

Boundary View

Winter 2017 - No. 17

The Newsletter of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Founded 1972

"SUPPORTING CRICKET IS AS IMPORTANT AS PLAYING CRICKET"



Former opponents renew friendships!

L-R: Peter Bagley, Mushtaq Mohammad, Gordon Smith, John Huband

I think the photograph and the header slogan above it epitomise the true spirit of cricket and our Society!

The quote (new to my ears) were spoken at Terry Church's book launch by the Mayor of Dudley, Cllr Dave Tyler. Both motto and photo are surely what cricket societies are all about!

The 'strapline' should be prominently used. Opportunities for its use include Boundary View, emails, publicity leaflets, and our exciting, new-look website, which will be unveiled very soon. [See below]

On the theme of supporting cricket, may I draw members' attention to the set-up of a **Local Research Group**, brief details of which are on the back page. Please help our first project in any way that you can!

Down under it's two down and three to play. To all intents and purposes The Ashes are back in Australian hands, as it is inconceivable that they won't win at least one of the three. It seems that the ignoble art of sledging has plumbed new depths and that stump mikes are being muted. If that's what how far cricket has fallen, then it's a sorry state of affairs.

NEW SDCS WEBSITE!

The Society's website will be re-launched soon with a new look **and a new address**. Members will be informed by email of the date when the site goes live. We hope you enjoy it and look forward to receiving your comments!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to our Society:

John Wilde – Stourport-on-Severn

Ross Wilde – Stourport-on-Severn

SADLY

We have been informed of the following members who have died.

Douglas Macfarlane, a long-standing member, passed away on 27 April 2017, after a short illness. He was aged 67.

Roger Brindley, passed away at the end of October, after returning from a holiday in Vietnam.

Douglas Adnitt passed away on 3 October 2017.

Although **Tom Pritchard** was not a member of the Society, he was featured in the Society's recent book: *Stourbridge CC Test Cricketers*. After reaching his personal century, he died on 22 August 2017. He was included in the book as a 'worthy' – one who should have played Test cricket but didn't.

We offer our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

We wish all members of the Society a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

DO NOT FORGET!

Our first meeting of 2018 will be held on 18 January **starting at 2pm**.

CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

Is November the worst month of the year if you are a cricket fan? Dead leaves and darkness, marooned in the Northern Hemisphere a long way from any meaningful cricket, it certainly seems that way.

On the eve of the Ashes, however, perhaps a glimmer of light emerges every fourth year allowing the opportunity to head south, finances permitting, for at least part of the famous old contest, or subscribe to BT Sport and spend two months without much sleep feeling each day as if you are permanently jet-lagged.

There are of course other opportunities to keep track of cricket on the other side of the world. Perhaps wrapping yourself in the duvet with an iPad or listening to unrivalled TMS coverage, which will at least keep you in touch with what is happening whilst you inflict upon yourself a night of broken sleep, trying to pretend next day it was all worthwhile.

I have never been one of those people who completely ignore its happening, turn off the light and sleep for eight hours, going downstairs, putting the kettle on next morning and thinking, "Oh, I'll just check the score, hope there's not been another batting collapse!"

To me the Ashes is part of our nation's fabric, meaningful and without rivalry, within the sporting calendar.

I sometimes wonder like a good many people how I was able to navigate family, work and cricket so successfully.

Cricket is such a different sport to any other and because of the Ashes Test format of 25 days played out over seven gruelling weeks, it can leave you mentally and physically drained, as well as the players, as was the case here in 2005.

Ashes cricket in Australia is so diverse because of the geographical difference with each venue. The need to adjust each side for the Adelaide day/night Test could be significant within the overall outcome of the series. By our next meeting, we shall have a clearer insight into how the series is evolving, as it will be day one of the 3rd Test in Perth. I look forward to seeing you on 14th December when we shall give a festive welcome to David Millns.

MIKE TOMKINS - Chairman

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

Viscount Cobham (Patron)
Terry Church (Programme Secretary)

Dave Nicklin (President)
Anthony Collis (Secretary / Editor)

Mike Tomkins (Chairman)
Ken Workman (Treasurer)

MUSHTAQ MOHAMMAD Northants & Pakistan

The Society's 45th winter season began with a discussion between former Pakistan captain, Mushtaq Mohammad (pictured on front page) and Dave Bradley of BBC H&W.

