

SAN DIEGO TED WILLIAMS SABR CHAPTER

August 2002 e-NEWS, Issue No. 5

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THEODORE SAMUEL WILLIAMS

AUGUST 30, 1918-JULY 5, 2002

We all realize that San Diego and our chapter are closely related to Ted Williams...in 1991 we received his permission to proudly use his name to honor our chapter.

Then, in 2000, our chapter selected him as the most influential person in baseball in San Diego during the 20th century. Is it really any wonder? He was born in San Diego, played winter league and high school baseball here, joined the PCL Padres in their maiden season directly from high school, and helped them to the playoffs in both the 1936 and 1937 seasons. In 1937 they swept through the playoffs for San Diego's first PCL championship. The name...and the individual...Ted Williams was synonymous with San Diego and baseball for nearly two-thirds of the 20th century.

Ted still has many personal friends in San Diego plus others of us who have grown up watching him while he was at Boston playing for the Red Sox. And, there are younger ones of us who were not privileged to see him play in person but have watched films and videos of him at bat, and have read stories and books about him.

There is a lot to say about Ted Williams. In particular, there is significance to his Hall of Fame baseball career. Thus, we are thinking of hosting a special regional meeting that would focus on Ted's life and his career. We would invite former players, San Diego friends, researchers...all to talk about Ted Williams and his high school, minor and major league baseball career. Let us know what you think about this idea.

SUMMARY OF TED WILLIAMS CHAPTER'S JULY 20th REGIONAL MEETING

Our Chapter's summer regional meeting was held in the Qualcomm Stadium Press Box on Saturday, July 20th and was attended by 33 members and friends.

Chuck Symonds led things off with his recollections as batboy for a game between "Pete Gray's All-Stars" and the "Barnstorming Colored Giants" played in the winter 1945. Pete Gray, who died recently, was a one-armed outfielder who played for the St. Louis Browns for a short time in 1945 after a few good minor league years played during World War II. Players in the game included Dick Bartell and John Rigney, plus players from Negro League teams such as Birmingham Barons, Oakland Giants, Homestead Grays, Kansas City Monarchs, and Paige's All-Stars.

Next up, **Richard Lederer**, author and co-host of a KPBS radio show, provided an entertaining talk on the "The Language of Baseball." Nicknames, origin of words, baseball words used throughout our everyday language were all part of Richard's informative and interactive presentation. **Ed Price**, baseball beat writer who covers the Arizona Diamondbacks for the *Arizona Tribune Newspapers*, was our third speaker. Ed gave an in-depth background to the every day life of baseball writer during the season. Our "clean-up hitter" was former Oakland and Milwaukee infielder **Rob Picciolo**, who currently serves as San Diego Padres Bench Coach. Rob was at his best in describing what his normal day is like, and his role on the bench during the game.

Frank Myers won the raffle of a five-photo sequence of Ted Williams at bat when he was here at Lane Field in December 1941 only a few months after winning the American League batting championship at .406. These rare color photos were being donated by **Autumn (Durst) Keltner**. **Greg Funk** and **Steve Shewmaker** also won prizes.

**SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY
SAN DIEGO SABR BASEBALL RESEARCH CENTER (BRC)
NEW ACQUISITIONS**

Our chapter's library liaison, **Vic Cardell**, has announced new acquisitions in Central Library and Branches during the three month period, April-June 2002.

BOOKS

Adomites, Paul and Dennis DeValeria, eds. *Baseball in Pittsburgh: An Anthology of New, Unusual, Challenging and Amazing Facts about the Greatest Game as Played in the Steel City*. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1995. **796.357/Baseball**

Allen, Lee. *Cooperstown Corner: Columns from The Sporting News 1962-1969*. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, [1969] **796.357/Allen**

Alvarez, Mark. *Baseball for the Fun of It*. Cleveland: SABR, 1997. **796.357/Alvarez**

Baseball Records Update, 1993. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1993. **796.357/Baseball**

Baseball Register 2002. St. Louis, Mo.: Sporting News, 2002. **R796.357/Baseball**

Bergen, Philip S. *Index to SABR Publications*. Kansas City, Mo.: Society for American Baseball Research, 1987. **R796.357/Bergen**

Bitker, Steve. *The Original San Francisco Giants: The Giants of '58*. Champaign, Ill.: Sports Publishing, 2001. **796.35764/Bitker** (Central and branches)

Bjarkman, Peter C. *The New York Mets Encyclopedia*. Champaign, Ill.: Sports Publishing, c2001. **796.357/Bjarkman**

A Celebration of Louisville Baseball in the Major and Minor Leagues. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1997. (27th SABR National Convention) **796.357/Celebration**

Cockcroft, James D. *Latinos en el béisbol de Estados Unidos*. México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1999. **SPA 796.357/Cockcroft** (Central and branches)

