

MUSTANG MEMORIES



Spring 2009

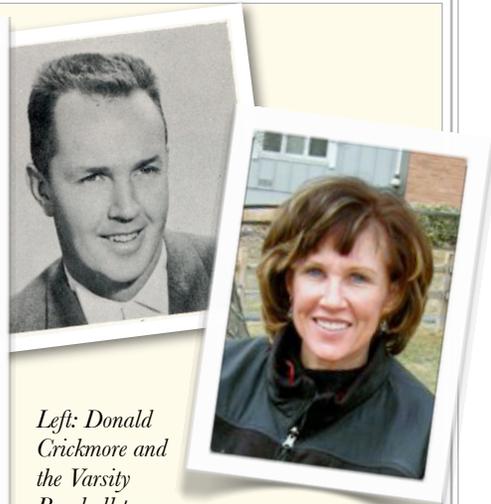
Vol. 2, Issue 2

www.sdafoundation.com/alumni

KNOW SOMEONE WHO'D
LIKE TO RECEIVE
THIS NEWSLETTER?
WRITE OR CALL:
SDA.ALUMNI@GMAIL.COM
760-753-1121, X5085



VARSITY BASEBALL TEAM: Row 1—Y. Hamada, C. Salbato, B. Corrales, G. Arnett; Row 2—G. Van Es, B. Alto, M. Matlock, G. Seckington; Row 3—C. Gill, Mgr., B. Lyman, W. Nakagawa, R. Salbato, B. Biddle, B. Reyna, D. Crickmore, Coach.



Left: Donald Crickmore and the Varsity Baseball team (from the 1956 Hoofprint).

Middle: Mr. Crickmore (1956 Hoofprint).

Right: Teri Crickmore Curtis ('69)

Remembering Mr. Donald Crickmore

YUKIO HAMADA ('57)

Dear Teri, your dad was the single most important person in my life.

When I entered the ninth grade at San Dieguito Union High School in 1953, I thought I was a pretty good athlete. My dream was to be a star football player for the mighty Mustangs. So when tryouts for the junior varsity football team began in August, I was among the 40 or 50 hopefuls.

Standing at full height I was a massive 4' 11" and weighed about 105 lbs. I was without a doubt the smallest player on the field. But I knew it wasn't the size of the dog in the fight but the size of the fight in the dog. I went through every drill and took more than my share of lumps, but I thought I had a good week and was confident that I was clearly one of the better ninth graders.

On Monday the coaches were to post

(Continued on page 4)

JAY HELMANTOLER ('60)

During the spring of 1953 word was passed that a new youth league baseball program was beginning at San Dieguito High School and would be meeting at the Junior Varsity Field. Any boy who had an interest was encouraged to show up. So a few of my buddies and I went to the introductory meeting at the field on a Saturday morning.

Your dad explained what this new baseball program was about, how it worked. At the time, in 1953, there

(Continued on page 5)

JAMES TINSLEY ('54)

Your father was my baseball coach, and is unforgettable—a wonderful person and a talented, dedicated coach.

Best of all attributes, I believe, was his genuine concern for each young person in his care. He was a highly principled man and a strict disciplinarian who always did what was right for his players. Some might call his approach "tough love." I'll give you an example.

At the end of my senior year our class held a "ditch day" at the beach in Del Mar. There was also a baseball practice at the

(Continued on page 4)

Last fall, Teri Crickmore Curtis ('69) asked our readers for memories of her father, Donald Crickmore, the SDUHS coach, teacher and principal who died when she was a child. That request marked the beginning of "an incredible journey," says Teri, who received scores of letters, emails and phone calls from alumni — some excerpts of which we're sharing with you. "They are all priceless to me," says Teri, "and I am so very, very grateful."

MUSTANG MEMORIES

Alumni Newsletter

Mustang Memories is published by the SDA Foundation to encourage alumni interest in San Dieguito High School Academy and help alumni reconnect with each other. Your donations can help defray mailing costs and support student programs.

Our mailing list will not be sold, traded, or published, but we will share it with your class representative for reunion planning. Please contact us for more information:

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SDA Foundation

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Mustang Memories

Editor Bonnie Wren

Alumni Obituaries

Please submit alumni obituaries to sda.alumni@gmail.com.

