

SABR BALLPARKS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

November-December 1992

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A FOUNDING MEMBER: SABR

Robert F. Bluthardt Committee Chairman
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I NEW MEMBERS

We welcome these folks to our committee:

- Patrick Norton All levels; modern era and early 20th c; Eastern Shore lg; 106 Centre Ave. Shibe Park; Wilmington, DE; Baltimore & D.C. Interested in 206
Towson, MD 21286 the new Wilmington park.
- Michael Hardcastle All levels; 1920 to present; Sportsman's Park; Arlington 5715 Clemens Stadium; Plans to develop a history of Jamestown Expos
St. Louis, MO 63112 and their park (NY-Penn lg, Class A). Welcomes assistance.
- Dennis Higgins All levels; 1920-present; Old Comiskey; Cleve. Stadium & 309 West Portal Ave. Tiger Stadium; has done minor lg. radio play-by-play
San Francisco, CA 94127
- Ira S. Drucker All levels esp. Federal lg and foreign parks (So. Amer. & 401 Broadway #601 Korea); pre-1900 to 1950 eras; NYC & Brooklyn; suggests a
New York, NY 10013 list of places that foreign professional teams play.
- Jess Haskins All levels; Minor lg. parks in NE; Fenway Park; interested 399 RFD 2 in renovations for Hadlock Field (Portland, ME); looking
Ellsworth, ME 04605 for info on infield maintenance & groundskeeping procedures.
- Steven Burns Major lgs; 1900-present; Chicago/Boston/Detroit parks; 12235 SE 60th St. #2 considering a model building project for old Comiskey and
Bellevue, WA 98006 welcomes any assistance/advice.

Please welcome these gentlemen to our committee if you see projects or interests that you share,

II BALLPARK SCULPTURE

Has anyone kept a list of the many interesting statues, busts, and other three-dimensional pieces that adorn ballparks? The bat at Yankee Stadium; Stan's statue in St. Louis; Cobb and Niekro statues in Atlanta... the list goes on. Who would like to put together a definitive summary of such works, both major and minor league parks? It might make a good research presentation (perhaps with slides) at an upcoming regional or national meeting. Interested? Contact Bob Bluthardt and we'll get something started.

III BALLPARK ANNIVERSARIES

1993 brings new anniversaries such as the 80th of Ebbets Field. Would someone like to submit a list of significant 25/50/75/100 and other years anniversaries for our next newsletter? Please submit such info by January 30.

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IV BALLPARKS BOOKS, PUBLICATIONS & ITEMS

1. Elysian Fields Quarterly, formerly the Minneapolis Review of Baseball, has another excellent edition (Vol. 11 No. 4 1992) and one of the many fine articles is by committee member John Pastier. "Baseball Loci: A Survey of Ballparks Books" is a fine summary and critique of fourteen books, publications, and booklets. To subscribe to EFQ and/or to order this issue, call them at (319) 588-1451. Single copies are \$7.50 postage included.
2. Maryland Historical Magazine, Vol. 87/Summer-92 issue, is dedicated to baseball in Maryland with six major pieces on major/minor league ball plus a fine story of Memorial Stadium. Call (410) 685-3750 for ordering info.
3. Cite, an architecture journal of Rice University, published a good article on the Texas Rangers design competition for the new ballpark. Several Ballparks Committee people are mentioned in the piece that ran in Vol. 28 Spring/92. Call (713) 524-6297 to order. The issue was \$4.00 plus postage.
4. The Creation of a Baseball Stadium, a photo essay on Camden Yards in Baltimore by Janice Rettaliata, can be ordered from the author at PO Box 22799, Baltimore, MD 21203. \$30.25 will cover the book plus shipping according to Don Lancaster of our committee.
5. 70 Years with the Pelicans by committee member Arthur Schott is available at \$8.00 including shipping. Write Arthur at 459 Jewel Street, New Orleans, LA 70124. Some information on the city's ballparks is included.
6. The Stadium Newsletter is published by Mike Cervenka of J & J Postcards, 213 Lilac Street, Elburn, IL 60119. Single issues are \$2.00 and annual subscriptions (12/year) are \$9.00. The newsletter purpose is "to exchange ideas, opinions, and memorabilia with other collectors." Mike includes much info on franchise shiftings in the minors and contributed articles from card collectors.
7. Bill Goff has been sponsoring paintings of ballparks for years. Now, he has a 1993 calendar for sale (\$15.00 plus \$4.00 shipping; bulk prices available). Also, fifty-seven cards of the various ballparks works are available in a set. Call 1-800-321-GOFF for ordering info. Fax is 203-927-1987.

