

THIS week sees the start of a new feature on **Cricket and the Community** in Batley. The series of articles has been written by **DR PETER DAVIES**, project leader of the **Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees**, and the first one focuses on **Mount CC in Mount Pleasant**.

A recent photograph of the Mount CC team. (NS)



ALTHOUGH competitive cricket and a permanent home were still some way off, Mount Cricket Club was formed by seven young Asian cricket enthusiasts in 1974.

In 1977 Mount CC began their tenancy at the Kirklees Council-owned Hyattlands Park. In the same year the club took its bow in competitive cricket, joining the Dewsbury and District League.

That first season ended with a ninth-place finish in Section C after the team won six of the 20 matches they played.

After two seasons of competitive cricket, Mount CC scooped the first of many league and cup titles. The season also saw the club carry off the Dewsbury and District League Section C championship.

By 1984, Mount's second XI was starting to emulate the success of the first XI. That year saw the club bag the Dewsbury and District League Section D title.

Despite the club's continued success, Mount have always encountered great difficulty when they have tried to progress into local senior leagues.

Mount CC stalwart Farid Karolia.

The main stumbling block has always been the fact that their HQ, Hyattlands Park, is council-owned. Unfortunately, the playing area and facilities have not been deemed to be suitable by league inspectors.

Thus, the club has searched for other ways to give its better players a higher standard of cricket. In 1991 an

Mounting ambitions



Mount CC celebrated their 21st birthday in 1995 with a special function. (NS)

arrangement was made with struggling Chickenley CC.

Their first XI, playing in the Central Yorkshire League, effectively became Mount CC first XI. However, the arrangement with Chickenley was not to last.

The continued success of Mount helped their efforts to recruit new players. By the mid-1990s this had enabled a new team to be formed - which joined the Wakefield Union Cricket League.

The club's first XI had also joined a new Leeds-centric competition, the Barkston Ash League, in search of a higher standard of cricket.

The continued success of the club has meant that Mount awards nights have become very special events. They are regularly attended by big-name guests and large crowds. The local community holds the club in great esteem.

A staggering 1,100 people attended the 1999 awards night,



Ismail Dawood - the first homegrown Asian player to become a first-team regular for Yorkshire - is an old boy of Mount CC. (NS)

when the guest list included Ann Taylor MP, Mike Wood MP, Chris Hassell, chief executive of Yorkshire CCC, and Raj Williams, Secretary of the High

standard of cricket, the club left the Dewsbury and District League in 1997 and joined the Dales Council League. Junior development has been a

prime concern at Mount throughout the club's history.

In the late-1990s great strides were taken to ensure that quality coaching could be provided. At the end of one season a staggering 20 Mount players enrolled on the ECB coaching course.

The success of the club's junior development programme has also been recognised by Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

In 2002 the remarkable success story of Mount CC was brought to national attention via a special feature article in the highly acclaimed *Observer Sport Monthly* magazine.

After the club's unqualified success in the Dales Council, Mount once again took the opportunity to provide higher-class cricket for its players in 2001.

This time they linked up with Howden Clough CC of the Leeds/West Riding League. Unfortunately,

the relationship with Howden Clough was short-lived. However, in 2002 another partnership received the green light, with Mount setting up shop with Staincliffe CC from the Central Yorkshire League.

Today, Mount stand as a wonderful example of a thriving community cricket club in action.

Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-written three books about the history of local cricket and the series is called *100 Not Out*. They are part of the £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crackensedge Lane, Dewsbury.

The books are published by Sigma Press. Call 01454 472405 for more information.

BATLEY is the next club in our special summer feature on cricket and the community in Batley. The series of articles

has been written by DR PETER DAVIES, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirkstall.



IT WAS in the 1840s, we are told, that cricket was first played in Batley. The probability is that, in some form, cricket reared its head much earlier.

One key date in the emergence of cricket in Batley was 1862, when an All England XI visited Batley and beat the home side by 62 runs.

This sporting spectacle would have increased interest in the embryonic game. It is no coincidence that a year later, Batley Cricket Club was founded as successor to Prince of Wales CC.

