

Looking back

with Margaret Heward

This week sees the start of a new feature on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley. The series of articles has been written by Dr Peter Davies, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirkstiles which has been running over the last two years, and the first one focuses on Gomersal

Glorious days for Gomersal

THE first sign of cricket in Gomersal village was in 1863.

On August 14, 15 and 16, 22 cricketers of Gomersal and district (including several county players) starred in a match against the United England XI.

The date of the club's formation is uncertain, but the majority of sources indicate that Gomersal St Mary's Cricket Club (as the club was then known) was founded in 1881 by the village vicar, the Rev RF Taylor.

It played its matches near the Wheatsheaf Inn, on a field also used by the local football team – also founded by the sports-mad clergyman. This church link is significant, and is repeated across other clubs in West Yorkshire and beyond.

In 1886 an entry for Gomersal appeared in the Athletic News Cricket Supplement and Club Directory.

The club was re-formed in 1892 and moved to what became its permanent home – Oxford Road. This had previously been the site of the Little Gomersal Colliery.

Some members remember this as the official birth of the club, as the centenary was celebrated in 1992. Later sources also demonstrate the difficulty the club has had in dating its own formation.

On the eve of the Great War, Gomersal was able to field a women's cricket team.



ABOVE: The 1914 women's team at Gomersal. **LEFT:** Famous Gomersal old boy Wilf Barber.

Club to Gomersal Cricket Club. The club had always been financially solvent, so when a decline in profits was encountered due to falling membership, the club was concerned. Members thought of ways to increase income – one of the suggestions being a bar. The president, however, decided that the best way to move forward was a door-to-door canvass of local households. Young children were also encouraged to play cricket at the club.

The end of the Second World War for Gomersal Cricket Club meant a new tea room. The club bought an ex-army Nissen hut to serve this purpose.

Following the purchase of the tea room, Gomersal continued to develop their ground. In 1962 a bar was opened in the Nissen hut. The club then decided, in 1974, to open a new clubhouse and changing rooms. After coming so close so many times in the past, finally in 1984 Gomersal became Heavy Woollen Cup winners for the first time.

1992 marked the 100th anniversary of the formation of the club. No doubt this event led to lots of nostalgia – and thoughts about the future. In 1993 Gomersal celebrated their first-place finish in the Central Yorkshire League but they didn't stop there. In all they claimed three trophies that summer.

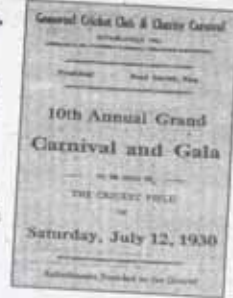
After lifting the Central

LEFT: The 1966 2nd XI crowthorpe cup winners. **INSET:** The programme for the 1930 charity carnival.

A BOOK about the Heavy Woollen Cup – one of the most famous cricketing competitions in the world – was launched at Gomersal Cricket Club on Monday. From Batley to Barnsley is written by historian Mike Butler and is a year-by-year chronicle of the competition.

It is published in association with the Cricket Heritage Project and for information on how to get a copy telephone 01484 472405.

Mike Butler launches his book surrounded by (from left) Lesley Robinson, David Sharp, Peter Davies, Bob Shaddockton and Keith Robinson. (090513)



Yorkshire League's Premier Division title

in 1999, Gomersal had the confidence they needed to make an application to join the Bradford Cricket League in 2000.

After joining the league, they quickly gained promotion to the top division.

Today, Gomersal stands as a modern, progressive club with excellent facilities. It is also a club that is very conscious of its own history and heritage.

Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-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, and copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury.

The books are published by Sigma Press. Call 01484 472405 for more information.



In the second of his features on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley, Dr Peter Davies looks at Cleckheaton CC

A treat for fans of cricket

CLECKHEATON CC was formed in 1864. It was originally known as Hunsworth Mills Cricket Club and was set up as a workshop team.

As the club website announces: 'In that year [1864] a strip measuring 40 yards by 10 yards was laid out in the field on which the club still plays to this very day, and a year later in 1865 members subscribed to have a wooden hut erected to provide proper facilities. A further year down the line the pitch was extended to a much more impressive 40 yards by 40 yards. The year 1872 saw the building of a brick pavilion to replace the wooden hut that had by now become too small for the ever-increasing band of new members.'

This pavilion, built by the club's own members at Moorend during their leisure hours, probably stood close to where today's main bar area is situated.