Born in 1943, Mushy's main recollection of Partition was when his extended Muslim family fled from India to Karachi where they were allowed to play indoor cricket in a former Hindu temple. "Added to which my early education was at a Christian school, which didn't altogether help me to understand my identity!"

Mushtaq's family included five brothers, all of whom played first-class cricket and four represented Pakistan as Test cricketers.

The fourth oldest, Mushtaq became not only the world's youngest Test cricketer, but actually made his first-class debut aged 13, when he appeared for Karachi Whites against Hyderabad in 1956/57. With a maturity beyond his years, he scored 87 and took five for 28, but was dropped for the next match, because the opposition was considered stronger. Mushy recalled his Test debut in 1958/59: "After playing a match in Peshawar, I was on the train back to Karachi, when at Lahore, a man told me to get off the train. I said 'Why? I have got a ticket'. He said I was wanted in Lahore, where the third Test against West Indies was to be played and I was in the squad. I knew nothing about it, but he was adamant and said I must go home and report back tomorrow. 'Go home? My home is in Karachi 300 miles away and the train now has gone!' So he helped me find my brother Wazir, who was in the team. Next day, I saw it was a turf wicket, but I had no boots, only the tennis shoes that I wore on a matting wicket. I borrowed a pair of boots, but they hurt my feet.

"I went out to bat and faced Wes Hall. I could see the smoke coming from his nostrils, but I managed to stay there. Gerry Alexander told him to let me have a

bouncer, but Hall declined saying: 'he is just a boy'. "Give him a bouncer," ordered Alexander, who was the captain. Wes duly did, but the ball went high and down the leg side, so I was in no danger. Unfortunately after scoring 14, he gave me a yorker which landed on my big toe! I was out leg before and I hobbled back in my gym shoes."

In 1966, Mushtaq made his debut for Northamptonshire and went on to play 262 matches, scoring almost 16,000 runs (av. 39.16) including 32 centuries. He also took 551 wickets (av. 24) with his leg breaks. The Cobblers were a strong side as can be judged from the likes of Keith Andrew, Bishen Bedi, Milburn, Mushtaq, Steele and Peter Willey. Mushy rated Andrew and Bedi as top class performers. Bedi always wanted to win; the same could not be said of all county players. He recalled two great characters: Colin Milburn was a law unto himself. Hopelessly overweight, he ducked out of training and seldom got to bed before 3am, but was always ready to play next day. David Steele was "a miser and if he invited you for a cuppa, he would tell you to bring your own tea bag while he provided the water!" He was known in the game as Crime, because crime never pays!

After the interval, Mushtaq answered a variety of interesting questions. Asked about players that he rated of other counties, Mushy plumped for his fellow Pakistani, Imran Khan, who he said, worked harder at the game than anyone else. He trained longer and he stayed longer in the nets. He proved to be an excellent Test captain and a great all-round cricketer. Mike Procter was another great player who put everything into his game. Besides Hanif, Mushtaq admired Gavaskar and Boycott who all invariably batted with great determination to give their countries a solid start. To emphasise the importance of concentration, Hanif (337) batted for 970 minutes, spread over three days, against West Indies to gain a draw in the first meeting between the two countries.

He agreed that he was the originator of the reverse sweep which he first used against Fred Titmus whose field placing left an inviting gap through the slips. "My first attempt went for six!" Although he did not enjoy watching T20 cricket, he said he would have played it because he was paid to play cricket, but T20 did not equip players with the concentration needed at Test level. Mushtaq was asked about the family's links with cricket. Hanif was the father of Shoaib and grandfather of Shezar – three generations of first-class cricketers, but the grandson has yet to win a Test cap. The four brothers who represented Pakistan at Test level were Hanif, Mushtaq, Sadiq and Wazir – Raees made up the five who played first-class matches.

Asked for his predictions on the forthcoming Ashes, Mushtaq believes that England, with or without Ben Stokes, have an excellent chance of beating Australia, who he thinks are "not what they were, but should never be under-estimated on home soil." Afghanistan will learn quickly and adapt in much the same way as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have done. Mushtaq added that many Afghans have gained valuable experience by playing in Pakistan.

