

THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

ADMINISTRATORS

Traditionally, the cricket club committee has been almost always all-male: male president, male chairman, male secretary, male treasurer.



But researcher Dennis O’Keefe says that at Illingworth St. Mary’s CC in the early nineteenth century: ***‘The women on the committee were wives of the more prominent men in the club. I think it included the vicar’s wife, which would be deliciously Agatha Christie.’***

Today, things have changed. Of course, there are still a multitude of tea ladies, and a plethora of female scorers, and always a number of willing fundraisers, but women have also taken on other mantles.

One of the most visible of all Calderdale cricket club officials was Miss Selina Barrett, president of Stones CC (Ripponden) during the inter-war period.



She took centre stage when the 1938 Halifax Parish Cup-winning team was photographed, and also appears in photographs of other successful teams of the period.



At some point in the late twentieth century, things started to change dramatically.



Mandy Forbes, Norwood Green CC secretary

As women gained more rights in the 'public' sphere - the workplace, the law - so they started to make advances in the 'private' world of clubs and voluntary societies.

This is the testimony of Freda Heywood, former secretary at Todmorden CC:

I started at the club when I was about 19 and I'm now 72 so I've been involved for about 53 years give or take a few.



Freda Heywood with her husband Malcolm

However, in 1992 I became the club's secretary and I stayed in that position till I retired in 2000. I think I may have been the first female secretary. The situation has not really changed - there are still maybe only three or four women on the committee today.

Freda has also co-authored the history of Todmorden CC: *Cloth Caps and Cricket Crazy*.

Julie Pearson (below, centre) is another local cricket club secretary – at Blackley.



She says:

I'm the club secretary but I end up doing a bit of everything. Mainly it involves sorting out the paperwork but it could be anything from keeping minutes at meetings to helping out with catering.

During the cricket season in summer I tend to be there for three to four hours most evenings and then all day Saturday

and Sunday when matches are on. So it's quite a commitment and it's all voluntary.



I got involved when my husband first went to play there in 1978 and they needed a secretary so I was volunteered.

Sadly my husband died in 1990 but I continued working there as I had made lots of friends at the club. I'm now in my second stint as club secretary and I've been doing it about 10 years now.

So, women have become club secretaries – and also treasurers and chairmen.

Of course, the 'road to power' was a rocky one. Cricket is a notoriously conservative sport, and alongside golf could claim to be one of the last bastions of gender apartheid.



Sue Woolford, ex-secretary of Luddendenfoot CC and the driving force behind the club's recent application for a pavilion redevelopment grant

THE NUMBERS GAME

SCORERS

Another potential job for wives, girlfriends, mothers and daughters is team scorer.

This is a major commitment: to attend every game of the season, sit in a small wooden scoreboard (or sometimes in the open air) and fill in the team scorebook, accurately and in detailed fashion.





**Above and below: on the balcony at
Brighthouse**

The only recompense is the grateful thanks of the team captain, a free tea, and a little bit of pocket money.





Karen Towell scored for Rastrick New Road CC and features on this 1971 photo.



**Rastrick New Road in 1971 – with Karen
front row, far left**

She says: 'I was 14 when my cousin Stephen Eccles took early retirement at 15. He taught me to score and it was muted that I was possibly the youngest female scorer at the time in local league cricket. I haven't a clue if that is correct but I thoroughly enjoyed travelling to all the different grounds.'



Karen Towell in 1971



Kimberley Spurr, Northowram Hedge Top, 1997





Michelle Hennessy, Blackley, 1981





R SUTCLIFFE (scorer), I CALVERT, S SMITH, S BELL, A INGHAM, S LEES, T LOFT, D EVANS,
T RAMFORTH (President), N BARRACLOUGH, C SUTCLIFFE (capt), M TURNER, G TURNER (Chairman).

R.Sutcliffe, Bradshaw, 1992



But do you know this female scorer at Lightcliffe in 1975?

