

SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter

March/April 1991

Robert F. Bluthardt            Committee Chairman  
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I NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- \* Chris Nichol, 1810 Kello Drive, Greensboro, NC 27405  
Interests in all levels after 1920; Cleveland & Tiger Stadiums; may publish some ballpark postcards from his photo collection; suggests a publication of the seating charts from the classic parks.
- \* Dr. Jerrold Casway, 9252 Broken Timber Way, Columbia, MD 21045  
Pre-1900 parks for NL, AA, NA, & PL; 19th century parks of Philadelphia; has done extensive research on Phila' pre-Shibe Park playing sites.
- \* Allen Tait, 116 Olive Street, Grimsby, Ontario, Canada L3M 5A7  
NL & AL parks after 1950; Skydome; preservation of the classic parks
- \* Dr. Nick Trujillo, 4125 Bruhn Ct., Sacramento, CA 95821  
Major league parks 1920-on; has written two-year study of workers at Arlington Stadium; interested in Comiskey, Wrigley, Dodger Stadium; suggests a study or project to see how different franchises/fans/cities have said "goodbye" to parks.
- \* Fred Taylor, 708 N. Chestnut, Creston, IA 50801  
All leagues and eras; Municipal Stadium in KC and Sec Taylor Stadium in Des. Moines; Comiskey Park; has extensive baseball library including back copies of Baseball Digest (1941-) and Sporting News (1964-); suggests a picture series on the destruction of Comiskey Park.
- \* Roy Flemming, 9309 Stonebridge Dr., College Station, TX 77845  
All leagues from 1920-; college parks; Texas minor leagues
- \* Robert M. Boynton, 376 Bellaire St., Del Mar, CA 92014  
Major leagues after 1920; considering writing on some aspects of ballparks and has a list of possible themes.
- \* Cherie D. Miller, 1965 Cheremoya Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90068  
NL & AL, especially early 20th cent.; Fenway, Dodger Stad, Comiskey & Wrigley, Candlestick; creating a newsletter for CA SABR members and is looking for material; interested in info/material on major-minor lg. parks in CA; suggests a coordinated trip to various parks, especially endangered ones.
- \* Kevin Grace, 51 W. Charlotte, Cincinnati, OH 45215  
Minor lgs, esp. rural places, early 20th cent. & pre-1900; Ohio and greater Cin. area; researching Wiedemann Ballpark in Newport, KY (1890-1917) and seeks help.

Welcome to these new members. If you see areas of mutual interest, please contact them and say hello.

(2) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter  
March/April 1991

## II MARKER REPORT

1. Chicago: The Illinois State Historical Society has tentatively accepted our committee's proposal for a marker for Comiskey Park. A summary of the park's historical significance with an extended bibliography and a packet of reading material was submitted in early April. Joe Feldman, publisher of the Bridgeport News, a community paper, agreed to be a sponsor and donated \$475.00 for the marker. A thank-you note from members of this committee would be a nice gesture: Mr. Feldman's address is 3252 So. Halsted St., Chicago, IL 60608. We now await the approval of the state historical markers advisory board as well as the cooperation of the White Sox.
2. Washington: Gordon Thomas reports that the "trail is growing cold." His latest efforts with the new president of Howard University, owners of the property that once had Griffith Stadium, produced the same response, "thank you but no."
3. Philadelphia: The site of Shibe Park now has a major church being built upon it. My letter to the pastor has not produced a reply. Area members with suggestions or connections are welcome to offer any and all advice. The recent book on Shibe Park paints an unkind but accurate picture of the racial policies of the Athletics and we may be looking at a situation similar to Washington. Any ideas?
4. New York: Mike Frank has assisted and a letter was recently sent to the head of the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, owners of the property that once had the first home of the Yankees. The Ebbets Field site has a marker; how about the Polo Grounds? And what about Washington Park in Brooklyn?
5. St. Louis: The local SABR chapter had a ceremony for Sportsman's Park on April 27. SABR member Harry Brunt reports that the site had more major league games than any other site in America.
6. Roosevelt Stadium, NJ, marker has been up for a year and we invite SABR members to view it when they attend the convention in NYC this June.

III BASEBALL TOURS I have a number of extra brochures/schedules of the Jay Buckley ballpark tours travel program. Send along a SASE for 29¢ for a copy.