Mushtaq caused great amusement by referring to one of the audience, an old-time adversary from his Birmingham League days, as 'the off-spinner who never turned a ball'. Gordon Smith took the jibe in great part! "The secret of Gordon's success was not that he didn't turn the ball, but he made batsmen think that he would turn his next delivery. He simply kept us guessing!" And there ended a fascinating evening – the first of many more to come. [For the record, Mushtaq was aged 15 years 124 days on his debut and remains the youngest Test cricketer. Mushtaq omitted to say he was the first dismissal of a Wes Hall hat-trick, Fazal Mahmood and Nasim-ul-Ghani following.]

19 October 2017

Att. 72 (61members + 11 guests)

Post-meeting email received by Terry Church: "Thank you for having me at the Club. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting old friends, John Huband, Gordon Smith, Peter Bagley and many others. Thanks once again!" — Mushy

The *Daily Mail* (11 November) carried an article about Wes Hall (now Sir Wes) paying a return visit to Accrington CC, the Club he played league cricket for in the 1960s. The hat-trick, in the article's footnote, was the first time West Indies had achieved the feat.

Not CCS now CSA

At the November meeting of the Council of Cricket Societies, it was agreed that the name of CCS will henceforth be known as Cricket Societies Alliance (CSA) and represents the interests of member societies worldwide.

It was also announced that the author, Stephen Chalke, who has recently revived the Cricket Society's West of England branch, has agreed to become the CSA's Patron.

STOURBRIDGE TEST CRICKETERS

The book was compiled by the Society to mark the 175th anniversary of the founding of Stourbridge CC. A total of nineteen cricketers played for the Club and also won Test honours. Five others – Worthies – also represented their country, but not in Test matches.

The book, which makes an ideal present for all cricket enthusiasts, is on sale at meetings and costs £7.50 to members (elsewhere at £9.00).

NEW BLOOD NEEDED

The Society wishes to increase the size of the committee and will seek to appoint two additional persons at the AGM in April 2018.

The chief requirement for any potential committee member is enthusiasm. Duties are not onerous. The committee meets thrice yearly to review activities and discuss future plans.

For further information, please contact any committee member.

ANDY MURTAGH
(Author & biographer)

Andy Murtagh is the first to admit that he was never a great cricketer, but he was good enough to play with some world-class players during his career of 27 first-class matches between 1973 and 1977. However, he pointed out that he was twelfth man for Hampshire on numerous occasions. After his playing days ended, he took up a post at Malvern College where he succeeded Alan Duff who played 6 matches Worcestershire and sadly died aged 51. Murtagh (right) took over cricket coaching duties and taught English for the next 30 years. Andy has since written a number of biographies – the latest of which *Gentleman & Player* – aptly describes the late Colin Cowdrey.

Colin was born in the foothills of India in 1932. His father was a tea planter and a keen cricketer with one first-class match, for Madras Europeans in 1927, to his name. Colin practised in the tennis court where his father instructed him to bat with his back, against the wire fencing, to ensure that he played shots through the covers, which became Cowdrey's trade-mark stroke in years to come.

His was a lonely childhood, with only the houseboy for companionship. At the age of five, Colin was accompanied by his parents to a prep school in England and, due to the War, he did not see them again for seven years.

He went on to senior school at Tonbridge, and played in the first XI against Clifton. The match was played at Lord's and a tubby Cowdrey, aged 13, not only was the youngest boy to appear at Headquarters, but top-scorer for his school in the first innings, with 75 out of 156 and scored 44 in the second. Added to which, his teasing leg breaks produced figures of five for 59 (including 3 stumpings), to help secure victory by 2 runs. His performance won praise in *The Times*, but

rather unkindly added that 'Colin looked like Cyril Washbrook as seen through the



wrong end of a telescope'. While still at school, Cowdrey made his first-class debut against Derbyshire in 1950. He scored 15 and 26 and could not prevent defeat by an innings. He won three

Blues and captained Oxford against Cambridge in 1954, but never finished his degree. Cowdrey was chosen for the Ashes tour of 1954/55; in the second Test, he figured in a match-winning partnership with Peter May as they put on 116 for the fourth wicket. When Colin was out for 56, he burst into tears in the dressing room and blamed himself for jeopardising the match and possibly the Ashes. He was consoled by Hutton, described by Murtagh as his father-figure, and by Frank Tyson who made good his vow to win the match with figures of six for 85. After regaining the Ashes, the team celebrated with 56 bottles of champagne!

