

During the summer of 2006 the *Brighouse Echo* ran a series of local cricket club histories written by Project Leader Dr Peter Davies and based on Project research. They covered Brighouse CC, Lightcliffe CC, Hartshead Moor CC, Rastrick CC, Badger Hill CC and Southowram CC

Over the past two years Dr Peter Davies from the Department of History at the University of Huddersfield has been reconstructing the history of local cricket as part of a pioneering £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project being sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the University of Huddersfield. Working in tandem with research assistant Rob Light, he has been unearthing old photographs, archive documents and other sources relating to the rich local history of the sport. See www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk for further details. Contact Dr Davies on 01484 472405 or via p.j.davies@hud.ac.uk if you have any more information or images for the Project archive. This week the spotlight falls on Brighouse . . .

ALTHOUGH it is generally recognised that the current Brighouse Cricket Club came into being in 1873, this date actually marks the year in which the club was re-formed and moved to the ground at Clifton Road.

In fact, cricket had been played in the town for many years before 1873. During this time matches were commonly played on a ground behind the Parish Church and the sport was fostered by a number of influential local gentlemen including C. Jessop Esq, J. Milnes and J. Grinerod who formed a club called Brighouse Alexandra.

The club was re-formed in 1873 when the old Brighouse Alexandra Cricket Club amalgamated with the Brighouse Working Men's Institute.

The result was that Brighouse New Alexandra CC (later Brighouse CC) was born, and the new club rented a new ground, which was situated in a convenient location behind the Working Men's Institute's clubhouse.

Clifton Road was to become the home of Brighouse cricket until the beginning of the twenty-first century. It was rented from Messrs J.B. Sugdens, and was later re-laid 'for cricketing purposes'. The first match was played on 30 May 1873.

The club's first professional was William Shotton from Lascelles Hall. He was engaged in 1876, 11 years after the

first of his two first-class appearances for Yorkshire.

His association with Brighouse proved to be long and successful. He played 12 seasons for the club as both professional and amateur, scoring 3,011 runs and taking 318 wickets.

Derby matches with Rastrick were always keenly fought affairs, especially in the 1870s. The first 2nd XI encounter took place in 1873.

In 1893, Brighouse became founder members of the West Riding League, which was recognised by Athletic News as 'the chief organisation of its kind in the county'.

In the last summer of peace before the Great War, Brighouse CC hosted a special workshops competition, with local works teams fighting it out for supremacy on the pitch.

Teams like Turner & Wainwrights, Mill Royd Mills, Beacon Dyeworks and Co-op Decorators took part in the special tournament.

The Brighouse club's first major successes in both league and cup competitions came in 1918 when the Yorkshire Council Championship and the Halifax Parish Cup were both claimed.

In the 1930s women's cricket was all the rage in Brighouse and surrounding towns. The Brighouse & Elland Echo featured adverts for games, match reports and

action photos in its pages - and Mona Greenwood, who went on to play for England, became the pin-up girl of local cricket.

In winter 1958 Brighouse pulled off a major coup by signing Frank Lowson, the former Test batsman who had been released by Yorkshire.

Lowson, who scored 15,321 runs in his nine-year career with Yorkshire, had an immediate impact. In his first season Brighouse won the Bradford League Division 2 title and the Waddilove Cup.

After the initial success which had come with signing Frank Lowson, the 1st XI strode out with confidence to begin the 1960 season.

The Yorkshire Colt David Pickles, who had begun his career down the road at Sowerby Bridge, had joined the club to strengthen the bowling attack.

By September that confidence had turned to euphoria, as, for the first time since 1932, the Bradford League title came to Clifton Road. The team had achieved the remarkable feat of ending the season undefeated.

In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s the club bagged a handful of Division 2 titles, and a few individual batting awards into the bargain.

Brighouse eventually sold their ground to Tesco and left Clifton Road at the end of the 2002 season.