Class Representatives

We will gladly provide you with what contact information we have for your classmates. We'll publicize your reunion events in our newsletter and on our website, too. We're looking for class reps for the following years: 1979, 1981-82, 1984-87, and 1990-on.

Alumni Committee

Do you live in North County San Diego? Would you like to become a member of our Alumni Committee? We're exploring ways in which the Foundation might assist in reunion-planning and need alumni members.

Back Issues

If you'd like a copy of a previous issue of *Mustang Memories*, please forward your request to our office (address above). A donation to cover postage and handling costs is much appreciated.

Missing Movies

We're looking for film of school events like the 1937 groundbreaking. Do you know where any such movies might be tucked away? Please contact (760) 753-1121, x5085.

REUNIONS CALENDAR

The 50th Reunion of the Class of 1959.

Pick one or both of two great reunion options!

First: the annual dinner at Tony's Jacal in Solana Beach, September 5th at 6 p.m. RSVP by August 29.

Second: the San Dieguito High Class of '59 Reunion Cruise October 10-17, 2009. For more info on either event, contact Butch or Carolyn Stillman by email at moonlight58@prodigy.net or call (951) 767-0196.

The 45th Reunion of the Class of 1964, September 11-13, 2009.

Your 45th reunion committee has planned an exciting weekend of golf, dinner, and a picnic. Contact Len Hayashi lenhayashi@att.net or (760) 480-1913; or Thelma Stark Reynaga tjr92024@cox.net or (760) 942-5070. (More details on our website, too.)

"Collective 60th Birthday Weekend" (Class of 1967), October 23-25, 2009, Catalina Island. Contact Cathy Daun Hicks at Cathy.Hicks@sduhsd.net or Kathy Stuart Jensen at (760) 753-2624.

The 40th Reunion of the Class of 1969, August 22, 2009. Lomas Santa Fe Country Club. Contact San-



Coach Al Southworth ('48), teacher Charles McIntire and his wife Connie joined the Class of 1968 at their reunion picnic on the San Dieguito campus, Aug. 27, 2008.

dra Hubbard Lee: sandyilee@cox.net or (760) 753-3215. More details on our website, too.)

The 35th Reunion of the Class of 1974, August 15-16, 2009.

Party Saturday night at the Ecke Barn, beach party Sunday afternoon. Reservations are required. \$40/person (covers both events). Contact Alicia Terry: agterry@sbcglobal.net or (760) 434-9385 or visit the website: <http://www.gresham.com/classof74/>

1970s Reunion, June 27, 2009.

Encinitas Community Center. Celebrate the great San Dieguito classes of the 70's with an evening of music, dancing and karaoke. Informal attire and no-host bar. Ticket includes dinner and a drink but hurry: prices go up as time goes by! (Tickets purchased in April are \$35; May, \$40; June, \$45). Golf tournament and beach outing also planned; updates at <http://sandieguitoalumni.com>. For more information contact Tony Kranz at sdhs77mustangs@gmail.com or (760) 207-4534.

The 20th Reunion of the Class of 1989, October 24, 2009.

Sheraton Carlsbad Resort & Spa. Tickets are \$85 if paid before 7/24/09. Contact Reunion Specialists: info@reunion-specialists.com or (760) 721-0525, or visit <http://reunion-specialists.com> for more info.

Visit <http://sdafoundation.com/alumni> for photos and more information on upcoming reunions.



Reunion organizers celebrate during the 1988 reunion picnic held on campus Aug. 3, 2008. Josh Bowman, Nancy Bouffard, Maria Turalda Bowman, and Laura Wetherill Waterman.

Yukio Hamada (continued from page 1)

the list of players who made the squad and the players crowded around the window in the coaches' office where the list was posted. As I forced my way to the front of the line, I anxiously searched the list of names and my heart sank when I realized my name wasn't on the list. I was cut!

I can't express the feelings I was experiencing: disappointment, sadness, emptiness, grief, anger. I just felt so empty and hopeless. I don't remember much after that.