Twenty years later, Colin Cowdrey's Test career was book-ended by another Ashes encounter down-under. The Aussies had a hostile pair of fast bowlers in Thompson and Lillee, famously dubbed by Eric Morecambe as "Lillian Thompson, a fine Australian girl".

In retirement, Cowdrey became President of MCC and Chairman of ICC. He was knighted and later ennobled as Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge.

After the interval, Andy responded to members' questions.

He was asked about Colin's much published avoidance of national service. Andy

suggested that a recent foot operation, with a six-weeks stay in bed, plus a certain amount of influence may have been the cause. Sir Gerald Nabarro MP reportedly said, "He was fit enough to score 100, but not fit enough to peel potatoes".

Asked to compare Hampshire's greatest pair of openers, Andy responded, "One's black, one's white!" He added that there was an uneasy relationship, but one of mutual respect with Gordon Greenidge keen to learn from Barry Richards.

Asked about Kevin Pietersen's time with Hampshire, Andy admitted he was a fine cricketer, but not a popular player.

When Andy married Lin, his nephew Tim, who plays for Middlesex, was due to attend the evening reception at Eastnor Castle. He mentioned this to the umpire, who told him not to worry about being late and promptly gave him out lbw.

With Ireland due to make their Test debut in 2018, he had high hopes that another member of his family will play.

Andy described T20 as a slog-fest and found it boring to watch but great to play.

He recalled that Boycott had an older girlfriend, known as Grandma, on the county circuit. A naïve Andy was deputed to pass word to Boycs that Grandma was here to see him, with the all-too obvious result!

Asked about Malvern College players in his time, Andy singled out Ricardo ELLcock, who had been discovered playing cricket on a beach in Barbados. Strings were pulled to bring him to Malvern and he played for the County, but a serious back injury ended his career. He is now a jumbo pilot for Virgin Air.

Andy admitted that public schoolboys have it too easy—coached by county pros, no club subs, no lunch or tea fees.

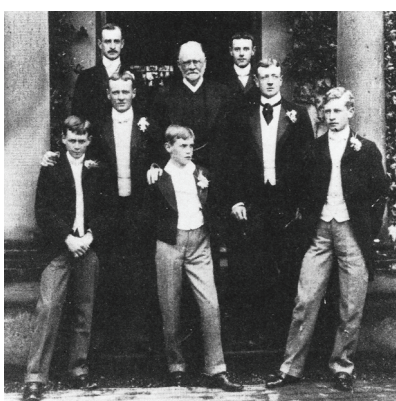
Finally asked who was to be his next book subject, Andy said, "Tony Greig!"

That should be another interesting story!

16 November 2017

Att: 63 (55 members + 8 guests)

'Ton-up' Terry Church apologised that he was unable to attend this evening. In conversation, he told the editor that Andy Murtagh was the hundredth guest that he had arranged to speak to our Society. Terry deserves a medal for his much-valued and appreciated efforts! Terry said he is willing to hand over the reins to someone new. Please form a queue at the next meeting.



FOSTERSHIRE

THE STORY OF A GREAT MALVERN FAMILY

This book by Anthony Collis provides a fascinating glimpse into the lives of seven brothers who all played first-class cricket for Worcestershire in the pre-WW1 area, fondly known as the Golden Age of cricket.

The book, due to be published in early 2018, is offered to members at the exclusive price of £12 (normally £14)

Please add £3 p&p if you cannot collect at our monthly meetings.

To order: Send cheque, payable to A D Collis, and your details to:

34a Chawn Hill, Stourbridge DY9 7JB.

Or, you may purchase a copy at the monthly meetings.