Club with a proud past - an exciting future



Brighouse scrapbook : Clifton Road, league champions and a match programme



Bowled a few googlies – but Lightcliffe keep bouncing them back

Over the past two years Dr Peter Davies from the Department of History at the University of Huddersfield has been reconstructing the history of local cricket as part of a pioneering £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project being sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the University of Huddersfield. Working in tandem with research assistant Rob Light, he has been unearthing old photographs, archive documents and other sources relating to the rich local history of the sport. A website, which can be found at www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk has further details. Contact Dr Davies on 01484-472405 or via p.j.davies@hud.ac.uk if you have any more information or images for the Project archive. This week the spotlight falls on Lightcliffe ...

William Ackroyd who provided Lightcliffe with a new pavilion in 1922 – but a condition forbade the sale of alcohol and the chance of a lucrative earner.



It was 1875 when Lightcliffe Cricket Club was formed.

At this time, the club was located at the other end of Lightcliffe village on West Field. Today the ground is situated on Wakefield Road, although a local farmer owns the ground.

Lightcliffe played an instrumental role in the formation of one of the district's first cricket leagues.

A Parish Cup committee was formed in Halifax in 1887 and Lightcliffe Cricket Club was one of the 12 organisations involved in this.

The club was a key player in the establishment of the Halifax & District League in the 1890s.

Lightcliffe continued to play in the Halifax League for the rest of the century and well into the twentieth century.

An inspection of all grounds in the Halifax Parish League was made in 1891 – including Lightcliffe. It was recorded that the ground was 150 x 118 yards in area and was in good condition.

While still playing in the Halifax Parish League, Lightcliffe were successful in winning the championship in 1905.

Due to the Great War (1914-18), Lightcliffe joined the Spen Valley League on a temporary basis.

Large numbers of young men enlisted, and as a result a number of clubs were unable to carry on for the duration of the conflict. But despite the war the cricket continued in full force.

Lightcliffe were overjoyed when Sir W.H. Ackroyd provided the club with a new pavilion in 1922. However, on receiving the pavilion, one of the conditions was 'that they did not have a bar or sell alcohol.'

In 1924 the club left the Halifax League and joined the Bradford League, one of Yorkshire's most prestigious competitions.

The 1920s were a roaring success for Lightcliffe. The big year was 1926 – the year of the General Strike.

After playing matches against Saltaire, Windhill, Bradford and Lidgett Green, the 1st XI won the Priestley Cup for the first time, but not the last.

The club received an early setback at the start of the 1947 season. In the off-season, leading player and future captain Herbert Aspinall had been injured playing football!

This temporary setback was viewed with great seriousness, and received a special mention in the club minutes.

In 1947 women at Lightcliffe would have been very pleased to hear the news

that in the following season, 1948, they would be accepted as full playing members.

However, they would not have been pleased to hear that they would have to pay the same joining fee as an ordinary member. Equality came at a price!

The Priestley Cup final of 1950 was affected adversely by the elements. The local newspaper recorded: 'After an appeal for bad light by the Lightcliffe batsman had succeeded...a thunderstorm sent spectators scurrying for shelter.'

Uncertain times loomed for Lightcliffe in 1974. As one newspaper put it: 'The club celebrate their centenary next year and are approaching a vital stage in their history. The lease on the ground ends in February 1977, which means that 1976 would be their last season unless they can negotiate a new lease or arrange to purchase the ground.'

However, all fears were laid to rest when Lightcliffe successfully reached agreement over the Wakefield Road venue.

Across the Bradford League there are urban landscapes aplenty, but Lightcliffe bucks the trend. It is a beautiful rural outpost.



The brochure produced to mark the opening of the club's pavilion extension

Forward-looking club proud of its heritage



The club emblem, stalwart Len Squire and the 1876 Hartshead squad



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 C.C.) 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 C.C. joined the Heavy Woollen Cup. After previous successes in 1894 and 1895, Hartshead Moor became champions of the Spenn Valley & 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 towards the cost, with a loan taken out for the remaining £150.