In 1872 also, the club operated with 1st and 2nd teams for the first time, and William Hatton, a wicketkeeper from Liverpool, became the club's first professional player to be engaged for a full season. Only 19 years after formation, in 1883, Cleckheaton became one of the 'original' teams to compete in the highly prestigious Heavy Woollen Cup.

The club changed its name in 1885 - from Hunsworth Mills CC to Cleckheaton CC. This was a popular move, as there was no cricket club bearing the town's name.

Cleckheaton Alexandra, who had played near Whitcliffe Mount, had ceased to exist in 1863.

Cleckheaton's ground, close to the mills, underwent some major changes in 1894. Over 30,000 square feet of turf was re-laid.

The president of the club officially opened the 'new' ground on 19 May 1894. This was a joyful day and the occasion was marked by an unforgettable cricketing encounter.

A match was arranged against Rastrick - and Yorkshire star J Tunnicliffe joined the Cleckheaton side. In 1896 the cricket club amalgamated with the Crown Green Bowling Club.

Then, in 1903, Cleckheaton joined the prestigious Yorkshire Council cricket competition, having previously competed in the Spen Valley League.

During the 1930s Cleckheaton

RIGHT: An aerial view of the Cleckheaton ground back in 1981.



LEFT: Cleckheaton Cricket Club's first XI from 1980. BELOW LEFT: The ground pictured around 1910. INSET: A matchday programme from two years ago.

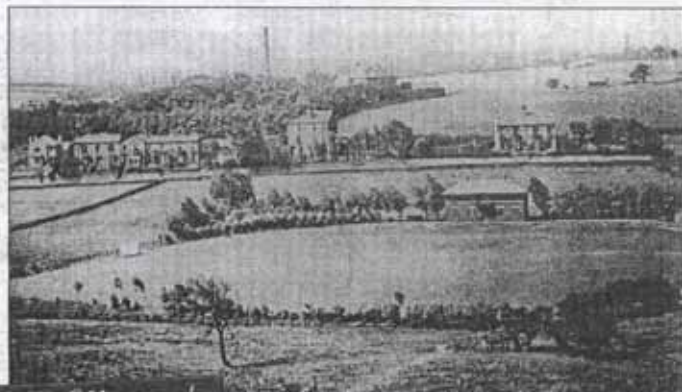
CC became the proud owners of their ground, and also Frank Morton became one of the main driving forces at Moorend.

He was also one of the founding fathers of the Central Yorkshire Cricket League in 1937, and remained its president until 1958.

After a spell in the Heavy Woollen League, Cleckheaton joined the Central Yorkshire League (CYL) as founder members in 1938. They remained there until 1975, playing such teams as Ossett, Batley, Staincliffe, Birstall and Mirfield.

After coming close so many times in the past, finally, in 1939, as war approached, Cleckheaton became Heavy Woollen Cup winners. They beat local rivals Scholes by 65 runs in the final at Hartshead Moor.

The period between 1939 and 1959 did not witness very much success at Cleckheaton.



However, in 1948 Cleckheaton managed to achieve an astonishing victory against Birstall in the second round of the Heavy Woollen Cup, posting a total of 411

in the process. This was their highest score in the competition. Cleckheaton not only won the Heavy Woollen Cup in 1959, but also went on to scoop the trophy the year after, in 1960. They beat Hanging Heaton in both finals. 1964 marked the 100th

anniversary of the formation of the club. No doubt this occasion led to lots of nostalgia - and also thoughts about the future. Cleckheaton merged with the local rugby union club to form Cleckheaton Sports Club in 1972.

HONOUR

This was an innovative move and following on from this, in 1973, the club was chosen to host the Heavy Woollen Cup final again, an honour that had not come their way since 1943. After hosting two major cup finals, and also doing well on the field, Cleckheaton had the confidence they needed to apply to join the Bradford Cricket League. (This meant they withdrew temporarily from the Heavy Woollen

Cup). The club's first match in the Bradford League came on April 24 1976, with Windhill the opponents. Cleckheaton got off to an excellent start. Opening bowler Seb Grose recorded figures of six for 16 and Windhill were bowled out for just 37!

The decision to recruit overseas players was made in 1977, when the 1st XI was in urgent need of strengthening. Since this date, local cricket-watchers have been treated to some of the best in foreign cricketing talent.

The match at Moorend on July 18 was the defining moment of the 1998 season. Against Ben Rhydding, Cleckheaton posted the highest total recorded in the history of the

Bradford League. Their total of 427 runs beat the record previously held by Bradford and Bingley who scored 406 for eight in 1990.