IV NEW COMISKEY PARK has opened to the expected positive reviews, except, of course, for a few well-informed holdouts! Check the reprints section for more info. If you make a visit this season and have some comments, send them along and let's get them into print! We hope that Chicago-area members are taking some type of photo record of the destruction of the original park.

V COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE In the first ten months of the 1990-91 SABR year (July-April) our committee has received nearly 400 cards and letters. Keep them coming, but be patient for an answer!

VI CHANGE OF ADDRESS for Frank Helminski to 625 6th Street, SW, Rochester, MN 55902.

VII UPDATED ROSTER LISTS are always available for a 29¢ SASE.

(3) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter  
March/April 1991

- VIII PHIL LOWRY thanks the many committee members who wrote, contributed, and came across with photos and sources for the second edition of Green Cathedrals. No news just yet on the state of the project.
- IX GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS thank our committee: Donald Beyer, Lt. gov. of VA, sent a kind note thanking us for sending him a copy of City Baseball Magic. Also, Sen. Quentin Kopp of the California State Senate thanked our committee for ballpark info and materials on stadia construction.
- X ZACHARY TAYLOR DAVIS, a Chicago architect and designer of Comiskey and Wrigley, is the subject of a master's thesis. If you have any information or leads about Mr. Davis and his work, contact Mark Bartos, 271 A Green Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.
- XI BASEBALL STADIUMS IN AMERICAN CULTURE is another thesis project by Bartley Brown at the University of Alabama. He is examining Fenway Park, the Astrodome, and Fulton County Stadium as "examples of the construction technics and cultural values at the time of their construction. If you can assist, please contact him at 1662 Cripple Creek Drive, Apt. D, Homewood, AL 35209
- XII CUTAWAY DRAWINGS OF OLD AND NEW PARKS were donated by Bruce Genter to our committee. These renderings well document the "close to the field" nature of the older parks. We thank Bruce for this generous contribution to our files.
- XIII MINOR LEAGUES IN NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE Our thanks to John Lobingier for sending a copy of this story in the April-91 issue that includes some good color shots of minor league parks and players/fans/situations.
- XIV BASEBALL CONVENTION IN KENTUCKY, August 2-4, 1991, meeting includes research presentations, tours, a Redbirds-Iowa Cubs game, book swap and more. Contact Bob Bailey at 12129 Briargate Lane, Goshen, KY 40026.
- XV MEMORIAL STADIUM/BALLPARKS EXHIBIT is planned in Baltimore for a July-91 opening according to Gordon Thomas. The exhibit to cover the history and significance of Baltimore's ballpark may travel the state. Members with information/materials to share, suggestions, advice, etc, should contact Gordon at 3000 No. Edison, Arlington, VA 22207
- XVI POSTAGE FUND CONTRIBUTIONS Many of you give a little something extra for asking for reprints and that is always appreciated. A special thank-you goes to three people who made generous contributions to our postage fund: Bruce Genter, David Pietrusza, and Charles Wilson. Our fund stays solvent because of such generous souls!
- XVII BALLPARKS STORY IN TEXAS RANGERS PROGRAM. Larry Kelly of the Rangers pr office wrote a story on ballparks past, present, and future as the Rangers eye the next facility for their team. Should you pick up a program at Arlington Stadium, be sure to read it as our committee files assisted.
- XVIII PHOTO REQUEST: A new book is scheduled to come out in the spring of 1992 on 25 parks and the publishers have requested assistance with photos. Contact Ms. Maxine Dormer, Moore & Moore, 10 West 20th St., New York, NY 10011 (212) 633-0572. The 210 page book is authored by Jim Tackach, a SABR member.

