

Mr M J Wood  
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9<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Mr Peter Davies  
(Project Leader)

Dear Peter

I am now 40 years old and have been with the club for at least 30 years starting as a scorer for the second team progressing to second team captain, committee member and now chairman, treasurer and general organiser and helper. I shall try to give you my side of things of what I have seen and done so it may be easier to do it this way so that you can use this as you will.

In those days I can remember great characters especially the two captains Paul Brook and Tony Atkinson. Tony Atkinson a 20 stone slow bowler and a very good one at that was well liked amongst the lads and was a true cricketer playing hard but fair, a great chap to have in the dressing room and in the bar.

Paul Brook was first team captain and was one of the finest opening batters of his time. He played captain and generally got the section going financially and was also responsible for getting players.

He had some great players alongside him, Erick Loxton, Peter Robinson, Colin Peacock, Mick Hargreaves and an exceptional talent and person in David Bruce an all rounder and a pleasure to play the game with, a true competitor in every sense. All these players gave 100 % for Paul. During the Tony Atkinson and Paul Brook era John Lodge was in general charge of the club but also did fantastic work for the cricket section. John was tireless in his efforts to support the club and was a great steward never shy of working long hours for little return.

Also at this time Daryl Jackson was involved with the cricket section and also went on to become the chairman of the club. A true stalwart of the section and the club Daz a real character who likes a good drink has been the centre of a lot of good nights out. Since those days Daryl has recently become life member to the club for his efforts but now just organises teas and raffles on Saturday match days.

It is about the early eighties that I became seriously involved in the section ie committee. I became captain of the second team and won the second cup Wheatley Cup Final at Gildersome against Gomersal. In that match Paul Sweeney hit 150 runs and we went on to victory, what a day!!! In those 6 years of captancy I won the batting averages 5 times.

We have had some great overseas pros over the years in Paul Brooks era we had a batter called Masood Anwar who proved to be one of the all time best overseas that the Central Yorkshire League has ever had. In more recent times Thornhill had Jatin Paranjape a quality opening batter who won the league batting averages for the time

he was here. One year his average for the whole season was 123 and then went on in the next season to play for Yorkshire Bank in the Bradford League. One year he stayed at my house and he invited the players of Thornhill to Odsal Top to watch India versus Pakistan in Imrans Khan's cancer fundraising cricket match. That same evening I had about 9 of the indian test team at my house including Tendulkar, Kumble, Gambhir and many more, a great night!!

At this time local businessman Bob Yates also took Jatin under his wing and became very close. Bob helped the club by providing work and sponsorship for Jatin. In 2001 we had a pro called Imire Ishaq an all rounder from Pakistan another popular player amongst the lads. He used to work in London at his uncles during the week and then travel up Friday nights for the weekend's games. On his way up on the coach he had one too many beers and fell asleep, he woke up in Chesterfield bus station at 4.00 am a bit worse for wear. He staggered around the bus station before being picked up by the local constabulary. Trying to make sense of it all the police rang our secretary up to back Imire's story. Our secretary Mr Eddy Portman was duly rung at 4.00 am and questioned about Imire Ishaq's identity and involvement with Thornhill. Everything was ok so the police kindly offered to put Imire in an empty cell to get some sleep until Mr Portman could collect him.

In more recent times we have had Derek Johnson, Luckman Hans and Richard Fenwick playing at the club. These 3 all started their cricketing days at Chickenley which has now got 30 houses on their ground. Derek as captain turned Chickenley into one of the finest Central Yorkshire Teams of its time. Derek went on to play and captain Mirfield, Liversedge and under him they all had great success. Finally finishing up at Thornhill with Richard and Lucky it is a truly full-circled story. All three still playing, Lucky in the first team and Richard and Derek captain and vice captain of the second team. Our first team captain is Scott Cursley who has been at the club since he was a teenager going through all levels of the junior sides and representing Thornhill on several Joe Lumb occasions. Between Scott and Richard Fenwick they do a fantastic job in getting two sides to turn out every week.

Finally our groundsman Mr Edward Portman does a sterling job on the wicket and outfield every week and it is a credit to him as you have seen.

I hope this is of help to you, should you require anything further then do not hesitate to get in touch.

PS Don't forget we have the bat, a photograph of the second team and we have recently received the 1893 thornhill cricket club team photograph.

Yours sincerely

**Michael Wood**