Today, Cleckheaton CC stands as an ambitious and progressive club, with a high-quality junior set-up and wonderful facilities only a six-hit away from Chain Bar and the M62.

● Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-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, and copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crakenedge Lane, Dewsbury. The books are published by Sigma Press. Call 01484 472405 for more information.

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The 1876 team photo. (N5)



Len Squire when the ground flooded. (N5)

Hartshead cricketing memories

ACCORDING to official club publications: "It is generally agreed that in 1876 a party of young men first started playing cricket, under the name of Hartshead Moor Cricket Club, at the top of the Moor.

"Later on they obtained the use of the present field, and under the tenancy of Messrs H Holdroyd and Joseph Wilkinson had the use of it free of cost until almost 1900."

It is a fact that for 129 years, the club has been known by the same name (Hartshead Moor CC) and played at the same venue (Highmoor Lane) - a relatively unusual occurrence in local cricket circles.

In 1886, three years after the competition had begun, Hartshead Moor CC joined the Heavy Woollen Cup.

After previous successes in 1894 and 1895, Hartshead Moor became champions of the Spen Valley and District League for the third time in 1910.

In 1925 an opportunity arose to buy the ground for £350. Helped by the president of the club and a huge fundraising campaign, £200 was raised

By Peter Davies

towards the cost, with a loan taken out for the remaining £150.

In the mid-1920s club officials said new accommodation was "imperative". By 1928 the existing pavilion had been redeveloped.

It was opened officially on August 25 in the presence of club representatives and W Brooke on behalf of architects Messrs G Castle and Son.

But the weather couldn't oblige and the scheduled fixture against Heckmondwike had to be cancelled due to rain!

Women have played an important role at Highmoor Lane. This was confirmed in the Jubilee Bazaar brochure of 1926: "Had we a book many times this size it would not be large enough to express our thanks to our ladies for the way they have helped in looking after the social side of our club."

In 1937 plans submitted by Herbert Walker were approved to put up a scoring pavilion. On July 23 1938 the new scoreboard was opened, with a range of Yorkshire cricketing VIPs pre-

sent for the occasion.

Club member JH Crossland offered a prize to the first batsman to record a century under the shadow of the new scoreboard, and Moor batsman Norman Mounsey wasted no time at all - hitting 102 not out on the very day the box was unveiled.

MILITARY

In 1940 a photograph of the first XI in the form of a greetings card was sent to all those who had donned military colours, with a postal order also included. The club reported that in 1941: "We were still not feeling any serious effects of the War in personnel and were still able to field a useful side".

A year later, two female members were called up and because of an increase in the amount of male cricketers being called to action, the club admitted that it was finding it difficult to raise two league teams.

After only three seasons in the Bradford Section of the Yorkshire Council, the club moved into the Central Yorkshire League in 1944.



The club scooped the Heavy Woollen Cup for the very first time in 1958. Hanging Heaton were the opponents...and Moor ran out winners by 44 runs.

In 1964 the club joined the prestigious Bradford League in search of higher-grade cricket.

The hamlet of Hartshead Moor is famous for its cricket club - and also for the M62 that passes close by. The motorway opened in 1970, and three years later a service station was built, almost underneath the cricket ground.

Some club members were secretly delighted. "At last it put

us on the map!" was the reaction of one.

There were implications: land was lost, and this was only partly offset when, soon after, the club acquired 1,300 square yards off the Kirklees Estate. The old pavilion (built in 1928) had to go and a new one had to be built.

On windy afternoons, with the M62 down below, Hartshead Moor can be quite a noisy ground, but the locals have got used to it.

"It is open to the elements. It's also noisy, but only at certain times," says one player.

Instead of charging an admission fee to games, the club sells a 16-page matchday programme at every home fixture played by the 1st XI in the Bradford League.

The front cover features a photograph of the first-ever Hartshead Moor side of 1876, which demonstrates that even in the 21st century, the club is acutely aware of its history and heritage.

And in Leonard Squire - ex-player, club official and generous benefactor - the club boast a true gentleman stalwart.

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In the fourth of his features on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley **DR PETER DAVIES** looks at the history of Scholes CC

Centre of life in village

IN THE 1860s and 1870s cricket was extremely popular in Scholes. Local historian David Wilding tells us that a cricket team attached to the local Victoria Institute was founded in 1869. The institute was akin to a local community centre and in many ways the centre of village life. But the cricket team that eventually came to be known as Scholes CC was formed as Scholes Albert Mills CC around 1870.