XIX CONFERENCES ON BASEBALL

- \* The third annual "Baseball and the American Culture" conference takes place in Cooperstown, NY (where else?), June 10-12, 1991. SABR Latin American Committee chair, Peter Bjarkman is presenting and a total of 18 sessions are listed. I am guessing that all SABR members received a flyer. If you attend, send us an evaluation and we'll print it in the next newsletter available. I see that Bob Krizek of Arizona State University is speaking on "Remembrances and Expectations: The Investment of Identity in the Changing of Comiskey." Does he mean the person or the park? If you did not receive a flyer and want one, contact the conference at Meckler Publishing, 11 Ferry Lane West, Westport, CT 06880
- \* The North American Society for Sports History (NASSH) is holding its annual meeting in Chicago at Loyola University, May 24-27, 1991. Corey Seeman of our committee is speaking on "A Matter of Appeasement: Baseball Owners and the City of Chicago on the Matters of New Stadiums and Arc Lighting." Marcie Taylor of the University of Cincinnati speaks on "Preserving the National Pastime: The Battle to Save Tiger Stadium." These sessions are back-to-back, 5:00 - 5:40 pm, on Monday, May 27, Session XXXV. The conference features many additional sessions on baseball. For more info, contact the NASSH at 101 White Building, Penn. State University, University Park, PA 16802-3903.
- XXX HBO SPECIAL ON BALLPARKS "When It Was a Game" will be broadcast on July 8 on HBO and will feature home movies from the 1930s and on. Steve Stern of the production office for the project says that the program will be quite exciting for ball-park fans.
- XXI POLO GROUNDS ON TV "Polo Grounds: Requiem for an Arena," aired on WABC, Channel 7 in New York on April 15, 1964. Frank Cardone at 4 DeHaven Drive, Yonkers, NY 10703, has been searching for a copy of the program and hasn't been successful. Any advice? He has tried the Hall of Fame, Museum of Broadcasting, Channel 7 in NYC, and the Library of Congress. The TV Guide says that the program "traces the history of the stadium through film clips, photos and interviews with the athletes who played there. Horace McMahon narrates."
- XXII FOOTBALL GROUNDS OF ENGLAND & EUROPE Don Lancaster notes that two new books that cover the football facilities have similarities to our ballpark publications. The author, says Don, "has the same love of football grounds that we have of ballparks...one interesting thing is the similarity of our dilemma of new, sterile, suburban ballfields and the new sterile suburban football grounds they are building in Europe." For more info and information on ordering these books, contact Don at 567 Oaklynn Court, Apt. 1B, Pittsburgh, PA 15220-4208.
- XXIII THE BABE, a new film bio of Babe Ruth, is being put together and the researchers from both Chicago and Los Angeles have been contacting our committee. One question involved segregated seating in the 1920s in certain cities; another on the exact appearances of parks in the 1920s and 1930s; and a recent question on what the turnstiles looked like at Fenway in 1920!
- XXIV BALTIMORE CAMDEN YARDS PARK photos, several sets, have been donated to our files by Bruce Genther. Thanks! With all the present and future ballpark building, members are missing a chance at recording history if they do not take a few pictures. If only we had color film for the 1909-1915 building boom!

(5) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter  
March/April 1991

- XXV HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF... New committee member Jerry Casway reports that his research into pre-1900 parks has been revealing. "What is so extraordinary is how the business of sports parks has not changed. The promotion of the game, press coverage, advertising, transportation and playing conditions are all tied to the nature of the facility. You would be amazed at the early dating of some of these practices."
- XXVI NL OFFICIALS VISIT ST. PETERSBURG, and seem to be impressed with the Florida Suncoast Dome. Thanks to Joe Favano for a large packet of clippings. Recent jockeying for position between St. Petersburg and Miami have involved some detailed weather consulting and the number of rainy days in each area.
- XXVII MINOR LEAGUE/AMATEUR/COLLEGE BALLPARKS including the capacity, dimensions, distinctive features, and historical interest is the ambitious project of Ted Hathaway of 5645 Fremont Avenue, SØ, Minneapolis, MN 55419. Ted already knows about the Lowry and Benson books. If anyone has "produced reports or bibliographies," please contact him.
- XXVIII WOMEN'S URINALS AT THE NEW BALTIMORE PARK Our thanks to the many committee members who forwarded clippings, both local and wire service, on these new female toilets that are being considered for the Camden Yards project. One article had a new name for the device, a "she-inal." Is this a great country or what!
- XXIX BALLPARKS COMMITTEE PHOTO CONTEST There is still time to get your entries sent for the contest. Joe Favano reported several weeks ago that the number of entries was not large, so some categories may not have enough to declare a winner. If you are serious about the contest, get busy! If you are going to be a day or two late with the entries, call Joe for confirmation at (203) 637-3221. Guidelines are printed in this issue.
- XXX SHIBE PARK BOOK by committee member Bruce Kuklick has been printed and available at bookstores for several weeks. To Everything a Season, Shibe Park and Urban Philadelphia, 1909-1976, is published by Princeton University Press. Cost is \$19.95 for the hardcover, 237 page publication that features an index, essay on sources, notes, six maps and twenty-two photos. The draft was quite good and I recommend the final product. Members with any comments or opinion on the book should submit their findings by June 15, 1991, and I'll incorporate them into a review for our next issue of the newsletter. SABR and several members of our committee are thanked throughout the publication and we thank Bruce and the publisher for providing the committee with a copy of the book.
- XXXI TROUBLE IN CLEVELAND The Gateway Project, as the new ballpark/arena development is called, is in financial trouble and the screaming and posturing is getting intense. Our thanks to Evan Meyer and F. David Gill for the steady supply of clippings to keep us informed. We enclose a copy of the Plain-Dealer editorial for a summary of the problems, people, and opinion.
- XXXII NEW BALLPARKS BOOK by Dan Dickinson & Kieran Dickinson, Major League Stadiums, A Vacation Planning Reference to the 26 Baseball Parks. A 1991 publication for \$24.95 has a two-part chapter on each park. One part gives an overview on the park, team, and "fan culture." The second part has practical info on prices, ballpark food, good seats, parking, souvenirs, etc. Available from McFarland & Company, Inc. Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. 380 pages. If anyone reads it, consider a review for our newsletter.