By 1880 the club had set up home at Mount Pleasant, and been joined by other local sportsmen, including rugby players who had set up Batley RFC - later to become known as The Gallant Youths.

When in May 1876 the United South of England XI played against 20 of Batley and District, the visitors included the great W G Grace.

The match was played in front of around 4,000 to 5,000 people. Grace scored 4 and 40 as the local 20 won by 11 wickets.

Two years after the United South of England visit, Batley took on the Australian tourists.

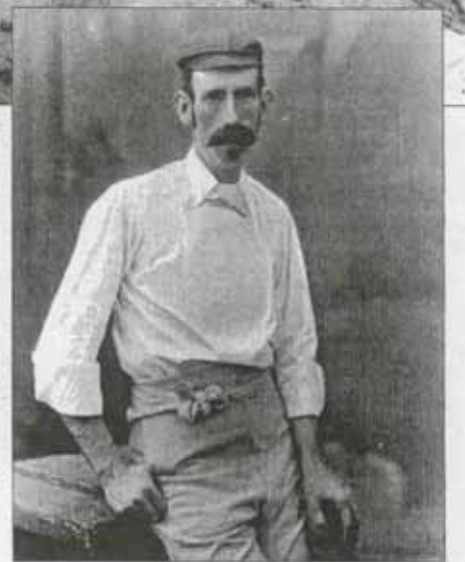
The Australian side was formidable, and included the demon fast bowler Fred Spofforth.



● Top: An aerial view of Batley Cricket Club and Mount Pleasant. (NS)

● Above: The Batley Cricket Club team from 1894. (NS)

● Right: Louis Hall, a dour opening batsman known locally as 'The Batley Giant'. (NS)



The day Batley C C took on the Aussies

FIRST CLASS

On September 17, 1883, Mount Pleasant hosted its first and last first-class fixture, between T Ennmett's XI v R G Barlow's XI.

In the early years of the Heavy Woollen Cup, Batley's record was only bettered by that of its great rival Dewsbury and Savile. It contested 10 finals before 1914, winning five of them.

Historically, Batley have always been one of the most colourful and controversial clubs in the competition - for example, pelting the supporters of the victorious Birstall side with grass sods in 1892.

Batley have also been one of the most important clubs in the history of the cup, competing almost every year and they are the fourth most successful club in the history of the competition.

On 12 occasions the trophy has gone to Mount Pleasant but only three of those were since the end of the Second World War.

The cup final has been staged at Mount Pleasant 13 times, a total only exceeded by Savile Town and Heckmondwike.

In the 1880s organised competition - in the shape of local leagues and cups - was still some years away. What therefore

existed was an informal network of inter-town friendly fixtures and challenge matches.

During this era the club's most famous personality was Louis Hall, a dour opening batsman and known locally as 'The Batley Giant'.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Batley won their fair share of Heavy Woollen Cups - triumphing in 1900, 1905, 1911, 1919, 1922, 1930 and 1943.

Under the captaincy of P Shaw, Batley stormed to the Central Yorkshire League 2nd XI First Division title in 1946. They also won the championship the

following year, 1947, with F Hirst as skipper.

During the post-war decades, Batley claimed their fair share of Central Yorkshire League silverware.

SAME YEAR

In 1967 Batley won the Central Yorkshire League First Division under the captaincy of Solly Adam. In the same year they also scooped the Wheatley Cup 2nd XI cup competition.

1989 was also an epic year for Batley CC. They won the Central Yorkshire League First Divi-

sion, the Jack Hampshire Memorial Trophy 1st XI Cup, the Yorkshire Council play-offs, the Heavy Woollen Cup and the Crowther Cup (2nd XI).

In the late-1990s social change impacted upon Batley Cricket Club.

The Asian community in Batley and Mount Pleasant area rallied round to save the club and supply it with players as others left to play elsewhere.

The old pavilion was redeveloped thanks to the hard work of volunteers from the club.

It now incorporates changing rooms, a tea room area and

scorebox. Adorning the outside walls are adverts for a variety of local companies and sponsors.

