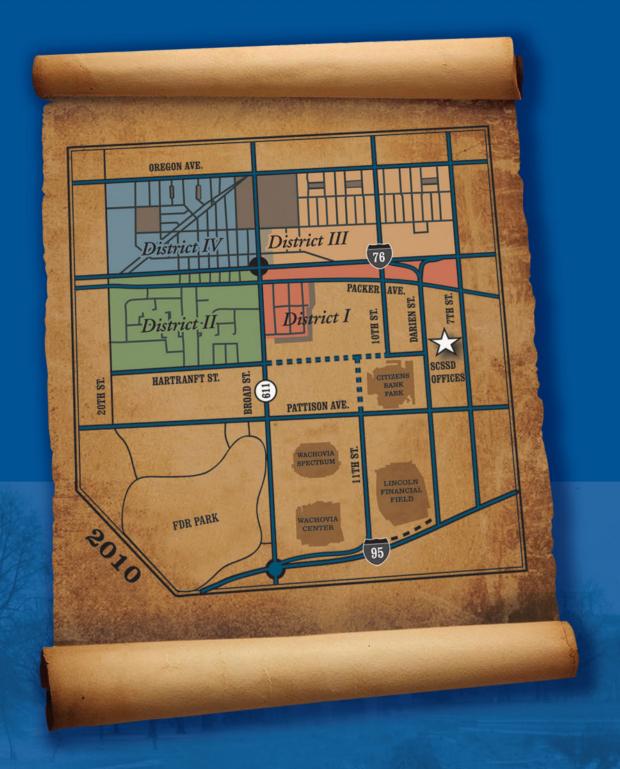


A NOSTALGIC LOOK AT OUR NEIGHBORHOODS



## SPORTS COMPLEX SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT



The Sports Complex Special Services District, or SCSSD for short, is a non-profit corporation that serves approximately 9,000 residents and 4,000 households located within the four Community Districts shown in the map above. SCSSD is engaged in a mission to protect community interests, improve neighborhood quality of life, and promote efficient operation of the South Philadelphia sports complex venues. SCSSD is proud to provide neighbors with this unique gift publication to supplement our ongoing programs such as residential street and sidewalk cleaning, landscape beautification, traffic improvement projects, lighting upgrades, and community events.



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#### DISTRICT II

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#### DISTRICT III

**Director** John Sfrisi **Alternate** Joseph Messina

#### DISTRICT IV

**Director** Ted Scairato **Alternate** George Hatton III

#### **COMCAST-SPECTACOR**

**Director** John Page **Alternate** Mike Hasson

#### PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

**Director** Don Smolenski **Alternate** Leonard Bonacci

#### PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

**Director** Mike Stiles, Esq. **Alternate** Michael Harris

#### **EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS**

#### PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

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#### **CITY MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Dr. Camille Cates Barnett

#### PA STATE HOUSE

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#### PA STATE SENATE

Hon. Lawrence M. Farnese, Jr.

#### **OFFICERS**

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John Page

#### VICE PRESIDENT

Judy Cerrone (current) Barbara Capozzi, Esq. (past) Ted Scairato (past)

#### SECRETARY

Don Smolenski (current) Mike Stiles, Esq. (past)

#### **TREASURER**

John Sfrisi

# LOOKING BACK MOVING FORWARD

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- 108 Acknowledgements & Credits



This book is dedicated to the residents and places that have made and continue to make the neighborhoods around the Sports Complex in South Philadelphia a truly special place to live, work, and visit.

SCSSD recognizes our volunteer Community Directors who spend countless hours in pursuit of neighborhood protections and improvements.

Ongoing thanks to Comcast-Spectacor, the Philadelphia Eagles, and the Philadelphia Phillies for fully funding SCSSD and making this book possible.

#### Dear SCSSD Neighbors,

Did South Philadelphia really have its own Liberty Bell?

Was there once an outdoor boxing stadium at the corner of Broad and Packer?

A pool-jumping horse visible from row homes?

How about a public pool large enough to fit 70,000 Philadelphians?

Long before SCSSD was created in 2001, the land south of Oregon Avenue witnessed a myriad of historical events and was home to many significant landmarks that have come and gone. This book provides a small glimpse into that history of development with over 300 nostalgic photos organized under five themes.

We are thrilled to share these remarkable photos with you, and the answer is 'yes' to all of the questions posed above...

A massive Liberty Bell replica spanned South Broad Street in 1926 (page 60).

Toppi Stadium sat 5,000 fans for local boxing entertainment (page 32).

Horse diving was a popular attraction at the Aquarama (page 29).

And FDR Park once had a 12 million gallon concrete swimming pool (page 49).

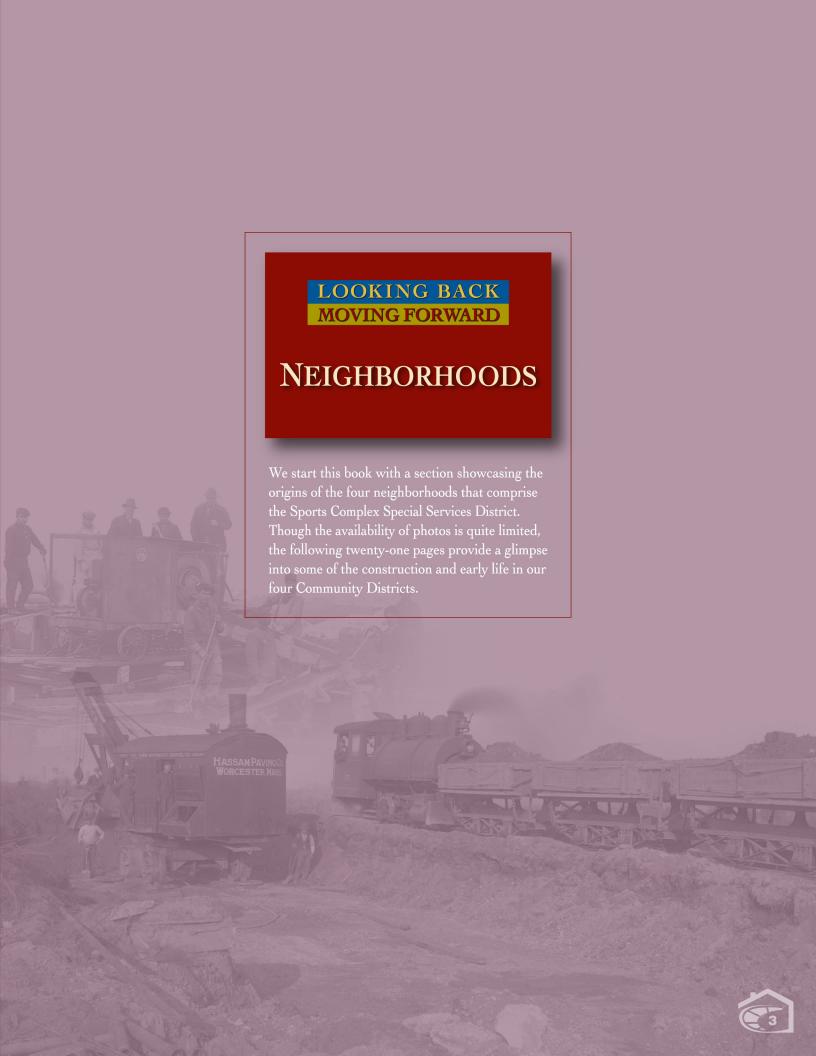
Through this photo compilation, we hope to take you on a memorable journey back in time to the birth and growth of our neighborhoods. Older residents can reminisce, while younger residents can see what was here before they were born. These authentic snapshots give you an appreciation of how much has changed in less than a century...

It is a way of Looking Back while Moving Forward.

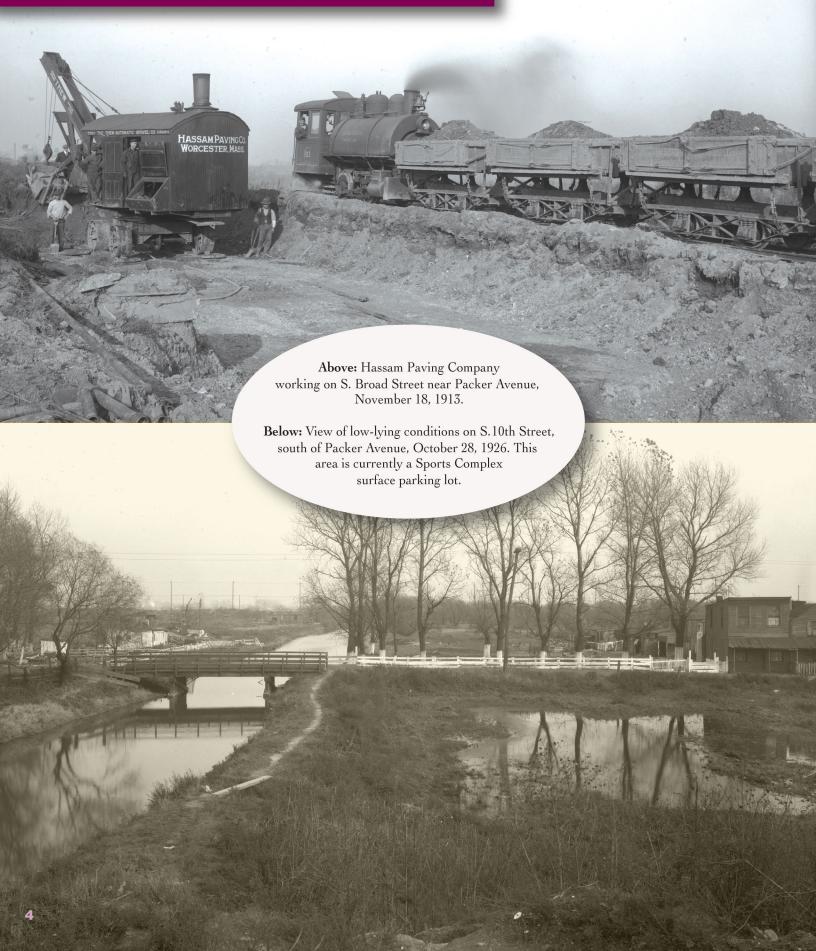
We hope you enjoy this keepsake book as much as we did preparing it for you.

Sincerely,
The Sports Complex Special Services District (SCSSD)

Disclaimer: Please note this book is <u>not</u> a comprehensive history of your neighborhoods. We have made our absolute best effort to research and accurately represent photos and information in this book. However, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of information from cited sources. It should also be noted, in particular with the Neighborhoods section, that some locations are highlighted with multiple photos, while other residential locations have no photos. This is not a matter of favoritism, but rather limited photo availability!



# NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY DISTRICT I



# 155 NEW HOME

Construction of rowhomes along the 3100 block of S. Broad Street, October 7, 1952. The photo on the left is looking south. The photo on the right shows the northeast corner of S. Broad Street and Curtin Street.









Construction of rowhomes along the 3200 block of S. Broad Street, October 7, 1952. The photo on the left is looking south from Curtin Street. The photo on the right shows the northeast corner of S. Broad Street and Geary Street.



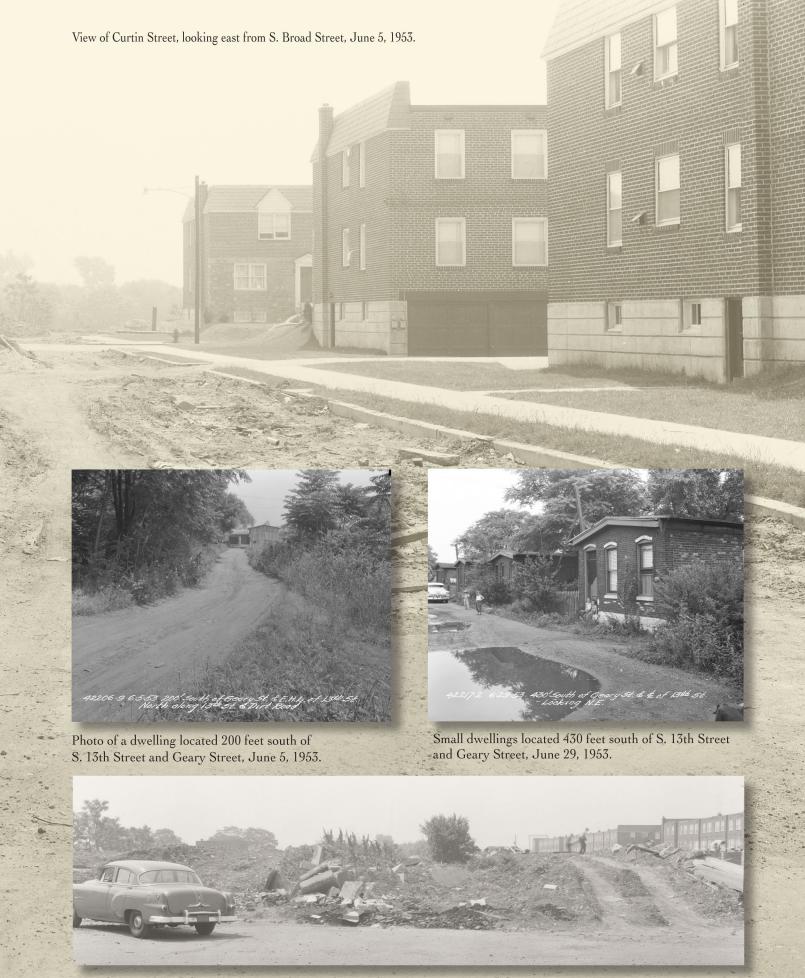


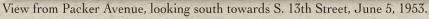


Brick dwelling units located southeast of S. 13th Street and Curtin Street, June 5, 1953.

