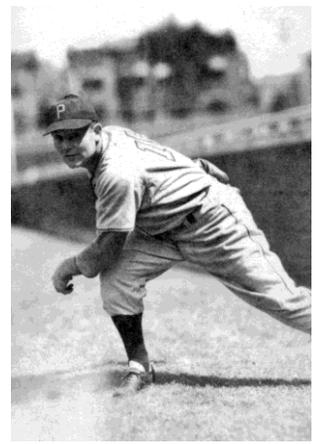




# Historic QUAKERTOWN

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## November 2021 Newsletter

Hello members of the Quakertown Historical Society,

In this edition of the Newsletter, we have included three articles that were written by members of the community.

The first is an article taken from The Free Press that was published around 1987. It talks about the beginnings of the Memorial Park Stadium and what it has become over the years.

Mr. Fox was the long-time sports Editor of the Free Press and covered all local sports during his time in that role. He was also very involved in the Quakertown Blazers, a member of a summer league made up of teams whose rosters were current college baseball players at the time.

The article finishes with what he is experiencing in and about 1987 and his personal opinion of the stadium. The stadium still is being used today and is scheduled for some refurbishing in the near future.

The second article was written by Lillian Shaw, a member of the Historical Society at the time. While the article is undated, the best guess is that it was written in the fall of 1969 or the winter of 1970. It talks about the Citizens Band and its role in the community as not only a concert band but also a marching band. As the article states, the Band no longer exists.

The third article was written by Emily O. Higgenbottom on February 4, 1970. It is about the Quakertown Stove Works. Some of you may remember the last buildings standing at the site until the redevelopment of downtown Quakertown in the early 70's. In its day, it employed a considerable number of people. While the article talks about the business continuing in Richlandtown, to the best of our knowledge, it no longer exists.

Finally, a genealogy of Uriah S. Stauffer is included. It is interesting for two reasons – (1) it talks about a person who, at the time, was very important in the community and (2) the writing itself uses the wording of the times. You will see his name in future articles of this newsletter.

At the Society, we continue to discover writings that were done by a variety of people and help to add “color” to the great history of Quakertown. If you have something to contribute, whether it be an item in your possession or an article that you wish to write and add to our collection, we would welcome your contribution.

The Board of Directors of the Quakertown Historical Society wish you a very

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING.**

**Memorial Park Stadium**  
**By George R. Fox**  
**“Take Another Look” Article/Quakertown Free Press**  
**Circa 1987**

Recently I was questioned about the history of the baseball field in Memorial Park by Councilman Bill Edge. This stirred memories of those who lived through the past four decades and gained the interest of those who did not experience the sights and sounds of by gone days.

There is little known about sports prior to World War I in Quakertown. One of the few known facts is that there was a baseball team formed on September 12, 1866.

The association was called the Baseball Club of Quakertown. An initiation fee of fifty cents was charged, and dues were collected semimonthly. The name was later changed to the Tohickon Baseball Club.

Baseball in Quakertown, as many people know it today, actually started in the fall of 1935 when veterinarian Dr. Calvin Moyer started the Quakertown Athletic Association (QAA) because of fading interest in area matinee horse racing and Sunday auto racing at the old fairgrounds. Dr. Moyer was elected president of the new organization, and the following spring the QAA joined the East Penn League.

Some of the men who were active in the organization were Myles Fischer, George Kollo, Jake Stoneback, Earl Allem, Rosse Broome, Dick Johnson, Howard Cummings, and Woody Lewis.

Quakertown, playing its 42-game schedule at LuLu Park, won EPL championships the next two years. Because of a street expansion program, the borough extended Park Avenue, and to make way for the project, the LuLu Park grandstand and baseball field were to be demolished. However, during the 1938 season, the QAA purchased eight acres of land from St. Isidore’s Church, at Fourth and Mill Streets, with plans to build a new ballpark.

The Quakertown Construction Company was awarded the contract for the overall \$10,000.00 job. Included in the new facility was a grandstand, along with a wooden fence painted with advertisements to cost \$5000.00 – or half the total.; a refreshment stand outside the park; a public address system; rest rooms; and parking for 400 cars. A 50-foot-high steel flagpole, surrounded by shrubbery and donated by Mr. & Mrs. Charles Broome in memory of their son, Ross, a former QAA secretary who died the previous November, was located in centerfield, about 430 feet from home plate. The left field and right-field foul poles each measured 340 feet.

