

January 2004 – Getting the Grant

**ANOTHER FIRST FOR HUDDERSFIELD HISTORY:
MAJOR GRANT TO
STUDY CRICKET
HISTORY**

Huddersfield Historian Peter Davies, working in conjunction with local cricket leagues and the archives services of Kirklees and Calderdale, has been awarded £43,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support work on the social history of cricket in the area. This, the first ever grant by the HLF to a sport history project, is further confirmation of Huddersfield History's reputation for outstanding research and for bringing academic excellence to the community.



HUDDERSFIELD HISTORY
*STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE
IN LEARNING & SCHOLARSHIP*

Department of History, University of Huddersfield Poster

BOWLED OVER! £43,000 TO STUDY CRICKET

By ED REED
News Reporter

A SPORTS historian has been awarded £43,000 — to research almost 200 years of cricket in Huddersfield.

Dr Peter Davies, a senior history lecturer at Huddersfield University, will use the National Lottery Heritage Fund cash for the ambitious project.

It could eventually result in a book about the game in Huddersfield and in Calderdale.

The news was announced to 400 guests at the Drakes Huddersfield Cricket League's annual dinner at the Cedar Court Hotel, Ainley Top, and confirmed today.

Paul Whiteley, the league's executive secretary, said the money was to research and archive the history of the game in the region, which stretches back nearly to the time of Napoleon. The oldest club in the

Huddersfield area is Lascelles Hall.

Villagers used to play the game before obtaining their own field there in 1825.

The lottery money will pay for a research assistant, boards outside local cricket clubs giving details of their history and audio tapes of interviews with former players.

The Huddersfield and District League came into being in 1891 and now has 29 teams.

Other authors have researched the league's history, most notably Alec Lodge and Leslie Duncalf in a centenary publication.

But Mr Whiteley said the latest project would be extremely ambitious and was long overdue.

"The whole idea is there are 29 Huddersfield League clubs, there are lots of Calderdale League clubs and in the clubhouses there must be a history of cricket in the area which clearly has not been put together in any shape or form.



■ CRICKET BUFF: The university's Dr Peter Davies.

"The Huddersfield Cricket League has the centenary booklet, which went into some detail. But the whole idea is to go out there and speak to clubs and members, par-

ticularly the older members."

Mr Whiteley said it would take vast amounts of time to devote to trawling through old records, club books and scoresheets, as well as speaking to former players about their memories.

One of the most important aspects of the project would be talking to older players.

Mr Whiteley believes there could be ex-cricketers who were involved in the game around the First World War.

Dr Davies was appointed honorary historian of the league in March last year.

And the league committees hope that, within a year or two, he will produce a book on his findings.

"The Bradford League archives are a lot better than in Huddersfield," said Mr Whiteley.

"Lots of stuff here wasn't considered to be of historical value."

ed.reed@examiner.co.uk



Passion: history lecturer Peter Davies loves cricket

£43,000 grant to study cricket history

By Georgina Tidswell

A UNIVERSITY lecturer has been bowled over by a £43,000 grant to study the history of cricket in Calderdale.

Dr Peter Davies, a senior history lecturer at Huddersfield University, has received the grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and will use it for a two-year project on the sport in Calderdale and Kirklees.

"I am very excited. History is my work but cricket is my passion so to be able to combine them is wonderful," said the 37-year-old who has played the game since he was a child.

He said it was probably the

first time a sport had been recognised as part of our heritage.

"People study all kinds of things but when it comes to sport they don't think about it that way.

"My argument is that cricket is fundamental to the heritage and social history of this area, this is very much cricket country.

"My family come from North Wales and there are about seven cricket clubs in the same area there, but in Calderdale

there are 40," he said. Some money will go towards a personal assistant to help Mr Davies collect material and put together the histories of each club, which will go on a board in each clubhouse.

"I want to make the people who pass by to know that the club is there and to say to people who live there 'this is important to your village'."

Mr Davies also wants to record clubs' oral histories on audio tape and collect old minute books and even old bats and balls.

The tapes and books will be stored in the archives at the

Central Library, Halifax.

He also wants to put on exhibitions in branch libraries throughout Calderdale.

In the summer painters and photographers will be touring the grounds to capture them at their prime.

He wants to work with schools to plan field trips to cricket grounds.

He plans set up a three-year degree at Huddersfield University to run alongside the project and hopes to write a book about it.

Anyone who can help Mr Davies with the project can contact him on 01484 472359.