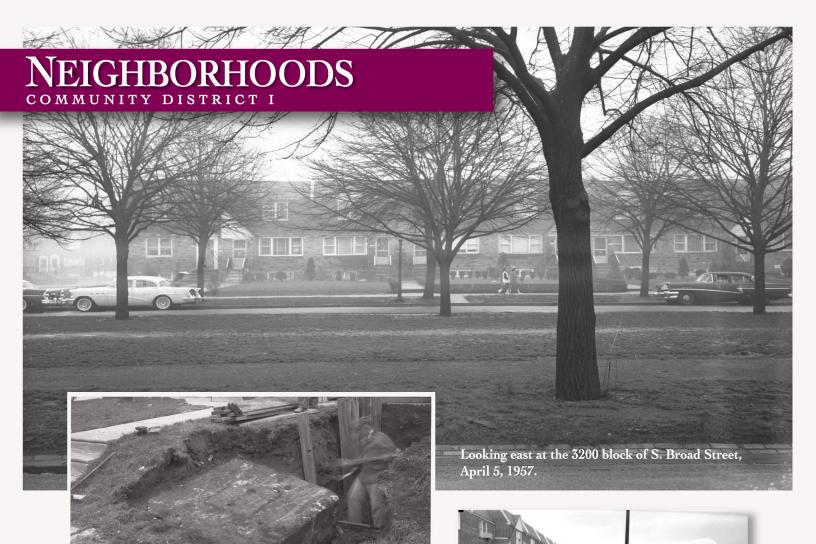


View of Geary Street, looking east from S. Broad Street, June 5, 1953. The right side of the photo shows the vacant land that would much later become the 1300 block of Geary Street homes.









A large concrete slab found in the front yard of a home on the 3100 block of S. Juniper Street, December 11, 1956.



Looking north along the 3200 block of S. Juniper Street, December 31, 1956.

View of S. Juniper Street, looking south towards Geary Street, December 31, 1956. The screen from the South City Drive-In Movie Theater is visible in the background.



Looking south along the 3100 block of S. Juniper Street, August 11, 1976. Veterans Stadium is visible in the background.

View of S. Juniper Street, looking north from Geary Street, December 31, 1956.

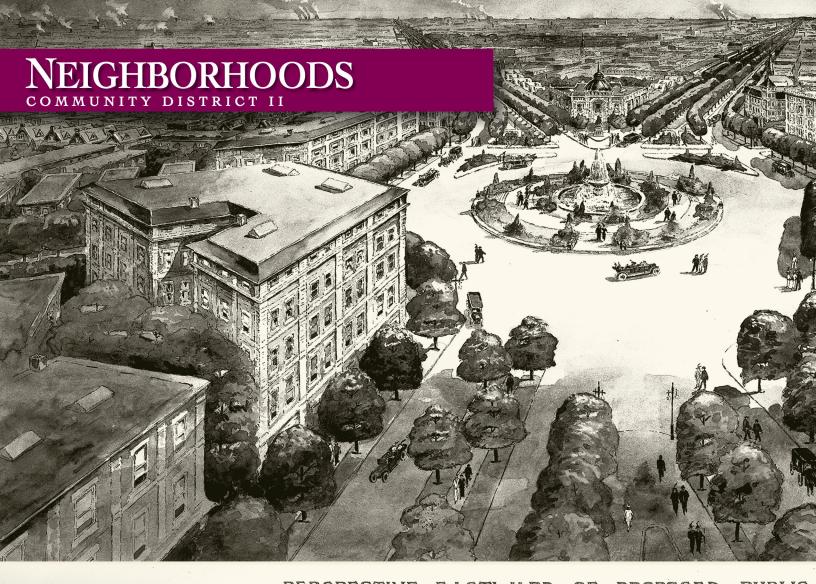
#### BEFORE & AFTER





Views of S. 13th Street, between Packer Avenue and Geary Street, 1950's.





BUREAU DE SURVEYS
PAILADELPHIA
MARCA 1914

PERSPECTIVE EASTWARD OF PROPOSED PUBLIC INTERSECTION OF 20TH. ST.- MOYAMENSING AVE. AN





Rendering of a proposed public square at the intersection of S. 20th Street, Moyamensing Avenue, and Packer Avenue, dated March 1914 from Philadelphia's Bureau of Surveys. Almost a century later, SCSSD is currently pursuing a roundabout design concept for this intersection with the goal of establishing a community gateway, calming traffic, and adding landscape beautification.

Looking north from Pattison Avenue near S. 20th Street, May 21, 1952.

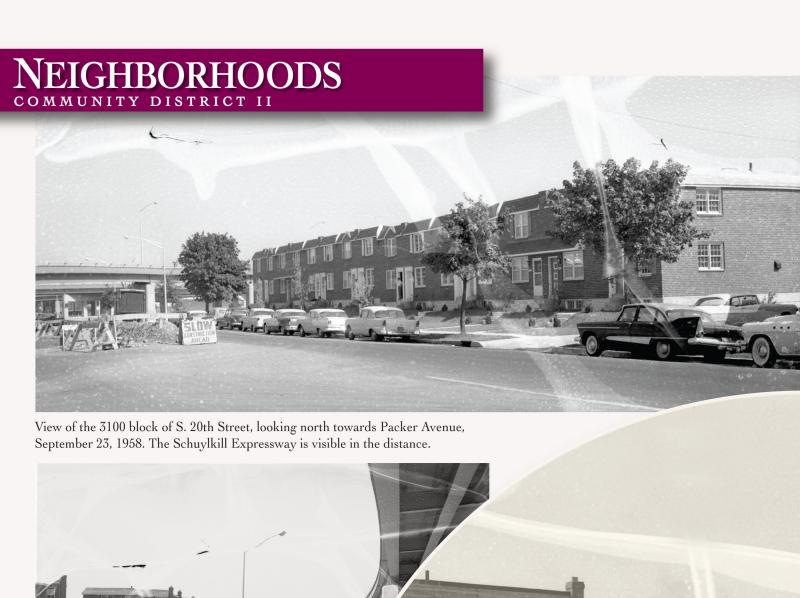
### SQUARE PACKER AVE.

#### NAVAL SHIPYARD HOMES



1914

Views of the Shipyard Homes built near the end of World War II. Homes were located west of S. Broad Street between the U.S. Naval Hospital and Packer Avenue.







Views of the corner store on the northwest corner of S. 17th Street and Packer Avenue, October 7, 1967.



at the back of homes under construction along the 1900 block of Schley Street, September 23, 1958.





#### RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION · 1919

View of residential construction, looking northeast from the intersection of S. 10th Street and Johnston Street, January 21, 1919.



View of the 1000 block of Johnston Street, looking west from Alder Street, February 17, 1919.



View of the 2700 block of S. 7th Street, looking



View of the 1200 block of Mollbore Terrace, looking west from S. 12th Street, March 3, 1919.







A damaged traffic signal at the intersection of S. Broad Street and Oregon Avenue, December 11, 1944.

#### S. 10TH & JOHNSTON STREETS-1926





Homes in the vicinity of S. 10th Street and Johnston Street, July 19, 1926.



Looking west at the 700 block of Mollbore Terrace under construction, May 1919.

#### S. 7TH STREET 1952

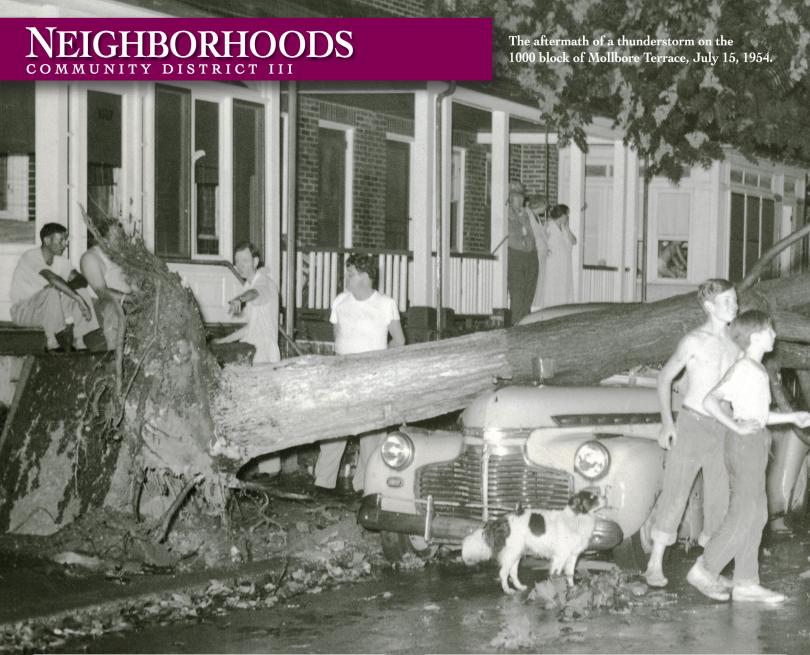


Looking north on S. 7th Street from the intersection of Bigler Street, April 22, 1952.



Looking north on S. 7th Street at the intersection of Johnston Street, April 22, 1952.







Looking northeast from S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue, September 13, 1955. This is the current location of the Schuylkill Expressway. Homes abutting the 1300 block of Pollock Street can be seen in the background.



Looking south along the 2800 block of S. 10th Street, March 9, 1956.

#### BIGLER STREET · 1956



Looking west from S. 13th Street, March 1, 1956. Marconi Plaza can be seen on the right.



Looking east from S. Broad Street, July 20, 1956. Marconi Plaza can be seen on the left.

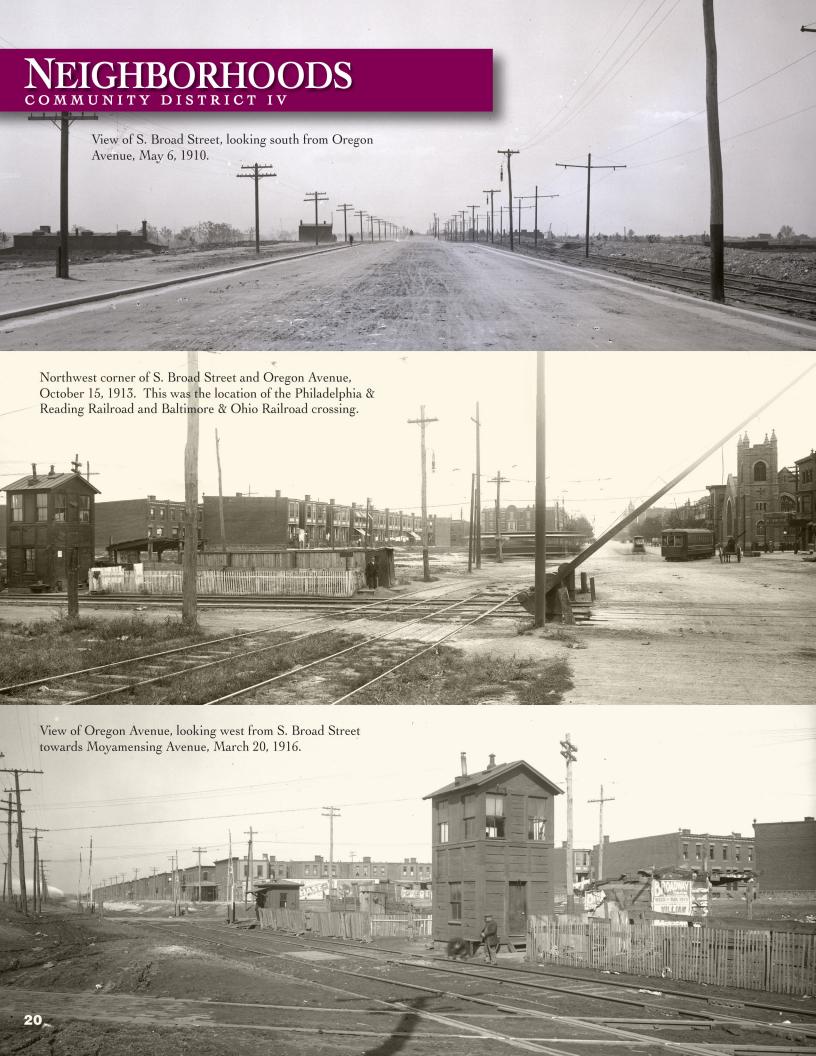


Looking west from Alder Street, July 20, 1956. The fence on the left fronts the current location of the Supersite athletic fields.



e in

Looking south along the 2700 block of S. Marvine Street, August 30, 1956.





Looking south at the grass terrace along the 2700 block of S. Smedley Street during the early 1900's.



View of the 2800 block of S. 16th Street, looking north from Bigler Street, May 9, 1951.

Southwest corner of S. Broad Street and Bigler Street, October 20, 1953.



# **NEIGHBORHOODS**

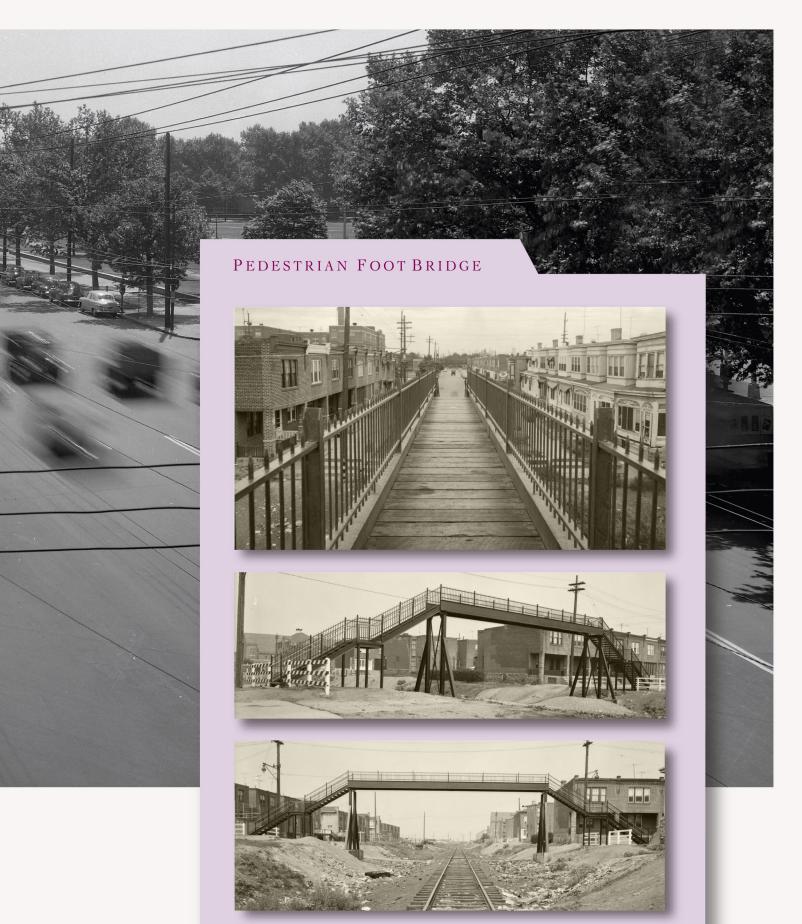
COMMUNITY DISTRICT IV



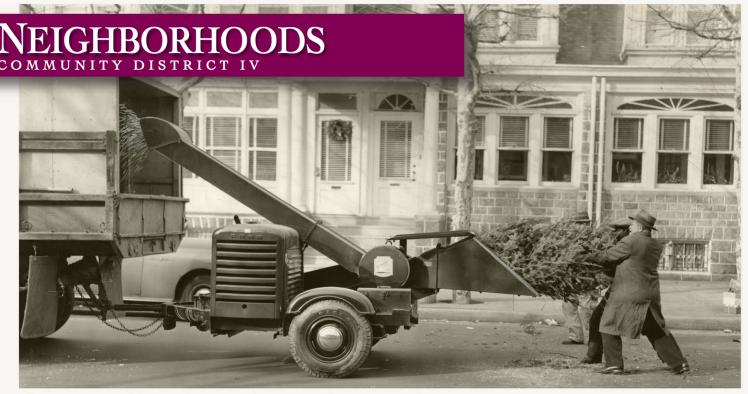
Looking east at the intersection of S. Broad Street and Oregon Avenue, May 26, 1954. Subway stations would later replace the gas station on the northeast corner (top left) and a small portion of the Marconi Plaza park on the southeast corner (top right).



