

# CORRIDORS OF POWER

## ADMINISTRATORS & CLUB OFFICIALS

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



**In 1998 Skelmanthorpe CC appointed a female chair and vice-chair: Margaret Dollive and Beverley Crossland**

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.



**Margaret and Beverley at the 2005 Skelmanthorpe Cricket Heritage Exhibition**

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

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.



**Mrs Moxon – long-serving Emley CC secretary**

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.

# Cricket club gets the woman's touch

By Helen Goodwin

HANGING Heaton Cricket Club will be getting the women's touch with the appointment of its first two female committee members.

Jo Gilbert, 39, of Derwent Road, and Sue Gray, of Ullswater Avenue, are now fully-fledged members and are hoping to make a real difference to the club.

Jo's life-long involvement with cricket has been a real family affair - her dad and brother both played for Hanging Heaton and her nephews and son Ben, 18, do so now. On top of that, her partner Mel Dearden has been club president for the past two years.

"My family have been involved with the cricket club for years and years," she said. "My dad is cricket secretary and vice-president so it's his influence that made me want to contribute to the club's future."

Having been visiting the cricket club since she was a babe in arms Jo, who also has a daughter, Samantha, 16, could not wait to become a member as soon as she was old enough - at the age of 18.

Being on the committee will combine Jo's interest in cricket with her aim to ensure the club's prosperous future.

"I really enjoy cricket and we've been saying for years they could do with a few



Opening up a new era: Jo Gilbert, left, and Sue Gray (130121)

women on the committee," she said. "There are certain things that we would look after better than the men - we would make sure the place was always tidy for a start!"

Although there was once a separate women's committee, that was scrapped, and for many years the club had an all-male committee.

But the male committee members did not grumble when Jo and Sue showed an interest in joining up.

"They were all for it!" said

Jo. "We looked up the rules and that was it. All you had to do was be a member for a year first."

Sue, whose husband, Howard, is treasurer of the club, said: "I think there was a definite need for a female voice on the committee, it was something that needed to be put right. There are many women who are club members and they need to be represented too."

With the cricket season only spanning six months of the year, other income is

required to promote club's prosperity, and it is in this capacity that Jo and Sue hope to make their mark.

The club has proved to be a popular venue for functions and Jo and Sue have already organised the 100th Year's Eve function, which has hosted various other events.

Jo said: "It's a cricket club and all I want is for cricket to carry on there and for the club to survive, that's what we stand for."

**In 2004 Hanging Heaton CC appointed their first two female committee members**



**Hilary Holmes is currently secretary at  
Linthwaite CC in the Huddersfield League**



**Julie Walker is in her second spell as chair at Hopton Mills CC**



**And she doubles as tea lady**

Women have also played a role in the administration of local leagues.

**W** Saturday The Huddersfield Daily  
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**I**f you can't beat 'em, join 'em — that's been Joyce Booth's way of coming to terms with the cricketers in her life. Margaret Overend talks to a woman who has made Huddersfield cricketing history. **CRICKET** was destined to play a major role in Joyce Booth's life.

Married into a family for whom playing for Thurstonland Cricket Club is a tradition, she could hardly have ignored it.

As it is, the sport has become a passion for the 59-year-old grandmother.

As a girl of 12, she began a lifetime's involvement with the Marsh Hall Lane side by making the tea — an essential role, as many a cricketing wife or mother will confirm.

And 47 years later, she is still involved with the club.

But whereas many women confine their involvement to making sandwiches and washing whites, Joyce's role grew.

In 1988 she attended her first Yorkshire Electricity Central League meeting as Thurstonland's representative.

And at their last annual meeting, the league honoured her with the post of vice-president, making her the only woman to have held the position in the league's 83-year history.

It called for some gentle persuasion. Initially she declined because she did not think a woman vice-president would be accepted.

"I was happy to be where I was and I didn't think it would work with a lady as vice-president because cricket is still a male-dominated sport."

In fact, despite holding such a position, Joyce still does not go to the league's annual dinner, which remains an all-male affair.

But the position she cherishes most is membership of the league's management board, in which she was elected when it was first founded in 1991.

She holds that membership in such high regard because she was elected to the post — along with the other eight members — in a vote open to every club in the league.

"I thought I didn't stand any chance because I did not feel the clubs would vote for a woman. I was very surprised when they voted me on," she added.

"But I have never felt as though I didn't fit in. I am not treated any differently to anyone else."

Joyce's pedigree reads like a *Who's Who* of Thurstonland cricket.

Her father-in-law played for the club, as did her first husband, Geoff, who continued to play until his death in 1958.