NOTE: If you see a book, journal article, booklet/pamphlet, publication, video, or other items on ballparks or related themes, let us know so we can share the info with the committee. Reviews or short summaries of publications are always welcome. What you provide is what we print!

V TIGER STADIUM NEWS

The Tiger Stadium Fan Club reported a productive meeting with new owner Mike Ilitch on September 24. Ilitch saw the club's Cochrane Plan for the renovation and preservation of the classic park. New ticket prices for 1993 include a \$1 or \$1.50 hike for reserved seats plus the creation of "Tiger Den" box seats for \$20 with in-service food and special parking. Ilitch is also exploring new billboards for the park. Send a 29¢ SASE for an article on the billboards. To learn more about the Fan Club, write PO Box 441426, Detroit, MI 48244-1426 (313) 964-5991.

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VI PITTSBURGH MARKER PROJECT

Several SABR and committee members are exploring a marker for that city's Exposition Park that was located near the present-day Three Rivers Stadium. There have been some question about the exact location of the old parks home plate where the marker has been suggested. If you have some info or suggestions to offer, please contact Ed Luteran at (412) 443-0231 or write him at 4843 Spring Valley Drive, Allison Park, PA 15101. The marker would honor the site of the 1903 World Series and note its 90th anniversary of the fall classic.

VII NEW ARLINGTON STADIUM

Construction continues at the site just south of the current park. The Rangers created some news and controversy with their plans for premium seating, price increases for some seats, and special fees for the best seats in the house. Send a SASE of 29¢ for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram story of 11-19-92.

VIII CAMDEN YARDS

This park continues to influence thinking and planning across the nation. A recent Washington Post article said the park drew \$52.8 million in spending to the area in 1992. Also, from committee member John Kaup, a few articles that cover Camden Yards while noting the shortcomings of San Diego's Jack Murphy Stadium. Send a dollar if you want the copies.

IX RFK STADIUM

With the announcement of Jack Kent Cooke's plans for a new football stadium near the current facility, RFK will lose its football tenants, but maybe it will attract baseball? Gordon Thomas sent us a series of articles from the Washington Post on RFK and its baseball vs. football use and its future potential. Send a dollar for the clippings if you are interested.

X BALLPARKS QUILT

Barbara Dannenfelser of Stillwater, NJ, notes that her "Welcome to the Friendly Confines" quilt, a seven by eight foot interpretation of Wrigley Field, will be on display at the annual Cubs Convention, January 15-17, 1993, at the Chicago Hilton & Towers. For more info on the convention, call (312) 404-4006. Randy, Barbara's husband is a committee member. Barbara has also finished a quilt with a background of Yankee Stadium that celebrates Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio with the season of 1941 (Williams hits .406 and DiMaggio has 56-game hitting streak).

XI BALLPARKS MODEL

Congratulations to committee member Bruce Genter as he recently finished his Baker Bowl model. And thanks to all committee members who assisted, especially Jerry Casway. Bruce also finished Griffith Stadium in model form. Both Griffith and Baker Bowl were commissioned by fellow committee member Mark Mahler. Perhaps we might see some of these models at the 1993 convention?

XII COMISKEY PARK MARKER

Gordon Thomas reports that all of the old park is gone; the parking lot is in place, and a "Comiskey Park 1910-1990 Homeplate" marker sits on the spot with LF and LF foul lines. In his words, "sad to say that a classic park once sat on that site."

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XIII BALLPARKS SEATS

Jerry Casway wrote to say that he has acquired four attached box seats from Shibe Park, circa 1940s. "They repose in my garage and await my handiwork." On the subject of old park seats, John Guilfoyle sent a copy of a NY Daily News article on a class of students who are salvaging some 1913 Ebbets Field seats. The troubling comment by Marty Adler, founder of the Brooklyn Dodgers Hall of Fame, is that the chairs are in groups of five in concrete: "We break up more chairs than we save." The seats are part of the 2200 that went to Hart Island in NYC and were used for the City Workhouse ball fields. And by the way, let us mention one more time the organization of ballpark seat collectors: Box Seat Gazette, Seitz & Co., 1772 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104-6030 (612) 646-3659. Editor is Michael Seitz.