There is also a seating area in front of the building where batters waiting to go out to the middle can bite their nails in peace and quiet.

Over the years, the cricket club has put on an array of social events to help with fundraising: discos, race nights and prize draws.

Today, Batley CC stands as one of the most famous clubs in the area and boasts a distinguished history and heritage.

● Dr Davies and Rob Light have written three books about the history of local cricket and the series is called *180 Not Out*. They are part of the £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury. The books are published by Sigma Press. Call 01484 472405 for more information.

HANGING HEATON is the next club in our special summer feature on cricket and the community in Batley. The series of articles has been written by Dr Peter Davies, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees, which has been running over the last two years

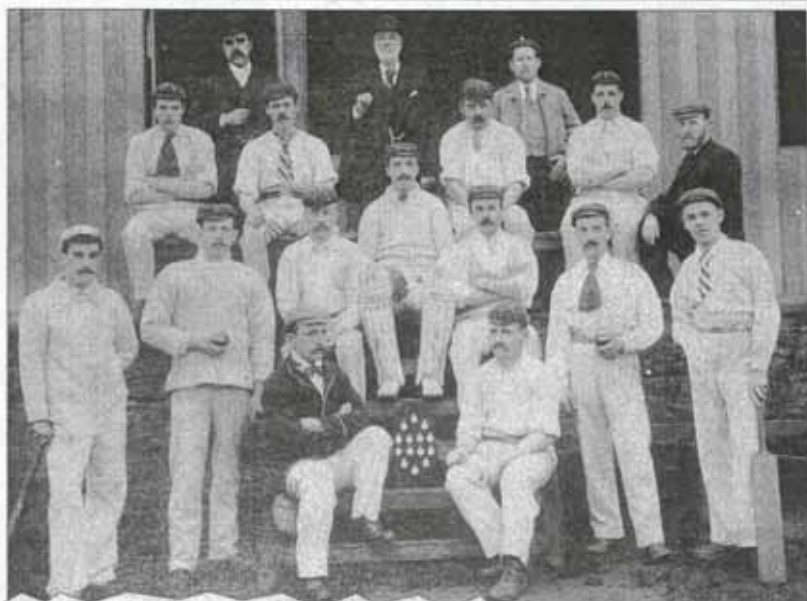
Club with a past shrouded in mystery

THE origins of Hanging Heaton Cricket Club, and of cricket in Hanging Heaton more generally, are shrouded in mystery. We know that in 1874 there were no Hanging Heaton teams featuring in the local press. However, around 1876 – the generally accepted date of formation of Hanging Heaton CC – there are a number of village teams fulfilling fixtures that gain the attention of local papers. In 1876 we come across Hanging Heaton Young Britannia. In 1877 we encounter a team called Hanging Heaton Mutual Improvement. A third team (there may well have been others) and certainly the team that seems to be the most established (with a regular, expanding fixture list from 1876 onwards, and also two teams – a 1st and 2nd XI) is Hanging Heaton New Star. Hanging Heaton New Star's affiliation is unclear. Was it a group of friends? A team linked to a local public house? Or even connected to the local Ebenezer Methodist Church? Hanging Heaton CC made their bow in the prestigious Heavy Woollen Cup in 1898. They

joined the Heavy Woollen League in 1898. A minor sensation occurred in 1899 when Hanging Heaton – until this date, relatively unsuccessful in the Heavy Woollen Cup – reached the final. They encountered the all-powerful Dewsbury and Savile side, and were dismissed for 28 in 9 overs. This score remains the lowest ever in a Heavy Woollen Cup final!

UNIQUE HAT-TRICK

And in 1926 – the year of the General Strike – L Carris of Drighlington CC took NINE wickets in a Heavy Woollen Cup encounter with Hanging Heaton. In the summer of 1930, with world war looming again, Hanging Heaton decided to join the Leeds League. During the last summer of the Second World War, Hanging Heaton pulled off a unique hat-trick – scooping the Central Yorkshire League title, the Yorkshire Council championship, and the Wheatley Cup. Hanging Heaton contested 15 of the 29 Heavy Woollen Cup finals between 1946 and 1974, winning



Hanging Heaton were Glidersome League winners in 1896.