The Albert Mill Company was formed in 1860 as a friendly society and company mill. According to Wilding, the team was named the Albert Mill Co but was mainly made up of Firth Holdsworth's employees. Firth Holdsworth's specialised in weaving and worsted spinning. In 1882 Scholes Albert Mills were drawn against Roberttown All Saints in the first round of the inaugural Heavy Woollen Cup, staged in 1883.

It is probable that Scholes Albert Mills CC played all their home games at New Popplewell Lane, on a patch of land that was once a quarry. The land came into being as a cricket ground when between 20 and 30 workers filled and levelled the ground using nothing but picks, shovels and wheelbarrows.

In 1894 Scholes joined the Spen and Calder Valley League - one of the many localised cricket competitions that were in existence in this era.

In Scholes's third round Heavy Woollen Cup tie against Heckmondwike in 1897, there was amazing controversy surrounding the climax to the game.

Scholes defeated Heckmondwike. However, the losers protested because the Scholes players had left the field of play before the final batsman had had chance to appear.

The result stood, as the umpires agreed that at least two minutes had passed. Heckmondwike still needed 17 runs to win at this point.

In 1906 the club was a founder member of another local competition, the Spen Valley and District League. They finished the season in seventh

place. Scholes Cricket Club displayed its ambition and aspirations when, in 1916 - as war raged across the globe - it was accepted as a member of the prestigious county-wide cricket competition the Yorkshire Council. According to David Wilding, there is evidence to suggest that knur and spell - an early form of golf - was played in the village in this period.

"Behind the Rising Sun," he writes, "in May 1916, Dan Smith, landlord of the Rising Sun, was granted permission by the Bradford Justices to sell intoxicating liquor provided he undertook not to have any rabbit coursing or knur and spell matches."

"In addition locals engaged in illegal cock fighting, arrow throwing, pigeon shooting, dog racing, and 'pitch and toss', nearly all these sports being occasions for heavy betting." In 1919 the fields in the village that were used for sport, and two adjoining

fields, were put up for sale. It was decided that the community would purchase the land in order to use it for cricket and other games. A former playing member, Thompson Jowett, was generous enough to donate £500 towards the total cost of the land (£1,000).

In 1921 two tennis courts were erected adjacent to the cricket field. The year after a football pitch was created, thereafter used by Scholes Old Boys AFC. A year later, in 1922, a pavilion was built at an estimated cost of £860. Viscount Cowdray presented the trustees with a cheque for £3,400, which enabled the work to be started. In 1939 Scholes played Batley in a Heavy Woollen Cup semi-final tie.

Frustratingly, the playing area was partially flooded by rain match! Scholes were eventually defeated by Cleckheaton in the final. In 1944 the club joined the Central Yorkshire Cricket League, six years after it was formed in 1938. 1956 stands out as the club's best season in the aftermath of the Second World War. In fact, it was the start of a string of successful years. The club won division two unopposed under the captaincy of JK Bluns. They were also



ABOVE: The Albert Mill Company Cricket Club. LEFT: The Scholes line-up from 1938. BELOW: A programme from the sportsman's dinner. BELOW RIGHT: A write-up of a match in the Guardian from 1976.



with Scholes needing only 16 runs still to win. The Batley captain, JS Barritt, did not wish to return on another evening, instead opting to put on a raincoat and continue the

runners-up in the Yorkshire Council; however, they were bowled out for 38 in the play-off final.

The following season, 1957, the 2nd XI became division one champions under the captaincy of D Asquith.

The current clubhouse was built in 1980, with the help of a loan from Tetley's Brewery. This loan, though generous, did not please everyone as there were two Methodists on the club committee who opposed the offer of aid from a large brewing company.

A new scoreboard soon followed as

SCHOLES ALBERT MILLS v. STAINCLIFFE BRITANNIA (Second Elevens).—Played at Staincliffe, on Saturday last, and resulted in a victory for the home club with four wickets to fall. Score:—

SCHOLES—Robertshaw 0, Asquith 2, Eastwood 1, Butterfield 6, Gomersall 2, Hargreaves 1, Squire 0, H. Butterfield 0, F. Squire 1, Hanson (not out) 1, Balstrick 2, extras 14; total 30.

STAINCLIFFE—Esley 1, Smith (not out) 9, Haslam 21, Pickering 0, T. Robinson 4, B. Clarkson 1, Esley (not

well. In 1965, under the captaincy of Dr C M Raynor, Scholes shared the Bradley Trophy for the most points picked up by the 1st XI in the last six matches of the season with Morley.