XIV REPORT FROM CLEVELAND

F.D. Gill has his 1993 and 1994 seats ordered! He notes that the Indians will be milking the last year at the Stadium for all its nostalgic worth. Ticket prices for the last season by the lake will increase across the board with box seats at \$12 and bleachers at \$5. Part of the upper deck in RF was in place as of early December. For a copy of a photo and article, send 50¢. The fall/winter 1992 issue of Inside, the Gateway project's newsletter, was filled with good photos and news. Write the Gateway people at 1026 Terminal Tower, Cleveland, OH 44113 and they might put you on the mailing list. Call (216) 241-1994 for faster service.

XV RESEARCH REQUEST

Damian Housman, 2640 Park Windsor Drive, Apt. 207, Ft. Meyers, FL 33901 (813) 278-4213 seeks info, materials, and advice for a highly detailed model of Ebbets Field. "Especially need location of vendor facilities, bathrooms, ticket booths, gates, walkways, ramps, clubhouse, and other details not seen on photographs." Please contact him if you can assist.

XVI NEW DODGER MUSEUM

Several folks including Damian (see above) have mentioned a new Dodger Museum at the Corvette Americana Hall of Fame, near Cooperstown, NY. The curator, Allen Schery notes that the museum might open in 18 months. If anyone receives additional information, keep us posted.

XVII BALLPARKS PHOTO COLLECTION

Thanks to many contributing members and Joe Favano & Mike Dempsey we now have four full binders of photos with more coming. We want to exhibit these at the 1993 San Diego convention, but Joe needs some willing folks to sit at the table, watch the photos, and chat with SABR attendees and guests. Are you attending the 93 meeting? Can you spare a few hours? If the answer is "yes" to both questions, please write Joe at 21 Roosevelt Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870. About ten people could do the job.

XVIII METROPOLITAN STADIUM PLAQUE

Galen Wiser of the committee reports that that megamall in Bloomington, MN, has a marker for the old ballpark: "Metropolitan Stadium Home Plate, 1956-1981" He says that "there is also a seat supposedly in its original location that marks the spot where Harmon Killebrew hit a home run." The official name of the shopping center is the "Mall of America."

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XIX PAST NOTES ON BALLPARKS

Thanks to Brad Sullivan, we can offer copies of these interesting items:

1. Changes in LF fence at Crosley Field, 4-19-61, Sporting News (1 pg)
2. New IA Dodger scoreboard, 5-2-62, Sporting News, (1 pg)
3. First major lg. game at Metropolitan Stadium, 5-3-61, Sporting News, (1 pg)
4. Obstructed views of Milwaukee new scoreboard, 5-2-62, Sporting News, (1 pg)
5. Construction of Dodger Stadium, 5-10-61, Sporting News, (2 pgs)
6. Opening of San Diego's new stadium, 9-1-67, Sporting News (1 pg)
7. All-Star in DC Stadium, Sporting News, 7-7-62 (2 pgs)
Game
8. Problems with building Candlestick Park, 2-14-60, Wall St. Journal (2 pgs)
9. Opening of Astrodome, 4-9-65, Wall St. Journal (2 pgs)
10. Series of articles on proposed domed stadium for Cleveland, 1968, (7 pgs)

The usual costs apply: 6¢/page plus 29¢ for the first four pages; add 23¢ for each additional four pages or fraction.

XX OTHER BALLPARKS MATERIALS

1. New Phila. park downtown considered, Phila Inquirer, 10-9-92 (2 pgs)
2. Bob Boynton's critique of Camden Yards & new Comiskey (4 pgs)
3. Review of "The Babe" by baseball historian (2 pgs)
4. Exhibition Stadium slated for destruction, AP, 10-22-92 (1 pg)
5. Harmon Killebrew's 573 home runs park by park breakdown (1 pg)
6. "Ten Most Unusual Uses of Metrodome, 1982-92" Facility Manager (1 pg)
7. Corrections to Ritter's Lost Ballparks (1 pg)
8. "The First of the Worst," Wash. Senators, Sports Heritage, Spring/88 (8 pgs)
9. Camden Yards, Design Management, August-1992, (6 pgs)
10. Survey data on 23 NFL stadiums (some ballparks too), (25 pgs)