INSET: Our sister paper the Dewsbury Reporter told the story of how the Tewitflooders were Yorkshire Council champions during World War II back in 1944.

BELOW LEFT: A matchday programme from 2004.



section was formed. In 1907 a new ladies' room received the go-ahead. The centrepiece was a 'grey/red' fireplace. The ladies' section also involved themselves in fundraising. Somewhat surprisingly, given Hanging Heaton's identification with and success in the Heavy Woollen Cup, Bennett

Lane has staged the final on only one occasion, in 1968. Interestingly, Hanging Heaton lifted the trophy themselves the year before and the year after. The village of Hanging Heaton – and the area surrounding the cricket ground – is famous for its bird life. The lapwing tewit, in particular, is a common sight – so much so that the club crest now features a small tewit!

period 1957-1962 Hanging Heaton played in five Heavy Woollen Cup finals and lost all of them, the closest being a seven-run defeat at the hands of Dewsbury in 1957. Between 1979 and 1985 the club were absent from the competition. Since re-joining, normal service has been resumed, with victory in 2000, and finishing runners-up on three occasions and being beaten semi-finalists in 1996 and

Only in 1999 was there real failure with a shock 3rd round defeat at the hands of Woodlands. Overall, Hanging Heaton are the sixth most successful club in the history of the Cup: seven-times winners and 14-times runners-up. It is clearly a very special competition for the men from Bennett Lane. A landmark in the history of Hanging Heaton Cricket Club occurred in 1966 when a ladies'

Hanging Heaton C.C.



SDS Bradford League – Division 1
Official Programme
Welcome to Bennett Lane

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Hanging Heaton CC were winners of four trophies in 1951.

Treat yourself to Malcolm Haigh's fourth local history book. Its 29 chapters containing more than 40 photos reveal how Batley people's ideas and ambitions affected the area, the country and the world at large.

FANTASTIC VALUE AT ONLY £13.95

Cross Bank – the club the Rumbolds built

CROSS Bank Wesleyan Chapel was opened in March, 1871, 'a neat and handsome' building according to the local Batley newspaper.

Two years previously, the Sunday school building had been opened. Around 600 young people attended the Sunday school.

The chapel building was paid for by the Brearley family (£4,000), and dedicated to the memory of Robert Brearley, the founder of the local worsted manufacturer's, based at Queen Street Mills, Bradford Road.

The first minister at the church was the Rev Frederick Friend.

The church had been built during a boom time for Methodism in the districts of Cross Bank and Carlinghow.

Before it closed down, Cross Bank Methodist Church was home to a mixed Bible class, a ladies fellowship, Scouts and Cubs, and a youth group.

Little is known about the origins of Cross Bank Methodist Cricket Club but 1904 is a possible date of formation.

The year 1921 witnessed the birth of one of the most important figures in the history of CMCC, Kenneth Rumbold – and a plaque, pinned to the wall of the Lea Road pavilion, commemorates this fact.

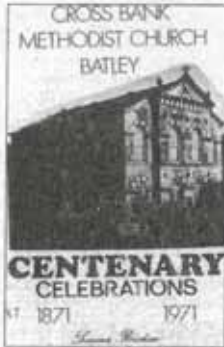
Ken's father Alf had been a dedicated member of the chapel – and had sung a 'bass solo' in 1919 as part of the Sunday school jubilee celebrations.

Both men played a vital role in the development and survival of Cross Bank Methodist Cricket Club – hence the official title of the Lea Road ground: The Rumbolds.

The inter-war years were dominated by the phenomenon of Sunday school – and church-linked cricket clubs. So much so that the Batley and District Sunday School League was a buoyant local competition, with a full fixture list every weekend.

Cross Bank played their cricket in this competition.

CROSS Bank Methodists CC is the next club in our special summer feature on cricket and the community in Batley. The series of articles has been written by DR PETER DAVIES, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees, which has been running over the last two years.



For two major reasons, 1963 was a big year for the club. Alf Rumbold purchased the ground... and Yorkshire and England legend Len Hutton visited Lea Road to do a spot of coaching.