Oregon Avenue at the intersection of S. 15th Street and Moyamensing Avenue, May 26, 1954.



Views of the S. 17th Street pedestrian footbridge spanning the railroad tracks in 1952. Tunnels would later replace the footbridges to retain pedestrian access under the Schuylkill Expressway.



Christmas trees are fed into a chipping machine on S. 17th Street, near Johnston Street, January 5, 1955.



View of the west side of the 2900 block of S. Broad Street, looking north from Pollock Street, July 23, 1956.



Northwest corner of S. Broad Street and Pollock Street, October 20, 1953.



# LANDMARKS

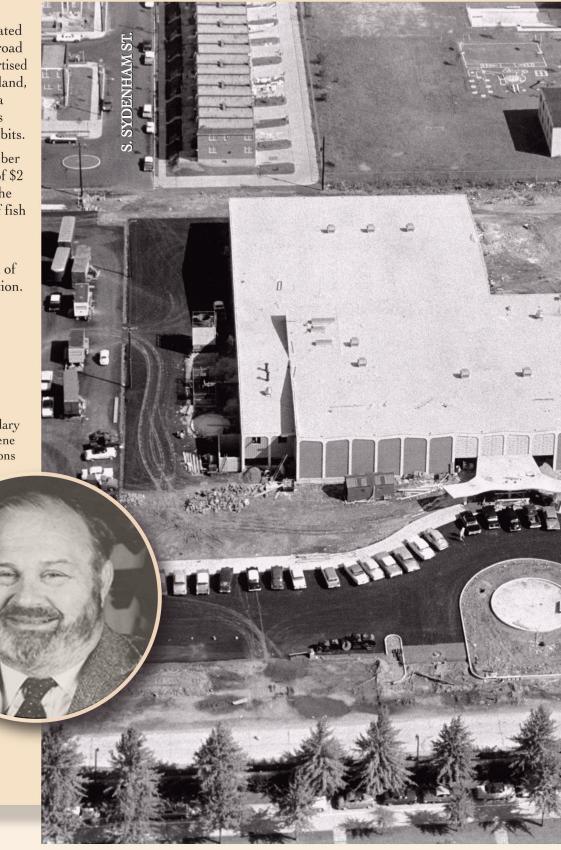
The Aquarama was located on the northwest corner of S. Broad Street and Hartranft Street. Advertised as Philadelphia's marine wonderland, the Aquarama Theater of the Sea educated and entertained visitors with a variety of shows and exhibits.

The Aquarama opened in December 1962 with a daily admission fee of \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. The 10-acre site had over 50 tanks of fish and an outdoor grandstand that seated 1,200 people.

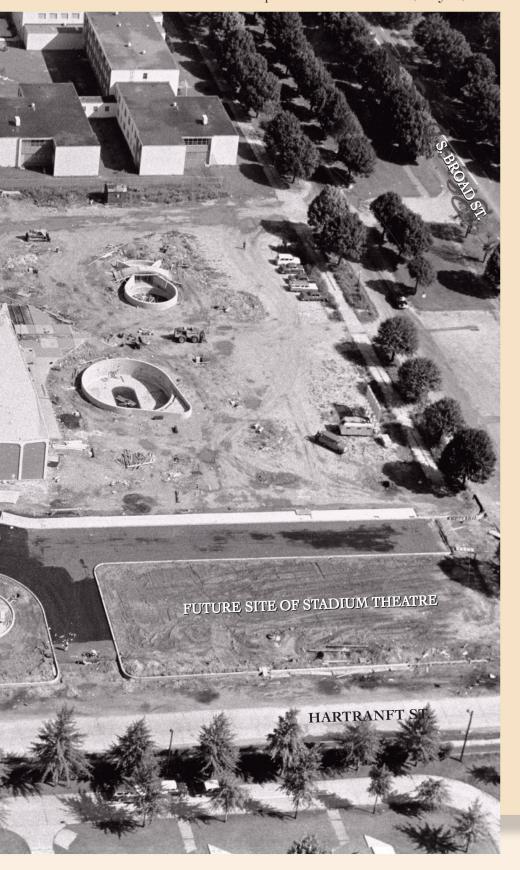
The Aquarama closed at the end of 1969, after seven years of operation. Today, this site includes a bank, drug store, and medical facility.

Below: Before becoming the legendary voice of the Philadelphia Flyers, Gene Hart was the assistant public relations director and announcer for the

Aquarama.



Aquarama under construction, July 30, 1962.





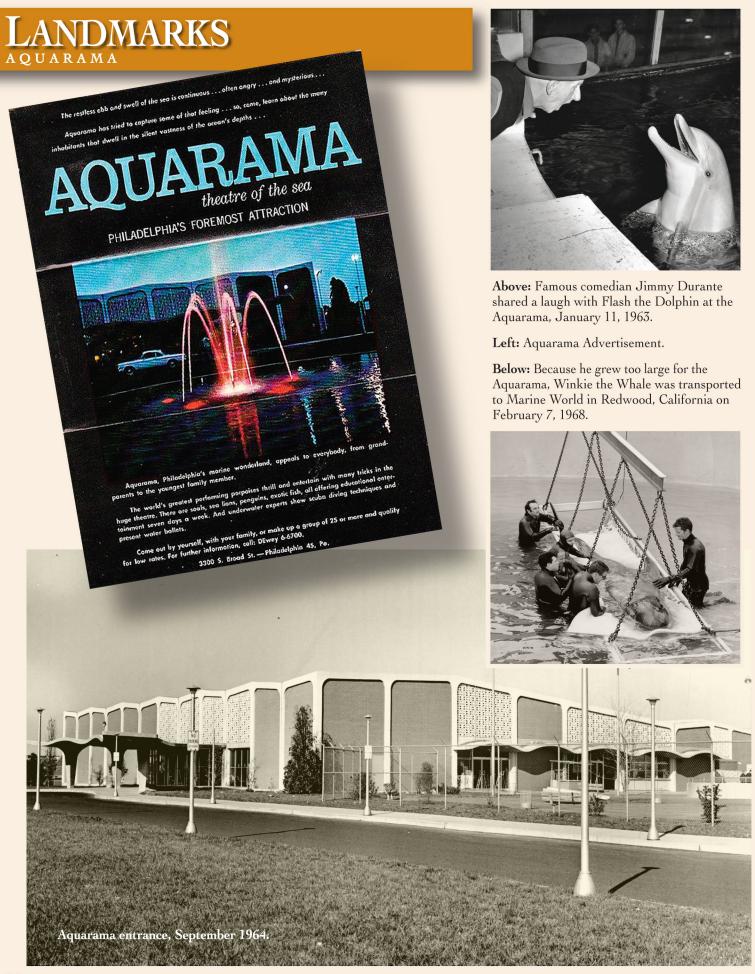


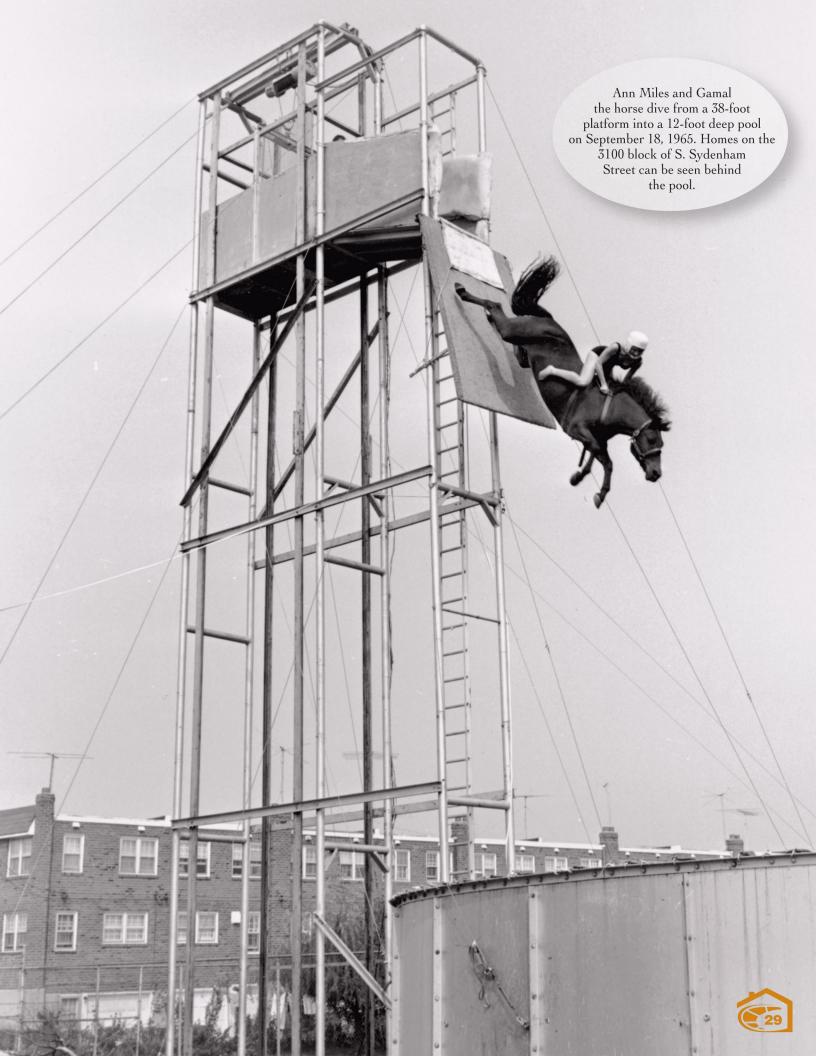




Animal attractions at Aquarama.



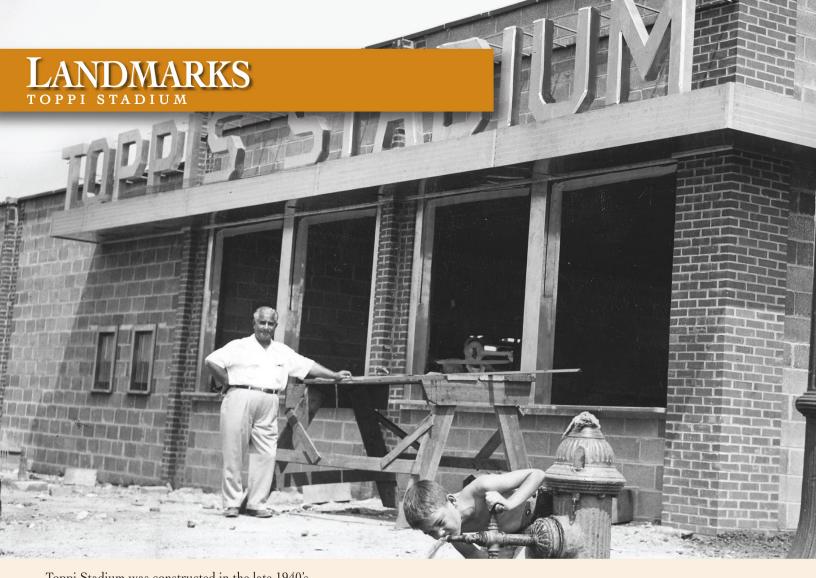






Looking south at the Stadium Theatre and Aquarama complex, May 5, 1969.





Toppi Stadium was constructed in the late 1940's.





Toppi Stadium was located on the northwest corner of S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue. This outdoor boxing arena sat 5,000 patrons. It opened on July 15, 1948, and closed on August 27, 1953.



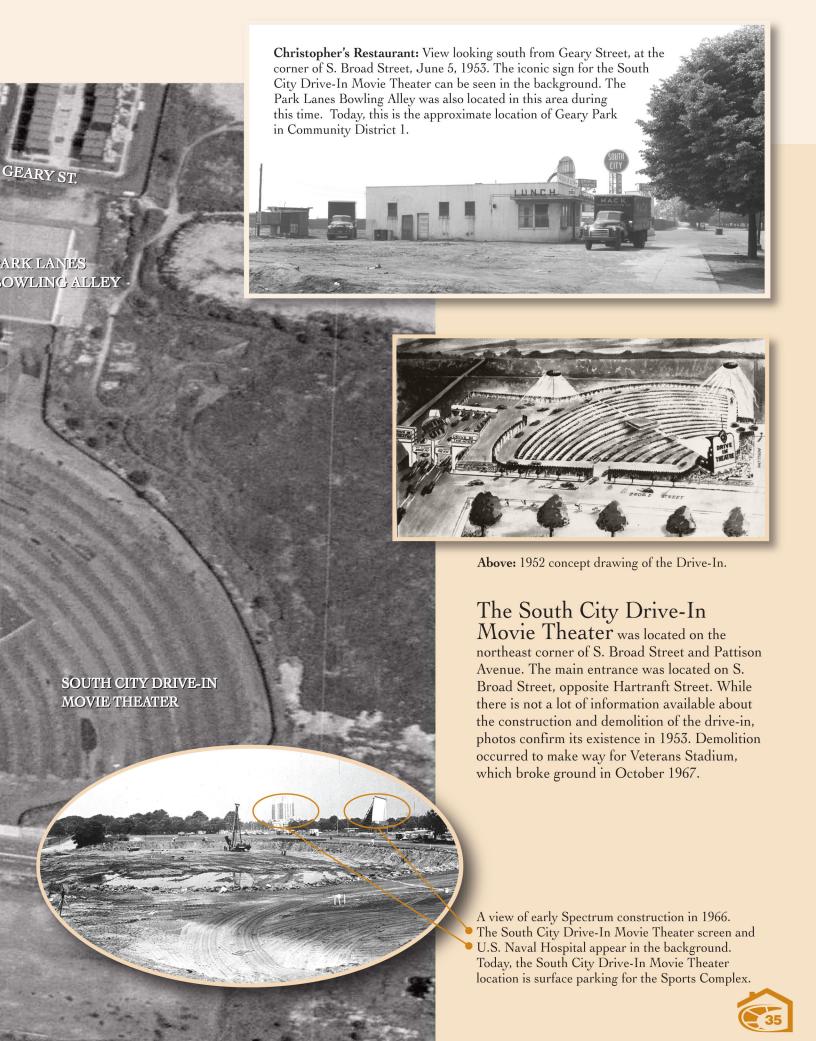




Demolition of Toppi Stadium's walls and bleachers in March 1954.







