

OLD ALMONDBURIANS: the second in a second series of cricket histories...

# Old Boys upholding honour of the game

**AROUND  
THE  
WICKET**

...with  
historian  
Peter  
Davies

**S**CHOOLS cricket has been played at Arkenley Lane, Almondbury, since 1884.

King James's School, Almondbury, dates from 1608. It was established as a special 'royal school' after one Thomas Beaumont rode to London to petition King James I on behalf of the 'gentlemen of Almondbury'. Beaumont succeeded in his mission and the school has traded on its royal connections ever since.

In 1958 a pavilion building was built at Arkenley Lane to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the founding of the school.

Old Almondburians Cricket Club was founded in 1976. Today, they play in the Huddersfield Central League.

But who exactly are the Old Almondburians? Their website answers our question:

"The Old Almondburians' Society is a fellowship of past pupils and staff of King James's School in Almondbury, Huddersfield. Membership is currently around 700 and the Society's affairs are administered by an Executive Committee which meets monthly."

The Society has two stated objectives: (1) To uphold the honour and status of the School. (2) To provide a means of contact between members, one with another and the School.

Over the years, the Society has fulfilled the first objective in many different ways, such as:

- supporting the School against possible closure
- building the cricket pavilion
- floodlighting the school buildings
- financing sound systems
- providing sports kits for various teams
- using its membership network to place a massive range of skills at the School's disposal

Membership ranges from those who joined the school in 1920 to those who left this summer.

The Old Almondburians have a busy sporting life. Their football team, Almondburians AFC, have played in the Yorkshire Old Boys League (they field three open-age teams).

Their golfers play for the Gothard Cup at Woodsome Hall every year, and club members have played badminton and tennis 'for fun' on Thursday nights at King James's School.

There has also been a table tennis section. Old Almondburians Cricket Club first entered two teams in the Huddersfield Central League in 1980, after four years in

the now-defunct Huddersfield Association.

According to their website, they are 'always looking for good, new players'.

All the news, about sport and other things, is broadcast in *The Old Almondburian*, their rather distinguished newsletter.

In 1982 an edition stated: "In the near future it is hoped to renovate the pavilion and surrounds, the envy of every visiting club in the league. The interest and encouragement of Mr Conley and the Old Almondburians committee have been greatly appreciated in this direction."

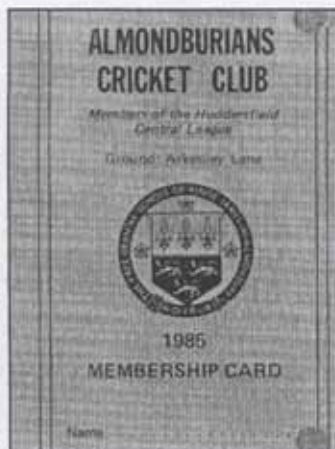
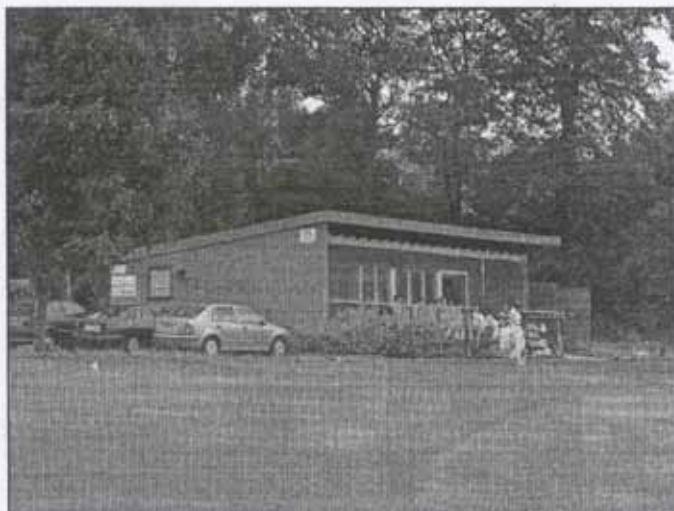
Since then the life of the cricket club has been dominated by fundraising efforts, President's Day occasions, and annual dinners (last year's was held at Lockwood Park).

On the field the club reached its first Ailsop Cup final in 1988 - only to be beaten by Denby.

It has also claimed its fair share of Central League divisional titles.

Today, the club's president is Jack Taylor - former teacher at the school, classy seam bowler, and one of the nicest men in the world of Huddersfield league cricket.

□ **HISTORY IN MAKING:** Above: the pavilion at Arkenley Lane. Below: current president Jack Taylor, on his way to taking 5-46 against Broad Oak in 1985 (Oak opener Max Oyson and umpire Hedley Collins are also pictured) and an 1985 member's card



□ **LINE-UPS:** Team for the 1985 Sykes Cup quarter final versus Broad Oak. Back: J D Taylor, J Taylor, G Cliffe, C Ramsden, P Whitley, S M Slack; front: J Cliffe (scorer), J Broadhead, A Willford, R Field (capt), M Willford and W Tunnicliffe and Right: a team shot from 1981