

People who made project possible

Steve Baker, MC of Sunday's dedication of Shu Carlton Stadium, recognized the following businesses and individuals for their contributions in making the project a success:

-Shu Carlton, whose legacy inspired the idea.

-Louise Carlton, who motivated it by her dedication.

-The Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame.

-Dean Spears and the Kings Mountain City Council.

-Mayor Rick Murphrey, -Robbie Henderson and Forever Green.

-Cunningham Brick and Bennett Brick.

-Morris Scrap Metal.

-Dub Blalock and Dean Spears.

-Kings Mountain city construction crews.

-Ultra Machine, which donated the steel and laser services.

-Superior Powdercoating.

-Jerry Adams.

-Tim Spicer.

-Eric Price and the KMHS welding class.

-Victory Trophy and Engraving.

-Butch Pearson and RPM Mobile Sound.

-George Harris and the many former players - the living legacy of Coach Carlton's building of successful men.

KM: netters beat Shelby for SMAC crown

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of them were decided in straight sets.

"Beating a poorhouse name such as Shelby in tennis doesn't happen every year," said KM Coach Rick Henderson. "Sometimes it may take a decade or more, but it was bittersweet and we will enjoy this win for weeks and months to come."

"We wanted this win for our one and only senior (Isaiah Cole) as he has steadied the ship this year at the #1 singles seed."

Cole finished the conference season with a 5-2 record. Dylan Irvin and Gibson Conner were also 5-2 and the #2 and #3 positions. Landon Irvin was 5-0 at #4 and Robert Baker and Dalton Cash were 7-0 at #5 and #6.

In another match last week, the Mountaineers defeated Burns 8-1.

Burns match:
Singles -Isaiah Cole (KM) d. Tyler Helms 6-3, 6-1; Dylan Irvin (KM) d. Michael Page 6-1, 6-4; Gibson Conner (KM) d. Spencer Crow 6-2, 6-0; Robert Baker (KM) d. Clayton Hamrick 6-1, 6-3; Dalton Cash (KM) d. Huner Bumgardner 6-0, 6-0; Alex Lovelace (KM) d. Nick Fulbright 6-2, 6-1.

Doubles - Cole/Conner (KM) d. Helms/Page 8-3; Baker/Cash (KM) d. Crow/Hamrick 8-3; Bumgardner/Fulbright (B) d. Devin Ayscue/Bailey Goodson 8-6.

Shelby match:
Singles -Isaiah Cole (KM) d. Charles Dixon 6-1, 6-2; Alex Nanney (S) d. Dylan Irvin 6-4, 6-4; Aaron Assad (S) d. Gibson Conner 6-3, 4-6, 10-5; Landon Ervin (KM) d. Hill Morgan 6-4, 6-2; Robert Baker (KM) d. Griffin Benfield 3-6, 6-3, 10-8; Dalton Cash (KM) d. Will Clifton 6-0, 6-2.

Doubles
Irvin/Conner (KM) d. Nanney/Assad 10-3; Cole/Cash (KM) d. Dixon/Morgan 10-6; Ervin/Baker (KM) d. Benfield/Clifton 10-8.



Louise Carlton (holding plaque) is pictured with football players and three cheerleaders who were part of Coach Carlton's teams from 1948-1956 at Kings Mountain High School. Football players, left to right, are Roy Hammett, Jimmy Littlejohn, David Marlowe, Bill Herndon, Mearl Valentine, Buddy Smith, Jack Ruth, Johnny Harris (representing his late father, Ollie Harris Jr., George Harris, Jimmy Kimmell, John McGinnis, Gene Patterson and Bill Ruth.

Shu Carlton Stadium dedicated Sunday

A large number of his former players, students, friends and others were on hand Sunday afternoon as sports and city officials dedicated the former City Stadium in memory of legendary former Kings Mountain High football coach Everette "Shu" Carlton.

George Harris, KMHS's only High School All-American football player and the star quarterback on Carlton's and the Mountaineers' first-ever championship team in 1955, was keynote speaker. Carlton's daughter, Debbie, gave the reception speech on behalf of the family.

Harris, Mayor Rick Murphrey and Coach Carlton's widow, Louise, unveiled a plaque that will be permanently displayed on one of the two brick columns that support the 400-plus pound "Shu Carlton Stadium" sign.

"Kings Mountain is a special place for our family," Debbie said. "My sisters and I spent our first years here. Our family took shape here. Kings Mountain was always special to Dad. It was the place which gave him his first opportunity to teach and to coach. It welcomed him back after his service in Korea."

"His Kings Mountain players were most special to him," she added. "The ties he made with them lasted a life time. He treasured these bonds."

Carlton came to KMHS in 1948 after graduating from Lenoir-Rhyne College. He began his collegiate football career at Duke University but entered the U.S. Marines at the onset of World War II. After the war he enrolled at LR and played three years there.

The Mountaineer program was at a low point upon Carlton's arrival. They had won just one game the previous season and had three different head coaches each of the three years before Carlton took the job.

