

SABR BALLPARKS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

June - December, 1998

© SABR Ballparks Committee 1998

Robert F. Bluthardt
3514 Cedar Ridge Lane
San Angelo, Texas 76904

Committee Chairman
home (915) 942-0635
work (915) 481-2646 fax (915) 657-4540
Email rfvblue@wcc.net

I. NEW MEMBERS

Mark Sommer
1266 Teaneck Road 10A
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Shea Stadium, Elysian Field, all eras & levels; historic-non-active parks

Jack Moulds
262 Lowell Avenue
Mercerville, NJ 08619-2528

All eras & levels; Yankee Stadium, Old Comiskey & Cleveland Stadium;
Interested in helping with minor lg. park research

Thomas DeAngelo
52 City Blvd.
Staten Island, NY 10301-3304

Pre-1900 and 1900-50 parks; all levels; NYC & Brooklyn; interested in
historic markers for Washington Park & St. George Grounds.

John Moist
932 41st Street
Sacramento, CA 95819

AL Parks; Philadelphia

Alan Rice
337 Terry Avenue
Billings, MT 59101

1920-50 parks; major & minor lgs.

Cory Suppes
5169 Seaside Court
Union City, CA 94587

All eras & levels; internet interest; would like to become a storage/clearing-
house for SABR Ballparks Committee; maintains ballparks web site at
www.ballparks.com.

Ross Sackett
Box 448
Eureka Springs, AR 72632

All post-1900 parks; all levels, older parks still active;

Max Neuberger
3 Stuyvesant Oval #MH
New York, NY 10009

All eras and all levels; New York current and former parks; interested in
evaluating the new "retro" parks to see if they measure up to their classic
originals.

We welcome these new members to the Committee; please contact any member for whom you see a common interest.

II RESEARCH NOTES

1. A production company is planning a program on ballparks for the History Channel in the summer. We sent some material from the Committee files and expect more specific requests later. Meanwhile, we will keep you posted and have a report for the Spring-99 newsletter.
2. Daryl Brock asks about the origins of the dugout, noting that he has seen some early versions in the Polo Grounds for 1910. He is especially interested in dugouts below field level. If you have any material to share, write him at 1565 Rose Street, Berkeley, CA 94703.
3. We have a copy of Larry Zuckerman's great story on "How to Go About Researching Ballparks" that ran in the Minor League Committee Newsletter a few years back. Three pages available.
4. Alan Schmidt of our Committee asks if anyone has produced models of Yankee Stadium before the 1974-75 renovation. Contact him at 325 Liberty Street, Hillsdale, NJ 07642.
5. Robert Golon of our Committee wants to know when ballparks first had formal press boxes or facilities. He has some info on a special area at the 1892 Polo Grounds. If you have material, please write him at 102 O'Keefe Lane, South Plainfield, NJ 07080.
6. And now they are researching the architects themselves! A Florida International University student recently contacted us for information about a certain architect. He was to "research the theories attributed to an individual." One page available.
7. Bruno Egloff at CSS 335, PO Box 25323, Miami, FL 33102, seeks a copy of the plans or blueprints for Pro Player Stadium (ex-Joe Robbie) in Miami.
8. Vince Guerrieri of 830 Wilkinson Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44509, needs information on that city's minor league park of the Mid-Atlantic Lg. days of 1939-42; 46-51.
9. James B. Ricci of 30 No. Farms Road, Haydenville, MA 01039-9724, requests "archived photos and their accompanying stories of sports fields being cut with reel mowers from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century."
10. Patrick Petit of 3512 Cherryvale Drive, Beltsville, MD 20705, notes that Municipal Stadium in nearby Hagerstown was built in the 1930s as a WPA project. He wonders how many parks were built in that way--is there a listing of all WPA ballparks? If you have some suggestions, contact him and send us a copy too.
11. Another questions about the pathway to the pitcher's mound, this time regarding Fenway Park. Bill Nowlin of One Camp Street, Cambridge, MA 02140, seeks the dates of this pathway for Fenway.
12. Would a 1907 college baseball field be the oldest of its kind? So asks Kip Carlson, Sports Information Director-Baseball, Oregon State, Gill Coliseum, Room 209, Corvallis, OR 97331. Coleman Field-- set to be replaced this coming season-- has hosted 91 years of local ball. Five pages available. If you have something older, contact Kip

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

13. Bruce Genter is working on a model of Fenway Park and he needs photos of the buildings right across the street from Fenway's main grandstand entrance on Yawkey Way (formerly Jersey Street). Please write him at 15835 Haynes Road, Laurel, MD 20707.
14. The Committee files recently assisted a research company helping the United States Postal Service with its 1950s decade baseball stamps. One will mark the Yankee-Dodger rivalry and another will celebrate the famed Thomson home run when "the Giants win the pennant."
15. Thanks to Fred Schuld we have a copy of a photo of Akron's Seiberling Field. And thanks to area baseball historian Richard McBane we have a profile of this park that hosted many semi-professional teams before WWII . Two pages available.
16. Two new movies for the "Ballparks & TV/Movies" file: In "Trouble Along the Way" (1953) John Wayne plays a college football coach and there are some scenes in the Polo Grounds. And in "A New Kind of Love," (1963) Paul Newman plays a writer and there are some great aerial shots of Dodger Stadium, referred to as Chavez Ravine." These could be very early shots from the 1962 season.
17. A last word, of sorts, for the missing Eddie Grant plaque from the Polo Grounds. Ev Parker, a former NYPD detective, notes that his research shows no record of any stolen marker being reported to the park's nearest precinct house. Ev concludes that it may have been taken from the vandals by the police, but it has failed to appear in any official records. Perhaps it will re-appear at some dramatic moment like the Braves Field home plate. That item disappeared on the evening of the team's announcing it was fleeing Boston. It surfaced with the four boys--now men--at the 1988 Braves 40th Anniversary/48 Pennant dinner. The boys had kept it hidden in various homes for four decades!
18. Ballparks history pioneer Phil Lowry asks if anyone caught the mistake by George Will in his 3-30-98 Newsweek column musing that Jimmy Foxx should have had 67 home runs in 1932 instead of the 58 he gets in the record books. Will argues that 1932 fences in Cleveland and St. Louis effected Foxx in 1932 but not Ruth in 1927. Wrong--says Phil. Anyhow, McGwire hit 70.
19. Professor Gail Rowe is still looking for information about the rebuilt South End Grounds after the 1894 fire. She wonders if the new facility had dressing rooms for the players. Please write her at Dept. of History, University of No. Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639.
20. Dan Gutman just wrote and asks if anyone knows where Ruth's famed 1932 "called shot" landed. He says it landed inside a ticket booth in CF--just where was it? He also welcomes information about Wrigley Field in 1932. Write him at 224 Euclid Avenue, Haddonfield, NJ 08033.