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

It was opened officially on 25 August in the presence of club representatives and W. Brooke on behalf of architects Messrs. G. Castle & 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 erect a 'scoring pavilion'. On 23 July 1938 the new scoreboard was opened, with a range of Yorkshire cricketers, VIPs present for the occasion.

Club member J.H. 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.

In 1940 a photograph of the 1st 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 was on the move, this time joining 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.

Rather than being fearful or worried about the services coming, some club members were secretly delight-

ed. 'At last it put us on the map' was the reaction of one.

There were direct implications: 1,700 square yards of land were taken off the club (about a third of its site), 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 (located further round the boundary edge).

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 match day 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 twenty-first century, the club is acutely aware of its history and heritage.

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

Over the past two years Dr Peter Davies from the Department of History at the University of Huddersfield has been reconstructing the history of local cricket as part of a pioneering £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project being sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the University of Huddersfield. Working in tandem with research assistant Rob Light, he has been unearthing old photographs, archive documents and other sources relating to the rich local history of the sport. See www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk for further details. Contact Dr Davies on 01484 472405 or via p.j.davies@hud.ac.uk if you have any more information or images for the Project archive. Today the spotlight falls on Rastrick . . .

Visitors feared an uphill struggle against Rastrick

WHILE many people will think of our world famous brass band whenever Rastrick is mentioned it is Rastrick Cricket Club that is the oldest surviving leisure-based organisation. Records of games played go back to 1863.

But, unorganised, unrecorded cricket was probably first played in Rastrick in the 1840s. One of the teams from those days was Rastrick United, the forerunner of Rastrick C.C.

There were no leagues then, but fixtures were arranged and cards issued. One regular fixture every year was against local rivals Brighouse. By 1868 the club was also playing matches against leading local sides such as Dalton, from Huddersfield.

Rastrick C.C. moved to their current home at Round Hill soon after they were established. It is not known exactly where their former ground was, but it was either in Fixby or Grantham on Dewsbury Road.

By 1874 the club's traditional rivalry with Brighouse C.C. had begun. The Brighouse club had recently re-formed as Brighouse New Alexandra. The superiority of the long-established Rastrick C.C. over their near neighbours was clear, as the club's 2nd XI actually played the Brighouse 1st XI.

Visiting teams in the early days didn't really relish playing Rastrick.

Transport was not what it is today and opposition sides arriving by train at Brighouse station faced a two-mile hike - all up hill - to Rastrick's ground. And that included carrying all the kit as well!

Originally the hill at Round Hill extended well into the playing area. In 1891, major excavations took place to remove a part of the hill to provide a more level playing field.

In the early 1890s Rastrick joined the Huddersfield & District League. However, when the Huddersfield League decided to form a second division, they demoted Rastrick into the new section. Despite their objections, the League refused to change its decision and Rastrick joined the Spenn Valley League instead.

One intriguing item which occurs repeatedly in early committee meeting minutes is the order for pies each week. Some weeks, as few as five dozen (60) pies are ordered, while at other times as many as fifteen dozen (180) or more were ordered if the 1st XI were at home.

The size of the pie order gives some idea of the size of matchday crowds in those days. Not everyone would have bought a pie - but attendances could have topped 1,000 at cup finals and semi-finals.

In 1899 it was reported that a young Rastrick bowler named Shaw had recorded the following bowling analysis: 6 overs, 5 maidens, 2 runs, 10 wickets. And the last 6 wickets were taken with consecutive balls!

The first Round Hill pavilion was opened on 15 April 1905 by Sir Thomas Brook-Hitchin. A year later, Rastrick decided to dispense with their professional and pay 'talent money' to their top-performing players instead. Soon after, however, the club realised the folly of their ways and reversed the 1906 decision.

In 1923 Rastrick re-joined the Huddersfield & District League after a spell in the Yorkshire Council (Halifax Section).

In 1931 the club ran a ladies team. On 29 May 1931 the Brighouse & Elland Echo reported: 'A large crowd [around 1,000] enjoyed the novel spectacle of a ladies' cricket match on the Rastrick ground last Monday morning, when teams representing Rastrick and Brighouse met in a friendly game.'