But on Tuesday afternoon, when all the players were down at the field, I sneaked back into the locker room to empty my locker. I stopped by the coaches' window to see if somehow I had been mistaken and hoping that miraculously my name would be on that list. It wasn't. I was nearly in tears and, as I said earlier, I felt so empty and lost. I couldn't cry because real men don't cry but I would have if I weren't in the locker room. Then I felt this strong hand on my shoulder and a voice spoke and said, "I'm sorry that you got cut. I'm starting winter league baseball in a couple of weeks and I want you to play for me."

I couldn't believe it! The man talking to me was Don Crickmore, the Varsity baseball coach, and he was asking me to play baseball for him and with all those varsity baseball players.

Gone were all those feelings of rejection and failure. This coach believed in me and wanted me to play for him. He gave me hope and helped me to believe in myself.

I went on to play for him that winter and, although I didn't start many games, I did play and continued to play for Coach Crickmore until I graduated. Because of him, I became a teacher and although I could never be the man he was, I have tried to emulate him. He taught me to look for the best in others, to work hard, and to be a team player.

Because of him, I have used this story and others as sermon illustrations to talk about grace, redemption, and second chances. Without a doubt, he was a gift of God and I was lucky enough to know him and to play for him.

James Tinsley (continued from page 1)

school. There were two of us seniors who decided we were having too much fun at the beach to leave for practice. Four others made the right decision to attend the practice. SDUHS was playing our final game at home the next day against Escondido High School, a team coach Crickmore wanted to beat more than any other team in the league. He had coached the Escondido players when they were youths.

When I went to the locker room the next day to prepare for the Escondido game, I found out that Coach Crickmore had pulled my uniform. "No practice, no play." This was a bitter pill, but the right medicine. Even though I was a fixture on the team and could contribute to a win over Escondido, I was sitting out my final game.

Two years later I wrote your father, after a year of postgraduate prep school in Washington, DC I was playing baseball for the US Naval Academy team in Annapolis. I wanted him to know I had been able to progress to the college level.

Your father wrote me back right away. He said he was not surprised, saying he remembered I got five hits in my last high school game against Mar Vista. Quite a memory, I'd say, but that was your father.

ARDIN WRIGHT ('59)

I remember him as being a quiet man. Not once did I ever hear him raise his voice or be in a hurry. That was his style.

I think I was in the seventh grade when it was very popular for the boys to show up at the San Dieguito gym to play pickup basketball. After one very heated contest that Mr. Crickmore was refereeing, he gave the victory to the other team. I was quite sure that my team had won and I yelled at him. I bellowed, "Crickmore!!!"

And very quietly and slowly he said, "Mr. Crickmore." I was completely defused and had nothing further to say. That's how he did things and it was very, very effective.



LAWRENCE SECKINGTON ('55)

Mr. Crickmore, as we respectfully addressed him, was a patient and excellent coach. Thanks to his knowledge and love of the game, he turned out some good players: my

brother George, class of '57, became All Southern California third base.

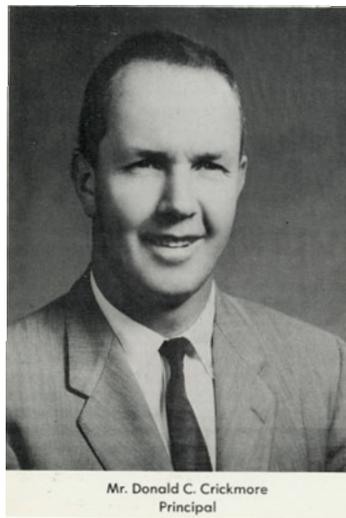
During the winter, he coached Winter Baseball and, during the summer, coached 15-and-under and 17-and-under American Legion baseball. During the winter season, he would struggle to find nine kids to field a team. We would play any position. I played outfield and catcher and sometimes relieved a pitcher. One night I played with Escondido at Anaheim Stadium. High school fields were not lit in those

days so playing under lights seemed extravagant. We would play anyone: Lincoln, Hoover, Point Loma, San Diego. I recall playing the Marines at the San Diego Recruit Depot. They ran the bases with aggression and sharp steel spikes.

He also arranged for us to play the High School team on Avalon Island. It was a fantastic experience: a long bus ride to the ferry, playing baseball on a golf course, and dancing at the Casino Ballroom.