# LANDMARKS U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL

On January 10, 1932, the U.S. Navy announced plans to build a medical complex to replace the temporary medical buildings in the Navy Yard. The U.S. Naval Hospital was constructed for \$3.2 million on the 22-acre site bounded by Pattison Avenue and Hartranft Street, between S.Broad Street and S. 20th Street. The complex included a main building with 660 beds, and living quarters for hospital officers and nurses. Declining use of the buildings in the late 1970's led to its eventual closing. Demolition occurred in 2001, making way for the Eagles' NovaCare Complex, a large surface parking lot, and a green space buffer area for Community District 2.

In 1935, Pattison Avenue bridged over a lagoon located between S. 17th Street and S. 18th Street, as shown in this view looking north from League Island Park (now FDR Park).



Injured soldiers are entertained at the hospital in the late 1940's.



Looking north at the U.S. Naval Hospital complex, 1940.



Looking west at the intersection of S. Broad Street and Pattison Avenue, March 1955. The U.S. Naval Hospital is visible in the upper left corner.



The U.S. Naval Hospital bus stop located on Pattison Avenue, 1955.



Navy personnel attend the U.S. Naval Hospital dedication ceremony in 1935.



# LANDMARKS WALT WHITMAN BRIDGE

The Walt Whitman Bridge spans the Delaware River between South Philadelphia and Gloucester City, New Jersey. It is named after Walt Whitman, a famous 19th-century poet who spent his last years in Camden, New Jersey. Construction of this \$90 million bridge began in August 1953. After four years of construction, the bridge opened to traffic in 1957 with a toll of 25 cents.



Looking west at the construction of the bridge approach piers, September 1955.



View of the completed bridge in 1957.

View of the Walt Whitman Bridge during the last year of construction, 1956.

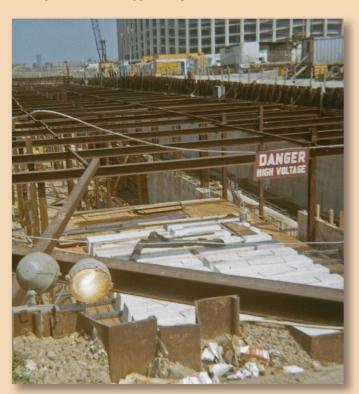


## LANDMARKS

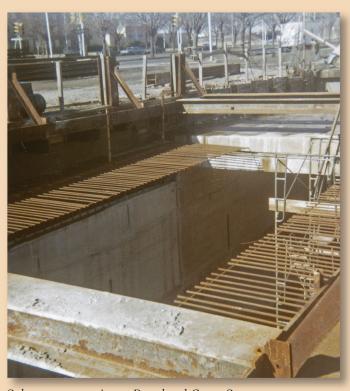
The Broad Street Subway opened its first section in 1928, connecting City Hall north to Olney Avenue. The line incrementally extended south in 1932 (Lombard/South) and 1938 (Snyder). Two years after Veterans Stadium opened, the Subway was further extended to Oregon Avenue and Pattison Avenue, providing connectivity to the Sports Complex. The Pattison Avenue station opened on April 8, 1973. Local agencies are currently studying the feasibility of extending the subway further south into the Navy Yard.



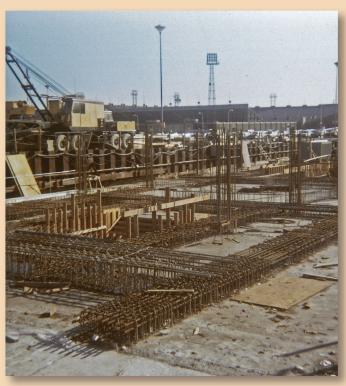
Subway construction supplies staged in front of District 1 homes.



Subway construction next to Veterans Stadium.



Subway construction at Broad and Geary Streets.



Subway construction with JFK Stadium in background.



# BROAD STREET SUBWAY EXTENDED TO PATTISON AVENUE

## CHANGES IN SERVICE ON Routes C, G, M, 4, 7,17 and 19

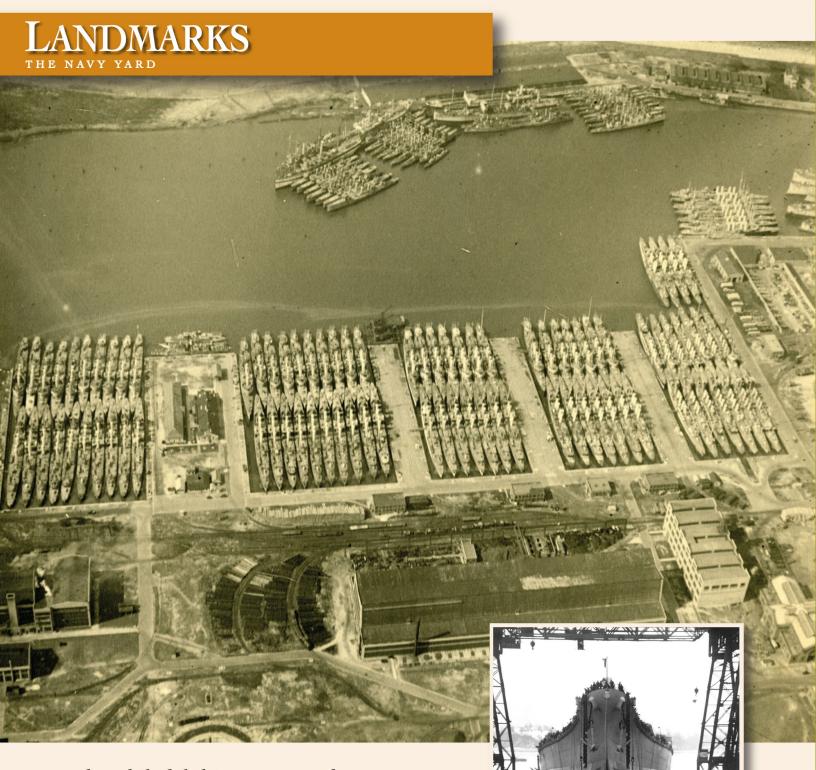
#### **Effective Sunday**

To provide faster service and to encourage maximum use of the \$38 million extension of the city-owned Broad Street Subway from Snyder ave. to a new terminus at Broad st. & Pattison ave., with an intermediate station at Oregon ave., certain changes affecting seven surface lines in South Phila. will become effective Sunday. Changes in the operation of five bus routes and the discontinuance of two routes will be made coincident with the extension of the subway. A detailed map is shown inside.

The extension and related surface line changes will provide faster service to such major activity centers as the Naval Base, U.S. Defense Personnel Support Center, Food Distribution Center, sports complex adjacent to the new Pattison ave. subway terminus and the Naval Hospital, as well as for residents south of Snyder ave. Escalators at both the Oregon ave. station and the Pattison ave. terminus will facilitate the interchange between subway and surface lines.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) brochure, April 1973.





The Philadelphia Navy Yard, located at the south end of S. Broad Street, was established in the late 1800's. The site is approximately 1,200 acres, which is about 200 acres larger than Center City. Throughout its active existence, many historic ships and equipment were produced in Philadelphia. In 1995, the Navy officially closed the yard. It is now a mixed-use development with both adaptive reuse of historic buildings and new construction. Currently, the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) manages the development, operations, and leasing of the property.

Launch of the battleship New Jersey at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, December 7, 1942.



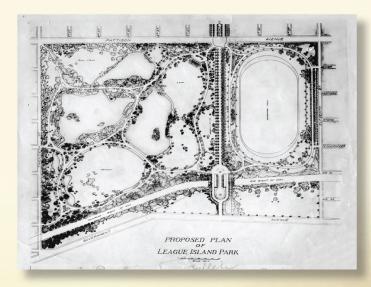
## South Philadelphia's 300-acre park has many names. Originally League Island Park, it was

has many names. Originally League Island Park, it was renamed Franklin D. Roosevelt Park in the 1940's to honor the 32nd President of the United States. It later received the designation of 'Historic' FDR Park. Today, it is most simply known as "FDR Park" or "The Lakes".

Planning for the Park began in 1899 with drawings created by Samuel Parsons. Those ideas were built upon in the City's 1904 Plan of Park and Parkway Improvements in South Philadelphia.

In 1912, the city hired the Olmsted Brothers, an acclaimed landscape architecture firm, to develop a fresh perspective for the park. The Olmsted Brothers envisioned active recreation for the east side of the park, and designed the west side with winding paths, open space, and small bodies of water.

While Olmsted's League Island Park was completed in 1921, significant changes were made shortly thereafter for the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition. Additional changes occurred in 1937 when the Fairmount Park Commission developed a plan to improve existing amenities and expand with a golf course. The League Island Golf Club opened on July 13, 1940, and remains in operation today as the FDR Golf Club.



Above: Illustration of early vision for League Island Park, October 12, 1914.

**Below:** Aerial view of League Island Park in the early 1900's. This shows the land before it was developed for the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition.





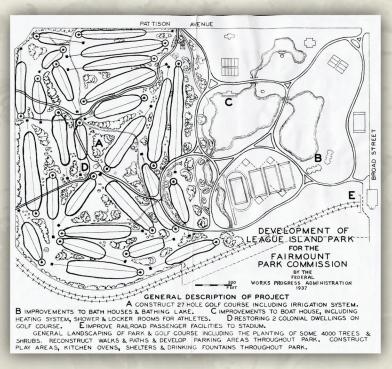
A bridge in League Island Park, January 21, 1914.



A VIEW IN LEAGUE ISLAND PARK PAILADELPAIA

Jos H. Autchinson - Nov. 27-1514

Drawing of League Island Park, November 27, 1914.



1937 Development Plan for League Island Park. The cost of proposed upgrades and improvements was estimated at \$964,923.



LEAGUE ISLAND / FDR PARK

#### The American Swedish Historical

Museum is located in FDR Park, on the south side of Pattison Avenue, just east of S. 20th Street. In the 1920's, Swedish Americans were looking for a way to commemorate the 17th century arrival of Swedish settlers to America. The site of the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition in South Philadelphia became a perfect location, as this land was part of a grant from Sweden's Queen Christina. During the Exposition, the Crown Prince of Sweden laid the cornerstone of the Museum. Construction was nearly complete by October 1927, but it wasn't until June 1938 when the Museum had its formal public dedication. This valuable Museum is one of the only buildings remaining from the Exposition. It continues to operate today and also plays host to the annual SCSSD Children's Halloween Party.



View looking north from inside FDR Park.



A 9,000 pound Dahlgren cannon on display in front of the American Swedish Historical Museum, March 29, 1974. The Museum has two cannons on long-term loan from the U.S. Navy. Originally from the USS Richmond, these cannons became standard armament for ships in the 1850's. The cannon is named after the inventor, John Dahlgren, a Navy man and Philadelphian of Swedish decent.



View of the American Swedish Historical Museum from Pattison Avenue, July 12, 1968.



Bellaire Manor was built between 1735 and 1750. The Manor is located inside FDR Park near S. 20th Street and Pattison Avenue. It originally overlooked a 142-acre farm. Today, the Manor sits on FDR golf course, as seen in this photo from 1964.





LEAGUE ISLAND / FDR PARK-1920's, 1930's



The Park guard, "Uncle Charlie", visits with children, July 15, 1922.



The Grand Gazebo, August 22, 1922.





Swimming in the Park during the Sesquicentennial Exposition, August 21, 1926.



A Ford sedan crashes into a Park booth during the 1926 Sesquicentennial Exposition.





More than 70,000 Philadelphians at the Park pool, July 12, 1937. At one time, this was the largest man-made swimming hole in the country, holding 12 million gallons of well water. The bathhouses, which still exist in the Park today, are in the distance.



Park bathers, June 24, 1939.



LEAGUE ISLAND / FDR PARK - 1940's, 1950's, 1960's



Students at war bonds event, September 1943.

Boy at the Park pool, August 2, 1941.

Bathers in the Park, June 22, 1941.

2,000 catfish and 1,000 sunfish were added to the Park lake for year-round fishing, October 26, 1952.





Newlyweds take a boat ride, May 10, 1955.