Crepeau, Richard C. *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind, 1919-1941*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, [2000] **796.357/Crepeau**

Dawidoff, Nicholas, ed. *Baseball: A Literary Anthology*. New York: Library of America, 2002. **810.80355/Baseball**

Eckhouse, Morris, ed. *All-Star Baseball in Cleveland*. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1997. **796.357/All**

Elston, Gene. *A Stitch in Time: A Baseball Chronology, 1845-2000*. Houston, Tex.: Halcyon Press, 2001. **796.35709/Elston** (Central and branches)

Forker, Dom. *Test Your Baseball IQ*. New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 1993. **796.35702/Forker**

Gallagher, Mark and Walter LeConte. *The Yankee Encyclopedia*. 5th ed. [Champaign, Ill.]: Sports Publishing, 2001. **R796.357/Gallagher**

Honig, Donald. *Baseball America: The Heroes of the Game and the Times of Their Glory*. New York: Macmillan, 1985. **796.357/Honig** (Central and branches)

Howard, Red. *Ballparks*. New York: Metro Books, 2001. **796.35706/Von Goeben** (Branches only)

Lally, Richard. *Bombers: An Oral History of the New York Yankees*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2002. **796.35764/Lally** (Central and branches)

Northern California Baseball History. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1998. (28th SABR National Convention) **796.357/Northern**

Okkonen, Marc. *The Federal League of 1914-1915: Baseball's Third Major League*. Garrett Park, MD: Society for American Baseball Research, 1989. **796.357/Okkonen**

Papucci, Nelson. *The San Diego Padres, 1969-2002: A Complete History*. San Diego: Big League Press, 2002. **796.35764/Papucci** (Branches only)

San Diego Padres Media Guide, 2002. San Diego: San Diego Padres, 2002. **R796.357/San** (Central and branches)

Society for American Baseball Research. *Baseball Historical Review*. Cooperstown, N.Y.: Society for American Baseball Research, 1981. **796.357/Baseball**

Society for American Baseball Research. *Baseball's First Stars: The Second Volume of Biographies of the Greatest Nineteenth Century Players, Managers, Umpires, Executives, and Writers*. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1996. **796.357/Baseball's**

Society for American Baseball Research, Arizona Flame Delhi Chapter. *Mining Towns to Major Leagues: A History of Arizona Baseball*. Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1999. **796.357/Mining**

Standard Catalog of Minor League Baseball Cards. 2000 ed. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2000. **R769.4979/Standard 2000**

STATS player profiles, 2001. Lincolnwood, IL: STATS, Inc., 2000. **R796.357/STATS 2001**

Tiemann, Robert L. and Mark Rucker, eds. *Nineteenth Century Stars.* [Kansas City, Mo.]: Society for American Baseball Research, 1989. **796.357/Nineteenth**

Total Baseball. *Total Baseball Trivia.* Kingston, N.Y.: Total/Sports Illustrated, 2001. **796.357/Total** (Central and branches)

Vincent, David W., ed. *Home Runs in the Old Ballparks: Who Hit the First, the Last, and the Most Round-Trippers in our Former Major League Parks, 1876-1994.* Cleveland: SABR, 1995. **796.35726/Home**

Ward, John Montgomery. *Base-Ball: How to Become a Player, With the Origin, History and Explanation of the Game.* Cleveland: SABR, [1993] **796.3557/Ward**

Whiting, Robert. *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat: Baseball Samurai Style.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1977. **797.0952/Whiting** (Central and branches)

AUDIO-SPOKEN WORD

Berra, Yogi. *When You Come to a Fork in the Road, Take It!* St. Paul, Minn.: HighBridge, 2001. 2 sound discs. Abridged. **CD B/Berra.** (Central and branches)

VIDEO

Bull Durham. Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment, 2002. 1 videodisc. **DVD 791.4372/Bull** (Central and branches)

"THE FENWAY PROJECT"

Several issues back we told you about the Fenway Project. Here's an update from the SABR web page: Everyone who sees a ballgame inevitably sees it differently, because we each have our own unique experiences and perceptions. A baseball game as seen and reported by 600 fans? That was the goal of the "Fenway Project."

On Friday evening June 28, 2002 upwards of 600 members of SABR attended the scheduled Red Sox/Braves game at Boston's Fenway Park as one of the activities of SABR's 32nd annual convention. With the participation of many attended, the "Fenway Project" will attempt to present the most comprehensive view of a baseball game ever produced.

The idea for this project grew out of an excellent publication by the Ted Williams Chapter (San Diego) where 8 chapter members attended the May 13, 1998 Padres home game and published a report viewing the game from many angles. Their report was a chapter publication entitled *Facets of the Diamond*. This is a good example of one research idea fostering another.

