



Society for American Baseball Research
San Diego Ted Williams Chapter

eNews

March 11, 2014

Issue No. 55

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Winter Regional Meeting on February 15th Highlighted by Bill Weiss Collection



Our Chapter held its annual winter meeting on 15 February 2014. In years past, we have held our winter meeting at Petco Park in one of their various meeting rooms. This year, thanks to the completion of the Central San Diego Library, we held the event in the new library's auditorium. Over 100 people attended the February event, at which several interesting and informative presentations were given.

That the meeting was held at the Library was especially appropriate, as earlier in the week, in tandem with our Chapter, the Library announced they had acquired the **Bill Weiss Collection** of baseball artifacts and information.

Following introductory remarks by the Chapter President **Dan Boyle, Mark Macrae** introduced the collection. Mark, a member of the San Francisco (O'Doul) and Sacramento SABR Chapters. He joined us in order to introduce Bill Weiss to those of us not familiar with the man. Mark had known Bill for many years and has headed the Trust established to manage the disposition of Weiss's baseball archives.

Mark noted that Bill was born in Chicago and moved to San Mateo in 1950 when he was hired to take over the job as statistician for the Pacific Coast League (PCL). By that time Weiss had already been working for several minor leagues in a similar capacity. Weiss also prepared "sketch books" for major and minor league teams that included brief biographical information and a statistical records for players gathered from information he collected from questionnaires that he sent players. Over 100,000 questionnaires constitute part of the Archive. In the collection are also official records (e.g., league, team, player) for most of the minor leagues west of the Mississippi from the 1950s through the 1980s.



Weiss was an active researcher and a member of SABR—actually member #34—joining shortly after it started in 1971. In 2006 he was elected into the PCL Hall of Fame. Weiss died in 2011 at the age of 86. For a more detailed biography go to <http://sabr.org/latest/memorial-william-j-weiss>.

Tom Larwin followed Macrae with a presentation summarizing the contents of the Weiss Archive. He started off with a set of numbers to describe the Archive:

- 15 – the weight, in tons, of material donated
- 1870s – the earliest date of publications in the Archive
- 583 – the number of boxes of books, publications, files, papers
- 152 – the number of file drawers containing player index cards
- 120,000 – the number of player questionnaires

Tom indicated that the initial load of materials arrived in San Diego in early December 2013 and the fourth and last truck load arrived in January 2014. Once all of the material reached San Diego members of the Chapter Steering Committee began inventorying the contents of each box. (Ed. Note: As of March 7th 49.2% of the 583 boxes have been inventoried.) Out of the total number of boxes, there are 110 boxes that are marked as containing books (non-fiction and fiction). Inventorying these boxes is a bit different as each book is being examined to determine whether a copy is already in the Library's possession. Within the next several months this process will be completed and the new additions will start showing up on the Central Library's shelves.

With regard to the non-book material, Tom noted that much of it will be digitized in a searchable format. He pointed out that digitizing so many records will be take years to complete. On a parallel path our Chapter is partnering with SABR National to use the services of the LA84 Foundation (formed with excess funds left over from the 1984 Olympics) for digitizing the questionnaires.

Tom closed by inviting anyone interested in helping out in a volunteer capacity to contact him at lar.11@cox.net.

For additional information on the Weiss Archive you can go to:
<http://sabr.org/latest/bill-weiss-collection-baseball-research-donated-sabr-san-diego-chapter-library>.

Next, **John Freeman** and **Richard Lister** talked about their part in the writing of a new book on **Doug Harvey**. Harvey was born in the LA area and at the age of 6, moved to El Centro. His father was an umpire working semi-pro baseball, first in the LA and then in the El Centro area, and Doug did some umpiring with his father as a teenager. After attending San Diego State University, and working at several odd jobs, he returned to umpiring and decided to try his hand as a professional. That was in 1957. He worked in Class C ball in California to start, and after four years jumped all the way to AAA. In 1962 he debuted as a Major League umpire, working the first ever game at Dodger Stadium. He was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010.

