

## **Notes on History of Cumberworth United CC by Andrew Pearson**

### **Holmfirth Cup – Winners 1894**

This is one of the earliest trophies won by the club. After defeating Scholes in the semi-final (Cumberworth 74 all out; Scholes 52 all out) the final tie was contested against Thurstonland. It was a very close fought affair and Cumberworth won by one wicket, scoring 85 for 9 to pass Thurstonland's tally of 82 all out. The score suggests the winning runs came from a boundary.

Examination of the summarised scorecard in the local press suggests that the win owed a great deal to a last wicket partnership with both not out batsmen in double figures when the winning hit was made. Details of the Cumberworth innings follow:

F Tarbatt 5; W Hanson 9; H Senior 6; T Senior 7; B Peace 5; T Horn 0; E Horn 5; H Tarbatt 25 not out; A Kilner 4; W Booth 0; T Haigh 11 not out; Extras 8 (Total 85/9).

The Thurstonland wickets had been shared between three bowlers with W Booth taking five, A Kilner three and B Peace two.

The victory was celebrated in style and a local writer noted 'Thurstonland were done. Hats and bonnets, umbrellas and sticks were flying all around, and children like young kittens rolled and tumbled on the ground.'

### **Special General Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> June 1948**

It was proposed that the club gets 'two 15ft old covered goods van bodies'. It was further proposed that Wilfred Lawton and Billie Atkinson visit Derby to inspect possible suitable items.

Also at this meeting it was suggested that Arthur Smith and Arnold Tarbatt see Mr Whittaker regarding a possible site on the tips for a proposed new pavilion. If permission for this site was refused then the alternative was to ask if the new tents could be put next to the tea tent.

### **Chapel protest in 1977**

Regular chapel goers expressed their concern about junior matches being played on a Sunday morning. The club had always enjoyed a harmonious relationship with them and so it was decided not to enter the league in order to preserve mutual good feelings.

### **Friend Allsop (5 Feb 1901-17 May 1992)**

The name of Friend Allsop is closely linked with the Cumberworth community and, in particular, with its cricket club. Apart from a short spell with Shepley CC when they were in the Huddersfield Central League, most of his playing days were spent with his village club.

Since 1953 his name has been associated with the Allsop Cup, presented in his memory by Cumberworth United CC, which is presented to the winners of the HCCL first team knock out competition. The citation on the cup states that the intention was 'To perpetuate the memory of a great sportsman.'

The following reflections on him are summarised from remarks made in a history of Cumberworth, ***Camp of the Cumbrians***, written by A Tarbatt and published in 1980. His prowess at cricket was evident from an early age because it is reported that, when at Denby Dale Council School, 'Friend made his fifties when other boys were pleased to make their tens.' From his earliest years as a player he was able to play strokes all round the wicket and it was stated that his defence was like a barn door. Pulls and swings to leg came easily to him and the hitting of sixes when the opportunity arose seemed effortless.

He was very much a team player and sympathetic to those with lesser skills. Sacrificing his wicket to let others have a knock was not unknown when the situation in the game permitted it. The decision of the umpire was never questioned.

Some significant individual performances will appear in the timeline but the 1933 and 1934 seasons saw heavy run scoring in all games. In the former he totalled 1070 runs at an average of 59.40 and he continued his heavy scoring in the following year by making 1015 runs, this time averaging 67.66 per innings.

Whilst building his own house it was alleged that the regular collections he earned for his batting feats in particular were of great help to him in settling bills.

In the book by A Tarbatt, we also get a fuller picture of Friend Allsop's character and he was far from being a one dimensional figure only recognised for feats on local cricket fields, significant though those were.

We learn that he was very sensitive to injustice of any kind and often felt despair at how others sometimes conducted themselves. He was 'a keen nature and garden lover' and attended WEA classes and, for a considerable period, he was a member of a local Male Voice Choir. It is also recorded that he was an accomplished billiards player.

In these days of high profile sportsmen and women who dominate the mass media, it is good to reflect on the lasting impact that a skilled local figure had in his community during his playing days and which he continues to have thanks largely to the cup donated in his memory on his death in 1952 at a relatively young age.

## **FAMILY CONNECTIONS**

Many village cricket teams have names which reflect family links with them over several generations and Cumberworth is no exception. The Seniors, Lockwoods, Mosleys and Kilners feature in the team right into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and those names are present in numbers in a membership book in use from 1932 to 1984.