XXI MINOR LEAGUE MATERIALS

1. New Durham Ballpark, Durham Herald-Sun, 9-18-92 (2 pgs)
2. Double-A Ball in Memorial Stadium, The Sun, 11-14-92 (1 pg)
3. Two articles on Lawrence Stadium, Portsmouth, VA (2 pgs)
4. Baseball back in New Haven, CT, misc. articles, fall-92 (4 pgs)
5. Quincy, IL park and team history, (2 pgs)
6. PCL League and parks, Sunset, June-92 (6 pgs)
7. Theme park proposed for old Durham, NC park, Raleigh News/Observer, 8-5-92 (2 pgs)
8. New Norfolk, VA park (1 pg)
9. New parks/teams in Binghampton, NY & San Bernadino, CA (2 pgs each)
10. California Minor League Class A for 1993, (3 pgs)

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XXII COMISKEY PARK VIDEO

"The Wrecking of Old Comiskey Park," a 37-minute video with 250 photos of that park's last year and destruction, is available from Bougainville Productions (who knows the significance of that name), PO Box 578-358, Chicago, IL 60657-8358 (312) 239-3974 or 525-3153. Cost is \$19.90 plus 3.00 postage. Illinois residents must add \$1.74 for sales tax. Dave Levenson of the production company sent our committee a tape and I had the pleasure of viewing it recently. I have several reviews and additional information if committee members wish copies. Send 85 cents for postage & copying. If you mourned the loss of old Comiskey, this tape is worth your consideration.

XXIII SOME BALLPARKS NEWS NOTES

1. The Houston Astrodome will remove the Marlboro Man ad and refuse all future tobacco advertising in the stadium.
2. The Rangers had a recent press conference announcing their acquisition of Tom Henke, but they held it at the new park site. "Club officials, Henke, and the media all wore hard hats as they stood in the mud beneath steel & concrete toting cranes." Sporting News 1-4-93
3. The Astros are packaging a section of seats behind home plate as "The Diamond Level." Seats must be purchased at \$8100/season in minimum blocks of four. SN 12-28-92
4. White Sox organist Nancy Faust signed a six-year contract with the club. She started during Bill Veeck's second ownership 23 years ago. SN 11-16-92
5. Felix Jose of the Cards became just the second player to hit the RF scoreboard for a home run at Busch Stadium, a 460 foot shot. SN 9-21-92
6. Less than a packed house at SF Candlestick Park (45,630 and it seats 62,000) saw what might have been the Giants last game in that city.
7. Fundraising is underway for a statue of Roberto Clemente outside of Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh. See item II on page 1 of this newsletter.
8. The Orioles broke 3 million last season on the 68th home date. Only the Blue Jays have done it quicker, making 3 million by the 62nd date in 1991 and again in 1990 by the 64th date. The club joins the Dodgers, Blue Jays, Twins, Cardinals, and Mets in the 3 million or better club. Remember when drawing a million a season was a big deal!
9. Three Rivers Stadium may cut its capacity from 60,000 to 45,000 by covering sections of outfield seats. First to go would be those seats in the upper deck on either side of the scoreboard.
10. Remembering the first game at Cleveland Stadium: "Great day, but one disappointment. At League Park, they always opened up the gates in CF after the game so we could exit there and catch a streetcar. We were allowed on the field... and we would run the bases..... When that game was over at the Stadium, I thought they'd let us go onto the field, too. They didn't. That was kind of a let down." Fred Heinlen, Lake County News-Herald 8-2-92

XXIV MILWAUKEE REPORT

Jim Nitz kindly provided us with an update on that city's new ballpark. While there has been no official groundbreaking, there have been the usual test borings and the "environmental impact" studies. The Brewers are concentrating on raising their season tickets base from 6300 to 10,000 while selling the 100 luxury boxes and 2500 "club seats" for the park-to-be. Current plans have the park ready by opening day-1996. The cost will be \$140 million (the club carries \$104 million while receiving a state loan for \$35 million) while the "infrastructure" costs (moving of Highway 41) will run about \$67 million. The Brewers hope to have all of the new park's club seats and boxes sold by opening day-1993. Meanwhile, Bernie Brewer will be coming back! The Milwaukee mascot and symbol will return after a thundering majority (23,410 to 1,389) of fans approved his return.

XXV 1993 PHOTO CONTEST

Our thanks to Ken Carrano who has agreed to chair this year's photo contest. Exact guidelines will be available from Ken at 2696 Sterling Court, Elgin, IL 60123 (708) 468-9473 as of February 1. There will probably be five categories: major league day shot; major league night; minor league day; minor league night; and a "best in show." Ken is reviewing the materials from the last contest and members with suggestions on guidelines and prizes are urged to contact him. And speaking of prizes: we are in need of some donated items for this year's contest. Please contact Ken if you have something to donate.