III. EXHIBITS

1. Helen Miller sends her best greetings and wants us to know of a special baseball exhibit "of Reds pictures and memorabilia from the collection of (her late husband) Richard Miller." Location: Main Library Atrium of the Public Library of Cincinnati, 800 Vine Street. March 1-31, 1999.
2. A special exhibit of ballparks models took place in San Diego's Hall of Champions last July & August. Among the models were those of Shibe, Forbes, Crosley, Griffith, and Baker Bowl, done by Bruce Genter (owned by Mark Mahler). The future SD park model plus an HOK Denver model were there too.

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

3. "Play Ball, Yesterday & Today," an exhibit and series of activities, celebrated the arrival of major league baseball to Tampa-St. Petersburg, took place last spring. Five pages available.

IV ATTENDANCE NOTES

1. Major League Baseball set a new full season attendance record with almost 70.5 million fans, up a few percentage points from the 1993 total of 70,257,938. However, the majors had two new teams in 1998, (Tampa Bay & Arizona) and they accounted for nearly 6 million new fans. In 1997, the two leagues drew 63,867,022, so '98 levels were up about 10% overall. Drop the two expansion teams and the increase over last year was quite small.
2. Five AL teams and 8 NL teams increased their attendance over 1997; 8 AL teams and 7 NL teams dropped from 1997 levels. Five teams had their best all-time year in 1998 (New York/AL, Cleveland, St. Louis, San Diego, and Houston).
3. No surprise that the home run derby helped Chicago and St. Louis, and their rivals: Chicago's home and road attendance was up 4900 & 5800 per game while St. Louis had about 7000 more fans for each home and road game.
4. Beanie Babies helped too. Twenty teams had beanie baby promotions and those games had an average of 39,735 while those same teams averaged 29,017 for all other games, a 37% increase.

V MARKERS

1. Frank D'Amico of our Committee is thinking of organizing an effort for some type of statue outside of Fenway Park--and maybe a similar effort for Braves Field. Boston's first American League Park, the Huntington Avenue Grounds has both a marker and a statue of Cy Young while the old South End park has a marker inside the transit station occupying the site. If you have any thoughts, write Frank at 14 Rogers Avenue, Dedham, MA 02026.
2. ISN reported on August 31 that they were considering naming a part of Waveland and Sheffield outside of Wrigley Field in honor of Jack Brickhouse and Harry Caray. But since the city already had small downtown streets named for them, it was suggested to go with "Hey, Hey Drive" and "Holy Cow Way."
3. Kudos to Stew Thornley for his summary of how to do a marker project printed in the SABR Bulletin's Pres Box column (Sept/Oct. 98). We have a small file on marker projects, so if you are considering such an effort, contact your chairman.
4. The Brooklyn Dodger Hall of Fame newsletter reported that a marker was placed on Montague Street, location of the club offices. "The plaque is on a wall of the bank for all to see and not to touch."
5. An impressive effort announced last summer to spruce up the remains of League Park, create a museum and a 200-home development, and preserve the field. Cleveland Plain-Dealer, 8-30-98 (2 pgs). The ticket office and a section of the grandstand remains.

VI ARTICLES/MATERIAL OF THE PAST

1. First night game in Cleveland was for Negro Lgs. contest, Cleve. PD, 7-13-30, (1 pg)
2. "Frisco Facing Race With Time to Build New Stadium for Giants," TSN, 7-31-57 (1 pg)
3. Det/Cin. Exhibition game shows that Twin Cities ready for major lg. ball, TSN, 8-14-57 (1 pg)
4. Four pages of local articles on building of new League Park/Cleveland, Sept/1909
5. Profile of League Park scoreboard/operator, ca. 1915, Cleve. PD, (1 pg)
6. Location of Pitts. first ballpark and the efforts to mark the site, Pitts. Post-Gazette, 7-10-98 (1 pg)
7. One-page profile of County Stadium and city, Milwaukee Magazine, June/98
8. Yogi Berra muses about Yankee Stadium, interview with Mike Lupica, (1 pg) 11-2-98
9. One-page summary of all stats and construction notes on Yankee Stadium/1923
10. Three-part series in TSN on Polo Grounds history, July/August-1957 (12 pgs)
11. Tampa/St. Pete. citizens helped black players find lodging in 50s, St. Pete. Times, 3-9-98 (3 pgs)
12. Seating plans and notes at Soldiers Field for Dempsey-Tunney fight of 1927, Cleve. PD, 4-17-27 (1 pg)
13. Two pages of Cleve. PD, 4-29-47, of the shifting stadium fences.
14. Stadium facilities too expensive for schoolboy sports, Cleve. News, 10-15-98 (1 pg)
15. Six photos from Committee member Tom Holster's collection on Griffith Stadium, including several shots after club left DC. Photocopies available.
16. "My Summer in Baseball," recollections of Comiskey batboy of late 40s, CSM, 7-24-98 (1 pg)
17. "Bulkeley Stadium was a special spot," Hartford, CT paper, (4 pgs) 9-28-98. Site now has a marker.
18. One page profile of 1951 Pioneer Lg. teams/cities/stadiums, managers, etc. Billings, MT program
19. Four pages of handouts from Stew Thornley's fine slide-tak on the Polo Grounds.
20. Ten pages of Ebbets Field facts/photos/notes from Ebbets Field Ventures LLC web page.
21. "Nashville Parks of the Past," 1998 Sounds News, (1 pg)
22. "A Blaze of Doubt," '48 fire wipes out Edmonds Field, Sacramento Bee, 7-26-98, (2 pgs)
23. "In Search of the Giants," photo of Polo Grounds marker/summary of team history, Vil. Voice, (1 pg)
24. Blueprints of Wrigley Field held by architect's granddaughter, Cedar Rapids Gzete, 6-13-98 (2 pgs)