Other local families who feature prominently in the period before World War 2 had, by the time this particular book was last used, lost their link.

Below is a list on the number of members sharing a surname before 1940 and in brackets the figure for that same name in 1980.

Allsop 4 (0); Auckland 14 (2); Booth 6 (1); Cook 4 (0); Horn 15 (0); Kilner 6 (4);

Lockwood 10 (8); Mosley 6 (3); Pell 6 (0); Senior 10 (4); Smith 11 (1);

Stephenson 5 (2); Tarbatt 5 (1).

## **KEN SMITH (born 1919)**

One of the oldest surviving former playing members of the club is Ken Smith. Apart from active service in World War 2, he has been a life long resident of the village and to this day takes a keen interest in the fortunes of the team and loves talking about cricket.

He joined the club as a junior in 1932 and when he got a place in the senior team he vividly recalls playing with Friend Allsop, indeed opening the batting with him on many occasions. Large numbers would come to watch this prolific village batsman and he recalled a game against Penistone Netherfield when he ran Friend out. He says he remembers being close to tears and the spectators being disappointed at not seeing him bat for longer.

He refers, somewhat poetically, to Friend Allsop's bat being like a scimitar as he went through his range of strokes and echoes the feelings of so many when he says that he was a wonderful man, well worthy of the respect in which he was held.

One member of the Horn family, who featured so prominently in Cumberworth cricket up to the 1960s, was his uncle, Arthur. The farm opposite the ground was owned by the Horn family and it was the custom to fetch water from it to brew the essential tea for the interval between innings.

A female member of the Horn family was a good bowler and batter and she used to appear at practice sessions and showed good skill. She did not, however, get any chance to play competitively.

Travel in his early years in the first and second team was by waggonette owned by Mr H Roberts, long before the mass ownership of private cars. After being taken to the heights of Cartworth Moor on one occasion, the driver informed the team that his return might be delayed as he was involved in haymaking. The game finished and the team repaired to the nearby Rising Sun, destroyed by fire in the mid 1970s, which was the meeting place for the home team and their visitors after games had finished. Long hours passed and the drink flowed more and more freely and when the waggonette eventually made its appearance the Cumberworth players were certainly in a boisterous mood as they climbed aboard for the journey home.

He clearly remembers the arrival of the goods vans in 1948 and said that Cecil Auckland was one of those helping to manoeuvre them into position. Unfortunately at a key moment a couple of fingers were caught underneath. Luckily, no permanent damage was done but Cumberworth was without a key bowler for a week or two whilst he recovered.

An important event staged to raise funds shortly after the Second World War was a carnival held in the grounds of Kirkstyles. The owner was Mr A Shackleton who gave many substantial subscriptions to the club in the late forties and early fifties. A miniature railway was set up in the grounds and was much enjoyed by the local children but the occasion, memorable though it was, appears to have been a one off.

Manual labour was the way the outfield was cut before the advent of mechanical mowers and it was referred to as backbreaking although essential work. Outfields today could be cut much shorter and that helped batsmen compile larger scores, at least that was the theory.

The outfield occasionally saw games of nipsy, a close relative of knur and spell, in the 1930s where the object was to strike a 'pig' or small, hard ball, perhaps the size of a large marble, as far as possible. Casual competitions took place between men in the village. Another sporting diversion provided on the cricket ground was a tennis court in the corner to the left of the modern tearoom but this ended in the 1930s.

He regarded near neighbours Denby Dale as probably the club's greatest rivals on the field and said that he always enjoyed visits to Thurstonland's ground where he remembered several good contests. Victories over Skelmanthorpe were also enjoyable when they managed to pull them off.

His daughter reminded him of losing a few teeth from his days keeping wicket but this never put him off the game. He never made a century but had two scores in the nineties in the first team, one of them at Penistone. Only rarely was he called upon to bowl and a game at Clayton West was quoted as an example of why he was not called on more often. Cumberworth was up against it and, perhaps in desperation, the captain invited him to have a go. The batsman, Percy Bedford, was in full flow and his two overs saw the ball disappear to all areas of the ground. With a wry smile he said that he was hardly ever asked to perform that duty again.

He played his last game in 1973 but still looks back with pleasure on the happy memories he had from his days on the field playing for his local village and tries whenever possible to get to an occasional game.