

rooms and commentary and press boxes all over the world. No opportunity – absolutely none – to promote cricketing matters in general and those of Wombwell in particular escapes the eye or the pen of Jack Sokell.

The society lists as its patrons John Arlott, Keith Miller, Sir Brian Rix, E. W. Swanton, Colin Cowdrey, Freddie Trueman and Geoff Boycott, and has a membership world-wide of 600. More than 2,000 celebrities have been guest speakers at its winter meetings and dinners, the very first of them being Johnny Wardle, who was a good friend to the Society in its early days. The new president is Miss Jean Swift and the headquarters (after years in a Wombwell pub) are now at the Oaks Working Men's Club in Ardsley – appropriately enough, Wardle's birthplace.

In a nice mixture of sentimentality and practicality the society makes awards to promising young cricketers in the name of famous first-class players, so we have the Jack Hobbs, Learie Constantine, Maurice Leyland, Arthur Wrigley (former BBC scorer and statistician) and now the Johnny Wardle trophies. It also runs under-fifteen and under-seventeen sides and winter coaching classes with a view to sending a continuous stream of young players into the local clubs and leagues and beyond. As we have seen in an earlier page, this has produced positive results.

Secretary: Jack Sokell, 42 Woodstock Road, Barnsley.

*Blackley Cricket Society* started out in October 1974 with a guest speaker, followed by a meal of cold meat and pickles, cheese and biscuits and a *barrel of beer*. This was the entirely laudable idea of a good cricketing evening worked out by Roy Chappel, a local baker who was connected with Blackley Cricket Club. It worked well at first, but when the early novelty had worn off the attendances dwindled a little and so finishing off the barrel presented a few problems, at least in terms of time. Obviously, no bunch of good Yorkshiremen were going to *leave* any ale undrunk so the meetings tended to last rather long into the night!

Blackley is a small village on the hill between Halifax and Huddersfield, and the name is pronounced in perfectly orthodox fashion. But there is a Blackley in north-west Manchester which calls itself Blakeley (a typical bit of Lancashire nonconformism!) and Cedric Rhoades, invited as a guest speaker during his time as the Lancashire CCC chairman, got a few old-fashioned looks from

the locals when he asked the way. Roy Chappel did the catering himself in the society's early days but ill-health forced him to quit after the 1985–6 winter and for a time there was something of a crisis: it looked as though it might be necessary to move meetings from the Blackley Cricket Club pavilion. Then one John Hudson came to the rescue, an experienced caterer from the Dewsbury League, and now the members can choose their menu from such exotic delights as curry, lasagne, stew-and-dumplings, meat-and-potato pie. Clearly the nosh is a rather important factor in Blackley C. S. meetings but their speakers have included Bomber Wells (Gloucs/Notts), Jack Robertson (Middlesex), Norman Graham (Kent), Chris Balderstone (Yorks/Leics), Peter Roebuck (Somerset) and David Frith, Editor of *Wisden Cricket Monthly*. Current membership is fifty-one (all male, which is a bit unusual in cricket society circles) and average attendances around forty, which makes Blackley probably the smallest society affiliated to the Council of Cricket Societies. Meetings take place on the second Tuesday of the month.

Secretary: Dennis Butterfield, 7 Bayswater Terrace, Halifax HX3 0NB.

*Heavy Woollen Cricket Society* was founded in 1974 and one of the original members was Peter Hirst, the Dewsbury district representative on the Yorkshire CCC Committee. Sadly, he died the following year so the society provided a trophy in his name which goes to the members' choice of Yorkshire player of the year. The first speaker was Norman Yardley and since then the guest list has covered players, cricket-writers, TV personalities, coaches, managers and 'cricket maniacs'. These have been roped in by the enterprising Mollie Staines, for six years a lone, symbolic female figure on the Yorkshire CCC committee and speaker-finder for the society since its inception. Meetings are held at Cleckheaton Cricket Club on the second Wednesday of each winter month (October to April).

Secretary: Gordon S. Cooper, 27 Milford Grove, Gomersal, Cleckheaton.

The *East Riding Cricket Society* started operations in the winter of 1966–7, but the seeds had been sown in the previous decade. Sidney Hainsworth, chairman of the Hull manufacturing firm of J. F. Fenner and Company, and a great friend of cricket and cricketers, had brought a number of notable figures to speak at Fenner Sports