In 1997 the club received a grant from the Lottery Sports Fund for over £130,000. The money was used to extend and improve the pavilion.

Scholes netted the division one title in 2004, finishing 21 points above the second placed side. In doing so they also scooped the Bradley Trophy. They thus entered the Premiership.

The icing

on the cake came when the club also claimed the best-kept ground award, a fantastic tribute to hardworking groundsman Andy Spencer. In October 2004 the club welcomed speaker Graham Lloyd (Lancashire and England) and comedian Zak Stevens to a special sportsman's dinner.

Today, Scholes are an ambitious and progressive local league cricket club, with an attractive ground and a range of supportive sponsors.

Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-written three books about the history of local cricket and the series is called *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 Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury.

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In the sixth of his features on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley Dr Peter Davies looks at the history of Liversedge CC

Team at heart of village

IN THE 1960s there was a cluster of teams in the Liversedge area, including Hightown Heights, Roberttown Star of Brunswick, Littletown United, Littletown Young Alma, Hightown Young England and Roberttown All Saints (the parish church-connected club generally viewed as the precursor to Liversedge CC).

The club has always played at Roberttown Lane. The ground is sited on an old tip linked to an old glassworks. The land was probably made into a cricket ground around 1900, soon after the birth of Liversedge CC as successor club to Roberttown All Saints CC.

In the early days, the ground had a big slope. The Dymond family of the nearby Dymond Pit, in Headlands Road, arranged for rails and tubs to be used, and a band of volunteers from the village shipped tons and tons of earth from the top end of the field to the lower regions, and so negated the slope to some extent.

In 1919 three local men bought the ground for the club, but on condition that it was used exclusively for cricket. Today, Roberttown Lane is an attractive venue that has hosted many set-piece cricketing occasions, including many Heavy Woollen Cup finals.

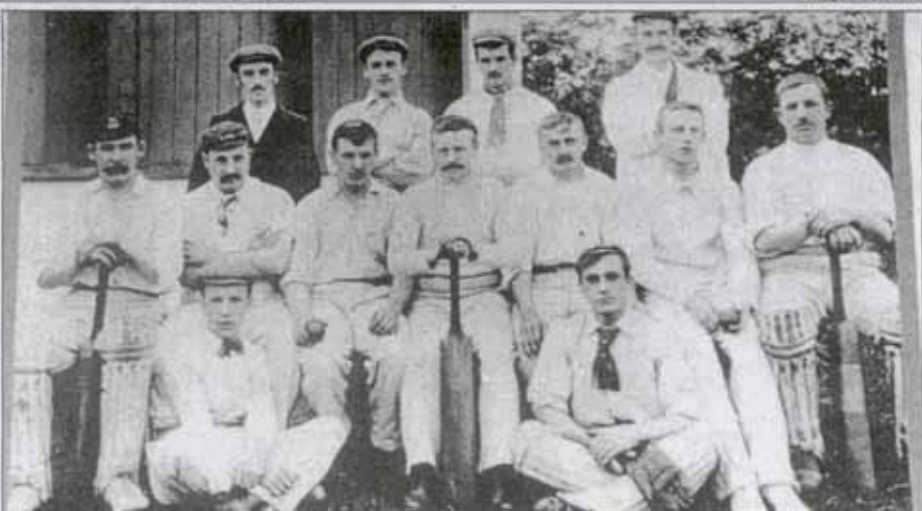
On matchdays, practice nets are put up on the outfield to aid the players in their quest for a last-minute workout. On November 5 each year, the

PARTY TIME: Liversedge were the 1966 Heavy Woollen Cup winners.

field is put to a totally different use, with the local firework display holding centre stage. In 1905 Liversedge were founder members of the Spen Valley Cricket League. They won it in the first year – and the second!

Roberttown All Saints had entered the inaugural Heavy Woollen Cup in 1883 but had lost in the first round against Scholes. Until the beginning of the First World War, Liversedge's best achievement in the competition was to reach the semi-final on one occasion. Successive finals were reached in 1916 and 1917 but in both cases Ossett were triumphant. In 1920 Liversedge joined the Heavy Woollen League but

suffered a disastrous debut year: played 16, won 2, lost 10, drawn 4, points 2. They finished bottom, and only gained two points (clubs got one point for a win – nothing else counted). Liversedge's first final triumph in the Heavy Woollen Cup came in 1929 against Morley. A further cup triumph followed in 1933, with Heckmondwike the beaten finalists. After spells in the Spen Valley League and Heavy Woollen League, Liversedge joined the Central Yorkshire League for the 1938 season. Heartbreak followed in 1943,



ABOVE: 1897 team photo.