VII SPECIAL ENCLOSURES

1. "The Old Ballparks Were Better," or so says our Committee member Phil Bess. And he has backed up that claim with a list of fifty reasons. They ran on the ESPN Sportszone web page the week of September 15.
2. A Ballparks Quiz courtesy of our own Barry Evans, given originally at last spring's Chicago regional. If you have not already participated in this exercise (play fair!), then give it a try and send back to your chairman by February 22 and we correct them and post the winner(s) Some prize to be awarded. This is not an "open book" test as we used to say in high school!
3. Rich Tabac, a writer in CA, seeks information from the enclosed survey for a big article he is writing for American Way magazine. Be as prolific as you wish.
4. SAVE FENWAY PARK, a group/project described elsewhere in this newsletter, seeks input on its proposals to renovate and preserve the classic facility for the future. The enclosed draft of proposed ways/means is "only the first volley in (the) internal debate." If you have any comment or suggestions, contact Jeffrey Harris, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Northeast Office, Seven Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Boston, MA 02109. (617) 523-0885 FAX (617) 523-1199; Jeffrey notes that "an alleged cadre of architects are waiting to work with us on the proposal."

VIII BUSINESS/POLITICS/ARCHITECTURE ARTICLES

1. "Losing Sight," Boston Globe, 5-3-98, concise, illustrated study on why today's stadia place fans so far away from the playing field/arena (4 pgs) Must reading for serious ballparks fans!
2. "Stadium referendums fail in Triad (NC) and Toledo," BB America, June 8-21, 1998 (1 pg)
3. "The best bargains in sports," financial summary of baseball before 1998 season, Chi Sun-Times, 3-29-98
4. Indians stock seems to follow team's on-field record, Cleve. PD, 6-18-98 (1 pg)
5. "Stadium design expert is packaging new deals," wire service, 8-10-98 (2 pg)
6. "Internet catches stadium building boom," WSJ, 6-16-98, (1 pg)
7. Fan revolts at AZ ticket price increase, SI, 10-12-98 (1 pg)
8. Chicago writer yearns for old Comiskey and better parks, Sun-Times, 4-13-98 (1 pg)
9. "Recycling strikes out at Jacobs Field," Cleve PD, 6-19-98 (1 pg)
10. "Virtual billboards becoming a reality," superimposed ads on tv, AP, 8-5-98 (1 pg)
11. "The truth about stadium funding," Buffalo/Cleveland/Pitts., Buffalo Beat, 8/28-9/3 1998 (1 pg)
12. Phoenix rebuilds downtown with sports and entertainment , CSM, 6-1-98, (2 pgs)
13. "Ownership is a corporate thing," no source, 1998 article
14. "Public sours on paying for parks," SF Examiner, 9-7-98 (1 pg)
15. "New parks are no guarantee of success," USA Today BB Weekly, 11/25-12/1 1998, (1 pg) ; includes article by AL prez Gene Budig urging new park for Boston (shades of Dr. Brown & Comiskey)
16. NY Times of 12-17-98 created the "Arena League" where teams were ranked and placed into divisions based on the stock performance of their corporate sponsors for arenas. Interesting concept! (1 pg)
17. TSN Quiz of 6-22-98; can you name the team(s) that play in these corporate sponsored arenas? (1 pg)

IX MISCELLANEOUS BALLPARKS ITEMS & NEWS

1. The Brooklyn Dodger Hall of Fame newsletter can be had for a lifetime for just \$5; contact Marty Adler, 2946 Bayside Court, Wantagh, NY 11793. They cover many ballparks items with Ebbets Field.
2. Dr. Gerald Phillips passed away at his home in Austin, TX in June of last year. He was the consultant who determined that the Astrodome ceiling needed to be 208 feet from the playing surface. As a physics professor at Rice and the University of Texas, Rice made his calculations before such home run titans as Mark McGwire. He proved pretty accurate; how many times has the crown inside the park been hit?
3. SmartMoney magazine in August-98 published an article, "Field of Dreams," that has wonderful wide-angle shots of Tiger/Fenway/Yankee. Three pages available. "Visit baseball's great old parks--while you can."
4. Simon Inglis of our Committee visited Houston & Chicago to research his new book on sports facilities. He kindly donated a copy of his recent work, Villa Park, 100 Years, a wonderfully illustrated overview of Birmingham's famed playing facility. Published by Sports Project, LTD for L24.95, it can be ordered by writing 188 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, England, B67 5EH.
5. "What It Costs When You're In The Park," a one-page summary of concessions costs for all 30 ml parks available from Street & Smith's SportsBusiness Journal. July 13-19, 1998. Pittsburgh is the cheapest for a beer, soda, hot dog, program & parking at \$14.75 while Tampa Bay tops the chart at \$23.25 for the same items. All costs pro-rated as there are different size servings. Florida and the Cubs had the cheapest 16 oz beer at \$3.33; Anaheim topped the majors at \$5.71! Soda is cheapest in Montreal (\$1.41) and the best hot dog deal can be found in Toronto (\$.75). Park cheap in Pittsburgh (\$4) and pay big at Wrigley

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

for 11 bucks. Programs ranged from \$1 (KC) to \$5 at six parks. For some of the more expensive parks, a bus or subway ride--as available--would cut costs considerably!

