

SANDWICHES & CAKES!

TEA LADIES



Mother and daughter at Thongsbridge



Happy at Denby Dale (left) and Marsden

In the early days, inns and public houses were prominent in the provision of refreshments at cricket matches.

For example, at Keighley CC in 1873 Thomas Cowgill of the Burlington Arms was granted the 'privilege' of catering rights at the cost of £10. It is possible too that churches put on light refreshments, especially where clubs had a church link or where a club's ground was close by.



'Tea ladies', as we know them today, probably emerged in the inter-war period. They would be volunteers who wanted to help the club on the catering side. Often, though, their contribution went 'under the radar', and did not feature in club accounts.

There is something quintessentially English about the traditional cricket tea – and the traditional cricket tea lady.



Thongsbridge Ladies Tea Committee, 1950



Shepley tea ladies in 1971. L-R: Wendy Kettlewell, June Fisher,
Margaret Oldfield, Joan Kaye



The Almondbury tea room in the 1970s. L-R Mrs June Drake, Mrs Carol, Mrs Mabel Beaumont, Mrs Maureen Earnshaw, Mrs Margaret Lyons, Mrs Audry Green, Mrs Barbra Thorpe, Mrs Nora Beaumont

Traditional fare might be cheese and cucumber sandwiches plus a slice of chocolate cake and a cup of tea.



Leymoor CC, Golcar



Holmfirth CC



Liversedge CC



Meltham CC (left) and Holmfirth CC



Holmfirth CC

This kind of light meal between innings has engrained itself in the national psyche.

And, of course, in the main, it is women – cricketers' wives and girlfriends, mothers and daughters plus friends and supporters – who have been responsible.



Left: Raymond Hawkyard and his wife Barbara - head tea lady at Bradley & Colnebridge CC. Right: Mrs Wood (in blue) – tea lady at Crossbank Methodists CC, Birstall

Some tea ladies have been nominated for awards – like Deborah Garlick at Birkby Nuffield CC. This was how her club spokesman nominated her:

DEBORAH GARLICK – SUPERWOMAN

Deborah Garlick. She's Superwoman you know.



Deborah - she likes 'Deb' or 'Debs' but isn't too keen on 'Debbie' – is the ultimate cricket club tea lady.

But she's not just a tea-brewer and sandwich-maker: she's also club chairperson, part-time treasurer, part-time secretary and full-time lift-giver.

By profession, Debs is a nurse – and every summer she takes care of a cricket club that, without her, would surely die.

‘Why do I do it? I must be mad!’, she is heard to mutter under her breath extremely regularly during the long YMCA season.



Well, she ‘does it’...because her dad, Maynard, is President of the club (and also sole groundsman) and her son, James, is a budding junior cricketer.

And she ‘does it’ enthusiastically and, I’m sure, better than any other tea lady in Yorkshire.

She brews up like an international expert, she caters for both vegetarians and non-vegetarians in her luscious salad rolls, and she makes the most yummy chocolate cake in the North of England.

She even brings two hard-boiled eggs to every home game to placate a particularly health-conscious cricketing doctor. You ask for it; she'll provide it.



I tell you what I'd like: a transfer market for cricket club tea ladies – we'd get millions for her.

Deborah Garlick: She's a Star – She's Superwoman.

Over the last century and a half it would be fair to say that women's main role at local cricket clubs has been in the kitchen. With weekend matches in mind, they will order food, go out and pick it up, and then prepare it while the first innings is taking place.

Teamwork is also important. There is great solidarity among tea ladies.



Almondbury Wesleyans CC



Two duos at Meltham



Thurstonland CC



Birstall (left) and Flockton



Almondbury (left) and Almondbury Wesleyans



Doing the dishes at Armitage Bridge (left) and Cartworth Moor

Club tea ladies will make teas and coffees to go alongside the sandwiches and cakes, and then wash up – hopefully with a little help from the cricketers!



Brewing up at Almondbury Wesleyans...



And at Broad Oak...



And at Armitage Bridge

Tea ladies also have to be extremely sociable as players and spectators will always want to pass the time of day with them.



The Hopton Mills pavilion



Fernside Avenue, Almondbury 1



Fernside Avenue, Almondbury 2



Fernside Avenue, Almondbury 3



Fernside Avenue, Almondbury 4

Then they might sit down for a bite to eat, or a glass of wine, themselves!



Moorlands CC, Mirfield

Some clubs are fortunate in that they can rely on 'voluntary' tea ladies – and the money they make from teas can thus be ploughed back into club funds. Over a full season of maybe 30-odd games, this can make an enormous difference to a cricket club's balance sheet.

Others have to 'hire' outside caterers or allow in-house folk to make a 'mini-business' out of teas – with the money raised being kept by the caterers. And of course, the catering does not stop at this.

There are 'drinks' to make for the cricketers every 15 or 20 overs.



Now and next: Heckmondwike & Carlinghow CC





Left: Flockton CC in the Huddersfield Central League



Cartworth Moor CC

Some women might also work behind the bar.



Hopton Mills (left) and Clayton West



Armitage Bridge (left) and Nortonthorpe



Thurstonland CC

And also food to prepare for social and fundraising events from January to December.



The Heavy Woollen Cup final at Liversedge, 2006



**Now and next: the opening of the new pavilion at
Almondbury Wesleyans**





The contribution of tea ladies to local clubs has been acknowledged in full. Take this paragraph in the Mirfield CC minute book of 1963...

Correspondence

The Secretary read out the Circular Letter dated 16th Aug addressed to All Playing Members of the Club and handed to them on Saturday, 17th Aug thanking them for their services during the past season and expressing the hope that they would all be with us again in 1964. Copy of a similar Circ. letter dated 17th Aug addressed to all Members of the Ladies Committee thanking them for their services during the Season was also read out. The Secretary also read out the copies of his letters dated 24th Aug addressed to Messrs. Buller-Sinfield, Central Garage, Mirfield and A. Wilson Esq, "Walrain Hopton Lane, Mirfield thanking them for the Prizes donated

And this example from Edgerton CC:

1a1, Balmoral Aven
Crosland Moss
Huddersfield
HD4 5LG

Dear Secretary and Team Members

I would sincerely like to thank you all for the lovely bouquet which arrived this afternoon (Thur 13th); it was a complete surprise and I am very grateful for the thought shown.

It was a pleasure doing the teas for the team and if you find you are in any difficulty next season please do not hesitate in contacting me, and perhaps with some small arrangement prior to the game concerned I could help you out.

Thank you once again
Yours sincerely
Angela Herd.