Halifax Courier



Junior coaching at Saincliffe Cricket Club

Howzat!!

The pioneering Cricket Heritage Project at the University of Huddersfield explodes into life this summer, with a full schedule of displays and a high-profile exhibition at Tolson Museum.

The Project - sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the University to the tune of £50,000 - is enquiring into the heritage and social history of cricket in Calderdale and Kirklees. After twelve months of hard graft, Project leader Dr Peter Davies and assistant Rob Light are ready to hit the road.

The exhibitions will be the most visible, and exciting, aspect of the Project, said Peter. The Tolson Museum exhibition will be the jewel in the crown - an in-depth

survey of local cricketing history, with special emphasis on the origins of local clubs, competition, equipment and the ethnic dimension to cricket in Kirklees.

The Project Team have been working with Tolson staff over the past year, ready for the exhibition to be formally launched with guest VIPs from the world of local cricket present at the opening.

But the Tolson exhibition is only one aspect of the Project. There will also be special displays up and down Kirklees, in villages and towns. 'Every cricket community in the area will have its own customised exhibition - in the local library, pub or some other public venue. We're really looking forward to the summer,' said Peter, 'it is going to take the Project onto a new level.'



Mount Cricket Club



Old Almondburians Cricket Club

'180 not Out - The Development of Cricket in Kirklees'

Tolson Museum from 14th May and every day throughout the summer.

Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm; Sat, Sun, 12 noon-5pm

'Cricket Carnival'

Sun 21 August, 1pm-4pm

Family day at Tolson Museum and Ravensknowle Park on a cricketing theme.

Cricket Teas & Exhibition Tours

Sat 18 June, 11am-2pm

Meet Peter Davies and Rob Light for tours and have your cricket collections identified.

Admission Free Tel 01484 223830 or visit: www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk for further details

History on Your Doorstep

Pitch in to chart sport's history

By ED REED
News Reporter

A LECTURER is relishing the challenge of bringing together cricket's rich regional history for a huge archive in Huddersfield.

The Examiner revealed yesterday that thanks to a National Lottery grant, sports-mad academic Dr Peter Davies is to spend the next few years chronicling the game's past, speaking to old players and gathering historical items linked to the sport in Kirklees and Calderdale.

And he is now asking for help with his research from everyone involved in the game.

The oral history, collected from elderly players, will allow him to build a picture of the sport in Kirklees throughout the first half of the 20th century. Club records stretching further back will also prove valuable for the archive.

Dr Davies was granted £43,000 by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to carry out its first-ever sports-related project. Normally, the cash goes on preserving old buildings and monuments.

But Dr Davies will focus on the social history and heritage of a game which has been at the heart of village life for centuries.

"A lot of clubs have had fires and been vandalised and some of the stuff has been lost. It's the role of history to say 'this is important, let's guard it'."

He eventually hopes to write a book based on his studies.

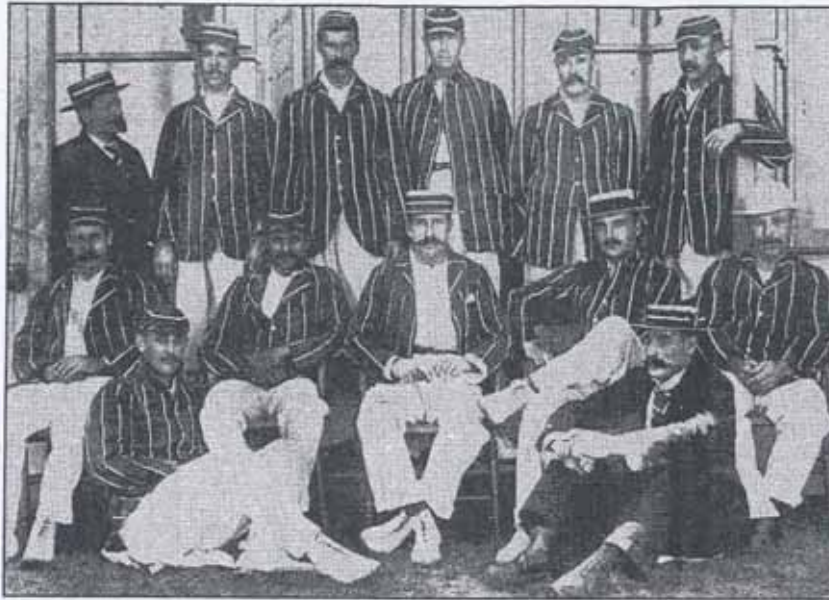
The senior lecturer in history at the University of Huddersfield views cricket as more than just a game. It has played a crucial role in community life for more than 200 years.

