

A Club with Four Grounds

1871 Scar Bottom
1872 Low Westwood Bottom
1874 Knowle Bank
1877 Town End (a.k.a. Swallow Lane)

Swallow Lane Today

Swallow Lane is sited just a few hundred yards from the centre of Golcar, and nestles close to a pub, a brewery and a working men's co-operative society which dates from 1895. On one side it borders onto the back of bungalow gardens, some of these built on plots of land sold by the club in 1992. On the other side is the spectacular and raw Colne Valley landscape, full of cottages, mills and farmers' fields demarcated by dark dry stone walls.

Tremendous fund-raising efforts enabled the club to purchase the ground in the 1920s and to build the current club rooms which were completed in 1933. Club President at the time, Arthur Wood, had close contacts at Yorkshire and the premises were opened with a golden key by the Yorkshire captain, Brian Sellers, accompanied by George Hirst, Maurice Leyland and Arthur Mitchell. Both Leyland and Mitchell would later hold benefit matches at Golcar. These premises were significantly upgraded in 1970 and are divided into bar and café areas, both containing mementoes of Golcar's history.

Into the 1930s the club had a stable and yard, the horse being used to pull the cutting and rolling equipment. The advent of mechanical equipment saw the horse sold. In October 1934 the stable and yard were let to a Mr Firth at £4 per annum.

At the same time advice from Headingley groundsman Mr Moulton helped to improve the pitches. Today, the square today plays as well as it has ever done, offering reasonable pace and bounce, testimony to the care it has received over the years.

A constant feature of the ground has been the steep grass bank on the top side which affords a superb elevated view of the action. It also serves as a backstop for boys who play football on the ground and leave the outfield bare. The club relayed this part of the playing area in the winter of 2004-05 at a cost of £1000, and pray that the footballers will stay away.

Such local difficulties are nothing new. In May 1966 the committee 'resolved that we leave certain lights on the club with a view to being a deterrent to illegal entry' and that 'we contact West Riding Crime Prevention Department (Wakefield) regarding making clubroom more secure'.

A new feature on the Golcar Cricket Ground, opened in 2005, is a superb changing complex for both the cricketing and bowling sections of the club, built between the two. The building also incorporates a beautifully designed and easy to read scoreboard. The whole cost in excess of £75 000 and was

funded by sale of the land occupied by the Victorian pavilion in the north west corner of the ground. Sadly this marks the end of the line for one of the oldest buildings in club cricket.

Another development is the laying of tarmac on the driveway and car park. Seeking a safe access for children to the Colne Valley Museum, which is at the back of the Swallow Lane Ground, Kirklees Council has offered to pay for this improvement on the proviso that the driveway can be used as a route to the museum.

With new changing facilities, scoreboard, road and a partially relayed outfield, the Swallow Lane ground is much upgraded for 2005, Golcar's first season in the Huddersfield League Section A since 1993.