According to the newspaper, 'The match was full of interest'. The Echo's report was accompanied by the (rather sexist) headline, 'Fair Cricketers at Rastrick'.

Similarly, the Echo stated: 'The ladies entered enthusiastically into the game, and some of them displayed no little skill.' A caption to a photograph read: 'A Good Return - A fielder in the ladies' cricket match at Rastrick caught in graceful pose'.

We are also told that in 1931 the 'pin-up girl' of local women's cricket, Mona Greenwood, turned out for Rastrick Ladies against Brighouse.

In the middle of 1931, the Brighouse and Elland Echo stated: 'There is also to be a Brighouse v Rastrick Ladies'



Cricket at Round Hill . . . Played out in a unique setting

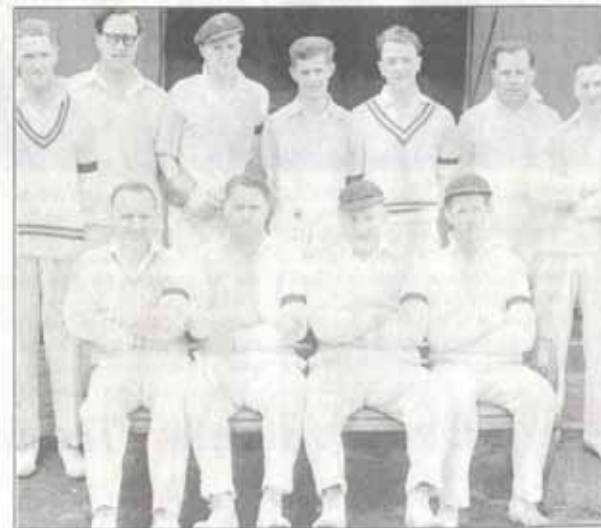
match, probably on July 4, and on July 18 the Brighouse and district ladies will meet Lascelles Hall ladies. Both the latter matches will be at Rastrick. It is also hoped to arrange an evening fixture with Bradford ladies.'

It was in the 1940s that the club was able to purchase its Clough Lane ground. One commentator said that £900 had been raised 'with astonishing ease'.

In 1951 a cricket writer commented: 'It is at Rastrick that one can find the old character which is always one of the features connected with a local cricket club.'

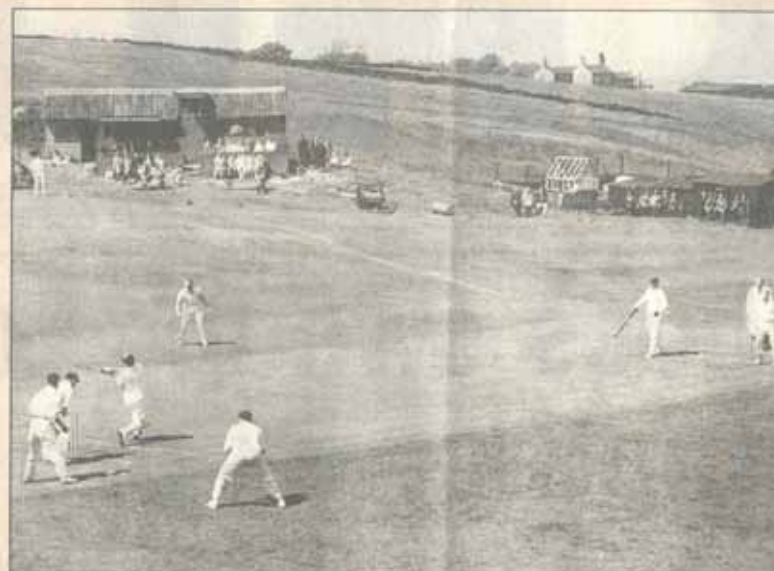
The club celebrated its 125th anniversary in 1988, and produced some beautiful commemorative plates to mark the occasion. A rather distinguished brick scoreboard was erected in 1996 - 20ft tall and constructed at a cost of £26,000.

Today, Rastrick pit their wits against other teams in the prestigious Huddersfield Cricket League.