Huddersfield lies at the very heart of one of the most fiercely proud cricketing counties in the country.

"Village cricket is fundamental to our heritage and history," said Dr Davies, who himself turns out for the YMCA cricket team at Birkby and has played the game all his life.

"It's real life. Some of the villages are formed around the cricket field. There's a pub, there's a church, there's a cricket ground."

His task will be massive. "There are lots of clubs to work with.



■ LOCAL HEROES: George Herbert Hirst and Wilfred Rhodes, two cricketers for Kirkheaton in the Huddersfield League, both went on to play for Yorkshire and England. Hirst is pictured above, sitting front right, on a tour of Australia in 1896-1897. Below: Rhodes (left), and Hirst with C I Thornton, a founder of the Scarborough Cricket Festival in the 1920s.



Cricketing people love to talk. They love to reminisce!"

As part of the project, information plaques will be put outside all the cricket grounds in Kirklees giving a potted history about the site and club.

There will be education packs for schools. Local artists will paint

each cricket ground while photographers will create a picture archive for future generations.

There are about 60 village cricket grounds in Kirklees.

As well as the book, Dr Davies hopes to write a number of articles as the project develops.

The cash will allow Dr Davies to

appoint a research assistant to help his work.

"I never thought that my main hobby, which is cricket, could become an academic thing."

Anyone who wishes to help should call Dr Davies on 01484 472359.

Huddersfield Examiner

A Lottery grant means Peter can research the rich history of Calderdale's fields of honour

Here's £43,000...now uncover cricket's joys

By Virginia Mason

THE gentle thwack of leather on willow, the ripples of applause.

So the rules might not be all that simple to follow. But that wouldn't spoil your appreciation of a game of cricket on the village green.

Especially if there were home-made cakes, sandwiches and urns of tea for the break of play.

What other game is such a part of our heritage?

Peter Davies certainly believes it is. Calderdale, he says, is rich with a history of this national sport and he is now ready to go into bat to prove it.

The 38-year-old Huddersfield University history lecturer is about to embark on a two-year project - thanks to the backing of a £43,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund - which will investigate just how important cricket, the community and local heritage is in Calderdale and Kirklees.

"Cricket is a fundamental part of the local cultural tradition," he says. "Yet often the heritage of grounds and the societies



Rich history: Researcher Peter Davies

'There's a tealady at Mytholmroyd has been making the sandwiches for 70 years'



"Clubs in Calderdale and Kirklees act as a focal-point for community life, just like the village pub and the village church."

"It is not just that local men play for senior sides but children turn out for junior sides, women often help on the social side and many elderly people take on administrative roles. There is also a high ethnic-minority involvement."

"What I want this project to do is to make people more aware of their local cricketering heritage."

Peter, who lives in Salendine Nook, is a regular cricketer himself.

"I live in Kirklees but on the Calderdale border and what has become obvious with the research I have done so far is just how rich

all its cricket clubs. They are steeped in history and already I am finding there are some wonderful stories waiting to be told."

A full-time lecturer at Huddersfield for the past 13 years, he tells the story of a tealady at Mytholmroyd Cricket Club who has been making the sandwiches and refreshments for 70 years. "Can you imagine that?" he says.

He also talks of how he has taken his mum round grounds and, like many people, she did not know of their existence.

"The role of the cricket club is absolutely central to village life and yet if you look through many local history books, the cricket club won't even get a mention."

record straight? He starts to explain how the ground-breaking project will work - and it's almost as complex as the scoring.

"There are several angles and I am just so pleased we have got this money from the lottery fund because it isn't often cricket becomes a heritage issue."

"We are always conserving rivers and meadows so why not cricket?"

Peter has already set about collecting items for Halifax's Central Library.

Old score books, minute books, bats, balls, trophies and medals will all form part of the display.

He is also collating oral histories of clubs. "I am going to be putting these memories on tape and hope they will capture what village life was like, the community around the cricket club," he says.

At each cricket ground it is also planned to put up a welcome board giving a potted history of the club.

Community photographers and artists will also capture all these cricketering

locations for posterity. Their work will then form exhibitions at libraries.

Peter also wants to get local schools involved, working with teachers and pupils so they can produce work that can be included in the exhibitions.

