

Boundary View

Winter 2015 - No.11

The Newsletter of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Founded 1972

WHERE WERE YOU IN 1972/3?

The first guest speakers in our inaugural season were Hugo Yarnold followed by Rachel Heyhoe-Flint.

Were you at either meeting, or, better still, at both? If so we want to hear from you!

Why? Because the editor of the Council of Cricket Society's newsletter wants to run a profile of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society.

It would be great to hear from any member who attended either meeting at the Old White Horse Inn.

He or she will almost certainly be the Society's longest-serving member!

Stourbridge resident, Ron Headley was the unfortunate victim of a rain-ruined benefit match against Warwickshire in 1972. Ron, partnered by Glenn Turner, put on 259 before the first wicket fell.

The Society's first president was Don Kenyon, who sadly collapsed and later died at a cricket meeting at Worcester in 1996. Forty-three years later, Tim Jones's biography of Worcestershire's greatest skipper is now available! [See page 2]

It has been established that the following persons have justifiable claims to having been members of the Society since the early days:

Ken Worton attended a preliminary meeting prior to the first actual meeting. Terry Church, Alan Tompkins and Brian Priest were among those present at the early meetings. If you were also there, I would like to hear from you!

Other member with memories of the Society's early happenings are invited to please contact Anthony Collis soonest.

[Contact details on back page]

TOM FELL CANCER SCARE

Worcestershire batsman Tom Fell has undergone surgery after being diagnosed with testicular cancer - but the 22-year-old has been given the green light to resume playing in Australia.

Tom announced, "Daryl Mitchell for his benefit year has named 'Oddballs' as his charity which promotes testicular cancer awareness."



Our Guest Speakers

Oct - Paul Horton (above)
Nov - Stephen Chalke (below)
Reports on page 3



WORCS SKIPPER'S BENEFIT

An evening in aid of Daryl Mitchell's benefit will be held on Thursday 28 January 2016 at 7pm for 7.30pm.

The venue is the Duke William in Stourbridge and will include a tour of Craddock's brewery, four free ale tasters plus a pie & mash supper. Tickets cost £20

For bookings and further details, contact Mark Ashbourne via email: ma004g2691@blueyonder.co.uk or phone: 07506 747619

Note – advance booking is essential.

CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

In the searing heat of Abu Dhabi, 'time', the all important ingredient of five day Test cricket, ran out on England. Despite four days of sparring for the right to go one up in the three match series, victory eluded them on day five.

Captain Alastair Cook's leadership and batting skills, unrecognisable from the humiliation in Perth in 2013, produced an outstanding 836 minutes of epic endurance one could ever witness on a sports field, leaving a trail of broken batting records behind him. The sheer determination, quality and example of how to bat at international level after being in the field for five sessions is quite remarkable.

Try explaining that to an American or any of our own countrymen who are not into cricket and observe their vague expressions!

It may well be that the all important 'time' taken and used in his early days of county cricket and more recently the relentless hours at Loughborough have proven well worth while. We must now rely on the media to let this remarkable example remain a beacon for future young sports players.

'Time' certainly flew by at our first winter meeting in October, which I suppose goes to prove what a fantastic guest we had. Paul Horton entertained us and thoroughly enjoyed his first visit to Stourbridge and he hopes that he may be invited back in the future. Thank you to all our members for the questions you put to him and the support you gave on the night.

Here's looking forward to the rest of our meetings this season. Finally, may I wish the compliments of the season to all members and all our friends in cricket!

Mike Tomkins

PLEASE NOTE!

The meeting on **18 February 2016** will commence at **11:30am**.
John Barclay will be our guest

The Spring Trip is now **SOLD OUT!**
Further details of **both** events on page 4.