In 1966 the club were league cup winners – and a famous team photo from the occasion hangs proudly in the Lea Road pavilion.

Note the fact that in the 1950s there were still enough local church-based teams to make a Sunday school league viable. Club benefactor Kenneth Rumbold was a member of the victorious 1956 side.

In 1996 and 1971 Cross Bank bagged the Dewsbury and Dis-

trict League Challenge Cup, and in 1979 the current pavilion was constructed.

Sadly, in 2000 club president Ken Rumbold died. A great servant to Cross Bank Methodists Cricket Club is the tribute paid to him in the Lea Road pavilion.

His widow Joan is still connected to the club and watches the occasional match at The Rumbolds.

Today Cross Bank Methodists Cricket Club have a lovely ground, a hard working set of members, and a thriving junior set-up.

The club is proud of its heritage. The Methodist link may have disappeared – a product of various factors, including the amalgamation of local chapels – but in the words of one senior figure at The Rumbolds, the club will never change its name.

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Cross Bank are trophy winners



Left: Cross Bank Methodist Church centenary celebration. (NS)

Right: Newspaper report of Cross Bank's victory in the Marsdin Trophy. (NS)

Below: A team photo from 1956. (NS)



BIRSTALL CC is the last club in our special summer feature on cricket and the community in Batley. The series of articles has been written by Dr PETER DAVIES, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees, which has been running over the last two years.

THE first cricket club to appear in Birstall was Birstall Albert Cricket Club, named after the Prince Consort. They played six matches a year, including Feast matches against Holmfirth.

Apparently, the team played near the Black Bull in Kirkgate as early as 1854. There is a certain amount of debate as to whether this is a direct ancestor of the current club.

This club had a small membership of around 30 people, and these saw fit to change their name in 1860 to Birstall Victoria – in honour of the Queen.

In 1860 Birstall Victoria moved from near the Black Bull to a site behind the National Schools in Scott's Field.

The team remained here for 10 years (occasionally competing under the name Birstall Cricket Club) until notice was served for a housing development.

GROUND

Therefore, a ground move had to take place yet again. Eventually, the club settled at its current location around 1870.

In 1883 Birstall Victoria embarked on a brief merger with Birstall Rugby Club.

However, this was short-lived and the separation of the two establishments in 1885 signalled the official birth of the cricket club as an entity.

This development also heralded the arrival of the club's first Heavy Woollen Cup victory in the same year, against rivals Dewsbury and Savile in the final.

This team retained the trophy the following year, beating Dewsbury and Savile again.

Plans for a grandstand were passed in April 1887 and around 5,000 people were reported as attending that year's Heavy Woollen Cup semi-final against Dewsbury and Savile.

PLOUGHED

Money was ploughed into ground improvements and in 1892 the pitch was leveled out using pit waste.

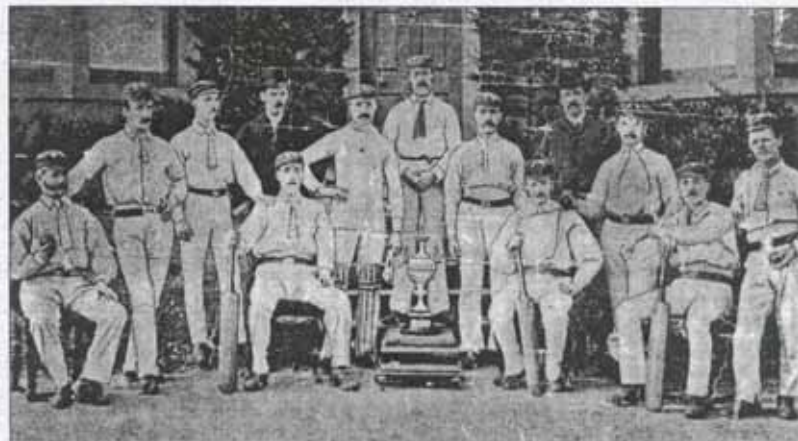
This investment seemed to have a knock-on effect on the field of play – one of the reasons (possibly) why the club was able to claim the Heavy Woollen Cup in 1892.