MEETINGS' PROGRAMME FOR 2017/18

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

- Dec 14** **David MILLNS** (Notts, Leics, Tasmania & Boland). Now a first-class umpire. David is one of the few bowlers to score a hundred and take ten wickets in the same first-class match.
- Jan 18** **Geoff COPE** (Yorkshire & England) Now registered blind, Geoff is the subject of Stephen Chalke's new book, "In Sunshine and Shadow". **Please note this is an afternoon meeting – 2pm start (No food!)**
- Feb 15** **Dean ALLEN** (Author of "Empire, War & Cricket") A lavish presentation of legendary 'Laird of Matjiesfontein', Scottish-born James Logan, who made a fortune and financed cricket in Southern Africa.
- Mar 15** **Norman GIFFORD MBE** (Worcs, Warwks & England) 15 Test caps, 2,068 career wickets; captain, Test selector, coach and now WCCC President.
- Apr 12** **AGM (Starting at 7pm)** followed by **TOM SCOTT** (former WCCC Chief Executive) at 7:45 for 8pm

RAFFLE PRIZES

The Society will gratefully accept members' donations that can be used as raffle prizes. Please contact any committee member for details.

SIGN IN, PLEASE

As there is no welcome table on entry, signing-in sheets will be made available before and during the meeting. Your co-operation is anticipated with thanks.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBS?

Any members who have not paid their subscriptions by 31 December 2017 will be regarded as 'lapsed' and will receive no further communications.

ANOTHER 57 BLACK COUNTRY SPORTSMEN

Buoyed by the success of his first collection, Terry launched his second tribute to 57 varieties of Black Country sportsmen. The pavilion of Himley CC was filled to capacity by friends, relatives and sports aficionados – plus twelve notables featured in the book.

The launch was opened by the Mayor of Dudley, Cllr Dave Tyler who was accompanied by his wife Winifred, Deputy Mayoress. In his address, the Mayor congratulated Terry on an outstanding publication and commented that "supporting sport is just as important as playing sport".

Terry proceeded to highlight some of the subjects which were drawn not just from cricket and football, but also from other sports.

The cricketers featured in the book include Ronnie Bird, Dennis Breakwell, Dean Headley, George Headley (Ron appeared in Vol.1), Ron Jones, Derek Pearson, John Sedgley, and Chris Tolley, who all played first-class cricket. Brummie-born, Leicestershire 'keeper Phil Whitticase qualifies for entry due to his boyhood years spent in Wordsley. Club cricketers include Stuart Boroughs, David Collins, John Huband, Graham Hudson and Brian Lester.

Terry's book is an ideal stocking-filler for all Black Country sports fans and also serves as a reminder of the days when sport was played for the enjoyment rather than thoughts of riches unlimited. The book, priced at £8.95, is available at our monthly meetings and also from Ashwood Nurseries.

SOCIETY'S TRIP TO CARDIFF

Thursday 22 March 2018

Departure time will be 7.30am from Stourbridge Cricket Club. Subject to traffic we should arrive at The Swalec Stadium in time for coffee at 10am. This will be followed by a presentation and tour with lunch booked for 12.30pm. The main course will be lasagne.

We should depart The Swalec by about 1.30pm. It is a short walk to The Principality Stadium and there will be free time available in the city before our tour commences at 3pm.

At the conclusion of the tour we will rejoin the coach, parked at The Swalec. It is hoped that we will arrive at Stourbridge at approximately 7pm. The total cost of the trip is confirmed as £39 which must be made to Terry Church no later than our February meeting. **Cheques preferred, please, made out to Stourbridge and District Cricket Society.**

A CENTURY AT LAST!

As a village batsman of somewhat limited ability I never remotely looked like making a century on any of my visits to the crease. However I am proud to say that I have at last reached three figures. When I became Programme Secretary at the start of the 2003-4 season, my first speaker booking was **Rodney Hogg** and my century was reached at the November 2017 meeting with **Andy Murtagh**. Having made my maiden hundred I will be happy to declare if any member would like to take my place in the Society's batting order.

Terry Church

LOCAL RESEARCH APPEAL

There is an abundance of material about the history and heritage to cricket at Test and County level.

However few records exist of cricket at Club level. If you have any memories or photos of your Club, may we borrow them to aid our research.

More details are available on a separate leaflet. Please pass any material to either Anthony Collis or Terry Church at our meetings. Thank you.

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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Stourbridge & District Cricket Society is a member of Cricket Societies Alliance (formerly Council of Cricket Societies)
www.councilcricket society.com (awaiting notification of change of address)