

Over the past two and a half years, Dr Peter Davies from the History Department at the University of Huddersfield has been researching and reconstructing the history and heritage of cricket in Kirklees. This is Part 1 of a four-part series on cricket in Almondbury, featuring Almondbury CC, Almondbury Wesleyans CC, Old Almondburians CC and Almondbury

Part 1: Almondbury CC

Almondbury C.C. was founded by a group of local cricket enthusiasts who had played in the vicinity in 1873.

They raised funds by holding a concert during the winter of 1873-4 and formed the club in 1874, playing 19 matches that season, winning 8, drawing 5 and losing 6.

Two local men were instrumental in the founding of the club: Edward Dyson, a surgeon, and Charles H. Taylor, a merchant.

In the same year - on 24 November - the club acquired a lease for Fernside Avenue, and has played there ever since.

The first AGM was held at the Radcliffe Arms and was attended by 50 members.



Almondbury were one of the founding members of the Huddersfield Central League in 1913, and they won the championship two years later.

But they decided to join the Huddersfield & District League in 1926, the year of the General Strike.

Eddie Leadbeater made his Almondbury debut during the Second World War, in 1941. He was a leg-spinner by trade and went on to win two England Test caps, in 1951 and 1952.

Almondbury were a force to be reckoned with in the 1940s and 1950s, winning Section 'A' of the Huddersfield League in 1950 and 1951.

In the 1951 publication, *60 Years of Glorious Cricket! Huddersfield and District Cricket League Diamond Jubilee 1891-1951*, it was stated that, 'Last winter the players themselves not only stripped the turf at the bottom end of the field but also levelled the ground with tipping from the adjoining housing estate, and re-laying the turf made a great improvement to playing conditions.'

Almondbury went on to lift the Sykes Cup for the first time in 1962.

The club hold the distinction of being one of the last Huddersfield League side to lift a very famous piece of silverware: the Heavy Woollen Cup.

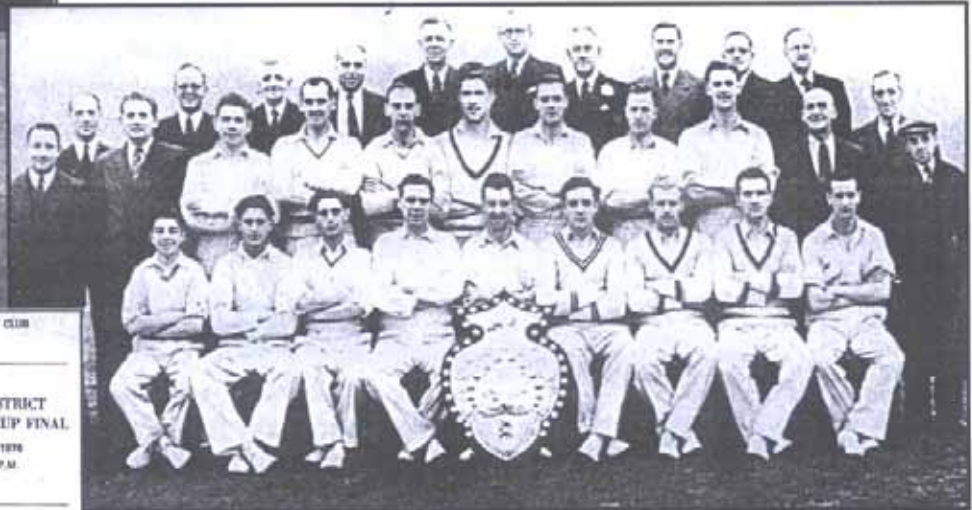
Originally, clubs had to be located within six miles of Batley Town Hall to take part in this competition, but gradually this rule was relaxed; hence Almondbury's historic 1976 adventure. Today, Almondbury are renowned for bringing on talented professionals. One recent example was Shahid Nawaz, who began his career at the club before moving on to Read C.C., in the Ribblesdale League, in 1996.

They also boast one of the most dedicated and hardest working stalwarts in the area: Donald Earnshaw or 'Mr Almondbury'.

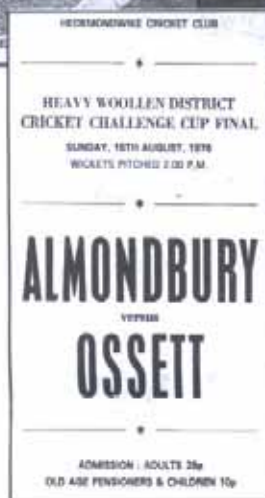
See www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk for further information about the Cricket Heritage Project currently running at the University of Huddersfield. Contact Peter on 01484 472606 or via p.j.davies@hud.ac.uk if you have any more information or old photographs relating to the history of local cricket.



Left: **EDDIE LEADBEATER IN ACTION**



Above: **1962 SYKES CUP FINAL TEAM**



Left: **1976 HEAVY WOOLLEN DISTRICT CUP FINAL PROGRAMME**

The Almondbury Community Recreation Team invite young people to Connexion events at Southfield Park for various sports activities :-

Monday 7.30 — 8.30
Wednesday 6.00—8.00

Contact :- Indy Basra Tel :- 07877049910
Netherton Young People's Service
Netherton Village Hall
330—332, Meltham Road
Huddersfield HD47EX

Lowerhouses Wednesday Club at Longley Baptist Church (1.00—2.30 p.m.) - A meeting place for older people in the Lowerhouses area—refreshments, games, activities and useful information. For more details ring 300210. Escorted transport is available — ring Pat 512279

**ALMONDBURY
METHODIST CHURCH
"OPEN HOUSE"**
Every other Tuesday

Owing to building work further dates will be announced later when available
Coffee is available before meals which are served from 12 noon
Enquiries 01484 420277