They had two girls, Gillian and Janet, two of today's tea ladies.

Two years after Geoff's death, she married his brother, Ken, who also played for the club.

The couple had three sons who, in true Booth tradition, now play for Thurstonland. Andrew is second XI captain, Neil is vice-captain and youngest son, Lee, runs out with the first team.

But Joyce's cricketing generation game does not stop there. Her grand-



Joyce Booth — 'There's no place like Thurstonland'

**D**ESPITE being league vice-president, Joyce admits she's in the dark about some of the finer points of the game.

"I enjoy watching cricket tremendously, but a lot of the technicalities I don't understand and I don't really think I want to."

"The men laugh at me sometimes because of some of the things I say, but it does not make any difference."

"This was one of the things that worried me when they asked me to be a vice-president. But does it matter if you do not know about innings, or googlies, or a chuzman, as long as you are prepared to work for the league?"

She also realises that what she lacks in expert knowledge she makes up for in other ways.

"A lady is useful sometimes, especially in things like disciplinary matters. A different viewpoint is a help."

And she would like to see more women becoming involved in the game.

"Women have a lot to offer other than just in the traditional roles."

She is full of praise for the YE Central League, saying it is going from strength to strength, with improving standards at grounds and better-quality cricket.

Forty-seven years watching the game have given Joyce a wealth of happy memories.

Like putting up a woodshed at Cartworth before to form a makeshift shelter from the sun — until the weight of water brought the whole thing crashing down, drenching Joyce and her friend.

Or being sleep in conversation while walking round the Abensbury Wesleyans ground.

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But her fondest memory is from 1987 when Thurstonland won the Alltop Cup for a record third successive time and completed the double by winning the championship.

One of the things she most enjoys about following a club in the Central League is the diversity of grounds.

"I love the different ones — Densby Dale, Huddersfield, Upper Hopton."

"But there's nowhere like Thurstonland."

Joyce is the first to admit she loves cricket a lot — friendship, memories and a great deal of pride in her family's achievements.

"I have enjoyed watching my family play and I enjoy belonging to the club."

"It's given me a great deal, so I have tried to put back what I have taken out — and with three boys, that is an awful lot."

"I cannot imagine life without it," she says.

With the Booth family's cricketing tradition, that's not a prospect she is likely to face for a long time.

## A woman Central to a man's world

# The Joyce of cricket

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Maintaining a family tradition — Mrs Booth with her cricketing grandsons Adam (left) and Jordan (right), both now Thurstonland players

sons are now getting in on the act.

Twelve-year-old Jordan plays at under-11, under-15 and under-17 level — and waiting in the wings is eight-year-old Adam, who has already turned out a couple of times for the under-11s.

Even three-year-old Josh knows how to bowl and handle a bat!

There are other members of the Booth family, including nephews David and Martin Oldham, who also figure on the Thurstonland books.

Joyce has served on the club committee since 1980, helping to raise money and draw up tea robes.

**Joyce Booth from Thurstonland is now a Huddersfield Central League Vice-President**



Yorkshire Electricity Huddersfield Central Cricket League vice-president Joyce Booth, who is also the representative for the Thurstonland club, was on hand to present the Section A Trophy to Richard Parr, captain of champions Woodfield Park Police Sports, before the start of the match against her own club's second team

**Part of her job is to present silverware!**



**Julie Dolley from Birkby FMA also serves on the Central League's Management Board**

# SIXES AND SITES!

## SCORERS & WEBMASTERS

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



### Adding the numbers up at Flockton

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.

Many clubs have had female scorers over the years:



**Moorlands CC (Mirfield)**



Upper Chapel C.C. side, seen here before the start of Saturday's game at Chapel Lane. Back row: A. Sykes, G. Sykes, N. Rayner, P. Kemp, S. Winn, K. Stone, D. Walker. Front row: R. Walker, R. Lodge, B. Cooper (Capt), G. Aspinall, D. Crowther and S. Aspinall (scorer).  
1975

**Upper Chapel CC, 1975**



Back Row (l to r) G. Harrison (President) S. Darry P. Wilman G. Gil W. Settle B. Mason G. Laycock (Scorer)  
 Front Row (l to r) R. Varney A. Howden P. S. Trevitt (Captain) A. Hampston D. Laycock I. Kenworthy

## Batley CC, 1980



BACK ROW: A. BOLT, G. CONLEY, J. STONEY, J. WALKER, N. PARKINSON, J. BROADHEAD  
 N. HARRISVAPE, B. WOODCOCK (SCORER)  
 FRONT ROW: A. KAYE, N. AHIF, I. LATIP, D. JACKSON (CAPT.), A. BUTLER, M. BUTLER

