. Why doesn't someone build a model of Fenway Park? Well, someone has, long-time model maker Carl Schoen in Sulphur Springs, MO. Carl was featured in an excellent story in the National. If you can assist Mr. Mayo, Mr. Merilla, or Mr. Montanari, please contact them and say hello.
- VIII FREE PROGRAM FROM THE REBUILT CROSLY FIELD in Blue Ash, OH, for a 45 cent stamp (I'll supply the envelope). Thanks to the City of Blue Ash for sending a bunch and thanks to committee member Bob Littlejohn for suggesting to the city that they pass some along. The program is dated 9-15-90 for the "Big Red Machine Reunion."

(3) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter
September-October, 1990

- IX PUBLICATIONS ON MEMORIAL STADIUM IN BALTIMORE Committee member Bruce Genther reports that the Babe Ruth Museum and the Orioles have tentatively agreed to a Memorial Stadium publication by 1992, perhaps with the opening of the new park in April. Proceeds of book sales would go to the Babe Ruth Museum, which plans a major exhibit on the history of Municipal Stadium. Meanwhile, Baltimore Sunpapers are planning on some small promotional publications on Memorial Stadium for April-91. Bruce believes that this enterprise will not seriously hurt the Orioles/Ruth Museum operation. If you have any suggestions, research info, etc., please contact Bruce at 15835 Haynes Road, Laurel, MD 20707. Bruce asks that copies of any info be sent to avoid the expense of returning materials.
- X BALLPARKS OF BALTIMORE a SABR presentation given at the annual Balto/D.C. regional meeting, is available from Gordon Thomas for a large (9 x 12) manilla envelope with \$1.45. Write him at 3000 No. Edison Street, Alexandria, VA 22207.
- XI BASEBALL HEIRLOOMS appeared on the public tv affiliate of Dallas KERA-TV recently. Committee member Phil Bess was among the speakers. If you have a public tv station in your area, watch your listings. Several people have asked about copies of the program. I know of no copies for sale, though the producers discussed that two years ago as a possibility.
- XII ADDRESS CHANGE Bob Bailey is now at 12129 Briargate Lane, Goshen, KY; ~~Andrew~~ Klein now at 6 Virginia Road, Waltham, MA 02154.
- XIII COMMITTEE MEMBER IN SPORTS ILLUSTRATED A belated recognition to Jerry Cohen whose "Ebbets Field Flannels" business was profiled in the 7-30-90 issue of SI. The Seattle resident joined our committee last spring. His company makes accurate replicas of obscure minor league teams.
- XIV POLO GROUNDS FACADE Fans of this famed park know that a ring of decorative features on the front of the grandstand's first deck was removed in the early 1920s. Why? I believe that they came with the rebuilt 1911 Polo Grounds and they disappeared by the 1923 season. If you know why they were removed (and where they went to) contact Elliot Knispel, 50 Gramt Street, Farmingdale, NY 11735. And let me know too!
- XV TIGER STADIUM UPDATE The fan club fighting to save this historic ballpark reports that the lease with the Tigers binds the club to Tiger Stadium until 2008, a 30-year lease signed in 1978. The club held several fundraising benefits over the fall months. If you would like to help save Tiger Stadium, contact the fan club at PO Box 441426, Detroit, MI 48244-1426.
- XVI BALLPARK MAPS Rand McNally of Baltimore, MD, has out out a "Major League Baseball Stadium Map Series." I have Vol. I No. 1, covering Memorial Stadium with a neighborhood close-up map and general park info. Has anyone seen other maps for parks? If so, let me know.

(4) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter
September-October, 1990

