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Volume: 13

Issue: 02

Past & Present, Decades Apart



PHOTO ABOVE: View of the original archway on August 01, 1947 as Clayton Veterans examine marker at WWII Memorial at Haupt Field, E. Academy and N. New Streets. (L to R) Oliver Shinker, Lewis Cheeseman, John Schotz.

The property known as Haupt Field* was sold to the Clayton Board of Education on February 11, 1921 for the sum of \$1,200.00. Clayton High School's original football field ran north and south, until in the mid 1930s, the WPA (Works Progress Administration) graded the field and turned it into its present direction. It was used for all outdoor sports and Physical Education classes. In the early days, students would walk from the high school on West Academy St. and Aura Road to Haupt Field on East Academy St.

Shortly after World War II, two different committees were formed for two separate projects at Haupt Field. The first committee formed was the World War II Memorial Field House Fund Committee. The memorial field house, honoring all who served in the armed forces during World War II, was for the use of the boys and girls of Clayton and Franklinville. Construction was scheduled to start in the spring of 1946. Each field house had a locker room, shower room, ticket booth and refreshment counter. The \$12,000 memorial field house at Haupt Field was dedicated on August 3rd, 1947 with ceremonies attended by many local dignitaries. The ground level monument inscription is as follows:

TO THOSE WHO SERVED
1941 - 1945
WE PAY GRATEFUL TRIBUTE
TO OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS
WHO IN THE EVIL CRISIS OF WAR
OFFERED THEIR STRENGTH AND LIVES
TO THEIR COUNTRY'S SERVICE

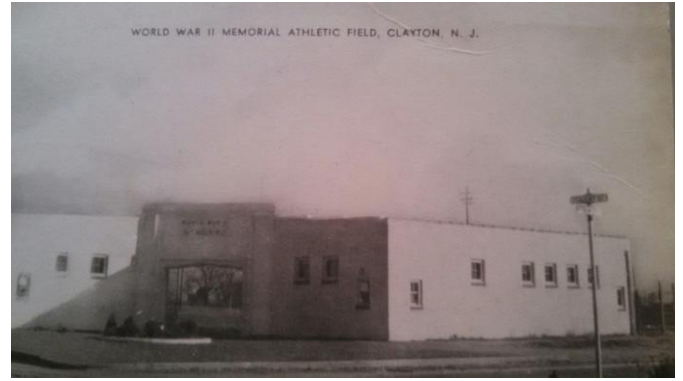


PHOTO ABOVE: Local view postcard of WWII Memorial by The Mayrose Co., Publishers, Linden, NJ

The Clayton Athletic Club, made up of Clayton veterans and alumni, formed a second committee in the Spring of 1947. This was the Light Committee. For the one or two night time games played on the field, rented lights were brought in on trucks, along with large generators. The generators were loud and expensive to run, as gasoline was rationed during the war years. Donations of materials, time and money, allowed the lights to be installed by the fall of 1947. Bob Weir donated the lights through his employment, the New York Shipyard; the Atlantic Electric Company donated the poles for the lights and Joe Maloney donated the clerical work. The Clayton Athletic Club bought the wiring and other incidentals needed for the installation. Volunteers dug the 7 feet deep holes by hand. At that time, Clayton was the only High School in South Jersey with lights for games and band competitions.

A "Bring Back the Lights at Haupt Field" committee was formed in 2011 to raise the money needed for new lighting in order to restore the night games. This project was completed in 2015.

* Haupt Field is named for Nancy Elizabeth "Nana" Haupt, who served as a teacher and school supervisor for the Clayton Schools from 1902 until 1946.



PHOTO ABOVE: April 19, 2016. HAUPT FIELD, Home of the Clippers. In the far right upper corner, one can see the new lights installed in 2015.