Each and every member of SABR was encouraged to attend the game - with scorecard, notebook and any sort of recording device that would allow them to share their thoughts and observations on the game. **Bill Nowlin**, author of the book *Fenway Saved* and the "Fenway Lives" study for the Library of Congress, will serve as editor for the final report. He envisions a book and a possible a feature section made available on the SABR website.

BOYNTON BASEBALL RESEARCH AWARD

In our last issue we announced the winner of our 1st annual Boynton Baseball Research Award, **Martha Aguilar**, who will be a senior at Vista High this Fall. Her paper was "A Look at the Creation of Modern Baseball, The Formation and Contributions of the Negro Leagues."

In a letter to the Chapter's Steering Committee dated July 20th Martha indicated that she was still "in shock" that she won. She has placed the cash into a savings fund for college and she hopes to attend a UC school and major in Political Science and work for the government in the foreign service.

PCL PADRES LANE FIELD HISTORICAL MARKER

We are making progress to have an historical marker installed near the intersection of Pacific Highway and Broadway to commemorate the location of Lane Field, the PCL Padres home from 1936-1957. We have transmitted a letter to SABR's Acting Executive Director, **John Zajc**, requesting financial assistance for the marker. The Unified Port District also has indicated their help. **Bill Swank** has contributed a set of words for the plaque...so we are getting close.

SABR32 ANNUAL CONVENTION IN BOSTON "POST CARD" FROM Jay Walker

Hello all...I thought I would write a few comments on the recent SABR national convention in Boston at the end of June. For those of you who have never been to a convention, it is 3 1/2 days of continuous research presentations and committee-specific meetings with special panels, tours and ballpark trips thrown in, going from 8 in the morning to 10 at night. Of course you only have to go to the things that interest you, and a certain amount of time is devoted to catching up with old friends and taking a few diversionary tours into the city proper. This was a serious temptation for me since I spent my university years in Boston.

These are my personal notes and they cover only a fraction of all the things that went on, and most of the accounts are brief. The convention set an all-time attendance record of around 750.

Thursday 6/27

1. Ballparks - **Mike Trabert** had a slide show of 49 different ballparks where he has attended major league games including Japan and Mexico.
2. Umpires Panel - MLB now gives the home-plate umpire a CD after each game, showing each pitch and whether the pitch was a ball, strike or on the black. The idea is that the umps will review the missed calls and see if they are consistently occurring in certain areas of the strike zone. The hope of course is that the "40 umps, 40 different strike zones" will be a thing of the past.
3. Baseball Index - **Andy McCue** and **Ted Hathaway**. This great research tool is now up on the web at <http://www.baseballindex.org/tbi.asp>

Friday 6/28

1. Old Boston ballparks tour (a combined walking and trolley tour). First we hiked about a mile to Northeastern Univ. to the old South End Grounds where the Boston Braves, er Beaneaters, played in the late 1800s. The field is a softball field today, with only about 30 feet of the original facade left in right field. But I got to stand on the same mound Kid Nichols pitched from!

Next was a short walk (still on campus) to the Huntington Avenue grounds where the Boston Red Sox played before moving to Fenway in 1912. The campus has pretty much overrun anything left of the ballpark, but there was a small park (i.e., a patch of grass with some trees) outside of a dorm with home plate placed on its original spot and a statue of Cy Young erected 60 feet 6 inches away. BTW, this is where the first World Series was played in 1903. (Since this is being written to SABR members, maybe I should put that "first" in quotes). I have a Japanese friend who had no idea I would be visiting this place, but interestingly enough when I got back to SD, she had sent a translated passage from a Japanese baseball book by Sayama Kazuo about his visit to this Cy Young statue. I'll place her translation at the end for those who might be interested in reading it, and please excuse inaccuracies in her spelling or wording - after all, that we should do so well in translating Japanese.

Our final ballpark stop was a trolley ride to old Braves Field where they played from 1914-1952. I was actually pretty familiar with this as the site now has dormitories and athletic facilities for Boston Univ. where I attended college, and it was generally a place to avoid at the time since it was the sole on-campus haven for the jocks and fraternity boys. While we were there, the old field was being desecrated by a woman's pro soccer team. The old offices of the Braves executives are now the headquarters for the Boston U. police force. Three World Series were played at the field.

2. Back at the hotel, **Cyril Morong** gave a pretty good talk on clutch hitting, basically concluding that any effect was small. Of about 60 long-term players rated on his stat, Tony Gwynn was #2 and Joe Carter last.
3. **Tom Tippett** of Diamond Mind fame gave what turned out to be the top research presentation - "Using Lineup-dependent Expected Runs Analysis to Evaluate Strategies." Both well-written and well-presented, I had no problems with the selection.
4. **Dave Smith** of Retrosheet (an amazing on-going project that gets historical play-by-play results) gave a quite humorous talk on what-they-said vs. what-really-happened. My vote for the most entertaining presentation.
5. Ballgame at Fenway, won by the Braves 4-2 with 2 runs in the 9th. My personal highlight was someone on the street giving me my very own "Yankees Suck" sign.