6. Fans of Braves Field need to subscribe to the Boston Braves Historical Association newsletter that covers a wide range of topics on the team and the park. The association had its annual October reunion that included panels, research reports, and a tour of the old Wigwam. 1998 marks the 50th anniversary of the '48 pennant team, and it was just ten years ago that this Committee joined forces with Boston University and the New England Sports Museum to produce that marker for the park and a great weekend of Braves events. Contact the BBHA at PO Box 5668, Marlboro, MA 01752 for more details.
7. I have some extra programs from the 4-8-95 special old-timers/state legislators day game at Rickwood Field. First-some-first sent, no charge.
8. Chet Hoff, the oldest ex-player in major league history, passed away at 107 in Daytona Beach, FL, last September. Chet joined the ceremony in 1993 to mark the site of Hilltop Park, original home of the New York Yankees in uptown Manhattan. A rookie pitcher for NY in 1911, Chet struck out Ty Cobb in his second big league game. He played several seasons with NY, one with St. Louis (AL), served in WWI after a season in the minors and then ended his baseball career. Hoff played at Hilltop Park and our Committee helped to get the marker project underway in the early 1990s. One-page obit available from the NY Times, 9-24-98.
9. The famous Nieman Marcus Christmas catalog for 1998 offered two original Ebbets Field seats for \$2750! A trio ran for \$3750. At least they were cheaper than the \$300,000 tiara of 120 carats of diamonds. KC Star, 9-15-98 (1 pg)
10. While SABR met in the Bay Area, two super fans were visiting SF & Oak as part of a cross-country effort to see all thirty teams/parks. The 30 games in 38 days trek would cost each man \$1500 (plus the air fare to start. SF Examiner story 6-27-98 (2 pgs). Both are young (22) and presumably single.
11. Less taxing but still impressive over the long haul is Committee member Joe Dulle's summary of his park travels across the miles and years. Broken down by league and type, Joe is building a collection. (five pages available.) We are building a file on you super fans.
12. Al Lang Field in St. Petersburg has been renamed "Florida Power Park, Home of Al Lang Field," for the 1998 season. Built in 1947, the park was named for local baseball booster and two-term mayor, Al Lang. An exhibit honoring Al Lang was also proposed. (1 pg) local paper.
13. List of all 1998 Japanese ballparks, all stadiums plus several domes, available.
14. Now we have a ballplayer/ballparks researcher! Several publications noted that Phillies CF Doug Glanville, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, wrote his senior thesis on "the feasibility of putting a baseball stadium near Philadelphia's 30th Street train station." Could any of our members in the Philly area see about our obtaining a copy of this 120 page work?
15. TSN of 8-17-98 noted a wild night in the pool at the Bank One Ballpark. Seems a local swimsuit maker rented the OF pool and stocked it with strippers modeling the latest fashions.

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

16. The new retractable domes are engineering marvels of some scope, so Civil Engineering published a review of the latest domes in its Dec/98 issue (4 pgs). It covers Seattle, Houston, Milwaukee, and Arizona. Seattle has the biggest roof span at 631-655 feet; Arizona the smallest at 517 feet.
17. Take care of those classic park seats! Note # 9 in this section. "Restoring Stadium Seats," VCBC #15, (3 pgs) tells you how.
18. Braves Field factoids (two pages) available. Did you know that the Red Sox and Braves played each other 104 times from 1905 until March/1953? The Braves won 38 and four were ties.
19. Correction to Mike Dempsey's Bridgeport work as noted in the last newsletter. He did not perform the original research, but he used the reference work by Mike Roer on that city's ballparks.
20. Your chairman was channel surfing after the rest of the household went to bed one night last month, and there appears a Clint Eastwood movie with a scene inside/in front of Candlestick Park. So, a quick look to the tv pages shows this is "The Enforcer" made in 1976, featuring the famed character Dirty Harry. A few scenes later and the mayor's car, earlier seen at Candlestick, is ambushed by some hippie radicals and doesn't the area look familiar? Yes, it's the China Basin district with the Lefty O'Doul Bridge in the background, site of the soon-to-be completed new SF ballpark. How about that! Parks old and future in the same movie!

X BOOKS & OTHER PUBLICATIONS/ITEMS

1. Our good friend Charles Brereton has produced another fine Ebbets Field calendar with some previously unseen photos of that classic ballpark. He kindly sent our Committee a few copies. This year's "Field in Flatbush" calendars are \$14, and the previous five years (94-98) are available for \$10/each. PO Box 307, Concord, NH 03302. All prices include s/h.
2. Stadium Views, 1-800-898-9960, offer color wide-angle photos/posters of ballparks, posters of AL & NL parks, and other views. Prices start at \$15. Nice catalog.
3. Sports Collectors Guild, 1-800-950-0320, have a wide range of miniature models of most major league facilities, including all ballparks, current and long-gone. Get a brochure for \$2. They are based in Arizona, so I guess we will be seeing a lot of them at SABR/99.
4. Bill Feldman sent us a copy of his latest art work, a painting of Ruth's famed "called shot" in Chicago at the 1932 World Series. Bill seeks a good photo of the Astrodome from behind home plate looking straight to CF for his next project. He also is considering a Texas Stadium (Dallas Cowboys) project. Write him at 2140 East 5th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11233 , if you can assist.
5. Bruce Genther alerts us to a general purpose book, Stadia. A Design and Development Guide. While not too oriented to baseball, it does cover most major topics of sports facilities design. Nine pages available of the cover pages and table of contents. \$39.95 for paperback edition by Architectural Press, ISBN #0 7506 3217 8. The cover jacket notes " a stadium is one of the most exciting building types of the 1990s."

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

6. The Dodger Encyclopedia has been noted as "an in-depth look at one of history's most beloved franchises." by the publisher, Sports Publishing, Inc. Anyone have it; if so, what does it say about about ballparks? You can order at 1-800-327-5557.
7. The Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball was recently reviewed by the Nineteenth Century Committee and it was given a good review with some cautions. At 888 pages and \$75, it might not be for everyone. If you have a copy, tell us what ballparks usefulness it might possess. Review available (1 pg)
8. Field of Schemes, by Common Courage Press, 1 Red Barn Road, Monroe, ME 04951 (207) 525-0900 has a definitive slant (subtitle of "the inside story of how private interests are picking the public's pocket--- and ruining our national pastimes"), but it does provide a readable overview of the 'build it or we move the team" routine heard so often these days. Four page publisher's press release available, also a brief review by Claudia Perry of the Business of Baseball Committee as published in their recent newsletter. 226 pages; index and notes, \$22.95.
9. In the Ballpark, The Working Lives of Baseball People, authored by George Gmelch & J. J. Weiner, was published by Smithsonian Institution Press, 254 pages, photo/index/biblio, \$21.95. We welcome a review if anyone has a copy. It sounds like an expanded version of The Ballpark, written about Fenway by William Jaspersohn twenty years ago.
10. Build it and They Will Come: The Arrival of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, by Paul Pederson, PO Box 1194, Stuart, FL 34995, 1-888-257-7017. 288 pages with photos/notes/index/biblio., \$15.95. Any reviews?
11. Baseball in Bridgeport, From Barnum to the Bluefish, by Mike Roer, The Academy Group, 184 pages, index & photos, \$9.95. Contact author at 425 Katona Drive, Bridgeport, CT 06430.
12. SABR Bulletin had an ad for Babe Ruth Slept Here, The Baseball Landmarks of NYC by Jim Reisler, due out last month. 256 pages with photos. Anyone have one and can offer an opinion"?
13. Now that Tiger Stadium is entering its last year, Tiger books are getting popular. I just read Richard Bak's book, A Place for Summer, A Narrative History of Tiger Stadium. A weighty book (really, it is made of good quality paper!), it covers the whole story of the sports/public events at Michigan & Trumbull with a great selection of photos, an index to all opening days, and some statistics. Available from Wayne State University Press, Detroit , MI 48201 490 pages