## Mirfield CC, 2000



**Birstall CC, 1978 (above) and 1998 (below)**



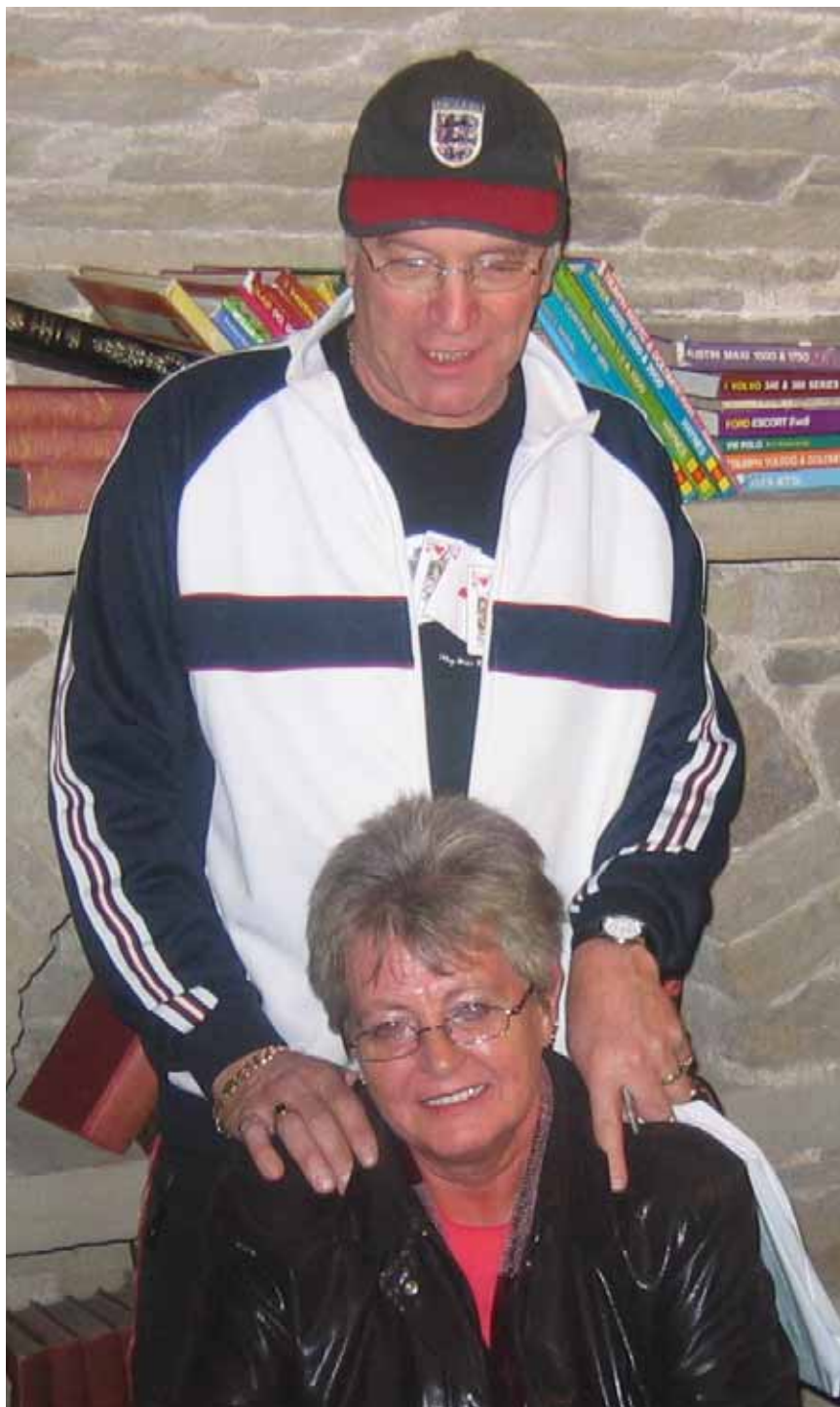
S. Rowley, C. Purlow (Capt.), S. Bagnall, S. Denton, T. Wood, J. Baker, M. Gilman, R. Hosley,

S. Hobson, G. Hobson, C. Brice, R. Ellis, R. Sidle, M. Turner, S. Purlow.  
(Scorer) (Scorer)



**And M.Haigh – Liversedge CC in season 1951**

Women are also modern-day cricket club webmasters.



**Vic and Lesley Reed – husband-and-wife webmasters at Denby Dale CC**