(6) SABR Ballparks Committee Newsletter  
March/April 1991

- XXXIII TIGER STADIUM continues to be in the news, but it is unfortunate that the efforts of the Tiger Stadium Fan Club are not given the credit that is due. Meanwhile, more tradition at Tiger Stadium is going. Organ music has been replaced with canned music.
- XXXIV VOTE! The latest SABR newsletter has the election ballot and candidate statements for the board and office positions. Please make sure you vote and help this society for the future.
- XXXV BASEBALL COMMISSIONER BACKS BALTIMORE PLAN As you may recall, our last newsletter had a short note about the proposal to add another building to the end of the B & O warehouse, thus compromising the original design plan. The April 19, 1991 Baltimore Sun reported that Fay Vincent said, "My view is that you have a wonderful ballpark design. It would be nice to keep it that way."
- XXXVI ATTENDANCE FIGURES Corey Seeman has taken the 1990 AL attendance figures and worked out a statistic he calls "Team Attendance Index system, based on the team's total attendance and the number of wins for the season. For the full explanation, send me a SASE of 29¢.
- XXXVII THE LAST YEAR Many major and minor league teams have abandoned older facilities for new places in the last twenty-five years. Corey Seeman suggests that there is enough evidence for a series of case studies of how certain teams have used that last season in whatever facility to market the club and sell tickets. The hard-sell of the White Sox with Comiskey's season could be an extreme example. How did the Pirates (Forbes Field), Reds (Crosley Field), and other teams use the "last year" issue, if at all. Any thoughts? If so, write Corey or myself. Corey's home address is 532 Sheridan Road #2A, Evanston, IL 60202.
- XXXVIII SABR CONVENTION I very much regret that I will not be attending the New York SABR annual convention in late June, but Valerie and I have every intention of attending in 1992. The annual committee business meeting can be whatever all of you wish to make of it, and if anyone has pre-convention thoughts, send them along by June 15, and I will be happy to compile them as a start for the gathering.
- XXXIX FROM THE UMPIRE & RULES COMMITTEE newsletter... a billboard in an Everett, WA ballpark sponsored by a local optical center has the words "Ya Bum, Ya Need Glasses" as a "hoary critique" of the umps poor eyesight. The newsletter also reports on a ballpark at the NJ, PA, NY borders in which a 1906 game featured a triple play that took place in each part of the ballpark that each of the three states could claim.

That is all for now. My apologies for being a few weeks late with this edition. The May June issue will go out before the SABR convention, so get your news items and suggestions to me before June 15, 1991!

## SABR BALLPARK PHOTO CONTEST

**Contest Criteria:** To capture the essence of the ballpark as well as the category among the list below.

**General guidelines:**

Photos must be received at 21 Roosevelt Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870 by May 15, 1991. Photos need not be taken in 1991 but must be taken by entrant. No magazine photos, no postcards. The photo subject to be the ballpark in question. No player action shots.