(More memories of Mr. Crickmore on page 5)



Mr. Donald C. Crickmore
Principal

Remembering Mr. Crickmore

(continued from page 4)

EDDIE STUART ('64)

I lived across the street from the Don Crickmore baseball field. Your father would let me shag balls for him in the late '50s.

He was my favorite coach; he was a very nice man and I remember him well. He taught me how to play ball. He loved young people and we all loved him. He always wanted his ball field to look good, so he would rake and water the field long after everyone had gone home.



MARLIN MATLOCK ('57)

My junior year was the year San Dieguito High School won everything. We went all the way to the SCIF finals in San Diego. We lost the final game, however. Your father would not let us get down about that.

He said how proud he was of us and he would always remember us and what we had accomplished. He said that our school was a small school in comparison to the teams we were beating. He said the school that finally beat us graduated over 500 seniors a year compared to our school that graduated only 100 seniors.

He truly loved the game of baseball. He threw batting practice to us a couple of times and commented that he was way too old to be doing that. He had a great sense of humor and would break the tension many times by saying something funny or personally funny about one of the players.

Your father was special to me and I consider myself very lucky to have been associated with him. He was indeed a father figure to me and I would go to him with things I would not discuss with my dad.

He was responsible for me getting a scholarship to Palomar College in San Marcos. He called a man by the name of Rusty Myers who was the Athletic Director and baseball coach at Palomar. Rusty called me and advised that if I would come to Palomar and play baseball he would see to it that I would not have financial problems. I

came from a poor family and did not have the funds to go to college.

I am getting old (70) now but I will always remember Don Crickmore and the impact he had on me. I finally became a California Highway Patrol Officer and retired in 1992. I think he would have approved with a smile and a pat on the back.



SARA MACLEOD WOLFF ('61)

I graduated in 1961 and have one outstanding memory of your dad as principal.

I always loved horses, as did my dad. He had friends that were trainers at Del Mar Track who invited us to go up and sit in their box at Santa Anita Track.

I really didn't want to miss out on this opportunity, so my dad agreed to let me go. I was to meet him outside school at the 10 a.m. break and he'd take me with him. My mom was not to know as she was very strict about skipping school!

We had a great day, well worth what was to follow. During my second class of the next day I was called into the office. I NEVER was called into the office, so I went in very nervously. There sat your dad, being very stern and principal-like.

He asked me if I had gone to Santa Anita Races as he had heard. I said I had. He said there were rules about such things, and while he loved the races as much as anyone he couldn't let me get away with going during school. I just knew he was going to put me on suspension for cutting class and was terrified my mom would find out! I told your dad as much.

So for punishment he had me copy the entire California Motor Vehicle code book! I was stunned. It was a very thick book! But it was better to get writers' cramp than to face the wrath of my mom!

As I took a copy of the book and started to leave his office, he called me back in and said, "Next time you decide to go to the races, stop in here first. I can't excuse you from school, but will give you some money to put on a horse!" I always thought very highly of your dad after that!

Jay Helmantoler *(continued from page 1)*

was absolutely no youth baseball program in the entire San Dieguito area and it was his foresight, interest, and energy that got it started. Not many boys came to the meeting, as a matter of fact we only had enough kids for 3 teams so probably only about 30-35 kids in total. But instantly I was taken with your dad's kindness, easygoing manner, and interest in providing an opportunity for all of us guys.

There was absolutely no money for a league, no sponsors whatsoever, no equipment provided other than what your dad brought. Years later I wondered how the balls, bats, bases appeared, where they came from, and I'm certain your dad brought them from his Mustang team.

I don't remember how the teams were selected but their names were Dodgers, Yankees and Braves. And with no money for uniforms we had to provide our own shirts, had to dye them according to the team colors. Thus, Green Dodgers, White Yankees and Blue Braves. I was on the Green Dodgers along with Bill Bruns, who later on would be a star pitcher for the Mustangs.

Being small and not particularly strong, I learned to bunt, and coupled with pretty fast feet, I could get hits that way. Bunting was my way then on the offensive side. Also I learned on defense to hustle at all times. Being the smallest kid I got relegated to the outfield, first in right, later in left field.

One time I ran a long way to make a great catch in foul territory for the third out of an inning. Coming off the field your dad said, "Great catch, way to hustle." That to me was everything. Having approval and attention was just the best.

