

ALBERT'S 'TEN-FOR' WERE CLUB-MATES

OLD Town CC was formed as far back as 1885, although they temporarily disbanded between 1891 and 1894.

Originally, they played their home games at Middle Nook Farm on the far eastern fringes of the village. In time, the farm became the site of a house called "Stalheim", now known as "Burnside".

In the early days, Old Town elevens competed in the Calder Valley League and the Hebden Bridge League, and in 1895 five members of the local Greenwood family turned out for the first team.

But times were hard in 1906. In another match Old Town came up against local rivals Cragg Vale. After travelling to the game in a specially-hired wagonette, the Old Town first eleven was skittled out for a paltry total of 111.

In 1895, the club moved to Old Laithe, in the Chiserley area.

Peter Davies of Huddersfield University has spent much of the past three years researching cricket clubs in the Calderdale and Kirklees area and co-authoring the three volume book '180 Not Out', including a fascinating selection of memorabilia and history from all the upper Calder Valley Clubs. In the latest in an occasional series he turns his eye on Old Town Cricket Club

Old Town, playing in the second division of the Hebden Bridge League, were the visitors when Birchcliffe played their first match at Nell Carr on Saturday, April 11 1896.

"It was altogether too cold for the game, and at that altitude the breeze was something shocking...under the circumstances, the match hardly lends itself to criticism," commented the Hebden Bridge Times.

During the Second World War, "Old

Laithe was requisitioned by the National Fire Service - with compensation duly paid to the club.

In 1956 Old Town Cricket Club introduced a Ladies membership category. The subscription rate was 2/- 6d and in the first year 28 Lady members joined adding £3 10/- to club funds.

Ground improvements were essential to the survival of cricket clubs throughout the Calder Valley in the 1950s. The most ambitious venture was at Old Town.

In 1957 the club relocated to Boston Hill. The Hebden Bridge Times and Gazette stated: "The (Boston Hill) ground, in an ideal setting and surrounded by trees, is in marked contrast to the bleak exposed field at Old Laithe, which has the unenviable distinction of being one of the highest cricket grounds in Yorkshire."

Boston Hill was christened on 27 April 1957, with Old Town second eleven taking on Stones second eleven.

The new ground not only hosted cricket but also the Whit Monday Gala - a big local event - and various functions and dinner dances, many of which were fundraisers for OTCC.



Fifties chic, the Boston Hill pavilion in 1957 on the day it opened

Old Town's first season at Boston Hill (1957) was also the last season of the Hebden Bridge League.

At Old Town's Annual General Meeting on January 6, 1958, President Raymond Ashworth revealed that the club had made firm its application to join the Halifax Cricket Association.

Old Town played only one season in the Halifax Association, 1958, winning the third division. In that season, Albert Harding achieved the rare feat of taking all

10 wickets in an innings - and they were all Old Town batsmen!

The first and second teams were in the same league and Albert's performance came in the match between the two. The first eleven were all out for 132 and Albert took 10 for 43 as the seconds were dismissed for 73.

Today, the club runs three senior teams in the Halifax League and two junior sides. Mytholmroyd Methodists and Booth are the traditional local rivals.



As you were, a team shot from the 1930s