- XVII GREENVILLE, SC MARKER FOR JOE JACKSON Shoeless Joe Jackson played his early professional games for the Greenville Spinners of the Carolina Association in 1908. The 1990 Cleveland issue of the Oldtyme Baseball News noted that little is left of Meadowbrook Park but a small ballfield and a lot for the city's garbage trucks. Would a marker be appropriate? If any committee member living in the area--or passing through the region--wants to check it out, please let me know.
- XVIII CITY BASEBALL MAGIC Though sales from the outside world have dropped off, we still receive inquiries. Last month an architecture professor at the Univ. of Houston ordered a copy for his course on design. His students are designing ballparks! There have been several courses like this across the land. It now has been one full year since we published CBM. A second edition has been published by the Minneapolis Review of Baseball. Looking for a sporty holiday gift for a baseball friend? Support the Ballparks Committee and buy some of the remaining copies of the first printing. Cost: \$7.00 Contact Bob Bluthardt for information.
- XIX ECONOMIC REASONS FOR LEAVING OLD PARKS and the ties of urban development to new stadia projects are being explored by Bill Watterson, a recent member of the committee. Contact Bill at 1900 Franklin Ave East, Seattle, WA 98102. Bill has also asked about the availability of various ballpark books, leading me to item XX
- XX GREEN CATHEDRALS..... where can I get a copy....do you have extras....what booksellers have a copy..... I now get about two requests for a source each month. Pretty ironic for a SABR publication that was years in the making and almost not completed. Anyhow---does anyone know of a source for copies of the first edition? And what is the status of a second edition?
- XXI SAVE WADE STADIUM in Duluth, MN. Committee member Todd Klatt is part of a group that is trying to renovate this WPA/1941 ballpark for the many local teams that use it. I just received a packet of info from Todd. If you would like a copy, please send a 45 SASE. To assist or lend suggestions, contact Todd at 927 East 5th St., Duluth, MN 55805. To make donations, contact the Wade Stadium Task Force, PO Box 275, Duluth, MN 55807.
- XXII COMPUTER COMMITTEE LIAISONS announced in the September-90 Committee Newsletter are Ann Tomczyk, 259A Nassau Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11222; Mark Pankin 1018 No. Cleveland St., Arlington, VA 22201; Mark Landsbaum, 1577 Deer Crossing, Diamond Bar, CA 91765. If you have computer questions, these are your reps!

(5) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter
September-October, 1990

XXIII LAST GAMES for some ballparks aren't as dramatic as that for Comiskey. And the attendance wasn't much either. Braves Field died before 8,822 in 1952; Ebbets Field before 6,702 in 1957; Colt Stadium before 6,246 in 1964; and Griffith Stadium before 1,498 in 1961.

XXIV RESOURCES FOR SPORTS HISTORY, a new exhibit being developed by new committee member Corey Seeman of the Chicago Historical Society. This small exhibit will contain about seventy manuscripts and photographs, covering sports material in non-sports settings. Corey hopes to examine four or five different issues and demonstrate some of the resources one might use to explore and study the topic. The exhibit should be ready by late December and run to August of 1991. The Society is located at Clark Street at North Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614.

XXV SURVEY FOR 1991 I would like to update my records on our many members and their interests/resources. A form may be coming your way in 1991 if you have been a member for more than three years. Please return it promptly when it arrives. Our people represent the greatest strength of the Ballparks Committee.

XXVI COMMITTEE OPINION POLL will be sent out with the next issue to get your opinions on various issues that relate to the general agenda for the committee chairs meeting in Chicago next February. I ask for your return of this form to give me an accurate reflection of this committee's ideas, opinions, and suggestions.

XXVII OTHER CITY BASEBALL MAGIC NEWS The offices of a Norfolk, VA architecture firm called in mid-September asking for a copy as the firm was considering a project for a new ballpark for that city. Also, the CMB publication was reviewed in Urban Land, a magazine covering news in urban development and architecture.

XXVIII INFO ON ALL NA, UA, & PL parks is sought by Irv. Mouallem, 6601 Burns Street, Rego Park, NY 11374. If you have anything on the parks of the National Association, Union Association, and Players League of the late 19th century, Irv would like to hear from you. His group is putting out a book on the all-time team vs. team records in professional baseball.

XXX COLOR HOME MOVIES OF BALLPARKS in the 1930s to the 1960s are sought by the folks at Black Canyon Productions for a tv special "When It Was a Game," scheduled for an April-91 showing. They are looking for 8 & 16 mm films that show the old parks. If you can help, contact George Roy at (212) 586-7722, 200 West 57th Street, NYC, NY 10019. George says that this show will appear on HBO and that some of the film they have thus far is simply astounding. Any pre- and post- WWII color movies of baseball would be of interest to the group.