But that's NOT cricket

THE cricket pavilion has often been a murder scene for crime writers. Who can forget the nasty business at Fletcher's Cross (right) which almost had DCI Tom Barnaby stumped in the "Midsomer Murders"?



Perfect English scene: A match is played (above) in front of the pavilion at Todmorden. And (left) Lightcliffe pavilion on a spring morning with the season not far away

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Tea up: Daniel Tessayman (left) and Paul Ramsden do the honours at Lightcliffe Cricket Club

"Ideally we'd love local schoolchildren to go on field trips to their local cricket grounds, to draw and paint or maybe study the history of the pavilion. Working out those batting averages would help with maths too."

The project will also involve setting up an interactive website and finally - as if all this was not enough - he'll be writing a book.

He just slips that one in as a last thought.

"I'll probably have enough for two books, to be honest," he jokes.

"But I feel this is a subject that has been ignored for too long. Now it's time to give it the recognition it deserves. To be honest - it's become a bit of a crusade."

● Peter's project will be officially launched at a special event, The Heritage and Social History of Cricket in Calderdale and Kirklees, which will be held on Saturday at Huddersfield University, Queensgate, Huddersfield, from 10am to 4pm.

Places can be booked on 01484 472359.

Peter would also like to hear from anyone with any cricketering memories or memorabilia. They should contact him on 01484

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Bowled over!

That was the reaction of History lecturer Dr Peter Davies when he heard that he had received a cheque for £43,400 to support his research into village cricket in Kirklees and Calderdale.

Peter received the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund – the first time that this body has awarded money to a sport-related project – and he is now all set to launch his pioneering investigation about cricket, community and the local heritage.

As well as creating an interactive web-site, the project will establish cricket archives in Halifax and Huddersfield town libraries, including an oral history bank. Local libraries will also host exhibitions on a cricket/community theme, and *Heritage Trail* leaflets will be available to the general public.

The project will also employ community photographers and artists to depict local cricketing landscapes, and educational heritage-orientated signage will be erected in and around local cricket grounds.

Peter – himself a cricketer and passionate supporter of Lancashire County Cricket Club – is in no doubt that the social history of cricket is a neglected subject: “Cricket is a fundamental part of the local cultural tradition. Yet often, the heritage of grounds, and the societies that shape them, is neglected. The core aim of the project is to make local people more aware of their local cricketing heritage.

“Clubs in Calderdale and Kirklees act as a focal-point for community life, just like the village pub and the village church do.



Cricket researcher Dr Peter Davies (Division of History)

It is not just that local men play for senior sides, but children turn out for junior sides, women often help on the social side, and many elderly people take on administrative roles. There is also a high ethnic-minority involvement.”

On the academic front, Peter hopes to write two books on the cricketing heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees. The subject of *Sport and Heritage* will also be introduced into a variety of degree-level modules at the University.

Anyone who has any local cricketing memories or memorabilia should contact Peter on ext 2405.

Owzat!

**Appeal
to local
cricket
enthusiasts**

**Special
Saturday
Day-School
27 March,
10am-4pm**

Peter will officially launch his research project at a special day-school event, *The Heritage and Social History of Cricket in Calderdale and Kirklees*.

The day-school will be of special interest to local cricketers, cricket-watchers, former cricketers and officials of local cricket clubs in Calderdale and Kirklees.

Tickets for the day-school are £5. For more information or to reserve a place, contact Liz Trayte on ext 2359 or e-mail l.trayte@hud.ac.uk

"The bowler's Holding, the batman's..."

...as a radio commentator once remarked

He was, of course talking about cricket. And the gentle sound of leather on willow has been an interest of one Huddersfield lecturer for many years.

But "knocked for six" was the reaction of Dr Peter Davies when he heard that he had received £43,400 to support his research into village cricket in the Huddersfield and Halifax area.

Peter, a lecturer in the Division of History, is now all set to launch his pioneering investigation about cricket, community and the local heritage.

"Clubs in Calderdale and Kirkstiles act as a focal-point for community life, just like the village pub and the village church do. It is not just that local men play for senior sides, but children turn out for junior sides, women often help on the social side, and many elderly people take on administrative roles. There is also a high ethnic-minority involvement."

As well as creating an interactive web-site, the project will establish cricket archives in Halifax and Huddersfield town libraries, which will include an oral history bank.

"We are also going to commission photographers and artists to depict local cricketing landscapes, and educational heritage-orientated signage will be erected in and around local cricket grounds," said Peter, himself a cricketer and passionate supporter of Lancashire County Cricket Club.