The Rastrick side playing in the 1954 season

Club 'an integral part of the community'



The Rastrick New Road team pictured in 1921 and an overview of the ground taken in the early 1950s

BADGER Hill Cricket Club was originally known as Rastrick New Road Sunday School C.C..

The earliest surviving minute is dated 1896, when those in attendance voted to have a cricket club for another year. This appears to have been an annual practice until 1900 when the vote appears to have been dispensed with.

The club was an integral part of both Rastrick New Road church and the local community.

Fund-raising brought the whole community together in well organised occasions such as Minstrel Shows and 'At Homes' events.

The club didn't raise funds just for itself either. Charity matches were played to garner money for various other causes.

We often think of cricket as predominantly a men's sport, even today. Yet cricket was played by women as far back as the early twentieth century. For example, Rastrick New Road Sunday School fielded a ladies team in the 1930s.

In 1937 the club's 1st XI were League champions and Lumb Cup winners. The 2nd XI also scooped a pair of trophies. In 1950 Rastrick New Road also scooped

the Crossland Trophy.

In society at large, the 1980s saw women finally beginning to gain acceptance as equals with men. Trevor Bottomley believed this applied to local cricket too.

He registered his daughter, Suzanne, the club's scorer, as a player. When they were short of players, she put down her pencil and picked up her bat instead!

She also remembers that the opposition often didn't know how to bowl to her, thinking they had to be 'gentle'. However, she was no slouch with the bat - her favourite shot was the square cut - and the opposition would often end up collecting the ball from the wrong side of the boundary rope.

In 1987 Rastrick New Road Sunday School C.C. wanted to join the growing number of clubs playing cricket on Sundays.

The Sunday School, however, were opposed to this, and the club faced a difficult decision - stay with the Sunday School and don't play on Sundays, or go it alone?

Following much soul-searching, the club decided to break away. It was forced

to change its name, and so ended an association which had lasted over a hundred years.

They decided to take their new name from the name of their ground - and Badger Hill CC was born.

The end of the association between Rastrick New Road Sunday School and the cricket club was an amicable one.

While the Sunday School did not agree with playing cricket on Sundays, they saw it as a matter for the cricketers' consciences - and did not condemn the club for its decision.

Indeed, Steve Goodall, a lay preacher at the Sunday School, continued to play for the Badgers and was secretary of the club until about six years ago - but he never played on Sundays!

On June 3, 1989 tragedy struck Badger Hill when Trevor Bottomley died during a match. Trevor had been a hard-working and long-serving member of Badger Hill Cricket Club both on and off the field. He is greatly missed by his family and the club.

In the mid-1990s, Badger Hill graduated into the Huddersfield Central League after decades in the Huddersfield

Association. This meant away matches in Batley, Dewsbury and on the outskirts of Wakefield, Barnsley and Sheffield.

Around this time, the club was disappointed to miss out on a large development grant to help build a new clubhouse.

Just as it seemed that things couldn't get any worse, they did. In 2002 vandals torched the 'old' clubhouse - and the club was left with nothing. Except the ground and its stalwart players.

Many Badger Hill players felt that after the fire the end was near for the club. But not everyone was prepared to give in. The community that is Badger Hill C.C. began to fight back.

Today the Badgers run two teams and new players are slowly swelling the number of club members.

There is still a long way to go before the club is able to re-live the heady days of the post-war period, but there is a wonderful spirit of community at Badger Hill - from the chairman right down to the tea ladies - that binds the club together.

Dr Peter Davies from the Department of History at the University of Huddersfield has been reconstructing the history of local cricket as part of a pioneering £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project being sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the University of Huddersfield. Working in tandem with research assistant Rob Light, he has been unearthing old photographs, archive documents and other sources relating to the rich local history of the sport. Here he turns the spotlight on Parish Cup heroes Southowram.

Yet another chapter in the Southowram success story



Earlier success . . . the Halifax League Second Division Champions in 1992

SOUTHOWRAM Cricket Club is one of the success stories of today's sporting scene in Calderdale.

