

## Groundsman Peter Holloway by Andrew Pearson

Peter was in his mid twenties when he began his long career as groundsman at Thurstonland in the 1960s. He only relinquished the post in 2002 although he still keeps his hand in by cutting the grass in the spectator area beyond the boundary edge, looking after the flower beds and mowing the square. General maintenance jobs also see him in action and the smooth running and good repair of the club's machinery is largely down to his conscientiousness in getting essential jobs done.



**1994 – Peter is back row, far right**

When in full time action he said that he was really responsible for everything with jobs on the square and the preparation of match wickets the top priority. Although essentially he was a one man band, he was grateful for the help of one or two people over the years, particularly with the task of mowing the outfield. Winter was essentially a time for recharging the batteries once necessary end of season work such as spiking and scarifying the square had been carried out.

More up to date equipment has, he feels, made the job much easier although the hours have still to be put in. The standard of the wickets has improved significantly over the years and the closer cut outfields and clearer markings make grounds look better as well as helping teams to make larger totals.

His earliest memory of being involved at Thurstonland was as first team scorer and everything followed on from that. He has always felt that a special feature of his village club is its friendliness and the warm welcome given to visitors whether spectators or players, at least with the latter once action on the field has finished. He feels that the hard working team of tea ladies put on an excellent variety of refreshments on match days and he looks forward to the end of season post game 'nosh up' for members and friends which features a choice of hot pot, giant Yorkshire puddings and curries to set everyone up for the colder weather ahead.

The large size of the field and its open views have always made his home ground special to him. He enjoys visiting away venues and a particular favourite is Penistone.

Although far from being a doom monger, he does worry about constantly rising costs and the potential impact they have on the future of small village clubs. The currently thriving junior section gives rise to optimism but he hopes that their commitment to the game in general, and to Thurstonland in particular, will be long lasting in the face of competition from so many other leisure opportunities in the modern world.