

MRS BIRKBY'S TEAS

Alan Hampshire on the ground

In my early days the square wasn't as big. The club also spent a lot of money levelling the playing area. It took out a loan from the Yorkshire Bank. Club treasurers were still paying this off many years later!



The club had to play its home games away from The Astleys while the ground was being levelled. So it lodged at the grammar school for a season. And because Walter Birkby lived close by, the players had their tea in the Birkbys' front room! Mrs Birkby did all the teas for a year!

In this period the club played in the Amateur League. There were no sightscreens and the pitch was a bit lively. The ball would lift off a length and 100 was probably a good score. It's much better now, beautiful in fact; it's great for scoring runs. This has been the biggest improvement at the club during my time.

I bowled into the wind here for 50 years! I didn't mind at all – I just got used to it. The wind comes from west to east – from the Stones/Ripponden direction mostly.