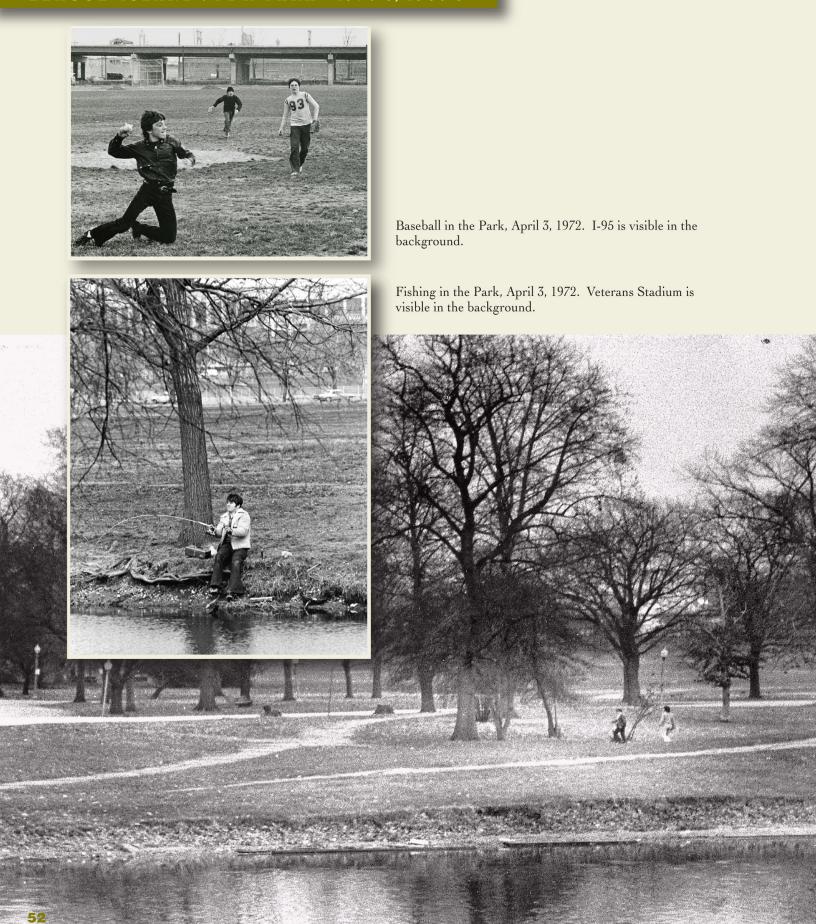
A stroll in the Park, February 9, 1956.



The Pennsylvania Fish Commission stocking the Park lake with catfish, June 6, 1968.



PARKS
LEAGUE ISLAND / FDR PARK-1970's, 1980's





Camping in the Park, April 3, 1972.



Playing on the cannon in front of the American Swedish Historical Museum, August 31, 1974.



Hockey on the frozen Park lake, January 24, 1976.



Paddle boating in the Park, July 24, 1981.



The Grand Gazebo, November 19, 1974. JFK Stadium is visible in the background.

#### OREGON / MARCONI PLAZA

Oregon Plaza was designed by the Olmstead Brothers between 1914 and 1916. The 19-acre Roman style plaza has two mirrored halves split by S. Broad Street. It served as the grand entrance for the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition with a huge Liberty Bell replica in the center.

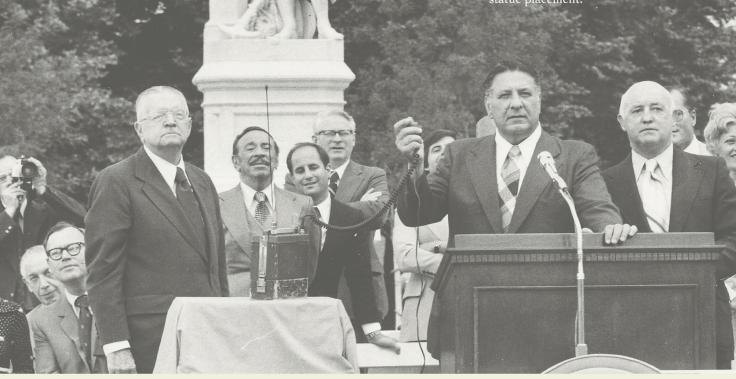
Portrait: Oregon Plaza was renamed Marconi Plaza on October 18, 1937. The Plaza is dedicated to the Italian inventor, Guglielmo Marconi, a Nobel Prize winner who is considered the inventor of the radiotelegraph system.



The Plaza includes several historic markers honoring Mr. Marconi, such as this one shown in 1959.



The Marconi Memorial Association, pictured here in 1976, plans future statue placement.



A ribbon cutting ceremony on June 13, 1977 recognized renovations at Marconi Plaza. Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo pushes a radio button to honor Guglielmo Marconi and prompt the ribbon cutting. The Christopher Columbus statue visible in the background is located on the west side of Marconi Plaza, in Community District 4.



# LOOKING BACK MOVING FORWARD

#### 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

The following twenty-five pages take you back in time to the remarkable 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition, when South Philadelphia was transformed and showcased to an international audience. This celebration of the nation's 150th anniversary encompassed the current boundaries of the Sports Complex Special Services District, starting with a gateway at S. Broad Street and Oregon Avenue, followed by a Main Entrance at S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue, and extending south to the Navy Yard.



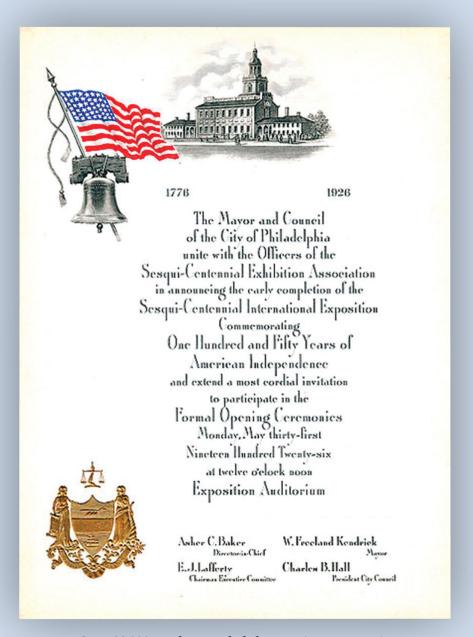
Celebrating our country's 150th anniversary of independence called for a grand event. With memories of Philadelphia's very successful Centennial Celebration held in 1876, the Sesquicentennial Exhibition Association began to plan for this international event in 1921. On March 19, 1925, President Calvin Coolidge issued a proclamation inviting the nations of the world to visit South Philadelphia. While plans were big and elaborate, the event was plagued by budget constraints that compromised construction. Formal Opening Ceremonies were held on May 31, 1926, even though an estimated 25% of the buildings and exhibits were still incomplete.

The Exposition was open for six months, closing on December 1, 1926. Approximately 6.4 million people visited the Exposition, far less than the predicted 36 million visitors. Rain most likely contributed to the low attendance. Only 28% of the event days recorded clear weather. The Exposition recorded its largest paid attendance of 107,937 people on October 3, 1926. To provide a current day perspective, that crowd size is comparable to a concurrent sellout of Citizens Bank Park and Lincoln Financial Field.





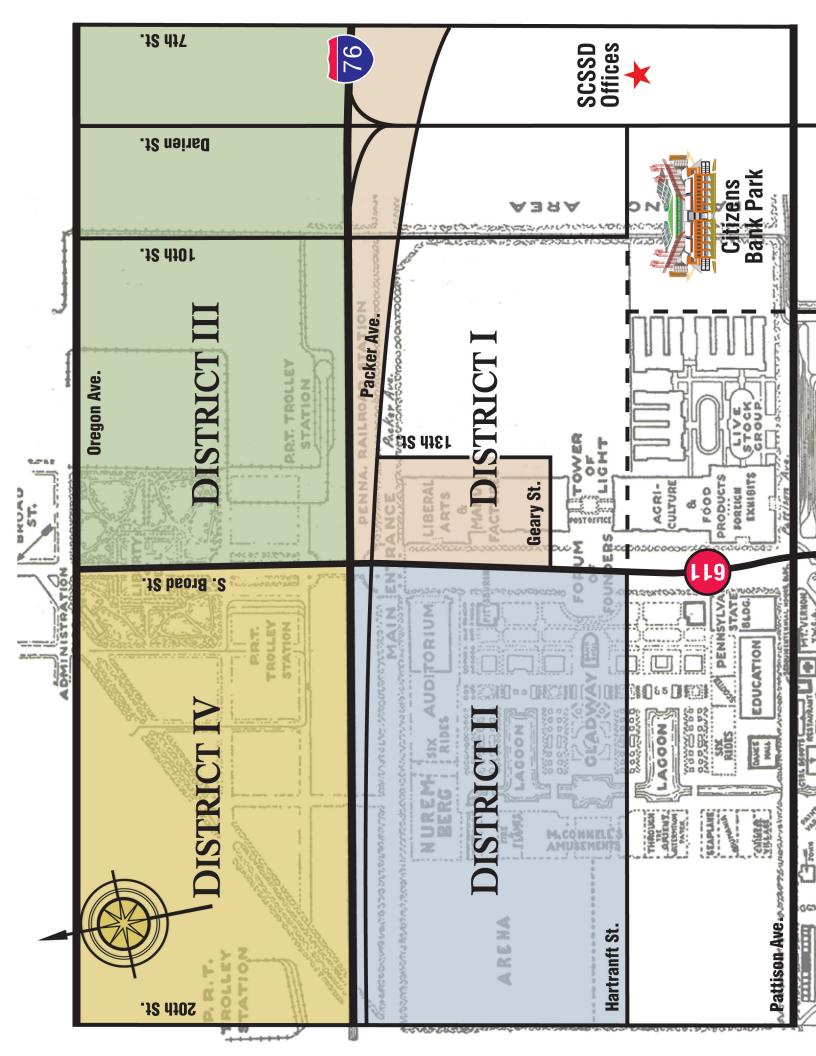
#### 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

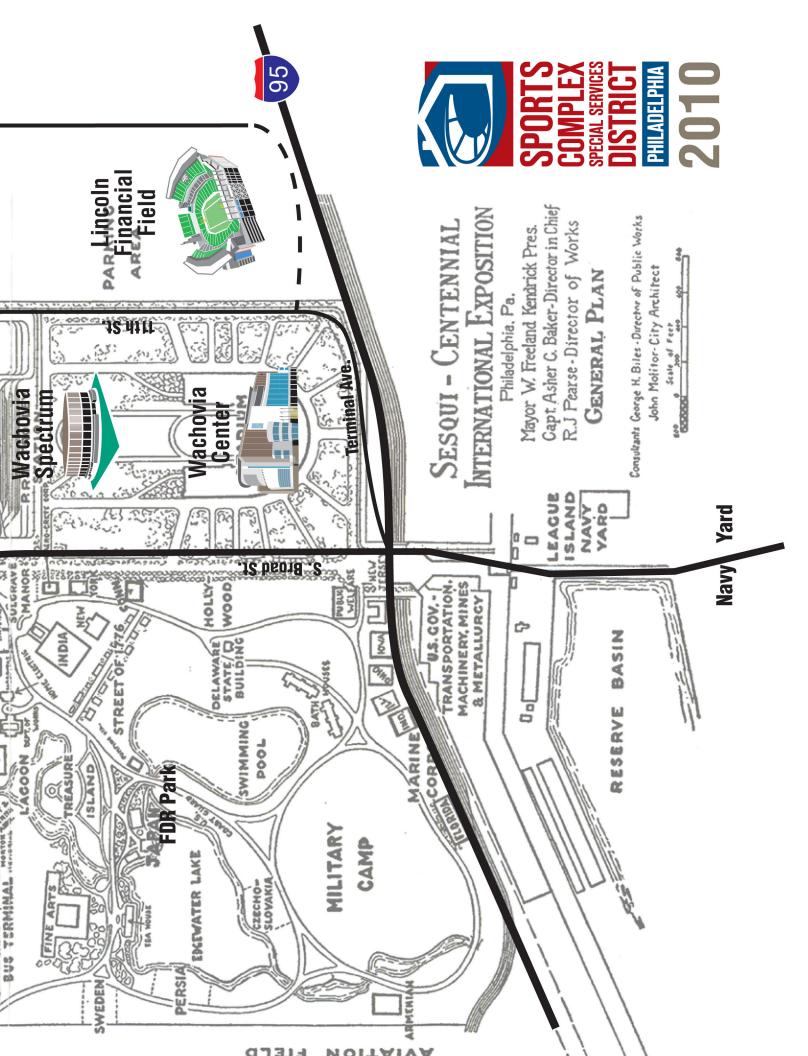


Over 82,000 people attended the opening ceremonies.

Fold out this page to see the General Plan for the Sesquicentennial International Exposition. This map illustrates the proposed locations for each exhibit, and very little strayed from this rendering. A second map on the translucent paper allows you to see where exhibits and buildings were located in what is now the Sports Complex Special Services District.



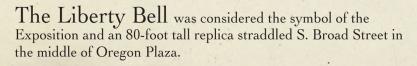




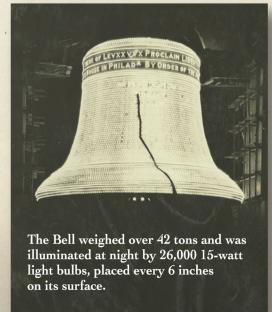
## 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

LIBERTY BELL & ENTRANCE

60



The replica Bell cost \$100,000 and took only two months to build, but photos from the Opening Ceremony parade show the Bell still under construction as vehicles passed underneath. After the Exposition concluded, the Bell was dismantled in August 1927 and sold for scrap for only \$60.







A view of the completed Liberty Bell from the west side of Oregon Plaza (now Marconi Plaza), June 17, 1926.



The Administration Building was located at the intersection of S. 15th Street, Oregon Avenue, and Moyamensing Avenue, just inside Oregon Plaza (now Marconi Plaza). This building housed the Exposition staff offices. Completed in October 1925, it was the first building to be constructed for the Exposition.







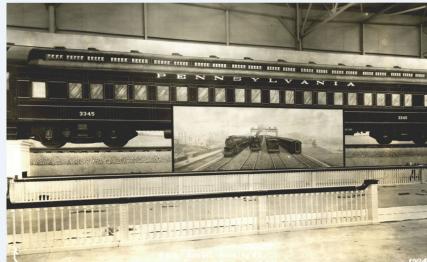


Construction of the Palaces, March 6,1926. The Palace of Liberal Arts & Manufacturers was located on the southeast corner of S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue, today's Community District 1. The Palace of Agriculture & Food Products was located on the northeast corner of S. Broad Street and Pattison Avenue. This is the current location of the Pattison Subway Station and Sports Complex surface parking lots. Homes in Community District 3 are visible at the top of this photo.









The Palace of Liberal Arts & Manufacturers was 962 feet long by 392 feet wide, and cost \$950,000 to build. It had over 200 exhibits, such as the Pennsylvania Railroad Exhibit. Displays demonstrated the most updated products, processes, and technologies from leading manufacturers.



### 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

EXHIBITION PALACES









## 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

THE GLADWAY



The Gladway had many carnival rides, including a roller coaster and speedway. Homes along the north side of Packer Avenue are visible in the top and bottom photos.





Crowd poses in front of Muller Bros. Restaurant in the Nuremberg section of the Exposition, June 17, 1926. The location is just south of Packer Avenue, near S. 18th Street.