The opinions expressed in Boundary View are not necessarily those of Stourbridge Cricket Society

Dave Nicklin (President) **Committee Members:**
Mike Tomkins (Chairman); **Vacant** (Secretary); **Ken Workman** (Treasurer); **Terry Church** (Programme Secretary)

OBITUARY – TOM GRAVENEY



Former England cricketer, Tom Graveney died on 3 November 2015 at the age of 88, after a long battle against Parkinson's disease. This was the second family loss – as only a few days earlier – his elder brother, Ken, passed away in America.

Thomas William Graveney was a batsman of the highest calibre and, but for mild brushes with authority, should have played for England in more than the 79 Tests in which he did appear.

In view of his subsequent career, of which much has been written in praise, it is interesting to reflect that his initial appearances for various teams at first-class level gave little indication of the player that he was to become.

He marked his first-class debut for Gloucestershire in 1948 with a duck against Oxford University. He fared little better in his first Championship match, when he faced Worcestershire and was dismissed cheaply in each innings – lbw Howorth 4 and bowled Perks 4.

He appeared 17 times for the Players, but in his first encounter in 1949, he failed to reach double figures in either innings – ct Kardar b Brown 2 and bowled Bailey 5. In 1962, Graveney appeared in the last-ever fixture between the 'Ams and Pros', scoring 21 and 41. In the latter innings, Tom again fell victim to the bowling of Trevor Bailey.

Ironically, four decades later, Graveney became the 200th person – and the first professional cricketer – to attain the hallowed post of President of the MCC. This must have caused Lord Hawke to become gravely restless.

He made his first Test appearance, in place of the injured Denis Compton, against South Africa at Old Trafford in 1951. He was only called upon to bat in the first innings when he was again out inexpensively, bowled Athol Rowan 15. Tom was the last survivor of both teams.

In the manner of WG Grace sixty-odd years earlier, Tom packed his bags and left Gloucestershire for pastures new. His first match for Worcestershire in 1962 was at Hove where he

was twice dismissed cheaply – ct Langridge b Thompson 27 and stumped Parks b Bell 16. However, the change of county brought about a transformation in Graveney's achievements and career.

Notwithstanding the above observations, Tom Graveney was a hugely successful batsman. He batted with unhurried elegance and style, epitomised by his trademark graceful cover drive as shown in the picture. In the days, before helmets, he coped with the pace of Lindwall and Miller, the aggression of Adcock and Heine, plus the fearsome duo of Griffith and Hall. It was a mark of his class that seldom if ever was he hit. He scored 258, the highest innings of his career, against West Indies in 1957, yet he could never be sure of his place in the Test team. He fell foul of Freddie Brown, Gubby Allen and Alec Bedser, in their respective tenures as Chairman of England Selectors, which conservatively cost Graveney at least 25 Test caps. His omission was warmly 'welcomed' by Richie Benaud, who said Tom would have been an automatic choice in any Australian Test side under Benaud's captaincy.

In 1964, Tom scored his hundredth hundred and in so doing became the first man to achieve the feat in a post-WW2 career. He added a further 22 centuries, the last of which was an unbeaten score of exactly 100 against Yorkshire in 1970. At New Road, he revelled in the team spirit which he craved and enjoyed. The upshot was his new county winning the Championship in 1964 for the first time in their history. They repeated the feat in the ensuing centenary year also.

After a brief and unsuccessful spell with Queensland, Tom Graveney returned to England and became a landlord of a pub in Cheltenham and took up a career as a BBC commentator. Fittingly, the newly-built Graeme Hick Pavilion at New Road features a bar named in honour of Tom Graveney. He was also Worcestershire President from 1994 to 1998. His services to cricket and the cricket society movement were recognised when Tom Graveney O.B.E. was made Hon. Life Vice-President of the Council of Cricket Societies and spoke to our Society in 2008. (His nephew, David was our first guest of that 2007/08 season).

'Long Tom' Graveney was an affable, well-liked and much-respected gentleman who, besides playing cricket, loved nothing better than talking cricket over a pint or three.