Freeman and Lister shared several stories about the writing of the book and their interactions with Doug. Some of those stories may appear in the book, *They Called Me God*, due for release on 25 March 2014. Several other stories they told probably won't.

In the 3-hole, current Padres television broadcast analyst **Mark Grant** came to the stage. Grant was introduced by Chapter Vice President **Andy Strasberg** who set the tone for a humorous half hour. Andy's introduction was based on career highlights contained on the back of a trading card of Mark Grant's (however, it was a fictitious card and suffice it to say, the highlights were very trivial). With Mark warmed up to the task he went on to delight the audience with stories of his time in a major league uniform, and his experiences as a professional broadcaster working with the Padres. Mark displayed his talent for telling stories in an entertaining and engaging way.



Hitting cleanup, LA Chapter member and former SABR President **Andy McCue** talked about another upcoming book, *Mover and Shaker: Walter O'Malley, the Dodgers, and Baseball's Westward Expansion*. People forget, but at one time the Pacific Coast League rivaled both Major Leagues in terms of level of play and quality of players. There were attempts by the league to become a third Major League to rival both the National and American. Unfortunately, when O'Malley decided to move the Dodgers, and convinced the Giants to move with him, that hope was dashed forever. McCue discussed some of the history behind those events. His book is scheduled for release in May of this year.

Rounding out our lineup, **Tom Romenesko** talked about his experiences after working in baseball for 40+ years, mostly as a scout.

Andy Strasberg closed out the meeting with a tribute to the late Padres broadcaster **Jerry Coleman**. Andy told several humorous and touching stories about Jerry, whom Andy had known for better than 40 years. Andy worked with Jerry as a member of the Padres front office in the 1970s and 1980s.



Second Annual SABR Garage Sale

On 22 February 2014 our Chapter hosted its second annual Garage Sale. Like last year's event, all proceeds raised will be used to support our Baseball Research Center (BRC). This year we held the event at Randy Jones' Grill in Mission Valley.



We had artifacts of all shapes and sizes, mostly print items. Highlights included *The Sporting News (TSN)* newspapers from various years, starting with the 1930s and up through the 1960s. There were also newer *TSN* issues, full color print magazine style, from the 1980s and 1990s. That collection of *TSN* material took up three tables. We had dozens of *Sports Illustrated* magazines, most from the 1970s; it is amazing how often a baseball player or scene made the cover of *SI* back then. Hard-cover and soft-cover baseball books took up another five.



Other items on-hand included old baseball programs from various teams, All-Star Game and World Series commemorative programs, MLB team yearbooks and media guides. There were three additional tables of baseball memorabilia, including game-used bats, autographed balls, baseball cards, and a variety of other items (glassware, photos, etc).



The party started promptly at 11:30 am and continued until 2:00 pm. More people walked through the sale in the first 20 minutes than did during the three hour event last year. Thanks to the great turnout, the Chapter raised over \$1,500 for the BRC.

We will look to continue the Garage Sale tradition next spring.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership is the life-blood of SABR and, of course, our local chapter.

Shadi Abudayyeh recently joined our Chapter. He is a San Diego native, and was fortunate to experience both the very best (1998) and the most tragic game (Game 163, 2007) of the Padres' recent history. Despite attending California State University, Fullerton, amongst Angels and Dodgers fans, his love for the Padres never diminished. He is employed by Wells Fargo as a business analyst. His fascination with analytics and baseball sabermetrics developed after constant failure in fantasy baseball coupled with poor Padres yearly finishes. Shadi remains casually optimistic about the Padres this season (you can hang a star on that rotation though) while not forgetting the constant debacles that were Matt Bush and Donovan Tate. He looks forward to active participation in this community, and you can find him often at Petco Park in a 1996 Gwynn jersey with a Sculpin in his hand.

Welcome to the Chapter, Shadi.