(6) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter
September-October, 1990

- XXXI FUTURE COMMITTEE MEMBERS profiled in the November-December newsletter could number another half-dozen as there have been many inquiries about our committee. Among the probable new members soon to send in a survey form are F. David Gill of Cleveland, OH and Tom Shieber of Mt. Wilson, CA. Dave has been appointed to the advisory board of fans who will give the Cleveland Indians some direction for their new ballpark. Tom's interest in photo identification and he has 8000 entries in his data base.
- XXXII EMERALD FIELD, A RETURN TO THE URBAN BALLPARK, is a Masters Thesis written by Stuart Malcomb of the University of Washington. He has most kindly donated a copy of his thesis to the committee. This impressively illustrated 190-page work was influenced by several committee members. We thank Mr. Malcomb for his thoughtfulness. This makes two such works given to the committee. John Curran gave us a copy of his thesis that designed a new park for the Brewers.
- XXXIII SHIBE PARK has a fan in Korea. George Amadio is with the US Army and has written us twice, sending some clippings on ballparks. If you have any materials on Shibe Park that you would like to share, please write him at PO Box 145, APO San Francisco, 96366.
- XXXIV YANKEE FAN NEWSLETTER is a production of committee member John Guilfoyle of Centereach, NY. The Vol. #2 issue deals with the Stadium lease issue. Our thanks for a copy of the March-1990 issue. Back copies are \$1.00. John lives at 50 Henry Road, Centereach, NY 11720. A transit officer with the NY Transit Police, John has graciously offered his services for security during any tour of Yankee Stadium. He notes that the sites of the Polo Grounds and Hilltop Park are not far away.
- XXXV BOOK SOURCE from John Guilfoyle (and mentioned by a few SABR people) is Bernard Titowsky, PO Bpx 36, Kew Gardens, NY 11415 (718) 441-1199. John tells us what others have said: the fellow has a great collection of out-of-print and old books, but his prices are high. The Ballparks for \$125; Green Cathedrals at \$97.50. He has a catalog. Write for info.
- XXXVI EBBETS FIELD will be part of an in-depth paper on "Baseball in Brooklyn" by Matthew Kachur, the same fellow who wrote the fine piece on "The Construction of Yankee Stadium." His Brooklyn paper will focus on the general history of the sport in that borough, from the mid-1800s to the building of Ebbets Field. If you have an insights to share, write Mat at 231 West 15th Street, NYC, NY 10001 #4B.

(7) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter
September-October, 1990

XXXVII NYC BALLPARKS MEETING is being discussed for the winter and I expect to be passing through NYC sometime around December 19. Vin Russo is trying to organize something. Details later.

XXXVIII THANKS to those donating material to our file:

Dick Johnson	Ralph Graber	Jim Peters
Evan Meyer	Keith Danish	Gordon Thomas
Paul Shapiro	Vin Russo	
John Misner	Nadine Smith (Tampa Tribune)	
Dick Kaufman	Stew Thornley	Kyle Johnson
Elliot Knispel	Jim Brown	John Guilfoyle
	Bob Littlejohn	Norman Macht

XXXIX ARTICLES AVAILABLE

- a) "Remembering the Tree that Played Center Field," (Atlanta's Ponce de Leon Park), Baseball Digest, Sept. 90.
- b) "Chicago's Comiskey Park to Perish at 80," Cleveland Plain Dealer, 9-24-90
- c) "Touching All the Bases," (a railroad tour of ballparks), Amtrak Express, Aug./Sept. 90
- d) "Salvation at a sanctuary of sport," Phila. Inquirer, 7-12-90 (church going up on site of Shibe Park)
- e) "Fill Dirt and Astro turf," Seattle Times/Post Intelligencer, 7-22-90 (history of Kingdome site).
- f) "90s could usher in new ballpark era," USA TODAY, 9-24-90
- g) "Field of Memories," (workers remember Comiskey Park) Union, Summer-90
- h) "Comiskey: No Field of Dreams, But a Real Park in a Gritty City," NY Times, 9-30-90
- i) "Take Me Out to the Old Ballparks," LA Times 9-2-90 (father/son tour the old parks)

one article is 25 cents SASE; 2-3 is 45 cents;
4-5 is 65 cents; 6-7 is 85 cents; 8-9 is \$1.05

That should do it for now. Keep in touch and keep those cards and letters coming!