ANOTHER NEW MEMBER Ken is also a new member of the committee and he has a wide range of interests on all levels and eras for parks. Comiskey (old & new), Milwaukee, St. Louis, & Columbus, OH. He is researching Aurora, IL and its ballpark where Casey Stengel played in 1911. Assistance welcomed.

XXVI NINETEENTH CENTURY BALLPARKS PROJECT

Work is ongoing on this project to research and write essays on the thirty-six cities that hosted major league baseball from 1871 to the dawn of the modern stadium age in 1909. Bob Bailey is coordinating the work and he can be reached at (502) 228-5269; 12129 Briargate Lane, Goshen, KY 40026. Bob has compiled the cities that we need to cover and here they are:

Altoona, PA	Detroit	Milwaukee	Rockford, IL
Baltimore	Elizabeth, NJ	Newark, NJ	St. Louis
Boston	Fort Wayne	New Haven, CT	St. Paul, MN
Brooklyn	Hartford, CT	New York	Syracuse
Buffalo	Indianapolis	Philadelphia	Toledo
Chicago	Kansas City	Pittsburgh	Troy, NY
Cincinnati	Keokuk, IA	Providence, RI	Washington, D.C.
Cleveland	Louisville	Richmond, VA	Wilmington, DE
Columbus, OH	Middletown, CT	Rochester, NY	Worcester, MA

The goal is to start research/writing on all of these locations with the development of drafts by 1993 convention time and beyond. This is a long-range project of a few years with an eventual goal of publication. The essays will focus on a park's location, architecture, construction, alterations, other uses, demise, and current site use. Interested? Contact Bob Bailey for further instructions. Bob's essay (draft) on Louisville parks is available from Bob Bluthardt as a sample for prospective authors.

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XXVII HILLTOP PARK MARKER

Work continues on this project to mark the site in Washington Heights (165th to 168th Streets & Broadway) in Manhattan where the American League began in New York City. A draft of the marker script will be sent to the current owners of the site, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, who will fund the marker and some related events in their entirety! The hospital will be holding some type of fundraiser this winter and there are great hopes of getting the New York Yankees involved. For the record, Hilltop Park housed the Yankees from 1903 to 1912, when they moved for another ten years to the Polo Grounds. The Giants also played a few months of games at Hilltop in 1911 after the wooden Polo Grounds burned. For more information, send a SASE of 52 cents. Thanks to Bill Cahill, Mike Frank, & Larry Ritter for their ongoing support and assistance.

XXVIII MINOR LEAGUE PARK SLIDES

We remind members that the "Marty O'Connor Collection" of minor league park slides is available for your use. To receive a summary of the parks and slides we have catalogued, send a SASE for 52¢ for the eight-page summary. Ordering info will be ready for the next newsletter in mid-February.

XXIX SOME MINOR LEAGUE PARK NOTES

1. Birmingham, AL officials were making some efforts to receive state or national recognition for Rickwood Field, the oldest park in professional ball until its recent abandonment. Our committee has offered assistance.
2. Congratulations to Dick Kaufman whose two photos of Municipal Stadium in Reading, PA were used on some 1992 tickets.
3. Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha, NE, continues to grow. Recent additions push that park to 21,000 by the spring of 1993.
4. Question: what cities have parks without a team? Write Mike Dempsey at 1552 Glasgow Road, RFD Box 99, Voluntown, CT 06384. Mike is planning a photo trip and will hit VA, TN, NC, SC, and KY.
5. More than a few proposals were fighting it out for the future site of baseball in Rochester, NY, including saving the current facility, Silver Stadium. Lots of politics and drama says John Schwartz.

XXX END OF THE YEAR NOTES

Pending the last reimbursement check from the SABR offices, this committee finished in the black for 1992! A full accounting will be available in the next newsletter. Our solvency is due to our many kind supporters. We thank John Kaup, Bruce Genter, Gordon Thomas, and Bill Albach for their donations to the postage fund. The correspondence was busy again: nearly 500 letters received and 551 sent out. And thanks too for donations by Chris Jennison & Jim Nitz.

XXXI THANKS FOR MATERIAL DONATIONS go to Brad Sullivan, Joe Favano, Gordon Thomas, Dick Kaufman, Bob Boynton, John Guilfoyle, F.D. Gill, David Moreau, John Schwartz, Galen Wiser, Jim Brown, John Kaup, Kit Crissey, John Lobingier, Andy McCue, Mike Dempsey, & Willard Lewis.

Best wishes for 1993; next newsletter in mid-late February.