

# Bowled over by history

**Martin Bishop**, from Purley-on-Thames, is a BT manager, based in Reading, who has just published a book on the history of the Huntley & Palmer cricket team

## Do you have time for any hobbies?

I am particularly interested in local sporting history. I play for Purley-on-Thames Cricket Club which amalgamated in the 1980s with Associated Biscuits, which had morphed from Huntley & Palmer's, and the interest just kicked off.

## What, outside your work and family, do you feel most passionately about?

I am chairman of my local cricket club and have spent a lot of time developing our junior section. It is extremely satisfying to be part of an organisation that offers young people the opportunity to take part in sport in a safe and enjoyable environment. To see seven year olds develop into adult first team players is very rewarding.

## What book are you currently reading?

*Netherland* by Joseph O'Neill, a thriller based in New York with a cricket theme – funny how the cricket theme seems to attract my interest!

## What's the last film you saw at the cinema?

*The Reader*, starring Kate Winslet. Well worth the Oscar! For a 50-something I have a great attraction to cartoon and animation films. I tend to enjoy films like *Shrek* or *Wallace and Grommit* much more than my children!

## Can you recommend a restaurant near you?

Nino's in Reading is perhaps my favourite. Excellent service, simple well cooked food and friendly staff make for a relaxing experience at almost any time, lunch or evening.

## And a pub?

The Six Bells in Beenham is a warm, welcoming pub with fantastic food. Being a Beenham boy it is great to see



Above: Martin is fascinated by cricket. Below left: Basildon Park, near Pangbourne. Below right: Kate Winslet in *The Reader*.



the pub so successful whilst so many others are struggling and shutting down. It was CAMRA's West Berkshire pub of the year last year.

## Are you into sport or physical exercise?

I like watching most sports, enjoy playing cricket and am a season ticket holder at Reading FC.

## Can you recommend any walks near you?

The Thames from Purley upstream to Pangbourne is fantastic at any time of year and in any weather. I particularly like to see rowers out during long summer evenings; very relaxing for me (if not the rowers!).

## Where would you take a visitor from abroad for the day?

Basildon House, near Pangbourne, is



an excellent day out with plenty of interest. Add this to a meal in a local pub and I think that would just about sum up our area.

## What's the area's best kept secret when it comes to attractions?

Our countryside, some of our local places and views are fantastic, mist over the Thames at Pangbourne on an early spring morning, the view from Streatley Hill across Goring Gap and down onto the Thames, surely these can't be beaten yet we take them very much for granted.

Bats, Balls & Biscuits is available, price £9, including p&p, from Martin Bishop at 2 Huckleberry Close, Purley-on-Thames, Berkshire RG8 8EH. Tel: 0118 9453117.