Also, The Detroit Tigers, Club and Community, 1945-95 by Patrick Harrigan and John Fetzer: On a Handshake by Dan Ewald have been published. Leverett T. Smith reviewed both in the July-98 SABR Bibliography Committee newsletter, 2 pages available.
14. County Stadium won't be around much longer, so you might want a few vintage photos of its creation in Milwaukee in the early 1950s. Bob Koehler has quite a collection at a reasonable \$5 each plus \$3 s/h. Write Bob at 1100 Red Barn Lane, Elm Grove, WI 53122 (414) 780-0047. Two page summary of the building of the Stadium and Bob's photos available.
15. Baseball Direct catalog had a calendar, "Hallowed Ground: Ballparks Past & Present." \$14.95 Also, Fodor's Ballpark Vacations guide by the well-known travel company. 254 pages \$12.95. The catalog also carried a new illustrated history of the Yankees. Call 1-800-244-8837 to order.

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

16. Elysian Fields Quarterly has been back in business for a while and they offer back copies of their previous editions. EEQ has been very supportive of the classic ballparks and the efforts to preserve the old and better build the new. Call (651) 644-8558 for a recent catalog. As many of you may know, EEQ's predecessor, the Minneapolis Review of Baseball, published our Committee's booklet, City Baseball Magic, the summary of how to build a better ballpark.
17. STATS Inc. has a series of books and one just came out that may be of special interest to ballparks people. Ballparks Sourcebook: Diamond Diagrams was written by Oscar Palacios, Eric Robin, and STATS, Inc. It covers all current major league parks, many of those long-gone parks--even many 19th. century fields, plus some minor league parks. Most interesting are the field diagrams and the figuring of the total square footage of fair playing space, giving a new look at what parks are bigger/smaller and, perhaps, friendly or not to hitters. All parks should have a standard infield of 90 feet square or 8100 square feet, but different foul lines and OF fences create varying totals of square footage of outfield and thus total playing area. Current NL parks average 111,400 square feet of fair surface, but AL parks have 108,800 square footage, a 2.3% difference. As you might guess, Boston is the smallest field at 99,000 with Tampa Bay at 105,000 and Cleveland at 106,000; the largest three are Denver at 117,000, Atlanta with 115,000 and six other teams at 113,000.

The book also shows how some parks have effectively shrunk over the years. A classic example is Yankee Stadium that started out at 151,000 square feet from 1923-27; 124,000 in 1937-66; 118,000 in 1976-84; and 113,000 in 1992-98. I did a quick check of all parks listed, and the smallest five seem to be LA Wrigley at 101,000, Ebbets of 1955-57 & Sicks at 100,000, Fenway at 99,000, and Baker Bowl at 92,000.

I recommend this book as a good reference work. \$24.95 (847) 676-3322 www.stats.com

Another STATS book, Baseball Scoreboard 1998, had a few ballparks entries. It ranked parks as friendly or not to stolen bases and the best three locations to steal a base were Montreal, Toronto, & Milwaukee while the least friendly three were Atlanta, NY/NL & Oakland. For the 1995-97 period, the top three day parks for home runs were Anaheim, Colorado, & San Diego, and at night the top three were Colorado, Detroit, and SF. Los Angeles and Houston were in the bottom three day or night.

We welcome any news of a ballparks book or related publication, and any review offered will be run as space is available.

XI MAJOR LEAGUE NEWS NOTES

1. **BOSTON** The Red Sox continue to seek a new facility and their plans to build another Fenway across the street from the existing park have not been well received by the mayor or the neighborhood. As noted earlier in this newsletter, plans are being made to offer a refurbished/overhauled Fenway to meet the economic needs for the team without losing the soul of the 1912 classic. Our Committee was quoted in a few short stories in the Boston papers last fall (3 pgs). Meanwhile, the team and the city came to an agreement to keep the street vendors near the park for the 1999 season. Vendors will take advantage of Yawkey Way (outside the main grandstand entrance) being made into a pedestrian mall on game days and handicapped parking will be relocated to Landsdowne Street. It looks like Fenway will make it into the 21st century, but how long will it last?