His career was interrupted in 1951 when he was called back into active duty with the Marines during the Korean War. UNC All-American Art Weiner, who had played one season of pro football, served as head coach that season.

When Carlton returned in 1952, his JV team had been disbanded and he had to start all over with mostly freshmen. He switched from the single wing to T-formation in 1953 and posted a winning record and by 1954 he had built a powerhouse that was expected to bring the school its first-ever



Some of the crowd that attended Sunday's dedication of Shu Carlton Stadium. At far left are Johnny and Betty Gamble. Mrs. Gamble's husband and Johnny's father, the late John Gamble, was Shu Carlton's assistant coach and became head coach in 1957 when Coach Carlton took over as head coach at Ashley High in Gastonia. Coach Gamble's teams continued the Mountaineer winning tradition established during the Carlton years.

championship but fell just short with a 7-2-1 overall record.

George Harris recalled in his speech that the general feeling at the start of practice in 1955 was that the Mountaineers wouldn't be very good. But with Carlton's guidance and the hard work and dedication of the players resulted in an undefeated regular season and the Southwest Conference championship. In Carlton's last season, 1956, the Mountaineers went unbeaten again and won the Western NC title.

"He had a reputation of being tough but there wasn't a mean bone in that man's body," Harris said.

Harris recalled a conversation with Mrs. Carlton several years ago when he told her Coach Carlton "was really tough but I bet he was a teddy bear at home, and she said he was."

Harris said Carlton was a great coach and a great role model. Harris said he was a no-nonsense person and strong willed. He was dedicated, disciplined, demanding, determined, very intelligent, a great motivator who was organized, a great leader and very honest.

"He taught us by the way he conducted himself," Harris said. "He taught us life lessons. He taught about the strengths we should have and to achieve things that seemed almost impossible to do."

Harris recalled that the team walked three blocks to every practice and every game from Central School on Ridge Street to what is now Shu Carlton Stadium.

"Back then I thought it was miles," he said.

Harris called Carlton a great teacher. "He taught us discipline," he said. "He inspired people to work hard. We worked on precision every day. Everybody had an assignment and had to get it done."

Although the '55 players weren't big (there were only about three on the roster that weighed over 180 pounds, and Harris was one of them),



Shu Carlton's family is pictured with the coach's 1955 All-American quarterback George Harris. Front row, left to right, Carlton's daughter Deborah O'Neal, his wife Louise Carlton, and daughter Linda Grant. Back row from left, George Harris, Carlton's daughter Elaine Gomez, his granddaughter Betsy Grant, and his son-in-law Hank Grant.

they were in exceptional physical shape. They worked hard, played smart, and were mentally tough football players. Harris said they practiced hard, played hard and played to win.

"The 1955 team was the first football team that Coach Carlton had, and the first one that Kings Mountain had to win a championship," Harris noted. He pointed out that the team gave up only 26 points during the regular season and shutout six of their 10 opponents.

"A lot of the players that came up from the midget teams that were organized in 1949 were coming into high school when Coach Carlton came back as a Korean War hero," Harris recalled. "A lot of us were freshmen. Coach Carlton and his staff were pretty dismayed at the start of practice in 1955. They didn't have much to work with."

"Coach Carlton put in a triple option play. We had run a belly play in 1954. The triple option offense was more flexible and he taught us to be good at it. We were not very big but we had a lot of heart, great coaching and were always prepared."

Kings Mountain shutout Bessemer City 59-0 in the season opener, and after three games had scored 93 points to their opponents' zero. Their six shutouts during the regular included two SWC powerhouses, Shelby and Cherryville.

"That defense was the best Kings Mountain's ever had," Harris said. "Holding our opponents to 26 points was a tribute to the linemen, backfield, and everybody on the team."

Harris said Carlton turned "teenagers into young men." He strengthened their character, taught them how to be good leaders, discipline, teamwork, organization, planning and planted in them a mental attitude to be someone who "can do instead of maybe."

Harris said it is fitting that the city stadium be dedicated to Coach Carlton.

"This is where it all began," he said. "It was the players' field of dreams where Coach Carlton made the dreams come true. For fans, coaches and players it was a place for Friday night fun and excitement - our 'Friday Night under the Lights.'

"It was Coach Carlton's

workshop where he made teenage boys into young men and winning football teams. This stadium is rightly being named for Coach Everette 'Shu' Carlton."

As she closed her speech, Carlton's daughter Debbie thanked the city and volunteers who made the day possible.

"Our family would like to express our deepest appreciation to you for naming this stadium for our father," she said. "He would find it so fitting since his career began here."

"Dad was proud of his Kings Mountain teams. He expected a great deal from his players, but he gave even more. He cared about them as players but he cared about them even more as young men."

"Dad helped countless young men get into college and he enjoyed hearing from them long after graduation. Dad would be extremely pleased with this honor... with the dedication of this stadium in his honor. Thank you for Shu Carlton Stadium and for remembering him. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who had a hand in this."

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