The Franklin Trust Company building was located in the Nuremberg section, took only 24 days to construct, and served as the official bank depository for the Exposition. The company's trademark logo "At Your Service Day and Night" advertised the bank's ability to serve the public until midnight daily, even on holidays.



The Pennsylvania State Building was located on the northwest corner of S. Broad Street and Pattison Avenue, today the site of the Eagles' practice fields. The Sculpture of Industry and Sculpture of Agriculture were recessed into the exterior walls. A large central courtyard with a keystone shaped reflecting pool fronted S. Broad Street.



Looking east along Packer Avenue towards the Main Entrance at S. Broad Street, July 1926. Residential homes are visible on the left and the Auditorium Building on the right.

### STREETS OF CAIRO





Construction of the Streets of Cairo exhibit, June 1926. This exhibit was part of the "Through the Orient" section of the Exposition, providing visitors a chance to experience the exotic lands of Egypt. This location is the approximate site of the former U.S. Naval Hospital, which today is a surface parking lot, west of the Eagles' NovaCare Complex.



The Auditorium Building was located just inside the Main Entrance, on the southwest corner of S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue. This building could hold over 10,000 people and hosted many events.



# 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

LEAGUE ISLAND PARK

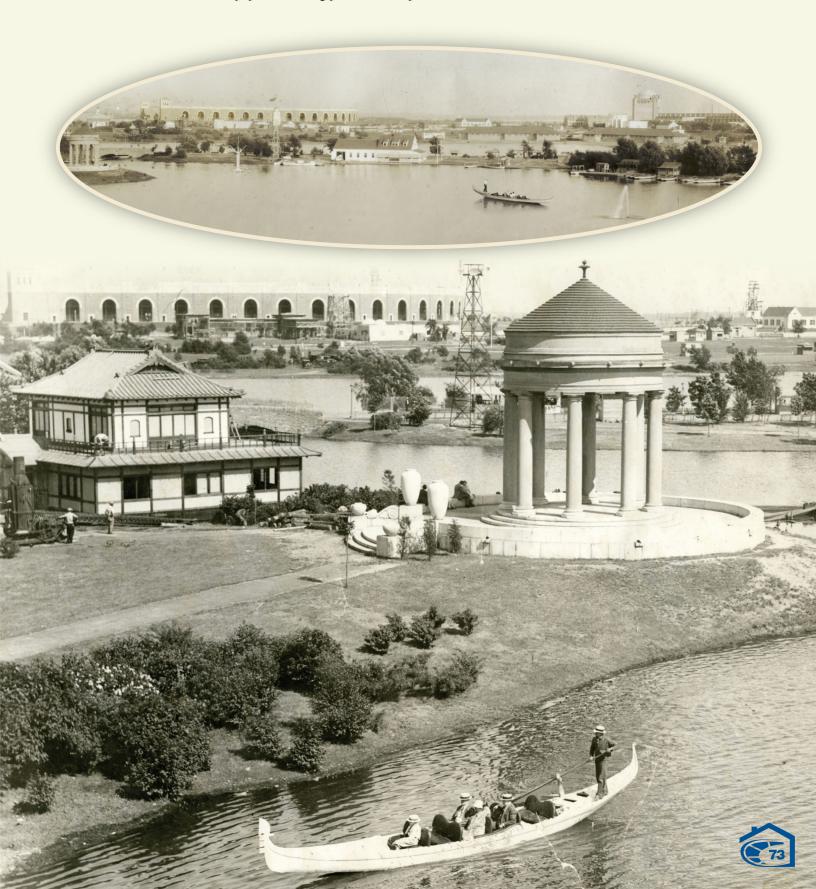


League Island Park (now FDR Park) was transformed into a 5-acre amusement oasis during the Exposition, modeled after the famous storybook Treasure Island. It featured a replica of the Canadian Rockies and a miniature railroad in the center of the man-made lagoon. This was one of the most popular exhibits, despite an additional 25 cent admission fee for kids and adults.



The Olmstead Brothers designed League Island Park in 1912. As quickly as the Park was completed in 1921, the west side was transformed into a showcase of international architecture styles and recreational activities for visitors to enjoy during the Exposition.

The photos below show authentic Italian gondolas gliding across Edgewater Lake, providing riders with a touch of Venice. The gondolas float close to the shore where riders can see both the Japanese Pavilion and the Grand Gazebo. The Grand Gazebo was erected in 1914 as part of the original Park. This historic gazebo still stands today as the icon of FDR Park and a popular wedding photo backdrop.



## 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

LEAGUE ISLAND PARK



Japanese Tea Pavilion



The National Home Electric building demonstrated modern electrical amenities.



India Building



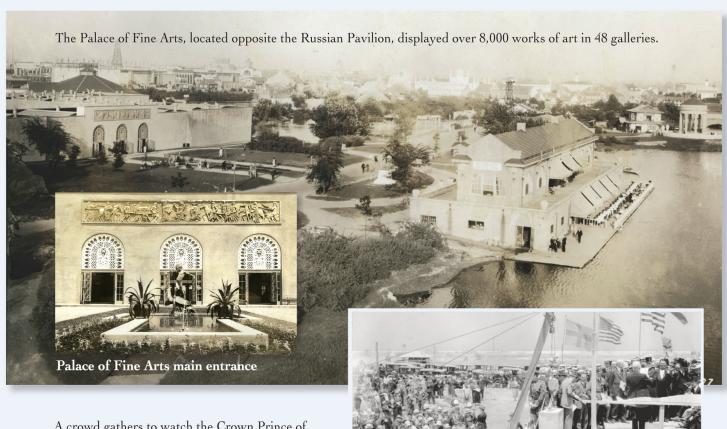
Sulgrave Manor, an exact replica of George Washington's ancestral home in England. After the Exposition, the building was sold to a local Philadelphian and relocated to Chestnut Hill, where it still stands today.

### HIGH STREET OF 1776

The Exposition recreated the original 1776 beauty of Philadelphia's High Street (now called Market Street). Philadelphia's Mayor Kendrick organized the Women's Committee that spearheaded this exhibit.



The High Street exhibit dedication ceremony, June 14, 1926.



A crowd gathers to watch the Crown Prince of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, lay the cornerstone for the John Morton Memorial Building, June 2, 1926. This building was later renamed the American Swedish Historical Museum. It is one of the only buildings remaining from the Exposition.



At one end of the exhibit was the Marketplace with a grand white dome. Town Hall, representing the City's original building, was at the other end of exhibit.



Flanking both sides of the street were twenty historic buildings representing Colonial Philadelphia.



# 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

LEAGUE ISLAND PARK & AVIATION FIELD

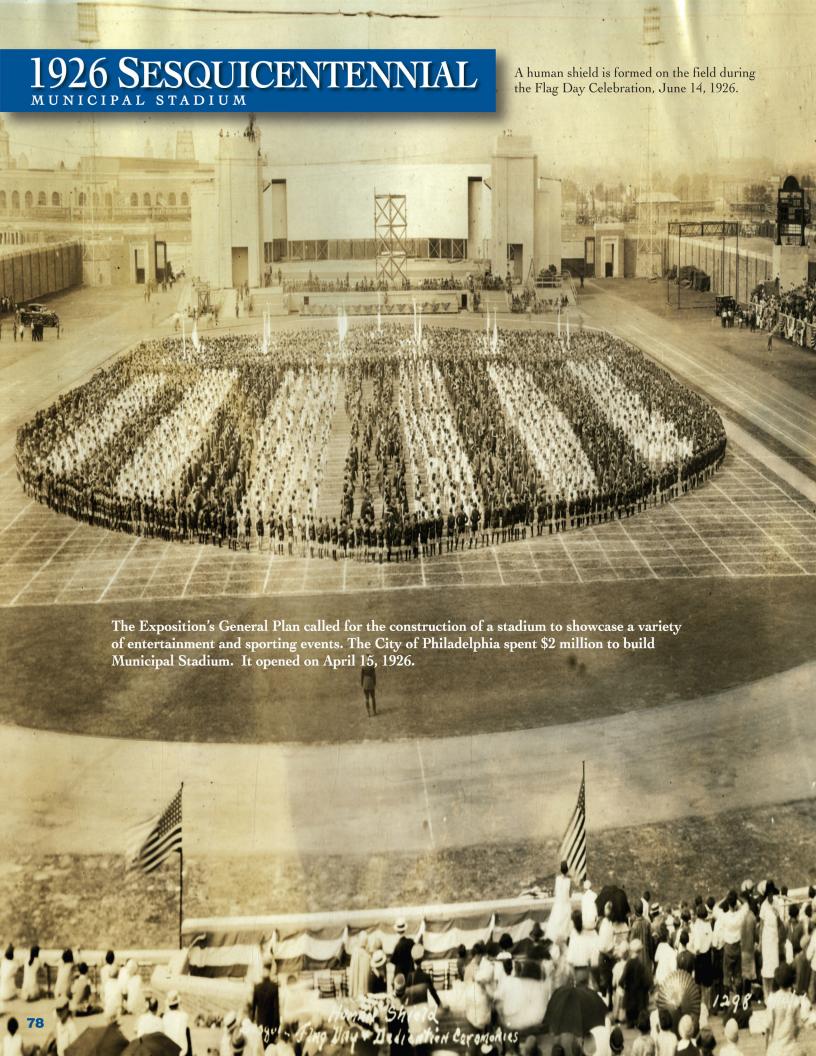




The Russian Pavilion was originally built as a boat house in 1914. For the Exposition, it was transformed into the Russian Pavilion Restaurant and Tea Room. One side faced the Palace of Fine Arts and the other side overlooked Edgewater Lake. This structure still stands in FDR Park today.

The Military Camp was located south of Edgewater Lake. Visitors were invited to watch over 1,000 soldiers perform drills.





### BOXING IN MUNICIPAL STADIUM



Crews assemble the fight ring at Municipal Stadium.

Municipal Stadium was designed to hold approximately 100,000 people. However, on September 23, 1926, it exceeded capacity when over 120,000 fans packed the Stadium to watch boxer Jack Dempsey defend his heavyweight title against Gene Tunney. Tunney defeated Dempsey in 10 rounds amid the pouring rain.





On October 3, 1926, the Archdioceses of Philadelphia held a pontifical mass at Municipal Stadium to celebrate the Sesquicentennial. Over 300,000 people attended, both inside and in areas just outside the Stadium.



# 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

VISITORS



Mayor Kendrick inspects the Exposition grounds on May 30, 1926, one day before the formal opening ceremonies.



Visitors pour into the Main Entrance at S. Broad Street and Packer Avenue, June 27, 1926.



Two gentlemen visit the Valley Forge Beer Booth.



Twenty-five electrical buses, called The PaRTy Car, shuttled visitors throughout the Exposition. Operated by the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co. (PRT), each bus sat 40 people and could reach a speed of 8 MPH.

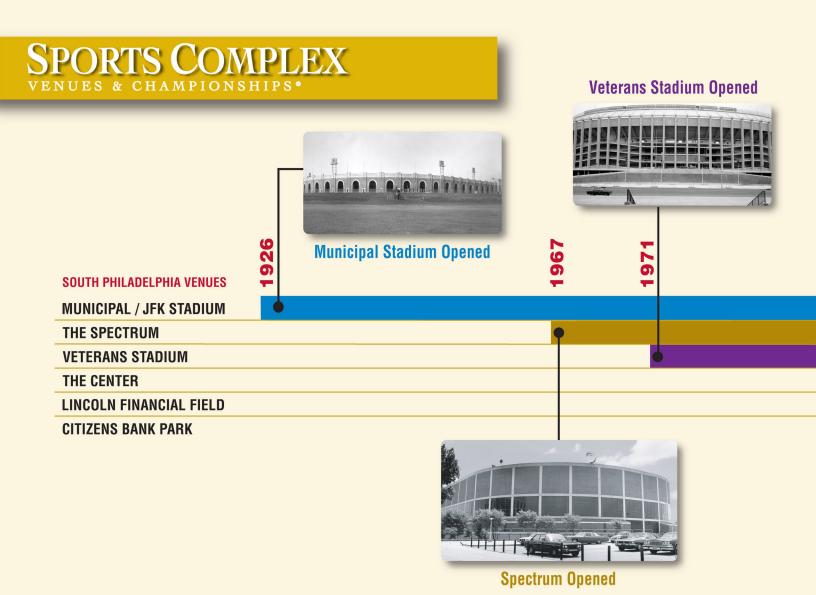


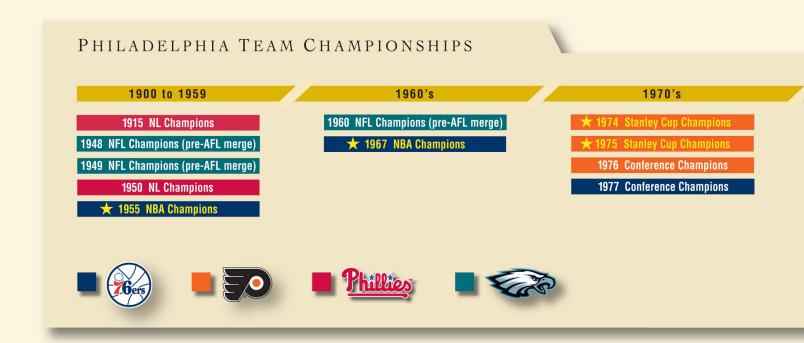


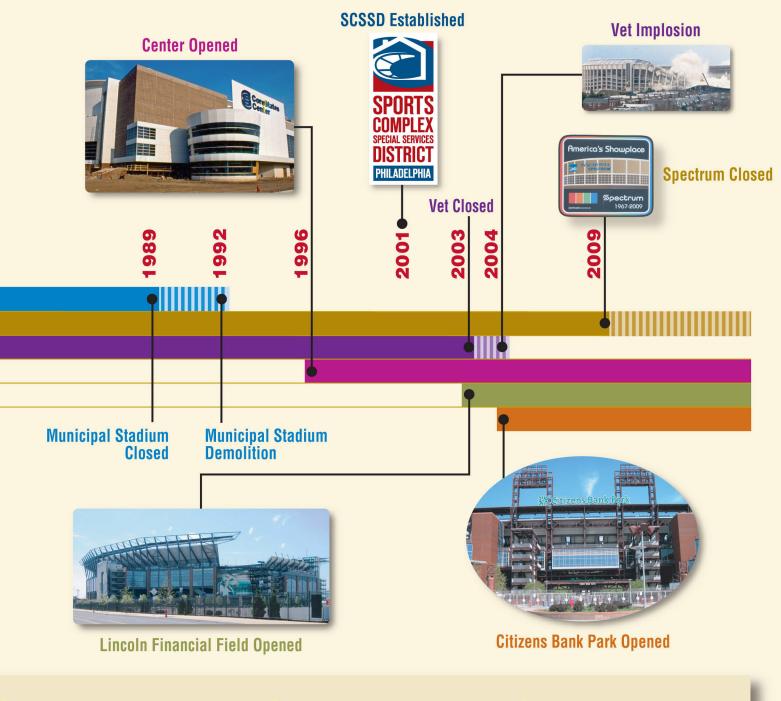
### SPORTS COMPLEX

In this final section, we celebrate the venues that comprise the remarkable South Philadelphia Sports Complex, both past and present.