	M	Inns	N.O.	HS	Runs	Avg	100s/50s
Tests	79	123	13	258	4,882	44.38	11/20
Career	732	1,223	159	258	47,793	44.91	122/233

KEN'S QUIZ

Answer the following ten questions and then use the first letter of each answer to rearrange the ten letters into the name of a current first class county venue.

A bottle of something alcoholic will be presented to the first name drawn (in the event of more than one all correct answer). Happy hunting!

1. William Herbert Hobbs , son of a famous father.
2. Worcestershire brothers who both played for England.
3. Zimbabwe born scorer of 100+ centuries who emigrated to Australia.
4. Bodyline bowler who also emigrated to Australia.
5. Most recent addition to the County Championship.

6. Worcestershire Secretary founded the Minor Counties championship and saw them become a first class county.

7. The last to play for England at both cricket and football.

8. Lewis Carroll complained about his walks in the park being interrupted by cricket matches.

9. He was both Cricket Correspondent and Music Critic for the Manchester Guardian in a career which spanned World War 2. He started as cricket coach at Shrewsbury School and was knighted.

10. First professional captain at Bristol retired in 1958 at 45.

Answers plus the name of the venue to be handed into Ken Workman at the January 2016 meeting; the winner will be notified soon after.

PAUL HORTON (Lancashire and Matabeleland Tuskers)

The Society's first guest of the season was Paul Horton who enthralled a capacity audience. Australian-born to English parents, Paul mentioned how his dual nationality generated many amusing experiences, seemingly wherever he went!

After his parents returned to England, 15-year-old Horton found cricket in the Liverpool area very different to his youthful cricket in Oz. "My first taste of cricket in England was with Winstanley Park CC, Wigan, on a snow-covered pitch and I was informed that sledging was not part of under 16's cricket."

Horton joined Sefton Park CC where he came under the eye of Lancashire, which provoked a club v. county dispute. Horton had been given clearance by the ECB to play as an English player, but this cut no ice with Sefton Park, who adhered to the local league which took a different view of his nationality status.

Horton progressed through the age groups and joined Lancashire's first team squad in 2003, where he found it difficult to establish himself in the county eleven. In order to improve his batting, he spent the winter of 2006/7 playing grade cricket in Australia, where he found that, in the land of his birth, he was now viewed as an overseas player!

In May 2007, Paul scored his maiden

first-class century when he made 139 against Worcestershire. He would add sixteen more hundreds for Lancashire before he was informed in 2015 that he was surplus to requirements. He has since accepted a contract with Leicestershire, justifying his decision "because the county can only go up!"

Paul enjoyed two winters playing for Matabeleland Tuskers in Zimbabwe, for whom he scored 209 against Southern Rocks in 2010/11. During his stay in Bulawayo, Paul coached some junior players and once naively set up a five-a-side football game. With no 'practice bibs' to differentiate the sides, Horton played blacks against whites and made the lone coloured player the referee!

While there, Paul mislaid his passport. His attempts to convince the border officials that a replacement document was the genuine article, caused him to not only miss his flight, but also faced the threat of being detained as an illegal immigrant!

In the meeting's opening session, Paul spoke without notes for over an hour prior to the interval, followed by another half-hour, before heading back to Manchester.

Paul recalled the occasion when Lancashire took on a player of uncertain age and doubtful pedigree, who scarcely played for the county and when he did, it was hard to see how he was worth a place. "We simply could not believe it

when we heard that Worcestershire had taken on Adrian Shankar!" In the dressing room, it was suspected that he was an undercover agent investigating match-fixing!

In reply to a question about Moeen Ali's credentials as an opener for England, Paul thought Ali is best suited to bat at six, as his defence is not tight enough against the new ball.

Paul fears that T20 is making cricket too comfortable for many players especially in Australia, where the lure of the Baggy Green seems to have lost much of its pull. "The money and the shortened format means that batsmen are pleased if they score forty and many bowlers feel satisfied with two wickets for their evening's work. It's easy money."