LEFT: Allan Trevitt who recorded an incredible bowling performance for Liversedge 2nd XI against Batley 2nd XI on June 20, 1981. He bowled seven overs, for seven maidens, no runs and nine wickets.



Once upon a time, Heckmondwike were the local rivals. After all, it is walking distance from Roberttown Lane to Cemetery Road, home of 'Heck'. And the 'big match' was usually scheduled for Whit Monday in May.

However, once Heckmondwike switched leagues, it was the annual encounters against Mirfield Parish Cavaliers that set hearts racing in and around Liversedge.

Today, the club boasts an attractive and well equipped clubhouse and a colourful and informative website.

added to insurance monies, and in the end the club was able to build a large new building.

This has survived until today, with a dressing room extension arriving in 1998.

West Indian spin bowler Sunny Ramadhin starred for Liversedge as they scooped the Heavy Woollen Cup in World Cup year, 1966.

Throughout the club's history, women have played an invaluable role, as the LCC committee minutes make plain:

□ April 1967 – 'Ladies Committee were granted permission to purchase more crockery for the teas.'

□ Dec 1967 – 'The president gave special thanks... to the ladies of the club who had once again done an excellent job.'

□ Dec 1967 – 'It was discussed as to the format of a social committee and a suggestion that some of the ladies be approached was agreed.'

□ Dec 1967 – 'The ceiling in the ladies' toilet had been repaired and permission to pay was granted.'

□ January 13 1968 – Mrs T Hallsworth became club treasurer. The minute book records that on 27 January,

'Mrs Hallsworth said that she had not expected the position to be as difficult as it was going to be and hoped that some recognition would be made to our ex-treasurer for doing the job for 14 years.'

□ Oct 1968 – 'Pointed out by Mr Gomerall that lady members

were not allowed by rules to hold office unless they became full members and paid full subs.'

□ Nov 1968 – 'Mrs Hallsworth would become a full member.'

□ Nov 1968 – 'Presentation night was all fixed and it was decided that all ladies who were helping with food arrangements would not be required to pay. Flowers would also be purchased for the ladies.'

□ Mar 1969 – 'The pre-season get-together on April 15 was organised and ladies would be providing the buffet.'

□ Nov 1969 – 'Passed with thanks to all the ladies for an excellent buffet on presentation night and for their efforts throughout the year.'

□ Mar 1990 – 'Ladies thanked the committee for their bar snack evening which was enjoyed very much.'

Dogs have also been a perennial issue at Roberttown Lane:

□ 'The steward asked if he could build a kennel and pen for his dog at the rear of the club. Passed.' (Mar 1988)

□ 'Mr Newsome asked if we could have a word with a member who brings a dog in that tends to run about. Secretary to have a word.' (Aug 1968)

□ 'The case of dogs being on the field was raised and a suitable notice should be put at the ground entrance.'

(Jun 1989)

when Batley overcame Liversedge in the final of the Heavy Woollen Cup.

At one point in the post-war era, Liversedge CC sponsored a Workshops Competition. This was played for by an array of local mill and factory sides.

In fact, the actual trophy awarded to the winning works team was the special trophy won by Roberttown All Saints in 1885, 1886 and 1887 (all we know about this competition was that it was an early Spen Valley cricket tournament).

The old pavilion at Roberttown Lane burned down in the 1960s. Most of the club's archives were destroyed in the process. The club had to appeal to villagers for funds to rebuild the structure, and money came flooding in. This was



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Victory parade for all-conquering Heck

HECKMONDWIKE Cricket Club was officially founded on May 28 1864, and is the oldest club in North Kirkfoes. However its origins are, in reality, much earlier than this.

In 1838 a businessman from Nottingham, Dean Allen, and a group of prominent local merchants, such as William Wharton and Thomas F Firth, are credited with being founders of the club.

These men arranged matches for their new team against Wakefield, Crossland Moor (Huddersfield), Bradford, Halifax and Harrogate. When September of the club's first season came around, this is how the results panned out: Won 10, Drawn 4, Lost 6.

This was deemed to be an excellent record considering it was the club's first season as a recognised team. Celebrations took place at the Woodman Inn (which was next to the Red Lion), where all the players and honorary members joined in. After this, the first annual meeting was held. The treasurer of the club deduced that, after paying expenses, they had made a £13 profit for the season, and immediately put it in the Heckmondwike bank.