Municipal/JFK Stadium and Veterans Stadium have come and gone. The Spectrum readies for a 2010 demolition. The Philadelphia tradition of world-class sports and entertainment continues with three active venues: Comcast-Spectacor's Wachovia Center, the Philadelphia Eagles' Lincoln Financial Field, and the Philadelphia Phillies' Citizens Bank Park. These venue operators provide the Sports Complex Special Services District with ongoing funds to protect and improve quality of life in the adjacent residential neighborhoods highlighted in this book.



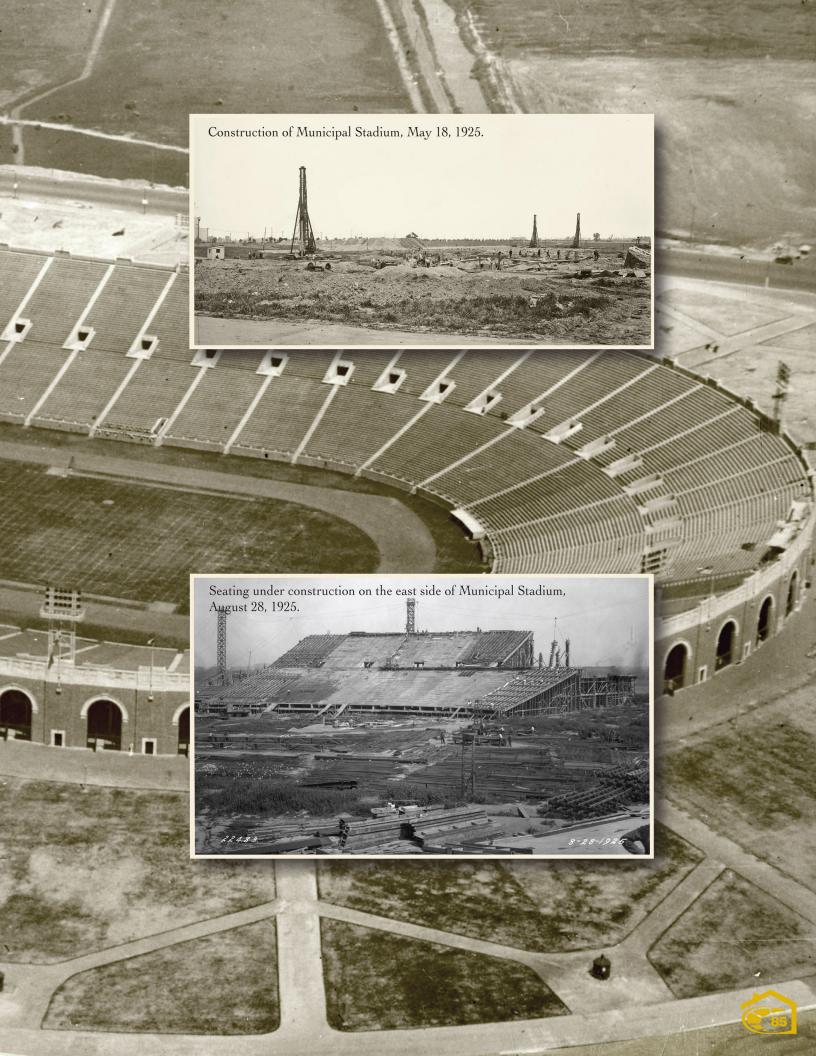
















Aerial view of crowd, December 27, 1935.





Army vs. Navy football game.



Snow removal for the Liberty Bowl Game between Oregon and Penn State, held on December 20, 1960.



Heavy traffic along S. Broad Street outside Municipal Stadium, December 3, 1945.



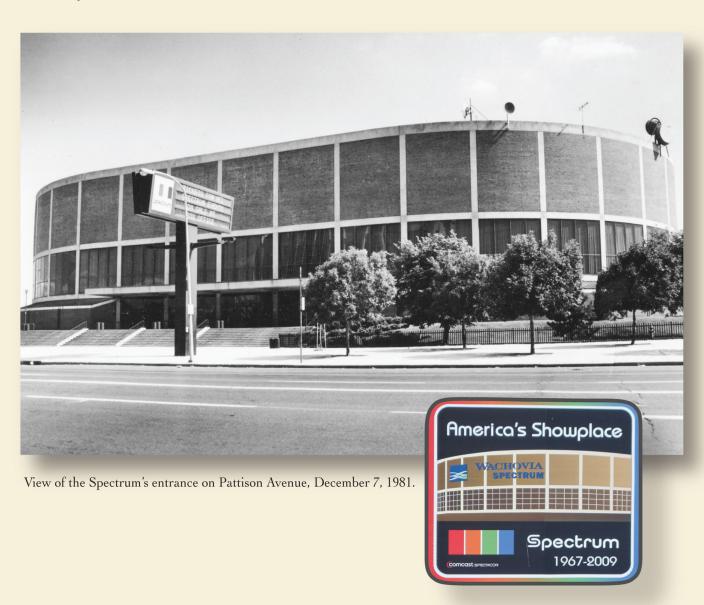
# SPORTS COMPLEX

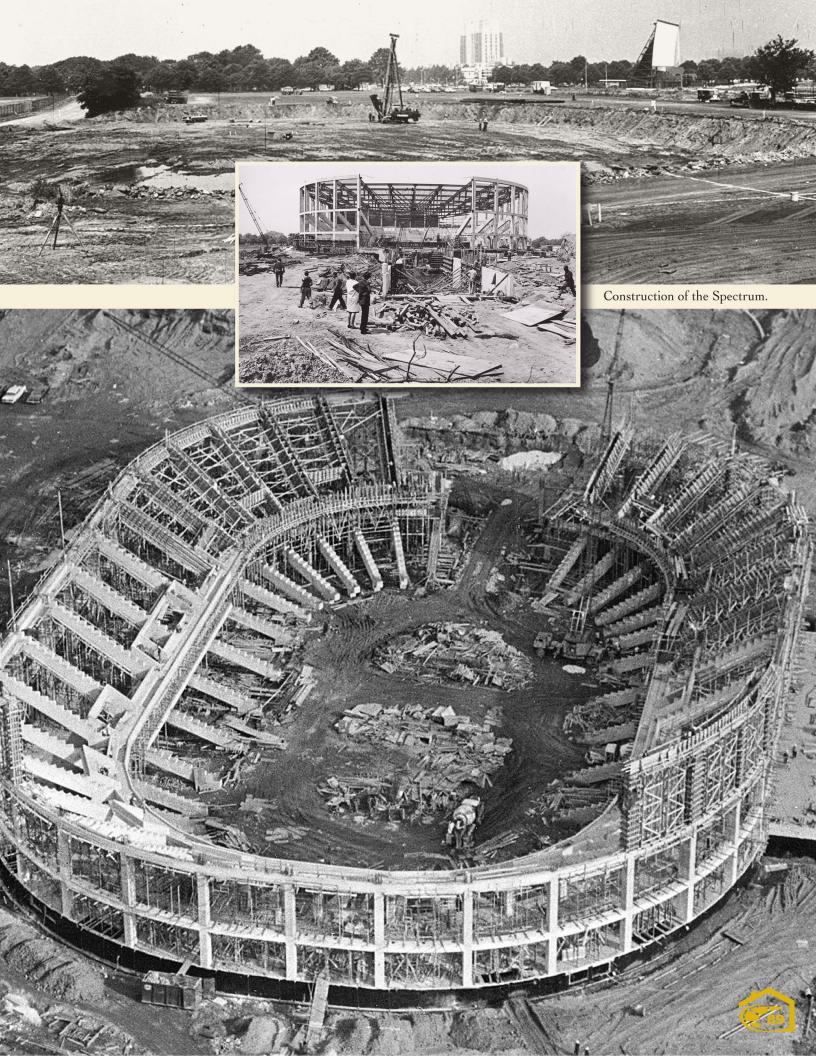
THE SPECTRUM

Ed Snider opened the Spectrum in 1967 as the new home for the NHL Philadelphia Flyers hockey team and the NBA Philadelphia 76ers basketball team. The Spectrum is an indoor sports arena that sat 17,500 patrons and cost \$7 million to construct. During its tenure, the building had four different names:



The Spectrum hosted its last event in 2009 and is scheduled for demolition in 2010 to make way for a mixed-use development called *PhillyLive!*.







Comcast-Spectacor opened the Center in 1996 as a new home for the NHL Philadelphia Flyers hockey team and the NBA Philadelphia 76ers basketball team, along with other sporting and entertainment events. The Center cost \$210 million to construct and has seating for over 19,000 patrons. The building has been called three different names: CoreStates Center (1996 – 1998), First Union Center (1998 – 2003), and Wachovia Center (2003 – Present). It is located south of the Wachovia Spectrum, between S. Broad Street and 11th Street, where Municipal/JFK Stadium once stood.



### CONSTRUCTION OF THE CENTER





Groundbreaking for the Center took place in September 1994.









SITE



FUTURE HOME OF THE Phillies AND EAGLES

PHILADELPHIA



JAMES H. J. TATE, MAYOR



Ceremonial construction 'kickoff' at the site that would become Veterans Stadium, July 1969.

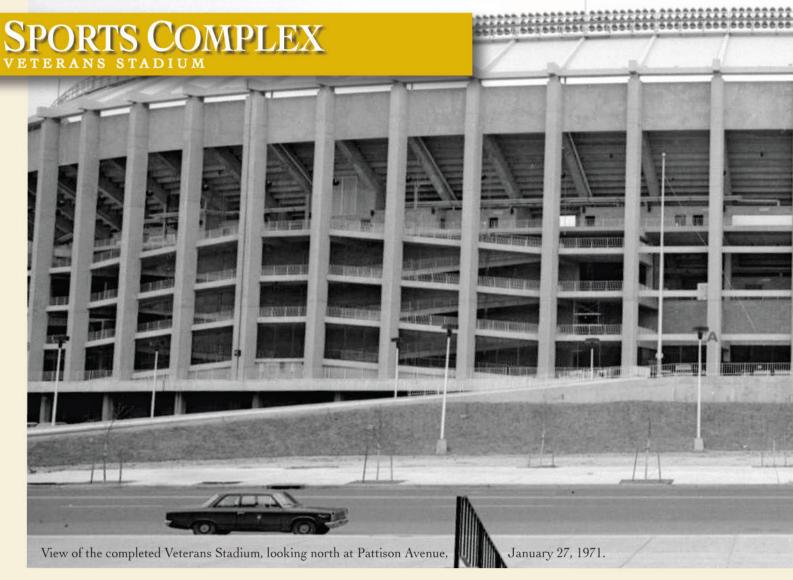
The City of Philadelphia opened Veterans Stadium in 1971, seven years after City residents approved the first bond issue to replace Shibe Park (later known as Connie Mack Stadium) as the home of the Philadelphia Phillies and Philadelphia Eagles. This multi-purpose venue, more commonly known as 'The Vet', cost \$63 million to construct and could seat 62,000 baseball fans and 65,000 football fans. The Vet hosted its final Eagles' game on January 19, 2003, and its final Phillies' game on September 28, 2003, making way for the 2004 demolition and implosion.





Residents meet at Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church Hall in April 1967 to hear about the additional funds needed to build Veterans Stadium.





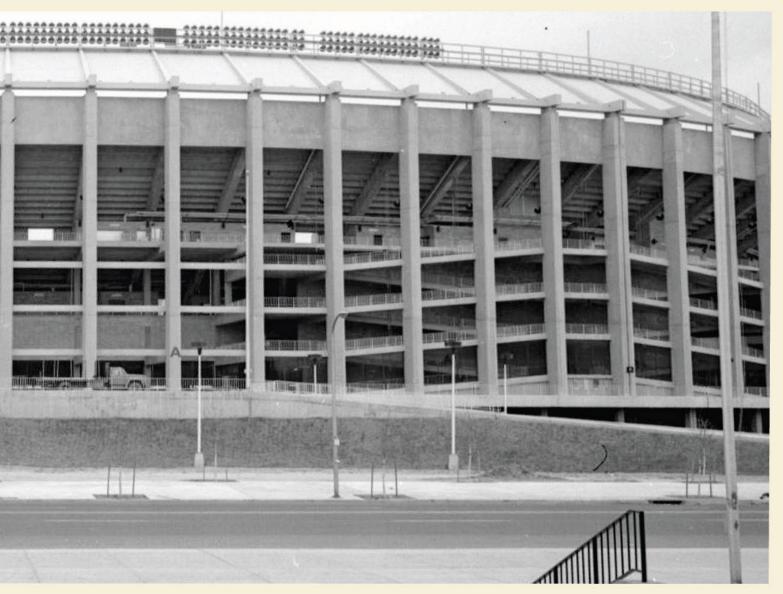


Aerial view of construction, November 2, 1969. The "octorad" design made the stadium compatible for both baseball and football games.





Three workers were injured when a 140-foot crane toppled during stadium construction, May 16, 1969.