Paul Horton is a genuine, journeyman cricketer, who spoke modestly and with much humour. We look forward to seeing him at New Road next season, providing he doesn't increase his tally of centuries at Worcestershire's expense.

If you missed the meeting, ask someone to tell you about the accident suffered by Andrew Flintoff and his refreshing cool drink!

Meeting held: 15 October 2015

Attendance: 92

STEPHEN CHALKE (Author & Publisher)

Prior to this evening's talk, the Chairman asked members to observe one minute's silence in memory of Tom Graveney.

As the founder of Fairfield Books, Stephen Chalke has written and published a number of cricket books, which include fascinating accounts of the lives of characters such as Bob Appleyard, John Barclay, Tom Cartwright, Clive Lloyd and 'Bomber' Wells.

Author cum raconteur, Stephen Chalke gave a virtuoso presentation about his latest book "Summer's Crown" to a capacity audience. Stephen held the floor for almost two hours during which he spoke without notes other than occasionally quoting brief extracts from his book.

Stephen's book is sub-titled The History of the County Championship (CC), which contains fascinating details of events and facts from its beginning until the end of the 2014 season (a separate update is included for 2015).

The convincing author described how

the stronger counties (the Big Six) came to monopolise the CC and how much the counties relied upon amateurs (mostly batsmen who played for 'free') to enable professionals to be employed to do much of the donkey work, particularly bowling.

In 1891, C.J.M. Fox, the Kent amateur, batting against Sussex at Hove, was 0 not out at lunch, but failed to re-appear after the interval and was adjudged out, or rather, 'absent, out' – not absent hurt or injured. When asked to explain, Fox merely replied, "I was enjoying lunch with a widow!"

In 1982, by now the retired Middlesex all-rounder, Fred Titmus popped into the home dressing room to wish his colleagues luck in the last match of the season. Skipper Mike Brearley foresaw the need to draft him into the team and after scrounging the necessary togs, Titmus, aged 49, duly played a significant part against Surrey in what was the Championship decider. Ironically, on Fred's debut against Somerset, Brearley (Horace not Mike) was also in the team. Fred was fond of saying, "I came in with the father and went out with the son!"

Mindful of his audience, Chalke referred to a few episodes involving Worcestershire cricket.

In 1925, Worcestershire called upon 39 different players, including Rev Reginald Moss whose county debut at the age of 57 years and 88 days makes him the oldest man ever to play in the championship. While at Oxford, he won a cricket blue in 1889. He played what he thought was his last first-class game in 1893, but made a comeback 32 years later, which is a record gap between two first-class appearances. Rev. Moss was Rector at Icomb in the Cotswolds.

At the Oval in 1954, Worcestershire were humbled by the mighty Surrey in a match that produced a definite result with the lowest-ever aggregate of runs. The visitors were put in on a drying wicket and were put out for 25. Surrey's skipper declared at 92/3 and next day, Worcestershire were dismissed for 40 – only Hugo Yarnold (14) reached double figures. Chalke considered the Surrey side of the 1950s to be the best-ever.

Meeting held: 19 November 2015

Attendance: 100

MEETINGS' PROGRAMME – 2015/16

All meetings start at 7.30pm (unless stated otherwise) Programme subject to change
If in doubt, for example, due to severe weather, phone 01384 292170

December 10 * Darren Maddy (Leicestershire & Warwickshire)

Darren first played for Leicestershire and was part of their Championship-winning teams of 1996 and 1998. He moved to Warwickshire in 2006, elected captain in 2007 and 2008, leading them back to Division One of the Championship.

January 21 Ken Burney (W.G. Grace)

Ken will eulogise 'The Champion' whose first-class debut sesquicentenary and death centenary both occur in 2015. He will also discuss Grace's two amazing seasons of 1876 and 1895. Some of Ken's collection of WG Grace cricketana will be on display.

