

The South Palo Alto We Shared:

On the occasion of the 40th reunion of the Cubberley Class of 1974

by

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Ten short years removed from earning their place in the Greatest Generation,
our parents perched on this western edge of manifest destiny,
bought cheap, functional Eichlers in tracts carved from still-harvested apricot
groves
where kids rode bikes everywhere in cul-de-sac neighborhoods,
bisected by Charleston and Middlefield,
bounded by El Camino, Oregon Expressway, San Antonio,
and the Bayshore Freeway.

Our fathers worked at Varian, Fairchild, and Philco
or rode the train from a lazy California Avenue depot up to The City,
a far-away place that we visited on weekends.
Our mothers dragged us shopping to Mayfair, Co-op, Sears and Maximart,
where bread was still sliced by the baker,
toys rarely plugged in,
and color TV's were magical and rare.

At Cubberley we *mostly* went to class.
We looked forward to the important stuff:
brunch, lunch, our sports, our plays, our concerts,
a smoke over by the donut shop,
glances from a boy or girl that made the day glow.

We were mostly white and Anglo
until a few brave kids of color breached the Bayshore barrier that separated Beaver
Clever suburbia from violence and poverty.
We knew Senor Gamez was gay,
but that was not yet OK for many of our brothers, sisters, and best friends.

We received the Hassling legacy of Ron Jones, Tony Petrie, and Student Power,
manifested in Tom Stamper and the Alternative School,
where couches replaced desks
and Frisbee replaced gym.

Some of us studied every weeknight.
Some of us hardly studied at all.
We did share an adolescent biochemistry that juggled us up and down,
passionate and risky,

insightful and stupid,
mean spirited and kind...
sometimes all in a single week or night or day.

We came to school in sandals, boots, Birkenstocks, barefoot;
in halter-tops, blue jeans, long straight hair.
It took three schools to gather a quorum for prom,
but we ALL turned out to support Coach Peters
because kids in Viet Nam had suffered the napalm attacks of a government that had
lost its way.

If our big brothers and sisters were radical or just truant,
maybe we joined a Sit-in in Berkeley,
or wandered the forbidden edges of a Be-In in the Haight.
We were mostly middle class, which loosely justified the pranks we wrought on
dark homecoming nights against "those rich kids" from Paly High.

On weekends we cruised Mayfield Mall,
the Bijou,
the Varsity,
the drive-in.
Perhaps we spent a Sunday with Santana at El Camino,
Joan Baez at Frost,
or the Dead at Winterland.
We bought and sold weedy, seedy \$10 lids,
found misguided adults to buy us six packs of Mickey's Big Mouth
or cheap bottles of Colt 45.
Parents looked the other way or bought a keg and left for the night.

In the summer, we suffered through typing class and driver's ed,
bought Slurpees for a dime, a quarter, thirty-five cents for a large,
swam ten hours a day at Greenmeadow and Eichler,
worked the night shift at greasy fast food franchises,
and ate hot dogs watching little brothers whiff on Little League fastballs to the smell
of a freshly-mown outfield.

In less than two decades, microchips and fearless innovation would turn our small
stucco homes into million-dollar tear-downs.
Families with young kids moved away,
schools closed,
the post-war era gave early birth to the 21st century.

We went to college, to jobs, moved out of our parents' homes...
and some moved right back in.
The trees in South Palo Alto grew up and arched across our streets.
We grew up, too,

sharing a window of time and space
perhaps not unique...but certainly it was ours.

Welcome

Thanks to "extended committee"

- Margie Foley and her Robin
- Shawn Hoover
- Sharon Oliver
- Cate Ryan
- Risa Swirsky
- Cindy Estonoctoc
- Mikki Buckley
- Peter Gioumousis

Huge thanks to Tim Sandborn for the picnic

Reflection

Recognition of those who have passed: reading of the names
Others? Teachers who have passed?

In Large Group

Traditional:

Traveled farthest

Most kids/grandkids

Longest married

Most/Least changed in 40 years

Novel:

Favorite charity or most fun "giving it away" in last 40 years

Most spectacular "flameout" failure since high school

Post Up Session:

Favorite teacher at Cubberley/Wilbur

Person you had a crush on at Cubberley

Person you wish you had talked to or hung out with more at Cubberley

Best thing I learned because of time at Cubberley

Most embarrassing moment at Wilbur/Cubberley