The team originally played close to where the current Market Place is sited, moving shortly after to Royle Fold. It was in 1873 that the club moved into Cemetery Road, and that is where it has played ever since. Heckmondwike were the first ever club to win the Heavy Woollen Cup, way back in 1862. In this period only clubs located within a six-mile radius of Batley town hall could enter the competition! This distance was later extended to nine miles in 1886, 12 miles in 1901, 15 miles in 1929, and finally 18 miles in 2000. The victorious Heckmondwike side were met by a crowd of several thousand locals on their return to Heckmondwike. The



MAKE MINE A DOUBLE: Heckmondwike's double-winning side of 1934.
BELOW: A letter from 1883 declining an offer of a season at Heckmondwike CC.

team were given a rapturous reception by the crowd, who were led by the Flush Mill Band.

The team then paraded the trophy to the Sir Robert Peel Inn, and of course the Cricketers Arms (and why not?). The victory also received significant attention in the local press.

Not only was the cup victory a great achievement, it also came just a year after the club had nearly faced closure. In 1882 Heckmondwike CC's finances were in such dire straits that creditors had already begun to seize valuables. However, a young committee team took on the responsibility of improving the club's fortunes, and they did a marvellous job.

In addition to winning the



Heavy Woollen Cup, they ended the season in profit by £9. With a famous cup win and an improved bank balance, the

prestige of the club began to rise. Heckmondwike joined the Yorkshire Council in 1911 - which had them locking horns with cricket clubs from all over the county. This was a very prestigious cricket competition.

After further Heavy Woollen Cup final victories against Osett in 1907, and East Bierley in 1927, Heckmondwike retained the trophy in 1938.

The final that year against Morley saw an amazing display from three young players: W Knowles - 66, G Mayman - 62 n-o, and G Blackburn - 56. These three batsmen helped to increase the Heckmondwike score from 130 for 7 to 327 for nine wickets. This is all the more remarkable when it is realised that all three were tail-enders! Heckmondwike went on to win the match by 217 runs - and also the Heavy Woollen Cup!



In his latest feature on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley, Dr Peter Davies looks at the history of the oldest club in North Kirkfoes - Heckmondwike CC.

Roaring Thirties

The 1930s were an incredibly triumphant decade for the club. They won the Heavy Woollen League four times, the Heavy Woollen Cup four times, and the Crowther Cup once.

The Heckmondwike 1st XI of 1934 were double victors; they were successful in both the Heavy Woollen League and Cup - where they beat Liversedge in the final by five wickets.

This 1936 side continued the club's winning tradition. In this year, Heckmondwike became Heavy Woollen League champions, in addition to winning the Heavy Woollen Cup. This time it was Cleckheaton who they defeated in the final, by five wickets.

A year later, in 1937, Heckmondwike and their officials played an important part in the formation of the Central Yorkshire Cricket League in 1937.

With the Second World War over, it was time to return to winning ways for Heckmondwike Cricket Club. The first major victory came in the form of the Heavy Woollen Cup. They defeated arch-rivals Batley by 68 runs in the final of 1945.

This was followed by successive victories over Dewsbury and Hanging Heaton in the same competition in 1947 and 1948. 1948 also saw Heckmondwike crowned champions of the Central Yorkshire Cricket League. Between 1946 and 1974 Heckmondwike appeared in five Heavy Woollen Cup finals and won four of them. The last of Heckmondwike's 14 cup wins came in 1981 against Liversedge. Their last appearance in a final came two years later, when they were surprisingly

beaten by Chickenley. Heckmondwike have the remarkable record of winning 14 of their 19 Heavy Woollen Cup finals - a success rate of 74 per cent, which is much superior to that of any of the other multiple winners.

Heckmondwike occupy third place in the all-time list of Heavy Woollen Cup contestants.

The Heckmondwike ground at Cemetery Road has hosted the Heavy Woollen Cup final on 22 occasions, more than any other venue except Saville Town. It is, however, almost two decades since the final was last held there.

1964 marked the 100th Anniversary of the formation of the club. No doubt this event led to lots of nostalgia - and thoughts about the future.

A year later, the club staged a 10-mile sponsored walk to help raise money for ground improvements.

Once again, Heckmondwike produced the goods when it mattered. The seasons 1970, 1977 and 1978 were arguably the greatest in the history of the club.

