

"The bowler's Holding, the batman's..."

...as a radio commentator once remarked

He was, of course talking about cricket. And the gentle sound of leather on willow has been an interest of one Huddersfield lecturer for many years.

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Peter, a lecturer in the Division of History, is now all set to launch his pioneering investigation about cricket, community and the local heritage.

"Clubs in Calderdale and Kirklees act as a focal-point for community life, just like the village pub and the village church do. It is not just that local men play for senior sides, but children turn out for junior sides, women often help on the social side, and many elderly people take on administrative roles. There is also a high ethnic-minority involvement."

As well as creating an interactive web-site, the project will establish cricket archives in Halifax and Huddersfield town libraries, which will include an oral history bank.

"We are also going to commission photographers and artists to depict local cricketing landscapes, and educational heritage-orientated signage will be erected in and around local cricket grounds," said Peter, himself a cricketer and passionate supporter of Lancashire County Cricket Club.

The Manchester man is in no doubt that the social history of cricket is being neglected: "Cricket is a fundamental part of the local cultural tradition. Yet often, the heritage of grounds, and the societies that shape them, is being overlooked. The core aim of the project is to make local people more aware of their local cricketing heritage."

On the academic front, Peter hopes to write two books on the cricketing heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees, and the subject of *Sport and Heritage* will also be introduced into a variety of degree-level modules at the University.

Anyone who has any local cricketing memories or memorabilia should contact Peter on 01484 472405.



The gentle sound of
leather on willow...

Huddersfield cricket
researchers
Peter Davies (right)
and **Rob Light**

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Courses in Health and Sport

To help Peter, the Division of History has appointed an expert on the history of West Yorkshire sport.

Rob Light, a PhD student specialising in nineteenth-century cricket history and will work in tandem with Peter, who is heading the two-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund – the first sport-orientated project to receive such a grant.

"We will be trying to re-construct the history of cricket in the area," said Rob, "and we are interested in locating old minute books, scorebooks, photos and any other artefacts that would help with this. We'll even be putting the reminiscences of old cricketers on tape. If anyone has any cricketing memorabilia, we'd love to hear from them."

Rob hails from Pateley Bridge and plays for Pateley Bridge Cricket Club. He has also written the official history of his club. Rob gained an MA in Sports History and Culture from Leicester De Montfort University and is an expert on cricket in Victorian Yorkshire.

Says Rob: "Cricket has a rich heritage in this part of world and we will be working towards creating a special cricket archive in the main Huddersfield and Halifax libraries. My job is to make this accessible to ordinary people by piecing together the history of the sport in local villages and towns."