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

2. **NEW YORK** It is the battle of the plans, as one Committee noted, to keep/steal the Yankees. The Newark Star-Ledger commissioned and published a very detailed plan to re-build Yankee Stadium in classic detail to seat 49,300 just north of Jersey City . Five pages available of this 9-27-98 plan. Meanwhile, back in the Bronx, they have published a plan to create a "Yankee Village" about the Stadium and spend \$535 million to fix the park and the neighborhood. Thanks to new Committee member, Max Neuberger, we have a copy of the plan, "Safe at Home, Yankee Stadium in The Bronx" proposed by Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer. (55 pages with the transportation plan). We also have twenty pages of NYC newspaper articles generally supporting the team staying in the Bronx. The team's big complaint of lagging attendance didn't quite hold this year as the Yankees set an all-time pace, but they fell just one day's gate short of hitting the magic 3-million mark that Steinbrenner noted as the beginning point to chat about keeping the team in the Bronx.
3. **DETROIT** The name of the new park was sold to Comerica for \$66 million as announced at a press conference in late December. Four pages of local articles available; also we have ten pages from the team web site. Projected capacity of the new place will be 40,000. Dimensions projected to be LF 346; CF 422; RF 330; Power alleys 402 in left and 379 in right. Scheduled to open in April/2000. Comerica, the biggest bank in Michigan, will pay the \$66 million naming rights fee over 30 years. Meanwhile, some efforts have begun to save a part of Tiger Stadium once the team moves (2 pgs available)
4. **SEATTLE** Another park went corporate with Safeco Field announced in June as the new facility for the Mariners. The insurance company will pay \$40 million for the rights. Lile Anderson sent us a large packet of clippings and construction photos. Locals weren't too pleased that the taxpayer supported park gets a corporate name. Scheduled opening date will be in July-1999. A July/98 crisis was averted when the team agreed to cover anticipated costs overruns of \$81 million. Up to fifteen pages of local articles available.
5. **SAN DIEGO** The November 3 referendum on the new park passed by a 59-41% margin, so with money in place the work has begun to erect a 41,000 seat facility and throw in area development for a \$411 million price tag. We have up to fifty pages of local articles as the city and team tried to get an agreement on the project. Also, articles on the design & location.
6. **MILWAUKEE** As of late November Miller Park was 40% complete and was on schedule to be ready for Opening Day-2000. First pieces of the retractable roof were to go in place in December. The Scorecard newsletter for the project notes a 43,000 seat facility sitting on a total site of 265 acres and 13,000 parking spaces. Up to ten pages of fall-98 stories.
7. **PITTSBURGH** The new park for the Pirates will be named PNC Park for a \$40 million fee spread over 30 years by PNC Bank, a financial services/bank headquartered in the city. As of the fall, property & homes on the park site (on the North Shore across from downtown) were being bought and some demolition had begun near the base of the Sixth Street Bridge. Up to ten pages of local articles plus a photocopy of the glossy naming announcement available. Expected capacity: 38,000; dimensions: LF 326, CF 399, RF 320. It will be one of the smallest of the new parks ever built, but one must consider the overall Pittsburgh attendance history. Meanwhile, the "Plan B" funding plan got routed to an improper bill in the Legislature and was vetoed by the governor, who promised to work for a better bill next year. The Pirates set a 12-21-98 deadline for securing public funding. If ground is not broken by spring of 1999, no park could be ready by the spring of 2001.

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

8. **ST. PETERSBURG** Lots of excitement as the Tampa-St. Pete area got major league baseball after generations of spring training games. Local articles available up to ten pages on field layout, traffic patterns, the discrepancies in attendance keeping, and the unusual four-ring roof system. With all the wires, speakers, and catwalks above the playing field, one broadcaster said it was like "playing inside some kid's erector set." And a review of the OF distances revealed that the cozy power alleys of 370 feet were actually 359! That will be changed for 1999. Short fences didn't help: the home team was outslugged: 96-67.
9. **TORONTO** The Jays agreed to a new lease at SkyDome, but they threatened to return to Exhibition Stadium. Four-page history of Exhibition Std., Toronto Star, 9-3-98 .
10. **LOS ANGELES** Now that the Dodgers have been sold, there was some rumor that the ballpark was in danger. Renovations necessary for the new ownership may be too costly and a new park may be sought. With SF and Milwaukee soon to get new facilities, LA will be the second oldest behind Wrigley Field.
11. **CHICAGO** Could the Bears leave Soldier Field and play at Comiskey? They used to play at Wrigley and Mayor Daley suggested last October that an expanded Comiskey might serve as a good football home. Sun-Times, 4 pages.
12. **CINCINNATI** The new ballpark goes next to the existing Cinergy Field by 2002 or 2003. The Broadway site supporters lost out. Up to 20 pages of info available including the 7- page memorandum of understanding between the team and the County. Voters rejected the change from the riverfront by a 65-35 margin. Preliminary stats show the new park to seat 45,000.
13. **KANSAS CITY** The Royals are planning big renovations to their park, hoping to make it an "entertainment destination." Attendance has lagged behind major league averages since the early 90s.
14. **MINNESOTA** The Twins will stay at the Metrodome for another two years through 2000. They still claim that a new facility is needed.
15. **TEXAS** The team raised lower box seats from \$25 to \$30, but kept \$2 grandstand seats for kids under 13 the same with an increase to \$5 from \$4 for adults.
16. **FLORIDA** The new owner of the Marlins, John Henry, says that he will work for public funding for a new stadium. Henry is worth close to \$1 billion. He said he would provide up to \$300 million if necessary.
17. **HOUSTON** Randy Johnson caused an increase for weekday games of 16,341. On August 8, a Friday game with Johnson pitching drew 52,701, a regular season record at the Astrodome. Houston's big attendance boost this past season sets the club in a good position for their new downtown stadium, set for April-2000. However, an AP story of 12-20-98 noted that architectural problems may delay the project. The city is banking on the park spurring a downtown revival of entertainment and night activity and the area has seen some increased interest in previously neglected warehouses and other buildings. It has been decades since downtown was fully lively after dark. Up to seven pages on the situation, including a piece quoting our Committee on the value of classic parks downtown.
18. **ARIZONA** While most reviews of the new facility were favorable, they did have some troubles keeping the upper deck seating areas cool. AP story, 7-15-98 (1 pg) Also, "How Phoenix Built the BoB," Pitts. Gazette, 9-6-98, (2 pgs).

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

19. MONTREAL The Expos were the only team in the majors to dip below the 1-million mark in attendance, and in the best baseball months of June-August, they had many games with fewer than 10,000 in the park. This is one case where a new park would be a help. The local government is not jumping in to help finance any facility and sales of personal seat licenses were far behind projections. USA Today, 7-21-98 (1 pg) plus 20 pages from the web page on the proposed new park.
20. SAN FRANCISCO Pac Bell Park is set for April-2000, seating 42,000. The web page notes a RF corner of 307 feet, one of the shortest foul lines in the majors, and CF will be 420 feet. Up to 25 pages from the web site available.
21. ANAHEIM Obviously some changes to the park helped as the club's home attendance jumped 42.5%, biggest hike in both leagues. Thanks to Brian Powers of our Committee; Brian works for HOK who did the renovation work on Edison Field. We also have a copy of the LA Times special section on the spruced up park, 3-23-98, and we can copy up to ten pages of details and stories.
22. BALTIMORE Remember Memorial Stadium? The City of Baltimore has put out an ad for a "Development Opportunity" that will accept proposals for the site of 29.5 acres.