However, as the team walked home through Batley, some disgruntled opposition supporters pelted the team and the accompanying Birstall Band with grass sods. This didn't dampen the cel-

From Albert to Victoria – and beyond



Totally triumphant: Birstall Cricket Club's treble winning 1954 team.



Looking back more than 120 years to the 1885 side that won the Heavy Woollen Cup. (NS)

ebrations, which lasted for a full week and, as one local historian states: "The cup was hardly ever empty of alcohol." The club initially bought the Leeds Road ground in 1896.

However, problems with mortgage payments led to an appeal from the club to potential benefactors.

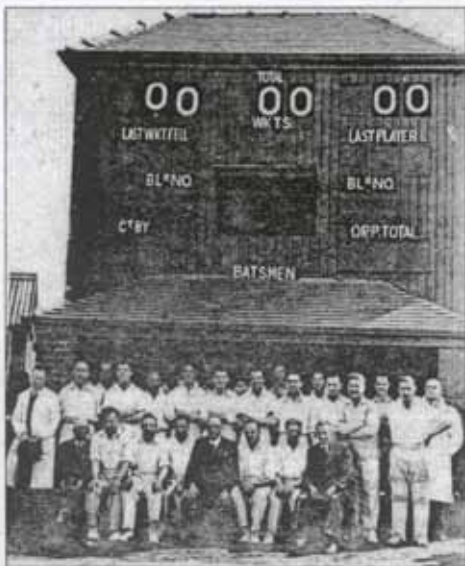
A key local personality, Dr Forsyth, responded to the plea.

Birstall beat Hopton Mills in the 1909 Heavy Woollen Cup final, and a great reception was reserved for the successful Birstall players.

The *Dewsbury Reporter* described the journey home:

been made. Birstall refused to continue the match on the Monday, claiming Ossett had failed to complete the match on the Friday.

The match was awarded to Ossett!



In front of the scoreboard at Birstall Cricket Club. (NS)

"The winning team, who journeyed to Birstall by wagonette, displaying the cup en route, were met at the Smithies by Birstall Old Band, and great crowds of people gathered to welcome the players. The wagonette journeyed up Station Road, followed by the crowd, and then on Low Lane, where there was a monster assembly."

MARGIN

The report details how a charity fundraising game took place after the opening ceremony, between Birstall and a team captained by local councillor and manufacturer (and coincidentally, captain of Batley CC) Mr FWH Auty. Victory, and by no small margin, was to Birstall.

In 1932 Thornhill were defeated in the final of the Heavy Woollen Cup. Club skipper on this occasion was J E Thurmand.

Three years later, in 1935, the Birstall v Ossett Heavy Woollen Cup semi-final started on the Saturday and continued on the Wednesday and Thursday evenings without completion.

Ossett failed to turn up on the Friday evening, claiming an agreement to continue on Monday had been made. Birstall refused to continue the match on the Monday, claiming Ossett had failed to complete the match on the Friday.

The match was awarded to Ossett!

After this dispute, the club left the Heavy Woollen League and spent the 1936 season in the Leeds League before re-joining the Heavy Woollen League for the 1937 season.

The hardships of wartime are evident in the informal nature of a contract to engage WH Newell as pro in 1945. His fee was 25/- a match.

It was written on the back of an invoice for a 12 volt six watt SCC bulb from George Box Ltd!

In 1947 a letter was written to thank the Ladies Committee for a gift of £50 – which they had donated to the club after a stint of fundraising.

Birstall Cricket Club claimed a remarkable treble in 1954: scooping the Central Yorkshire League, the Heavy Woollen Cup and the Wheatley Cup.

NEW BAR

After some difficult years in the mid-1960s, the club started to plan for the future. A new bar was opened in 1968. The clubhouse extension was then officially opened by Brian Sellers, the former Yorkshire captain, in the following year and the bar was extended in 1974.

And in recent decades Birstall have claimed their fair share of Central Yorkshire League silverware.

They also possess one of the best-appointed grounds in the area.

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