The Manchester man is in no doubt that the social history of cricket is being neglected: "Cricket is a fundamental part of the local cultural tradition. Yet often, the heritage of grounds, and the societies that shape them, is being overlooked. The core aim of the project is to make local people more aware of their local cricketing heritage."

On the academic front, Peter hopes to write two books on the cricketing heritage of Calderdale and Kirkstiles, and the subject of *Sport and Heritage* will also be introduced into a variety of degree-level modules at the University.

Anyone who has any local cricketing memories or memorabilia should contact Peter on 01484 472405.

'knocked for six'

was the reaction of Dr Peter Davies when he heard that he had received £43,400 to support his research into village cricket in the Huddersfield and Halifax area.



The gentle sound of leather on willow...
Huddersfield cricket researchers
Peter Davies (right)
and Rob Light

Hudd-ines home
Courses in Health and Sport

To help Peter, the Division of History has appointed an expert on the history of West Yorkshire sport.

Rob Light, a PhD student specialising in nineteenth-century cricket history and will work in tandem with Peter, who is heading the two-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund – the first sport-orientated project to receive such a grant.

"We will be trying to re-construct the history of cricket in the area," said Rob, "and we are interested in locating old minute books, scorebooks, photos and any other artefacts that would help with this. We'll even be putting the reminiscences of old cricketers on tape. If anyone has any cricketing memorabilia, we'd love to hear from them."

Rob hails from Pateley Bridge and plays for Pateley Bridge Cricket Club. He has also written the official history of his club. Rob gained an MA in Sports History and Culture from Leicester De Montfort University and is an expert on cricket in Victorian Yorkshire.

Says Rob: "Cricket has a rich heritage in this part of world and we will be working towards creating a special cricket archive in the main Huddersfield and Halifax libraries. My job is to make this accessible to ordinary people by piecing together the history of the sport in local villages and towns."

Hit for six

History lecturer Dr Peter Davies is celebrating after a receiving a grant of £43,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to explore the heritage and social history of cricket in Kirkstiles and Calderdale.

Peter, a keen cricketer and cricket fan, said: 'To receive money to study cricket – my main passion outside work – is like going to heaven without dying. Cricket is a fundamental part of the heritage of West Yorkshire. Yet so often, the heritage of grounds and pavilions, and of the teams and communities who have created and shaped them, is little known.

'League clubs in Calderdale and Kirkstiles act as a focal point for community life: children play in junior sides, women often help on the social side, and many elderly people take on administrative or ground-maintenance roles. Many clubs hire out their ground facilities to community groups and those based in rural areas have to be especially aware of countryside-related issues. There is also high Asian/Afro-Caribbean involvement in local cricket.'

The Project will be led by Peter at the University, but will also involve 'partnership' work with The Trinity Insurance Halifax Cricket League, The Drakes Huddersfield Cricket League, Halifax Public Library, Huddersfield Public Library and West Yorkshire Archives. Peter will also be assisted by new Research Assistant, Rob Light, Rob hails from North Yorkshire, has an MA in Sports History, and is currently writing his Phd on cricket in Victorian Yorkshire.

Peter said: 'This Project is about cricket, community and the local heritage. It will establish cricket archives - including an oral history 'bank' – in Halifax and Huddersfield town libraries. It will employ "community" photographers/artists to depict local cricketing landscapes and heritage-orientated signage will be erected in and around local cricket grounds.'

Local libraries will host exhibitions on a cricket/community theme and 'Heritage Trail' leaflets will be available. Informative features will also appear in the local media. Peter also hopes to write a book on the cricketing heritage of Halifax and Huddersfield.

Huddersfield heritage

THE Heritage Lottery Fund is more known for sponsoring projects about arts, buildings and landscapes, but in its last round of funding it dished out its first ever grant for sport. And it wasn't in the most likely of places.

Dr Peter Davies, a senior history lecturer at Huddersfield University, was given £43,000 by the HLF to research the cricket heritage of Huddersfield and Calderdale in Yorkshire. He will trawl through archives and records to bring alive a history in the area that is known to date back to the late 18th century.

"There are 29 Huddersfield League clubs, there are lots of Calderdale League clubs and in the clubhouses there must be a history of cricket in the area which clearly has not been put together in any shape or form," said Davies. "The idea is to speak to clubs and members, particularly older members."

Davies has already employed a research assistant and expects to publish a book on his findings within a few years. If you would like to catch up on the latest project news, check out www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk.

Wisden Cricket Monthly