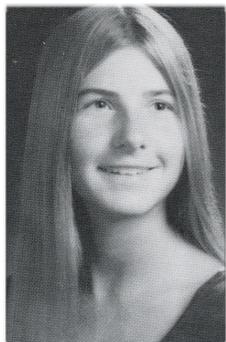
After your dad got our youth league off the ground in 1953, more and more fathers seemed to pick up the tasks of making it all work. Those guys deserve credit as well: Mr. Bruns (Bill's dad), Mr. Repa (Ted's dad), Mr. Roebuck (Bill's dad), Mr. Thomas (Bernie's dad), lots of others, too. This was the very beginning of what became a terrific baseball program.



San Dieguito Featured Alum Q&A: Cheryl Heuton ('75)

Writer and journalist Cheryl Heuton is also the creator, executive producer and writer of the television show *Numb3rs*.

Can you tell us a little about your background?



Cheryl Heuton,
from the 1975 Hoofprint.

I'm the oldest of three children who all went to San Dieguito. My father was Verlin Heuton, who taught English, General Semantics and Epistemics at San Dieguito for many years. My family moved from the Los Angeles area to North San Diego County in 1959. My mother, Ann Heuton, still resides in Encinitas.

What is your favorite San Dieguito memory?

There's no one favorite. I have great memories of Friday night football games, of taking classes from Rose Sleigh and Mary Sternberg. I enjoyed talking with some very bright students who were attending San Dieguito at the same time I was, including Timothy Gosnell ('75) and Ralph Keeling ('75), both of whom went on to become highly regarded scientists. I enjoyed playing on the tennis team. I loved taking theater and speaking chorus classes with Clayton Liggett.

Who was your favorite teacher, and why?

We had so many great teachers, it would be a crime to have to pick only one. And, as a teacher's kid, I have to admit to being partial to my own father.

But as far as teachers not actually related to me, I'll start with Rose Sleigh. She was a wonderful literature teacher and taught me how to read, and how to write. Do you know that her son, Tom Sleigh, is probably the finest American poet of his generation? He recently won the Kingsley Tufts Award, a \$100,000 prize given to poets. He's published many books, his



Rosamond Sleigh and student, as seen in the 1974 Hoofprint

work has appeared in *The New Yorker* many times, and he's a professor at Hunter College. So clearly Mrs. Sleigh knew what she was doing when it came to teaching literature, and the love of literature, to children.

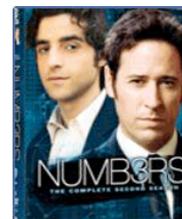
I also loved Mary Sternberg, who also did a terrific job teaching literature. Lucien Bonnafoux was wonderful. The brilliant chemistry teacher, the one who taught the double-period advanced placement class—Shirley Richardson—she was a wonderful science teacher. I am still inspired by things I learned from her. James Ringstrom, math teacher, was a terrific educator. Jerry Henning taught physics and geometry and was great at getting a complex topic across well. And the wonderful biology teacher: Sandi Yayanos.

We had an outstanding team of teachers at San Dieguito when I was there.

How does what you learned at San Dieguito shape your life today?

I still have the book about poetry that Rose Sleigh taught from. I dip into it all the time.

I created a TV show about a mathematician, and the inspiration for that goes back to things I experienced at San Dieguito—particularly getting to know some of my brilliant fellow students.



I am a professional writer largely due to the inspiration and training that came from Rose Sleigh and Mary Sternberg. However, Shirley Richardson's chemistry class was also fundamental to my thinking. And Mr. Ringstrom's math class. Sometimes it was watching the combination of a great teacher with other bright students that provided some of the best inspiration and insight. I took that chemistry class with Tim Gosnell and Ralph Keeling, and even then one could see that they were going to be scientists of note.

Of what accomplishments are you most proud?

I'm proud that I've managed to earn a living for some 30 years by writing. Before working in television and film, I was a journalist. I worked at several of the local newspapers in North County before moving to Los Angeles to work at the *Los Angeles Daily News* and the *Herald-Examiner*.

What are your plans for the future?

To keep writing, to work on more TV shows and movies. To travel. To keep reading a lot of books and poetry.