Dedication of the new facility was held on June 11, 1939. Dr. Moyer presided over the festivities as the master of ceremonies. Attorney Gorden Luckenbill gave the dedication address, and former State Senator Henry L. Snyder, EPL commissioner, presented the 1938 pennant to manager Jake L. Stoneback. The Boy Scouts took part in the flag raising ceremonies, and league president Paul T. Hartzell tossed out the first ball.

Quakertown lost the game 14-4 to the first-place Easton Fleas before a standing room crowd of 1,100. Due to the large crowds, The QAA added bleachers beyond the grandstand, increasing seating capacity to 1,300.

On January 10, 1945, the QAA turned the eight acres of their ballpark and land over to Quakertown Borough for \$1.00. That was the beginning of Memorial Park, a recreational facility that is steadily growing, dedicated to the men and women who served in the armed forces during World War II.

A new redwood fence, anchored on concrete posts, replaced the old seven-foot-high wooden fence in the early 1960’s. At the same time, the playing field was reduced in size to its present dimensions. The refreshment stand was also torn down.

Two years ago, lights were installed on the field at a cost of \$50,000.00.

Last year, the American Legion constructed a refreshment stand/restroom building, and it is to be in operation this season.

There are other improvements planned to upgrade the facility, including a scoreboard and a new public address system.

Most of the play on the field over the years has been devoted to games from the EPL, American Legion, church leagues, Tri-County League, Legion all-star games and tournaments, Connie Mack Leagues and – for the past three seasons – the Quakertown Blazers of the Atlantic Collegiate Baseball League.

Exhibition games, featuring the Brooklyn Dodger rookies, Pittsburgh Crawfords, donkey baseball, and Big Six football have also been played on the field.

Other events have enjoyed use of the field, including Easter egg hunts, band concerts, art shows, and the Jaycees Senior Citizens Old-Timers Day.

Being closely associated with the Atlantic Collegiate Baseball League, I have heard many, many compliments from visiting teams and scouts. The field is something the community can be proud of.

## **The Citizens Band**

The Band was organized in the summer and fall of 1902. Some of the local boys often sat on a bench outside of Charles T. Leitch's Drug Store for a social chat. Here the organization of a band was discussed by Elmer M. Shelly, William Shive, Linford Kernechel, Worman Shelly, Charles Heist, Philip Croll, Wellington Moyer, Fred Krauss, and Charles Wilson.

Officers were elected and the second floor of the Red Lion livery stable became the meeting place. Harry Moyer agreed to teach the boys to play and to direct the band. Instruments were bought from a Sellersville band for \$75.00. Philip Croll financed the purchase and the boys reimbursed him by paying five cents each week. The proceeds from a chicken supper in Red Lion Hall finally paid the whole bill. Charles P. Wilson, Sr. brought the instruments in a hay wagon so they would not be dented as they had no cases.

The first public appearance of the Band was on the lawn of the west side of the Red Lion Hotel. Harry Moyer conducted.

The first paid engagement of the band was for the Fillman Sunday School Picnic on Doylestown Road. Transportation to and from was in hay wagons. On this occasion there were twenty-five members and the treasury received twenty-five dollars for this engagement.

The first marching done by the Band was up the California Road and back to the Red Lion Hotel.

A few years later, John Muth, a former leader of the Arion Band of Allentown, became leader for a short time. Then, Peter Moyer served as leader of the Band until 1918 when he was forced to resign because of the war work. He was very successful as the leader.

Worman M. Shelly was then elected leader and he served very successfully for many years.

The last leader was Richard Nace and the last annual concert was performed in the Quakertown Community Senior High School on March 31, 1968.

The Citizens Band was known as a marching band. It took part in many parades in Quakertown and in other places in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The Band gave an excellent benefit concert for the Quakertown Historical Society in Memorial Park on September 14, 1969.