The 1st XI were crowned Central Yorkshire Cricket League champions in all three of these years. They also won the Bradley Trophy for the most points gained in the last six matches of 1977.

1977: not only was this the year of punk and the Queen's Silver Jubilee; it was also the year that the new Heckmondwike clubhouse finally opened its doors. It had been 12 years in the making, but now the wait was finally over.

Today, Heckmondwike play in the Huddersfield Central League together with Mirfield CC and other clubs in South and North Kirkfoes and beyond.

BELOW: The team of 1978 celebrate winning the Central Yorkshire Cricket League three times in a row



Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-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 and copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury.

The books are published by Sigma Press. Call Dr Davies on 01484 472405 for more information.

In the last of his features on Cricket and the Community in the Spen Valley, Dr Peter Davies traces the history of Heckmondwike and Carlinghow United Cricket Club

Sport and worship went hand in hand

HECKMONDWIKE and Carlinghow United Cricket Club was not founded under this name. In 1890 Upper Independent Chapel was built in Chapel Lane, Heckmondwike, and it was this institution that gave rise to Upper Chapel Cricket Club, which later merged with a Carlinghow cricket club to form Heckmondwike and Carlinghow United Cricket Club.

The construction of the Upper Independent Chapel led to the formation of the original cricket team. The church gave the community a meeting place where they could arrange social and leisure events such as cricket matches. Early members of the team are likely to have been closely associated with the church. Later evidence suggests that this was also the case many years thereafter. The original ground is still used today and is situated on Chapel Lane, Heckmondwike. The first mention of a 'Cricket Club' came in Upper Chapel literature of 1892. Links to the church in the early years were clearly very strong. The Upper Independent Chapel 'manual' for 1897 shows that many people were initially attracted to the cricket



club and through this then became attached also to the church. The church encouraged the young men of the team to join their church and Sunday school. Cricket was not the only sport that the church encouraged. Church manuals dating as far back as the early 1900s carry reports about other sports clubs. The bowling club dates back to around 1920 and a tennis club was set up in 1922. The 1930s witnessed the start of a boom period. In 1937 the club achieved their first major success as winners of the Spen Valley League. In the last summer of peacetime - 1939 - they scooped the Herald Cup. The beginning of the

Second World War led to many problems for Upper Chapel Cricket Club, as it did for most of local clubs at this time. The war meant that the club found it extremely hard to raise a side. 1946 was a year of joy for many with the ending of the conflict. However as the Upper Chapel manual shows, on returning from the forces, many ex-players were shocked at the state of the pitch and pavilion! This shock led to the re-formation of the club, primarily to work on the ground. A meeting of interested parties led not only to the re-inauguration of this cricket club but the foundation of the now well known church youth movement: BCYO.

Work was done on the field and pavilion. The club was indebted to many volunteers and also to the church for their financial backing during this time of need. The club welcomed back many old members and also encouraged new members to join. They now had the confidence to maintain the good name of Upper Chapel CC. The club also stressed the importance of non-playing members - they had been crucial in the immediate post-war years. The hard work of the late summer of 1946, put in by the members of the re-formed cricket club, was justly rewarded during the 1947 season. The club's 1946 aim to

keep up the high standards, and follow in the footsteps of its forbears, had clearly been achieved. In 1947 Upper Chapel lost no games at all! They won the Batley and District Sunday school League Cup and the Batley and District Sunday school Challenge Cup. This was a great achievement considering that the club was still in the process of reform. The season saw them playing on half the original playing area and changing in the Sunday school rooms. In July 1962 Upper Chapel won the Batley and District Sunday school final at Mount Pleasant against Cross Bank Methodists. In 1966 the Batley

Cricket League folded and Upper Chapel joined the Dewsbury and District League in Section C. The league handbook shows that in 1969 they won Section C and thus entered Section B for the 1970 season. By 1974 they had been relegated to Section C. Throughout this decade they yo-yoed between Sections B and C. Again, in 1977 the club gained promotion to Section B but were relegated at the end of the 1978 season. In this period, the side was based around three families: the Sykeses, Walkers and Aspinalls. After changing their name to Heckmondwike URC CC, the club amalgamated with another local side to form Heckmondwike and Carlinghow United CC. Today the club is thriving in the Huddersfield Central League, and there is always a great spirit and enthusiasm at Chapel Lane.



ABOVE: Heckmondwike and Carlinghow's team of 1975.
LEFT: 1937 spen valley league winners.
FAR LEFT: Time for tea - a tea lady brings out a cuppa for the thirty players.



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An undated team photo from another successful year.

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