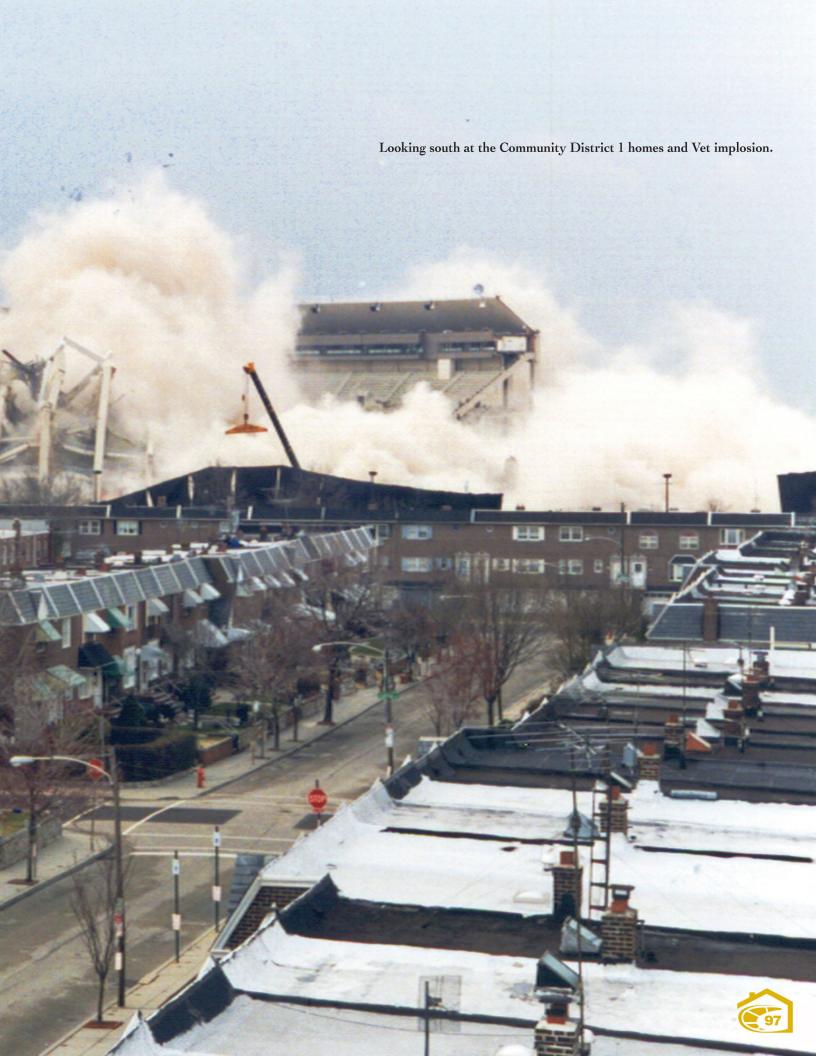
Residents fill the floor and balconies of City Council chambers to participate in the stadium naming process, March 12, 1970.



# SPORTS COMPLEX VETERANS STADIUM IMPLOSION

At 7:00 AM on Sunday, March 21, 2004, Veterans Stadium was imploded. The memorable building was leveled in just 62 seconds.







Final tributes along the Packer Avenue fence in front of the Vet the morning of the implosion.

### COMMEMORATIVE MARKERS





Today, the Veterans Stadium site is a surface parking lot for the Sports Complex. The Vet is commemorated with several markers, including granite stones that identify the former locations of the baseball bases, the baseball pitcher's mound, and the football goalposts.





Contractors prepare the Vet for implosion, March 9, 2004.

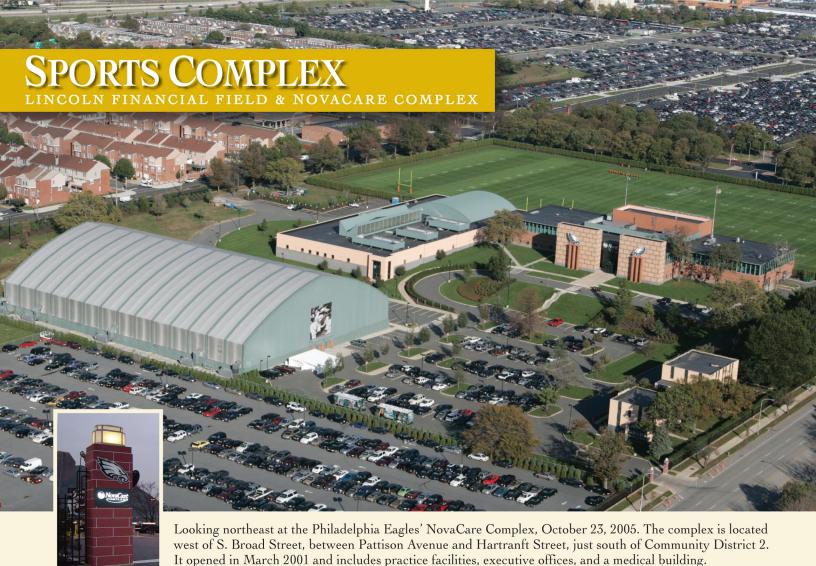


The Veterans Stadium rubble, just after implosion.



Contractors process and clear the Veterans Stadium rubble, May 13, 2004.







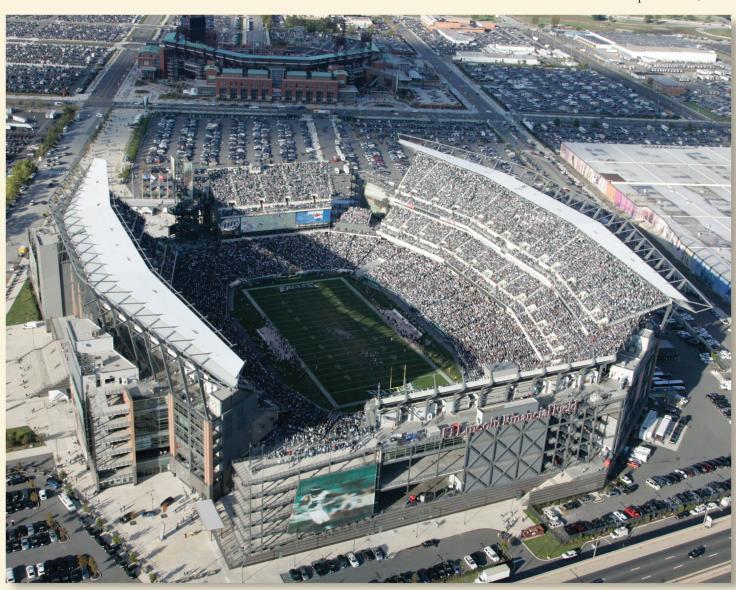
The Philadelphia Eagles opened Lincoln Financial Field in 2003, after breaking ground in June 2001. The stadium cost \$512 million to construct and seats 67,594 fans. It is located south of Pattison Avenue, between 11th Street and Darien Street.





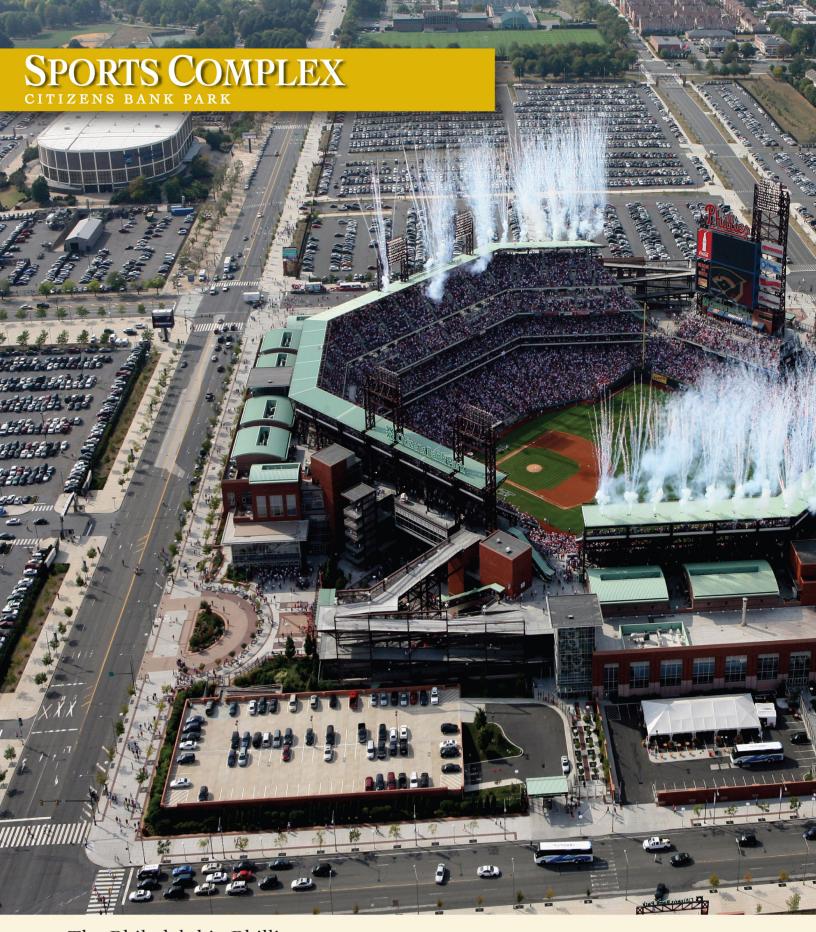


September 18, 2005

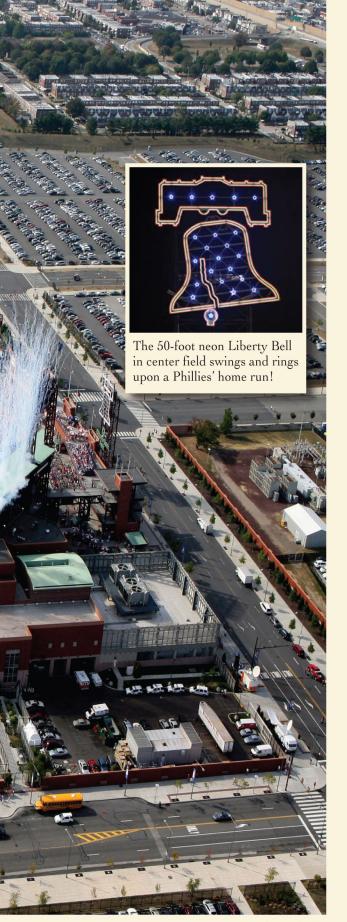


October 23, 2005





The Philadelphia Phillies opened Citizens Bank Park in April 2004, after three years of construction. The ballpark cost \$458 million to construct (including site work) and seats 43,651 fans. It is located north of Pattison Avenue, between Citizens Bank Way and Darien Street.



October 4, 2007









# SPORTS ( MR. BASEBALL 1862 - 1956CONNIE MACK'S SPORTSMAN'S CREED I PROMISE TO PLAY THE CAME TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY AT ALL TIMES. I WILL ALWAYS PLAY TO WIN. BUT IF I LOSE I WILL NEVER LOOK FOR EXCUSES WHICH WOULD DETRACT FROM MY OPPONENT'S VICTORY. I WILL ALWAYS ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE GAME ON THE DIAMOND AS WELL AS IN MYDAILY LIFE. I WILL NEVER GLOAT IN VICTORY OR PITY MY SELF IN DEFEAT. I WILL JUDGE A TEAMMATE AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND NEVER ON THE BASIS OF HIS RACE OR RELIGION.

### OUTSIDE THE VENUES...



Steve Carlton Citizens Bank Park



Mike Schmidt Citizens Bank Park



Robin Roberts Citizens Bank Park



Wilt Chamberlain Wachovia Center

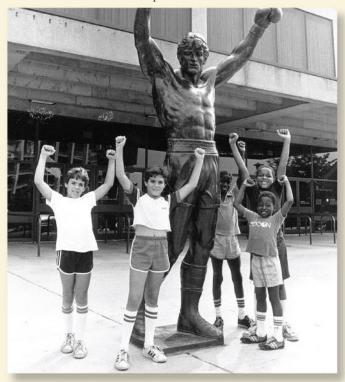


Dr. Julius Erving Wachovia Spectrum



Kate Smith Wachovia Spectrum

"Rocky" seen here outside the Spectrum. "Rocky" is currently located outside the Philadelphia Art Museum.



"Score" at the Spectrum. Gary Dornhoefer's game winning overtime goal in game five of the Flyers 1973 Stanley Cup Playoffs quarterfinal series against the Minnesota North Stars.



Veterans Stadium Memorial on Pattison Avenue.

**Joseph Brown** Philadelphia's own native sculptor

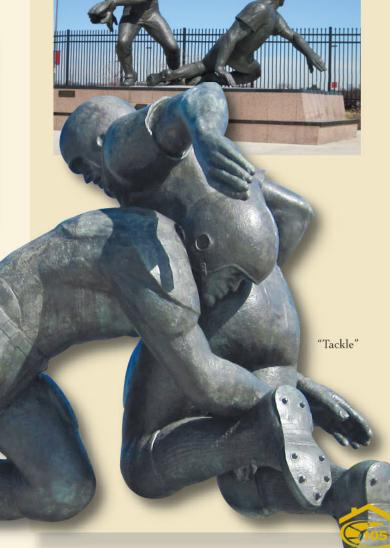
"Batter"

"Punter"





"Play At Second Base"







### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS**

The Sports Complex Special Services District (SCSSD) is fortunate to have a dedicated Board of Directors pursuing community improvement objectives, using much appreciated funding from Comcast-Spectacor, the Philadelphia Eagles, and the Philadelphia Phillies. Community Directors, venue operators, and government leaders work together under this valuable partnership to make SCSSD a success and this book a reality.

SCSSD would like to thank the many institutions that steward Philadelphia's pictorial past. This book would not have been possible without the availability of amazing photos from two primary sources:

- *Philly*History.org An award-winning online photo history project run by the City of Philadelphia's Department of Records.
- Temple University Libraries, Urban **Archives -** A repository documenting the social, economic, and physical development of the Philadelphia area.

Special thanks to the consultant team that helped SCSSD complete this book:

- Hurley~Franks & Associates Research and Planning
- **■** Bob Fischer Design Associates Publication Design

Valuable Sesquicentennial facts were obtained from the book entitled, Philadelphia's 1926 Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition, by James D. Ristine.

Front Cover top-PhillyHistory.org

bottom-Philadelphia Eagles

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background-Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives



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background-Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives



### SESQUICENTENNIAL

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### **SPORTS COMPLEX**

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bottom right-Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau



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row 1 middle-PhillyHistory.org

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row 4 middle-SCSSD

row 4 right-Brent Blanchard/Implosionworld.com

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row 5 middle-Philadelphia Eagles

row 5 right-SCSSD

row 6 left-SCSSD

row 6 middle-SCSSD

row 6 right-Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau



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Print Services: Frank Ricchey/The Phoenix Group

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all-SCSSD

top left-Comcast-Spectacor all others-SCSSD

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