XII MAJOR LEAGUE/GENERAL ARTICLES

1. "Stadia collectors are passionate about their hobby," SCD, 8-7-98 (3 pgs)
2. "Introducing the Ballpark of the 21st Century," great propaganda from the Tampa Bay team mag. (6 pgs)
3. "Is Grass Greener?" Newsday, 8-6-98 (1 pg), grass on replacable trays at NY Giants football stadium.
4. Bill Livingston of the Cleve. PD lists his bottom twenty sports facilities and baseball provided these: Cinergy, New Comiskey, Tropicana, Kingdome, Coors, Shea, 3Com, Metrodome, Edison, & County, 8-10-98 (1 pg).
5. "Ballpark Beauties," writer reviews Wrigley, Fenway, Yankee, & Tiger, Modesto Bee, 7-5-98 (4 pgs)
6. "Diamond in the rough," Cleve. PD, 8-10-98, (1 pg) Review of Tiger Stadium.
7. "The Coors Curse," SI, 7-20-98, how Coors eats pitchers! Elias Sports Bureau found that Coors effected its offense at a rate five times greater than the next facility (Ballpark in Arlington). (4 pgs)
8. "Field of Themes," Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, 5-26-98 (2 pgs), how they cut the grass in shapes
9. "Diamond Cutters," SI, 9-21-98 (9 pgs) Story of the famed groundskeeping family, the Bossards.
10. "Fans Souvenir-Hungry," Detroit News, 7-1-98, (3 pgs), how to get a foul ball, esp. at Tiger Stadium.
11. Bob Greene of Cal. Tribune is unimpressed with new Tropicana Field, (1 pg) 4-13-98

XIII MINOR LEAGUE ARTICLES & NEWS

1. Tales of two cities outside Chicago: Schaumburg has protestors against a minor lg. park, but the village approved the building of a 7000-seat Wrigley clone; meanwhile, the Cook County Cheetas hope for a new park in Crestwood, but it will be double the original estimate. (10 pages of local stories)
2. Minor lg. ball will return to the Austin area as Round Rock, a community north of the city, approved a 7500-seat facility with local hotel tax money. The AA Houston affiliate of the Texas League would use the park. Nolan Ryan and son are part of a deal to buy/relocate the Jackson, MS team. However, a legal challenge was expected as hotel tax money may be illegal for this project.

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

3. Chattanooga's Engel Stadium, one of the oldest in minor lg. ball, needs \$4.8 million in repairs to upgrade it for AA standards.
4. "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," Ohio's minor lg. teams, Ohio Magazine, April-98 (6 pgs)
5. Memphis, TN new park will be delayed; team to play another year at Tim McCarver Stadium.
6. New Haven leaves its 1927 park for North Carolina (Zebulon).
7. Another 1927 park, Stockton, CA. and its team had a rough year
8. McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, RI, oldest AAA park (1942) expected to be ready for 1999 season.
9. Central Islip, Long Island ballpark planned for new team, two Newsday stories, (2 pgs)
10. Ohio State Univ. in Columbus has new baseball park, program and story (3 pgs)
11. Canal Park helps Akron bounce back, Wash. Post, 7-1-98 (1 pg)
12. Story on another Akron facility, Firestone Stadium, Akron Beacon-Journal, 6-14-98 (1 pg)
13. LA Dodgers offered spring training facility on Indian reservation, Ariz. Republic, 11-10-98 (2 pgs)
14. Remodeled Everett (WA) Memorial Stadium pleases fans, 2 stories-local (4 pgs)
15. Municipal Stadium in Reading, PA, profiled (1 pg) Reading Eagle, 12-6-98; park is nearing 50!
16. "A Crowded Field," too much baseball in NJ? NJ Monthly, April-98, (4 pgs)
17. Mets agree to let minor lg. ball come to Coney Island, Brooklyn, NYT, 9-16-98 (1 pg)
18. Profile of minor lg. baseball boom, Planning, May-98 (7 pgs)
19. Baseball America in late December ran a story on the best minor league parks, and only one was more than ten years old! (6 pgs). They ranked Oklahoma City as #2, and having seen it, I would agree!
20. Bridgeport, CT rebounds with baseball, two local stories, (3 pgs)
21. Pittsfield, MA will be at Waconah Field (1919, rebuilt in 1950) for 1999, but maybe Brooklyn for 2000?
22. Lowell, MA opened a new 5000-seat park, Lelacheur Park in July/98
23. Ray Winder Field in Little Rock (1932) needs help to come up to standards; owner looking to city.
24. Recreation Park, Visalia, is 52 years old needs replacing says new team owner. Team drew dead last in CA League last year, fewer than 1000/game.
25. Total minor league attendance was up in 1998, but more teams helped; average game attendance was down 1.9%. Five leagues and 27 teams set new records BB America, 10/26-11/8, 1998)
26. Minor lg. teams in smaller towns shifting to bigger cities, BB America, 11/9-22, (1 pg)
27. Father/son hit several minor lg. games in New England, Boston Globe, 7-2-98 (4 pgs)
28. Fresno schedule and 12-page guide for 1998 season at college facility, Beiden Field, while they last.
29. Dick Kaufman did a quick count and since Cooper Stadium was built in 1977, 110 new minor league parks have been erected, and with 210 minor lg. cities today, that means over 50% are in new parks!
30. Stephen Carroll reports that The Ballpark in Old Orchard Beach, a hot place for a brief spurt of minor lg ball in 1984 and 1987-88, now lies idle. Steve liked Hadlock Field in Portland, ME.
31. Cedar Rapids, IA voters turned down a sales tax option that might have fixed up Veterans Memorial Stadium, third oldest/active park in the state (1948) behind Davenport ('31), Clinton ('37), & Waterloo ('46)
32. Mike Dempsey cites what is occupying all Bridgeport, CT baseball sites (1 pg), using Mike Roer book.
33. New park underway for Newark, NJ Bears. Opening date set for 6-1-99, Star-Ledger (1 pg) 8-30-98
34. Seating charts available for new Yogi Berra and Sancastle stadia in NJ (1 pg each)
35. Frontier League Rascals broke ground for new ballpark in O'Fallon, MO.
36. Care to see the Cape Cod League parks? Mike Dempsey surveyed them all! Cotuit was best; Bourne worst.
37. "Ebbets Field in Hartford," Hartford Business Journal, 7-21-98 (1 pg)
38. Info on new Tucson Electric Park plus area baseball history, (6 pgs) Ariz. Daily Star, 2-26-98.

