

# A sport that's at the heart of community

## Success on field and off at Mytholmroyd Cricket Club

**Peter Davies** of Huddersfield University has spent much of the last three years discovering more about local cricket clubs in the Calderdale and Kirklees areas, recently co-authoring a three-volume book, '180 Not Out', which features a fascinating selection of memorabilia from all the upper Calder Valley clubs. In the first of an occasional series looking at the clubs and their vital links with community, he turns his eye on **Mytholmroyd Cricket Club**

**THE** origins of Mytholmroyd C.C. remain uncertain. However, by 1894 the club had two teams, one of which played in the Calder Valley League.

During the 1895 season the 1st XI were joined by local rivals Mytholmroyd Wesleyan Sunday School C.C. in the Hebden Bridge League.

Around the turn of the century we come across the Sowerby Division League. It looks like Mytholmroyd also entered a team into this competition.

The club joined the Halifax Parish Cup competition in 1896 and were included in a grounds inspection survey carried out by the authorities.

By 1914 Mytholmroyd had joined the Halifax & District League and that year saw the 1st XI crowned champions for the first time.

The presentation of the trophy was followed by a social evening at which the 'cup was filled with a palatable beverage and the success of the club was drunk all round.'

Just after the Great War, Mytholmroyd joined the Halifax Parish League. The 1st XI won the Halifax Cup for the second time in 1923 and retained the trophy the



Mytholmroyd success on the field...the 2005 Parish Cup winning side

following season.

In 1939 the club surpassed the all-round success of two years earlier. As well as winning both 1st XI and 2nd XI Halifax Cricket League titles, the Parish Cup was also claimed after the final against Triangle at King Cross.

On 25 April 1952 the Hebden Bridge Times and Gazette reported: 'At Mytholmroyd the field is in fine condition and once again the

club is hoping to have the finest wicket in the league. There have been a few renovations made during the close season, including a new sight-board. Extensive improvements have been made to conveniences.'

In the same year, on 3 November, L.H. Parker, club secretary, announced at the AGM: 'To all former players...It would appear that to cease playing means

to end all association with the club. Surely this is wrong. These are the men we look to for future guidance on committees and to give advice to the young cricketer.'

Sunday sport was a contentious issue in the late 1950s. Sowerby Bridge District Council had emphatically refused to open its bowling greens for Sunday use, yet leisure was beginning to encroach the Sabbath.

The Halifax League was one of the first local competitions to experiment with Sunday play and it was a success.

At the Mytholmroyd C.C. AGM at the White Hart Hotel, Mytholmroyd, on Monday 28 October 1957, secretary N.D. Turner commented: 'During the past season Sunday cricket has been introduced and the new venture has made a substantial increase in the club's income.'

Mytholmroyd's batsmen enjoyed themselves in the summer of 1957. They struck 294 all out against Barksland and followed that with 291 all out against Booth.

A new clubhouse arrived in 2000 - an event that acted as a spur for many other improvements and developments.

In 2002 the club organised a special trip to watch Yorkshire play in the C&G trophy final at Lords. It proved a successful day as the county side defeated Somerset by 6 wickets.

And in 2005 Mytholmroyd scooped the Parish Cup - a memorable achievement.



...and off it, a community barbecue in 2004, with the club's new pavilion, opened in 2000, in the background. Picture: DAVID EVANS