Founded in 1978 and therefore much younger than most of its rivals, it boasts an idyllic ground, excellent facilities and an impressive honours board, added to at the weekend with the club's superb Parish Cup success.

Although the club are the 'new boys' of local league cricket, they have interesting and intriguing predecessors in the hilltop village still famous for its quarrying industry.

For centuries, Southowram has been famed for its quarrying or 'delving'. At one time the precious stone was actually mined, leading to the village acquiring the nickname 'Klondike'. Later, steam cranes perched precariously on the edge of quarries became a characteristic Southowram sight.

The example of Southowram helps us to understand the role played by churches in the expansion of cricket in late Victorian England.

All of the village's teams had a church or chapel link. There were

teams from the Methodist chapels and both of the Anglican churches, St. Michael's at Bank Top (now demolished), and the Southowram Parish Church, St Anne-in-the-Grove, formed their own teams.

Of the various precursors to today's Southowram C.C., the St. Anne's Church team had the longest and most chequered history.

It probably began in the 1880s and in its early years the team was sometimes referred to as 'St. Anne's Church Choir' or 'Southowram Choir'.

Southowram is a village of lost cricket grounds. Some of the fields used over the years were gobbled up for quarrying, but many remain. In its early years the St. Anne's team played at Cross Platts, close to the church.

From the 1890s to the 1930s, Southowram's various cricket teams (there were by this time quite a few) are reported to be playing at grounds in Law Lane, Pinnar Lane and West Lane.

There is also evidence that at one time cricket was played on a ground adjacent to the now

demolished Yew Tree House, in the heart of the village.

In 1891 the Halifax Parish Cricket Challenge Cup Committee appraised the grounds of all the clubs that had entered the competition. Here is their description of the Southowram St. Anne's pitch:

This field adjoins Greenwood's Quarry near the Pack Horse Inn. It measures 125 x 100 yards and has a laid crease 30 x 20 yards, a good though small pavilion and seating for about 60. Both crease and outfield are good though the later is somewhat uneven in contour.

At this period there was a quarry called Greenwood and Marshall at Milking Hill. If this is where the 1891 ground was, then it would be remarkably close to the location of the present pitch, developed in the 1980s.

Southowram St. Anne's were regular entrants in the Halifax Parish Cup in the 1890s, although the team enjoyed little success, usually losing in the first round or even the preliminary round.

Southowram St. Anne's had little success over the years, with a

second placing in the 1899 Akroydon League being one of its best achievements.

During its 50-year-plus existence, the Southowram St. Anne's team played in a number of different leagues. In the late 1890s they had a stint in the Brighouse Cricket League.

In the early 1900s Southowram St. Anne's tried their hand in the Halifax-based Akroydon League:

In 1899 a St. Anne's team is sometimes, though not always, referred to as Southowram St. Anne's Band of Hope. This suggests the church and team had come under the sway of the most influential temperance movement of the time.

Between 1907 and 1915 there was a Halifax and District Church League for teams connected with Anglican churches in the area.

Southowram St. Anne's took part in this competition, winning it in 1914. A team from the now-demolished St. Michael's at Bank Top also played in the Church League.

Southowram St. Anne's had several spells in the Halifax Amateur Cricket League - the last

being from 1916-20 - and also played in the Halifax and District Cricket League up to 1922, when the Club was a founder member of the Halifax and District Amateur Association, created in 1923 as an amalgam of the Amateur and District Leagues.

The 'Saints' played on until 1929, latterly sharing a ground with the village's Methodist team until a lack of support caused the St. Anne's club to fold after some 50 years.

By the end of the 1920s Southowram St. Anne's had gone into terminal decline. But the village's Methodist cricket team would stay in business until the eve of World War Two.

Having earlier played in the Halifax and District Nonconformist League, the team usually known as Southowram U.M.C. (United Methodist Church), moved into the Association in 1925.

During the 1930s the United Methodists team was sometimes referred to solely as 'Southowram' in match reports such as this one from 26 April 1930.