*Grateful acknowledgement is extended to Mr. & Mrs. Everett Afflerbach for securing and lending the fifty-year history of the Band. Lillian H. Shaw*

## **The Quakertown Stove Works**

**By Emily O. Higginbottom**

**February 4, 1970**

The industry was established in 1882 and was first operated by Roberts, Scypes and company, manufacturers of ranges, stoves, and heaters. The plant was situated on the north side of West Broad Street between Third and Fourth Streets. A few of the old buildings remained until the redevelopment project razed them.

This was one of Quakertown's most important industries for a number of years. The various models of the early ranges were priced in accordance with size. The small, simply designed stoves sold for \$10.00. Larger and more elaborate stoves with warming shelves, reservoirs for heating water, sold for \$40.00 and \$50.00.

Parlor stoves were also manufactured. These varied also in size and elaborateness. The stoves ranged from small, simple models to large, handsome, and ornate ones with nickel trim and having many little isinglass

windows with a nickel rail around the base, ideal for warming feet. All the more ornate stoves were finished off with a shiny little urn on the top.

They also made a wood burning, box type stove in which could be burned large chunks of wood, a very effective room heater.

A farmer's furnace or farmer's boiler was also made with a thirty-gallon removable cauldron. Wood was placed below the cauldron. The cauldron was used for heating water for the family laundry or for making scrapple and soap.

In 1899, the stove works was completely destroyed by fire. All the wooden patterns from which the castings were made were lost. When they rebuilt, the facilities were greatly expanded so that operation on a much larger scale was possible. The firm was now known as Roberts Winner and Company. Some years later, it was incorporated and operated thereafter as the Quakertown Stove Works.

They established a branch office and showroom on North Second Street in Philadelphia.

In this era, the designs of the stoves changed and were given new names. The iron work was more elaborate and there were many added refinements, such as top warming ovens, oven door thermometers, connections for hot water heaters.

The Quaker "Beechwood" Range and the "Colonial" were the two most popular models. There was still a wide variety of designs and prices. Some of the smaller types known as Egg Stoves, because of their shape, and the little laundry stoves with one or two top lids are now collectors' items.

Around the turn of the century, hot-air furnaces began to be more widely used for heating houses, as well as larger public buildings, than these the stove works made.

When gas became available in the smaller communities and was replacing coal burning stoves for cooking, they started manufacturing gas ranges. A great innovation was the combination range, half coal-burning and half fueled by gas, which provided comfortable cooking conditions in winter or summer.

In the boon years of production, about 125 to 130 people were employed, including many molders who, according to my Father, were a hardy lot.

After the 1920's, the Foundry discontinued operating, as gas was rapidly replacing coal as fuel, but the stove business continued making gas ranges, later replacement parts only.

Many people may not know that the Quakertown Stove Works is still in operation in a factory in Richlandtown, where they make grills and equipment for restaurants. Currently they employ eight to ten people. Mr. Joseph Roberts, a son of William P. Roberts, one of the original founders, still has an interest in the business.

This industry and its products were a vital part of the past, the kitchen stove in a woman's daily life and who knows how many political issues were settled and philosophies propounded around the pot-bellied stoves where men gathered.

## **URIAH S. STAUFFER – Bucks County Genealogical Website**

...of the firm of Stauffer & Shelly, publishers, P.O. Quakertown, was born November 13, 1859, at Milford Square, this county, his parents being Enos S. and Catherine (Shelly) Stauffer. He was reared on the farm and worked at that employment seventeen years, attending the common schools. In 1876 he began to learn the printing business with his relative, John Stauffer, with whom he remained two years. He then attended Ursinus college, Collegeville, Montgomery county, Pa., one term, after which he spent six months with Mr. John Stauffer. At the expiration of that time he went to Philadelphia, where he worked as a journeyman printer. In 1880 he returned to Quakertown and took charge of a job printing office then owned by John G. Stauffer. The following year he purchased the "Free Press," and in 1886 the partnership now existing between him and Anthony S. Shelly was formed, and the "Patriot and Reformer" was purchased of John G. Stauffer. On Christmas, 1883, he was married to Adeline W. Shelly, youngest daughter of Rev. Andrew B. Shelly, of Milford township, a minister of the Mennonite church, of which both are members. Their child, Clayton, was born June 1, 1887.