

## CRICKET

# Club was forged from industry: Now Bridgeholme takes its proud place at the heart of town's leisure

By cricket historian Peter Davies

THERE is no place called Bridgeholme, so how did Bridgeholme Cricket Club acquire its name?

The club originated directly from local industry. The cricket teams from J.J. Tatham Ltd., Nanholme Mills, and Moss Brothers, Bridgeroyd Mills joined forces to form one club in 1950.

The name 'Bridgeholme' was invented by combining 'Nanholme' and 'Bridgeroyd'. These two mills still exist today, although Nanholme is now re-named Springholme and is owned by Pickwell-Arnold.

The club had no ground during its first season in 1951 - its only year in the Todmorden and District League - and played all matches away.

Preparation of the Station House ground on the Hebden Bridge-Todmorden road had been underway since the summer of 1952. Drainage, levelling and the laying of the square had been the priorities.

In January 1954 an application to enter the Halifax Parish Cup was rejected, in part because the ground was deemed 'unfit', yet five months later Bridgeholme were selected to host the Hebden Bridge League's knockout final between Heptonstall Slack and Birchcliffe.

Further improvements saw the club admitted to the Parish Cup and Halifax League for 1956.

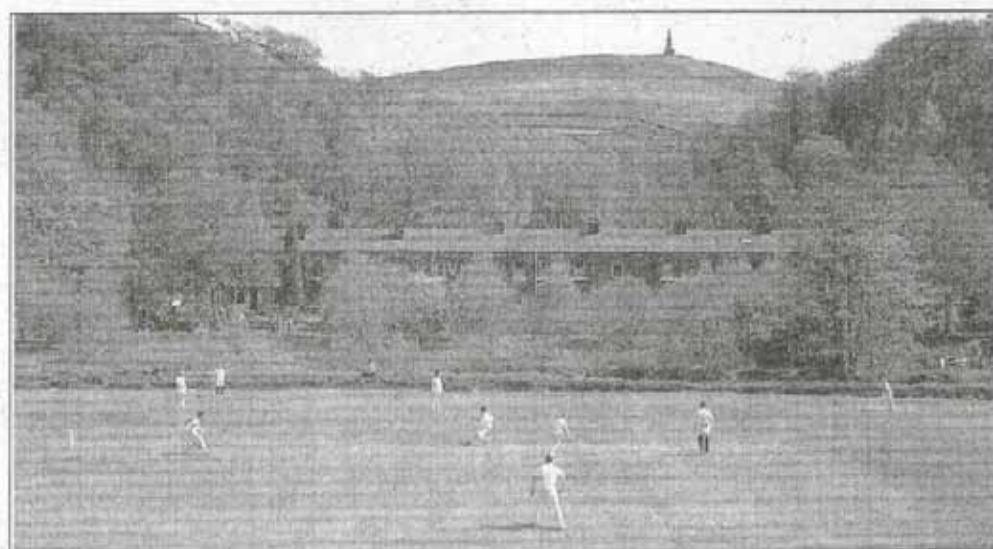
Bridgeholme played their first match in the Halifax League at Blackley on Saturday 21 April 1956, losing by 45 runs.

The first significant blip on the Bridgeholme radar

## Hebden Bridge Cricket League Winners



Right: A perfect setting: action at Bridgeholme around 1994.  
Left: Hebden Bridge League winners, 1953



came in 1959. Bridgeholme's form inexplicably fell away. In Ernest Travis, who hit 508 runs at an average of 36, the club possessed one of the league's finest batsmen, but a fourth-from-bottom finish did not augur well. Relegation followed in 1960.

For most of the next four decades, Bridgeholme played in the Halifax Amateur Cricket Association.

But the resignation of Barkisland from the Halifax League in 2000 left a vacancy.

Bridgeholme applied and were willingly re-admitted. All the omens seemed right. Bridgeholme fulfilled all the criteria of playing on their own ground, having a good pitch and running two teams.

Bridgeholme do not have an official nickname but they are often referred to as 'Todmorden's Cinderella Club', with Todmorden and Walsden long-term dom-

inant cricket forces in the town.

But in Keith Hudson they have one of the hardest-working stalwarts in the Halifax League and in Station House one of the most attractive and well appointed cricket grounds in Calderdale.

It is also a busy social centre too, with strong links with the recently formed Eastwood Residents' Association.

Another dedicated player and member of the club, Peter Brennend, is also one of the former winners of the Todmorden News Ron Wild Trophy for services to sport.

The future looks very bright.

● With grateful thanks to Brian Heywood for his research on Bridgeholme CC.