**General Photo Criteria:**

Black and White or Color. Size: 3 1/2" by 5" to not larger than 4" by 6". Number of photos: no limit to categories entered but no more than 2 photos per category. Each photo must be designated to a category by the entrant. All entries will become property of SABR's Ballpark Committee Photo Collection

**Who is eligible:**

Any current member of SABR. Also, all photos donated to the Ballpark Committee collection since the 1990 National Convention in Cleveland.

**Categories:**

Best Exterior Ballpark View,  
Best Interior View of the Field,  
Best Interior View of the stands,  
Best Upper Deck view (Major League stadium)  
Best Evening photo,  
Best Minor League,  
Best Major League.

Category winners will be displayed at the 1992 National Convention in New York City.

A Best Photo in contest will be chosen from among category winners.

**Prizes:**

To be announced later. Will be awarded at the National Convention in New York City.

2C

### THE PLAIN DEALER



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## Gateway: Smoke and promises

The development of Gateway, the new baseball stadium, is a complex process. It is not just a matter of building a stadium, but of creating a new ballpark. The stadium is being built on a site that was once a parking lot. The stadium is being built on a site that was once a parking lot. The stadium is being built on a site that was once a parking lot.

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March/April 1991

<u>pages</u>	<u>Reprints</u> 6¢/page plus 29¢ for first 4 pgs; 23¢ each additional 4 pages
(1)	1. Flyer, Major League Baseball in South Florida (Miami)
(1)	2. "A few ghosts may linger," <u>Chicago Tribune</u> , 4-18-91, abandoned parks
(7)	3. <del>Five</del> articles on RFK Stadium's remodeling for baseball in Washington
(11)	4. "Take Me Back to the Ballparks," <u>Wash. Post</u> , Thomas Boswell, 3-24-91, Balt. & D.C.
(5)	5. Five pages on Gateway/Cleveland project
(2)	6. "Playing the Field," <u>Arch. Record</u> , Oct. 1990, profile of Oriole's Janet M. Smith
(12)	7. Twelve-page handout on Camden Yards project
(1)	8. "Under Construction," <u>Balt. Sun</u> , 2-17-91, new Balt. park
(3)	9. "Historic McCormick Field," Asheville, NC <u>Citizn-Times</u> , 3-10-91
(1)	10. "Architects Bridge to Ballpark Memories," <u>Balt. Sun</u> , 4-1-91
(2)	11. "Chiefs make pitch for \$20 million stadium," <u>Syracuse Herald-Journal</u> , 3-1-91
(1)	12. Shibe Park book review, <u>Phila. Inquirer</u> , 4-7-91
(3)	13. "Home of the Braves," <u>Quincy Patriot-Ledger</u> , 3-16/17-91
(1)	14. "Amid the Rubble at 'Old Comiskey,' the Ghosts of Baseball Past," <u>Wash. Post</u> 4-19-91
(1)	15. "Detroit Facing Suicide Squeeze with Grand Old Tiger Stadium," <u>Wall St. Journal</u> , 4-24-91
(1)	16. Graphic/profile of new Comiskey, <u>The National</u> , 4-18-91
(2)	17. The transformation of Joe Robbie Stadium for baseball, <u>Miami Herald</u> , 3-26-91
(1)	18. Comiskey Park vs. Camden Yards, <u>Balt. Sun</u> , 4-23-91 graphics/notes
(1)	19. "Those Memorial Days," Gordon Thomas (committee member!), <u>Wash. Post.</u> , 4-28-91
(2)	20. Construction of church on Shibe Park site, <u>Phila Inquirer</u> , 2-17-91

It was a very busy spring for clippings and we thank David Pietrusza, F. David Gill, Bruce Genter, Gordon Thomas, Jerry Casway, Jim Brown, Dan Palubniak, Ralph Graber, Mike Frank, Dick Kaufman, Kim Nitz, Barry Evans, Evan Meyer, Rozalyn Mazur, Joe Favano, Keith Danish, Charles Wilson, John Guilfoyle, John Lobingier, Paul Shapiro, for their sending of material. And, as usual, if I left you out, my apologies! (and let me know so you get credit for the next issue.).

Also, a special thanks to new member Nick Trujillo for a copy of his manuscript on the study of Arlington Stadium personnel.

And thanks to Corey Seeman for copies of various clippings, including the special sections from both Chicago dailies on the new Comiskey Park.

Thanks to David Wright for the copies of the ballpark travel programs in item #III