****All copies can be had a 12 cents/page and that includes postage. Make any checks out to Bob Bluthardt in name only. The Committee postage fund appreciates any donations when ordering copies. Be patient after this newsletter goes out if you order copies; this issue started with 150 pounds of clippings and materials!**

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter June - December, 1998

XIV THANK YOU to all Committee members who have patiently awaited this often deferred newsletter, and kept sending materials. At risk of leaving someone out, the roll of honor for the past six months salutes the following members who sent material for the newsletter:

Mark Altizer, Lile Anderson, Bill Albach, Ernie Accorsi, Bob Brady, Bob Boynton, Daniel Bonk, Jim Brown, Steve Bennett, Bob Bochar, Charles Brereton, Ken Carrano, Dick Clark, Jack Carlson, Steve Carroll, Steve Csik, Kip Carlson, Gary Coleman, Keith Danish, Mike Dempsey, Joe Dulle, Frank D'Amico, Ira Drucker, Thomas De Angelo, Barry Evans, Bruno Egloff, Joe Favano, Mike Frank, Paul Ferrante, Bruce Genter, Jay Gauthreaux, Ron Gabriel, Joe Gusky, Bob Golon, Tom Holster, Ken Hodges, Jeffrey Harris, Paul Henderson, Fred Ivor-Campbell, Simon Inglis, Paul Janeczko, Chris Jennison, Dick Kaufman, Bill Kirwin, Don Lancaster, Phil Lowry, Helen Miller, Ray Miller, Gary Miller, David Moreau, Andy McCue, Richard McBane, Joe Murphy, Jack Moulds, John Matthew, D. Mendez, Jim Nitz, Ed Nixon, Bill Nowlin, Max Neuberger, Brian Powers, Oscar, Palacios, Ev Parker, John Pardon, David Paulson, Patrick Petit, Tim Rask, Gail Rowe, Jim Ricci, B. Robinson, Fred Schuld, Alan Schmidt, Cory Suppes, Brad Sullivan, Don Spoon, Ross Sackett, Stew Thornley, Mark Vatauvuk, Galen Wiser, & Jerry Gregory. Thank you all!

XV JOIN UP FOR 1999

If you have not renewed your SABR membership for the coming year, please do so. We submit our Committee rosters to the Cleveland office for review. Committee membership, unless special arrangements are made, is usually tied to being a SABR member first.

XVI ANNUAL COMMITTEE MEETING

About 35 Committee members and guests attended the annual business meeting of the Committee at the SABR National gathering in CA over the last weekend in June. A copy of the Committee's annual report is enclosed with this newsletter. Discussion reviewed some on-going projects (photo collection, minor lg. index, and the 19th cent. project) and members also talked about some research techniques/resources for ballparks hunting. Cory Suppes explained his internet/web page for ballparks and offered to promote this Committee and its projects. A current event talk also took place.

XVII SABR IN ARIZONA

Members who want to discuss something at the upcoming business meeting should send in their topics. When our date/time is available, we will post it in the newsletter. We will expect to have a Committee Table and displays/materials are welcome.

XVIII COMMITTEE GETS E-MAIL

The masthead of this issue of the newsletter notes an e-mail address. We just got everything installed, but only expect it to be checked only once a week or so. Meantime, your chairman is very content to get correspondence the traditional way. Our thanks to the chairman's wife, Valerie, whose persistence got this family wired for the 21st century just in time before the 20th leaves us.

XIX NEXT NEWSLETTER is scheduled for early April. Keep those clippings and materials coming!

BALLPARKS TRIVIA QUIZ by Barry Evans

Given at the Chicago/Emil Rothe Chapter 5-31-98

(All questions refer to major league ballparks, past & present)

- 1-3. Name the three pre-1998 teams still playing in their original parks.
4. What was the last of the classic parks (Except for Wrigley Field) to install lights?
5. This ballpark hosted major league baseball for 60 years, but its CF bleachers were never reached by a home run.
6. When this post World War II park first opened, there was a hedge in CF in lieu of a fence or wall.
7. In what year was the first night game held in Wrigley Field (hint: it did not involve the Cubs)
8. What was the first park to carpet the entire infield with artificial turf (except for the small dirt sliding pit around the bases)?
9. This neoclassic park has drawn raves, but there is an area in the RF bleachers from which one's view of 1B is totally obstructed.
10. What was the second ballpark to host night games; the first night game was played there 60 years ago this June.
11. The largest crowd for a major league game was 93,103 at the LA Coliseum on 5-7-59. Who was the Dodgers opponent
12. Ted Williams became the last .400 hitter when he went 6 for 8 in a doubleheader on the last day of the season in this park.
13. In 62 years that this park hosted major league ball, not a single no-hitter was tossed here.
14. The first ever pennant playoff game (to resolve a regular season tie) was played in this park.
15. Al Kaline's 3000th hit, Frank Robinson's 500th home run, Rocky Colavito's 4 consecutive HR's in one game and Tom Cheney's 21 K's in one game all occurred in this park.
16. The first radio broadcast of a major league game originated in this park.
17. The first World Series Grand Slam occurred here.
18. In what park was the first amplified public address system used?
19. From what park was the first major league game televised?
20. Both Henry Aaron and Willie McCovey hit their 500th home run in this park.
21. Where was Dizzy Dean's toe broken by a line drive off the bat of Earl Averill in the All-Star Game?
22. Who hit the first home run in the Astrodome?
- 23-25. Name the three parks in the 1960s that had ivy on their walls.
26. Prior to the installation of permanent seats in the 1960s, Wrigley Field used folding chairs in the lower deck box seat sections. There were two complete sets of chairs, one wooden and the other metal. What purpose was served by having two sets of chairs?
- 27-30. What four ex-Cardinals are honored with monuments in Yankee Stadium? (taken from the Eysian Field Quarterly, Spring 1998 issue)

Send or Fax the answers to Bob Bluthardt, 3514 Cedar Ridge Lane, San Angelo, Texas 76904 (915) 657-4540, to be received or postmarked by February 22, 1999.