February 18 John Barclay (Sussex) - Note this is a lunchtime meeting starting at 11:30am—See below

The inimitable Bonn-born, Old Etonian never fails to captivate his audience and this lunchtime presentation is sure to be no exception. His career occurred too late for him to appear for the Gentlemen v. Players. He would have been in his element!

March 17 David Steele (Northamptonshire and England)

At the age of 33, he was chosen to make his debut for England – against Australia with both Lillee and Thompson at their peak. During his 1975 benefit season at Northants, David received a meat chop for every run he scored from a grateful local butcher!

April 14 * David Houghton (Zimbabwe) with Dave Bradley (BBC Hereford and Worcester)

Dave Houghton, Zimbabwe's first Test captain, holds the record for the most runs in Tests without a duck, with 1,464 runs in 22 Tests for Zimbabwe without ever being out for nought. He is highly rated as a coach at both national and county level.

NOTE! * Both the December and April meetings will be held on the second Thursday!

The February meeting will begin at 11:30 (coffee & raffle). John Barclay will speak from 12-noon until the buffet lunch at 1pm. This will be followed by a Q&A session at 1.45pm. The meeting will end at 2.30pm.

The buffet lunch will cost £6.50 per head, payable IN ADVANCE, preferably by cheque to Stourbridge Cricket Society. Mike Tomkins will receive payments between 6.30pm and 7:15pm at the December and January meetings.

SPRING TRIP SOLD OUT

Details have been finalised for our "Society on Tour 2016" which is now SOLD OUT.

We leave Stourbridge CC at 7.30am on Thursday 10 March and travel with Woodstones of Kidderminster.

Coffee will be provided in the Tavern prior to the Lord's tour which will commence at 11.30am and will last for one hour thirty minutes. Please note the Media Centre will be closed for refurbishment at the time of our visit.

We will then go to The Emirates for a tour commencing at 2pm that will last for about an hour so that we will leave for home at about 3.30pm.

As last year please bring a packed lunch to be eaten on the journey between the two venues.

Total cost of the trip will be £39.00 which includes coffee and also a contribution towards the traditional driver's collection.

We will be collecting payment at the January and February meetings of the Society. Cheques are preferred, made payable to Stourbridge Cricket Society.

Terry Church

SECRETARY VACANCY

Dave Nicklin, SCS President has stepped into the breach, and is acting-Secretary on a strictly *pro-tem* basis.

It is to be hoped that in the midst of our growing membership that there is someone who is willing and able to take on the role.

Interested persons are urged to contact the President or the Chairman at the monthly meeting or, if you cannot wait that long, please phone either:

Mike Tomkins 01384 288868
Dave Nicklin 01527 871835

BOOK REVIEWS

Members who receive a cricket book at Christmas or get one at any other time are invited to write a brief review for *Boundary View*.

The length of the review is up to the individual, but the essential points to consider are whether or not the book was enjoyable and if the reviewer is able to recommend the title to others.

Please send your reviews to Anthony Collis, preferably by email, to the address shown below.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

Ken Workman reports:
Cricket books bequeathed by the late Ray Edwards realised a total of £1,500 with all proceeds going to Worcestershire CCC Supporters Association. A splendid result!

Ken was delighted to report at the November meeting that 100 members had already renewed their subscriptions.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following persons who have recently joined the Society.

Dennis Banks – Pedmore
Douglas Earnshaw – Pensnett
David Gordon – Kingswinford
Michael Harrington – Kinver
Roger Perry – Oldswinford
Graham Sessions – Bewdley

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Worcester Cathedral is to stage a Service of Thanksgiving next April in honour of legendary Worcestershire batsman Tom Graveney.

The service will take place in the Cathedral on Friday, April 29 at 2.30pm and all are welcome to attend.

Newsletter Deadlines

Deadline for receipt of copy is for each *Issue* is (Last Friday of Month)

Autumn (August) *Winter* (November) *Spring* (February)

Preferably all articles should be typed and emailed to the address below

The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse the publication of any material submitted without further reason.

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