Saturday 6/29

1. Poster presentations. This is something new for the convention that SABR tried this year, and I think it went well enough that they will continue in the future. My favorite (although not the winner) was by **Steve Steinberg** called "The Curse of the... Hurlers," arguing that all the pitchers the Red Sox traded to the Yankees in the late teens and early 20s did the franchise more harm than the trade of the Bambino.
2. Luncheon Banquet - after the banquet, they presented a slide show on the life of **Bob Davids**, the SABR founder who passed away in February, and it was nicely done.
3. Ted Williams panel with **Johnny Pesky**, **Dom DiMaggio** and **Maureen Cronin** (Joe Cronin's daughter). A little disappointing only in that the questions often seemed lame or off-topic. My favorite moment came after a Johnny Pesky story when he added "and that one's even true." Of course looking back, the sad irony to the afternoon would be that Ted would be dead in less than a week.
4. Trivia contest - I skipped out for awhile to hang around and grab dinner in town with some of the guys. Later, I decided to try my hand at the trivia contest. The initial question to whittle down the number of contestants was to write down all the players in the Hall of Fame who had played, coached or managed with the Boston Braves (I believe there are 34 in all). Fortunately, they only announced those who made the cut because I think I may have been a serious contender...for last place.

Sunday 6/30

1. Stat Anal (Statistical Analysis) Committee meeting - the big thing now among the statheads is a study by **Voros McCracken** that seems to show there is not much difference between pitchers in the percent of hits allowed for balls put in play (i.e., the differences come from strikeouts, walks and home runs allowed). **Dick Cramer** gave a talk that lent some credence to Voros' claims.
2. Vintage Baseball tournament - for those of us who didn't have planes to catch, we walked down to Boston Common for a Vintage Baseball game. The teams dressed up in the uniforms of the 1860s and played by 1860s rules. As a spectator, you are extremely uncool if you blurt out "nice hit," but should instead use the proper vernacular of "well struck, sir." Interestingly, I was visiting my folks in Connecticut the following weekend, and they had a 3-day Vintage Baseball tournament in Hartford with teams coming from as far away as Ohio. This Vintage Baseball seems to have gotten very popular on the east coast over the past 5 years, but has not really caught on in the west yet.
3. The 2003 convention will be in Denver, with Cincinnati slated to be the host city in 2004.

Here is the translation of Sayama Kazuo's visit to the Cy Young statue at the old Huntington Avenue grounds:

On my way home, I finally made Boston. I wanted to visit this city because I had someone I really wanted to meet. It's Cy Young. Cy Young, that Cy with 511 wins in Major League. "What? Are you sure you meet Cy Young?" You may say. Yes, you can meet him for sure.

There's a little sign near half a block away from Forcise St., amid of shool buildings of Northeastern College on Hunchington Street near Fenway Park in Boston, that says, "World Series Way". Walking along the buildings for a while, you'll suddenly come across a little crescent-shaped park. And in a bush in the park is he, Cy Young.

He stands there, bending his big body forward, watching the catcher's signs closely. His right arm going back upon his hip. Right hand gripping a baseball. I personally think this statue should be appreciated from the back. In the first place, a copper plate is placed towards the end of his gaze that indicates that is the place where the first World Series were held in 1903.

Very warm, bright sunshine was flooding over me. Shiny grasses in the park was reflecting the bright light. It's about noon and students were coming out of the school buildings and sat down on benches surrounding the park. Girls started unwrapping their lunches. I heard sprightly young voice go here and there.

And yet Cy Young never made a move no matter what happened in front of his eyes. He just standed still, looking into the catcher's glove. Here and now there could be only me to catch his ball! Though these young girls' being near embarrassed me to an extent, how could I resist catching Cy's pitches! I walked up to the copper home plate and stood there facing Cy. I placed myself at a catcher's position and crouched. Now, sign. Right, what the sign should be? Straight, of course. Super straight balls that made 2,803 strike-outs.

I reached my left hand forward as if guiding Cy the spot to throw. Cy was watching the hand, "All right, here we go." The sunshine was even brighter and so the grass was greener. No wind. The girls' giggles and cheers did not bother me any more. "Nice pitch!" "Nice catch!" I heard, but to me it was not cheeky cheers from people walking by but voice from heaven that came across the time and space.

And then I saw Cy set to throwing motions - arms moving up backwards - and then I saw a ball srpintering toward me like a thunder. "I've got to catch it! Don't retreat! I've got to get the ball" - I was telling myself when I felt my left hand a heavy impact.

What was that?

I don't know. But one thing I do know is that baseball one hundred years ago is still alive here...it is alive just as the vintage baseball in mountains of Catskill or as Cy Young here.